

SKOOB

Occult Review

ISSUE 4

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I WAS A CHILD DISCIPLE OF THE
BEAST – Vivienne Browning

THE ENGLISH
ADVENTURE

– Jonathan Ward

THE ASTRAL BEAUTY VERSUS
THE ASTRAL ILLUSION

– Vee Van Dam

GRADED GRAINS MAKE
FINER FLOUR

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VICTOR NEUBERG'S
"THE WATER BEAKER"

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE
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– Michael Hudson

THE WHISPERING GALLERY
DICTIONARY OF ALCHEMY

– Diana Fernando

REVIEWS

Plus

ARTWORK: Miranod Gray, Nema, Linda Falorio,
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SKOOB OCCULT REVIEW

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VYVYAN DEACON

I WAS A CHILD DISCIPLE OF THE BEAST

Part Two: The Missing Years

Vivienne Browning

In *Stirrings in Oz*, the first article of this two-part account (The Occult Review Autumn 1990) I wrote of my birth and early childhood in the 1920's in Australia where I was raised as a Thelemite in the discipleship of the complex Beast of Revelation, whose most notorious personification was Aleister Crowley.

My father and first mentor was Vyvyan Deacon, the famous spiritualist medium. He has a magical name or motto VICARIUS FILII DEI, from his initiation through the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society - The Ibis Lodge in Melbourne in 1914.

He ran an Australian Order of Oriental Templars which promoted the theology of Aleister Crowley, with especial attention to Crowley's Hymn to Pan.

The idea of the Beast of Revelation, whose number was 666, influenced my up-bringing, not only through Aleister Crowley, but through my father, whose magical motto, if carefully studied, can be seen to contain the Roman numerals which clearly add up to 666.

viz. VICARIUS FILII DEI

V(5) + I(1) + C(100) + I(1) + U(5) + I(1) + L(50) + I(1) + I(1) + D(500) + I(1)

5+1+100+1+5+1+50+1+1+500+1 = 666

After a successful court action in 1929 when my father sued an Australian newspaper for libel and was awarded unprecedented damages, he brought my mother, sister and seven-year-old self to England on S.S. Jervis Bay. We arrived at Waterloo Station from Southampton by boat-train on 1st November 1930. On arrival tragedy struck when I dropped and smashed my china-headed doll Betty on to the platform as I alighted from the train; ironic, when I had safely carried it throughout the thousands of miles journey half-way round the world. This tragedy and my ensuing sobs of despair were assuaged by something very enjoyable, the discovery of ESCALATORS.

The escalators provided a fairy playground while my father went into London to make contacts. The muted clack-clacking of the stairs as they disappeared and re-appeared magically ascending and descending in opposite directions was the mesmerising rhythm I needed to recall:

'Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. Love is the law, love under will.'

I loved this new country, where in November night arrived in the afternoon, illumined by so many lights; the narrow winding streets leading to the unknown - so different from the uncomplicated broad set squares of the Melbourne streets I had left behind - and the tiny wintry sun, seen like a moon through the clouds.

My father contacted patriarchal John Lewis, editor since its inception 1912, of the International Psychic

Gazette - with its interesting cover full of theosophical, masonic and spiritual symbols.

Mr. Lewis became our Father Christmas that first Christmas in England, visiting us in our humble Brixton flat, laden with gifts, and he himself, strict vegetarian and teetotaler insisted on having no more than a cheese sandwich and glass of Adam's Ale. He took us to the Fortune Theatre to see Dickens' Christmas Carol, and one of the last performances of George Robey.

He heralded in the New Year 1931 with a two-page lead article in The International Psychic Gazette No. 208 Vol 19 with the spectacular heading: 'The Medium who thrashed a Newspaper - A Relative of Robert Browning!'. This head-line came to the notice of Aleister Crowley. It was of interest to him on two counts, firstly because it showed money could be made from suing successfully for libel and secondly, anyone or anything related to Robert Browning was of interest to Crowley, Browning being his favourite poet.

Crowley did not bring his charge for libel for another year after he had read Nina Hamnett's Laughing Torso and saw an opportunity of accusing his friend of libelling him in accounts of his activities at the Abbey of Thelema in Sicily. As it happened he was unsuccessful, the judge being sickened at the accounts of the supposed goings-on at Cefalu. Crowley had quoted liberally from Browning the previous year to introduce his Banned Lecture on Gilles de Rais,

which was to have been delivered before the Oxford University Poetry Society on the evening of Monday 3rd February 1930. It was published by my father's friend from Australia Inky Stephensen at 41 Museum Street for sale price 6d to the members of the University of Oxford who had been deprived of hearing it delivered by the great man himself. Crowley gave my father a copy.

It was from this time that I learned to appreciate Crowley's sense of humour and his sound logic in defending Gilles de Rais against the accusation of his having murdered 800 children by virtue of the fact that it would have been taken over two years of murdering one a day, from a sparsely populated area where there would be unlikely to be so many youngsters, and well-nigh impossible to kidnap even one or two children without intervention as parents would be alerted to keeping a vigil over their offspring. Crowley suggested that peoples' fears could be first voiced and then accepted as facts. When little Johnny disappears it is stated that he has been kidnapped for the purpose of ritual murder, when in fact he turns up all right, if rather muddy, half an hour later.

My father was soon in contact with his old friend, Bishop Wedgwood, head of Co-masonry in the Theosophical Society, who through ill-health had had to retire from public life to Camberley, Surrey. He visited London from time to time, for I met him at a friend's house in Hampstead for a spiritualist seance with my father taking the part of direct voice medium.

Another contact was Bishop James of The Sanctuary, Knightsbridge, known as the Harrods Bishop, because his church was at 23 Basil Street just behind Harrods, the famous store. The Bishop invited my father to lecture and give psychic demonstrations there, even though

he himself made derogatory remarks about Spiritualism and mediums. I attended services there and received spiritual instruction from Bishop James until my Baptism and Confirmation by him on 7th October 1934. On the way to this private spiritual ceremony, escorted by my father, seven black cats crossed my path.

Frederick James had been ordained as a deacon in April 1915 by Matthew, from whom the English Apostolic Succession in the Liberal Catholic Church originates, he having raised to the Episcopate in the Dutch Old Catholic Church by Archbishop Gul of the Netherlands. Matthew also raised to the Episcopate Willoughby, who in turn on 5th November 1916 raised Frederick James to the Episcopate (whereupon James formed his own independent Church which, in the Sanctuary, thrived.)

It was Willoughby who also raised Wedgwood to the Episcopate, who in turn raised his friend and colleague in the Theosophical Society, Lead-beater, to the Episcopate so that they could both play an important role as Bishops of the Liberal Catholic Church in Sydney when they were considered 'persona non grata' in the Theosophical Society at the time of Annie Besant's visit in 1922. Wedgwood and the Liberal Catholic Church and Theosophy were well-known to Crowley through his early days of lampooning the leading Theosophists Leadbeater, Annie Besant and Krishnamurti. Such baiting was familiar to me as a child from articles type-written in purple ink which my father read aloud to appreciative company in Australia in the 1920s - but at the time of my Baptism and Confirmation Crowley had not yet met Bishop James, nor had he attended a service in The Sanctuary.

All the leading Spiritualist groups recruited my father for his outstanding gifts in healing, psychometry, clairvoyance, trance mediumship, direct voice, not least of them The

Borderland Library - The Stead Bureau run by Estelle Stead, where, by popular demand he, Vyvyan Deacon ran courses of twelve lectures on spiritual development. I accompanied my father when he gave this course and heard the voice of W.T. Stead instruct his daughter to give me pamphlets and books which he had published as Books for the Bairns.

My father attended the Foyles Literary Luncheon on 15th September 1932 when Crowley was guest speaker. My memory of this time was of frequent social meetings in Fitzrovia, at private houses in Chelsea, after-theatre parties and library conventions at The Cheshire Cheese when my father seemed to meet many of the current favourites of theatre, the Art world and that of Literature. He knew W.B. Yeats and held a seance at The Abbey Theatre Dublin at his request. His circle of acquaintances also included A.E. (George Russell), Frank Harris, Bernard Shaw, the Huxleys, Epstein model Betty May, Augustus John & Walter Sickert.

Crowley's name had always been familiar to me and I was aware that it had become more familiar since we arrived from Australia but I had not yet made his acquaintance.

In 1934 before my Baptism and Confirmation I won a scholarship in the London County Council Junior examinations. I came in the top twenty in Greater London so was eligible for selection to the Greycoat School, but my father wanted me to attend The Mary Datchelor School in Camberwell, the district where Robert Browning was born. My father chose this school as being the most Thelematic in up-bringing, there being no unreasonable school rules. It was stated merely that any breach of courtesy to others, or common sense, would be a breach of the school rules. The headmistress, Dr. Brock, later Dame Dorothy, had written for her

thesis at Girton, Studies on Fronto and his Age - Fronto being a friend and tutor of Marcus Aurelius, whom my father admired. I recall my father in conversation with Dr. Brock, arousing her interest when he spoke of his experiments with Aldous Huxley using Mescaline to examine various areas of Consciousness.

I accompanied my father when he fulfilled engagements as a medium, whenever I was free from school work. I recall details of visits to many private houses, public halls, but in particular several of the seances reported in *The Spirit Saith* by Arthur Frederick Sharp published in 1957, several years after my father's death. Those direct seances were specifically directed towards the foundation of The Order of the Preparation for the Communion of Souls on 18th March 1935 with the Revd. Maurice Elliot as Honorary Secretary and the Revd. Arthur Sharp as President.

The two-fold nature of the Beasts of Revelation was more distinct at this time. To me, Crowley represented the Anti-Christ with my father diametrically opposed as the Christ-child, having done what he could to fulfil his mission to get Spiritualism accepted by the Established Church according to the practice of the Christian Mystics or Mysteries of the early Christian era.

A climax was to be reached in 1936-1938 when my father and Aleister Crowley communicated almost daily. They corresponded by letter, communicated by telephone, met for social engagements and for magickal exercises. Crowley asked for the exact time of day my father was born on 9th August 1895 in Newbury, Berks, so that an astrological chart could be worked out for his 41st birthday, the day on which Aleister Crowley, Baphomet, was invited to dine at our home in 21 Lorn Road, Stockwell, London SW9.

Unfortunately the information from

my grandmother, who was still living in Sydney, Australia, could not arrive in time, but six weeks later it was revealed that a friend present at the birth remarked that it was one minute after 9 O'clock at night.

On the 9th August 1936 I met Crowley for the first time.

When he knocked on the door I was sent to open it and welcome him. My first impression of him as an old, short man I now realise was a subconscious comparison with my father who was twenty years younger and endowed with a taller, neater figure. His voice was less strong, without my father's oratorical ring, as he asked, "Is the little lady in?" referring to my mother, who was under five feet tall. He had brought a present for my mother and was obviously more interested in seeing her than in the thirteen year old who had opened the door.

This meeting is most memorable because of the rapport we built up between us as he saw and approved of some pen and ink drawings I had done of Baudelaire's *Fleurs de Mal*, and of some of his own poems, where I added a splash of red to convey more realism to blood - purely artistic, nothing sinister. Crowley was most affable and gentle with children, as Christina Foyle will testify. She used to be taken by him for walks in Hyde Park - happy occasions.

My father shared his sense of humour when he introduced Crowley to grapefruit-sized steak suet puddings. They were obtained hot and succulent from Fred's coffee-stall opposite Kennington Church. My father called them Babies Heads, purely as a joke because Crowley was believed to be the reincarnation of Gilles de Rais.

The joke of the Babies Heads was appreciated by theatrical and Fitzrovia socialites who used to make special pilgrimages to Fred's Cafe until trade was so booming Fred never required payment for my father's

orders. Bert, a taxi-driver devotee of Vyvyan Deacon, gave his services freely and fetched these delicacies for us, starting an avant-garde Take-Away service.

Discipleship of the Beast was a blissfully happy occupation until I shared my pleasure at school. Teachers and fellow pupils amazingly did not share my admiration.

They were not amused that I had met The Black Magician who had received notorious press coverage over his court case. They also thought the garish picture of his Scarlet Woman in lurid poster paints which he had given me as a present was evil, and saw to its disposal. I firmly fixed these people with a stare between the eyes willing them to regret their desecration.

Also in 1936 my father introduced Crowley to Bishop James (they met at The Cafe Royal for meals) and to The Sanctuary, which the Master Baphomet said he considered a suitable place for magickal exercises. My father held meetings of The Christian Mystics of the Rose Cross there starting on Monday 21st September 1936. My father officiated as Frater Memnon, Custodian of The Sanctuary and Sole Vice Regent for the Supreme and Holy King for England, Iona and All the Britains.

Whether or not it was from distorted rumours of these meetings, Ngaio Marsh, the crime writer, had published at this time a completely fictional account called *Death in Ecstasy* of meetings at a place similar to The Sanctuary. To leave no doubt in the minds of those who knew The Sanctuary a plan of the building disguised as the House of the Sacred Flame was printed as a Frontispiece to the novel. Although she denied in print that the novel had any basis in fact, I received a letter from Ngaio Marsh not long before she died in which she admitted that she had attended a meeting at The Sanctuary and that a visit had indeed suggested

the plot of Death in Ecstasy.

My father introduced several people to Crowley who were also friends to me such as Arthur Day, who helped Crowley financially, particularly with a publication of *The Equinox*, and a handsome young Italian, Pietro Rambelli, from Russi Rayena with whom I found pen-friendship and for whom Crowley did an astrological chart.

Crowley was sometimes among people who finished off an evening at our place after gatherings at The Cafe Royal or Chelsea parties attended by Augustus John, Walter Sickert, Ethel Mannin, and others of the literary and theatrical world. It was at these gatherings I heard of Ethel Mannin placing match-sticks in the corners of a match-box and stating solemnly *The Streets of Samarkand* by Day - then lighting the matches and announcing solemnly *The Streets of Samarkand* by Night - which for some unaccountable reason had them in fits of laughter - especially Crowley.

It was also during these times that I saw samples of the paintings of Augustus John, Crowley and Sickert and heard stories of the Ripper murders, Freemasonry and the royal surgeon Gull, and was left with the impression that Sickert was somehow related to the Royal family via the Duke of Clarence.

Frequently my father would wake me with a tasty morsel to eat and let me join in the talk of the latest risqué discovery, such as the banned record of *Gloomy Sunday* which had supposedly had the effect of causing several young people in America to commit suicide after hearing it played. I listened to it intently when I was alone in the house, confident that at the critical moment I would be able to exert my will and restrain myself from going beyond the brink of no return. I was disappointed to find that the *Gloomy Sunday* left me totally unmoved and I thought that I,

my father and certainly Aleister Crowley could do better.

A risqué subject on one occasion was the picture entitled *FEET* which was the latest object to cause an uproar in Fitzrovia. This time my mother intervened on the pretext that as I was not old enough to be legally married I should not see it. This was the only occasion I recall of being censored.

I learned much from my father in 1937 concerning the whole of the Law, *WILL*. Heralded as a latter-day Paracelsus, my father, like him, sustained a fractured skull. He discharged himself against doctor's orders the moment he regained consciousness in Kings College Hospital, where he had been taken. While still dangerously threatened by the consequences he fulfilled an engagement in Torquay to lecture on the late Violet Tweedale's *Cosmic Christ*, for which the renowned metaphysician came to Torquay expressly to take the Chair.

For the enthusiastic favourable publicity, credit was due to our family friend Sheridan Bickers, (Sherry-an' Bitters to his familiars) who twenty years earlier had introduced starlet Elizabeth Fox to Crowley which resulted in her going to his Abbey at Cefalu. Sherry had been out of touch with Crowley for years, but was devoted to my parents and I remember frequent meetings with him.

Alice Bailey lectured at The Sanctuary. In retrospect there appears to have been a closer Universal Brotherhood of Man than was dreamed of at the time.

Sherry had written words which could have been, or indeed had been, written by many others - "each man and woman is a star" and "the truth is that nothing really dies but false belief. Let us see what we can give to the world - not take from it."

Although only a child of thirteen I had an understanding of the dualistic philosophy of Pythagoras, of The

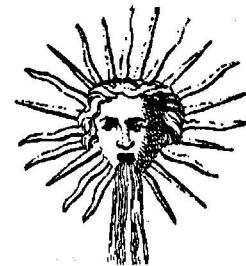
Beast, of Aleister Crowley and my father, and that it was making itself manifest throughout the world.

In another fall in December Vyvyan Deacon sustained another fracture, this time in his upper left arm. This was treated by a doctor as a dislocation which not only made more complicated the fracture, but also put extra strain on an already strained heart. I could not imagine the pain my father suffered but I know that it was, and had to be, the greatest suffering in his life. He was admitted to St. Giles Hospital Camberwell.

He came home to be with us for Christmas, when I attended midnight mass at The Sanctuary to which I travelled by bus alone. He returned to St. Giles hospital early in the New Year. Crowley visited him, sent him at least one book and wrote to him. Crowley's letter written on 15th February 1938 was the last letter my father received before he died in the early hours of the morning 19th February 1938.

At the end my mother was alienated from Crowley, and I did not know the reason for Crowley's disappearance from the scene. I was ignorant on the subject of the apparent neglect of us by Crowley at that time. I continued my visits to The Sanctuary and Bishop James. Although torn apart at the loss of my father's physical presence I found comfort in the continuing teachings of The Beast as made manifest through my father and Aleister Crowley.

I did what I willed as the whole of the Law and found that love is the law, love under will.



ENGLISH ADVENTURE

Part Four of Five

Jonathan Wood

The confirmation of the look in her eyes was a true glory to me, as if an ancient age old handed down weight of labouring misapprehension had been lifted from my shoulders, cast aside by unseen protective hands and like a bitter pill, dissolved in the newly created bubbling waters of my mind. She looked at me as a desperate but confident lover stares into her partner's eye, hoping to evoke some energy of response. She shook her head and whispered "don't you know who I am and who my mother was"?, as if I was some kind of naughty bewildered child. I stared at her jewellery jangling about her sweet kissable neck; I stared into her nut brown eyes, my heart thumping rapidly like the knocking digit of a disembodied hand come looking for its attachment. I thought for a second, watching the reflection and shafts of sunlight at the back of her head play tricks with her appearance. I could barely "see" her face, only an expanse of dark, fine twirling free falling strands of hair catching themselves in the light, her features disappearing now into the general dissolving picture before me. I knew it, I knew that face, I recognised the melting sounds of seaborne waves and the clanking bells around the necks of goats and sheep about the cliff face in Cefalu. She smiled at me and shook her head and said "yes I am the daughter of Francesca and now my love, you will be the privileged one to hear the voice that is deep within me; I am, and I carry the golden key to your lost years, your

lost experience within this vapour of unwinding dreams. I too have come through the backward karezzic ejaculation of bad dreams. As the daughter of Francesca, I have been touched where it hurt the most, by the clinging legacy of the Beast; I have had my embryonic head washed and foully anointed with his vampiric seed, thinking himself into the mistaken opinion that he has mastered tantra, by his copious lethargic outspillings. But like so many others, he has failed dismally to gauge the connection between divine celibacy and tantra, between the inner control of the outer and inner, and the highest self-pollination of the soul. He has spat himself into the setting western star eye upon the blossoming lotus. **There is a high connection between celibacy and tantrism, between the mastering of fertility and the refinement and retention of lust and love that makes both yourself and your partner higher off the ground than all the vampires.** Come my friend, Time is not on our side anymore, you should know that now. Let us leave this place for the cure of the antidote of all we desire". Her eyes were resolute and cold, blinking as if I myself did not exist. I felt a little as if I had been at a Society meeting, half stunned, half adrift, my mind ablur with frustrations and contradictions, puzzled by her words in this dogmatic outburst and yet in awe of her as she pulled me out of this esoteric watering hole where most of the patrons were of the Left Hand Path, would they admit to it. I have, all too often and still they

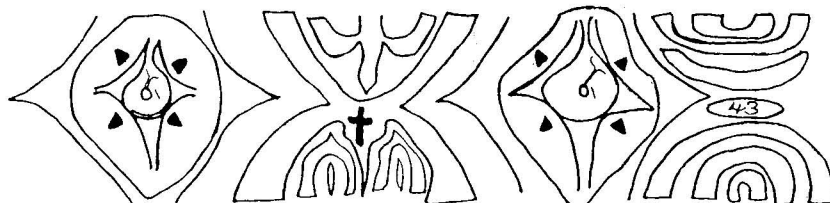
wonder and still they disbelieve. I felt the same cold as I once had done back in Francesca's poor abode below the Cephalodium Rock. I felt cold despite the sunshine and its burning edifice in my face. Nothing was now beginning to matter like hell. The cleansing feeling about not caring about anything, not least myself, finally fell upon my shoulders with the touch of this Italian maiden's hand in mine. She posted her card in High Holborn and we were off, leaving the sticky vampiristic facades of London behind us. I had worshipped for too long at London's Hellish Gateway, sucked too long upon the fruit of its intricacy and frozen intimacy. London's tube map of arteries caught up with the double reflection of the Tree of Life. With the knowing constancy of embarking upon some kind of a trail, we travelled south and back to my lowly lonely room. We both seemed to want the same thing; to fall into each others arms and unite like animals locked in the blissful melting act of SEX, our bodies pulsing like organic triggers alive with a permeating and prickling wet electricity as if each atom of our insides - the parts of us that were most closely caught - were enjoying a separate existence of melting anatomical mystical indecency. WE had realised that the denial of physicality as an act was as sacred as the immersement in the ritual of lust, but now that didn't matter, the theories had merged. Our bodies fused together into one, my eyes becoming blinded out of the

possibilities of mere sight and as I stared into her breasts my eyes did see a thousand screeching pterodactyls moving at will up through a vortex. I realised that my eyes were closed, yet it did not matter. I could hear their sounds, see the piercing primordial inhumanity of their eyes. How could they be otherwise, having never before spied humankind till now, their watery orbs like horrid eggs within a serpent's open purse, their scaly wings flapping ever harder creating a secret kingdom of noise about our room. We were beyond the realm of mere existence, our voices beginning to grow the detritus of sacred vibration, evolving tinctures and subtle resonances that made the very room expand, walls receding and retreating like those of my new found lovely Italian connection. We didn't even have to think to hold back, to attempt to retain our self-sufficient life forces, for we had given them separate life within our bodies like underwater volcanic eruptions multiplied amidst the atmosphere of hard pressed evolving carbon, of beasts caught in tar pits and of the first mark upon the wall by such as you or I.

golden neck torque that had not been there before, a frightening ancient smile upon her lips, her face a floating prison of transfigurations. Her face then once more began to settle amidst the far off sounds of tinkling bells and gulls and rising seaspray. We kissed and smiled and laid our heads back down to rest, safe in the knowledge that we had thrown off the bitter yolk of the ramifications of the castle of occult thought. For do we not wake every morning surrounded by the ramparts of the mystery of the universe? Is not the merest nod of the head and the recognition of an image before our eyes - the quiet acceptance of the surface of things - as but a gateway, an emblem of that which is below. We lie here now amidst the dying embers of our passion, our hearts running cardiac arrests of electricity through water into flesh, ancient symbols and modern misconceptions and images **bombarding the arches of our minds like God's searchlight tattoo trained upon the brittle human conception of his infinity.** A card is raised from out the pack and the head of Horus becomes a jewelled egg, pecked at by its own

places chocolate money upon our brows, that melts like sweet and scalding tar upon our pupils and so we fall backward against this glowing pageant into an age-ordained sleep, imploding ever inward to the very heart of all things, pumping away within our secret vaults. The Goddess Silence paints our faces with the dust of glowing butterfly wings and smiles for She knows all, having seen all.

Upon our sleep, I can see the prow of a horizon just beginning to glow with thin and winnowy tongues of pale nascent flame. There is a subtle interchange of shades and complexions upon the land below this fissure and somewhere deep in the middle of all of this, the first faintly recognisable elements of an untouched landscape. My head and that of my new found love are still deep within the cradle of darkness, where the **faculty of vision has the frequency of a distant lighthouse.** Darkness, light, darkness, light. Illumination tunneling through darkness only to be swallowed once more by the very knowledge that it delves into. My eyes become like vaporous orbs,



There was that naked dancer against the tree, there the brook within my room and there transmuted back to some semblance of animality the figure of the cat, its glassy spiral eyes burning with gaseous green fires flecked with snowflake dirty browns, blinking at us as we lay there growing sleepy on our bed bombarded by images of dead trees and giant runners in some kind of gliding pantomimic chase across a cliff top, figures floating, wavering submerging and sinking into ground. My lover's earrings clinked against her

reflection; Yggdrasil becomes the earth itself without protection, writhing its sacred branches ever inward to the centre as prescribed. The Jesus Christ in all of us runs wild within himself wanting merely peace and quiet to achieve his mystic ends rather than having to be the mystic end, his cross mutating into a holy tree of sacred knowledge stained by the blood of his learning and love and not by the sacrifice, the catalyst of the reversion of the mystic end of humanity and the humanity of the mystic end. Osiris painted as a gaping clown thus

themselves giving off a semblance of heavenly fire that twists and winnows into the atmosphere, as strange and guttural ancient chantings evolve in an audial procession upon our ears as thus this landscape unfolds and is uncovered by the proximity of the radiant beams that transfigure this virgin land. The Sun is yet ungolden in this new setting, is pale and shimmering, hidden from the facility of true power by the guardian face of elemental trickery, casting its rays upon the ground that emerges, features three dimensional like some-

thing from a pop-up children's book I read long years ago. There is not a building of any description within my sight, cleansed as it has been of the darkness and cruel onslaught of the process of London; a process of change stuck in a groove, a subtle breaking down of components into a distillation of an airless construct, a frieze upon a forgotten hillside somewhere, that never tastes the Sun. But here away from all that constitutes an atmosphere, a culture of dying and picking over the flesh of that which is almost dead, here there is nothing but the sounds of Nature coming into its own; of a reddish vitality flooding through my veins, a feeling that my senses are for the first time beginning to truly evolve themselves into this new experience. It is as if I am a child again now, next to my love who rests content within herself, the sounds of Sicilian gulls within her ears, of the delicate crumbings of the cliff above her mother's house and of a thousand burning afternoons within the memory of those settings around the Temple of Diana. There is a ghost sky now above my head that glides like inverted water across my vision, filled in this purity of borealis with a myriad of scenes of ancient towns being built, of familiar locations reflected in this tawny glinting wayward furnace. All that glides above my head like infant horsemen is known to me. I can see the milling bustling streets of Palermo in this sky, can see the shopkeeper with his store of magick robes, for one second breaking off from what he is doing to turn and face the vision in the sky that he possesses now; of two people lying upon a bare heath within a room within a revolving vault of finest lead, but he can see GOLD, the GOLD around my head. And that for him is the beauty of knowledge of his own way, of delving ever deeper into the mysteries that multiply and clothe themselves in impenetrability by revelation; that I am but a speck of light upon his

ceremonial jacket, with the unicursal hexagram in deepest red upon his back. HE enters once more his vault beneath the streets of Palermo, down ancient crumbling passageways to the very core of the vast sundrenched Pelegrino mountain, to the very banquet of darkness, where now lies the vellum notebook in its rightful place, isolated save for those that wish to protect it from the glances and the clutches of thelemic academia. This was something read with religious devotion, a kind of unspoken mystical devotion where magick gave way through its own sacred processes of change to an all-knowing, all-powerful procession of musical silent solitary confinement of mystical devotionism.

And London skies are now but a faintly dissolving vignette upon our brains in the singing undergrowth that we now inhabit. Beautiful evolving groves of trees and vast deserts of newly emerging stretching buds that turn deserts golden into fragrant intoxicating pollen bound eruptions of colour popping with the clarity of the heart beat against ones ear in the deep of the night. And in walking, letting our bodies become imbued with the surface water of golden dew of this morning, we found the vision before us of a long path towards a gateway. This path was laid with nautical submergent fossils, bodies and brittle shells atrophying into sacred spiral and sculpture as our feet touched their surfaces. Eyes and gills and water antennae becoming golden trinkets and crackling exoskeletons joining the music of the breeze. Beautiful rocks, square like natural pavings that had been carved by the strength of water lined our way festooned in symbols that seemed to be an amalgam of all that we knew. The simple cross itself had become a single component of a giant lattice carved upon these rocks connecting horizontals and verticals together, opening up vast purple quadruple pyr-

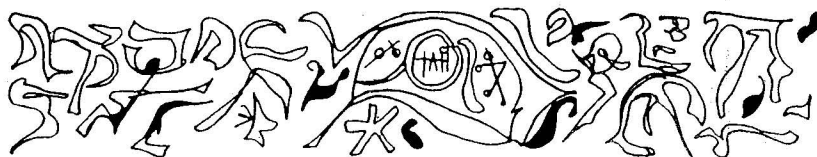
amidic structures within each right angle of each set of lines and bars. Tiny diminutive carvings on these slabs seemed to bulge, to grow to remonstrate with our eyes, turning merest mundane vision into a chaotic world beyond abundance, bursting our retinae, our corneae, filling our mouths and minds with the potency of a million resounding quivering emergent letters and shapes, where a million hours could not accommodate the time taken to traverse the vertical of a common ankh; where the merest finger painting of a cross disturbed this organic tapestry into further bursts of black birth amidst this crazed and hyper-multiplying ocean. This was the luscious scarification of the mind and skin, not some rank defacing of the body with a penknife, but the true exploding of the prison of the cranium and what's inside. Glowing entity sigils lead the way along this path in ever mounting numbers upon these slabs. Velvets, purples, the most brilliant yellows and shimmering metallic platinum bore the bodies of these sigils. Vast chivalric faces amidst their flapping banners of ancestry and nobility, their purpose upon the path to some kind of victory in the head. Processional creatures with vast smiles across their faces, armour shining, glinting, clanking and bursting upon us. We began to count these creatures upon these rocks, their banners, to pronounce their names, but at the intonation of every letter their names grew by a further confusion of alphabets and with it grew their smiles, their unbounded joy at being unpronounceable, unattainable and unextinguishable. Upon their brows were crosses borne and within the central cross of this were other crosses, each one growing smaller, expanding themselves into tinier and tinier universes of exploding birth of entities. These sigil-bound creatures were wholly and indubitably chivalric and devotional, their gematric astrological

ancestry flowed back to the opening of time itself and its mirror image of the joke of time, whose smile begins and ends with a scowling helmeted remnant of a head beneath which is the carrion laden shell of a head with a new born child upon the retinal image of its quickly chewed and rotting eyes. And there was music heralded by these gallant courtly denizens of time holding great cohorts of musicians within their hands like a fragment of Richard Dadd's world brought to painful and energetic faery life. Vast miniscule trumpeters blowing pollen in cloudish jets from out their instruments caressing our faces with their honey soaked incantations. Trumpets made of the basest lead unfurling into erectile visions of purest gold, perspiring with dew and the sweetest musick upon the ears amidst this path of living rocks, of the flow and splash of history rent asunder into its rightful confusion and pagentry. And with the breadth and scale of this musick came the first semblance from high and far away of a subtle unwinding of an English Holy Mantra, a vocal architectural unbidding of the spiral of the unity of sound and vision and speech and taste and smell and love. In the closing of the eyes against the dazzle and luscious medieval chaos of this scene, the first sounds of this sacred chant thus grew upon our minds and with the power of musick and its higher compatriot the voice, thus further worlds emerged upon us like oceans of primordial sputum laden with the reverse side of this path processional of symbol and chivalry. Vast letters growing bigger, ever bigger, distilling and dispelling the scale and possibility of symbols and meaning thus emerged from our mouths. Giant alphas and omegas,

strings of unpronounceable indefinable jumbled eastern characters like prone bodies falling upon the ground. Medieval heretical scripts uncurling from our tongues like so much rice paper ready to be burnt and amidst these tangled babbles of holy writ, the bodies of those once glorious entities marbled with the crackling power of their own destinies.

Shield-laden seas of long-dead bodies cast upon spikes, mountainous bonfires of calf-bound books awaiting the kiss of the flame; giant horizon bonfires of those already burning and somewhere in our heads, the ability to fight this and open our eyes to the beauty of an unfurling song from far away. Beautiful hybrid ancient instruments accompanied this lyric plainsong from out invisible mouths of passionate choirs. BUT....there was no processional choir, no tapering candle illuminated throned, merely the sound upon the air and from out the vast and bubbling sea beyond these gates clustered in nameless beings there rose like some Leviathan, a huge and shining cathedral, a monstrous spire and cavernous central aisle rising forth out of the sea; water cascading down its walls in furious torrents disturbed after centuries beneath the surface of this sea. Shining prismatic stained glass windows running with sea water, drying at once in the humidity of this sacred land, displaying its living breathing architecture. Beautiful fusions of lead and glass and pigment. Curling fossil nautilus shapes festooned in hearts and crosses; classical figures with the faces of indian deities, The Christ with his hands crossed upon his chest in the Osiris mode smiling a smile as long as eternity itself. Beautiful windows, minutely segmented that changed

shade and colour like the delicacy of the colour mix upon a butterfly's wings. This construction was conceived of many different styles, a veritable living collage of the architect's collective mind, a stoney blueprint of the Gothic, Renaissance, Byzantine, Greek, Asiatic, Arabic, Indian, Chinese and African. Its walls were hung with fetishes, totems, symbols, charms, spells, prayers and lines of sacred script. Death masks of saints, popes and female popes, shamans, magicians, alchemists, reformers, puritans, philosophers and renegade priests all peered out, all heavy laden with this holy water. Books lined the lower external walls. A page of one flapped open towards me from out its covers. I could see that its pages were printed on hand made paper. There was merely an inverted triangle of text within getting smaller as it went down which read....."Just stand here and close your eyes and forget we ever met, for I am merely memory and the taste of it. In the morning which is now, I shall have never been, my love. I can sweep the memory of me away like dust upon a statue's finger and I shall no longer be there for you to remember, for I love you and love transcends the need for contact after union "And below this text a sepia printed photograph, just like the one I had seen so seemingly long ago in that dreary bookshop, me wrestling with the bookseller for that elusive volume. And now I grow weary with the weight of all this vision and am alone, my love has gone, descended to the outer world, wandering, never ageing, playing her allotted part in this web of chance meetings, knowing full well that there is no such thing as destiny as we know it, merely the shadow play of dying inevitability.



GRADED GRAINS MAKE FINER FLOUR

Michael Staley

This article was prompted by Gerald Gardner. He presented a friend with a copy of one of his books, and signed it with his magickal name and the title "4=7 O.T.O."

It is odd, to say the least, that someone who had been initiated into the O.T.O. by Crowley should have so confused the grades of two distinct magickal Orders. Crowley headed two Orders - the Astrum Argenteum (A A) and the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.). The grade 4=7 is clearly of the A A - that of Philosophus. The difference between the two Orders is primarily one of function.

The A A is concerned with the magickal and mystical attainment of the individual aspirant, and its training programme as given by Crowley in, for example, 'One Star in Sight' - reflects this. As envisaged by Crowley, the Order depended for its existence in the Outer on a catena or chain of experiences. Ideally, the aspirant knew only two people - the one being of the grade immediately above, and the other of the grade immediately below; progress to the next grade was dependent upon someone being at hand to assume the grade just vacated.

The O.T.O., on the other hand, is a body of initiates who are working for the establishment upon earth of the Law of Thelema - the Kingdom of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. It does not undertake the training of novices, and it is not a teaching Order. Its purpose is to transmit the 93 current, which proceeds from the heart of energy,

itself veiled by the image of Shaitan-Aiwaz 93 .

Before proceeding further with this comparison, we must consider the A A as existing on two levels - often referred to as the Outer and the Inner. The Outer refers to the manifestation of an Order in what we like to think of as the concrete world. This appearance proceeds from the Inner Planes, which is the origin of the current which powers any true Order. Unless an Order has this Inner planes contact, it is rootless and will ultimately perish - unless its members formulate such a link.

The A A is essentially a universal mystical Order, including everyone in its ranks, whether they realise it or not. This is why Crowley could refer to Madame Blavatsky as 8=3 (Magister Templi), or Sir Edward Kelley as 6=5 (Adeptus Major). These people had in all probability never heard of the A A , but would have been aware of the principle behind such an assessment. Such a ranking is sometimes referred to as the Great White Brotherhood, with its panoply of Secret Chiefs, Hidden Masters and the like - exalted Intelligences beyond the merely human, intervening in our affairs when considering it necessary.

It can be deduced from this that the current which powers the A A , and which proceeds from the Inner, is behind all Outer Orders of this sort. In Crowley's day the Order was reified or incarnated as a formal training Order, consisting of three divisions. The lower was the Golden

Dawn, which Crowley reformulated to bring it into line as a dependent Order within the A A .

Next there was the Rose Cross. Finally there was the Silver Star, which included the three exalted grades of Magister Templi, Magus, and Ipsissimus. Crowley carried out this rebuilding in 1906 and 1907 with the assistance of George Cecil Jones, who had introduced him to the Golden Dawn many years earlier. Through its grade structure it served to train the aspirant in various strands of magick and mysticism. Many of the training instructions were published by Crowley in *The Equinox*, and they form a body of training and instruction without parallel.

Crowley's interest in the O.T.O. was awakened in 1912 or thereabouts - the precise date is shrouded in mystery by Crowley's suggestion of a time warp having taken place. The exact origins of the O.T.O. have their own share of shrouding, but it seems to have emerged from the shadows of German fringe masonry around the turn of the century. There is an interesting paper by Ellic Howe on the comings and goings of Theodor Reuss, which attempts to shed some light on this period.

In the wake of the well-publicised legal action launched by Mathers, Crowley had been sent a multitude of honorary titles and dignities, one of them being from the O.T.O. He paid little attention to this at the time, until a visit from Theodor Reuss put the central secret of the Order in true perspective for him. Thereafter, and

working with the permission of Reuss, Crowley revised the rituals of the Order and made Thelema its focus. He began to see the O.T.O. as the principal instrument for the propagation of Thelema, a focus for individual adepts to harmonise their efforts.

During Crowley's day these two Orders operated side by side, but he always kept them distinct. The Blue Equinox, published in 1919, was subtitled the Official Organ of both Orders. Many people had membership of both, a further sign that they served different functions. It was not uncommon for someone to be of the Ninth Degree O.T.O. and still a Neophyte (1-10) of the A A - Frank Bennett, for instance.

Crowley appears to have initiated some people directly into the Ninth Degree O.T.O., but was keen to see orderly and thorough progress through the grades of the A A One effect of this was that many initiates used to spend years in one of the earlier grades, such as Neophyte, presumably because they were unable to pass the examination necessary for admittance into the next grade. A thorough and demonstrable mastery of the gradework would have been required. Whether or not the examinations were as rigorous as stated - mastery of asana, for instance, being gauged by the ability to balance a saucerful of water on the head for an hour, without spilling a drop - I do not know.

It is the three highest grades of the A A which have attracted the most attention over the years, and about which the most confusion exists. The whole of the Order was geared to individual attainment - the nurturing of adepts. The two lower divisions within the Order were preparatory to these grades which were held to lie beyond the Abyss. We are using a lot of jargon here, and this needs comment.

Any grading system can only be an approximation, and to that extent arbitrary. The grades of the A A

were mapped onto the sephiroth of the Tree of Life - not because the Tree is an eternal verity, but because it gives a convenient classification, a yardstick. Aspirants have attained for thousands of years without having the faintest idea of such terms as Magister Templi, Crossing the Abyss, and the like. The experience is the important thing, and is universal; the label, on the other hand, is arbitrary, and depends upon which tradition is being worked. These and similar initiations are not sudden, overnight affairs which can be conferred in the course of a contrived ceremony; on the contrary, they are protracted, demanding experiences, often taking years to run their course.

Initiation is the distillation or fruit of direct magickal and mystical experience, the course of which may be marked at various stages by ritual. However, the ceremony is here a marker or recognition of an experience, not something which causes the experience. Crowley's Crossing of the Abyss and rebirth as Magister Templi, for instance, was not regarded by him as being completed until 1909, when he worked The Vision and the Voice in the Algerian Desert with Victor Neuburg. Within this working the Abyss was crossed several times, the culmination of this initiation which had commenced in 1905. There are no examinations for these higher grades - they are self-conferred, but of course utterly meaningless without the initiatory experiences of which they are only the marker or badge.

It might seem, superficially, that there is much scope here for self-delusion and fraud. Grading can only be a very rough and ready way of assessment and categorisation. To that extent, it is arbitrary; however, what is important is the experience which it glyphs, and upon which it is the seal. We have the records of several who have traversed these remote regions. Much of Crowley's

initiation is well documented, although there are gaps. There are also partial descriptions of those of Achad, in Liber 31 (published by Level Press).

We also get glimpses, from his surviving essays and letters, of the voyages of Jack Parsons through some very demanding wastelands of the spirit. It is evident that these adepts were out on their own, with naught for guidance but their aspiration and their intuition. A flavour of Parsons' commitment is conveyed in the following, taken from a letter to Germer of 1949:

"At present I have entered magickal regions where there is no possibility of outside help or assistance. The oaths are taken, the bridges burned, and there is no possibility of turning back. I am cognisant of the dangers of my position, but hope that my wide acquaintance with physical and moral dangers in the past, and my total dedication to Nuit, will see me through."

And again in a letter to Marjorie Cameron a little later:

"If you only knew the ache to dissolve, to pass away, to go, to be one - to drink utterly of the cup men call death or madness - to be away, at rest, at peace. But I will endure. I will do what must be done, to the last moment of putrefying flesh, to the last pulsation of a dying brain. not for myself, not for you, but for the vision which I saw once - that is forever."

This brings us to the heart of the matter about grades, whether they be A A , O.T.O., or whatever. Some people are against hierarchy per se, and feel that grades are nothing more than an appeal to vanity - baubles and satraps, banana republics, a device for deceit and manipulation. Certainly, any system of categorisation is open to abuse and misunderstanding; however, to regard this as condemnation of all grade systems is to throw out the baby with the bath-

water. Essentially it is a means of progressing through a course of work or action in an orderly fashion, and is hence pragmatic only.

Grades are neither an indication of spiritual worth - whatever that might be - and neither do they represent some sort of occult caste system. Doubtless there will always be some people who see the grade as something desirable in its own right, an object of glamour. It would be tempting to give such people enough rope to hang themselves; then, their vanity in crescendo, they could be left to fester happily in some backwater, leaving the rest of us to get on with some work.

There is a danger of rigidity, of fossilisation; of keeping a specific system of degrees because of tradi-

tion and veneration. Orders change in their Outer manifestations, as do the rest of us nuggets of transient phenomena. An Order is not only a framework within which to operate, but also a repository of the experience of its initiates.

The O.T.O., for example, has been overhauled since Crowley's death, and will continue to evolve. The A A , when it is once again manifest in the Outer, may not necessarily have the same form as envisaged by Crowley. These Orders are powered by their Inner contacts, which are dynamic and radiant. It would be surprising, therefore, if an Order supposedly powered by the 93 current kept rigorously to its form of half a century ago or more. Magick is change, and magick is going.

I can, essentially, only speak from my own experience. I have been a member of an hierarchical magickal Order - the O.T.O. - for fifteen years. That might, I suppose, be construed as having a vested interest in the matter. However, in the course of those fifteen years I have been through a lot of magickal and mystical experience, and I feel grateful for the opportunity to avail myself of a framework within which to operate. I have a great deal of respect for those who stand apart from Orders, and prefer to work by their own light. The fact is that we all do this anyway, whether with in an Order or outsider; the endeavour is always to contact the fountain-head within, rather than remain reliant on any external authority, no matter how illustrious.

THE HORLA

Peter Redgrove

I sniffed at her neck; I saw a tall and mobile fountain,
A noble fountain splashing over silver.

Her scent preceded her entrance in a cluster of faces.

I kissed her hand, a face formed in my mind
And fitted like a mask on her face as I raised my head.

There is a spider that emits the perfume of a female moth
To catch the innocent silver night-flier.
This is not she.

Lunch at the butterfly-farm, each insect dressed
In all the clothes it has, over the beaky exoskeleton;
Wearing them like a rainbow, the pheromones.

After, the timber-abattoirs, full of wasps
Who love the tree-blood and sawdust,

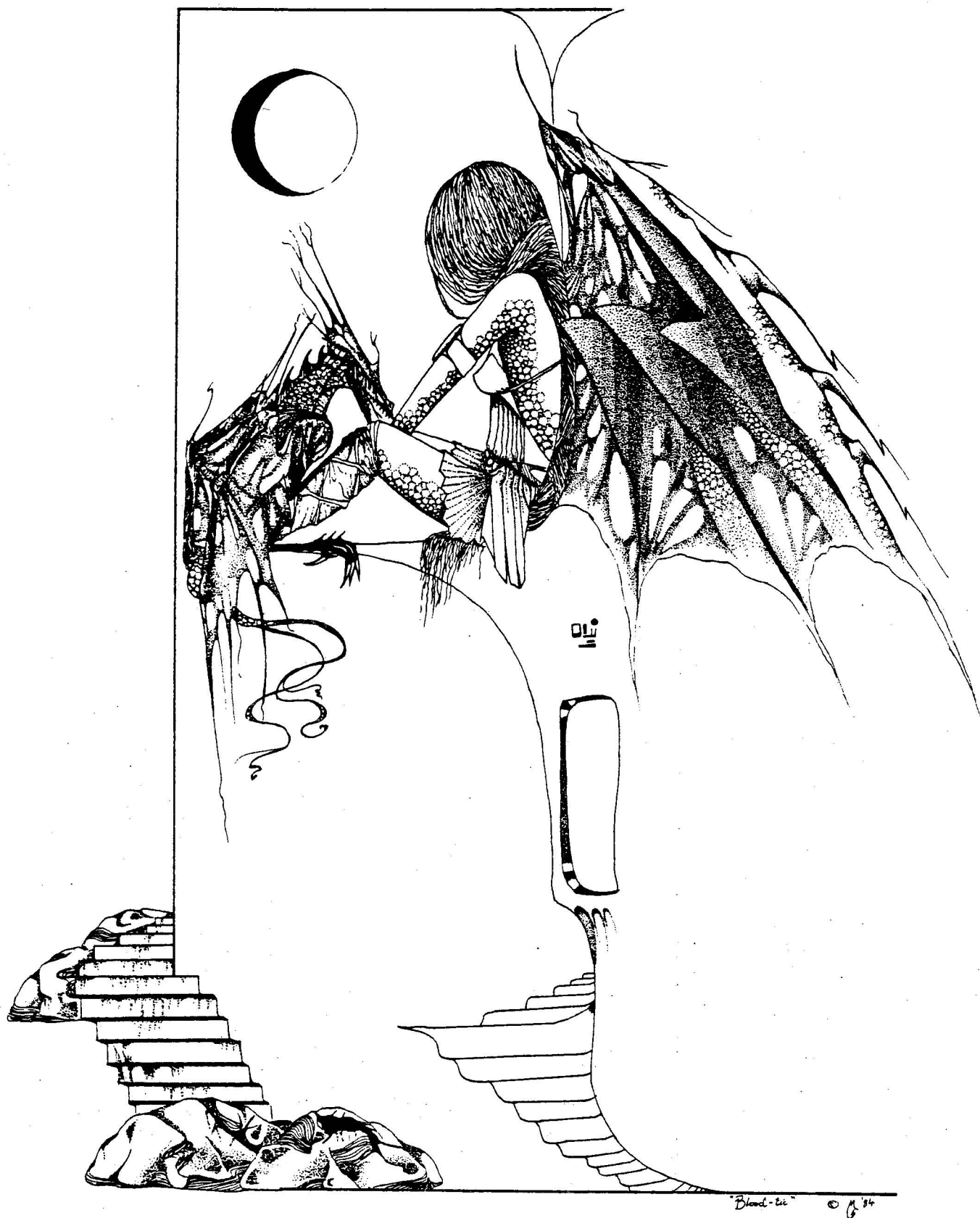
Who gather for their banquets after the killing-machines are shut down,
Who kneel to their feast in black and yellow masses.

In fifteen minutes the sheds are stripped of their green blood and dust.



BLOOD - TIC

by Miranda Gray



Victor Neuburg's "THE WATER BEARER"

Caroline Robertson

The word 'esoteric' implies something designed specifically for an initiate, and, in a sense *The Water Bearer* fits such a description. Yet although its author wrote for an initiate, he felt that in the New Age, of whose coming he was so sure, everyone would be an initiate. In this sense he wrote for everyone. The words of a song from Hair "This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius" came forty odd years after *The Water Bearer* was written for just such an event. In a note at the beginning of the book he wrote:

"Those who understand this book will probably agree with it, for there is nothing in it that is not entirely orthodox in the highest circles....Those who do not understand it will be justified in regarding it as a poem or as a satire; for it is both." He continued:

"The work is a contribution to the slight but growing literature of the New Age of Dionysus."

This growing literature is still flourishing, with New Age material appearing with increasing frequency, and exercising a fascination over a growing number of readers. Neuburg could hardly have imagined the growth in New Age Bookshops selling all kinds of material other than literature, and yet he was sure that the New Age was beginning. This kind of foresight was typical of the man.

The poet Victor Neuburg wrote *The Water Bearer* at, he said, 'a sitting' on the evening/morning of the

7/8 March 1924 - the night his son was born. The child, born at the birth of the Age of Aquarius for which the piece was named, and to whom the final part of the work was dedicated:

"The latter part of the book was written at lightning speed as though from dictation..."

Later in the same year, a publisher to whom the manuscript was sent, wrote:

"It is fascinating and original - but dare one publish such a venture?"

Apparently not, for it was never published. It exists now in typescript on yellowing paper, and will appear for the first time in *The Collected Works of Victor B. Neuburg* (forthcoming).

The complexities of a mind trained in classical scholarship, qabalah and ritual magic; attuned to poetry, mythology and history, and attracted to the potential of modern science brought to birth a complex and difficult work. The great wealth of references may for many modern readers be largely incomprehensible, but the result is certainly 'fascinating and original'.

The Water Bearer tells a tale of the creation of the universe and the writer's inner landscape. To one who knows something of his poetry and thinking this landscape is familiar, as there are many recurrent images and themes: the concept of universal goddess, the idea of a single creation whose parts are important only as a part of that oneness of which he was convinced. The universality of gods and goddesses of whatever religion

might take humanity's fancy is stressed often, and the love of a living earth is fundamental to his work. This work, however, is different from the poetry, in that it brings together such images for the first time: thus the goddess who haunts so much of his work is found here, with other gods and goddesses. Pan, a favourite deity of his, appear here, with a host of Egyptian, Persian and other divine beings. It becomes clear when the reader experiences this amalgam, that the work reflects the poet's philosophy of the unitary nature of creation: that the separate myths, ideas, creations and beliefs of mankind were in fact one, and that they came from One and to One would return.

Although simply expressed, it is a view which may be familiar to some in Buddhist terms. Neuburg, was not, however, a Buddhist. He had no religion in the conventional sense of the word, and his philosophy of 'oneness' comes less from a religious tradition than from his training in magic and qabalah and his knowledge of mythology. Thus, when one reads 'The Eye' as a chapter title in part one, this 'Eye' could be the Eye of Horus, or the 'Eye' which Neuburg privately referred to as 'I'. It is hard to be certain, but throughout the work he refers to 'One' or 'I' or 'Eye' as being interchangeable. Horus was the son, or, in some legends, the husband, of Hathor, whose eyes were the Sun and Moon and whose gift to men was the arts.

The book is divided into three parts, described as follows: Part One

is 'a sketch of the world today'; Part Two is 'an account of its evolution' and the third part is 'mainly autobiographical and critical'. There are several autobiographical elements in the work, some intentional and some not, but these refer to his earthly being. The reference to 'autobiography' that he makes in his description of Part Three, is in fact to his spiritual life, and his existence in many incarnations.

Part One is entitled *The Jew's Tale* and it is divided into twelve short chapters, with curious titles, some of whose meanings are related to the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. How, otherwise, is one to explain such titles as 'The Back of the Head' (Qoph) or 'The Camel' (Gimel) Some of the titles are less difficult, 'The Door' (Daleth) and 'The House' (Beth) clearly have a meaning on both the material and the spiritual level, whilst 'The Eye' (Ayin) as we have seen, has a distinct meaning for the writer. One key to understanding such plays on words as 'Eye' and 'I' is to be found in the copy of *The Tree of Life* which its author, Israel Regardie, sent to Neuburg in the thirties. In the margins of this work, Neuburg wrote many comments, and a number of these show very precisely what he meant by such puns.

Some of the poet's own work is also a key. In *Songs of the Groves*, for example, published in 1921 by The Vine Press, he wrote a short piece called *The Garden of Pythagoras* which is written in the same mystic vein and with a number of the mystical elements to be found in *The Water Bearer*.

The work begins with a clear statement about the evolution of the world:

"It was no chance that drew together these flames; away over the mountains there yet lies the void: and therein, although the heart may be consumed there is a Reason for the

gigantic images that refract the light of times past. For all life is a mirror of what was, and of what will be...."

The house of the Ox (related to Aleph, the first letter), is the starting point, a "settled way...set conveniently for passing to and back from the Central Pillar". The poet, writing this work, felt that he was in fact being used as a scribe for some being that was working through him. At the beginning of chapter four this entity declares:

"O delicate my Masters! For forty years have I not known such a scribe!"

There is an interesting comment on the nature of divinity later in the same chapter:

"Lord! How I run on! They call me the garrulous god; and until now I never knew why. But being reflected in a man's brain, why! I understand! Know this, Children; were there no men there'd be no gods. For we depend upon men for a living, we who live on air!"

"All gods reside in the human breast" said a man; "that's why gods made man, for they doubted until then their own immortality; in the New Age we'll mingle again with men; and beget the mighty ones...."

Again, four chapters later, he indicates that more than one entity was involved in the work:

"Hasten, then, O my Scribe; for soon another shall guide the pen."

Throughout the work, the poet is surprisingly optimistic about the future of the 'little green star' as he referred to the planet Earth. 'Surprising', because Neuburg was not by nature an optimist. There was a dualism in his nature, which was at different times, both brake and spur to his creativity.

At the end of chapter twelve in Part One:

"I would not hark back to that Royal Age of the magi for all its glory of splendour, for mightier things are about to befall the children of the Green Star. And remember, O my

Scribe, it was no chance that drew together these flames."

In Part Two, *The World*, Neuburg took the ages of evolution, and equated them with the houses of the zodiac.

His notes in *Regardie's Tree of life* make clear that he believed that the zodiac was in fact man himself - that is, that all aspects of the astrological pattern met in Humankind, as a whole, and in individuals as well.

Interestingly he took the signs in reverse order to the way in which they generally appear in papers and magazines, so that 'The Fishes' (Pisces), came first, and 'The Ram' (Aries) came last.

It is instructive to bear in mind the Gaia theory when looking at this part of the book, for although Neuburg's language is not scientific, but an odd mixture of vernacular and archaic, the theory of the Earth as a living entity which he puts forward is remarkably similar to that put forward by Lovelock and his peers, in *The Gaia Hypothesis* amongst other books.

Lovelock's theory of the Earth as a living organism is of great interest to the New Age movement, giving some scientific credibility to what could be otherwise called a rather amorphous collection of ideas.

Chapter One, then, 'The Fishes' is the sign which looks....

"...far, far back in the Ages when first was formed that planet whereon we dwell...(and it)...was twinned by Venus and Neptune."

Chapter Two, 'The Water Bearer' (Aquarius), was the age which saw the coming of vegetation:

"the first heresy of change."

The idea of change as heresy is deep rooted enough in the psyche of humankind to need no further comment! Each god brought certain gifts to help the changes and Diana, 'a green haired nereid is at the heart of the Green World'.

Diana was for Neuburg just one personification of Nature - the Earth goddess, the archetypal goddess in fact, who appeared also as Isis/Venus/Astarte, Gaia herself perhaps, and almost certainly the woman haunted much of his verse. She appears explicitly in a poem called *The Green Ladie*, and here he placed her firmly in the centre of the world's creation.

Pan appears in chapter 3, when the sign of the goat, Capricorn, brought to earth:

"the whole gamut scheme of division and re-writing that comes by the gifts of the Goat, the Horned one...[the] disuniter...joiner the poet's propensity for playing with words is manifest.

Sagittarius, The Archer, of chapter 4, is :

"Ganymede, the Imp of Ecstasy, the bearer of the Water of life..."

The chapter contains an interesting comment on religion in general:

"Be it told now: every religion of earth is but a sect: a cutting off of man from man; and the destruction of creeds shall be the destruction of fear and hatred and shame..."

Each chapter describes some aspect of the evolution of man and the universe, although the derivation from the zodiac sign is not always clear. In Scorpio, for example, in chapter 5:

"the twin curses of Faith and Reason came upon the world and desolated it..."

The loss of man's innate spirituality and the resultant disunity brought unity: the ultimate paradox of life coming from death, which is found in almost every faith:

"The One became many and the many sought after the One...[faith and reason]...are at feud; but from their union shall proceed a third who shall heal, and reconcile, and make whole all upon the Great Sea whereupon is cast all life..."

The poet was convinced that organised religion had destroyed or warped man's original destiny. By 'organised religion' he clearly meant the Judaeo-Christian creeds, and chapter 6, *The Scales (Libra)*, he is very specific about this:

"...the ideals of those who call themselves the Chosen are falling to decay and death. The Jews' creed and those therefrom derived...denied the True Word..."

The 'True Word' was that of Nature, and the world of other, more naturally derived divinities which were closer to man's original state.

Enough has been said here to indicate the nature of this part of the book, but something must be said of the final chapter, 12, *The Ram (Aries)*. For with this chapter, the tale of the earth's, and man's evolution comes full circle:

"We are upon the Age that is about to dawn...And lo! we are back; laughing beneath the beams of the great golden Sun whereof our tale first told."

Part 3, is 'mainly autobiographical' although the fragments of autobiography are in fact difficult to disentangle. The section begins with a 'poem' which sets the mood:

*"The old time lies over me...
And in my brain there lingers the
olden memory."*

This is reminiscent of another poem of his which forms the prologue to his *Swift Wings*:

*"All my songs were heard before
All my songs were sung,
Here beside a Southern shore,
But in an alien tongue."*

In chapter 1, 'The Promise' the poet declared that he had promised himself for more than thirty years that he would æwrite of these things.

Since he was at the time of writing, forty-one, the promise had been made when he was eleven, or younger. He went on to equate the 'birth' of this book with the imminent birth of his son. Throughout part 3, he writes of the great age of his soul: a realisation which came in childhood, when, seeing the streets he saw:

"the quarried stone ere it was quarried..."

He recalled other incarnations, images and ideas, tumbled together on the pages. This third part of the book takes the reader on an extremely intimate journey, deep into the soul and psyche of one convinced he had lived before, and who felt, like John Donne, that he was intimately connected with all of creation. The idea that 'no man is an island entire of itself...' was very important in his philosophy.

The Water Bearer then, is complex, and difficult, and its interest lies not only in what it can tell the reader about the man who wrote it, but also in the fusion of mythologies and ideas. In keeping with New Age literature, it is a spiritual guide of sorts. Duality is a constant theme, Neuburg indicating that the Moon and the Sun are different parts of the whole, the polarity being of vital importance.

"The Sun is the constant, the Moon the variable."

Throughout, he equates Thoth with Hermes, indeed throughout the work he makes clear that it is not names that matter but the essence, with gods and goddesses being interchangeable. Thoth, for example, was the Egyptian god of writing, he was also a moon god and magician, and the deity of time, officiating at the judgement of the dead. Hermes, messenger of the gods, became the conductor of souls to the underworld, and interestingly was the patron of thieves. The equation is clear enough, both gods had to do with the dead, and with communication.

Dionysus is another example of the poet's expression of such ideas. In the chapter entitled *The Brain*, he describes how creation requires what he calls Ecstasy. The dictionary definition of this word is:

"a state of mental exaltation, prophetic or poetic frenzy, a trance."

And such Ecstasy should be 'born in calm and nature' according to *The Water Bearer*. Life was seen by Neuburg as an Ecstasy, and again the poet returned to gods and goddesses: the moon is instinct, the sun is mind. Dionysus was:

"The male spring god, Lord of the inner esoteric vibre that causes the seasons...[and] the maddening one, the disturber...the Transcendence by Pain is the gift of Dionysus whose passive worshippers are the old Lords of the Phantasy of Misruling."

Dionysus was thus the author of the New Age, equated with Aquarius, carrier of water, the bringer of life:

"So too is the Bearer of the Water akin to the Bearer of Blood."

The same attributes might be given to Pan whose Panic revels were notorious in the ancient world, and whose embrace also was the gift of Transcendence by Pain. Such an idea is found also in the Christian resurrection, and in mystery religions in general with their idea of sacrifice giving life.

The notion of unity at the heart of all creation is an important part of occult thinking, and of some religious teaching. The One is the longed for attainment, and thus, Neuburg can write:

"To one who has glimpsed for an instant the utterly distant...Nought wherein all IS and evolves, the wranglings and disputes of philosophy and theology have only an academic and casual interest..."

Neuburg felt that he had glimpsed this Nought, which he called in Qabalistic terms the Ain Soph or One.

Qabalism is an ancient Hebrew philosophy deeply concerned with what Israel Regardie called

"a primeval substance-principle which some have called God - the Absolute."

Thus, in *The Water Bearer*, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Hebrew elements mingle together. The separate cultures that formed the different mythologies and theologies cease to matter. The Judaeo-Christian tradition is herein credited with little but destruction, and the poet celebrates the essential unity of creation, and the circular nature of evolution.

There is no other way of 'summing-up' this work, than to say that it is extraordinary. It has much to offer to New Age philosophy and to those who would be Children of the New Age. Written before the modern concept of the New Age philosophy with all its implications for the way we live, it is a modern and holistic approach to the physical and spiritual planes of existence.



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BOOK REVIEWS

Steve Wilson

When an outsider attempts to understand an alien culture, many things can happen. An academic will try dry analytical techniques from outside the circle, so to speak, while the anthropologist will move into the circle, experience, but then move outside again in order to write a report. With the converted however, results can be mixed.

Paul Brunton spent much of the first half of this century moving amongst the yogis and mystics of the east. He had personal mystical experience to guide him, which is perhaps why his understanding of meditation, and his astounding experiences with Indian gurus, never blinded him to the human side of those he was dealing with.

Now, nine years after his death Crucible have published PAUL BRUNTON: ESSENTIAL READINGS, price £7.99, selected and edited by Joscelyn Goodwin. While the clarity of Brunton's thought shines throughout, it seems that he had several phases of expression, moving from an eastern, through a personal (the Overmind) to a Christian framework. These, though, are only reference points. I do not agree with everything he says, but he is an unjustly neglected author.

He has his followers yet, but perhaps it would have been better if a relative outsider had made this selection, though the editing is excellent. I feel that there is a bit missing, there is nothing from *The Secret Science Beyond Yoga* for example, but anything that reminds

people that, to paraphrase, the fact that someone has had a mystical experience does not mean that they are always right, is worth publication.

Reshad Feild is a case in point. In the Element Book THE ALCHEMY OF THE HEART, price £7.99, we learn that Feild has made a similar journey to that of Brunton. Feild, however had wedded himself firmly to Islam, and while he does not stress this, like a lot of western converts he sneaks it in.

I agree with him that people who waffle on about their previous lives are bores, avoiding experience in the now, but that does not disprove the theory of reincarnation. Feild implies that it does.

As the work of a Sufi Master it is as best mediocre, though never unintelligent, and if Feild does not claim to be a master perhaps his time would be better spent continuing his inner work rather than writing what is now his eighth book and running schools in human transformation.

Perhaps to make up for this Element have got a real Sufi, not a master but at least a Muslim and proud of it, to write THE ELEMENTS OF SUFISM, price £4.99 (as are the others reviewed below). Shaykh Fadhalla Haeri gives a brief but comprehensive guide that lives up to the Elements Of title, as do the rest of this quarters publications in the series, a particularly good bunch this time round in fact.

The Shaykh rather overstresses the Shi'ite bias in Sufism, and when

revealing that the Naqshbandi order are in fact Sunni, ignores this and carries on. Nevertheless surely the best introduction to Sufism available.

To get back to the outsiders, Paul Crompton must be one of Britain's first converts to Tai Chi. I remember him being rather dogmatic in the early Seventies, but he has shed this and produced a marvellously common sense guide to the art. I recommend his ELEMENTS OF TAI CHI to anyone interested in the Internal School of Martial Arts, particularly their history. The difficulties in unravelling this makes working out who the True O.T.O are seem a kindergarten exercise.

In the case of ELEMENTS OF PSYCHOSYNTHESIS, Will Parfitt has become an insider in the worlds of both Therapy and Magic, and I find the blend intensely annoying, perhaps because I find it so bland. Now, however, it is clear why. Will has brought a discipline to a discipline. In trying to make the Tree of Life a tool for growth he has perhaps found a personal answer to a pressing question revealed in this excellent book: what can an advanced system of spiritual development do without a religion to work in?

However, Magic is not a religion, it is a series of techniques with a different goal. Will shows here the dynamism of Psychosynthesis, and I find it revealing that mixing it with Magic devalues both. Perhaps Pagans should use them side by side, as separate tools.

THE ELEMENTS OF DREAMWORK brings us to a different type of outsider. Strehon Kaplan-Williams began working with the dream techniques of the Senoi, a remote pacific tribe, and produced The Dreamwork Manual a decade ago. I found it then and find it now an invaluable tool. Strehon has developed in a different direction and I strongly disagree with some statements, particularly about Lucid Dreaming, but appreciate his position. This really does act as a manual, it has 62 headings, explained with examples, and if you understand the heading you can skip the rest, enabling you to pick out what you need. He gives the major methods of dreamwork at the end.

Lest I give the impression that only Element are producing good stuff, two more outsiders have produced valuable books well worth reading. Nigel Pennick is an outsider to his subject, MAZES AND LABYRINTHS, published by Hale in hardback at £16.95, in time rather than spirit. He is certainly the best Earth Mysteries researcher around, and this work gives a meticulous guide to the maze, from its origins as a magical tool, through its 'puzzle maze' phase familiar to us at Hampton Court, to the modern revival, in which he has played a major part. I would go into further detail but must save what space I have left for:

THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK ON PAGAN MYTHOLOGY THAT I HAVE READ SINCE I BECAME A PAGAN

I am not given to praising books unduly, and if my usual acid is lacking this issue it is because, presumably, my editor has been kind in her selection, but this was a profound shock by any measure. ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, published by Gothic Image at £14.95 is the most revealing, unsettling work I could have imagined. I have become used to feminist works attempting to find

Goddesses everywhere, to the detriment of the Gods, and naively assumed that this was to be 'another one of those'.

By page 30 my religious view had changed profoundly. Have you ever wondered why the East European and Japanese Pagan pantheons are so neglected by 'Our Author', be they Jung or Sjoo? I hadn't. I had always been aware that there have been Solar Goddesses and Moon Gods, but it becomes clear that there has been:

a) A 19th Century conspiracy by mythologists to make all Goddesses Lunar or terrestrial and all Gods/Heroes Solar, when the opposite is far more common (though by no means exclusively so) by mis-translation or leaving out 'She' or 'Her' completely, and

b) A 20th Century male conspiracy to continue this lie and:

c) Complete acquiescence by the most famous feminist authors on paganism, including further deliberate mis-translation and worse.

The demolition job done on M.Esther Harding, to say nothing of her lesser acolytes, is thorough. So well has this book been researched, so convincing is its conclusion, that in certain 'Feminist' circles a whispering campaign has begun against the author, who has presumably converted to Christianity, as the tale goes, since she wrote the introduction in July this year.

What she has done is to show how denial of 'Male Logic' in favour of 'Feminine Intuition' is merely continuing a 19th Century slander against women, reinforced by Jung and gleefully followed by small people who take the attitude 'logic and facts don't matter, I am a woman and therefore what I say is true'. Had this book been written by a man it would have been easier to denigrate, instead it seems that smears and innuendos are all that is left. The author has become a true outsider. Buy this book, Pagans, Mystics, Mythogra-

phers and Magicians, buy it while you can, before it becomes the Satanic Verses of the Womens Mysteries movement.

ALEISTER CROWLEY

The Forbidden Lecture of Gilles de Rais

Mandrake Press Ltd., hbk £12.95

Reviewed by Gerald Suster

Why bother with publishing the minor work of Aleister Crowley? Isn't it merely of interest to connoisseurs of the curious and unusual? Is there anything in his minor key which could evoke interest among the intelligent?

These questions are raised by the republication of THE FORBIDDEN LECTURE. Aleister Crowley was invited by Arthur Calder Marshall, a committee member of the Oxford University Poetry Society, to give a lecture. Crowley agreed -and proposed the topic of Gilles de Rais, who inspired the Bluebeard legend. This was accepted by the Poetry Society. Unfortunately, Father Ronald Knox, the University's Catholic Chaplain, was outraged by the possibility of freedom of speech and sent unofficial word that if the lecture went ahead, the students involved might well be sent down. Although there was no official ban at all, Father Knox nevertheless succeeded in prohibiting the lecture through dishonest intimidation.

This suppression and censorship was obviously yet one more disgusting disgrace in the despicable history of the murderous and torturing Roman Catholic Church. It is well documented: children were tortured in the dungeons of Christians. Again and again and again. Given the Rochdale 'satanic abuse' case, one can only exhort the interested reader to turn to The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology by Russell Hope Rob-

bins, Fellow of the Royal College of Literature, to see for oneself just how vile and foul Christians can be.

What do we find in this publication? A good cover, quality of binding, paper and print; an absolutely first-class introduction by Keith Richmond, from whom I hope we will hear more; and a banned lecture by good old Uncle Aleister. Was he on form for the day?

I had always thought that Gilles de Rais was a totally disgusting individual who murdered children in some ludicrous quest for alchemical knowledge. The reading of Crowley's lecture has made me reconsider the matter.

Figures vary: Crowley states that Gilles de Rais was accused of murdering 800 children; according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the figure is 142. Even so, it seems to be a very large number.

Even if the figure was 142, it seems preposterously unlikely. As Crowley points out, peasants love their children and would have made a fuss if even one disappeared. Also, the Church loathed the pursuit of knowledge. Moreover, Gilles de Rais, appointed Marshal of France, the man who fought by the side of Joan of Arc, was accused of precisely the same crimes as her by the very same accusers. Coincidence?

Joan of Arc has been canonised: not much use to her in those agonizing moments when the Church burned her flesh to death. Gilles de Rais has been execrated.

What Crowley is asking is: is it not possible that this man was also a victimised innocent?

Shakespeare, always reflecting the climate of his time, portrayed Joan of Arc in King Henry VI as an evil sorceress. Yet today she is portrayed, even by the Church which burned her flesh and bones to a death more painful than you or I can conceivably imagine, as a saint.

Could this not also be true of that

grand warrior and her companion, Gilles de Rais?

If Gilles de Rais had harmed just one hair of merely one child, this writer would be the first to condemn him.

Of course, and at that time - and now - the Church hated warriors, intellectuals, free thinkers and women of achievement. It tortured, murdered, killed and lied, making the Gestapo look holy by comparison.

Crowley's contention is that the Church burned Gilles de Rais as it burned Joan of Arc for the same reasons: they were doing important work to liberate people. Also, they wanted de Rais' vast wealth and property holdings.

The Mandrake Press should be warmly congratulated, therefore, on bringing out a splendid production of a most thought-provoking work. Certainly it has made me embark on a more thorough investigation into the case of Gilles de Rais, which was once again suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church at Oxford in the 1930's. Bad habits and even worse manners persist.

There is just one key question which a Catholic might ask. Didn't Gilles de Rais confess freely to these disgusting atrocities?

No, he didn't actually. At his trial he pleaded Not Guilty. Encyclopedia Britannica's article queries the legal procedures. Why, then, did he confess? Simple.

The Church threatened him - see Britannica - with the disgusting and despicable debasement, degradation and the pleasures of pulling out finger-nails, cracking bones on the rack and crunching thumbs as it gave to every dissident who pursued knowledge and wisdom and who got caught for it.

Thanks, Uncle Aleister, for pointing out this matter to us with your usual sparkle, and consequently inviting further research.

Thanks too: to Mandrake Books and Keith Richmond.

CHESCA POTTER & JOHN MATTHEWS

The Aquarian Guide to Legendary London

Aquarian Press, pbk £7.99

Illustrated by Chesca Potter

Reviewed by Andrew Rooke

This is the only book that explores the legends, folklore and mythology of our magical capital. The treasure trove of contents includes a discussion on William Blake's Socialistic vision of the fourfold City, Nigel Pennick on the mysteries of the Templars in London, Alfred Watkins' London Leylines, and Rob Stephenson on the rich traditions of the city. Other essays cover Bran's head as a Palladium of Britain; a confusing chapter on Merlin, and a rather jingoistic piece on St Mary le Bow.

The most outstanding contributions are: Goddesses of London by Caroline Wise, which offers powerful and useful visualization techniques for contacting these deities, to revitalize oneself and the city; Chesca Potter's Mythology of London, which puts it into context, and Carol Lewis' Witchcraft and Magic before 1736, an enjoyable, surprising and fact-filled piece.

The book is marred by a grotesque three page 'meditation' which must have poor William Blake turning in his grave. A lot of areas of London and its Environs are not covered, but the subject matter is so interesting, and the Gazetteer so useful, that another volume would be worthwhile.

The book reminds me of the pioneering work the likes of Alan Cleaver, John Merron, Caroline Wise, Andy Collins and ASSAP (The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena) and I feel that the idea for Legendary London manifested from their Project Albion

booklets. It was certainly Project Albion and Psychic Questing that started people looking beneath legends and folktales rather than just reciting them. It is also this type of research that has emphasised the importance of place in magic. usually this is totally neglected by magicians and witches, or abused when they go off to any stone circle or hill figure for one of their seasonal rituals with no regard for that site's aspect.

Legendary London is a terrific book. Recommended.

Exercise for contacting Diana from Legendary London:-

Sit peacefully in St Paul's Cathedral and visualize a tall brown-skinned lady dressed in skins and bearing antlers on her head. She is standing on the high altar and her powerful presence fills the cold oppressive building. Two hounds sit on either side of the altar, looking up at her. She raises a bow high, and shoots an arrow of light through the dome, sending a shower of silver sparks over the city, thus reclaiming her lands and continuing her protective role.

JOHN MICHELL

New Light on the Ancient Mystery of Glastonbury Gothic Image, pbk £9.95

Reviewed by Andrew Collins

Interest in the mysteries of Glastonbury is growing, yet there is no readily available or easily accessible pulp paperback or coffee table compilation currently in your local bookstore.

With this in mind, I assumed that with New Light, Gothic Image were attempting to capture this potential market with a pot-boiler by the visionary John Michell. If this was so, then the author of such modern day masterpieces on landscape enigmas as The View over Atlantis and City

of Revelation could not have adhered to the commissioning brief. Despite a very uncommercial and unappealing cover, this is a revelatory and inspiring book on Glastonbury's ancient riddles.

It begins with an objective summary of Glastonbury's prehistory and pagan society angled from such Michellesque themes as world centres and twelvefold Utopian societies. He also outlines the concept that there were once seven sacred islands in the vicinity with chapels which housed ascetic hermit monks who were attached to the abbey. The perhaps simple fact is also pointed out: that the islands are arranged in a configuration which closely resembles the seven stars of Ursa Major.

Sadly, in contrast, Michell has little to say about Glastonbury's other stellar mystery - Katherine Maltwood's major re-discovery of the zodiac, which is of tantamount importance in understanding the later Christian sanctity of the town and its environs.

Part two takes the reader through the obvious material on Joseph of Arimathea's and even Jesus' possible visit to the area. This is backed up by a review of all the legends, folklore and traditions from as far away as Cornwall.

Stage by stage the early Christian foundation at Glastonbury is pieced together from historical sources such as William of Malmsbury. It is concise, simple and to the point and leaves out the Abbey's post-Conquest History. If the book had ended here, it would have been mainly a rehash of old material. But Michell then races the reader through the last few chapters to a dramatic end, summarizing the public work of Frederick Bligh Bond at the Abbey during the 1910's; his communications with the long dead monks with the aid of John Alan Bartlett, and his use of the psychic information to uncover hidden archaeological features.

Bond was dismissed from his post

as director of excavations, and disgraced, his accurate psychic work tragically caused the end of his active architectural career.

For the rest of his life, Bond was obsessed with the Geometry behind the Glastonbury Mysteries and knew he was on the brink of a major breakthrough on the original sanctity of the foundation of Glastonbury. He failed and died an unhappy man. In a few simple moves as is customary for the rediscoverer of the St. Michael's Line, The Circle of Perpetual Choirs (the subject of a book currently in preparation from leading Earth Mysteries investigator John Merron) and Glastonbury's Vesica Piscis town geometry, Michell reassesses Bligh Bond's work, both archaeologically and geometrically, and solves the lot!

Bligh Bond would be kicking himself if he was still alive.

MARGARET D'AMBROSIO

Meggie's Journey

Polygon, Pbk

Reviewed by Sheila Brown

An interesting and readable book which tells the story of Meggie and her magical journeys at the four fire festivals, in which she gains four gifts from the Sidhe which awaken her magical powers.

This book works on different levels. A fast and pacy book in the sense that the magical journeys are set in one year of human time, one gets the sense that time is also irrelevant in this sense, and that the story is of a journey across time and space. It provides an introduction to the symbology of the Western Tradition and is told rather like a children's story.

I thought it would make for good serialisation on television, in much the same way as The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis has been done, but preferably produced

more after the fashion of *The Labyrinth* by David Bowie. The book is extremely visual.

BRANDY WILLIAMS

Ecstatic Ritual

Prism/Unity, pbk £6.95

Reviewed by Gavin Semple

One of the worst aspects of the 'New Age' movement is the proliferation of books such as this, which pour out of America like worms teeming from the belly of a corpse. Suddenly there is a range of publishers, with logos of a rainbow, whale or some such thing, who will chuck out any old tat - plagiarised from other sources and thoroughly diluted - for the crystal festooned ones to keep on a shelf between *The Psychic Power of Minnows* and *Cover-up: the secret CIA plot to assassinate Lobsang Rampa*. I suppose with this one they'll even feel that they've got their hand on something serious, perhaps even risqué, after all the candle magic and plinking relaxation music.

Subtitled *Practical Sex Magic*, this book in fact consists of a short course of sexual therapy, followed by a few tips on bhakti yoga. The devotee, termed here a 'Hetaera', is assumed to be a complete sexual and psychological cripple, and is consequently instructed in how to make such magical affirmations as "I know what I like", "I am whole", "My body is beautiful", "I can change my world"; to look at their genitals in a mirror for the first time and so on. An attitude of vacant eyed, smiling apology seems to be the basic weapon of the Hetaera as he impresses his mighty Will upon the universe: listen to this one, an affirmation to be repeated during sessions of solitary pleasure - "I love myself. I am filled with peace. I am an effective business person (now there's a clue...)/ musician / communicator / therapist etc. I express my anger out loud, calmly, and effectively. I acknowledge and appreciate

my own beauty and the beauty around me". Had enough? Pass my Uzi over would you? In the second section of the book advice is given on how to cultivate and direct sexual energy, dedicating it to deities such as Aphrodite and Dionysus. The prayers suggested are feeble, unpoetic and badly written: I can't think of any deities who would put up with such pitiful mewling, least of all Dionysus, who would probably shuffle off in search of some lusty Maenads and a bit of blood.

The book arrives with a typical fantasy-style cover picture to entice the unprotected reader, but once inside the standard of illustration falls dramatically. There are several ropy drawings by the authors friends (cheaper I suppose) including a frog-faced man in the posture characteristic of safari park baboons, and one which is either a copulating couple radiating lines of energy, or an exposition of nude trigonometry.

The text is written in American, with all the horrors of spelling and syntax which this implies, and exhibits the primary diagnostic evidence of New Age syndrome - instant jargon: those laboured buzzwords tacked together with a hyphen to create a glamour of pseudo-scientific legitimacy. I know it's just my negative, hostile mind-set at work, but I simply do not want to become 'centered' in a 'shared trust-space', I just don't, that's all. The author's tone is permanently wide-eyed and patronising - the reader begins to feel like a recalcitrant potty trainee.

It is briefly mentioned that sex magic can be used to make desired realities manifest ("Do you need an income or a better place to live?"), but this is quickly passed over. Not a word about possession by wer-animals, nor how to send loathsome terata into your enemies' dreams, furred and fanged, with tentacles akimbo.

Instead of the promised practical

sex magic, what we get for our seven pounds is basically an airport newsstand version of Douglas and Slinger's *Sexual Secrets*; utterly limp and bloodless.

GARETH ROSE

Sexstasy: From Sex Magic to Magical Sex

Sirius Publishing, pbk £3.00

Reviewed by Frater Venusius 49

Unpretentiously written, this brief survey will be a useful introduction to the field of tantric sex for those without any previous acquaintance. Since it draws on the discoveries of Wilhelm Reich, and relates the de-blocking of muscular armour to tantric procedures, its utility to the novice is increased. It also relates the physiology of the brain and nervous system to Hindu ideas such as the ida, pingala and sushumna currents, in an incomplete fashion, but I think it would stimulate the reader to evolve their own comparisons of different paradigms.

It retells the story of Aleister Crowley and the secret of the IXo of the O.T.O., but there again it seems to be aimed at the beginner and it is not that common to find people willing to produce a useful, pithy, non-bombastic compendium for the fresh inquirer. Any honest attempt to do so merits praise.

Following a useful presentation of background information, the treatment of a first approach to Tantric lovemaking is reassuring and free from the brandishing of would-be expertise to bewilder and bother the novice. It is friendly and relaxing. The emphasis on love and joy is a salutary balance to the exposition of the basic technical side of things. Delight, worship and wonderful recognition are, after all, the heart of the experience. As to the recommended use of a favourite scent, perhaps it should not be overdone. A mixture

of flowers is appropriate but should not overwhelm the natural fragrance of the body of the beloved, for in tantra we approach the purity of open flowers. Short, but sweet. Recommended.

ROBERT
The Divine Struggle
Nemeton Publications, pbk £6.99
Reviewed by Frances Hopkirk

Robert is a Gardnerian Witch and was a member of Gerald Gardner's coven in the 50s. He is a long time member of the Fellowship of Isis and The Church of All Worlds. As this book shows superbly, as her priest, he experiences the ecstasy of the Goddess in the way only a man can - as her lover.

After initiation into Wicca, Robert was pondering why such a loving and joyful religion should be so viciously persecuted. The answer came in a 'brainstorm' "The Judaeo-Christian God and the Pagan Goddess are two cosmic powers, neither of which are 'bad', locked in an Eternal dialectical struggle which has caused the Evolution of Life on Earth as we know it." The idea for this book was born, and through Her priest the Female force tells of this struggle from Creation to the twentieth century.

Robert feels the I AM and the Mother-of-All in this story are similar to Hadit and Nuit, and that he has been inspired by the cosmic powers which inspired Crowley.

The Goddesses' history of humankind is refreshing and the final chapter 'Survival' is pure joy and common sense, discussing sexual relationships ('sexual intimacy sacred to Me') and rites of passage, which in a society free of the sick and dangerous notion of original sin would lead to a wonderfully harmonic world.

The Divine Struggle is a breath of fresh air amongst the Goddess

Garbage spewed from the mouths of the Women's Mysteries harpies and the feeble pap churned out by the factories of the 'professional pagans'.

ROGER WILLIAMSON
The Sun at Night
The Vann Press, pbk \$6.95 +
\$1 p&p
Reviewed by Frater Venusius 49

This book as a (barely?) fictionalized account of a contemporary young magician's discoveries and development - his journey towards and experiences within a vigorous Order with Golden Dawnish trappings. It postulates a Lucifer who is a lightbringer vilified by the Christians, a thesis in which analogically the 'rebel' Cain also figures as a hero. The idea of separation being the price of individual conscious knowledge and the metaphor of the apparent 'rebellion' in the process of the development of knowledge and skill are not in themselves concepts with which I have any quarrel, the metaphor of Adam is bound to intensify in Cain.

But I have little patience with facile criticisms of Christianity which seize upon its most exoteric politics-and-media forms. One may as well base criticism of astrology on a scanning of the horoscope columns of one of the grosser tabloids. Every belief system accommodates a level of fundamental stupidity.

From the outset this book feels like an autobiography. One experiences no shifts of perspective between reader and protagonists, such as would invite a critical circumambulation of the 'hero'. Instead, the writer conveys a direct and purposeful vitality, and the sharp-edged but fleeting perceptual enjoyment the 'hero' seems to derive from his mental and physical environment in the course of his impatient trajectory.

However there is also a suspicion of the sort of tunnel vision that a fast-

driving motorist must need to maintain on a motorway. One also has the impression of being talked to (almost talked at) from very close quarters - a feeling not unfamiliar in occult circles. The author's peculiar elan is strangely effective. The purposeful energy is striking in spite of a frequent descent into facile or infelicitous forms of expression:-

"The Spirits of the Air supported the vision with a canticle of nature's symphony as they passed through the foliage in the guise of subtle breezes. The whole of nature was a cathedral where man and the gods became one. Here I was at peace, a disciple of Pan."

Such generalized throwing together of cliches is poles apart from the particularized evocations to which ecstatic immersion in Nature would give rise to in the breast of a Crowley, or a Gerald Manly Hopkins for that matter. But Williamson can be effectively succinct - a grandmother is described as the "wing clipper", a chilling phrase.

Certainly there is much that is schematic and cerebral - he seems always to be in a hurry even if he has read up in Jung and magick. Again, the hero's mother's parable of the gifts and limitations of reasons (the fox) is pertinent and well-formed, but deserves a less cursory expression. Clarity, energy, but - haste mars the effect, for haste is careless of everything - style, character-building images, atmospheres and leit-motifs.

The author seems to share with one of his subsidiary characters, Mark, the traits of "mechanical thinker" and "the undercurrent of the romantic". Indeed the dialogue between this Mark and the protagonist is as sketchy and cliched as a teenage story-in-strip cartoon magazine, and later between hero and Vivian we get this:-

"Why don't you come?" she asked (sic). Hello, I thought. This is more like it. "Well, um, yes O.K."

He also writes sentences in which inventiveness, clumsiness and too obvious point-making tumble together in an exasperating amalgam:-

"He raised his hands gesticulating a scramble of arcs in the air with negative results. Such a sharp contrast to my own earlier ritual positive hand movements which carved clean geometric figures in the aether to positive ends"

'Scramble of arcs' - that's inventive, but the contrast between their hand movements is too patent - please don't nudge the reader! And such phrases as 'with negative results' and 'to positive ends' sound leadenly clumsy in this context.

Much current occult fiction suffers from an ambitious intention yoked to an immature and unevocative style. Surely the magical novelist should be capable of evocation!

Lets not sneer at the Christians chaps (and chapesses) until we can muster at least a handful of practitioners in this generation who can match the Christian Charles Williams in numinous potency. In the light of tone and style I quote the following:-

"I turned the page and wrote the title of my new challenge.

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SPHINX (or how I came to understand myself). The presumption of the piece hit me immediately but it sounded impressive, so I left it."

It encapsulates the naive arrogant and youthful energy which saves the book, patchily written though it be, from the trough of stylistic banality, upon whose edge it so often seems precariously to teeter. The rhetorical question in particular is a dangerous stylistic device when deployed with callow liberality:-

"The park was only a few minutes walk away and readily accessible to me.....had it at some point in the far distant past witnessed scenes of high magick? Was it a portal, a crossing-over point to the realms of long-

forgotten kingdoms, unknown and unwanted by modern man?

Who can say?"

Who indeed, if not the author. We are also deluged with novelette-style purple prose:-

"The proportions of her body were a talisman which evoked the sexual demon within me and burst the chains of his bondage."

Worse follows, I draw a veil over the chewed tongue. Anyway the story hots up thereafter (about half-way through the book) and I'd hate to spoil it for you.

However, I do wonder why the young magicians initiator-to-be has the same surname as the publisher of this novel - coincidence? Now there's another rhetorical question for you. Intriguingly enough, the hero's passage from ignorance to knowledge is reflected in a transformation in the writing style, which abruptly becomes more sensitive, passionate, evocative; with a twist, a shift of perspective that convincingly accompanies the accelerating influence of the initiation process, enabling me to finish it in one sitting.

GERALD SUSTER

The Truth About the Tarot
Skoob Esoterica, pbk £4.99
Reviewed by Mark Parry-Maddocks

For innovation and depth, I think The Truth About the Tarot is going to be a difficult act to follow. There's a lot packed into a small compass here, from the initial sets of correspondences to be learnt, through to subtler considerations from the viewpoints of psychological exploration, mythology, and meditation.

The Truth About the Tarot is plainly meant to be used as a complement to the many simpler expositions of the Tarot available; indeed, Mr. Suster enjoins the use of basic primers on Astrology, the Qabalah, and the I-

Ching in conjunction with his book.

The Crowley/Harris Thoth Tarot is the basis for his exposition: by keeping to one set of cards, he avoids the problems of covering variations of design, astrological attribution, etc. Here the Thoth pack has received an explanation that is neither too recondite (Crowley's own Book of Thoth), or brief and slapdash (the little booklet that comes with the Thoth cards, which is sadly no longer a reprint of the catalogue for the original 1940s exhibition of the card-paintings).

Even if you're the most jaded Madame Sosostriis who has read everything on the "wicked pack of cards", I think you will be pleasantly surprised by some of Mr. Suster's ideas. Among other things, he has included the rules for a delightful game using the Tarot in his chapter "The Royal Game of Human Life; or, Celestial Snakes and Ladders".

Having struggled with the involved rules of the Continental Tarot games, I can recommend this game unreservedly; not just as a pastime, but an enjoyable way of familiarising yourself - and others - with the cards. It gets right away from the approach of so many other books with their admonitions to "go and practise reading the cards on your friends and family". Friends and family rapidly get bored with being used as guinea-pigs, as I'm sure most experienced Tarot users will attest.

There is a pleasantly down-to-earth attitude about the dangers of ascribing too "suburban" a sense of morality to the cards:

"XX The Aeon (Judgement) has been used to inform us that the wicked will be punished and the good rewarded - comforting, no doubt, to the multi-million victims of war, genocide, famine, torture, and pestilence." (p. 55)

Only two real reservations: first, Mr. Suster's rather costive prose-style, besprinkled with unnecessary capi-

talizations, seems heavily influenced by Crowley and Mathers - there are better Victorian writers to emulate - Robert Louis Stevenson, perhaps? Second, *The Truth About the Truth* just isn't long enough; more space might have made it easier to read - and I'm sure that here is plenty more to illuminate from this source, that will now regrettably have to be held over for a future volume.

Overall, though, this is one of the most original books on the Tarot I have seen in a long time.

VIVIEN MORGAN

Paths to Avalon

Merlin Books, pbk £5.75

Reviewed by Richard Thompson

This paperback places some of the characters and objects of the Arthurian legends onto the spheres of the Tree of Life, which is part of the Jewish spiritual system.

It offers 'pathworkings', imaginative mental exercises along what the 'close your eyes and let's pretend' school of occultism see as the paths and spheres of the Tree, which are given Arthurian descriptions. Ms. Morgan hopes these journeys will be pleasure-filled and rewarding.

She says they should bring about a change not just within ourselves but within 'our race', whatever that is nowadays days. Ahh, its the Celts. Presumably any Anglo-Saxon, Norsemen, Indians, Pakistanis, West Indians, Africans, Chinese, Bengalis, Japanese, members of the Royal Family and the aristocracy, and of course Jews should not try these exercises!

What the hell is a Celt these days?! It is the fault of Merlin that this book was written, a point which caused confusion as I thought Merlin was a badge of office and that there were many Merlins. Later in the book this theory is indeed mentioned. So which Merlin inspired the book?

Another confusing point: sometimes the author says that when carrying out the pathworkings we are contacting our super-egos, our higher selves, and that Merlin, Guinevere, etc, are simply aspects of our own nature. But on other pages it is objective deities who will respond when we invoke. Even more confusing, music is suggested for the exercises, yet most of it is not British, nor Celtic.

Merlin placed on Hod and not Chesed was a point that jumped out straight away to the Group I worked the paths with. In discussion we agreed that Vivien Morgan was wise enough to see beyond the archetype Merlin who appears as a Disney/Tolkienesque wizard with pointy hat and beard. The Group I chose to work the paths with were a Jew and a Black who were born in Britain and a Swede and a White American who were not, and a 'British' person from Essex (of obviously well mixed ancestry!) We all felt that the exercises were much better than any others we had come across from the 'Western Mysteries' movement.

In our opinion they were somehow healthier and that Vivien Morgan is generally better-aspected than many of the characters one meets in this scene. To quote her, she has "...seen groups who behaved far more like members of a particularly bad amateur dramatic society....it is a tragedy that such hopeful aspiration should be cheapened, that projects of high hopes and noble purpose should degenerate into jealousy, competitive rivalry and the sort of in-fighting that would put the most egotistical bunch of prima donnas to shame".

Isn't it because some people involved in this type of practice are contacting Gods and Goddesses that they already believe to be just an aspect of themselves, rather than objective deities? Isn't it because they sometimes make the mistake of interpreting priestess with Goddess,

identifying themselves as Morgan, or Ceridwen, instead of their servants? (I recently heard a priestess angrily declaring of another "She's not Sekhmet, I am!").

The individual exercises are recommended, especially for groups. They would have to be taped for the solitary worker. A tape of *Paths of Avalon* would be a welcome idea, leaving out all the talk of race and the generally confusing text and almost apologetic introduction, which get in the way of these very interesting pathworkings. Try the *Paths of Avalon* if your temple is guarded from thoughts that the British are any better than anyone else, and ideas of deification, and you'll be safe from megalomania.

GEOFFREY ASHE

King Arthur

"Art and Imagination" series

Thames & Hudson, pbk £6.95

Reviewed by Tristram Knight

How do Thames & Hudson manage to get out this delightful series on art paper, excellently printed with colour, with a wealth of judiciously chosen illustrations, all at £6.95? It is quite an achievement.

The text begins with a concise review of the quasi-historical Geoffrey of Monmouth's background then moves on to the consideration of the transmutation of history into legend:-

"Medieval authors handling a story from olden times make no attempt at authenticity. They put virtually everything in terms of contemporary experience and interests. Romances make Merlin the sponsor of the whole Arthurian regime....."

These two quotes will have to serve as examples of Geoffrey Ashe's clarity and conciseness of expression in the pithy twenty-five page survey of the Arthurian background which

precedes the beautiful diverse and imaginative selection of pictures that follow it.

The survey relates ideas of a golden age and its restoration to such other conceptions of it as those of the ancient Chinese, Hindus, Greeks and Romans. This leads on to a consideration of the utopian aspect which runs through medieval times, through Victorian times and Tennyson, and so on to T.H.White and Charles Williams in the 20th Century.

He considers the Round Table and the sometimes very different characters given to particular mythical personage in different renditions of the legend.

Ashe then surveys "Love in Arthur's Kingdom" and provocatively, he states that "There is not much evidence for Courtly Love happening in real life". Is this assertion a sign of the times? I can certainly remember several ponderous Edwardian tomes adducing evidence to the contrary.

When he comes to the decline of Arthur's realm, Ashe blames the depiction of Merlin's debacle on the fact that Christianity was no longer imbued with the attitude of the magic-tolerant Celts by the time of the medieval fabulists.

The original connotations of the Grail are listed. At this point we get yet another terse remark that makes ripples:-

"The Grail, though enshrined out of sight, gave Britain a privileged place in Christendom". Since this is a brief introduction one is then left fruitfully, to consider implications for oneself, like a good undergrad essay title. Discuss!

In all, the introduction covers a considerable variety of well-chosen topics, usefully comparing a variety of cultural perspectives. The plates which follow include a colour representation of Arthurian figures adoring a Venus on a vesica piscis (an almost almond or yoni-shape used not only to enclose Madonna and

child in medieval Christian art, but in the geometry of some of the most powerful cathedrals).

The choice of plates is uniformly illuminating. The larger plates are followed by smaller black and white plates illustrating such Arthurian-related themes as "The Wonderful Child", "Mutability and Downfall", and "Music Drama". The pictures are once again a stimulating selection, with a fair infusion of the unexpected. For instance, in a section titled "The Great Return", we have a haloed and laurelled Napoleon with the caption:

"Napoleon, who died in 1821, could not return literally. But the re-interment of his ashes in Paris was a kind of return, and reinforced a growing mystique. This symbolic resurrection helped his nephew to sweep to power as Napoleon III."

A constant dilemma in any time - and for any nation, particularly now. We have the saintly Prince Charles, but we also have a ferret bag of unpleasant politicians. The return of the King - or the eruption of the Thing? Anyway, read this strongly recommended book.

ALEISTER CROWLEY

The Rites of Eleusis
Mandrake Press Ltd, Thame,
hbk £35.00

Limited edition of 1000 copies
Reviewed by Frater Venusius 49

This is a very handsomely produced and compendious volume, with the text of the Rites forming the core, set in an ample context of comment, essays and related Crowley texts.

Keith Richmond's informative introductory essay describes fully and clearly the evolution of the Rites from Crowley's idea of devising rituals which would introduce a wider public to a magickal context whereby they could undergo the transforming experience of personal religious

rapture, through the planning and incidents preceding the final text, then the reality of performance at Caxton Hall, and finally a judicious selection from and comments on reviews of and reactions to the Rites. The brevity of rehearsal time which attended the first rites may become traditional, since this year's courageous revival of the Cycle initiated by Geraldine Beskin also inadvertently renewed this condition. Urgency, however, seems to concentrate energy!

Terry DuQuesne's essay on the Eleusinian Mysteries emphasizes primary sources and provides a historical account and reveals the deep magickal perspective underlying the potent myth of Demeter and Persephone.

The text of the Rites themselves are conveniently followed by the text of Liber Thesauron Eidolon (963) from which chapters are prescribed to be read out in the course of the rites themselves.

The text of Liber O vel Manus Sagittae then follows - appropriately, since the Banishing Rituals of the Pentagram and Hexagram occur in the course of the Rites.

Then comes Crowley's essay "Concerning 'Blasphemy' in general and the 'Rites of Eleusis' in particular" in which he defends his "orderly decorous ceremonies" from the incomprehension or deliberate malice of detractors.

This is a book to treasure - not least of course for the evocative poetry and magickal efficacy of the Rites, when performed with "energized enthusiasm" (as in the case of the best examples in this year's re-creation of the Cycle).

Although on first reading the Rites may even seem to present an aspect of Chaos, it turns out to be the creative Chaos of the vortex into which energies can enter and articulate themselves. Perhaps aware that, with his public mission for the Cycle in

mind, the Rites would be liable to enactment by non-professional groups of considerable diversity. Crowley seems to have left a capacity in the structures of his rituals for the reception of the varied gifts and backgrounds which performers would bring to interact with what he had set up.

Where he had used the work of others (e.g. prolonged quotations from Swinburne and a recitation of 91st Psalm of David), there is no sense of heterogenous yoking together of disparate elements, rather, in performance, the impression is well-nigh "seamless" - and very "seemly".

A note before the text of the Rites justly draws attention to Crowley's paraphrases from Euripides and Sappho. The joyful intoxication of "blue delirious weather" is quite singular. Like Swinburne, Crowley was clearly permeated, rather than merely adorned, by his Classical education, and they often display a similarity of rhythmic and musical felicity, mainly Hellenic, arising from their empathetic immersion in the religious and magickal experience from which their originals derived the best part of their sublimity. In the current climate it is probably worth emphasizing that skilfully employed, rhythm and the music of syllables, far from contributing a merely decorative mellifluousness, can, in such inspired hands, summon up a potent atmosphere with the depth and precision of music itself. This seems lost on the literalistic textual critics, who have assisted the decline of modern poetry towards more listless banality; but Crowley is a matter not only of the intoxicating torrent, but of the crystalline image. What an heraldic, yet breathing icon is evoked by these words of Pan in the Rite of Luna:-

"Hear me, O lily-white goat
O crisp as a thicket of thorns,
With a collar of gold for thy throat,
A scarlet bow for thy horns"

The first two lines of this collide, 'lily' and 'thicket of thorns' in a manner which manages to be at once startling and judicious, recalling simultaneously the 17th Century English Metaphysicals and the French Symbolists of the late 19th Century.

The book is embellished with contemporary photographs of Crowley and of the Rites, and with Dwina Murphy-Gibb's sinuous and delicate illustrations.

I regard this as an essential volume, lovingly researched and assembled, and generously presented.

Life in the Next World
Cesara Publications, pbk £3.00
Reviewed by Sandra Hayes

This 62 page booklet is extremely useful for research or for those exploring the comparative myths and magical / religious beliefs for use in ritual, e.g. a multi-faith Fellowship of Isis type funeral rite, or remembrance service, or a Samhain observance.

Over 20 traditions are covered from Babylonian to Zoroastrianism, showing the similarities and the major differences between each culture's ideas of life after death.

Many sources are quoted in full, from Plato to A.E.. A medieval manuscript tells us that "Paradise is neither in heaven nor on earth...is forty fathoms higher than Noah's flood was and it hangeth between heaven and earth wonderfully and the ruler of all things made it."

Spiritualism is given a lot of space. Spiritualists and occultists often shun each other today, but in its early days it was quite different and there was a lot of cross-fertilization. If the right medium is found, the fusing of magic and spiritualism can produce powerful results. The appearance of dogs in the underworld tales of many countries is not surprising. Nor is it surprising that the underworld of

systems other than Christianity is not a vile hell.

Of particular interest are the after-life myths of Finland and Islam. *Life in the Next World* is a worthy little book.

DAVID FONTANA
Dreamlife
Element, pbk £7.99
Reviewed by Matthew Stevens

David Fontana is a Reader in Educational Psychology at the University of Wales and the author of a number of works on the subject. For some years he has also been lecturing and running workshops on dreams. *Dreamlife* is an intelligent, well researched book written in a clear, comprehensive style that manages admirably to convey the author's obvious enthusiasm for the subject while developing a unique perspective on understanding and working with dreams that combines psychological, spiritual and magical approaches.

He begins with an examination of the scientific research into what actually happens when we sleep, and of the various explanations currently on offer, and then discusses some of the popular conceptions and misconceptions about dreaming (in which he points out that as they exhibit the same changes in physiological responses when asleep, most animals probably dream too).

After a brief outline of different ideas through history, Fontana spends some time looking at the theories put forward by Freud, who saw all dreams as wish-fulfilment based on the self-preservation and sex drives;

Jung, who puts more of an emphasis on the creative and spiritual aspects of the Self; Fritz Perls, the founder of gestalt therapy, who saw dreams for the most part as 'unfinished emotional business'; and one of the founders of existential

psychology, Medard Boss, with his stress on dreams as a face-value guide to our 'being-in-the-world'.

Drawing on these sources, the author then develops his techniques for working with dreams on what he terms as the 'Non-Symbolic', 'Mundane Symbolic' and 'Higher Symbolic' levels.

In the chapters that follow there is, it seems, something for everybody: Creativity and Problem-Solving in dreams, an examination of Hypnagogic States between waking and sleeping, ESP and precognition, Lucid dreaming, and discussion of Out-of-the-Body and Near-Death experiences.

Throughout, the emphasis is on practical examples and exercises, with the reader being offered a number of different methods to help achieve these experiences - many summarised in step-by-step programs that are clear and easy to follow - as well as careful examination of additional sources, such as Tibetan Buddhism and J.W.Dunne's *An Experiment with Time*, the book that got me started all those years ago.

I think that the fascination of dreams is that they are a part of the Mysteries that all of us have experienced at some point in our lives, and that perhaps they are a means by which we can learn a bit more about ourselves. I would like to applaud David Fontana for writing a book that will be informative, encouraging, and above all useful to both 'general reader' and 'serious student' alike.

AMOOKOS

Tantra Magick

Mandrake, pbk £6.99

Reviewed by Matthew Stevens

When I first set out to study what for convenience I shall call 'The Occult', my main problem was a lack

of source material. Now it seems that the reverse is true: there are so many books available, and so many groups and individuals who are offering to share their paths to enlightenment, that the aspirant is faced with the problem of knowing where to start.

The Arcane and Magickal Order Of the Knights Of Shambhala are a group who claim admirably enough that their purpose is "the unveiling of the spiritual potential latent within every individual", and Tantra Magick contains the first three sets of instructions of this Order.

After a fairly colourful account of His Holiness Shri Gurudeva Mahendranath's quest for Spiritual Truths among the Holy Men of India, it reveals that the Time Has Come for the grade papers to be made publicly available for the general good of Mankind.

In all fairness, Tantra Magick does what it sets out to do, and outlines the various rites, symbols, meditations and visualizations of the first three grades in a manner that is straightforward and easy to follow, but I can't help feeling that it doesn't really offer anything particularly new or in any way unique other than it is presented within a quite precise Cosmological framework based on Received Tradition.

The authors are quick to point out that all the grades, symbols, rites, etc, are 'convenient fictions', and indeed a lot can be gained from experimenting with models and metaphors that help us to achieve a shift in perspective and make us examine the ways in which we look at things.

I think that the main benefit that will be gained from pursuing such practices will simply be because of the actual discipline involved in following this kind of program.

I think it will mainly be of interest to those that have already decided that the way of AMOOKOS is for them.

JOHN MACQUEEN

St Nynia

Polygon Books, pbk

Reviewed by Chesca Potter

This is an exhaustive and scholarly book about St Nynia (St Ninian), a fifth century cleric based at Galloway, Scotland. The book would however appeal to those with an interest in rather obscure Pictish and Celtic history.

MAGGIE ANTHONY

The Valkyries : The Women Around Jung

Element, pbk £8.99

Reviewed by Alison Roberts

The evening I was given this book to review, I flicked through it and decided, to leave it for a few days. That night I had a dream that some women, made of straw, a bit like corn dollies, coming through a hole in a church wall where a large slab of stone had been removed. They were 'The Norns', and were all carrying something red, which appeared to be glowing. I could not make out what it was. I had some understanding of the dream, and what it meant both to me and several of my colleagues.

As an experiment, I told some other people of the dream and they quite routinely gave it different but apparently Jungian interpretations. It seemed to me that since any dream or vision can be interpreted in a Jungian way, this method is a limited system.

Nine quid (the number of the Valkyries in Norse myth) is a lot to pay for this slim book, but it can be read from cover to cover in a couple of hours and is an intense, captivating read. Its brief format adds to its depth and richness.

Many women flocked to Zurich for analysis with C G Jung, and became helpers or analysts themselves. There is no doubt that he was a charismatic

man, driven by mystical experiences, and who had felt the powerful tides of mythic material since childhood. There is evidence that he was a strong psychic medium, the type who causes poltergeist activity. It seems he had easy access to his unconscious mind, and growing up with this could not have been an easy process.

The image of the women projected by the author, intentionally or not, is fascinating and disturbing: "I was to learn of the furore caused by my attempting to write this book. I was threatened, told I would never be able to do anything in the field of psychology in California if the book was published and that the Jungians would make it difficult for me to do anything at all".

This was the way Jungians responded to someone who has studied at The C G Jung Institute in Zurich, and who deeply admired Jung, and had felt her life touched and changed by him. Ms Anthony was not prepared for the almost universal introversion of the Valkyries, their absorption with their own inner processes and lack of interest in the outer world. But she did understand their wariness of the "American popularisation which tends to trivialise".

It was the reluctance of the women and their colleagues to talk which is responsible for the slimness of the book, and presumably explains the bizarre inclusion of Dion Fortune, which must surely be padding, and an interpretation of Jung's birthchart which in my opinion, does indeed trivialise.

Ms Anthony writes well and one becomes an observer on the scene as she describes Emma 'The Wife', an evidently strong intellectual woman who complained to Freud that she had to speak stupidly in public to make sure that no one would think she was trying to compete with her husband. For many years she had to endure 'The Mistress', Toni Wolff, with dignity: "This triangle of Jung,

Emma and Toni has been alternately praised for its openness, and deplored for the pain which it inflicted on both women. More rarely, the question is asked why Jung insisted on such a relationship continuing in view of the obvious pain it caused his wife."

The Valkyries mentioned in this book came from the aristocracy and moneyed classes. A rather revolting feeling is evoked by this book that some of the women were spoilt little girls who secretly wished to marry their father, thus possessing his love totally. I am sure this is not the author's intention, but the feeling is lurking between the words that Jung was the father figure to these women, who Ms Anthony says were neurotic. The nickname for one of them was 'The Bride of Christ'. They all appeared to be jealous of each other where Jung was concerned. An almost frivolous image is conjured up at other times, of rich women hopping over to Zurich when they had bad dreams!

Ms Anthony points out that although intelligent, creative and cultured, the female Jungians never questioned Jung's assumptions about myth, archetypes, and women, and continued his patriarchal themes in their own work, rarely showing any originality. M Esther Harding's 'Women's Mysteries' had its beginnings in the early days with Jung, and was one of the first modern works to suggest that there had been major female deities and that mortal women had held a serious role in religion. Although it was conceived in 1929, Ms Anthony suggests it may have been due to a remark by Jung that its publication was delayed for many years, and as someone who was influenced by the patriarchal attitude of his times he may have been shocked by it.

I'm not convinced he was shocked, but, "Jung still had a fear and distaste for the aggressive feminine and the mixture in 'Women's Mysteries' may

have been too much for him until he digested it" says Ms Anthony. Later on, though, she feels Jung would have been bored by the re-hashes and unquestioning attitudes from his followers. Whatever he originally thought of 'Women's Mysteries', which still perpetuated Jung's stereotypes about men and women, in 1955 Jung was still making statements like "A man's foremost is in his work. But a woman - a man is her work and her business". He goes on to suggest that a woman's place is in the home as a nest-maker and mother.

Many women in the workplace today are constantly disempowered by attitudes like this. But Jung had a lot of respect for his Valkyries, most of whom were unmarried, and some, (if I am disentangling a confusing piece in chapter 7 correctly) homosexual. Jung felt that the unmarried ones should support each other, and set up matches where a couple would live together. It was bad enough being an intellectual woman in these days, but a spinster in the medical profession as well was too much! One feels that Jung offered these women a channel for their intellectual gifts. They all felt he was their saviour.

Jung has become a buzz-word in the occult and New Age scene, although I wonder how many have read and understood his works, which is not an easy task. How many have grasped his ideas, or questioned? Violence against women is appalling, and I shuddered when I read how he threw Jolande Jaffe down a flight of stairs when she told him she wanted to write a book about him. Yet I could understand his annoyance. "Possibly Jung, who knew how difficult his writing was for many people, was fearful of the popularisation of his ideas..."

Ms Anthony says that some scholars are beginning to tire of the unthinking acceptance of archetypes, psychological universals, which

submerge the individual psyche. A scholar who attended the Jung Institute in Zurich claims that the subjective selection of research material is used to 'document pre-ordained conclusions'.

Few of the women around Jung diverged far from his thought, nor questioned his assertions about the animus. "Certainly they would have been in a better position, if only because of their sex, to give empirical observations of their own and other womens psyches". They never saw fit to question Jung's strange statements on the existence of the animus and anima. "Since the anima is an archetype that is found in men it is reasonable to suggest that an equiva-

lent archetype must be present in women". The animus is seen as the aggressive, assertive masculine parts of women, which causes trouble if not checked and must be kept out of sight around men because it is not feminine. In my opinion, women intellectuals who have re-hashed these ideas have aided the oppression of the less priveleged.

After finishing this book in bed, I felt sure to have a 'Jungian Dream'. As it happened I had part two of the Norns dream. It involved a Norse goddess who was extremely ancient, and was also Indian. She lived under the sea, but had legs, although she had the atmosphere of a Naga. Some witches and New Age people who

had contact with her thought she was evil because they did not understand that just because something is not all sweetness and light, it is not bad.

In C S Lewis fashion, they felt particularly threatened by a snakey magickal female. She helped us find a large hunting horn. Although this means something to me, I felt that by coincidence, it fits in well with the animus discussion in the paragraph above.

Maggie Anthony's Jungian adventure began nearly 30 years ago when she read a wonderful book, *Memoirs, Dreams, Reflections*, where the POWER of Jung springs out at the reader; I would recommend it to anyone, along with *The Valkyries*.

NOT HERSELF EVE

Peter Redgrove

"The moon is silver without, and
A jewel within, cool
In both its aspects," she says,
"Do you like my dress? it is the serpent's
Slough in which Eve dressed to persuade
Adam." It was see-through, this blouse,
And like a kind of taffeta
Which showed differently-coloured
Lights passing over her skin.
"The design was first," she went on,
"That humans were not to die,
Only to be changed, and to slough
Their old skins, like the serpent;
This," pointing to her silk, "is
The shadow of the serpent, the part that dies,
So you can make clothing of it without offence..."

She turned and turned about in her taffety,
Which now shone green; "I studied
In paradise three years," she said brightly,
And I had gathered that she herself
Was not immortal Eve; and I wondered
At the glory of that serpent
Of whom these clothes were the mere shadow cast.



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THE ASTRAL REALITY

Vs.

THE ASTRAL ILLUSION

Vee Van Dam

Much on the Astral Plane is deceptive and illusionary, as it is based on appearance - however, this is true of the physical plane as well. One must always look behind the form side of Nature to find its Reality - the Power behind the form.

What may seem elevated may not be, as it may hide its true face behind the veneer of splendour and richness. Therefore you will have to learn to see what is truly real and distinguish it from what is merely real in appearance.

Having said this, on the Astral Plane it is possible to experience almost anything in a perfectly tangible manner - be it an object, or a being, or a subject. Nevertheless, whereas the Astral Plane can be thought of as a place, or universe of

dreams - which sometimes makes it appear to be unreal from a certain perspective or viewpoint - the physical plane can also be described as a zone of dense deception - i.e. a place, or universe of solidified dreams; in some respects there is not much difference between these two Planes - they are both illusionary, even though they can both be experienced as real from a certain angle - since they both form a matrix of energy-substances which harbours intelligent life.

The main issue to consider here is the reality of forms versus the Reality of Power. as the Power conceals itself behind the forms, these seem real until they are seen, and are thereby revealed, as unreal - the forms are just masks for the Spirit.

Therefore whatever you will

experience on the Astral Plane, regardless of how real it may seem, is in fact only a disguise - if you can see through this disguise, then you will perceive its true nature, and you will be able to benefit from what there is to be known about it.

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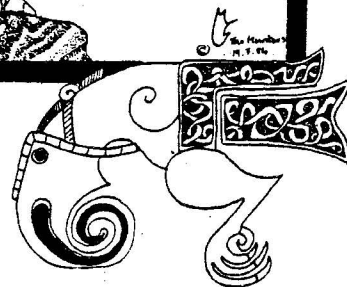
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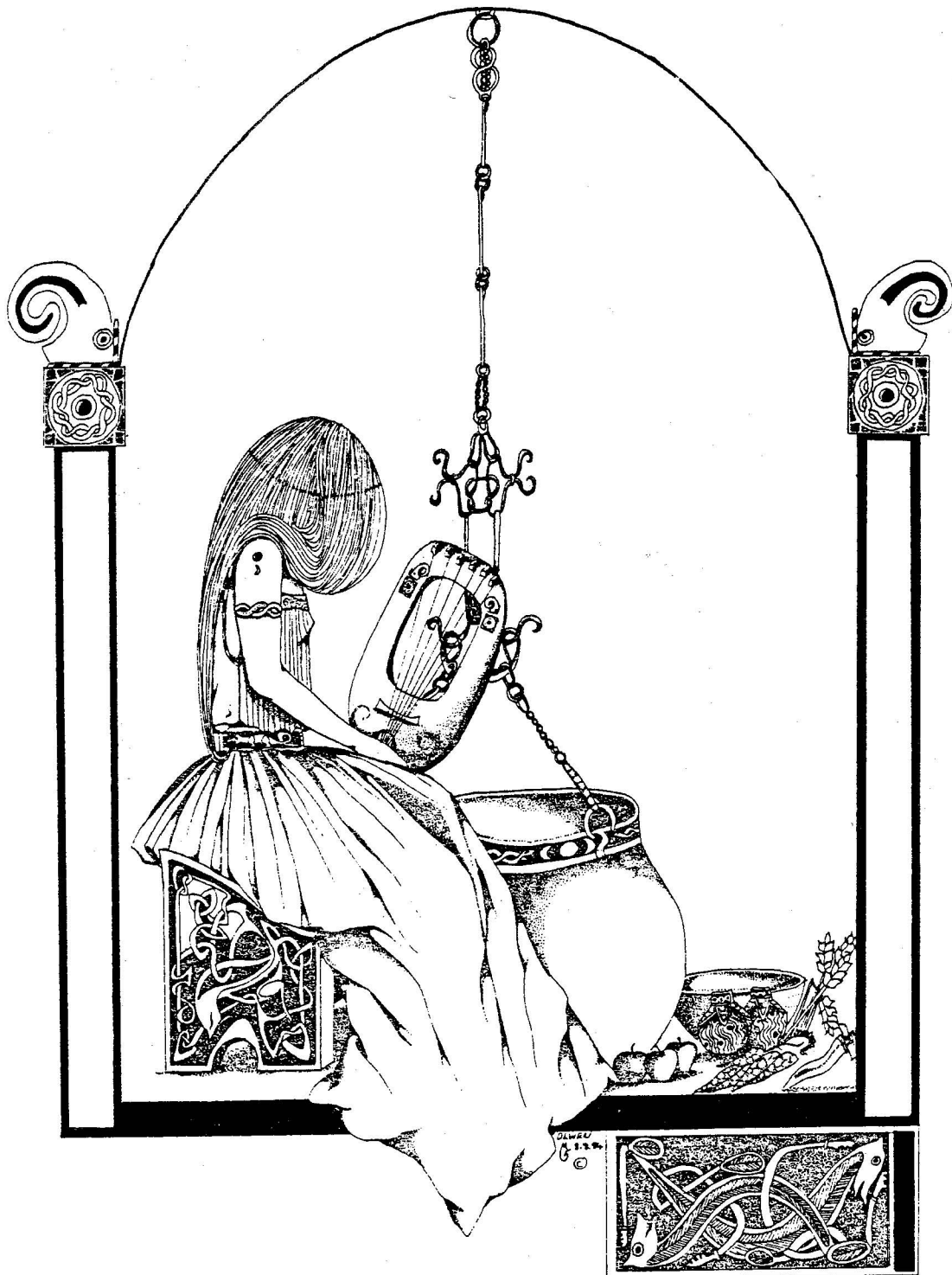
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THE DICTIONARY OF ALCHEMY

Part Three

Diana Fernando

UNCTUOSITY, as in "terrene unctuousity", earthy oiliness: another mercurial cover-up.

UNION i.e. of man with God, the ultimate aim of alchemy. There are of course unions all the way up the line, just as there are separations and repulsions. [See *Androgyne and *Hermaphrodite]

UNIVERSAL ALKAHEST or MEDICINE: *Azoth or philosophical *mercury, according to Basil Valentine, that evanescent monk. "Azoth and fire alone are needed in the work of Wisdom". However others say it is *antimony, the most poisonous and powerful of the metals used in transmutation, that is known as the Universal Medicine because it alone of metals is governed by all seven planets and not just by one (as *gold is by the sun, silver by the moon, and so on).

URINE. Used along with arsenic and wine by the dabbling Empress Barbara (second wife of Sigismund) to make a passable imitation of silver coins.

UROBOROS, the serpent that eats its own tail, symbolising both egg and sphere, and the cyclical nature of the universe, beginning and end.

VAULT. Christian Rosencreutz was buried in a very elaborate one, whose proportions parallel those of the Great Pyramid and the Temple of Solomon. Vaults had a spiritualising

effect on man - an "envoutment", a raising of vibrations. [See also *Hieroglyphs and *Wedding.]

VEILS swathed alchemy right, left and centre - what with the arcane language, vows of reticence, alien allegories - anything to fob off the fatuous. Even the unsquashable Paracelsus said of the art of alchemy, "...but to write more about this mystery is forbidden". As regards nine tenths of the arcana, veiled it shall remain.

V.D. In the mentioning thereof, it was delicately left in the Latin, or buck-passed onto another nationality. It was able to be cured by *tincture of *antimony prepared by that elusive speculator Basil Valentine, and applied in 1495 to sufferers of the outbreak on the French expedition to Naples under Charles VIII. A little while later it was cured by *mercury prepared by Paracelsus (always drunk and always lucid) who wrote a whole treatise on it which was banned, but the broadsheets published looked much like the advertisements about AIDS on the London Underground today.

VENOM. "Antimony is venom. Take it to *Vulcan to expel the venom," says Vasil Valentine, as "remedy against the French pox". [See *V.D., *Poison, and *Universal Alkahest.]

VIBRATIONS. Since the ultimate conversation-stopper definition of

alchemy is: "the raising of vibrations", it's as well to remember everything has its own vibration or frequency or wave. As substances change, so do their colours, and so do their vibrations; the more refined the substance, the finer the vibration, the higher the frequency.

VIRGO LUCIFERA: the radiant maiden in the castle where Christian Rosencreutz goes to the *Wedding. She's on a revolving throne, clad in pure white, sparkling with *gold. She it is who enigmatically announces that everyone must be weighed.

VULCAN. Our mastermind, Paracelsus, has once more put very clearly Vulcan's role: "The master of alchemy is Vulcan. God created iron but not that which is to be made of it. He enjoined *fire and Vulcan, who is the lord of *fire, to do the rest. Iron must be cleansed of its dross before it can be forged. This process is alchemy; its founder is the smith Vulcan."

WATER. According to the heretic Arnold de Villanova, water is alchemically *azoth, which water is argentum vivum (i.e. *quicksilver), and the mysterious c.20th adept Fulcanelli says, "It is this water coagulated in the form of a stony mass which is the *Alkahest and Universal Solvent", while Paracelsus says that man has two bodies, the physical and the sidereal: "Water and earth...constitute the physical enve-

lope of life", but the sidereal body is "fire and air".

WEDDING. "The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz" takes us with him along his path of transformation like an alchemical "Pilgrim's Progress". [See *Nuptials and *Ludibrium.]

WHITE EAGLE: sal ammoniac; those with a weakness for allegory will see the connection.

WINGS [See *Flying Slave and *Hermes.]

WOLF: antimony. A dog devoured by a wolf signified purification of *gold by antimony.

WOMEN, in alchemy, not many: the Empress Barbara [see *Urine]; Mary [see *Bain-marie]; Leona Constantia, Abbess of Clermont (c. 1736); and Medea who was always concocting magic brews from wolfsbane or vitriol or little bits of dead ram. Pregnant women were forbidden to be given the *Stone - after all, Eve was secondary to Adam: her alchemical role was confined to the kitchen as cook. [See *Fire and *Vulcan.]

WOUIVRES, telluric currents marking sites of special magnetic power where *dolmens, pyramids, temples and churches were built. [See *Labyrinth.]

X. The symbol of the cross, the body, or physical matter. Upright or oblique, the humanistic sign shows matter in spirit (the is spirit, man is matter). In the alchemical game of noughts and crosses, is the original glyph for Mars, showing matter dominating spirit, but motivated by spirit from below. Venus, is exactly the opposite, with spirit dominating matter. Many of the devices for gold in its various

forms are permutations on this theme: is calcined gold powder, is potable gold, wire or thread gold, for strings of musical instruments. [See *Symbols and *Gold.]

XERION, the Greek "dry powder for wounds"; translated to "el-ixir" by the Arabs.

YELLOW EMPEROR'S BOOK OF MEDICINE, the Nei Ching, whose very title suggests medical alchemy, goes back to 200 B.C., if not perhaps as far back as 2600 B.C. when the mythical Emperor is said to have been alive. The Book relies on a whole system of correlations between the "universal quintet" of elements: water, fire, wood, metal (gold or cinnabar), and earth, and the main organs of the body. All this is firmly entrenched in Tao as the supreme regulator of the universe.

YI KING, or the more familiar I Ching, the Book of Mutation, is imbued with alchemical symbolism, particularly the hermetic hexagrams with the notion of "above" and "below", and the change from "yin" to "yang" - female to male, volatile to fixed.

YIN & YANG: the opposing principles of the universe. Yin - female, watery, heavy, passive; yang - male, fiery, light, active. Yin is mercury, and yang is gold, cinnabar, sulphur. "When yin (negativeness) and yang (positiveness) are properly matched, tranquillity prevails," says the same chemistry-book quoted under *Ting.

'ZANIES OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH' - those sophisticators posing as alchemical scholars that, dead or alive, line the bookshelves of the Bodleian and the British Library. [See *Ashmole.]

ZINC, possibly a Paracelsian expletive, certainly a portmanteau invention, Zinne + Kupfer (tin + copper), of our Archimedean adept of Einsiedeln.

ZODIAC, those "little animals" in the sky that correlate with all the planets and all the *kingdoms.

ZOHAR, the "vast concatenation of texts" that constitutes the chief literature of the *Kabalah, first printed in sepher (book) - form in Italy between 1558-60, from - say shaky sources - a compilation of one Moses de Leon in the c.13th.

il ZOPPO: the cripple, i.e. Edward Kelley, who may well have met his end escaping from Rudolph's castle because he was a cripple and not because he "was slayne" (as Dee asserts he was in 1595). Certain it is that Sir K., knighted, lamed, earless or otherwise was hobbling around Most Castle at least until 22 May 1597. [See *Bohemian Hermes, *Cacochymicus, *Ears, *Kings, *Scryer.]

ZUCCARI, putrefied alum (via an intricate process in a *pelican) or "sweet water, an excellent arcanum for extinguishing the microscopic fire in men of a metallic temperament," which note, from our by-now-familiar friend Paracelsus, fittingly sees this Dictionary out.



THE LANGUAGE OF THE WITCHES

Part Three: How 'Christian' is the Garter?

Michael Harrison

Palmerston said of it that the reason why he liked it was that 'there was no damned merit about it' - he meant that other qualities than political skill earned it. When Dr Addison, Ramsay MacDonald's Labour Minister of Health, was made a Knight of the Garter (after having been created a Viscount in Mr Attlee's post-war administration of 1945), there was considerable surprise expressed that 'an ordinary G.P.' should have been admitted to the Most noble Order. Perhaps the name of Addison implied that he was something traditionally more than 'a mere general-practitioner'.

The name of 'the Divell' mentioned in the evidence against Lady Alice Kyteler in 1324 was 'Robin Artisson', and I added that 'Artisson' was evidently the Basque artzan, shepherd (that is, a group of old Believers). I certainly have no evidence to lead me to believe that Dr Addison, first Viscount Addison K.G., was an Old Believer - but what if, lacking some other customary qualifications, he had been fortunate enough to possess, as George Henry Beltz had possessed, the right sort of name?

And what of King Arthur?

In his excellent *From Caesar to Arthur* (London: Collins, 1960), Geoffrey Ashe calls attention to - but does not satisfactorily account for - an antagonism on the part of the early Welsh Church historians and hagiographers to King Arthur, whose name Mr Ashe correctly gives as 'Artorius', but incorrectly repeats the old story that this Latin name-from-a-

word means 'Bear' (the animal). It does not - and it is about time that writers on Roman Britain went back to their Latin dictionaries. Ar(c)torius does not mean 'bear', but, seemingly, 'he who has to do with bears; bear trainer; bear keeper'; and the most probable meaning of his name (which would account for the hostility of the Christian Church) is 'Lord Keeper of the Sacred Bears' - that is, a high-priest of a Temple of Artemis, the Bear-Goddess. (Whose flourishing worship in Roman and post-Roman Britain I have described in *The London that was Rome*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971).

In other words, Arthur (it is either a title or a nickname) had a special attachment - priestly or not - to the Bear-Goddess. When the historical record describes him as going into battle, 'wearing the image of the Virgin' on his armour, we are invited to believe that it is of the Virgin Mary that the badge is an image; but Artemis was the Virgin Goddess par excellence in the pre-Christian world; and in the annual ceremony of the Brauronia, when the maidens were dedicated to the Virgin Bear-Goddess, the Roman Catholic institution of the white-clad Children of Mary is both matched - and anticipated.

Was Arthur priest as well as military leader - as was that other great heroic figure from Arthurian times: St Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre? Though one was 'pagan', the other Christian, they both fought to preserve civilization from the barbarian Saxon. And both to some extent -

succeeded: for if their anti-Saxon efforts did not save Britain entirely, they did preserve the British West (as Wales) to this day. There is a curiously named hill in the very centre of the 'Arthurian' country - Barbury Hill - that the Saxon invaders called 'Beranbyrg', a name which apparently means 'Tomb of the Bear'? Was this both Arthur's campaign headquarters and his tomb?

Why I think that Arthur was - or was accepted as - a pagan leader or leader of the Pagans (perhaps they are not quite the same thing) is that names which appear in the semi-historical Arthurian record at an early date reappear in the complete historical record at a late date - at a time, indeed, when perfectly organized persecution is giving the death-blow to the Old Religion 'above ground'.

One of the most important series of witch-trials were those held by Sir Brian Darcy, 'the English Bodin', at St Oses (modern St Osyth), a name which is a regular development from 'Isis', whose temple once stood where the ruins of the monastery now are. The local witches - late 17th Century priestesses of Isis, The Great Mother - were tracked down and (mostly) executed by the zealous Sir Brian. The nominal rolls abound with Wiccan names - Joan Pechey = Juan Pitxi (pr. Peechy), 'Jewel of the Lord', was a notable defendant; but there are also Elizabeth Bennett and Ursula ('Little She Bear') Kemp and so many others.

It is one of Mother Bennett's two familiars - Suckin, 'like a black dog',

and Lierd, 'like a red lion' - which most interests me: for the name, Suckin, which turns up as her familiar in 1582 at St Osyth, is encountered earlier, in the ancient Welsh tale of Culhwch and Olwen (14th Century, but preserving material of nearly eight hundred years earlier), as one of Arthur's 'knights': Sugyn, the wonder-worker 'who can drink up a sea until the ships lie stranded'. Suckin and Sugyn (both pronounced with the long 'Continental' U) = Basque sakan, 'profound, deep, difficult'. Sugyn was so named because it was the profundity of the ocean, the extent of the deep, that he could reveal. (Incidentally, is the old - generally house-maid's name, Sukey, really a shortening of 'Susan'? Is it not rather a shortening of the familiar, in both senses of the word, name, Suckin or Sookin?)

The links with Arthur - whoever or whatever he was - become more strikingly apparent when, in the trial of Andro Man at Aberdeen in 1597, we find him accused of having 'kissed the Queen of Elphin's arse', and find, too, that the medieval Story of Taliesin (with much 9th Century matter included) begins the mysterious 'Riddle of Taliesin' with the lines:

Primary chief bard am I to Elphin,
And my home-land is in the spaces of
the summer stars

The Old Religion has a long pedigree indeed; and when we follow its permeations into the living speech of today, we may well wonder if indeed, though driven underground, it ceased to be as influential three centuries ago as even its 'ministers' might have feared. Even the commonest vulgarities are seen to be no vulgarities at all, but the enduring, vigorously living ancient speech of the Wicca. "It's all prick!" said a man in the street, dismissing a politician's words as so much rubbish. 'All prick..?' Better Basque alperik, 'useless', which is the hardly changed origin of the 'vulgar' English phrase.

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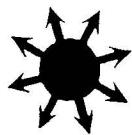
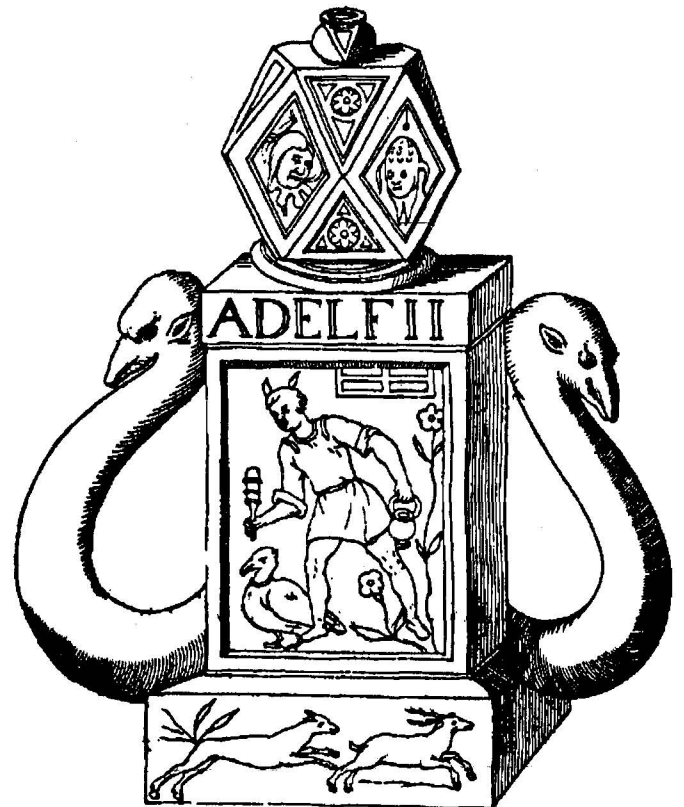
The Parousia; his beard
Was white as April semen, her mouth
Glittered like the forest at dewfall;

Yet these are the bodiless ones,
And this is the titles of the Hindu
Ananga Ranga the Art of Love

Which purposeth the melting
Of the skin and the presence of
A third being who causes

The original two to come, and who leaves
Out of the lightning crack in the air
A bodiless perfume surveying

All it hath been; and they
Rheia Zoöntes live slowly re-entering
Time, like the insects' magnetic
Haze, and the swarms inter-penetrating.



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THE CALLANISH STONES

Linda Falorio

The girl convulsed when it at last appeared, a scream torn from her throat by the sudden rush of wind that whirled about the silent standing stones of that remote north land, the Outer Hebrides. Starlight shone distant, pale and cold upon her naked body arched upon the central altar stone, her mind stunned into disbelief then unawareness by the image wreathed in terror that rapidly congealed within the mirror slung above her. With a sudden wrenching movement the image freed itself from the entrapping glass, an unspeakable darkness black within black boiled onto the barren starlit heath. The horror bore down upon the girl, ever-hungry, burning with desire, smothering the pale lines of her body within its embrace that was of the dark void of space that spanned the stars. The two men watched the black devouring maw convulsing in the centre of that ancient ring of stones, awed and silent, intent upon the spectacle enacted in the darkness of the heath. While strange unearthly lights played upon the stones like pulsing Northern Lights, as if the stones had been awakened after all their years as silent sentinels: Watchers of the nameless Outer Gates. In a time, the wind died upon the heath. The nightmare darkness, black and sated vortex of desire, slowly drew itself away. It moved once more onto the surface of the mirror, black within black, melting back into the starlight, leaving nothing of itself but the silence of the cold and distant star? Did you see anything? "The boys

looked nervously at one another. Fear then came into her face, and she turned searching eyes from one boy to the other. "What happened, damn it!" The boys exchanged furtive glances, then the fair one, Justin, whispered: "We did it." "What now?" the girl asked at last, mingled fear and excitement rising crazily within her as she gazed at the unknowable silence of the stars. "What happens now that we've made contact? Pammy, now the fun begins," Justin said, and tossed a meaningful look at Burke. "Not so fast," Burke replied cautiously, as always. "I'm not sure whether we got the right entity. We were supposed to be reactivating a site used in the ancient Megalithic worship of the Horned One. But you saw what that thing looked like "You mean you actually saw something?" Pam demanded. Falling suddenly silent, they boys stared into the darkness, black within black, brooding beyond the perimeter of stone."Come on you guys! I have a right to know. What happened?" Pammy, it's nothing. We couldn't actually see anything. It just seemed like something was there.....at least you acted like it "Acted like what?" If you must know, you sure seemed to be enjoying the hell out of yourself!" Justin smirked, elbowing Burke, who frowned."Oh." Pam sank down onto the hard dirt of the heath, feeling suddenly dizzy with a vertigo that made the stones loop and whirl around her. "I must have tranced out. I don't remember anything....But we did reactivate the site?" Look at the lights.

We certainly awakened something..." Burke said quietly, as the nameless wind moaned across the heath, whispering through the space between the stones. "You're not going paranoid, are you?" Justin sneered. Burke thought a long time, gazing at the stones, and at the strange unearthly light that flickered on them. "No,...I'm just not sure about the entity we contacted. Maybe we were wrong. Maybe the Callanish Stones were ancient long before the time of the Megalithic cults of the Horned One. Who knows what sort of nameless gods they might have worshipped, or whether they were even fully human "What are you talking about?" Let sleeping dogs lie," Pam whispered, feeling again that twinge of excitement, mingled with both fear and a dark foretaste of desire."Those times were dark, morality was non-existent. Animal instincts were all that mattered. Eat or be eaten. And dark gods ruled the earth whose only thought was the satisfaction of desire..."Let's go! You're scaring me!" Pam cried, panicked, heading for the car as if pursued, for she had the inexplicable sensation of being watched by a sentient something, dwelling in those cold vast darknesses that spanned the dim and distant stars. Justin stood up, disgusted, brushing thorns and stickers from his clothes. "Come on, Burke, let's go with her. We'll come back later for the mirror. "Isn't it awfully crowded," Justin complained, as Pam squeezes herself between them in the front seat of the car. "What are you complain-

ing about? I'm the one who has to straddle the damn console! Besides, I feel safer this way," she pleaded, glancing nervously into the back seat of the car. "I don't know what you're worried about," Justin insisted. "Everything worked just perfectly" "It went all wrong," Burke moaned. "I've had enough of you and your 'dark gods'!" Justin hissed in frustration. "Just relax and forget it, will you?" "Oh? What is it, Pammy?" Nothing. I just had a chill. I can't get over feeling really strange,...It's as if a glittering darkness is coming at me from behind, but when I turn and look it's gone,...because it's really something inside of me that's working its way out,...It's as if a piece of me has been destroyed, some warm, human part that keeps the rest of it in check, that keeps us all from becoming monsters. "Pammy, that's all nonsense and you know it. Now be good and move your knee so I can start the car. I can't get to the shift,... "No, wait. I don't feel well. I think I'm going to be sick. Let me out,..." Burke hauled her from the car. "O.K. Over there. Down in that cut there are some bushes,...""Jesus! What a night!" Justin cursed, lighting a cigar as they leaned against the car to wait for Pam. "Do you think she's alright?" "I certainly hope so. For her sake, for all our sakes,..." The wind picked up, screaming from the barren heath and tore his words away. Burke looked again at the strange lights play upon the stones, as if something alien, unhuman had awakened. "Do you know they did human sacrifice?" He asked at last. "What?" "I was just thinking of the Old Ones, the ones who worshipped the nameless gods of pre-human time,...""Why don't you quit harping on that shit!....Pammy, what's keeping you? It's bloody freezing, with that wind!" "I don't feel well,...""Her voice sounds strange,...go get her." Reluctantly, Burke scrambled down into the clinging mists and darkness of the cut.

The night had become thick and dark, with dragon's breath rising on the heath, scudding windblown clouds obscured even the dim light of the stars. Burke tried not to think of the ungodly lights upon the stones, or of what they had unwittingly awakened, as he groped his way among the clinging brambles that tore his arms and face and clothes. "Oh there you are!" He said, crashing blindly into Pam. "Are you alright?" "What happened to you?" She asked quietly, touching her finger to a gash upon his cheek. Then she put her bloodied finger into her mouth, intent and thoughtful. She made a queer animal sound within her throat and turned suddenly upon him. "I want you." "What? Oh, what the hell,..." Burke sighed. When he pressed his lips to hers he felt they were hot with fever. "Everything alright down there?" Justin called when he heard the scuffling in the bushes, the muffled moans, the sounds, as of a dying animal. "Come down, I need your help," he heard Burke answer, his voice taking on an unnerving surreal quality as it filtered to his through the crawling mist. "Right,..." Justin said, speaking to no one but the closing darkness as he plunged into the bank of fog thick as a shroud. The silence was unearthly. The night lay ominously still upon the scrub grass and the tangled vegetation brooding at the

bottom of the cut. "Where are you,...?" Justin called out, groping. When he heard a noise he turned abruptly. "My god!" His mind went white with fear. And the fear became mingled with excitement and unnameable desire when he saw their clothes were bloody, torn, as if they had been mauled by some wild animal. They suddenly appeared as terrifying strangers, fevered, dangerous, hungering with dark, primordial passion that transgressed all human bonds. Yet something in his soul awakened in answer to the alien light that shone within their eyes, engulfing the small, warm, human part of him within its glittering, ever hungering maw, black within black, dark vortex of passion and desire. And with an agonized cry, at the last his soul dissolved into that dark void of space that spanned the stars. The wind whirled savagely across the barren heath in grotesque answer, screaming through the space between the ancient stones. Mute relics of pre-human time, alone the stones waited for the spirits to return and again take their pleasure of the living. The strange lights played upon them once again, as if something unhuman, vast beyond all comprehension, had awakened. While the forgotten mirrors glittered, remote and cold, filled with the dark light of the stars.

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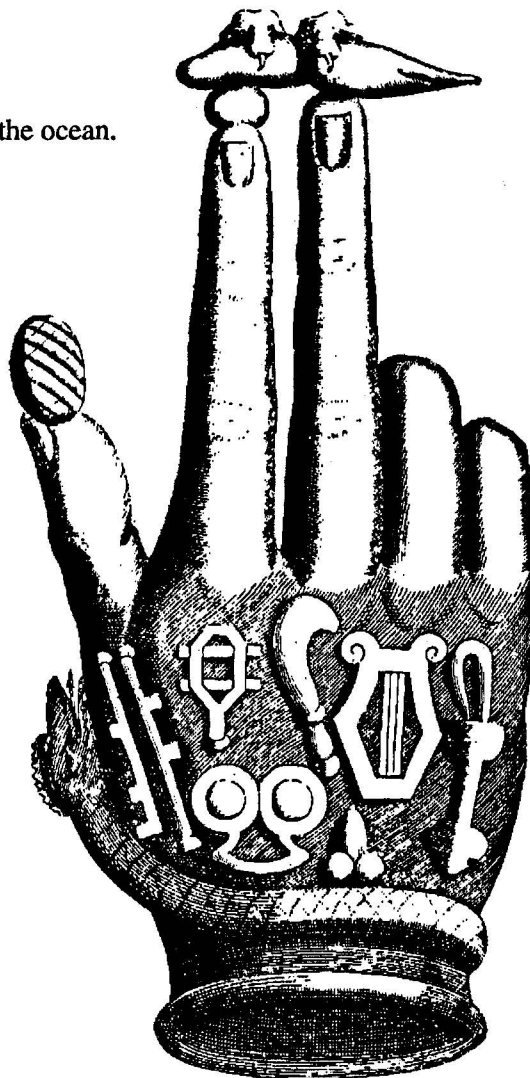
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INVERSE

Peter Redgrove

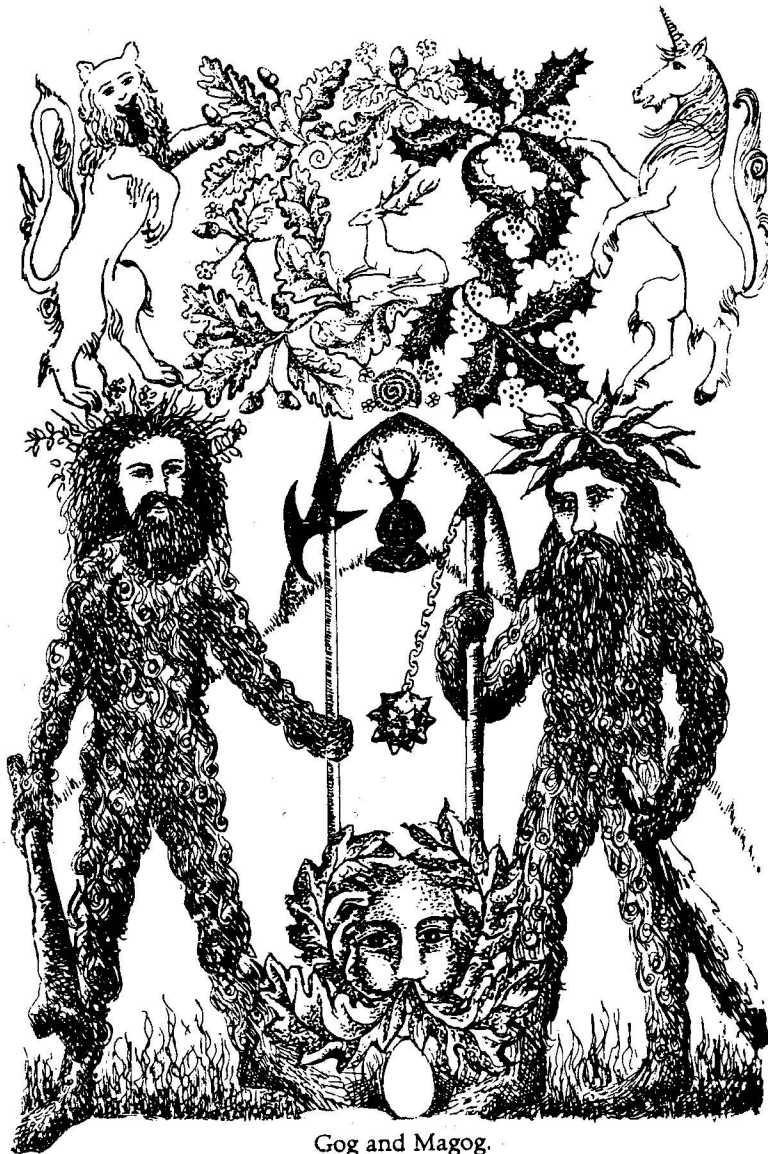
The rays of the moon are sweet and salty,
The docks visited by every kind of ship
Cargoes of tamarind, or sea-slugs,
Of stags' horns, and with every one
The second, secret cargo woven of perfume
And stacked electricity; venture down
Into the hold whose walls clear
And you see the whole sea swimming towards you.
Meanwhile, the silvery pilchards
Are laid in tall round barrels
By the Fish Maidens who arrange
The tails at the centre to create
An inverse star pulled clean out of the ocean.



GOG and MAGOG

From the book 'Legendary London'

by Chesca Potter



Gog and Magog.

THE WHISPERING GALLERY

Jonathan Wood

Whilst all around you crumbles into desperate confusion and those everyday facades and masks of concrete and flesh wavers and mutates against the perfected innocence of one's expectations, you must listen to what is within, that whispers like a spectral special friend, that issues yourself a grim and timely ultimatum to resist and fortify your invisible kingdom lest like your surroundings, you melt into the common unwinding downward spiral of drifting humanity. God, it's so hard keeping the firm foundations of anything more than a pretence together, convincing yourself that the noises flowing around you are not screams emanating from within. But that's the subtle beauty of the challenge, to become stronger; to transcend the merely hardened brittle externality of the physical, to imagine the full expanding joyous internality of one's body and like some ancient mad Divine architect thus build a perfect pyramid inside oneself, from the natural stone of YOU. There are those that will say it cannot be done; that it is an intrinsically selfish and even negative path to tread; that it closes a galaxy of doorways. But, not a bit of it! Listen to them not, but revel in the satisfaction that its boundless energetic possibilities bring. Like slipping an unused highly polished cartridge into the empty belly of a rifle, you will come to recognise its quality, its purpose and its high degree of craftsmanship; like something that fits, that can stay inert for years and years safe in the knowledge that

it is a perfect construct made with loving mechanical precision and skill. CLICK! It's safe. A disturbing analogy some will perhaps remark, but one that points to the unwrapping of that minuscule capsule of purest universe, awake and ready to perform its task, but equally more powerful just living, basking in the knowledge of its very existence. It is lovely to imagine in your head the transformation of one's image of entirety of body and spirit into a thing of symmetry; something perfect and pointed, each side resembling its others, masking its full treasure behind acres of natural stone, existing for a century every second, blissful in its conceited state of having to do nothing. Just sit, close your eyes, smile longingly and imagine that building process taking place. Amaze yourself by this dispersal of the physical action transformed into the most feverish interior labour you never imagined yourself capable of. Take joy in setting your mason's square upon the multitudinous blueprints set before you upon the golden table set by that unknown quantity that seeks to give you the promising defence of spiritual immortality. And AH, the ecstasy, when that last dusty brick is laid to rest within its slot, blotting out the exterior Sun; letting your own subtle burning light evolve from out its centre, from the confines of your horde of heightened polished treasure, without even having raised a finger, whilst all around collapses in a ghastly and familiar unsalvagable heap or thus stands

empty, open to the ravages of the elements and seas of unwanted visitors that scavenge like pirates in the corners of your psyche, picking over the leftover thoughts of your unprotected self, sucking for warmth and droplets of inspiration at your inner walls like the deadly uncontrolled floating debris of the defenceless; the negative all knowing guardian of the black green rays of possession that lead the hordes of the easily led. This quality of non action is most powerful, becoming a suitable attractant to the harnessing of what one SECRET CHIEF recently questioned as being "The Great Work". The possibility that it is the veritable channel of perpetual joy and deeply shooting insight. Having the ability by simply resonating, doing nothing, to have the greatest events, past and future, march reverentially through your head, proving beyond any shadow of doubt that you are more than just a body with a mind, or a tongue-tied outsider that cannot see further than the edge of tomorrow. It is most gratifying, being able to watch events ferment from a protected distance, exploding in your very face, watching the collision of results merely slide down your walls like ice against a furnace door. You will be powerless in this process but to grow to love, to relish this deviousness of self fertilization, feeling your undying impregnating seed breaking off into the priest holes of deepest space, falling into others' laps, shocking them with a wily unexpected

crackle of heartfelt, mind-perfected Godly-erupting current. Question everything as you sit and grow, your face hidden in the activity of your brain. Just lie back and cast aside the implosion of the world around; dream yourself stupid into a Godly PACT, your flesh alive in fire like glowing newly ground jewels upon an ancient shield, glinting in the blackest mirror, the invincible reflection of your soul, held up by phantom hands to your smiling victorious face that is "The Great Work" in all its glory! Build yourself, build in yourself. Gather multiplying invisible hands that grasp and jostle for position, rough and calloused, intent on shouldering these blocks into your strong

facade. Take note of all their faces, let not one pass of whom you do not approve, and lust to take control of, and like the highest most sacred and fermented inner bindu and kala bound together thus, begin to glow from your inside, igniting with a vengeance your astral light that spreads itself and grows like some infected micro organism cast upon a scientist's slide diademed in a lovely holy water prison. Tell no one of this discovered underground spring of boundless granite imagination; no, not one soul, but let the process take its course as you close your eyes at the army of furtive glances that rebound off your body. Seal yourself in and bait your traps with the nobil-

ity of the hungry Lion and the all seeing Eagle against the robbers of your light. Let them clamber up your sides, risking mere life and limb in the climb to your perfected point, knowing that what lies at the top is but the first footsteps on the quest for God. And you my friend, with your pyramid will have but one problem; that of keeping count of the multiplicity of YOURSELVES that come full circle in your Godly Pact, knowing that whoever is looking down at you through the prismatic microscopic lens thus smiles and nods his head in boundless beautiful recognition of the unleashed and energetic glorious process of the mystery of his "Great Work".

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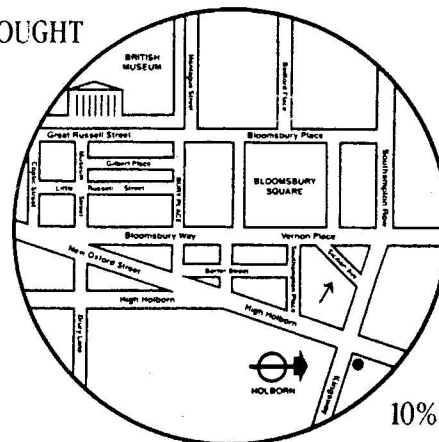
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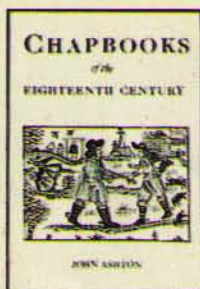


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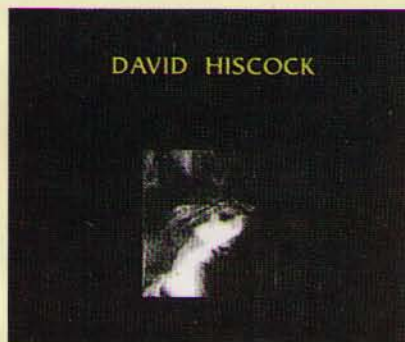


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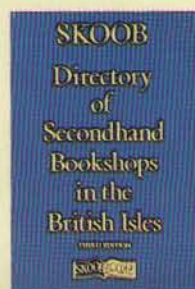
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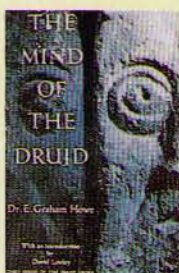


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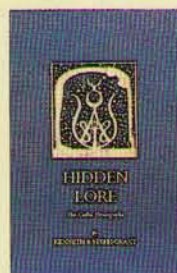


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