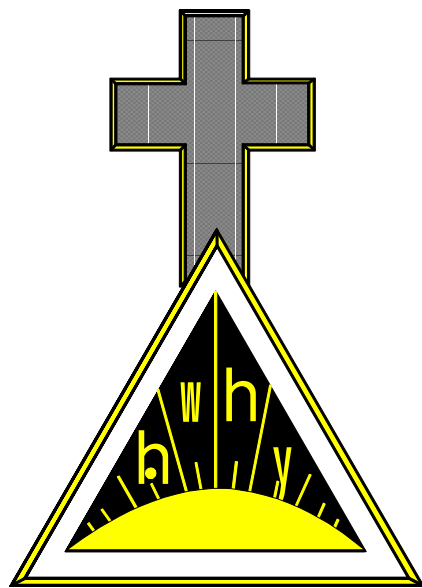


The Hermetic Order Of The
GOLDEN DAWN Intl.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE
PHILOSOPHUS GRADE AND
THE DANGERS THEREOF**



PHILOSOPHUS 4=7

By now, you know that each grade contains its own risks. Each of the elements, though they can be utilized and mastered, and in fact, must be mastered in order to cause reality to conform to will, presents its own specific challenge. The element of Fire is a particularly difficult element, for it is in the element of Fire that the aspirant begins to burn away aspects of the ego that are detrimental in the process of the formation and the accomplishment of the Great Work.

Learning to control one's life force, one's lower emotions, one's Nephesh as projected through the sephira of desire, is absolutely essential to magical workings. However, in addition to that, understanding the nature of one's own personal Fire is extremely important. Not long ago, I examined in my own personality how the element of pain became corrupted and manifested itself and transmuted itself into the element of anger, and from there, the pain which was not dealt with became a fueling force like gasoline on a fire to project the anger into hostility. In examining this process, it became apparent to me that one must deal with the base element of pain before one can deal effectively with the element of anger. It is not good enough to suppress anger. One must reach deep within himself and understand the nature of anger as it relates to pain. Anger of course is associated with Fire, and most of the time it is corrupted Fire. One of the things that the Philosophus should do on a regular basis is examine his own inner psyche through the use of one of the Tattwas, particularly the Tattwa of Tejas, yet not merely Tejas, but combinations of Tejas and the other elements. Therefore, it is almost essential that the Philosophus has a full set of twenty-five Tattwa cards.

Examining the nature of one's thoughts as projected through the element of Fire, such as Air of Fire, one's body, such as Earth of Fire, one's emotions, such as Water of Fire, will help us to better understand the nature of who we really are and what we have become. It is even more essential to understand why we became this way. Why do some people have a seemingly uneventful life as far as negative anger outbursts, hostilities, wars with other individuals, and other people seem totally emersed in conflict, wars, anger, problems, sexual abuse, lust, etc.. One of the reasons for this probably deals with childhood and the kind of information that was thought to be of value as the child formulated himself or herself into an adult. Therefore, it is essential in working the Fire aspect of the Tattwas to ask yourself these questions, "Why do I think that this is important?", "Why am I willing to go through great extremes to act in the same way that I acted in the past?." In other words, if a particular kind of Fire nature is inappropriate or not causing pleasure in one's life, and in many areas causing disharmony or disfunction, then perhaps one should examine the reasons that one chose this behavior mode in the beginning or in early childhood and re-think through the logic. Some of this work can be done just through quiet meditation. Some of it can also be accomplished, as mentioned, by working the aspects of the Fire Tattwa.

Not long ago, a student of the Order hit the 4=7 grade of Philosophus. Almost instantly, upon hitting this grade, arguments and conflicts began to manifest in her life. These arguments and conflicts seemed to be at bay during the Practicus grade, but during the Philsophus grade they were enshrined. Immediate conflicts that had not existed in the Practicus grade began to re-emerge. Now, some of these conflicts were very apparent in the Theoricus grade, such as inability to handle one's lower emotions, inability to handle and to control one's outward and ego desires, inability to handle one's lust, inability to handle one's anger, etc.. This particular person almost immediately ran

into a tremendous amount of energy problems that were corrupted Fire manifested in the Philosophus grade. Instead of realizing that she was having similar problems as existed in the Theoricus grade of Air, but are now manifested ten fold in the Philosophus grade of Fire, she refused to accept that her problems were because of her inability to control the element of Fire. Consequently, irrational decisions began, hasty quick decisions, decisions that not only affected her but her family and her children. Though she could use some form of ego logic to rationalize her decisions, they certainly made no sense compared to the plan that she had laid out not only for her own inner magical growth, but her financial future as well.

This may not be a common occurrence in the Fire grade but it is certainly a possibility, and therefore, the Philosophus is encouraged to take note of his emotions, particularly emotions of irrationality, urgency, lust, anger, and also the emotion that seems to carry this thought with it: "I know a lot now, I don't need anybody's help." This kind of thinking is the kind of thinking that holds the Philosophus back.

The Philosophus, after spending a significant amount of time in the other grades, feels that he or she has and possesses a tremendous amount of knowledge and now is capable of utilizing that knowledge without the aid of his or her personal proctor or the Order in general. Again, this is Fire corrupted. Certainly, increased independence does take place in the Philosophus grade. We must remember that Fire must always be maintained if it is to be safe, and therefore, we must always be on guard and be vigilant in working with the element of Fire. Rather than let the Fire burn away connections and inner growth with the Order, personal proctor, study time, ritual work, etc., the Fire should be utilized to enhance it, to light it up, to give it energy, and to give it manifestation. If this is done, the Philosophus will find that his knowledge and power will grow even faster than in the other grades.

Other emotions again must be examined. The Tattwas become a wonderful method of examining them. We learn to understand that if we are responsible for everything that happens in the Universe because it is a projection of ourselves, then we really have no one to blame but ourselves. Therefore, if we are irritated by the behavior and actions of other people, it is really only an aspect of ourselves. By changing ourselves, we then change the world around us. If we are not happy with a person in our life, let us concentrate on that aspect of that person that lives within us. I guarantee that if you change that sufficiently, the person in the outer will also change as well as yourself and harmony can exist, or the person will cease to be part of your life. In other words, you will not use manipulated behavior to control this person or behavior to keep this person under will, but you will have merely worked on yourself internally, understanding that this person is really a projection of yourself. So as you change yourself, you change the Universe, or in other words, "As above, so below."

We welcome you to the grade of Philosophus. This grade is a grade that requires a minimum of seven months of residency. The reason for the seven month minimum residency in the Philosophus grade is because in this grade, you are learning to control one of the most volatile elements of all, the element of Fire. In addition, by learning to control and manipulate the energy of Fire within your own emotional and mental make-up, you will also be working with all of the previous elements. With too much Air, the Fire becomes enraged; not enough Air, the Fire goes out. Water is the checking point for Fire; it keeps Fire under will. Of course, Earth, unless you build the

house, it will not stand. So consequently, Earth is the foundation that keeps us strong, calm and well-grounded as we build our pillar of Fire.

You have reached the highest grade of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in the Golden Dawn's system of magic. There is no grade higher than this in the Outer Order. This grade is attributed to j xii. Please read over the testing requirements for this grade for entrance into the Portal grade. Special testing and requirements are different in this grade than they have been in previous grades. So in addition, this grade is not only a grade unto itself, it is a grade of reconstruction of all the elemental knowledge that you have learned in the previous grades in your Order. We expect no less than for you to be the best Philosophus possible, for you to master this grade and not only to be a credit to yourself, but a credit to the Order as a whole. We also expect you to help and work with other Order members as others have helped and worked with you in the past. We congratulate you on your achievement, and at the same time, warn you that the pathway has not yet really begun, but begins in the future grade of 5=6.