

HOWLINGS



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INTRODUCTION

THE ACADEMY OF LETTERS WILL NOT ADMIT THE GRIMORE. Wild schemes bound to bursting in camel hair jackets or toad skins. Less than respectable, there is always that slight sulphur tang.

The grimoire is the quintessential magickal book, that is, if you can learn how to read it and then dare to work with it. The grimoire is always in some sense incomplete. It will not reveal its secrets without dedication and the often bitter lessons of wisdom on the path to power. This is a rare idea in a modern world glutted with information and starving for content.

The grimoire is a palingenesis. The hack and paste of overlapping ages. Some made to look old, others seeming younger in candlelight than the centuries should make them. These texts are the lost, the rediscovered, the rescued from the flames, and the outright invented. It is a dog-eared tarot gallery. The grimoire is poured over by French priests in stained cassocks and a scruffy lot of sorcerers to the disdain of clean-cut mages. Those who understand grimoires are truly people of the book in a way that the Abrahamic religions can only parody. We are in the company of vagabonds, camel thieves, diabolists and the truly devout. Borges, the blind doorman, reads down the list with braille fingers and calmly admits them all.

Grimoires have been lifted out of the glass curio cabinet and are being worked with in earnest. The *Picatrix* is finally becoming available in English. The Arabic influence on alchemy and hermetic science begins to be recognised again even as fundamentalist Islam narrows its eyes.

Howlings

The Goetia have struggled out of the Mathers-Crowley straitjacket and have a boisterous joy to them, which the psychological model cannot explain.

Agrippa's planetary kameas are revealed to be corrupt as the text is read more closely by magickians than academics ever could. Kenneth Grant's *Nightside of Eden* inspires Caliphate, Typhonian and lone wolves to assail the tunnels of *Liber 231*. What seemed a scant text is now unfolding many mysteries. Bertiaux's perplexing *Voudon Gnostic Workbook* is back in print to baffle another generation who will not be spoon fed by the spider loa. The Cultus Sabbati have turned on a new generation to the idea of the magickal book, and here we look at *Qutub*, perhaps not a grimoire in the traditional sense but one of the more mysterious of Andrew Chumley's texts.

New grimoires are being born in leathery skins. The mind of the magician who writes such a book is an aperture through which the spirits walk into our world and make themselves known to us.

Howlings brings all these grimoires together for the first time. It places seal by seal and writer by writer in an elaborate and deliberate pact. It has become a grimoire itself. The spirits are bound into the pages and released in the reading. The copies consecrated with smoke, with ink, with letter, with number, with love. You will be drawn in new and fascinating directions by these essays. Some will embrace the abominations, others will simply see them as monstrous combinations. This is chimera. This is legion. This is not always pretty, even in peacock wrap and gilt stamped.

All of the writers and artists within *Howlings* are engaged in Work, whether at sword point in circle, or without formal ritual. These are their personal and, crucially, conflicting accounts. This is part of the answer to the question of how the magick book can be made to yield up its secrets. Not one, but many voices. Howling.

In Nomine Babalon

Peter Grey
14th February 2008



THE UNVEILING OF HERMES

The Embodiment of Truth in Picatrix

Hafiz Batin

THE SYSTEMIC SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL DISINFORMATION WE, O BROTHERS AND SISTERS, are incessantly exposed to acts as a potent adversary in this prolonged spiritual warfare. Our struggle is not straightforward and we are forced to endure the commodification of liberty and machinations of regimes wishing to control hearts and minds (may the One's infinite mercy let them never infiltrate our souls, the last bastion of hope) with their eternally optimistic financial models selling exponen-

tial economic growth and consumerism as the archetypes of civilisation and progress. It is fortunate (all praise due to the One) however, that the learned and wise (may they be granted the key to eternal paradise) are still able to penetrate the gloomy veil of worldly illusion to catch momentary glimpses of absolute Truth pervading through the cosmic excrement from which time, space and man emerge. The motivation behind this essay is an unveiling, with specific reference to *Picatrix*, a celebrated medieval magical treatise of great value to the Western esoteric tradition. Its fame in this respect may primarily derive from the talismanic and astrological operations it describes. However, my intention is to shed light on another dimension of this treatise, which I believe has yet to be fully exposed. This dimension is Truth, which conveyed in *Picatrix* via its metahistorical and mythical embodiment as Hermeticism, forms the essence of Divine power and is the only worthwhile ally in our fight for spiritual liberation. Through exposing aspects of Truth, we hope (the all powerful and merciful One willing) that its sublime and iridescent beauty can be brought to those who seek a renewed perspective for illumination in the repository of times now passed.

It is only by returning to the source that we are able to reacquaint ourselves with the fundamental basis of absolute Truth, which encompasses all theoretical and practical knowledge regarding our relationship with the Divine. *Picatrix* is firmly decided on this matter stating that 'it is from Him and the higher world that the spirit of man is descended; this is why man must wish to return to his place of origin, where his roots are'.¹ Through magical ritual man, as the pinnacle of creation, has the capacity to interface with his creator and, at the zenith of the operation, dissolve into the oblivion of nothingness to experience the ineffable. Echoing traditionalist values, the Truth is positioned within this essay as the means by which man is able to construct evolutionary perspectives for these dark times. My aims may appear lofty but there is no arrogance intended, merely hope that we may find new ways of achieving those things that are fundamental to the purpose of our existence. To promote the importance of aiming our operations towards the highest possible point forms the underlying motivation behind this essay, a call to transcend the sub-lunary and celestial regions and instead connect with the super-celestial realm of Divinity. All is possible, permissible and everywhere, now.

PICATRIX

Metahistorical Context & Synopsis

For those unfamiliar with the medieval magical treatise under inspection, *Picatrix* is the name bestowed upon the Latin adaptation of an Arabic grimoire of celestial magic titled the *Ghāyat al-Hakīm* or the *Aim of the Sage*, which appeared in Spain around 1256. Although attributed to the Andalusian mathematician and astronomer Maslama ibn Ahmad al-Majrīṭī (d. c. 1008), chronological inconsistencies suggest he could not have been the author and the work is therefore usually attributed to Pseudo-Majrīṭī.² *Picatrix* is presented as the synchronised unveiling of magical rites and philosophical doctrine and as one traverses the seemingly erratic order of the treatise it becomes evident that both play an equal role. The reader is informed that the arts of magic and alchemy could not exist without philosophy and that the real purposes of magic and alchemy were to attract people to study the science of philosophy.³ This interdependent relationship is vital on two fronts. Firstly, it provides an intellectual basis for talismanic operations and secondly serves as a means of protecting the operator from daemonic intervention. This strategy is by no means unique and other examples include Iamblichus' (c. 240–c. 325 CE) *De Mysteriis* and, perhaps of more relevance to current investigation, the *Rāsa'il Ikhwān al-Safā'* or the *Treatises of the Brethren of Purity* and the corpus belonging to the Islamic alchemist Jābir ibn Hayyān (c. 721–c. 815 CE). Both of these may have acted as inspiration for the author of *Picatrix*, particularly as their content is often replicated, sometimes ad verbatim, throughout the treatise. David Pingree, a scholar who has devoted study towards *Picatrix*, observes the types of magical acts described in the text as reflecting ancient traditions such as those of Mesopotamia and Egypt, which could have been transmitted through Hellenistic and Roman versions of them.⁴ Avoiding the temptation to embark upon a historical survey it is evident that what is contained within *Picatrix* appears to stem from a perennial or metahistorical dimension of wisdom, which I propose is concurrent with the origin of Truth.

Picatrix can be summarised as a fully instructional encyclopaedic manual expounding a philosophy of nature upon which talismanic and astral magic is based. The emphasis of *Picatrix* appears to lie in portraying magic

as a constituent of Hermetic cosmology, which has the ability to guide man towards the realisation of an innate gnosis. Antoine Faivre views the slant of *Picatrix* as gnostic optimism, within which the universe is Divine.⁵ There is no dualism as the world below is in constant contact with the worlds above. Man is able to manipulate this fundamental Hermetic precept in order to know Divinity.⁶ *Picatrix* is presented from a geocentric view, derived from Ptolemy, within which the most elevated planetary positions are those furthest from Earth. Another key feature of *Picatrix* lies in the acceptance of a cosmic celestial spirit, Neoplatonic in origin, which the soul acquires from the stars and planetary spheres on its descent into the earthly body and which thus makes it susceptible to astral influence.⁷ Neoplatonism is also found in the hypostases used to convey the ontological framework within which the magician must operate. The hypostases comprise the One, universal intellect, world soul, the sphere of nature (primum mobile), the spheres of the seven planets, matter and the elements. It is worth noting that these hypostases are parallel to those found in Jābir ibn Hayyān's *Khitāb al-Khamsīn* and part three of the *Rāsa'il* of the *Ikhwān al-Safā'*.⁸ As Seyyed Hossein Nasr points out it was Jābir (known in the Latin West as Geber) who claimed to have possessed knowledge of the Greek sages, especially that belonging to Pythagoras and Apollonius of Tyana (known in Islam as Bālinās) and the sources of the *Rāsa'il* themselves are often traced to the Jabīrian corpus and Pythagorean elements transmitted via the Harrānians.⁹ The justification for recounting this historical aspect lies in an attempt to convey the Hermetic point of origin in *Picatrix* and it is this central message of primordial knowledge or perennial Truth, which needs to be viewed afresh.

The magical operations of *Picatrix* themselves are primarily based upon talismanic operations which aim to capture and draw down the spirit of the celestial world into material nature. This can be achieved by utilising knowledge concerning specific chains of correspondence present in plants, animals and metals used in conjunction with the movement of the heavens, which determine astrological timings.

THE UNVEILING OF TRUTH IN PICATRIX

Picatrix commences with prayers to the One and promises to reveal profound secrets. The source of absolute Truth is the One; all proceeds from the One, which alone is perfect, transcendent and eternal. In the opening chapter, the author sets out the rank and honour of philosophy and knowledge as the noblest gift granted to man by the One. Man's duty is to use this gift to seek out the true nature of his existence. It is only through an understanding of the true essence of things and how all existence ultimately derives from the first cause that man's intellect and soul can be illuminated.¹⁰ Crucially, it is man alone who possesses a rational soul in addition to the vegetative and animal faculties. He is a microcosm corresponding to the macrocosm. Using this Hermetic analogy in relation to the idea of universal sympathy, human beings are able to know everything in creation. It is therefore through the study of science in its original form i.e. not divorced from philosophy, that man is permitted access to his perfect nature or inner Divine being and is thus granted the wisdom of being able to explain everything in this world.¹¹ What emerges from this is that the study of philosophy can lead to real knowledge of the One. *Picatrix* also makes it clear that nothing can be accomplished in science without the power and disposition of the planets and that synonymous with this is the realisation of the presence of the Divine within oneself, which grants success in magical operations.¹²

Upon realisation of this gnosis it is possible to obtain the key to unveiling the truth of science and philosophy, which according to *Picatrix* can also be found at the point where the sage connects with his ruling planet.¹³ I propose that this celestial magical process is equivalent to the discovery of one's personal daemon. Furthermore, this suggests the unveiling of Truth may reside within the climax of the talismanic ritual and this appears consistent with Iamblichean theurgy or 'god work'. Of equal importance however, is the initial purification and intellectual awareness of the operator, which is intrinsic to the execution of all talismanic operations and without which the risk of daemonic interference exists.

Describing or attempting to conceive how this experience of Truth manifests itself is futile by virtue of its absolute power and it therefore

becomes necessary to purge oneself of all preconceptions before the process of unveiling may begin. In the context of reasserting the role of Truth, this dictates we should free ourselves from all we have become trapped by during our earthly existence. The time for spiritual revolution is now and Hermes as the archetypal personification of Truth must be reborn.

Another key passage in *Picatrix* is presented in the context of Hermes and bears resemblance with the introductory chapter of *The Secret of Creation* attributed to Apollonius of Tyana, which is thought to derive from *The Book of Creation of Hermes*. In this passage the reader is told about knowledge possessed by ancient sages regarding spirits relating to man's inner Divine being, or perfect nature. When the sages were in need of connecting with their perfect nature, they would call out four names: Meegius, Betzahuech, Vacdez and Nufeneguediz.¹⁴ What follows, although relayed from the perspective of Hermes, would appear to relate to Apollonius and his discovery of the tomb of Hermes. The story, as told in *Picatrix*, describes the discovery of a darkened underground vault out of which violent winds emerge and extinguish the torch of the seeker. To gain access to the vault the seeker is told by a man, who appears in a dream, to put the light within a glass lantern so that the winds do not extinguish his torch. Upon entry to the vault he is told to draw four talismans, one in each corner, where the secrets of the world and his perfect nature may be revealed. On asking who the voice is, he is told it is his own inner being and that when he wishes to communicate with him that he should call out his four names.¹⁵ What I believe this story conveys is that by digging into the inner vault of the self, it is possible to locate the essence of our perfect nature. In turn, and based on the notion that we all possess sparks of Divinity, it is possible to make a connection and become acquainted with the Divine, which equates to the realisation of absolute Truth.

Picatrix is clear to emphasise this point because by learning to understand things in their essence, man is able to understand the nature of magic.¹⁶ This in itself is no easy task and we learn in *Picatrix* how the sages of antiquity exposed these truths in a hidden fashion to conceal their knowledge from the ignorant ones.¹⁷ In contrast, the author of *Picatrix* seeks to clarify this obscurity in a most profound manner, unveiling wisdom and knowledge of the inferior world as a necessary prerequisite to understand-

ing the virtues and acts of the heavens. Of crucial relevance to this is the fact that, within *Picatrix*, Hermes is the authority for imparting to man the route to discovery of this innate gnosis.

CONCLUSION & REPERCUSSIONS IN THE REASSERTION OF TRUTH

How does the unveiling of Truth occur in *Picatrix*? Firstly, it is proposed that *Picatrix* may be viewed as a key Islamic treatise, which contains within it a series of references to Hermes as the mythical embodiment of metaphysical Truth. Secondly, and of direct relevance to *Picatrix* and its comprehensive treatment of worldly knowledge, is the insistence upon the study of nature as a fundamental aid, integral to the process and a necessary stage in the realisation of Truth. As Nasr states, absolute Truth is particularised by the specific form of revelation as well as by the characteristics of the people who study it and, additionally, that this particularisation has direct bearing upon the study of nature from a cosmological perspective.¹⁸ In Hermeticism, the role of nature is viewed as pertaining to a book of symbols which can be used by man to interpret and understand nature in his spiritual journey of ascension. The central precept in Hermetic cosmology is the absolute unity of the Divine or the One, which is especially apparent in *Picatrix*. In this manner, the fundamental idea of Truth forms the universal criterion of Islam, which simultaneously acts as the vehicle through which Hermetic and Neoplatonic doctrines can be assimilated with Islamic revelation.¹⁹

Viewed in this context, the intention of *Picatrix* may be to present an encyclopaedic treatise upon which the idea of absolute unity (as the One) can be discovered and recognised as synonymous with Truth. Within this it is simultaneously loyal to the Hermetic heritage from which it is essentially formed. Furthermore, nature as a faculty of the Neoplatonic world soul is the receiver of forms present in all worldly things and thereby assumes its role as governor and the cause of all motion in the sub-lunary realm. This co-dependence of nature and unity becomes the activating force for gaining an understanding of Divinity as absolute and equivalent with Truth. The study of nature is thus qualified as constituting a Divinely-ordained route towards the realisation of gnosis and within this context that the

talismanic operations of *Picatrix* can be situated. It follows that the study of sciences such as astrology must be considered in light of metaphysical principles, which have been shown as underlying the Hermetic cosmology within *Picatrix*.

Picatrix contains comprehensive instructions concerning the fabrication of elaborate talismans as well as dealing with the wider remit of magic in its Divine guise, which in some senses can be considered as parallel to Iamblichean theurgy. It is my greatest conviction that through the reassertion of Truth, boundless wisdom remains to be unearthed from the darkest vault of our inner being. This is where man's perfect nature patiently and quietly resides, awaiting the calling of his four names so that he may reveal earthly and otherworldly treasures (the beneficent One willing) to the sages among us. *Picatrix* has revealed that via use of the intellect, man as *magnum miraculum* is able to ascend the seven heavens to assume his rightful Divine rank using an omnipresent network of sympathy integrated within a hierarchical emanationist cosmology. Within this ontological spectrum the hypostasis of the One oversees the regulation of Divinely-inspired law, according to which our earthly existence constitutes the descent and necessary ascent of the soul. Within this cosmological framework, an infinite array of symbols embedded in the universe can be discovered and used in a manner consistent with the idea of an imaginal cosmic ladder which the seeker ascends in the hope of achieving gnosis. Sympathy, perhaps conceived as Love, binds all things in the universe together and thus forms the spiritual mechanism for effecting change in the material world. It is through these chains of sympathy, manifested in the celestial world, animal and plant kingdoms that the magician is able to retrace the steps to his celestial deity, his perfect nature. This in turn forms the route towards gnosis and immortalisation of the soul. Identification with our perfect nature appears consistent with the idea of discovering one's personal daemon, itself a necessary step in the journey of ascension of the soul. It is my belief that by somehow transcending the necessary physical operations of nature it becomes possible for the operator to come into contact with Divinity.

Perhaps one final lesson we can learn from *Picatrix* is that by reasserting the importance of Truth in the modern world, it is possible to reposition the role of transcendence within our lives. As Faivre points out, this does

not entail the creation of false myths but instead points towards the refusal of them, not sacrificing ourselves to ancient or new idols but refusing to idolise history, refusing to succumb to the ideologies of history.²⁰ In this context *Picatrix*, presented as an aid to discovering Truth, becomes the spiritual battleground where real opportunity resides for rebirth and liberation. It is here that the sage can hope to gain an understanding of Divinity as the origin and conclusion of all things.

ENDNOTES

- 1 *Picatrix, un traité de magie médiéval*, I.I. 1-2, pp.44-46.
- 2 David Pingree, 'Some of the Sources of the *Ghayat al-hakim*', pp.1-2.
- 3 *Picatrix*, I.I. 1-2, pp.44-46.
- 4 David Pingree, 'Some of the Sources of the *Ghayat al-hakim*', p.2.
- 5 Antoine Faivre, 1995, p.56.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 D.P. Walker, 2000, p.38.
- 8 David Pingree, 'Some of the Sources of the *Ghayat al-hakim*', p.3.
- 9 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 1978, pp.37-38.
- 10 *Picatrix*, I.I. 1-2, pp.44-46.
- 11 *Picatrix*, I.VI. 1, p.79.
- 12 *Picatrix*, III.IV. 1, p.204.
- 13 *Picatrix*, III.V. 5, p.208.
- 14 *Picatrix*, III.VI. 1, p.204.
- 15 *Picatrix*, III.VI. 1, pp.204-05.
- 16 *Picatrix*, V.VI. 5, p.82.
- 17 *Picatrix*, V.VI. 6, p.82.
- 18 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, p.1.
- 19 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, p.4.
- 20 Antoine Faivre, pp.63-66.

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- D.P. Walker *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella*



ANDROMALIUS
The Liberator

Paul Hughes-Barlow

THIS LITTLE ESSAY WAS ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED as a counterweight to the notion that the Goetia can only be invoked with difficulty by advanced ritual magickians, at cost to their health and sanity. Granted, I had the blessings of Punditt Maharaj, my spiritual Master, but my outlook was purely on spiritual growth, and my sights were firmly on the Orient. My interest in Western systems grew out of inner experiences and visions that could not be explained by Eastern systems. I was being prepared by Punditt. After a year or two with him, he informed me that he believed I could be a Punditt – naturally, he did not tell me of the ordeals ahead. In one way you could see the many years with him as an equivalent to the six months of preparation for the *Abramelin* rituals undertaken by Crowley & al.

My contention is that Goetic experience is actually quite common, but because the experience or contact is so subtle, so easy to miss, few are recorded let alone recognised. I have helped a number of aspirants to work with the Goetia. All that is needed is an interest in the subject.

During the writing of this essay I had not one, but two visions, both very similar in content, and both centring on the 72nd Spirit, Andromalius. He is not a Spirit I had contact with before. Early in the first vision the seed of a question not unnaturally formed in my mind: *I am writing this essay... We know, they chuckled. Do you want me to write about it?* The response was more laughter.

I was not alone during both visions, the visions happened at different times, with different people – who were unaware of what I was seeing – and in different places. Andromalius was with me on the half hour walk through a Brighton shopping centre packed with Christmas shoppers, and my mind was taken to certain aspects of cosmology that the Goetia wanted me to comprehend.

15th November 2007: I was chanting the Divine Names of God, and I ‘saw’ that a colleague needed healing. I focussed on him, and I saw he was surrounded by snakes emanating from his feet. I could not see an immediate solution, so I continued to chant the Divine Names. The vision intensified, as did the number of the snakes. Were they Nagas? My mind came to consider the Goetia, and the vision changed subtly and then transformed. The snakes morphed together, and began to separate from my friend, as they did so I saw the figure of a man. Andromalius came to mind. I had never had dealings with him before, but I vaguely remembered he was associated with a serpent. I only had the vision for confirmation. I was miles from my books or the internet.

The chanting intensified. As I acknowledged his right to be there, I noticed all the other seventy one Spirits appearing outside the circle, and yet they were also inside the circle. The Spirits formed equidistantly around their own circle, and the circle began to rotate anticlockwise. Their circle rotated within and beyond my circle, and it was as if they were also generating a translucent sphere that shimmered with its own light. As I pondered, and continued to chant, I noticed that the circle – or was it one or two cir-

cles? I could not distinguish, yet I understood the nature of it – was around me, and it was immediately within my heart.

The spheres were generated by the balanced energies of the 72 Spirits stationed on the equator. The spheres continued to spin anticlockwise. As I gazed, I saw a larger Spirit at the centre in a dark brown robe with a white turban. He was an Ifrit, more powerful than the Jinn, known to us as Goetia.

I was given more insights into the work of the Jinn, and the powerful Ifrit, as the energy from the spinning sphere increased. As the prayers were recited, their work done, the Spirits gradually faded away.

The next day I finally got online to discover that Andromalius’ office, according to the Mathers *Goetia*, is:

To bring back both a Thief, and the Goods which be stolen; and to discover all Wickedness, and Underhand Dealing; and to punish all Thieves and other Wicked People and also to discover Treasures that be Hid.

The powers of Andromalius perfectly summed up the situation of my friend. I saw him the next day, looking calmer, in control, and already he was working hard to recover things that he had lost.

These events happened barely a week after I was asked to contribute to this book. In so many ways the Vision and the Workings encapsulate my approach to the Goetia. The vision of the 72 Spirits on the circumference of the circle in perfect balance, confirming – as if I needed it – their relationship to the quincunxes of astrology. The Goetia came in response to my need for a healing solution. They did not appear immediately, but as a result of my discovering the snakes as the problem. They responded to the chanting of the Divine Names. It was as if the Divine Names provided the energy and space to contain the work, but let it not be said that the Spirits were in any way confined. They were there because they chose to be there, and they chose to be seen in a way that confirmed their equal status between themselves. Clearly for maximum effect all the Goetia should be present, with the focus on the Spirit who is doing the Working. Note that I did not ‘call’ or invoke or evoke any spirit. Indeed, I believe it was the power of the Divine Names that empowered my query or quest to help my colleague. It was the Goetia themselves who presented Andromalius to be the agent of

change, and it may be that he was also released from some nefarious duty as a result of the Working. For me, the most fascinating aspect of the entire Working is the appearance of the Ifrit at the centre of the Spirits and the circle. In Islamic mythology the Ifrit is an infernal class of beings whose lives are structured on a tribal basis. This jars with my description above, where the Goetia are seen equally on the circumference of the circle, but it may be that the West has conflated the Jinn with the Ifrit.

The only infernal aspect of the vision came at the beginning, when I was trying to release the serpents from my colleague. The chanting of the Divine Names automatically creates a sacred space, and it was within that space that the Goetia appeared to help me and my colleague.

The ability to conduct such an operation takes many years. For me, it was nearly twenty five years, and it started when I had lost my belief in any kind of spirit, or ghost. While the West focuses on the need to perform the *Abramelin* and Goetic rituals perfectly, I was taken on a journey where I was helped by a living Master who had been working with Spirits all his life. He saw my potential at a time when all I wanted was to meditate and simply live a spiritual life.

To understand my journey, we have to go back to the beginning. This was unlike 'normal' magickal and spiritual journeys where the aspirant is aware of what is to come, what is to be expected, and is conversant with the technical terms. The roadmap is familiar, after all others have been down that path before – so the books tell us. By contrast, I never knew the roadmap, and I had no idea of the milestones to come, or even when I was coming close to them. I never knew the tests that I had to face. I never knew when the tests were taking place, and I have to presume I passed those tests satisfactorily. I may well have had to do many retakes, but I cannot tell you what they were, or when it happened, primarily because I rarely faced the same situation twice, and if I did, I had to do things differently. I am talking in riddles, but for many years my life was an enigma living in the shadow of the enigma that is my teacher, and the enigmas that were the Spirits. There are many strictures surrounding working with the Goetia. I have seen the fear in the faces of experienced magicians when I have broached the subject. In the course of my Goetic journey I became aware of those strictures, so when the Goetia did appear, it was hard for me to

validate my experiences. For all I knew the Western occult approach was the only way to do things.

A further complication is that my journey was done mostly in silence. There is the silence of the way; the silence of my teacher in response to my desperate questions to find some comprehension of what was going on; and the silence I had to work under, knowing that there was nobody else to turn to. When things got really tough, and that was the norm rather than the exception, Punditt would disappear so that I had to face the situation alone. I was regularly thrown into the deep end of the swimming pool, not knowing if I could swim, as all manner of sharks swam around me and attacked, while Punditt held my head underwater before I could even gulp some air. I regularly faced my demise knowing that nobody would ever know my fate.

My personal situation was never easy. Money was tight, and I seemed to be assailed by enemies from all directions. One day walking down the road with Punditt, during a particularly difficult time, I burst into tears. Punditt swore, and threatened to abandon me there and then. That was my lesson on stoicism, as if I needed one.

The Work between the master and the student is also silent. It took many years before I realised that I had to talk about some of my experiences, and then only with a few selected friends who seemed to be on a similar path. With time I began to see that I had to talk about my experiences to a wider audience, knowing that I have no way of providing proof. Naturally, Punditt was silent on whether I had permission to divulge certain experiences. The pact we had between us was, as always, tacit and unspoken. Paradoxically, the Goetia have been the most vocal of the spirits I work with. Certainly, they were almost always the easiest to recognise.

There are seminal moments on the Goetic journey. Mine happened in my early twenties on a bright, sunny but cool, late morning in Brighton, so it was probably in the Autumn. We were walking slowly down Western Road. My teacher Punditt Maharaj was in his fifties, he was barely five feet high with a round face and dark lustrous hair. We rarely had conversations. Even at this early stage I knew I was never going to write a book on the Discourses with my Master. The long silences were profound, but my mind rarely penetrated the depths. We were walking slowly past an empty bus

stop, nobody was there. Suddenly my head swivelled, but I saw nothing. Punditt smiled, *A spirit said good morning*. I grunted.

One evening we were in his small flat. Once again I was sitting there wondering what I was doing. I still had no idea who Punditt really was, and what he was doing. I was considering saying something about making a move, going back to my flat to sleep or watch tv. Punditt looked at me intently, he pointed and said, *This spirit sitting next to me is teaching you*. I was too nonplussed to say anything coherent. Besides, I already knew my questions would not elicit anything.

Systematically, my old life (I was barely into my twenties) was being dismantled. Every belief, tenet, way of life, work, friendship, social life, thought and idea was ruthlessly, and sometimes brutally destroyed. Occasionally something was put in place, but generally I was in a nihilistic state. Punditt smiled enigmatically. When I met him, I was vegetarian, teetotal, and meditating 3 hours twice a day while holding down a poorly paid office job. Later, I would see that I was heading for a nervous breakdown. I was regularly trying to sup as many lagers as Punditt before closing time in the days when the pubs would close at 3pm. I never did manage to keep up with him. In the evening we would cook a very hot chicken curry while we worked through a bottle of Black Label or vodka. By now I had been evicted from the Meditation Centre on trumped up charges. I was past caring.

One day, soon after the previous events, or more accurately non-experiences, I got a pain in my body. It was an ache that spread within my chest. Then it moved, gradually but perceptibly. By now, Punditt and I had a simple sign language system. I pointed to where the pain was, and he nodded, *It is a baby spirit. What sort of baby spirit?* I asked. *A baby spirit. Don't worry, it will go.* That baby spirit stayed with me for years.

The pain moved to my head. It was excruciating. The intensity of the pains (yes, there could be more than one at the same time), continued for years. The pains were there during waking, dreaming and sleeping. The pains were there when I was drunk, sober, or getting over a hangover. The pains were there during sex. I learnt to continue life as though nothing untoward was going on. The pains would move constantly, and change in size, sometimes growing, sometimes shrinking. When a pain stopped, another would take its place. Eventually I would realise that these spiritual growing

pains were preparing me to become a Spirit. The baby spirit was myself, the emergent new Self. In time, Spirits would see me as one of them, but for now I was continuing in misery, wondering when it would end. However, at that time what was happening was incomprehensible, and the only comfort I got was Punditt's insouciance at my suffering.

Dreams became a terrifying experience. I was assailed continually by Spirits of every kind and description, assuming of course that I was able to classify them. I was being trained to be a spiritual warrior. Nightly, and with trepidation, I went to bed, constantly in physical and mental pain. The attacks would start. One night a Spirit nearly killed me with a knife. I woke up, lay for a few seconds, and decided to go back to sleep. Instantly I was back with the Spirit, who was so surprised to see me that I had the advantage, and I could kill it. Nightly I witnessed and took part in massacres. I also found allies, and sometimes I was teaching Spirits. Sometimes, as I lay in bed awake, I was aware of a Spirit lying next to me. Female Spirits would occasionally appear in dreams, and they would often have sex with me.

One day, as I was shaving and looking into the mirror, I 'saw' a Spirit in my mind. He said his name was Valefor. I mentally nodded, unsure what to do. After a few seconds Valefor vanished. My mental, emotional and spiritual state had not changed. I was curious, but I did not know where to find more information, as there was no point in asking Punditt.

This was the cue to start desperately devouring books on magic in an attempt to make sense of my experiences. I came across the big Llewellyn paperback on the Golden Dawn teachings. From there, the writings of Aleister Crowley mesmerised me, and then Kenneth Grant.

My spiritual journey was really rubbing salt into the wounds. Not only was I in continuous pain, but it was costing me a fortune in books that never quite gave me the answer. The curious thing was, as I read these books, I would recognise the spiritual experiences. I had already had them. The books were merely confirming what I was already going through. However, I was not a member of a Lodge. I was not performing any magical rituals (there was nobody to work with). I had no magical weapons either. For a while I tried doing the banishing rituals, but I quickly lost interest.

Punditt had to go to Manchester to see some of his relatives. He was not in the best of health, and he wanted me to go with him. Somehow, I got out of this obligation, but after a week he phoned me insisting that I come up. While crossing from Victoria to Euston, I visited my new favourite bookshop, Atlantis, by the British Museum. On the shelf wrapped in clingfilm, was a grubby second hand copy of *Outside the Circles of Time* by Kenneth Grant. The price was £50, very expensive, but I knew that if I did not get it, it would not be there the next time. I read most of the book on the crowded train to Manchester. My time with Punditt's family was pleasant. They naturally cooked better curry than he did, and their chapattis were perfect circles. We continued to drink. After a week, we went to see his relatives in Liverpool. By now his health had deteriorated, and he lay on a mattress on the floor in a bare room on the third floor of a large Victorian house. I did not know what to do. He was my master, how could I help him? I remembered something in *Outside the Circles of Time*, and after some effort found the passage. Grant made it very clear that this particular operation should not be undertaken under any circumstances. By now, I had run through the limited repertoire of spiritual healing I was capable of. I had no choice. Punditt was getting worse, and I was worried that he would not pull through. I went for a walk, and with trepidation I performed this operation. My mood lifted, and when I got back to the house, Punditt was clearly better. Exalted, I grabbed the book to check and see if there was anything I could do, or I had omitted to do. The passage had disappeared. I could not find it, and with the passing of time, I cannot remember what it was that I did that afternoon in Liverpool.

However, this experience gave me the confidence to begin my magical and spiritual journey in earnest. I would search out magical techniques that were considered to be very dangerous, and invariably a time would come when I had to use those techniques, always without a safety net.

One day I said to Punditt, *I realise I have to do these things myself*. He nodded, *If you make a mistake, don't worry, I will fix it*. Naturally we had never discussed my magical research into these books. Punditt has the patience of Job. Every morning when we met up, he would have to correct the mistakes I had made the previous night. I never said what the mistakes

were, but when I mentioned them, he would nod sagely, and silently fix them.

Occasionally I would see a Goetic Spirit, and sometimes the spirit would ask me to do something. Sometimes I would ask a Goetic Spirit to help me on something. Now and then I would see several Goetic Spirits together. Appearances could happen at any time of the day or night, I could be walking down the road, or sitting in the pub in various states of intoxication. Invariably I would see the Spirit exactly as described in the literature, and I would often 'see' its name. If I remembered, I would look up the name in the book when I got home. I had an understanding or rapport with the Goetia, but I could not always say what was really going on.

By now pretty much any and every incident in my life with Punditt was deemed to be something to do with Spirits. One day, as I was about to cross a busy road, a Spirit pushed me in the back, trying to kill me under the wheels of a car. Spirits would prevent clients from coming for readings. Things would often fly off the shelf in the kitchen when I was in the living room of my flat with Punditt. One evening, as Punditt sat on the sofa, whisky glass in hand, I went into the kitchen, and there in the doorway, stood a Grey, about two feet tall and as solid as any material object. I looked down at him, and he looked up, making points with his finger as if remonstrating. However, no words could be heard. I stood there slightly nonplussed for a few seconds as I was lectured by this Grey, then I decided to go back into the living room. Punditt was chatting with my brother, but he looked up as I entered. I said nothing but turned around and went back to the kitchen. The Grey had disappeared. I did not even bother looking for him as I reflected that people had written bestsellers on lesser experiences. Who was going to believe that I saw a Grey in my flat, where was his flying saucer? How did he get in? It wasn't as if I had surgery done on me. I don't think I ever mentioned this incident with Punditt.

I had got onto the internet in the early days, and on a newsgroup I learned of an exhibition in London of Aleister Crowley's paintings. I naturally went, and I purchased a limited edition print of *The Master Therion 666* as a memento. I took it home, and for some reason kept it in the paper bag on top of the cupboard in my bedroom. After a few months I decided to put the print on the wall of my living room. I put it up by my computer.

A few minutes later Punditt telephoned, warning me of a spirit problem. He never rang to warn me like this. I had barely put the phone down when the computer crashed spectacularly. The print was returned to its wrapping on top of the cupboard. For a week nothing I did could resuscitate my computer. Then, it suddenly worked again, as if nothing had ever been wrong with it. After a few months I got the courage to put the picture back on the wall, this time without incident. A few days later Punditt came round for one of our regular curry and whisky evenings. He saw the picture smiled and said, *Spirit*. The Master Therion was smiling too.

GOETIA & THE TAROT

In 2003, at about the same time as I was speaking at the Occulture Conference in Brighton, I was contacted by a publisher, Oliver Rathbone. I was commissioned to write a book on the Tarot based in part on my Supertarot website. Neither of us wanted to do a typical book on the Tarot, so we came up with the idea of having eleven chapters, eleven being the number of magick and change. Oliver then suggested pairing up the Major Arcana, and I would write a commentary. I was not too enthused by the idea, but actually it worked out very well. We had also agreed to minimise the kabbalistic tree of life attributions to the Tarot. I had been going through a process of realisation that despite appearances to the contrary, the kabbalistic tree of life is not really appropriate to the Tarot. However, it is one thing to see that the two are not really connected, it is another to see what replaces it.

The novelty of the eleven chapters and pairing of the Major Arcana allowed me to abandon a lot of the conventions of Tarot books, but it took a while before I came up with the idea of analysing a Tarot spread, in particular the Opening of the Key spread, in various different ways. As far as I knew, nobody had approached a Tarot book in such a way. By now I was spending several months with a girlfriend in Houston, Texas. She was working long hours, so I had no excuse not to knuckle down.

The Opening of the Key spread (00TK) uses all the cards cut into four piles. The original rules are slightly ambiguous. Crowley, in *The Book of Thoth*, uses slightly different rules to the Golden Dawn. The 00TK spread relies on card counting and pairing to analyse the cards. The top card of the pile containing the Significator is the starting point for counting according to some specific rules. However, since I had the time and the inclination (I had a book to fill), I began to experiment by counting from all the cards, not just from the top card. The process was time-consuming, but I learnt a lot.

One night I had a strange dream. I was being tortured by Spirits who wanted to know about 'the second fool'. There is only one Fool, particularly as it is zero. Having had many weird dreams I generally do not take too much notice of them, but this one was different. I pondered for days without much success and then forgot all about it. Then I remembered the dream, and it occurred to me that maybe the answer lies in the function of the Fool, which is the origin of the Universe, everything comes from it. So, the opposite function would be everything returning to the Source. Instantly everything changed, and I suddenly saw all the Spirits of *Liber 231* appearing before me, and they helped solve the problem.

A few days later, Gaap appeared to me, telling me that the Goetia were cousins of the *Liber 231* Spirits, and that I should not forget them. The Goetia also told me that they originated in Iraq. At the same time Britain and the USA were desperate to invade that country on flimsy pretexts. At the same time, I found *Tarot & Magic* by Donald Michael Kraig. I had to laugh as he recounted how he nearly died in his attempts to contact the *Liber 231* Spirits. You really need a master to help in your magical endeavours. Despite their connections, the combination of Tarot and magick have never fulfilled their potential, largely, I believe, because of the rigid adherence to the Tree of Life as a cosmological structure. Kraig suffered, but his insights reach to a new level:

The real question... is, 'Where are the Tarot and magic going?' Who is going to come up with a system of magic that carry us well through the 21st century? Who will devise a system of divination and magic for the next era of human existence? Is it hidden in some book or deck that is already created? Is it being created now?

I believe I can answer some of these questions. The new structures are already there. *The Book of Thoth* by Aleister Crowley and Frieda Harris is truly a magical grimoire. The prime Tarot spread is the OOTK, first presented in the Golden Dawn magical system. With careful analysis the combination of *The Book of Thoth* and the OOTK spread is unbeatable. But first, we have to discard some notions. I was already abandoning the kabbalistic Tree of Life as a viable system for structuring the Tarot. As I continue my studies, the Kabbalah is becoming increasingly irrelevant. On the other hand, the structure of the Tarot itself is perfectly balanced for spiritual and magical workings. The elemental and astrological attributions of the Tarot cards are critical.

Many books on Tarot and magic emphasize the need for divination before magical practice is carried out. To do this the magician has had to determine the magical operation, its purpose and the Spirits to be invoked. A lot of assumptions have to be made. How much better would it be if the Tarot told you of the magical work that needed to be done, when the operation should take place, and the nature and name of the Spirits to be invoked, or worked with? Would you also like to know the spiritual forces that may have caused the problem in the first place? I bet you would.

My book, *Tarot and the Magus* gives you the Keys. The Keys are found in the OOTK spread, in particular the counting technique. The original instructions tell the reader to count from the top card, or Significator, but I decided to extend the technique by analysing the count from every card, in both directions. As I analysed the data I saw patterns emerging, that would never have been known from the original rules. Quite simply, when we count from every card, in both directions, we discover that some cards are not counted onto. We also find that some cards are not counted onto in either direction from any other card in the string. These cards are similar to finding the source of the Nile. They represent knowledge or information that may be hidden. If it is a court card, it may represent a person who is acting behind the scenes. If it is a major card, or any of the 2-10 minor cards, we know the Spirits associated with these cards, and we can construct a Working to enhance or ameliorate the influence of that Spirit in the situation we are exploring.

In essence, analysis of the OOTK spread will give us the source, course and goal of our magical Working. I have found that analysis will make changes automatically. One method is to record the exact sequence of the Tarot cards in the four piles, as a permanent record, to be consulted as events unfold. If you are particularly extravagant, you can keep the cards in the four piles on your altar.

Reading the Tarot using the OOTK spread becomes a dynamic process. I have found that working this way brings energies into line, creating balance within and without. Combined with the silent presence of my master, working with Spirits is relatively easy. In my experience, Work results in liberation for the Spirit or Spirits, the magician, and for the person or situation where the Work is directed.

FOOL & UNIVERSE

While I was writing *Tarot and the Magus* all the Spirits of *Liber 231* appeared in the circumference of a circle around me. I felt protected. Their appearance coincided with an insight into the function of the Fool as the locus of ingress and egress by the entire manifested universe. Indeed, I had already studied the pairing of the Major Arcana for the book, and the Fool was seen as an aspect of the Universe card.

On the Thoth Universe card we have the Shemhamforash of 72 quinances around the dancing figure. The Golden Dawn associated the Goetia with the 36 Minor Arcana (Aces excluded), so that each card has two Goetia. Starting with the two of Wands representing the first ten degrees of Aries, we have the first Spirit, Bael, who is supposed to operate by Day. The thirty seventh Spirit is Phenex, who also rules the two of Wands, this time by Night. As a convention this seems perfectly acceptable to the Goetia. However, we also need to understand that the proper astrological attribution is to have the Spirits in sequence each ruling five degrees, so that Phenex is associated with the first five degrees of Libra. My own experience is that all the Goetia are available all the time, and that it is advisable to invite all 72 Spirits to convocation, and then see which Spirit or area is brought into focus.

In either case, Andromalius is the last Spirit, and he is associated with the final degrees of Pisces. As far as I know I have not had contact with Andromalius previously. After some thought I realised that Andromalius was preparing the ground for a new cycle. It is possible that he is associated with the Nagas. His function seems to be as a Liberator and Initiator of a new cycle. My view is that the Fall is about man, not the Angels or Spirits, and it refers to the loss of the ability to commune with other beings.

In both visions I saw all 72 Spirits in a circle around me, moving anti-clockwise. There is a dualistic aspect in that they were also within me. They were also in a circle that was oblique to the horizon, which I understood to indicate the Zodiacal circle. There is enough evidence to show that the divinatory meanings of the Minor Arcana are derived from the decanates, and not from the sephiroth of the Tree of Life, see *The Mystical Origins of the Tarot* by Paul Huson. As I looked beyond this circle I could see the Heavens, and I understood that the Goetia were the Keys or the Link to the Heavens beyond (I have not explored thus far). My mind turned to the Magus card, where the Magus is depicted with one arm raised, as if connecting Heaven with Earth. The Magus is paired with the fiery Judgment or Aeon card, and we should note that the Jinn are considered to originate from smokeless fire. Crowley related The Aeon to events in 1904, and he wrote that this card should depict the Stele of Revealing. Magus is a Persian word that is the origin of magic, and of course there are the three Magi who visited Jesus.

Increasingly there is an understanding that the origins of the Tarot lie in the Middle East, wherein Islam and Sufism lie. Crowley states that the Angel of the Tarot is HRU or Heru (Horus), but I think greater significance should be given to HVA, 'He', which when pronounced is 'Hoo', the most powerful chant in Sufism. 'Hoo' means is, or being, or essence, as in 'Allah Hoo', God IS. The Hebrew letters of the Fool and Universe, ATh, also means essence, while the Magus and Aeon, BSh can mean in fire, so we see that the Hebrew and Sufi associations are congruent within the Tarot and the Goetia. However, while Kabbalism and the Tarot has been explored ad nauseum, the Sufi currents may well prove to be more productive.

DEVELOPING WORKINGS WITH THE GOETIA

The Spirits came to me; I have never performed the *Abramelin* ritual or Goetic rituals. I also had the advantage of a master who was fully conversant with Spirits, although we never discussed the Goetia. Prayer and the use of mantras also helped greatly. In my experience there is no need for a magickal circle. I never used one. When Spirits appear in broad daylight in shopping centres and other places with crowds, Goetic invocation and ritual will be useless unless you prefer impromptu street theatre. When I was with my teacher I had to learn to be impassive towards whatever was thrown in my direction. I learned to work in all kinds of pressure environments. Here are a few rules I have found helpful:

Do:

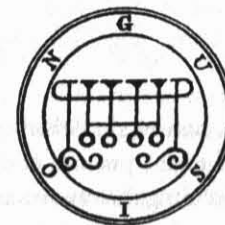
- Treat Spirits with respect, they are your friends.
- Work with Spirits as colleagues.
- Be prepared for other Spirits to appear and either watch or help in the Working.
- Work on your own spiritual development.
- Believe in God.
- Practise meditation or other spiritual methods.
- Associate with those on the spiritual path.
- Allow the Spirits to show what work is required.
- Be flexible in your perceptions.
- Be prepared for Spirits to appear at any time.
- Be prepared to work with Spirits in waking, dreaming and sleeping states.
- Be prepared to discover new powers and ways of working.
- Forget pretty much everything you have read about the Goetia.
- See the Goetia as Jinn.
- Read the *Koran*.
- See the Goetia as an aspect of your Self.
- Use the Thoth Tarot in conjunction with the oortk spread.

Howlings

It is possible to program quartz crystals for working with the Goetia. I program the crystal with all 72 Spirits. Somehow, the possession of such a crystal seems to augment and accelerate communication with the Goetia.

Don't:

- Use rituals.
- Use magickal weapons.
- Impose kabbalistic frameworks onto the Goetia.
- Use a magickal circle.
- Have any apparatus to torture Spirits into compliance.
- Be dogmatic in your expectations.



SEX IN THE CIRCLE

Thea Faye

A WARNING, those of a delicate, politically-correct disposition should look away. Go on. Turn the pages until you reach the next essay. In an anthology dedicated to examining what is arguably one of the most controversial branches of magick, evokation, this piece dares to do the unthinkable in our supposedly enlightened modern world. It examines the very real fact that men and women are different and, as such, not only should, but must, take a different approach to the *Goetia*.

At first glance that might appear to be a nonsense, and one which is abhorrent to many in these times of sexual equality. After all, there is nothing that a man can do that a woman cannot and vice versa, right? Wrong. Until such a time as we see a leap in fertility techniques, only women can go through pregnancy and birth. This, we will see, makes a huge impact when it comes to dealing with the spirits.

The first issue that needs to be addressed is the question of whether women should even be evoking at all. According to *Abramelin*:

Among women, there be only Virgins who are suitable; but I strongly advise that so important a matter should not be communicated to them, because of the accidents that they might cause by their curiosity and love of talk.

As a lactating, menstruating, non-virgin (whichever way you look at it), in theory I am wholly unsuited to the practise of evocation. But, let us look closer at the subject before deciding that we women should walk away from the practise.

I have encountered magickians who believe that the *Goetia* should be interpreted literally, believing the text contains all one needs to evoke Goetic spirits. This would mean that the *Goetia* itself explicitly excludes women. Think I'm wrong? If we look at the recitations provided, they are very specific. *The Address unto the Spirit upon its Coming* states:

Behold the person of the exorcist in the midst of the exorcism; him who is arméd by GOD andwithout fear;him who potently invocateth thee and calleth thee forth unto appearance; even him, thy master, who is called *Oñinomos*.

Emphasis mine; quite clearly, the exorcist is male. *Abramelin* makes an exception for virgins, but the *Goetia* requires a man to summon the spirits. Yet many women, myself included, have worked extremely successfully with this particular grimoire. Part of the reason for this is that the grimoires are very much a product of their time. The views that were held to be true when they were written are no longer applicable. Anyone who wishes to evoke should have mastered the basics of magick before attempting to do so, including the maxim of the Magus:

To know, to will, to dare, and to keep silent.

As such, any problems a 'love of talk' might cause should have long since been banished. As for feminine curiosity, whilst I confess that I have been known to push the boundaries when it comes to magickal practise, this is

no more than anyone else who reaches a certain level of attainment. This is no different to any of the men of my acquaintance.

The Address is slightly more problematic and something which took me a while to get to grips with. I attempted substituting the appropriate female terms, but they felt completely wrong and pretentious, as if I were being politically correct for the sake of it, rather than it being the natural, proper thing to do. So I reverted to the original text interpreting 'him' as being 'man' as in, I am speaking with the supreme authority as one of my species that is, mankind, as opposed to one of my gender. Thus far, it has served me well and it does not feel as awkward as calling myself 'her, thy mistress.'

I am something of a traditionalist and prefer to follow a trodden path as much as possible. Yet in this instance, were I to obey the rules, I would be denying myself access to the possibilities and experiences that evocation opens up to the magickian. I am reluctant to restrict myself in this manner. The problem is that I can evoke on an even day during the waxing moon, then an odd day during the waning moon, and compare and contrast results to see how essential the proscribed timing is. I cannot ever change my gender to know whether if I were male I would be a lot better at what I do. Likewise, there is a strong argument to suggest that the ritual costume, the lion skin belt, mitre, et al, is designed to disguise the summoner as Solomon, in order to fool the spirit into believing that he is heeding the command of someone truly empowered by God to perform the evocation. This is not an unreasonable supposition, but we are dealing with spirits who are extremely ancient. They have seen and done more than we mere humans can possibly imagine. I find it extremely difficult to believe that with a silly hat, white robe and apron cunningly disguising a seal for me to flash at the appropriate moment, a demon will be so overcome by my power that it will miss the fact that I am unmistakably female.

This suggests that at least some deviation is possible, which then leads to the conjecture that there is a lot in the system which can be ignored or substituted, if you know what you are doing. I do wonder whether the spirits had a hand in determining the rules which govern the *Goetia* and, if so, whether the costume was concocted more to see how ridiculous they could make someone look whilst still taking themselves seriously, than out of any ability on the part of the gear to confer authority on the magickian.

Whether this is true or not, and exactly how far one can alter the requirements laid down in the text, is down to the individual to discover for themselves. I still prefer to follow the rules as much as possible and have found that results improve exponentially with strict adherence to the book. I have also noted that the lazier one is with technique, the more one opens oneself up to side effects. Some of these are warned of within the *Goetia*, such as being lied to, being tempted to steal or death, but others are more insidious and will only be discovered later. Suffice to say, I would not recommend that one perform a simplified, modified version of an evocation unless they had fully mastered and understood the techniques and principles first. Such a comprehension only comes with practical experience.

Though gender is not an issue when it comes to whether women should evoke in the first place, I find that it nevertheless impacts on results and practises. A very simple example is in how the spirits present themselves. How the summoner encounters the spirits is framed by their own perception. The magickian needs to be on guard against simply being told what they want to hear or what they already know. This is more than possible given the spirits' mastery of language, even when constrained to tell the truth, which is a subjective notion at best. A good example of this is the 14th spirit, Gusion. He claims to be a former love god and appeared to me in male form. What is interesting is that in comparing notes with male magickians, 'he' appears as a woman, and a very seductive one at that. I found him to be the most enticing and beguiling spirit I have encountered and one whose whisperings were extremely tempting, even if ultimately unsuccessful. It would be necessary for others to experiment further and find whether gender and sexual orientation made any difference to its appearance. I suspect that it would. Gusion takes whatever form he feels will have the strongest appeal.

Whilst many magickians will reward the spirit they evoke, in most cases it is not essential. It very much depends on whether you prefer the carrot or the stick. Are you the type of person inclined to build up a good working relationship with the spirits by providing them with bonuses for a job well done? Or do you go by the book and provide no reward, since the spirits are there to be commanded, and instead punish them for any transgressions?

Gusion was eager to obtain sexual offerings, unsurprising for one who considers himself to be associated with love. This might not appear to be a gender issue, but if we examine what goes on during such an act more closely, there are again a few inequalities that need to be addressed. When a man masturbates, he produces semen. When a woman does, unless she is that rarity, a female who can ejaculate, she produces lubrication and not necessarily copious amounts of it either. Whilst it might be tricky to maintain your aim, it is possible for a man to cast his sperm across the sigil without leaving the safety of the circle. It is a lot more difficult for a woman to do the same thing.

I would ask, what is an appropriate and equivalent sacrifice if you are female? The obvious answer, and one which is usually touted as being acceptable, is menstrual blood. Although any human fluid contains power there is no real sacrifice involved in offering up waste product, something that your body is ridding itself of regardless of whether you have any further use for it. You could just as easily offer urine or excrement and that may well be precisely what the spirit requires. This is the level that menstrual blood functions at. Fresh blood, direct from a vein, on the other hand is a true sacrifice, but is not specifically female. It is also possible to offer up the energy of orgasm, making a female gift more metaphysical than physical in nature. This poses the interesting issue that if someone is safely ensconced within their circle, would such energy be able to transcend the barrier? And if not, would a spirit derive any kind of voyeuristic satisfaction from merely observing? I admit to not having come to any hard and fast conclusion.

One approach is to have a partner in the circle with you so that any act of sex magick produces a mingling of male and female juices, this forming the basis of the offering. Most of the writing on sex magick stresses the need for a male partner in order to achieve maximum results. Another solution is to perform sex magick outside of the evocation, either making the offering before or after the ritual and in that way avoid sharing your circle. The lone practitioner can have a seal to hand within the circle which is used as a visual focus during masturbation and then anointed after orgasm. As long as the circle is not breached it should be possible to then pass this to the spirit within the triangle.

I would like to raise another question for consideration, that of pregnancy. It is often said that women should not practise magick when pregnant. However, I have made my greatest magickal advances whilst pregnant. My first forays into the realms of evocation were during pregnancy and I evoked on a regular basis right up until my third trimester. Would I recommend this? Not necessarily. It is important to listen to your body and the child within and if you hear any form of dissent, abstain. There is no need so pressing that you absolutely have to evoke at that time. What I have found is that if a baby does not wish to be present during any magickal practise, their consciousness will leave for the duration of the operation, so the problem tends to be more down to the physical stamina of the mother, with all the pressure that pregnancy puts on the body, rather than any ill effect to the child.

Over this period no spirit expressed any interest in my baby, who appears not to have suffered any ill effects from my Work. I do know of someone who, when asked what would be appropriate payment, was given a number of options, including the life of his first born son. Unsurprisingly, this is one suggestion that was not taken up, but it does demonstrate the importance of determining what price will be paid before agreeing any deal with a spirit.

Where children are involved, there is an argument to say that whilst a father might be dispensable (especially one who has his life insurance in order), a mother might not be, especially in the early months if she is nursing. Contrary to Abramelin's belief, women's 'innate curiosity' is overridden by the need to ensure that our children are properly cared for and protected. This is perhaps less of an issue in modern society where parental roles are blended and blurred more than they were in the past, but it is another issue to consider before embarking upon an evocation. Perhaps this is the reason, above any other, that meant that only virgins could consider the practise.

So where does this leave us? With more ideas and questions than there are answers. This is a work in progress for me. Some things I have settled to my own satisfaction, such as the problem with *The Address*, others I am still experimenting with. It may well be that things that concern me would not worry another woman, or even occur to them. Another woman may feel so uncomfortable with the notion of referring to herself as male that it would

be better for her to rewrite *The Address* from scratch and, having done so, obtain better results than she would by staying with the original text.

Evocation, like any other field of magick, is a practical endeavour. Theorising is all very well and good but until you have obtained practical experience, it is nothing more than a nice idea. Women still seem to be in the minority when it comes to working with the *Goetia* and so there is a much smaller store of information to draw upon when examining what has worked and what has not. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that gender politics do have a part to play when it comes to the *Goetia*. The solutions to the issues aren't as simple as pretending that men and women are the same underneath their linen robes. Questions of biology have a much more prominent role to play than it might first appear. It is futile to attempt to ignore the differences when we can embrace them and adjust our practises and attitudes accordingly. We will find that we improve not only our immediate results, but also our understanding of how magick works, how it fits together and what our part is in the grand scheme of things.

Evocation might appear to be the ultimate in results magick. The more I work with the spirits the more I am forced to conclude that this is only a minor side effect, albeit a (mostly) beneficial one. The real purpose of evocation is to move further down the path towards enlightenment. As such, we must fully accept who we are, with our strengths and shortcomings, and work within that to further ourselves along the journey that is the Great Work. Being female is no bar to working with the Goetic spirits. Attempting to deny your sex and behave as if you are male is. The sooner a woman can understand and accept this, the sooner she will find herself achieving the kind of results that many write off as being too fantastical to be true. As anyone who works with the spirits will tell you nothing is too fantastical when it comes to evocation.

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TOOLS OF THE GOETIA

Aleq Grai

ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACED BY THE POTENTIAL EVOKER is not the stigma of evokation but the unknown waters that they are about to embark upon. This is not technique, the right robes, the perfect blade, or getting the words right. All of this is taken as read. The problem we face is that of the unknown waters that may sink any one of us. The psychological effects of evokation are all but overlooked in the write up, the debrief, or any warnings we see. Warnings speak of noxious breath, being tempted to steal, or outright death. Whilst these are very real issues the more subtle menace, that odourless, tasteless, colourless hazard, lies entirely in how we react to the evokation itself, how much risk we put ourselves in needlessly, and in what we expose ourselves to in the course of exploring the nature of the spirits we summon.

I want to examine this, and in doing so, set down my thoughts on my own experiences. I want to better understand how I reacted to the situations that I had put myself in, how I learned from those situations, so that when I repeat the work I can quantify and understand the results. Moreover, the long term effects for me have been profound and directly related to the work I have done in the circle.

In the Summer of 2005 I was finally moved by a serious and compelling event to undertake what I presumed at that time to be the peak of my magickal career. The evocation of a spirit into physical form, to command it, and to survive.

Now some will think 'the man is insane, evocation is a doddle' but alas, to the rest of us, it has been programmed into us as forbidden, bad, dangerous, and only to be undertaken by the most advanced adepts.

But I had been robbed. My entire silver smithing tools collection, works in progress, bullion, gems and irreplaceable items had been stolen by the very people I had commissioned to ship my goods to the other end of the planet, safely, securely, untouched. To find they had been removed was soul destroying. For the insurance company to weasel out of paying due to a logistical oversight on the part of the company that stole it was the last straw.

Now I shall be clear, I entered into this with blood in my mouth, and raging fire in my heart. Probably a good thing there was much to prepare.

After reviewing what notes I had I began to study all of the relevant material I could get my hands on. I did not believe that the seals presented in the *Goetia of Solomon* (Mathers/Crowley edition) was the full representation, let alone balanced. I contacted a friend in the old country, and he very kindly sent the appropriate seal. It appeared to my logic that there was still something missing. We had a sigil, we had a name, we had the binding angel, and the appropriate psalm. At this point I was strapped for time, never a good thing when considering matters of such gravity. I had prepared a temple specifically for the task, and undertook my very first evocation, without looking more deeply into the real nature of the seal.

Let us be clear: I did not have a complete seal; I did not have a great deal of the paraphernalia; I had no markings on the temple floor; I did not observe the times, seasons, nor the phases of the moon.

Essentially, I was calling on the entity outside of business hours and to make a house call to boot. I did, however, construct a solid copper seal in the exact likeness of the seal I was given. This was your bargain basement Konstantinos evocation 101.

It went well. I certainly felt the change after the second conjuration. I had felt it almost immediately, but I wanted to be sure. I questioned the spirit, constrained it, commanded it. I set a time frame, and then gave it license to depart. I closed, and that I thought was that.

Time passed and my need for retribution took hold beyond the requisite working without lust of result. On this occasion with a clarity of purpose and urgency I had not felt before. I tore through the bureaucracy of the shipping firm like a spastic bullock in a china shop, leaving whatever hapless receptionist I met, or talked to, in a mess of tears and wails, and any shipping clerk or other company drone wanting to take their own life. Until I hit the Regional Director for Asia Pacific.

I enjoyed him at great length. Forty-five minutes later he paid up, a broken man. He was a man who knew to his very soul that if I saw him I would beat him to within an inch of his life, and then have him. The moment he tried the passive aggressive routine I waded right in and shattered any facet of male bravado he might have had. Those who had any involvement with the consignment were fired. That I thought was that. I finished the discussion thinking *ye gods – was that me?*

Let us examine this a little closer. There are a few issues that anger and a narrow focus brought about here. I should have known better, but here is the first lesson.

Never ever use the words 'by any means necessary' when commanding a spirit. All they needed was a tool, and that tool was me. Am I kidding myself? I don't think so. The content, diction, and vitriol in my vociferation to all at the shipping company is something I had not, until that time, enjoyed. I was along for the ride and savouring the carnage I created.

Now spent, my climax realised, a tangible, all encompassing depression took hold. I think the upside was the weather, a long hot Summer. I began to slip, little by little, day by day, into a place that would prove very difficult to return from. This was a depression that was almost imperceptible at first but hit me cumulatively, affecting my ability to do my craft, visualisation,

second sight, dream work, meditation, short term memory and concentration.

As a result I worked harder, and further evocations, either for results or research, were undertaken. Some were done using relatively complete seals, others taken straight from the Mathers/Crowley *Goetia*. A devil-may-care apathy started to manifest in my Working and in my life and I almost lost my job. I battled on, alone, and not remotely rational even in day to day life. I had pretty much hit rock bottom. It took all of 18 months.

Then events began to move. Various publications hit the market, material I had been waiting for. I took time off to get my head together, allowing things to fall into place. Emerging from my shell I questioned and truly discovered the boon I had been given, a wondrous creature in the guise of a loving wife, someone a lot cleverer than I, who was also independently examining the same path. We had made discoveries on our own, and compared notes.

From this it was determined that a clear, well laid out formula was needed. This meant abandoning the contemporary material, the mistranslations containing errors and massive omissions. My mistakes stemmed from that incomplete seal, thoroughly shoddy material and working with a poor ritual structure. We started again with what we knew worked, coupled with common sense.

The tools were re-examined, rebuilt as required. The Ring, the Pentacle, and an actual brass Triangle of Art was constructed instead of the old wooden one. The temple abandoned and another constructed, this time with room to breath. We marked out three concentric circles therein to mark the name of the binding angel, the psalm, the governing archangel and so forth in great detail. The ritual as laid out in the *Goetia* was only missing the lion skin girdle. The tools were re-consecrated and the temple finished. Every aspect of the ritual was re-examined and one common theme emerged, to maintain balance, safety and control.

I follow a fairly straight forward preparatory process before evocation:

Standard purifications, shower and clothe.

Clean the temple, clean the brass.

Lay out anything that may be required, Wand, Pentacle and Blade.

Notes and Seal placed in their respective places.

The Ritual itself:

LBRP and LBRH.

Opening by Watchtower.

Additional castings.

Invocations of Binding/Adversarial Angels.

Evocation of the spirit.

Identification and Constraint.

Binding – Command.

License to depart.

Banishings and close.

The results were apparent from the very beginning. The building of the circle, the calling of the various energies required, I was reminded of being at the command deck of a large ship.

Plagued by doubts borne of dire depression I resolved to 'just go for it – and damn the torpedoes'. I had to work for it, including commanding a King, a second conjuration, and when I looked up, there was Andromalius.

Quickly tasked, I bound him to agree by asking three different questions, so we were perfectly clear there was no room to budge on the deal struck. I gave him license to depart and that was that. I closed in the usual manner and I sensed something was different. I knew I had covered all the bases, and things had balanced themselves out since that period 18 months ago when I had first evoked Andromalius. The hollow feeling had gone. Over the next few days and weeks a great deal of who I was returned of its own accord. Don't get me wrong, this didn't all happen at once. As I had lost my tools, so too I had lost parts of myself to depression, and now I was rediscovering them again.

THE FINAL EVOKATION OF ANDROMALIUS

What is your Name?

Andromalius.

There was no hesitation in this. The spirit followed instructions to prove its name.

What is your Primary Sphere of Influence?

The celestial spheres of the outer darkness.

This was a flash and I was taken unawares by this. I remember thinking to myself whether there was anything that I had done recently that may have triggered this response as its implications could be quite profound.

What else do you have knowledge of?

The names and sigils of all things.

Now this was some juicy stuff, and further cause for additional work.

What is the significance or use of the thing you teach?

He doesn't tolerate stupid questions it would seem, I got no answer here.

What sets you aside from others with similar authority?

There are no others with such an authority.

There was a definite aura of pride felt in this.

Tell me of your origins.

Very mixed.

I received a great many images here, and of no particular order or determinable meaning.

By what other names are you known?

Boaz, the left hand pillar at the porch way or entrance to King Solomon's Temple.

I intended to look into correspondences on this one, though I feel this was a blind, taking advantage of my own preoccupation at the time. Nothing indicates as far as I can determine any relationship with Solomon beyond the original constriction within the brass vessel. The construction of Solomon's temple as far as I can determine did not include the Goetic spirits in the workforce – nor were there spirits bound in the structure. My opinion, a diversion based on my current state of mind.

What endeavours are you currently engaged in?

Too much to take in here. Very busy, he is a favourite right now, very much in fashion.

What historical engagements have you been involved in?

Nothing or too much.

What are the limits of your capabilities?

A brief flash of me.

From where do you draw your power?

No result here – I may be labouring the obvious.

What are the side effects of working with you?

Down right nothing, otherwise serious depression.

What is your true form?

(Maniacal grin) *The adder is not a snake, it is a tentacle – his true form is altogether different.*

What payment do you require for services?

The moment I asked this question, I heard a woman being seriously assaulted, possibly sexually. It was brutal and he got off on the screams. He will settle for glory, given full flight he will take anything he can get and defile it. I did two evocations that evening. The violence that was precipitated in my neighbourhood right on cue was thoroughly unsettling, twice.

What is the benefit to me of working with you?

(A smirk)

Temple closed and spirit banished.

GETTING TOOLED UP

I have learned that you need almost anal attention to detail in keeping the temple clean, nay spotless, the tools likewise. This becomes very apparent after you have dealt with the Goetic spirits for even a short while. Coming to understand what they are capable of leads us to be sure that one's mind and working environment is clear.

The devil-may-care attitude expressed by the likes of Konstantinos in *Summoning Spirits*, and Duquette in *My Life with the Spirits* towards the spirits concerned is, in my opinion, imbecilic at best. The habits created by such working will create more harm than good. I must refute their evocation 101 style in favour of doing it meticulously. Get it right, do the ground work, and take your time.

This develops a serious respect for the work and the energies/entities we are dealing with. I do not mean fear, trepidation yes, but bravado has no place here either. Any inkling of cowardice, the contemporary back-sliding passive aggressive nature of the metrosexual urban male will result in the ritual going South, dramatically. Such lack of character cannot sustain any degree of contact, let alone manifestation. Ergo you will not constrain the spirit, let alone command it, you will not manifest the desired result, you will not pass Go.

This is the real deal, therefore thou shalt not fuck about.

New Age style meditating on the entity, making offerings, path workings, lighting a candle, sleeping with the sigil, asking the spirit to come and guide is sadly lacking, however well intentioned. You need the courage and depth of character to actually call the bugger up, constrain it, bind and command it, and not least, torture the little bastard when it doesn't come up with the goods.

For this reason I would suggest that the process of evocation is in itself a maturing experience, having a profound psychological effect on the evoker. There is a realisation, a point of no return, when we learn that this is real. There is no going back.

I would strongly recommend the practice of evocation in any mystical path. It is initiatory, the crucible being the very circle in which the evoker stands. The initiator stands within the Triangle of Art. It all comes down to avoiding any dross going into the mix in order to create the perfect alloy.

All the tools must be wielded correctly and with intent. I recommend an actual sword, and also the ice cold merciless nature of one ready to use it at the slightest hesitation from the spirit concerned. This is a part of a process that has been laid down for centuries. The presumption of trendsetters to bugger it about, to weaken the resolve of the process, to undermine the very safety mechanisms that are tried, and proven is a sure indication that they have not the foggiest idea as to what they are doing.

We tend to learn this lesson the hard way, and the affect on us is quite simply character building. As in any work of magick, half the effort will give us zero results. Not half the results, zero.

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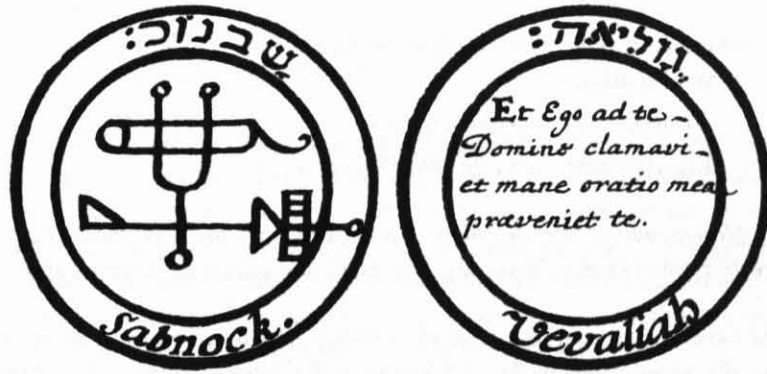
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ORDER AND CHAOS

The Use of Adversarial Angels to Control Demons in the Grimoires

David Rankine

And besides you must understand that the Devils may be forced and constrained by the good Angels, and this is because of the Grace which the one lost, and the other as yet retains.

The Goetia of Dr Rudd

THE POLAR BALANCE found in the grimoires between angels and their fallen brethren, the demons, continues an ancient tradition of conflict between spiritual creatures of order and of chaos. Throughout history this duality is seen in most mythologies, from the Egyptian conflict of Horus and Set to the Greek Olympian/Titan conflict, to the Celtic Tuatha de Danaan/Fir Bolg conflict and the Indian Devas and Asuras.

Order & Chaos



The Angel with the Key to the Bottomless Pit
Albrecht Dürer, 1497

During the work I have been doing over the last few years with Stephen Skinner, we came upon the apogee of the balance of adversarial angels and demons, *Harley MS 6483*. We published this amazing work as volume three of our Sourceworks of Ceremonial Magic series, *The Goetia of Dr Rudd*. In his version of the *Goetia*, Rudd expanded the scope of the *Lemegeton*, giving 72 double-seals for working with the 72 Goetic demons balanced with the 72 corresponding Shem ha-Mephorash angels, and their associated Biblical verses from Psalms, used as part of the invocatory process. This theme is also seen in *Harley MS 6482*, which was clearly originally part of the same manuscript (as seen by the pagination).

That Rudd was heavily influenced by Peter de Abano's *Heptameron* is clear from the material in *Harley MS 6483*, and hence we see the wearing of the pentacle as a lamen on the chest and the magick circle from this source being included as vital aspects of the procedure of the *Goetia*. By wearing the seal with the reverse side bearing the appropriate controlling Shem ha-Mephorash angel facing towards his heart, the magician is more protected from the wiles, or malice, of the demon he has summoned.

The use of the Psalms is highly significant, considering their long history of magickal use. The Psalms are not only used in Rudd's *Goetia*, but also in the *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, *The Key of Solomon*, *Abramelin* and other grimoires. We see the seven Penitential Psalms being used in preparing the magician for invocation. More specifically we find the use of the Psalms as part of the process of achieving Ruach ha-Qadosh ('spirit of holiness' or prophecy) in Kabbalah and their use in Jewish folklore as anti-demonic phylacteries. Psalms 3, 10 and 91 were all used in a protective fashion against demons and are also used with the Shem ha-Mephorash angels. Likewise Psalms 3, 6, 8, 9, 22, 29 and 39, all used with the Shem ha-Mephorash angels, are some of those used to achieve Ruach ha-Qadosh.

With such a history of use it is no surprise that the Psalms should be used as part of the invocatory process. As can be seen throughout the grimoires, repetition is a key phenomena, so the relevant Psalm is best repeated a good number of times (until you feel the connection has been established), preferably in the Latin for greater mental effect. Should you feel the need to perform a longer conjuration prior to the Psalm, the following

example from *Sloane MS 3824* works very well for this purpose, or indeed for other circumstances where you need a good general conjuration.

A Prayer to be said before the calling forth of Elemental or Infernal Powers, or Spirits of Darkness

O most high, Immense, Immortal, Incomprehensible, and Omnipotent Lord God of Hosts, the only Creator of Heaven & Earth, & of all things contained therein; who, amongst all other admirable works of the Creation, hast made Man, according to the express Image of thy self, dignifying him with more divine, Celestial & Sublime Excellency, & superior part and participation, cohering with the most high & sacred Godhead, Angels, Heavens, Elements, & Elemental things, & given him an Imperial Sovereignty, over all Sublunar things in the Creation, both Animal, Vegetable, Mineral & Elemental: and next even to thy self under the Heavens, as a benefit and perogative proper only to Man, & to no other Creature: And who hath likewise given to Man, a Sovereign power over all sublunar Spirits, both Aerial, Terrestrial & otherwise Elemental, residing in Orders & Mansions proper, & other wandering Spirits out of Orders or Mansions proper, both of Light & Darkness, & also Infernal Spirits, & subjected them to his Obedience & Service, whensoever he shall Command, Constrain, Call forth & move them to visible appearance, in order thereunto. Now then O most high & heavenly God we thy humble Servants, reverently here present in thy holy fear, do beseech thee in thine infinite Mercy & paternal goodness, that all Sublunar Spirits both Elemental and residing in Orders, & otherwise wandering out of Orders, both of Light & Darkness, & also Infernal Powers, may at the reading & rehearsal of our Invocations, Conjurations & Constraingatons. & by thee commanded, & compelled, & constrained, obediently and peaceably to move & appear visibly, in fair & decent Firm: & Shape, & in no wise hurtful, dreadful, terrible or affrightful, or otherwise in any violence or violent manner unto us, & here before us in these Glass Receptacles, or otherwise, to appear out of them here before us, in like serene, fair & decent manner, as shall be most convenient & necessary for any action, thing or matter, that they are called for to such

appearances; & to serve & obey us, & to fulfil & go forth in our will, desires & Commandments in all & every several & particular matters & things respectively, wherein their Office & Orders are concerned, or whereunto in any wise they properly appertain; & also to depart from our presence, & obediently & peaceably to return to their Orders & Places of residence, when they have conformed & fulfilled all our Will and Commandments; And that we shall discharge them for the time present, & time future; or shall accordingly give them Licence so to do, and also to be ready from time to time at our Call, & at all times to appear visibly unto us, & to serve & obey us, & to fulfil all our requests whatsoever we shall command them, & also to return to their Orders in peace, when we shall give them Licence to depart thereunto, without violence, injury, harm, prejudice or other mischief or mischievous matter to be done unto us or this Place, or to any other person or places whatsoever.

Amen.

There is an intriguing reference in the section entitled *Of the Orders of Wicked Demons and of their Fall and their divers Natures in Janua Magica Reserata* (Sloane MS 3825). Rudd records that Psalm 72:9 (note the combination of the 72 of the Shem ha-Mephorash with the Psalms):

According to the Hebrews, verily it runs thus. 'Before him the inhabitants of solitude shall bend their knees, that is, the aerial spirits shall worship him as the Cabalists do assert, and his enemies shall lick the dust.'

It is interesting to see that the inhabitants of solitude or aerial spirits (i.e. demons) shall bend their knees before him and worship him. This is a clear indication of the supremacy of the God who can be expressed as the Shem ha-Mephorash, and it is possible that Rudd made this connection and hence hinted at it in this way.

From the Goetic point of view the ultimate adversarial angel could be said to be Michael ('He who is like God'). In addition to the names Primeumaton, Anaphaxeton and Tetragrammaton at the three sides of the triangle, the inscription of Mi-cha-el is found at the three corners. These

names were used to help constrain the spirit into giving truthful answers. It is significant that Metatron may originally have been the secret name of Michael, see Scholem and Kaplan, indicating an even more divine control in the triangle.

Another clear example of adversarial angels which is often overlooked is that of the Planetary Intelligences which govern the Planetary Spirits, or to give them their other names, the Planetary Angels which govern the Planetary Demons. It is interesting to note that in the invocations of the Planetary Intelligences, found in *Sloane MS 3821*, we find the phrase 'by the great lamen Schemhamphorash', continuing the association of the Shem ha-Mephorash angels with the adversarial polarity.

There are three demons who are above the control of the angels however, viz the three governing potentates of Lucifer, Beelzebub and Satan (commonly recorded as L:B:S in the grimoires). As Stephen and I have shown in *The Goetia of Dr Rudd*, it is likely that these three were originally part of the hierarchy which manifested as the *Lemegeton*, seen in the proto-Lemegeton text of *Sloane MS 3824*:

O All you Spirits of great power L:B:S: [Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Sathan] unto whom By Orders & Offices, as Messengers of wrath, & Ministers of divine Justice, the Execution of God's Judgement are committed, & accordingly at his Commandment by you fulfilled, on all sublunar things, Creatures & places whatsoever & wheresoever he shall decree and appoint the same to be inflicted.

These demons are of such importance that they do not have comparable adversarial angels in the grimoires, though Satan is bound by an angel in *Revelations 20*, which tradition suggests is Michael, which fits with his use in the triangle. The texts make it clear that these demons were not to be treated in the same manner as the hordes of demons, but rather used as governors to control their minions. In fact they are treated more with the respect accorded to the angels! Within the same text (*Sloane 3824*) there is an interesting invocation where these demons are clearly given a divine mandate, and in this context are being called upon to govern the four Demon Kings of the directions.

Howlings

O ye Spirits & Devils, Sathan, Lucifer, Beelzebub & Dansiation; I conjure you all by your powers & strengths you are permitted to have, by Almighty God the Father, the Son & the Holy Ghost, three persons & one God, in Trinity & unity, That you enforce these 4 Kings of the 4 Gates of the World, that is Urinus or Oriens King of the East, Paymon King of the West, Amaymon King of the South, & Egin King of the North.

Although adversarial angels have a major role, it should be remembered that these ruling spirits also have a major role to play. In both instances what is significant is the role the hierarchy plays, and determining the chain of command is one of the keys to ensuring successful results.

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THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL

Thea Faye

THE GOETIA REQUIRES A WISE UNDERSTANDING of the issues of language. Names matter. Words are vitally important. These are amongst the basics of magick, the lessons you should learn long before you ever even touch a grimoire. But it should not take much experience with evokation to realise that, when it comes to dealing with spirits, this runs deep.

First of all we should look at the actual text itself. We can already see some of the nuances at play without needing a spirit standing before us. There are those who would argue that the *Goetia* should be read literally, which would make it a reasonably straightforward text. The powers attributed to the spirits appear to be self explanatory and it should not be too difficult to choose the spirit which is most appropriate for your needs. However, all is not as it seems.

If, for example, we wish to find out how the universe came to be, how it will end or something as seemingly innocuous as what fate has in store for us over the course of the next twelve months, we have apparently an array of spirits from which to choose. Vassago can *declare things Past and to Come*; Amun can *tell all things Past and to Come*, whilst Barbatos *knoweth all things Past and to Come*; Gusion *telleth all things Past, Present and to Come*, as does Purson. A veritable feast of spirits may be able to help you.

If we stop and consider the above examples it is immediately apparent that all things are not equal. Vassago, Amun and Barbatos are not described as knowing anything about the present. If you want to know what is happening in the here and now they will be unable to help. And how do we define the present? Is it this second, today, this week, this year, this lifetime?

It is easy to assume that they each have access to the same amount of knowledge, but if you question the spirits you will find that they have different understandings of what entails past and future. Some can tell of the dawn of the universe until its death. Others are limited to when time was first measured. There are also those who can tell all events past, present and future, but only during your lifetime and only pertaining to your life.

We can also note a difference between 'declaring' 'telling' and 'knowing'. Even when they have been constrained to tell the truth, that subtle distinction can have a greater significance than it at first seems. A psychic may tell your fortune and be accurate to the best of their knowledge, predicting the most likely outcome if you choose a particular course. But that is not the same as their knowing your future without a shadow of a doubt.

A literal reading of the *Goetia* provides us with some interesting images when it comes to the spirits fulfilling their obligations. For example, Viné builds towers and overthrows great stone walls, whilst Sabnock goes even further in his architectural achievements and builds high towers, castles and cities and furnishes them with armour. It might be tempting to have a city built for you, but there is another, less obvious interpretation, one which is shown in The Tower card of the Tarot.

In *Seventy-Eight Degrees of Wisdom*, Rachel Pollack writes:

The Tower is said to be the materialist conception of the universe, and the lightning the destruction that comes to a life based on purely materialist principles. Even here we find a great deal of subtlety. While it may appear that some outside force strikes down the narrow-minded person, the violence shown in the card actually derives from psychological principles. The person who lives only to satisfy the ego demands of wealth, fame and physical pleasure, ignoring both introspection and the spiritual beauty of the universe, raises a prison around himself. We see this prison as the Tower'. The powerful implications should be clear.

If we read further Pollack reveals why The Tower is such a potent symbol.

... revelation comes as a lightning bolt which destroys the illusions of the material world in a single blinding flash... No matter how long the meditation, the years of prayer or occult training, the truth comes all at once or it does not come at all.

The towers of the *Goetia* may be actual, and the spirits that build them may assist you in accruing enough material wealth to enable you to erect your own. This is a limited use, and arguably a misuse, of their potential. The towers are ostensibly an allusion to your standing in the world. How you view yourself and how others view you. These spirits can assist you in the quest for spiritual enlightenment, the aim of the Great Work. Whereas building your tower in Da'ath will lead you nowhere.

It should be clear that there are major subtleties and nuances at play within this particular grimoire. Let us look at two specific examples, Haures/Flauros and Andras. According to the *Goetia*, Haures:

... is a Great Duke, and appeareth at first like a Leopard, Mighty, Terrible, and Strong, but after a while, at the Command of the Exorcist, he putteth on Human Shape with Eyes Flaming and Fiery, and a most Terrible Countenance. He giveth True Answers of all things, Present, Past, and to Come. But if he be not commanded into a Triangle, he will Lie in all these Things, and deceive and beguile the Exorcist in these things, or in such and such business. He will, lastly, talk of the Creation of the World, and of Divinity,

and of how he and other Spirits fell. He destroyeth and burneth up those who be the Enemies of the Exorcist should he so desire it; also he will not suffer him to be tempted by any other Spirit or otherwise.

Surely it is not an unreasonable assumption to think that if you do not use a triangle he will simply tell you a few falsehoods and be an unreliable source of information. The reality goes deeper. There are those who believe that Haures is none other than the Egyptian god Horus. He certainly does a good impression of deity, but he is not a god, and he is certainly not Horus. His lies go to his very core, his appearance, his essence. The unwary evoker is easily fooled into believing that he has performed a wondrous demonstration of power and genuinely evoked a god, paying him homage accordingly. When it comes to providing information or obeying commands you are extremely likely to have your wishes granted by him. Performing some small trifle in return for worship and offerings is a minor trade to him, thus further enforcing the belief that he is Horus. It pays to take heed of the other warning contained within the description. Once he has you ensnared in his lies, he is a jealous god and will not take kindly to you working with any other spirit. He expects and demands all your attention and woe betide the evoker who chooses to walk away. Never forget that these beings have been around a lot longer than we have and will remain long after we have gone. They have plenty of time in which to play the waiting game. You may not realise you've been played until it is too late.

Andras is another treacherous spirit. We are told he will slay both the evoker and his fellows if he is not careful. What reason could someone have for taking this risk when no other spirit carries the same danger? Quite simply because he is a double-edged sword. His power can also be turned against others. Andras is a master of the art of sowing discord and there are times when this can come in very handy indeed. This ability should provide a hint as to what is going on. The text does not specifically state that this death is a physical one. There are many forms of death, of the personality, of your life as it currently exists, the death and rebirth of initiation, and exile, when one is dead to society. Using him as a mechanism to rid yourself of your enemy may result in the two of you no longer having any contact. It should also be born in mind that whilst there are many forms of death,

this does not mean that it will not be a physical one. Even if you have evoked and dismissed without apparent ill effect you may not have got off scot free. The text does not explicitly say that this death will come during the ceremony. Having established a link between the two of you by the act of evocation, you leave the door open for him to extract his payment at the moment that will cause him the most satisfaction, perhaps years after the event.

All my references to the *Goetia* have been to the Mathers/Crowley translation and this in itself presents problems. When Andras is described in De Plancy's *Dictionnaire Infernal*, he says nothing on the death of the evoker, instead informing us that he can give advice on how to kill, and escalate quarrels and discord. Whereas Johann Wier elaborates on who is in danger if you do not follow the correct protocol, noting he can kill the master, the servant, and all assistants. Not only do you have to read your edition of the *Goetia* extremely closely, it pays to check which version you are using and compare this with others to see the differences between them. In theory, if you are working with Wier's version, you need only be concerned with protecting yourself and your assistants. However, 'fellows' carries with it a much broader implication and could potentially jeopardise your family and friends, even if they have no involvement in magick.

So how do we speak with these tricky spirits?

Even after researching which spirit to work with, do not assume that you know everything about them. Doing so runs the risk of placing limits on what they can do for you. They may not feel the need to volunteer to do extra work on your behalf. Stating, *You are reputed to be able to do XYZ – Is this true?* will no doubt receive agreement, but no more. You will deny yourself the opportunity to understand their subtleties. This is fine if you sincerely want a big tower erected in your back garden. If you are looking to develop your arcane knowledge and understanding, you would be better served to ask the spirit what its abilities are first and then compare and contrast this with the text. Since the spirit is bound to tell the truth, if you have followed the ritual appropriately, it will present itself honestly. You may be surprised. When you spend time dealing with the spirits, you will realise just how

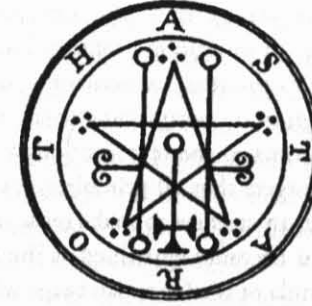
Howlings

easy it is to lie while telling the truth and how important it is to make sure you choose your words with care. Each and every word will bind not only the spirit, but you as well. A poorly worded command will cause you more problems than it solves. It is advisable to prepare your questions and orders in advance. It is worth confirming that the spirit is in agreement and capable of performing the task. Again, take care in how this is done. There is a difference between asking *Will you consent?* and *Do you consent?* Leave no room for the spirit to weasel out of responsibility.

This may appear pedantic, but every evokation carries with it the potential to cause serious harm to the careless magickian. As Forneus tells us, there is no such thing as an iron clad contract. Where words are used there is always room for manoeuvre. Working with the Goetic spirits will bring unexpected results. It can develop and enrich your magick in ways that you never dreamed could be possible. You will be forced to learn from your mistakes if you are to continue on this path. The further you go the clearer it is that using the spirits for material endeavours can give good results, it is only a fraction of what they are able to show you. Be willing to open yourself up to the hidden meanings. They are there in plain sight for those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

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THE STIFLING AIR

Peter Grey

Also perfumes and a chafing dish of charcoal, kindled to put the fumes into to smoke or perfume the place appointed for action.

The Goetia

GRIMOIRES NEED TO BE APPROACHED SENSUALLY. The book lover knows this instinctively, fondling bindings and spine, feeling the weight of paper and page. There is magick in the book itself. We find delicious nuances in font and ink. Yet with the *Goetia*, the text has been hand-copied by the atrocious and incompetent over many centuries. The final text we find before us is an overheard conversation, a mistake of letters made pictures. It is an untrustworthy and tantalising map of the unmappable. Even cross-checking the manuscript sources does not shed more light on what it once was.

This is where the academics fall away and declare that the text is gibberish. How can one make sense of such a mismatched mess? The hopeless corruption will not yield answers to those who do not know how to read the twilight language. We have to work with it. The book must be brought to life.

Here the Carcist faces an intriguing problem, knowing that the Spirits themselves hold the key to the text, he needs to make contact with them even though the information on summoning them may be incomplete, or a later addition. So, he turns to the text and follows the set patterns, the dull ritual rubric, and forgets that all grimoires, however delectably presented are incomplete. In an attempt to make sense of the material, slavish adherence to instructions becomes enshrined as the holy law. He uses the craven and terrified formula of the Christian mage who can only see spirits as something to scream and bellow commands at like some spittle flecked Bishop at the council of Nicea. It is he who shrieks and squeals and threatens, not the supposed fallen angel meant to appear in the triangle in the name of JHVH. To the spirit he must seem malefic indeed. I would gently suggest that we have rather moved on from this sorry state. The Carcist would do well to remember that JHVH began as a small spirit ferried about in a gilded box.

Rather than assail the whole scaffolding of Goetic working, that will have to wait for the next book, I want to look at one aspect. What is it that we should burn for the spirits? How is it that we can make them appear before us and not be left standing in paper crowns and singed linen, sore throated open and empty? Always in magick there is the ask, that we can make something from nothing. Or we are just actors on a small circular stage using delusion to mask our failures.

The honest truth is that Goetic magick is just smoke and mirrors. Through Franz Bardon, Poke Runyon or Donald Michael Kraig the mirror has been exhaustively described. Now we should turn our attention to the other vital element, and conjure something out of thin air to see in that mirror. It would be a good time for you to begin to burn something, whether a cigarette prop in your hand, a joss stick or whatnot. Smoulder something, add the smoke to this very book and start to change it from a consecrated object into a living thing. For now let us lose in the smoke the other particulars of ritual which you choose to use with the spirits.

We are doing something more insubstantial and illusory than giving the spirit a body to possess. The static crackle words of the possessed are not gifted to us to sift through like laurel leaves into some form of language. Something rarer is happening here. We have smoke to work with. Even if the spirits use men as the agency of their action, they do not have the benefit of a form to fill in ritual. Yet the smoke passes over the barrier of holy names without a tremor. It ignores the chain of word curses with its charged particle swirl. It makes mockery of any Solomon who does not hold a ring to his face. But even Solomon, unlike the miraculous Bill Clinton, has to inhale sometime. You cannot stop the all pervasive demon smoke, yet you can regulate how much you choose to take in.

One of the great lost secrets of the *Goetia* is that the smoke burning infernally in the chaffing dish is where the true fire can be found. The mirror only reflects this truth.

The use of smoke is so obvious, it seems insane to see that it has been lost. In favouring the clean cedar temple blend or the one-size fits all Abramelin incense the meaning of the smoke has been puffed away. It has become as meaningless as the spectacles, testicles, wallet, and watch body cross of christian ritual is without the energy work to back it up. By not going into the shroud of smoke, our magick is as empty as masonic ritual has become. Our fore-fathers knew better, the Scythians who scattered hemp seeds on hot rocks, the Arabs hot boxing under prayer carpets, the smothered Jews in the tabernacle tent. Ritual magick in particular tends to be performed in closed chambers, when working in the open, some smokes may be more usefully employed in a tube of virgin parchment and passed between the working members of the circle in the manner of Shiva.

More often than not, the spirit does not only need the correct smoke for summoning, the spirit is literally in and of the smoke. Modern magick has pinched closed its nose, and quite frankly, it smells terrible, though at least not of stale patchouli or a scant smudge of sage.

The Catholics work better magic than most in that they copiously burn frankincense. The smoking thuribles of the Mass are literally transformative, as frankincense is a psychoactive resin. Perhaps it is the addictive property of frankincense which lures people back to Mass, bypassing their dominant and rational mind by appealing to that neglected human sense

beloved of seducers and seduction, smell. Frankincense was burned for Ish-tar long before this and was used by the Assyrians, Hebrews, Greeks, Arabs and Egyptians.

Simply because you do not roll it up and smoke it does not mean incense is not a drug. The Catholics and Greek Orthodox have a young boy whose sole job is to swing the smoke and drench the church and worshippers. If we suggested this in magical work, the social services would very quickly get involved. There are better canaries to take with you into the coalmine. But learn this from them, the smoke needs special attention and if the Carcist is working with assistants one of them should very productively tend the smoke. Those of a more modern, militarist or fetishistic persuasion may wish to equip them with a gasmask or respirator when working with the more noxious burning substances. Let us repeat the warning here, even burning charcoal by itself in a confined space can and will invisibly kill you.

The Catholics stole their incense use from the ancient temples where great braziers would billow forth smoke that would enable the worshippers and ritualists to become utterly intoxicated with the presence of divinity. Egyptian and Greek magicians would, according to ethnobotanist Christian Ratsch, use frankincense to summon demons. We would do well to follow their example.

Can you expect this from a single puttering charcoal disk and a scant pinch of resin?

Do the spirits really arise from such small offerings when once they were courted by troughs sloshing over with the blood of butchered bulls and stacked poppy heads?

To succeed you must exceed yet without blunting your sensitivity. In this matter you would do well to follow your nose.

The 'Greater' *Key of Solomon* is clearer than the *Goetia* on the matter of incense, both instructing that we burn copious amounts of incense and giving a general temple recipe of frankincense, aloes, nutmeg, benzoin, musk,

myrrh, galbanum and other sweet spices. It also offers the sage advice that we burn nice smelling incense for nice spirits and bad smelling incense for bad ones. This seems in line with the recipe in *Exodus* 30:34:

And the Lord said unto Moses, take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum: these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight.

Stacte is myrrh, and onycha is likely to be the neutral gum arabic employed for binding an incense blend. Galbanum is the sap of the Persian *Ferula Gummosa*, a plant the same family as *asafoetida*. It was the green incense of Egypt, can be used as an anointing oil, and for driving away flies and serpents. Buzzing flies are not always appreciated, even in Goetic work.

Yet, if this is the incense of JHVH and only to be burned unto him, surely each of the 72 demons will have their own scent as well?

If you would care to indulge in a little blasphemy, you may wish to use the Moses trademarked blend. Or, harking back to the defrocked or heel-kicking heretic priests of France who embraced the *Goetia*, use the same frankincense burned in church bought from a clerical supply shop. We cannot countenance stealing from churches, they have enough problems to be getting on with right now. Those leaky roofs can't seem to keep the elements out, just as the stout doors cannot keep the worshippers in.

A general temple blend is just the start of our olfactory odyssey. Burning this clears the space and prepares it. Next, we need to examine which ingredients are appropriate for the individual spirits, and the important word is individual, these are not the identikit mannekins of the shemhamphorash. Each spirit needs to be approached as a unique entity and evoked as such. This creative and responsive method of working with the spirits cannot be achieved if you are still in the 'scream and demean' mindset.

Solomon himself had been gathering ingredients according to the *Song of Songs*, frankincense, myrrh, cannabis, lignum aloes and every kind of incense tree. These are our base fragrances, though this list is of particular interest to those pursuing sexual ends.

Howlings

FRANKINCENSE is known to the Arabs as *Al-Luban*, the milky one. It is from this that we get the name *olibanum*, a suitably Goetic corruption. The bark of the tree is incised and in the dog days the tears taken. *Olibanum* was burned for Ishtar, Adonis and Bel. It was offered to Aphrodite to ensure enough clients for the hetaerae and at bloody sacrifices. Frankincense is also used to perfume the female sex, women may find standing over a brazier is worth exploring. This is more fruitful than trying to apply unguents internally with a broomhandle in the manner of inquisition fantasies.

For Goetic work Sitri, Bael, and Ashtaroth appreciate the use of frankincense. Crowley in 777 notes that, *Olibanum possesses a comprehensive catholic quality such as no other incense can boast*. It works as an intensifier for other perfumes and was used almost universally in ritual. Daniel Schulke describes it in *Viridarium Umbris* as the *brother of the rose*, providing sweetness in the desert. This suggests a formula for our lovely Gemory of the slipped crown jostling on sleek hips.

Frankincense is an absolute essential. One of the effects it has is a deepening of the breathing, which aids inhalation of kindred smokes. It is also worth remembering that once all tear resins were collectively called frankincense, there are other perfumes hiding here.

MYRRH grows in southern Arabia and the Somali coast, a thorny shrub which again is incised and the tears taken from its weeping. Myrrh was used for preserving dead flesh and carries with it teachings about the death rites. It adds an earthy note to frankincense which adds an often needed bitterness to a scent which could become too heady. Burn myrrh for the scuffle flutter wingsweep of Bifrons million feet, and the other necrotic and graveyard denizens of the Goetic spirit list such as Bune. It also pleases Gaap, given his role in birth and naturally, Murmur. Combined with hemp and frankincense in wine it can also serve as a sacrament. An alternative is *Opopanax* which is rightly described as sweet myrrh and can be used in a like manner.

The Stifling Air

CANNABIS, or *Kaneh* in the Hebrew is often mistranslated as *calamus* in the Bible. It is a weed that grows everywhere, though increasingly in foil-lined and lit wardrobes due to the opposition to its fragrant healing smoke by our modern Pharisees. Without going the full Rastafarian it is clear that this plant was used extensively in ritual. In Goetic work this is an essential ally for producing visions and communicating with the spirits. It is a powerful ally which is often not shown the respect it should be accorded due to its easy going nature. To enter into the Arabian Nights this is the herb to burn. It should go without saying that the Goetic worker should not venture anywhere without first having delved into the *Alf Laylah Wa Laylah*.

LIGNUM ALOES, also know as Oud, comes from a fungal infection in evergreen trees in India and Malaysia. The resin sweetens and becomes an aphrodisiac, a more clearly venusian symbol could not be found. Many of the trees have now been destroyed and you should carefully investigate the source of this before offering it to the fire. A sweet burning wood directs us to the pyre of Pheonix and as a balsam to soothe and sweeten the more angry spirits. Sandalwood is worth your investigation here as well, though again an endangered wood.

The clean Lebanese CEDAR is another sweet wood long honoured. It is especially appropriate for the Spirits who were once worshipped on the high places before the bloated rise of the one so-called true god. Bael may twitch his whiskers for this.

BALM OF GILEAD is likely to have been one of the other unnamed incense trees. With its association of healing wounds, the Carcist may wish to perfume themselves with this when dealing with Sabnach and Lerayou. Cinnamon and cassia, as ingredients in the Egyptian Kyphi are also needful of your pungent and stimulated imagination here.

When Sheba travelled to Solomon she brought spices, herbs, resins and seeds in massive quantities. It is these treasure chests that we should now ransack for our more exotic and noxious fumigants. The Goetic Spirits are

similarly foreign as the legendary Queen, and when we are seeking them we must follow the trade routes, to Arabia, Egypt, Canaan, Greece, Africa, India, as far as China.

HENBANE is where the dangerous reputation of the Goetia begins to be earned. Henbane is not to be used without a great deal of care, as with all of the Solanaceae. Tropane Alkaloids will kill you and doses vary wildly from individual to individual. Before tossing the seeds onto a brazier do your research and proceed with extreme caution. There are very real consequences here.

Henbane seeds were the incense of Ancient Greece and Egypt. Henbane also seems the clearest contender as the drug of witchcraft. The Assyrians burned henbane and sulphur to banish demons which suggests a Goetic use in the stinking box. The seeds smell bad enough when burned alone, though I favour their use in invocation rather than torture. The fumes also have an arousing effect and can be used when seeking to meet Zepar or understand Astaroth. In their death giving-guise and larger numbers, Andras is here.

MANDRAKE is another solanaceae, though not as dangerous to the Carcist as henbane seeds. There seems little point in exhaustively repeating Mandrake lore. Highly prized in the Middle East, Mandrake is of particular note when you wish to make offerings to Astaroth. Mandrake can be considered the goetic tree of knowledge, with its fruit, the love apples, used in many erotic works. Burned in medieval magick, there may be more to be said for mandrake wine than placing it in the fire. However, the subtle effect of adding mandrake to the mix should not be overlooked though the smoke needs to be sweetened rather than used alone.

BELLADONNA is the third of these poisons. Her malefic reputation once more suggests burning as a better method than ingestion. She brings wide-eyed sight. An overdose, if survived, will provide all the demonic visions one could ever wish for. She is merciless, sickle-sharp in her cruelty. When you wish to employ one of the spirits to bring death to an enemy, belladonna is the smoke to use. Botis and Bathin may appreciate

your entreaties under her cowl. She is also a seductress, and as such Glasya Labolas enjoys her company.

ANGEL'S TRUMPETS are the final solanaceae to herald the appearance of the Goetia. Carried from as far as the Himalayas, these terrible flowers flare their skirts with hypnotic effect. Poison she whispers, poison, poison, poison. But still they lure you. Burn with caution. Flauros is more than a corrupt Horus and can be found here. However, know the spirit well and offer the flower with great reverence and care.

POPPY has a sleepy charm. Perhaps the sharp blade in the hand of Fureas incised it first and brought dreams to the Greeks. Poppy seeds are an offering for healing, and vision for those who sleep in the temple. The Carcist would do well to spend the night in circle and be woken by dawn scribbling down memories. The wise understand the meaning of Buer. The associations of death and night summons the black birds and night ravens. But let us not forget in our forgetfulness the cheering. There is more than the croaking din, she stills flutterings. I would add lotus here, but it is better in the watery element, as an infusion to bring Saleos nosing through the shallows.

SYRIAN RUE comes as dragon's teeth. The small hard triangular red seeds have been burned on braziers and steeped in wine for centuries. Syrian Rue is the magickal plant once known as Moly. Rue is undergoing a revival of sorts as it functions as a monoamine oxidase inhibitor. The bitter gold cold water extraction produces a clear drunkenness which in particular sharpens the sense of sound. Beleth and Amon suggest themselves. It's use on wedding nights in Morocco point to an aphrodisiac quality whilst it is employed for easing childbirth in Pakistan. Gaap is only one of the spirits who warms to rue. Syrian Rue is used in combination, see calamus in particular, but also agaric and the skittish drawing out of Furfur. Burning the seeds for their visionary quality makes them an essential part of any Goetic incense mix.

Howlings

BENZOIN, also known as gum benjamin or Jawee, should be sourced from Morocco. The white is for air, the black for earth and water, and the red for fire. These alchemical uses can be explained to you by Decarabia who will direct you to the djinn ruling them. Outside of this, it is helpful to note that red jawee is part of the blend for Ose.

CORIANDER is for love magic as it is warming and copious in seed. Gladden your heart with this and use it with the dove spirits. Other than combining them in recipes for summoning the green fairy of Absinthe, coriander seeds and fennel are reputed to conjure the Devil. Fennel is not one of my allies, though the Devil is, I happily leave that plant to your own study. Parsley Root is a neglected grimoire incense and psychoactive that needs investigating here as well.

WORMWOOD, burned as herbage is mildly euphoric, a wry smile. Artemisia recalls the goddess Artemis, and it serves those spirits who are hunting out hidden things. It needs to be blended with others to tip over into more mercurial theivery or eloquence. Wormwood is a sister of mugwort whose use in moxibustion should suggest more uses to you.

Many of the Goetic smokes are noxious, but not exclusively so. Jasmine lends her electric insistence to this. It is a mistaken belief that the rogues gallery of 72 spirits are all bad to the bone. If you can curb your death metal aesthetic, let me suggest roses. Rose may be an alternative to burning asfoetida and olibanum to cleanse your working space. See *The Red Goddess* for more use of petals and perfume in working with Her, the Mother of Abominations.

When burning the right incense the Carcist should also consider using a feather to fan and flutter the smoke. A stock dove, crow, raven, owl or peacock should provide one for you. Let your goetic ritual take flight rather than be tethered to pious observances. Learn to see with all your senses. Breath deep, we have to bring the goetic spirits into our lungs blood and permeable membranes rather than leaving them to moulder in their books. Burn handfuls, burn wisely, these are an army of abominations. There are legions of spirits hungry to be fed and seen in the smoke.

The Stifling Air

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Melancholia

Albrecht Dürer, 1515, incorporating the kamea of Jupiter

16	3	2	13
5	10	11	8
9	6	7	12
4	15	14	1

AGRIPPA AND THE MAGIC SQUARES

David Rankine

A SIGIL COULD BE DESCRIBED AS A PICTOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION of a name or specific intent. The sigil representing a spiritual creature can act as a gateway for the energy of that creature to manifest. A technique which finds its most dramatic modern expression in the vevers of Voodoo, although it is equally appropriate for the Planetary Intelligences and Spirits detailed by Agrippa.

The creation of sigils on the kameas is, as far as we know, first documented in Agrippa in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, 1508–09. The kameas by themselves were being used for magick prior to this and were not created by Agrippa as has been suggested. The kameas were inscribed on planetary amulets and talismans made of thin sheets of the planetary metals and used for a wide variety of purposes. A manuscript entitled *The Book of Angels, Rings, Characters & Images of the Planets: attributed to Osbern Bokenham*, dating to the period 1441–45, makes specific reference to use of the kameas in talismanic magick in this manner. This MS is contained in *Cambridge MS Dd.xi.45*, between herbal and medical texts, and all written in the same hand.

Novotny attributes Agrippa's source for use of the kameas to the short piece *A Treatise on Magic Squares* possibly written by Manuel Moschopolos, which was bound in with a 15th century copy of the *Picatrix* in Cracow. Agrippa's exposure to the kameas was probably through his teacher Abbot Johannes Trithemius, who we know possessed a copy of the *Picatrix* as well as an extremely impressive array of grimoires.

However, we must not discount the Kabbalistic use of magick squares as the possible source for Trithemius and Agrippa. The famous Kabbalist Rabbi Joseph Tzayach (1505–1573) documents their use in a number of his works, continuing a Kabbalistic tradition which goes back some centuries. Significantly, Tzayach lists the kameas for the classical planets as used by Agrippa, in the 3–9 range, but also adds the 10–20 range (omitting 15) for the Sephiroth from Kether to Malkuth. It may have been Abraham ben Meir ibn Ezra (1090–1167), a Jewish philosopher who translated many Arab works into Hebrew, and who had a fascination for magick squares and numbers, who spread their use in his travels across Europe from Spain to Italy.

The earliest known magick square was the Chinese Lo Shu, a 3×3 square better known to us as the Saturn kamea, which can be dated to the 1st century CE. The idea of magick squares may have been transmitted from China through India to the Arab world. The *Rāsa'il* (Encyclopaedia), composed around 990 CE by a group of Arab scholars lists the magic squares from 3×3 through to 9×9 (i.e. the classical seven). At this stage we must still speculate on routes of transmission, though it is clear magick squares had been used for many centuries by several traditions prior to Agrippa. As was often the case, the Renaissance magicians described how the kameas worked in a somewhat romanticized manner. In *Harley MS 6482, Of the Little Tables of the Planets and what Divine Names, Intelligences and Demons Belong to these Tables*, we read:

The Magi of old framed certain Tables distributed to the seven planets. They called them sacred containing great virtues of heavenly numbers, by the Ideas of a divine soul, by a reason impressed on the Soul of the World in heavenly things, and the sweet harmony of those heavenly things, according to the proportion of the effigies, signifying together the Intelli-

gences more than mundane, which cannot otherwise be expressed than by the notes of numbers and characters. For material numbers and figures can do nothing in the mysteries of hidden things unless represented by numbers and formal figures as they are governed and informed by the Intelligences and Divine numerations, which unite the extremes of matter and spirit, to the will of the soul elevated by a great affection of the operator in celestial virtue, receiving power from God, by the Soul of the Universe, and the observations of celestial constellations, unto a matter applied to a form convenient, by disposed mediums in the skill and science magical.

Returning to Agrippa, and the technique he used, the Hebrew names of beings such as the Planetary Intelligences and Planetary Spirits were transcribed onto the kameas, the sigil being formed by drawing lines joining the squares corresponding to the numerical values of the letters in sequence. The numbers attributed to the letters were used according to the range of numbers within the kamea. If the letter had a higher number attributed to it than existed in the kamea, the number was dropped to the highest number available in the Aiq Beker table. As the largest kamea is that of the Moon, which has the number range 1–81, any letter with a numerical value over 80 would always be reduced.

The Aiq Beker table is also known as the Qabalah of Nine Chambers. The name Aiq Beker comes from the attribution of the letters to the first two chambers, hence AIQ (Aleph, Yod, Qoph) BKR (Beth, Kaph, Resh).

THE AIQ BEKER 'QABALAH OF NINE CHAMBERS'

1	2	3
Aleph (A: 1) Yod (I, Y: 10) Qoph (Q: 100)	Beth (B: 2) Kaph (K: 20) Resh (R: 200)	Gimel (G: 3) Lamed (L: 30) Shin (Sh: 300)
4	5	6
Daleth (D: 4) Mem (M: 40) Tav (Th: 400)	He (H, E: 5) Nun (N: 50) Final Kaph (K: 500)	Vav (V, O, U: 6) Samekh (S: 60) Final Mem (M: 600)
7	8	9
Zain (Z: 7) Ayin (Aa, O, Ngh: 70) Final Nun (N: 700)	Cheth (Ch: 8) Peh (P, Ph: 80) Final Peh (P, Ph: 800)	Teth (T: 9) Tzaddi (Tz: 90) Final Tzaddi (Tz: 900)

Examples are the best way to illustrate how this principle works when applied correctly. The Planetary Intelligence of Saturn is Agiel. When this name is attributed numerically the sequence is 1(A), 3(G), 1(I), 1(A), 3(L). Because the name is drawn on the planetary kamea for Saturn, which only contains the number range of 1-9, I with a numerical value of 10 is reduced to 1, and L with a numerical value of 30 is reduced to 3.

However, if we now take the Planetary Intelligence of Venus, Kedemel, this is drawn on the Venus kamea with a number range of 1-49. Kedemel has the numerical attributions of 100(Q), 4(D), 40(M), 1(A), 30(L). The 100 is dropped to 10 because the number 100 is not found in the kamea, but the 40 and 30 are not reduced because they exist in the kamea.

22	47	16	41	10	35	4
23	48	17	42	11	36	29
30	6	24	49	18	36	12
13	31	7	25	43	19	37
38	14	32	1	26	44	20
21	39	8	33	2	27	45
46	15	40	9	34	28	

Original Venus Kamea

22	47	16	41	10	35	4
23	48	17	42	11	36	29
30	6	24	49	18	36	12
13	31	7	25	43	19	37
38	14	32	1	26	44	20
21	39	8	33	2	27	45
46	15	40	9	34	28	

Corrected Venus Kamea

Where the number attributed to the first letter is placed in the kamea is marked with a small circle in the centre of the number square. From this circle a straight line is drawn to the centre of the square for the second number, and so on until the last number is reached. This final end point is marked by either a small perpendicular bar or another circle.

If a word begins with two letters with the same numerical value, a bifurcation like a curvy m may be used, with the line to the next square drawn from the centre of the bifurcation. When two consecutive letters within the word have the same numerical value, a small loop is drawn, with additional loops for each additional repetition of the same numerical value.

When a word begins and ends in the same square of the kamea, the sigil is sometimes connected so there is no apparent beginning or end.

Confusingly, in the first source for this technique, Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, Agrippa himself does not seem to always stick to these principles in the construction of the sigils for the Planetary Intelligences and Spirits. For instance where a word contains the letters IA together, which is common in names of spiritual creatures, the numerical values of the letters, I=10 and A=1, are often added to make 11, instead of using the squares for 10 and 1. Likewise, he sometimes combines other letters with no apparent reason, and does not always reduce a number to the highest value, e.g. reducing 200 to 2 instead of 20 when there is a 20 in the kamea.

Howlings

Since Agrippa's work, the tendency has been to reproduce his sigils without any explanation. For this reason I will refer to all the sigils which demonstrate inconsistencies, for the reader to redraw for themselves.

Martial Planetary Intelligence: Graphiel (GRAPhIAL)

$$\begin{aligned} &G+R+A+Ph+I+A+L \\ &3+200+1+80+10+1+30 = 325 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1-25, so 80 is reduced to 8 and 30 to 3; 200 is reduced to 2 rather than 20 for no clear reason. The 10+1 of IA are combined to 11 and the square for 11 used. As the word begins and ends on a 3 the sigil is closed at this square.

Martial Planetary Spirit: Bartzabel (BRTzBAL)

$$\begin{aligned} &B+R+Tz+B+A+L \\ &2+200+90+2+1+30 = 325 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1-25, so 90 is reduced to 9 and 30 to 3; 200 is reduced to 2 rather than 20 for no clear reason. The two 2s at the beginning of the name are indicated by the double loop

Solar Planetary Intelligence: Nakhiel (NKIAL)

$$\begin{aligned} &N+K+I+A+L \\ &50+20+10+1+30 = 111 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1-36, so 50 is reduced to 5. The 1 and A are not combined, and for no clear reason 30 is reduced to 3 despite being in the kamea.

Agrippa & the Magic Squares

Solar Planetary Spirit: Sorath (SVRTh)

$$\begin{aligned} &S+V+R+Th \\ &60+6+200+400 = 666 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1-36, so 400 is reduced to 4, and 60 to 6; 200 is reduced to 2 rather than 20 for no clear reason. The two 6s together at the beginning of the name are indicated by the double loop.

Venerable Planetary Intelligence: Hagiell (HGIAL)

$$\begin{aligned} &H+G+I+A+L \\ &5+3+10+1+30 = 49 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1-49, so you would expect no reductions. However 30 is reduced to 3. The 10+1 of IA are combined to 11 and the square for 11 used with a double loop, which is not used elsewhere.

Mercurial Planetary Intelligence: Tiriel (TIRIAL)

$$\begin{aligned} &T+I+R+I+A+L \\ &9+10+200+10+1+30 = 260 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1-64, so 200 is reduced to 20. The 10+1 of IA are combined to 11 and the square for 11 used, rather than using the squares for 10 and 1.

Lunar Planetary Intelligence of Intelligences: Malkah be-Tharshisim ve-ad Be-Ruachoth Shechalim (MLKA BThRShIThIM AaD BRVCh ShChQIM)

$$\begin{aligned} &MLKA BThRShIThIM AaD BRVCh ShChQIM \\ &40+30+20+1 \ 2+400+200+300+10+400+10+600 \ 70+4 \ 2+200+6+8 \\ &300+8+100+10+600 = 3321 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1–81, so 600 is reduced to 60, 400 to 40, 300 to 30, 200 to 20, and 100 to 10. In the first word the 20 (K) and 1 (A) are combined to make 21 and this square used instead of 20 and 1 for no clear reason.

Lunar Planetary Spirit: Chasmodai (ChShMVDAI)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Ch+Sh+M} &= \text{V+D=A+I} \\ 8+300+40+6+4+1+10 &= 369 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1–81, so 300 is reduced to 30. This 30 is then combined with the 40 (M) to produce 70 as a combined total and that square used instead of 30 and 40. There is no obvious reason for this.

Lunar Planetary Spirit of Spirits: Schad Barschemoth ha-Shartathan (ShD-BRShHMAaTh ShRThThN)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sh+D B+R+Sh+H+M+Aa+Th} & \quad \text{Sh+R+Th+Th+N} \\ 300+4 \quad 2+200+300+5+40+70+400 & \quad 300+200+400+400+700 = 3321 \end{aligned}$$

The kamea contains the range 1–81, so 700 is reduced to 70, 400 to 40, 300 to 30 and 200 to 20. The 300 (Sh) reduced to 30 in the second word is added to the following 5 (H) to make 35 as a combined total and that square used instead of 30 and 5, for no obvious reason. The loop from 40–70–40 is also unexplained, as there is no reason for it not to be straight lines.

By the 17th century the sigils drawn off the kameas were already well established, as can be seen by the following quote from *Sloane MSS 3821*:

There are Seven Intelligences or Spirits, of light, who are Celestially Dignified, by nature, Angelical & Benevolent, whose names are to be Collected, & Characters Drawn from the forementioned tables [i.e. the kameas]; with the names of God, Governing them, by the force, Influence, Virtue, & Mystical, & Secret, Efficacy, whereof, them good demons, are power-

fully moved, & to be Called forth, to Visible Appearance, whose Names are as followeth.

In looking at Agrippa's influence, we should also remember that many other magicians have worked with different types of sigils since then (remembering that Agrippa describes reduction sigilisation in his *Three Books* as well). A fine example of this prevalence is to be found in the 18th century *Sloane MSS 3822*, which contains the following prayer (reproduced verbatim):

A PRAYER BEFORE THE PUTTING OF ANY SIGIL
by Sir Thomas Myddleton

O Almighty Lord and everlasting God, by whose power both the heavens and the Earth with all things therein contained were made, by whose providence all things both in heaven & Earth are governed Who givest virtue to every Creature, that thou hast made as to plants, stones, herbs, & all for the use of man (who in thee doth live, move, & hath his being) yea & to words, prayers, signs & sigils dost give especial virtues, & especially to thy own great Names, for expelling of evil spirits & healing diseases, give thy special blessing unto these sigils which in thy Name we do apply unto this thy Servant, let those virtues equal the virtue of Gideon's Sword that vanquished the Philistines, of Judith that cut off the Babylonian's head, the strength of Sampson's arms, the strength of David; let his prayers that made them (who bear a place in the Celestial Choir) be now heard in remembrance, & let our weak prayers, have access unto thy throne of Grace, & so for prayer with thy Sacred Majesty that these Sigils may receive that virtue from thee, that was humbly supplicated at the making of them, and Let this thy Servant find & feel the effectual workings of them, to the Recovering of health both of body & mind, & preserving from the Like or any other evil, both of body & mind hereafter, & grant this O merciful father for Jesus Christ his Sake in whose blessed Name we do humbly & heartily beg it, of thee, in that prayer which he hath taught us.

Take a good time agreeable to the Sigil you will put on.

Howlings

So having looked deeper into the sources of Agrippa's work, I hope this will inspire further work with the Planetary Intelligences and Planetary Spirits he detailed.

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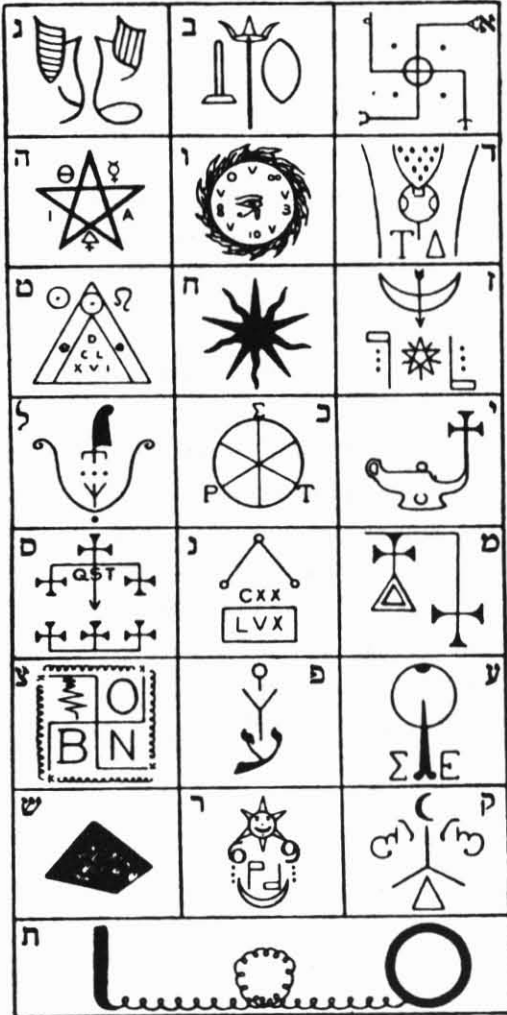
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LIBER XXII DOMARVM MERCVRII
CVM SVIS GENIIS



LIBER XXII CARCERORVM QLIPHOTH
CVM SVIS GENIIS

WHAT HAS BEEN SEEN IN AMENNTI

An Introduction to the Hermeneutics of Liber 231

Krzysztof Azarewicz, Mihrab Camp OTO

THE HOLY BOOKS OF THELEMA can be seen as some of the finest examples of the magical grimoire tradition. First let us examine the meaning of that word carefully. The word 'grimoire' comes from the old French *grammaire* which is itself derived from the Greek root *grammatikos* or 'relating to letters', from which grammar, a system of basic linguistic units, is derived. Language can indeed be used as a magical tool to create a universe. Tahuti, Heka, Hermes, Mercury are all gods of magick and language. Following the principles of scientific illuminism, it is very important to look at how etymology and semantics can demarcate the boundaries of our own universes. In this way we can understand the esoteric and exoteric mechanisms of our perception of the cosmos around us and within us. As magicians we need to know how to be precise in using grimoires, or the grammar of everyday language, in order to raise our consciousness to new levels. Terence McKenna notes in his excellent *Food of the Gods*:

The evidence gathered from millenia of shamanic experience argues that the world is actually made of language in some fashion. Although at odds with the expectations of modern science, this radical proposition is in agreement with much of current linguistic thinking... Language is not merely a device for communicating ideas about the world, but rather a tool for bringing the world into existence in the first place. Reality is not simply 'experienced' or 'reflected' in language, but instead is actually produced by language... For the shaman the world appears to be more in the nature of an utterance or a tale... Cosmos is a tale that becomes true as it is told and as it tells itself.

Crowley expresses a similar opinion in *Liber ABA*, when he describes magick as an example of mythopeia, and Thoth as simply the discoverer of writing. He elaborates on this in *Magick Without Tears*, in the essay *Hieroglyphics*.

Regardless of our ontological opinions about the subjectivity or objectivity of reality and the role of the subject and object structure of language in interpreting phenomena, life can be viewed as a constant stream of events. It seems to be sufficient for us to go with the flow of such events and use them for our own benefit.

There is a tendency among modern magicians towards the excessive use of the *modus operandi* presented in somewhat old fashioned grimoires, and as a result they paradoxically limit the possibility of establishing contact on much higher planes than the material one. The reader is referred to Chapter 69 of Crowley's *The Book of Lies* wherein two Triangles of Art are discussed, 'the descending tongue of grace' and 'the ascending tongue of prayer'. By working with only one of these concepts many magicians never achieve a perfect control over their devotion, 'prayer', and in worst cases they are literally possessed by beings from Beyond, 'grace'. Thus, many are misled by traditional or medieval texts and are seduced by the glamour and spectacular effects of working with spirits. In the terminology of classical yoga, they play with siddhis or magical powers, which are merely the side effects of much more important alchemical processes. It is clearly indicated in the mystico-magickal system of the AA that such grimoires and techniques should be used as a part of the magical training. In other words, they should be considered a means of preparation for much higher initiatory experience.

However, *The Holy Books of Thelema* grant the freedom to establish one's own hierarchy of the spiritual realms according to one's inclinations, requirements and magical capacity. They are not focused on so-called result magic, but instead give instructions in karma yoga or union by action, which is a vital aspect of Thelema, and life in general. In this context, it all depends on a relationship being established between the practitioner and an individual scripture. Even the basic founding documents of the O.T.O. like *Liber 101* and *Liber 194* are practical grimoires.

In order to establish a close, esoteric relationship between an individual and the *Holy Books* we need to develop a dialectical interaction between the following three characters: the text itself, the reader and the interpretive community.

None of these three can exist autonomously, but only as a part of a larger unity through which the meanings of the *Holy Books* can be interpreted. The word or Logos of Thelema will only be truly manifested in the harmonious development of all three factors.

The Holy Books of Thelema give a much wider operating field for the magician than any traditional magical text since they cover a wider range of spiritual experiences. From the textual and conceptual perspective of the individual libri, we can divide them into three categories. Firstly, practical instruction, written in symbolic language, for achieving direct spiritual or mystical experience of the higher grades of the AA. This accomplishment directly influences our perception of all planes of reality, with the *Holy Books* providing the codes of communication to commune with such planes. *Liber 65* is one of the finest examples of this approach, giving, 'an account of the relations of the Aspirant with his Holy Guardian Angel.' Secondly, texts like *Liber 27* and *Liber 813* are elaborations on the fundamental theoretical and practical Qabalah or, as Crowley called it, the alphabet of Magick. The third group of Holy Books is focused on practical matters and gives very potent techniques which can be easily deciphered and safely used on an almost everyday basis. Examples are *Liber 66*, which, 'describes an extremely powerful ritual of practical Magick', and *Liber 231*, which is, 'a technical treatise on the Tarot... explained as a formula of initiation.'

It is perhaps due to its mysterious textual and hieroglyphic form that *Liber 231* drew my attention during my early studies of the Holy Books. Aleister Crowley received the hieroglyphic portions of *Liber 231*, *Arcana in Atus of Tahuti* and *Sigils of Genii*, in December 1907, and the text was produced in 1911.

Liber 231 can be divided into four sections: The title itself is worth mentioning since it divides the book into two parts: *Liber Arcanorum* or *The Secret Book of the Atus of Tahuti which Asar (Osiris) saw in Amennti (The Egyptian Underworld)*, which is numbered 231, and *Liber Carcerorum*, or *The Book of the Prisons of the Qliphoth with their genii*.

The second part consists of two tables showing the sigils of genii from *Liber Arcanorum* and *Carcerorum*. Taken together they have the technical title *Liber 22*, the symbolism of which will be discussed later. Between the

tables, there is a small textual portion which gives an instruction in pairing and comparing the Hebrew letters attributed to the sigils.

Next is a collection of 22 verses based on Egyptian mythological motifs. The verses are numbered in exactly the same manner as the Major Arcana of the Tarot.

The last portion of the book gives 44 (2 × 22) names of the 'genii of the Scales of Serpent and of the Qliphoth.'

The synopsis of *Liber 231* gives a key to the interpretation of the book:

This is an account of the cosmic process so far as it is indicated by the Tarot Trumps... *Liber CCXXXI* is a technical treatise on the Tarot. The sequence of the 22 Trumps is explained as a formula of initiation.

The technical titles of the charts are now very obvious, they show the sigils of genii connected with the Tarot trumps, the first in relation to the Tree of Life itself, the other to the Qliphoth.

The number of the Book, 231, also corresponds directly to the Major Arcana being the sum of the first 22 numbers, 0 to 21 as printed on the tarot trumps in Roman numerals.

In the *Sepher Yetzirah* we read, 'Twenty-two Foundation Letters He placed them in a circle like a wall with 231 Gates'. This refers to the lines connecting each pair of Hebrew letters, which are referred to as gates. The Rabbinic tradition teaches that a systematic meditation upon the various combinations will open the mind to the mysteries of God.

The sigils of *Liber 231* were redrawn by J.F.C. Fuller according to instructions given by Crowley:

General Design: Maybe a wheel with 22 compartments on the rim. The wheel has 8 spokes. At the 4 corners are the 4 Kerubim [sketch with Aquarius, Scorpio, Taurus, Leo clockwise from top left]. But the Pillar Scheme is equally good... These sigils are dangerously automatic, and should not be exposed or left lying about... This is perhaps because these are the Atus which are beheld in Amennti – they are therefore the governors & inspectors of the disordered fabrications.

It is not my intention to discuss in depth the symbolism of the book itself, nor the meaning behind Crowley's short comment, 'this book is true up to the grade of Adeptus Exemptus of the AA'. It is sufficient to say that the story of Asar in Amennti is based on themes found in the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* which describes the ancient Egyptian conception of the after-life and gives a collection of hymns, spells, and instructions allowing the deceased to pass through the obstacles in the land of the dead. There are many interpretations of the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*. One reading puts an emphasis on the guiding nature of the text as a cartography of the human psyche in confrontation with its shadow. This concept is quite interesting in the light of Crowley's opinion that people who are not initiates into the mysteries of life and death, living as automatons, are 'dead souls'. In this light, *Liber 231* can be seen as a manual of self-initiation, of passing through the alchemical process from gross and inanimate first matter to becoming a living being in the fullest sense.

It is no mistake that *Liber 231* is connected with the Tarot, which is itself a guided spiritual journey through almost all imaginable and unimaginable worlds and archetypes. The Tarot can be understood as a hieroglyphic representation of the process of individuation. These ideas were interesting enough for several generations of magicians to embark on the ship of Asar and descend into the underworld in search of new life and light, with *Liber 231* as a guidebook for their journey.

The first known person who worked with the genii of 231 was Marcelo Ramos Motta, a disciple of Karl Germer and a high initiate of the AA. Motta published his personal research on *Liber 231* in his edition of *The Equinox*. He describes his modus operandi in the following manner:

The Seer would lay a straw mat on the floor, consecrate a circle around it, do the Banishings and Invocations from *Liber Al*, invoke his H.G.A. and the force radiating from Boleskine, and execute the skrying.

Concerning the skrying, Motta gives the following instruction:

You imagine a door, paint the symbol on it, and imagine that you are going through it. Mental images differ from astral images, but only practice

brings understanding and discrimination of the difference involved. They are unmistakable to anyone who practiced regularly.

Prior to the workings Motta used to paint the sigils of the genii and some qabalistic pentacles in the Queen scale around them, and then usually affixed the seal to his forehead. He started his experiments in July 1969 and finished them in March 1975. Despite the chaotic records and methodology (he seemed to pick particular paths quite randomly and then madly worked with them) his grimoire is a fascinating document, written with painful honesty.

Ray Eales published his own *Equinox Vol. VII*, no. 1 in 1992. It is in this issue that we find descriptions of another set of experiments with *Liber 231*, this time regarding the Qliphotic genii. Workings were undertaken by Frater S.T.S., possibly David Bersson, Motta's disciple in the AA. He started them in May 1978 and finished in December 1980. In comparison to Motta's account, the material presented in *Visions* by S.T.S. is less chaotic, with more elaborate rituals and the seer seemed to be much better prepared. The structure, the qabalistic Tree of Life, seems to have been used more wisely and constructively, despite the nature of the qliphotic genii. S.T.S. started from dealings with Thantifaxath, who resides on the 32nd path leading from Malkuth to Yesod, then encountered Qulielfi in order to meet Shalicy, and therefore complete the explorations of all the paths leading from Malkuth. He then proceeded to work with Qliphotic genii on higher levels of the Tree.

Kenneth Grant's *Nightside of Eden* is perhaps the most renowned work on *Liber 231*. Grant gives a fascinating insight into the nature of the Qliphotic genii, analysing their sigils and names, describing their powers, kalas and bindus, and the modes of combining them in accordance with the power zones governed, or rather, haunted by beings from the other side of the Tree of Life. Grant states that:

...the actual method of magical evocation has not been given explicitly because of the obvious dangers involved, and because its abuse, either through accident or design, is only too likely to occur.

The techniques mentioned above will be evident to those who have studied Grant's *Typhonian Trilogies*.

Grant clearly makes mistakes in calculating the gematric values of the names of the genii, and as a result, there follows a series of mistakes in analysing their nature. After a detailed analysis of Grant's work, his use of colours for sigils also seems to be mixed up. He follows the King and Princess scale, but only so far, then the matter becomes quite confusing. The nature of the shapes of material basis for the sigils themselves is doubtful as well.

Despite this, his study is recommended for any serious student of *Liber 231*. The author prepared a beautiful cartographic representation of the Tunnels of Set, 'a network of dream cells in the subconscious mind.' His elaborated descriptions of certain columns from 777, which served him as a basis for a detailed qabalistic exegesis of *Liber 231*, can also serve as a preparation ground and meditative tool for new and advanced psychonauts alike.

Grant deliberately left the Mercurial genii out of his book, stating that Crowley described them in his magnum opus on the Tarot, *The Book of Thoth*. I disagree with Mr Grant's assumption. Based on my own experiments and those conducted by Mihrab Camp of the Ordo Templi Orientis, the Mercurial beings of *Liber 231* are better seen as Yetziratic guardians watching over the pylons leading to the realms of the Major Arcana located in Briah. The nature of the Mercurial genii will be briefly discussed later.

Nightside of Eden inspired Linda Falorio and her partner Fred Fowler to create the *Shadow Tarot*. She writes:

The method of producing the images was to paint the ancient magickal sigil – probably of Sumerian origin or older, resurrected by Crowley in *Liber CCXXXI* – of the Qliphoth of each dayside Path, then immerse in the energies for weeks or months via meditation/tantra... While 'regular' tarot cards depict the familiar world of ego-consciousness, in this dark tarot each sigil evokes the ancient interdimensional shadow forces. Each painting provides a means of positive integration/acceptance of potentially explosive/corrosive dark material into the personality without shattering its fragile vessel.

Falorio undertook a series of magical workings based on Grant's book between July 1983 and February 1988:

Rather than ascending by way of Malkuth as in dayside explorations using Golden Dawn techniques, one explores the underlying tunnels by projecting consciousness through Daäth – 'the gateway of the manifestation of non-manifestation' – the entrance to the Nightside of the Tree of Life.

According to her description, the experiments with exploration and reification of the Sethian Tunnels took place in a group context and the basic operational structure was possibly similar to that used by Mihrab Camp.

Another artist and magician who developed a personal interest in the sigils of *Arcanorum and Carcerorum* is Barry William Hale. Being artistically inclined, he has produced some amazing artwork based on *Liber 231* for the Australian Oceania Lodge of the O.T.O. His drawings can be used as extremely potent meditative tools. Hale developed alternative arrangements of the sigils and placed them in a wheel surrounded by the four cherubic beasts. He created a large number of such drawings, with the sigils placed in different combinations. In some pictures, he worked just with the Mercurial genii, in others he placed both the Mercurial and Qliphotic in concentric circles. The axis of the wheel was usually a flower, the sun or an eye in the triangle, all of which have their own unique place in the hermeneutics of the Western Mystery Tradition. From the central axis of the picture circles appear like ripples on the waters of the unconscious. Wheels are seen within wheels. Then, an amazed eye sees figures as if gravitating towards the sigils, or even towards the central point. The form assumed by these entities are those of different pantheons, philosophies and cultures: Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Haitian Voudoun, Congolese Palo Mayombe and native Australian Aborigines, all watched over by four cherubs, guardians of the corners outside of which there is a vastness of realities.

In his *Preliminary Study Towards a Sigillic Exegesis of Liber 231*, Hale gives an interesting account of an encounter with one of the genii. After creating his mandalas he:

...was afforded a visit from one of these Genii in a most remarkable manner. One of these artistic works was sealed in a frame and used during a working involving these sigils. The face of the frame was broken by a 'secondary' means, breaking the seal. It cracked directly in between the sigil that had just been worked with and the one that was next upon the wheel. Given that the art piece was very large and the space between sigils was pretty small it was an interesting turn of events to say the least.

Hale's essay develops the idea of combining sorcery with art, and carries strong thelemic overtones. It is a great introduction to a comparative study of the Mercurial and Qliphotic seals.

There are many other magicians and artists exploring the realms of the 231 gates from different perspectives. Paul Hughes-Barlow wrote a book *Tarot and the Magus*, which is partially based upon the pairing of the Major Arcana according to principles presented in the instructions of *Liber 231*.

Michael Sanborn conducted some group experiments at Cheth House of the O.T.O. and developed the Orphic Egg Meditation, based on the 22 Scales of the Serpent of *Liber 231*.

Interviews with magicians in England and America show that the modes of using the sigils and names of the genii, of employing astral and evocatory formulae, vary significantly. A comparative and critical study of those approaches, and the results obtained therefrom, is in preparation.

There is a good reason for working with such magical guide books as *Liber 231*. Participants will not only acquire basic knowledge of ritual magic, the Tarot, and Qabala but the conducted experiments should also create a strong egregore or an energetic engine within the group.

While the AA system is strictly based on solitary work, the O.T.O. allows us to share our own individual initiatory experiences. The results enable us to go beyond our limited conception of the universe and ourselves. It is only by the reconditioning and reprogramming of our points of view that we can tune into the archetypal and perennial dimensions of existence. This will lead us towards the accomplishment of the Great Work which we all have to perform as magicians. The exchange and sharing of ideas and ex-

periences between initiates are tools we should use in order to achieve this. We are all traveling on the same boat across the solar system, and sharing that adventure with other living beings is an exciting experience. Communication is a communion.

On a more esoteric level, *Liber 231* provides us with an extremely powerful tool for such high magickal operations as obtaining the knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. The 22 scales of the Serpent, if understood properly, create a spiral staircase directly to this communion. The paths can and actually should be travelled both upwards and downwards, thus uniting the ascending head of the ancient Serpent Nechesch who initiated Eve, the blue triangle of prayer, with the descending Flash of Creation, Mezla, the red triangle of grace.

One of the practices studied by a Neophyte of the AA is *Liber HHH* of which part *MMM* is a meditative equivalent of the ritual of initiation known as *Liber Pyramidos*. In that text we find a striking analogy with the 22 scales of the Serpent mentioned in *Liber 231*:

Let [the aspirant] aspire fervently unto the Holy Guardian Angel... Two and twenty times shall he figure to himself that he is bitten by a serpent, feeling even in his body the poison thereof.

We may also add that the magical power attributed to the initiatory stage of a Neophyte is the vision of the Holy Guardian Angel.

PASSING INTO AMENNTI

During a series of workings with the genii of *Liber 231*, members of Mihrab Camp employed an experimental method based on the principles of scientific illuminism and sceptical theurgy. This approach opened the way to experiential contact between the genii and the participants. Thus, scientific methodology was combined with an intuitive insight.

The key to successfully exploring a particular domain, such as those accessible through *Liber 231*, is in obtaining the magickal trance. Modern

writers on the subject tend to disregard this necessary prerequisite, and focus entirely on repeated descriptions and unproductive analyses of basic rituals. Fortunately there are some exceptions. Austin Osman Spare gave us an interesting insight into the nature of trance, and his ideas were further developed by magicians such as Peter J. Carroll. Even preliminary rituals, such as those of the Pentagram and Hexagram, can induce a very real trance state if the practitioner has achieved the necessarily high level of consciousness. The induction is made possible by the ferocity of intention, followed by specific and fully understood actions.

Workings conducted by members of the Camp usually started with relaxation practices which open the gate to the state of gnosis. These consisted of yogic techniques such as body awareness, calming the mind and relaxing the whole physio-psychological system; *Anuloma Viloma*, increasing mental concentration and inducing states of meditation; *Nadi Shodhana Pranayama*, regulating the flow of prana in subtle bodies and removing blockages of the nadis; *Kapalbhati*, energising the mind and removing sleepiness. All of these practices are ideal before commencing a meditation and astral working. All can lead to dharana or other levels of concentration depending on individual's capacity and experience in such practices.

The preparation of the space involved personal purifications, banishings, and invoking the energies of Mercury, since the genii of *Liber 231* are of a mercurial nature.

The purified and properly consecrated space was used for the reception of Briatic mercurial influences. This was achieved by an invocation of Thoth by the formula described in *Liber Israfel*, an occidental equivalent of a Tantric practice called *nyasa*, which Feuerstein describes as the, 'ritual infusion of life force into an object, including one's own body, by which it is divinized.'

This ritual is perfect for any kind of group working. It explicitly indicates its suitability for use as such by referring to 'listeners' in the text. Also, according to the ancient Egyptian ways of communicating with the neteru, it would be appropriate for an officer to wear a mask of Tahuti in order to empower his or her own ability as a channel for energy transmission.

Next, the verses from *Liber 231* were read up to the one the group was working with. Each verse is connected with a particular Hebrew letter and

the name of the genius. During the recitation, the sigil of the genius was unveiled and the mantra was chanted.

The sigil was painted using the colours in the following manner. The background was coloured in the Princess Scale. The seal itself in the King Scale. In this way combining that which is Below with that which is Above, and the Outer with the Inner. To illustrate this process let us examine the sigil of Aiu-iao-Uia. The background behind the sigil would be painted in emerald, flecked gold and the seal itself in bright pale yellow. Obviously using different colour scales will lead to different results.

Les *objets magiques* employed in this basic procedure were of a Tantric nature. It is my own personal opinion that one of the aims of the O.T.O. is to create a bridge linking the esoteric traditions of the East with those of the West and to annihilate the dichotomy between them by opening the path to ek-stasis or the transcendence of illusionary realities. The methods used in these workings were based on such an eclectic approach.

The sigil is a perfect example of a yantra, a geometric figure widely used in Tantric worship as the body of a chosen deity. This theurgical device or *energeia* is an ideal basis for the manifestation of the Aristotelean entelechy.

The name of the genius serves as a mantra, a mystical syllable, a song, a spell or a vibration. Not only does it create single-pointed concentration and a perfect focus on the telos of the working, but also serves as a tunnel, usually in the shape of a cone of light, by which a particular genius slips down from the Atmanic or Buddha plane into the astral. The temple itself would also be charged with proper incenses, totems, and other paraphernalia corresponding to the path, whereas the sigil would be placed in a geomantic figure in order to attract the genius.

In Tantric practices, yantra and mantra are used for invoking certain deities. The invocation can take two forms, a practitioner either visualises him or herself as a deity, or experiences the darshan or a vision of the divine form. In the workings described here, the latter method was employed by means of communication which took place on the astral plane. The procedure was that the practitioners visualised doors, a curtain or a veil, enlarged it to natural proportions, and projected the sigil of the genius painted in appropriate colours. Assuming their bodies of light they opened it and

entered the astral realm. This is analogous to the Tantric practices where initiates perform *jiva-nyasa*, a process of revitalising, sanctifying and charging the subtle bodies. The imagined body which serves as a vehicle is called *shakta-deha* the power-charged body, or *sakali-karana*, a complete instrument.

In most cases, the establishment of communication took place within a short period of time, this was due to the mercurial qualities involved in the process.

INTO THE TUNNEL OF AIU-IAO-UIA

I opened the doors and saw thick and sticky nets which were glued to the gate and that which was behind. I couldn't see much. A dark and narrow, very narrow, almost claustrophobic tunnel. I entered it feeling low and almost material astral plasma.

After a while of struggling with the nets I found myself in a very large open space. On the horizon, there were pyramid-like peaks of mountains. It was daytime, the sky wasn't blue but yellowish so I assumed it had to be fully covered with clouds. Suddenly, I saw how the air was forming into the fast and violent formations of the wind. It was blowing in almost equal sequences so that I could perceive it as a swastika created of four winds blowing and rotating one by one.

The wind snatched me up and carried me away. I was swirling violently in the air. Somehow I realised that I was carried on the Breath, an expiration of something or someone big enough to make me feel as if I was a minute, virtually invisible atom in the stream of a single breath. After a while, I saw some particles in the air that had power of resistance, or perhaps the wind lost its speed and impetus? The particles stopped on their way and started to form visible shapes mostly in green and gold. At the stopping place of the wind (where the wind stops, and what changes are happening at the threshold of inertia and activity, seem to be open questions) the particles have formulated a shape of an entity. A harlequin or a trickster

seem to be appropriate words to describe it. It was an amazingly tall and thin figure of a man. His body was 'painted' in these colours, the whole uniform including a characteristic long peaked hat of a wizard was also green and gold. The figure smiled sarcastically keeping a cigar in one hand and a whip in the other. Suddenly he moved, or I should say, he relocated himself quicker than the blinking of an eye to various places around me. It was very difficult to actually follow his movements and the whole narrative of the event. It made me feel quite uncomfortable and I sensed chaos and disorder around. In a series of minute flashes, I experienced a confusion of thoughts, forms, and astral shapes.

The genius seemed to be communicative and friendly, but sometimes frivolous or cunning, with trickster-like attitude and a tendency to play pranks. It was for that reason that the standard tests and questionings had to be employed. It all depends on courtesy, and the level of mastery of the astral plane. I have had the chance to interview members of another experimental group who have evoked these genii into the Triangle of Art. However, the spirits didn't seem to like the idea of being imprisoned and forced to communicate.

In the case studied in this essay, the genii very often sent their own messengers in order to check if the operator was prepared for the contact. In such situations, an unexperienced psychonaut could be easily deceived by these beings. One strange case was recorded during the operation with Salathlalamrodnathainist, during which a magician asked a question to the group of entities who came to greet him at the threshold between the worlds.

What can you teach me? he asked.

One of them replied, *Nothing.*

The disappointed traveller decided to come back soon after he heard the answer. That situation would not be strange at all, but in the first chapter of *The Book of the Law* we read, 'Nothing is a secret key of this law.' The whole communication was broken due to a very simple fact that the operator was

not prepared to receive information which could be of great importance in relation to the Law of Thelema.

During the 22 Mercurial workings, the genii seemed to show the characteristics of the archetypal trickster, who can be found as the Greek Hermes, the sacred clowns of Pueblo people, the Aboriginal Great Breaker of Taboo Banapana, Hopi Pan-like Kokopelli or Haitian Papa Legba. All of them serve as guardians of the crossroads, psychopomps guiding souls to the afterlife, and helping with the transmutation of the First Matter into Gold.

INTO THE TUNNEL OF NADIMRAPHOROIOZOTHALAI

A dwarf led me to the large hall. The floor was covered in black and white squares and at the end there was a throne with figure sitting on it. The figure was dressed in a long black cloak, wearing a mask which resembled a skull without the lower jaw. In the middle of the chamber there was a sarcophagus made of stone. I came closer to it and the figure from the throne did the same. Everything was bathed in crystal blue astral light.

We stood on two sides of the sarcophagus. The figure threw dice which fell down on the tomb. The score was 6 and 3. (63 is the number of Abaddon)

Then I had a vision in which I saw an empty coffin placed inside the sarcophagus. Naturally and instinctively, I lay down in it. Then, a strange funeral ceremony started. The hall was filled with a procession of fauns and children playing on pipes and joyously dancing. All of them sprinkled the sarcophagus with rose petals.

My causal body started to move up from the coffin. I was losing my weight leaving behind first physical, then etheric, astral, and finally my mental body. It was a process of putrefaction and reification during which different images of myself portrayed in different subtle bodies were falling down like old leaves. I started to lose my senses, one by one. At the end, I lost my sight. The darkness was soon transformed into brilliance. I lost my memory.

The genii of *Liber 231* were in this case personified thresholds, stages on the initiatory journey leading to Mount Abiegnus. Similar to the tricksters, they exhibited a variability of gender and forms, changing them according to their own fancy. This matter was deeply studied during astral communication with the spirits. Some of the genii showed characteristics of being hermaphroditic or of a third gender, which could be explored in further workings.

All participants kept records of their workings which were compiled, carefully examined and compared. After studying the accounts, it appeared that most of the genii had a tendency to take a quasi-anthropomorphic form and their individual characteristics corresponded to the nature of the pylon or path they inhabited.

In most cases they exhibited vast knowledge about the magical weapons and powers attributed to their realities. In this context they resemble familiars or shamanic allies who guide a magician and teach him the secrets of their own worlds. Many of them gave very practical instructions concerning healing, preparations of protective amulets and spells, known in Tantra as kavaca or armor, and other helpful suggestions with regards to an individual initiatory path.

During the whole series of the operations, the members of the group received a large amount of information about seals, names and qualities of the genii. They also paired the letters and sigils and thus opened completely new ways of exploring the mysteries of *Liber 231*. Pairing the letters opens a new way to interpret esoterically the nature of the genii. The key may be found in the 13th Aethyr of *Liber 418*. A grimoire giving the detailed methodology of the experiments and describing the visions will be published in the near future.

Some of the paths required several explorations and there is still much to be discovered. All results depend on the capacity and initiatory level of the individuals involved in the operations. The possibilities for the exploration of different realities within *Liber 231* are virtually endless.

Some members of the group decided to stop the experiments at an early stage, having found all they expected from such magickal operations. Others simply gave up the whole idea since they approached the spirits with a lack of respect which mirrored their lack of respect for themselves. They

are still in the darkness of ignorance. Perhaps they reached their natural stopping point. The very same thing happens during the explorations of the Thirty Aethyrs. If you are not prepared to go further you will see only blackness. There were others who endured until the end and now meditate upon the meaning of the visions. The experiences and the messages need to be assimilated for a pattern to emerge from the chaos of the astral realms. Regardless of the level of success, all individuals who decided to open the gates and explore these unknown realities attained a degree of self knowledge, and a better understanding of the path they tread in this incarnation.

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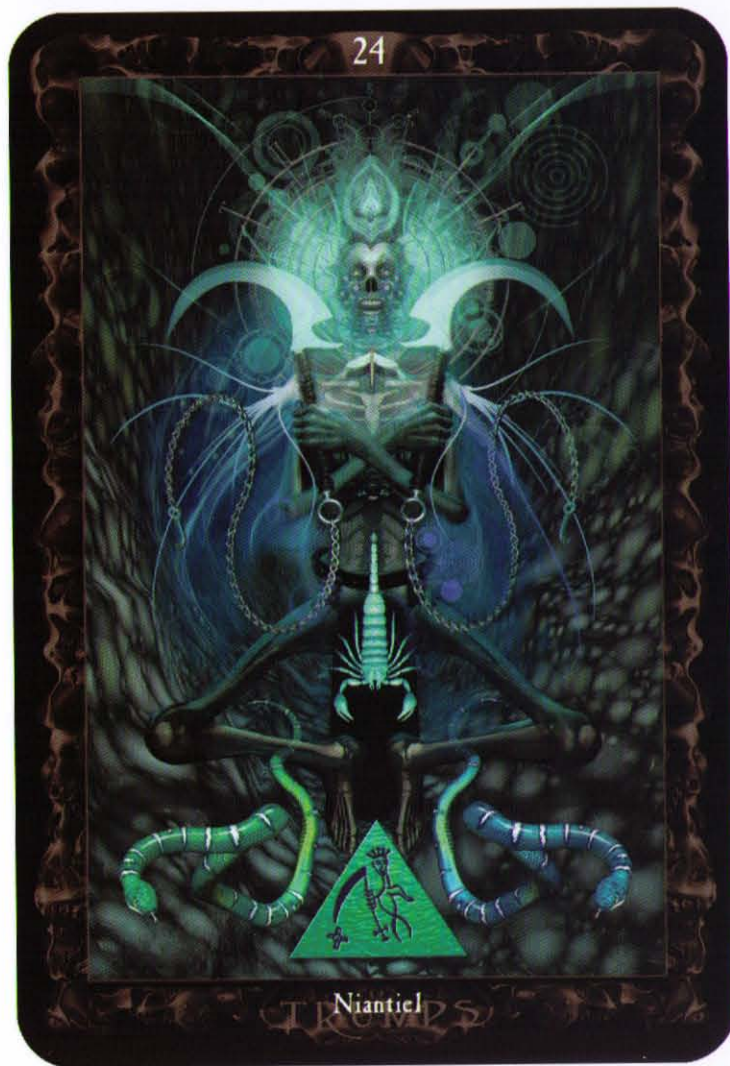


Gargophias

16



Uriens



THE NIGHTSIDE TAROT

Battlefield notes on the Nightside Tarot

Stafford Stone

THE SPIRITS OF LIBER 231 ARE NOT TO BE ENCOUNTERED CASUALLY. Contact with them produces results in the manner of an electromagnetic pulse or ripple effect, affecting not just the explorer but everyone in his or her circle. It is not 'another dimension', there is no clear delineation between the Tunnels and 'reality', it is all just one reality, so there is bound to be some spillover into one's mundane life. I wasn't prepared for just how much.

Since I began exploring the Tunnels of Set and painting the cards of the Nightside Tarot, both of my parents, a close aunt and uncle, a best friend, and two pet cats all died. I lost my wife and young son, my home and most of my possessions. Close friendships imploded, relationships crumbled, jobs were lost, debts incurred, stupid actions undertaken, and grave

Howlings

errors of judgement made. In one intense memorable week alone, in early 2002, I was fired from a job, evicted from a flat, had over £6000 stolen, was dumped in a relationship, and required emergency dental surgery. The life I thought I had, and the future I thought was before me, fell away like flakes of peeling paint. In short, every single thing I was once attached to or held dear has been stripped away from me, like flesh from bone. Nevertheless, I am today freer, and happier, than I have ever been. It has been an intensely liberating ride. The only way out of the wilderness is to keep going.

BATTLEFIELD NOTES

I found it interesting that Crowley describes the Qliphoth as inhabiting prison cells, the opposite of the Mercurial Spirit's 'houses'. A house is where one lives by choice, while a cell is where one is forced to live. I think it is necessary that these Spirits be imprisoned, for without containment they are too free. They are formless, excessive, chaotic, expanding, and exhibit too much power. The only way they can be dealt with meaningfully is by containing, restraining, contracting that power, pouring it, jelly like, into a mould of our own design. A Genie in a bottle is a very good analogy. For this reason, the forced symmetry of the designs is my crude attempt to juxtapose Order and Chaos, rather than a strictly accurate reflection of my direct experience. The cards thus provide a means of safely viewing the Spirits, through a Window as it were, rather than thrusting the unprepared directly through the Door into an arena of the damned. Each will have to unlock the Doors for themselves.

Baratchial

Male. Howling wordlessly in impotent rage, the ape like Black Brother Baratchial rushes through the dark labyrinth of his own making, venting his frustration on those he meets, and blindly unaware that the sigils self-painted on his body are what binds him in this Hell. It is his own uncon-

The Nightside Tarot

scious memories that haunt him. The Golden Ball appears in many fairy tales, for example Iron John and The Frog Prince, and folk ballads such as *The Prickle Holly Bush*, as a symbol of the Self. It needs to be 'lost' before it can be 'found'. It cannot be held onto, and must be let go.

Baratchial no longer carries the weapons of the Magus, having either lost them or no longer having any need for them. Despite being unable to help himself, Baratchial often makes a good guide. When paired with Shal-icu, who provides the means of his release, it is revealed that Baratchial's 'blackness' is an alchemical stage.

Gargophias

Female. A great batrachian Virgin squats astride a golden cube. Ectoplasmic ghostly lemures with camel skull heads float about her as she guards her unmanifest parthenogenetic potential in the form of frogspawn. She wears a necklace of five human skulls. Sitting on a cubic throne in a stance more usually associated with Atu IV. However, the cube is directly connected with the sanctum sanctorum, wherein resided the Ark of the Covenant. The cube is the Stone of Foundation, the central point of all Space. She is thus the Shekinah, or Shakti, the supreme feminine magickal power, flanked by her kerubim. As Shakti, or Sekhet, she is a lunar force, the goddess of sexual passion and intoxication, hence her connection with honey: Sekhet means bee. The bow and arrow is turned inwards towards her, about to pierce her veil. She is linked to the constellation Gemini. Gargophias is paired with Raflifu, the Black, or sick, Sun, the King in Yellow.

Uriens

Male. A giant, blind, red minotaur with brass hooves, he stands carrying two huge crossed keys, one silver, one gold, the Keys to Heaven and Hell. Black flame issues from his erect penis, and a golden phoenix rests at his

Howlings

feet. The Tunnel is filled with writhing, worm like, excremental creatures. His halo is a compass, and blood rains down around him.

Uriens can represent either 'Unlocking' or 'Locking', with all that they imply, be it revealing, setting or breaking free, rebellion, draining, or imprisoning, freezing, or containing. Uriens may grant sustaining Energy and Physical Strength, or gift a Curse, depending on how he is approached. Destructive relationships and divorce are here. The inability to be decisive.

Uriens is related to Orion the Hunter who was born when the gods pissed on an ox-hide He is father of the Nephilim. Sacred to him are the Summer Solstice, the constellation Leo, and the New Moon. He is paired with Parfaxitas, the Demon who haunts the Ruined Tower. In turn, Parfaxitas is linked to Nimrod, also a hunter, the builder of the Tower of Babel.

Niantiel

Female. A transparent, skeletal figure. Many eyed, she carries a pair of sickle scythes. On her head is a peacock feather crown. At her throat is a mayfly, which lives but a single day. At her genitals is a scorpion, and at her feet are a pair of snakes. Her halo represents Time.

She is purity through putrefaction, a cleanser, seeing all and slaying all before her. Nothing can escape her. She is the Great Initiatrix, the desecrator, the Sun-Phallus in Amenta-Anus. Seed amongst shit, the fertilising churning of new life.

Niantiel is paired with Lafcursiax. The Hebrew letter traditionally associated with Atu XIII is Nun, originally derived from the Scales of Libra, the balance of Maat associated with Atu VIII, Lafcursiax's 'dayside' counterpart.



THE GATES OF DAATH

Donald Tyson

TO EXPLORE THE KNOWLEDGE HIDDEN IN LIBER 231 we must understand its scaffolding, the Tree of Life. This is a complex symbolic diagram that evolved out of the mystical teachings of the Jewish Kabbalah. The two-dimensional Tree contains ten circles which represent three-dimensional spheres of light called Sephiroth. Each Sephirah embodies an emanation of God, and together they make up the very fabric of the universe. Kabbalists believe that these ten spheres of radiance emanate one after another, from heaven to earth. On the form of the Tree commonly used in Western magic they are arranged in three columns, known as the Right Pillar of Mercy, the Left Pillar of Severity, and the Middle Pillar of Mildness. The Right Pillar is masculine and expansive, the Left Pillar feminine and restrictive, and the Middle Pillar androgynous and balanced.

Running between these ten spheres are twenty-two channels, also known as pathways or paths, that transmit the radiant nature of one sphere to another. Channels derive their most essential qualities from the pair of Sephiroth they link. The ten Sephiroth are known as the first ten paths on the Tree, so the twenty-two connecting channels are numbered beginning with the number eleven and ending with the number thirty-two. To put it another way, the eleventh path is actually the first channel.

The form of the Tree of the Sephiroth adopted by Samuel L. 'MacGregor' Mathers (1854–1918), leader of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, was derived from the work *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, published between 1652–4 by the Jesuit priest Athanasius Kircher (1602–80). Kircher's Tree has twenty-two channels, each of which is assigned a Hebrew letter. The pattern of the spheres and the channels in Kircher's diagram is identical to that adopted by the Golden Dawn. The placement of Hebrew letters on the channels is the same placement used by Mathers. Not all of Kircher's correspondences were accepted by the Golden Dawn, however. Kircher arranged the astrological planets on the Sephiroth irregularly from Chesed to Malkuth, whereas Mathers placed them in descending Ptolemaic order from Binah to Yesod. There are other minor differences. Kircher numbered his channels from one to twenty-two, rather than from eleven to thirty-two. However the reliance by Mathers on the arrangement of Kircher is obvious.

Even before Mathers, Kircher's correspondences for the Hebrew letters had influenced the esoteric Tarot interpretations of Eliphas Lévi. In his 1855 book *Rituel de la Haute Magie* Lévi borrowed from Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* for his Tarot trump meanings, linking his trumps through the Hebrew letters with the planets assigned to those letters by Kircher. For example, Lévi's illustration of Baphomet, which represents his conception of the trump the Devil, has the caduceus of Mercury rising from its groin because he assigned this trump the Hebrew letter Samekh, and Kircher linked Samekh with the planet Mercury, the symbol of which is the caduceus. The debt owed to Kircher by the modern esoteric Tarot, though largely unrecognized, is considerable.

In the Golden Dawn system of correspondences, the twenty-two Hebrew letters are assigned to the channels on the Tree in Kircher's order. The

trumps are linked to the paths through their corresponding Hebrew letters, beginning with the Fool on path eleven and ending with the Universe on path thirty-two. The trumps derive part of their meanings from the paths, and in a kind of synergistic symbiosis the meanings of the paths are in part derived from the trumps. Each Hebrew letter corresponds with either a zodiac sign, a planet or an element.

As a result, in the Golden Dawn system each path is represented by a Hebrew letter, a Tarot trump and the glyph of a zodiac sign, planet or element. Symbolic meanings were also given to the Hebrew letters themselves, and these influenced the interpretation of the corresponding channels on the Tree and their trumps.

As is true of so much Golden Dawn magic, this particular form of the Tree has become the standard form in modern Western esotericism. Indeed, it is so widely used that many who use it do not even realize that there are older arrangements for the Sephiroth that do not resemble trees in the least degree, and numerous Trees that have differing patterns and variant numbers of pathways. This can have radical implications for *Liber 231*.

The Golden Dawn Tree is almost identical to Kircher's version in its physical form, but Kircher's Tree does not show one path crossing over another – in his version all paths are merged into each other on the same level. This is also true of one of the original Golden Dawn designs contained in the *Second Knowledge Lecture* of the Order. A different Golden Dawn color illustration shows the horizontal paths crossing over the top of the vertical and diagonal paths.

Aleister Crowley was a member of the original Golden Dawn, before becoming leader of the OTO. In his *Book of Thoth* he illustrated the Tree with the three horizontal paths on top of the verticals and diagonals, suggesting this was the accepted form. However, Dion Fortune, who belonged to the Golden Dawn in the period during which it was headed by Mathers' wife, illustrated the Tree in her book *The Mystical Qabalah* with the horizontal pathways running beneath the vertical and diagonal paths. There is no general agreement on this minor matter. I have chosen to show these horizontal paths crossing above the vertical and diagonal paths.

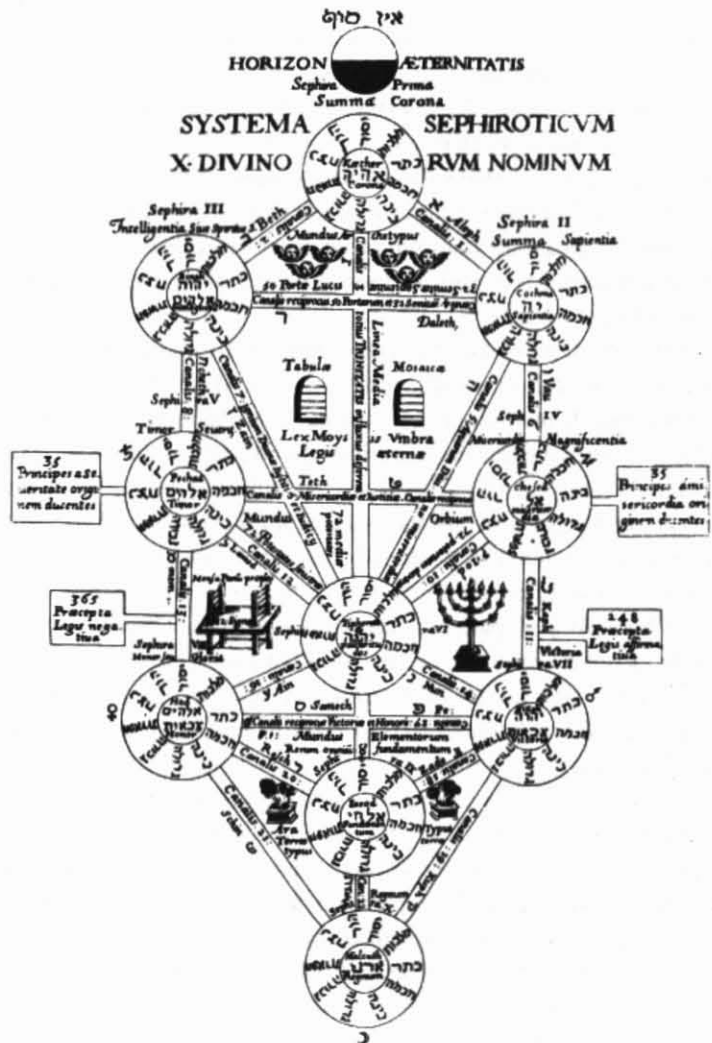


Figure 1: Kircher's Tree of the Sephiroth, from Oedipus Aegyptiacus, 1652-4.

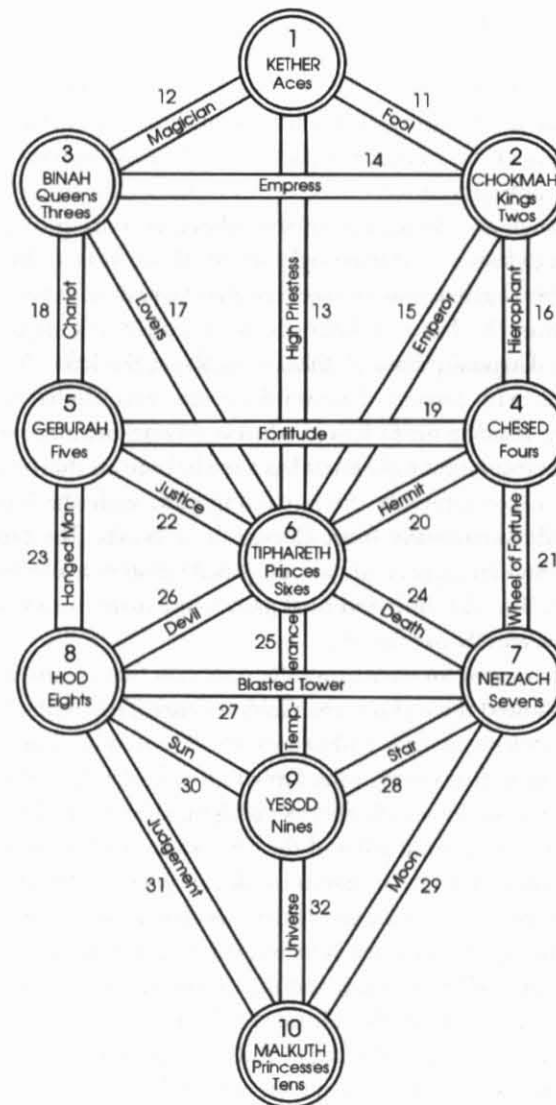


Figure 2: Golden Dawn Tree of the Sephiroth

PATHS ON THE REFORMED TREE

In most respects, this Golden Dawn Tree works quite well. However, certain aspects of its structure have always troubled me. There is an anomaly in the numbering of the connecting paths, and the arrangement of the paths is inherently unbalanced.

The channels are radiated from the spheres according to their angles, from highest to lowest, and from right to left. If you look at the first Sephirah on the Tree, Kether, you will see that the eleventh path runs diagonally downward from Kether to Chokmah on the right side of the Tree, the twelfth path diagonally from Kether to Binah on the left side, and finally the thirteenth path directly downward on the central pillar from Kether to Tiphareth. Moving on to Chokmah, the second Sephirah on the Tree, we see that one of its four channels has already been established. The fourteenth path is consequently the remaining path with the highest angle, which extends horizontally from Chokmah to Binah. The fifteenth path has the next highest angle, and runs diagonally downward from Chokmah to Tiphareth. The sixteenth and final path to emanate from Chokmah extends down vertically to Chesed.

This same system for emanating the pathways from higher to lower Sephiroth is followed throughout the Golden Dawn Tree, with the single exception of paths twenty-five and twenty-six. It would be expected that the paths emanating downward from Tiphareth would follow the pattern of Kether, and extend diagonally first to the right, then to the left, and finally vertically down the central pillar of the Tree. However, the three paths that emanate downward from Tiphareth break this pattern. The twenty-fourth path extends, as we would expect, diagonally downward from Tiphareth to Netzach on the right side of the Tree, but the twenty-fifth path runs directly down the central pillar to Yesod, and the twenty-sixth emanates diagonally from Tiphareth to Hod on the left side of the Tree.

In my opinion, the numbering of the paths twenty-five and twenty-six should be reversed, in order to make the pattern by which the paths are emanated from higher to lower completely consistent. This requires that the placement of the Hebrew letters on these paths also be inverted, along with the associated trumps. I went so far as to make this reversal on the standard

Tree of the Sephiroth in my book *New Millennium Magic*, so strongly did I feel about this matter. When the numbers are reversed in the Golden Dawn arrangement of the paths, trump XIV Temperance falls on path twenty-five from Tiphareth to Hod, and trump XV The Devil occupies path twenty-six from Tiphareth to Yesod.

If this were the only fault in the Golden Dawn Tree, it would be a minor matter. However, a much more serious imbalance exists in the overall placements of the channels between the spheres. This reveals itself in two ways. The first is the existence of three pathways leading upward from the lowermost Sephirah, Malkuth. The second indicator of an imbalance in the paths is the absence of pathways between Binah–Chesed, and between Chokmah–Geburah. The absence of these two paths is very difficult to explain in any convincing way, but the Golden Dawn Tree is so widely and so unquestioningly accepted, that this matter is seldom raised, or is brought up only to be quickly dismissed.

In my opinion, it makes no sense to have three paths leading up from Malkuth. In the Golden Dawn system of correspondences, the tenth sphere, Malkuth, is the sphere of the four elements, the Earth, the material reality that we all perceive ourselves to inhabit. The ninth sphere, Yesod, is the sphere of the Moon, the celestial sphere of traditional astrology that is nearest the Earth. The sphere of the Moon has always been recognized as the gateway to the higher spheres of the other planets. In order to descend from the celestial spheres to the Earth, or to ascend from the Earth to the celestial spheres, it is necessary to pass through the gateway of the Moon. It cannot be avoided or circumvented. Yet in the Golden Dawn Tree, the pathways connecting Hod–Malkuth and Netzach–Malkuth indicate that Yesod, the sphere of the Moon, can be bypassed when ascending on the Tree. Some older versions of the Tree of the Sephiroth show only a single path connecting Malkuth to Yesod. The accompanying example is taken from the title page of the Latin edition of *Sha'are Orach* (Gates of Light) by Rabbi Joseph Gikatilla, translated in 1615 by Paulus Ricius under the title *Portae Lucis*. Notice that the shape of the Tree is substantially the same as that given by Kircher, but the number of paths is reduced to eighteen. Deviations in the shape of the Tree and the number of paths are not uncommon in older texts.

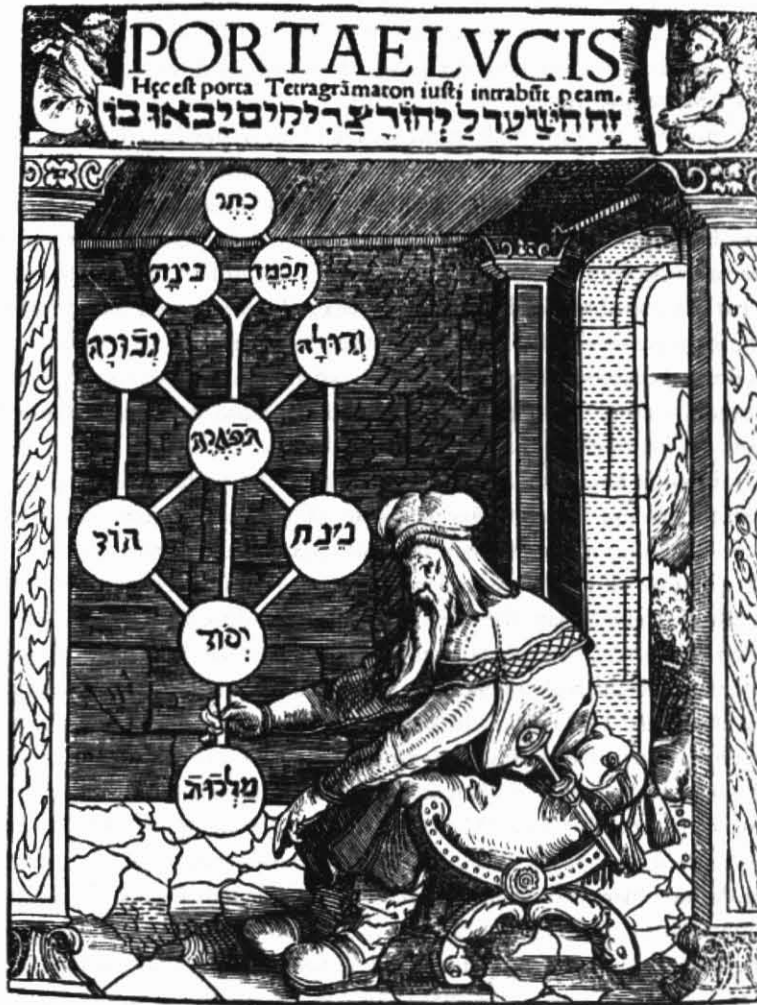


Figure 3: Tree of the Sephiroth, from Paulus Ricius' *Portae Lucis*, 1615

I am convinced that there should be one path leading up from the sphere of the Earth, and that it must connect to the sphere of the Moon. This would compel anyone ascending the Tree in meditation, or in what the Golden Dawn called path-working (a kind of astral travel), to pass through the gateway of the Moon before moving on to the higher spheres. The sphere of the Moon is the astral plane, and when attempting to access higher spiritual realities, the astral plane must be crossed.

If we remove two of the three paths connecting Malkuth with the rest of the Tree, what are we to do with them? The assignment of the twenty-two Hebrew letters to the paths is long established. In order to assign the twenty-two letters to the pathways, there must be twenty-two connecting paths, so we cannot simply abolish these two paths as superfluous. The answer is to move them to the higher portion of the Tree above the central sphere of Tiphareth, and to use them to link Chokmah-Geburah and Binah-Chesed. When we do this, we find that these crossed paths define an eleventh invisible sphere on the central pillar of the Tree midway between and somewhat below the level of Chokmah and Binah. This invisible sphere is known in the Kabbalah as Daath (Knowledge). Daath is not recognized as a true Sephirah, but is becoming increasingly important in esoteric speculations that deal with the lower or hinder regions of the Tree that are supposed to be inhabited by the malicious spirits known as the Qlippoth, or Husks.

In order for Daath to play any part in the Tree, even the mysterious and shadowy role of an unseen eleventh Sephirah that is the gateway to the realm of the Qlippoth, it must be located and defined in some way on the Tree diagram. In the illustration by Ricius it is located by the cleft in the Y-shaped path above Tiphareth. It is not explicitly defined by Kircher's model of the Tree, which is the basis for the Golden Dawn model so widely used today. However, when the two redundant pathways are removed from Malkuth and used to link Chokmah-Geburah and Binah-Chesed, the eleventh sphere of Daath is located by their intersection.

There is another justification for linking Chokmah with Geburah and Binah with Chesed. In the zigzag path followed by creative energy down the Tree from Kether to Malkuth, known as the Way of the Lightning, the energy moves from Binah to Chesed as it flows from higher to successively lower Sephiroth. This is the only branch in the Way of the Lightning that

does not trace a pathway between the Sephiroth, due to the absence of the path Binah-Chesed in Kircher's version of the Tree and that of the Golden Dawn.

The Way of the Lightning defines itself before the coming into being of any of the pathways, so it is able to leap across the gaps between the spheres, but it seems strange that this is the only part of its journey that is not bridged by a subsequent path. It might be tempting to argue that the absence of a path between Binah-Chesed defines the Abyss, a gulf that exists between the three highest Sephiroth and the lower seven, were it not that five other pathways bridge the Abyss on Kircher's model of the Tree. In my view the Abyss is much better defined by the eleventh pseudo-Sephirah, Daath.

Daath, sometimes spelled Da'ath, is a fascinating contradiction. It is both a Sephirah, and yet not a Sephirah. The Sepher Yetzirah states emphatically, 'Ten is the number of the ineffable Sephiroth, ten and not nine, ten and not eleven.'⁷ When the ten Sephiroth are kept in their traditional places, Daath must remain an enigma. In order for Daath to become a legitimate Sephirah, it would be necessary to eliminate one of the ten, and indeed this is sometimes done by raising the final sphere, Malkuth, to the position of Daath. When Malkuth, the Kingdom, is elevated to Daath, Knowledge, the Tree becomes perfectly regular and balanced in its geometry.

There is a mystery here. Malkuth in Daath, the Kingdom of Knowledge, is the condition of mankind in the Garden of Eden after Adam eats the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and becomes in the words of the Serpent of Wisdom, like unto a god. Malkuth at the base of the Tree is the fallen state of humanity after its expulsion from Eden, its former pure and perfect condition. It is through Malkuth, the physical flesh, elevated to Daath, the knowledge of the spirit, that humanity can regain its rightful heritage and once more dwell above the sphere of the Moon. These biblical metaphors express a spiritual reality.

How can Daath be both a Sephirah, yet not a Sephirah? Just as well to ask how a doorway can be both a portal, yet not a portal. Daath is a gateway that in the usual course of events remains shut. Power flows through each of the legitimate ten Sephiroth, but power does not flow through Daath

unless it is forced through this portal. It may be likened organically to a closed sphincter. In the reformed structure of the Tree, shown in figure 4, the location of invisible Daath is the only place where three pathways cross, and all of them are paths emanating from the Supernals, the three highest Sephiroth. This crossing place may be broken through to form a bridge. When the power of these three crossing channels mingles, Daath is born.

The elevated paths between Chokmah-Geburah and Binah-Chesed are the only diagonal paths on the Tree that cross between the Left Pillar and the Right Pillar – the horizontal paths do this, but not the diagonals. All diagonals on the Tree of Kircher and the Golden Dawn link one of the outer pillars with the Middle Pillar. In order to pass from one side of the Kircher Tree to the other via a diagonal channel, a stop must be made in one of the spheres on the spine of the Tree. In the case of these two elevated channels, a stop may occur in Daath, but it is not absolutely essential that it occur. These paths are sometimes continuous, and sometimes interrupted, as will be explained when considering the back of the Tree.

After changing the locations of the connecting paths on the Tree as described above, it was an easy matter to emanate the paths from Kether downward in order to reassign their numbers, along with the Hebrew letters and Tarot trumps that reside on them. This would have been impossible without an understanding of how the paths are emanated successively from higher to lower and from right to left, but having established this method of emanation by a study of the Kircher model of the Tree, it was a simple task to number the paths of the restructured Tree. Note on figure 4 that the numbering of the three paths emanating downward from Tiphareth mirrors the numbering of the three paths emanating downward from Kether – diagonal right, diagonal left, vertical center.

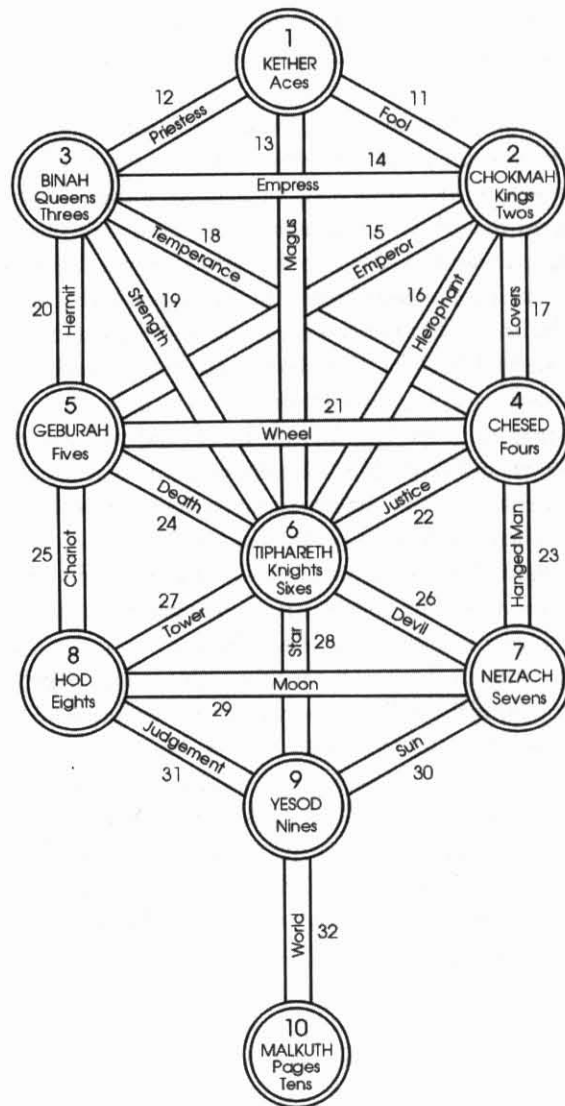


Figure 4: Reformed Tree of the Sephiroth

It will be noticed that the Tarot trumps are not in the usual Golden Dawn sequence on my reformed version of the Tree. Several aspects of the Golden Dawn trump sequence have always troubled me, and in presenting my revised Tree in this essay, it seemed appropriate to also present my revised ordering of the Tarot trumps on the paths. They have been fully explained and defended in the appendix to my book *Portable Magic*. None of the changes are arbitrary, but have been arrived at after years of meditation. This revised set of Tarot trump correspondences represents my mature understanding of the subject.

FRATER ACHAD'S WAY OF THE SERPENT

The usual assignment of the trumps to the paths traces their descending order from the top of the Tree to the bottom. There is another manner of placing the trumps on the Tree, an ascending order that numbers the twenty-two trumps in reverse. Ascent on the pathways during path working or meditation usually proceeds up the numerical sequence of the paths in inverse order, from the thirty-second at the base of the Tree to the eleventh at the top. However, if the numbers assigned to the paths are reversed so that they begin at the bottom of the Tree and proceed upward, ascent on the paths during path working begins from the eleventh at the base of the Tree and concludes with the thirty-second at its top.

This arrangement was first proposed by Charles Stansfeld Jones (1886–1950), a disciple of Aleister Crowley who is better known by his pen-name, Frater Achad. In his book *Q. B. L., or The Bride's Reception*, published privately in 1922, Achad wondered to himself why the numbering of the paths should begin at the top of the Tree rather than at its base. It seemed to him to make better sense to begin with the lowest path rather than with the highest, since it is by way of the paths that the Tree is ascended.

The Qabalists tell us that the Sephiroth were emanated by means of the Flaming Sword, or Lightning Flash, which descended from Kether unto Malkuth. They also say that this was followed by the ascent of the Serpent of Wisdom who thus formed the paths. They showed his head at the top of

the Tree, in the path leading from Kether to Chokmah, which is in turn the First Path of the Flaming Sword.

All the known authorities have then continued to number the remaining 22 of the 32 Paths of Wisdom, from Path 11 (joining Kether and Chokmah) to Path 32 (joining Yesod and Malkuth). Students have only to refer to such well known authorities as Mr. W. Wynn Westcott, in his *Introduction to the Study of the Kabbalah*, 777 and *The Equinox*, Vol. I, no. 2, which shows the attributions of Mr. Mathers and the Golden Dawn, to prove this assertion to be a recognized fact.

One may now question how it was that the Serpent who formed the Paths by ascending the Tree, could possibly have started at the Top, and why previous commentators have never taken this vital idea into consideration.¹¹

The Kabbalistic term Way of the Serpent usually refers to an ascent from the bottom of the Tree to the top through the inverse numerical sequence of the paths. It is shown graphically in a very clever way by a snake that coils around the channels of the Tree, touching each channel in turn as it climbs from the base of the Tree to its crown. The snake begins at path thirty-two just above Malkuth, moves to path thirty-one, then path thirty, and so on up the Tree to path eleven above Chokmah. This is how the Way of the Serpent was understood by members of the Golden Dawn. Frater Achad applied the term to his inverted numerical sequence for the paths on the Tree, which ascends from path eleven at the base to path thirty-two at the top of the Tree.

Aleister Crowley, who at one time held Achad in the highest regard and considered Achad to be his own magical son, at first was fascinated by this radical new arrangement of the trumps on the channels of the Tree, but ultimately he rejected the innovation. He was not willing to replace the traditional assignment of the Hebrew letters to the paths, which had served Kabbalists so well for centuries, with an inverted arrangement. Where the letters go, so must go the trumps and Crowley could not bring himself to sacrifice the traditional placement of the trumps on the Tree for Achad's radical new order.

Neither Achad nor Crowley realized that it was not a matter of replacing the traditional order, but of establishing a second parallel order that

would coexist with the first. That there are two ways of progress on the Tree, the Way of the Lightning and the Way of the Serpent, should have been the clue, but neither man appears to have believed that two opposite orderings for the trumps on the pathways could simultaneously exist. And they cannot exist, on the same side of the Tree, but if one ordering of the trumps is placed on the front of the Tree, and the other on its back, they will not come into conflict.

Achad did not attempt to change the structure of the paths on the Tree, he merely reversed the placement of the Hebrew letters and their corresponding trumps on the existing paths. Instead of putting the first letter, Aleph, along with its trump The Fool, on the highest path between Kether and Chokmah, he put this letter and trump on the lowest path between Malkuth and Yesod. He renumbered this lowest path, which in traditional numbering is path thirty-two, as path eleven, and conceived it as ascending from Malkuth to Yesod, rather than descending from Yesod to Malkuth. Achad followed the same course for all the remaining paths, inverting the locations of the Hebrew letters on the Tree so that path thirty-one became path twelve, path thirty became path thirteen, and so on.

He did feel compelled to make one change in the location of the trumps on this inverted Way of the Serpent. Instead of placing The Wheel on his renumbered ascending path twenty-one from Tiphareth to Geburah, Achad shifted to this path the trump The Tower, because he felt it to be in better accord with the nature of Geburah and its planet Mars. He supplied only those paths up to the channel that runs horizontally between Geburah and Chesed, and there stopped, perhaps because he was less than confident about his reassignments of the trumps to the higher pathways on the Tree.

The reason he gave his readers was that he did not feel able to reveal the paths extending above the Abyss, which he referred to as the Veil of the Abyss:

Past this Veil I do not feel permitted to lead you at this time. You may trace up the correspondences for yourselves and will find that in some instances, according to the accepted order of things, there will be difficulties in making perfect adjustments.

I take this to mean that he was not sure enough of his reassignments to the higher paths to commit them to publication. There may have been another reason for him to stop at the Abyss, which I will touch on below.

The Veil and the Abyss are not the same thing. Achad's terminology is somewhat confusing. The Abyss is a gulf that separates the triangle defined by the three highest Sephiroth, known as the Supernals, from the lower seven on the Tree. Achad conceived the Abyss as curved, passing through Daath at its center and extending down on either side of the Tree to touch Chesed and Geburah. It marks the upper boundary of human consciousness, even in its exalted state. The Veil of the Temple, also known as Paroketh, is a similar barrier that is drawn across the Tree just above the level of Tiphareth. It marks the upper boundary for normal human consciousness, which cannot ascend above Tiphareth on the front side of the Tree.

A year after *Q.B.L.* Achad published *The Egyptian Revival*, in which he completed the work he had begun on the inverted paths of the Way of the Serpent. In the back of this later book is a full diagram of the Tree showing the locations of all twenty-two paths. He made a number of changes in the arrangement he presented in *Q.B.L.* For example, in the earlier work, The Emperor occupies the path between Netzach and Yesod, but in the later book, this path has The Chariot. The first book places The Chariot on the vertical path from Tiphareth to Yesod, but the second book has The Hanged Man on this path. These specifics do not concern us here, only Achad's seminal concept of numbering the paths from bottom to top, rather than top to bottom.

BACK SIDE OF THE RATIONALIZED TREE

It is an easy matter to follow Achad's lead and to renumber the paths on my rationalized version of the Tree from the bottom to the top, in reverse order. The paths are not emanated in a series of rays upward in the manner that they were emanated downward – they simply have their numbering inverted so that the first becomes last and the last becomes first, the second becomes second-last and the second-last becomes second, and so on. The Hebrew letters will similarly be inverted, along with their corresponding

Tarot trumps. This ascending arrangement of the pathways is placed on the hinder side of the Tree of the Sephiroth, so that each channel bears two trumps, one on its face and the other on its back.

Keep in mind when considering the diagram of the back side of the reformed Tree that the pillars are reversed right to left, with the Pillar of Mildness appearing on the left of the page, and the Pillar of Severity on the right. The Sephiroth on these pillars are similarly inverted, so that Binah appears on the right side of the page and Chokmah on the left. Think of the Tree as a physical model made of tubes and spheres, and consider what would happen to its left and right sides were you to turn it over and look at its back.

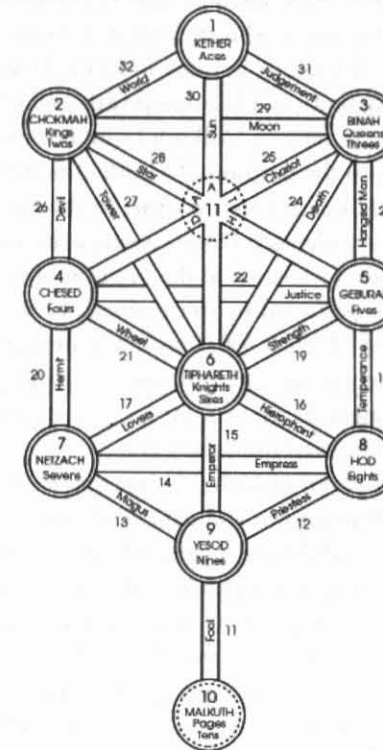


Figure 5: Ascending Order of Paths on the Back of the Rationalized Tree

On the front of the Tree only ten Sephiroth appear. Daath remains hidden because it is closed. However, when we consider the back of the Tree, Daath is defined on the level of the Abyss. Entry to the back of the Tree means that the lower gateway of Daath beneath Malkuth has been forced open, and when the lower gateway is opened, the upper gateway of Daath also comes into being in sympathetic response, because these two apertures are linked. We cannot consider the hinder side of the Tree without assuming the presence of Daath. In a sense, the entire inverted and reversed Tree is contained within Daath, just as a living Tree is contained in potential within its seedpod, since the back of the Tree can only be accessed by entering through the lower gate of Daath at the base of Malkuth. The number of Daath is eleven, which is also the number of the goddess Nuit in Aleister Crowley's *Book of the Law*, and of all its followers, who are known as Thelemites. However, it is not necessary to be a Thelemite in order to access Daath.

The link between Malkuth and Daath is revealed when we imagine what would happen were we to remove Malkuth from its location at the base of the Tree and elevate it to the position of Daath. The Sephiroth would become perfectly balanced in a geometric sense. In the model of the Tree we are accustomed to using, Malkuth seems to dangle by itself on the base of the Tree. This elevation of Malkuth to the position of Daath is sometimes referred to as the Tree perfected or spiritualized, because the removal of Malkuth eliminates our physical reality from the universe depicted by the Tree. It is a thought experiment, nothing more. The physical world exists as an essential component of the real for incarnated humanity, therefore Malkuth cannot be eliminated from the Tree.

Two passageways lead out of Malkuth, one that is known and revealed, the other that is largely unknown and concealed. The concealed way from Malkuth leads by means of the lower gate of Daath through the bottom or rear of this Sephirah and up the backside of the Tree in the reverse order of the trumps, following the Way of the Serpent in Frater Achad's sense of the term, which traces the sequential numbering of the paths from bottom to top. The members of the Golden Dawn did not understand the existence of this back passageway because it does not stand open, but must be forced open. Crowley should have grasped the significance of Achad's inverted

numbering of the channels, but perhaps could not conceive of two systems existing simultaneously without conflict.

THE ROLE OF DAATH

Once it is understood that the Tree has two sides, the role of the eleventh shadow Sephirah, Daath, becomes obvious. Its function is to link the back of the Tree with the front. Daath has two gates, an entrance at the base of Malkuth, and an exit at the level of the Abyss. This is necessary because, above the level of Chesed, there is no manifest duality. Referring to the horizontal pathway between Geburah and Chesed, Frater Achad put it this way:

Note that this forms the Second Reciprocal Path or Veil of the Abyss above which ideas are only true insofar as they contain their own opposites.

Below the Abyss, opposites are kept separate by the two sides of the Tree; above the Abyss, opposites cannot coexist because there is nothing to hold them apart. Magic is dependent upon duality, which is why Kenneth Grant was led to observe:

...beyond the Abyss, magick as a practical mode of being, ceases to obtain.

If the Tree lacks duality and has only one side above the Abyss, the question naturally arises as to why there are orders of the Qliphoth for the three Supernals. The Qliphoth are demonic beings who represent the chaotic or evil aspect of the Sephiroth they mirror. Accepting that duality ends above Daath, we would assume that there could be no evil or good in the Supernals, only existence. I puzzled over this matter for some time, until it occurred to me that, as a practical matter of path working, duality is equivalent to freedom of choice. Ascending the Tree, we can choose to seek a way of openness or one of restriction. This freedom of choice exists on either side of the Tree below the Abyss. The front of the Tree represents attainment by turning away from the ego, and the back of the Tree attainment by

embracing the ego. Yet in either of these approaches to enlightenment, we can pursue a gentle and loving way or a way that is hard and judgmental.

Once we progress above the level of Daath, we no longer have this freedom to choose compassion or severity, because this duality no longer exists simultaneously on the paths. Above the Abyss, the Tree divides into two sets of Supernals, one representing the highest expression of the Light, the other the lowest expression of the Darkness. These two sets of Supernals cannot in any sense be said to coexist. They have being only in completely separate dimensions of reality. On the ascent up the front of the Tree only the Supernals of Light are accessible, because Daath is closed and therefore does not exist. When we ascend to Daath on the back of the Tree, we are presented with a choice of either the Supernals of Light, or the Supernals of Darkness. We either save or damn ourselves, depending on which choice we make.

The Abyss is said to exist immediately below the level of the Supernals, yet also below Malkuth. How can this be, when there is only one Abyss? The answer lies in the connection between Malkuth and Daath. Daath is the gateway to the Abyss, and no entry is made into the Abyss except through Daath. In path working on the front of the Tree the Abyss may be crossed, or it may act as a barrier to further progress, but it cannot be entered. The Abyss can only be entered from the back of the Tree after passing through Daath, and within the Abyss exist the dark Supernals of the Qlipoth, which are completely separated from the bright Supernals accessed on the front of the Tree.

The dark Supernals on the back of the Tree can be represented graphically as a kind of diadem hanging from an inverted Daath below Malkuth. Those who enter the Abyss while ascending the back of the Tree immediately fall below Malkuth. The bright Supernals should be conceived to be on the top of the Tree, and the dark Supernals to be on the bottom of the Tree beneath Malkuth. In the accompanying diagram, only the bottom part of this extended Tree of thirteen Sephiroth is shown for reasons of space. It has thirteen spheres rather than fourteen because Malkuth and Daath exist in conjunction and act as a single entity. The pathways connecting the dark Supernals in the diagram are those that lie completely within the Abyss, and therefore have no duality.

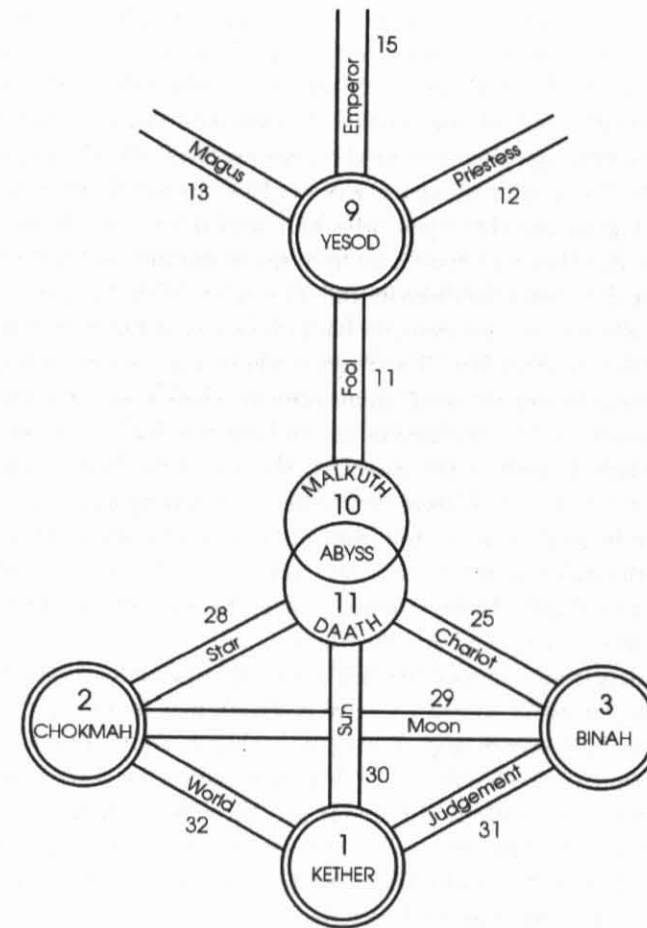


Figure 6: Dark Supernals pendant from Daath below Malkuth

Daath is the way of knowing on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Those who pass through Daath into the Supernals of Darkness have deliberately made themselves one with the chaotic principle of the universe that is personified in Christian lore as Satan or the Devil. Those who make the choice in Daath to pass into the Supernals of Light embrace the cosmic principle of order and law and become one with the creative divine source. After passing through Daath, there is no turning back. The choice cannot be unmade. Those who adopt the way of chaos follow the same mythic course of Lucifer and the angels, who were hurled from heaven into the bottomless Pit. They turn their faces from the uniformity and certainty of the Light and embrace the diversity and uncertainty of the Shadows.

Daath allows those ascending the back of the Tree to link with those ascending the front of the Tree. It is as high as a human being can rise in levels of consciousness using the ego as an instrument. Above Daath, the physical urges, emotions and mental desires can no longer be used to energize the will. In Daath the path worker ascending the rear of the Tree is presented with a choice, to turn away from the shadows after having used them as far as they can be used to elevate the consciousness, or to embrace the lowest aspect of the darkness and become one with it, allowing it to overwhelm the awareness of self. The first choice involves crossing over the Abyss; the second choice is to descend into the Abyss.

The Abyss is sometimes described as a kind of ravine or fissure in the earth. This is a useful way to conceive it. Daath may be thought of as a round house built over the gap of this gulf that has six doors in its sides. The six doors represent both ends of the three channels on the rear of the Tree that pass through Daath. It is a unique peculiarity of the house of Daath that its doors only open one way. Three give entrance, and the opposite three provide exit. Those who enter Daath in their ascent up the backside of the Tree are confronted with the choice either to seek the light or to embrace the darkness. Those who choose the light have the more daunting task, because it requires that they abandon their concepts of self and of the world that have served them so well in ascending to this station on the Tree. Those who choose the darkness do so easily since it is merely a surrender to the ultimate fulfillment of the path they have already been following.

When seekers cross the floor of the round house of Daath and open one of the three doors that provide exit, they are confronted by two staircases. On the right is a steep, straight stair of white marble that ascends to one of the bright Supernals on the front of the Tree. On the left, a spiral staircase of black marble descends to one of the dark Supernals that lie below the level of Malkuth. The climb up the white stair is as arduous as the descent down the black stair is effortless. Since the traveler is exhausted by the time the house of Daath is attained, the choice is difficult – to accept the fulfillment of the path that has been followed thus far up the back of the Tree and descend through Daath to the dark Supernals that lie beneath Malkuth in the Abyss, or to cast everything away and embrace a new form of consciousness in order to ascend to the bright Supernals that exist at the apex of the Tree.

There are two ways of ascending the Tree in ritual path working. The accepted way is to force the mind upward in the face of the descending current of the Light. This is ascent up the front of the Tree and follows the inverse numeration of the channels from thirty-two to eleven. It is the abnegation of the ego and the only way of ascent that has been commonly known. Because it presses upward against the Light, it requires great concentration and effort. It is akin to swimming upstream against the current of a river. At each stage the Light washes through the mind and purges it of egocentric desires.

The other way is to pass out of the sunlight through the sphincter of Malkuth and into the moonlight at the rear of the Tree, following the numerations of the channels in their natural order from eleven upward. This requires much less effort from Malkuth to Daath, because it is akin to swimming downstream. The penalty for this easier progress is paid at the Abyss, where the transition across Daath from the shadowed back of the Tree to the bright Supernals at its crown comes as a wrenching shock. It is so much easier to simply follow the flow and descend through the doorways of Daath down the black stairs to the shadow Supernals, and become forever lost in the Abyss.

It should be needless to say that this description of Daath as a round house with six doors is merely a metaphor intended to make understanding the concept of Daath easier. Daath is really a state of consciousness, as are all the other Sephiroth on the Tree. The paths represent in a graphical way

transitions from one state of consciousness to another. These states of consciousness are not merely conceptual, but encompass all awareness of being from the highest of philosophical speculation to the lowest and most basic of physical impulses and urges. They are mind states that express the completeness of reality, both subjective and objective, while we occupy them. They are static in that they serve as way stations on the road of life. By contrast, the channels, and the trumps that represent them, are dynamic, and represent shifts in consciousness.

It is helpful to conceive the Tree and its paths as a series of stairways and round way stations on the slope of a mountain. To follow a pathway is to climb up or down one of these open stairs, except for horizontal paths which are flat walkways; to enter a Sefirah is to pass through one of the doors leading into a round house, where rest is to be had from the ordeal of ascent. All of the doors in all of the round houses allow both entrance and exit, with the exception of Daath, whose doors permit passage only in one direction, and Malkuth whose lower door can only be used as an exit from the kingdom, never as an entrance.

Kether is the palace at the summit of the mountain. The Abyss is a chasm that cuts across the side of the mountain slope and bars ascent, except by way of the seven flights of stairs that span its gulf. There is no deliberate and conscious descent into this rift apart from the three black stairs that slant down from the house of Daath. To climb the front of the Tree is to ascend the mountainside in daylight; to climb the rear of the Tree is to ascend it under moonlight. On the mountain slope above the Abyss, it is always day. Within the Abyss, it is eternal night where not even the silver illumination of the moon penetrates.

When we ascend in our spiritual state along the twenty-eighth path from Geburah to Chokmah up the backside of the Tree, as we pass through the house of Daath we have the opportunity to transit from the moonlit darkness below the gulf of the Abyss to the sunlit brightness that exists above the Abyss at the summit of the mountain. Similarly, when ascending up the back of the Tree along the thirtieth path from Tiphareth to Kether, or the twenty-fifth path from Chesed to Binah, we face the choice of whether or not to transit through the gateway of Daath from shadows to light, or to take the descending stairs that lead to a deeper and unending

darkness. Daath allows exit through a kind of wormhole from the alternative shadow-state of reality that is the backside of the Tree, and which has its entrance by way of a similar wormhole located at the foundation of Malkuth. For this reason Daath and Malkuth are intimately linked.

Passage through these wormholes is in one direction only – in through the rear, or bottom, of Malkuth to the moonlit back of the Tree; and out through the gateway of Daath to the bright Supernals on the front of the Tree. The Sephiroth on the rear of the Tree below the level of Daath do not exist within the Abyss, although they lead to its entrance. That is why Daath is placed where it is, just under the Supernals. It is the Supernals alone that occupy the Abyss, and Daath is their conscious gateway through which they may be deliberately entered with full awareness of the consequences. Once transition is made through the gateway of Daath, there is no returning up from the Abyss. Neither is passage to be made from the back of the Tree through the rear aperture of Malkuth to its face.

The Abyss is a crescent-shaped rift that divides the three Supernals from the lower seven Sephiroth. It extends through the center of Daath across the full width of the Tree, cutting through all three pillars. The vertical pathways on the hinder side of the Tree from Geburah to Binah and Chesed to Chokmah, along with the diagonal paths from Tiphareth to Binah and from Tiphareth to Chokmah, descend into the Abyss but do not pass through Daath, the knowledge of good and evil. As a consequence, ascent up the backside of the Tree via these four paths does not offer the option of conscious choice. These paths are strongly unbalanced either to the right or to the left side of the Tree. Those who follow them on the side of the shadows are automatically committed to the darkness. They abandon the balance of Tiphareth in favor of the destructive ways either of expansion or of restriction. Only in balance can the difficult transition be made from the shadowed back of the Tree to its bright crown, which is why Daath – the way of transition – is located on the Middle Pillar.

Achad has indicated that the Abyss cuts off the vertical pathways above Geburah and Chesed in two diagrams in which the boundary of Daath is not depicted as a horizontal line, as is often the case, but as a curved line in the shape of an inverted crescent that touches Geburah and Chesed at its horns, excluding the paths extending upward from these two Sephiroth.

The boundary of the Abyss is significantly higher when climbing the Middle Pillar than it is when ascending the Right or Left Pillar. The balance of the Middle Pillar allows a higher attainment of consciousness using the ego as an instrument of will. However, Daath marks the upper limit of this ego-centric approach to enlightenment. Anyone ascending the rear of the Tree who wishes to attain a more exalted state of awareness must exit through Daath into the radiant splendor of the Supernals.

It is my own belief that in *Q.B.L.* Achad intuitively sensed the impossibility of ascending by means of his inverted Way of the Serpent higher than the Abyss, except through Daath. This would explain why he refrained from describing the paths above the Abyss – on the back of the Tree, they do not really exist. The paths that appear to be above the Abyss are actually located within it. The back of the Tree is a realm that exalts duality, where illusion and magic rule supreme. However, above the Abyss duality cannot endure. The paths above the Abyss have only one side – there is no back or front of the Tree above the Abyss. The duality of the paths is split into two completely separate dimensions of reality, one of light and the other of shadow, and these dimensions have no interaction with one another. The first exists above the gulf of the Abyss, and the other within its hidden depths.

Daath is choice. There is no requirement to transition from the dark back of the Tree to its bright Supernals via Daath, merely the possibility to do so if the determination and courage exist to make the attempt. Those deliberately seeking to embrace and be utterly consumed by the darkness are able to descend into the Abyss through any of the three exit doors leading out of Daath. Yet if a different choice is made, those same doors also lead to the light. The three paths that enter into Daath have two sides, but those same three paths leading out of Daath divide into two, each with only one side.

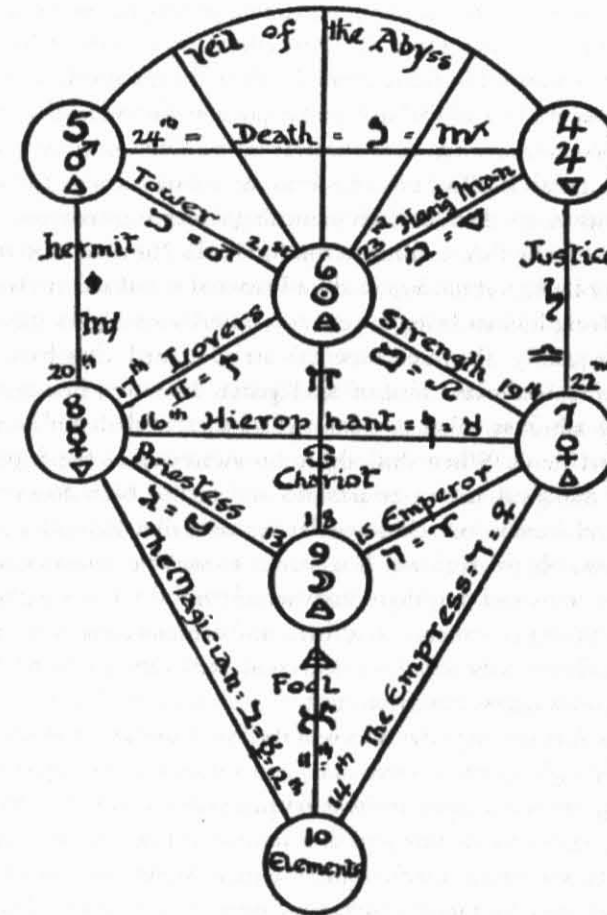


Figure 7: Achad's diagram of the Way of the Serpent below the Abyss, from *Q. B. L., or The Bride's Reception*, 1922.

If we think of the convoluted ascent up the back of the Tree as an alimentary canal, in which movement only progresses in one direction, then Malkuth is the mouth and Daath the anus. Remember, the back of the

Tree is the inverse of its face, so the direction of progress is the reverse of what might be expected. From the front side the lower gate in Malkuth is an anus that excretes, but from the back side it is a mouth that consumes. Penetration at the base of Malkuth makes possible the eventual attainment of the highest common trunk of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Above Daath the Tree branches into two crowns, one in the sunlight and the other in the shadow. Each branching crown is utterly cut off from the other except by their common stem in Daath. The choice between the Supernals of Light and the Supernals of Darkness is realized in Daath.

For a living human being, ascent to a mind state higher than Daath occurs infrequently. The three Supernals are so exalted they have little in common with incarnated human intelligence. However, it is sometimes possible for a human mind to transcend its shell of flesh and unite with the universal mind. When this occurs, an awareness of the Supernals is attainable, though it cannot be retained and carried back down the Tree into ordinary human consciousness, except as a dim echo of a memory that is impossible to articulate. It is correct to say that human consciousness cannot transcend the Abyss; however, the mind can rise higher when it becomes universal consciousness. Universal consciousness is not a higher form of human consciousness – it is a completely different state. The two forms of consciousness cannot coexist.

Descent into the Abyss by means of the four rearward channels that do not pass through Daath is unreasoned and automatic, an acquiescence to the existing flow of energies at the outer pillars of the Tree that distort the sensations, emotions and thoughts. It is an intoxicating descent from which there can be no return. By the time the path worker on the rear of the Tree reaches these four most dangerous channels, he is being rushed along with his own accumulated momentum and could not turn aside even if he wished. So unbalanced are the various levels of his personality, he does not seek to make the attempt to stop his fall, but rejoices in it. This is the price that is paid for the ease and quickness of ascent up the lower paths on the back of the Tree. Ascending the rear of the Tree need not necessarily end in disaster, but disaster in the form of these four pathways of automatic, animal instinct is always present as a potential consequence.

ASCENT ON THE DARK SIDE

One way to penetrate the back side of the Tree is to immerse oneself in the ecstasy of the flesh, in order to pass through the secret lower door in Malkuth. This is the blind plunge of the Fool into darkness, which must be taken without any prior guarantee of a successful outcome. It is a leap of faith that transcends the intellect, requiring actions that make no logical sense. It cannot be obtained through conventional sexual practices. The only guide is intuition, which is continually refreshed on the ascent up the hinder side of the Tree. Reason cannot be trusted, and if relied upon will lead to fatal errors.

The plunge of the Fool through the back door of Malkuth leads to the dark side of Yesod, the lunar sphere of illusions and visions that defy reason. All passage up the Tree must go through the sphere of the Moon, even ascent up the back side of the Tree. The shadow face of Yesod is a an egoistic reveling in a mental state akin to madness, where only contradiction makes sense. Achievement of this state is characterized by a wild fecundity of psychic perceptions, most of which resist easy interpretation.

Entry into the reverse of Hod results in a chaos of personal plans and schemes that are born from the visions in Yesod. The presiding power is that of Mercury. In this state of mind the danger that must be avoided is to analyze endlessly and to draw distorted and unbalanced conclusions based on false premises.

The entry into Netzach on the back of the Tree is similarly unbalanced, but here the tendency is to become fixated on modes of sensual experience that may prevent progress if they become obsessive and are endlessly repeated without innovation or evolution. The power that rules this sphere is that of Venus – not the orderly and balanced energy of Venus that functions on the front of the Tree in this sphere, but Venus in her extravagant excesses and fascinating perversions.

Ascent upward from Yesod to the inverse of Tiphareth produces a state of mind in which the vanity of the ego becomes dominant. There is danger that preoccupation about the attainment of esoteric wisdom, and pride over its achievement, will produce an inertia in which these attainments are jealously guarded and exulted in for their own sake, rather than as stepping

stones to a higher attainment that requires their abandonment. The power operating in this sphere is that of the Sun.

The personal power achieved in Tiphareth carries two dangers, represented by the states of mind obtained in the inverse of Geburah and Chesed. The first danger is that the individual who has attained the throne of Tiphareth will wish to impose his or her will upon others in a punitive or repressive way. We observe this in cult leaders who seek to control every aspect of their followers' lives. The operative power here is the shadowy hinder side of Mars.

The opposite danger lies in the achievement of the mind state of Chesed, the complete abandonment of any responsibility that comes with the greater knowledge and power that has been achieved in Tiphareth. Those who become fixated in this sphere on the backside of the Tree think that whatever they do is right merely because they have chosen to do it. They refuse to criticize or limit either their own behavior or the behavior of others in any way, by thought or deed. The intoxicating and expansive influence here is Jupiter.

The final constructive movement up the backside of the Tree is into Daath, the sphere of Knowledge. To obtain this elevation is to have successfully passed through the opposite trials represented by Geburah and Chesed, and to have willingly forsaken the power acquired in Tiphareth in order to achieve a more spiritual consciousness. The power of Tiphareth on the backside of the Tree can only be employed for egocentric purposes, whether they are selfish or charitable. It eventually becomes a prison of the mind and must be released. To obtain Daath is to stand on the brink of the Abyss, with only the Supernals as a higher attainment.

All of the spheres on the back side of the Tree represent snares that entrap the will with allurements that relate to personal attainment. The way up the back of the Tree is the path of individual experience, ability, learning and power. It appeals to the ego, and to selfish motives. The person attempting the ascent up the back of the Tree can become trapped in any of the Sephiroth. The Sephiroth stand for states of mind; the paths connecting them are transitions between states. Time on the paths is spent in dynamic transition, but entire years may be expended frozen within the various Sephiroth, or even the remainder of a lifetime.

The outer pillars of the Tree represent opposite poles of imbalance. On the front of the Tree, that imbalance pertains to successive levels or states of mind that are somewhat impersonal or abstract. Even though the spheres on the outer pillars of the face of the Tree are not balanced in the sense that those of the Middle Pillar are balanced, yet they contain their own internal order and harmony. On the rear of the Tree, all spheres are in conflict with themselves and give rise to chaotic impulses, although these are less extreme on the spheres of the Middle Pillar.

Instead of the Way of the Serpent, we might better call the ascent up the face of the Tree the Way of the World, since it begins by traversing the pathway of the Tarot trump The World, and is characterized by the clarity of reasoned consciousness functioning in what seems to be an orderly cosmos. The ascent up the backside of the Tree may be termed the Way of the Fool since it begins with the pathway of the trump The Fool in its lower manifestation, which is not the spiritual Fool of the heights, but the confused and reckless Fool of the depths. The Way of the World is deliberately applied intellect in which an attempt is made to exclude the ego; the Way of the Fool is the intuitive surrender to ego experience.

It must be stressed that ascent on the back of the Tree does not necessarily involve evil. It is quicker and easier than ascent on the front of the Tree, but also more dangerous, and part of that danger is the temptation to commit actions for selfish purposes without regard to their wider consequences. The path of the ego is fraught with peril because it is inherently unbalanced. When ascending the rear of the Tree, mental, emotional and moral balance must be constantly monitored and adjusted, since they will not maintain themselves without oversight. The rear of the Tree is unstable, and tends to chaos. That is its power. Its very imbalance can be used as a series of levers to lift the mind to higher resting states. At the Abyss this process fails, and a new path must be taken – the only alternative is to embrace the chaos and become lost in it.

THE PERMUTATION OF ATHBASH

The practical consequence of an ascending, secret order for the pathways of the Tree that exists along with the conventional descending order is that the two trumps on each pathway are esoterically linked in a very intimate manner. For example, The Fool is linked with The World; The Priestess is linked with Judgement; The Magus is linked with The Sun. Esoteric writers on the Tarot have in the past found reasons to link the first and last trumps, the second and second-last, and so on. However, they never possessed such a clear rationale for doing so as is presented by the combined ascending and descending ways of progress on the paths of the Tree.

The connection between the trumps on the face of the Tree and those on the back can be illustrated in a very simple way by folding the twenty-two trumps over upon themselves to create eleven pairs. Each pair occupies two paths, one trump of the pair on the front of each path and the other trump on the rear. For example, path eleven on the face of the Tree has The Fool in front and The World in back; path thirty-two has The World in front and The Fool in back.

The Fool	0	א	ת	XXI	The World
The High Priestess	I	ב	ש	XX	Judgement
The Magus	II	ג	ך	XIX	The Sun
The Empress	III	ד	ק	XVIII	The Moon
The Emperor	IV	ה	צ	XVII	The Star
The Hierophant	V	ו	פ	XVI	The Tower
The Lovers	VI	ז	ע	XV	The Devil
Temperance	VII	ח	ם	XIV	The Chariot
Strength	VIII	ט	נ	XIII	Death
The Hermit	IX	י	ס	XII	The Hanged Man
The Wheel of Fortune	X	כ	ף	XI	Justice

Table 1: pairs of trumps on the back and front of the Tree

Those familiar with the techniques of the Kabbalah will immediately notice that the arrangement of the Hebrew alphabet in the table of pairs shows the combination of Hebrew letters that is called Athbash in the Kabbalistic method of permutation known as Tziruph. The name of this permutation derives from the first two letter pairs – Aleph-Tau, Beth-Shin (AthBSh). This is the simplest of all the permutations of Tziruph, because the Hebrew alphabet is merely bent back upon itself in the middle.

One of the two changes made in my rationalized order of the trumps is the inversion of the locations of The Chariot and Temperance. These trumps form one of the pairs on the same pathway when the trumps are applied to the Tree in descending order on its front, and ascending order on its back. This is especially interesting because the inversion was made without reference to the back of the Tree. Similarly, the only important change made by Aleister Crowley to the Golden Dawn set of correspondences for the trumps was to counterchange the positions of trump XVII The Star with trump IV The Emperor. This is not a change that became popular, and not one that I approve of or recognize, but it involves another pair of trumps on the permutation of Athbash.

Crowley did not fold the twenty-two Hebrew letters back upon themselves to make this change, but arranged the trumps of the twelve Simple letters that apply to the signs of the zodiac in the form of a pointed oval with a twist at each end.²⁰ One twist in the oval inverts trump VIII with trump XI. This was the change in the ordering of the trumps made by MacGregor Mathers of the Golden Dawn when he switched the places of Strength and Justice. It was recognized by A. E. Waite and became widely accepted through Waite's Tarot. The other twist in the oval of the zodiac inverts trumps IV and XVII. This was the change Crowley believed to have been indicated by the line in the Book of the Law that reads:

Tzaddi is not the Star.

THE QLIPPOTH

The Qlipoth (Shells or Husks) are assigned to the back of the Tree in ten hierarchies that are bound up with the ten Sephiroth. The name 'Shells' comes from the concept of the Sephiroth as hollow spheres filled with a holy light that is the presence of God. The Qlipoth are not a part of that light, but merely the shell surrounding it, and therefore devoid of true existence. They are like hollow eggshells, having shape but containing nothing. In human form, they are living men and women who give the appearance of complete human beings, yet are incomplete, lacking the portion of human nature that is eternal and changeless, and possessing only that which is temporary and transitory.

The hierarchies of the Qlipoth represent the discordance or imbalance of the perfect Sephiroth. They are agents of chaos. Each hierarchy is assigned a demonic leader. A useful way of thinking of the hierarchies is to conceive them as the absolutely worst manifestation of the power of each Sephiroth, in its most corrupted and chaotic form. The list in the accompanying table shows the order of the hierarchies and their heads that was accepted by Mathers during his leadership of the Golden Dawn.

<i>Sephiroth</i>	<i>Order</i>	<i>Ruler</i>
Kether	Thamiel (Two Contenders)	Satan & Moloch
Chokmah	Ghogiel (Hinderers)	Beelzebub
Binah	Satariel (Concealers)	Lucifuge
Chesed	Agshekeloth (Smiters or Breakers)	Ashtaroth
Geburah	Golohab (Burners or Flaming Ones)	Asmodeus
Tiphareth	Tagiriron (Disputers)	Belphegor
Netzach	Gharab Tzerek (Raveners)	Baal
Hod	Samael (False Accusers)	Adrammelech
Yesod	Gamaliel (Obscene Ones)	Lilith
Malkuth	Nahemoth (Dolorous Ones)	Nahema

Table 2: Orders of the Qlipoth and their demonic rulers

I felt it necessary to make two minor emendations. The list as provided by Israel Regardie in his Golden Dawn was part of the *Fifth Knowledge Lecture* of the teaching curriculum of that society. It gives Lilith as the demonic hierarchy of Malkuth. Obviously Lilith is a single demon, not a hierarchy of demons, even though as the Mother of Demons she is sometimes depicted surrounded by her children. I have reverted to the list of the orders of the Qlipoth provided by Mathers in his introduction to his *Kabbalah Unveiled*, where he gives Nahemoth as the hierarchy of Malkuth.

The list in the *Kabbalah Unveiled* is probably earlier in composition than the list that formed part of the *Fifth Knowledge Lecture*. In that earlier list he placed Lilith as the ruling demon of Yesod, the ninth Sephirah, and Nahema as the ruling demon of Malkuth. This makes good sense, although one could argue that Nahema as the seducer is better located in Yesod, and Lilith as the killer of infants in Malkuth – Lilith and Nahema are often treated as two aspects of the same demon, and their qualities are interchangeable, but Nahema is more often depicted as a young woman and Lilith as an older woman. Despite this minor reservation, I have kept Mathers' attribution of Lilith as the demon queen of Yesod and Nahema as the demon queen of Malkuth. The aspect of Lilith that operates in Yesod is the seducer, and the aspect of Nahema that operates in Malkuth is the strangler of babies.

The orders of Qlipoth are present in a potential way within each of the Sephiroth. They need not be encountered when ascending the Tree either from the front, or from the back, but in practice it is impossible to avoid triggering their appearance in at least some of the Sephiroth through which you pass. On the front of the Tree the Qlipoth are the worst expression of the egoless and intellectual state of mind represented by each Sephirah; on the back of the Tree they are the worst expression of the egocentric and experiential state of mind of each Sephirah. The rearward forms are much nearer the surface and more dangerous. In either case they are to be avoided, if possible.

KETHER is characterized by unity. It is the single and undivided head of creation. The order of the Qlipoth associated with Kether, the Thamiel, expresses disunity. It is ruled by the two potent de-

mons Satan and Moloch, who in this hierarchy are to be understood as more or less evenly matched, so that they can go on contesting for eternity. The demons of this order are forever bickering and fighting. This hierarchy is called the Two Contenders rather than simply the Contenders to emphasize that the leaders are battling with each other, not contending in unison with a third party.

CHOKMAH, the first going forth from Kether, is the initial creative spark that eventually gives rise to all things. In the Golden Dawn system it is the Sephirah of the zodiac, an appropriate assignment since the stars in traditional astrology are supposed to send down rays upon the earth that facilitate the progress of events. Associated with this sphere on the Tree is the order of Ghogiel, the Hinderers. Their purpose is to frustrate the initial beginnings of projects, and the conception of plans. The ruling demon is Beelzebub, Lord of the Flies. Flies annoy and distract the mind away from more important matters.

BINAH is the nurturing and endlessly fruitful womb of creation, within which the inseminating sparks from Chokmah grow and assume archetypal forms. Without Binah there would be no manifestation. She enables the ideal to become actual. The order of Qlippoth associated with this sphere on the Tree are the Satariel, the Concealers. Whereas Binah brings forth all things from her womb, the Satariel hinder the bringing forth of concepts into being. They hide them and make it impossible for them to be developed. The ruler of this hierarchy is Lucifuge.

CHESED represents love and benevolence. It is the outpouring of generosity and charity, the fountain of mercy. The hierarchy of the Qlippoth that conveys the chaotic imbalance of this sphere on the Tree is Agshekeloth, the Smiters or Breakers. Rather than forgiving, they strike out in anger. Their ruler is the demon Ashtaroth.

GEBURAH is the sphere of restriction, of judgments enforced on humanity by divine will. It is the social code and the rule of law imposed upon members of a society to compel conformity and types

of behavior considered to be correct or necessary. Without Geburah to hold impulses in check, the Tree would fly apart. The order of Qlippoth in this sphere are the Golohab, the Burners. They represent the lawlessness of those who loot and vandalize the property or possessions of others. They are the violators of the rule of law and order. Their head demon is Asmodeus.

TIPHARETH is the center of the Tree, and stands for the principle of harmony. It balances the Tree both left to right and top to bottom, and within itself is perfectly balanced. This sphere is the place of the Messiah, or Christos (the Anointed), who for Christians is Jesus. It is the divine and perfect part of human nature, and the highest level to which normal human consciousness can ascend. The order of Qlippoth known as the Tagiriron are the Disputers, the bringers of disharmony and imbalance. Their ruler is the demon Belphegor.

NETZACH is the sphere of Firmness or Victory, in which the object of desire has been attained and possessed. It is confidence and satisfaction concerning the outcome of events. All needs have been met in abundance. The Qlippoth who inhabit the underside of this sphere on the Tree are the Ghareb Tzerek, or Raveners, who are constantly hungry, constantly in need. They seek to take and hold more than they require, which creates imbalance both when they attempt to gain their objectives, and when they selfishly hoard what they have attained. They are characterized by unending dissatisfaction. Their ruler is the demon Baal.

HOD is the Sephirah of Splendor. It is the enjoyment of the fruits of the victory of Netzach in the form of love for art, display and costume. It is the delight of fame and a good reputation, though in its best expression without vanity or pride. The Qlippoth of this sphere are the Samael, the False Accusers. These demons destroy reputations and trust with lying accusations. They attempt to taint the honor of human beings, and undermine good will. Their leader is Adrammelech.

YESOD, the ninth sphere, signifies the Foundation upon which the entire material world is based. It is the reality of forms

that underlies physical objects. Without this foundation of spiritual truth, matter would have no way of assuming shapes or sustaining them. It is this sphere on the Tree that enables the human fetus to grow correctly within the womb. This is the astral plane, so vital to the continuance of the material plane. However, the astral is also known for its illusions, which are forms without substance. The order of Qliphoth that express this chaotic side of the astral plane are the Gameliel, the Obscene Ones, who represent desires of the imagination. These spirits induce in the mind the desires that normally occur during physical lovemaking, and cause the ejaculation of semen. The seed that might otherwise have engendered a physical child of flesh and blood instead is used to create an astral spirit without a body. The ruler of this order is Lilith, the Night Hag who induces sexual dreams and is the Mother of Demons.

MALKUTH is the fulfillment of the process of creation that began with Kether. It is the Word made flesh. This sphere represents the world of the four elements, what we know as our everyday physical reality. The Qliphoth order placed here is the Nahemoth or Dolorous Ones, who endlessly wail in frustration and dissatisfaction, their hopes forever unrealized. Their leader is Nahema, the demon who in one of her guises snuffs out the life of newborn infants by stopping their breath.

ALEISTER CROWLEY'S LIBER CCXXXI

The ten orders of Qliphoth have long been associated with the Sephiroth, but there were no demons linked with the twenty-two pathways on the Tree in modern Western occultism until Aleister Crowley scribed the names and sigils for two sets of spirits for the paths in and published the results in his periodical *The Equinox Vol. I, no. vii* in the document that is known by its shortened title as *Liber CCXXXI*. There are three parts to this brief document.

The first is a pair of tables showing two sets of sigils that are associated with the Hebrew letters. Crowley referred to the first set of sigils as the twenty-two domains of Mercury, and to the second set as the twenty-two

dungeons of the Qliphoth. Mercury is the god of wisdom, symbolized by the wise serpent that coils itself up his staff. Dungeons are located beneath the surface of the earth, which is to say, beneath Malkuth.

Note in Aleister's depiction, the anomaly in the sequence of Hebrew letters on the table of Mercury. The places of the fifth letter, Heh, and the sixth letter, Vav, have been inverted.

The sigils on the right-hand table of the Qliphoth bear obvious links with the Tarot trumps, as arranged on the Hebrew letters in the Golden Dawn system of correspondences. The trump Strength has a sigil in the shape of a lion; the trump Justice shows a figure with an unbalanced set of scales in one hand and a sword falling from the other hand; the trump The Hanged Man, corresponding with water, shows a cloud from which streams some form of precipitation, alongside a downward pointing arrow; the trump Death shows a figure holding a scythe; the trump The Tower shows a tower. The Qliphothic sigil of the trump The Moon bears 22 lunar crescents, arranged in groups of twelve, seven, and three, to correspond with the three divisions of the Hebrew alphabet into Simple, Double and Mother letters. The sigil of the trump The Sun shows a black solar disk in eclipse. The sigil of the trump The Devil depicts an erect penis and scrotum.

The second part of *Liber CCXXXI* is a poem in twenty-two verses in which Crowley alludes to the natures of the pathways on the Tree using symbolism that is heavily involved with the mythology of his own *Book of the Law* and cult of Thelema.

The third part consists of two lists of names, which Crowley titled *The Genii of the 22 Scales of the Serpent and of the Qliphoth*. The lists are associated with the Hebrew alphabet. The list of names on the left is that of the spirits of the sigils in the table on the left, characterized by Crowley as the genii of the scales of the Serpent. By this he meant the serpent that ascends the Tree of Life, touching each of the paths – its scales – with its body as it ascends. The list of names on the right belongs to the spirits whose sigils form the table on the right, characterized by Crowley as the genii of the Qliphoth.

Crowley applied both these lists to the pathways on the front of the Tree. However, once we acknowledge that the Tree has two sides, a front and a back, it makes much more sense to apply the sigils in the left table,

and the left list of names, to the channels on the front of the Tree, and the sigils in the right table, and the right list of names, to the channels on the back of the Tree. They are easily assigned to the paths by their Hebrew letters. The spirits of the Serpent on the front of the Tree are applied to the channels in descending order, and the spirits of the Qlipboth on the back of the Tree are linked to the channels in ascending order.

In *Liber CCXXXI* Crowley employed Greek and Arabic letters in his list of the spirits of the Serpent. However, he was kind enough to insert in brackets his Latin letter equivalents for these characters, so it is a simple matter to substitute Latin for the Greek and Arabic letters, making these names much easier to read and pronounce. The names of the Qlipboth were written only in Latin letters by Crowley. After the sixth name in the list of the spirits of the Serpent, corresponding to the Hebrew letter Vav, Crowley indicated in brackets 'a secret name follows' but did not supply this secret name. It seems to me possible that the inversion of the Hebrew letters Heh and Vav in the table of the Serpent is connected with this secret name.

These sigils and names may be used to access Crowley's sets of spiritual intelligences for both the front and back sides of the pathways on the Tree of the Sephiroth. This is not necessary for path working on the Tree, but students of Thelema may wish to employ these names and sigils during their path working rituals, as an aid in transiting the paths.

The set of Qlipboth scribed by Crowley is applied to the back of the Tree and examined at length by Kenneth Grant in *Nightside of Eden*. Grant does not treat the genii of Mercury in this work, and places the genii of the Qlipboth on the paths in the usual order, beginning with path eleven between Kether-Chokmah and ending with path thirty-two between Yesod-Malkuth. He employs the common Golden Dawn structure of the Tree with its three paths leading to Malkuth.

Hebrew Letters	Spirits of the Serpent	Spirits of the Qlipboth
א Aleph	Aaa-u-iao-uaaa	Amprodias
ב Beth	Beaathaoooabitom	Baratchial
ג Gimel	Gitonosapfollois	Gargophias
ד Daleth	Danastartaroth	Dagdagiell
ה Heh	Hoo-oo-ro-ist	Hemethterith
ו Vav	Vuaretza [a secret name follows]	Uriens
ז Zayin	Zoooasar	Zamradial
ח Cheth	Chiva-abrahamadabra-cadaxviii	Characith
ט Teth	Thalaaster-a-dekerv-al	Temphioth
י Yod	Iehuvahastanaathan	Yamatu
כ Kaph	Kerugunaviel	Kurgasix
ל Lamed	Lusanaherandraton	Lafcursix
מ Mem	Malai	Malkunofat
נ Nun	Nadimraphoroiozaathalai	Niantiel
ס Samekh	Salathlala-amrodnathaaist	Saksaksalim
ע Ayin	Oaoaaaooooa-ist	A'ano'nin
פ Pe	Purathmetai-apametai	Parfaxitas
צ Tzaddi	Xanthasteranshq-ist	Tzuffifu
ק Qoph	Qanidnayx-ipamai	Qulielfi
ר Resh	Ra-a-gioselahladnaimawa-ist	Raflifu
ש Shin	Shabnax-odobor	Shalicu
ת Tau	Thath'th'thithaathuth-thist	Thantifaxath

MEANINGS OF THE TRUMPS ON THE BACK OF THE TREE

The relocation of the trumps to the inverted order of the paths on the back of the rationalized Tree alters their meanings in this context. It will be useful to consider the trumps in relation to the Sephiroth they link.

The Fool bridges the gap between Malkuth and Yesod on the 11th ascending path. He represents the blind step through the rear aperture of Malkuth into the confusing shadows on the backside of the Tree. Yesod on the back of the Tree carries the dangers of illusion and nightmare, the waning crescent of the moon. The element of the Fool is Air, but in this case it is expressed by a gasp – an intake of breath – rather than a cry, as on the front of the Tree.

The Priestess guards the 12th diagonal-ascending path between Yesod and Hod, on the Left Pillar of the Tree. Because the Tree is inverted when viewed from the back, she is located on the right side of its image on the page. She carries the current of the waning moon from Yesod to Hod, making all its glittering pomp and lavish display seem disordered and inappropriate. Whereas on the face of the Tree she is unconscious of her beauty, on the back she displays it as a distraction designed to manipulate the mind and divert it away from important esoteric truths.

The Magus stands on the 13th diagonal path leading up from Yesod to Netzach on the Right Pillar. He combines the current of the moon, which he draws up from Yesod, with his own planet Mercury, as aspect of Hod since Mercury is also the planet of Hod, and merges them into Venus, the planet of Netzach. His eyes blaze with a fanatical desire for power of a personal kind. On the back of the Tree the power of the Magus takes the form of sexual magnetism and a dominating will capable of controlling other human beings. He seeks these illusions of greatness for his own satisfaction.

The Empress straddles the 14th horizontal path from Hod to Netzach. She is the crystallized forms of the imagination in Hod carried forward to the desire for realization in Netzach. The Empress equilibrates the polarized mental states of these two Sephiroth, but is more strongly drawn to Netzach because her planet, Venus, is the same as the planet of Netzach. The plans and fantasies of Hod become the basis for yearning desire in Netzach that realizes itself in luxury and opulence.

The Emperor guards the 15th middle path leading vertically upward from Yesod to Tiphareth. This path bypasses the extremes of Netzach and Hod, the lust for satisfaction and the love of intricate calculations, in contrast to the path of the Empress which balances these polar states of consciousness. He represents the single-minded pursuit of personal greatness, unconcerned with schemes or pleasures unless they serve this purpose. His zodiac sign, the ram of Aries, forces itself upward, driven by the irrational and disordered visions of Yesod. His path crosses the path of the Empress, and unites the Sephiroth of the astrological Moon and Sun. This indicates that his goal is the generation of a magical child, either in the sense of a disciple who will fulfill his goals, or a work that will express in itself his greatness. This path is flanked by that of The Lovers and The Hierophant, confirming that its primary energy is an esoteric marriage of Yesod and Tiphareth.

The Hierophant opens the gateway of the 16th ascending diagonal path from Hod on the Left Pillar of the Tree to Tiphareth at its center. On the back of the Tree this trump expresses the laws of nature subverted or subsumed to the will of the individual. Progress is possible in this way from the left side of the Tree from the love for study and scholastic attainment in its own right that presides in Hod to the greatness of the will that shines forth in Tiphareth. This path applies the teachings of Hod to life, resulting in the achievement of an almost divine state.

The Lovers on the opposite side of the Tree on the 17th diagonal path up from Netzach to Tiphareth presents a different possibility when moving from imbalance to balance. Rather than the restric-

tive application of natural law that occurs in the Hierophant, the Lovers embody the expansive expression of the perfection of the will by the sensual manipulation of sexual energy. The Hierophant is the way of the mind, but the Lovers is the way of the flesh. Both are capable of achieving the same divine state of being in Tiphareth.

Temperance defines the 18th vertical pathway up the left side of the Tree from Hod to Geburah. All vertical paths express a similar driving energy. The left side of the Tree is the side of severity and restriction. The exuberance of learning that characterizes Hod, and the delight in complexity and display for its own sake, is judiciously filtered on its passage upward through this path, so that only the teachings of value are retained – all the rest is discarded without regret, no matter how much pains were required to acquire it. The zodiac sign of Temperance in my reformed trump correspondences is the crab of Cancer. The crab seizes and holds, but she selects judiciously and wisely, blending the best from all disciplines. This is the way of alchemy.

Strength on the diagonal 19th path upward from Tiphareth to Geburah is the restrictive application of the will in order to channel the personal power that exists in the mental state of Tiphareth into a meaningful code of behavior. The Left Pillar is the female side of the Tree, and the zodiac sign of this Tarot trump is Leo. In this trump, the lion is silenced and restrained by the will of a woman, who is sometimes shown seated upon its back. This is the impulse that caused Aleister Crowley to compose his *Book of the Law*, and is the meaning behind its primary maxim, 'Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.' The personal power of the magus in Tiphareth is voluntarily constrained and channeled into a set of precepts in Geburah that, because of the egoism of the back side of the Tree, are imposed on others. It is not enough that there be self-control, the control must be extended beyond the self.

The Hermit on the opposite side of the Tree, the expansive Right Pillar of Mercy, carries the 20th path upward from Netzach to Chesed. His function is similar to that of Temperance, but whereas Tem-

perance filters and refines the studies of the mind, the Hermit discards the useless though pleasant distractions of the flesh, retaining only those that produce a greater power of the will. Although the Hermit appears restrictive, he is actually expansive in the sense that his ascetic practices are indulged in with single-minded fanaticism to the exclusion of other activities. He takes from the unexamined enthusiasm of the Lovers only what he needs to further his cause, which is movement upward on the Tree, then focuses exclusively on those physical practices. This is the way of Kundalini yoga.

The Wheel on the diagonal 21st path from Tiphareth to Chesed on the Right side of the Tree is the acceptance of consequences of karma, or cause and effect, as a moderating influence on the personal will. The attainment of Tiphareth does not mean that anything that is possible must be done. Actions have consequences. The self-love of the divine son in Tiphareth is extended to others, but only in the sense that other human beings are seen as extensions of the self. There is an acceptance of responsibility. This is Crowley's famous secondary maxim derived from the *Book of the Law*, 'Love is the Law, love under Will.' It appears to contradict the first maxim, but is really a necessary consequence of the first. The law (Geburah) and love (Chesed) always coexist. Severity must be balanced by mercy.

Justice on the 22nd path links the restriction and imposed control of Geburah with the love and mercy of Chesed. She must be constantly adjusting the beam of her balance to prevent an excess of either the right or left pillar of the Tree. The zodiac sign of Justice is Libra, the scales. There is an ever present danger that the will of the magus will cause imbalance in an effort to realize selfish purposes. To a large extent the balance is self-adjusting. It requires a sustained effort to hold it at an angle, but the will is quite capable of making this effort when driven by the ego. This is the highest pathway that exists below the Abyss, and for this reason expresses the least ego of any path on the back of the Tree. It can be deliberately unbalanced, but when this is done, no progress is possible through either Geburah or Chesed to Daath.

The enigmatic *Hanged Man* marks the vertical 23rd path upward from Geburah to Binah on the Left Pillar of the Tree. This pathway enters into the Abyss without crossing through Daath. It leads directly to the dark shadow Supernal on the left branch of the Tree, and represents the commitment of the restrictive thinking of Geburah to the hollow understanding of Binah. There is no truth in this dark shell of Binah, only archetypal forms with the resemblance of vitality. It is wholly governed by the Satariel, the Concealers of Truth. In this context the Hanged Man represents the deliberate suspension of reason and the freedom of choice for the willing acceptance of received authority.

Death on the diagonal 24th path from Tiphareth to Binah is the abandonment of the divine nature inherent in humanity to embrace the rule of the Dark Queen and become one of her instruments. It extends directly into the Abyss to the dark Supernal of the Left Pillar. It is the death of the soul, willing enslavement in exchange for power.

The Chariot on path twenty-five leads diagonally upward from Chesed on the Right Pillar of the Tree to Binah on the Left Pillar. It passes through Daath, the gateway from the rear of the Tree to its front, and thus offers a choice – to purge the ego of the expansive self-love in Chesed and ascend through the gateway of Daath by way of the path of Temperance to the golden sphere of Binah on the bright face of the Tree, where a true understanding of universal principles of creation awaits the seeker; or to continue on along the path of the Chariot to embrace the oppressive hollow doctrines of the shadow of Binah of the dark Supernals in the Abyss, in the hope of using them for personal greatness. In order to pass through the gateway of Daath to Binah on the face of the Tree, selfish purposes must be left behind.

The Devil on the 26th path that leads directly upward from Chesed to Chokmah is the final surrender of the will to the lowest instincts and urges of the flesh. It is the riotous excess and liberality of Chesed carried on to insane levels that lack all restraint or reason, and must ultimately prove self-destructive. It is self-love perverted to its

ultimate degree. It passes into the Abyss, where it descends to the shadow Supernal on the Left Pillar, and does not offer escape through Daath to the bright face of the Tree.

The Tower on the diagonal 27th pathway from Tiphareth to Chokmah is the destruction due to imbalance and excess of the edifice of egotistical self-delusions of godhood that has been erected in Tiphareth. When the attempt is made to apply to the greater world the recognition of divine birthright that has been obtained in Tiphareth, the very attempt destroys that divinity and leaves only a fallen ruin where it formerly stood. This path passes directly into the Abyss to the shadow sphere Chokmah on the Dark Supernals the Tree. Instead of the divine wisdom that is held within this sphere on the sunlit crown, the seeker finds only the Ghogiel, the Hinderers who frustrate every grand inspiration. The power obtainable here is to join them in their work and actively cast down the creative impulses of others, but to do so is to voluntarily become one of the Qlippoth in Chokmah.

The Star lies on the diagonal 28th path from Geburah to Chokmah. It passes through Daath, and offers the choice of ascending to either the dark or the bright Supernal of the Right Pillar. Those who pass through the gateway of Daath to the sunlit face of the Tree make use of the guiding fire of their star of destiny to burn away all egocentric purposes from the level of self-command that has been attained in Geburah, before they transition at Daath to the path of the Emperor. This allows the inspiration of Chokmah to flow to them unhindered, and they become fountains of wisdom of the divine source of creation. Those who choose not to exit the rear of the Tree by the gateway of Daath follow the dark star of their fate to its end and find their personal attainment only in the depths of the Abyss by hindering of the greatness of others.

The Moon lies on the reciprocating 29th path that extends between Binah and Chokmah. It is completely a part of the Supernals. Those who walk this path in the Abyss on the shadowy back side of the Tree are forever lost to the Light. Daath offers the only opportunity to

pass out of the darkness, and when it is rejected, no second chance is given. This path is a constant oscillation between the attraction of personal power in Chokmah, and the surrender of the will in Binah; between the joy that comes from controlling others, and the sense of security that comes from accepting a higher authority without question. It is a path of futility.

The Sun on the vertical 30th path between Tiphareth and Kether passes through the Daath on the Middle Pillar. It offers the choice of purging the divinity obtained in Tiphareth of ego and ascending to unite directly with the highest crown of creation on the bright face of the Tree, by exiting the back of the Tree through the aperture of Daath and continuing upward along the path of the Magus; or of extinguishing that divine illumination forever by ignoring the gateway of Daath and continuing directly down to the shadow of Kether on the dark inverted crown of the Tree. The ascent through Daath to Kether on the face of the Tree is equivalent to the Sun dawning, whereas the descent directly to Kether on the rear of the Tree is the Sun setting forever into darkness. Egocentric urges and goals destroy the unity of Kether and produces a mind always at war with itself, its power fighting against itself and therefore self-limited.

The trump *Judgement* on the diagonal 31st path up from Binah to Kether on the shadow side of the Tree is the critical censure of the Left Pillar of the Tree applied inwardly to the highest purpose, and the rejection of that purpose, leaving nothing but darkness. It is the final abortion of the soul. The result is emptiness, aridity, and unending internal conflict since no guide remains to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

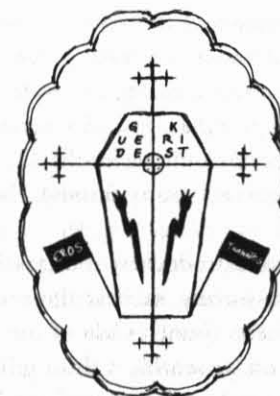
The World on the 32nd and final diagonal pathway between Chokmah and Kether expresses the final loss of worldly authority in the confusion that reigns within the shadow sphere of Kether. Mounting self-doubt at last eviscerates the power of command over others that reached its peak in Chokmah, leaving only the inner conflict of the dark Crown of Creation. In the end all ambition falls through the turning spiral at the center of the sphere into oblivion.

This outline of the meanings of the trumps on the back of the Tree is intended merely to be suggestive, not dogmatic. The Tarot is so complex that many levels of interpretation are possible for each card. The most important point I wish to convey is that ascent up the back of the Tree is motivated by selfish or egotistical purposes, whereas ascent up the front of the Tree is motivated by a desire to leave selfish ambitions behind. The back of the Tree is not evil, nor the front of the Tree good. Both are a mixture of good and evil, of cosmos and chaos. Since magic is largely a path of the ego, the magician will often attempt to ascend the Tree by its back; the abnegation of the ego is the goal of religion, so the mystic most often tries to ascend the Tree by its front.

This distinction is general and will not apply in all cases. There is no purely ego-driven magician, nor is there a purely egoless mystic. Some who pursue magic will simultaneously seek to free themselves from the chains of personal desire, and may ascend the face of the Tree; some who seek union with the divine will be unable to abandon their personal demons, and may ascend the Tree from the back. Whether ascent is made on the Tree from the front or rear is not a matter of deliberate choice, but of the beliefs and attitudes held by the individual who seeks to attain higher levels of consciousness through esoteric practices. A person may decide to climb the front of the Tree, but without even knowing it may actually mount it from the rear, if his attitudes and actions are more in harmony with the shadowy side of the Tree.

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INTO THE MEON

Approaching the Voudon Gnostic Workbook

David Beth

...in opposition to all humanistic culture, we are lured ever to the brink of chaos. We want to go where we are forbidden. We want to know what has been denied to us. We seek, in a word, the 'more'.

Michael Bertiaux

HO OPHIS HO ARCHAIOS! Master Michael Bertiaux's *Voudon Gnostic Workbook* (VGW) is among the most important of the modern magical grimoires. No other single book, except *Vom Kosmogonischen Eros* by Ludwig Klages, has influenced my occult life and development as much as this tome. The VGW is a collection of gospels, techniques and instructions of the Ophidian serpent cult La Couleuvre Noire (LCN). Maybe the most notorious and infamous of the modern grimoires, its content connects us directly with ancient times of primordial saturnian and kosmic gnosis. Esoteric currents are made available to us via powerful transmissions from archaic entities and strange magical realms.

Unsettling to many, shocking and terrifying is the nature of the *Voudon Gnostic Workbook*. It is not concerned with (occult) political correctness, nor a pleasing style. Rather, it is a daring exposure of sorcery and a vision of a mythical tellurian and pelasgian past where the realm of the gods was immediately accessible. For the initiates of the LCN this immediate esoteric universe becomes a concrete reality through the pathways outlined in the *VGW*.

There has been sufficient introductory information on the work of the LCN and the nature of its sorcery, such as the excellent chapters on the Black Snake Cult in Kenneth Grant's *Cults of the Shadow*. Therefore the focus of this essay will be on presenting a short glimpse of a personal understanding, an evaluation and application of the *VGW* in my work as a Voudon Gnostic initiate. But before we enter deeper into the fascinating world the *VGW* represents, let me explain some important points.

WRITTEN MATERIALS & INNER WORLDS

The value of written materials is undeniable. It shows the creativity of a person and a group. It helps to explain their gnosis and serves as an inspiration for others. It can be a foundation on which other ideas are based and thus support the evolution of thought within a continuum.

Sometimes Inner Order material may be released to the public without it causing any harm or disclosing the innermost secrets and gnosis. This is the case with some materials of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and the LCN, specifically the *Voudon Gnostic Workbook* and the four year *Courses of the Monastery of the Seven Rays*, all authored by Michael Bertiaux. Although Master Bertiaux never cared nor intended to appeal to the mass market, or to achieve any kind of fame, he and the Great Masters of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN decided to make some teachings of the Orders available to the greater public in various degrees. Bertiaux has always had a great interest in esoteric healing and compassion for fellow seekers on the path to Gnostic enlightenment. He knew that some of the results and modes of work of the research laboratories of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN could indeed aid others, unconnected in a direct way to the Vou-

don Gnostic continuum, to develop as Gnostic individuals. And indeed this happened many times as these books not only greatly influenced contemporary occult circles and individuals such as Kenneth Grant of the Typhonians, the Chaos magick scene and Gnostic circles, but also musicians and artists such as Grant Morrison, creator of *The Invisibles* comic series. Bertiaux intended these materials to be inspirations to others, to give them aid in their spiritual quest, never intending to be dogmatic or worshipped.

However, these writings are more than merely inspirational and instructional. The Voudon Gnostic materials, and especially the *VGW*, also possess a deeper layer. They contain secret doors which may be opened to admit the seeker into other universes and dimensions of esoteric Voudon. There exist strange places of magical powers and spiritual energies, which contain powerful formulae for gnostic transformation. These realms are hinted at in the books and materials of the Orders, but the keys to unlock the doors leading to them are not in written form. The gates are being guarded by the spirit wardens and human protectors of the Orders, who operate in an esoteric symbiosis to admit only those loyal students capable of navigating these esoteric and nocturnal worlds.

The deeper layers can only be penetrated through direct guidance and initiation by a few Masters of the Orders and LCN. Members with potential are guided step by step to the revelation of the inner mysteries by teachers holding special sacramental power. Access to the inner worlds and temples always means direct contact and work with the Loas and spirits uniquely attached to the Orders of the Voudon Gnostic continuum. These areas can only be accessed if one is formally attached to the initiatic chain of the Orders of the Hierophant Michael Bertiaux and the Masters with sacramental power, who transmit the *Afflatus*, which serves as a magical link to the Inner Order. It is impossible to achieve this link and access the inner layers without being attached to the continuum of Michael Bertiaux and his appointed High Priests as they are the successors of the Jean-Maine family to which the spirits of the Inner Temple are bonded and loyal. Only those who possess special powers coming through hierophantic initiation have the duty and abilities to feed the energies from the Inner Orders, the spirit pools to the outer courts.

In the afro-atlantean tradition, direct and personal empowerments and transmissions are the only valid way to transfer spiritual and magical powers. These empowerments and spiritual transfers can only unfold and work if the person works within the magical and spiritual continuum governed by the Hierophant, the High Priests, and its spirit patrons. There is no other way. Everyone who leaves the continuum or has been disconnected to it will lose his ability to enter the Inner Temples of the Voudon Gnosis and will lose the protection and support of the Voudon Gnostic spirits.

Very few Masters of the Orders have, and had, the powers and duty to serve as a bridge between the Inner and Outer Orders and hold special sacramental powers to protect the Orders. While an initiate can be guided to the highest level of realization and empowerment of the Voudon Gnosis, the sacramental powers to confer and transfer powers to others are only possessed by an esoterically chosen few High Priests within the Orders. These Masters have always worked inside the Orders and not once has one of those Masters left the Orders. There are esoteric reasons and laws which would make this impossible.

Now you understand why the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN freely offer insight into many areas of their work and even publish secrets for others to study. It is for esoteric inspiration and for spiritual growth. It will not enable anyone not formally connected to the Voudon Gnostic continuum of Hierophant Michael Bertiaux to enter the Inner Orders or claim any-kind of sacramental power. Much insight can be gained from the study of the books outside the Orders and probably many ideas and transformations can occur. However, there is a limitation in this process and this limitation can only be transcended through initiatic contact with the sacramental Masters and guides of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN.

RITES OF INITIATION

There are many types of empowerments and initiations in the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN, which are given from master to student. They are given to special students who have distinguished themselves and have proven their loyalty and abilities. Those are the people who enter from the Outer Orders to the Inner Orders, and layers. There are different types of such rites. At this point, only a handful of Voudon Gnostic Masters are able to give out any kind of initiations or empowerments. In contrast to the rather static and sterile temple initiations of many Orders, such sacramental rites are being given in a freestyle shamanic fashion. Whilst they do follow certain guidelines and esoteric rules, they are given individually to each candidate who is ready to receive them.

One such initiation into the LCN type of Work requires the anointing and activation of certain points on the naked body of the initiand, while the initiator, who is possessed by the patron spirits, speaks and chants in the Langue Mystère in which he was trained to receive and utter. The initiations and empowerments in the LCN are only concerned with magical transmissions.

It is not unusual for a candidate to experience visions, trance, possession, extreme emotions and altered states of mind. This is totally different from the experience of a typical initiation ritual. Pure spirit force is activated here and is transmitted from the Master to the candidate in order to unlock power zones in the body, or to activate the sexual centres, or prepare the 'meat' to receive spirits as permanent residents. Other initiation rites are hinted at in the *VGW*, although they are at times quite concealed.

VOUDON GNOSIS

Something that attracted me deeply from the beginning about the *VGW*, and in fact all of Bertiaux's writings, was its inherent gnostic character. Michael Bertiaux boldly states that as gnostic magicians, *in opposition to all humanistic culture, we are lured ever to the brink of chaos. We want to go where we are forbidden. We want to know what has been denied to us. We seek, in a word, the 'more'.* And truly, on our quest there should be no boundary beyond which one is forbidden to venture, and we must fear no current as too deep or too dark.

Bertiaux acknowledges that at the root of all religions and spiritual systems lays a gnostic source and that by the application of precise occult and esoteric formulae we can draw power and energy from various systems and use them for magical operations in our laboratories of luciferian transformation. For example, in our school the Christ myth is closely associated not with sun worship in its primitive form, but with an elaborate transfer and absorption of solar qualities into the Christ-figure, thus creating a powerful god image befitting our work as alchemical sexual magicians. From the beginning of Christology, this true relating of Christ with the Sun was done only in a few gnostic sects, like La Couleuvre Noire who also relate him to Damballah and Leghba. He is thus the Sun God at the crossroads. A magical formula of application enables the ophidian sex magicians to draw upon all the magic done in the name of Christ and transfer its power to their rites. In this way all the psychic energy generated by the faithful in Christ, which is stored in a vast astral reservoir, can be tapped into by the Voudon Gnostic sorcerers who use it for the empowerment of their Work. In the *VGW* Bertiaux uses a range of spiritual and esoteric systems like Hinduism and Shinto in this way and so opens up a very broad magical universe. But make no mistake, this process of absorbing the esoteric energies of different systems requires a deep initiatic knowledge of certain occult procedures and is not a random and superficial adaptation of other systems. The initiatic knowledge and tools of incorporating the esoteric cores of other systems are provided to us through the secrets of esoteric voudon. Esoteric voudon, a deep system in itself, is the thread that runs through the whole of Voudon Gnosis.

LA PRISE DES YEAUX

The Elemental Vision

The elemental vision signals rebirth; within us, the element recalls its limitlessness amid the primordial flux, as element and flux devour themselves anew: the winds, the trees, and the stars now speak. Through immeasurably distant ages, death and birth greet the soul of man in the wavering blade of grass, and they hear the dark inner night of the blood of man in the falling rain, as it trickles through the leaves outside.

Ludwig Klages

There is one vital factor to understand when working with the *VGW* and all the more advanced areas of La Couleuvre Noire. It is not the conceptual but the elemental type of (sexual) magic, with its focus on the elemental kingdom, that is the central form of work. It is directly from elemental contacts that we were able to draw a whole encyclopedia of elemental sorcery, and some of these results are to be found in the *VGW*. The Voudon Gnostic and LCN tradition focuses largely on working with the roots of sexuality. Here, elemental magic very often finds expression in the production of signs. These signs then explain and show what elemental life is all about. Such signs are often artistic in expression, like Bertiaux's paintings. What we have come to term Esoteric Logic in the secrets of the Orders and LCN is in essence not a conceptual type of work or expression. The essence of our Esoteric Logic is connected to a deep level of elemental manifestation. It is non verbal and deeply plutonian in its rawness. In the elemental cells of the Voudon Gnosis the body is being experienced as raw and elemental, as pure instinct. Esoteric workings of such nature lead to a metaphysical breakthrough, a certain type of violence which is not esoterically evil as long as it is not conceptualized. Bertiaux correctly states that:

...(e)vil is in the world of conceptualized types of language, but violence in the unconscious realm – violence as Lebensphilosophie (after Klages) is the basis of all true art, all gesture, all hedonic tone, and the elemental motion of primitives, be they society, people or sounds.

One cultus within the Voudon Gnosis makes the soul (including mind)/body complex the elemental pole of action, which becomes their esoteric poiteau mitan. Not unlike the devotees of exoteric voudon when they dance in a frenzy around the poiteau mitan and hurl themselves like energetic sparks and howls of psychism at all the participants, the esoteric vodoist engages in what Bertiaux calls *mediumistic wrestling with the spirits*. This is the way the spirits want to work and interact with us. In our interpretation this would also be the way of interacting with other spirits, like those in grimoires such as the *Goetia*. This special cultus teaches the worship of a certain type of god-possession acted out through the phenomena of the body. Another very powerful method of expressing this energy worked within our continuum is a cult that was taught by the late Hector Jean-Maine. Producing art and craft as part of ritual became strongly connected to this cult as we initiates drew more and more powers and pictures from the world of the spirits. Through art we are able to show to other initiates of the Order how the phantastic realms of the spirits manifest and how, in the multiplicity of spirits, we have one vision of power, the elemental and raw vision of the Gods of Vudu. This Vision is closely tied in with the secrets known as La Prise des Yeaux.

La Prise des Yeaux is part of the mysteries of the Orders and LCN which is achieved through the raw frenzy of our elemental worship. La Prise des Yeaux in our system is also called the esoteric vision, occult imagination or inner sight. As part of the power of the High Priesthood it is given as a gift from the world of the spirits to those who have dedicated their fullness of being to the Voudon Gnostic Gods. These powers, of which La Prise des Yeaux is one of the most significant, are instruments for the initiate as an esoteric technician in service to the spirits. Through them he is able to participate entirely and without limits in their worlds. Candidates to the Priesthood and the High Priesthood may receive the powers once they are carefully and ritually prepared by a sacramental Master who also and already has obtained them himself.

These mysteries with their unbroken chain of masters and adepts have come down to us from the ancient Mystery Schools. The universal gnostic and esoteric validity of Bertiaux's system is also shown by the fact that the esoteric source of the esoteric voudon transmission is likely to be the same

as that found within the ancient cults of the Kosmic Gnostics. Of these the Fraternitas Borealis, a universal Hyperborean order, and the Ecclesia Gnostica Aeterna, are the most public. What Bertiaux describes as La Prise des Yeaux in the *VGW* and the *Monastery Courses* is taught within the Kosmic groups as the Elemental Vision:

The elemental vision signals rebirth; within us, the element recalls its limitlessness amid the primordial flux, as element and flux devour themselves anew: the winds, the trees, and the stars now speak. Through immeasurably distant ages, death and birth greet the soul of man in the wavering blade of grass, and they hear the dark inner night of the blood of man in the falling rain, as it trickles through the leaves outside.

Here, Ludwig Klages, the great champion of 20th century life-philosophy, and a profound influence on Bertiaux and myself, points straight to one of the most important reasons of using the elemental and ecstatic path. It generates rebirth and revitalization and allows us to partake in the world and its soul and through this we become initiated into true esoteric and absolute Being.

The Voudon Gnostics use a concept that comes to them most probably through the Hyperborean tradition, the preference for the path of the magician to that of the mystic. The preference for the esoteric principle of the soul to that of the spirit. While the spirit principle demands disengagement with the world of the body and sensations by following the call of the 'intruder' (spirit), the principle of soul acknowledges a profound mystery through the experience of the soul which is connected to the body and senses. Whereas the spirit principle is mainly denial of the world and the chastising of elemental experience, the soul principle is advocating a Dionysian ecstasy in experience, and become empowered by what the Kosmic initiates have come to term the 'Eros Cosmogonos'. In *Rythmen und Runen* Ludwig Klages states:

Eros is not just a fine, blind, animalistic sensuality; we must be more precise: Eros is sensuality at the very moment of its realization.'

When Bertiaux explains the mysteries of the Body of Osiris-Legbha and the Black and Red Rays in the *VGW*, he points to precisely this. As the

initiand is gradually led by the Hierophant through the esoteric processes and magical stages of the Osirian mythos, he enters and passes through the halls of the mysteries.

These halls are within the initiate's own body but they are also deep states of awareness, whereby that part of him which is the Osiris-Leghba soul takes over, upon awakening, and replaces the persona of the mere mortal. When this happens, the soul is then awakened to its true essence and we are able to understand that the Osirian Resurrection has happened. These mysteries are physical processes and they are related to the laws of the awakening of the body and its understanding of itself as the soul.

Through this process the initiand turns his body into a perfect map or network of the ideal and total worlds of being.

These worlds come and are present in the body and in the processes, which enable the body to function in every way, from exoteric to the most esoteric, because the spirits of these very high or remote worlds are totally in the field of the body, present really in the incarnation of physical substance, and awaiting the magickal awakening of their true essence.

Perfection is achieved when the soul awakens, and the awakened soul is vision! What is revealed is the esoteric actuality of the primordial images.

He who is inhabited by Eros-Dionysus becomes a dæmon whilst he yet remains a man. Such a being sees through the shadow-body of things into the flaming night of the images. He himself is destiny; he himself incarnates a Medusean dread. The streams of earth, the storms of heaven, and the starry vault above are all within him, and his power reaches beyond the orbit of Saturn.

SEXUAL MAGIC

The esoteric fuel to empower all of the Voudon Gnostic operations and transformations is distilled through the use of sexual energies and sexual magic. Those who have studied the second year of the *Monastery Courses* know just how elaborate and multilayered sexual magic can become. I am very confident that the sexual magical system taught in the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN is far more complex and elaborate than most, if not any other sexual magical system out there.

While the Voudon Gnostic continuum is concerned with the whole spectrum of sexual magical energies and work, the LCN especially focuses on the more elemental type. This is one reason why the LCN is a rather specialized course of work and not accessible for everyone. The potent elemental shadow power shaman of the LCN is interested in drawing the most powerful magical energies from the rawest archaic and aboriginal elements of man, and indeed his pre-human heritage. Untamed primordial powers are accessed and released and can be put to use by the sorcerer. We also need to work this way because certain groups of spirits are only accessible through such extreme forms of sexual magical work.

We are not concerned here with a theoretical and metaphorical idea of sexual magic or a description of inner processes only. Many are aware that the Orders and LCN include some of the most highly elaborated forms of gnostic thought and magical philosophy. Master Bertiaux once said that without having studied Hegel and the German philosophers, who he considers highly esoteric, one cannot be his student. He and other adepts of the Orders have, and had, great intellectual training and were thus able to incorporate highly abstract and theoretical systems of philosophy and thought into the occult and gnostic framework of the Orders. But unlike the philosophers, who were in most cases only thinkers, maybe esoteric thinkers, but not occultists, the adepts of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN were indeed able to bring these systems alive in a magical way, to empower and feed these theoretical systems and turn them into practical magical and esoteric worlds for their use in spiritual and magical evolution. They empowered these abstract, philosophical and highly elaborate systems

with the most primitive, potent and elemental kind of sexual energy accessible, thus uniting two powerful poles and giving birth to a new creation.

In the elemental temples of the Orders we are convinced that we must build out of and focus the energy upon the low and elemental powers. We want to stir up ancient powers and cosmic emotions and memories. We prefer the low to the high vibrations to achieve this.

In the secret research laboratories of the Orders and LCN, we are constantly working on new methods for obtaining and using sexual magical energies. We can glimpse this in a short excerpt from an unpublished paper authorized for the inner elemental cell of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and LCN by the Choronzon Club:

Seated in his throne in the north of the temple, in the place of the least light, the master will sing the conjuration of elemental being: *Numesama, Alfragor, Darteamas, Kasqecot – I am without beginning and without end, I am the wideness of space and the thinness of time, I am nothing and I am everything, for my name is darkness and my essence is the firstborn of all potencies. Come forth and worship me, I am your master and your god.* The servants will now break forth and worship the master and his body with their lips, mouths, tongues and hands. The Master rises and is possessed by the invisible and terrible powers of darkness and weirdness, as strange voices are heard and a great fear descends upon the assembly, a fear of death and loss of one's very being. The Master begins the second conjuration in a mysterious tongue...

Later in the text the Master proclaims, *I am Gog and Magog, there is no power to restrain me*, if he wishes to practice ritual sexual intercourse of any type, he will hold them and have them stand next to his throne. Lycanthropy, time travelling and esoteric psychoanalysis are all amongst the techniques employed by the initiates of these elemental sexual temples.

The adept will be confronted with forms of energy and practices which he may find extremely unsettling and against his civilized nature, so only those who feel the call to travel back to the beginnings of time, to the creature of instinct and raw power, will be able to sanely survive this trip.

During work with this elemental sexual sorcery there are often times when we work directly with the spirits, who naturally do not suffer the

same problems as we humans do, especially in regards to moral codes or confinements. More so, the guardian spirits of the Voudon Gnosis delight in sexual magic as it is a direct link to them and a way of communication and exchange. I am not referring to the theoretical, highly abstract forms of sexual magic but to direct, primitive forms of sexual sorcery that create the most powerful effects when working with the mysteries of the Voudon Gnosis. In these, our nocturnal temples of primitive powers, the sexual magic of secret cults of ancient times are being continued.

In the dark mysteries of the High Priests of Hades, of Guedhe-Nibbho and Bacalou Baca, strange rites are carried out which bring us back into contact with the elemental powers of our pre-civilized Self. I will not go into detail here and explain exactly the rites and methods of those specialized Inner Order cults, as this is reserved only for those few adepts actually entering this field of work. I can say only so much. To work in this field, it is not only necessary to have a fundamental understanding of the usual forms of sexual magic, like we find in the OTO system or in other systems of the East and West, but one must have done intense and thorough investigations into the Self and must have thrown off most of the conventional and modern shackles that keeps the primal man in bondage. A preliminary work before entering the shadow sorcery could be the work explained in the Guzotte papers of the VGW, especially the development of the Eros of Les Loa and of course the development of the Points Chaud. All this involves a very explorative mentality and the potential initiate must be ready to venture far into the dark realms of the Self and its magical universes.

These Inner Cults of elemental sexual sorcery are not the same as the Inner Cults usually spoken of when discussing the more advanced work of the Orders and LCN. These Inner Cults and Inner Order work can be accessed without ever moving into this field. Most Inner Order adepts will never enter and descend into those temples of the High Priests of Hades as they lack the natural predisposition for such work. For most members and higher adepts of the Orders and LCN it is more than sufficient to make use of the results of the fusion of the highly elaborate and advanced thought systems with the most elemental and primitive sexual magic. They will surely be able to reach the highest summits of spiritual and occult attainment. Their talents and abilities are put to use on other fronts and research laboratories

of the Inner Orders. Their contact with sexual magic will of course also be very challenging and intense, as the sexo-magical energies are the foundation of all our work. They will be able to use all the results and benefits created by the adepts of the elemental sexual temples as in turn those adepts will be able to use their results and their creations.

However, there remain those Masters in the secret laboratories and temples who will continue to explore further those dark realms and perform rites of sexual magic to create pools of strong raw elemental energy and power from which all the High Priests can draw energies to empower or initiate their students along the lines of the system.

POINTS CHAUD

Directly connected to our sexual magical work and the *VGW* is the development of the Points Chaud, or Hot Points. They are of central importance to the Voudon Gnostic path and the system of the *VGW*. The Points Chaud are basically intelligent entities as well as dynamic processes of energies. They have their roots and source of power in the bisexuality of esoteric voudon and thus are ultimately principles and communication energies of Les Vudu, the Gods of the Voudon Gnostic world. In total we have 336 Hot Points, 16 basic axioms and the 64 magical interpretations plus the 256 amplifications. After they have been opened and activated they merge with the mind and psychic field of the Voudon Gnostic initiate. As radiations of the Voudon Gnostic archetypes and spirits, they are being sustained by these specific energies unique to our system. In the *VGW* we read the following:

Q: Are the Points-Chauds of this system entities or are they processes?

A: Both. Everything in this field is both an intelligent entity (beyond human levels of intelligence) and a dynamic process or energy. When the candidate is with the system, these points-chauds merge with his mind and psychic field. They do not when the same person is separate. They are like psychological complexes of the most creative sort, which being radiations of the archetypes are sustained by the planetary energies in question. Hence, it would be possible to lose the powers if you withdrew from the gnostic continuum of the system.

All of these Hot Points need to be inducted into the individual system of magical operations (his [in]visible bodies) in order for an initiate to function perfectly as a Voudon Gnostic magician. The Points Chauds are centres that when activated can release specific Kalas/Ojas manifested through sexo-magical work. So how are the Points Chauds given or received? There are different ways in our system to do this. Let me now briefly touch upon a procedure described in the *VGW* and which is referred to as the Guzotte system.

The Points Chaud are closely associated to what we call the *Presentments* which are in their essences very powerful 'appearance elementals'. These Presentments are the way in which Les Vudu, the Gods of esoteric Voudon, interact with the body of the initiand. It is the communication of initiatic energies. These Presentments now need to be developed so as to become Hot Points. This development must take place through viewing and understanding the Presentments as Pheonismes. These are what Bertiaux describes as:

...thought forms of an extremely sexual, sensous, and exotic character. They are cultivated by the Guzotte magicians in very exciting and possibly dangerous ways. They are used like articulate but artificial elementals. They may come and go from the magician. Wherever they are the atmosphere is one of intense lust and sexual excitement.

Their change into Hot Points is done through a process Bertiaux calls the 'Esoteric Logic of the body'. This process is both individual and experiential but also, in part, guided by initiatic transmissions from a High Priest. When this integrative and esoteric process of understanding the Presentments as Pheonismes is achieved, the Pheonismes become Hot Points and then can be mapped out and inducted in the various power zones of the body. Upon receiving the Points Chaud, a link is established between the sexual energies and the cosmic lifestream. As a result, the perfect Voudon Gnostic, whose Points Chaud have been opened, also becomes a living vampire.

THE GRIMOIRE GHUEDHE

Making use of the mysteries of the Points Chauds, and a major step on the path towards the realization of the complete Voudon Gnostic universe as taught in the *VGW*, is the work with the *Grimoire Ghuedhe* (*GG*). The *GG* teaches the intimate contact between initiand and powerful Loas of death and sexuality, the Guedhes. The sorcerer activates certain Hot Points on his body which then become dwelling places for the spirits of the *GG*. Through this he enters into a constant symbiotic relation with these entities and is able to activate them quickly and easily through sexual magical techniques in order to help him in any desired magical operation. There are some basic workings which can be engaged in by anyone who has entered the LCN current. But after the initial phase and before entering the more advanced areas, one must be called to the inner cultus. Great Grimoire Ghuedhe himself, who is a Loa, must call you to be a member of his cult and we have ways to determine when he does. All other candidates will be refused because we cannot go against the will of the Loa.

Work in the *GG* centres on quite a large number of Loas, 40 are initially introduced in the *VGW*. All of them have their veves, their magical symbols through which we get to know them, and through which we contact them. Each of these loas has his special area of work and thus is called upon individually to do his assigned tasks. The magic done with each individual Loa is ritual action and is different for every Loa, so all magical operations are unique to the spirit you work with. Every Loa of the *GG* has his inner school and his inner teachings and special initiations for the cult member. Additionally, each Loa of the various sub-families also has a special map of consciousness which is not the same as his veve. This map is used to locate that Loa on the inner plane and many Loas of the same family exist nearby each other in connecting territories. In this way we are able to map out and make the best use of the potentials of the G(huedhe)Universe.

The Loas form different families, such as the spider family, the liturgical family (connected to initiations and temples), and others who have different areas of specialization such as divination, lycanthropy, and research. The *GG* is highly experimental and every student is encouraged, along certain lines, to establish his contact with these entities. As the Loas are rather

conservative and do not change much, newer Loas are constantly added to the *GG* to meet the special needs of the initiates.

This leads us to another important point. If we want to work the magic of the *GG* and *VGW* in its depths and fullness we need to be initiated:

Properly speaking the student has to be physically initiated into the depths of the sigil (the Veve), but psychic approaches to the outside of the mystery are possible, otherwise we wouldn't have a course available. However, Dr Jean-Maine, nor his late father, ever said that physical initiation was non-essential in the voodoo arts, as voodoo is physical, northerly, earthly and ceremonial. It is not a Golden Dawn, or English OTO 'astral confraternity' to which all are invited to be actual members. Physical initiation is the method of Voudon.

The main practice within the *GG* is based on sexual and elemental work connected to 16 sexo-magical centers (Hot Points) in the body to which are assigned Loas of the different families. These spaces can then again be subdivided so that we get 256 spaces. The purpose of the *GG* is to create a simple personal and practical way to working with the most essential voodoo spirits. The initiand will build a temple out of spiritual forces within his own occult anatomy and thus the spirits will become operational in his own esoteric experience as he gives them places to live. His occult body becomes the temple of the Loas of *GG*.

In our work with the *GG* we are totally unconcerned by what materialistic religions and profane ethics define as good or bad, positive or negative, and this is the policy in the whole of the Voudon Gnostic work. As initiates of the *GG* we are true Catholics, members of the Catholic Church of Guedhe and thus do not work in such limited ways of human made concepts. The Guedhe Catholics focus on true occultism and gnostic unity with Christ-Leghba-Guedhe-God. Bertiaux rightly states that:

...(e)vil and black magic cannot exist for they are outside of the God-Man who died on the Cross, who in his death upon the cross destroyed the power of demonic and negative demonic beings to provide resisting centers of evil power to the Catholic church of Ghuedhe. It is true that to each center of power we can find some spirits which are constructive and some which are destructive. However, all spirits are serviteurs of Ghuedhe

and so all are included in his plan to lead all beings to the Man-God who died on the Cross. All Loa are saints attributed to Famille Ghuedhe. That is why the catholic Church of Ghuedhe and the Black Pope are sources of very successful magical achievements. This is the pathway of the Cross.

There is one addition I need to make in regards to the *GG* and the Catholicism it implies. While in the past true Catholic occult anatomy was only concerned with men and taught that in any true Catholic church we find no women we have today created, with Bertiaux's blessings, a very powerful way to include priestesses in our *GG* work. This has been done in adherence to true Gnostic tradition and has been extremely successful. Let us also not forget that the number 256 corresponds to certain very important and occult secretions and magical venoms which are very suitably worked with by a priestess.

Teachers of spider magic (as the sexual Voudon of the *GG* is called) are those who derive their power and initiations directly from the Zothyrian time-system. The essential power behind all the spider sexual alchemy of the *GG* derives from the so called rites of Zom, and thus their teachers are called Zomates or priesthood of Zom. This is the most dangerous and archaic but also the most esoteric form of the Zothyrian metaphysics of magic. These rites of Zom are based for the most part on sexo-magical and sexo-alchemical contacts between certain magical beings, angels and planets known and unknown in our solar system. Kenneth Grant has referred to this type of work in his book *Cults of the Shadow* when talking about the Trans-Yuggothian Transmission Station.

INTO THE MEON

The daemonic transformation, the achievement of the Elemental Vision, and in fact all of the *VGW* is very tightly connected to the gnosis of the Meon, or Universe B, and its esoteric science and study, Meontology. Kenneth Grant has correctly attributed the Universe B to the Nightside of the Tree of Life. It has always been clear to the magicians of esoteric voudon that, as Kenneth Grant states in *The Nightside of Eden*:

...full magical initiation is not possible without an understanding of the so-called qliphotic paths which are, in practice, as real as the shadow of any object illuminated by the sun.

The Meon, this icy realm of nothingness, is also the Hyperborean shadow realm, that place beneath the fires of Hel(l), where at the centre of the lost soul, the lost city, lies the rigidity and silence of the eternal and frozen cold of the Hyperborean underworld. It may also be equated with the Neither-Neither concept of Austin Osman Spare.

There are many reasons why the sorcerers of our tradition travel and explore these spaces. In fact I would go so far as to claim that the fundamentals of the magic in the Inner Temples of the Voudon Gnosis and the LCN are based on contacts with the Meon. The Meon is amongst other things a source of tremendous magical creativity and esoteric powers of which the Ojas are amongst the most supreme. Ojas, although a very complex matter, are basically esoteric primordial energy. They are not to be confused with certain other energies called by this name. The Ojas unique to our system are also the ideal source of sexual radioactivity within the higher adepts of our school. As Bertiaux writes:

We may ask what are advantages of an Ojas based sexual radioactivity? In answer we can say that they are simply these: the magician has access to another power source which he would not have otherwise. His magical power is much more increased and he can produce exact measurements of his progress as a sex magician of our lineage.(..)The magician who makes use of Ojas is simply more powerful and more efficient in his psyche and his magical work is thereby superior.

The Ojas manifest their magical qualities and potency in many different ways and can empower all the rites of the Voudon Gnostic sex-magician.

While Ojas may be existent to one or another degree in a student of our system due to his magical work with our current, they need to be inducted into the student by a Master of the Order to reach their fullest degree and potential. Firstly, the Bishop or Master will detect and measure the level, quality and area of Ojas in the student's esoteric body. This is usually done with instruments derived from Esoteric Engineering, as described in the

third year *Course of the Monastery of the Seven Rays*, which is the teaching vehicle of the Voudon Gnostic Orders. Once the master has analysed the student's occult anatomy in regards to Ojas, he will begin to deduct Ojas from the Meon to induct them into the student, to charge his esoteric power-plant.

The deduction of Ojas from the Meon can happen in various different ways. The High Priest will either use his ability of La Prise des Yeux or he may deduct Ojas from the energies of Aiwaz-Physics, whose basis is to be found in the ontic sphere and which connects directly to the meonic zone. The most radiant form of Ojas are received through the Daathian deduction via the magical operations of Uranus and Vulkanus, the Marrassas of ideal fire. This is the most dangerous form of deduction of Ojas and only workable for the very few magicians who have been sworn to the Law of Daath. This work is symbiotically connected to Choronzon and Baron Lundy who is Choronzon in the Haitian esoteric voudon. Choronzon and his hierophant Lundy are the pleroma of the Meon and the sorcerer will need to travel the pathway of Chronos, the Lord of Time, who has been released from all spheres and restriction of being and existence. This path will lead beyond the sphere of Chronos to that of Lord Choronzon/Lundy. As Bertiaux in the *VGW* instructs:

So let him look for the darkness in which is illumined, for that is the sacred fire of Lundy.

The Temple of Lundy-Choronzon, with its 11 gates and 16 doors (and which is the Temple of the Meon) is directly related to the Hyperborean mysteries. This is described in a paper of the Fraternitas Borealis, called *The Black Pilgrimage*, as the:

Black Sun, the Sol Niger which shines above the Midnight Mountain and illumines the Hyperborean alchemical temple of absolute Nigredo, the Darkness that shines.

EPILOGUE
Living the Dream-Images

*The seat of the soul is located at the point of connection
between the outer world and the inner.*

Novalis, *Blütenstaub*

The *Voudon Gnostic Workbook* with its unique word-creations, terrifying symbolism, phantastic realms and worlds stirs the soul and stimulates the mind of any reader who approaches it openly. It allows us to extract much concrete knowledge from its pages and to put it to practical work immediately. But, there is much more to it. Not unlike Austin Osman Spare's *Book of Pleasure* and other writings, the book is in itself a magical machine or tool. A specific composition of language creates an esoteric symphony of destruction. What it helps to destroy or to overcome is the conscious rational, a bastion of that acosmic power which I call 'spirit'. Language that has been infused with the ardor and wildness of true life possesses the power to induce in us the Meonic state. This sorcery of language alone may activate occult dimensions of our soul allowing us to undergo more than human experiences. We enter the gates to unknown magical universes and become the true Dionysian man who lives his dream images of creative ecstasy.

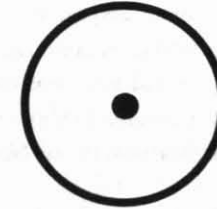
Once we are able to understand and integrate the magical system underlying the teachings of the *VGW* we will be able to realize in the flesh what the kosmic adepts of the Fraternitas Borealis have termed the 'kosmic isolation of the risen Krist'. In this gnostic-luciferian transformation the consciousness of the Kosmos and perfect Being breaks into man as the flowering of the elemental powers. We experience directly the awesome might of the Gods of esoteric voudon as they incarnate in our own Being. Let us always remember the profound words of Novalis:

*The outer world is only an inner one
that has been raised to the condition of secrecy.*

Howlings

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GETTING TO THE POINT

Jack Macbeth

QUTUB IS AN HYPNOTIC, WHIRLING WORK, revolving around a poem that weaves Sufi, Yezidi and Zoroastrian themes about the axle and fulcrum of *Qutub* the poem, the point.

It is immediately difficult to write about the distinctly personal works of ADK, particularly so with *Qutub*. Following the cryptic poem, a series of essays astutely details the intentions, cosmology and provenance of the work. What else is left to say? Since I cannot compete with the author on exposition, nor match his deft blending of the academic and the artistic, I am left to contemplate my relationship with the work as an integral component of my own magical development.

What follows is an understanding born not from the referencing of aged tomes in dusty libraries, but thoughts derived for the campaign of rituals that formed a devotional practice with this text.

I was relatively young when Mephistopheles placed the book in my hands, initiating an exchange from which I would not escape. I was largely unimpressed with the book when held in comparison to the author's previous work. It lacked the overt ritualistic verbiage. The quasi-Egyptian figures surrounded by innumerable cursive glyphs and sigils had given way to a cohesive set of abstract italic forms. When I had first glanced upon the *Azoetia*, aged around thirteen, I had been ensnared, beguiled and utterly entranced by the illustrations, particularly those that fused geometry with chaotic dots and lines. But the illustrations of *Qutub* held no such fascination.

What was this book I held? A magic book? A grimoire? Driveling poetry? Certainly this is not your run-of-the-mill tract on magic. Save for one ritual, almost tagged on to the end, there is nothing by way of explicit practice, no circles, pentagrams, candles, blasting rods or magic rabbit skin garters. And yet, even the slightest work with it unveils its nature as a volume capable of setting the aspirant on a strange, if oblique path of magical endeavor.

Reading it does little, reciting it does more. As I read the visions dance about me. I find the hidden illustrations and they seduce me utterly. Flashes of gnosis alight in my mind, and are swiftly passed over by the relentless onslaught of the subsequent verses. This is a mystical joy. In recitation I am performing not studying. The book is alive in my hands. The ideas, the themes, the enchantments revolve about me, dizzying my senses. The verses of the poem, so rich in imagery, so grand in composition, coalesce like a swirling cloud, layer upon layer. Soon I stumble, falling prostrate before the majesty evoked.

In each recitation, even to this day, I catch new glimpses of meaning in the words as they are wed to a different and unique instant of expression. This seems to be far more effective than that which is garnered by contemplative reading alone. It is almost as if the necessity of continuing to recite the poem prevents me from pausing to consider. It forces the daemon to express itself in a manner that transcends logical thought. Through this it is able to bind shivering kinaesthetic sensations to the images.

I realise then a notion previously accepted only intellectually. The real grimoire is found in the unique relationship between the reader and the

book or, in the language of the poem, between the artist and the daemon-muse. The meeting-place of the known and the mysterious is the playground of the possible, and therein do the sorcerers convene.

But there was more to follow. Encoded within the verses are myriad little charms, spells and magical axioms. These were to unfold over a period of about a year, and see their climax beneath the solar eclipse, anno 1999.

Qutub, I began to discover, is not just a pseudo-Persian poem, but a many layered exposition on the sorcerous arte. Not only does it encode the wisdom of the QTB, the devotional path of Khidir, and the Sufi and the peacock angel cult, but it also explores the very notion of the grimoire itself as a vessel for the transmission of a magical current.

It seems easy to pick up and begin working with the common grimoires. It is arguably impossible to adhere to the many ludicrous demands made to ensure the dedication of their practitioners. Every grimoire takes more than a degree of initiated interpretation to reveal the mechanisms at work beneath their acid-free pseudo-vellum.

Similarly, it is easy to pick up *Qutub*, to read through its pretentious prose and riddling rimes without the slightest comprehension. At least the medieval grimoires tell the magician what to do. Perhaps in this way *Qutub* does best what all grimoires do by their nature, it makes you work hard for the gnosis and power it alludes to. Nothing is given freely, or even directly.

INVOCATION

Rising to my feet, I begin again, the recitation. No, not recitation, prayer, orison, invocation. Without seeing the trap, I innocently stroll into practical endeavour. The process of alignment has tentatively begun.

As with all rituals written by others but performed by myself, there comes a point in the repetition of ritual ownership. At this point the ritual becomes mine. It is no longer the copyrighted words on dry pages. It has become a living process within me, perpetuated by a sequence of actions, gestures and orisons offered to my daimon, willingly, by myself.

In reading aloud, numerous things start to happen.

Trance sets in. To begin with, I cannot concentrate upon the meaning of the words and their expression. When my attention dwells on the words, my tongue falters, but when I release myself to the non-linguistic flow of the poem, I cease to hear the words I am uttering. Comprehension is pitted against articulation.

Already I am in a state of vacillation, flicking back and forth between attention and non-attention. God's fishing hook is swallowed and buried in my tongue.

As my awareness oscillates between its two levels of attentiveness, I am caught in void between. I am open and vacant, willingly surrendering even my will to the magic of the instant.

But surely reciting a poem aloud does not constitute magic or sorcery? Nearly a decade later, with a solid grasp of the practicalities and theory of performance, I might now decide that it does, but back then it did not. Sure enough the poem had ensnared me, its hook bitten into me. But I felt the compulsion to resist, and pull my workings into more formal ritual.

I began with the act of whirling, the spinning vortex, a theme congruent with the axle of *Qutub*. It allowed me to concentrate exclusively on the poem, mantra and sigil with which I worked. As the chamber about me revolved at speed, I entered a trance of stillness. Daily I did this as I delivered the poem, always turning to the left, against the sun's path. In itself such an act is immediately rewarding. As part of this emerging devotional campaign, it added tremendous punctuation to my days and nights.

RITUAL

I turned to the ritual towards the back of the book. The simplicity of the rite reflected the simplicity of the intention that I brought to it, to augment the alignment of myself to the wisdom of the book.

It is worth spending words on the two sublime prayers of affirmation that accompany it. The axiomatic affirmations of the former prayer encapsulate much of principle ethos through which the individual begins to identify with the mysterious *Qutub*. The entire piece builds to a climactic point, before unwinding itself through a curious inversion of the previous affirmations. Curious, because, even inverted, they still retain their alignment to the ideals of the book as whole. The central line reads,

Existence itself will be eclipsed by my shadow.

A line I had not paid heed to until that point when, in near darkness, I offered the prayer to the sun and moon conjoined above me, one special Summer morning in 1999.

As for the latter of the two prayers, the *Formula of the Opposer* contains further exquisite condensing of magical principles inherent to the book. It is utterly surpassed by a triple oath it demands of the sorcerer.

So potent were these two prayers and the elements they contained, that even though *Qutub* is now a rare joy for my indulgence, the words have never left me, the affirmations persist on a daily basis, riddling my own subsequent works, and the oaths, though testing, have completely stained my soul. Khidir's peacock quill has left its mark.

So there it was, an initiation of sorts. The poem ensnared me. Its sustained repetition, gradually bound me, the *Rite of the Opposer* not only opened the poem up for me, but led me into a trap of the sincerest dedication and devotion.

We must be aware that the works of grimoires externalize and reflect inner alchemical processes. By this I do not mean psychological ones, although they are also addressed, but deeper changes that assault our core beliefs, desires and values, gradually and dramatically aligning our selves with the intent of the grimoire.

One strand of the poem concerns the writing of the book itself and the power of grimoires. In the opening verses we discover all but this one shall burn, in what seems a ceremonial conflagration of transgression and rejection. That they are, in effect, perishable and transient, whilst this one is written *by no mortal hand*; it is of divine provenance. And yet, we are informed that even this book shall disappear. For today the book is whole, *then shall my hands pluck it away*, returning us to the idea of the instant of now-ness that is *Qutub*. All that matters is the existence of the book, the grimoire, within the sentience of the sorcerer NOW.

The book is written in ink drawn from *blackest light* bled from the *first gods vein*, but the spell, the poem itself, is then sealed within Khidir's Urn, the receptacle of Khidir, the sorcerer ourselves. Wise men shout at the burning of the ancient books of lore, but the silent sage recognises that their truths are held within us, and shall remain. We are the grimoire written on *the parchment of our life*.

There are many more themes that weave themselves throughout the poem. To examine them is beyond the scope of this essay, and in the spirit of its manifestation and delivery, would be to miss the Point. The book is, in effect, a ballad of love between the artist and his muse. It is not a riddle to be attacked with the cruelty of logic, but rather one to be seduced by and surrendered to. It is a vessel of oblique learning. Of subliminal indoctrination whose purpose is to test, to challenge and entice the sorcerer to realise *Qutub* within ourselves, and become the *Thunderbolt of Chance*.

The rituals that I gathered in response to my congress with *Qutub* were of the moment and personal. The stanzas spoke to me of rituals that I might perform, they spoke to me of places only I know. This is the power of interpretation, and the surrender that the author gives to a work once it has passed from their hands. Ultimately, the meaning and power of all grimoires resides solely within the hands of the practitioners who work with them, of which the author is but one.

If then we are left to explore and discover the rituals hidden within such veiled text are we subject to self-delusion? Quite possibly. It is a fine line, but crooked or straight, this line is ruthlessly strict. Discipline and devotion go hand in hand. We must allow ourselves to become obsessed, and eventually possessed by the spirit of the book. We must draw upon our existent

foundation of inner resources and wisdom pertaining to what makes rituals functional and to what ends different magical devices should be employed. It was with that in mind that my burgeoning obsession was tempered with piercing scrutiny over every act I performed. If one is to relax utterly into surrender, one must also know absolute tension in willful self awareness.

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EXISTENCE ECLIPSED

Pilgrimage is a common aspect of devotional practice. The journey through time and space not only tests our dedication and our foresight, but it also removes us from our normal world, leading us into the perilous place of sanctity and otherness. The act of journeying thrusts us into the space between 'Here and There' or 'This and That'. My journey took me across the waters to the tiny island of my birth, indeed the suitably called 'Island of the Point', directly over which the totality of the solar eclipse would pass.

Once there, my mornings consisted of general ritual practice and recitation of *Qutub* on a beautiful deserted beach, whilst my evenings were dedicated to the *Rite of the Opposer*. Any other time spent alone was infected with the mantra *la ilaha ila ana* – there is no god but I.

Verse 17 had told me what to do:

*Meet me at the altar table,
meet me beneath the black-noon sun.*

I visited a special place on the island, the Devil's Altar, a peninsula of rock jutting out into a secluded reservoir. My diary notes that, by trying to avoid some over zealous water-board staff, I had taken a difficult, more circuitous route.

Scrambling through brambles to meet my destiny, I jumped to avoid falling into a concealed fortification (such as are common in the area) whilst my legs, bramble-scratched, bled freely.

Howlings

Verse 43 came to mind:

*By year, by day, and by each moment
the abyss crossed the pathway strayed,
each sacrifice does mark the road
each slough, old flesh from new flesh flayed...*

I arrived at my ritual site with impeccable timing. My charcoal lit, the incense smouldered hanging in sheltered air. Here I was, ready to meet the *black noon sun*. At 11 minutes past 11 o'clock the eclipse began.

The unanticipated shock of seeing the smallest sliver of sun missing triggered a cascade of spontaneous ritual events. More formal plans were laid waste by the sheer power spilling out of the sky, raining down hard upon me. Blood-letting, writing, ritual and the deepest atavistic surges cycled through me. A full cycle of the Azoetic solar adorations accompanied each approximate phase of the sun's transition behind the moon. In the instant before totality, the *Prayer of the Design* was exclaimed. Only then I noted the presence of the word 'eclipse' in the centre of the page. As totality came in gigantic strides, the pool of darkness visibly raced towards me. It hit me in a wave of cool silence. I spoke the oaths of the *Formula of the Opposer* with startling sincerity. Looking up at the heavenly congress, I saw I was enveloped in a tornado of darkness. Outside the shade of totality, visible in the distance all about me, was the sunlight of the world of man. In the centre of totality, I stood motionless, suspended in the stillness of the hurricane's eye, the strangest quiet I ever heard whispered sweet nothings to me. Here was Qutub, the silent black diamond, the heart of all-otherness in the immediacy of the instant. Then with a rush, the whirlwind left and I watched the strange darkness race off towards the East.

As the lovers in the sky pulled apart, my ritual continued, with a different resonance. The marriage had occurred. It reverberated in my bones, it flowed as blood from limbs, and now as consecrated wine it showered over my head in a baptism, in my strange one man Sabbat I danced and sang and sang some more.

Getting to the Point

In the days and nights following, I pieced yet more of the ritual together. So many elements had been realised that day without the conscious attentiveness of I. A collusion of otherness, between daimon and book, had brought to that Point.

Reading through the poem, it is perhaps the closing lines that have most enchanted me. Their sentiment has been indelibly etched on my values, my beliefs, my motivations and intentions within my life.

*Take the world to be thy lover,
And take thyself and make it Other...*



THE LIFE OF THE BOOK

by the anonymous author of
Liber Niger Legionis: The Grimoire of Pharaon

WHILE THE LIVES OF THE MAGICIAN AND HIS BOOK are necessarily intertwined, they are by no means always synchronous, for the books of many living magicians are dead already, and some of the greatest grimoires outlive those who compiled them. Popularity, currency, or fame are nevertheless no indicators of life, as the necrophiliac glorification of heroic pasts and the soul-dead gaze of electrically vivified talking heads and the various other avatars of the demiurgical media spectacle surely indicate, throughout all fifteen-minutes of their solipsistic eternity.

The fortunate or obstinate artist (or magician) who escapes the sacrificial offering of his firstborn to that modern Moloch may prove to be less fortunate than its media priests, if his offspring demonstrates a competi-

tively persistent will to outlive him. The siring and raising of a book can be a dangerous task for its single parent. Even once dead, its shade can arise to linger over the mage's soul or hover vampiric awaiting the blood of fresh belief. Other books devour their creators while still living, and leave not even the dessicated husk of 'the magician', but rather the shambling undead zombie called 'the author', or even worse, 'the scribe'. Still others resurrect fully into flesh. Rather than the vampiric shade, the vampiric corpse somehow survives in perfect, static beauty, preying gently or brutally upon the black blood of its fellows, or the red life-force of its admiring readers.

Still living, however, the grimoire itself can become host to the magician's own familiar spirit, evolving and changing along with him, shedding outworn skins of belief and growing new coverings to replace them. This transmutative path of textual metamorphosis furthers the evolution of both idea and form yet also affords opportunities for radical changes of phase in the magician's work. The grimoire becoming pupa, chrysalis, and ultimately butterfly. In establishing total rapport and affinity between his own familiar spirit and the presiding genius or genii of a grimoire – both his own and others – the magician himself becomes a living book of art, his skin the pages of his sole grimoire tattooed upon its cover and written within, in the blood. Such an act of aesthetic alchemy offers an opportunity for the magician to simultaneously record and manipulate, through the act of recording, his own self-transmutation. The dialogue between such Books of Life and Books of the Dead, whether the Book of Death or merely another Book of Dead Names or Dead Nomes, forms one instance of a sorcerous tradition un-Bound by any Book.

The magical records, journals, and even dream diaries ubiquitous in contemporary magic are rarely thought of as grimoires, yet they come closer to the original function of the magician's notebook than do the elaborate art objects occasionally promoted as Authentic Rare Grimoires of Sorcery. These handsomely crafted talismans of power are often underrated as magical objects even as they are overrated as sources of secret knowledge or lore. Their rarity, scarcity, and expense imply an investment of aesthetic belief the power of which is in both the sensory appreciation and the opportunity of ownership, secrecy as value. The content remains secondary. Even when the book fully embodies not only the art but also the technique and praxis

of the magician who crafted it, this revelation becomes a most dazzling blind, since the very function of the aesthetic grimoire is to demonstrate personal mastery of the use of imagery. Nevertheless, the storm of speculation surrounding the content of such secret books, and their origin, itself feeds their mystique and the power of their Mystery. However, it is in the magician's own record that the greatest secrets are hidden behind the grammar of his own self dialogue, commentaries, and self reflection made explicit. Thus, in considering the creation and function of the grimoire, the magician ought to begin by considering that of the record and the various forms it might take, as well as the various methods of producing it.

The primary choice faced by any magician in regard to the record is whether it should be written or unwritten. A further consequence of this choice is a decision of belief, whether he chooses a written or unwritten record. Is the magician also a writer? If so, is his writing an art distinct from his sorcery? Is it a primary focus, or merely one of many ritual tools employed in his practice? The magician with no affinity for the art of writing, or perhaps little interest in the expression of magic through any art save itself, may choose to treat the record as the scientific component of his practice, carefully noting the timing and procedure employed in various conjurations, and the surrounding factors relating thereto. While this may sound minimalist, such a record quickly becomes voluminous and increasingly detailed, functioning already as a personal grimoire. If made carefully, consistently, and intelligibly, it may even prove useful to others, but only scientifically. The personal art of sorcery rarely finds itself embodied in such a record, the sterility of which is more a useful protection of the magician's sanity, than a means of transmitting or communicating an initiatory current. For those magicians who eschew the art of writing, then, the sterility of the scientific record may prove to be a primary reason for leaving it unwritten, in whole or in part. The deliberate abandonment of the scientific aspects (some might say pretensions) of magic leaves the sorcerer open to a greater attunement with its own aesthetic patterns and currents. It also leaves more opportunity for extreme retroactive magic, manipulation or modification of the personal history, and controlled mining expeditions delving after the treasures often found in the caves nestled under the shores of insanity.

For those magicians who do possess some inclination or expertise in the written art, (or elect the belief that the act of writing is either a component or vehicle of sorcerous practice), the situation is even more complex. If the art of writing is considered to be an art distinct from the magician's sorcery, the record can be treated as a literary device acting as a reference point, and a bulwark of aesthetic sanity. The magician's ego, having something to identify with other than the seething chaos of sorcerous inspiration, will find writing – even concerning magic – to be an opportunity to bind, organize, or even exorcise overly chaotic aspects of his magical consciousness. The magician will also then find that leaving the magical record unwritten may either unleash great power (or chaos) of belief, or provide an opportunity for other writings to function as channels of magical inspiration. The magical novelist, for example, might find that if he does not create a novel after (or as) his magical record, his magical life comes to resemble his other novels. The identity of 'the writer' can also act as a meta-consciousness even amongst the various magical selves and personae the magician might create or project, aligning the internal dialogue of the mind that pervades these various constructs. With a sufficiently multiple magical self-consciousness, the magician may even find himself with a choice of records, a variety of consciousnesses leading either to powers of extreme compartmentalism, or a disorganized consciousness bordering on madness. The analogy is comparable in the case of the magician choosing to use literary arts themselves as a magical focus, although the direction of the intent is somewhat different. The 'writer' as a magical self has the opportunity to utilize the very act of writing as a sorcerous means to 'spell out' intentions either for the magician's own selves or perhaps even the surrounding reality. This makes the record itself a magical tool. Modifications to the record themselves become retroactive conjurations or self-enchancements. The style and selection of recorded content becomes akin to the boundaries of the magical circle and the aesthetic choices of paradigm and imagery. When such a magician leaves the record unwritten, he invokes the opportunity to manipulate the chaos of events directly through specific acts of art, in exchange for the magical continuity that the record otherwise provides.

Akin to this would be the choice to leave the record unwritten when the magician's sole art and focus is the written word, but the case is more

extreme, invoking the total immediacy of immanent chaos by sacrificing not just continuity, but the state of aesthetic self reflection encouraged by the use of a sole art of self enchantment. Such a magician chooses, at least temporarily, to make his self-conjurations so fully aligned to his immanent will to power that the mitigating influence of the aesthetic preference is ignored (or, as such a practitioner might prefer, transcended). This is not, of course, to say that more outwardly directed conjurations might not appear to be wholly artistic. When written, however, the record of the magician whose sorcery is the word itself becomes a talisman of great, if constraining, influence, embodying his entire reality in the form of a bound mirror, comprising a totality of literary, and perhaps literal, gnosis, and informing all his artistic works. Yet even so, the grimoire of the magician's total self and total will can never be fully revealed at once, but only gradually unfurl itself. Such is the nature of the Sole Book of Life and the One Grimoire of the Art.

For many, the personal journal will be akin to or even identical with the magical record, but it can also be used as its opposite mirror, recording (or leaving unrecorded) similar patterns in the magician's apparently mundane life, becoming a 'grimoire of the normal', and acting not so much as a sanity device, as an opportunity for the magical will to inject controlled chaos into the magician's own personal affairs, a tool of self enchantment particularly suited for illumination. The common notion of writing to the 'dear diary' provides an obvious opportunity for magical belief and application: 'Dear daimon, I am writing to you of my troubles in the hope of finding a quick solution.' Likewise, the dream diary might offer manifold possibilities of both analysis and self suggestion, serving a role for the subconscious, and perhaps the 'shade' or 'shades', similar to that which the record serves for the magical self and the personal journal might serve for the ego. The aesthetic decision of whether the dream diary is primarily scientific, journalistic, or fully artistic, remains contingent upon the magician's own arrangement of aesthetic belief, and beliefs about aesthetics.

All these works might become a basis for a more formally conceived grimoire. Inspiration for this could be a situational response to an instinctive compulsion, or it might be a calculated act of, or bid for, power, on the magician's part. Contrarily, the magician might set out to compile a

record, journal, or diary with the full prior intention of using it as the basis for an aesthetic (or purely practical) grimoire of the art. Any such manifestation embodies an aspect of the magician's secret Book of Life. When fully manifest as an independent work, it may become its own Book of Life, assuming it continues to grow, evolve, and change. Such a living book is under perpetual revision, continual expansion, and frequent self correction – in contrast to those various Books of the Dead the weight of whose hoary stasis gives them a binding power upon belief. Both a Book of Life and its more necrotic counterparts share a capacity to independently interact with the belief of those who read or use them, but as the means differ greatly, so do the methods of crafting and applying such texts. The creation and nurturing of a living book requires the love, dedication, and will to kill and destroy characteristic of all acts of siring, protecting, and defending new life. The more analogous the process to the living reality, the more vibrant and alive the book. The personality such a text develops will certainly change and evolve through time. Those who have the fortune to acquire it may find in it a companion, a living teacher, or even a master, depending on the character and spirit of the book. The slavish imitation of the perceived will of the author is likely to bring the same rewards and detriments as wilful submission to one of the representatives, or children, of a great (or supposedly great) authority.

The situation with a Book of the Dead is rather different. Such a 'dead' work never changes its personality, character, or disposition, and subsists through its parasitism of living belief, attaching itself to whole structures of perspective, or insinuating its influence into the life of the sorcerer himself. While this may sound insidious, it may also be a useful symbiosis, and is surely no more perverse than the peculiar relationships many magicians develop with spirits. While a living book may become, through the death of its belief, a Book of the Dead, such might also be deliberately created. Every 'reconstructed' grimoire might be seen in this way, as well as pseudonymous or spurious grimoires presenting a false antiquity. Likewise, books deliberately evoking beliefs or paradigms already dead are generally of this type. Often their power is formulaic and literal, and while they may inspire the living work of the sorcerer, they rarely feed it directly. The reanimation of a Book of the Dead into a Book of Life, while not impossible, is a dif-

ficult task, and generally still results in peculiar unlife, or vampiric undeath, of belief. Nevertheless, a true literary 'resurrection' might well occur if the resuscitated book is seen to change, develop, and undergo revision along with its more recent peers. Certainly, the act of granting full resurrection to a dead grimoire would require providing it the appropriate translation and setting to fully 'live' in present reality, along with all of the necessary improvements to ensure it is still capable of significantly interacting with magicians and with its contemporaries.

The personification of the grimoire here is not to suggest merely the familiar concept of the spirit or genius of the book with intent and abstract reality independent of the content of the grimoire. Rather, that the book itself, its words (and meanings, overt, covert, and otherwise), and its concepts all literally and physically comprise its manifest personification in flesh. Of course, this reality in no way diminishes the expression of the information encoded into the pattern of the book's 'spirit'. In the case of the best grimoires, it enhances its power by granting it an aesthetic body capable of conveying magical power along all available sensory and extra-sensory routes.

However, it would not be apt to suggest that all living grimoires, taken together, comprise a sort of additive manifestation of one singular Book of Life, constantly revealing further of its mysteries and wonders, although such is often the view of the more expansive and tolerant religious conceptions of revealed truth. Rather, each grimoire individually and alone embodies the Sole Book of Life, the only Arte of the Sorcerer. The magical equivalent of the religious or prophetic Book of Life is, of course, known to religious traditions conceiving of the idea as the exact inverse of their eternal verities, a Book of Death bound by the Devil. In this way, the totality of necromantic and necronomic wisdom entombed in the various Books of the Dead is known to be apprehended by the Devil himself, the supreme and sovereign master of the Arte Magical. Yet the Pact by which the Sorcerer writes his name in the Devil's Book is by no means a 'sale' of the 'soul', which is rather what the god of transcendence asks in exchange for salvation from the world of change. Instead, the Sorcerer's name is promised to the Devil, whose names are a Legion, and which are all endowed with the power of Eternal Undeath.

CONSPIRATORS

Hafiz Batin

Taking an oath of allegiance to the Ismaili order at birth, Hafiz has been immersed in an esoteric outlook for thirty-three years. His first degree (Chemistry with French) triggered an interest in alchemy and a profound realisation of the current divorce existing between science and esotericism. Previously employed strategies to reassert balance have been executed through sonic operations (under the guise of Nous), although the hope is that the recent completion of an MA in Western esotericism will facilitate additional and sustained engagement with the disenchanted world through the medium of the written word.

Paul Hughes-Barlow

Paul is working on a number of projects exploring the interaction of humans and spirits, solving problems caused as a result of these interactions, and finding ways to improve the workings of Spirit using a combination of rediscovered ancient techniques and modern methods. With a small group of adepts he is developing Sufi techniques to harmonise the workings of Man with Spirit. Paul can be contacted at www.supertarot.co.uk

Thea Faye

Thea is an initiate of the Mysteries and has studied many different branches of magick over the years. She has extensive experience working with the Goetia, her first Goetic encounter being with Purson, followed by Vine, who have both proven extremely helpful over the years. She has developed a working relationship with a number of spirits and is perpetually working on honing her technique and experimenting with evokation as a mechanism towards deeper understanding beyond mere results magick.

Aleq Grai

Aleq is a reclusive grumpy occultist with two decades behind him mired in traditional, as well as contemporary, witchcraft not just spanning the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, but also the local paths accordingly. He also has interests in matters ceremonial across the Western traditions. Aleq has succeeded in upsetting a great many self-professed experts with his straight talking approach. Having found the Pagan scene to be wholly corrupt and without merit, he has withdrawn from society as a whole to pursue what is essentially a personal path – as do we all.

Peter Grey

Peter is a devotee of Babalon. He is the author of *The Red Goddess* and a founding member of Scarlet Imprint. An exponent of the antinomian and libertarian strand of the Western Magical Tradition, he works with the Goetic spirits. He is very much in Love.

David Rankine

David is an author and esoteric researcher who lives and works in Wales. His work focuses primarily on the Qabalah and other Western Esoteric Traditions and practices. He has been working with Stephen Skinner on producing the *Source Works of Ceremonial Magic* series, making available for the first time a corpus of rare and previously inaccessible Renaissance grimoire material to the magical community. David often co-writes with his partner Sorita d'Este who shares his passion for grimoires and ceremonial magick, details of these can be found on www.avaloniabooks.co.uk

Krzysztof Azarewicz

Krzysztof is a Polish born traveller, poet, psychonaut and explorer of magical realms of existence. He founded Lashtal Press, which specialises in publishing books by Aleister Crowley, A.O. Spare and Frater Achad in Polish. He is an ordained priest of the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, a member of the Ordo Templi Orientis and its Translator's Guild. He has been living in London since 1999.

Stafford Stone

Stafford began his occult career in the short-lived Cult of the Hidden God, before becoming a member of the Typhonian Order for almost twenty years. He participated in the Ku-Sebittu, a joint lodge with Cultus Sabbati, and is also a member of the Esoteric Order of Dagon. He is the creator of the Nightside Tarot.

Donald Tyson

Donald is a Canadian from Halifax, Nova Scotia and a professional writer. He devotes his life to the attainment of a complete gnosis of the art of magic in theory and practice. His purpose is to formulate an accessible system of personal training drawing from East and West, past and present, that will help the individual discover the reason for one's existence and a way to fulfil it.

David Beth

David is the Sovereign Grand Master of the Voudon Gnostic Orders and La Couleuvre Noire, being instrumental in shaping the current development of the Voudon Gnostic System. An Apostolic Gnostic Bishop he is the current Patriarch of the Ecclesia Gnostica Æterna and the Head of the Kosmic Gnostic Fraternitas Borealis. He is a university-educated historian, was born and raised in Africa and has also lived in the USA and Europe. Nowadays he works mainly as a writer and lecturer, and when not travelling the world for esoteric purposes he is based in London, UK.

Jack Macbeth

Mr Macbeth is a sorcerer, illustrator, film-maker, producer, performer and installation artist. He is the author of the scarce modern grimoire *The Totemic Invocation of the Shadow Selves*. All things are distilled within the crucible of his art.

Anon

The Author of *Liber Niger Legionis: the Grimoire of Pharaosan* wishes to remain anonymous.

