

Glimpses of the *Left Hand Path*

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS ON THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE
OF THE PATH TO SELF-DEIFICATION



This book is a collection of fifteen texts on chosen aspects of the Left Hand Path, including essays, rituals and pathworkings.

The articles cover such themes as:

Hecate - Goddess of Darkness, Magic and the Moon

Seven Babylonian Demons of the Underworld

Introduction to Goetic Magic

Rudolf Steiner's Demonosophy

Demonic, Natural and Qabalistic Magic in the European Renaissance

Sorath - Steiner's View of the Antichrist

Yatuk Dinoih - Black Magic in Ancient Persia

articles about Pan, Melek Taus, Lilith

...and many more...

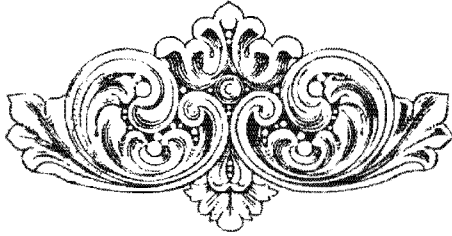


GLIMPSES OF THE LEFT HAND PATH

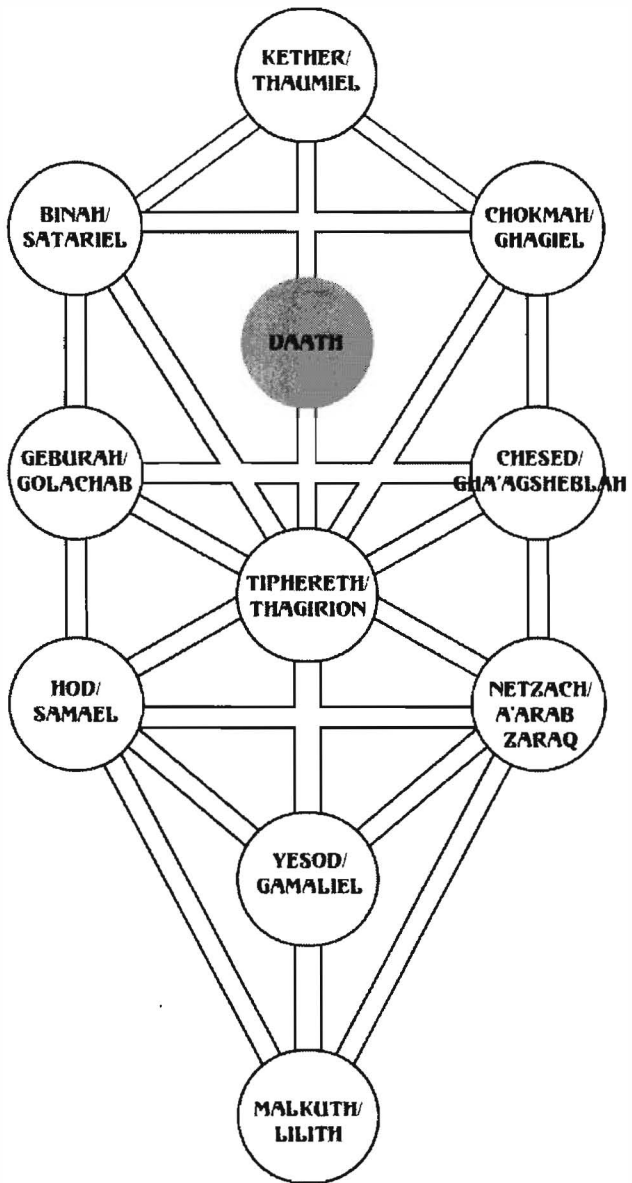
A Collection of Essays
on the Philosophy and Practice
of the Path to Self-Deification



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Essays gathered in this book were written by members of Lodge Magan active in the years 2002-2010. The first edition, released in January 2004, was a collection of chosen texts which until then were available only in Polish and published on Magan's old website. They explained the basics of the Left Hand Path philosophy and covered a few chosen themes closely related to this path of spiritual progress. In the current edition these texts were revised and updated, and some of them were removed and replaced by a more recent material. The majority of them have a rather introductory character, as such is the purpose of this book, but a few also refer to less known esoteric subjects. The second edition of this book is first in a series of volumes which will cover chosen themes related to the Left Hand Path and the Draconian Tradition and will be released in the forthcoming years.

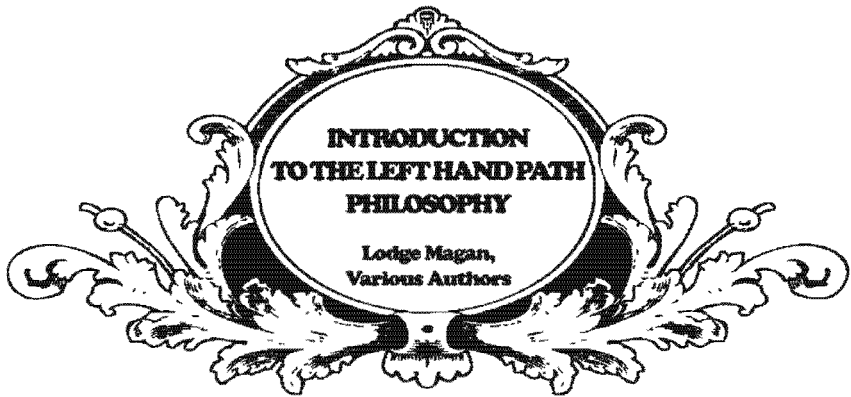
Lodge Magan was founded in 2002 by Asenath Mason, and throughout this time it existed first as a ritual group, then as an official representative of magical order Dragon Rouge, and now exists as a local ritual circle, working with advanced projects and holding regular meetings. The work of the Lodge is aimed at initiatory progress of the group as well as individual members. In 2010 Lodge Magan has decided to leave Dragon Rouge and continue the magical work as an independent circle. Draconian path is a beautiful quest towards individual Godhood and it should never be constrained by false mentors whose interest lies more in materialistic concerns than in spiritual pursuits. All that is needed to work with the Draconian tradition is the will, inspiration, and self-discipline. Draconian adepts are wanderers aligned with the eternal cosmic current, ascending to the heights and descending to the depths of the Universe in the mystical

process of Becoming – and this process is always personal. To flow with the Dragon, means to burn obstacles which bind your progress towards individual self-deification.

With these words, we dedicate this book to all our readers and to those who have supported our projects throughout the last few years. We hope that you will find these texts interesting and inspiring in your personal work.

Ho Drakon Ho Megas

Lodge Magan, Spring 2010



The Left Hand Path is often defined as "the way downwards," the introspective spiritual quest for power and for knowledge about the inner mind. It is also a journey into Darkness, the search of presence and communication with dark forces which, according to the Left Hand Path traditions, are closely connected with ancient cults of Nature also referred to as "lunar currents." But what is "self-deification," the main goal of the Left Hand Path, and what does "godhood" actually mean?

Gods

First of all, we should attempt to explain the concept of "a god." In all cultures we encounter numerous deities, gods and goddesses, embodying particular forces ruling the universe. From the dawn of time, man was aware of the existence of diverse forces which were given special forms and attributes for the sake of a better understanding of their nature. Deities, spirits, angels, or demons - these are the most known examples of those forms. They personified principles of Light and Darkness, the life-giving solar power and the mystical nature of the moon. Among them we will find personifications of fire, water, earth, air, the living Nature, stars and planets, and many other aspects of the world. However, this depiction of the forces in the universe in a concrete form did not represent a mere awareness of exterior forces that governed the universe but rather a structure of human perception and understanding of the surrounding phenomena. It should be remembered that any image of a deity is an

expression of man's projection of our own desires and aspirations. Gods are ideal beings, symbolic of what man wants to be but is not. Peter J. Carroll in his *Liber Null* proposes a theory that humanity has evolved through four main stages/aeons. In the first, the so-called Shamanism and Magic aeon, mankind was fully aware of its own psychic forces that were necessary to survive in a hostile world full of menaces. The vital force of all living beings was considered to be the only creative force. It was referred to as "the Horned God," and had no moral aspects - it was neither "good" nor "evil" - but rather a mixture of elements: good and evil, light and dark, beauty and danger. Its main qualities were creative dynamism and vitality. This view later influenced certain currents of magic and sorcery, and was preserved in aboriginal cultures. Deities appeared in the second era - the Pagan aeon - when mankind developed more complex modes of thinking. Yet, it had another significant result: man moved further away from primordial nature and lost awareness of his own psychic powers. It was also the time when man "created" gods, demons, and other entities, in order to fill the void caused by the loss of inborn knowledge and the lack of belief in the power of the human mind. Many of those deities were anthropomorphic and thus, easy and natural to identify with. They possessed human qualities but their essence was the enormous power: immortality. They existed beyond human laws and limitations. The third, Monotheistic aeon, brought the development of religions such as Christianity, Judaism, or Islam. Man began to worship a single, idealized form of themselves, which embodied the complete collection of qualities that humans desired for themselves. The fourth era was the Atheistic aeon. This stage was characterized by a belief that man can understand and manipulate the universe simply by observation of material things. Existence of spiritual entities was denied, and the emotional experience was the only important value. The fifth, present aeon, is a pursuit of the return to some aspects of the first aeon's consciousness, but on a higher level. Thus, gods should not be regarded as entities in their own right only. On the one hand, they are the beings that have existed from the beginning of the history, but on the other, they have also been "created" by mankind during our search for contact with our own nature. In this sense, gods seem nothing more than personified aspects of human consciousness. As Carroll observed, "It is man who creates gods, not vice versa."¹

¹ Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Null & Psychonaut*

Who is then "the only God," worshipped by monotheistic religions? Like in the case of pagan gods, who were personifications of particular aspects of the universe and human consciousness, the monotheistic God is the collection of these principles: the force considered to be perfect, indivisible, omnipotent, not affected by any limitations and not subjected to any classifications. In fact, it is but another projection of human dreams about an ideal and homogenic consciousness. Moreover, it should be remembered that gods of monotheistic religions contain elements of those cultures from which they emerged. Their original function was to legitimize the authority of priests who represented them (priests held many significant social and political positions), and rulers who supported those religions (they accepted the foundation of a unified system of beliefs because it provided strict control over the community). It is also worth to mention that gods of monotheistic religions are often defined as forces or masculine nature, which is connected with the patriarchal power and established social structures. They also personify the Light and the beginning of the process of Creation after the defeat of Primordial Chaos. The rise of monotheistic religions, focused around the only God, was the phenomenon brought by the so-called "solar cults," which marked the departure from the earlier lunar cults centered on the Goddess and connected with Darkness and feminine energy. Those cults were now repressed, their worshippers were called "the followers of Evil," and the primary creative force that played the pivotal role in the cults of the Goddess became the symbol of the Devil, the Adversary of "the only God" who personified the Light and Order. This is how monotheistic religions abandoned and suppressed the creative potential represented by deities of Nature connected with the lunar currents. The aspects of life and vitality, once venerated by the old religions, were now suppressed. They were given the form of the Devil, rejected, and pushed outside the new, monotheistic structures. Throughout ages, the Adversary has received many different forms and names. But what, precisely, is the Devil, the Opponent of God? Carroll explains it in the following way:

"This is the spirit of the life energy of our planet. All living beings have some extra quality in them which separates them from inorganic matter. The ancient shamans mainly sought to represent this force by the Horned God. In more modern times this force has reasserted itself in our awareness under the symbol of Baphomet."²

² Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Null & Psychonaut*

Baphomet, in his view, is the psychic field "generated by the totality of living beings on this planet." In cults and religions worldwide he was variously represented as "Pan, Pangenitor, Pamphage, All-Begetter, All-Destroyer, as Shiva-Kali - creative phallus and abominable mother and destroyer - as Abraxas - polymorphic god who is both good and evil - as the animal headed Devil of sex and death, as the evil Archon set over this world, as Ishtar or Astaroth - goddess of love and war - as the Anima Mundi or World soul, or simply as 'Goddess'." Among other representations of Baphomet he also mentions Baron Samedi, Thanateros, or Cernunnos, the horned god of the Celtic lore.

This concept contains contradictory aspects of the universe: life and death, light and darkness, the beautiful and the terrifying. Monotheistic religions removed the cult of life and vitality from their doctrine. However, it managed to survive in other traditions, those which in the modern occultism are referred to as "the Left Hand Path." One of these traditions is the Draconian philosophy, in which the creative cosmic force is called "the Dragon." The Dragon represents the union of all opposites and personifies all forces that constitute the foundations of the world, as well as those existing outside the structured order. In other words, it is the symbol of those aspects that have been lost throughout the history of world religions and which monotheism rejected as "evil" or "devilish." In many myths and legends, the Dragon is the vital force of creation. Yet, it is also referred to as Chaos which must be defeated by younger gods (e.g. Marduk's battle with Tiamat in the Babylonian story), or saints (e.g. Saint George slaying the dragon), representing the new, solar-patriarchal order, stabilization, and peace. The "victory over Chaos" was in fact the abandonment of creative dynamism, the element existing both in Nature and in the human mind. The power of the Dragon is contained within the human body as the Kundalini energy which has the potential to release the power that man lost contact with a long time ago, the evolutionary force which was driven out of human consciousness by monotheistic doctrines. The Left Hand Path strives towards the revival of the intimate relationship with Nature, with those primordial and atavistic forces that the Right Hand Path considers to be the Devil, the Adversary. The vision proposed by the Right Hand Path is incomplete because it shows only one side of the universe. In a Yezidi legend, Melek Ta'us (the personification of the "Adversary") speaks to God:

"Your work is not perfect, o Great Creator, because everything in it is uniform and does not possess the necessary equilibrium; there cannot be Light without Darkness, days without nights, perfumes without stench, angels without demons."³

The Devil embodies the eternal principle of Darkness, he is the Adversary of Light, and thus, he makes the harmony in the universe possible. The Left Hand Path does not employ only one side of the forces that constitute the world but aims at bringing them at balance. The Left Hand Path magic does not worship (in the monotheistic sense) any gods or spirits. Its goal is to reach for the source of energy represented by those deities, to master the primordial force of creation, and to use it to release the personal power: the spark of Divinity within, which mankind ceased to recognize a long time ago. The Left Hand Path explores the dark side of the universe, the Darkness that preceded the Light, existing before our world was created. The Left Hand Path descends into the heart of Darkness to find the ancient knowledge, power, and enlightenment.

The Left Hand Path Traditions

The desire for contact with the primeval creative force of the universe has been preserved for centuries in various religious and magical traditions. In Western occultism the Left Hand Path traditions are often referred to as "Satanism," but in fact, their range is much wider. The Left Hand Path is called *via sinistra* and it is the current which has its roots in ancient cults of gods and goddesses of wild Nature, such as Dionysus. Above all, it refers to cults of female deities, such as e.g. Hecate, the goddess of the night, the moon, and witchcraft. The term "Left Hand Path" itself exists not only in Western esotericism but also in Hindu Tantrism, where *vama-chara* or *vama marg* ("left hand path") is a more direct way to Divinity, more powerful than *dakshina-chara* ("right hand path"), but also more dangerous. Julius Evola writes in his book *The Yoga of Power* that there is a significant difference between these two paths, which are both, however, under Shiva's aegis. In "the right hand path," the adept "always experiences 'someone above him,' even at the highest level of realization." In the "left hand path," he becomes "the ultimate Sovereign (chakravartin = worldruler)."

³ *Fiat Nox*, issue 1, November 2002

The Left Hand Path philosophy is also encountered in other traditions. In the Qabalah it is the way of the qliphoth – the principles existing on the Tree of Night, the nightside of the Tree of Life. In Scandinavian traditions, Seid – magical art of trance which leads to liberation of the soul – might be an example. Also in Vodou certain elements of the Left Hand Path survived, the example of which are the Petro rites or the so-called “red sects” (*cabrit thomazos*), based on concepts similar to qliphothic systems. It is similar with the Hindu cults of *aghoras*. All those traditions include an initiation process that leads to immortality and self-deification through the renewal of primordial energy associated with the notion of Darkness, the feminine lunar current, and the re-creation of consciousness in harmony with the universe. At the same time, it is the spiritual progress of an individual, the powerful consciousness existing beyond and above the collective consciousness of all living beings.

Initiatory Process of the Left and the Right Hand Path

The path of initiation practiced by the Right Hand Path systems might be called *via sacra*, as the supreme goal is here the annihilation of those aspects of man (the microcosm) and the universe (the macrocosm) that are regarded as “dark,” “evil,” undesired and distracting humans from God. The Left Hand Path, or *via sinistra*, does not avoid these aspects, on the contrary – it aims at confronting them and using their power for re-creation of the personal universe. The Right Hand Path is the way “upwards,” towards the Light and away from Darkness. In other words, it is focused only on one side: the denial of the fact that Light cannot exist without Darkness. The primeval chaos, from which the whole universe emerged, was an amalgam of opposites – Light and Darkness, fire and water, air and earth, etc. These elements were named and differentiated through the “act of Creation,” and formed the surrounding world as we know it. This occurred through polarization of opposites and was based on cosmic duality. The adept has to re-unite all these elements to re-create the complete unity – the godhood. It is not entirely possible on the Right Hand Path because it seeks to annihilate the unwanted aspects of macro/microcosm without recognizing that they are an inseparable part of the whole scenario. On the Left Hand Path, however, initiatory process is based on alchemical formula *solve et coagula* (“dissolve and preserve”), and it is based on a gradual confrontation also with those aspects which the

Right Hand Path views as "negative." In Qabalistic terms, the Right Hand Path adept chooses the way upwards and "climbs" to the highest level of the Tree of Life (Kether). The Left Hand Path adept chooses also the way of the qliphothic Tree of Night. In this sense, the Right Hand Path adept works only with one side of the symbolic Tree, while the Left Hand Path practitioner works with both of them. When the Left Hand Path adept reaches the Kether sphere, he simultaneously reaches Thaumiel – the twin qlipha which represents the highest level of alchemical transmutation (godhood). The Left Hand Path is therefore the way of balance between the opposite forces of existence – Light and Darkness, stasis and dynamism, creative and destructive energies – because they are complimentary and cannot exist without each other. Only the harmony and balance between these opposites can be the source of wisdom and power. Light represents birth, creation, order. Darkness denotes death, decay, deconstruction, return to the heart of chaos. Together, these forces are the source of every form of life, for each kind of energy requires two opposing factors. Negation of one of them is the rejection of life itself:

"The magician aims to become a center of creation and destruction himself, a living manifestation of Chaos force within the realm of duality, a complete microcosm, a god."⁴

For this reason, one of the main symbols of the Left Hand Path is the Dragon symbolizing the unity of all opposites, or a Serpent, e.g. Ouroboros who bites his own tail. Ouroboros contains both feminine and masculine elements, impregnating and giving birth to himself, devouring and initiating life, active and passive. He is the supreme emblem of the primordial condition of the universe: the mixture of bright and dark aspects. He is the destruction but also the creative potential. It is the state which existed in the very beginning, before the elements were differentiated and given form. Ouroboros represents the famous Hermetic principle "as above, so below." This rule refers to the relationship between man and the surrounding world. Accordingly to the world, which contains many different principles, man is not a harmonious unity but rather a mixture of elements. Some of them tend to gather together, creating the feeling of the ego.⁵ Many other magical and religious traditions perceive

⁴ Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Null & Psychonaut*

⁵ Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Kaos*

man in a similar way. Synthesis of clusters constituting a human being is the main goal of alchemical *Magnum Opus*.

Carl Gustav Jung tried to explain this process with particular psychological terms. He compared the alchemical transmutation to the process called "individuation." According to him, individuation was a gradual creation of the Self, indivisible unity, unique and distinct from other individuals and from the collective consciousness. This process, like the alchemical *Magnum Opus*, is based on reconstruction of consciousness in order to rebuild the primeval unity. To achieve this goal, confrontation with all aspects of the psyche is necessary – also with those rejected by the Western "high magic" as "evil," with those elements which Jung called the Shadow. Jung's Shadow is a dark, repressed aspect of human nature, our dark, "evil" side. However, the encounter with the dark side was the first and the most important stage of alchemical transmutation, essential for the achievement of the Philosopher's Stone, a complete and unified consciousness. In alchemy, this stage was called the *nigredo*, or the blackening, and was connected with the *solve* formula which included the destruction and dissolution of consciousness in order to make a new, higher stage of synthesis, possible. To complete the alchemical work, the adept had to confront all aspects of the psyche – "good" and "evil," human and bestial – the complete integration of the opposites was absolutely essential. The Right Hand Path rejects this dark side, and therefore the completion of *Magnum Opus* is impossible. Jung claimed that the emphasis of the sole "good" resulted in the sense of alienation and inner confusion for the man of the West. He was convinced that the Western culture, and Christianity in particular, ignored the most important aspects of spiritual salvation – the feminine element and the so-called "evil," by which he meant the destructive aspect. Individuation is not possible without them. We should also explain here the role of the ego in Jung's view of individuation. This process is often mistaken for the conscious identification of the ego with the Self. It is not true, however, and in this case, individuation would merely refer to selfishness. In fact, it is the opposite. Jung observes:

"I note that the individuation process is confused with the coming of the Ego into consciousness and that the Ego is in consequence identified with the self, which naturally produces a hopeless conceptual muddle. Individuation is then nothing but egocentredness and autoeroticism. But the self comprises infinitely more than a

mere Ego... It is as much one's self, and all other selves, as the Ego. Individuation does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to oneself."⁶

In his view, the goal of individuation is to make a human being whole, to integrate all conscious and unconscious contents of the psyche. He also compares this process to stages of alchemical transmutation, the crowning of which was the *Lapis Philosophorum*. It should be remembered that in the traditional Western alchemy the Philosopher's Stone is associated with the way "upwards," the union with the Divine, yet, it also includes the integration of dark elements into the light of consciousness. Even though in the majority of alchemical treatises the Stone is red, it is also sometimes said that the *Lapis Philosophorum* of the Right Hand Path is the White Diamond, while the Stone of the Left Hand Path is Black. The White Diamond represents here the Kether level and the union with God, the collective consciousness. The Black Diamond is the equivalent of the Thaumiel level, when the adept transcends Kether and takes the final step into the worlds beyond the structure of creation. This makes the initiation complete and the adept becomes a god.

Antinomianism

An important element of the Left Hand Path is antinomianism, the attitude of opposing commonly accepted norms of behaviour and public values. This attitude was also one of the crucial components of Jung's individuation. As he observed in one of his works, "The more a man's life is shaped by the collective norm, the greater is his individual immorality."⁷ Antinomianism is not only the rejection of moral, social, and religious values which rule the mundane world. On the Left Hand Path, it is a spiritual concept associated with the way "towards the within," the pursuit of self-salvation, distinct from straight and seemingly easy paths offered to masses by monotheistic religions. To the Left Hand Path practitioner, the gods are archetypal entities connected with particular aspects of the universe and reflected in the components of human consciousness. The adept has to break out of the common paradigm that imposes recognition of these forces as superior. It is essential to step out of the narrow frames established by mass religions which reserve no place for spiritual progress

⁶ C.G. Jung: *Collected Works*

⁷ C.G. Jung: *Collected Works*

of an individual. Passive acceptance of this imposed order leads to stagnation or worse - results in regression. The Right Hand Path aims at integration with this order, which is characterized by extraversion (exposing oneself to the outside world). In religious and mystical understanding, this means the union with the transcendent god who is above the adept. In this case, the practitioner has to abandon his individual aspirations and subordinate to a higher force. The Left Hand Path is characterized by introversion and puts the emphasis on an individual experience, the personal initiatory quest into the depths of one's inner mind.

Self-deification

Yet, one of the most dubious questions is still to be answered: What does it mean that a human being becomes a god? "Godhood" can be understood in many different ways. It should be remembered that the surrounding reality is a question of how each of us perceives the forces existing in the universe. The world is out of control to those who remain unaware of their psychic potential. They can merely observe and travel through the phenomena of the universe as passive passengers. But the alchemical process of initiation offered by the Left Hand Path gradually awakens and releases this potential. Confrontation with individual aspects of consciousness gives a deep insight into one's personality and brings knowledge about one's inner powers and how they can be used to influence and change the surrounding world. Knowledge and understanding of these powers allows us to shape our lives according to our Will. To achieve this, it is essential to go through a difficult and endlessly long process of alchemical transmutation which begins in the mind and manifests in all aspects of life:

"The basis of the Left Hand Path is that humans are but machines, but may in potential become gods. The first aspect that a human has to change is their inner world. They have been taught - or rather acquired - a series of randomly assorted thoughts, notions, and behaviors, most of which either actively hinder them, or at best lull them into a sleeplike state. These stultifying forces mainly group themselves into forces that oppose the body, the mind, the emotions, and the will. Each of these must be overcome."⁸

⁸ Don Webb, Stephen E. Flowers: *Uncle Setnakt's Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path*

The Left Hand Path adept has to recognize, embrace, and explore his inner Darkness in order to illuminate it with the light of knowledge and understanding. The experience offered by the Right Hand Path is one-sided. According to monotheistic doctrines, to "see the God" means to experience cognition as a part of a human consciousness paradigm. To experience the whole of it, means also "to see the Devil."⁹ The final union with God - the ultimate goal of the Right Hand Path - represents the melting of an individual in the collective consciousness, in the ocean of forces that constitute the universe. The Left Hand Path adept undergoes a conscious process of integrating his Self, and thus, he is able to preserve the unity and resist the force of the collective consciousness. As Peter J. Carroll notes, at the moment of death the individual life-force is reabsorbed into "the life force pool of this world which makes itself known to us as Baphomet." To monotheistic religions, this experience is the union with God. To the Left Hand Path adept, it means to be "devoured by the Devil and he seeks deliberately to avoid it."¹⁰

In the Right Hand Path philosophy, man cannot oppose God, the higher force. The Left Hand Path traditions do not share this conviction. The symbolic exile of humans from the Garden of Eden, like the myth of the fall of Lucifer, represents the pursuit of individual godhood, and Darkness becomes a metaphor transcending the frames imposed by God. In Darkness, man shines with his own Light and in the Void, he creates his own world. The journey into Darkness is a spiritual evolution of man. The Garden of Eden represents childhood - the time when man feels safe and is dependent on a higher force, the omnipotent "father," The act of leaving the Garden of Eden is a step towards maturity, independence, liberty, but also responsibility, as man starts to make decisions about his own life. To take this step is to enter the Left Hand Path - and to walk this path, means to abandon the safety of Light and face the Unknown, the Dark, the Irrational. We have to descend into the abyss of Darkness in a demanding quest for liberty and individual godhood.

⁹ Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Kaos*

¹⁰ Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Null & Psychonaut*



Typhonian Tradition is rooted in ancient cults of Nature as the Great Mother. It is the most primeval of all early cults. The great Goddess was the symbol of Nature and fertility of the earth. This conviction arose around the belief in the mystical powers of the feminine. Maternity and the ability to bring new life into the world belonged to the sphere of sacrum. With development of religious structures, the time when the Great Mother was worshipped came to be referred to as the "lunar phase". The concept of the Goddess represented the most primordial forces behind all life, creation and fertility.

The term "Typhonian" itself refers to the ancient Egyptian cult of female energy identified with the Dragon Goddess, later recognized as Ta-Urt, the mother of Set. This is how the origin of the Typhonian Tradition is described by the British occultist, Kenneth Grant. Typhon is a Greek equivalent of the name given to this Egyptian goddess, though in the Greek mythology this is a fierce male deity. In ancient Greek sources, Typhon is referred to as a dragon (*drakôn*). He is an amorphous reptile deity with wings. He is said to be the offspring of Gaia and Tartarus - the Earth and the Underworld. Therefore he is an earthly, chthonic creature.

Symbolically, the Dragon Goddess represented the wheel of eternal changes occurring frequently in Nature. Her attribute was the group of the seven stars in the Great Bear Constellation. Helena Blavatsky in her *Isis Unveiled* observes that the origin of the name "Typhon" is closely connected with the forces of Nature: the violent, the unruly, the untamed. Floods caused by the river Nile were called by ancient Egyptians

"Typhon". She also writes that the mounds built along the river to prevent inundations were called Typhonian or *Taphos*. In Egyptian art Typhon is depicted in the form of an ass, a crocodile, or a fish. Gerald Massey, who invented the term "Typhonian Tradition", writes in his *Lectures* that this tradition derived from the god Sevek, the deity with the crocodile's head, yet closely associated with the Dragon. According to him, the name of Sevek signified the sevenfold: "hence the seven heads of the Dragon who is of the seven and 'is himself also an eighth', as we are told in Revelation". He also describes the astrological meaning of the name:

"In Egypt the Great Bear was the constellation of Typhon, or Kepha, the old genetrix, called the Mother of the Revolutions; and the Dragon with seven heads was assigned to her son Sevek- Kronus, or Saturn, called the Dragon of Life. That is, the typical dragon or serpent with seven heads was female at first, and then the type was continued as male in her son Sevek, the Sevenfold Serpent, in Ea the Sevenfold, in Num-Ra, in the Seven-headed Serpent, Iao-Chnubis, and others... In the book of Enoch these two constellations are identified as Leviathan and Behemoth = Bekhmut, or the Dragon and Hippopotamus = Great Bear, and they are the primal pair that was first created in the garden of Eden".

The concept of the primordial female principle out of which the whole universe emerges and which underlies the cycles of Nature is encountered worldwide. The most vivid example is found in the ancient Babylonian accounts. The Babylonian Dragon-Goddess, Tiamat, corresponds to the Great Bear Constellation and personifies the dark, primal aspects of Nature. According to Massey, she is the same as the Egyptian Typhon:

"The Old Dragon of Chaos and the Abyss is the same whether called Tiamat, Tavthe, or Typhon. By Typhon I mean the beast that imaged the first Great Mother, hippopotamus in front and crocodile behind, who therefore is the Dragon of Egypt. Her name of Tep, Teb, or Tept is the original of Typhon. Tiamat = Tavthe represents that abyss of the beginning which is the Egyptian Tepht. This Tepht is the abyss, the source, the void, the hole of the snake, the habitat of the dragon, the outrance or uterus of birth as place which preceded personification. Another name for the abyss is Abzu, the earlier form of which is the Egyptian Khepsh in the north - that is, the Pool of Khep, the hippopotamus or Typhon=Dragon."

The rise of civilization brought a major change in the attitude towards religion, which resulted in the decline of the primeval lunar current and the growth of the solar cult of the masculine god. The cult of the Goddess became a dangerous relic of old times, a threat to new, patriarchal

structures imposed by the solar current. Followers of Typhonian cults became adversaries and their gods were demonized. The Mother Goddess was transformed into a cruel and demonic force of Nature. The Egyptian god Set, representing the dark and dynamic aspect of Nature (sometimes also identified with the goddess Typhon), became the embodiment of evil the devil of the new order. A symbolic image of the clash that occurred between the new and the old religion was the myth of the conflict between Set and Horus. Set/Typhon became the Adversary, the principle of cosmic rebellion, the initiator of the path of liberation from the rigid order that was brought into the contemporary religious structures. Set and Horus (or Osiris) represented two opposing cosmic powers: that of destruction and that of creation. Osiris embodied the nourishing and the life-giving moon, while Set was the force of the sun - viewed as hostile towards humanity because of the heat which made the soil dry and barren. In other parts of the world, especially in colder climates, this nourishing force was ascribed to the sun, while the night was the principle of death. Thus, while Osiris was the god of the Nile, Set was the lord of the desert, the habitation of demons, and enemy of mankind. In the Western lore Set/Typhon came to be identified with Satan who had a similar function in the Bible as the serpent tempting humans to eat the forbidden fruits of Knowledge. The path of liberation is the core of the Typhonian Tradition and is also called the Left Hand Path, or the way towards self-deification and self-re-creation according to the Serpent's promise that when humans taste the fruits of Knowledge, their eyes will be opened and they will be like God, knowing good and evil.

This mythical promise has become a foundation for different antinomian currents that flourished among early Gnostic sects such as the Ophites, the Cainites, the Sethites, and others that believed in the messianic role of the Serpent in the Garden of Eden. But not only - the Serpent was regarded as the initiator of the path to liberation and wisdom in many cultures all over the world. As Blavatsky observes:

"...At all ages the serpent was the symbol of divine wisdom, which kills in order to resurrect, destroys but to rebuild the better. Moses is made a descendant of Levi, a serpent-tribe. Gautama-Buddha is of a serpent-lineage, through the Naga (serpent) race of kings who reigned in Magadha. Hermes, or the god Taaut (Thoth), in his snake-symbol is Tet; and, according to the Ophite legends, Jesus or Christos is born from a snake (divine wisdom, or Holy Ghost), *i.e.*, he became a Son of God through

His Initiation into the "Serpent Science." Vishnu, identical with the Egyptian Kneph, ~~points~~ on the heavenly *seven-headed serpent*".¹¹

In esoteric traditions the Typhonian current is identified with the "Draconian", the name being derived from "Draco", the son of the goddess Typhon. Draco was associated with Set and his symbol was the Sirius star, also connected with the planet Saturn. In the occult philosophy Her/Typhon is usually the initiator, the symbol of creative lunar energy, chaotic, untamed and uncontrollable. The awakening of this energy, however, expands the ordinary span of consciousness. This force is the Inner Dragon, the Kundalini. One of the most important goals on the Draconian Path is to awaken the hidden lunar energy and to bring it at balance with the solar element. The Draconian current is therefore the path of harmonious relationship - between the Matter and the Spirit, the inner and the outer Dragon, the Darkness and the Light, the power of creation and the force of destruction, the masculine and the feminine. The Dragon which signifies this concept is the equilibrium of all opposites.

As the adversary of Horus, Set represents the dynamic principle of change and evolution. The Typhonian Tradition is therefore a process in which an adept is supposed to reach a particular condition, manifesting in the human nature as "the adversary". It means to challenge and transcend barriers and limitations of the commonly accepted structures in the surrounding world, to turn the wheel of eternal changes, and to release the energy that expands consciousness and allows for changes in the external world. The Typhonian/Draconian path is characterized by iconoclasm, the destruction of false images and emblems which conceal the true picture of reality. It is, above all, an inner transformation which alters the way we perceive the world. It annihilates the boundaries of perception and leads to dynamic progress. In ancient Typhonian cults the symbol of natural dynamics was the serpent - it represented the ever-moving energy, raw and pure force, primal cosmic consciousness. It embodied the vital force behind the eternal cycle in Nature: birth, death, and re-birth - hence numerous depictions of the serpent as a cosmic circle, like in the Gnostic image of Ouroboros, the serpent biting his own tail.

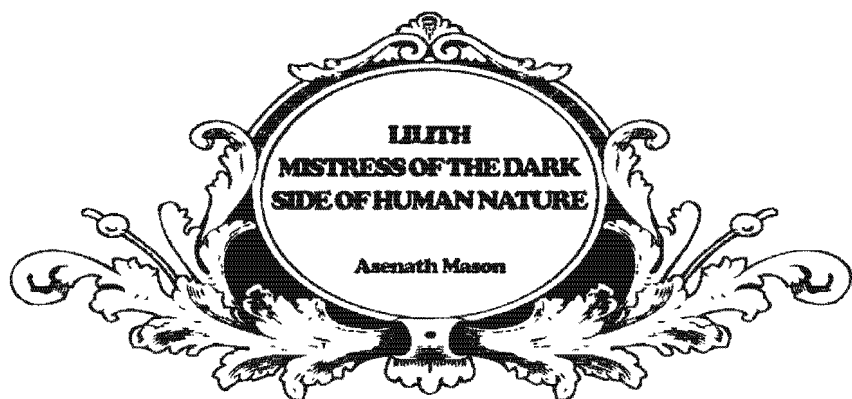
Kenneth Grant presents the Typhonian Tradition as the gnosis aimed at contacting forces of darkness and chaos. In the concept of the Qabalistic

¹¹ Helena Blavatsky: *Isis Unveiled*

Tree these entities reside on the adverse side, the Tree of Night – described as the shadow or the roots of the Tree of Life. The Qabalistic Tree represents all aspects of the universe and is depicted as consisting of ten spheres (the sephiroth), with one hidden sphere (called Daath, “knowledge”) – the gate to the dark side of the Tree. These adversary entities, called “the qliphoth”, are the object of focus of the Typhonian gnosis. They are believed to be the emanations of the primordial darkness, the seven-headed Dragon-Goddess. Grant writes in *Magical Revival* that the historical Draconian/Typhonian cults were those which included the “worship of the Whore or Unmated Mother”, like the Egyptian cults of Sevekh. The whole Tree of Night is believed to emanate from the dark mother-goddess. The word “qliphoth” is related to such terms as “shells”, “husks”, or “a whore”, which suggests that the opposite side of the Qabalistic Tree of Life is the feminine principle.

The Typhonian/Draconian Current is also the current of force and fire. Heraclitus considered the fire as the basic element of the world, the creative force that causes eternal changes in Nature. Fire is the dynamic principle of transformation – both the inner and the outer. In the Hindu tradition the inner fire is called the Kundalini and depicted as a serpent lying dormant at the base of the spine. Awakened through yogic practices, it rises up the spine until it reaches the third eye chakra, where it initiates the evolutionary changes in consciousness. It is also often described as a feminine force that spins the wheel of everlasting changes. Symbolically, it is depicted as a serpent coiling around the tree (symbol of the masculine principle), or as a serpent fighting an eagle (symbol of the patriarchal solar order). In ancient times the synthesis of these opposite elements was the “plumed serpent”. In Draconian philosophy the symbolic balance between the opposites is the Dragon – the union of the serpent and the eagle, the feminine and the masculine, that which is above with that which is below.

In the philosophy of the Draconian path the Dragon is, above all, a symbol of power lying hidden in the depths of psyche. It is the dynamic force that leads to the transformation of consciousness, removes boundaries of perception and allows access to the psychic powers, the existence of which we are not normally aware of. The Draconian path is the spiritual journey through the forgotten levels of consciousness, the exploration of the hidden aspects of the universe and the mysterious, primeval source of human existence.



"Faust: Who's that?

Mephistopheles: Adam's first wife, Lilith.

Beware - beware of her bright hair,
And the strange dress that glitters there:

Many a young man she beguileth,
Smiles winningly on youthful faces,
But woe to him whom she embraces!"

(J.W. Goethe: *Faust*)

Lilith is one of the most known dark goddesses and the most famous female personification of Evil. It is therefore worthwhile to take a closer look at this figure who appears in many mythologies, is identified with many other goddesses, and her names still remain uncounted.

The best known myth of Lilith is the Jewish story depicting her as the first wife of Adam, the one before Eve. However, this tale varies depending on a source. The complete myth is presented in the text called *Alphabet of Ben Sira*, dating to 7th-19th century CE. According to the story, Lilith and Adam were created together, at the same time, from the soil of the earth. But the rebellious Lilith immediately began to quarrel with her husband and refused to succumb to his will. She flew with fury up to heaven, screaming the secret name of God (Shemhamforash) and left the Garden of Eden. After that she settled on the shores of the Red Sea, where she gave birth to hundreds of demons. Seeing this, God sent three of his angels, Senoi,

Sansenoi, and Semangelof, to bring her back to the Garden of Eden, but to no avail: Lilith refused to return. Moreover, she threatened to kill the children of Adam. The angels told her that if she did so, each day they would kill a hundred of her own children as a punishment for her evil deed. They also said that her place would be taken by another woman who would yield to the will of God and her husband. At these threats, Lilith promised not to harm any infant who would be protected by an amulet with the names of these three angels inscribed on it. It is, however, believed that every female infant is in danger during the first twenty days after birth and male infant throughout the first eight days. Thus, Lilith came to be identified with a night demoness, the vampiric spirit who sucks the blood of new-born children.

Lilith is often depicted as a succubus who haunts men during sleep and steals their semen. Impregnated by the stolen seed, each day she gives birth to new demons. This identification with the nocturnal succubus is probably rooted in the Babylonian story of Lilitu. There were three similar types of spirits in the Babylonian lore: the male Lilu, the female Lilitu and Ardat-Lili. These spirits were not deities. Lilu wandered through deserts and in open areas and was especially dangerous to pregnant women and infants. Lilitu seemed to be his female counterpart, while Ardat-Lili (whose name means "maiden Lilu") was supposedly a young girl incapable of normal sexual activity, aggressive towards young men. Ardat-Lili, often mentioned in magical texts, is related to the Jewish Lilith: "She is not a wife, a mother; she has not known happiness, has not undressed in front of her husband, has no milk in her breasts".¹² She was believed to cause impotence in men and sterility in women.

In Arabic accounts Lilith appears as an evil spirit and her children are the demons of the desert. She is believed to have 784 children, as many as it is expressed in the numerical value of her name. In Assyrian inscriptions, she is referred to as Li-lit, "evil spirit". It was a common conviction that she is extremely dangerous to women who were about to have their first child.

However, legends about Lilith's relationship with Adam are not always the same. It is sometimes believed that after the exile from the Garden of Eden, Adam blamed Eve for their fall and at that time he reunited with Lilith. Together with Lilith he conceived children which became demons, like all

¹² Jeremy Black, Anthony Green: *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*

the other offspring of the goddess. When Adam and Eve finally reunited, Lilith was proclaimed the queen of demons. Another tale describes Lilith as a consort of Samael. But even the prince of Hell could not tame her rebellious nature and Lilith fled from him, choosing freedom and independence. From now on she was believed to give birth to thousands of demons – conceived from semen gathered from men’s masturbation or nocturnal pollutions. But she could also possess women and it is said that she is the real mother of Cain, for she possessed Eve when she lay with the Serpent, Samael. She rules sexuality, especially free, unrestrained sex for pleasure, not for procreation. In Lilith myths sexuality is of great significance. The Serpent, who tempted Eve to taste the fruits of knowledge¹³, is himself the phallic symbol (though it is sometimes believed that it was Lilith who appeared in the shape of the serpent). After eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve saw their nudity and became aware of their sexuality. After the exile from the Garden of Eden, Eve gave birth to her first child, which implies that the first couple did not know physical sex before. And sexual act is also the reason for Lilith’s argument with Adam – she refused to lie beneath her husband during the intercourse. The remnant of this story is the traditional image of a succubus riding her sexual partner on the top. Succubi are mentioned in literature and legends since earliest antiquity. Medieval monks and hermits often describe being “assaulted” and “raped” by demons in the shape of beautiful but demonic women.

There is also another version of Lilith’s origin, found in the tale of Lilith and Samael. In *Treatise on the Left Emanation* Rabbi Isaac ben Jacob Ha-Kohen writes that Samael and Lilith were born as one, like Adam and Eve. Samael’s mate is called the Matron Lilith, and both of them were born at the same hour, “intertwined in each other”. The author also mentions another form of Lilith, a younger or “lesser” Lilith, who is the daughter of the king Qafsefoni and the mate of Asmodeus. Therefore, there are more mythological characters who share the name of Lilith. As Asmodeus’ consort, Lilith is not viewed as the same that mates with Samael:

“...Samael, the great prince of them all, grew exceedingly jealous of Asmodeus the king of the demons because of this Lilith who is called Lilith the Maiden (the young). She is in the form of a beautiful woman from her head to her waist. But from the waist down she is burning fire-like mother like daughter. She is called

¹³ It is often interpreted that the gift of the Serpent was in fact the awakening of sexual awareness in humans.

Mehetabel daughter of Matred, and the meaning is something immersed (mabu tabal). The meaning here is that her intentions are never for the good. She only seeks to incite wars and various demons of war and the war between Daughter Lilith and Matron Lilith.”¹⁴

There is also a psychological interpretation of the Lilith myth. In Jungian psychology she is the Anima. When Adam rejected this part of the Self, she turned to the Shadow (Samael). At that moment the rejected Anima began to strive for domination and assumed the demonic shape. In Talmud Adam is created as an androgynous being. Lilith can be therefore viewed as the feminine aspect of his Self. It is, however, a rather brief and shallow interpretation, and the role of Lilith in the male and the female psychology is much greater.

Lilith and Eve are two opposing embodiments of the feminine principle. Lilith is impregnated through sex that does not lead to procreation, i.e. through autoeroticism. It is her who controls the energy and is the dominant side. Eve is impregnated through partnership and submission. She represents procreation and dependence on the masculine will. Lilith's offspring are demons, while Eve's children are humans whom Lilith strives to destroy. That is why it was believed that none of the human children is safe to Lilith's assaults. Only *circumcision* was a guarantee of safety. Until then, however, the baby had to be protected by special amulets and talismans that were to threaten Lilith and her demons away. Many ancient findings such as amulets, coins, or bowls, included inscriptions “Lilith begone” and the names of the three angels who witnessed her vow on the shore of the Red Sea.

Lilith is as often associated with the moon as with the earth. She also belongs to the air sphere. Lilim, her children, were thought to be the spirits of storms and winds. Only later did they come to be identified with the night and nocturnal creatures such as owls, the reason for which was probably the Hebrew term “lilah” – the night. Lilith is often associated with winds and birds that soar in the air. She also flew up to God to scream his secret name and left the Garden of Eden to settle in the place called Zamargad.

¹⁴ *Treatise on the Left Emanation*

Lilith represents the dark side of sexuality: danger, ferocity, dark fantasies, and perversion. In this sense she resembles Kali who is the mother and the destroyer at the same time. Lilith devours the offspring of Eve, bringing death to the human race as well as salvation through awakening of sexuality. She represents departure from the restricted, patriarchal view of female sexuality. In monotheistic religions sex serves only one purpose: procreation. It is not allowed to spill semen for other purpose than impregnation. Autoeroticism is a sin against God. A similar attitude is shown towards female sexuality. Menstruating women are viewed as impure and their role is limited to maternity. Lilith is the symbol of sexual energy liberated from patriarchal rules and laws. Hence the two opposing visions of a woman: on the one side there is Eve – obedient, submissive, faithful wife and caring mother; on the other there is Lilith – rebellious, independent, choosing partners on her own, aware of the power of her sexuality. Patriarchal law sees the female sexuality as a demonic force, that is why Lilith is shown as a demon, the embodiment of transgression. Female sexuality kept under male control guarantees the stability of the family, legitimacy of heirs, and ensures the patriarchal structures. Unleashed, it is a threat to the established order. Therefore Lilith was also one of the favourite symbols in the early twentieth-century feminist movements. As the goddess of rebellion, she is also the patroness of the antinomian attitudes on the Left Hand Path. Not accidentally, one of the Integral elements of the Left Hand Path philosophy is the exploration of sexuality and Lilith is the most important emblem of this concept. In this role she resembles other dark goddesses, such as the Hindu Kali:

"In Indic religions, Kali is the dark goddess who, among other things, drinks blood and kills whomever gets in her path. Kali is partially responsible for the death of the demon Raktabija. In the Devi Mahatmyam, we read about Raktabija, whose blood created new asuras with every drop spilled. According to the Cappeller Sanskrit-English Dictionary, rakta means "blood" in its noun form, while bija means "seed (of plants and animals), seedcorn, grain, germ, element, origin, beginning". Thus, Raktabija means "blood seed." In order to kill Raktabija, Kali takes possession of his seed by drinking all of his blood, thereby preventing the creation of new demons. The Talmudic tale, while similar, is a bit more twisted. When Adam spills his own "seed," i.e. his sperm, Lilith takes it, as Kali does, but in Kali's case new demons are prevented from springing up, while in Lilith's story new demons are born."¹⁵

¹⁵ Lilit Concoff: *Lilith: Destroyer, Mother, Goddess*

Lilith is also associated with vampirism, the reason for which is her insatiable hunger - the hunger for life (the devouring of children) and for sexual gratification. Her vampiric nature also owes much to the connection to the female monthly cycle - she is the goddess of the "red moon", the menstrual blood and energy contained within. Sometimes she is called the goddess of the dark side of the moon, a mythical land inhabited by vampiric entities. Vampirism is the union of life and death, Eros and Thanatos (Eros - sexual energy, the life spark, and Thanatos - disintegrating force of death). The hunger for blood is closely connected with the phases of the moon, while the concept of "devouring" also signifies the absorption of energy, life's potential, which is "sucked" into the Other Side. In the Qlipothic Qabalah, this is the formula of Gamaliel qlipha, whose demonic ruler is Lilith herself. To a practitioner wandering through astral labyrinths, Lilith reveals herself as a half-woman half-serpent (with the serpent's lower part of the body). She seduces the adept and guides him through the path of fantasies and perversions in order to help him release the serpent's power, the Kundalini force inherent in sexuality. Gamaliel is the first astral sphere, the realm of dark dreams, visions, fantasies, desires, urges, and instincts. All of them are brought to the light of consciousness on this level. Gamaliel is the womb of Lilith from which the adept drinks the blood of the moon and falls into a trance in which he drifts through visionary dreams. In this sense Lilith resembles Babalon, the Scarlet Woman, with whom she is often identified. Lilith's womb is the chalice of Babalon, the Unholy Grail filled with the goddess' lunar blood: the elixir through which the mystery of life and death is revealed. The adept intoxicates himself with life by tasting death. The encounter with Lilith is often a strong erotic experience, the taste of bitter-sweet elixir of immortality contained within her blood.

However, the Gamaliel qlipha, ruled by Lilith, is not to be mistaken with the first qlipha on the Tree of Night named "Lilith", though in fact they have much in common. It is the first qlipha (the counterpart of the Malkuth sephira on the Tree of Life), also called "the womb of Lilith" or "the cave of Lilith", for it is the entrance to the Other Side (*Sitra Ahra*) of the Qabalistic Tree. In literature and mythologies we often encounter a concept of a dark cave or a cleft in the earth which later appears to be a gate to Hell. The forest through which Dante in *Divine Comedy* walks to find the hellish gate is one of examples of this concept. In Tantrism the equivalent of this spiritual level is the Muladhara chakra, where the Kundalini serpent lies

coiled, waiting to be awakened. The Kundalini force is often described as a sexual power. In this chakra, in the sphere of earth, the spark of life is hidden. It awakens when the adept enters the womb of Lilith. Here we are confronted with instincts, the libido, the vital force which makes mankind and the universe alive. The Zohar calls Lilith "the soul of wild animals", and indeed, she is the wild aspect of Nature, both in the micro- and the macrocosmic sense. She is the mistress of the Unholy Sabbat, ecstasy achieved through dark and savage practices, often sexual. In modern traditions of witchcraft she has been replaced by Aradia, a gentler goddess of Nature. Yet, it is Lilith who holds the chalice of ecstasy, the secret of the witches. Together with deities such as Pan, Dionysus, or Baphomet, she represents the primordial aspects of Nature. Together with Samael, she is the union of the sun and the moon (the image of which is the Leviathan serpent). They are the patrons of the Sabbat and they preside over the qliphotic awakening through the exploration of sexuality. About this Rabbi Isaac ben Jacob Ha-Kohen writes:

"You already know that evil Samael and wicked Lilith are like a sexual pair who, by means of an intermediary, receive an evil and wicked emanation from one and emanate to the other. I shall explain this relying on the esoteric meaning in the verse 'In that day the Lord will punish with his great, cruel, mighty sword Leviathan the twisted serpent and Leviathan the tortuous serpent' - this is Lilith - 'and He will slay the dragon of the sea' (Isaiah 27:1). As there is a pure Leviathan in the sea and it is called a serpent, so there is a great defiled serpent in the sea in the literal sense. The same holds true above in a hidden way. The heavenly serpent is a blind prince, the image of an intermediary between Samael and Lilith. Its name is 'Anin'iver'.

The names of Lilith are numerous. Some of them, in the number of seventeen, she reputedly revealed to the prophet Elias. These are: Abeko, Abito, Amizo, Batna, Eilo, Ita, Izorpo, Kali, Kea, Kokos, Lilith, Odam, Partasah, Patrota, Podo, Satrina, Talto. A similar list is given by Hanauer in *Folk-Lore of the Holy Land*: Abro, Amiz, Amizu, Avitu, Bituah, Ik, IIs, Kalee, Kakash, Kema, Lilith, Partasha, Petrota, Pods, Raphi, Satrinah, Thiltho. *Dictionary of Angels* adds to this list the following names: Abyzu, Alio, Alu, Ardad Lili, Gallu, Gelou, Gilou, Lamassu, Zariel, Zephonith. Undoubtedly, many others can be found in other accounts and sources.

Lilith is identified with many goddesses and female demons. Apart from the above-mentioned Kali and Babalon, her equivalent is also Naamah, a

demon from the Qabalistic tradition, sometimes believed to be the alter-ego of Lilith. Naamah, however, does not possess the aspect of a child-murdering demon. Other female spirits linked with Lilith are Makhlat and Agrat – but these are rather her rivals:

“The she-demon Makhloth (the dancer) and her daughter Agrath are two female demons who live in strife with Lilith. Lilith is accompanied by four hundred and eighty hosts of evil spirits and destroying angels, and she is constantly howling. Makhloth is accompanied by four hundred and seventy-eight hosts of evil spirits. She and her daughter Agrath, from the Zend word *Agra* = beating, are in constant enmity with Lilith”.¹⁶

Lilith tempts the magician to break the taboos imposed by culture, community and religion. She herself transcends all limitations and guides others onto the path of liberation, spiritual freedom, through challenging the structures of the patriarchal order. There is a story of an encounter between King Solomon and a strange solitary woman. He asked her whether she was a spirit or a human. Her answer was: “I am the spirit that puts hatred between husband and wife; I make women miscarry; I make them barren; I make men impotent; I make husbands love other men’s wives, and wives other women’s husbands; in short, I do all contrary to the happiness of wedded life”. Helena Blavatsky describes her as an “ethereal shadow”, the dark side of human nature – both in a man and in a woman, the instinct from the depth of the soul, the spark which awakens and maintains the Dragon’s fire in mankind.

¹⁶ *The Talmud, Demons & Magic*

The Summoning of Lilith

Melez!

I invoke you, goddess of the moon! Come forth from the desert caves of the Red Sea. Come to me, mother of fornication, Samael's consort! Mistress of Life and Death! Appear to me, mother of the path to dark wisdom! Reveal to me your bestial beauty!

LIL-KA-LITU! LILIT MALKAH HA'SHADIM!

I invoke you by your secret names:

Abeko, Abito, Amizo, Batna, Eilo, Ita, Izorpo, Kali, Kea, Kokos, Odam, Partasah, Patrota, Podo, Satrina, Talto, Lilith!

Queen of the Night, Mistress of the blood-red moon, arise from Darkness! May this night become the manifestation of infernal ecstasy! Awaken me with your kiss of blood and force! You are the Owl of Wisdom! You are the Serpent that brings freedom with its kiss!

Lepaca Lilith!

Hear my calling! Encircle me in your dark womb! Embrace me with your passion and nocturnal lust! Surround me with your crimson cloak made from the blood of the moon! Let me drink the life-force from your lips! Awaken the Dragon which coils in the depths of my soul! Lead me to the infernal Sabbath, straight to the cave of the Beast!

So mote it be!



Serpents were worshipped as sacred animals from time immemorial. Ancient people associated them with divine spheres and ascribed many mystical attributes to these chthonic creatures. Serpents were identified with many phenomena and their symbolism is very complex. The mystical qualities of the animal were usually connected with one dominant feature, e.g. crawling, skin-removal, shape, deadly venom, etc. Not less significant was the characteristics connected with places where serpents dwelt, such as forests, deserts, seas, lakes, water vessels, and other locations. The snake was a symbol of destruction as well as an emblem of life and fertility. It was connected with the feminine element, but was also a phallic symbol, the biblical snake-tempter who led humans to sin, or a savior - the bearer of knowledge and wisdom. Many ancient gods and entities were depicted as serpents. Snakes were also associated with a variety of natural forces - this symbol had an enormous influence which has not declined even in the modern world.

There is a mystical connection between the symbolism of the serpent and the feminine principle. The serpent which dwells the chthonic regions is in a continual union with Mother Earth - the personified maternity. The earth for ages has been perceived as the Great Mother, the one who gives birth, feeds, and nourishes, the source of life and fertility. The connection between the serpent and the earth element indicated its female aspect, the principle of fertility, maternity, and femininity. However, the female element does not only refer to fertility and maternity but also to all that is mysterious, unforeseen, intuitive, irrational. The biblical Serpent turns to Eve, not to Adam. Eve's rival, demonic Lilith is also often identified with

the serpent. Many ancient goddesses were depicted as women holding serpents in their hands. Among them we can find such mythological characters as Hecate, Persephone, and Artemis. Ancient Egyptian goddess of fertility was called Renenutet and depicted as half-serpent half-woman. Her name meant "renen" - "food" and "utet" - "serpent". In ancient Greece she was known as Thermitis.¹⁷ There are also mythological characters depicted with snakes instead of hair, like the Erinyes, Gorgon, or Echidna, the demonic snake-woman from Greek mythology. In central Europe there was a common belief that if you bury woman's hair under the moonlight, they will turn into serpents.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the serpent was also a phallic symbol, an impregnating masculine force connected with sunrays or bolts of lightning. In this context, the masculine or the feminine role of the serpent as a symbol is highly ambivalent.

Goddesses associated with serpents were not only deities of the earth but also of the underworld, the darkness and the black cosmic womb. Ancient Greeks believed that the soul of a dead person assumes the shape of a serpent. That is why the serpent was often considered as a chthonic symbol, the personified power of the underworld, dark otherworldly forces, and the primordial energy of cosmic darkness. In this aspect the serpent was a symbol of the dark side of human nature, the principle hidden in the unconscious. In the Qabalah qliphotic levels of the Tree of Night are considered to be a domain of forces depicted as serpents or dragons. Egyptian god Apophis, the snake-demon that threatens the sun god's daily journey through the underworld, might be a proper example. Ra has to fight Apophis every day during his passage through Amenti. Egyptian myths describe how the demonic serpent is killed by the sun god and his blood dyes the skies red at dawn. Apophis is sometimes identified with Set or demonic Typhon - the dragon-headed and serpent-legged monster. Other demonic serpents appearing in world's mythologies are e.g. Leviathan, Jormungandr, or Vritra. Ahriman, the Persian personification of evil, appears in depictions with the head of a lion and a serpent coiled around his body. However, not only the fearsome, demonic entities were associated with serpents. The snake was also the attribute of benevolent deities. Atum - the ancient Egyptian creator of the world - was sometimes depicted as a serpent. Serpents appear also as the attribute of Athena. Varuna, the highest god of the Vedic religion, bears the name of

¹⁷ Manfred Lurker: *Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses, Devils and Demons*

¹⁸ Juan Cirlot: *Dictionary of Symbols*

“Nagaraja”, “King of Serpents”. In the Hindu beliefs the Naga serpents are demonic entities, often depicted as half-humans, half-snakes, with five or seven heads. Their role and qualities are not entirely negative. The Ananta serpent is the symbol of Infinity. Sesha uplifts the Earth. Vasuki acts as a rope which stirs the sea and frightens other demons away for Shiva. In the Hindu folklore the Naga serpents are worshipped as patrons of fertility. In Tibet they are regarded as benevolent water deities who watch over the Buddhist writings.¹⁹

It is also worth to notice that deities, spirits and demons depicted as serpents were often connected with water. This view owes much to the symbolism of the female aspect in which the water element has always played a pivotal role. Leviathan, Jormungandr, as well as other serpent entities, were often water creatures. This also refers to deities depicted as dragons, like the Babylonian dragon-goddess Tiamat (embodying the concept of salty waters) and Apsu (fresh waters). The connection between serpents, dragons and water was the result of their primordial, chaotic nature. The primordial chaos was often described as ancient waters from which the whole universe was born. The serpent-like nature of the ancient gods implies therefore their connection to the primordial energy, the principle of chaos, being the source of creative potential. This is highly evocative of the Kundalini energy which represents the internal psychic force in the tradition of Tantrism. We also find its equivalents in other world cultures. The Egyptian uraeus is a symbol of transformation by ascension, similar to the process of Kundalini awakening when it ascends through seven traditional energy levels, the chakras. Similar motifs are found in ancient Mesopotamia – the ascent through the levels of the ziggurat, or the way through steps made of seven metals in rituals of Mithras. Kundalini is the force which awakens and transforms consciousness, leading to spiritual initiation and rebirth of senses.

The ascent of the Kundalini serpent indicates also the serpent’s role as the mediator between the worlds – the lower and the higher, the earth and the heavens, or the earth and the underworld. The best known example of this concept is the Caduceus, two snakes coiled around the staff crowned with a pair of wings. This symbol has been known from the ancient times. In ancient Rome it represented the spiritual and moral balance. The staff denoted power, serpents – wisdom, and wings – diligence. The Caduceus

¹⁹ Manfred Lurker: *Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses, Devils and Demons*

can be successfully compared to Tantric ideas about the Kundalini as the emblem of the transformative energy of human evolution. This energy is symbolized by ascending serpents. Coiled around the staff, which represents the axis of the universe, the serpents embody the concept of a precise, mutual symmetry, the active balance of opposite forces. They stand for the earth, the lower forces, the earthly instincts, and the underworld. The pair of wings on top of the Caduceus is the higher world, the symbol of the Spirit. The Caduceus was also the attribute of Hermes/Mercury - the god's messenger and mediator between the worlds. Hermes is the psychopomp who guides souls from the worldly life into the great beyond, leads them from the world of humans to the Other Side. Alchemy attributes to this deity one of the most important functions in the process of transmutation. The alchemical Mercury represents the unconscious liquid and dynamic energy that has a double nature - feminine and masculine, higher and lower. It is the symbol of *complexio oppositorum*. His other names are *Monstrum Hermaphroditus* or *Rebis*. In alchemy it is the agent of transformation, endowed with a huge creative potential, inseparably connected with other concepts of the serpent. Mercury's Caduceus is also a symbol of polarization of opposites, integration of elements: staff - earth, wings - air, serpents - water and fire. The Greek myth about the prophet Tiresias, who was transformed into a woman after he had separated two copulating snakes (the Caduceus) and into a man again after he did the same seven years later, shows that the serpent was considered to be closely connected with transformation of opposites. These serpents, as well as those coiling around the Caduceus, are Ida and Pingala from the Hindu tradition. Kundalini unites the opposite elements: earth with air through its journey upwards, and water, the feminine element - when it flows through the left nadi (Ida) with the masculine element of fire - when it flows through the right nadi (Pingala). In the last stage of the journey occurs the synthesis of the opposites - the serpent becomes the dragon - the winged embodiment of the Quintessence.

Many traditions depict the dragon as the winged serpent. Medieval dragons had the chest and the feet of an eagle, the body of a serpent, the wings of a bat, and the tail ending with a pointed spike. Each of these elements represented a distinct quality: the eagle - the heavenly aspect, the serpent - the mystery and the underworld, the wings - the intellect, the tail - the reason. This is, however, only one of numerous interpretations of the dragon symbol. Like the serpent, the dragon was the mediator between the

worlds, embodying particular aspects of the universe and all elements existing in Nature. Cirlot observes that both the dragon and the serpent personify the rhythm of life in the whole universe, which is particularly easy to notice on the example of the Chinese tradition:

“The association of dragon/lightning/rain/fecundity is very common in archaic Chinese texts, for which reason the fabulous animal becomes the connecting link between the Upper Waters and earth. However, it is impossible to generalize about the dragon from the Chinese mythology, for there are subterranean, aerial and aquatic dragons. ‘The earth joins up with the dragon’ means that it is raining. It plays an important part as an intermediary, then, between the two extremes of the cosmic forces associated with the essential characteristics of the three-level symbolism, that is: the highest level of spirituality; the intermediary plane of the phenomenal life; and the lower level of inferior and telluric forces”.²⁰

Serpents coiling around the Caduceus also resemble an image of a serpent coiling around a tree, which is common for many cultures worldwide. Like the Caduceus staff, the tree symbolizes the *axis mundi*, the axis connecting particular levels and dimensions of the whole universe – the lower words (the underworld, hell) are the roots of the tree, while the higher, heavenly planes are symbolized by leaves and branches. The trunk is the axis through which the soul can travel between the worlds. This concept corresponds to Shushumna, the central nadi in Tantrism, through which the Kundalini serpent makes its ascent. The serpent coiled around a tree is also symbolic of the harmony of cosmic forces. Usually this image also includes an eagle sitting on top of the tree. In this sense, the serpent is one of the fundamental archetypes in the synthesis of forces that constitute the universe.

In myths and legends the serpent is almost always a wise creature, often depicted as personifying wisdom and power. In ancient Greece the serpent was sacred to Athena, the goddess of wisdom. In one of the myths she is – in a sense – the mother of the serpent-man Erichonios who was born from Hephaestus’ semen which ejaculated on the ground when Athena resisted him and vanished.²¹ In Egypt the cobra was considered to be the symbol of power and knowledge, the highest wisdom – both divine and royal, the domain of pharaohs, children of gods. The winged serpent, or a dragon, according to some myths, guards treasures, gems and great riches hidden

²⁰ Juan Cirlot: *Dictionary of Symbols*

²¹ Manfred Lurker: *Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses, Devils and Demons*

In mountainous caves. A similar function is sometimes attributed to snakes. The Naga are guardians of temples. It is also the Serpent that guards the Tree of Knowledge and the Well of Immortality. These treasures are symbols of knowledge and wisdom which can only be gained by strong and courageous heroes who do not fear to face the danger. In esoteric sense, the quest for treasures guarded by primordial reptiles is a symbol of initiation. It is a spiritual journey in search for the lost knowledge. The biblical Serpent is the seducer, described as evil incarnate, the Adversary who leads humans to eternal damnation. His role in the Garden of Eden, however, might be interpreted in several different ways. He represents the alternative to salvation through God: the path of independence and self-responsibility. He is the initiator of mankind and the emblem of the path towards self-deification. Helena Blavatsky observes that in ancient magical traditions the name "Serpent" or "Dragon" was given to people of knowledge, initiated adepts.²² The Gnostics believed that the Serpent personified the principle of salvation. Eve's temptation to eat the fruits from the Tree of Knowledge was equivalent to liberating humans from the force of cosmic oppression. Many Gnostic doctrines included the cult of the Serpent, such as e.g. the Naasseni (from Hebrew *na'ash* - "snake"), or the Ophites (from Greek *ophis*). They claimed that the Serpent was the savior of mankind because he taught man the divine secrets and revealed the true knowledge, the gnosis. In *The Gnostic Religion* Hans Jonas describes the Gnostic story of salvation in the following way: the heavenly mother, Sophia-Prunikos decided to destroy the demiurgic work of her malevolent son Ialdabaoth and sent the Serpent to tempt Adam and Eve to break Ialdabaoth's commandments. The plan was successful - they both ate the fruits from the forbidden tree. But when they did so, they became aware of forces which existed outside their world and turned away from their creators. This was the first victory of the transcendental principle over the force that blocked man's access to knowledge. Until that time man was merely the hostage of Light. The Serpent's deed marked the beginning of Gnosis on earth.

The Ophites were one of the earliest Gnostic sects, active in the second century in Syria and Egypt. In their doctrine the Serpent symbolized the knowledge allowing for the liberation from the shackles of the mundane world. He was the initiator of man's individual path, opposed to the laws of the universe, leading to self-salvation. But also in the Gnostic religions

²² Helena Blavatsky: *The Secret Doctrine*

the symbolism of the serpent has a certain ambivalence. There is the Agathodaimon, representing benevolent qualities, and Kakodaimon, connected with the evil element. The Gnostic serpent is Nous and Logos. He is often associated with the feminine force of Sophia/Ennoia, the One Who Gives Birth to Everything, the *Anima Mundi*. In this sense, the serpent represents the feminine wisdom, intuition, repetition, rhythm, creation. Unlike in the teachings of the Ophites, other Gnostic doctrines included the serpent's connection to the primordial darkness, cosmic abyss, and dark waters. He was not only the savior but also the ruler and the essence of evil existing in the world. The gigantic snake/dragon was thought to coil around the globe, encircling the earth in its eternal embrace. The Gnostic treatise *Pistis Sophia* claims: "In the outer darkness there is a great dragon having its tail in its mouth".²³ This serpent is an archaic symbol, most often referred to as Ouroboros. This motif appears in many cultures, in Egypt, Greece, etc. not only as the Gnostic symbol. Ouroboros has a very complex meaning. He represents the time and the *continuum* of life, cyclic changes in Nature, death and rebirth. His images sometimes include the inscription "En to pan" (One is All). The serpent devouring his own tail stands for eternal movement. Ouroboros kills himself, marries himself, impregnates himself, devours himself, and gives birth to himself - this is the union of opposites and the primordial self-sufficiency. He can be interpreted as the union of male and female elements because half of his body is bright and the other half dark. It implies the union of opposing principles, like in the Chinese Yin-Yang symbol in which Yang represents masculine force and Yin - feminine. Ouroboros is therefore another example of a variety of meanings attributed to the symbolism of the serpent and its connection to extremes: the positive and the negative. He represents the primordial state of existence that contains both darkness and light, destruction and creative potential. This is the archetypal darkness in human consciousness.

We can also find the motif of the cosmic serpent coiling around the globe in the Vodou tradition. Here he is called Damballah and depicted as the serpent leaned over the path through which the sun walks each day. Sometimes he is united with his female counterpart, Aida, the rainbow. Damballah is the patron of the heavenly waters and springs and rivers on the earthly plane. When he hides in the sea, the cosmic waters reflect him

²³ Hans Jonas: *The Gnostic Religion*

the rainbow. Damballah and Aida form a sexual union. They both encircle the cosmos, like the serpent coiled around the whole universe.²⁴

Uroboros crawls through each location and each element, connecting the world in a cosmic harmony. The Ophites believed that the serpent lives in every single object and in every single creature. Their doctrine recognized seven circles, levels corresponding to the structure of the universe. This is evocative of the Tantric concept of the Kundalini serpent which ascends upwards through seven chakras. The chakras represent the levels of the ascent towards the Divine, like the Mesopotamian ziggurats which had seven terraces dedicated to particular gods, symbolizing the structure of the universe. Seven is the number often mentioned in association with the Serpent or the Dragon. In myths and legends we often encounter seven-headed snakes and dragons. Almost all dragons from ancient mythologies had seven heads. According to Blavatsky, seven heads symbolize the seven elements that the Nature and the human being consist of. The seventh, central head, is the most important.²⁵ In certain esoteric traditions there are seven levels of energy that constitute the world. Their manifestation is reflected in particular aspects of Nature: the seven colours of the rainbow, the seven stars of the Great Bear Constellation, the seven directions in the space, the seven planets of traditional astrology, etc. Blavatsky writes:

"The seven Northern constellations make up the Black Warrior; the seven Eastern (Chinese autumn) constitute the White Tiger; the seven Southern are the Vermilion Bird; and the seven Western (called Vernal) are the Azure Dragon. Each of these four Spirits presides over its heptanomis during one lunar week. The genitive of the first heptanomis (Typhon of the Seven Stars) now took a lunar character; in this phase we find the goddess Sefekh, whose name signifies number 7, is the feminine word, or *logos* in place of the mother of Time, who was the earlier *Word*, as goddess of the Seven Stars".²⁶

Seven is also the number of days in a week, planetary deities, but also the Christian cardinal sins. It was believed in Bavaria that the seventh son of the same parents becomes a werewolf. Seven was the number of Saturn and his influences, both positive and negative. It had an enormous meaning in the occult philosophy. However, there were also dragons with the number of heads different than seven. The three-headed dragon, for

²⁴ Maya Deren: *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*

²⁵ Helena Blavatsky: *The Secret Doctrine*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

instance, symbolizes three essences - the active, the passive and the neutral.²⁷

Serpent's venom can be a deadly poison or a mystical elixir which heals and transforms. The serpent coiling around a chalice is the emblem often encounter in medicine and pharmaceuticals. Also in ancient times the serpent was the attribute of deities that were believed to have healing powers. Asclepius, the Greek god of healing and medical arts, was sometimes depicted as a serpent and probably originally was a serpent deity. In one of his depictions he holds a rod with a snake coiled around. His daughter Hygeia, the goddess of health, is depicted in a similar way. Her sacred animal and companion is the serpent. This also refers to the serpent's skill of rejuvenation through the removal of the skin, which is an old symbol of renovation and resurrection, both in the physical and in the spiritual sense. That is why the serpent sometimes appears in images holding a fruit or a herb of immortality in his jaws.²⁸

Serpents and dragons also represent the unconscious instincts, dark and hidden aspects of the human nature. For this reason they often have demonic character. In the human brain there are still parts that we share with our evolutionary ancestors, reptiles and beasts. Peter J. Carroll observes:

"All the dragons, serpents and scaly demons of myth and nightmare are reptile atavisms out of the older parts of our brains. Evolution has not deleted these ancestral behaviour patterns, merely buried them under a pile of new modifications. Thus, in mythology the gods, as representatives of human consciousness, suppress the titans and dragons of the older consciousness".²⁹

Serpents symbolize the unconscious forces that have been repressed from our conscious mind. Confrontation with them is often seen as destructive and frightening. Liberation of these instincts means the necessity to face the mystical qualities of the unconscious, traditionally viewed as dark and negative and suppressed by cultures and religions. Myths and legends describe this as the conquer of the serpent/dragon by a god or a saint - representatives or the new world order. Depending on a context, the

²⁷ Juan Cirlot: *Dictionary of Symbols*

²⁸ Manfred Lurker: *Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses, Devils and Demons*

²⁹ Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Null & Psychonaut*

Dragon is vanquished e.g. by Apollo, Kadmos, Perseus, Siegfried, Saint George, or Archangel Michael.

The defeat of the dragon does not only signify the triumph over chaos and the foundation of the new world order, but also the repression of the primeval instincts - recognized as dark, evil and unwanted. These forces usually have a destructive character but when we learn to master them, they become a tool of transformation, spiritual enlightenment and liberation. The traditional mythological story of a victorious fight with the dragon/serpent is not a tale about taming the force but about rejecting and denying it. Rejected instincts emerge from the forgotten abyss of the inner mind, bringing chaos into the life of man and assuming shapes of dragon-like and serpent-like monsters. The mastery of this force, however, is possible through spiritual discipline: we can learn to rule over the forgotten aspects of the mind and use them in our spiritual progress.



„I was, am now, and shall have no end. I exercise dominion over all creatures and over the affairs of all who are under the protection of my image. I am ever present to help all who trust in me and call upon me in time of need. There is no place in the universe that knows not my presence (...) I teach and guide those who follow my instruction. If anyone obey me and conform to my commandments, he shall have joy, delight, and goodness.” (*Al Jilwah*)

The majority of modern research into the Yezidi beliefs is based on two texts regarded as the sacred scriptures: *Al Jilwah* (Revelation) and *Meshaf Resh* (The Black Book). In these two writings one may also find descriptions of the entity who traditionally acts as God’s messenger and creator of the world of humans. This entity is the angel Melek Taus.

Called “The Peacock Angel,” Melek Taus probably derives from ancient Assyrian beliefs, where he was known as Adramelek. Adramelek was the sun god worshipped in Assyrian town of Sepharvaim, and his cult included human sacrifice: the burning of offerings. In the medieval demonic hierarchy, he has the title of the Great Chancellor of Hell. He also appears in the Bible in regard to children sacrifice via burning them or placing them within a heated bronze statue of the god. His common depiction was that of a half-human half-peacock. In a symbolic sense, a peacock represents the union of all colours and is an emblem of immortality and the eternal soul. Adramelek, however, was seen by Christianity as a symbol of evil and material world. This characteristics allows for his association with the Peacock Angel of Yezidis. Melek Taus is

the lord of the earth, the world of matter. This function, according to the Yezidi beliefs, is not reserved to the omnipotent God but to his messenger and favourite angel.

It is him who speaks in the book *Al Jilwah* and describes himself as the lord of the world and all living beings, humans and animals: "The beasts of the earth, the birds of heaven, and the fish of the sea are all under the control of my hands." He rules the life and death of all creatures. He bestows good fortune and wealth, but he also punishes for disobedience. He knows all treasures and all hidden things on the earth. The world has no mysteries from him and he reveals this hidden knowledge to his worshippers and to those whom he chooses.

According to certain theories, Melek Taus was created by Ahriman, the Persian lord of Darkness as his manifestation. And thus, while looking through the colourful peacock feathers, one can see Ahriman himself - or Shaitan, as he is called in the Yezidi lore. The Black Book, *Meshaf Resh*, which presents the process in which the world was created, mentions the Peacock Angel as the first entity created by God. In the beginning, God created a white pearl, then a bird, and he placed the jewel on its back. Afterwards, he created seven angels, each on the respective day of the week. Melek Taus (called also Azazel or Shaitan) emerged on Sunday as the first of angels and he was given the rule over all of them:

"On each of the other Days of the week the One brought forth Angels to serve Melek Taus. After this, the Invisible One retreated into Itself, and acted no more; but Melek Taus was left to act."

It was him who divided the pearl into four parts and out of it created seas and the world of humans: the sky, the earth, the sun, and the moon, mankind, animals, and birds. Then, he created a ship in which he remained for thirty thousand years, after which he came to dwell among humans, in the town of Lalish. From the Qabalistic perspective, as the ruler of the material world (Malkuth) he is the reverse of God in Kether.

The followers of Melek Taus, the Yezidis are under his special care. There is a curious legend concerning the origin of these people. According to *Meshaf Resh*, the Yezidis descend from Adam but not from Eve. It is explained in a tale of an argument between Adam and Eve who tried to settle to which of them their children belonged. They decided to clear this issue by a peculiar

test. They filled two separate vessels with mud, and in one of them they placed Eve's menstrual blood, in the other – Adam's semen. Afterwards, they buried the vessels for nine months. When they opened them, in Adam's vessel they saw a male child. Eve's vessel was empty. This child is believed to be the first of the Yezidis, the word "Yezidi" meaning "those on the right path," or those following God (one of theories assumes that the word derives from the Sumerian language). But there are also other speculations about the etymology of the word. Another one derives it from Old Iranian "yazata" (divine being – an angel or god).

For Yezidis, Melek Taus is the one who not only created them but also endowed them with culture and the gift of civilization. He revealed to them his knowledge and wisdom, like it was in the case of angels described in apocryphal writings, who descended to the earth to live among humans. Such texts as *The Book of Enoch* mention the angel Azazel as one of their leaders. He taught mankind the art of war: how to make swords, knives, shields and coats of mail, how to make bracelets and ornaments, and the art of make-up: beautifying the face, the knowledge of precious stones, colouring substances, and metals of the earth. Azazel from *The Book of Enoch* is often identified with the Peacock Angel of Yezidis and in *Meshaf Resh* he bears the same name. Azazel, with his profound knowledge of metals and minerals, is thought to be the founder of alchemy, the science which has its origin in the ancient fascination with metallurgy and the mysteries of elements contained within the earth. However, in a spiritual sense, alchemy is the science of soul transformation. Azazel was therefore one of the first to guide humans onto the path of spiritual initiation, the way towards self-deification. Since times immemorial it has been believed that the key to this process is the mystical fire, the divine light, which is the essence of angels and all entities that dwell in higher dimensions. Before Azazel descended to the earth, he was one of the Seraphim, the fiery angels:

"The Seraphim are the Lords of Light, the Sons of the Eternal Fire that sleeps within all as the Serpent Power, *kundalini*. In ancient magic practised by such as the patriarch Abraham, Moses and Solomon, a light-body (golem) was created that enabled one to travel into the aetheric and astral realms. See the future and the past the same as you see the present. This light-body was also called the 'rainbow body'

of 'the peacock's tail.' Birds, such as ravens, swans, and peacocks serve as symbols of different stages of alchemical workings - both physical and spiritual."³⁰

Indeed, in alchemy the peacock is the symbol of the phase in which the adept has experienced the connection between the material and the spiritual and has learned how to transform one into the other: flesh into spirit and spirit into flesh. At this level, the adept is fully aware of having entered into the inner experience of the astral world and it is truly the turning point on one's magical path. "The Peacock's Tail" is encountered as a sudden appearance of a rush of colours, with a stunning iridescence, which might create an illusion that one has reached the final goal. This stage is sometimes represented by a winged dragon. The rainbow flash of the Peacock's Tail also corresponds to the colours of the seven chakras through which the fiery serpent rises in an ascent of spiritual liberation.

The name "Melek" (or "Malik") in etymology means "king" or "angel" (from Hebrew "mal'ak" - messenger). "Taus" is a Persian word for a peacock. Because his association with fire, he is often attributed the colour red. But it is generally believed that the true colour of Melek Taus is blue. Yezidis have a special attitude to this colour - no one is allowed to dress in blue. It is a forbidden colour in this cultural circle. For this reason travelers who encountered the Yezidis on their journeys often thought that they find all shades of blue repulsive. But this peculiar attitude does not result from repulsion but rather from being considered as sacred. It is therefore not allowed to wear blue garments, as it is forbidden to speak the name of god: Shaitan. As it is written in *Al Filwah*:

"Do not mention my name nor my attributes, lest ye regret it; for ye do not know what those who are without may do. O ye that have believed in me, honor my symbol and my image, for they remind you of me."

This symbol and image by which Shaitan was replaced is the image of Melek Taus, the Peacock Angel. He is the fire in both aspects: the one that nourishes and illuminates the way, and the one that burns and destroys. He cannot be viewed as purely good or purely evil, as he is both at the same time - the light of illumination and the force of destruction. The Yezidis believe that he exists in each of his followers - as the force with two opposite aspects: bright and dark, just as the human nature itself. Melek

³⁰ "Why Azazel is the Peacock Angel" (<http://www.semjaaza.com>)

Taus is therefore also a symbol of man: the divine principle of light dressed in the garment of darkness – the matter and the mundane world.

There is another story from *Meshaf Resh* which accounts for the initiatory role of Melek Taus. And so, when God ordered angels to place man in Paradise, he was allowed to eat of the fruit of every green herb except wheat. When Melek Taus saw this, he asked God how man was supposed to beget offspring, and God answered that this issue is left to him. Thus, Melek Taus came to Adam and told him to taste the forbidden plant as well. But when Adam did as he was commanded, his belly swelled because it had no outlet. Then, God sent a bird which made the outlet and helped to relieve Adam's suffering. This story is a symbolic initiation of man, the encouragement to seek for what is hidden, the forbidden knowledge. Wheat corresponds here to the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden, the only fruit that man was not allowed to taste. Melek Taus gave man the knowledge which opened his eyes and was symbolic of the first step on the initiatory path.

The legends also mention seven towers (the so called „towers of Shaitan”), where special priests and magicians gathered to conduct ceremonies in honour of the forces of darkness. These towers were located around the whole Middle East and connected by a network of magical energy lines. It was believed that these lines were the medium through which Melek Taus directed all events on the earth. The central tower was located on the Lalesh mountain, the place where Sheik Adi, the main character in the history of Yezidi beliefs, preached the religion of Shaitan. Melek Taus reputedly dictated him his message contained in the book *Al Jilwah* in the twelfth century. According to the legend, when Sheik Adi set on his final journey, Shaitan assumed his shape and ruled the Yezidis for three years. When Sheik Adi returned, Yezidis killed him, convinced that he was a fraud. Then, Shaitan appeared to them in his true form and proclaimed that Sheik Adi's sacrifice was necessary, as his task on the earth was completed. Sheik Adi is the main prophet of Yezidis and the central character in religion and ceremonies.

There are also many ceremonies devoted to Melek Taus. In one of them participants gather around a statue, and when the first rays of the dawning sun are cast upon the Peacock Angel, they fall to the earth to greet him. This ceremony derives from ancient solar cults and points that Melek Taus

is a deity connected to the sphere of light rather than to the principle of darkness.

And there is also a curious legend which explains why Shaitan/Melek Taus is depicted in a peacock's form. The story comes from the priest named Nadir-Lugh. According to this legend, Shaitan, who is the master of this world, had to fight with Jesus, here seen as one of angels who assumed human form and descended to the earth to steal the world from Shaitan. This was the reason of his crucifixion. But Shaitan foresaw his intentions, took Jesus from the cross and replaced his body by an illusion. It was the illusion which died and was buried in a tomb. After three days it disappeared, which is the reason why Mary and Mary Magdalene found the grave empty. Then, they saw Shaitan who explained the situation. As women did not want to believe him, he decided to prove his power: he tore a peacock apart and made his come alive again. After that, he took the form of the peacock and since that moment he has been known as Melek Taus, the Peacock Angel.

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Zoroastrianism

The cult of the Wise Lord, Ahura-Mazda, also called in Greek Oromazdes (Hellenized: Ohrmuzd, Ohrmazd) was a religion that flourished among Iranian tribes throughout nearly thousand years. Written on the pages of the *Avesta* (sacred texts of Zarathushtra's religion), the beliefs derived from earliest antiquity, from myths and legends older than the Iranian status of an independent community, stretching back to Indo-Iranian influences. The oldest accounts of the cult of the Wise Lord (Ahura - wise, Mazda - lord) are estimated to be at least 2500 years old and were left by those "whom he gave power: the Achaemenid kings".

In fact, the religious doctrine of Zarathushtra (7th century BCE) was not a new religion but rather a restored belief originating from older forms of Ohrmuzd cults (Mazdaism), and was a sort of "a compromise between ideology and teachings" that were incorporated into Zoroastrianism. The most important of these ideologies were Zurvanism and Manichaeism. The concepts of the origin of the universe differ in Zoroastrian myths and were shaped by the doctrine and thought around which a particular myth arose. One of the cosmologic versions in Zurvanite doctrine describes the genesis in the following way: in the beginning there was only Zurvan, the infinite time. There was no sun and no moon that would measure the months, the days, and the years. There was no earth and no sky. Nothing existed apart from Zurvan. But Zurvan desired an offspring. He prayed and made offerings until he finally conceived a child. He imagined his unborn child

as pure light, majesty, beauty and such absolute goodness that man cannot comprehend. But the thought is always involuntarily accompanied by its adversary - thus he imagined also the opposite character: darkness, ugliness, and evil, and a shade of doubt appeared together with the faith of a bright essence of the unborn. Apart from love, there were also opposite emotions: reluctance and envy. And though these were only shadows of feelings and thought, they were strong enough to conceive another son, the opposite of the first, embodying all qualities that Zurvan rejected. The other son was dark and evil, hostile towards the first one, aggressive and full of hatred. Zurvan was unaware of carrying two sons in his womb. As all-embracing unity, he did not know the nature of division, he did not know that separation always results in two things, not in one. Therefore he promised his first-born son the rule over the universe. But it happened that the son who emerged first from Zurvan's womb was not the desired bright son, the Wise Lord Ohrmuzd, but the dark, hairy, foul, and full of hatred: the first to come was Ahriman.

This is one of the versions of the myth about the beginning of all things. Another, influenced by the Persian Manichaeism, claims that originally there was only Good and Evil, Light and Darkness, the two primordial spirits, unaware of each other's existence. These are, however, stories that lay at the foundation of the official religion of the Old Persia - Zoroastrianism, the cult of the idealized Good Lord who embodied the infinite wisdom, goodness, and purity. This purity was worshipped by early Zoroastrian priests (the Magi) in the form of fire. This Old Persian religion represents what the Western Hermetic Tradition calls the Right Hand Path - where the worshipper is obedient to the official moral laws (created by the Wise Lord himself) and social rules that govern the whole community, and has to follow these regulations in order to deserve the mercy of God (salvation). This god is usually somewhere outside, high in abstract heavens, and the goal is to reunite with him after the death of the physical body.

It is significant that in this and other cultures, mythologies represent not only the gnosis (revelation) but also social changes occurring at those times. The Mazdaic and later Zoroastrian dualistic concept of the eternal struggle between the forces of Light and Darkness is a metaphor of the rising Persian statehood - the transition from the nomadic (Ahrimanic) tribal life into the settled agricultural system from which the first

monarchic dynasties emerged. The dualistic Persian mythology influenced also many later religious doctrines such as Gnosticism (especially the Persian Manichaeism and Mandaeism, or modern neo-Gnostic forms such as anthroposophy), the foundations of the Slavic mythology, or the dualism of the Christian doctrine. However, few researchers of the esoteric tradition are aware that in the Persian empire, apart from the bright religion of Ahura Mazda, there was also another cult: the antinomian form of the occult rebellion – Yatuk Dinoih, the religion of Ahriman.

Akht and Matigan-I Yosht-I Fryan

The oldest known accounts of Yatuk Dinoih (in Persian: witchcraft or sorcery) are derived from the Middle-Persian period, from the so-called *Pahlavi* script (etymologically: “heroic”), dating to 330 BCE – 326 CE. It was the time of the Sassanid dynasty. This tale is known as *Matigan-I Yosht-I Fryan* and describes an evil sorcerer, Akht, who travelled from town to town and challenged holy men (sages) with riddles. If they gave a proper answer, Akht let them go and live. But if they failed, he killed them. Riddles were in the form of questions that no one could answer. This way he killed 900 megvas (holy men) and the same number of women. Finally, Akht came to the town of Frashno-Vazaran, which means “the town answering riddles”, but even there no one could pass his test. However, there was a young man called Yoistha Fryan, a wise and holy person. He accepted the sorcerer’s challenge and thus the great game of questions and answers began. Akht asked thirty-three questions and all of them are given in the *Pahlavi* text. The young wiseman answered all of them and asked the sorcerer three questions of his own. Then, the tale describes a horrible ending.

This story, however, has another meaning – an esoteric interpretation connected with the magical knowledge and techniques of old Yaturan sorcerers. Ervad Marzban Hathiram in his essay about *Matigan-I Yosht-I Fryan* observes that Akht’s tests were not usual questions and the wisemen did not die in a conventional way. The sorcerer created them on the basis of the Staota: the law of vibrations. The Staota was put into a tight spool that was given (as a question) to the challenged person. When they tried to open the spool (answer the question), the force would kill them if they were not able to deal with the vibration (energy). Michael W. Ford explains

This in a modern interpretation that the words (questions) were the "demonic mantras of power" that awakened the primeval magical knowledge (atavisms), the alphabet of desire, in the sorcerer's mind.

Akht himself (sometimes called Akht Jadu or Kabad-us-spae) in the symbolism of the Yatukan magic is very important: he was both "creator and member of Yatus-coven of nomadic demons and sorcerers who wandered around Persia and practiced sorcery", as well as the embodiment of demonic powers of Ahriman, his earthly avatar (in regard to the nature and the goal of Yatukan initiation). He was the first (in Persia) to succeed in isolating the consciousness from "the natural order" (self-deification) through the dark alchemical transmutation.

Ahriman, Yatuk Dinoih, and the Left Hand Path

Ahriman, or Angra Mainyu, in Zoroastrian mythology and demonology is the spirit of darkness, prototype of what in the Western culture is referred to as the Prince of Darkness or the devil - embodiment of the ultimate evil. The Greeks and the Romans knew him as Arimanus, and Herodotus compared him to the Greek *Kakodaimonos*, meaning: evil spirit. The name "Ahriman" itself means "devilish spirit", or simply "devil". He is the creator and the lord of Daevas - evil spirits, one of the most ancient archetypes of the Western demons (the example of which is Aeshma Daeva, the spirit of hatred and fury, who in the European lore became Asmodeus). But the "evil nature" of Ahriman results from the patriarchal perception and the view imposed by the solar religion and the state authorities. In fact, he is like many other dark deities such as the Arabic Iblis, the Egyptian Set, the Judaic Sathan (Lucifer), or the Slavic Czernobog. He embodies the primordial darkness and chaos that preceded all creation. In the act of creation chaos gives rise not only to Light but to the whole structured universe. In many ancient mythologies this act is symbolically depicted as a defeat of a primeval monster, the symbol of original chaos, usually presented as a Serpent or a Dragon. Ahriman is a typical example of such a primordial monster. One of his most common forms was that of a black dragon (also a wolf, a toad, or a serpent) and like other similar deities, he was the spirit of death and the patron of sorcerers and witches.

The old Persian path of sorcery was unknown to the culture of the West for a long time. The tradition of Yatus (nomadic sorcerers and demons) is still one of the least known or understood religions. Yatus is in fact an ancient Left Hand Path system, originating from the area of what now constitutes Iran, and having much in common with the Typhonian/Draconian current. Similarly as the Egyptian Set, the godform of Ahriman in the symbolism of the Yatukan cults personifies the concept of the Adversary. It is the point in which an individual consciousness is awakened from "the sleep" and through antinomian rebellion challenges the imposed world structures. Like Set, he is the initiator, the symbol of darkness, chaos, and the lunar current - though this particular aspect is more evidently embodied by Az, the female counterpart of Ahriman. Az is the vampiric "queen of witches" and "mother of demons", the Persian equivalent of Lilith, Kali, or Hecate.

In all this ambiguity of the "Devilish Spirit", the most important is his symbolism of the self-deified consciousness. Ahriman represents the magician who achieved immortality through exploration of the Dark Side and found there the beautiful light of promethean illumination - the divinity within - the Black Diamond.

For a deeper understanding of this subject, it is interesting to compare the nature of Ahriman and his hierarchy of Daevas by means of Qabalistic analogy. Ohrmuzd and his emanations, the Amesha Spenta, personify the bright side of the universe that can be compared to the sephiroth on the Tree of Life, representing particular aspects of God (this is also the character and function of Ohrmuzd). However, as each sephira has its dark counterpart, so each Amesha Spenta has its dark equivalent, the antithesis in the form of the main Daevas that emerged from Ahriman's nature in the process of creation. Like the Qabalistic qliphoth, the Yatukan demons represent the inaccessible aspects of the universe and the dark side of consciousness. And like qliphothic energies, the Daevas are the dynamic, chaotic, and destructive forces.

Apart from vampiric initiation, the essence of the Yatukan magic also involves goetic evocations and invocations that stretch far beyond the practices of *The Lesser Key of Solomon*. When the goetic magician stands in the circle, afraid of the conjured force, Yatus (the sorcerer) or Pairika (the witch) consciously strive for the complete union with the evoked Daevas,

and the ultimate test of awakening is to enter the evocation circle without any protection. By means of dark magical practices and the inner alchemy, the nomadic followers of this forgotten religion worked to become like Akhtya (the founder of this cult) from the old Persian legends, the immortal sorcerer, to become strong enough to “transform desires into flesh” and to control the surrounding reality. Thus, through the communion with the most terrifying demons in history, they acquired their skills and knowledge essential to achieve the divinity – just like Ahriman.

Yatukan Magic in Postmodernist Times

Postmodernism, or postmodernist movement, seems a suitable term to characterize the today's world-picture: the period in which the contact with the sphere of sacrum has been replaced by mass media and each “modern” magical system is based on volatile identity, panpsychism, and eclecticism. The Yatukan tradition has also succumbed to the impact of the modern occult thought that might be called Magical Pragmatism. Apart from old techniques rooted in Persian traditions, this system has incorporated elements of Aleister Crowley's Thelema, Austin Osman Spare's Zos Kia Kultus, and inspiration from works of Jake Stratton-Kent, John Whiteside Parsons, or Charles Pace. We can also find here traces of the postmodern system of Chaos Magic. The Yatukan sorcery develops by incorporating also elements of necromancy and vampirism from other related paths: the Egyptian magic, Palo Mayombe, or Santeria. All this, however, occurs through a very modern and effective system of pragmatic dark magic and spiritual alchemy.

Yatukan Ritual of the Black Dragon

Lodge Magan, Various Authors

**Lord of the Shadows! Essence of Darkness! I summon your black spirits!
I seek union with the Shadow that is hidden in the abyss of my soul!
May the ritual begin!**

Lepaca Kliffoth!

Take the sword or a dagger and point it in the four cardinal directions,
speaking the following words:

South

**Shaitan! Lord of the Desert and the burning sun! Set! Bringer of Storms
and Fire! Let your essence enter this temple. Come forth from the utmost
Darkness! Light your Black Flame on the altar of my soul! I invoke thee!**

East

**Lucifer! Morning Star! Bringer of Light and Illumination! Phosphorus!
Let your spark of divinity blaze brighter than the light of the midday
sun. Fill this temple with the Promethean fire and light the flame on the
abyss of my existence! I invoke thee!**

North

**Belial! Angel of misrule! Belhor! Spirit of Earth and Darkness! Source of
impurity! Father of Lust and earthly pleasures! Enter this temple with
your spirits of Darkness! Come forth from the North, the realm of Cold. I
invoke thee!**

West

~ 54 ~

Leviathan! Great Serpent of the Sea! Rahab! Seven-headed Dragon of Chaos! Embrace me in your timeless coils. Rise forth from the depths of dark waters and fill this temple with the power that lies hidden deep in the nethermost abysses! I invoke thee!

May the infernal gates open and may the powers of the Above and the Below enter this ritual space to witness and enforce this ceremony!

Envision portals opening from the four directions and from above and below, visualize the dark powers entering the temple and filling in with a thick black energy. Vibrate the staota:

Nonasturma

Raise your wand and recite:

Spirit of Darkness, Angra Mainyu, I invoke you! I am the wanderer on the path of shadows on which I seek your presence and your guidance. Lift the veil of light that conceals the true nature of the world and let me become immortal in Darkness. Awaken me through your dark communion and let me taste the fruits of infernal ecstasy. Ahriman! The Black Dragon of Shadows! Fiendish Spirit! Let your dark forces into my being and reveal to me your essence through your seven archfiends!

Continue visualizing the temple being filled with thick black smoke

Indra! Lord of Apostasy! Daemon of Isolation! Enter my consciousness. Light the spark which I shall transform into fire of deification. The false gods will pass away to make way for those who seek divinity within!

Zairitsha! Spirit of immortal wisdom! Reveal to me infernal treasures of hidden knowledge! Unveil the ancient wisdom of dark sorcery!

Sauru! Demon of Disobedience! Essence of Rebellion! Give me the strength and perseverance to walk the harsh path of antinomian isolation! Let me follow the stream of Chaos that shall become my tool of dynamic progression!

**Naonhaithya! Spirit of Discontent! Move the wheel of eternal progress!
Do not let me rest in a mere content of stagnation, but set the wheel of
changes into motion so that I could always gather fresh fruits of my
work!**

**Taurvi! Daemon of deadly venom! Destroy the weakness with your
poison! Annihilate lies and illusions around me! Awaken in me the
hunger for knowledge that shall be transformed into power!**

**Aka Manah! Lord of isolated consciousness! Plant the seeds of divinity
in my soul and let them grow in the utmost Darkness so that I could
emerge from the abyss of ignorance as an avatar of the Black Dragon!**

**Aeshma Daeva! Demon of lust and anger! Wrath and Revenge! Violence,
Conflict and War! Awaken in me the fury so that I could, like the
tornado, destroy all obstacles in the way that I have chosen!**

**Lords of the Flesh
Lords of the Mind**

**Let my Will be proclaimed through your actions! Let me desire become
flesh!**

Vibrate the staota of power:

Yatukisahla!

**I become the vessel of Darkness which I transform into the divine fire.
Dark becomes Light and on this forbidden path I approach my own
godhood. May the Black Flame illuminate my being!**

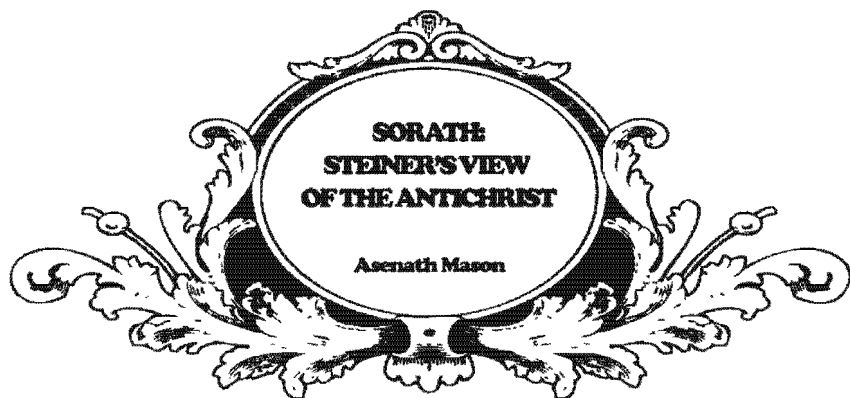
While vibrating another staota feel how the invoked energy is entering and
transforming your consciousness:

Izzadraana!

Ho Drakon Ho Megas!

Comments:

This ritual summons the seven Daevas, seven archfiends of Ahriman, the Black Dragon, and uses them as vehicles of aid in the process of self-deification that is the goal and essence of the Left Hand Path. The staota (vibrations) that are used in the ritual are taken from the grimoire of Persian witchcraft "Yatuk Dinoih" (second edition) by Michael. W. Ford.



"But there is also an opposing principle to the Lamb: there is the Sun Demon, the so-called Demon of the Sun, that which works in the evil forces of man, thrusting back the force of the Lamb. It works in such a way that certain portion of the human race will be excluded from the evolution leading to the Sun."³¹

In 1908 Rudolf Steiner held a series of lectures on the Apocalypse, the Antichrist and the opposing forces of good and evil. The central figure of these lectures was the so-called Sun Demon Sorath. Traditionally, Sorath is known as the spirit of the Sun, the dark counterpart of Archangel Michael, and his name translates as "the banished one." Therefore, he is an "evil angel," the dark spirit who rules not the Sun itself but rather its dark side, the Black Sun. In the Qabalah he is the intelligence of Thagirion, the

³¹ Rudolf Steiner's lectures

qliptothic counterpart of Tipheret. In his theories, Steiner came to identify Sorath with the force opposing Christ, the Christ's Shadow, the Antichrist. The Biblical Apocalypse speaks of three beasts: the great red dragon with 7 heads, 10 horns and 7 crowns; a sea beast with 7 heads, 10 horns and 10 crowns; and finally - an earth beast with two horns which looks like a lamb but speaks like a dragon.³² That last beast is Sorath, the spirit whose number is 666, the one whose aim is to destroy the work of Christ.

Steiner explains the significance of the name Sorath (s-v-r-t) and its numerical value in the following way: the letter Samech stands for the physical body, Vau - the etheric body, Resh - the astral body, and Tau - the lower "I" - all of these refer to man. Sorath is therefore inseparably connected with a human being, it is an integral part of the Self. What is significant - he represents the lower aspects of the Self, the ones connected with the earth, and also with the ego. Steiner claimed that during the Apocalypse stage the activity of Sorath would be revealed in the "War of All against All," which means a misguided ego development, or the obsession with the "I." In Steiner's view, this will not happen soon - the earth is still in the process of evolution, the process that includes seven great stages that will come to an end in a distant future. Then, mankind will be faced with the choice between Christ and Antichrist, the Lamb and the Beast. However, Sorath is inherent in human Self and thus never ceases to be active "in evil forces of man." His influence is continuous and inevitable, and it is expressed in basic instincts, impulses and lower actions of the will ("Mankind has a thorn in the flesh" - 2 Corinthians 12:2). The consequence of this is the lack of need for spiritualization, which creates a void that is filled with an urge to extreme experiences arising from instincts: sexual perversions, senseless violence, drug abuse, etc. (actually, the recognizable symptoms of our times). Thus, humanity does not progress spiritually but relies solely on a momentous gratification and bodily needs. That is why Steiner called Sorath "the arch-enemy of all development" and "the denier of all change."³³

Identification with Sorath leads to an illusory conviction that one is a god. From this conviction arises the denial of spiritual progress and the illusive sense of strength:

³² Terry Boardman: *Aspects of the Occult Significance of the Year 1998*

³³ Rudolf Steiner's lectures

"But the aim of being who hoped to intervene in 666 was to make himself God. That means, he wanted to take place of God for mankind; he was filled with what constitutes the Antichrist. This is expressed in the self-deification tendency of some dictators of the twentieth century."³⁴

Steiner refers here to the year 666 when the teachings inspired by Sorath were about to spread all over Europe from the academy of Gondishapur. He even mentions a teacher from Gondishapur "whose name is unknown, but who was the greatest opponent of Christ Jesus."³⁵ The self-deification tendency he speaks about means not the path of progress but a mere identification with the ego and rejection of spirituality that is concealed from man who "remains an animal, lags behind in his human evolution."³⁶ This results first in stagnation, then in regression. To illustrate this denial of the spirit, Steiner refers to the Eighth Ecumenical Council of 869, when, according to him, the spirit was abolished. In his view, this event that influenced the further tendencies in Christianity was inspired by Sorath:

"The being who hoped to intervene in 666 said: 'Men will come who no longer direct their gaze to the spirit - the spirit will not interest them. I shall see to it' (and this he actually brought about) that in the year 869 a Council will be held in Constantinople at which the spirit will be abolished. Men will no longer be interested in the spirit; they will turn their attention to nature and form ghostlike concepts of nature."³⁷

And is it not what actually happened to Christianity in the following centuries? The general manifestation of Sorath principle triggered the tendency to deny and reject the spirit that characterizes the gradual development of the Christian doctrine. In this case, it is interesting to follow Steiner's theory that evolutionary streams in Christianity have been the work of the Antichrist.

The symbolic sign of Sorath is a stroke bent back, with two curved points:



³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

The curved branches represent two horns of the Beast. They are also symbolic of two "chief servants" of Sorath - Lucifer and Ahriman, the force of light and the essence of darkness, wisdom and strength. In Steiner's view, Sorath stands behind Lucifer and Ahriman and inspires their actions. Steiner claimed that they both had or would have the period in history when their manifestation would reach its climax. According to this view, Lucifer had already ruled the earth - in the third millennium BCE when he incarnated in China. Ahriman is yet about to be incarnated, which should happen in the West at the end of the second millennium CE. Following this idea, we might assume that his incarnation in flesh has already occurred, and the period from 2000 CE onwards will be dominated by Ahrimanic emanations. Lucifer's incarnation marked the so-called period of man's incarnation into physical existence, Ahriman's - the time of exarnation out of physical existence. Ahriman has been trying to prevent this spiritual exarnation of human being. In relation to Lucifer, he might be called the spirit of contraction, while the "Light-Bearer" represents the principle of spiritual expansion. Sorath is behind these principles. He does not incarnate but remains hidden and unknown like a shadow. Steiner often refers to him as the Shadow of Christ, and emphasizes that the primary aim of Sorath is to destroy what Christ has done for mankind. Thus, the focus of his activity is on the lower instincts of man and the ego, where lies the greatest potential of Sorathic principle, this "thorn in the flesh:"

"For this War of All against All is the result of the 'kink' left behind in the physical body as the remains of Sorath's activity, the 'thorn' that can really lead to an incitement of the body-bound instinctive forces of egoism, which are so powerful because they are rooted undetected in the unconscious will of man."³⁸

This turn towards instincts, urges and impulses prepares the ground for Ahrimanic influence. Moreover, as Sorath's activity focuses on materialism, his other major tool is the god of money, Mammon. The period of Ahriman is also the time of Mammon's rule over the world. Everything is purchasable and money is put above mankind - it is more important than the human being. Humanity is trapped in a pursuit of an empty illusion. In Steiner's view, this is characteristic of Sorath's activity - the focus on earth and matter.

³⁸ Peter Tradowsky: *Christ and Antichrist - Understanding The Events At The End Of The Century*

According to Peter Tradowsky, who wrote about Steiner's theories in his book *Christ and Antichrist*, the most evident example of Sorathic possession was Hitler and the whole Nazi movement, the symbol of which was the swastika, the ancient representation of the Sun. It is significant that Hitler was convinced of his absolute power and wanted to be accepted almost as a god. His obsessive fanaticism about a unified state ("one people, one empire, one leader") was an expression of this aspiration. A striking instance of the manifestation of Sorathic principle was his statement: "The work begun by Christ, I will bring to a conclusion!" – declaration in which he puts himself in the place of the Antichrist. Another Sorathic quality was Hitler's amazing ability to manipulate the audience. His opponents went to meetings with counter-arguments and returned as enthusiastic supporters of his policies. He had an incredible skill of paralyzing thoughts of crowds thus creating the mind hypnosis, the gateway for Sorath to enter. His speeches stirred the crowd so extremely that people were totally overwhelmed with love, adoration, enthusiasm, fury – feelings so intense that brought them to tears. He possessed a strange magnetism, the ability to enter the will of others, as if he "put them under a spell." What is interesting, even at the moments of passionate speeches he kept his own emotions in a firm grip: "When he flung his tirades of hate into the auditorium, he was at the same time in control of his ebullition." This combination of fanaticism with rationality is the perfect example of what Steiner called the collaboration of Lucifer and Ahriman. It is also significant that little was known about Hitler's personality – a typical example of Sorath's desire to remain as an unknown shadow. Even his close advisors could say very little about him. As Ribbentrop writes:

The fact is that, although I have experienced so much with him, I have not got any closer to him humanly or otherwise in all our years of working together than I was on the first day we were acquainted."³⁹

There was one more striking resemblance to Sorath's striving to be regarded as God – the use of "heil" salute. As Tradowsky observes, this word in German language had been so far used only with reference to God or something divine.

Even though anthroposophy called the year 1933 "the rise of the Beast," Steiner believed that the peak of Sorath's influence occurred every 666

³⁹ Ibid.

years in earth evolution. On such occasions the Antichrist attempts to enter the minds of humans and lead them away from Christ. For the first time such an attempt took place in the year 666 when Sorath was about to give mankind knowledge for which people were not ready (the conscious soul), which could have catastrophic results for humanity. The tool of the Beast was then the Academy in Gondishapur in Persia. The next occurrence of 666 happened in 1332, the year of Black Death and other disastrous events. The third occurrence took place in 1998 which, according to Steiner, was the rise of Ahrimanic rule over the earth. Steiner held his lectures concerning the end of the millennium long before 1998. He was not mistaken, however, as to the omnipresent authority of materialism and ego-obsession. Much of his theories fit the present world-picture - the concentration on earthly aspects of life.

Sorath is therefore not as much of a "Sun demon" as an "Earth demon," the beast that emerges from the Earth and rules the Earth. However, his emanation does not mean the total rejection of spiritual forces but rather their different use: the descent instead of the ascent. In modern esotericism this is the distinction underlying two spiritual attitudes: the Right Hand Path and the Left Hand Path. For the Right Hand Path, the force of the "I," the ego, is dangerous and is a mere hindrance in spiritual progress. The Left Hand Path exploits the ego power and views it as a potential. This practice throughout ages has been known as black magic. Aleister Crowley referred to magicians who used the ego force as "the black brothers," the opposite of "the white brotherhood" whose aim was to leave the ego behind on the spiritual path of evolution. That is the reason underlying Steiner's conviction that Sorath leads man into black magic:

"Ultimately mankind will become divided into those who use white magic and those who use black magic. Thus in the mystery of 666, or Sorath is hidden the secret of black magic."⁴⁰

There is a theory that the name "Sorath" can be derived from Suriel/Sarhapanim, the female form of which is Suriath. This was originally an angel whose task was to guard the sunlight during the night and return it to God in the morning. This motif of the Sun at night appears in all cultures and is known as the Dark Sun, the Black Sun, or the Sun in Darkness. If we follow Steiner's view that Christ was the Sun, then logically

⁴⁰ Rudolf Steiner's lectures

Sorath as the Antichrist is the Black Sun – and as the upward ascent towards Christ is characteristic of the Right Hand Path, the descent towards the Sun in Darkness is the essence of the Left Hand Path.

There is a difference, however, between being an unconscious vessel for Sorathic powers and the conscious use of them which is characteristic of the Left Hand Path currents. The path of self-deification is based not on the mere illusion of "being a god," the vessel for the Antichrist, but the striving to become the Adversary oneself, the self-isolated consciousness. This is the attitude towards progress under the sign of the inner Sun, the Black Sun that is represented by Sorath.

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The Renaissance Masters of Black Magic

Johannes Trithemius

Trithemius (1462-1516) was a respected monk in the Benedictine monastery of Sponheim. After his arrival, he reformed the monastery, restored the building, established a large library of about 2000 various volumes, and obliged monks to more devoted and regular work. Apart from this, however, he was a passionate follower of occult sciences and gained fame as a magician practising demonic magic. This opinion owed much to his interests in Hermeticism which was not well seen by the Church authorities. The main reason, however, was his book *Steganographia*. In 1498, he wrote to his friend Arnold Bostins sharing his ideas about the book:

"This book, in which I teach many little-known secrets and mysteries, will seem to all, especially the ignorant, full of superhuman, amazing, incredible things. Nobody has ever spoken or written of them before me".⁴¹

The title of the book, *Steganographia*, derived from Greek and translated as "hidden writing". On the surface it was a system of angelic magic, but in fact it was a system of cryptography and the art of encoding messages – at

⁴¹Andre Nataf: *Dictionary of the Occult*

least two first books of the work. They were conventionally written and explained how to encode texts, along with providing suitable examples. The third book, however, was different. It contained numbers and names of different entities. It was about conjuring 28 planetary intelligences, four for each of the seven planets. There were also detailed descriptions of how to send such a message: using rose oil ink, drawing a picture of the particular spirit, fashioning another picture of the person who was to receive the message, folding them together, wrapping in a whitewashed linen, and finally placing all in a container which was to be hidden. Because of these descriptions, it was widely believed that the book contained secrets of conjuring spirits, and scholars generally considered it a prime example of the sixteenth-century grimoire of black magic. Trithemius himself claimed that the book contained synthesis of sciences, the art of memory, magic, language-learning system, and a method of sending messages without any symbols or the help of a messenger. The reaction to the book was very fierce – it was considered a qabalistic and necromantic work with forbidden formulas for conjuring demons. Actually, it has been lately discovered that the third book of the work was also a secret code hidden behind the names of angels, spirits and astrological signs. At this time it was attacked as a book of demonic incantations and forbidden occult arts. Trithemius reputedly destroyed some of the portions of the book, but the manuscript circulated widely around Europe and his theories became very influential. Trithemius, however, did not refute these rumours. It was generally known that he had a great interest in the Qabalah and numerology, and indeed wrote some other works on magic and alchemy. He tried to describe some of the methods used to conjure supernatural powers and with their help influence the external world.

What was then the nature of his magic? Trithemius studied the relations between the micro- and the macrocosm and tried to apply this knowledge in practice. He mostly used the names of angels in his books, which is also the reason why his studies were called "angelic magic". His methods, however, did not differ much from those used by other magicians who dealt with demonic magic. The only difference is that in Trithemius' invocations the names of demons were replaced with the names of angels. The procedure for conjuring those entities still remained the same. In *The Art of Drawing Spirits into Crystals* he uses the same procedures of calling the spirits as in the contemporary grimoires of black magic: preparation of the crystal, drawing a magical circle, choosing a proper day and hour,

putting a ring and a pentacle, and the ceremony itself. Besides, in some writings Trithemius described certain experiences with demons whom he conjured and could not fully control. We might then suspect that his magic was not only "angelic".⁴²

There were also many rumours about Trithemius' magical skills. It was believed that he used the art of necromancy at the request of the Emperor Maximilian I to summon the spirit of his deceased wife Mary of Burgundy. He had a reputation of an alchemist and never denied it. It was even said that the financial resources for the restoration of the monastery were the result of the successful transmutation of the Philosopher's Stone⁴³. No wonder that his person contributed largely to the Faust myth in the Renaissance Europe. Among his works there was also *Antipalus Maleficiorum Comprehensus*, a book which classified witches according to their specialities. The book also listed 44 methods of divination and contained an interesting bibliography.

Agrippa Von Nettesheim

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-1535) was an acknowledged expert on occultism, philosopher and the most influential writer of the Renaissance esoteric literature. His key work *De Occulta Philosophia* greatly contributed to the development of the Renaissance studies of magic and linked his name with the contemporary Faust legends. It was an encyclopedia of magic in which he made an attempt to describe the most popular aspects of the occult philosophy of the age, especially the Hermetic teachings. He claimed that behind the superficial description of occult arts presented in his book, there is also a secret interpretation which cannot be written down but must be passed from the master to the student. His definition of magic given in the first chapter of the work was:

"Magic is a faculty of wonderful virtue, full of most high mysteries, containing the most profound contemplation of most secret things, together with the nature, power, quality, substance, and virtues thereof, as also the knowledge of whole nature, and it doth instruct us concerning the differing and agreement of things

⁴² Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh: *The Elixir and the Stone*

⁴³ Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh: *The Elixir and the Stone*

amongst themselves, whence it produceth its wonderful effects, by uniting the virtues of things through the application of them one to the other, and to their inferior suitable subjects, joining and knitting them together thoroughly by the powers, and virtues of the superior Bodies. This is the most perfect and chief science, that sacred and sublimer kind of Philosophy, and lastly the most absolute perfection of all most excellent Philosophy".⁴⁴

He advocated the conviction that a true magician had to be skilled in many disciplines: natural philosophy, mathematics, arithmetics, music, geometry, optics, astronomy and physics, theology, etc. He also believed in unity of all traditional sciences. According to him, they all complemented and reinforced one another and the knowledge of all of them was a necessity for a magician. Therefore, the three parts of his *Occult Philosophy* present such aspects of the occult as: natural magic (focusing on the exploration of three worlds: the elemental, the celestial and the intellectual), numerology and secrets of cosmic harmony, and, finally, ceremonial magic along with the description of hierarchy of angels and demons.

Agrippa is probably the best known Renaissance magician associated with demonic black magic. It is significant that he was "a living legend" also to his contemporaries. He was commonly considered to be a sorcerer practising black magic. It was believed that he had a magical ball in which he could see distant places, past and future events. Agrippa himself greatly contributed to his image of a "mysterious magician". He claimed, for example, that most of his knowledge was the result of the contact with demons. There were also stories that Agrippa used to walk everywhere followed by a black dog. The animal was believed to be his familiar, a demon in the shape of a dog. This rumour linked his name with legends about Faustus - for example a similar account can be found in Philip Melanchton's biography of Johannes Faustus, in which the protagonist was constantly accompanied by a black dog. Of course, it was not an ordinary animal but Mephistopheles himself. Another rumour described Agrippa's abilities to communicate with the dead. Once, he reputedly summoned the spirit of Cicero at the request of lord Surrey and his court. There was also a story of Agrippa's student who came to his study when the scholar was out. The young apprentice evoked a powerful demon using a spell from Agrippa's magic book but he was too weak to control the creature. According to the story, the demon killed the apprentice. When Agrippa

⁴⁴ Agrippa. *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*

returned and saw what happened, he forced the demon to enter the body of a boy and walk into the town so that everyone could see the apprentice alive. The scholar did not want to be accused of murdering the unfortunate student. The possessed body went out of Agrippa's house and walked through the town until the demon left it. Then it fell on the ground as if the boy had a sudden attack and died of natural causes.⁴⁵

Agrippa's reputation of a sorcerer was reinforced by the publication of *The Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy*, a supposed supplement to his *De Occulta Philosophia*. The fourth book gained a notorious publicity because of the references to black magic, necromancy, demonic evocations, etc. It appeared in Latin some thirty years after Agrippa's death and its authorship has been often questioned. The book expands on a few particular themes from the previous three books, mostly concerning diverse techniques of summoning spirits - what is significant: not only heavenly, angelic forces, but the so called "evil spirits". The first part of the work describes methods of extracting names of good and evil spirits corresponding to the seven planets. Then, the author explains how to fashion characters consisting of lines and heads and provides the tabulation of the most popular shapes associated with spirits and planets to which they are attributed. There is also a treatise on pentacles and sigils, consecration of instruments used in rituals and ceremonies and preparation of *Liber Spiritum* (the Book of Spirits). The directions for communicating with evil spirits resemble those presented in other grimoires. Before summoning a spirit, a magician has to take into account several basic things: what planet it is associated with, its properties, the convenient time for the operation, the quality of air and the proper place for a magical circle. In the circle the magician has to write proper names: of the summoned evil spirit and the good ones that are supposed to constrain it, also certain characters and pentacles to fortify the place. When the preparations are complete, the magician and his assistants consecrate the circle and begin the ceremony.

Agrippa gives properties of the possible forms and shapes assumed by the planetary spirits, those of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and also the Sun and the Moon. The last part of the book contains a short description of necromantic operations of summoning the spirits of the dead, which is interesting, as such descriptions are rarely given in other

⁴⁵ Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh: *The Elixir and the Stone*

grimoires. According to Agrippa, to summon such spirits the magician had to use blood, or a part of the body of the dead person, bones of the dead, flesh, eggs, milk, honey, and oil. The operation had to be carried out in the haunted places or where the summoned person spent much time. The place most suitable for such a ceremony would be a churchyard or an area where criminals were executed, or where many people died a violent death. The ceremony also had to involve artificial lights with inscriptions of names and seals.⁴⁶

Legends and published writings made Agrippa a very famous and influential figure in the contemporary Europe. His name is mentioned in many sixteenth-century literary works, such as e.g. Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*. No wonder that he had a great influence on the shape of various legends and stories about Faust. In Christopher Marlowe's famous dramatic work *Doctor Faustus* Agrippa appears as a historical figure and as one of the characters. Faustus calls for him to obtain advice concerning magical practices. Marlowe's Faustus himself is a character modeled on Agrippa and stories from his life. In the centuries to follow Agrippa's image would be taken by many writers and used as a prototype of many literary protagonists. Among them were such figures as the magician from Marguerite Yourcenar's *L'oeuvre au noir* (1968) and, of course, the most famous Faust character created by Goethe in his dramatic work.

Edward Kelly

Edward Kelly (1555-1595 e.v.), the infamous assistant of the acknowledged Elizabethan magus John Dee, was one of the Renaissance figures most commonly associated with black magic, demonic practices, and also often called a mere trickster and a charlatan. There are, however, certain things which suggest that he was something more than a mere con man. Crowley's opinion of Kelly is very favourable. According to him, Kelly was a genius and a very skilful magician. Crowley even considered himself to be the reincarnation of Kelly.

⁴⁶ *The Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy*

Kelly's reputation of a black magician is rooted in his interest in alchemy, demons, necromancy, and other occult arts of the age. He was said to experiment with alchemy, trying to manufacture gold. An eighteenth-century engraving from Ebenezer Sibly's *A New and Complete Illustration of the Occult Sciences* presents Kelly in a ceremony of summoning a spirit of a deceased person. Kelly is standing in a magical circle with a companion (probably Paul Waring), holding wand and a book of spells in his hands, communicating with the summoned spirit. The scene is placed at the graveyard at night.⁴⁷ This is the reflection of the rumours about Kelley's necromantic pursuits and his inclination to black magic.

The most famous, however, was Kelly's cooperation with John Dee. Dee and Kelly met in 1582. Before these years, Dee performed many magical experiments, always working with someone else:

"From the records that do survive, we can describe Dee's experiments as follows. Dee always worked with a Seer, who would look into Dee's "Shewstone," i.e. a crystal ball, or an Obsidian "magic mirror". Dee would usually begin each session by praying fervently. The Seer would then look into the Shewstone and describe the visions he experienced. All the while Dee recorded what the Seer said, and would often address questions to the entity which was supposedly within the crystal. The first recorded scrying session, in 1581, began with Dee praying that an angel called Anael would appear to Saul in the crystal globe. Dee writes the record of the session as if he converses directly with Anael, but we should assume that Saul acted as the "mouthpiece" for the apparition in the crystal".⁴⁸

Kelly joined him in March 1582 and from that time he was his only assistant throughout scrying sessions and experiments that led to the foundation of the Enochian system. Dee's reputation in his own day was not perfect either. He was respected by scholars and patrons at the court, but at the same time there were rumours that he was a sorcerer, often called a "conjuror." His cooperation with Kelly, always considered a black magician, initiated a great deal of further rumours. Their work was based on shared duties: Dee acted as an orator reciting prayers in order to evoke spirits that were to manifest in a scrying stone prepared for this occasion. Kelly was the medium: he watched the stone and reported everything he saw or heard. Simultaneously, Dee wrote down everything that was said.

⁴⁷ Waite A.E. *The Book of Spells*

⁴⁸ Alex Sumner. *John Dee*

Kelly's background was shrouded in mystery. There is not much known about him before his meeting Dee, apart from a few pieces of information. Kelly viewed himself as an alchemist. He published three alchemical works: *The Stone of the Philosophers*, *The Humid Way*, and *The Theatre of Terrestrial Astronomy*. He had, however, a great interest in the contemporary demonic magic and probably was familiar with the most famous grimoires. In his magical diaries Dee observes that Kelly often complained about the interference of "evil spirits" and he probably did not stop practising demonic magic apart from participating in the scrying sessions. It is also suspected that the spirits he contacted during these sessions were not always "angels" since some of the things they told Kelly questioned their "heavenly" status. The most famous example was the wife-swapping incident – an "angel" told Kelly that he and Dee should exchange wives and share them in common, which they did. That was probably one of the reasons why Dee decided to break his relationship with Kelly soon after. It is also the example quoted to support the theory that the messages from spirits were mere products of Kelly's imagination. There are, of course, more similar instances of the questionable angelic messages. Once, the angel Uriel appeared to Kelly and ordered Dee to give his "faithful assistant" a pension of 50 pounds a year.⁴⁹ In one fragment of his diary Dee writes that the spirits attempted to persuade Kelly:

- "- That Jesus was not God.
- That no prayer ought to be made to Jesus.
- That there is no sin.
- That mans soul doth go from one body to another childe quickening or animation.
- That as many men and women as are now, have always been (...)
- That the generation of mankind from Adam and Eve, is not an History, but a writing which has another sense.
- No Holy Ghost they acknowledged.
- They would not suffer him to pray to Jesus Christ; but would rebuke him, saying, that he robbed God of his honour, etc."⁵⁰

But Kelly was indeed a diligent assistant. He devoted much of his time for experiments with Dee and worked with him throughout many years until they split. As he often complained, he was aware that the visions and voices he experienced were not necessarily "angels". On the contrary – he

⁴⁹ Andre Nataf: *Dictionary of the Occult*

⁵⁰ T.Apiryon: *Sir Edward Kelly*

suspected that they might have been dark manifestations of his unconscious, and sometimes he was convinced that they were nothing else than demons. Dee never experienced them himself, so in his opinion they were "angels" and he did not believe Kelly's impressions about their demonic character.

Johann Weyer

Johann Weyer (1515-1588) was a student of Agrippa and a firm believer in magic. He was also a famous scholar in the field of medicine and a pioneer in psychiatry because of his deep interest in human mental mechanisms. His most famous work is *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1563), a rebuttal of *Malleus Maleficarum* - the most influential Renaissance witch hunter's handbook. Weyer was convinced that women accused of witchcraft were in fact mentally disturbed and they needed a medical treatment, not exorcisms. He criticised severely all cruel punishments prescribed for witchcraft by law and pleaded for leniency for the accused persons.

However, Weyer did not question the existence of devils and their influence on human life. In his book he described in great detail all the powers of demons and the danger arising from the contact with their agents: magicians and poisoners (but not witches). According to him, poisoners with the devil's help inflicted physical harm, but magicians were even worse. While witches served the devil because their will was not strong enough and they could not resist his temptations, magicians were strong-willed people who willingly took instructions from demons. In his view, magicians tried to overcome the laws of nature and willingly communicated with evil forces in their pursuit for power. This made them the devil's agents - conscious followers of the evil path.

What is important, however, is an appendix to his monumental work, in which Weyer included a list of demons. He called this catalogue *Pseudomonarchia daemonum* and referred to its source as *Liber officiorum spirituum, seu Liber dictus Empto. Salomonis, de principibus & regibus dæmoniorum* ("Book of the offices of spirits, or the Book of sayings of Empto. Solomon concerning the princes and kings of the demons"). In fact, *Pseudomonarchia daemonum* clearly resembles the *Goetia* - these are almost the same entities, some with slight variations in names. Similarly as in the

Goetia, Weyer gives descriptions of each demon, focusing on their names, possible shapes, properties and their hierarchy. But there are also differences. In Weyer's text there are no demonic seals, and the spirits are summoned by a simple conjuration, not the elaborate ritual such as those from the *Goetia*. The order and the number of spirits is also different. Instead of 72 demons of the *Goetia*, Weyer enumerates 68 spirits in a completely different order. The demons are generally the same, apart from the missing ones: Vassago, Seere, Dantalion and Andromalius.⁵¹

In spite of Weyer's dislike for magicians, his *Pseudomonarchia daemonum* was widely used by numerous practitioners of black arts. Paradoxically, it became one of the most influential texts on demonic magic in the sixteenth century.

Pico della Mirandola: a Modern Magician in the Fifteenth-Century Italy

The above survey of the main masters of Renaissance Magic contains a clear and detailed picture of Europe's magical landscape during the Renaissance centuries. The reader can now have an idea on how strong in the philosophical environment (where often the magical practice was gaining a moral support) was the dichotomy between demonic and natural magic. Every single author, philosopher and practitioner of the magical arts was strongly claiming to be a follower of the natural path, regardless of the actual researches he was involved into. To save themselves from accuses and probable imprisonments, most of the Hermetic authors of Renaissance declared – apart from rare cases – their dedication to the „noble cause“ of Natural Magic.

To properly follow the discussion about this – often subtle – dividing line would be beyond the purpose of this article. It is enough to state that, roughly, natural magic was distinguished from the so-called „demonic“ because it was dealing uniquely with the „lunar“ and „sub-lunar“ world; so to say, with the energies and the occult properties of Earth.

⁵¹ Johann Weyer: *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum*

The realm of demonic magic was instead the one of ceremonial magic, witchcraft, a magic dealing with *other worlds and dimensions* of existence, and so much more dangerous for the Church, who wanted to keep an exclusive grasp on the extra-mundane theology. This diatribe has anyway been exposed in detail elsewhere⁵²; what is of interest for us is that under the label of „Natural“ or „Spiritual“ magic many practitioner of the occult arts were hiding their unorthodox experiments. Trithemius himself – and others – were publically throwing scorn on „black magic“, only to dive deep into demonic magic experiments in the safety of their laboratories.

One of the most interesting and underestimated figure of the Italian Renaissance was the Italian philosopher and magician Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494). The main non-Jewish figure to have studied and introduced the Qabalah into the western culture, he synthesized the Qabalistic and the Medieval Hermeticism into a complete system of practical magic very close to the ones that more than 400 years later would have dawned on the Western Occultism.

Since childhood an unquiet and passionate student, he always looked forth for a foundation of knowledge able to transcend the simple dogmas of Christianity; he became fond of the philosophical and esoteric sciences and, despite his young age, mastered the Hebrew language as no other contemporary scholar, learning Chaldean and Arabian as well. In a first moment he saw the Jewish mysticism as something that could help him gain new insights into the mysteries of Christianity; therefore he approached with enthusiasm the study of the more theoretical foundations of the Qabalah, to accomplish his life-long project: a complete synthesis of human knowledge and arts.

His main insights came with the discovery of the works of Abraham Abū'l-'Afiya, a Spanish Jew of the thirteenth century that followed the Spanish branch of Qabalism known as „Shemot“ or „of the Names“, the practical part of the Qabalah. Abū'l-'Afiya developed meditation techniques linked to the different associations of the Hebrew alphabet, whose aim was, on a side, the mystical and gnostic knowledge of God, and – on a less orthodox side -, it was meant to use the words of power of the Hebrew language to

⁵² D.P. Walker: *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella*

contact and control angels and other astral beings, and also to perform changes on the material plane.⁵³

Pico became more and more fascinated by the systems developed by Abū'l-'Afiya. He probably saw the techniques of the Spanish qabalist as a pragmatic way to dive into the divine, beyond the heavy religious and philosophical structures. The „Path of the Names“ was a real and effective system able to bring knowledge from the other side, reaching beyond the sphere of action of Earth and the „good magic“ – the one that from Marsilio Ficino and on the Italian and European school of Hermeticism would have taught and imposed.

Pico made a first „break-through“ defining the *ars combinandi* (Latin: the art of combining) of the Qabalah a very high magical art dealing with superior things beyond the sphere of the moon: „the supreme part of natural magic“. This was very revolutionary; the thin line between the hardly-accepted natural magic and demonic magic was exactly traced between what was dealing with the *sub-lunaris* (earthly) sphere and the *super-lunaris* (celestial, stellar and infernal) realms.⁵⁴ Pico gave a new dignity to magic. He still called it „natural magic“, even if „supreme“, but a line had been definitely crossed: the interest is now to „channel the powers of the supernal spheres“, beyond the stars.⁵⁵ He will later admit even that Qabalistic Magic is an higher form of magic in respect to the Natural one; and it is not surprising that the Church will condemn all the 900 assertions of his important work *Conclusiones*.

In his exploration of Qabalist Magic, Pico arrives to recognize the identical nature of the good and evil forms of Jewish Magic. The evil qabbalists – affirms Pico della Mirandola – the ones that invoke and command demons, calling forth their power from Solomon and Enoch, drew their power from the same source as the „good“ qabalists, only the ends were different. The evil qabalists were invoking evil demons, while the good ones had the discernment to work only with angels – but as a matter of fact, Pico recognized the common source of both attitudes, even if warning anyone to work with the dark side of Qabalism.

⁵³ P. Zambelli. *L'ambigua natura della Magia*

⁵⁴ F. Yates: *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*

⁵⁵ G. Pico della Mirandola. *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno*

What is certain is that from now on the philosophical works of Pico della Mirandola are rich of magical elements and apologies of the magical arts; it is not really possible anymore, as Frances Yates says, to distinguish between mysticism and magic in Pico. His writings are full of accounts of magical operations, of an ascension through the Sephiroth and of contact with outer beings. First among the many students of the occult arts that came before and after him, Pico speaks of how to release the astral body during ecstatic works; he often refers to the rising of a fiery energy that brings a kind of death, that he calls *mors osculi* (death of kiss). This sounds quite similar to the accounts on Kundalini given in Tantric texts about Samadhi and the rise of the Serpent Power through the Sushumna.

His warnings about the dark side of the Qabalah are frequent, but from many hints we can understand that he was having a direct knowledge of it. He often underlined the importance of recognizing good angels from evil ones, and to perform proper purification rites before any magical operation. As he states in one of his works:

Qui operatur in Cabala...si errabit in opere aut non purificatus accesserit, deuorabitur ab Azazale...⁵⁶

The fear of encountering the evil astral demons was one of the main reasons why Natural Magic had always tried to avoid any kind of contact with the other side.

It is also worth to mention the correspondences that Pico noticed between the ten Aristotelic spheres of the cosmos and the ten Sephiroth. His intuition brought him to understand that Aristotle's vision of the cosmos wasn't uniquely physical, but extended to the higher spheres. He traces the following lay-out:

⁵⁶ Latin: Who operates with Qabalah, if will do wrong a Work, or will approach it not purified, will be devoured by Azazel. F. Yates. *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*

Sephiroth

Spheres

1. Kether	Primum Mobile
2. Chockmah	Eight Sphere
3. Binah	Saturn
4. Chesed	Jupiter
5. Geburah	Mars
6. Tiphereth	Sol
7. Netzach	Venus
8. Hod	Mercury
9. Yesod	Luna
10. Malkuth	Elements

Useless to say, this became the main attribution of the ten Sephiroth and was later re-taken by the Golden Dawn and many other western magical Orders.

We must also contextualize his writings in the climate of the era. The Church and the traditional philosophical circles were strictly condemning any kind of suspect doctrine, and even if in the fifteenth century in Italy we are not at the extremes that will be encountered in the Counter-Reformation Europe of few decades after, such a magical system as the one that Pico wanted to develop were strongly opposed.

He was trying, through theory and practice combined, to establish a mystico-magical system based on the elevation of man beyond his limits, and beyond any restricting dogma. Pico was claiming to be a Christian, but in the more mystic meaning of the term. His yearning for unity with God reminds of the ascetic attitude of Taoist and Zen mystics, a kind of transcendence and knowledge of what lies beyond.

He was the first to theorize a Man as a *Magus*, able to use magic and the Qabalah to „shape one's destiny“, beyond religion and any boundary. He claimed the right of man to be free to think, shape, love his own universe, and even to modify it by the means of magic. No surprise that he received no sympathy from the Church. Even more heretical was the inclusion in his system of the gnostic heresy of the „Est Deus In Nobis“ (Latin: God Is In

Us); the magician uses as fuel for his magical operation the divine spark that lies deep in him, and that will help him to *become again divine*, marrying heaven and hell, earth and the supernal dimensions. Keeping in mind the historical context where he lived, these assertions place Pico as one of the most revolutionary and influential authors of Renaissance magic and philosophy; the echo of his thoughts and works can be seen in authors that will come many centuries after him.

Also from a historical point of view his work has a great relevance. He was the first among the Western scholars to understand the practical and magical nature of the Qabalah. From him and on, Qabalah would definitely form the core of the „cultural education of the Renaissance Magician“, to quote again the Renaissance Magic scholar Frances Yates. He paid his revolutionary ideas and his syncretic spirit with a life-long persecution by the Church that led to his premature death. At the age of 31, after having been officially lifted from all accuses, was assassinated by poisoning in the city of Florence.



Terrifying mistress of the night and witchcraft, with serpents in her hair and a torch in her hand, surrounded by howling hounds - such is the depiction of Hecate in visual arts and mythological tales. The cult of this ancient goddess originates from Thrace, she had many followers among the Carians of Anatolia, and her worship was widely spread throughout Greece. It was through the Greek myths and legends that she has found her way into the culture of the West. Hecate was depicted as a woman sitting on a throne, as three women joined at the backside (a maiden, a nymph and a crone), or as one character with three heads. There were also statues depicting her as a woman with the head of a horse and a dog, or a lion and a bull.⁵⁷

Hecate possesses many aspects and many powers. Often her cults referred to the concept of life and death, the mystical transformation through death and rebirth. She was benevolent and generous to nature and to humans, as well as ruthless, responsible for all nocturnal atrocities and destructive witchcraft. She ruled the earth, the sky and the sea, and she also decided about human fates. Her worshippers prayed to her for happiness, wealth and prosperity. In Athens, houses had a small altar in honour of Hecate and she was highly respected among the folk. According to Hesiod's *Theogony*, she was the daughter of Titans: Perses and Asteria, a benevolent deity who nursed the children of Zeus. Hesiod's Hecate was the favourite of gods and humans, the goddess who always listened to and answered people's prayers. She could endow man with wealth, power and fame,

⁵⁷ Manfred Lurker: *Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses, Devils and Demons*

protected soldiers in battles and sailors at sea. She watched over the justice in courts and granted victory in competitions. And finally, she was also associated with the moon and worshipped as the patroness of agriculture.⁵⁸

On the other hand, Hecate was viewed as the goddess of darkness and death. It was believed that she appeared at night at the crossroads, accompanied by dogs, ghouls and wraiths. She could assume a terrifying shape, wandered around graveyards and heralded misfortune to all who saw her. Therefore, one of her names was Antaia ("she who meets"). She was also called Trivia, as she appeared at three roads crossing one another. In many cultures crossroads are thought to represent the earthly point where worlds and dimensions meet and intertwine: the world of Spirit and the world of Matter, the place of gods and the mundane reality of humans, the earthly and the divine. During her nocturnal wanderings, Hecate was extremely dangerous and people stayed away from places where she could appear, for she brought death to those whom she encountered. But to those who dared to seek her, she showed the right way – the one that should be chosen from the three crossing roads, the path of initiation into her dark mysteries.

Hecate was often seen in desolate places: on tops of mountains, in the depth of forests, and in forgotten areas. Her kingdom was that of wild animals: hounds, wolves, dears, and serpents. Her witchcraft often included mysteries of transformation into a beast, a practice resembling the shamanic tradition of shape-shifting. Like the goddess, who assumed shapes of animals herself, follower of her path could shape-shift into bestial creatures associated with her lore. In her retinue one could find Empusa, the fearful ghoul feeding on human flesh and haunting her prey under the disguise of a beautiful woman. Hecate was also the goddess of the underworld – she guarded the gates of Hades together with the hellish dog, Cerberus. She was believed to rule over vengeance and atonement. At the crossroads her worshippers left cakes and honey as the offering, and sometimes also animals were sacrificed, especially black dogs. Her cult was unlike the worship of other deities celebrated by open, public festivals. Offerings to Hecate were left secretly at night. They were left for wild animals, the creatures of the night, her servants and companions.

⁵⁸ Hesiod: *Theogony*

However, Hecate was above all the patroness of witches and the goddess of dark magic. She endowed them with power over the forces of Nature, revealed the secrets of herbs and taught how to prepare magical potions. She was the mistress of necromancy and funereal magic. To her followers she appeared with torches in her hands, or in an animal shape - a mare, a dog, or a wolf. She led her adepts through the path of darkest and deepest layers of the irrational. Her cult was persecuted by patriarchal religions because it involved practices that seemed devious and dangerous, especially those connected with the powers of female sexuality. Her mysteries were based on the cult of sexuality in its savage and primal aspect. Witches who worshipped Hecate used witchcraft to increase sexual attractiveness and to attract the potential prey. Their attitude to sex was predatory - they treated their partners as prey, seized them and left them drained, exhausted, deprived of life energies. The cult of Hecate was therefore associated with the cult of unleashed female sexuality - threatening the patriarchal structures of the community. In this sense, Hecate was one of the "darkest" goddesses of the Western pantheon. Her cult is the *via sinistra*, the exploration of the dark side of human nature, the wild element, the dark instinct of the primordial left-hand-path traditions.

Hecate was also associated with the moon and thus, considered a goddess of the moonlight. That is why, she was called Mene, the name deriving from Selene, the goddess of the moon and the underworld. Her mysteries can be therefore associated with the female menstrual period which had been linked with the moon phases since earliest antiquity. Hecate, however, was a chthonic goddess. One of her main attributes is a key that opens the gate of Hades. The torch lights up the dark corridors and tunnels of the underworld. She is the guide who leads adepts through the kingdom of the dead, the goddess of illumination sometimes even depicted as a living flame, illuminating the darkness of obscurity and oblivion.

In literature, witches often summon her name in their spells and rites. In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Hecate is the Queen of Witches invoked by the "weird sisters" in their grim prophesies. Shakespeare often mentions this mysterious goddess in his magic-themed plays such as *Macbeth* or *Midsummer Night's Dream*. In literature she is commonly linked with witchcraft and the night. Also *The Witch* from the title of the play by the English playwright Thomas Middleton is called Hecate. This dark goddess is often described as a personification of black magic. This image is rooted

in the medieval tradition, when Hecate was the goddess of death and moonlight, the mistress of the dead, the Wild Hunt, warriors, and presides over nocturnal gathering of witches and their malevolent spells.

The name "Hecate" itself is of unknown origin. It has been suggested that it might mean "the one that stands away." There is also a resemblance between the word "Hecate" and the Egyptian term "hekau," meaning "magic." Or it can also be a derivative from the name of the Egyptian Heqet, the frog-headed goddess of childbirth. According to Robert Graves, her name means "hundred" and refers to the Great Year of hundred lunar months, when once ruled the Sacred King. His blood was the symbol of the earth's rebirth.⁵⁹ Hecate has many other titles as well. Apart from the above-mentioned, she was also called Aphrattos ("Unnamed") or Pandina ("Terrifying").

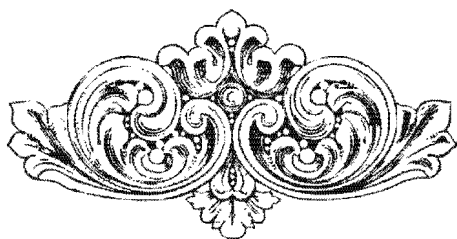
Among other goddesses, she was identified with Artemis, Selene, Demeter, or Persephone. It was her who told Demeter about Persephone's abduction by Hades into the underworld. Through her marriage to Hades, Persephone became the mistress of the cyclic changes in Nature - in the late autumn she descends to the underworld, which marks the beginning of winter and the seasonal death of Nature. In the spring she returns, bringing new life into the world. When she emerges from the land of the dead, Hecate comes forth to greet her, and thus becomes her companion in the symbolic process of Nature's death and rebirth. As the goddess of magic and dark rites, she can also be linked with the Celtic Cerridwen, the mistress of witchcraft, whose main attribute is the cauldron of wisdom. The iconographic image of a witch as a woman brewing a magical potion in a cauldron is the re-enactment of this ancient myth. The witch's potion was the source of great knowledge, unknown to non-initiates. There is a legend that once Cerridwen's servant tasted a few drops of her elixir, which gave him profound knowledge, poetic talents, and ability to see the past and the future events.⁶⁰

Initiation into the mysteries of Hecate is the descent into the Darkness, where the ancient knowledge lies hidden, awaiting to be re-discovered. Hecate leads us through dark paths to the gates of hell, where the terrifying Cerberus guards the long forgotten secrets of power and immortality. The

⁵⁹ Robert Graves: *Greek Myths*

⁶⁰ Edain Mc Coy: *Celtic Myth and Magick*

key to the door is in the hand of the goddess and her torch is the flame of illumination, shining into the depth of the adept's soul.



HECATE WORKINGS

The following is a series of three workings devoted to Hecate which were prepared to establish communication with this dark goddess in her three aspects: the patroness of wild Nature, the queen of witchcraft, and the guide to the underworld. The project was originally conducted in a group of three female participants of Lodge Magan and preceded by preparatory practices such as meditations, drawing Hecate's image (the triple goddess), decorating the temple with the attributes of the goddess, and a nightly walk to the crossroads in order to leave an offering to her spirits.



Hecate - Patroness of Nature

The working starts with the meditation upon the Wiccan mantra: "Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Inanna." After that the practitioners should take a walk to the crossroads (preferably in a forest, where the working should take place) and leave an offering. The offering can be traditional (cakes and honey) or it can be replaced by incense (rosemary). The ritual can be performed at the crossroads or in a quiet, desolate place.

The choice of ritual tools is left to the practitioners. The altar, however, should include a chalice filled with pure water.

May the ritual begin!

We invoke Hecate, mistress and mother of wild Nature, of the forests and meadows that surround us! We seek the union with the earth on which we are standing! With the air which we breathe! With the water which we drink! And with the fire that burns on this altar! Our desire is to hear the call of the Goddess in our souls!

MELEZ!

Lady of the Moon, forest, mountains, and lakes! Your hands mould us as clay. You possess the secrets of the soul. You appear at night at the darkest woods. You make the earth live, breathe, and pulsate in its savage rhythm. Come forth with your servants: dogs, wolves, owls, serpents, and other beasts of the Nocturnal Wilderness! Let us join your dance with the priests of forgotten shrines and desolate places. Hear us! Embrace us! Reveal to us the mystery of life and death!

Visualize now a desolate forest and three dancing women: a young girl, a mature woman, and a crone. The circle is surrounded by wild animals that come from the forest and gather around.

Hecate! Surround us with your darkness in which we will hear the song of mermaids and the howling of wild beasts. Let your whisper flow through our spirits and our flesh. Lay a kiss on our foreheads through which we will die and rise reborn!

Draw on your forehead the glyph of the lunar goddess: the crescent with three points above.

ISIS! ASTARTE! DIANA! HECATE! DEMETER! KALI! INANNA!

Mistress of Nature! Mother! Witch! Queen of Life! Aphrattos! Pandeina! We invoke you through your name and the names of your sisters:

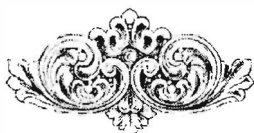
**MODRON! BONA DEA! PERSEPHONE! CERES! MORGAN! EPONA!
POMONA! DANU!**

**Come to us, Hecate! Touch us with your hand and release the wild
instincts which lie dormant in our souls!**

Drink some of the water from the chalice and offer the rest to the earth.

So mote it be!

Visualize now that you enter the circle and join the dancing women. You start to spin in the divine dance. Feel the kiss of the Goddess on your forehead - it will transform you into a wild animal - and join your bestial companions in the hunt through the woods.



Hecate - Queen of Witchcraft and the Moon

This working attempts to summon the nocturnal powers of Hecate, those of witchcraft and necromantic magic. The altar should be decorated with bones and skulls, preferably both human and animal. The chalice must be filled with red wine representing blood.

May the ritual begin!

**We invoke Hecate, queen of witchcraft, the night and the moon! Our
desire is to unite with the Goddess and to gaze into the depths of our
souls in search of her Dark Flame!**

MELEZI!

Hecate! Goddess of Darkness, triple-goddess! You are the Moon, the Huntress and the Demon-Queen of the dead. Antaia! Woe to those for whom you have no mercy! Your breasts are filled with blood - bitter and delicate. It flows into the chalice from which we drink.

Consecrate the wine in the chalice, visualizing that the goddess' blood drops into the chalice from her naked breasts.

We enter your cemetery temple. We descend into Darkness. Your path leads to the shrines of the Abyss. We go down the black stairs into the bright flame of cold moonlight, where your dark servants, manes and ghouls gather for the unholy feast!

Visualize that you are surrounded by shades, ghouls, whose eyes shine in the dark, predatory specters waiting to tear you apart. Feel their breath on your neck. Hear their harsh whispers in your ear.

**HECATE! CERRIDWEN! ARJANRHOD! CAILLECH! AL-ILAT!
PERSEPHONE!**

Mistress of witchcraft, shades and infernal spirits! Your hair consists of serpents! Your flesh is the flame of the moon! Your breath is the breath of death! Enodia! Trioditis! Lady of the Crossroads! We drink the blood from your chalice, offering ours instead!

Drink the wine from the chalice and offer a few drops of your own blood - spill it onto the earth or burn it in fire, letting the scent ascend to the higher spheres.

Hecate-Mene! Lady of the Moon! We hear the howling of your wolves that gather around! We invoke you and we enter your ghostly shrine. Let your shades devour us! We desire to be reborn in your infernal fire!

PROPYLAIA! PHOSPHOROS! SOTEIRA! TRIODIA! CHTHONIA!

We hail you! May your fire be the force of our self-creation!

So mote it be!

Meditation:

Visualize that you are standing at the crossroads at night. You notice a woman in front of you, dressed in black, her eyes fiery. She bends over a cauldron, fills the chalice with the potion from the cauldron and give you to drink. When you drink the potion, you feel fire burning in you. Then, the shades and demons around hurl towards you and tear you apart. You cease to exist. The only thing you can still feel is the flame which crystallizes into a new body. Meditate upon this process for a while.

Afterwards, finish the working.



Hecate – The Guide into the Underworld

The third working is the descent into the personal underworld with Hecate as a guide. The short opening ritual is followed by a pathworking. It is recommended to perform these three workings on three days in a row, each on a different day. The initial incantation in this working is from “The Cry of the 27th Aethyr” in *The Vision and the Voice* by Aleister Crowley.

May the ritual begin!

**UNTU LA LA ULULA UMUNA TOFA LAMA LE LI NA AHR IMA
TAHARA ELULA ETFOMA UNUNA ARPETI ULU ULU ULU
MARABAN ULULU MAHATA ULU ULU LAMASTANA**

Hecate! Goddess of shades and witchcraft! Lady of Darkness! Queen of all them that dwell in Heaven! Queen of all them that are pure upon earth! Queen of all the sorcerers of Hell! Triple Goddess! We call you this night!

Come forth to us! Lead us into the dark pits of the underworld to find the wisdom of the ancients. Guide us through your path, black as the night, eternal and never-ending.

HECATE!

Let us gaze into the mirror of the soul through your eyes that see everything, deep in hell that hides the secret of existence! Let us taste your transforming potion! Manifest as the force of our self-creation!

We call you through your names:

Chthonian, Crataeis, Enodia, Antania, Kurotrophos, Artemis of the crossroads, Propylaia, Propolos, Phosphoros, Soteira, Prytania, Trivia, Klêidouchos, Tricephalus

Come to us, Hecate!

So mote it be!



Meditation:

Visualize that you are alone in the forest. You notice that you are dressed in a long black robe. You walk the path into the centre of the forest, straight forward until you reach the three crossing roads. You look at the moon and whisper the name "Hecate." In front of you opens a portal leading down, into hell. There are black stairs down, shining with a weird light. In your left hand you carry a torch. You can use it to light up the darkness while you are going down the stairs. You can see shadows moving on the walls of the corridor and hear their whispers.

Now you stand before a gate. It is guarded by Cerberus, the monstrous three-headed dog, with a snake for a tail and innumerable snake heads on his back. You reach to your pocket - there is a key and a lash. You strike the earth with a lash and the hound starts to obey you. You put the key in his jaws and the gate opens. You go inside. You are now in a chamber lit with torches. In the middle of the chamber there is a mirror. You come closer and gaze into it, but there is no reflection. The mirror is dormant. You reach into another pocket and find a dagger there. You cut your hand and let the blood flow onto the mirror. Now it is alive. You can see images moving and changing in it. Gaze into the mirror and observe the visions.

All you see is the reflection of your soul.

When the mirror stops showing images and becomes silent, go out of the chamber, take the key back and return up the stairs into the woods. Close the portal.



Spirit evocation is an old magical art, dating to the earliest antiquity. We may find references to necromantic and demonic evocations in many works of ancient literature, like e.g. the famous conjuration of the spirit of Samuel by the Witch of Endor. The art of spirit evocation was also widely used in the Middle Ages, and gathered into a complete ritual system in the 14th-17th century, when the majority of Solomonian grimoires appeared in circulation. Among all these books of magic, the *Goetia* holds a truly unique position. There is no other book of such a dreadful notoriety and there is no

other catalogue of spirits that would enjoy an equally enormous popularity in the Western Europe since the 15th century onwards. In this article we will look into the origins of this infamous magical system and its interpretation in the modern world.

The Origin of the *Goetia* and the Ancient View on Demonology

The word *Goetia* derives from the Greek term *Goēteia*, which was the art of calling-upon of evil demons and was related to ancient practice of necromancy. The etymology of *Goēteia* is also related to the roots *goēs* ("sorcerer," plural: *goētes*) and *goos* ("mourning song"), or *goāō* ("sing a song of mourning"). *Goēteia* might have received its name from the spirits of the dead which dwelled around the tombs, the *gooi* and *thrēnoi*. It was the art associated with the raising of the dead, a summoning of a dead person by the invocation of their names, and it was believed that the name derived from the lamentations (*goōn*) of people around the grave. Hence its association with "groaning, wailing" as it was suggested by Aleister Crowley when he published his famous work, *The Book of the Goetia of Solomon the King* in 1904, with a complete catalogue of seventy-two demons of the Solomonic tradition. Let us, however, return for a while to the ancient associations with necromancy. In Greek literature we often encounter fragments which account for the magical role of the *goēs*, "the mourner" as the person who evoked the spirits of the dead, either to obtain information from the deceased person or to lay the spirit in peace. These conjurations were done by means of songs and lamentations. In Aeschylus's *Persians* the ghost of Darius is summoned with high shrieks and mourning lamentations. In the same fashion the ghost of Achilles is evoked at his tomb in Sophocles' *Polyxena*. Also Plato spoke of a power which a *goēs* possessed over the souls of other people. And such references might be found in many other sources too. There are theories that the powers of the *goēs* might have been even greater than resurrecting the dead and communicating with them. He was a shaman who made an ecstatic journey to conduct the soul of a dead person to the underworld with magical lamentations and music, performing also the role of the psychopomp.⁶¹

⁶¹ Daniel Ogden: *Greek and Roman Necromancy*

In a later period this original meaning of *Goēteia* was lost and it came to be associated with malevolent magic and sorcery. The necromancer became a sorcerer who dared to violate the natural laws of the universe by evoking spirits in order to influence the world around. The *Goēteia* became a fatal, dark art, reserved to those who were not afraid to manipulate the fates of others and their own, which was viewed as forbidden because the ancients believed that each human being lives to fulfill their own fate and is not allowed to change it. There was also a new distinction between a *goēs*, "sorcerer" and a *magos*, "magician", the latter having a higher status, often regarded as a priest or a sage. The *magoi* did not attempt to change the natural order of the world and their function was to explain and interpret its phenomena. They enjoyed a great respect and were regarded as the successors of the old Persian Magi, the followers of Zoroaster and his doctrine. Their practices included divination and interpretation of dreams, and they also maintained the social order by providing metaphysical grounds for the social structures, while the *goētes* were believed to act against this order by using practices connected with the underworld, such as necromancy, charms, curses, and deceit. This distinction is mentioned in many ancient writings and works of literature. For instance, in the second century, Apuleius in his *Metamorphoses* writes about two kinds of contemporary magic: the first one, originating from Egypt and enjoying many favours of the gods, and the other, despised and forbidden by gods, working against nature, and practiced by witches in Thessaly.

In fact, there were three types of magic mentioned in the ancient sources: *goēteia*, *mageia*, and *theourgia*. Apart from the above-mentioned views, *goēteia* was also the lowest and the easiest form of magic, often referred to as "mere trickery", or the art of jugglers. The sorcerer who practiced *goēteia* was using elements in the objective universe to affect the will generated in his own subjective universe. This was done by summoning deities, angels, daimōns, formulae, magical operations, and all other available means so that they would do the will of the sorcerer. *Mageia* was the art practiced by a magician who had achieved a certain level of personal initiation and was able to act on a divine level. He did not ask any objective force to do his will because he had attained a unity with 'god' as a part of himself. Thus, his workings did not need intervention of any spirits but rather happened by means of the will itself. This form of magic was sometimes called "wonder-working". The third type of magic was theurgy, or "divine work." The works of theurgy were aligned with the gods and remained in

harmony with the laws of the objective universe. There were certain similarities between this kind of magic and the *goēteia*, but what made theurgy unique, was the concern with being “philosophically correct – and harmonious with nature – rather than just being effective and powerful”, as it was in the work of the *goēs*.⁶²

Demons

The distinction between “good” and “evil” magic echoed far into the medieval philosophy and theory of occult arts. With the rise of Christianity and the growth of the Church, all pagan spirits of old religions became vicious demons and agents of the Devil, constantly striving to bring man’s soul to damnation and to eternal tortures in Hell. However, ancient “demons” were not the malevolent spirits of the medieval Christian lore. The word “demon” has an ancient origin and derives from the Greek *daimôn*, a spirit which embodied the concept of a higher consciousness. A *daimôn* was a kind of a demigod or quasi-divinity of good or evil qualities, which could be attached to an individual by means of magical techniques. Through this, a person could merge with the essence of the *daimôn* and assume its powers. In Hermetic magic this spirit was also called *daimônion* and was regarded as an intermediary between the gods and humanity. In ancient Greece it was believed that a *daimôn* can be either good and helpful (the *agathodaimôn*) or vicious and evil (the *kakodaimôn*). These good *daimôn*s later came to be identified with angels (*angelos* – messengers of gods). Yet, more often *daimôn*s were mentioned in a neutral sense, as neither good nor evil. They were independent, relatively immortal and powerful entities, sometimes even viewed as demigods. A Roman equivalent of the *daimôn* was the *genius*, a familiar spirit inherited along genetic lines in the family. One of the most important works of contemporary magic was to absorb and unite with the personal *daimôn*. Through this unity, a magician could become “a son of a god” and exert his will over the whole universe.⁶³

The medieval view on the concept of a “demon”, largely influenced by Christian doctrines, was that of a fallen angel, a spirit who was punished by God and exiled from Heaven, forced to dwell in infernal regions for eternity. These spirits had opposed God’s will, either by the primary sin of

⁶² Daniel Ogden: *Greek and Roman Necromancy*

⁶³ Stephen Edred Flowers: *Hermetic Magic*

mating with mortal women, or by pride and disobedience. They dwell in darkness, deprived of the highest reward which is the presence of God and Light, but they appear on the earth, in the world of humans, and they can be summoned by a magician who acts on behalf of God. As their angelic faces were deformed by the atrocity of sins which they committed against God, they became abhorrent and repulsive creatures, hateful and malevolent to humans - the beloved creations of God. They live in an infernal kingdom, divided into hierarchies depending on their power and qualities, the most powerful presiding over many legions of inferior spirits.

The medieval demonic hierarchies embraced a wide variety of spirits from world's mythologies and religions, especially Greek, Roman, Semitic and Middle Eastern gods and minor entities. Ancient deities, such as the Semitic goddess of fertility Astarte became the abhorrent demon Astaroth. Ancient god Ba'al was a prototype for two powerful demons of infernal hierarchy: the lewd and arrogant demon of lies, Belial, and Beelzebub, the Lord of Flies. Even Phoenix, the mythical sacred bird of fire from Egyptian and Phoenician mythologies is mentioned in the infernal catalogue of the *Goetia* as one of the demons. These are just a few examples of how the ancient spirits were demonized by the new doctrine. They also received a new shape: some of them were hairy and satyr-like creatures, others resembled the desert Jinn from the Arabic lore or became goat-like demons of the wilderness. Spirits of nature, ancient gods, domestic entities - they all found their place in the newly founded demonic structure.

Solomonic Tradition

The *Goetia* is one of the books reputedly ascribed to the legendary King Solomon. Solomon was a historical figure, the ruler of Israel in the 10th century BCE. He was the reputed builder of the First Temple in Jerusalem, which was accomplished by the aid of the demons subdued for this purpose. He possessed talismans, magical rings, and powerful spells by which he could command demons to do any task for him, and finally he was rumoured to have left behind him secret books of magic. The life of King Solomon was the theme of many tales and legends in such renowned works as the *Bible*, the *Qu'ran*, *One Thousand and One Nights*, and an enormous collection of scriptures, apocryphal texts, as well as in the Qabalistic and Talmudic literature. His power, glory, his relationship with

the mythical witch, the Queen of Sheba, his magical skills, and his final downfall which occurred in strange circumstances, all this contributed to the rise of his reputation as the greatest magicians of all times.

One of the legends about his power over demons told a story of how he imprisoned evil spirits in a brazen vessel which he cast into a deep lake in Babylon. Believing that the vessel contained a hidden treasure, the Babylonians retrieved it and broke the seal by which the demons were bound. When the seal was broken, all spirits immediately flew out and dispersed to their former dwellings, except Belial who entered into a statue and became an oracle to his worshippers. According to the legend, there were 72 chief demons in the vessel, and these were the same spirits which were later included in the list that became the major part of the *Goetia*.

The *Goetia* and several similar grimoires appeared in the 14th-17th centuries and have been used by many practicing magicians onwards. It is, however, highly unlikely that the real King Solomon did actually write any of these texts, though it seems justified that such a legendary figure was chosen as the author of demonic grimoires. It was common in the late Middle Ages or the Renaissance times to write such books or grimoires anonymously or to attribute them to King Solomon. It is worth to notice that these were very uneasy times for magicians: the age of witch burnings, the Inquisition and severe repressions to "heretics". It was natural for scholars, monks and man of science to conceal their practice of demonic magic under the disguise of other fields of interest. And so, even though the Solomonic cycle of grimoires found its way to the hands of the contemporary magicians, it was only by "underground" channels, and the authors chose to remain anonymous to protect their reputation and life.

The history and origin of the spirits which now constitute the famous Clavicles may be traced perhaps to the first century of our era, when Josephus mentioned a book of incantations for conjuring demons circulating under the name of Solomon. He described how a Jew called Eleazar used the book to cure demonic possession. This mysterious text has never been found, but there were many other 'Solomonic' writings mentioned in the medieval sources, such as *Salomonis libri de gemmis et daemonibus*, *Le Livre de Salomon*, *Sigillum Salomonis*, or *Clavicula Salomonis*, listed among the "works of nigromancy" current at the time. Most of them were an amalgam of Jewish magical texts, commonly available in the first

centuries of our era in the Hellenistic part of Europe, largely influenced by the Hermetic magic and the Greek magical papyri. The incantations were mixtures of the Biblical psalms, folk charms, Latin, Greek and Hebrew formulae, into which the anonymous authors intertwined the names of "demons", mostly ancient pagan spirits and deities, now appearing under new, distorted names.

Grimoires

It is assumed that the oldest known grimoire is *The Testament of Solomon* dating to the 1st-3rd century. The word *grimoire* derives from the Greek root "grammatikos" and refers to the term "grammar", the system of language. A grimoire is therefore a "grammar of magic", a textbook for a magician, containing formulae, seals and instructions of how to summon chosen spirits, most often "evil", infernal demons. It was believed that even though God created the world and was the supreme ruler of all creatures, it was actually Satan who held dominion over the earth, its treasures and its phenomena. A magician, often a priest, or at least a pious Christian, had the power to summon the fallen spirits from their infernal abode by acting as a representative of God. He was an intermediary between Hell and Heaven, and could conjure, bind and command all spirits, both heavenly and infernal, if only he was chaste and pious enough to represent the divine power on the earth. Assuming that even demons in Hell had to obey God's orders, the magician could force them by divine names and prayers to do any task for him. And even though it was very difficult to be a successful magician and live the life according to directions from books of magic, the popularity of these texts was growing quickly in the Western Europe.

The first authored list of demons appeared in the 16th century in Johann Weyer's *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum* (1577), and later in Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1574). These first catalogues of demons included sixty-nine spirits with their offices and functions. The full list of seventy-two demons appeared in the seventeenth-century grimoire *The Lesser Key of Solomon* or *Clavicula Salomonis*, also known as *Lemegeton*. The whole book is divided into five parts, as it is explained in the original manuscript:

- The first part is a book of evil Spirits, Called GOETIA; Shewing how he bound up those Spirits, and used them in Severall things where by he Obtained great fame.
- The Second part is a book of Spirits partly Good, and partly Evil; which is Named THEURGIA-GOETIA; all Ayriall Spirits &c;
- The third part is of Spirits Governing the planetary houers, and what Spirits belongs to every Degree of the Signs, and Planits in the Signs; called the PAULIN, ART &c.
- The fourth part of this Book is called ALMADE[L], of Solomon, which contains 20 chief Spirits, which governs the foure Altitudes, or the 360 Degrees of the Zodiack.
- These two last orders of Spirits is of good and is called THEURGIA, and is to be Sought after by Divine Seeking &c. (3)

The first modern edition of the *Lemegeton* was published in 1904 by Aleister Crowley and S.L. MacGregor Mathers under the title *The Book of the Goetia of Solomon the King*. Since then it has been re-published many times, in diverse versions, compiled and edited by many more or less known occultists of the 20th and 21st centuries, and it is still one of the most popular and renown books on ritual magic.

However, the term "Goetic magic" is not referred only to the *Lesser Key of Solomon* but to the wide range of other grimoires from the Solomonian tradition, such as *Grimoirium Verum*, *The Grand Grimoire*, *True Black Magic*, *The Grimoire of Honorius*, and others which include a magical system similar to the one presented in the *Lemegeton*.

Traditional Goetic Magic

The *Goetia* contains descriptions of seventy-two demons, listed with their seals, titles, ranks in the infernal hierarchy, and the number of inferior spirits, usually given in legions. Almost half of the spirits teach liberal sciences and arts: astrology, astronomy, arithmetic, mathematics, geometry, the science of measurement, philosophy, logic, rhetoric, ethics, or geomancy. Many others teach languages, including understanding of the language of animals and birds, the knowledge of herbs, precious stones, woods, or the virtues of the planets. Many others again reveal past, present and things to come. They can endow the magician with the knowledge of

hidden and secret things, of the creation of the world, of the fall of the angels, and of the souls of the dead. Some can answer all questions about secret matters human or divine. But there are also many spirits which deal with more mundane things, such as revealing a hidden treasure and delivering it to the magician – in two cases the treasure in question is to be stolen by the demon in charge. Another power of several demons is to procure love, and they even make women undress before the magician. Others bestow on the operator the favours of friends and foes, reconcile them or incite mutual hatred. Other powers of Goetic demons include the gift of invisibility, transport of men and things to all parts of the world, transformation into various shapes, alteration of water into wine, transmutation of metals into gold, or procuring illusions.

The book also lists days and hours appropriate for demon conjurations. The particular spirits are ascribed to the four elements, the twelve star signs, and the seven planets. The seals of demons are to be fashioned in metals which correspond to the seven planetary powers and to the rank of the spirits: The Chief Kings' in Sol (Gold); Marquises' in Luna (Silver); Dukes' in Venus (Copper); Prelacies' in Jupiter (Tin); Knights' in Saturn (Lead); Presidents' in Mercury (Mercury); Earls' in Venus (Copper), and Luna (Silver). All seventy-two spirits are under the power of four Great Kings ruling the four quarters: Amaymon, Corson, Zimimay, and Gaap. These four Great Kings are not to be summoned, except on very important occasions.

Traditional magic of the *Goetia* is the art of evocation, conjuring the spirits onto the material plane and into a visible shape and manifestation. It gives exact directions of how the magician has to prepare to the operation, how to draw the magical circle and what requisites and talismans the operator must have during the evocation. There are also special prayers and incantations by means of which the magician summons a chosen spirit and dismisses it after the task has been completed. Solomonic grimoires usually give three summoning incantations combined with curses and sometimes also with the lashing of the demon, if the spirit is not willing to obey the operator. The magician stands in the magical circle with names of God and angels inscribed within, which protects him from the wrath and trickery of the demon, while the spirit appears and manifests outside the circle or in a magical triangle (pointed to the direction corresponding with the spirit's attributes), often assuming shape from the thick smoke of a special incense.

Sometimes the magician has to offer him a gift or a sacrifice. The demons are summoned either in their true shape or in a "comely human form", and some grimoires assume that the true shape of demons is too terrible to behold. After the orders are given, the demon is either supposed to perform the task immediately (e.g. in the case of treasures), or is dismissed and expected to do the work in the shortest possible time. There are plenty of such instructions, incantations, curses, and other charms in the *Goetia* and other Solomonic grimoires.

Modern Approach to the Ritual System of the *Goetia*

The twentieth century brought many editions and alterations of the original system of Solomonic magic. Starting from the translation of the *Goetia* published by Crowley and Mathers in the first years of the century, magicians began to adapt the old magical tradition to their personal ritual system. With the rise of modern psychology and Jungian theories on the Unconscious, the view on demons of old systems shifted from the belief in objective entities to a new theory, according to which they were merely the unknown parts of the mind, fragments of the personal Shadow. It was no longer necessary to evoke them by traditional means because many magicians believed that these archetypes can be activated by awakening the dormant layers of one's psyche.

Crowley and Mathers modified the traditional structure of the *Goetia* by introducing the Preliminary Invocation which summoned the personal divine aspect of the magician ("the Holy Guardian Angel") and placed him in the position of God. This was a significant departure from the traditional Goetic system in which the operator was merely an agent of the divine force and his powers were only "borrowed" from God for the time of evocation. Crowley also introduced elements of Goetic operations into other magical rituals of evocation. He often combined them with Enochian calls and a few Thelemic ceremonies, including e.g. the "Ruby Star" ritual. In his view, Solomon's demons were portions of the human brain and the *Goetia* was only a structure on which everyone could build their own magical system.

In the modern occultism there are three main forms of the Goetic magic: orthodox, archetypal, and the Left Hand Path approach. Each method has

its advantages and disadvantages. The orthodox method is based on the exact use of instructions contained in the old grimoires. In other words, this is the traditional old magic which includes the whole ceremonial system of Solomonian grimoires: the preparation of garments, accessories, seals, ritual tools, talismans and other accessories, as well as prayers and incantations spoken in the name of God. This method is very powerful and effective because of its ancient heritage and techniques, practiced and verified by many magicians. However, it is also very demanding, difficult and dangerous, and the practitioner must have a great determination to work with this method successfully.

The archetypal approach is based on the belief that the structure of the Goetic magic is constructed around universal archetypes which can be found in all traditions. The practitioner is allowed to remove or modify certain elements which do not belong to his worldview, such as names of God and angels, Hebrew inscriptions, or Biblical quotations. They are effective only if the magician is a Christian and lives in accordance with the religious laws. In other case, the magician can remove these elements and replace them with words and inscriptions that are a part of his own world picture: e.g. Enochian inscriptions, Norse runes, barbarous words of power, etc. The great disadvantage of this method is that it requires an enormous experience in the practice of evocation, as well as a profound knowledge of symbols and their meaning in various traditions. An inexperienced practitioner might not be able to decide what should be left and what removed, and he will either achieve no results at all or the effects of such experiments will be contrary to the expected and devastating to his life and the surrounding.

The third method is the Left Hand Path approach. This method does not require long and complex preparations, the circle with the names of God and angels, elaborate incantations, etc. It is an evocation through a direct experience of the conjured spirit - either by entering the circle or by breaking the circle and allowing the spirit to enter the mind of the practitioner. Thus, apart from the basic goal of an evocation, i.e. giving the spirit a task which it is supposed to perform for the magician, he also absorbs the spirit's energy and qualities - as in a ritual of invocation. The desired result is also to learn how to use these magical powers without the spirit's help. A Left Hand Path magician does not separate himself from the demon by a ritual circle but faces it and absorbs its qualities. From one

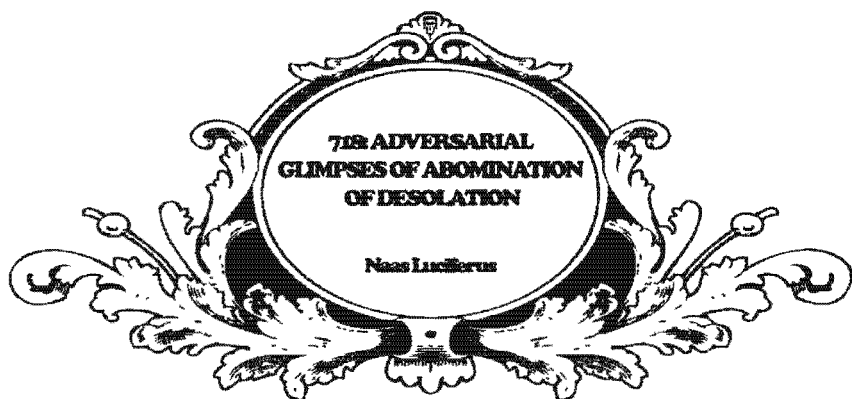
point of view, this might seem an easy method, as it requires no traditional means which are normally very difficult to obtain. Traditional techniques and methods often appear too complicated and unavailable to a modern practitioner. Not everyone owns a special temple for the spirit work or no one can afford to make talismans in silver or gold. This does not mean that without it one cannot practice the art of evocation at all. Each traditional method might be adjusted to the modern context, if only the magician is creative and has enough experience in this kind of practice. Besides, if we look at these spirits from the psychological point of view, they are nothing else than inner personifications of the Shadow, the rejected parts of the Self. Thus, when the magician evokes these dark personality aspects and confronts them, he no longer perceives them as "demons" and they become a natural part of his consciousness. On the other hand, an open and friendly approach to the Goetic demons is not enough to be able to give orders and to control these proud and powerful infernal leaders. By evoking each of them, the magician also evokes all legions of their subordinate spirits. It is not accidental that the evocation has always been considered the most difficult and dangerous of all magical arts.⁶⁴

A Few Words of Conclusion

To a traditional Goetic practitioner, magic was a life vocation. A single ritual of summoning, together with its preparations and cleansing period, took about two-three months. In the meantime, he had to live his personal life in accordance with magical instructions and the foundations of the spiritual path. In the modern world this attitude seems to be diametrically different. The majority of practicing occultists no longer follow the traditional methods of evocation. The instructions and requirements are viewed as too confusing, too difficult, too time-consuming, and finally - completely unnecessary. Many magicians choose the Left Hand Path approach to the art of evocation because it gives an illusory conviction of being "easy" and relatively "safe". This cannot be further from truth. Whether evocation is dangerous and destructive or not, it largely depends on the practitioner. The Left Hand Path quest for self-deification is tempting with its promise of god-like power, but it is also the most dangerous spiritual path. To pass beyond the human nature and to become

⁶⁴ Thomas Karlsson: *Qabalah, Qlipoth and Goetic Magic*

one with the Shadow might be a beautiful spiritual journey, but it can also be a traumatic and fatal experience. The key rule to the art of evocation is to approach it with caution, dedication, responsibility for what might happen, and a profound awareness of our own powers and weaknesses.



“19. That stele they shall call the Abomination of Desolation; count well its name, & it shall be to you as 718.”

718 comes from the Book of the Law (III:19), delivered to Aleister Crowley by Aiwass in 1904 in Egypt, Cairo, but the term and conception of Abomination of Desolation has much older roots. It comes from the Bible, more precisely from the Prophecy of Daniel. Its context is very specific, because the term “Abomination of Desolation” is purely antichristian, it appears as a symbol of vile of church (as building) but also as religion and conversion to the primary religion – paganism. It is a symbol of apostasy as well, departing from god’s laws and desecration of the temple. I don’t want to analyze this matter in reference to Christianity, that was only an introduction. However, it’s really important to focus on the fact that the Abomination of Desolation is something unholy in a holy place, in the biblical context it was about Antiochus IV Epiphanes (“Manifest [God]”, the “Illustrious”), who was called by Christians “the root of all evil” (of course it is only their point of view), and in the magickal context it was the 11th “sephira that was not sephira” Daath, the Gate to the Other Side (the Nightside) of the holy Tree of Life.

The Book of the Law gives us a very interesting clue regarding this old and forgotten conception, that is to say, the Stele of Revelation from the cult of Thelema shall be called the Abomination of Desolation and when we count it in a proper way, it should be to us as 718 – it is the clue for all cabalists. I took the action in early 2003. I have analyzed this very extensive subject for a few years in any possible way. It actually began from Kenneth Grant who worked with number 718 as well. It is very important that the 718 is the double of 359, Kenneth Grant found out only that 359 in Hebrew is the numerical value of ShTN, Shaitan or simply Satan and on this base Grant says that this means the 718 is Double Talisman of Shaitan, however for me it was too easy. I decided to divide the number 359 into pieces in order to find out and reveal the hidden affiliation (gematria). Second part of the equation I left untouched, yet I didn't treat it as Satan but as Adversary (it is primordial meaning of this Hebrew word). After many failures I did an important discovery, that is to say, 359 is the numerical value of this notation, AOR ChSK or 'or *chashakh*, which means the Dark Light or Enlightened Dark. I found out that 359 represents the union of Light and Darkness and together with the second 359 as Adversary or more clearly and literally Left Hand Path, so I got a fascinating, new meaning. As I wrote in the introduction of this essay, the Abomination of Desolation refers to something commonly rejected and now we can clearly see that this conception is so adequate to the Dark Side of Eden, "the dark side" - Tree of Knowledge (*a'atz da'ath*) – which is forbidden by God to Adam and Eve, it's the forbidden fruit, the Abomination of Desolation. I want to be honest and won't cover up that this conception is an objection to this one and definite religion and its laws and so called truths which are lies, this is the path of Satan-Lucifer (*sathanas luciferi*) or the Adversary which Brings the Light. But this isn't common and bright Light LUX, it is literally its adverse, XUL - the Dark Light, which contains both aspects, Heaven but also Hell. The number 718 talks to us about both aspects, basic equilibrium of contradictions – but not dualism! They are One and the same aspect of Entirety, by infiltrating each other they create the Universe.

718 does not know what heresy is, it is wolf among the sheep, the Gate of Hell in the center of Heaven, it is Satan, ShTN = 359 and Messiah, MShChHV = 359, it is Fullness of Knowledge and Wisdom, the darkness and light, dark aspect of brightness and bright aspect of darkness.

718 is also the Holy Grail from which Jesus drank during the Last Supper and at the same time it's the Holy Spear which pierced his side and made him bleed and this blood is gathered in the chalice. This is only a legend, but it describes what is the 718 itself! Its name is Adversary, the Left Hand Path, caressingly speaking – *sitra ahra*.

718 is the Black Flame (Dark Light), this conception refers to Luciferic Light on the Left Hand Path, union of oppositions, illumination of the dark side. The Abomination of Desolation is the sexual, devilish union of Samael and Lilith in order to obtain Divinity, this is the real sacrament of Grail, because it contains the conjunction of Light of Lucifer and Darkness of Lilith, it is the elixir which initiates on the Path of Adversary (718), it is the elixir of dark ecstasy in light! It is the sacrament of Abomination of Desolation, because for regular man it is blasphemy. In the Grail, there is the essence of Goddess and the Beast, in Thelema - Babalon and Therion, in Persian witchcraft – Az and Ahriman. Only in this way it is possible to create Divinity, for Christians it is heresy, for us, the Left Hand Path adepts it is the truth contained in the highest sacrament – Sacrament of Grail! In the Grail takes place transmutation of Fire and Water as the Black Flame (Lucifer) and Blood of Darkness (Lilith) – its effect is the elixir of divinity. The Grail is the evidence that in order to spiritually develop one does not need any god! This is not religious relict but Gnostic and spiritual artifact that shows the knowledge allowing to become a God (self godhood) without coming to him, this is not the union with god, but becoming a God literally, understanding the self divinity – deeper knowing of thy-self. The man becomes himself the chalice to which the Light pours. To show an example how the term Abomination of Desolation should be understood I want to write that the Holy Grail is it, but only when it comes to Christianity, its blasphemous heresy only for them (Christians).

718 shows that the term *satan* has positive aspects and connotations, it's the fire that burns Christianity's lies. The number 718 shows also that the word *satan* refers to eternal archetype of initiation (process of coming from darkness to light). It shows that obtaining the illumination is possible only by union of oppositions, whose archetypes are light and darkness, them who reject darkness as an evil matter, thus rejecting the possibility of recognition (*gnosis*), which is the main aim of initiation, without it there is no chance to obtain true illumination. 718 is the gift that shows the truth, breaks every kind of false conceptions of Satan and his function in the

process of initiation. Why is the union of Light and Darkness very important? Because Darkness is the place of the Hidden and the Light is Recognition of the Truth, it is showed in the ancient phrase "in the deepest darkness the highest light is hidden".

The final development of 718 is the number 11 ($7 \times 1 \times 8 = 56$, $5 + 6 = 11$), this number refers to the state of one more step beyond perfection as $10 + 1$, when the 10th is God, the 11th stands for becoming a God - apotheosis. While other systems end the path on 10, draconian system goes one step further, as 11 is the symbol of self-deification.

In the end of this essay I want to write that the true Name of the Stele counted properly by me that should be to me as 718 is "Stele of Adversary", in Hebrew language we write this as MShBH ShMAL = 718, notation ShMAL in 777⁶⁵ it is translated as "Sinistrum" which means Via Sinistra, Sitra Ahra or Left Hand Path, more simply and precisely - THE ADVERSARY!

The time of translation from Polish to English is no coincidence. It is very symbolic.

2nd April 2010, Poland, 21:37

⁶⁵ *Sepher Sephiroth* in *777 and other qabalistic writings of Aleister Crowley*, Samuel Weiser, INC, 1998, p. 40



Among Babylonian demons we may find a group of spirits called the Maskim, or "Ensnarers", "Layers of ambushes." This class of demons is only vaguely mentioned on clay tablets which constitute the main source of knowledge about Babylonian evil spirits. Most of what we know about Mesopotamian demons is generally based on incantations, hymns, formulae, and exorcisms against evil spirits. These conjurations were designed to threat demons away, to avert their actions, and to protect people from their attacks. In *Chaldean Magic: Its Origin and Development* by François Lenormant we can find a long and suggestive incantation against the seven evil spirits called the Maskim, which the author refers to as "the most formidable of the spirits."

The Maskim are most often described as spirits of the underworld, chthonic entities residing in the bowels of the earth. They are regarded the most wicked demons which surpass all others in power and evil. In descriptions and incantations they are mentioned as the messengers of Namtar and the throne-bearers of Ereshkigal, which underlines their connection to the underworld. Ereshkigal is the "Queen of the Great Below", the goddess who rules the land of the dead, together with her consort, Nergal. Namtar is her messenger and minister, one of the demons of the nether regions, the bringer of death. His name means "destiny" or "death". On the other hand, from the same description we learn that the number of the Maskim is "twice seven": "seven in heaven, seven on earth". They were created in "heaven's vault" as messengers to the god Anu, and reside in the "height of heaven", appearing on the earth as lightning flashes.

Anu (An) means "heaven" and is the name of the god of the sky, the prime mover, the supreme leader of the gods and their father. Thus, the Maskim seem to constitute two distinct groups of spirits, both destructive and terrifying. While the seven underworld demons cause plagues and disasters on the earth (like earthquakes), the sky spirits manifest as raging storms, hurricanes, lightning, and destructive winds "that bring darkness in heaven" and "cast gloom over the bright day."

The legend about these dark entities is retold in *Devils and Evil Spirits of Babylonia* by R. Campbell Thompson. According to the story, they were born out of Anu, together with other main deities, and are equally ancient. They are referred to alternately as gods, demons and spirits. Their ally is the Imkhullu, "the evil wind," and their main enemy is the god of fire, together with other main deities: Enlil, Ea, and Ishtar. The Maskim were created "to wreak destruction." To avoid it, the gods divided the whole heaven among three of them: Sin, Shamash and Ishtar (Sin - god of the moon, Shamash - god of the sun, and Ishtar - the mistress of heavens, daughter to Sin and sister to Shamash). But the seven evil gods stormed the vault of heaven and brought onto their side Sin, Shamash and Adad - the god of storms. They darkened the moon by an eclipse and brought thick clouds to cover the sun. Darkness fell upon the earth. Neither the moon nor the sun was shining. The gods were terrified and called for Marduk, the god of war, to fight the demons. Many fragments of the legend are missing, but we can see now how powerful the seven demons were if they managed to threaten the whole divine order. They could ravage heaven and earth, interrupt the movement of the stars and darken the sun and the moon. The gods' efforts to oppose them were futile. Even the powerful god of fire is almost helpless. Among the means of conquering the Seven, the legend mentions some coniferous tree, cypress or cedar, and the magical name "the meaning of which Hea keeps in his heart" (Hea / Ea - the ruler of gods).

From further description we learn more about the nature of the Maskim. They are neither male nor female, without a consort or offspring. They are destructive storms and evil winds. They do not know mercy or compassion, and do not listen to prayers. They rush like flood over the earth:

"From house to house they dash along.
No door can shut them out,

No bolt can turn them back.
Through the door, like a snake, they glide,
Through the hinge, like the wind, they storm.
Tearing the wife from the embrace of the man,
Snatching the child from the knees of a man,
Driving the freedman from his family home."⁶⁶

Here they are also mentioned individually: the first is "the South wind," the second – "a dragon, whose mouth is opened... that none can measure," the third – "a grim leopard, which carries off the young," the fourth – "a terrible Shibbu," the fifth – "a furious Wolf, who knoweth not to flee," the sixth is "a rampant ... which marches against god and king," and the seventh is "a storm, an evil wind, which takes vengeance."

The Maskim embodied the forces of chaos opposed to the normal course of nature. But, as we have already seen, they also attacked humans: "From the four corners the thrust of their advance burns like fire, they violently invade the dwellings of man, they lay bare the town as well as the country." In Simon's *Necronomicon*, which also mentions the Maskim, we read that they are the lords over the shadows and over the depths of the seas. They reigned once over the lost land of Magan, whence they came.

Let us now take a closer look at the particular demons and their nature. This analysis is based on experiences from a magical project, which was aimed at an exploration of the Maskim through rituals and focused meditations. The project was held in April 2006 as a collaboration between Lodge Magan and Lodge Heldrasil, Dragon Rouge Germany. It included workings devoted to each of the Maskim demons, based on reversed exorcisms and banishing formulae from ancient sources and also incantations from Simon's *Necronomicon*. Each working was constructed on similar words of power and incantations. Each also included a symbolic offering and meditation with the Key symbol to establish an astral contact with other participants.

The first of the Maskim is "the South wind" demon. It is connected with the desert, the heat of the sun and the drought which brings death of humans and animals, diseases and the destruction of crops. It is an extremely hot dark wind, burning everything that it encounters on its way, like a black,

⁶⁶ R. Campbell Thompson: *Devils and Evil Spirits of Babylonia*

demonic fire or a destructive tornado. In Mesopotamia winds and hurricanes were often regarded as demons, usually elemental ones. Sometimes they were believed to be messengers sent by gods to punish humans for their sins. The demon assumes many forms, or appears completely formless - as a whirlpool of black dust. Among the shapes which he assumes, we can mention a huge, anthropomorphic lizard-like figure with long hair and two pairs of wings; a demonic face with long fiery hair; or a black shape wearing a mask on the face. One of the visions experienced during this magical project included an image of the black wind carving a picture on the desert sand, blood-red in the light of the setting sun. This was a glyph of a human figure with circles in the place of the main chakras, and a symbol of an eye in the place of the throat chakra. This symbol turned out to be an entrance to the underworld, a pathway from which the black wind was emerging, and in which it disappeared. Also many other examples point at the close relation of this demon with the underworld. The wind blows out of a pit in the ground and guides the magician into underground labyrinths, temples, and tunnels, where the black fire burns so fiercely that one can hardly find any air to breathe. The heat burns down the body and releases the spirit. It inflames the magician and makes him a living torch or a fire elemental. In the magical work with this demon, the practitioner may also experience physical sensations of heat, dry air in the temple, or extreme thirst.

The second demon is the dragon "whose mouth is opened ... that none can measure." Dragon-like creatures in ancient Mesopotamia were not always viewed as demonic. In the Sumerian poetry there is a term "ušumgal" (a serpent monster), which does not have any pejorative meaning, however, but denotes a powerful god or a glorious king. In mythology we encounter many dragon creatures, e.g. the serpent-dragon (Mušhuššu), or the lion-dragon (identified sometimes with demons Asag or Anzu). Mušhuššu was a symbol of power, associated with such gods as Marduk, Nabu, or Asur. On the other hand, Asag and Anzu were vicious demons, bringing plagues and disasters onto people. The nature of the Maskim dragon-demon also seems complicated. It assumes forms and shapes connected to all elements; it can become a water serpent-dragon, like Leviathan, with its jaws as the waves of the ocean, very cold and silver. But it can also assume a form of a fiery dragon, with electric and fiery breath, casting bolts of lightning through its eyes. Furthermore, it can be wholly chthonic - appearing as a part of the earth or the underworld. Its head is a mountain, and its open

Jaws are an entrance to the cave, with sharp stones and rocks resembling the teeth of a beast. Its body is the earth with its underground caves, labyrinths and temples, where one can see statues of dragons. Its blood constitutes underground rivers, filled with water which looks like blood in the dim light of the underworld. And finally, the demon may also assume an airy form. In this shape it appears as a huge cosmic dragon, encircling the whole universe, like Ouroboros serpent. Its jaws are so enormous that it could easily swallow the globe. Its body is the night sky and its scales are the stars that shine in the cosmic space. All these shapes point at the universal nature of the Dragon - an entity containing all four elements within, and binding them with the fifth one - the Spirit. The Dragon is also the Kundalini, the serpent power inherent in each human being. Awakened, it rises to the stars and becomes the Dragon. Hence, while working with this demon, one may experience visions and dreams of astral transformation into a dragon's form, or flying on the dragon's back. One may also see an eternal cosmic dance of the Kundalini serpent.

The third demon is "a grim leopard which carries off the young." This entity embodies atavistic instincts of savage hunting. A leopard is an emblem of a wild predator, a shadow demon which hunts under the cloak of the night, searching for a prey. While working with this demon and absorbing its energy, the magician undergoes a transformation into a savage beast. Human instincts are left behind, and one experiences a drive of primal animal impulses, evoking visions of running through the woods and wilderness in search of a prey, violent killing, greedy devouring the flesh and drinking the blood of a victim - as if driven by a primal urge to satisfy the hunger. One may also experience visions of savage and bloody cults in which people are dressed in leopard skins and masks, dancing in a wild fashion around an altar with a freshly captured prey, performing an act of ritual cannibalism. A practice of wearing animal skins is typical of many African tribes. In Nigeria this custom is cultivated in funeral ceremonies, when the deceased are dressed in leopard's skins. Also some sources mention other rites in which the priests and participants wear skins of this animal. Leopard's skins were also used in funeral rites of ancient Egypt. In Mesopotamia the practice of wearing animal skins was not unknown either. On ancient reliefs we can often see people dressed in lion skins, embodying the powers of the animal. Bestial disguise was, of course, a symbolic acquirement of the animal's skills, strength, and agility. In magical practice it replaces the art of shape-shifting on the mundane level.

It induces a particular kind of a trance which allows for moving onto the astral level and for a complete transformation into a beast – a manifestation of one's hidden instincts and lusts. In the case of this Maskim demon, this is a manifestation of atavistic predatory instincts, which become awakened by absorption of this dark energy.

The fourth of the Maskim is "a terrible Shibbu." The word "Shibbu" in Acadian means "serpent". The demon may appear in many forms, but usually it assumes the shape of a horned serpent. The motif of a snake with a pair of horns is often encountered on the Kassite stones called *kudurrus*, on Assyrian seals and statues. Such objects had a protective function and were used as magical amulets. The horned serpent in mythology was called "bašmu" and was regarded a protective symbol. In Sumerian it was called "ušum" or "ušumgallu." The qualities of the Maskim Shibbu, however, seem far from this mythological function. It appears as a shadowy, ghastly spectre, spitting out deadly venom. It coils around the magician and bites him, plunging its teeth into mortal flesh and infecting him with poisonous substance. While the venom flows through the veins, the magician falls into a hallucinogenic trance, and through vapours of greenish smoke, one experiences visions of myriad serpents and vipers, serpent-people, underground temples with serpent statues, and endless tunnels, writhing and pulsating, as if alive. There, one meets the dwellers of the underworld – half-human, half-serpents, akin to Lilith in her bestial form. The practitioner is invited to bathe in a cauldron filled with green venom which induces visions and hallucinations, through which he is transformed into a serpent himself, a creature able to crawl between the worlds, dimensions, and angles. The magical power of this Maskim demon is the art of bestial shape-shifting, this time into a serpent, in a trance of hallucinatory intoxication with the astral venomous *elixir vitae*. The energy of the demon is also very vampiric in its nature and apart from self-initiatory purposes, it could be used in astral vampirism – to poison the victim and drain one's astral energy through the form of this shadowy wraith.

The fifth demon is "a furious wolf who knoweth not to flee." Again, while exploring the nature of this demon, we will easily discover a close relation to astral shape-shifting – this time into a wolf, or a half-wolf. This points at the connection with the concept of lycanthropy, shamanism, nagualism and totem animals. The demon appears as a huge wolf or an anthropomorphic werewolf, with sharp teeth and hard claws. It brings

visions of preying, eating flesh of victims and drinking their fresh, warm blood. The magician may undergo the transformation himself, under the light of the full moon, in severe pain which tears apart the mundane body and releases the soul - the bestial / animal element inherent in human spirit. This concept of a bestial soul is rooted in shamanic beliefs in totem animals, guardian spirits and guides through spiritual realms. In diverse parts of the world it was known as the nagual, or the fylgia, and in witchcraft, as the familiar spirit of a witch. Like the leopard demon, the Maskim spirit represents the art of therianthropy, which has a long tradition worldwide, in many cultures and their mythologies, and especially in magical customs. To transform oneself into a desired animal, magicians dressed themselves in animal skins, rubbed their bodies with magic ointments, drank water out of animal's footprints, or used a wide range of magical spells and incantations. It was believed that by these practices one may acquire skills and qualities of the animal. When the transformation and mental identification is complete, one becomes a savage and cruel animal - a werewolf in which all human instincts are replaced by bestial. This results in an unrestrained freedom on mental and astral level. While working with lycanthropy, the magician may experience a total identification with one's bestial side and perform actions that belong to what exists outside the human world order and social laws. In a form of the astral beast, one may wander around woods and wilderness, tearing apart humans and animals encountered on the way, in order to satisfy the insatiable primal hunger - the lust for ultimate freedom from all constraints of mundane reality. For this reason, in lycanthropy we often find elements of fierce sadism, cannibalism, blood drinking, necrophagia, and even necrophilia. During exploration of this Maskim demon, the magician may also experience a rush of insanity, rage and fury, taken to the point of a complete loss of human consciousness. Yet, the cautious approach to this entity may transform it into a guide and spiritual familiar, as it is in the case of totemic animals.

The sixth demon is a mysterious "rampant ... which marches against god and king." This vague description suggests a force of chaos and disorder, a spirit of rebellion against artificial structures established by humans. The demon itself seems to be very ambiguous and chaotic. It may manifest in the consciousness as a strong surge of aggression and energy directed towards destruction. It may also assume hundreds of shapes, but none is stable and each form is continuously shifting into another, just within

seconds. Sometimes it resembles a tiger, a panther, a werewolf, or simply consists of many animal parts, as if it embodied all beasts at the same time. The demon also has necromantic associations – it may manifest as a destructive force of darkness and death which does not spare anyone – neither kings nor gods. As we know from mythological accounts, in Mesopotamia even gods could die – e.g. the first husband of the goddess Ereshkigal, Gugal-Ana, died and later on she married Nergal. There are many other examples from Mesopotamian mythology. Thus, the force of the demon is not only a principle of antinomian rebellion, but also the death which destroys both living beings and human civilizations. It is the beast which tears the sky apart, destroys the divine order and brings a stream of chaos and darkness into the earth. While working with this demon, the magician may experience chaos and discord entering the mind and manifesting in the mundane life. Yet, it is an essence of antinomian transformation, necessary towards the balance of life and individual divinity.

The seventh and the last of the demons is "a storm, an evil wind which takes vengeance." This spirit reveals a close connection to violent forces of nature: storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, heavy rains, thunders and lightning – with all fierce phenomena which belong to the sphere of air. It may appear to the summoner in a form of a black winged figure, or as an airy serpent with a human-like head and horns. It may also manifest as a destructive power of nature: a violent wind that tears trees out of the ground, collapses buildings, and destroys everything on its way. It enters the temple like a hurricane and lifts the magician onto the dark side of Nature. On the astral level the demon might be used for offensive attacks. It raises storms on the astral plane and causes severe damage to the enemy. It may also be used to force a change through the astral level which will manifest in the mundane life. Yet, it is a violent demon, and should be approached carefully.

The number seven in Mesopotamian mythology has a great significance. There were seven protective gods, seven wisemen (apkallū), seven children of the goddess Ishara, seven sons of the god Enmessara (both deities of the underworld), and we have analogous seven main demons. Magical spells had to be spoken seven times, also ritual customs were performed in this number of times (or seven times seven), seven seals were hanged around the neck of an exorcised person, there were seven gates to the underworld,

the realm of Ereshkigal and Nergal, etc. No wonder that demons were divided into groups of seven: the Galla, the Gigim, and the Maskim demons. As we have already observed, the Maskim seem to be primeval entities - offspring of the god Anu, and an evil / dark counterpart of the seven main gods who correspond to the constellation of Pleiades. The Maskim exist on both macrocosmic and microcosmic level. They are principles of chaos which act against the divine order: against light, peace, laws, civilization, and other human and gods' inventions. But they also represent dark instincts, hidden lusts, savage urges, atavistic and primal - inherent in human spirit, but repressed to the utmost regions of consciousness. On the microcosmic level they represent the antinomian impulses which drive man towards individual isolation and self-deification. They are the hurricane of changes, initiators of dynamics, so essential for the maintenance of cosmic harmony.



An Incantation to Summon the Seven

(Based on *Chaldean Magic: Its Origin and Development*)

May the Ritual begin!

They are Seven

They are Seven

In the depths of the ocean, they are Seven

In the brilliancy of heavens, they are Seven

They proceed from the ocean depths

They proceed from the hidden retreat

They are neither male nor female

These which stretch themselves out like chains

They have no spouse

They do not produce children

They are strangers to benevolence

**They listen neither to prayers nor wishes
They are vermin that come forth from the Mountain of Mashu
They are the vengeance of the gods
Raising up difficulties
Obtaining power by violence
They are Seven!
They are Seven!
They are twice Seven
Spirit of the Heavens, may they appear at my command!
Spirit of the Earth, may they hear this conjuration!**

**Seven Liers in Wait!
I, (magical name), summon you!
In the name of the Great Red Dragon
And by the Dragon's power!
Come unto me!**

Utuk Xul! Alla Xul! Gigim Xul! Dingir Xul! Maskim Xul! Mulla Xul!

So mote it be!

Ho Drakon Ho Megas!



„And two female spirits - Lilith and Naamah - would come and copulate with him and bear children. And those whom they bore are the evil spirits of the world who are called the Plagues of Mankind". (*Zohar*)

She is called by many different names and worshipped as a goddess of many faces. Naamah – the ruler of the first qlipha on the Tree of Night is the one who mounts the Beast. She is the serpent lurking by the Tree of Life and waiting to climb on its top, the one “from above” or “from beyond”. Her name is most often translated as “Pleasant”, for in the Hebrew tradition she “sang pleasant songs to idols”. However, due to her connection to the kingdom of the night, shadows and phantoms, she is also called “Groaning”, as the creatures over whom she presides are traditionally responsible for strange and terrifying sounds in the night, awakening dark desires in men, leading them astray from God. Naamah is also believed to be the mother of divination, whose talent was not surpassed by any others, and the sister of Tubal Cain. She is known for her artistic talents, especially those concerning music instruments and singing, and she is the force contained within the kingdom of Matter.

„Beautiful”

Yet, the character of Naamah is most often analysed in the category of a succubus, a vampiric spirit haunting men at night in order to drain their

vital sexual essences during a perverse intercourse. In the Zoharic Qabalah the goddess is viewed as an angel of prostitution and one of Samael's consorts, mentioned alongside Eisheth Zenunim, Agrat Bat Mahlat, or Lilith herself. Perhaps her stunning beauty, which she uses to seduce men in their night visions, is the reason why she is also called "Beautiful". According to the apocrypha, she joined Lilith in haunting Adam when he and Eve separated for one hundred and thirty years after Cain's murder of Abel, for he did not want to beget children in the world of fear and violence. Demonic offspring born from this union are called the Plagues of Mankind, for they lead humans away from God. But the Goddess reputedly visits also each man filled with lust, giving birth to hundreds of other dark entities.

"And this Naamah became aroused and adhered to her evil side. And to this day she exists, and her abode is among the waves of the great sea. And she comes forth, and makes sport with the sons of man, and becomes hot from them in the dream, in that desire which a man has, and she clings to him, and she takes the desire and from it she conceives and brings forth other kinds of spirits into the world".

But what exactly are the demons born from the union of a mortal man with the dark princess Naamah? These are dreams, fantasies and desires which underlie the structures of the material world, yet remaining hidden and unconscious. In this sense, the waves of the great sea from which the Goddess comes become the ocean of the unconscious, the sea of forces on which a small part of our consciousness drifts exposed to interaction with the mundane world. They are the forces leading us away from God because these forces are the projection of our personal aspirations and pursuits. Attempts to create our own perfect paradise. Hidden from conscious awareness, they represent the shackles of the material world - the imprisonment in lusts and ambitions which do not lead anywhere, depriving us of energy and satisfaction with what we already have. They are the pillars on which we build our subjective image of reality. This projection of unconscious aspirations often assumes a sexual form, like it is in the case of possessive urge, and so the demons of Naamah and the Goddess herself also manifest with a sexual imagery. Still beyond our awareness, these energies bind our existence and keep it addicted from the materialistic view on the surrounding world.

And thus, when we confront Naamah, we face our urges and sources of motivation which shape our actions in the mundane life. On the one hand,

we open ourselves to all unusual desires and aspirations, gaining new will and joy of life. On the other hand, when we start to realize why we actually act the way we do, why we desire things, we are on a good way to liberate ourselves from them. By reaching to the source of urges we can satisfy and use them for a conscious action. Naamah is said to endow the magician with all pleasures and riches of the world. And it is so indeed. But if this meant indulgence in material goods, we would be bound even more to the sphere of matter, instead of being liberated from the shackles of the world. The way to the true spiritual progress is far from any dualisms. Heaven and hell are within us and the "riches of the world" are only a tool to perceive and experience the material plane in a conscious and chosen way. That is why Naamah is called "Beautiful" - for she shows us the true beauty which emanates onto the material world from the centre of our existence.

„Pleasant“ and „Groaning“

The joy of life and satisfaction with living in harmony with oneself are reflected in another aspect of Naamah's character. As we have already observed, the Goddess was also called "Pleasant". The followers of Cain, after being exiled from the Garden of Eden, had to conquer the hostile world and create their own space on the earth. This was the beginning of civilization, with its technical achievements, culture and arts. While Tubal Cain was the inventor of technical advancement - the symbolic first blacksmith and craftsman - his sister Naamah surpassed everyone with her talent for music instruments and singing. Monotheistic religions saw the joy of life expressed by music, sexual intercourse or singing as sinful, i.e. distracting man from following the way of God. This was because such elements led to affirmation of life and its power, and encouraged man to seek happiness in himself, not in a mere expectation of reward in a distant, abstract world which is available only in the afterlife. Moreover, the aversion to ecstatic music and pagan folklore was caused by the fact that music was used as a ritual tool, connected with the conviction that the spirit of a deity inhabited the instrument and spoke to the priest through the sound. This spirit could also be controlled by means of special music. What is interesting, a familiar spirit ascribed to the famous witch of Endor was an old lifeless instrument, made from an old goatskin.

"Yobal made reed instruments, and harps, and flutes, and whistles,

and the devils went and dwelt inside them.
When men blew into the pipes, the devils sang inside them”.

But this view on the nature of music also implies a deeper esoteric meaning. This refers to the interpretation of Naamah's name as "Groaning". On the one hand, Naamah's music represents all tones, vibrations and dark energies that are channeled when we being out first initiatory practices with the Lilith qlipha, the first level on the Tree of Night. This is a particular opening up for darkness and its transformative aspects. Perhaps for this reason the nature of music itself is so fascinating and connected with the chaotic sphere of the Qlipothic Tree - our mind is not capable of classifying the sounds, it can merely create a map of correlations between the tones, which makes it subjective for everyone. On the other hand, this can refer to the method of summoning and communicating the forces, which occurs by means of music and voice as well as by a trance induced by the sounds. In antiquity a word was considered powerful in itself, and knowledge of a true name of things was believed to give control over them. This is reflected in certain myths of creation in patriarchal religions, such as e.g. the Mesopotamian or the Hebrew lore in which Jehova and Marduk create things by naming them. And even though today we do not pay attention to the meaning of our words, it is a great mistake to underrate their power. Our mind is able to register and process only a small percentage of impulses which reach it in each second, so the words we use to describe the surrounding reality are enormously important. The language influences our perception, and by using a certain meaning, tone and style we create our own tunnel of reality. In other words - by defining the world around we can shape our lives.

It is also worth to mention that while music and words are used to make the contact and achieve the understanding of energies and vibrations, the deeper exploration of this method might lead us to a deeper understanding of the structure and their role in the universe. Perhaps for this reason Naamah is believed to be the Mother of Divination. Through ability to achieve a trance and a concrete medium, as well as through continual broadening of our mental capabilities, through a profound insight into the nature of ourselves and the world around, we can gain the ability to predict the direction of our tunnel of reality and predict the future events. In a similar way we can learn to contact and manipulate the subtle currents of astral energies which in fact are the forces that constitute the foundation of the material plane.

„Sleeping“

“And all went astray after them. And there was one male who came into the world from the spirit of Cain's side, and they called Tubal-Cain. And a female came forth with him, and the creatures went astray after her, and her name was Naamah. From her issued other spirits and demons”.

We shall now discuss the nature of Naamah in the context of the antinomian Left Hand Path. As Tubal Cain's sister, she might represent the female completion of the path of isolation and separation from the natural order. Here we can again refer to her name which was also attributed to a Caanatite town, as it is mentioned in the Book of Joshua. If we connect it with the fact that the tribe of Cain was the first to create cities on earth, we can reach some interesting conclusions. It can be therefore a metaphor of isolation of one's consciousness - a complete and independent city, opposed to the rest of the "natural" world ruled by God. In this sense, Naamah's name attributed to the city (not exactly the city in question but in a general understanding) may become a complementary crowning of the path, enriching it with the feminine element. This hypothesis might be confirmed by certain correlations achieved by the art of Gematria and Qabalah in which the numerical analysis of this concept would leave us with the words such as "Palace", "Gathering", or "Little City". Also the reference to Malkuth, the first sephira on the Tree of Life, equivalent to Lilith qlipha, which means "Kingdom" might give us some clues to further understanding of the issue.

The left, female side is also connected with many other conceptions related to Naamah. Her symbolism refers to other basic aspects that belong to the left hand path of spiritual development. Because of her attributes, the Goddess is often associated with the realm of the night and nocturnal animals, which suggests a metaphoric allusion to the element of darkness. This is the transformative element in nature which allows for all progress and movement. It is the alchemical process of *Solve* by which the old elements are destroyed to make place for the new - evolution and regeneration. It should be stressed, however, that conceptions of light and darkness in this paradigm are not marked with any moral characteristics - they are complementary forces which allow for the existence of the universe in itself. There has to be a force that brings death and destruction so that creation could be possible. Like all other qliphothic energies, Naamah

is associated with the principles of chaos and destruction – as we have already observed – she is the force that challenges us on a particular level and liberates us from the shackles of the world so that we could enter a higher level and confront other ordeals on the path towards the ultimate freedom.

But darkness is not only death and destruction. Female deities, often black and associated with the impregnated earth, were also the symbol of fertility and the primeval waters of chaos. The motif of creation of the world from the ocean of prime matter is common to many pagan mythologies. It also represents the transcendence of dualisms connected with life and death – the collection of all potentialities – the place from which all creation emerges and returns after the end of the mundane life. Female element, connected with darkness, the night and mystical waters, is also associated with the symbolism of the moon. This is viewed as an analogy between the female menstrual cycle, related to the moon phases, and the natural tides. The moon is the symbol of eternal changes in the macrocosm – from birth, through mature age, death, and resurrection of the spirit. Darkness is also connected with the concept of the unconscious and the unknown – and so the exploration of this element is linked to human path to divinity – the lost wholeness. For this reason Naamah is sometimes called “Sleeping” – as she signifies the dark, hidden, and unexplored element in man. The element of darkness that exists in the heart of creation, remaining hidden as a treasure, awaiting to be discovered by a courageous seeker.

Naamah is also the queen of vampires and werewolves, appearing to her followers in the company of ghouls and shades of the dead at burial grounds. In esoteric sense, this refers to death principle – and in a deeper meaning – to separation and change. Death is the visible lord of changes, and thus, the perfect freedom and transformation. However, the ancients viewed the place of death and rest of man, i.e. the grave, as a literal gate to the other side of the world. And this is the function ascribed to the first qlipha on the Tree of Night ruled by Naamah. The Lilith qlipha – the womb of the night – is the gate through which the magician enters the other side of creation, facing dark energies and subtle planes of the universe. In this symbolic sense the grave becomes the womb.

This level is also connected with the Muladhara chakra. On the one hand, it is the gate to subtle energies existing in man, as is it suggested by Robert

Bruce. Before it is opened, the energy which is gained from the element of earth does not flow freely through other, higher chakras. In the first energy zone the Kundalini serpent lies coiled three and a half times at the base of the spine. Once more this explains the meaning of the name "Sleeping", referring to the unlimited source and potential of sexual energy, which at this level is expressed through basic instincts and urges. Unexplored by the uninitiated, it remains dormant. As a powerful sexual force it is also associated with the succubi and the incubi, as it was noted in the previous part of this essay. This is also suggested by the sexual nature of Naamah herself. Here we should refer again to the vampiric aspect of the Goddess. The magician can awaken the red serpent by working with the root chakra used to drain the energy from the element of earth. And when we master the energy flow within our bodies, we will be able to connect our seven chakras, which are reflection of macrocosmic energies, with our surrounding and drain the power and the force from the world. The person with a perfect mastery of the chakras and a full control of the Kundalini power might become a god.

Naamah is the goddess who challenges the magician and questions the belief in the material image of reality. She opens consciousness to the kingdom of darkness and endows us with all delights and riches of the world – the beauty which is contained in our mind. She seduces and guides us with her music which awakens the ecstasy of life and leads us astray – to wild mountains, woods, and cemeteries – desolate places where we can hear the call of entities from the other side. Thus, we swear the oath of perfection and eternal pursuit of awakening the Great Red Dragon and divinity within. And when we cross the Womb of the Night and find ourselves on the dark side of the world, the fiery breath of the Dragon will become our light through the utmost recesses of Infinity.

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„Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who haunt this place,
Give me beauty in the inward soul,
And may the outward and inward be at one.“

- Socrates

The earliest cults of Pan appeared in Arcadia. He was usually depicted with goat's horns and legs, long ears, a beard and hair-covered body. According to legends, his father was Hermes, and mother – nymph Penelope (though it was also said that his mother was the fire goddess Maia). Hermes was famous for his fancy for wood nymphs with whom he had numerous offspring. Pan was one of his children. His half-human half-goat appearance was explained by the belief that Hermes seduced Penelope in the shape of a goat. Both Hermes and Pan originally had a similar function: they were gods of fields and forests, protectors of flocks and shepherds. The legend has it that Hermes took his horned son to Olympus but Pan was happy only when surrounded by wild nature. For this reason he abandoned Olympus and returned to earth to become the god of forests, mountains and all living nature.

He was identified with many other nature deities. Among them was Silvanus, the Roman god of fields and woods, usually depicted in a human form but dressed in goat skin. Another deity identified with Pan was the Phrygian god of fertility Priapos, protector of gardens, livestock, and fruit

plants, with a similar appearance as satyrs. The Greek satyrs had animal ears, horns, the tail of a horse and a hairy body. Like Priapos and Pan, they were often depicted in an ityphallic form. The chief of satyrs was Silenus, a minor forest deity, with the ears, the tail and legs of a horse. Silenus and satyrs belong to the retinue of Dionysus. They represent fertility and sexual powers associated with their dark, demonic aspect – they lead humans astray with their wild cries and night fires. They also steal sheep and goats from shepherds and frighten the peasants. Satyrs were also called fauns, the name derived from the Roman god Faunus, patron of shepherds and woodlands. Apart from his benevolent and protective functions, Faunus was also malicious and impish, just like the Greek satyrs. His consort was the goddess Fauna, worshipped by women as the Great Goddess. Their offspring were the Fatui, spirits of fields and woods that haunted human dreams – either revealing future events or evoking ghoulish nightmares. Also in Egypt we encounter the equivalent of Pan: the old-Egyptian god Min was presented in an ityphallic form, which points at his function of the patron of fertility and sexuality. At the same time he was the giver of food and all herbs. In Egypt, however, there was also another aspect of Pan. The ancient Greek historian, Herodotus, observes:

“The Mendesians reckon Pan among the eight gods who, they say, were before the twelve gods. Now in their painting and sculpture, the image of Pan is made with the head and the legs of a goat, as among the Greeks; not that he is thought to be in fact such, or unlike other gods; but why they represent him so, I have no wish to say. The Mendesians consider all goats sacred, the male even more than the female, and goatherds are held in special estimation: one he-goat is most sacred of all; when he dies, it is ordained that there should be great mourning in all the Mendesian district. In the Egyptian language Mendes is the name both for the he-goat and for Pan.”⁶⁷

Pan was also included in the group of Dionysus’ companions along with the satyrs, the Sileni, the bacchae, and the maenads. Sometimes he was associated with the goddess Cybele, the patroness of nature, fertility and sexuality.

All depictions of Pan and similar deities were horned, or at least connected with the animal aspect – the symbol of wild, untamed nature. In ancient times horns represented virility and strength. They were the attribute of warriors and in some cultures they were placed on helmets. Cirlot observes

⁶⁷ Herodotus: *Histories*

that the etymology of the word "horns" is similar to the term "crown", and originally the crown was a pointed diadem symbolizing the same strength as horns. The horns were also a common attribute of gods and the emblem of divinity. Among horned deities we can mention e.g. the Mesopotamian Adad or Anu, the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the Semitic Astarte, the Nigerian god Ikenga, the old-Egyptian goddess Satis, or the Celtic horned god Cernunnos. Also Moses was believed to come down from the mount Sinai with horns on his head.⁶⁸ The most significant meaning of the horns is that of phallic, masculine energy and strength. They represent the vital force and the primal, bestial instincts. The spiral shape of ram's horns corresponds to the concept of the Kundalini, the energy described as a serpent coiled around the spine, the vital force of creation and evolution. But horns are also the symbol of the female principle - abundance, fertility and maternity, which particularly refers to the horns of a cow or she-goat. The mythical goat Amalthea, who suckled the infant-god Zeus, stands for abundance and maternal powers. Goats were one of the first domesticated animals and were often used in ceremonies and celebrations ensuring the fertility of nature. This twofold symbolism of the horn implies its bisexual character - phallic and penetrating from the outside, and empty and receptive on the inside. Therefore, the horn is a lingam, the symbol of sexuality, the union of genders, the fertile force of nature.⁶⁹

Another symbol of strength and vital energy that we find in Pan is his hair. In mystical traditions hair often represented vitality and virility. The type of hair signified the type of energy or its level:

"Whereas hair on the head, because it grows on the top of the human body, symbolizes spiritual forces and can be equated, within the symbolism of water, with the 'Upper Ocean', body-hair is equivalent to the 'Lower Ocean', that is to say, it denotes the proliferation of the irrational power of the cosmos and of the instinctive life. This explains why the priests of many religions, the Egyptians among them, shaved off all their hair. And it also explains why the god Pan - a prefiguration of the devil - was depicted with hairy legs."⁷⁰

Therefore, the exposed attributes of Pan - the horns, the hairy body, and the phallus - represent fertility, untamed sexual energy, urge, and sexual impulses, savageness and lewdness that is found in the universe and is a

⁶⁸ Though this description is often attributed to a wrong translation of original material.

⁶⁹ Juan Cirlot: *A Dictionary of Symbols*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

part of the human nature: he is the god of woods and uncivilized, savage life. He wanders through the land, jumps over rocks, lurks in the woods and rapes the nymphs. His lifestyle is the expression of freedom without rules or boundaries, fully devoted to enjoying the pleasures of the wild nature, so characteristic for the wood spirits in primitive cultures.

It is therefore not accidental that it was his image that Christianity took as a portrayal of the devil. Pan is also the prototype of the Tarot Atu The Devil. His animal shape and character denote the wild, untamed instincts, while his human parts suggest that the bestial aspect is an integral part of the human nature. This image of the half-human half-bestial creature is the symbol of man and the universe. The upper part corresponds to the upper world – the realm of the spirit and high aspirations (the highest chakra, Sahasrara, the spiritual plane). The lower part of Pan's body corresponds to the lower world, the domain of instincts and urges, the most basic needs and impulses (the lowest chakra, Muladhara, the earthly plane). Pan's horns are the emblem of transformation of the earthly energy and instincts for the sake of spiritual progress.

The Egyptian goat of Mendes (originally a ram called Be Neb Dedet), identified with Pan, was incorporated by occult philosophies as the image of Baphomet – the vital force of the universe. The famous illustration by the nineteenth-century French occultist Eliphas Levi presents Baphomet as the symbol of the creative universal force, the spirit of all living creatures and the surrounding nature. In the illustration he is depicted as an entity uniting all opposites: with the goat's head, the female upper part of the body, the hooves, the wings and the burning torch on the head. This image signifies the union of the masculine energy and all elements. It is the symbol of fertility, creativity, wisdom and knowledge. In this picture Pan is a human being, a beast and a god. He is the force of creation and life, as well as destruction and death – the alchemical principles of *Solve* and *Coagula*. For this reason the ancient people considered Pan as the god of the whole nature, creator and master of all things. It is significant that the name "Pan" derives from the Greek "all" (there is another etymological interpretation that derives the name "pan" from "pa", the shortened form of "paon" = "protector of the flocks"). Therefore, he embraces all aspects of the universe: the bright side and the dark, demonic aspect. That is why he is called Pamphagos (All-Devourer) and Pangenitor (All-Begetter). In this sense, Pan is the raw energy, without its distinguished aspects, neither

good nor evil, existing in its undifferentiated form. This is the force beyond all rationality (*alogos*) – unpredictable, irrational, independent of any rules and laws. Servius describes Pan in the following way:

“Pan is a rustic god, formed in similitude of nature, and so he is called Pan, i.e. All: for he has horns in similitude of the rays of the sun and the horns of the moon; his face is ruddy, in imitation of the aether; he has a spotted fawn skin on his breast, in likeness of the stars; his lower parts are shaggy, on account of the trees, shrubs, and wild beasts; he has goat’s feet, to denote the stability of the earth; he has a pipe of seven reeds, on account of the harmony of the heavens, in which there are seven sounds; he has a crook, that is a curved staff, on account of the year, which runs back on itself, because he is the god of all nature”.⁷¹

However, Pan is above all the symbol of Matter, the mundane world of humans. Hence the Arcadians called him “Ton tes Hules Kurion”, “The Lord of Matter”, referring to the Greek term “hyle”, the world substance. That is why the Baphomet iconography includes an inverted pentagram pointing down, to the earth, which represents the superiority of Matter (the four upper arms of the pentagram) over the Spirit (the centered ray). Therefore, the path of Pan is the path of instincts, basic nature, union with the surrounding material world.

For the Greeks, Pan was the deity from Arcadia, dwelling in the Arcadian woodlands and mountains. This picturesque region in antiquity became the symbol of the bucolic Eden, with sunny meadows, wild forests, and idyllic life in harmony with nature. Here dwelled the fabled and mythical creatures, such as nymphs, satyrs or fauns. Arcadia was also the favourite place of Pan. Symbolically, it was the kingdom of the Irrational, the magic and the fable, the sphere of instincts, intuition, life, and vitality.

Arcadia was also the region of music. From early childhood everyone there learned to sing hymns in praise of gods, and each year there was a contest in which, accompanied by flutes and other instruments, competitors presented their artistic talents. Music was also the domain of Pan. His cult included dancing, singing and music, and Pan himself was believed to have invented the *syrinx*, a kind of a pipe with reeds of different length. He was often depicted while playing this instrument. According to a myth, the name “syrinx” derived from the name of a nymph who rejected Pan’s advances. Pan chased her until she asked gods to transform her into a band

⁷¹ Quoted in: Thomas Keightley: *The Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy*

of reeds. The wind blowing through the reeds produced such a beautiful sound that Pan made a pipe from them. This love for music reveals a different, gentle nature of Pan. Since earliest times music has been the symbol of sensibility. The music of Orpheus had the power to tame even the wildest beasts. It could stop the flow of a river and move the mountains. Music was a reflection of the cosmic harmony in the universe: the principle of order and balance between the structured and the savage. Pan's love for music also signifies his twofold nature: on the one hand he is savage and primitive, on the other hand: gentle and sensitive. Hence his relation to the satyrs and the fauns which reflect two aspects of nature: satyrs - wild and unbridled force, lust and aggression, and fauns - the gentle aspects. Pan unites all these elements as a force transcending them, or as their synthesis.

However, Pan was not always worshipped with music and singing. It was believed that at noon he rests in shadowy caves or deep in the woods. People were afraid to disturb his sleep and they thought that when he awakes, he can bring "panic" (the word derived from his name, the Greek "panikon" meaning "fear of Pan"), the paralyzing fear upon unfortunate travelers who interrupted his rest. The time of Pan's sleep was known as "Pan's hour". It was the time of the day when the heat was most severe, the wind ceased and there was a solemn silence. Birds stopped singing and all animals were sleepy and tired. In the Middle Ages, when Pan came to be identified with the devil, the noontime silence was thought to be the time of demons and evil spirits. Pan became "the demon of the noontide" who plagued humans with fatigue, weakness and unwillingness to work, which was believed to be a result of demonic possession. It was thought that the demon of the noontide left a possessed person in the evening, when the sun heat faded and the midday fatigue disappeared.

Despite a relatively small number of descriptions of celebrations and ceremonies devoted to Pan, his cult is often associated with the worship of fertility and sexuality. His celebrations were usually identified with the ecstatic cult of Dionysus, the god of fertility, wine and intoxication. Therefore, they involved music, singing and ecstatic dancing - performed by shepherds disguised in goat skins, or by maenads, the female companions of this Greek deity. The dancing retinue of Dionysus processed through the woods with torches and held orgiastic celebrations in honour of their patron. It was similar with the cult of Pan. He had many

sanctuaries and shrines around the whole Greece, usually in wild, desolate places. In depictions he was presented in the company of nymphs and Hermes, and among offerings left to him by worshippers was milk and honey. His sacred tree was oak (also the sacred tree of Zeus) and fir. He was also the patron of meadows, shepherds and livestock. As the god of woods and harvest, he was sometimes depicted with a twig, a bowl, or a fruit in his hands, and as the protector of animals – with an animal skin over his arm. He often appeared with the syrinx and was famous for his love of music. There is also a connection between the cult of Pan and the rise of the first theatres – the first actors constituting the choir were called satyrs and disguised in goat skins. The word “tragedy” itself derives from the Greek term “tragoidia” = “goat’s song”.

The most famous festival of Pan/Dionysus and other deities representing fertility was the last night of April, known in various traditions as Walpurgis Night, Roodmas, May Day, Giamonios, or Beltane. It was the celebration of sexuality and abundance, both in nature and in man. In Celtic beliefs it was the first day of summer. It was thought that it was the night when the forces from the Other Side took over the rule. Traditional celebrations of this festival included ecstatic dancing, jumping over the fire or a broom, and ritual orgies. These customs survived later in the sabbatic tradition and dark aspects of the Western witchcraft, or in their milder form – in modern neopagan rites.

Because of his twofold nature, Pan was also connected with the underworld and depicted with hooves. The ancients considered deformed legs not only as a token of bestial nature but also as an emblem of a demonic character and the connection to the lower world, the underworld, hell. The sign of Pan is Capricorn, ruled by the planet Saturn, the patron of the alchemical *nigredo* – the process of dissolution into a primordial condition (*prima materia*). Capricorn is the earth sign, representing the material world, the sphere of basic instincts, the lowest, physical plane. Pan is also a psychopomp – the guide of the souls in their journey into the underworld. This is because of his association with Hermes, the divine messenger who accompanied the deceased in their journey to the realm of shadows. However, Pan is not actually a guide of the dead souls, but rather a god of spiritual initiation – the guide of hunters in dark woods, and the guide of magicians in their journey through the darkness of the soul. He leads the adept through the night of death into freedom, through savage

and frightening spheres of existence into illumination that can only be found in the Night of Pan”:

“The spirit of the life force is the spirit of the dual ecstasy, procreation and reabsorption, sex and death. Beautiful and terrible god of the hovering hawk, God of the thrusting sapling, God of conjoined lovers, God of the worm-filled carcass, God of the starting hare, God of the wild hunt carousing the forest in mad exhilaration. Invoke this God with wild uninhibited love play, and with wine and strange drugs which thrill and exalt the vitality and imagination. Lastly, draw thine own exhilarated consciousness into communion with this God by profound concentration and visualization, and the magic life force is thine to wield for good or ill”.⁷²

Pan is the guide through the realm of darkness, chaos and night. This is the Night of Pan, also referred to as NOX: the sphere of primordial chaos, *prima materia* that preceded Creation. This is the sphere of all possibilities, all potential, source of all things. NOX is the gate that leads beyond the world as we know it. It is the abyss where everything is dissolved and the womb in which the adept dies and rises reborn. In this journey we are alone, subjected to the destructive influence of our own personal demons. In this journey we are led only by the horned god – through the abyss which contains the light of dark illumination, the light of knowledge and understanding, yet different from LUX – the light that shines on the world of Creation. The Night of Pan is the black illumination, the primordial light that can be found only through the descent into the heart of darkness.

“I am thy mate, I am thy man,
Goat of thy flock, I am gold, I am god,
Flesh to thy bone, flower to thy rod.
With hoofs of steel I race on the rocks
Through solstice stubborn to equinox.
And I rave; and I rape and I rip and I rend
Everlasting, world without end,
Mannikin, maiden, Maenad, man,
In the might of Pan.
Io Pan!”

- A. Crowley

⁷² Peter J. Carroll: *Liber Null & Psychonaut*

Invocation of Pan

Melez!

Lord of Lust, goat-footed Pan! Lord of the dance! God of the Woods!
Come forth to me! Come from forest glades with dancing nymphs!
Descend from peaks of the mountains and shrouded hills! Lead me into
your wild kingdom where I will join your celebration with savage
beasts, maenads, fauns and satyrs. Guide me with the sound of your
syrinx, the sweet and low melody of delight – through bright meadows
and dark woods.

Io Pan!

Silent One! Awaken from your noontide sleep and breathe life into
nature which awaits you in solemn silence. Enflame me with your
ecstatic and passionate dream! Delight my heart with laughter that
echoes deep in the woods, the voice that whispers sweet secrets into the
ears of your followers, the scream of ecstasy in your wild rites!

Io Pan!

Lord of the Hunt! Fill me with the thrill of chase! Take me to high hills
and the heart of the woods where I will join the bacchae in their
untamed and orgiastic passage! Show me how to return to the source of
my being! Let me drink your wine of frenzy! Enflame me in your divine
fury! Let me taste the communion of insanity and rapture through your
ferocious festival!

Io Pan!

All-Devourer! All Begetter! Pangenitor! Pamphage! Play your song of
life! Give me the power to destroy and create, the essence of life and
death! Let me die in your sweet arms and arise as a newborn child of
nature! Enter my heart and intoxicate me with your bestial lust and
joyful innocence! Horned God of the Woods! Reveal to me the mystery
of lust and liberty, life and love, death and rebirth!

Io Pan!

Forgotten One! Take me to the depth of my soul, into the heart of your Night, so that in darkness I could find the Light! Guide me on the lost path of Darkness! Show me the infernal kingdom where wild beasts await your command! I seek the union with the Shadow that exists behind the Threshold of Time. Lead me into the utmost Night and let me gaze into the Infinite!

Io Pan!

The Great God Pan!

So mote it be!



Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy – knowledge about the potential human (as opposed to theosophy – knowledge about God, and anthropology – knowledge about the actual human) is one of the Christian ways of spiritual world's cognition. However, it is much more than a contemporary form of gnosis. Christianity – also esoteric – is not in any extent a way of spiritual development that I would like to follow, but nevertheless, I am convinced that virtually everybody who wants to transcend the world of

phenomena (a facade which we are able to experience through our senses and intellect), should get acquainted with anthroposophical thought. Apart from aspects that may be called "postulative" (proposition of creating the new, alternative civilization based on values personified by Christ, way of initiation, ethical system), in Rudolf Steiner's writings and lectures everybody may find valuable, inspiring and versatile knowledge about the spiritual reality - in modern history of mankind, hardly anyone has obtained as deep initiation as the author of *Philosophy of Freedom*. I do not identify myself either with the christocentric system of values or with scientific methodology of examining the spiritual world, which is typical for Steiner's "spiritual essence", but I consider anthroposophy as an incredibly inspiring current of esoteric thought.

Spiritual reality which exists behind the façade of the so-called "real world" is full of diverse forces moving in many different, often opposing directions. Every spiritual being has its own system of values, postulates its own path of initiation and the form of redemption crowning it. I must emphasize here that I use the concept of "redemption" in much wider sense than it is used in Christian tradition. Unification of the soul and the Spirit, unification of individual consciousness and the universal consciousness of the Creator - this is Christian redemption, the crowning of the Christian path of initiation, which is very close to the magical tradition of the Right Hand Path. It is only one of many paths of initiation. To complete any way of spiritual development, to obtain the deepest possible initiation given by a spiritual being - this is exactly what I call "redemption". Steiner - the esoteric Christian - usually wrote about Christian initiation, but he never denied the existence of other paths of initiation and alternative visions of redemption. They are the subject of demonosophy - the knowledge about demonic beings (spiritual entities who oppose the Christian plan of world's salvation and propose their own paths of initiation in anthroposophical tradition are called demonic beings). Rudolf Steiner distinguished three categories among them - Asuric, Ahrimanic, and Luciferic beings - whom I am going to describe in the further part of this article.

In the Christian tradition, to which Steiner's anthroposophy refers to, the term "demon" is highly pejorative. On the other hand, the Greek *daimonion* (literally: "supernatural power") is a spiritual element of man, a spiritual being that awakens human's creative energy, or a voice from the inside.

Everything depends on a point of view... Initiation obtained by Steiner was Christian, and thus, the Christian system of values is a frame of reference for him and he formulates his opinions and postulates from this deeply christocentric viewpoint. That is why Steiner often calls demonic entities "dangerous" or "formidable" – they lead man away from Christ. Thus, Ahrimanic or Luciferic (not to even mention Asuric) initiation appears to be rather regression than development. When we try to examine this problem from a different perspective – Luciferic for example – then the Christian initiation appears to be an escape from the true, gorgeous freedom, the rejection of individual dreams about divinity, anti-humanist affirmation of humility and safety, acceptance of suffering, adoption of an attitude which is shallow in its one-sided altruism, negation of the individual spiritual development... Everything is relative – not only in the material but also in the spiritual world...

For me, demonosophy is the most fascinating but quite commonly neglected thread of Steiner's thought. I am convinced that a person who aims to obtain knowledge about the Asuras, Ahriman and Lucifer should treat all of Steiner's assessing statements with distance, having in mind that they are formulated from a deeply christocentric point of view and that they result from the Christian ethical system, which completely differs from the values of demonic beings.

In the following part of this article I am going to describe three groups of demonic beings. The Asuras, Lucifer and Ahriman (but also Christ) are rather archetypes, ideas, "collective beings", groups of entities rather than concrete individuals. That is why I will often write about them using the plural form – Asuric, Ahrimanic and Luciferic beings. Out of my inborn perversity, I begin the brief profile of the three demonic categories from description of Asuric beings. The Asuras appear only in the last phase of Steiner's revelations and we know about them much less than about other spiritual beings. Finding more detailed information about them is extremely difficult. Even Steiner wrote about the Asuras in a very brief and vague way.

A vast number of those who write about anthroposophy tend to skip the Asuric beings in their texts (I presume they find this subject completely uninteresting, or it evokes in them a feeling of abomination which is incredibly difficult to overcome...), the others only mention them

occasionally. Conscious of acting against the tradition, I decided to place the Asuras in the beginning of my description. I did this because of two reasons. Firstly, the Asuric beings are the oldest of all demons – they come from Saturn, the planet considered as the first phase of the development of the Universe. The second reason is much more important. The necessity of choice between existence and non-existence precedes the other dilemmas – these philosophical as well as those connected with the material reality. I think that there is no need to prove that one must exist to be able to choose – it is quite obvious. The existence is thus prior to the essence and the conflict between existence and non-existence is a contradiction prior to all others. Entering the path of Asuric initiation is equivalent to choosing the non-existence in this conflict (in the domain of consciousness). The Asuras attempt to suck the ego, to turn man into an anthropomorphic machine possessing some remains of intelligence, will and feelings, but lacking what is most important and valuable according to all systems of values apart from Asuric – personality. All the other systems of initiation postulate the conscious existence and advocate certain values (which are completely different in each case) that are positive from the ontological point of view. Asuric initiation is equivalent to giving up the ego, Asuric redemption is the annihilation of individuality and personality. From this perspective, the antagonism between the Asuras and Ahriman, Christ or Lucifer, comes to the fore and the choice between the Asuric and any other way of spiritual development becomes crucial. By the way – when I watch the surrounding society, I often have an impression that in the contemporary world the activity of the Asuras is incredibly intense.

Ahriman (from Persian: “Evil Spirit”) personifies materialism, power and cold intellect. It is a being younger than the Asuras but older than Lucifer. The material world and the ability to achieve supremacy over it are pivotal fields of Ahriman’s interest. Entering Ahrimanic path of initiation is equivalent to the necessity of giving up feelings like compassion, altruism or humility. They are objects of the deepest contempt as the symptoms of weakness. Ahrimanic values include power, strength, might, understood as the ability to impose one’s will on those who are weaker. This paradigm brings to the mind Charles Darwin’s and Herbert Spencer’s concepts, according to which, only the strong are able to survive and the weak become annihilated. Ahrimanic ethics resembles the nietzschean, where the Christian contradiction “good versus evil” becomes replaced by “powerful versus weak”. The victory of the powerful over the weak is considered to

be a natural and a strongly desired course of events. Hedonistically understood private good becomes the main point of reference and the prism through which everyone should judge all deeds, phenomena and events as "good" or "evil". In Ahrimanic ethics, apart from the nietzschean motives, machiavellist threads are extremely important. Efficiency is a value and an ethical criterion - the way leading to the goal is "good" if it brings the achievement (personal gain, pleasure) of the goal closer, and "evil" when it does not. According to this concept, cruelty and hurting other beings is itself ethically indifferent while absolutely acceptable if it leads to pleasure and fulfillment of needs.

Ahrimanic freedom is the ability to impose one's will on the others, the skill of enslaving the weak. The achievement of freedom, understood as such, gaining consciousness about the true, brutal nature of reality, understanding the ruthless laws that rule the world, accepting the role of a predator and becoming a more powerful predator than the others, immortal and invincible - this is the goal of Ahrimanic initiation. Ahrimanic love is nothing more than desire, eroticism and sensual pleasure. Spiritual development is not a goal itself but a tool which is useful when it leads to fulfillment of desires connected with the physical existence. Spirituality is treated manipulatively, the material reality is the point of entrance and the point of exit. While according to the Ahrimanic paradigm, man is mainly a biological and a chemical being, the denial of the existence of Ahrimanic esoteric would be a serious mistake. Ahrimanic occultism always aims to have direct measurable effects in the material world. Nevertheless, Ahriman's domain is advanced technology, exact and natural science. Rationalism, perfectionism and cold intellect - these are typical features of the Ahrimanic mind.

In Ahrimanic system of values there is no place for humanism. A human being as an idea should be overcome. Achieving the status of a combination of a carnivorous beast and a nietzschean superhuman, half-monster, half-machine, able to crush everybody who stands in their way and denies to fulfill their will - this is the goal of Ahrimanic initiation. Hatred, violence, terror, vision of society based on a centralized, hierarchic model, where the power belongs to the most powerful and the most noble - these are pivotal Ahrimanic values. According to Rudolf Steiner, ideologies that postulate hatred and create divisions among people (all forms of nationalism, racism, chauvinism) are inspired directly by

Ahriman. Ahrimanic beings are connected with the values which are called masculine in the tradition of culture. Rudolf Steiner prophesies that in this century Ahriman is going to incarnate. In our times the "Evil Spirit" is very active, preparing mankind for his arrival. The founder of anthroposophy writes that Ahriman will incarnate in the West (maybe in America?). Demonologists tend to identify Ahriman with Satan. Ahrimanic beings aim to take over control over mankind and – in consequence – over the earth. The Evil Spirit is identified with Darkness and the black colour.

Lucifer (from Latin: "Bringer of Light") – the youngest of demonic beings – is the total opposite of Ahriman, a rebel and a dreamer. He incarnated for the first time three thousand years before Christ in the Far East. In Steiner's works he appears as Christ's brother who rejected God's plan of development and redemption of the world, which strongly contrasted with his own plan. The Bringer of Light rejects both Ahrimanic values (pragmatism, apotheosis of violence, hedonism, and machiavellism) and Christian values (humility, altruism, loving everyone). He proposes an alternative way to those systems – a path of individual spiritual development, striving for perfection and rebellion against the world as it is. He does not accept the Universe as it is created by God. He disagrees with the worldwide suffering and pain. He is courageous enough to challenge the Creator. He calls for change in this world, elimination of evil and suffering. Lucifer inspires revolutionaries, dreamers, creators of utopias... Luciferic freedom first of all has a negative character (freedom "from"). It is a liberation of consciousness from dogmas and clichés enslaving it, rejecting all kinds of necessity. Freedom assumes the shape of rebellion against the Creator and his creation – reality. This rebellion is not a mere negation, it is full of creative energy and passion.

Lucifer is the patron of arts (especially ecstatic art which transcends the material reality) and mysticism. Luciferic outlook is based on idealism, spirituality is incomparably more important than existence of the material world. Material goods, sensual pleasure and fulfillment of lusts become less important. Moreover, the focus on the material world hinders spiritual development. Luciferic love is a boundless, incredibly intense fascination. Emotions, imagination and creativity are extremely important for Lucifer, while he rejects the perfectionist, impassive and cold intellect. The goal of Luciferic initiation is limitless Freedom, which is possible to achieve only when one transcends his human nature and becomes a god. Liberation

from limitations imposed by the material world and dogmas binding the ego gives us unlimited possibility of creating. Luciferic initiation is close to the magical Left Hand Path. The Bringer of Light contrasts material world with alternative realities. Steiner calls the VIII Sphere – Luciferic alternative Universe – “illusionary”. Lucifer himself appears in anthroposophical texts as a liar and a creator of illusions. Here a question comes to my mind – to what extent the so-called “real world” is more real than a world created by our imagination?

The way Rudolf Steiner describes Lucifer is full of contradictions. The creator of anthroposophy describes the Bringer of Light as the patron of changes and relentless pursuit of perfection. On the other hand, he calls him the “restorer of the Past”. I find the last description justified, while pagan religions (according to Steiner’s concept – religions before Christ) were often, but not always, very close to Luciferic paradigm. In anthroposophy Lucifer often appears as a dangerous being that threatens spiritual development and he is often called “a liar”. However, the tone that Steiner uses while describing Lucifer is often positive, sometimes even laudatory. There is no doubt that the founder of the Anthroposophical Society felt much stronger affinity towards Lucifer than towards Ahriman. Some even claim that anthroposophy, as a form of gnosis, includes many Luciferic threads and inspirations.

Luciferic Light strongly differs from Christian Light and Ahrimanic Darkness. It is a hidden shining, full of mysticism and mystery. It can be compared to star light or candle light... As Ahriman is identified with Satan, in demonological tradition Diabolos and Antichrist are Lucifer’s equivalents. Indian god Shiva, lord of changes, dance and destruction, and Odin, the father of the Aesir, god of wisdom and magic of the runes, are Luciferic beings. Lucifer is closely connected with values traditionally referred to as feminine. Steiner wrote that Luciferic beings often assume shapes of beautiful women when they appear in dreams and imagination.

The triadic division of demonic beings proposed by Steiner is rooted in the tradition of demonology. The medieval Cathars distinguished three demonic beings – Lucibel (whose equivalent is Lucifer), Satan (Ahriman) and Nihil (nothingness – the Asuras).

From Steiner's christocentric point of view, Ahrimanism and Luciferism are two extremities, and the initiatory path of esoteric Christianity leads between them. Ahriman inspires humans towards the material world, Lucifer - towards the spiritual. Steiner wrote about Luciferic and Ahrimanic "temptations" that threaten the balanced and harmonious spiritual development. On the other hand, he claims that Ahriman and Lucifer cooperate with one another. Did those two completely different spiritual beings really form an alliance against Christ? Is it long-termed or maybe only tactical? This point of view seems to be simplified and I have serious doubts about it. In my opinion, it is a consequence of choosing the christocentric point of view, from which the Ahrimanic and the Luciferic ways of initiation appear to be a spiritual regression indeed, while values alternative for Christians are nothing more than "temptations". There are plenty of ways to understand the spiritual world. There are many spiritual beings, ideas and systems of values, many paths leading to initiation. And let everyone follow their own path...