

A First Degree Lecture On Practices with the Pillars

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I: Introductory Remarks

In the lecture on the Pillars in the Lodge, we had a chance to look at the symbolism of the pillars in the lodge, and its wider application. We touched on the theme of *polarity*, and its manifestation through correspondences. In this lecture, we will take a look at some of the ways in which the formula of polarity can be put to use in magical training and in magical work.

II: Some General Principles

- A. In one sense, manifestation springs out of polarity -- complex manifestation, like the array of colors, "vibrates between the light and the darkness".
- B. Polarity is the root of differentiated manifestation. There is something that cannot be named: the En (AIN), or En Sof (AIN SVPh). Its first manifestation is unity, "the one". This applies to *anything*: to exist as a (=one) thing, it must be one, integral. But one implies duality (figure and ground). Thus polarity. This is not a logical exercise, or the manipulation of words: it refers to the structure of conscious experience itself which, according to the magical hypothesis, is the structure of manifestation.
- C. Polarity then reaches simultaneously "upward" and "downward", or "backward" and "forward". And in both directions it reaches toward a unity (although the unity it reaches for is a further "fall", or departure, from the unity from which it comes).
- D. Polarity is equilibration: it "seeks" equilibrium by equilibrating or equilibrizing. Both negative (stabilizing) and positive (amplifying) feedback can be involved. The "equistat", and the feedback modes, can often be chosen.
- E. Training in the use of polarity often involves "raids on the inarticulate", since articulation is only one pole. The core of such training is the immediate realization of the polar structure of polar correspondences, or (in an older terminology) polar sympathy.

III: Exercises and Practices

- A. Bodily, using the decussation of the principles. Balance: arms and legs, standing and moving. Attention to the body as a polar structure, and its background unity.
- B. Structural, using the interplay of active and passive, and the interplay between differentiated and undifferentiated fields. Gripping, being gripped.
- C. Somesthetic: using the interplay of inner and outer, entering and containing. Can usefully also be linked with using the interplay of volition and automaticity in breathing.
- D. Characterologic: traits in their polar structure, and their arising and transformation. A bit abstract here, but of more use in connection with elemental self-knowledge. Concretely, mapping positive and negative

manifestations of traits, and also mapping figure and ground aspects of traits, and noting relationship between the two.

- E. Noetic and perceptual: beginning with figure/ground observation, and going on to affect and cognition.- process observation, figure/ground inter-relationship. The polar structures of consciousness.

IV: Magic

A talismanic process mobilizing all these traits to mobilize the Light with respect to one's involvement with some matter.

- A. Formulating the matter or issue at hand. Some discursive meditation on any polarities involved.
- B. Preparing the material basis (as below) with the issue written between the double borders of the square frame. This may be distributed in fours, or not (eg repeated, or written all around) according to the taste and ideas of the practitioner.
- C. The usual preparations (preparation of the place by banishing and invocation). Invoke the Light to be present and active in this matter.
- D. Focus on the issue, and the talisman, first as a physical object, then as an object of perception, then as an object of thought and experience, until one has a sense of the figure/ground structure of this particular state of awareness. There should be a sense of participation in not only the ideas and feelings and perceptions, but also in the structure of the talisman.
- E. Place these all in the talisman as the "other limit" of this state of attention. (Projecting sign.) Practice regulated breathing until a stable sense of a united dual presence has been established. With the sign of silence, return to duality, sealing your boundaries, and establishing distinction between yourself and the talisman.
- F. Wrap the talisman. Give thanks to the Light and the forces of the Light. Close and banish as usual.
- G. After one cycle of the Light, within a consecrated space, invoke the Light to dissolve the energies of the talisman by resolving them back into the light. Destroy the material basis by fire, dissolve in water, and throw the water/ash mix onto earth 9through the air).

