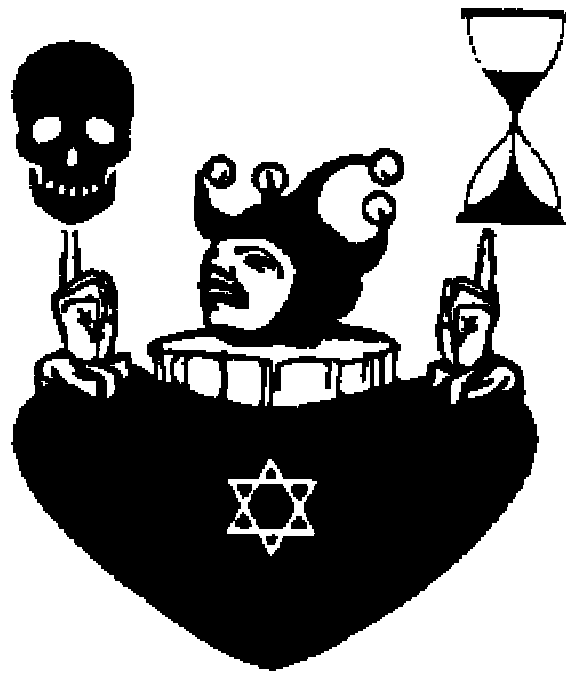


The Theatre of Magick



by
Ray Sherwin

“Every Word Herein is a Lie;
including the previous statement.”

(Abu Shenab, A.H.642)

TO THE READER

This book should be read in one sitting beginning at midnight. It should be illuminated by a single lamp, other parts of the room being in semi-darkness. Subtle incenses and music will enhance the dramatic effect.

The book should not be destroyed after the first reading.

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Overture

I first met Thessalonius Loyola in a ramshackle colonial-type bungalow on a blasted heath near Hollywood. The exterior of the place, which had been borrowed from a friend for the duration of his stay, belied its interior which was ordered and comfortable. The tang of leather permeated the large studio, especially when a body had just immersed itself in the more than copious chesterfield.

There was no hint of magick here except for the almost tangible aura surrounding the man himself. There was not a single book.

"I try to do without them these days, just as I do without weapons and paraphernalia, except when I'm teaching or working with one of the Lodges."

That a chief representative of the Order should be found in this out of the way place was unusual - it was a chance in a million that I was there myself. So it was only natural that I should spend a few days with him before I left for Cairo, especially since his reputation for reclusiveness had denied so many others access to him.

We spent our time walking, usually in silence, eating, usually in silence, and talking, refreshing ourselves as we did so with the peculiar local wine of which we drank an alarming quantity each evening. The subject of these talks was rarely magick in the sense that I would have previously used the word, but slowly the pieces began to come together and after a few such conversations the first faint glimmerings of understanding periodically illuminated my, by now grape-besotted mind. The rest of our time was spent in sleeping and it was during these periods of respite that such of the new ideas as I was able to grasp became assimilated and consolidated into a coherent whole.

Although Thess himself would probably not recognize the contents of this book as encapsulating aspects of his own teaching (because they have been strained through my perception of them and tinted by my description of them) I am indebted to him for turning my previous ideas on their heads and for furnishing the ideas which form the basis of this book.

Duality figures largely in his considerations but the incessant see-saw duality so much loved by the qabalists and old-aeon magicians he totally ignores as being no more than sophistry and of no merit in nuclear magick, the science of self evolution. Nor, he points out, is duality of the day-night, male-female order particularly effective in the performance of magick except in a small number of very special cases.

He sees only one duality. The way in which Kia perceives itself and its relationship with everything else. The Kia constructs itself a body, he reasons in order to experience and in order to create an effect. Without the matter- energy - space - time backdrop the Kia is, but that is all that may be said of it. It has no measurable properties or position.

Life, as far as we know, may well manifest somewhere as a three-legged, three-eyed creature living on a planet with three suns and no moons where three sexes come together to procreate. Its tripartheid philosophy would seem as natural to it as our system of duality seems to us and yet our dualities would seem absurd and inexplicable. Our notion of duality is wholly a condition of environment and is not essential in any sense of that word. Duality suggests dichotomy. Dichotomy is a mind state and does not exist in the phenomenal universe.

Loyola's conception of duality consists of Chaos and Cosmos, these terms being expressive of states of mind. Man looks at the universe and sees Chaos, randomness and irregularity. He imposes order on that Chaos and he sees Cosmos. This imposition of order is a tangled concept for, according to recent research, it may be that when science 'discovers' something new it could be inventing a rule to which the universe then conforms. We have no way of knowing, at the moment, whether or not this is the case. What is evident is that whatever model we construct for the universe, or even if we adopt a multi-modular approach, a pattern emerges, a pattern which can be used practically, magically and philosophically.

This demonstrates a pattern from a multi-modular approach using atomic weights, the planets and the days of the week - as follows - The metals opposite to the planets are arranged in ascending order of atomic weight. These are then transferred onto a seven-pointed star as planets in the same order, following the universal order. Reading clockwise around the star one then has the order of the days of the week. (see fig. 1)

"Now tell me the universe is not ordered!" he exclaims, and then gives an equally good example to show its randomness.

More than anything else it was this ability to argue successfully from any point of view that most impressed me about his approach. Would that I could have been able to persuade him to write down his ideas himself but he steadfastly refused to do so. My meagre offering is therefore dedicated to him with my gratitude.

The Scene

For thousands of years certain sections of all societies have practiced magick. Invariably it was a pursuit which conferred power on the individual who practiced it. Everyone has heard stories about what magick was like in the past, but what is its relevance today?

Magick has always been a study of the mind and how to make use of its latent powers. Some of these powers are still considered by most people to be supernatural. It also sought to use powers which the people saw in nature and many of these techniques we now believe to be absurd. Until the middle of the nineteenth century magick remained obscure and rather haphazard in its approach. Then two things happened which changed the situation. With the relaxation of legal restrictions brought about by a new tolerance, a different class of person, the educated class, allowed itself to become involved and to publish its ideas and its findings. Secondly, a new field of research was being opened - psychology.

Of course psychology and magick go hand in hand, each complementing the other, but there are differences. The most important difference is that psychology is the study of normal mind functions and application in psychiatry is to correct a dysfunction, bringing the individual back to the state that is considered normal. Magick is the study of para- or super - normal functions and its application is to deviate the individual's ability taking the normal state as a starting point.

Another difference is that whereas psychiatry is imposed on the subject by a therapist, in magick the practitioner is both subject and therapist, taking his own decisions and moving in his own direction.

In the past magick was a hit and miss business relying on arbitrary belief systems. With the benefit of scientific and psychological paradigms it has become a science in its own right, a science of self-recognition, and self- improvement through the process of initiation.

The current magical revival places less emphasis on authority than did the revival of the nineteenth century. Crowley, Spare, Johnston and their ilk are mostly responsible for this since it was they who put at our disposal the techniques of self initiation and self-realization. The individual has, to a large extent, superseded the hierarchical organism to which he would, at a previous time, have necessarily belonged.

This is not to say, however, that organized magical groups are an outmoded device - on the contrary, they ought, for many reasons, to be actively encouraged. But it does mean that the working methods and objectives of any magical group must constantly change to reflect the mood and conditions of the individuals of whom it is formed, Instruction in technique, personal guidance and the interaction of ideas are the requirements of the aspirant. Mystery mongering and secrecy are obsolete except in special cases which will be discussed in their place.

This book is an introduction to a magical system with no dogmas or tortuous belief requirements. The would-be magician needs nothing but the will to work and the ability to question his every action.

RAY SHERWIN Cairo, 1982.

The Theatre of Magick

Magick is not a religion in the way that most people understand that word. Religion, as it is commonly understood is the moral enemy of magick.'. The one restricts, the other liberates. The one requires that the intellect be twisted to accommodate ludicrous belief systems - the other adopts ludicrous belief systems willingly and for its own purposes. Then it destroys them. Religion requires a single life style for all people, at all time, in all places. Magick demands personalized, flexible tenets of behaviour and belief.

The magician takes himself out of the 'real' world into previously prescribed bizarre situations. For him this is one theatre of operations, its effect being to hone his perceptions both of the real world and of his own different functions within it.

Religion requires pristine thoughts and actions it believes to be evil. Magick embraces and attempts to understand all aspects of life and thought requiring, in order to do this, anything different, hot or cold, but not lukewarm.

The magician believes nothing in the sense of having faith, The experiments practically to ascertain if there is any truth or value in the postulates he has made himself or which he has borrowed from elsewhere. It is true that he holds certain organic beliefs for the sake of convenience. For example, he believes that the chair in which he is sitting or in which he is about to sit in is real - most of the time. This however is not a mental process but an instinctive or organic one without which life would be impossible.

Intellectually there are many concepts which he uses in which he does not believe except within carefully chosen parameters. Angels and devils, for instance, as archetypes of knowledge, energy or personal power are useful vehicles by the invocation of which the magician can examine facets of himself which are not easily accessible. In order to make full use of this and similar devices he must be able to suspend his disbelief, and this he does in the Theatre of Magick.

Theatre is the most appropriate term here because the magician is stepping outside what he normally considers to be reality and creating a malleable universe of his own through his will, his intellect and his imagination. The more bizarre his Theatre the less likely he is to confuse his activities on this level with the more mundane aspects of his life.

The traditional Theatre of the magician is as good a starting model as any. It is unlikely, absurd, and perfectly equipped. The magician has a special room with particular decor and stylized instruments. In the non-magician this room inspires fear, awe or hilarity. In the magician it inspires a mood and it inspires change.

The would-be-magician with no ideas of his own may borrow from children's stories or from grand texts on magick until he has discovered which mood is most suitable for him. Thereafter he begins to develop in his own way, acting, to continue the thespian analogy, as producer, director, set-designer, script-writer, star and audience. The more unusual the script and setting the greater the overall effect on him. Nor need he restrict himself to his 'temple'. These 'dramas' can be acted out in the real world with slight modifications in belief.

Example: the magician presumes himself to be the only real person in the world, all others being android 'extras' brought in especially for his benefit to any situation in which he finds himself. This practice should be continued until new interpretations cease to

occur to him. Diametrically opposed to this is the presumption that everyone in the world is an adept except him and that the world is waiting for him in order to take the next step in its evolution. This practice should also be continued until new interpretations cannot be found. During these processes he may also choose to put himself into impossible situations from which he finds it difficult to extricate himself.² These activities, carefully, performed, confer a new way of thinking, a new perspective from which it is easier to see things as they are and this the magician must be able to do before planning a long term course of action. But he must beware. If he is not careful here insanity will be his only result.

Working with a group of like minded colleagues increases the availability of ideas and activities and interplay of different personalities is of great value. Care should be taken in the selection of such people as to their compatibility and trustworthiness. Despite outward appearances this is not a game of the ordinary kind. Each member of a magical group is not only responsible for himself. He is responsible for everyone else too. Few people are capable of this kind of responsibility.

The techniques outlined in this book are cores, the bases of more elaborate exercises which can be performed by individuals Or by groups. On the whole these techniques are pragmatic, but occasionally rather more fanciful. It is up to the magician to understand their purpose and to remodel them according to his own tastes and requirements.

Secrecy

Secrecy is a necessary adjunct to the performance of magick but its use should be carefully considered since ad hoc secrecy cheapens any subject to which it is applied.

Its application in an authoritarian and dogmatic society such as ours is obvious. Suppressive establishment groups and suppressive magical groups will make the most of you if they know who you are and what you're doing. It was said in the past that if you knew a demon's name you had dominion over him. If these people get hold of your name, watch out.

This, of course, is one of the reasons for adopting a magical name. Written materials falling into the wrong hands are less likely to cause damage if they contain no trace of secular identity. In a magical group or order no member need ever know the true identity of any other but since such groups are composed of individuals whose integrity has been assured this option is seldom taken up.

More serious than the authoritarian threat from a magical orders point of view is the inter-group espionage which occasionally erupts. Not only do such factious outbreaks breed ill-feeling and cause time to be wasted, but they cause precious information which can only be appropriate to the working of one particular order to be popularized or degraded through the spoken word or in print.

It would seem absurd then to suggest that the greatest secrets are inviolable and that their publication would have no adverse effect on their efficacy. Yet this is so, for a secret is only worth knowing if it can be understood and there are some secrets which can only be appreciated in the light of prior understanding.

Most dangerous is that the method of initiation be known to the candidate before he undergoes that ordeal for if the advantage of surprise or shock be eliminated the ritual cannot achieve its effect. Moreover, it is, undoubtedly the first initiation which is most important. It is for this reason that the candidate has always been required to make a binding oath, the breaking of which would jeopardize his integrity, or perhaps his life.

Initiation by the group

An initiation serves two purposes. Firstly, it admits the candidate into the group and gives him equal rights with all other members. Secondly, it prepares him mentally for his work within the group and for the work he will do alone.

The method proposed here is simple and mechanistic relying on imposed gnosis and the candidate's responses to various stimuli presented to him. The candidate need know nothing whatsoever about magick or about the group.

The form of the ritual, which lasts for about four to six hours, is tempered to suit the candidate's ideas of what an initiation should be. To this end he attends many evaluative sessions to enable the adepts who will perform the rite to gain as clear a picture as possible of the candidate's needs.

The outcome of these informal meetings is a new ritual tailored to the needs of the candidate. It follows then that each initiation performed by the group is different, but there is a stable datum, a factor constant to all initiations of this type and that is gnosis.

Gnosis is not only a temporary change in mode. Its result is a permanent change in attitude, personality and magical ability. The more powerful the gnosis the more obvious and cataclysmic the effect.

The most powerful gnosis are those directly connected with the survival instinct. Of these, the fear of death and the liberation from that fear are the easiest to impose. This is why our order is called 'The Illuminates of Thanateros'.

All initiatory systems stem from the Ancient Egyptians. In their system the chief protagonists were Isis and Osiris, the Empress and the Hierophant, Venus and the Sun.

In the mysteries Isis (Venus) pieced together the dismembered Osiris (Sun) because of her love for him. The name 'Thanateros' is a contraction of thanatos (death) and eros (love), Thanatos being the Sun which dies each day and eros being venus [eros = venus (49 = 7 x 7) on the large scale]. This is not an old-aeon formula since it is a reflection of attitude rather than method. Furthermore, in his new life, the life that begins with his initiation, the illuminate is no longer the Sun-Osiris but the Sun/Son-Horus, the personification of the vital energy with which he has conquered his fears, anxieties and repressions and he now emerges as dynamic in his own sphere as Ra-Horus is in his.

It would be impertinent to describe an exact form of the rite for the reasons given above but it is possible to give a working basis insofar as discretion allows. It must be emphasized though, that the rite should not be performed lightly. Candidates should be closely observed, not only during the rite itself but also for a period of months beforehand so that the 'Chief Adept' has a control-group of the candidate's reactions with which to compare his reactions during the rite. This cannot be over-stressed. If the Chief Adept shirks his responsibilities madness, obsession or worse could be the outcome. At best the initiation would have no result and the system would be so demeaned as to be of no further use to the group.

First of all then, let us put ourselves in the position of the Candidate and attempt to understand what is going through his mind.

For a minimum of three months he has known that he is to go through some sort of ordeal. If his knowledge of magical procedures is limited this is an ordeal in itself becoming more intense as the day approaches.

He may have been asked to bring certain items with him - a simple robe, certain magical weapons. In the case of the weapons he may have been informed that he will be called upon to use these physically, though in what way he can only guess.

He may have been told what not to expect, for example physical torture or hurt. Whether or not he believes this depends on how much he trusts the Adept who is preparing him and, even if a deep trust exists, there will inevitably be a seed of suspicion at the back of his mind.

He knows that the Adept is certain of the effect of the rite but from his own point of view, since he has no knowledge of what the rite entails, again he can only guess at the changes that will take place within him.

In a confused and apprehensive state of mind, having prepared himself by fasting and meditation, he duly arrives at some meeting place from where he is conducted to the temple or site, a place to which he has not been before.

From the moment he sets out his initiation begins. The Adept who leads him both temporally and spatially. In this the Adept must use his ingenuity and use the environment to advantage. By the time they arrive at the site the Candidate is fatigued, unaware of his location and more apprehensive than ever.

From this point the rite is designed to suit the candidate. He might be asked to bathe ritually before robing. He might be asked to remain naked after bathing. He might even be asked to sully himself. Whatever the case, he is now physically prepared and his ordeal begins.

He is informed as pragmatically as possible that in order to be deemed to have successfully come through the ordeal he must remain in the appointed place and that to leave it for whatever reason, even though he be assailed by demons, is to fail. Leaving his place would not automatically preclude him from another attempt at some later date but he would inevitably lose credibility with the group who might choose not to go through all the painstaking organisation again if another failure were a likely outcome.

When the Chief Adept is sure that the Candidate has understood this he reads him the oath of secrecy, this to ensure that the detail of the rite should never be disclosed; the Candidate's consent to participating in the rite is deemed to have been given once the oath has been signed (preferably in his own blood using his magical name or motto).

Until this time the Chief Adept has presented himself as the person known to the Candidate. Now he assumes the role of the Master of the Temple.

The preliminary banishings, openings and sacraments are performed and the Candidate's weapons are consecrated. The robe is not consecrated since it is a symbol of the Candidate's past, of his mortality, of his fear and of his burned. At the culmination of the rite it may be stripped away and ceremonially. The preliminaries reflect, as far as possible, the expectations of the Candidate in order to facilitate maximum response. On completion of these the Adepts withdraw leaving the Candidate to his meditations. Here,

providing the rite thus far has been correctly performed it might be satisfactorily drawn to a conclusion, but this is not the case.

Having been left alone, possibly more alone than he has ever been before, with his thoughts of his own mortality and vulnerability, the adepts proceed to invoke the powers of the appropriate gnoses, taking care that the energies evoked are not too powerful for the Candidate's level of tolerance. At the same time they create a gnostic environment of which the Candidate can take full advantage.

The Chief Adept, ever watchful, interprets the reactions of the Candidate because at this point, if he has allowed himself to open up to them, the stimuli provided may cause repressions to surface and become apparent. In this case the Chief Adept seizes the opportunity and instructs the adepts as to what technique(s) should be employed and to what intensity. The effects of the invocations on the Candidate should be carefully noted by the scribe, especially descriptions of entities evoked to visible appearance.

Should the Candidate wish to speak with the Chief Adept at any time he must be given recourse to do so. There are many reasons why he might choose to do this even to the confession of his supposed sins. These communications may be written down or not, at the discretion of the Chief Adept.

Throughout the rite the Chief Adept must be solicitous to the Candidate for whose benefit the rite is being performed. He must at all times ensure in that the equipoise of the Candidate is not too much disturbed and yet that it is sufficiently upset to allow initiation to take place.

The rite is drawn to a close when obvious initiation has taken place. The closing ceremony, as with the opening, is tempered to the present needs of the Candidate but must contain devices suitable for the prevention of obsession. In other words, the banishings must be emphatic. (See 'Banishing' infra).

The Candidate, or Illuminate as he should now be called, is led back as quickly as possible to a familiar, comfortable place where he is fed and allowed to sleep for a few hours.

While he sleeps each adept who was present at the rite records his own impressions of what took place and the Chief Adept records the rubric of the rite as it was performed. On waking, the Illuminate records his own impressions in the same book omitting no detail, no matter how apparently unimportant. He also records his dreams.

It remains then only for the Chief Adept to de-brief the Illuminate. This is very important and he should ensure that sufficient time, a whole day if possible, is available for this. His first priority is to ensure that the Illuminate is indeed now in a state of equilibrium. He must also allow the Illuminate to talk freely and at length about his experience. He will undoubtedly be enthusiastic about sharing his excitement and it is best that he be given the opportunity to do this with a member of the group. Although he has signed the Oath of Secrecy it would be unwise to let him go his way unrelieved.

There is a further way in which he should be prepared both before and after the rite. A good initiation brings about an emotional state which can only be described as a 'release'. This release is characterized by a burst of enthusiasm and euphoric dynamism. In some cases it could be so marked in its [effect? ed.] as to mislead the new Illuminate into thinking that this is the change which the initiation was designed to bring about.

He should be warned before his initiation that this is likely to occur and that it will be superceded by an inevitable period of gloom and despondency, even depression. If not so warned he may have serious misgivings about an initiation which he previously thought to have been successful.

No further training should be given him during this period. He should, however, be closely observed and, if necessary, his state of mind should be rationalized. The despondency will pass as he adjusts to the state which his initiation was designed to bring about.

Because each candidate is different the intended change will also be different. Having said that, there is one change which each and every candidate should be able to observe in himself even though it might not be obvious to others - a change in approach, not only his approach to matters magical but in his approach to everything. When this is manifestly observable it is characterized by self-assurance and by a flexibility of mind which allows him to observe problems of all natures by taking into consideration divergent or even opposite points of view, following each perspective to its limit. This may take him no nearer to solving the problem but it will achieve a synoptic effect and a stability of purpose even though he will not yet be aware what that purpose is.

Having been steered through a difficult and sometimes discouraging period and having emerged at the other side of it, the Illuminate is well - prepared for similar periods of trauma which will occur after each initiation through which he puts himself in the future.

Self Initiation

No matter how successful an initiation imposed by the group on an individual might be such an operation is merely an induction, opening the eyes of the Illuminate and it remains incumbent upon him to initiate himself thoroughly. This is chiefly a matter of time and experience. He cannot expect to be suddenly, drastically changed by every act of magick he performs but he can expect the cumulative effect of many acts of magick to bring about the desired result. (however he defines it), whether or not the stated objective of all, or indeed any, of these acts was initiation.

The real rather than imagined difficulty here is the limited overview of the illuminate. Since he has no experience of the state he is aiming to put himself into and since that state is purely subjective he can work only by intuition and by trial and error.

Intuition comprises a large proportion of magick since it largely represents the organism rather than the foremind and its incessant internal dialogue. In the initiatory process the benefits of intuition are well enhanced by a flexible routine of magical operations and meditations and by the supervision and instruction of a person with a less limited overview. Whether he be called a guru, a friend or a taskmaster depends on the relationship.

Teachers do not seek pupils. Like everyone else a teachers main concern is his own development and he becomes a teacher only when he is approached for advice or instruction. Perhaps teaching will be of bend it to him.

So what is it that the Illuminate is trying to do? Obviously this changes with the individual and initiation itself is an impossible state to define. It is also difficult to observe since outwardly the initiate is no different to any other man, most of his miracles being performed inwardly. His attitude may be taken as an example, as may the way in which he relates to his work, but the Illuminate needs more to go on than this. Oblique answers to the question 'what does initiation confer?' may be enumerated as follows.

- 1) Re-acquaintance with self.
- 2) Improved dynamism.
- 3) Sustained wide overview.
- 4) Poise.
- 5) Magical power
- 6) Magical ability.
- 7) Ease of entry into the gnostic/genius state.

Of these the most important is the first. in ridding oneself of spurious personality accretions and confronting and coming to terms with the real 'I' the remaining qualities aimed at through initiation come naturally as one's knowledge of the techniques of magick becomes assimilated rather than learned.

Re-acquaintance with self has been recognized throughout the twentieth century as the lynch-pin of magick and mysticism. Aleister Crowley, using Mathers' translation of Abra Melin as a model chose to call it 'the Knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel', 'Guardian Angel' being such a ludicrous label as to defy mockery and to transcend limitation.

In the light of scientific investigations made in the last two decades this H.G.A. might better be taken to be a censorship mechanism, and not only in the psychic sense, since this function seems to exist in the brain itself. According to Professor Le Gros Clark of Oxford University "these groups of cells (the mid-brain) are more than simple relay stations; they are sorting stations which allow for the sorting and re-sorting of the incoming impulses so that they are projected onto the cerebral cortex in a new kind of pattern."

This approach argues not only for the concept of the observer created universe where perceptions are strained, tinted and limited according to the proclivities of the individual but also for the notion of restricted access to areas of information of the utmost value to the magician.

It is this brain function which we choose to call the H.G.A. In sifting observations and restricting access to certain types of information it acts like a fuse, offering neither too much nor too little for analysis at one time. It also prevents us from seeing so far into ourselves as to encounter the real horrors of existence. In learning to circumvent this function the magician needs the strength to confront those labyrinthine horrors and this he acquires gradually through a patiently gained acquaintance with the H.G.A. mechanism itself and the accumulated patchwork of what lies beyond. (see the Liminal Gnosis; infra). Every man has his minotaur; the magician also has a ball of twine. This ball of twine is his knowledge of himself. It can be achieved in a multitude of ways many of which are well known to adventurers of all paths and persuasions. One of the most perspicacious and essential of such systems is that set down by Lysis, disciple of Pythagoras, under the title of 'The Golden Verses of Pythagoras'.

These lines enshrine the whole process of self-examination or 'autopsy' directed towards initiation. The translation given here is by Aleister Crowley and Thessalonius Loyola.

The Golden Verses of Pythagoras

First estimate the norms of necessity, that are not subject to death, in the manner ordered by law. (1)
Also hold the oath in honour. (2)
Hold also in honour the noble heroes and the daemons pertaining to the Earth, fulfilling what is lawful. (3)
Estimate Kin, those nearest whereof thou art sprung. (4)
But who so of the others is most manful in manhood, make him thy lover. (5)
Model thyself by his gentle words, by his fruitful deeds. Rate him not for a small waywardness that thou mayest have power. For power lieth hard by necessity. (6)
These things accustom thyself to rule - the desires of the belly, of sleep, of lechery and of wrath. (7)
Do no base act, whether in public or in private. Of all these things first respect thine own self. (8)
Then practice justice in both deed and word. (9)
Acquire the habit of keeping thyself free from thoughtlessness in all matters soever. But know thou how it hath been appointed for all to die. (10)
Things cleansed have a way of coming now and being gone (11)
Estimate the necessary evils for what they are, and endure them all; by thy will, modify them. Then will their effect on thee be small indeed. (12)
Be thou tolerant of the ways of others.
Truth and error likewise have their lovers. If error triumph, go thy way and wait. (13)
Beware of prejudice and another's truths. Judge all things for thyself (14)
Estimate the consequences of thine actions. Perform thy will freely (15)
The fool understandeth this not. In the present thou shouldest contemplate the future. (16)
Pretence obstructs. Rather instruct thyself. Time and patience favour all . (17)
Neglect not thy health. (18)
Dispense with moderation. Food to the body and to the mind repose. (19)
Avoid excess in seeking or showing attention. For envy to either is alike attached (20)
Choose in all things a mean befitting thy will (21)
Ever estimate thine own omissions; question they works completed (22)
Abstain if these confound thy will; do what thou wilt. (23)
Meditate upon thy will, adhere to it, follow it. To heroic divinity will it lead thee (24)
I swear it by the One who teaches our soul to know itself. (25)
Before all things, in conformity with thy will, invoke the gods by whose aid alone the work began is completed. (26)
Instructed by them thou shalt see thyself clearly. Of all things shalt thou know the essence; thou shalt be one with the Kosmos. (27)
The high and the low unite their forces to produce the unchanging All. (28)
Thine actions strengthen thou through thy will, unburdened at impulse and vain desire. (29)
Then shall no evil befall thee (30)
Be thou not a plaything of thy passions, reacting to adversity. (31)
God! Thou couldst save them by opening their eyes. (32)
But no: 'tis for the divine hero to discern error and to see the truth.(33)
Nature serves him. (34)
Perform thy will and rest in its haven.
Observe thy will, avoiding non-lawful actions. Thy will must reign over all things. (35)

Although Crowley and Loyola produced a full commentary on these lines much of it is of a philosophical nature and would therefore be misplaced here. That commentary has been drawn upon only where appropriate to the present subject and additions have been made where necessary.

1. That which is not subject to death, *athanotos*, is God or natural power. The man wishing to harness such power and use it on his own behalf must ascertain its nature and its ways. This he does through observation and study. Man is a part of nature and a force of nature no less than any other form of existence.
2. The oath taken by the magician is a statement of the parameters, the constructs of a belief system, within which he is prepared to work. This is not an easy matter and he should not be afraid to modify this oath in accordance with the growth of his experience. The oath may be a simple statement or it may be as intriguing and complex a work as the British Constitution.
3. The hero is the man already successful in magick. He serves as an example to all who follow him. It is proof that the horror of the path is not futility. Man is a partaker of the substance of the Earth and is bound by its laws, both known and unknown. Daemons are natural laws, powers observable in man or in the cosmos which cannot be understood or explained by science/logic. The postulant must 'explore the mysterious region of his subtle relations with the Earth, and satisfy the spiritual conditions which obtain there.' (A. C.)
4. The parents are the clay from which the man is constructed. They are also the first human beings with whom he has prolonged close contact, in observing or remembering them he has a model of traits to foster or eliminate in himself. Further, it is in the nature of parents to condition their offspring into the types and modes of behaviour and activity which they find most acceptable. Most generations however look back on the previous generation critically, not only decrying what that generation did but also what it thought. There is no standard of right and wrong here - merely the truism that certain thoughts and actions are right at certain times. In analysing the belief constructs imposed upon him, intentionally or not, by his parents the magician enables himself to strip away the beliefs which he had hitherto held to be his own but which are now seen to be unnecessary accretions.
The smallest details are the most important.
Conditioning, the nurturing of one's own beliefs in someone else, is not the sole province of the parent. When a commercial tries to sell a product it also tries to sell its whole world view. When a politician accuses you of being apathetic he means apathetic towards him which is probably no better than he deserves. All beliefs should be examined. The verses have more to say on this later.
5. Love is a chemical attraction. As oxygen and hydrogen join together to express their love in a quality neither possesses in itself, so can the magician, through joining his mind to that of the hero, become more fluid in his appraisal of his own situation, appreciating those elements lacking in himself which would bring about his own transubstantiation.
6. The hero's words, his *logos*, are an expression of his magical identity, his formula. The joining of their minds through love (*agape non eras*) inspires the hero to divulge that nature which the friend may use as a model. The hero's deeds, his will expressed in action, are used in the same way. His misdeeds,

those actions which aver from his true will, should not be imitated; they are the tests and, thereby, the great strength of the disciples' love, of which his own power is an extension. It is in any case self-restrictive to expect the universe to comply with arbitrary values. In tolerating the weaknesses of his friend the magician expands his universe and becomes stronger.

7. This line has a freshness which has withstood the cancer of the repressive religions of the past two thousand years. It does not seek to impose a value judgment, a code of morality; but merely indicates that the passions endowed upon man by nature to ensure his survival must be ruled and not yet destroyed if he is to initiate himself. The appetites and reactions must be held in check one against the other and all in their proper relation to the will.
8. In this line is enshrined the basis of the cult of self, self-love and true will. Here there is no instruction toward altruism. An abasing deed is just as shameful whether it be performed privately or in company. There is no golden rule, ones own consideration being the only measure. The corollary of this is that every action should be an expression of the True Will. To do otherwise is magical suicide. 'Shame is . . . by actual etymology as well as by the psychological analysis, to be defined as the denial of the self ' (A. C.)
9. Here is the positive expression of the negative instruction in the previous line. The magician 'works' his raw material, his self, honing his habits to the steel of his will, the only non-arbitrary justice.
10. That which is thoughtless is illogical, not partaking of the logos, the magical identity, the innermost lore of the magician. Any action not directly in accord with the will is derogatory to magical integrity.
Knowledge is the corollary of death in both the practical and etymological sense. The fable of Adam and Eve is an illustration of this. Knowledge is duality, an extension of monistic consciousness, a willed appreciation of one's relationship with everything that is not self. In this sense monism is indeed innocence but its antithesis is not guilt or sin as posited by the religions but innocence or experience as described by mystics such as Blake and Spare.
One's own death exists only in the imagination and yet gnosis, or simulated death, is the basis of magick.
Knowledge of death is acquaintance with futility; but the fear of death is neutralized by the examination of previous deaths and by careful analysis of the next. Meditation in the liminal gnosis is recommended for this.
11. An instruction against materialism, Nothing is permanent except self. Those things for which the non-initiate aims are unreal.
12. Here is a reminder to the magician that he should evaluate the apparently random factors which interfere with his attainment, recognizing that these are the effects of previous actions which are now to be examined.
This line recommends that evils be endured because only through enduring them, that is, allowing them to persist, can they be observed. They should not be endured in the stoical or christian sense with the expectation of heavenly rewards hereafter for that course leads to stagnation rather than to the autopsy here recommended. By force of will they must be modified, made use of in self-enquiry and, in a sense, absorbed, thereby enriching self and negating any possible future influence that a particular evil might have.

The concept of sin is implicit in that of evil. Not only is it necessary to evaluate imposed evil and the evil resulting from previous actions: the evils the thoughts and actions supernumery to the will must be sought out, Confronted and eradicated.

This raises the peculiar problem of the recognition of sin, (unnecessary and thoughtless activity; see line 10). Clearly the notion of autopsy suggests that sin is what the enquirer himself considers it to be. It is through self enquiry that he recognizes his will and those elements of himself that do not comply with it. He decides for himself what moral code (if any) will least tend to excite his mind. His mind can then be excited at the right time and in the most appropriate way. He is then in control rather than at effect in any situation.

13. In not actively opposing others in word or deed one avoids exciting the mind pointlessly. By not expressing one's own point of view there is no chance of having it dashed before it is completely formulated. 'Do riot give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.' (Matt 7.v.6)
Magick is the pursuit of an unknown quarry. Like those adventurers who seek the Abominable Snowman the magician has only the vaguest idea of the nature of his prey but he is sustained, like them, by the excitement of the chase. This is not understood by the materialist who seeks what he believes to be freedom through the accumulation of wealth and the subjugation of others. In opposing the status quo which is by definition materialistic the magician, albeit unintentionally, singles himself out from the crowd, putting himself in a situation incompatible with the initiatory process. Invariably his best course of action in any circumstance is to remain silent, at least until his initiation is complete. In waiting rather than reacting he gives himself time to contemplate the consequences of anything he might have chosen to do. He is no Longer reactive, feckless and impulsive. He has matured in this respect and is one step nearer to his minotaur.
14. Truth is in almost all cases no more than a personal perspective. To take up someone else's truth is self-evidently ludicrous. By the same token, prejudice, the lazy mans truth, is folly.
15. In contemplating all possible actions and their likely effects the golden mean of the true will should be dearly held in mind.
16. In reference to the previous line comes the claim that only a fool could misunderstand the principle of will and its place as an integral part of cosmos. Then comes the instruction to contemplate the future. It is not meant by this that the magician should vaguely consider what the future holds for him but that he should systematically investigate every sequence of actions which is possible [or him to execute, and then to examine every detail within that sequence. He might do this to the extent of examining his own death and the putrefaction of his present body.
Nor does the fool understand how this line is an adjunct to the previous one; how the performance of one's true will is impossible without a detailed examination of future possibilities having been made.
17. These processes lead inexorably toward initiation but there is one trick which the mind will inevitably play to forestall success. Initiation is he only state, with the exception of death itself, against which the mind automatically rebels. That

rebellion, provided the initiatory processes are being performed to effect, takes the form of pretension. Having achieved some modicum of success the magician is confounded into believing his initiation to be complete. Only when he is aware of this trap can he be wary of it. In being patient with his progress, or even with his lack of it, success will come at leisure.

18.19.20.21.. These lines encapsulate considerations which should be arrived at through self-research. They are dealt with as a whole in the following corollary.

Corollary to lines 15-21. These lines represent a test for the magician. Will he follow the apparent meaning of the words or will he seek out and perform the mind-shattering techniques which close examination reveals? This test enabled the master not only to recognize which candidates were fit for formal initiation into the mysteries but also what form that initiation should take.

In sequitor these seven lines provide the information for self-initiation. Cleverly concealed within them is the injunction that this information must remain secret but that restriction is no longer applicable since the system is no longer used in a formal manner.

There are three exercises introduced to the magician here, along with details of the consequences of their correct performance. The overall instruction, that which takes precedence over all the others and within which the others have their definite place, is contained in line twenty-one.

The will is an inertial frame and whatever takes place inside it, that is, in conformity with it, must go with it, even if its direction cannot be ascertained from within.

This is the state in which the magician finds himself. He knows his will to be the golden mean; he knows that its performance is more important than all things and yet at the beginning, according to some magicians until the old aeon grade of Adeptus Major, he is unable to recognize, except intuitively, what that will might be.

The three exercises ultimately lead the magician to an understanding and identification of his will. The deeper the understanding of the magician the more fastidious he is in their performance. The more fastidious he is the more strenuous he finds them. The more strenuous he finds them the more ego shattering is their effect.

The fool, in this case the glib candidate, understands the letter of the instructions and acts accordingly. But he is ignorant of what is really expected of him and so makes no progress except in the moral qualities superficially suggested. There is no reason why such a candidate should be informed of his desultory progress. After many years of self-deception and self-pretence he might be shown these lines again and he might be surprised to learn that all those things for which he had been striving were directly referred to in the verses given to him at his acceptance as a candidate. Where did he go wrong? What were the ordeals he overlooked or neglected?

This is one of the reasons why the Pythagorean was expected to meditate on these verses daily. The morality expressed in them is not an easy one to assimilate and at first, that might be all that the candidate could see in them. The worthy candidate, however, would see in a relatively short time that he had succeeded in complying with the verses at that level and unless his attention were constantly redirected to them he might make the mistake of thinking his work complete. In having complied thus far he must necessarily look further; otherwise his daily recital and meditation would be no more

than a formality. Why should his master insist on a time wasting procedure? In trusting the master his instructions must also be trusted else no start can be made.

What then of the three ordeals, the walls of fire which cleanse the candidate of the dross millennia? In the man who dares to go through with them to the end they act through his emotion, his intellect and his intuition to identify him with his will. He becomes a powerhouse of directed energy, totally at cause over his actions and his environment, free to work as he will within the confines of destiny.

'In the present thou shouldst contemplate the future' (16)

We all contemplate the future. In preparing a meal one considers, in the short term, the dishes excellence of flavour; in the long term its diurnal effects on the body. But it is only when we consider the whole of the future, and thereby the whole of the past, in terms of ourselves, that our emotion is liberated. In this the process is not dissimilar to the Buddhist meditations on death. Examined in minute detail the prospect of death loses its emotive energy. It no longer looms darkly over the intellect. The same effect is achieved by contemplating previous death. (see liminal gnosis for technique.) Liberated from the fear of death one is liberated from the fear of fear and emotion is released to be used by the initiate. He is no longer its plaything to be boffeted this way and that according to the prevailing situation.

'Pretense obstructs. Rather instruct thyself. Time and patience favour all' (17)

In recognizing those things which he pretends the magician is compelled to confront those things which he does not know. Without making a positive effort it is impossible for him to recognize those things which must be done to further his progress.

In any case pretense is, in itself, an obstruction, it belies ability. The use of the word 'obstructs' is interesting. It implies no moralizing - it simply states that if the magician fools himself he will hinder his progress, prevent himself from going. This kind of evaluative progress takes time. The more time is devoted to it the more importance it assumes. In recognizing its importance the magician directs his attention to the working of his intellect. With emotion and intellect working together he goes on to the third ordeal, that which completes his initiation and identifies him with his will.

'Dispense with moderation. Food to the body and to the mind repose' (19)

Until the true will is discovered one can only approach a general consideration of it through intuition which is stultified by moderation, the arbitrary imposition of rules or dogmas. True moderation is, however, a self-regulating, self-equilibrating process as is demonstrated by the second sentence of the line. Mental repose is impossible if the body is given too much or too little food. If there is no mental repose the body craves stimulation through excesses of various kinds. This paradigm is applicable in many other cases.

In allowing free reign to natural law there is no necessity to live the life of an ascetic. He is informed by his instinct.

There is a danger here that the magician may make the assumption that his will is composed of various parts. It would be better for him to assume that it is not. His most expedient postulate would be that he, and everything he is, is contained within his will. The components of the will may be seen as appearances.

Sodium and chlorine, both poisonous, combine to produce common salt, a substance which is not only non-toxic but essential to the human body. Various factors combine to allow the will to be recognized in a similar way. But this analogy is not true since those parts of the self which combine to attune the magician to his will are not parts of that will. They serve only to inform it and to feed it.

The verses then re-emphasize the importance of the true will.

'Choose in all things a means befitting thy will' (21)

"Do that and no other shall say nay." (Liber AI)

This line refers to maintaining the effect of the discovered will. If any part of the work is omitted there will come a time when these omissions cannot be rectified. It is necessary to question works completed in order to fully understand that no task is ever complete but partakes of other works. This exercise is a process of examining one's actions to such a degree that the will remains superior to all other factors and that the initiate is always aware of it.

23. Here we find an adjunct to the previous line. There are many ways in which the will can be confounded but the foremost of these is living another's will to gain approval by taking a course of action approved by an individual or by society as a whole.
The word 'abstain' suggests a course of action incompatible with the ego, Abstinence is a function of the will, whose function is 'to go' as the ego's function is 'to be'. The ego's being is caused by the illusion that it can affect anything by interference. The self willed man knows this to be untrue and abstains from certain courses of action in order that his will might be done. This is achieved through constant vigilance.
24. This vigilance takes the form of meditating upon the will and remaining constantly aware of it until it finally reveals its innermost nature, its 'formula'. This formula is truly heroic for in its application the initiate becomes as a god. He is the hero, for what is any hero but one who knows his actions to be correct and whose actions show a way for others. The concepts of heroism and divinity are interchangeable. All gods are heroes, all heroes gods.
25. This is no lightly taken oath. It is a positive statement made again and again as a love song to his personified will, his angel.
26. A hero is only so in interaction with others. Only by seeing himself in those things that they are not is he able to maintain his will.
The hero lives his life in conformity with the formula of his will and that will is, by its nature, cosmic. If the link with the cosmos is broken he is no longer a hero. The will of the cosmos is the will that is god, and the gods by this time are his own thoughts and ideas.
27. The initiate knows himself through the aid of the gods because he is what they are not. Each god is an archetype, an expression of a particle of will that has aided man in his evolution.
The practical experience of invoking the gods at this stage is that he partakes of their energy. Being instructed by the gods takes one closer to the essence since

any great power absorbed into the self destroys its own seed and faces the individual from its dictates. If all the gods were invoked self would be blasted and only two things would remain, *kia* and *not-kia*.

28. A further effect of line 27 in that the high and low forces can do nothing but unite in the divine hero. (cf. Abra Melin.)
29. The will provokes certain actions according to its nature and this in turn strengthens the initiate. Stimulus response behaviour is no longer a hindrance to him.
30. No evil can befall him since he has abreacted his Karma through his actions and meditations in the earlier exercises and by continued action in accordance with the will. Being cosmic his will is incapable of incompatibility with other functions of the cosmos.
31. It is easy for the initiate to convert others through the power or passion that flows within and from him. He finds difficulty in understanding why others cannot see what he can see and ceases to be master of his power, becoming instead a plaything of the energy that flows through him. To power, all inertia is evil and adverse. The initiate tends to lose sight of his will. He becomes one with his passion and thereby invokes adversity. He temporarily falls from grace. The line does not, however, suggest that the initiate subdue all passion - that would be disadvantageous indeed - merely that he not be its plaything.
32. Once again comes the notion that all beings are dreaming reality., projecting the world as they would like to see it through metaphorically closed eyes. This is a part of the divine dance of creation that their eyes are closed - they are closed by choice, a choice born out of the illusion of individual will.
33. The initiate has the ability to discern what is not of his nature, that is, error. All that is of his nature is also of the nature of the cosmos and so serves him.
34. A part of the whole there is, for him, no disconformity.
35. A summary of the foregoing.

The Liminal Gnosis

There is a commodity which is infinitely more malleable than anything else in the universe. Controlled or not it can have devastating effects on perception, analytical functions and on the body. Its control is the basis of magick and an understanding of it is the lynch-pin of individual integration and stability.

The pioneers of psychology erroneously named it the unconscious mind; erroneously because it evident that this is the only mind function which operates all the time, even during catalepsy or deep hypnotic states. As the approach to psychology became more sophisticated it was relabeled 'the subconscious mind'. This label is also misleading, albeit unintentionally, since it intimates a hierarchical order and, thereby, a mislocation of self. It also suggests domination of one mind function by another and whereas this may be so it is, in the individual who has no control over it, the so-called subconscious which has dominion over all other functions. This mechanism is seen in an exaggerated way when a subject acts out a post-hypnotic suggestion.

Illustration: The subject is told that five minutes after waking he will remove his clothing without embarrassment. It is important that the scene is set for his disrobing and his conditioned reflexes removed with the suggestion that at that particular time all onlookers will be unable to see him because of any "imagined" invisible force field or similar device which will excuse his self consciousness. Even if he is the most prudish person imaginable and there are a dozen members of the opposite sex present he will carry out the suggestion. When asked why he has performed such an obviously uncharacteristic action, because he is unaware of the post-hypnotic-suggestion, he will produce a rationalization. (Few people care to admit that they act irrationally). His justification, in which he firmly believes, might be one of the following.

1. I suddenly became very hot.
2. My skin was hurting all over.
3. I wanted to see the reaction.
4. I wanted to know what it felt like.

All these explanations would be as inadequate to the subject as to the observer but, presented by the subconscious function with such an intolerable situation, any excuse is better than nothing.

In its negative mode the function of the mind into which post-hypnotic-suggestion may be implanted is responsible for psychosomatic illnesses, neuroses and unwanted vices. The subject in the illustration would experience a feeling of great release if the true reason for his bizarre action were explained to him. Although he might not understand the mechanism involved, the realization that he had been carrying out an implanted desire would come to him as a great relief and the need to fret over his incongruous action would disappear.

Everyone displays symptoms analogous to this. That the simple explanation of implanted desire is not usually appropriate and that more complex issues need to be investigated is the basis of this section of the book.

It was stated above that the terms 'unconscious' and 'subconscious' as applied to particular categories of mind are erroneous and misleading. Equally inappropriate are all other terms which seek to exemplify and compartmentalize the functions of the mind.

Even the signification 'Kia' should not be interpreted as intending separateness since Kia may rightly be observed as permeating the whole organism, the body and its activities being a phenomenal expression of it.

The task of the magician is to integrate the mind functions, even conscious functions can be obscure, and to access the subconscious functions which, when allowed to remain dormant, cause the organism to function on a reactive rather than a rational basis. The adept is the person who has achieved this and who is rationally responsible for his actions.

One method of integration involves accessing and interpreting dream or 'astral' activity the two being considered in this context as identical.

Everyone remembers some dreams. The majority of them, however, seem to be reabsorbed by the subconscious function of the mind and ultimately forgotten unless they are 'broken' at some time during the following day by an occurrence or word which stimulates a picture memory from which a part or the whole of the dream can be reconstructed. That most dreams are inaccessible to the conscious functions is an indication that a censorship mechanism is at work and it is this mechanism which the magician seeks to override.

Accessing and using dream material is a painstaking business. The most effective way is to write down dreams immediately on waking or to write down any images which linger on into wakefulness. Several minutes should be allowed for this after every period of sleep so that the mind is permitted a period of reverie or autism into which dream images can project themselves. After a few weeks of practice the magician will find not only that he has a vast amount of material at his disposal but also that his ability to recall dreams improves almost exponentially.

As far as interpretation is concerned two courses of action are recommended. Each dream should be examined at the time of its recollection since recent actual events may

- a) form the context of the dream or
- b) present a problem which the dream attempts to solve or
- c) present a moral or ethical problem which the dream seeks to abreact.

After some weeks of this the whole dream record may be studied in order to seek out recurring themes. The earlier interpretations may provide Keys to an understanding of thematic dream activity. During this process he may wish to study the psychology of dreams but he should be well aware that he is the only authority in the context of himself.

In studying his dreams in this manner the magician benefits in more ways than the integration of self. He also acquires an 'alphabet' of symbols which are comprehensible rather than being arbitrary or imposed and these can be used to good effect in ritual work or sigilisation. In recording and analysing his dreams he will also discover particular ways in which his conscious and subconscious functions interface and a knowledge of the ways in which information is restricted will also be of great benefit in formal ritual work. Since the area of dreaming began to be explored many reasons for this function have been suggested. Of these, the following provide the best means of ingress into the strange plane of consciously uncontrolled astral activity and most dreams can be examined in the context of one or more of them.

- 1) Wish fulfillment.
- 2) guilt expression.
- 3) encouragement.
- 4) inspiration.
- 5) solution of problems, actual or moral.
- 6) expression of potentialities
- 7) revelation of primitive forces (atavisms)
- 8) compensation - for considerations or actions desired but prohibited by conscious functions.
- 9) perseveration - problem solving by repetition, usually thematic
- 10) ideation - projection of possible actions; dreams in the place of experience.
- 11) Reminiscent/premonitory - what happened, what might happen.

When observation and analysis have been performed to the magician's satisfaction, when he has confronted and eliminated those complexes which the censorship mechanism attempted to conceal from him, he can then move on to implanting ideas into the 'non-conscious' function of the mind. In other words, he moves on to working with the positive aspects of the dream function. Before attempting sigilisation and other advanced techniques he should experiment with the mechanisms involved. One course of experimentation can be undertaken through the Liminal Gnosis.

Entering the Liminal Gnosis through erotic imagery

The Liminal Gnosis is a development of the state of consciousness between wakefulness and sleep. In this gnosis the subconscious function tends to cast out spontaneous images which can be observed by the conscious mind in its analytical mode. These images are often referred to as being of an 'astral' nature. In examining these images the magician begins to build up a rapport with his subconscious functions, with that facet of himself which, if uninterrupted, is capable of working miracles. Without this rapport magick cannot be performed and rapport does not occur until the magician has learned not to interfere with the gnosis. It is this non-interference which is a difficult skill to master.

On entering the Liminal Gnosis it is the tendency of the mind to allow spontaneous images to occur until they are noticed by the analytical function. When this happens the conscious mind revolts and jolts the self back into wakefulness. It follows then that autism in itself is insufficient. The magician is not aiming to consciously direct his phantasies but to observe those images which occur spontaneously and, through non-intervention to analyze them. As with many magical techniques the method of improvement is repetition.

The magician must be capable of recognizing when he has entered the Liminal Gnosis and since that state is so ephemeral and fickle his best course of action is to provide a stimulus for the subconscious function rather than to exercise his patience.

To avoid the interminable waiting which unaided observation necessitates the magician should allow a normal autistic reverie or daydream to develop into an uncontrolled but analysable liminal experience. In order to do this he must implant the mere germ of a notion into his subconscious function at exactly the right moment. One method of approaching this difficult task entails the use of sexual or erotic imagery as follows:-

The magician abstains from sexual activity of any kind for a period until his frustration is intolerable.

He exacerbates this frustration by reading erotic literature and perusing books and magazines of an exclusively sexual nature.

When frustration becomes intolerable, on retiring to his bed in a state of physical exhaustion he visualizes an intensely sexual image as though it were a still photograph. He also imagines that he can smell those perfumes most apposite to the visualized image. If he is unable to imagine smells he arranges to have that particular perfume, preferably an essential oil, in an evaporator near his bed.

The visual and olfactory senses are the only ones he uses at this stage since they are the only two senses which do not apparently rely on motion through space or time.

Should tumescence occur through concentration on the image he does not allow it to disturb the process. He uses it positively to create a strong sense of physical yearning throughout the entire body, but his body remains still and ready for sleep.

Sleep does not occur. As the magician enters the liminal Gnosis it is as though a switch has been flicked in his mind and the still picture of his image has become a living environment in which his sexual frustration is abreacted.

Should the magician find himself suddenly wakeful he repeats the entire process or picks up on an image received whilst in the gnosis and begins again from there.

If sleep ensues he makes careful note of his dreams and continues to practice the technique until success is achieved.

Success is marked by the ability to create such an 'astral' environment at will and by the ability to recognize the nature of the experience at the time of the experience; that in one sense it is real and effectual while in another sense it is not.

This procedure serves to introduce the magician to the Liminal Gnosis.

Having achieved and experienced it he may then use it for whatever purposes he wishes.

He might use spontaneous imagery in autopsy or self-enquiry (see Self-Initiation), in which case a detailed record should be kept and analysed during periods of greater lucidity. Such images may also be used for divination following the same process.

Sigils may be liminally reified. In this case a pictograph or, preferably, a photo-image is used as the key. Once the Liminal Gnosis has been entered and the desire begun to fulfill itself in that reality, the magician allows sleep to intervene, this time in the Temple, not in his bed. This is an unusually good sigilisation technique since the main barrier to successful sigilisation is the interference of the conscious function and its constant dialogue. In sleep this cannot happen and the desire becomes real on whichever plane is intended.

The faculty which some adepts have called the 'magical memory' can be more easily stimulated in the Liminal Gnosis than in any other state. The magician locates the earliest incident he can positively remember and uses this as the key. The images which flow from this assist the location of previous incidents which can, in turn, be used as keys to regress ad infinitum.

The Liminal Gnosis may also be used to explore the paths of the Tree of Life, the elements, the Enochian Aethyrs and the Egyptian god-forms. It may be used to come to an understanding of the pseudo-magical powers of levitation, analgesia and control over others.

The magician who practices these techniques will readily realize that the state of mind entered through the Liminal Gnosis is the only state of mind in which magick can be successfully performed. It is referred to as 'Liminal' only when it is achieved in the manner outlined above.

Interval

I have attempted to divide this book into two distinct halves, the first pragmatic and denying argument - the second concerned with beliefs which I and the reader may find convenient at particular times but which do not necessarily rely on truth or research in the orthodox sense.

Of course this was an impossible task. There are many points in the first half of the book, treating as it does of the delicate subject of initiation with which the reader will disagree either in whole or in part. I have merely set down what I believe to be a scientific approach to initiation which I hope will, in some way, meet the ideas of other magicians.

There have been attempts during the present century to present magick as a wholly scientific pursuit. However laudable the intention, which came as a reaction to the previous millennia of ad hoc, unmethodical working, it represented no more than a direct swing from one limited approach to another limited approach except where it took into account that emotion can be used scientifically.

There is a well known maxim which states that magick is a subtle synthesis of the human qualities will, intellect and emotion. There is another, 'solve et coagula' which means that these qualities should be analysed in their separateness and then fused together.

Belief is an emotional not an intellectual quality. In the process of initiation per se there is not place for it except inasmuch as its being the reason for the candidates desire to be initiated. Only emotion itself is analysed, but subsequent to initiation that quality must necessarily be aroused in order to generate the power required to violate probability. After the rigours of initiation it is difficult to find any notion concerning which disbelief can be suspended. Any belief construct which the magician is to use as a magical vehicle must therefore be either appealing to his intellect or patently absurd, the latter category denying the conscious functions need to rationalize. For this reason absurdities are more readily amenable and useful and they allow or expedite entry into a games condition of a peculiar theatrical nature. When the game condition has been entered the belief can be taken as a script or a storyboard and brought to reality, that is total mental involvement, through good direction, casting and, above all, props. This was the basis of the mystery religions of the past - the rites of Eleusis, Dionysus and Mithras. The difference between the mystery religion of old and twentieth century magick is that we are in a position to be heretic in the true sense - we have a choice. The worshipper of Priapus was that and nothing more. The modern magician may change his set, his props and his identity as he finds necessary.

The following essays were written with different belief constructs in mind. They represent figments of the authors and other peoples imaginations and in only the most tenuous of ways do they reflect truth, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; but they have been found useful in a multi-dimensional, multi-modular, non-exclusive approach to the techniques of personal and group magick.

Banishing

To expect a person to derive benefit from a written ritual of someone else's devising would be bizarre and arrogant. No two magicians, not even members of the same order, could be expected to react in the same way to an arrangement of actions and words. Declarations of intention must of course be agreed upon but there absolute agreement must end.

This is one reason why magicians tend to find group work tedious - their point of view can never be perfectly expressed in such an environment. But in group working the individuals ability to summon up energy increases exponentially according to the number in the group so, clearly, the chief adept of the group treads a fine line between disheartening his members and achieving dynamic results.

In some cases this difficulty can be circumvented by avoiding the use of set invocations and set ritual altogether. Group sigilisation, for instance, once the sigil has been designed to the satisfaction of all concerned, might make use of the noises of laughter, overbreathing, mantra, sex and so on, instead of formalised ritual, in order to focus the group will on the image and to lose it in the group subconscious.

Before beginning to work with belief constructs though, the individual or group must take steps to ensure that belief is not suspended permanently. This is always done with some kind of banishing ritual without which no magician can work successfully. Its functions are fivefold.

- a) At the beginning of a working it serves to change his mode from the pragmatic to the receptive.
- b) It clears his mind of all activity not connected with the working.
- c) It clears an area in space/time in which he can safely display his vulnerability, that is, allow his personality-defense system to drop.
- d) It prepares him for a possible suspension of disbelief.
- e) It acts as a demarcation between the plastic astral nature of the universe~ to which he will return to continue his daily affairs. That is, it prevents obsession.

Clearly, if a ritual is to fulfill all these functions it must have been performed habitually, daily over an extended period of time. On each occasion, even when only 'practicing', it must be followed by some kind of working, even if that be only meditation, and it must be performed again afterwards. Only in this way can the magician make an automatic connection between the ritual and its purposes. When the magician considers that connection between the ritual and he can safely progress onto workings of greater importance to him.

A banishing ritual is symbolic, that is to say it relies upon deep-seated elements from the magicians imagination and subconscious in order to achieve its effect. It is impossible merely to think oneself into the right state of mind - devices of some nature are unavoidable.

A list of such devices would be infinite. There are some, however, which appear to have had an almost archetypal attraction in the past and these serve here as examples.

- 1) The circle. Infinite and impregnable, an expression of the early gods, the circle can be cast with the magician egocentrically at its centre. A symbol of

timelessness, and therefore outside of time, it can also be considered as the point where a protective sphere in which the magician stands intersects the ground. It is a womb in which ideas ferment and mature.

- 2) The Elements. The number four was traditionally understood to be representative of stability and equilibrium. Also of rational change. The thinkers of classical times classified all things real or imaginary, concrete or abstract, under the auspices of the four elements.
- 3) The Pentagram. As a symbol the five-pointed star is usually explained as representing the dominion of the spirit of man over the base elements. Of course this is very effective in a banishing ritual but other significances of the pentagram should not be overlooked.
- 4) God-forms or Guardian-forms of one sort or another have invariably been used. Forms appropriate to the disposition of the magician should be chosen or created prudently. Sexual images, being perhaps the easiest to visualize, can be used with effect.
- 5) There is no reason why the English language should not be used. Its potency in magick is unequalled.

It is impossible to reproduce a scientific experiment. In the same way it is impossible to recreate a ritual of any sort time and again and expect to achieve similitude of reaction either in solo workings or in group workings. Different stimuli before workings and the expectations of varied workings demand that the banishings serve to operate within the prevailing mind-conditions and environment and this precludes the use of rigid pre-set forms. In any case, the mindless repetition of actions and words serves only dogma - the letter and not the spirit.

The magician or chief adept must have the ability to approach each operation with pristine freshness and to a certain extent his intention should be expressed directly from the seat of non-duality, that is, autoschediastically. If this were not so the function of the banishing described at b), above, could be served only by extremely complex devices and, in concentrating on these, the magician would lose sight of his intention.

In this case, why should it be necessary to plan the basic form and content of the rite at all? Firstly, there are few people who are capable of improvising a rite with specific intentions. Second, and more important, in group workings the chief adept caters for the group mind, using consensus elements as the bare bones on which to build a rite which, in effect, none of the celebrants has heard before and yet which satisfies the intellect and the instinct of each individual.

Examples of banishing rituals will be found in most source books on magick. Of these the most commonly given is the masonic and pseudo-qabalistic Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram. Whilst this is of some interest its greatest value is as a model as is also the case with the following examples.

EX. I. A circle of appropriate size is cast using ashes, chalk, rope or some other readily available substance. It is sanctified by the powers of the elements. A pentagram is drawn on a large scale in the air at the four quarters using an appropriate weapon. The name of the element opposite to each quarter is vibrated as the pentagram is visualized as

blazing in a colour, suitable to the element. The quarter of the East is dealt with first and the magician returns to face that direction on completing this task.

Standing with his arms crossed over his chest the magician visualizes,

- a) a naked goddess with blue wings before him.
- b) a naked goddess with silver wings behind him.
- c) a naked goddess with red wings to his right.
- d) a naked goddess with yellow wings to his left.

Each of these he refers to as the goddess of the element to which he has ascribed her. The tips of their outstretched wings touch to form a square which tangents the circle at the points of meeting.

Maintaining this visualisation and holding the dagger above his head he declares
"Above me the Blazing Star.
Around me the elements of power
Beneath me the circle of stability."

He pauses to reinforce these notions and then passes on to the openings or closings.

EX. II. The magician visualizes himself as standing on a platform which bisects a perspex sphere motionless in the darkness of space. Electronically he inscribes the sigils of the cardinal points and the Zenith onto the perspex in appropriate electric colours. His invocations summon five spacecraft which approach their own sigils and remain on guard until licensed to depart.

It was observed above that a banishing ritual relies upon deep-seated elements from the magicians subconscious in order to achieve its effect. To use someone else's elements for any ritual is rather like wearing another persons' shoes. Uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous. But often it is difficult for the intellect to recognize those symbols and archetypes which have a direct and powerful influence on his whole being. For this reason it may be useful to use the Liminal Gnosis to explore the subconscious function for associated imagery and using sign or symbol of banishing as an entry point. The received images being totally personal, and for that reason powerful, may then be incorporated into a rite far greater than the sum of its parts.

Astrognosis; a Question of Time

The magician's first question is 'how?' 'How do I violate probability or organise coincidence to work in my favour? But the how is not the whole. Deeply entangled within the how are the where and the when.

At different times both magicians and magical scholars have formulated answers to these questions but their formulae have never been balanced and have invariably been too self-opinionated or too reliant on traditional theories to be of use to other people.

The how has been answered in a thousand ways too well known to the reader to restate here.

The where has never been satisfactorily answered. The magician chooses between his living room, his temple, or a quiet place in the woods; a lonely graveyard or, if he put credence in that kind of thing, a confluence of ley lines or an ancient earthworking. The rule here seems to be that he should use the most atmospheric place he can find for an important working and the most convenient for a routine one.

The question of time is altogether more thorny. Presupposing the question 'is the time important?' to have been answered affirmatively, a conclusion that many magicians of the spontaneity school would repute, a pan-dimensional problem is opened up. Not only does the correct time need to be selected but also the correct time for a particular act of magick. The following possibilities might be taken into consideration.

- 1) Should it take place in the hours of daylight or darkness ?
- 2) Is the day of the week of any importance?
- 3) Is the date of any importance?
- 4) Is the phase of the moon as critical as some authorities have implied?
- 5) Is it necessary to take the astrological situation into account?

There are several ways of classifying the hours of the day and the days of the week under planetary headings ranging from the traditional and apparently arbitrary 'doctrin of signatures' to the more modern, but still arbitrary, system which uses atomic numbers in conjunction with the older method of attributing all things to planetary categories.

The first method assigns a planet to each day of the week, whence the names. Thus we have

MOON	MONDAY	LUNDI
MARS	TUESDAY	MARDI
MERCURY	WEDNESDAY	MERCREDI
JUPITER	THURSDAY	JEUDI
VENUS	FRIDAY	VENDREDI
SATURN	SATURDAY	SAMDI
SUN	SUNDAY	DIMANCHE

The hours of the day and night are calculated by dividing the periods of light and darkness by twelve and then naming the first hour by the planet of the day and following the sequence. The absurdity of this system is that on any given day the likelihood of that planet exerting any effect on the earth is minimal. However, if an arbitrary system is to be used as an indication of the best time to perform a working, randomness often functions

on our behalf, this is as good as any and it does allow for emotional and atmospheric connections to be made.

The other method of attribution comes to the same conclusion concerning the order of the days of the week but presumes from the first that the ancient notion of making a connection between a particular metal and a particular planet is correct without attempting to justify this. It reasons as follows:-

each planet signifies a metal and each metal has an atomic number. Arranging these a la periodic table with the lowest number first, the following list is obtained.

Mars	iron	26	Surmounting these on a seven-pointed star following the universal line and with the order of the atomic numbers a figure is obtained which gives the order of the days of the week, reading clockwise.
Venus	copper	29	
Moon	silver	47	
Jupiter	tin	50	
Sun	gold	79	
Mercury	mercury	80	
Saturn	lead	82	

Coincidence, happenstance, or an indication of divine order this serves to endow an arbitrary system with more meaning than it might otherwise have but there is here a further absurdity in that there are ten planets including sol and luna, not seven. A decimal system of dating would in many ways be more convenient than the present one but would detract from the week as a quarter of the lunar cycle which is more apparently important than any other indicator of periodicity for reasons given below. However, the year can be divided into thirty six decanates using the planets in the sequence of the days of the week with the more recently discovered planets interspersed between them thereby endowing each group of ten days with a set, but again arbitrary, planetary attribution which may be found useful, especially in works of sorcery. In addition to this the decans have traditionally been associated with the minor arcana of the tarot, the signs of the zodiac to the elements and so on, making the choice of time of the year very easy for workings which rely on this kind of jugglery with symbolism.

In considering the moon more definite observations can be made beginning with man's first excursions into astrology during the shamanistic period.

The era of the shaman began long before man became hunter with the interpretation of signs, signs which signaled the availability of food. Here is a possible interpretation of the origin of the zoomorphic gods. Man was never equipped to hunt and until the basis of a hunting technology had been evolved his only method of obtaining meat was by stealth or by scavenging remains left by better adapted animals. The lion, the vulture, the hyena and so on therefore became totemic of surfeits of meat. The snake, the cat and the crocodile became the types of stealth by which small or young animals might be stolen. (A parallel to this is the way in which chimpanzees organize raiding parties against neighbouring tribes of their own kind, the chief male always receiving the prize of the young captives brain).

Over the centuries, as his technology of the hunt began to develop, man's attitude towards the totemic animals must necessarily have changed. He no longer needed signs of this nature to follow. He now needed to avoid the danger- animals, as he had always done, and to observe the periodicity of the arrival of the animals he sought to kill.

The Shaman whose power over the others of his tribe was a result of his ability to interpret signs, would probably not discard totems which had become part of the group mythos even when their practicability was lost and so the signs from the previous period began to form the basis of an unsophisticated magick being of a primitive symbolic nature rather than expressive of a practical approach to the location of meat.

Coincident with this new signs were gaining in importance. Rather than being seen as mere meat, often previously unrecognisable by the time man arrived on the scene, prey was now observed in its living, animal form and the animals themselves became totemic. It was probably at this time that the notion of sympathy began to develop and the shamans next step would be to identify with the animal being hunted.

But how did such an idea come about ?

Sympathy, an apparently illogical connection between disconnected or disparate occurrences, must have first been observed between the lunar phases and the female cycle. In societies living close to nature the menstrual period is coincident with the dark days of the moon and in all societies the gestation period is of ten lunar cycles, the lunar reckoning being more easily observable and recordable than the solar.

According to archeologists who have studied their early epoch, by 40,000 years ago man was already logging the phases of the moon and the positions in which they occurred relative to his own position. Stone almanacs dating from this period have been well documented. They demonstrate that man was recording the phases of the moon 25,000 years before the advent of painting, arithmetic and writing.

It is reasonable to conjecture then that the observed sympathy between woman and the moon and the mystery of the phases of the moon with its cyclic death and rebirth and growth to fullness initiated far more than mere human curiosity. The importance of the moon in astrology and in magick has never been superceded. Its phases have been renamed and resignified throughout the ages and it was through observation of the moon and not the sun, if the etymological record is to be believed, that the dualistic concept of a battle between dark and lightness was formulated into symbolic perfection in the image of the Goddess Fifteen, Ishtar or Venus.

Given that man first began to study the moon 40,000 years ago our knowledge of her effects on the earth and on man is lamentably small. In his arrogance man visited our sister in orbit, brought back a few pieces of rock for scrutiny, and declared that she had been conquered. But what do we know about the effect the moon has on us? As a matter of fact. . .

. . . more people are committed to asylums at the time of the full moon than at any other time.

. . . the moon is responsible for the action of the tides, spring tides with the new or full moon, reap tides with the first and last quarter. As a consequence of the friction caused by tidal flow the period of the earth's rotation is increasing by 1/1000th of a second per century. Man is not long risen from that primeval sea.

. . . if a female's cycle is coincident with the phases of the moon she is at her most fertile at the full moon. It is likely that sexually attractive pheromones e may be exuded by her at that time although these have not as yet been isolated.

. . . a woman who is out of phase with the moon can reach synchronization with it by sleeping in a place where it can shine on her.

. . . sharp instruments exposed for long periods to the strangely polarized light of the moon become measurably less sharp.

. . . recent researches have established that crops sown in accordance with the phases of the moon give a better yield than control groups.

and as a matter of conjecture there is an occult tradition which states that magick cannot be successfully performed during the dark days of the moon. Many societies have taboos against intercourse during the menstrual period, maybe for stated reasons but more likely that magical power be generated or released when the taboo is broken. As a counterpoint to this, there is an astrological tradition which states that horary charts cannot be cast when the moon is in Scorpio and implicit in this is the idea that magick performed during this period is bound to fail. If this were true then negative magick worked during a negative period would produce a positive result!

There is another problem with which the magician must contend which is that quite evidently the moon has a greater effect on the reactions of some individuals than on others. It also appears that the moon exerts a more obvious influence on those people who are aware of it, its phases and its position.

SUMMARY: It is evident that the moon exerts an influence on the earth and its people but that influence is so various as to defy generalisation. It has also been demonstrated within recent years that a planet rising over the horizon exerts an influence, sometimes markedly, on the people born at that time.

Again no rule can be distilled from the available data.

The pragmatist must experiment in his own way, carefully recording lunar and planetary aspects and positions and thereby come to conclusions which are as personal as his methods of performing magick. Alternatively he could organize a routine of lunar observation, recording his emotional impressions, and thereafter perform magick during those phases or aspects in which he feels most powerful.

As a further alternative he might care to experiment with other people's astrognostic techniques. See, for example, Francis Barret's 'Celestial Intelligencer' or Crowley's 'De Arte Magica'.

Above all, the actor in the Theatre of Magick should not lose sight of the fact that it is his function to create atmosphere, of such electricity as to enable him to alter consciousness at will. The stars may not be important to him, may not even be poemial to gnosis, gnosis being the stable-datum without which magick cannot be performed.

The Theatre of Magick (Reprise)

Magick is more of a necessity today, and has much more scope, than in the shamanistic period, its twentieth century functions and applications being more manifold. It can be used as

- 1) a therapy
- 2) an antidote
- 3) a religion
- 4) a discipline
- 5) a way
- 6) a drama

or any combination of these.

Like all other dramas, the better one's performance the more interesting it is. The more interesting it is, the more likely an improvement in ones performance. The magician aims for his performance to reach the level of his capacity and it is with this in mind that the following are offered as improvisations which will hopefully tend towards a greater flexibility in the Theatre of Magick.

Anonymity

The use of faceless masks in a ritual has various advantages.

- 1) Anyone who wishes to remain anonymous can do so.
- 2) In a carefully chosen or designed place, with the celebrants wearing masks time and disbelief can be more easily suspended. Seeing a face one recognizes, like seeing a familiar object, brings one back to the here and now.
- 3) The sonorousness of the voice is enhanced by a well made mask.

Sound Effects

The use of unfamiliar noises can have an astonishing effect, especially on those present who do not know the source of the sound. Electronic music or music played backwards is useful but the magician will find more benefit for himself and his colleagues in creating weird sounds in situ. A glass marble rolled slowly around the inside of a slack drum, for example, can have a disorientating effect when used carefully in an outside location, as can a large metal canister containing a little water gently rocked from side to side.

The sound of a well made bullroarer creates a gnosis of its own. This is a piece of wood with chamfered edges about 8" by 3" by 1/4" attached by one end to a piece of cord. Whirled slowly around the head it gives the impression of giant wings beating overhead. Whirled at speed it sounds like nothing if not the assembled hordes of Beelzebub. Both sounds are totally peculiar.

Characterizations

- 1) Adopt the ambience of being totally at cause over the universe and being successful in all ventures and activities. This brings remarkable results.
- 2) Adopt the ambience of being the most fortunate person on the planet. Good fortune follows such a postulate as a matter of course.
- 3) Change habits. E.G. Give up nail-biting and take up cigarette smoking for two months. Then change back. After two more months make a different arbitrary

change such as performing particular functions with the left hand instead of the right or vice-versa. Ambidextrous individuals should use their feet.

The Wrong Way of Walking

As a supplement to the foregoing spend a whole day in every few months walking and running backwards. Do not look where you're going but develop a technique of avoiding large objects or deep holes. Practice in the following may prove useful.

Non-Sighted seeing

Blind people often develop an extra sense which helps them avoid objects in their path. It is possible for sighted people to develop this sense to such a remarkable degree that they can for example ride a bicycle blindfolded. Initially the technique depends on memory and detailed visualisation of the environment whilst blindfolded, filling in forgotten details by attempting to 'see' with the whole body rather than with the eyes. After some practice it is possible for anyone to differentiate colours in this manner. Adepts in the technique, having spent ten years or more perfecting their method, can even read books.

Walking over rough country on moonless, starless nights. helps build up this facility.

Stunts

Put yourself in dangerous or precarious situations as often as possible. As well as constantly drawing your attention to how good life has been to you so far this activity enhances the tendency towards premonition. This mind -brink phenomenon is impossible to describe or explain. It must be experienced.

It has the added benefit of increasing the amount of spontaneous liminal activity, during which premonitory flashes are most likely to occur.

The Phantom of the Opera

There is little benefit in this process above and beyond the academic interest in observing its results and the excellent practice in banishing required afterwards.

Theory: A poltergeist is a packet of undirected energy spontaneously and unwittingly created by adolescents of either sex.

Fact: If the attention of a group of such people is cleverly directed towards the possibility of there being a 'presence' in a particular place by a charismatic individual poltergeist activity will inevitably break out.

Note: Do not attempt this unless you are capable of controlling the un- subtle energies created and of maintaining the stability required by others during poltergeist activity. Amusing and unimportant at first the behaviour of an homunculous of this sort can easily get out of hand. During the author's experiment entire windows were blown out and various objects destroyed. Moreover, the people unknowingly connected with the experiment were not the only ones to be affected by it. Parties entirely innocent of any knowledge of the experiment and not in the category of 'adolescent' were heard to be having conversations with the author in his absence being apparently able to see and hear him quite distinctly. Sensitive people were affected in ways too diverse to mention.

A very powerful banishing was required to rid the house of its unwanted guest and the author, who found its attention seeking habits irritating in the extreme, would walk over a million miles of broken bottles before he would repeat the experiment.

Crystals

The poltergeist might have been tamed in another way. There is a magical tradition that demons can be imprisoned in crystals and the author made good use of this information to regate the power of a package of unstable energy which had been hurled at him from an unknown quarter. That no-one has since been able to work the Abra Melin system successfully because he had encapsulated an energy recognized and described by the Mage under a particular name is unlikely. Such- energies are excretions or extensions of Kia in the same way as arms and legs; they are archetypes, essences thrown up by the correctly stimulated self.

The technique of magick is to recognize and order these energies some of which seem to be more powerful than the organism itself. Now crystal is one of the most ordered commodities in the universe whether it be natural, like quartz, or chemical, and this sense of order can be used to good effect.

Eutorbulated energy packets (demons) can be concentrated into a solid crystal and there contained until the magician is capable of reabsorbing them without ill-effects. Traditionally the crystal is cleansed in running water.

Conversely, energies or powers in which the magician is deficient may be built up using rapidly growing crystal forms, such as cobalt chloride in isinglass, as sigils; solid sigils which can be observed in their growth and which can be easily destroyed allowing the absorption of the power newly generated in the ritual. For effect chemicals of different colours can be used to typify different functions.

Props

Invent new magical weapons and invest them with magical potency for particular tasks. A stick or wand to assist night-walking might be a good one to start with. At all costs avoid the traditional unless it has a direct personal effect.

Gain through sacrifice

Carefully, sparing no detail, construct a magical weapon of any sort. The manufacture was successful if a) the object is purely personal and b) it successfully assists the performance of a particular magical function.

Restatement: You have constructed a personal weapon using all your expertise. It is beautiful, powerful and an extension of yourself. Over a period of time you have used it and built up its charisma so that you are almost reliant upon it.

Then, when a great deal of energy is needed for a particular operation, destroy the weapon or give it away. The energy released by this sacrifice is much greater than the power generated by using the weapon. Of course, operations requiring such an amount of energy do not occur regularly. Many magicians died without ever having used the instruments they made for this purpose.

Objects as sigils

A stick, a piece of jewellery, any object which can be carried can be used as a sigil. It is programmed into the subconscious function in the same way as any other sigil except that it is designed to exert its influence only in a particular kind of situation or when held in a special way. In view of this it can be multi-functional. The freer the mind of the magician the more versatile the weapon.

Perfumes as sigils

Manufacture perfumes and reify them as sigils for the enhancement of particular functions such as personal power, magnetism, sexual attraction, intellectual capability and so on. In doing these keep in mind the pheromone theory that the olfactory sense subliminally dictates to the organism. It follows then that essences will be chosen only after experimentation and the traditional attributions might be completely contradicted. The magician may find, for instance, that ambergris excites the flesh and not the spirit, camphor the urge to kill flying insects and not the properties of the sphere of Netzach.

The Staircase Meditation (for use in the liminal gnosis)

Image yourself at the top of an enormous spiral staircase whose dimensions are so vast that the curve can only just be discerned. Robed or naked, armed or unarmed, begin to walk slowly down noting details such as the texture of the carpet or the smoothness of the marble. As the gnosis 'clicks' in take note of the people who pass you on the way up or down and any other details.

This is a useful meditation for going backwards in time, that is, for training the magical memory, each stair representing a period of time. The images received whilst in the gnosis can be examined later and used as keys for other Liminal experiments.

The Astral Spiral (for use in the liminal gnosis)

Image the dark emptiness of infinity, 'yourself an invisible dot on an invisible dot'. Image a vast spiral to which you are being attracted and into which you will inevitably be sucked, a la black hole. The spiral leads to a separate universe or anywhere else you care to go and is useful in experimenting with what used to be called 'astral traveling'. As you are sucked into the spiral construct a strong image of the place you want to be and then key in the gnosis. Empirical evidence can be used in the examination of results.

Divination

Devise new methods of divination, the more bizarre and unlikely the better. Example: examine the shadow cast by a naked woman onto a backlit screen and prognosticate the major news of the following day from the American continent.

All divinatory schemes are arbitrary, serving only to trigger a peculiar and usually dormant ability. The problem is to find the trigger which has the greatest effect on your capability.

Zoological Anathemas (with chymical justifications)

Capture a large toad and enclose it in your mouth. There are two reasons for doing this.

- 1) The absolute revulsion caused by having a wriggling, perhaps defecating amphibian in one's mouth brings about a tremendous release of the type of energy useful in sorcery.
- 2) A terrified toad exudes bucofhylin, a hallucinogenic drug the effects of which are well known to Shamans all over the world. Release the relieved batrachian with your thanks.

Collect a number of large snails or slugs and allow them to feed for several days on a plant or herb with magical virtues such as belladonna, borage and so on. Put them in a box of barley to remove the slime and then boil them in water flavour as you will. When the liquid has been reduced by 50% allow it to cool and drink it.

Both of these procedures can be used to effect with magick of the medieval grimoire variety, the creatures used typifying the demons so described in the ancient text.

Sacramental Wine

A bottle of Australian Ruby is not sufficient. The wine affords the magician an opportunity to exercise his alchemical ingenuity. The wine can be wholly made by him using herbs appropriate to particular workings or natural psychedelics in the fermentation or it could contain concoctions similar to the ones mentioned above. Whatever, its flavour should be unusual and provocative.

The Black Mass

The traditional black mass, although it has little magickal value in itself, should be performed at least once by every magician of whatever persuasion; not as an act of blasphemy but as an antidote to the lurking perverted psychocosm of the still extant mediaeval dogma of the church into which all westerners have, to some extent, been conditioned.

Encore

1. Anything which is not egocentric is dead.
2. Anything which can be perceived is real.
3. Something which cannot be perceived is not necessarily unreal.
4. Try everything at least twice. This instruction precludes such activities as suicide which can only be committed once. Suicide attempts are, of course permitted.
5. Ignore all left and right signs. These serve only to confuse, since stage right is audience left and vice-versa.
6. Lay as many ghosts as possible.
7. Never expose your pentacles.
8. Will is unity of desire.
9. When visiting the local coven be sure to take a shilling for the meter.
10. Magick is the violation of probability.

Exeunt

1. Magick is the enemy of religion only when that religion relies on faith since faith is not permitted to ask the question 'Why?'. The statement that the two paths are enemies should not be understood to infer that either is good or bad since this can only be judged in context by result.
It would be as ridiculous for a man whose faith is very strong to attempt the way of the skeptic as it would for the skeptic to force a faith into him self.
2. There is nothing like a war to pull a nation together. United by hatred, a common ideal, fear of danger and fear of the unknown, the nation becomes a powerful, coordinated unit. The greatest advances in science and technology happen in times of crisis when little time or money can be afforded.
Artificial crises induced in himself by himself, or, with his permission by others, have the same effects on the individual. These crisis or gnoses may have lasting effects depending on the method used. They need not be dangerous, merely extraordinary, moving his mind to areas he has not previously explored.
3. Thanateros also means 'poison'.
4. Alternatively he might call upon the archangelic guardians of the Apiru, Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, Auriel, or the protective goddesses of Khem, Isis, Nephthys, Nekhebet, Vatchet.
5. As a point of interest, Hekat was the frog-goddess of Egypt, the frog being a creature beloved of the traditional western European witch, the adorer of Hecate.