

Lion & Serpent

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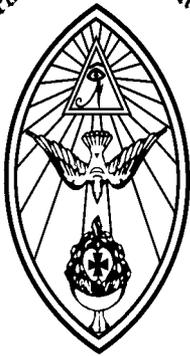
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FRONT COVER

Tarotic Deconstruction phase 2: Hermit/Hanged Man:

FRATER WANDERING YETI

30x40

Oil, acrylic, collage on canvas

The First Page

FRATER ΜΠΑΑ

Gentle readers,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It has been some time since our previous issue, and as such, many events have transpired since Frater HydraLVX (now Fr. ΝΘΛΜΚΜΝΠΓ) reported on the state of Sekhet-Maat Lodge in Vol. 11, No. 1. In addition to many capital improvements to our facilities, we have three new chartered initiators in our ranks (including yours truly). Additionally, we had a smashing success with Thelemic Symposium VI. As I write this, we are now in the midst of the Thelemic Holy Season and looking forward to the celebration of the 103rd anniversary of the Writing of the Book of the Law.

The Lodge is constantly working on improving its facilities, both physical and non-physical. Recently we installed new window treatments to shut out unwanted sunlight and to improve the insulation of our space. This has also remarkably improved the acoustics of the temple (no more echo!). In addition, Soror Aletheia Mnemonicas had the idea to install a digital thermometer in our temple space, which prevents us from accidentally leaving the heat on at night. Both of these improvements have had the added bonus of shrinking our power bill by about 25%. In addition, our website is now based on MediaWiki, which allows members to contribute content as they will. The new website, sekhetmaat.com, for the first time includes information on our new dues structure and our standing rules. We are currently raising funds for our next capital improvement: a series of frescoes on the facade of our facilities.

Quite a few things have transpired since the Sun left Cancer, which are summarized below:

Sol in Leone (7/23/06-8/22/06): After the wedding of our brethren MS and LR, we began our August round of initiations with III^o, culminating towards the end of Leo with Minerval and I^o initiations. This month also included an intimate celebration of the First Night of the Prophet and his Bride. We also held classes in Mantra and Magick, and on the Life and Philosophy of Philip K. Dick, as well as forums in "Thelema and Eastern Philosophy" and "Magick in the Modern World."

Sol in Virgine (8/23/06-9/22/06): Virgo saw a round of IV^o and PI initiations and an exemplification of the Minerval degree by yours truly. There were also classes on such topics as the Stele of Revealing and *Liber LV*.

Sol in Libra (9/23/06-10/22/06): Libra saw the debut of Soror Aletheia Mnemonicas' Equinox Reap Ritual, wherein we celebrated the mysteries of Autumn; additionally, the sign saw a celebration of the birth of The Prophet (otherwise known

as Crowleymas). The Lodge also hosted an exemplification of the First Degree by Frater GL, and held classes in the history and use of the Tarot.

Sol in Scorpione (10/23/06-11/21/06): At approximately 21° Scorpio, Sekhet-Maat held their second ever Midnight at the Oasis, a celebration of the entire cycle of the Man of Earth triad in one day. This event was peculiarly historical for the Lodge as we broke in two brand-new initiators in this cycle: Frater JP and yours truly. Though the night ended with everyone exhausted, the energy in the temple afterwards was palpable for some days! On the EGC front, we had a round of baptisms in this month on the 18th of November (one of our occasional Saturday masses). The Lodge also held classes in *Liber LXI* (or *Liber Causae*) and the banishing ritual known as *Liber Israfel*. The month concluded with a class on *Liber LXV* and the Holy Guardian Angel. Last but not least, we celebrated the Solar Return of Soror Aletheia Mnemonicas, who shared with us the joy and beauty of achieving (redacted) years of life.

Sol in Sagittario (11/22/06-12/21/06): One might be wonder how we could possibly have topped such a wild and wonderful Scorpio. Well, the answer is simple: We couldn't! But we did share a magnificent Thanksgiving feast at the Lodge, a workshop on Rituals of the Pentagram, Frater JP's outstanding class on Vocal Technique for Ritual, and a forum on meditation techniques. This month also saw one of our major capital improvements of the Lodge facilities: the installation of new window treatments to improve the façade of our space, to improve the insulation and acoustics of the temple, and to better keep out the light when we don't want it.

Sol in Capricorno (12/22/06-1/19/07): The rest we took in Sagittarius turned to a frenzy of work and celebration in Capricorn. Winter began with a celebration of the Winter Solstice, which included a Talent Show organized by Frater Zir and a midnight celebration of the Gnostic Mass. The end of the vulgar year 2006 was duly marked by a Night in the Wake World. Such was the celebration that the clean-up had to be scheduled for noon on New Year's Day. Towards the end of the month, the joy turned to remembrance as the Lodge hosted a Greater Feast for author and occultist Robert Anton Wilson.

During this month, the Lodge also hosted a Certified Initiator Training for aspiring initiators from Portland and Seattle. Many thanks to Soror Aletheia Mnemonicas and Frater Pelagius for their hard work in organizing CIT! In addition, this month saw the first in a series of Enochian Senior Workshops, intended to explore the Watchtowers. Last but not least, the Lodge held a workshop on Rituals of the Hexagram.

Sol in Aquario (1/20/07-2/18/07): Not wanting to begin slacking in any way, Aquarius saw the Lodge do another round of Man of Earth initiations, wherein we held an Exemplification of the Minerval degree and initiations of both the I and II degrees. On the EGC front, we saw a round of confirmations on the first day of the new month. We also held a Mass of the Phoenix and a class on Astrology.

Sol in Piscis (2/19/07-3/20/07): Pisces was extremely busy for the Lodge. The highlight of the event was Thelemic Symposium VI, organized by our Lodge Master Frater NΘAMKMNPI. Thelemic Symposium was a smashing success by all accounts, and in the opinion of this author it was the best Symposium since TSII. As per usual, The Lodge hosted a flock of students from the University of Montana, present on a field trip for a class on New Religious Movements. Students got a chance not only to ask questions of members of The Lodge, but also of the panelists. These students also had the chance to attend one of The Lodge's weekly celebrations of Liber XV.

We would have been busy enough just with Thelemic Symposium, but we also had not one, but two candidates initiated into the III°. We also held a workshop on the Star Ruby, a class on Astrology, and an Introduction to Qigong. So, as you can see, we had a very, very busy month. And so the next month seems to give us a relative lull....emphasis on *relative*.

Sol in Ariete (3/21/07-4/20/07): With the Equinox came the new year IVxv (associated trump: The Devil), and also the beginning of the Thelemic Holy Season: 22 days between the Equinox and the Third Day of the Writing of the Book of the Law. The Lodge is marking each day with an altar in our classroom, whereupon sits the Tarot card attributed to this day. We are also celebrating together by reading the appropriate passages for each day, according to the practices outlined by the College of Thelema. Those who are interested in more information on this practice should consult the College of Thelema website:

http://www.thelema.org/home/thelemic_holy_season.html

In addition, we have so far held classes on the Star Sapphire, the Kybalion, and Astrology. This month also has seen the formation of the Thelemic Musick Project, and who knows what that will bring?

De mutatione (Transitions): At Winter Solstice, the Lodge raised dues to \$35 per month in order to completely cover expenses with dues. Additionally, the Lodge changed the structure of its membership program, so that members and affiliates have many of the same benefits, and the benefits of membership have expanded to include taking initiation and attending initiate-only events. Complete information can be found on our website.

Frater Mau Bast has done a magnificent job as class co-ordinator for The Lodge, and as a result, anyone who came along to fill his shoes would have quite a task ahead of them. Frater Theapraxis has stepped up to this task, and thus far has proven himself quite able.

Well, that's all I have to report. Until next time,

Love is the Law, Love under Will

Working with Archetypes and Deities: Possession and Equilibration (part 2 of 2)

Frater Harmateus

The previous discussion has significant implications for the concept of equilibration. In magick, the word is usually defined as a bringing into balance or equilibrium of certain forces, energies, or elements. If archetypal possession is allowed to occur, then the psyche is not in equilibrium at that particular moment. All of the energies of the psyche are swept up in the drive of that one archetype to express itself through the individual. So, when I speak of equilibration as the desired state, I am referring to equilibration over time, not a steady, continual state of equilibrium or balance. One might term such a thing as longitudinal equilibration. In addition, there is the issue of balancing different energetic forces in the psyche. Each archetype brings with it unique gifts as well as risks. No one archetype, regardless of how complex and multi-faceted it may be, can guide us to the place Crowley (1990) so eloquently describes in *The Book of the Balance*. To achieve this equilibration we must work with many archetypes over the course of a lifetime and perhaps go into, and most certainly come out of, a variety of archetypal possessions. Each archetype, however, seeks only to express its own nature through the individual. Moreover, archetypes themselves are not inherently balanced, as they are insular distillates of different aspects of human experience. Let me give an analogy with which most students of magick will be familiar. As humans, we are thought to contain all four elements in our being: fire, water, air and earth. We seek to balance these elements in the self because when the elements are in balance, Spirit manifests. Now if we compare our nature to that of the elemental spirits—salamanders, undines, sylphs, and gnomes—it is clear that only we are capable of elemental balance. Elementals by their very nature contain only one element. Each elemental is absorbed only in its own nature, is aware only of its own nature. It is up to us to achieve this elemental balance within ourselves. Furthermore, it is ridiculous to expect help from the elemental spirits in this matter, or even to expect that they will recognize the value of this as a goal, as it is simply not part of their universe. It is much the same with the archetypes. Each archetype has no inclination to share the human vehicle of expression. There does not appear to be any evidence for some kind of archetypal “co-op” where the different archetypes “time share” the human vessel for the greater good of all. Once the archetype takes the wheel and starts driving, this process continues until either the archetypal energies are spent, or the person says, “Enough,” and takes back the wheel. Let me elaborate upon this second outcome.

In psychotherapy, there is a lot of work on what is called boundary setting, or limit setting. Anyone who has raised children, or has run a magickal lodge/oasis/camp, will know what I mean. As a therapist you attempt to help people to set realistic and appropriate boundaries with others and themselves, be consistent, follow through, etc. Most of the same principles apply to working with archetypes. If people cannot set boundaries in their relationships with others or with themselves, then they are apt to have problems with archetypal possession. There

are times when the person simply has to say, "Enough," and take back the wheel of the vehicle from whatever archetype is dominating the psyche to the neglect of the rest. The whole application of boundary/limit setting to relationships with archetypal forces is pragmatic point number two. There are times when the magician attempts to set boundaries with archetypal forces and fails to be able to do so. Why does this occur? This is a complex issue and a full discussion is beyond the time and space I am allotted here. In brief, it can occur because: 1) there is lack of skill or ability in limit setting generally; 2) there is insufficient development of Will for the follow-through; 3) there is some kind of unresolved issue in the psyche of the magician which is thematically, or symbolically, related to the archetype with which the individual cannot set the limits. These issues can be from this life or past lives. For example, unresolved issues with one's parents can cause boundary problems with Mother/Father, King/Queen archetypes. Similar issues about one's sense of self from childhood can cause problems with the various aspects of the Child archetype. The same applies to sexual issues and the Erotic archetypes. The unresolved issues create "chinks in the armor" of the magician's boundary walls, holes in his/her magical circle through which the archetypal energies can flow despite efforts to keep them at bay. Paradoxically, the same unresolved issues could create such rigid, impenetrable boundaries that none of the archetypal energies can be integrated on a conscious level. This then pushes the archetypal forces into the Shadow side of the psyche where they are likely to become pathological in a variety of ways.

In the final portion of my paper I am going to address the importance of the number four and its role in equilibration. Jung considered the number four to be the number of completion and discussed how this had implications of incompleteness for the Christian numeric formula of three, or Trinity. In magick, how many rituals are designed around the four quadrants of the compass – crosses and circles – the equal armed cross within the circle. Jung called the fourfold arrangement "the quaternity." Taking some excerpts from Sharp's (1991) discussion of and quotations from Jung:

An image with a four-fold structure, usually square or circular and symmetrical; psychologically, it points to the idea of wholeness...It is like the crossed threads in the telescope of our understanding. The cross formed by the points of the quaternity is no less universal and has in addition the highest possible moral and religious significance for Western man. Similarly the circle, as the symbol of completeness and perfect being, is a widespread expression for heaven, sun, and God; it also expresses the primordial image of man and soul. (110-111)

Using the invoking pentagram rituals, one is equilibrating the four elemental forces—air, fire, water and earth—at the four directions of the compass—east, south, west, and north. This balancing is perhaps even more noticeable in Regardie's (1982) "Opening by Watchtowers" ritual. Any of you who have seen Frater Pan's adaptation of Crowley's Star Sapphire ritual have witnessed an equilibration again involving forces at the four quarters. In this case the forces are not elemental, per se, but rather represent archetypal relational energies. Here the relational energies that flow between the archetypal Father and Mother, Mother and Son, Son and Daughter, and Daughter and Father are brought into

balance. Rather than pure, insular, archetypal energies being equilibrated, it is the relational energies between the archetypes that are placed at the four quarters and balanced. The concept of adopting and adapting ritual for archetypal equilibration, in order to minimize the risk of unintended archetypal possession, is a topic to which I will shortly return. First, some outline of what a basic archetypal quaternity arrangement might look like needs to be addressed.

Jungian analyst Robert Moore (1990), along with mythologist Douglas Gillette, described their basic quaternity for the masculine in their “King, Warrior, Magician, Lover” series of books. Their configuration is remarkably similar to Toni Wolff’s quaternity for the feminine archetypes (Hall, 1980). In the masculine, Moore and Gillette use the term “King” rather than “Father,” and Wolff chooses, for the feminine, “Mother” rather than “Queen,” but these appear to be in a similar vein given the Qabalistic associations of King/Father with the “Yod” and the Queen/Mother with the “He” (initial) in the Yod He Vau He formula. Wolff chooses the archetypal image of “the Amazon,” which clearly corresponds to “the Warrior.” The feminine is expressed by “the Hetaira,” the name used for the temple or sacred prostitutes of the ancient world, also meaning courtesan or concubine. Obviously, this corresponds to “the Lover.” The image of the “Mediatrix” is equivalent to “the Magician.” The Mediatrix mediates between the inner and outer worlds and is exemplified by the Pythia, the priestesses who delivered the Oracles at Delphi in ancient Greece. Wolff arranged her quaternity in the form of the equal-armed cross [fig. 1], with the Mother-Hetaira forming one axis (vertical) and with the Mediatrix-Amazon forming the cross axis (horizontal).

Now one might ask: why this arrangement? The Mother-Hetaira axis, and correspondingly the King-Lover in the masculine, may be thought of as representing the Eros, or life forces of the psyche. The King/Father and Queen/Mother archetypal cluster channels the Eros to inseminate and/or give birth to children, physical or magickal, along with projects and empires on many scales. Here the core attributes are creation, nurturance, and maintenance of some kind of order and structure. The other end of the polarity is the Lover/Hetaira. Here the Eros is directed towards pleasure, intimacy, aesthetics, the bringing together and co-mingling of elements, on many levels. Considering the other axis, that of the Mediatrix-Amazon, or Magician-Warrior, it is the direction of consciousness that is the defining attribute. Both the Mediatrix and the Magician journey inwards to

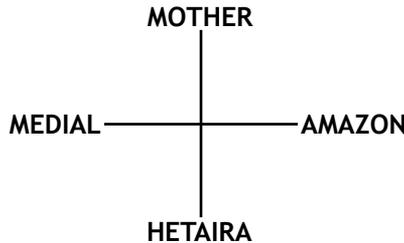


Figure 1

other worlds. The person who is in touch with this archetypal cluster profoundly understands the words so well stated by William James (1994): "Our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different." Contrast this with the extraverted, outgoing pattern of consciousness and energy associated with the Warrior/Amazon. It is important to note that these are represented as polarities. As such, energy and consciousness may be directed in different directions or for different purposes at different times. They are not dichotomies. They are not mutually exclusive. Take for example, "the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will," (Crowley, 1997) and note how much more effectively this will occur with an equilibration of the Magician, working inwardly, and the Warrior, working outwardly. This configuration of these particular archetypes is not meant to exclude all the other archetypes that do not fit within this framework. Similarly, I am not suggesting some kind of Euclidean space with x-y axes on which all archetypes can be plotted. These axes are dynamic, energetic in nature and not fixed or static. Also, there are other possible spatial arrangements to which I will now proceed.

Up until now I have been using the more traditional spatial arrangement of the equal-armed cross to represent the quaternary. Moore and Gillette conceptualize each archetype as having a bi-polar dysfunctional variant, as well as a healthy expression. There is an active and passive pole to the dysfunctional variant, or Shadow form of the archetype. If one takes the Lover archetype, the Shadow Lover contains the Addicted Lover (active pole) and the Impotent Lover (passive pole). Similarly, for the other archetypes the Shadow variants are as follows: King – the Tyrant (active) and the Weakling (passive); Warrior – the Sadist (active) and the Masochist (passive); the Magician – the Detached Manipulator (active) and the Denying "Innocent" One (passive) [fig. 2-3]. They suggest that the bi-polar dysfunctional variants be considered as the base of a triangle, with the healthy expression of the archetype in its fullness as the apex of the triangle. Bringing all four together would form a four-sided pyramid [fig.4]. Now Moore and Gillette's work has been with masculine archetypes, but they theorize that the feminine arrangement is also pyramidal in nature. Placing the masculine and feminine pyramid bases end to end yields an octahedron, or as Jung called it the "double quaternion." Both this spatial arrangement, as well as the more traditional equal-armed cross have implications for a ritual to equilibrate the archetypes.

Regardless of which spatial configuration one uses, directions of the compass must correspond to the four archetypal clusters. Given the elemental correspondences, the ones I will use are as follows: King/Father and Queen/Mother in the North with Earth; Magician/Mediatrix in the East with Air; Warrior/Amazon in the South with Fire; Lover/Hetaira in the South with Water. The Magician would begin with whatever centering device he/she prefers, e.g. Qabalistic Cross, intoning, meditation, breathing, etc. Invocations for each of the archetypes would be best kept subjective to the purposes of the magician and the aspects of the archetype with which he/she is working. These could include favorite passages and poems from outside sources, or original material, or even just wordless visualization that exemplifies the archetype as the magician wills it to manifest in consciousness. The simpler spatial arrangement could follow from the format of



Figure 2
 The Archetypes of the Mature Masculine (pt. 1)



Figure 3
 The Archetypes of the Mature Masculine (pt. 2)

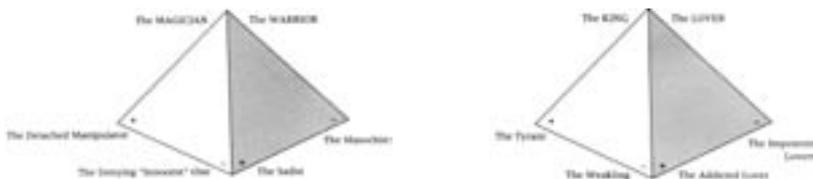


Figure 4
 The Pyramidal Structure of Mature Masculine Self

the Lesser Invoking Ritual of the Pentagram, but with equal-arm crosses drawn instead of pentagrams at each of the four quarters, drawing towards the placement of the archetype being invoked on the cross and ending the stroke at that point. A circle could, or could not, be drawn around the cross deosil, depending upon the preference of the magician.

Far more interesting possibilities present themselves with the octahedron arrangement. The opening would be as above, but instead of the equal-arm cross, a triangle would be drawn at each of the four quarters. One could begin at the mid-point of the base drawing out to the left and right, simultaneously with both hands. Placement of the magician's hands would now be at the points of the two Shadow variants of the archetype. The magician would now have the opportunity to transmute the Shadow aspects of the archetype as the hands ascend up to two sides of the triangle towards the apex, where the positive aspect of the archetype one Wills to manifest is located. This mini-chemical operation could be accompanied by whatever tools the magician desires, e.g. visualization, verse, energy work, etc. After all four archetypal quadrants are completed the tips of the triangles would be joined to build the pyramid. Now the octahedron could be constructed in several ways depending upon magickal intent. If the upward pointing pyramid is taken as a spatial metaphor for ascent into consciousness and the downward pointing one for descent into the unconscious, then the typical arrangement would be for men to invoke the masculine archetypes in the upward pyramid and the feminine ones in the downward pyramid. For women, this would be reversed: feminine pointing up and masculine pointing down. The logic of this is that while we all have both masculine and feminine sides, and therefore archetypes, men, in general, are more conscious of their masculine side and women of their feminine side. However, if the magical purpose were to work more with one's contra-sexual side, the above could be reversed, i.e. women invoking the masculine archetypes on top and the feminine below and similarly with men. Another variation I like is to invoke all eight archetypes, with respective triangles, then bring the tips of the triangles together to form the upward pyramid, followed by the downward one for an "as above, so below" effect. Of course, all of the above is merely suggestive. I offer it to stimulate thought about creation and use of ritual to promote archetypal equilibration.

As magicians we are in a unique position to work with archetypes. Like the artist we are more susceptible to archetypal possession by the very work we do. This is not a disadvantage, but it is a risk factor with which we must contend with our full consciousness. Were we never to allow our archetypes to drive the Chariot in our magickal workings, would we ever touch the Divine or kiss the lips of the ineffable? While our archetypes can take us to the most sublime and ecstatic states possible in human experience, they can also seduce us into the netherworlds of our own personal Hell. The descent into the underworld is itself a sacred tradition, as essential to the progression of our souls now as it was in the ancient mystery schools. The descent, like archetypal possession itself, is an integral part of the magician's journey, but you cannot leave Hell easily if you were seduced there, taken there in a state of unconsciousness. You may not even realize you are there, let alone know the path of the ascent for your return. You cannot rely on the archetype to bring you back. Hence, the essential wisdom of the deceptively simple counsel, "Know Thyself, O Man." Consciousness and

knowledge of self are essential for archetypal work. "Every man and woman is a star," we are told by the Master Therion. We, as stars, as magicians, as Thelemites, must harness the primordial energies of our archetypes in our pursuit of the Great Work, in our quest for Knowledge and Conversation with our Holy Guardian Angel. It is not only Love that needs to be under Will, but our archetypes as well. As Thelemites in this Aeon of the Crowned and Conquering Child, we no longer serve the "old gods" as did our pagan ancestors. Rather, we now work with them, in our magical operations and in the realization and perfection of our own divinity.

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Bitter Hell Bats Engorged on Loving Snakes

Dark and dry are the bones
Empty are the arms of the Mother

Metal and wet, my face
Red tears of shame and slaughter

The dust coils onto my legs
Where are the uncontrolled snakes of your fear

I slide down down down
Shaken souls from Hell reappear

Whispers in the dark shared
She moves silently to the side, enthralled

The Dark Daughter now stands alone
Left behind on the path that's discarded

Two coins in my hand to repay
Hot metal that has long been rotting

Leaving there, burnt offerings to Death
There was supposed to be a summer

No more a Daughter, I rise
Cold are the arms of the Mother

—Soror Aletheia Mnemonicas,

☉ 0° in ♋: ☽ 5° in ♌: dies ♃: IVxiv

Laborare est Orare

An ethos of self-sufficiency in the New Dark Age

Frater HydraLVX

There are many perspectives and opinions about the methods that local bodies should use to raise money—nearly as many opinions as there are individuals who care to think about it. Among the most prevalent areas of disagreement, historically, is whether local bodies should be principally funded by dues, or by other means. In examining other Orders that have established an ethos of self-sufficiency, the benefits and fitness of an approach of self-sufficiency in the O.T.O. seem clear.

Let us not, with folded arms, float with the tide of indolence, but ever strive after increase of that true knowledge which is wisdom and remember that “to labour is to pray,” or as the Latin motto has it, “*Laborare est Orare*,” for the day.

—*The Rosicrucians: Past and Present, at Home and Abroad*
by Wm. Wynn Westcott

“*Laborare est Orare*” is a motto that derives from the *Rule of Benedict* and which was later adopted by Freemasons. By adopting this ethos, the Benedictine Order attained a high degree of self-sufficiency which arguably helped them to survive the fall of Rome.

[Benedict] formulated a Rule by which the monks of his monastery would live. It laid stress on the equal value of prayer, study and work, and in this way Benedict laid the foundations for self-sufficiency in a period when a community would either survive on its own, or not survive at all. At the core of the Rule was the edict, *laborare est orare* (to work is to pray). Benedict’s monks were to be no mere ritualistic bookworms - he wanted them to get dirt under their nails. As the movement spread across Europe the Benedictines set up abbeys that prospered, safe behind their massive walls; even when the depredations of the barbarian invaders were taking their greatest toll of the country around.

—*Connections* by James Lee Burke

In the many discussions of self-sufficiency, it is clear that this ethos is not difficult for Thelemites to find relevant and applicable in local bodies. Today, however, practitioners (and especially Thelemites) must have different strategies for attaining a level of self-sufficiency than the Benedictine monks had. In a post-industrial service economy, in an organization which (unlike monasteries) *does not seek to separate itself from worldly interaction*, self-sufficiency might better be rendered as:

***Independence supported by cooperative labor and financial contribution,
resting on a foundation of shared commitment.***

When a body of initiates is supported fully by those same initiates, outside forces can only hurt the group if conditions are extreme, e.g., if there is a major eco-

conomic depression or everyone moves. Even then, with sufficient savings and/or contingency income, a body may survive the storm.

Aside from practical and strategic considerations, the phrase is, “labor is prayer,” and the simple meaning of this statement must not be overlooked. It needn’t be accepted on faith. Quite materialistically, by attaining self-sufficiency through labor (and those tokens of labor we call “dollars”), a community preserves its teachings and practices. It is therefore one method of ensuring *transmission of the gnosis*. Thereby, **labor invokes**. This is *karma yoga* through and through.

If we extend this kind of thinking to our daily life, considering all our efforts and skills to be of potential benefit to our local bodies, the body’s strength will grow immeasurably. This strength will also be of benefit to individuals. Consider how this has benefited the Benedictines:

The great church was the central symbol of faith about which all the manifold activities of a self-supporting community revolved. The Cistercian lay-brother was neither a slave nor an anchorite, but a skilled craftsman who wrought in metal, wood and stone, who built roads, wove cloth, bred stock and planted trees, and who tilled the soil of field and garden to make barren wastes fruitful. Yet all these manifold and highly individualistic activities were undertaken, not for personal enrichment, but for the benefit of the community and as an article of faith which was summed up in the precept of Stephen Harding: ‘*Laborare est Orare*’

—*High Horse Riderless* by L. T. C. Rolt

In the OTO, many of our practices could be considered “monastic,” but we do not withdraw entirely from the world into monasteries. Our founding documents do not recommend monastic isolation except for temporary periods. As Magi, standing “upright; their head above the heavens, their feet below the hells,” we do not cut off the lower to exalt the higher. In these respects, the following passage comparing a development in Zen to the Benedictine ethos is relevant:

As Magi, standing “upright;
their head above the heavens,
their feet below the hells,”
we do not cut off the lower to
exalt the higher.

One of the main attractions of Zen during the classical period of the shogunates was its double virtue in reforming monasticism and in its appeal to the ordinary person engaged in lay life. It did the former by simplifying monastic life and insisting on both hard labor and the practice of meditation . . . The movement appealed to the laity because it took seriously and in a practical way the Mahayana dictum of the identity between the empirical world or *samsara* and the transcendental world or *nirvana*. It took the idea expressed in the Latin tag *laborare est orare*, “to work is to pray,” important for Western monasticism, in new directions, for it integrated the meditative task and the skills of ordinary life.

—*The World’s Religions* by Ninian Smart

The Freemasons, of course, are very near us on the initiatory family tree, and their words on this subject may ring true for Thelemites who are working to build temples of gold and ivory and marble.

Now, this doctrine, that labor is worship, is the very doctrine that has been advanced and maintained, from time immemorial, as a leading dogma of the Order of Freemasonry. There is no other human institution under the sun which has set forth this great principle in such bold relief. We hear constantly of Freemasonry as an institution that inculcates morality, that fosters the social feeling, that teaches brotherly love; and all this is well, because it is true; but we must never forget that from its founda-

tion-stone to its pinnacle, all over its vast temple, is inscribed, in symbols of living light, the great truth that labor is worship.

— *Symbolism of Freemasonry* by
Albert Mackey

When members consider all the work that they do as a potential means to contribute to their local body, we will see local bodies easily supporting, sustaining, and improving their dedicated spaces.

Other organizations which use fundraising events, or get grants, or which rely too heavily on the contributions of a few generous members to support the majority of their operations are at the mercy of those unstable sources

of income. If local bodies wish to survive and thrive, they must find a way to fund their activities primarily through broad-based shared financial as well as laborious commitment. This motto, *Laborare est Orare*, captures an ethos which can give focus to that effort. When members consider all the work that they do as a potential means to contribute to their local body, we will see local bodies easily supporting, sustaining, and improving their dedicated spaces. When those same people are also contributing their labor and genius to the production of classes, rituals, amateur theater, even creating products for the local body to sell, the body becomes a vibrant fraternal community. As Aleister Crowley wrote in *Liber 194*:

... thus we gather up all the threads of human passion and interest, and weave them into an harmonious tapestry, subtly and diligently with great art, that our Order may seem an ornament even to the Stars that are in the Heavens at Night. In our rainbow-coloured texture we set forth the glory of the whole Universe—See thou to it, brother Magician, that thine own thread be strong, and pure, and of a colour brilliant in itself, yet ready to mingle in all beauty with those of thy brethren!

BURNING HEART

Within Thine own flames art Thou consumed-
To rend the 70,000 veils of Light...
A marvelous Thing!

O! Beautiful silsila* of the Nur Muhammad-
What wilt Thou reveal whenst Thou fully illuminate the World?

Where wilt Thou go?
Upon whose heart wilt Thou descend,
To set afire with Thy burning passion?

'Tis no matter!
Allah Knoweth best!

Spontaneously written during Ramadan 2000e.v. at the Oregon State
Penitentiary under the given name of
Hafiz

* Silsila: The lineage/transmission of Light from Prophet
Muhammad to the Pirs to Sheyks/Sheykas to their Dervishes of
Islamic Sufism.

An Essay on the Creed of the E.G.C.

Frater Ka'Ari'K

When I first saw the Gnostic Mass almost two years ago, I was overwhelmed by the depth of spiritual knowledge contained in its symbolism. Having attended Roman Catholic churches for several years during my youth, I felt a connection to the overall structure of Liber XV. But what I was most touched by were the Gnostic spiritual themes of attainment through knowledge and understanding that I had been pursuing ever since I stopped attending Roman Catholic church.

While the Gnostic Mass was certainly not what initially drew me to the O.T.O, it has found a special place in my heart. The more I participate in the Mass, the deeper my connection to it becomes, and the more the symbolism reveals to me. As I have progressed through the Man of Earth triad, each initiation has revealed new facets of the symbolism in the Mass. Taking my II^o and acting as a Deacon have been no exceptions to this trend. In fact, I feel that these things have caused the biggest leap so far in my understanding of Liber XV.

The Creed:

I believe in one secret and ineffable LORD; and in one Star in the Company of Stars of whose fire we are created, and to which we shall return; and in one Father of Life, Mystery of Mystery, in His name CHAOS, the sole viceregent of the Sun upon the Earth; and in one Air the nourisher of all that breathes. And I believe in one Earth, the Mother of us all, and in one Womb wherein all men are begotten, and wherein they shall rest, Mystery of Mystery, in her name BABALON.

And I believe in the Serpent and the Lion, Mystery of Mystery, in his name BAPHOMET.

And I believe in one Gnostic and Catholic church of Light, Life, Love, and Liberty, the word of whose Law is ΘΕΛΗΜΑ.

And I believe in the communion of Saints.

And, forasmuch as meat and drink are transmuted in us daily into spiritual substance, I believe in the Miracle of the Mass.

And I confess one Baptism of Wisdom whereby we accomplish the Miracle of Incarnation.

And I confess my life one, individual, and eternal that was, and is and is to come.

AUMGN, AUMGN, AUMGN.

The Creed of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica is a potent magical formula. Our church teaches universal (catholic) spiritual wisdom (gnosis). And our Creed illustrates this through many layers of symbolism. Through my own meditation and the study of the writings of others I have gained some insight into the Creed.

Hadit is the center of the circle, the infinite potential that burns in the heart of man, and is the seed of life. His number is eight, and one in eight. The Creed has eight points, the major points expressing the nature of one. This can be seen as expressing and invoking Hadit. However, the Creed summons the priestess, who will embody Nuit. This is a further Thelemic mystery. "Yet she shall be known and I never."

The force and fire of Hadit and his bride Nuit are certainly essential components that the Creed invokes. But there is much more. The יהוה formula is expressed several ways in the Creed. CHAOS is ך, BABALON is ה (initial), BAPHOMET is ך, and the church of THELEMA is ה (final). CHAOS, the fire of the sun, fills the watery womb of BABALON with life. They beget BAPHOMET, the airy wisdom and understanding transferred to mankind from Chokmah and Binah. The strength of BAPHOMET supports the Gnostic Catholic Church, which is the earthly foundation that promulgates the Law of ΘΕΛΗΜΑ.

The first four points of the Creed express the descent of divinity down the Tree of Life. The Gnostic Saints are representatives of that divine force cultivated in mankind. We commune with them that their spiritual substance may strengthen our own Wills. This communion is a natural process.

BAPHOMET can mean Baptism of Wisdom. Thus the miracle of incarnation is identifying with our own divinity. The Baptism of Wisdom can also be baptism into the church, which is essentially a vehicle of awakening the divine in each of us.

The final point of the Creed expresses that our life and our Will go beyond this temporal and physical existence. There is a part of us that is unique and also a part greater than ourselves. The current of our individual Will has been incarnated before us, and it will incarnate again after this body has passed on. This speaks to The End Collect: "Unto them from whose eyes the veil of life hath fallen may there be granted the accomplishment of their true Wills, . . . to achieve the labor and heroism of incarnation . . ."

Even without understanding all of the symbolism, as the last AUMGN is sounded and the priestess appears, the power of the Creed is felt. It synthesizes a great deal of Thelemic concepts into one concise formula that is the seed for the whole Mass.



Untitled Sketch

ALEISTER CROWLEY

from the Warburg Archives

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Fall Equinox Reap Ritual

Wherein our Community Reaps what it Sows

Soror Alethia Mnemonicas

☉ 7° in ♁; ☽ 23° in ♃ dies 2 IVxiv



Author's Note: This ritual was born in a few different places, but achieved its height when our Brother Kallah Adonai passed away last November. Up to that point, I had an incredibly strong desire to write a ritual for our Lodge that got people out of their heads and experiencing ritual within their bodies. As such, as you read through this, you will notice that it is not necessarily a lack of hermetic symbolism, but rather an increase in the physical essence and embodiment of the emotions within the participants that is the focus.

I would like to thank Sekhet-Maat Lodge and its members for supporting me in this Endeavour and for taking part in this ritual. Without my Brothers and Sisters to support me in my way of going, my path would be lonely indeed.

Main characters and History:

Chameheh – Frater KHABE ΚΛΟΣ

Chameheh is a traveling salesman. In historical mythologies, the traveling salesman is a man who comes to bring a new message. He is the Fool. He is not well liked or trusted because he is always selling some form of Snake Oil. More often than not, his inherent charisma takes over and he becomes an advocate for the people, maybe even remaining with them and becoming one of them. Remember though, Snake Oil was a real remedy brought from the Chinese during the building of the railroad. Made from Chinese Water Snakes, it really worked quite well as a remedy for pain.

Baba – Soror Natasya

This person is the leader of her people, they who have been Lost. They worship her decisions because they fear her. She is the Baba Yaga, the wise old woman, the ugly woman, the woman who rules by common sense. She understands life as well as

Death and is here to protect her folk from the disease and spirit of Death. She and her people are bound by Old Aeon logic.

Scapegoat – Frater Mantis

In the old language, the scapegoat is the goat who ‘scaped and got away . . . Our scapegoat has a message. Will the people be ready to hear it?

Executioner – Frater A

The Lord of Death and Bringer of Change, the Executioner understands Death in his very body as only he knows the feeling of the bones cracking and the dreaded THUMP of a head rolling.

Red Hands: Frater HydraLVX, Brother Tony, Frater I.O.I., Soror Sophia

“Caught Red Handed” In the before time, these are the men and women who were murderers, adulterers and those who were accused of Evil doing. In the New Aeon, they are guilty of assisting all of us in our march toward the understanding of Death by virtue of their authority and experience. In our community they represent those who have “by their own hand” (sponsorship and mentorship) sent the members to their “Death.” Our Red Hands are otherworldly and are here to promote Beauty and Harmony among the Brethren by virtue of guarding the ritual space, holding the emotional energy and comforting all involved. They exist to observe and experience the bigger picture. They are consumed by Silence and choose never to speak. Note: During the ritual at SML, the Red Hands were either members of the R+C Chapter, Committee of Four Members or Executive members of the Lodge, to conform with this symbolism.

Mem - Soror Alethia Mnemonicas

Mem is the Water. The 23rd path. The Law of Reversal. The Liberator. Our Mem invokes the Cup and Cross of Suffering for each of you as she brings her gift and facilitates your passage through the ritual.

People’s Plants: Frater Andropos Troy, Brother Jeff

These are the folks who will help the people grow and turn their attention toward the Light. Qi flow in the ritual, there’s always someone to help the unruly populous get unruly eh?

Metals: Brother Greg

There are always those who would rather bang pots and pans than yell, eh? With his Metal, his new music maker, and his voice, our Brother will bring soundscapes to our ritual.

The Unruly People: Attendees

The people are found to be grieving for the loss of their Lovers, Comrades, their Brothers and Sisters. This is you. You will be playing a vital part in our ritual tonight, dive in deep, for under the decay is the new seed, about to sprout.

The Stuffey Guy: Hodmedod the Scarecrow

Scarecrows are beings who banish the crows from the crops. They embody the fears of the people, fear of plague, fear of starvation, fear of death, fear of God. At the end of each Reaping season, these Stuffey Guys are painted various colors, and, if the

family had sadness through loss and death, it was the Stuff Guy who was blamed and their hands were painted red before being burned. A huge pyre in the town square would be the end of these guys, the ashes to be spread on the crops to show the victory over fear and to nourish their crops and spirits for the coming year.

Set Up:

Living Room: Potluck/ritual set up, decorations include dark things, as well as on the Feasting table, a platter with grave dirt and a skull set upon it. Offerings are there, tobacco, coins, candy and coffee. Incense burns upon it.

Temple: Low lights. The Tomb is in the *EAST* and is covered with flowers and ivy. Rather than appearing to be a tomb of death, it looks rather “lively.” Above the entrance is a Rose Cross made of Wheat. Inside resides a Stuff Guy (scarecrow), dressed in shoddy clothing. The Scapegoat also hides in the tomb, with the Stuff Guy. The mass altar is in the *WEST* and is equally odd, being covered in black cloth, 23 red candles burn here. There is a skull set at the top, with the 23rd candle next to it, dead and rotting roses (cut on the Summer Solstice, consecrated during the Gnostic mass and left in water to rot) in the vases. Pictures of dead loved ones and Masters, Crowley, Laylah, Rose, Reuss, McMurtry, Phyllis, Chris, Jeremy, Tim, Leigh Ann and others adorn the altar. Also on the altar are other emblems of Death, bones, rotting meat, dead bugs. Saturnine incense, mugwort, cypress, storax, etc., burns on the altar and its essence pervades the room with smoky illness. Baba sits upon the altar, in mourning, looking very stern, holding the Skull Staff.

The celebrants are asked to bring a picture of a dead loved one or fetish of something that symbolizes a Death in their life this year that they have had a hard time getting over and letting go of. They will be placed on the altar as they enter. As they do so, Baba will help them place the items and she will sorrowfully address them.

In the Beginning:

Music: An ambient track that is dark and ethereal will play in the background. Brother Greg will be singing sorrowfully old hymns.

Mem will open the door to the temple, the Monk's intoning/funerary music coming through with the Executioner standing guard. She will walk through the people quietly and will pick four people who will be carriers of the Old Aeon elements. She will hand these items to them (an earthen pot, a beat up metal bowl, a wooden chalice of water and an old wand) and then she will leave them in silence for a while.

Once everyone is ready, the Red Hands will begin their “Party” by laughing, clinking glasses, and doing readings and discussions in a humorous manner of the Holy Books of Thelema. They will be placed within Narnia (the storage area) with a light behind them so their shadows can be seen on the temple wall.

Mem will go out, leaving the door open and say:

Mem: How wonderful is Death, Death, and his brother Sleep! One, pale as yonder waning moon, with lips of lurid blue; The other, rosy as the morn, When throned on ocean's wave, It blushes o'er the world; Yet both so passing wonderful!¹

You though, you are not dead, you are only sleeping... I TOLD YOU NOT TO GO BACK TO SLEEP! (*Turning to the skull, and sadly telling him*) I told them not to sleep...

I have given to you the secrets of the Old (*motioning to the elements that the four are now carrying*), I charge you to care for them, as they are the only security you have left, but you WILL lose even these... Those who are caught "Red Handed" will wish to take them from you and you shall give them up immediately or you will be forever doomed to be complacent in the face of Death.

Who are these Red Hands that I speak of? They are your Lovers and your sorcerers. They are the men and women who have, by their own hand, sent you spiraling out, naked and cold into this world and they, again by their own hand have sent you to be hung upon your very own cross of suffering, where even still, you now hang.

Follow me, if you dare, into this Old World. Gain entrance by bringing forth your shame, accepting its mark upon your face, for how dare you live while they who are lost are seeking. Pray now my friends, pray with all of your heart that you have left that tonight you have eyes with which to see...

The Executioner then very seriously admits the people, as they enter; he beautifully adorns their faces with soot. This should be done roughly and somewhat painfully and he should invoke shame, grief and sadness among them. Mem will guide each person to the altar telling them to put anything which they would like to leave in this place, on the altar and then seat them.

Once they are all admitted and seated the Executioner will close the door, touch hands with Mem, commune with her and then walk one full circle of the temple, very slowly, looking into the eyes of each celebrant, making them as uncomfortable as possible, once he is satisfied, he will say "It is done" draw his Axe, and take guard by the door.

After the Executioner says "It is done". Chameheh should wrap up the partying, and with a Book of the law in his left hand held high, and the Red Hands following him, enter the temple.

Chameheh: Have you heard the word??? The Word of the New Aeon!

As they enter the dark temple, they are shocked by the dismal scene. The celebrants are all on the floor, looking unhappy and the executioner is standing guard. Chameheh looks at all of the people, one by one. Checking their faces and finding them all lost and horrified, he is saddened. As he identifies with the People, so The Red Hands in particular are VERY interested in the Altar. They are shocked at the state of it. They quickly go to

¹ Queen Mab, Percy Bysshe Shelley

it to look closer, inspecting and trying to comprehend what has been done. Rather than seeing it clothed in Red and shining, it is black with emblems of Death. They gently point to and maybe even touch Baba, but otherwise pay her no attention. She then points to the pictures, one by one, showing them the losses, when she is finished; they sadly turn to the center. They go to Chameheh who is by now weeping sadly and quietly at the loss of Light in the celebrants.

Baba: You have returned in a time when we are drawn within and weak from the grief of our losses. The people have suffered continual Death since the last Demon Moon. Its horrible face shown upon our community and has darkened all of those who carried the Light, I have been unable, due to my grief, to find any replacements among them, for none of these can shine as my other Children shone... They were like the Stars in the night... All is lost, there is no hope, Death is now for us, Death is the end of all...

Chameheh puts the Book of the Law sadly and dramatically into his Pocket. The Red Hands put their hands on his body, holding him gently and with Love, rocking him as he weeps. After a few minutes of this, they, with only their faces and hands communicate hope and Beauty to him he nods affirmative. Once this is done each will go to their quarter.

Musician: Three crashing gongs.

Chameheh lifts his head and with resolve begins the Star Ruby and in each quarter when he does the signs of NOX, each Red Hand takes up that sign.

*East/Tomb: Puella – Frater HydraLVX
North: Puer – Soror Sophia
West/Altar: Vir – Frater IOI
South: Mater Triumphans – Brother Tony*

When the banishing is finished, they all stand guard holding their hands, palms outward toward the Center.²

Chameheh: *To the Red Hand and people in the West:*

Sorrow? Grief? Huddled here in the darkness I see you. I see you! Clutching to each other as if there was such a loss as to shake your foundations! Who did you lose here in the West and to WHAT? Was it a bright being? Was it your Love? Was it your sense of peace or just your own foul thoughts? You bang your pots and pans,

² In each of the quarters the people have been given an old aeon element. In this old way of looking at things, Fire begets Earth by its ash, Earth gives birth from its veins the Metal. Metal in turn is forged and holds water. This water nourishes and refreshes the Wood which in turn feeds the fire. Thus we have:

*Earthen Pot – Earth to make Metal
Metal bowl – Metal to hold Water
Wooden Chalice with water – Wood taking up Water
Wooden Wand – Wood to feed Fire which in turn makes
Earth yet again...*

you plow your fields but you will REAP NOT. There is only Death here, your souls writhe in grief, but your grief is full and tired. Your Sun has set. People of Metal, what do you hold true and safe?

The Red Hand takes from one of the celebrants a beat up clay/earthen pot and gives it to Chameheh, who then gives it to Baba and she places it on the altar.

Chameheh: *To the Red Hand and people in the North:*

(Smelling the people) Ahhhh what is this? Fear I smell, here, in the North is the darkest fear, that of the deep unknown. You swim in the mist of its womb while it noisily gurgles in your throat, sucking at you, suffocating you. Twisting here in the darkness, you are dying of heaven. You tremble and wait for someone to come and save you. You wait for your shining bright soul, but he that inspired you, has died. And what of your dark soul? He lay twisted, drowned in his own self love, pulling you down with him. Your crops are lying in the muck, your minds are foul, you trust not in yourself, you drown in their wat'ry depths and cannot speak the Truth. People of Water, wherein art thou contained?

The Red Hand takes from one of the celebrants a beat up metal bowl and gives it to Chameheh, who then puts it on the altar in the East.

Chameheh: *To the Red Hand and people in the East:*

What disease has eroded away your roots? What fire, fueled by the Wind has come and burned your tender green away? Your loss is full and complete and your beloved cross of balance has been blown over, it lay dry and impotent, its branches dry and broken. Do you miss him? Where is she? WHO TOOK THEM AWAY FROM YOU? Who took your refreshment away? Where is he? The Master that gave you to drink? Gone. They are all gone. Oh People of Wood, wherein wilt thou now find refreshment?

The Red Hand takes from one of the celebrants the wooden chalice, full of water and gives it to Chameheh, who then gives it to Baba and she places it on the altar.

Chameheh: *To the Red Hand and people in the South:*

(Holding his hands to his chest) Can you feel it? Hold your hand to your heart and feel its beat. Constrained, untrusting, hardened. There is no Joy there, your chest holds itself tight and withered, your losses full within it. Does your belly burn from the hatred of slander and the continual stream of discouragement? Can you hear them barking now? THOSE INCESSANT BARKING DOGS!! They are starving and have only your lack of discipline to feed on. Shall they starve? Who changed the landscape of this temple and where is our lost soul? The heat charred your tender hope, taken it away all too soon, nowhere on Mother's Earth will it grow to reach the Sun now, for it has burned TO DEATH, leaving you dry, cracked and joyless. People of Fire, what willful thing will nourish and feed your flame?

The Red Hand takes from one of the celebrants the wooden wand and gives it to Chameheh, who then gives it to Baba and she places it on the altar.

Chameheh: *Moves to the center of the circle, the Red Hands will take up Guarding, one to each corner of the temple. Once everyone is positioned, he lights the cauldron and says:*

Death is the Well wherein a magician takes his Refreshment!

The Scapegoat will then slither out of the tomb, smiling at the thought of the last line. After this, he and Chameheh will circle round each other a few times then the scapegoat will begin taunting the people, stinking, slobbering, occasionally barking like a dog. Chameheh will then begin, when he feels he is ready, the evocation. The scapegoat, during this, sneakily (but in plain sight) will steal the implements on the altar and hide them in the tomb. Neither the Red Hands nor the Executioner, nor the Baba stops him, even though they do notice.

Chameheh: (*invokes, speaking to the people*)

There was three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high,
And they hath sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they hath sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful Spring came kindly on'
And show'rs began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surpris'd them all.

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong:
His head weel arm'd with pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bendin joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.
They've taken a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
They ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore.
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

They filled up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heav'd in John Barleycorn-
There, let him sink or swim!

They laid him upon the floor,
To work him farther woe;
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They toss'd him to and fro.

They wasted o'er a scorching flame
The marrow of his bones;
But a miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him between two stones.

And they have taken his very hero blood
And drank it round and round;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

At this point, he begins to court Baba, taking her down from the altar, invoking to her, inciting her, bringing passion to her.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise;
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy:
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Tho the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!³

During this final part, Baba will become excited at the prospect of happiness and she and Chameheh lead people in drinking and toasting by handing out a bottle of wine to be passed about. "Here here! AYE! YAY! Hail to the God John!" this sort of thing. The People Plants will also lead/help in this. However, the wine will be bitter.

Scapegoat: Oh you make me sick with your silly superstitious stories and happy smiles. You and your "god" John. He stands there shining as if you adore him simply for his ability to fall and then rise again (*mimicking an erection*). What magick is this? You are ignorant and unworthy! It is only a simple story of all men. He rises,

³ Ballad of John Barleycorn, Collected by Robert Burns, Edited.

he falls and you in your ignorance cry and why? Because you cannot see the Truth. Your mind is shallow, your hearts are corrupt. You cannot see Light.

Musicians: *Sickly Scapegoat dancy music begins*

Scapegoat then begins to dance around the temple in a sickly and disgusting fashion. He says the following words in a very condescending and mean-spirited way, as if he is above everyone, talking to them as if they were tregs and mocking them.

I adore thee in the song --
I am the Lord of Thebes, and I
The inspired forth-speaker of Mentu;
For me unveils the veiled sky,
The self-slain Ankh-af-na-khonsu
Whose words are truth. I invoke, I greet
Thy presence, O Ra-Hoor-Khuit!
Unity uttermost showed!
I adore the might of Thy breath,
Supreme and terrible God,
Who makest the gods and Death
To tremble before Thee: --
I, I adore thee!
Appear on the throne of Ra!
Open the ways of the Khu!
Lighten the ways of the Ka!
The ways of the Khabs run through
To stir me or still me!
Aum! let it fill me!

So that thy light is in me; & its red flame is as a sword in my hand to push thy order. There is a secret door that I shall make to establish thy way in all the quarters, (these are the adorations, as thou hast written), as it is said:

The light is mine; its rays consume
Me: I have made a secret door
Into the House of Ra and Tum,
Of Khephra and of Ahathoor.
I am thy Theban, O Mentu,
The prophet Ankh-af-na-khonsu!
By Bes-na-Maut my breast I beat;
By wise Ta-Nech I weave my spell.
Show thy star-splendour, O Nuit!
Bid me within thine House to dwell,
O winged snake of light, Hadit!
Abide with me, Ra-Hoor-Khuit!⁴

Baba: *Hysterical and yelling:* Who is this heretic? Who does he think he is? What is this horror that he speaks? You come here during our time of suffering and mock

⁴ Liber CCXX, Ch. III, Verse 37-38

us? We have lost everything, we are in the darkness and there is no end. HOW DARE YOU MOCK US? I will not allow you to damage my people, to kill their hearts and to wallow in their ignorance!

At this the people become enraged, Baba leading them in chasing and beating the Scapegoat. During this, the scapegoat laughs hysterically while spouting random lines from Liber AL. The People Plants whip him and chase him, spitting upon him, encouraging others to do the same. Eventually, the People Plants grab the Scapegoat and hold him. Baba, moving forward very slowly commands the attention of all, and after making her decision slowly and very demonically starts chanting:

Death for you, life for the crops!⁵

Mem will grab and put a noose around the Scapegoat's neck and hands him off to Baba, who begins to pull him slowly around in a circle in the temple, chanting ever louder, the People Plants encouraging everyone to join in.

The Red Hands and Chameheh will watch this for a while, but as (and not before) the crowd becomes more inflamed in anger, and are beating and yelling at the scapegoat they begin to resist the people, attempting to save the Scapegoat. The People Plants and Townswoman should resist and fight back. At just about the time when the Red Hands and Chameheh begin to lose the battle...

Executioner: *Axe drawn and held high yells as loud as he can the following, this should be as shocking and stunning as it possibly can be:*

STOP!!!

STOP!!!

Cease this ignorant fighting! Cease this blind hatred! Cease this riot!

Once everyone is standing there blindly looking at the Executioner, wondering what in the hell is happening, he goes on...

Executioner: Do you really believe that another Death will save your crops? Do you not understand that Death is the logical end of all? I have seen one head roll after another, their gray eyes staring into the night blue sky and **I can tell you with every living bone in my body that killing one man will never relieve your fears but will only fill you with more loss.** Death comes and Death goes, leaving your heart full of loss. Wail and cry over your losses, for they ARE losses... but do NOT fear Death. This is your nature.

You must face your fears, embody your fears and **let them go.** You must FEEL your loss.

⁵ This ritual, particular aspects of it, and its mantra, I give full credit, AND my sincerest apologies to my sometimes Dark Muse and the long time author of one of my guiltiest pleasures, Mr. Stephen King. May he long reign in the hell that is his Tower to the benefit of all of our passage into the unknown.

The Executioner, at the words, "Let them go" grabs the Scapegoat from the people (who let him of course, who wouldn't, he's a mean Mo Fo with an Axe!) and tosses him aside. The Scapegoat stands somewhat indignant and triumphant.

Executioner: Take that which is a symbol of your fear and turn it black with your hatred. *He takes the Stuff Guy now, out of the tomb with help from the Scapegoat, allow that fear to pour out of your body, your hands, your eyes into THIS Death. Go ahead, touch it, feel your fear, give Death the greatest kiss... (Scapegoat sloppily kisses the Stuff Guy on both cheeks, and then pushes him away...)*

Executioner: Allow your body to open, to soften to the fear and to allow it all out. Know NOW that you are this fear but that you can give it away as easily as causing blood to flow...

At this, Mem will have a basket of red ties, and demonstrating, she and the People's Plants will tie their cloth to the Stuff Guy saying "Death for you, Life for the Crops!" When all are finished...

Executioner: We must now kill this fear, kill it, burn it.

He begins chanting again...

Death for you, life for the crops!

But this time, at the Stuff Guy... He and the Scapegoat and the Red Hands will lead the procession, with the Stuff Guy held high to Mo's house by way of the school yard through the neighborhood. The musician joining in with banging pots and pans...

The Scapegoat will have his hands painted Red by Mem.

Mem and one of the People Plants will stay behind to prepare the altar...

First she will put out the cauldron fire and the altar candles. Each picture of the dead will be turned face down upon the altar.

She will open the bay doors and on the shelf above the garden, she will prepare another altar of a golden cloth upon which candles and the Stele of Revealing will be placed. The Old Aeon elements will be there, resumed from the tomb.

Once this is finished, she will follow the others (leaving one People Plant to guard the altar) and go to the fire circle, holding a bushel of wheat in each hand. When she arrives she will interrupt whatever is happening at that point, holding the wheat high in the air for all to see. Once she is done, she will cross the wheat over her chest, and then she will gather ashes up into her cauldron.

Mem: You have Willed this and now it is done. Follow me...

She will then lead them back to the lodge and the garden.

When they reach the garden, Chameheh and Baba will stand in front of the altar, together

as "King and Queen". They will kiss and then step one to each side.

Mem will hand each participant one of the stalks of wheat. When this is finished, the Scapegoat will hold his hands high, showing all the Red, and say:

KONX OM PAX!

I am the flame that burns in every heart of man, and in the core of every star. I am Life, and the giver of Life, yet therefore is the knowledge of me the knowledge of Death.⁶

He will then take and scatter the ashes of the Stuffy guy around the garden saying:

Thy Death shall be the seal of the promise of our age long love. Come! lift up thine heart & rejoice! We are one; we are none..⁷

Aye! feast! rejoice! there is no dread hereafter. There is the dissolution, and eternal ecstasy in the kisses of Nu.⁸

He then turns and takes the Old Aeon elements, and places them in the garden, nestled amongst the flowers where they will stay as a reminder not to pander to the Old Aeon fears of Death, superstition, tyranny and oppression. When he is finished he says to people:

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

They reply:

Love is the law, love under will.

All go inside and feast. Mem will remove the Grave dirt and skull, placing the dirt and offerings upon the mass altar and after the ritual will place them in the living room on the permanent altar. She'll come in days later and remove all, leaving gifts of her thankfulness for members to find.

This ritual is dedicated to

Frater Kallah-Adonai, always fervent in his loving devotion to his Angel, to Liknites, who is finally able to dance the eternal invocation of Dionysis, and My Brother Chris, whom I will forever mourn his loss, even knowing he has been reborn in the Sun...

⁵ Liber AL II:6

⁶ Liber AL II:66

⁷ Liber AL II:44

“TO UNLEASH A BEAST”

Frater Zir

The following account of a young fool's virgin excursion in seat-of-the-pants ritual writing, organization, and production for a large group, with eccentric license taken to absurd proportion, is partly true and equally false, therefore meaningless. Nonetheless, it may serve one to read it anyway, should they ever be so commendably foolish as to attempt such an overwhelmingly complex undertaking themselves.

The Muse Strikes

In mid to late April of 2006, while performing banal and mechanical tasks at the coffee production job I then held, it occurred to me that the year 2006 would see an interesting date in just over one month's time (6/6/6). Noting that nothing was scheduled on the lodge calendar for this date, it struck me as a bit of a shame. Our prophet, who after all called himself “The Great Beast 666,” would be revolted at our neglect, and we wouldn't have another chance to celebrate such a day for another hundred years. Somehow this horrible wrong had to be rectified.

But what would serve an occasion with such apocalyptic connotations, besides something really ballsy? The origin of the idea that would morph into the garish spectacle that actually occurred, was suggested to me by a brother whom I greatly respect. “Why don't you invoke Aleister Crowley himself?” Well, the notion was altogether too perfect to put down. Arrangements were made to reserve the day on the lodge calendar and I got to work.

On Intent

Question: If you wished to invoke TO MEGA THERION, how would you go about it, and what the hell would you do it for? You can bet it was never my intent to have an evening of prophet praise, wherein we could ceremonially jerk off the old bastard. It is clear to me that a prevailing motive in this affair was to make magick for its own sake, an elaborate joke played on itself, taken to garish extremity in painstaking detail. (This can be said for most of what Zir does, in fact.) But I felt it would be a bit flat to bring so many folks together to memorize, rehearse, and perform this fucking thing, whatever it was going to be, to an end purely absurd.

At the core of this, I think, there was an inexplicable urge to exercise the platform of potential manifestation that is found here at Sekhet Maat Lodge. As the work of the OTO largely pertains to social magick, it made sense to demonstrate the possibilities available to us in drawing upon the collective will of the community to put together an interesting piece of work.

One particular wish of mine was to see an increase in public exercise of Thelemic ritual material not limited to the initiations and the Gnostic Mass. One of the first events I attended here at SML was an invocation of BABALON crafted by

one of the founding members of the Portland OTO community. It was, in fact, participating in that event that inspired me to make the decision to initiate into the order and affiliate with the lodge. I wanted to see and be part of more events like this. So it goes that I stepped up to the plate to make one happen.

Another issue I wished to address was a phenomenon called Crowleyanity. It occurred to me that an invocation of THE GREAT BEAST 666 archetype, as opposed to conjuring the ghost of some dead occultist asshole, would be a more powerful source of apocalyptic inspiration. While the part Crowley played in the unfolding of magickal evolution cannot be denied, it is the responsibility of present and future Thelemites to carry the

As the work of the OTO largely pertains to social magick, it made sense to demonstrate the possibilities available to us in drawing upon the collective will of the community to put together an interesting piece of work.

93 current forward. It is every bit as much our legacy as it is his. I wanted to demonstrate that the beast of the apocalypse is US.

On Preparation

Okay, so the “Why” part somewhat satisfactorily answered, how does one invoke the old fart? A direct and simple method was suggested to me that sparked the initial research for the ritual’s writing, to dress an altar with

consumable goods of his fancy and to enthusiastically suggest he commune with us.

Since a major motive for the rite concerned the manifestation of something that reflected the group-mind’s notion of The Great Beast, it made sense to take a survey of the local community’s knowledge of the man. I was also short on time and had much to prepare besides the script itself. So, while I did invest some time reading about the prophet’s lifestyle proclivities, much of the idiosyncratic aesthetic of the ritual itself was adapted from suggestions from members of the community. I employed a two-fold word-of-mouth hype strategy, which both generated interest in the event and reaped an influx of ideas to steal.

The script in fact was based largely on ritual technology ripped directly from Crowley’s own rituals: The Star Ruby and Star Sapphire, and Liber Samekh. I adapted these rituals to be worked by a group and in a way to place emphasis on the sexual nature of the magick, the transcendence of duality by uniting opposites. For example, the segments of the script based on the Sapphire and Samekh were each performed by a male and female practitioner working in tandem.

A team of nine practitioners was required for this ritual. Much rehearsal of this beastly script would be necessary. We had one month to prepare, and May was an initiation month, which meant we’d have to squeeze rehearsals in between initiation rehearsals and the initiations themselves. Finding rehearsal times that matched 9 schedules proved near impossible. Make that 8 schedules, one practitioner cancelled and I never managed to find a replacement. So, we scheduled about four rehearsals, and went through the script each time with the people that

could be there. I think the only fully attended rehearsal was the run-through just before the performance itself, which took place on the night of the event. Luckily the ritualists who agreed to perform the thing were capable practitioners who invested a lot of their own personal time to getting their parts down.

We were also lucky to have a vast pool of crafty improvisational musicians to draw upon for the ritual; some were OTO-affiliated and some weren't, but all were of such a caliber that performance on the fly with only one brief run-through was easy for them. As we rehearsed the script here in Portland, a brother in Seattle slaved away on an elaborate video accompaniment to be projected onto a scrim that veiled the super-altar. He actually drove down to Portland to hand me the DVD in person two days before the event, even though he could not actually take the time off work to attend the thing. A brother who is a wine-vintner in the SML community handcrafted a special elixir for our sacramental consumption.

The Night Prior

For reasons I can't explain, it was important to me to stay overnight at the lodge the evening before the ritual's execution. I paced the floor of the temple mulling over which details were covered and which still needed to be taken care of, obsessively going over the script for aesthetic elements that hadn't been properly resolved. I was a bit afraid to actually try this thing for real. It was after all a complex variation on the ritual Crowley had used to invoke his holy guardian angel. I worried about about the fallout and tried to remind myself that a foolish endeavor was exactly what I had hoped to do.

I decided to lock myself in the temple and perform the rite in full by myself, both to put to bed my worries that I was unprepared, and to distract myself from the worried fixation that threatened to drive me mad. Things in the lodge got a bit wacky while doing this, doors opened and shut themselves, lights came on and off at random. At what would be the ritual's peak I collapsed on the floor and sobbed out the bullshit self-doubt for quite some time. That turned out to be what I needed to release the tension. I slept well in the temple, and upon waking the next day invoked through the LRP and went to work, excited about the day ahead.

6/6/6

After a rather giddy day at work, I eagerly went straight to the lodge and began setting up the temple. I was soon joined by brothers and sisters who came to my aid with last-minute tasks that needed completing, like preparing the feast and attending to aesthetic and technical issues. A sister and I sped around town picking up last minute ritual items and transporting a p.a. system from my home. Once the temple was satisfactory and all practitioners and musicians were present, we did a quick run-through of the ritual, even though many had already begun to assemble outside the temple door. It is not typical SML form to start an event late, but we needed the opportunity to walk through the rite, as this was the first time we had all the practitioners together in one room. Once we'd done that, I walked out to welcome the folks who came to join us. To my surprise, we

had maxed out the capacity of our space.

I really don't wish to comment much on the details of the ritual's execution. As with all acts of ceremonial magick, you kind of had to be there. But, for those interested in reading the script, it is available online in the "Rituals" section of SML's wiki: <http://sekhetmaat.com/wiki/index.php/Rituals>. Suffice to say, it was very hot in the temple, crammed full of people circumambulating on an early summer evening.

Afterward we enjoyed the feast and made merry for quite some time. A few brethren stayed behind and helped put the lodge back together and clean. After kicking back a few more drinks, we said goodbye and parted ways. I went to bed at about 4am and called in sick to work the following day.

Aftermath

Were the ritual's objectives accomplished? On some personal points of intent, I can emphatically answer yes. I discovered what it takes to make the type of lodge event I'd like to see actually happen, and hopefully inspired some folks to do the same. The community at large and many folks not typically associated with OTO came out of the woodwork to participate in the event. The energy we raised in executing the rite certainly continues to emanate thru my sphere of experience, I daily see some aspect or another of my life that has been imprinted by it. Many of these results are personal and you can ask me about them if you're interested.

Was it an original ritual or a rehash rip-off? I'm going to say it's a bit of neither and a bit of both, and there's something special about that. I'm uncertain if it's safe to say that this is the first ritual of it's kind, although that's not all too important to me. I'm curious to hear from or about others who may have modified Liber Samekh for groups of two or more. I'm also interested to hear from others that have incorporated multimedia faculties into ceremonial magick.

I still wonder if the rite succeeded in its objective of counter-Crowleyanity, or if that aim was a trapping of my own ego best forgotten about. And yet, though it was consistently the lowest priority on my mind throughout the process, I can't help but wonder what Crowley would have thought of the project. Perhaps I could find out by conjuring the old *goatfucker's* ghost...

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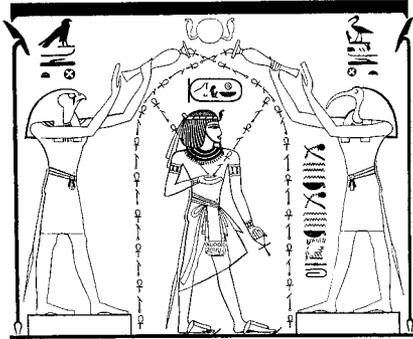
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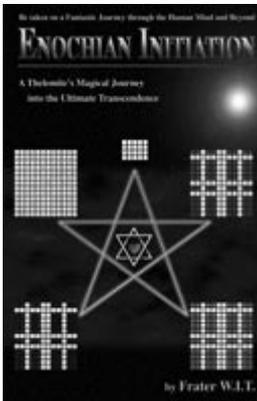
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