

Lion & Serpent

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Lion & Serpent

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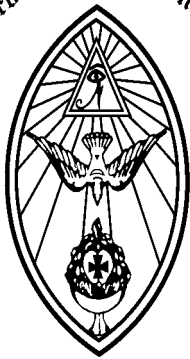
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FRONT COVER
LVX Hydra:
FRATER N0AMKMNPΓ
Digital

The First Page

FRATER ΜΠΑΑ

Gentle readers,

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

If you haven't been to SML since June 2 of this year, you may be in for a shock. We've remodeled the temple! The main changes are a paint job (red and black, very 80s, very Hadit) and a new frame for the veil to the mass altar. The difference between the new color scheme and the old color scheme is, er, striking, particularly for those of us who do ritual on a regular basis. In conjunction with this, we've begun a project to properly inventory the Lodge library, which now includes a copy of the Blue Equinox in the check-out section. Last but not least, we have new officers for the Lodge—meaning actually that we have mostly shuffled the officers, with one person moving into officership and another moving out to do bigger and brighter things.

And so, here's a quick recap of what's happened at SML since the last issue.

Sol in Ariete

Of course, with the beginning of the new year came the Thelemic Holy Season, marked by devotional readings (as suggested by the College of Thelema) through the 22 days marking the time between the Supreme Ritual and the Third Day of the Writing of the Book of the Law. We'd like to thank Fr. Theapraxis for organizing this celebration. In addition to this 22-day celebration, we also held classes on the Kybalion, basic astrology, and the Star Sapphire, as well as a forum on the topic of mysticism and art.

Sol in Tauro

The main event for this season was the membership meeting, where the officers of the Lodge and various others reported on the progress of Sekhet-Maat. This was quickly followed with the celebration of Walpurgisnacht, where the Lodge invited the spirits to come and party for a while. This of course was immediately followed by an hour long banishing and cleanup to get the spirits to go back home again. During this period was also the first live Minerval initiation with Sr. Sophia as initiator—much congratulations! In the meanwhile, this month saw SML break in some new temple gear with a pair of exemplifications (of the I° and II°), along with workshops and classes on Liber Samekh, money management, and self-initiation.

Sol in Geminis

The month started with a major remodeling project, a III^o initiation, and a class on Hermetic Qabalah. The 9th of June we were dazzled by the *Rite of Venus*, put on at Portland's CoHo Theater by our friends Eleusyve Productions (<http://www.eleusyve.com/>). On the 15th we held an installation ceremony for the new officers of the Lodge (see *de Transitione*, below).

De Transitione

On June 15th, 2007 *EV*, the Lodge held a formal ceremony to install its new executive officers. Fr. IOI, formerly the Deputy Lodge Master, is now Secretary of the Lodge. Fr. Pangloss is its new Treasurer, and Sr. Aletheia Mnemonicas, formerly our Treasurer, is now Assistant Lodge Master. During this ceremony, Sr. Aletheia Mnemonicas outlined her vision for the Lodge as a place where each member can learn to use their own *chi* as a complement to Fr. N0ΛMKMNPI's goal of financial stability. Sr. Sophia has retired from her duties in the executive in order to focus on her passion: the development of SML's EGC training program.

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

Love is the Law, Love under Will,

Djeridensis Creed

Derived from Aleister Crowley's *The Comment Called D: The Djeridensis Working*¹:

1. I accept and obey 666 as the Beast and the Prophet.
2. I follow his method of attainment to the knowledge of Nuit and realize the benefits thereof.
3. I accept *Liber AL vel Legis* as the Law for all Humanity.
4. I believe that the word of this Law is Θελημα, and that this Law is "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law."
5. I believe this means it is the Law of Humanity's Nature to fulfill the purpose for which each person is truly fitted.
6. I believe that the Nature of Humanity is distinguished in three classes as described in *Liber AL*: "Who calls us Thelemites will do no wrong, if he look but close into the word. For there are therein Three Grades, the Hermit, the Lover, and the Man of Earth." (1:40)
7. I accept my duty never to control the Will of another in the matter of Love.
8. I accept that Sin is defined as Restriction, and believe that Freedom is at times worth the price of Restriction, and that each case must be judged by its own Nature.

1. http://sekhetmaat.com/wiki/Documents/The_Djeridensis_Working

XIX + II

Starless
Lake of moons
This deep chalice.
An illusion of coolness,
The smooth black surface still and calm
Deceptively silent.

Experience,
the lip upon the cup,
the dew on the tongue,
Awakes suddenly with acidic flame:
!

And in that flash of disturbance
The strength of the liquor
Is the herald of a god.
The great eye opens
And beholds nothing but its own fire
And its reflection, the World.

Before speech spoke-
Before sight saw-
Before thought flew aloft-
A sting
A roar
A forked tongue of lightning
The cry of a newborn:
"There is no part of me that is not of the Gods."

—Soror ARGM



Queen of Heaven
FRATER ANDROPOS TROY
9" X 12"
Pencil on Paper

“hitchhiker’s guide to thelema”

FRATER ZIR

dream - friday the 13th of april 2007, 11:11am

i am that i am.

he is in me, and i in him.

thee who we adore, we also invoke.

he is leading me thru certain passages which he has been thru before, and we discover passages he has yet to encounter as well. there is no apparent beginning or end to this ever-shifting maze. we are lost, but do not despair. the experience of exploration is joy enough.

we reach an eave of sorts, concrete overhead with coffers carved into its underside. this ceiling hangs low, leaving little headroom. many illusory pathways suddenly present themselves, each leading nowhere discernable. below is a large body of water. he says he remembers the place but it took him quite some time and frustration to get to the aperture.

he goes on ahead, and i don’t see him for quite sometime. i hear his voice: “ah, here it is!” and i go to the place where his voice is, but he is nowhere to be seen, nor is a doorway of any kind to be found.

it takes time, effort, and frustration to find my own portal thru.

i reach the opening at last, but in order to pass thru, i must twist my spine in a way that seems impossible. strangely, once my spine finds the posture of appropriate contortion, it feels so natural that i wonder why i had never held myself in this way before.

there is a large pool of water and a red table. he is waiting for me near the table, and i ask him how he made it thru. he said i would not have fit thru the doorway he used, that i had to find my own, and my own way of manipulating myself thru it.

he has been waiting patiently, and says that he’s been deeper into the labyrinth, but i must stay in this world for at least as long as it takes me to make headway on solving its riddles. he embraces me however, and welcomes me, telling me that this part of the world has its beauties and its monstrosities, but that i will do well with putting the beauty and ugliness into balance. he tells me that i’ll even probably find the necessary puzzles to be enjoyable, and that i’ll likely want to stay longer than i need.

i tell him i can't imagine a more necessary place to be.

in my eager excitement, i slip, falling into the pool. there is an intoxicating ingredient infused into the pool's fluid, and when i come up for air i cannot help but laugh. the surrounding environment's every detail is suddenly very bright. he says that my eyes are adjusting to being open. he offers me a glass of some liquor i've never tasted before. he says "it's water, silly". he then embraces me again, says he is looking forward to seeing me later, and abruptly disappears.

i am transported to a small temple. on the dais, i see a scale that is out of balance with a bright multifaceted crystal on one end, and a black egg on the other, outweighing the crystal. i become naked, squatting down onto the black egg as if to incubate it, and begin writhing against the central support of the scale with my naked body. i hear her voice in my head, "when i was last here, the apparatus was differently coloured, are you sure you're doing this right?"

there is a faint giggle in her voice and it echoes whisperingly. i realise that this scenario is of necessity personal in its aesthetic, but that the process is more or less the same mechanic for each individual. i focus on the crystal, adjusting my breathing in time with the rising and falling of my love, calling in my pineal gland to the high priestess in a way without words.

when i was last here, the apparatus was differently coloured, are you sure you're doing this right?

in my right ear i hear the *gayatri* mantra and in my left i hear the mantra *a ka dua*. the central column of balance elongates and begins to twist like a barber's pole, changing to silver and violet. the crystal begins to glow. my mind goes quiet. i feel a hand on my shoulder and turn, seeing a woman, naked, whose image strobes between a porcelain virgin, an aged whore, my mother, my lover, and a woman i know, who terrifies me at times, entices me at others.

she tells me that i already know what to do, that i should waste no time, and act before giving the matter another thought. she straddles me, and we begin making love in a soft mechanical rhythm. we are both sitting upright in the lotus asana. the rich blood of her menses is in my mouth.

her eyes become pools of white, and i recall my own birth. her eyes become pools of gold, and i see visions of myself at present, flickering into glimpses of my potential future. her eyes go black and she disappears. there is no climax, but a dark silent breath. i am again transported to the world with the pool and the red table. on the table is a candle and a silver cup.

with an icepick, i open a hole into the top of my skull and bend to spill my blood into the cup, but a voice tells me "eager magician, now is not the time! we have much work to do, and you're not yet even halfway to the halfway point." i feel a slap and a pinch on my backside, and looking back, see nobody there. i hear the voice say "i figured you'd know where that came from." the opening in my

crown heals over with a warm sensation. my skull begins to glow. i know, in my heart of hearts, this healing kiss was sent by an angel. the love i long for beyond the stars.

suddenly i'm on a hiking trail in the forest, with seven other people that look like me with varying detail, each possessing their own personality. we walk in a line at first, a hiker in a white jumpsuit at the front of the pack, one in mauve and cyan behind him. there is one vested in blue behind him, and i am behind him in green. behind me is another in yellow, and behind him another in orange. at the rear of the line is one in red, and another, in silvery-grey, who jogs to and fro about the entire group. she delivers water and nourishment to those who need it. this jogging character breathes very loudly and the rest of us are quiet, focusing on the sounds that she makes.

there are elaborate delicacies of sensation to experience on this forest hike! there are red and golden birds which morph into flying koi fish. there are brightly coloured insects with golden wings, and with spiraling fractal patterns of all the colours of the rainbow in their crystalline segmented eyes. these creatures land in my hands and become candied confections of flavours yet untasted. the sky fades from color to color, never staying quite the same, and the clouds swirl in spiral patterns.

the sky suddenly goes dark, and i begin to fear for the safety of our group. the one in silver-grey senses my fear, and is apparently offended by it. she disappears off into the forest, and when this happens, what began as a healthy and balanced excursion quickly becomes a disarray of chatty and paranoid travellers without aim. i realise we each have individual duties to make the unified journey go well. but without the mysterious silver-grey one, we are clueless as to how to perform any tangible function whatsoever, whether individually or as a group.

suddenly the seven of us are imprisoned in a workshop, overseen by a black military officer who bears a slight facial resemblance to our lost partner in silver-grey.

it is up to me to conjure the will and intelligence to make our escape possible.

we unanimously decide to revolt! my role in this prison break is to cut thru

the bars. i have a circular saw that can cut thru metal, but i must sharpen the blade, and don't have the appropriate tools. i try using a hand-grinder, but the cord is frazzled, and it shorts out. sparks fly every where and the power goes out. the other six in my crew are bouncing aimlessly around the room in the dark, babbling in confused mania. it is up to me to conjure the will and intelligence to make our escape possible.

the guard divines our conspiracy and confronts me. it occurs to me i still have an icepick in my back pocket, and i stab him three times. the illusion of the workshop environment melts away, revealing a vast network of similar cells. there are screens on all six sides of each cube-shaped prison, onto which environments are projected, which play out a variety of false scenarios on an endless loop, for each group of seven souls imprisoned therein.

my six fellows are stunned and quieted by the shock of this revelation, and i manage to arrange them into a ring. we hold each other by the hands, and begin to focus on our breathing. the breathing of the group gradually relaxes and synchronizes, and morphs into a chant which is a hybrid of the *gayatri* and *a ka dua*. the lost sister in silver-grey appears in the center, adding to the chant. we are pulled into the center, and conjoin to morph into her.

the prison melts away and i am the silvery grey sister

she melts away and i am thrown into a chasm

falling endlessly, i melt away

i am that i am not

((()))

again i find myself standing between the pool and the red table, staring serenely into the flame of a candle.

he and she stand on either side of me and we witness a total eclipse of the sun.

we hold each other by the hands, reflecting the black light.

there is much to be done, nothing more to be said.

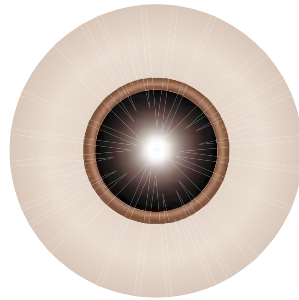
awake, i turn and walk again into the world.

without reference to language
explaining them away

set to cross the void
envision carapace
carrying whispers
to the sun

ordeal and silence
engage and figure
invade my heart
invading formation

create myself
a bark of silence
imagine awareness
remember home



reverence is character
which has its meaning
most equivocal
commanding silence

the great mass of words
in his own powers
trained himself to become the very sound
his judgment imitative of a directly natural answering

These are sounds habitually
thrown open to unlimited numbers

Walpurgis Night Spirit Feast

April 30th, 2007 EV

FRATER THEAPRAXIS

Preface

While living in Philadelphia, Inominandum introduced me to a ritual he had composed called a spirit feast.¹ I rather enjoyed the basic idea of the ritual, evoking a host of whatever spirits happen to come, making offerings, and partaking of communion with them, all in a gesture of goodwill. He described it to me as a neighborhood barbeque for the spirits, a metaphor that stuck with me for quite some time. Over the years, I performed a number of spirit feasts at various locations, primarily to create harmony and goodwill with spirits in my residences and personal working spaces.

Returning to Sekhet-Maat Lodge after some time, I got a sense that I wanted to spirit feast in the temple itself. I had hoped to do so for Samhaine of 2006 EV, but was unprepared to pull off a major ritual at that time. As we approached

the spring, I realized that another of my favorite “dark” holidays was approaching, *Walpurgisnacht*, providing an opportunity to perform the ritual. What follows is a condensed version of the “score” we used, edited to more truly reflect the actual performance and to remove parts that are available elsewhere (like Crowley’s

Hymn to Hecate). A comparison between this script and that which appears in *Behutet* #15 or in Inominandum’s book, *Protection and Reversal Magick*, will show my innovations and variations on the rite. In particular, I reconstructed the rite as a “feeding” to the spirits the Law through recitation of the last chapter of Liber ARARITA. That said, I owe much debt to Inominandum’s original rite and recommend purchasing his book.

He described it to me as a neighborhood barbeque for the spirits, a metaphor that stuck with me for quite some time.

For the ritual, we had three voices, three butoh dancers, and three musicians (a bass player; a musician manipulating the voices, loops, and gongs; and someone on prepared guitar). I played the role of the officiant. The three “voices” were given a seed text, which was a cut-up I had worked on one evening while scripting the ritual, combining elements of Burroughs, holy books, anthropology texts, and the random detritus of the internet (included some excerpts of the vitriolic and unfraternal debates that often occur on livejournal). The participants who provided the voices then took that seed text and incorporated their own texts into cut-ups that they brought for the ritual and read into a shared microphone: these voices were mixed on the fly as part of the ritual. All of this sound was provided through our two big PAs that sit in the back of the temple.

Opening

The temple is arranged in darkness, the altar decorated with offerings of flowers, gatherings, wine, incense, and candles. Participants are invited to bring their own offerings and leave them on the altar as they enter the temple. Two other altars act as “Gates” on the north and south side of the temple, bearing sigils of welcome, peace, and harmony. The tomb is left open. Musicians and three voices are set up toward the back.

There are no banishings.

The temple is opened with a silent circle casting by a procession of three times with the rod.

At this point, music comes in, low drones, melodic, etc.

Consecration

After returning to the center the officiant approaches the altar and traces the invoking pentagram of earth over the offerings.

Music continues, pulls down, but follows the elemental forms as the musicians see fit.

Earth of earth, first earth within me. Dwelling place of form and presence. Bless these offerings so that our guests may find in them light, life, love and liberty.

He traces the invoking pentagram of fire over the offerings.

Fire of fire, first fire within me. Dwelling place of transformation. Enter into the heart of these offerings, and there transmute the impurities therein into the sweet nectar of light, life, love and liberty.

He traces the invoking pentagram of air over the offerings.

Air of air, first air within me. Dwelling place of movement. Sweep across these offerings and remove any residue or dust or ash such that all remains is the purity of the offering.

He traces the invoking pentagram of water over the offerings

Water of water, first water within me. Dwelling place of opening. Wash over these offerings so that all that remains is the purest substance, the law which unites us all in the sacred house of liberty.

He traces the unicursal hexagram over the offerings

Music picks up, Voices start to come in as hums, drones, etc.

Law of the law, first law within me. Dwelling place of liberty, light, life, and love. Uplift these offerings so that they may lead us all to the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness.

Invocation

The officiant approaches the altar and recites Crowley's Hymn to Hecate.²

Voices continue, start reciting as whispers. Music turns brooding if it is not already so. During the invocation, dancers will begin to emerge from their hiding places.

Evocation of the Spirits

The officiant returns to the center of the temple, gesturing to the "gate" altars on the north and south as he intones:

Music moves into a slow rhythmic beat. Voices echo officiant as he intones. Dancers will come into the space and begin to manifest in the temple.

Io Evohe! Io Evohe! Io Evohe!

Come! Come! Come!

Every spirit of the firmament and of the ether and upon the earth and under the earth

Come! We Invite Thee!

Every spirit on dry land and in the water of whirling air and rushing fire

Come! We Invite Thee!

Every departed one, close and far, and those that walk between life and death

Come! We Invite Thee!

Every entity bound to me by debt or by my own debt unto thee!

Come! We Invite Thee!

Every guardian, servitor, and familiar bound to us

Every dryad, every sylph, undine, salamander, and gnomish spirit

Every angel or devil from the infernal to the celestial

Who dwell within the highest spheres or the lowest

Or within the houses of our bodies

Come all to this feast

Be seated upon the thrones of our imaginations

Partake of our offerings and dwell within our words.

Io Evohe! Io Evohe! Io Evohe!

Communion

The communion phase was not tightly scripted, but we had agreed on three basic phases. After evocation, the voices would layer their cut-ups with each other, and the musicians would bring the music into an improvisational pitch while the dancers took over the space for a while, perhaps prompting others to join in. After this was allowed to proceed for a while, the voices would bring it down to a quieter space and the dancers would go into a more static, still space, allowing a more contemplative communion. The third phase would then bring the energy back up until the voices blended the cut-ups into a recitation of the final chapter of Liber ARARITA, ending with the officiant and the dancers in the center of the temple as the officiant recited the word ARARITA.

Closing/License to Depart:

After the energy cools a little, the officiant recites:

Welcome and worthy guests, we thank you for sharing in this communion and this feast.

If it be your will, remain for us a while, and enjoy our company. If it be your will to depart, then depart.

May the blessings of the unity of the elements under the auspices of the law be upon you, and may this work be dedicated to your attainment as well as ours, and unto all sentient beings, that we may all attain the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness.

**The ending of the words is the word:
ABRAHADABRA**

Epilogue

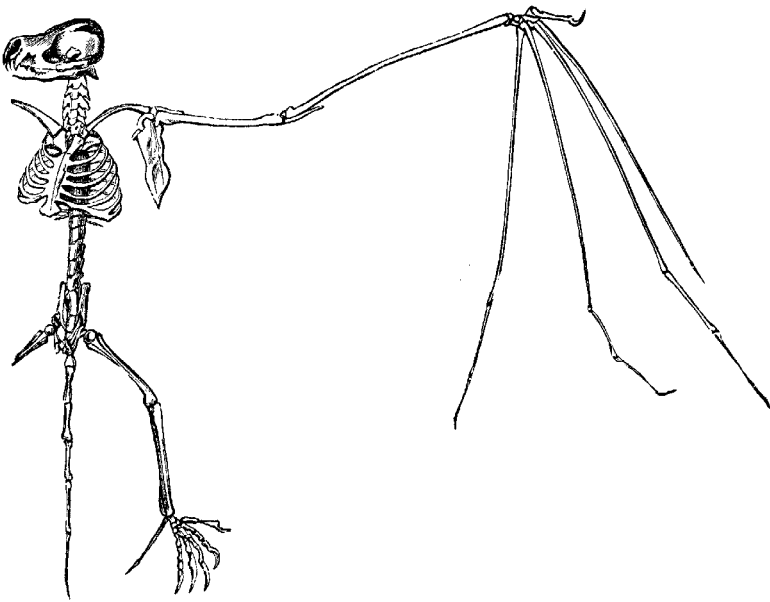
With three thrown together rehearsals, only one of which included all the operators, the performance went remarkably as planned. The dancers and I dressed in white and painted our bodies with clay and chewed on charcoal, as is traditional for Butoh performers. The dancers certainly did take over the space, to the extent that there was little room for attendees to actually dance themselves, though many people were able to work within the space with the spirits both during and after the ritual.

We did not banish the temple until 11 am the next day, at which point Frater Zir performed three banishings in a row; after this, we circled the temple banging on pots and pans, we finished cleaning up, and I smudged the entire Lodge down with sage 9 times. The clean-up itself took a good four hours. I bundled all of the biodegradable offerings except for the living flowers and tossed them off the bridge into the Willamette River. The flowers created 9 arrangements in vases to decorate the classroom for the following week. The remaining offerings I took to

my home altar for safekeeping and/or disposal. Amongst the offerings, I found a number of drawings that were left by attendees, sigils, prepared bottles of alcohol, a rabbit's foot, and grains.

My own personal journey has been rich with spirits since. During the operation itself, I was primarily coordinating the energy and had little time to actually fall into it. Nevertheless, life looks good, and the spirits seem happy.

My advice to anyone interested in using this formula is to get a copy of the original spirit feast by Inominandum and compare it to my own, using them to develop a ritual following the same basic formula for yourself. Or simply set up your space, consecrate the offerings, call in the spirits, hang out with them, and tell them when they can leave.



Notes:

¹ A copy of this original ritual can be found in issue #15 of *Behutet* (Autumn Equinox, 2002 EV), the journal of Thelesis Oasis, which is available in through their web-page at <http://www.thelesis.org/> or in *Protection & Reversal Magick: A Witch's Defense Manual* by Jason Miller, published by New Page, 2006 EV.

² The Hymn to Hecate is taken from Aleister Crowley's *Orpheus*, which is bound in volume three of the *Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*, printed in 1974 EV by the Yoga Publication Society.

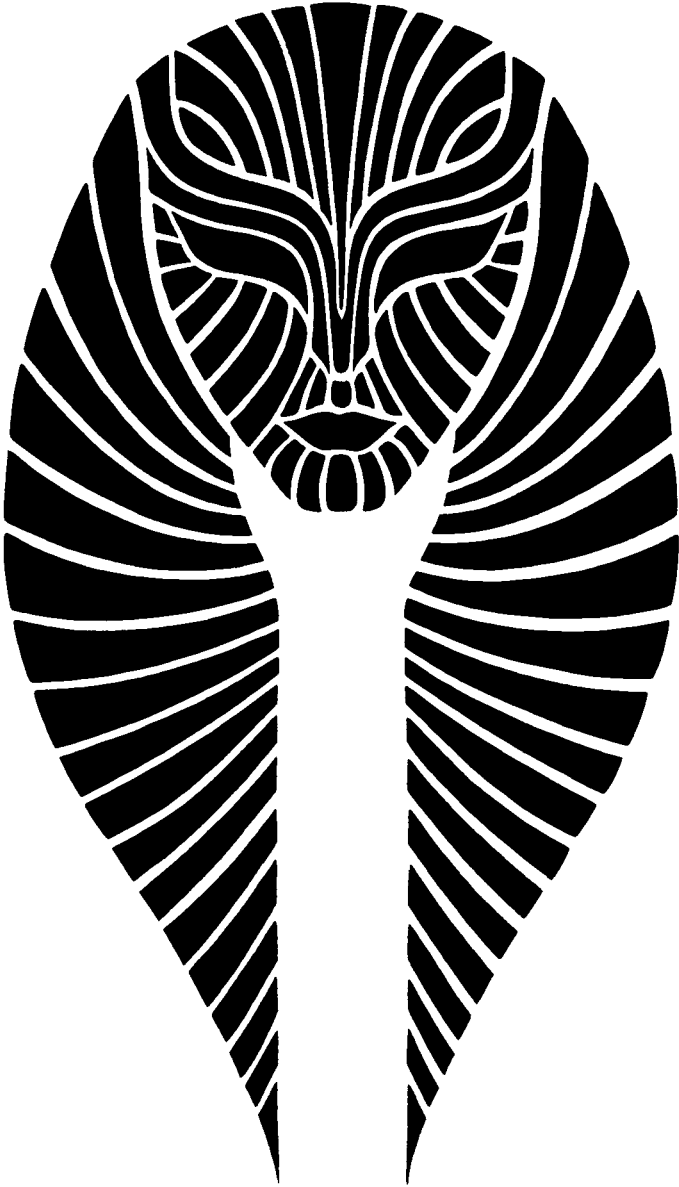
+|con + Archon + Aion+

Dawn cracked along its glassy base
Revealing spinning lights and furry darkness
Like spiders' legs scuttling
Below the lens of heaven,
The debris of ice and stars.

We the one watch
Sorcerers
Endlessly forming homunculi
Of their own substance, magnified.
Generation of assumption,
Flickering screen, airwave hum
Anything desire may conceive
Those guys in the pinstripe robes
Architecture of subjectivity is their business
"hey kid, want a job?"

Don't let them
Make you
Lie
To
Them...

—Soror ARGM



Nemyss
FRATER ARUN
18" X 24"
Pigment Pen on Paper

A Contemplation of Shiva

Part Two: Shiva-Shakti, the Hexagram Ritual, and the Gnostic Mass

FRATER ARUN

We are all inheritors of the Mysteries, by virtue of being born into the Temple of Initiation, Earth. The languages and symbols through which the Mysteries are conveyed ritually, however, are specific to the time, culture, and climate of their origin. In the previous Aeon, there was the beginning of a movement away from the tribe-specific codes of initiation into a particular people and toward the idea of "Universal" truths. The "Great Religions" began to spread with the idea that there were vehicles of the Mysteries that were appropriate for all humans. This inevitably resulted in war and competition between the various mega-paths as they sought to become the unanimous expression of human Gnosis.

As we now enter the New Aeon, this spread of ideas beyond the limits of their tribal and geographical origin has resulted in a frenzy of cross-pollination and inter-inspiration between systems. The images and practices of each stream of Initiation have shed so much new light and substance onto their previous competitors that it would be an exercise in anachronism to pretend to be the devotee of a single trip. We are all heretics now because heretics and pioneers are required to assemble the vast emerging body of human consciousness. We are each an alchemical vessel into which streams of information and inspiration are poured, from many lands and times. The resulting synergy of these ideas within our own realm of experience can form new synaptic connections between the neurons in the global brain. So mote it be.

The Six Rayed Star

In the first part of this essay, Shiva was considered as the Pentagram, the Five-Fold Word expressing the five Elements and the five Phases of becoming. In this part, we focus upon the formula of the Hexagram, as it appears in Shaivite iconography and then we will interpret this according to the Ritual of the Hexagram. This Ritual, like the Gnostic Mass, is a life-long unfolding of the Hermetic Mysteries to those who practice it and provides a lens through which we may distill the essence of meaning from the multitude of symbols presented to us in our travels.

In order to join with the Beloved, we must first form a unity within ourselves. The five Faces of Shiva represent this unity of the elements of the microcosm, bound together by the practices of Yoga into a single Self. This Self, forged by Sadhana (Work) from the previously warring elements, can now engage the Macrocosm, the World as Beloved. This Engagement of Self and All, Inner and Outer, Above and Below, we symbolize with the Hexagram. The formula of the Pentagram is Mastery over the sphere of Self; the formula of the Hexagram is Intercourse with the sphere of the Beloved.

One name for the Six-Rayed Star in Tantric iconography is the “Shiva-Shakti.” This is often seen in images of the Heart Chakra and in Yantras used for meditation by those engaged in the Tantric tradition. The upward, fire triangle usually represents some aspect of Shiva, the consciousness observing the World. The downward water triangle usually represents some aspect of Shakti, the feminine energy that animates the World. Their union in the Hexagram represents the Samadhi or conjunction of subject and object that dissolves all into Ananda or ecstasy. There are several variations of the Tantric Hexagram, similar to the variations found within the Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram itself.

The creation, preservation, and destruction of the Universe of perceived experience arises from the intercourse between the principles represented by Shiva and Shakti in Tantra and by Nuit

and Hadit in Thelema. The Dance between the Lover and the Beloved is celebrated in the Four Hexagrams of the Ritual and in the various stages of the Gnostic Mass. The Lover is the individual Conscious Self. The Beloved is the Cosmos as Companion. The fertilization of Cosmos by Self is Magick. The dissolution of Self into Cosmos is Mysticism. The images of

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romantic love are used in both systems to engage the whole being of the aspirant in the proper attitude to take toward the work. The asceticism attributed to the Yogic path is the work of the Pentagram, the pulling together and mastering of the various components of sensation into a functioning Self. But this Self is sterile and isolated unless there is an opening to the Beloved. This is the great mistake of the previous Aeon’s idea of orthodox mysticism: the shutting up of the Self, hiding from the kisses of the Beloved.

A key to understanding this Mystery is to be found in the words and letters of the opening of the Hexagram Ritual:

I.N.R.I.

Yod, Nun, Resh, Yod.

Virgo, Isis, Mighty Mother.

Scorpio, Apophis, Destroyer.

Sol, Osiris, Slain and Risen.

Isis, Apophis, Osiris IAO.

In the Sanskrit alphabet, “I” is a feminizing Shakti-letter. The name “Shiva” without this one letter becomes the word “Shava” which means “corpse.” By this is implied that Shiva without Shakti is inert, dead. This is represented in images of Kali-Devi astride the supine form of Shiva. She is dancing upon his corpse, and in some versions, mounting his erect Lingam. Just as Isis made love to the body of Osiris in order to bring forth Horus, the Resurrection, so is Shakti shown animating the body of Her Lover. I is for Isis and for Shakti bringing to life the body of the God. In the Gnostic Mass, the Priestess performs this role for the Priest at their first meeting.

The image of Kali-Shiva in the cremation ground implies a formula of female-superior intercourse (Shakti on top) for the purpose of the Dissolution, or Annihilation in the Beloved. Nuit, the Sky Goddess above Geb, the Earth God is an early reference to this formula. The reversal of gender polarity to Sky God and Earth Mother may also correspond to the shift into male-superior intercourse in which the man is considered to be working at "plowing the field." The Sky-Goddess position allows the male to concentrate upon internal practice rather than external motion. Thus, Shiva is the passive consciousness observing all while Shakti is the active energy animating all. The application to partner-play is obvious: the creation of the elixir of life through a formulation of the hexagram with Shakti astride Shiva, the apexes of the triangles touching to form the hour-glass shape. This is the shape of Shiva's Damaru drum (representing cosmic vibration) and is also the "water hexagram" in the Lesser Hexagram Ritual.

There is, however, an inner application to this formula. The posture known as "shavasana," the corpse pose, is the most passive and receptive of all asanas. It is simply lying on the ground, supine, like Shiva, relaxing entirely and perceiving all internal sensations. This is generally practiced after more active poses. During this stage, the energies motivated by invocation, chanting, pranayam, dancing, the vibration of God names, etc, can be experienced and integrated. This answers to the "Death Posture" of Austin Osman Spare and to the Hanged Man pose in the Tarot. The dance of Shakti, the energy of the Ritual, can be felt to play upon the body of the magician. The ability to engage and perceive one's own invoked energies is necessary before work with a partner can be fruitful. It is also a way to experience the joy and renewal of intercourse between the Above and Below while maintaining independence and solitude, not needing a partner to perform the Work, but being able to engage one when the time arises.

The Shiva-Shakti formula is thus one of individual practice that can develop into practice with a partner. For this to become part of the Great Work, however, the partner must be understood to be one form, one mask of the Eternal Beloved. They are also one Lover, one Center of Self within the Omnipresent Body of

They are also one Lover, one Center of Self within the Omnipresent Body of Delight, with their own unique relationship to the Beloved, of whom you are, to them, one form.

Delight, with their own unique relationship to the Beloved, of whom you are, to them, one form. This is one purpose of the rituals, be they Tantric Puja or Thelemic Star Sapphire. If the union is not between Star and Star, the result is fraught with Karma (hang-ups).

The various interchanges of polarity in the symbolism of Fire and Water, Male and Female, Active and Passive free us from assigning fixed qualities to ourselves or to these living symbols. Shiva is Solar-Masculine but is symbolized by the crescent moon upon his brow, his planetary day being Monday for purpose of ritual fasting (vrata). Shiva is also mostly described with negative qualities. His sect-mark itself is three horizontal lines, showing the negation of ego, karma and desire. In yogic imagery, Shakti is the "Secret Serpent, coiled about to spring" and Shiva is the awaiting Beloved in the Sahasrara-Crown. Thelema reverses this

symbolism so that Hadit arises and conjoins with Nuit in Death, the Crown of All. It is important to dance with the symbols and images so as not to mistake any of them for dogmatic Truth. The reversals of gender and energetic roles between Shiva and Shakti suggest the twinings of the twin serpents upon the Caduceus.

A Journey through the Chakras

This journey, which encompasses the cycle of the Great Work, is also the cycle of each individual Ritual of Union, such as the Gnostic Mass. In the first stage, the Elements of the self are called together. The Microcosm is assembled out of conflicting impulses and ruled by the Point of the Pentagram, the Realm of Aethyr situated in the Throat Chakra, the Vishudha. Shiva is shown with a blue throat, stained with the Poison that was released during the creation of the Amrita of Immortality. He had to reabsorb all that was imbalanced and rejected before becoming a complete being capable of tasting the Nectar that was to come. The deity of the Fifth Chakra is Shiva-Panchavaktra, the five-faced form discussed in the first part of this essay.

Through the power of the Voice of Invocation, the Elements are called into the Circle and their imbalances are transmuted. This is reflected in a Tantric Puja through the gathering together of offerings of fruit, milk, incense, fire, etc, and the purification of these offerings through chanting of mantras over them. Correspondingly, in the Gnostic Mass, the Priestess purifies and consecrates the Priest with the Elements before he purifies and consecrates her in turn.

In personal Hermetic ritual, the preliminary banishing ritual should serve to call into the circle all of the functions and forces of the aspirant.

After the aspects of the self, the Elements, are called together in the Pentagram, they are unified with the Beloved in the Hexagram. From the formula of the Fifth Chakra, or self-mastery, the aspirant progresses to the Sixth, the Ajna or third-eye wherein Shiva is shown in union with Shakti. Here is a Baphomet-like figure called Shiva-Ardhanareshwara, the hermaphroditic deity of the Ajna. Once the aspirant has become a Microcosm, the Macrocosm can now be engaged fully. There is now a Self to offer, a Something capable of dissolving into Nothing, whereas before there was only a muddle of impressions.

This stage is represented in the Gnostic Mass as the Priest and the Priestess within the Shrine, together engaged in the union of the Lance and Cup. In Puja, this corresponds to the arrival of the deity in the temple, enticed into presence by the consecrated offerings of ritual and song of the devotees present. In personal Hermetic ritual, this stage is the LVX resulting from the invocations.

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If the attitude of the Lover and the Beloved has been cultivated (Bhakti Yoga) prior to this encounter with the Force of the Other, the Macrocosm, then the final stage of the work should arise. The Five united to invoke the Six now dissolves into the Seven. The Crown Chakra, represented by the Septagram or Star of Babalon is the dissolution of both Self and Beloved, of both Microcosm and Macrocosm, of Shiva and Shakti into Brahma, the Ain Soph, the NO-Thing beyond. There are no rituals for this because it is the result of the Love of the Self for the Beloved. It is the attitude with which all of the previous rituals,

It is the attitude with which all of the previous rituals, practices and Sadhanas have been performed that determines the readiness of the aspirant for this Annihilation into NOX.

practices and Sadhanas have been performed that determines the readiness of the aspirant for this Annihilation into NOX.

Division and Dissolution

Just as Shiva becomes inert without the vitalizing touch of Shakti, so does the Divine Mother pass through a series of Ten Phases in her relationship

to Shiva. These are called the MahaVidyas, or Great Wisdoms. They are ten distinct goddesses who are also ten expressions of Shakti functioning in different ways. Ma-Kali is often shown with ten faces to represent these ten phases of her activity.

Like the phases of the Moon reflecting differing degrees of the Sun's light, the varying stages of conjunction between Shakti and Shiva create the world of forms, sustain the world of forms, and then dissolve and transform the world of forms. There is a separation that occurs as the world is projected into being until the furthest estrangement occurs in the phase represented by the Widow Goddess, Dhumavati. She is shown as an aged crone in poverty, followed by crows. She represents the Shakti separated from Shiva, the Dark Sterile Mother of Binah without any fertilization from Chokmah. She also represents the beginning of the return toward union which culminates in the Goddess Kamala, the Lotus overflowing with abundant fullness.

Interestingly, the two Sons of Shiva and Shakti were each born without direct coupling between their parents. Murugan emerged from the fiery ejaculations of Shiva who was awakened from his meditations to save the world once again. These ejaculations, seven in number, passed through an alchemical regimen, from the mouth of the fire god Agni to the Ganges and then into a field of reeds. Here they were nursed by the seven Stars of the Pleiades as seven infants who were then conjoined into a single body with six faces, while Ganesh was created by Parvati, the most benevolent aspect of Shakti as Divine wife and mother, from the earth of her body while bathing. He was later decapitated and reanimated with the Elephant's head by Shiva and Vishnu. Each of these stories implies a formula of Initiation.

The Divine Family, Shiva with five faces, Shakti with ten phases, Murugan with Six faces and Ganesh often shown with five, mirrors precisely the Tetragrammaton, with the letters יהוה each containing the number of aspects of

a member of the Tantric pantheon. We can find Ganesh, who is addressed for material concerns in Malkuth, Murugan, the Lord of Beauty and Commander of the Divine Host in Tiphareth, Kali-Devi, the Dark Goddess of Space-Time in Binah, and Shiva, the All-Father-Lingam in Chokmah.

Murugan is the externally directed Son whose weapon is the Lance and who is famous for wedding and thus making divine the Earth-Daughter Valli after many travels. (Here we have the Priest raising the Priestess by the virtue of the Rod.) Ganesh is the internally directed Son who is famous for encompassing the virtue of all of the holy shrines in the universe by circumambulating Shiva and Parvati, his divine parents, just as we all orbit the Sun.

Herein are concealed so many of the living symbols of our own Gnostic Mass, the contemplation of which inspires a cross-fertilization between the dream languages of East and West.

Book Reviews

Liber Aleph vel CXI: The Book of Wisdom or Folly In the Form of an Epistle of 666 The Great Wild Beast to his Son 777 by the Master Therion (Aleister Crowley)

Liber Aleph, or *The Book of Wisdom or Folly*, is one of Aleister Crowley's masterworks. It is a *tour de force* through Crowley's encyclopedic mind, a sequence of 208 gems of magical wisdom written during his visit to the U.S. The book is written as an epistle to his magical 'son,' to whom he dispenses fatherly advice on a broad range of occult subjects, including qabalah, magick, yoga, mystical trances, the True Will, alchemy, drugs, sex, love, death, and the education of children, among others.

Crowley writes here in a deliberately archaic style, which has the effect of exalting the mind into a kind of intellectual ecstasy. The arcane subject matter is raised to the sublime by the passionate poetic voice of its author.

Written during the winter of 1917 EV, in his apartment in Greenwich Village, Crowley composed *Liber Aleph* as a series of brief letters or epistles, limiting himself to a single page for each epistle. Each one is titled by a topic description in Latin. Crowley considered *Liber Aleph* an extended and

elaborate commentary on *The Book of the Law*. In it he gives us many glimpses of his vision of Thelema. The *Book of the Law* declares that every man and every woman is a star. So it is in *De Luce Stellarum* (On the Light of the Stars) that Crowley writes:

It was that most Holy Prophet, thine Uncle, called upon Earth William O'Neill, or Blake, who wrote for our Understanding these Eleven Sacred Words! —

If the Sun and Moon should doubt
They'd immediately go out.

O my Son, our Work is to shine by Force and Virtue of our own Natures without Consciousness or Consideration. Now, notwithstanding that our Radiance is constant and undimmed, it may be that Clouds gathering about us conceal our Glory from the Vision of other Stars. These Clouds are our Thoughts, not those true Thoughts which are but conscious Expressions of our Will, such as manifest in our Poesy, or our Music, or other Flower-Ray of our Light quintessential. Nay, the Cloud-Thought is born of Division and of Doubt; for all Thoughts, except they be creative Emanations, are Witnesses to Conflict within us. Our settled Relations with the Universe do not disturb our Minds, as, by Example,

The book is written as an epistle to his magical 'son,' to whom he dispenses fatherly advice on a broad range of occult subjects, including qabalah, magick, yoga, mystical trances, the True Will, alchemy, drugs, sex, love, death, and the education of children, among others.

our automatic bodily Functions, which speak to us only in the Sign of Distress. Thus all Consideration is Demonstration of Doubt; Doubt postulateth Duality, which is the Root of Choronzon.

The prose is dense and rich with idea and imagery. Crowley succinctly elucidates the roles of the mind and the True Will in the process of accomplishing the Great Work. The thinking engine of the ego-mind, fueled by the psycho-energetic combustion of mental dualisms, is the source of our thoughts, thoughts that can gather about us like clouds, and veil the stellar brilliance of our essential Self from others and even from ourselves. For Crowley, True Will is expressed as a natural unself-consciousness, an ease that flows from being harmonious with the Tao.

There are chapters on the nuts and bolts of magickal force and its operations, but there are also ecstatic philosophical paeans such as are found in the chapter *On the Universal Comedy which is called Pan* --

So, therefore, o my Son, count thyself happy, when thou understandest all these Things, being one of those Beings (or By-comings) whom we call Philosophers. All is a never-ending Play of Love wherein Our Lady Nuit and Her Lord Hadit rejoice; and every Part of the Play is Play. All Pain is but sharp Sauce to the Dish of Pleasure; for it is the Nature of the Universe that hath devised this everlasting Banquet of Joy.

This passage offers a cosmic vision of the Universe as the ecstatic Love Play of the supernal Thelemic deities Nuit and Hadit. The imagery also exemplifies Crowley's legendary appetite for life. In the chapter *De Virtute Tolerantia* (On the Virtue of Tolerance), we find an example of Thelemic ethics:

Understand then heartily, o my Son, that in the Light of this my Wisdom all Things are One, being of the Body of our Lady Nuit, proper, necessary, and perfect. There is then none superfluous or harmful, and there is none honourable or dishonourable more than another. Lo! In thine own Body, the vile Intestine is of more Worth to thee than the noble Hand or the proud Eye, for thou canst lose these and live, but not that. Esteem therefore a Thing in Relation to thine own Will, preferring the Ear if thou love Musick, and the Palate if thou love Wine, but the essential Organs of Life above these. Have Respect also to the Will of thy Fellow, not hindering him in his way save as he may overly jostle thee in thine. For by the Practice of this tolerance thou shalt come sooner to the Understanding of this Equality of all Things in Our Lady Nuit, and so the high Attainment of Universal Love. Yet in thy partial and particular Action, as thou art a Creature of Illusion, do thou maintain the right Relation of one Thing to another; fighting if thou be a Soldier, or

The thinking engine of the ego-mind, fueled by the psycho-energetic combustion of mental dualisms, is the source of our thoughts, thoughts that can gather about us like clouds, and veil the stellar brilliance of our essential Self from others and even from ourselves.

building if thou be a Mason. For if thou hold not fast this Discipline and Proportion, which alloweth its True Will to every Part of thy Being, the Error of one shall draw all after it into Ruin and Dispersion.

Love is the law, love under will. Thelemic tolerance is based on a respect for individual differences, founded on the mystical intuition of the unity ('the Body of our Lady Nuit') and the recognition of the infinite interrelatedness of the manifold in the world of appearances. Thelema can be seen as that 'Discipline and Proportion' which artfully trains the will to establish and maintain its harmony with cosmic love, which is after all, the law. Ceremonial magick is a tool used by Thelemites for training the will to vibrate with cosmic love.

For someone seeking to learn more about Thelema as a magickal philosophy and a spiritual discipline, *Liber Aleph* is a good resource. It is a challenging book and, like many of Crowley's works, one which a novice might find rather a jump into the deep end of the pool; but it is one which yields mystical rewards for the effort of contemplating its 'Wisdom or Folly.'

—Frater Dorje

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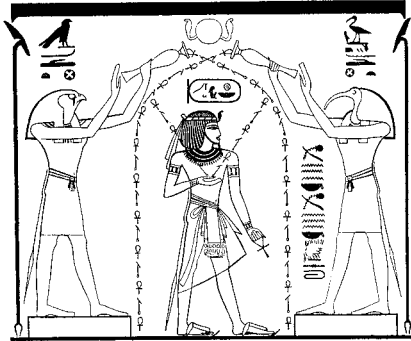
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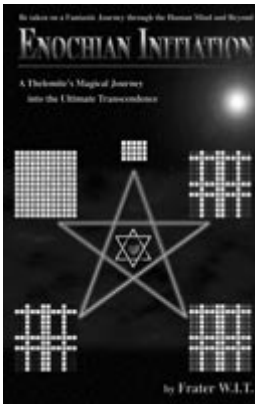
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bring me thru midnight to the sun

save me from evil and from good

that thy one crown of all the ten

even now and here be mine, AUMEN

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