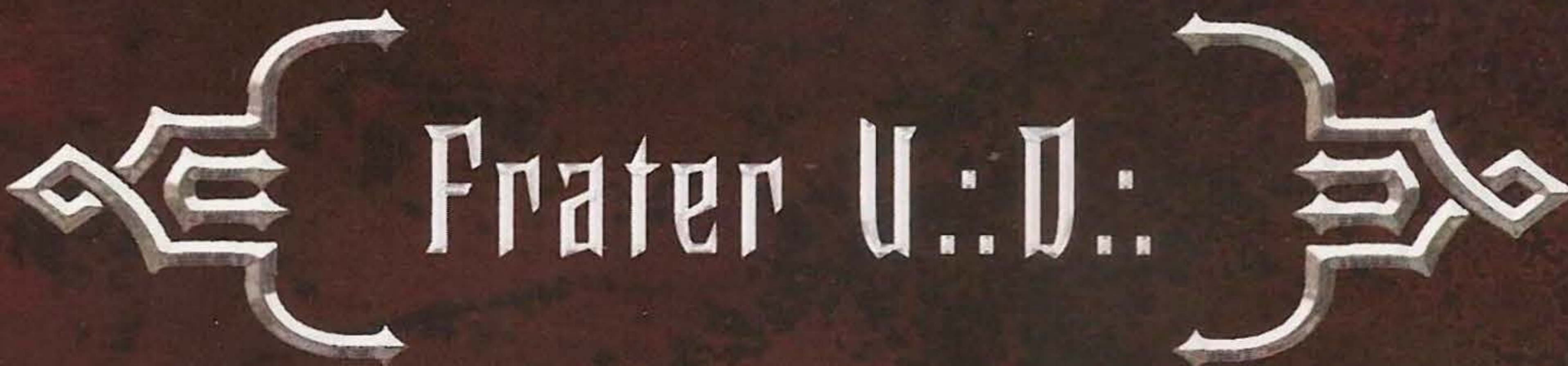


H I G H  
M A G I C I I

Theory

Practice

Expanded



Frater U.:D.:

HIGH  
MAGIC II

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Born in Heliopolis, Egypt, Frater U.: D.: has been working within the magical tradition for decades. He lived in Africa and Asia and trained with yoga and tantra masters, and studied languages and literature at the universities of Bonn and Lisbon. He is recognized as the founder of Pragmatic Magic, and has written articles for many magazines, including *Unicorn*, *Thelema: Magazine for Magic and Tantra*, *Anubis* (Germany), *The Lamp of Thoth*, and *Chaos International* (Great Britain). His published works include *Practical Sigil Magic*. Among his translations are the books of Peter Carroll and Ramsey Dukes, and Aleister Crowley's *Book of Lies*. At present, he lives in Belgium, where he is CEO of a software development company.

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H I G H  
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## FOREWORD TO VOLUME 2 OF *HIGH MAGIC*

This is the second and final volume of *High Magic: Theory and Practice*, concluding our long and detailed exploration of both Western and Eastern magical systems from an undogmatic modern viewpoint primarily focused on their practical implications and usability. Being an authentic sequel, perusal of volume 1 is obviously required to make the most use of what is being presented here for the advanced practitioner.

Following up from where we left off, many subjects will be pursued in greater depth, aligning them with the overall picture of applied pragmatic magic. Equally, many challenging new areas will be addressed, some of them for the first time in an English book publication.

Consequently, the nonlinear approach developed in volume 1 will be retained here. Rather than concatenate a library of longish self-contained monographs and essays covering a plethora of topics as if they were entirely unrelated, we have adopted the policy of dovetailing them by splitting up the theoretical and practical material into what is, after all, a comprehensive course of teaching and practical experimentation. This particular procedure, developed over decades of trial-and-error, has proven to be the most effective and time-saving method for many thousands of practitioners.

Finally, it bears repeating that our nonnegotiable aim is to assist you, the reader, in mastering the art and science of high magic as an *independent, liberated individual*—free from any of the restraints typically imposed by sectarian magical orders and narrow minded guru worship, so very abundant in conventional dogmatic magic.

If anything, we, as magicians, should view each other as compeers, pilgrims, and explorers pursuing the same magnum opus. This leaves no room for self-serving totem pole hierarchies. Thus, we will abide by the old motto of that purportedly most secular of mundane historical events, the French Revolution: *Ni dieu, ni maître!* (“[Let there be] neither god nor master [above us]!”)

*Become who you are—and who you want to be!*

# MAGIC AND YOGA (I)

Many magicians, in particular followers of the older traditions, feel that an intense and thorough study of yoga should be included in their students' magical training—at least for a while. Many styles of Indian yoga have been adapted to fit the needs of Westerners and these are so popular nowadays that it hardly seems necessary to discuss them in a book like this. As far as hatha yoga (the type of yoga involving physical exercises) is concerned, we will indeed keep our comments to a minimum. After all, there are plenty of excellent books about it on the market and classes are offered at gyms, community centers and yoga schools in even the most remote areas.

But with the large amount of information available, we often tend to forget what yoga is really about. Patañjali, one of the classic authors of yoga literature, says it best in his book *The Yoga Sutras*:

“Yogas' citta-vṛitti-nirodhaḥ.”

In English:

“Yoga is restraining [Sanskrit: *nirodha*] the fluctuations of mind.”

Although the derivative of the word “yoga” as “yoke = harness/self-discipline” is commonly stressed, it doesn't help much when the true intention of yoga is overlooked, for



example through exaggerated perceptions of asceticism, a sole emphasis on complicated body postures, or purely speculative philosophizing.

Plus, yoga is a complete philosophical and ideological system that cannot be reduced to a mere type of gymnastics. Like no other discipline known to us today, all of the numerous different styles of Indian yoga are extremely effective in applying highly developed, refined techniques for shifting awareness and shaping matter with the mind.

Readers who already have a good knowledge of yoga can just skim over the next section.

## **THE STRUCTURE OF ASHTANGA OR RAJA YOGA**

It was Vivekananda who was instrumental in bringing yoga to the Western world and establishing its popularity there. Through him, the term “raja” (= “royal”) came into use to describe a system of yoga that is more commonly known in India as “ashtanga” (= “eightfold path/eight limbs of yoga”). In fact, in Indian culture, a person’s own personal yoga path is generally referred to as the “royal” path, which sometimes causes confusion when it is mentioned in literature. That’s why we’ll stick to the initial designation of “eightfold yoga” in this book. After all, the style of yoga introduced by Vivekananda is the most widely practiced.

As the name already implies, this type of yoga is divided into eight paths or limbs, each one in itself leading to samadhi (= “union with the highest” or “enlightenment by achieving a state of empty mind”), although they are generally viewed and treated as parts of a whole.

We’ll be introducing these paths or limbs in the traditional way, first in their relationship to one another as a whole, and then individually. However, since we’re pursuing a concept that is different than most other authors’ of literature on yoga or magic, we will not be discussing them in order, but rather in the sequence that’s appropriate to the corresponding chapters of this book.

## THE EIGHT PATHS

### Yama

- Ahimsa — nonviolence
- Satya — truthfulness
- Asteya — abstention from theft
- Brahmacharya — abstinence from sexual activity
- Aparigraha — refrainment from accepting gifts

### Niyama

- Shauca — purity
- Santosha — contentment
- Tapah — austerity
- Svadhya — spiritual study
- Ishvarapranidhana — self-sacrifice to God

### Asana

body postures

### Pranayama

control of vital breath (prana)

### Pratyahara

abstraction of the senses

### Dharana

concentration

### Dhyana

meditation

### Samadhi

superconscious state or trance

First we will discuss the path of asana.

## ASANA IN THE PRACTICE OF MAGIC

The practice of asana often consists of bending the body into bizarre positions in order to experience the unusual flow of energies—and also transcending this experience in itself in order to trigger and experience altered states of consciousness. With this in mind, the rejection of hatha yoga (or “physical yoga”) by the more “spiritual” yoga schools is based on a fundamental misunderstanding. After all, every asana—if properly performed and mastered—will almost automatically lead to the state of meditation (dhyana).

Here’s what Patañjali has to say about asana:

“Sthira-sukham āsanam.”

In English:

“Asana is steady, comfortable posture.”

Some translations of Vivekananda refer to asana as a “sitting” posture when in fact the “body” postures of yoga are being referred to. (After all, it would be absurd to refer to recognized asanas such as headstands or the peacock in hatha yoga as sitting postures!)

The purpose of asanas is to calm the body and spirit. In addition, they promote good health, keep the body in good shape, regulate the glandular system, and strengthen muscles, tissue, tendons, all organs, and especially the immune system.

This harmonization has one disadvantage, however, especially for people who have a lot of contact with the general public. It makes your body extremely sensitive to everything that’s good for it—and bad as well. This is especially noticeable in a person’s diet. Although yoga will strengthen a person’s resistance, the yogi who doesn’t heed his or her inner voice and eats something that his or her body doesn’t need will certainly pay the price! A person doesn’t have to stick to a prescribed diet, although most yogis are indeed vegetarians and refrain for the most part from consuming drugs and other stimulants such as alcohol, nicotine, coffee, and theine. Instead, the body will develop its own individual diet based on a keen sense of exactly what it needs. This may strongly deviate from the norm and must be strictly adhered to in order to avoid serious health problems, especially with the stomach or digestive tract.

In magic, we use asanas for a similar reason as in yoga—to induce gnosis and turn off all bodily perception in order to allow the spirit to focus on its work without hindrance, but also to maintain the physical condition of our body, which is our most important vehicle since it's a reflection of our spirit. With the help of our body, we practice things such as letting go, self-discipline, devotion, vision, and action. Once our bodily perception is that well trained, it will work as an unerring seismograph for all magical things that happen around us. It will become both a source of joy and an alarm system, as well as our wholeness and the home of our gods (the Egyptian Book of the Dead says: “In every limb of our body lives a god”).

That's why asanas shouldn't feel like torture. (Aleister Crowley, however, often violated this basic principle. As a result, his yoga practice—in contrast to his other excellent writings on yoga—often resembled an exercise in brutal sadism.) Of course, students with no previous experience will often encounter situations that require a bit of sweat and tears, but since yoga has nothing to do with fakirs, pain should be understood as a signal from the body and be respected as a warning sign. That's why we mentioned the concise definition given by Patañjali: Asana should be steady and comfortable—nothing more, nothing less!

So there's absolutely no reason for beginners to force themselves into the lotus posture, perform headstands, or put their feet behind their ears unless they're interested in the numerous health advantages and improvement of concentration skills that such asanas can offer. It's important to sit in a steady position and have the proper mental attitude during magical practice so that the energy is able to flow properly and you're not distracted (we recommend keeping your back straight); you should be able to sit comfortably for a long period of time since shifting your position or body in any way could cause your concentration to be interrupted.

Again, Patañjali gives us some advice:

“Tato dvaṃdvānabhighā taḥ.”

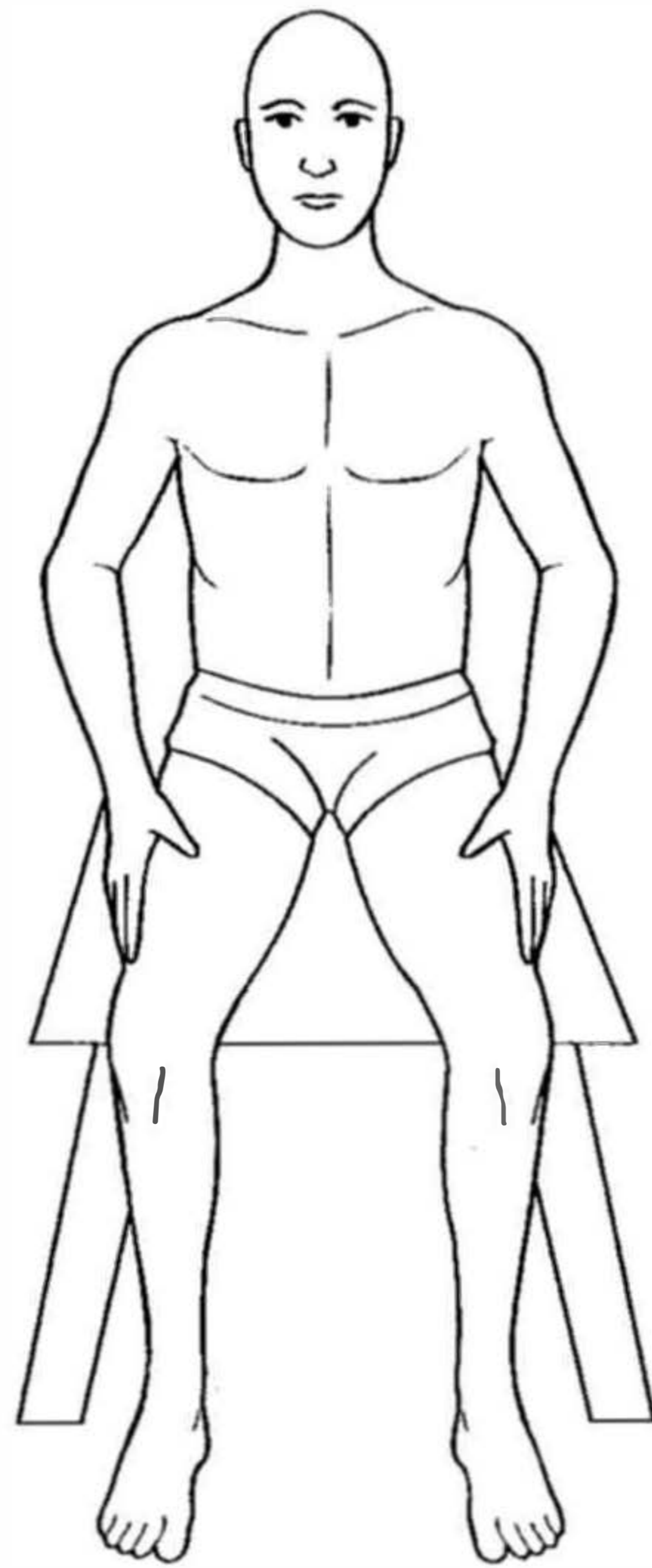
In English:

“(Once this position is achieved) there is no more obstruction through duality.”

Even just a quick first attempt will show the beginner what this means. When the body starts tingling or itching (especially in the legs) or when certain spots start twitching nervously, the yogi stays focused (despite these distractions) on his or her inner centeredness. This is done by shifting one's attention away from what affects the body and by subduing the senses (pratyahara). So we see how much the individual paths of eight-fold yoga merge into one another. To maintain a proper asana, the body requires concentration (dharana), which in turn requires subduing the senses (pratyahara) which in turn improves the mastery of the asana, thus sharpening concentration, leading to a state of meditation (dhyana) and ultimately to a state of superconsciousness (samadhi). But the dualities of joy and sorrow, good and evil, "important" and "unimportant" are meant here as well, as well as the distinction between spiritual aspiration and everyday attachment ("I actually think it's more important to take care of my car, there's something wrong with it, and next week we're going on vacation..."), and between concentration and distraction (because true concentration only knows itself).

Technically speaking, many of the "god-forms" used in Hermetic magic are asanas as well (and even often fulfill the same physiological function) in the same way that rune positions and hand gestures (e.g., in Freemasonry or letter magic) do, too. However, this is approaching the fuzzy area between asanas and mudras, which will be dealt with later in this book.

Although there are a countless number of asanas, only the following three usually play a significant role in magic during meditation and concentration (with the possible exception of the lotus position, which everyone who is physically able should learn at one time or another if only because of its unique, unmatched health benefits without overdoing it or turning it into torture). These are the god posture, the dragon posture, and the half-lotus posture (described here in simplified form).

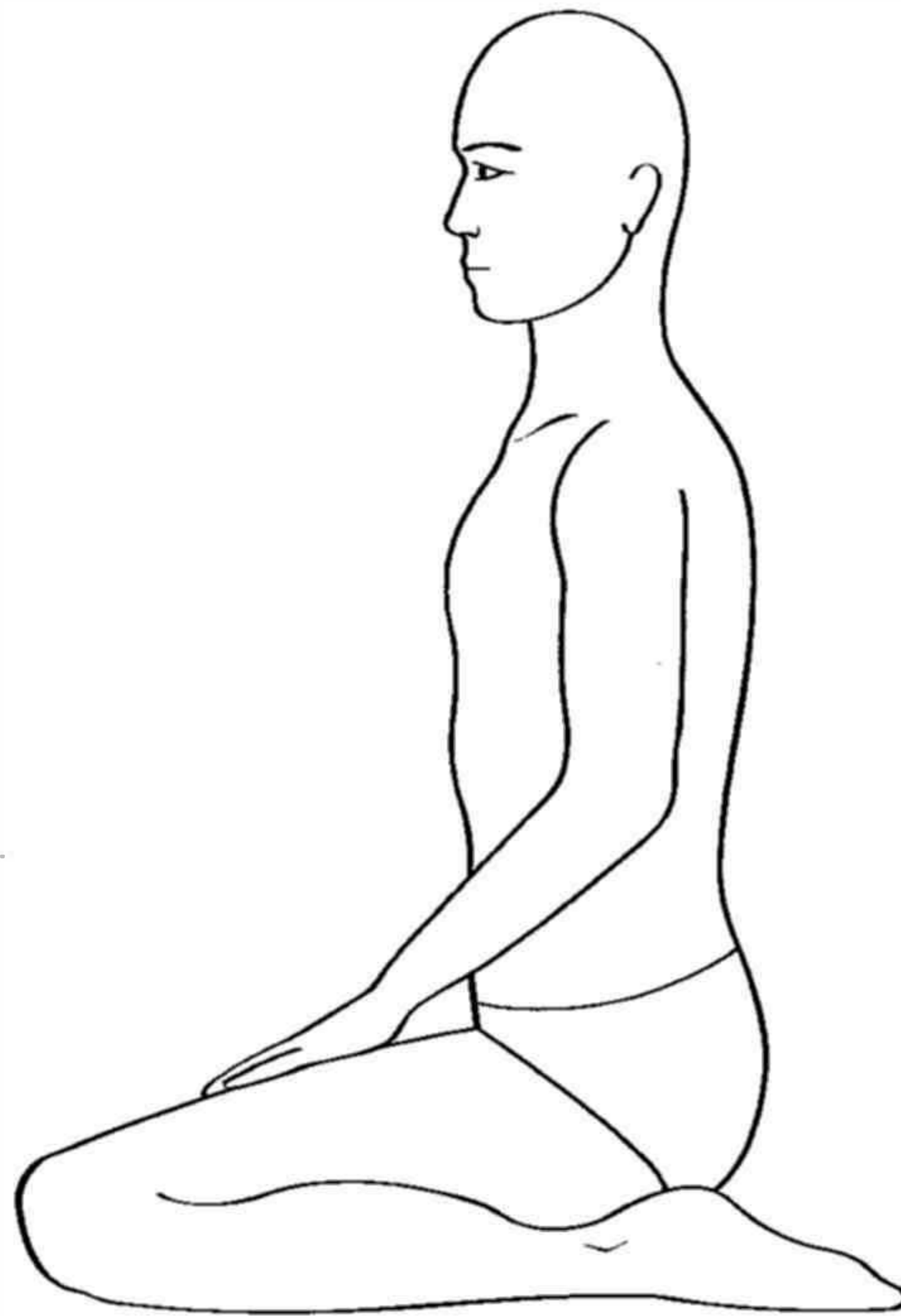


*Illustration 1: The god posture*

### **The God Posture**

Sit on a chair that has a straight backrest, although you shouldn't actually lean against it. In fact, it would be better to use a chair without any backrest at all. Your feet should touch the floor, and the palms of your hands should be placed flat on your thighs with the fingers together. Your back is erect but not stretched, your head is straight, and your eyes are closed or half-closed (or use the 180° gaze).

This posture is especially good for older people or those who are not able to sit on the floor for some reason or another.

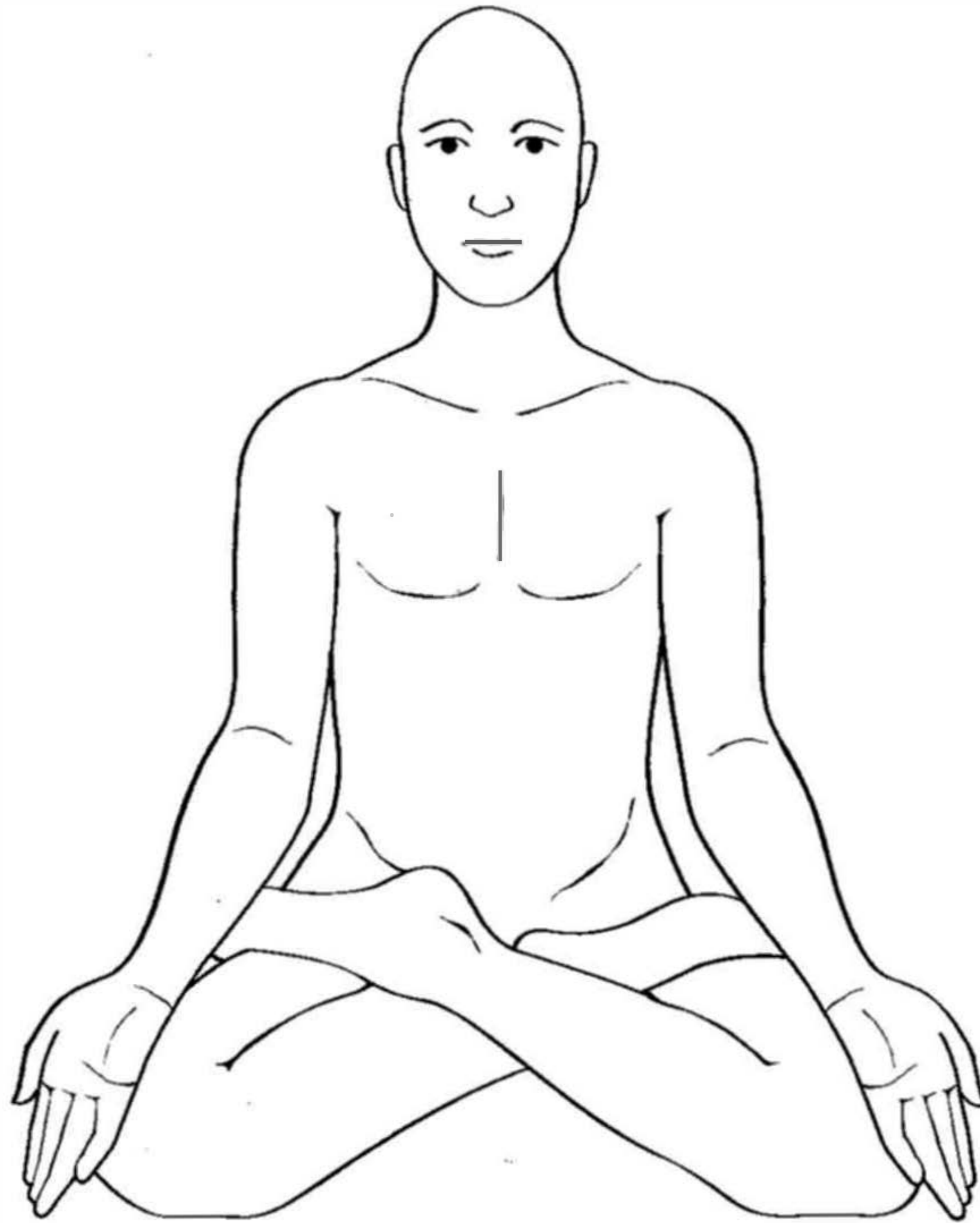


*Illustration 2: The dragon posture*

### **The Dragon Posture**

This posture is best done on the floor and a rug or blanket can be placed under your legs, but the surface should be hard (so don't practice on a mattress, bed, or couch!).

Rest your buttocks on your calves with your feet sticking out straight behind you or touching slightly, whatever is more comfortable. Your upper body is straight and your hands are placed on your thighs, just like in the god position. The position of your head is the same as above, too.



*Illustration 3: The half-lotus posture*

## **The Half-lotus Posture**

(or the “perfect posture”)

Much easier to master than the full lotus posture but, in the opinion of many authors on magic, just as effective. (Personally I prefer the lotus posture to all other asanas because once you’ve properly learned it, it’s the most comfortable of all since it automatically keeps the back straight, not to mention all of the health advantages that it brings as well.)

Rest your buttocks on the floor or on a blanket, or on a pillow placed under the back part of your buttocks, giving the whole posture a more slanted position. One foot rests on the inside upper thigh, the other is tucked underneath (right or left). If possible, both knees should touch the floor (with the pillow placed to support your lower back, this happens automatically). Your head is straight and shoulders relaxed, your hands are resting on your knees or on your lap if they’re not performing any special mudras (hand postures).



In all three postures, your tongue should lightly touch the front roof of the mouth—unless, of course, other exercises require you to do otherwise.

Particular attention should be paid to keeping the jaw and the forehead relaxed since this is often overlooked. “Steady and comfortable” describes a harmonious force field that occurs in the state between being tense and being relaxed; this is the state of body and mind that is optimal for contemplation or concentration on a magical or mystical goal.

That’s all on this subject for now. We’ll get back to it again later on in this book.

### **BASIC EXERCISE IN ENERGY CIRCULATION**

One of the most important exercises for harmonizing the body’s subtle internal energies is borrowed from Chinese acupuncture and Taoist yoga. It’s a basic exercise in energy circulation that we would like to describe in general here. More details about this practice can be found in the relevant literature available. The simplified form described here has, however, proven to be effective and is sufficiently suitable for our purposes.

Acupuncture is based on the vital life force called chi (or ch’i, ki, qi, xi) that flows along the meridians or energy pathways in the body. For this basic exercise in energy circulation, we need to familiarize ourselves with two of these meridians, namely the Governor Vessel and the Conception Vessel (Dumai and Renmai). The Governor Vessel runs from the perineum to the midline of the back and neck, down the midline of the head, right up to the middle of the upper lip and palate. The Conception Vessel also begins at the perineum and runs from the midline of the stomach, chest, neck, and chin, right up to the middle of the upper lip and lower jaw or tip of the tongue. (Various authors do not always agree on the exact course of the meridians. Even when it comes to the directions in which they flow, there are several variations and differences in opinion.)

With this basic exercise in energy circulation, use your imagination to circulate the energy from the perineum in the Governor Vessel up the back and then back down the front in the Conception Vessel. After we’ve done this, rub your hand several times over the hara region (located roughly the width of three fingers below the navel) in order to store the activated energy there.

**Note:** In order to avoid a blockage of energy, especially in the head area, it’s important to rest your tongue lightly on the front roof of the mouth.

According to the teachings of acupuncture, chi normally flows in the opposite direction, so it's possible that the direction of circulation that we recommend feels uncomfortable to you. In this case, try circulating the energy in the opposite direction—from the front, up to the top, and down the back. As far as the rest goes, proceed as above.

We've used the word "imagination" and, to the inexperienced beginner, it really will feel like the flow of energy is taking place purely in one's imagination. But in just a short time this process will become automatic, and there will be no more talk of imagination or even "illusion."

Apart from the numerous health advantages, I recommend this basic exercise in energy circulation as an excellent way for centering yourself since it creates a suitable shield of magical protection against foreign influence and loss of inner balance. It can also be used to transmute sexual energy, e.g., during phases of sexual abstinence. In particular, the storing of energy in the hara region has a positive healing effect on illness, and even conditions such as weakness and tiredness (e.g., from being overworked, during menstruation, effects of the weather, exhaustion) can be alleviated or even remedied entirely on a long-term basis.

Lots of misleading information has been written about the function of this basic exercise in energy circulation, and some authors even tend to make a religion out of it. Although this exercise can reveal possible blockages in the subtle body when the energy flow is activated consciously, blockages usually dissolve on their own with regular practice, and only in serious cases does an acupuncturist need to be consulted for therapy. But in no way does it mean that the small circulation of energy is "dead" if you don't do this exercise; it's always active, and the chi is constantly flowing along the meridians, although the intensity varies and depends on your current state of health and well-being. In this sense, it would be more accurate to refer to it as the "conscious intensification and steering" of the circulation instead of its "activation." Since it's already active, it's not so difficult to become aware of and be able to work it with as some literature makes it out to be. At seminars, students will often discover that it usually works within just minutes.

However, if you're having difficulties with consciously intensifying and steering the circulation of energy along the prescribed pathways, just be patient and keep practicing. It might be helpful to have someone help you by shaking a rattle (a simple rumba rattle that you can buy fairly cheaply in music stores will do, although you should choose one with a

bright sound instead of a dull one) close to your body in the desired direction of the flow of energy until you can actually feel it. This acoustic aid will help give you a feel for the circulation of energy so that it can be triggered later automatically without any additional help.

After a bit of practice, you'll be able to feel and intensify the flow of energy at any time in any position—and you should experiment with the various situations as well.

In addition to this basic exercise, there's also an advanced exercise in energy circulation in which the twelve main meridians are activated or intensified, but there's no need to go into that here. (Whoever is interested in this can refer to the books by Chia and Zöller in the bibliography at the end of this chapter.)

Illustration 4 shows the exact path of subtle energies during this exercise.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 49*

#### **THE BASIC EXERCISE IN ENERGY CIRCULATION**

Practice the basic exercise in energy circulation at least once a day, preferably in the morning, until you feel confident and convinced that you've mastered it. Then you can go on to practicing this circulation technique anywhere and any time, e.g., at work, while walking, while driving—and soon you'll learn to appreciate the tremendous soothing and harmonizing effect that this simple exercise has, especially in stressful situations.

This exercise can also be combined with other centering techniques such as the IAO formula or the OMNIL formula, either before or afterward. With a little bit of practice, it won't take you more than just two minutes—and after awhile, you'll need even less time to perform it.

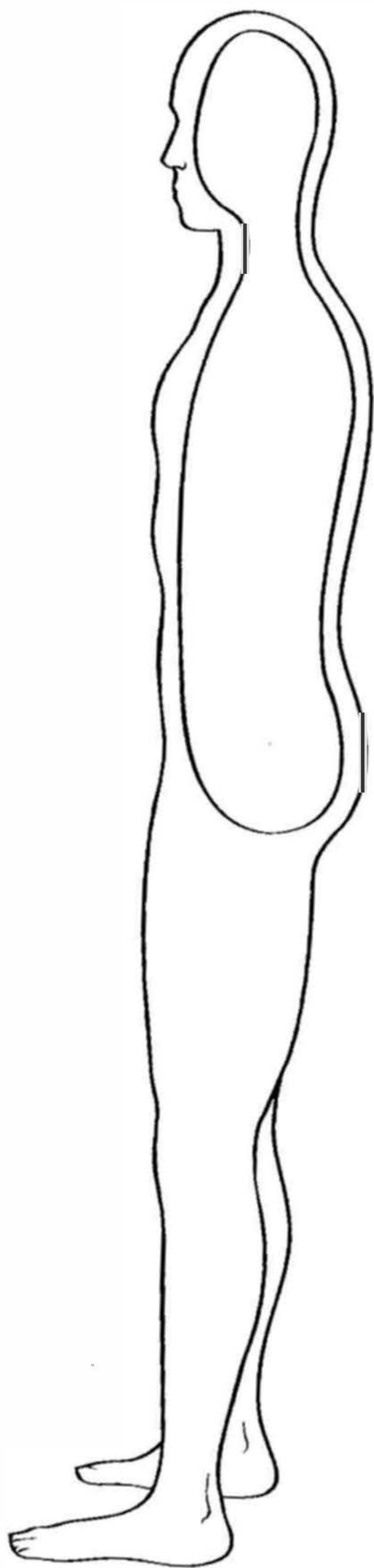
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## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

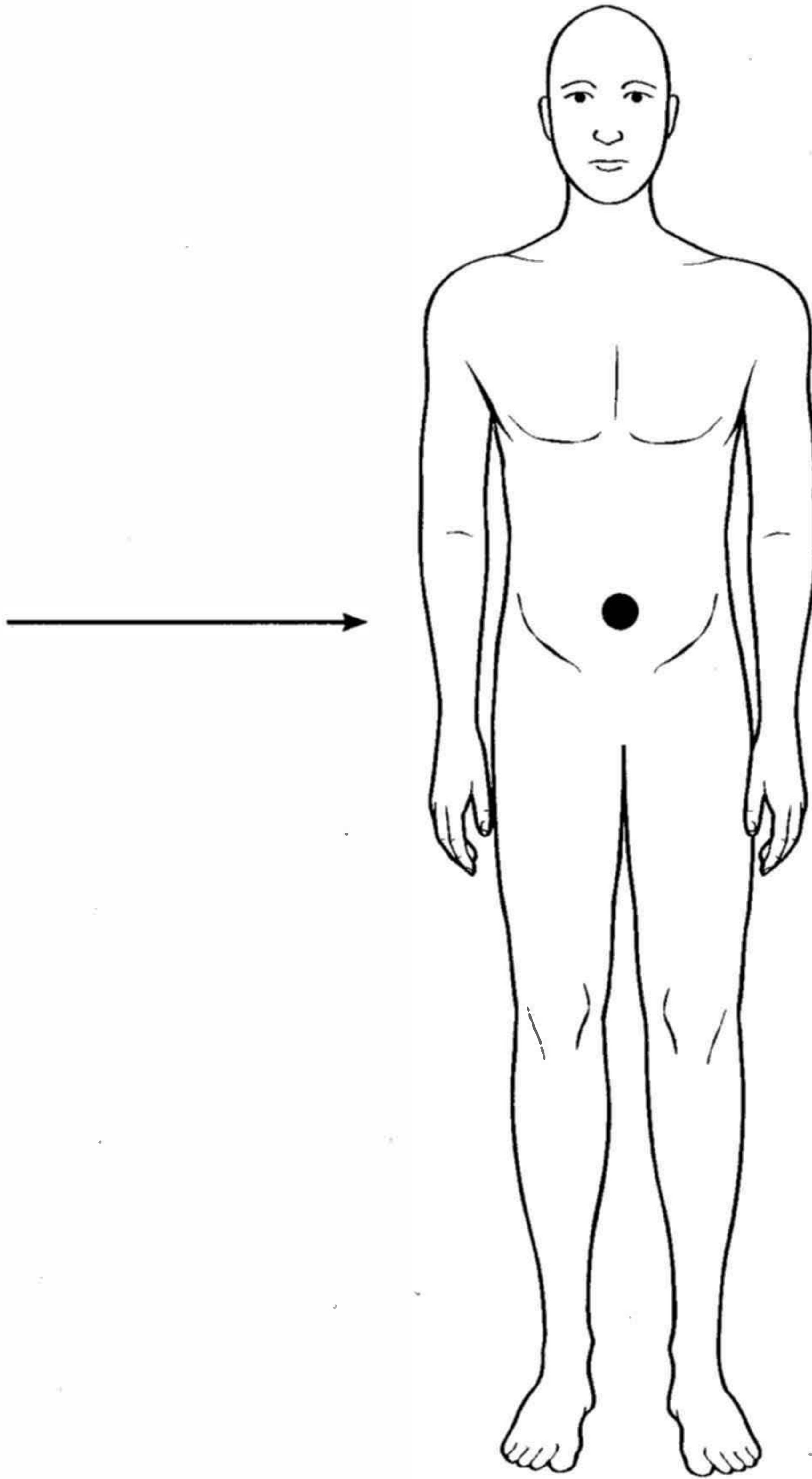
Mantak Chia, *Awaken Healing Energy Through Tao: The Taoist Secret of Circulating Internal Power*.

Josefine Zöller, *Das Tao der Selbstheilung*

(Both books are recommended for further reading about the basic exercise in energy circulation and the practice of acupuncture.)

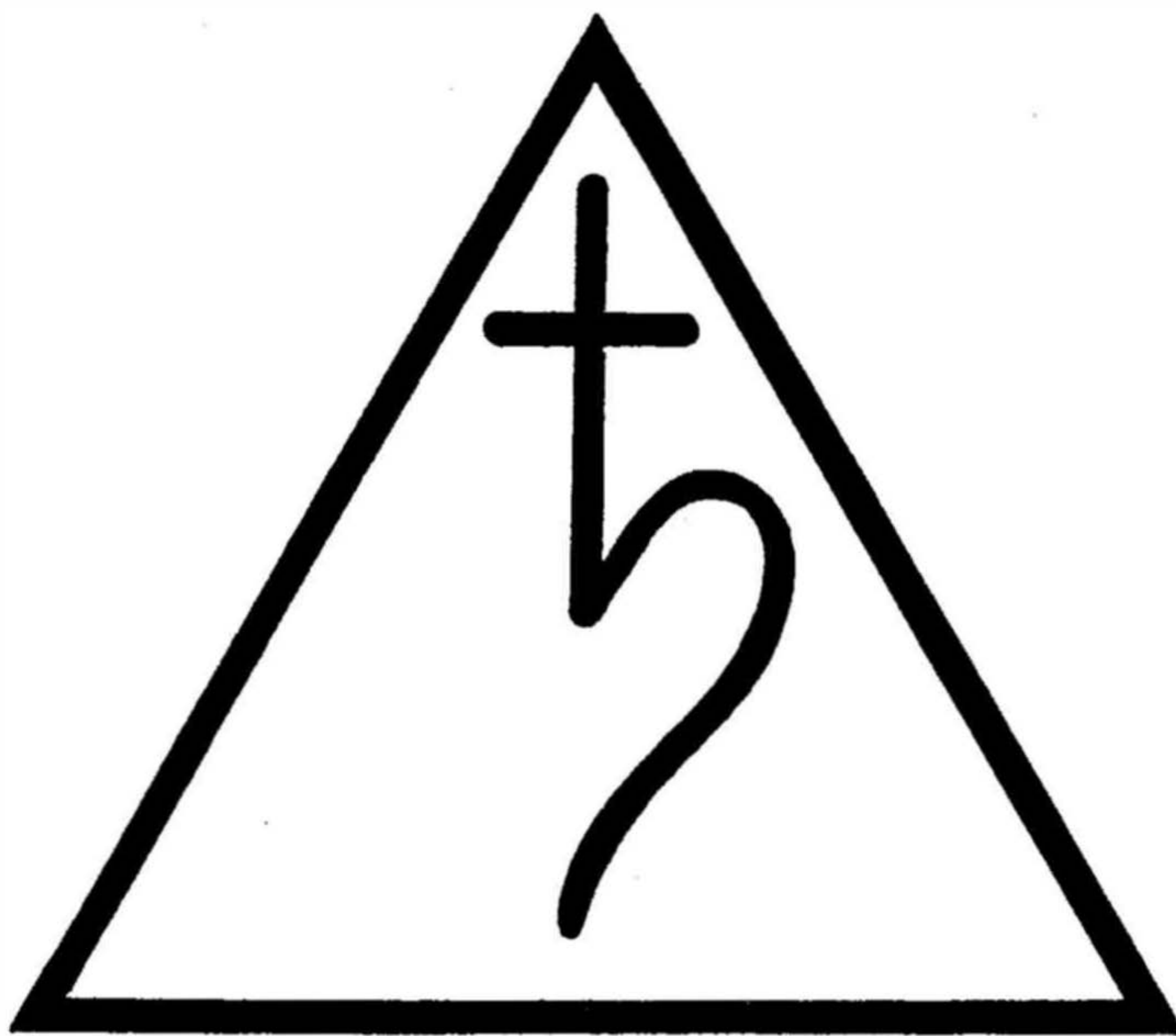


*Illustration 4: The basic exercise in energy circulation*



*Illustration 5: The hara region*

A SPIRITUAL EXERCISE FOR  
UNDERSTANDING SATURN



*Illustration 6: The symbol for Saturn*

A spiritual exercise is a time for reflection, contemplation, and concentration on a spiritual goal. During this time, everything else is put on hold: all spiritual, physical, material, and other matters.

Every practicing magician will undergo such spiritual exercises periodically (usually annually or semi-annually). They are a source of power and insight, of spiritual development and physical purification. The true value of such a spiritual exercise is often not recognized until long after the actual period of voluntary asceticism is over. The spiritual exercise is a valuable tool for magical training and its importance cannot be stressed enough. That's why we feel it is necessary for every person who is actively following the exercises in this book to undergo such a spiritual exercise.

It will take a total of four weeks. Each week you will be required to give up various things, not for their face value but in order to free you from dependencies of all types. (As so many spiritual schools across most cultures have pointed out for centuries if not millennia, more often than not there's hardly any difference between "possessing" something and being "possessed" by it—which, essentially, is a state of affairs no freedom-loving magician should be prepared to tolerate.) Later, after you've gained some experience with such spiritual exercises, you'll be able to develop your own.

During this spiritual exercise, you should meditate daily on Saturn. By now you should already be familiar with at least the basic principles that this planet embodies. Use the symbol for Saturn that's depicted in Illustration 6. Furthermore, on every Saturday you should perform a Saturn ritual and meditate for three hours on its principles.

During the four-week exercise, you should abstain from the following:

Week one:

- all kinds of sexual indulgence, both physically and mentally

Week two:

- all solid food or, if this is medically not advisable for you, reduce your food intake to half of your usual consumption

Week three:

- all types of stimulants and entertainment (such as drugs, parties, and social gatherings)

#### Week four:

- all types of stimulants and entertainment (such as drugs, parties, and social gatherings)
- all kinds of sexual indulgence, both physically and mentally
- all solid food or, if this is medically not advisable for you, reduce your food intake to half of your usual consumption

Let me explain in more detail:

#### Week one: sexual abstinence

Avoid all sexual activity. This includes autoeroticism as well as heterosexual or homosexual activity, and even sexual fantasies are forbidden. If your sexual drive is aroused, raise this sexual energy mentally along the Governor Vessel while you inhale, and let it flow down the Conception Vessel as you exhale, storing it in your hara when you're finished. Do this until your "ching chi" (sexual energy) subsides completely and your body is filled with a warm, pleasant feeling.

#### Week two: abstinence from solid food

Do not eat any solid food for one week. The only way to avoid this restriction is if you have a valid medical reason that requires you to eat solid food. If (and only if) this is the case, try to eat nothing but wheat bran (with milk or water and a dab of butter or margarine if you want). If this, too, is not recommended by your doctor, then try to at least reduce your food intake to a maximum of one-third of your normal diet and balance this off by increasing your intake of liquids. If possible, avoid physical exertion during this time.

#### Week three: abstinence from stimulants and entertainment

Abstain from all types of stimulants and entertainment for one week. This includes alcohol, caffeine, theine, drugs (except for prescribed medication), stimulants, sleeping pills, and so on. Entertainment and social gatherings of all types should also be avoided, such as parties, cinema, theater, discotheques, clubs, and pubs (with the exception of magical gatherings and group rituals). Withdraw from social contact as much as possible—avoid



television, the radio and phone calls (unless required at work), and all other types of conversation with other people.

Week four: abstain from sexual activity, solid food, stimulants and entertainment

Combine the practices of the first three weeks into one grand finale and abstain from everything for one entire week. Finish off the exercise with a Saturn ritual that should preferably take place on a Saturday during the hour governed by Saturn.

Furthermore, during the entire course of this spiritual exercise, you should meditate three times a day for at least three minutes each time on the principles of Saturn. Perform a Saturn ritual on each Saturday during the hour governed by Saturn.

Other themes for meditation are death, illness, transience, time, and so on.

Expand the spiritual exercise according to your own taste, e.g., with regular trips to the cemetery and visits to sick people, contemplation on the role that time plays in your life and objects used to measure time (clocks, bus schedules, etc.). Try to ensure that you have a regular daily routine and be economical in your use of time and money. Be extremely meticulous during this time, especially when it comes to what you wear and eat. Move slowly and deliberately, and turn walking into a type of meditation. This is also a suitable time for offensive or defensive magical operations for death or destruction, but also for coming to terms with everything that's excessive and how to eliminate this excess waste. Eliminate as much excess baggage in your life as you can and don't try to avoid the typical Saturnian harsh consequences that may result from this. Instead, pay more attention to Saturnian correspondences such as the number three, the metal lead, the colors black and brown, and so on.

On Saturdays, the first and eighth hours of daytime are governed by Saturn. This is calculated as follows:

1 daytime hour (DH) = time of sunset (SS) minus time of sunrise (SR) divided by twelve

-1 DH = (SS - SR) / 12

Therefore:

-the first daytime hour begins at SR and ends at (SR + DH)

-the eighth daytime hour begins at (DH x 7) + SR and ends at (DH x 8) + SR

On Saturdays, the third and tenth hours of nighttime are governed by Saturn as well. This is calculated as follows:

1 nighttime hour (NH) = the length of time between sunset (SS) on the day of the ritual until midnight plus the time of sunrise (SR) on the following day divided by twelve

-NH = [(24 - SS) + SR the following day] / 12

Therefore:

-the third nighttime hour begins at (NH x 2) + SS and ends at (NH x 3) + SS

-the tenth nighttime hour begins at (NH x 9) + SS and ends at (NH x 10) + SS

You can check the times of sunrise and sunset in your local newspaper, or ask at the local observatory or an airport. Remember that when calculating time, you are dealing in units of sixty and not with the more common decimal calculation that uses units of ten.

If for some reason, e.g., due to work obligations, you're not able to perform a ritual at each of the four planetary hours, you can use the following times instead: 3:00 am, 9:00 am, 3:00 pm, 9:00 pm. However, this should only be an exception.

Keep two diaries during the spiritual exercise: (1) continue to write as usual in your magical diary; (2) keep a special diary for this spiritual exercise in which you note the most significant observations, events, and realizations. Write legibly (it would be best to use block letters) using keywords and summarizing the details that you wrote in your magical diary.

I have to point out here that if you choose not to do this spiritual exercise, you're going to run into occasional difficulties with our training program later on because some subsequent practical exercises are based on the experiences that you have during this spiritual exercise.

Also, remember that you are doing this spiritual exercise for only one person on earth—you! It's you who determines the success and value of this truly magical exercise.

So keep your spirits up, don't give up, and good luck! The benefits of this spiritual exercise will speak for themselves in the long run.

# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (I)

## Preliminary Note:

Even if you're not all that interested in mirror magic, we recommend that you read this section carefully since the contents overlap with other areas of magical practice (e.g., ritual magic and the use of magical tools in general). Since we don't want to have to repeat ourselves later, please integrate the following information into your overall knowledge of magic so that you can apply the principles described here to other areas of practice as well.

## **CHARGING THE MAGIC MIRROR**

Some of the classics of magic literature make a big fuss about the "condensers" that are supposed to be used to charge a magic mirror. Franz Bardon was one of the most renowned users of this term, and many other authors copied him and still do. Condensers are solid or liquid substances that are used as a means to store certain types of energy, just like an electric condenser would do. In the case of magical condensers, we primarily mean the subtle energy of the elements. Therefore, we have condensers for air, earth, spirit, and so on.

In Bardon's system of magic, the use of such condensers makes complete sense since his magic is based on the concept of a world that follows the principles of electricity and magnetism. Here we can see the attempt to combine magic and the science of that period, both philosophically and conceptually. Such attempts tend to ruffle the feathers of most scientists since they're usually based on incompetent simplifications, generalizations, and

analogisms that have nothing to do with conventional science. The magician understands “energy” or “magnetism” quite differently than a physicist does, and the alchemistic elements of air, fire, etc., do not correspond to the elements of a chemist. (The same holds true in astrology, by the way, where the zodiac signs are not necessarily identical to the star signs, and symbolic planetary powers cannot be measured by space probes.)

While the scientist views this as nothing but a mix-up of the various reference levels (which he or she often does as well, by the way, for example when he or she chuckles about the fact that chemistry does not recognize earth as an “element”) the traditional magician realizes that he or she needs to have a standard concept of the world in which everything exists in relation to each other if he or she wants to be able to actively shape one’s own destiny. Not until contemporary chaos magic was developed were magicians able to free themselves from this premise for the most part in order to take a different approach (this will be discussed at a later point in this book).

Since we won’t be using Bardon’s technique here for storing the elements, we do not need any condensers for our practical work with the magical mirror. Therefore, we’ll only be discussing the basic concept of condensers in the passage below for better understanding.

### **BARDON’S SYSTEM OF CONDENSERS IN MIRROR MAGIC**

Bardon speaks of “fluid condensers” or “accumulators” that can be charged with electric and magnetic fluid, or with the fluid of the five elements. In keeping with his analogy to electricity, he postulates that various substances have a varying degree of “conductivity” for subtle energies, and he distinguishes between solid, liquid, and aeriform fluid condensers according to their consistency. Many different substances can be used as condensers accordingly, ranging from gold to resins and herbal extracts, to blood, sperm, and incense mixtures.

Furthermore, Bardon distinguishes between universal condensers made of simple substances, and compound condensers that are considered to be more powerful. Every liquid condenser contains gold in the form of soluble gold chloride (*Aurum chloratum*). But even homeopathic tinctures with a potency of D1–D3 can be used in the form of *Aurum chloratum*, *Aurum muriaticum*, or *Aurum metallicum* (Bardon was obviously an advocate of high potency homeopathy). (We’ll discuss the rules and possibilities of magical homeopathy in a later chapter).

However, for mirror magic, Bardon uses a solid condenser. This consists of the seven planetary metals as well as coal and resin. Here's the exact recipe:

Solid condenser according to Bardon

lead—one part  
tin—one part  
iron—one part  
gold—one part  
copper—one part  
brass—one part  
silver—one part

aloe resin (*gummiresina aloe*)—one part  
animal charcoal (*carbo animalia*)—three parts  
mineral coal—seven parts

All quantities are volume measurements, not weight measurements (e.g., cm<sup>3</sup>)

The ingredients are pulverized and mixed together well. The fluid condenser is applied to the surface of the magic mirror (the side that you look into) by evenly painting the surface with a thin layer of colorless lacquer; the pulverized condenser is then strewn onto the damp lacquer. The mirror is then put aside until it dries. (Interestingly, Bardon feels that a mirror used only for “optic clairvoyance” does not require any condenser at all.) Nowadays, you can buy magic mirrors with a prefabricated hole in the back of the frame that you can fill with your condenser. While Bardon's method is similar to photography (just like the special surface coating on photographic paper that captures the images), this system is more appropriate to the concept of a mirror (special backside coating that reflects the images).

Other magicians, on the other hand, recommend ritually decorating the frame of the mirror with magical symbols instead of using a condenser; for a mirror with a black frame, these symbols are usually painted in silver or white, but occasionally in red or green as well. The choice of symbols is entirely up to the magician. Generally a personal glyph is used (e.g., a sigil of one's magical name that is designed using the word

method), as well as the traditional symbols for the planets and the elements, or other sigils (also designed using A. O. Spare's word method) in order to enhance the magician's work with the mirror. In principal, both the condensers as well as the symbols and sigils serve the purpose of sending the subconscious mind a signal when they are viewed that will trigger the corresponding reaction (e.g., clairvoyance, astral travel, etc.).

The mirror is then charged ritually; for example if the mirror is to be used for intuitively viewing events that geographically take place somewhere else, a moon ritual can be used, or a ritual involving the planetary principles of Mercury (insight, wisdom, awareness). In the same way, the elements of air or water can also be used, or a mixture of various energies that are applied, however, in separate charging procedures. In the case of the latter, proceed as described above in earlier paragraphs.

Here's one example of such a multiple charging procedure (spread out over a period of five weeks):

1. moon ritual
2. Mercury ritual
3. water ritual
4. air ritual
5. sigil work (using sex magic)

In this example, the last operation would be the climax of the entire procedure to seal off its effectiveness. Instead of the procedure mentioned above, the magician could also perform four moon rituals (at new moon, full moon, and during the two crescent moons), which would give the mirror a more divinatory touch. Charging with Mars energy, on the other hand, would make the mirror suitable for combat magic.

It's important to realize that the magician must learn to use the correspondences and analogies that best fit his or her personal needs. This holds true not only for the actual classification of correspondences (e.g., the individual allocation of metals to the planets, etc.), but also—and above all—to their use. So you have to decide for yourself what the focus of your magic mirror should be, and what principles it should embody.

By the way, many magicians use different mirrors for different purposes. Thus, they may create a mirror for healing, another for divination or skrying work, one for love spells, etc. I generally recommend this over a single, "all-purpose" mirror, especially for

psychological and symbol-logical reasons. In the same way that no one tool can be an excellent hammer, screwdriver, and chisel all at the same time, the magician should go to all lengths to collect a versatile and extensive range of special magical tools, just like a good carpenter would. Only the experienced initiate, the “master of the empty hand” who needs no tools at all, will be able to get along sufficiently with just a few universal instruments.

But there’s a modern school of magic that doesn’t charge any of their weapons or instruments at all anymore. Instead, charging occurs automatically through use of the equipment itself. With repeated use, the nature of the magical weapon is imprinted into the subconscious mind in the same way that one can only learn to use a hammer by actually using it. Although I feel it important to mention this approach here, I certainly don’t recommend it, especially for magicians who just want to avoid the extra work of having to charge their tools. After all, representatives of the same school require that all of their magical tools be handmade in order to truly be efficient!

One method for checking to see if a magical weapon has been sufficiently charged is to see if it appears in your own dreams. If it does, this is a clear sign that your subconscious mind has integrated the weapon and is ready to work with it.

We can also check the charged status of a magical weapon with the magic gaze (180° gaze), with a pendulum, or by testing the energy with your hands. In the end, the quality of its activation can only be judged by how effectively it actually works.

Don’t be disappointed if you’re not happy with the results of your mirror magic or if you don’t seem to get any results at all. You just might not be cut out for this type of work. Even in magic, there are specialists who might excel in one area, yet function below average in others. However, only persistent practice will be able to show whether you have any kind of talent in a certain area of magical practice or not, and whether any further efforts on your part would prove successful. But this is not necessarily a permanent situation. Sometimes it will take years before you notice your progress, even long after you’ve given up all hope of ever being good. Some skills take a long time to improve and are the product of a lengthy development process. But this, too, will only be noticeable when you continue to try. In the same sense, it’s even possible that you may temporarily or even permanently lose some of your current skills. For this reason alone, every magician should aim at becoming as versatile as possible in order to have other alternatives open in times of emergency.



## MIRROR MAGIC: FIELDS OF APPLICATION

We've already mentioned that mirror magic can be used for many more things than literature often reveals. Here you'll find a short overview of the most important fields of application of mirror magic. This list is certainly not complete and some areas may even overlap. After all, the various disciplines of magic often go hand in hand with one another.

- astral travel
- divination (clairvoyance in particular)
- storing energy
- evocation
- exorcism (especially for the construction of spirit traps)
- influencing others
- healing
- odic charging and de-charging
- charging sigils
- telepathy
- death and destructive magic
- invisibility spells

We'll be discussing the various fields in detail (both in theory and practice) throughout the course of this book, but this short overview should suffice for now. In general, the same applies to the magic mirror as to every other magical weapon—it should be versatile and usable in a variety of different ways. The magic mirror is just one example of the magical tools that you can use that we picked in order to illustrate the basic structures of practical magical work. In other words: There are no limits to your imagination, and throughout the course of magical history, every generation and every single magician has thoroughly explored his or her magical weapons, integrated them into his or her practice, and developed new ways to use these tools while carefully documenting everything for future generations.

# MAGIC AND YOGA (II)

## MEDITATION AND THE CHAKRAS

Later on in this book, we'll be going into more detail about the Indian teachings of the chakras as applied to the various magical elements of tantra. In fact, every Western magician should become familiar with at least the fundamental elements of the Eastern chakra systems during the course of his or her basic training. After all, the practice of meditation is founded for the most part on these chakra systems. That's why we would like to describe the most significant principles of both disciplines here so that we are able to apply them to our practice.

## THE CHAKRAS

The Sanskrit word "chakra" means "something that turns; circle; wheel." When yogis meet together for meditation and instruction, the term "dharma chakra" is often used. There's also the puja chakra. So you see that the word "chakra" doesn't only refer to energy centers, although that's the kind that we will be discussing here. Since the nineteenth century, however, the word "chakra" has been influenced by Indian-style theosophy and yoga, so that it's now used in Western esotericism exclusively to describe the subtle energy centers. We'll stick to this usage in our book as well.

Most European new-agers are unaware that there are an endless number of different chakra systems in India, Tibet, and China, just to name a few of the main cultural centers where the chakras are taught. (In a similar way, China has many varying systems of

acupuncture in which even the path of the meridians and the position of the acupuncture points differ entirely from one another.) Generally we only hear about the one system that uses seven chakras since this is the system that was popularized (in modified form) by Theosophy. But there are also systems that work with 5, 14, 84, 144, and even more chakras, so it's quite difficult to understand the bitter feuding between the various yoga schools and their endless debates as to whether the sahasrara chakra, for example, is located inside the head or on the surface.

For pragmatic reasons, we'd like to introduce and briefly explain the seven-chakra system here without going into any of the complicated symbolism at this point that is particularly common to the chakra teachings of Indian tantra. In connection with kundalini yoga, tantra and sex magic, however, we'll have to come back to that symbolism.

In short, we can determine that Indian physiology is based on seven main subtle energy centers that are located along the spinal column. These centers are purely of a subtle nature, and it's important to stress that here. Although they are sometimes located near physical organs, they are not identical to these. (To put it in simple terms, "heart chakra" and "heart" are not the same thing!) Although there have been various attempts to equate the chakras with individual glands, the results of these attempts were never very convincing. Similar to the points in Chinese acupuncture, the locations of the chakras cannot be pinpointed anatomically according to schoolbook medicine. Nonetheless, they're understood to be real and effective, which magical practice proves again and again.

According to Indian symbology, each chakra is assigned with a specific lotus blossom, whereby each blossom contains a various amount of petals. In this sense, the sahasrara chakra mentioned above is often referred to as the "thousand-petal lotus," whereas the blossom for the ajna chakra only contains two petals. Each chakra also has a so-called seed syllable, which is used to activate the energy center. There's a whole lot of speculation and mystical talk about the philosophy of the chakras, which shouldn't concern us yet.

Apart from that, the difficult Sanskrit names of the chakras are generally quite confusing to the average person so that we generally refer to them by their anatomical position, such as the "throat chakra."

In order to avoid making things more complicated than they need to be, please see the table in Illustration 7 for a list of the Sanskrit names, the common anatomical terms

in English, the seed syllables, and the number of lotus petals. You should try to memorize these correspondences as soon as possible since they'll keep popping up again and again in literature on Eastern-influenced magic, and that's a good majority of it!

For clarity, Illustration 8 shows the position of the main chakras in the human body along with the minor chakras located in the feet, knees and hands, which you'll find mentioned frequently in literature as well.

<i>The chakras (seven chakra system)</i>			
Sanskrit name	anatomical term	seed syllable	# of lotus blossoms
muladhara chakra	root chakra	LAM	4
svadhista chakra	sacral chakra	VAM	6
manipura chakra	solar plexus	RAM	10
anahata chakra	heart chakra	YAM	12
vishuddhi chakra	throat chakra	HAM	16
ajna chakra	third eye chakra	OM	2
sahasrara chakra	crown chakra	all	1000

*Illustration 7: The seven main chakras and their correspondences*

The chakras are counted from bottom to top (root chakra = 1). So if we refer to the fifth chakra, we're talking about the throat chakra. In this system, all except the seventh chakra are located on the spinal column.

The root chakra is sometimes called the "sexual chakra." It's located on the perineum between the anus and the sexual organs and forms the base of the spinal column.

The sacral chakra is located slightly above the first chakra on the sacrum at roughly the level of the sexual organs.

The solar plexus is located just below the sternum.

The heart chakra is located just as the name says, at the level of the heart.

The throat chakra is located just slightly below the throat.

The third eye chakra is located at the level of the brow. It sits on the pineal gland, roughly two inches behind the forehead at the spot between your eyes.

The crown chakra (or “thousand-petal lotus”) is not located in the body itself, but rather directly above the top of the head on an imaginary line extending from the spinal column.

sahasrara

ajna

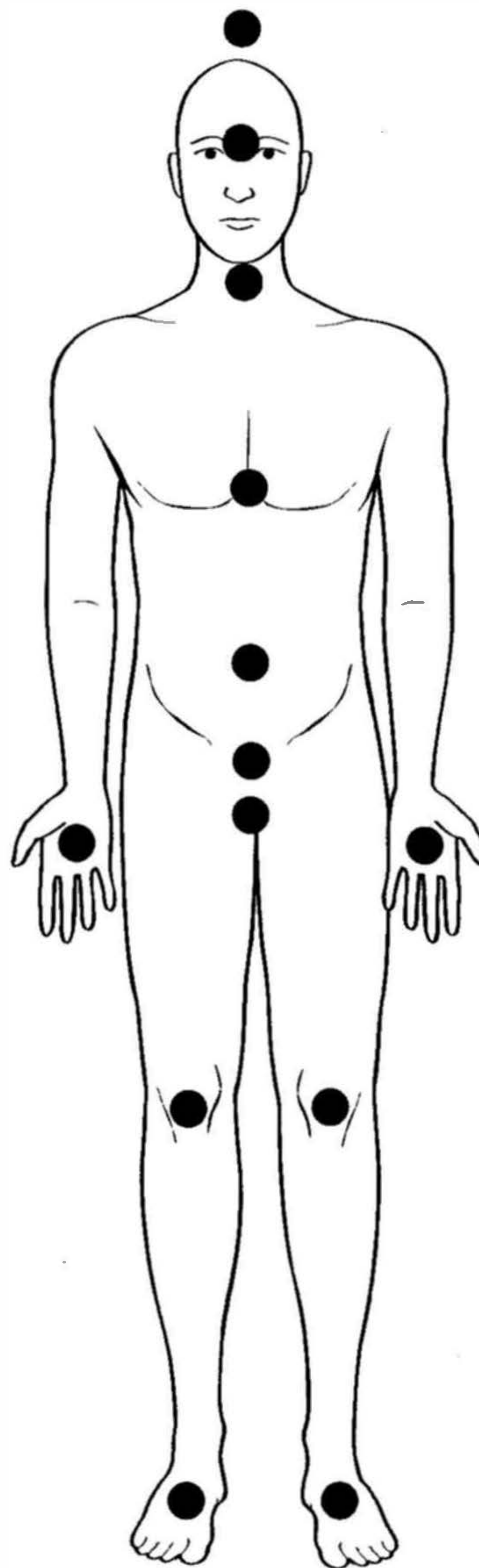
vishuddi

anahata

manipura

svadhistana

muladhara



crown chakra

third eye chakra

throat chakra

heart chakra

solar plexus

sacral chakra

root chakra

*Illustration 8: The chakras in the body*

Don't be surprised if you see other arrangements (e.g., the heart chakra located far left of the vertical line), especially among the more theosophically influenced authors. In his magical letters, Gregor A. Gregorius, who works with a system of fourteen chakras, differentiates between an "intuitional" and a "crown" chakra (the latter lies on the physical top of the head within the body), as well as between a "coccyx" and a "root" chakra.

So what is the importance of the chakra system in relation to our magical practice? Before we can understand this, we first need to become acquainted with the basics of meditation, which we'll discuss in the next subsection.

But first, let's talk about a few things that will shed some light on these meditation techniques. This includes the principle of kundalini that we've mentioned frequently before.

The kundalini (or kulakundalini) is the subtle vital force in humans. It rests—symbolically coiled like a rolled-up snake—in the root chakra, which is why it's often referred to as the "snake force." It blocks the entrance to the sushummna, which is a passageway leading vertically up the spinal column. In addition to this, there are two other passageways, the "ida" (female, moon channel) and the "pingala" (male, sun channel) that snake their way spirally up the middle pillar (sushummna) like the staff of Aesculapius, all the way to the nostrils.

The kundalini is more than just your usual type of subtle energy. According to Indian teachings, it's the embodiment of life itself. The act of "awaking" the kundalini, directing it upward along the sushummna, and uniting it with the thousand-petal chakra is equivalent to the union of Shiva and Shakti, of male and female, of yin and yang. It's this inner alchemy that leads to enlightenment and seemingly inexhaustible creativity because Shiva and Shakti (according to tantric teachings) join to form Brahman, which is the highest form of consciousness. In turn, achieving this state is considered the highest goal of kundalini yoga.

On its way up toward the sahasrara chakra, the kundalini in turn awakens the other individual chakras, purifying it with its "fire." (When this chakra is opened, it often really does feel like a burning sensation.) In general, the chakras vary in how pure or "open" they are, and a person's stage of development can actually be measured according to how wide his or her chakras are open. For example, a person who focuses on his or her sexual chakra will indulge in a healthy sexual appetite; a person who has developed his or her heart chakra will seemingly bubble with universal love (although we do not necessarily agree with this categorization or the moral judgment of values that automatically goes along with it, we still feel it is necessary to at least mention it here in order to remain objective).

We'll be working more with the chakras later on when we discuss healing techniques since they present a widespread, generally accepted, and relatively useful reference system with which we can define and treat sicknesses and other disruptions within a clear framework of symbols.

In conclusion, we should also point out that the various different chakra systems do not pose any practical problems to the pragmatic magician. After all, we're not interested in the supposed "objectivity" of the various correspondences, but rather in their practical application. Like Karl Marx supposedly once said: "The truth is whatever leads to success."

## **MEDITATION**

After so much theory, we'd like to get back to practice now. For the time being, forget the above information on chakras and practice the following meditation technique unimpeded by any references to other systems or forms of organization instead. Read the following paragraphs up until the Exercise section thoroughly first—then go ahead and get started!

However, there are a few guidelines that you should adhere to for successful meditation:

- Practice on an empty or half-empty stomach.  
(last food intake at least two to three hours beforehand)
- No alcohol  
(for at least four hours prior to meditation, or better none at all)
- Practice in an undisturbed environment  
(roughly twenty to thirty minutes per session)
- Practice at least once a day, two times would be better yet  
(There's no point at all in practicing just once a week!)
- If possible, practice at set, regular times.

### **Imagination**

Sit in the half-lotus or lotus posture. Close your eyes and breathe easily and relaxed. (No forced deep breathing!)

Draw your attention to the fact that you are sitting on planet earth with the universe all around you. Try to make this perception as real as possible. Don't worry if you cannot actually visualize this, a mere "feeling" or "sensation" is fine as long as it's clear and

distinct. This will help you to automatically turn off all distracting external noise and lose the sense of your physical body. (This will take a bit of practice though.)

Once you've reached this level of concentration, imagine a point of light penetrating your right big toe from the outside. Feel it rise up your leg until it reaches your perineum (muladhara chakra).

Next, imagine a second point of light penetrating your left big toe and rising slowly up your leg to your perineum. There, the two points of light will unite and therefore increase slightly in size.

Take the time to feel this point of light in your perineum.

Now allow the point of light to travel slowly up your spinal column. Don't try to feel or sense any of the chakras at this stage, it's not part of this exercise! Instead, let the point of light glide slowly upward, first to the navel region, then to your chest, up to the heart level, then to the neck, and finally to the middle of the head (the point stays on the spinal column the entire way).

Now slowly guide the point of light vertically to the spot right between your eyebrows, parallel to the ground (at a ninety-degree angle to your body).

Now breathe easily yet firm, but without having to exert yourself. Always breathe through your nose, if possible.

In your mind's eye, you should now see nothing but light.

Now feel the planet earth dissolving beneath you—very slowly!

Then feel your body dissolving as well—very slowly!

Now you are nothing but light.

Once you've reached this stage, begin with the mantra below.

### **THE MEDITATION MANTRA**

For this meditation, use the following two-syllable mantra:

HAM SO

(Practice pronouncing this mantra out loud before implementing it into your meditation. It should have a strong nasal intonation, and sound more like "HONNNGGG SSSOOHH." To practice, you can recite it while holding your nose shut. When you're finished practicing, however, you should never again vibrate the mantra out loud. During meditation, vibrate it silently to yourself.)



Coordinate the mantra with your breathing. Silently vibrate HAM while inhaling, and SO while exhaling. In doing so, don't attempt to adhere to a certain breathing pattern, just breathe free and naturally. The deeper you are in meditation, the shallower your breathing will become.

Once you've properly coordinated the mantra with your breathing, feel the light that makes up your body as well and with every repetition of the mantra, be consciously aware of its meaning:

I AM—INFINITY!

Just to avoid any misunderstandings: The meaning of the mantra is not vibrated like the mantra itself. Instead, it remains in the background of your awareness while you breathe and recite the mantra, while at the same time dissolve in the light. (After your second or third attempt at latest, you'll understand exactly how this is supposed to work. It's really quite simple!)

When you're ready to end the meditation, first draw your attention and awareness to your body and then to yourself sitting on the planet earth. Then stretch your body a bit and open your eyes.

The meditation should take at least twenty minutes (if necessary, set an alarm clock), and there are no upper time limits.

The important thing is that you perform each phase thoroughly. It's not important to try and vibrate the mantra for the longest time possible—neglecting the other phases of this exercise is a big mistake that will have a negative outcome on the overall results.

## **WARNING**

Do not perform this meditation if:

- you've taken drugs or are intoxicated
- you have a fever

Violating these rules can have devastating psychological effects, ranging from uncontrollable hallucinations to psychotic fits, if so predisposed. (You really don't want to find out the hard way if this is the case!) If you adhere to them, however, this meditation is completely safe. Otherwise, be relentless in your practice!

Practice every day for at least six months!

We'll be discussing the basic structures of meditation in the next section, but first you should get in a little bit of meditation practice. Then we'll explain the significance and the actual goal of this infinity meditation. Just a word in advance: With this meditation, you can greatly increase your magical perception and sensitivity to subtle energy as long as you practice on a regular basis.

Illustration 9 shows the path that the points of light should travel.



*Illustration 9: The infinity meditation (path followed by the points of light)*

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### **EXERCISE 50**

#### **PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (I)**

Get a magic mirror, or better yet, make one yourself. Think carefully about how you're going to prepare it and allow yourself plenty of time. We'll begin our practical work with the magic mirror in the next section. By then, you should have already started to charge your mirror. As mentioned above, you can either charge it in one specific operation, or you can start with a whole series of charging operations.

### **EXERCISE 51**

#### **THE INFINITY MEDITATION**

Practice the infinity meditation as described above. Be hard on yourself if you have difficulties with it—in just a few weeks you'll recognize the value of this

exercise and never even want to stop! The effort that you put into it now will pay off twice and three times as much in the long run.

By the way, being tired or sick are not valid excuses for not practicing (with the single exception of having a fever as mentioned in the warning note above). When performed properly, your need for sleep will reduce significantly in just a short time so that the time involved doing the meditation will more than pay off.

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### FURTHER READING

Although there's not a lot of literature available on the subject of mirror magic that can be applied to modern practice, we'd nonetheless like to mention two titles that could be helpful.

Gregor A. Gregorius, in his essay "*Spiegel- und Kristall-Magie*" taken from his book *Magische Briefe*

This book is of mere historical interest since it's full of unnecessary dogmatic regulations (ranging from breathing and concentration exercises to periods of fasting) that have nothing to do at all with mirror magic. Nevertheless, it's worth paging through this article since it conveys the typical approach to magic in Germany in the 1920s. The practical exercises, on the other hand, are of very little value.

Nigel R. Clough, *How to Make and Use Magic Mirrors*

Clough, in the style common to British pragmatic magic, dedicates nearly half of his book (of sixty pages) to making your own magic mirror. In particular, this includes the technique of casting a mirror with synthetic resins and making one out of paper mâché. Furthermore, he discusses condensers à la Bardon and gives concise yet enlightening information on trance techniques and the various uses of the magic mirror.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing this book is out of print but you might be able to obtain it from an antique book dealer.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Franz Bardon, *Initiation into Hermetics*

Gregor A. Gregorius, *Die magische Erweckung der Chakra im Äther-Körper des Menschen*

# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (II)

## USE OF THE MAGIC MIRROR (I)

### Positioning and Lighting

If you use your magic mirror for divination, the lighting should be soft, indirect, and not too bright. Candles will only work if there's no draft to make the flames flicker. When you sit in front of the mirror, on a chair, or on the floor, the light source should be placed behind the mirror or behind your back without glaring. We recommend keeping the rest of the room dark.

Place the mirror (either in a stand or propped up) so that you can stare comfortably at the middle of the concave surface for a long period of time.

## DIVINATION WITH THE MAGIC MIRROR

The literal meaning of divination is the art of seeing into the future, but this term is also used in a more general sense to mean perceiving things beyond the normal realm of time and space. In this wider sense, the magician can, for instance, also see past events or overcome distance to view present situations, such as observing a person who is physically not present. The commonly used term "clairvoyance" may literally be correct, but it has disadvantages as well. First of all, it's usually used in the sense of "seeing into the future," although this type of perception doesn't always involve optical "seeing"—perception of this type can occur by feeling or hearing things as well. (Of course, we have

the same problem with the Latin term *divinatio*, which is generally understood to mean fortunetelling and prophecy.)

In any case, note that you can use the magic mirror to see into the past, present, or future. The basic techniques are always the same in each case, only the goals are different.

Let's look at the magic mirror first as an instrument for seeing into the future. It's used similar to a crystal ball, which is an instrument that's not very common to ritual or active practical magic.

Every type of divination requires that a question be asked. The magician asks a question that he or she wants to receive an answer to. This is often more difficult than you might think. First, the magician must be aware of the fact that the magic mirror can only reply to a question that can be answered figuratively. Questions that require a yes or no answer are therefore useless. "Will I get the promotion?" will not elicit an accurate answer.

The same holds true for suggestive questions that already imply a specific answer, leaving no scope for alternatives. For example, the question "When will I get my promotion?" per se excludes the possibility that you might not get any promotion at all.

Questions that are too precise violate our symbol-logical fuzzy relation and such questions can often not be answered with images, with few exceptions. The same applies to questions about times or numbers. Although you might receive a figurative answer that makes sense to such questions on occasion, the results are usually notoriously imprecise.

Questions that are too vague, on the other hand, will also bring poor results. Questions such as "How can I find happiness?" or "How can I find true love?" are usually not specific enough. Such questions reflect your own uncertainty about the question and it's recommended (not only for magical reasons) to put them into more concrete terms.

Questions with an incalculable time span are pointless as well. If you ask the oracle what your magical development will be like over the next thirty years, don't be surprised if you get confusing and inaccurate results.

The same holds true for questions that go beyond the scope of your own personal influence. This rule is often violated, even by professional fortunetellers! Asking about (the next!) end of the world, or the world's political situation, or the next stage in evolution will only lead to silly answers. Only rarely will you find a highly sensitive person who can gather halfway useful information about such things, but this is truly an exception, and the countless number of false predictions that have been published in this

sense are proof of this. You should only ask about things that involve your direct range of influence or that of the person whom you are asking for. Later on when we discuss the magic sword, you'll see exactly what we mean by this.

Instead, we recommend that all of your questions be based on the "how" principle. For examples: "How will my job situation develop over the next six months?" "How should I act when confronting my boss?" and so on.

"What" questions work well too: "What's the real cause of my illness?" "What should I do about my job?" "What types of things should I avoid in my job?" Similar questions will work too: "What possibilities do I have to advance my career?" and so on.

As you can see, the art of divination requires the magician to rely a good deal on his or her instinct and common sense. Here, too, there are no specific rules and experience will be your best teacher.

For every act of divination, you should write down the question and response along with the exact date (time of day and even the position of the sun and moon, for magicians with astrological skills). Leave room for adding notes at a later date and check the results on a regular basis.

The above holds true for all types of picture oracles, so there will be no need to go into more detail on that later. The following list summarizes the types of questions that you should avoid in picture divination:

- yes/no questions
- suggestive questions
- questions that are too precise
- questions that are too vague
- questions with a long time frame
- questions that go beyond your own personal sphere of influence and experience

Once you've worded your question properly (this may often take twice as long as the actual act of divination), sit in front of your mirror with your eyes closed and relax. Breathe deeply a few times, but without straining yourself. Now ask your question out loud, repeating it clearly several times. Then open your eyes and stare at the middle of your magic mirror using the 180° gaze. Don't strain to recognize images, and don't project any of your own into the mirror—just observe your breathing while you stare and

repeat the question in the back of your mind like a mantra, over and over again. Don't force anything, and don't put any pressure on yourself to succeed.

If images do appear in the mirror after a time, just calmly take notice of them—don't get all excited or pass out in shock! Simply register the images and remember everything. Don't try to analyze the images to get an answer at this time—you'll have time for that later.

Of course, the images in the mirror will not necessarily be of a visual nature. For example, you might smell or taste them instead. Especially in the beginning, you'll more likely "sense" things, and with more experience, the images will become clearer and more precise.

When the images begin to fade or disappear, or if you have the feeling that you've already received an answer, then close your eyes and reflect on the impressions for a few minutes before you stretch your arms and legs, open your eyes, and write down the key notes. (You can also try to draw the images; even a vague sketch can help.)

Then, once you've become detached enough from the operation, try to interpret the images in relation to your question. This can be quite tricky sometimes, but practice makes perfect!

Some magicians strictly disapprove of such unceremonial procedures. In particular, many older authors require the initiate to perform every act of divination within a ceremonial framework, even requiring them at times to conjure certain demons before awaiting an answer. However, in modern practice, this has proved to be completely unnecessary, and even detrimental at times. If you read the internal documents authored by the leaders of famous magical orders in the past (from Crowley to Quintscher and Gregorius), you'll be surprised at how seldom such complicated procedures actually led to useful results. But "old school" magic was never known for its casualness anyway!

From a psychological point of view, it's obvious that a relaxed or even playful atmosphere will aid in the release of unconscious mental impressions as opposed to "ritual stress." Maybe you've noticed that the techniques described here are closely related to dream work. In fact, experience shows that we have better luck with picture oracles if we work with them like we will generally work with dreams since they both involve similar states of consciousness.

Of course, you don't have to blindly accept our opinion without a little healthy criticism. Experiment with divinatory rituals and find out what works best for you. The

only thing you should avoid at this point is the conjuration of demons since this is one of the most dangerous fields of magic and truly a job for experts. That's why we won't deal with this until much later in this book.

### **CHARGING SIGILS WITH THE MAGIC MIRROR**

Since the magic mirror is an ideal point of optical focus, we can use it to spasmodically charge sigils. The sigil is projected into the mirror right after you're finished with the death posture, and then you can banish with laughter as usual. Generally you'll use sigils designed with the word or picture method, but mantric sigils can be used as well, such as words of power that are hurled into the middle of the mirror.

It would be too much work to make a magic mirror just for this purpose, but if you already have one, you can certainly use it to focus your concentration while you recite mantras or mantric sigils.

There's another technique for projecting sigils toward a target using the magic mirror, but we'll discuss that later when we talk about influencing others and the use of magic for causing death and destruction.

Like no other magical weapon, the mirror becomes continually more effective with use. It doesn't matter whether you use it as a link to your subconscious mind that improves with use, or if the instrument itself is charged accordingly. It just matters how you look at things, and both paradigms have their advantages and disadvantages.

Popular superstition believes that after making and charging your magic mirror, the first living creature that looks into it should be an animal (or a small child). This is presumably an ancient shamanic hunting spell or a technique borrowed from atavistic magic. Both animals and children embody a primeval state of being, before the existence of consciousness. This is therefore a symbol-logical key for unlocking your own subconscious mind. Once you've recognized this structure, other more effective methods will become available to you to make your mirror magic a success.

Even today, children are used as mediums in many Eastern countries, especially for mirror divination. In some areas of Iran and North Africa, for example, it's common for the magician to have a small child (who has not yet reached puberty) look into a bowl with black oil in order to view the answers to his or her client's questions. By the way, we have something similar in the Western magic of Abramelin. Obviously, only



children with a special talent are chosen after they have received appropriate training. In any case, maybe this information will spark your interest and inspire you to experiment in your mirror magic with children as well. As long as this doesn't happen against the child's will (or that of its parents) and the work is done in a playful atmosphere, I don't see any problem with these types of experiments. Since the psychological censor in children is still underdeveloped and their perception is undistorted for the most part, they are the ideal candidates for mirror magic.

However, avoid becoming dependent on other mediums (adults or children). That would be a fatal development, which would lead back to the ancient practice in which the magician would find a medium that answers to his or her every whim. Things like that create more problems than advantages because they put a heavy strain on interpersonal relationships. In any case, most magicians reject such uncontrolled medium practices anyway, and rightly so! After all, magic is supposed to free you, and not create unnecessary dependencies.

# MAGIC AND YOGA (III)

## THE STRUCTURES OF MEDITATION (I)

Meditation is a very broad subject that we'll be touching on from time to time throughout the course of this book. In the last section, we introduced one type of meditation that you are strongly encouraged to practice. At this point, we'd like to give a short (yet by no means complete) introduction to the basic structures of meditative practice.

Principally, meditation is understood as a type of centering. Although the Latin term *meditatio* is generally translated as "reflection," it would be more appropriate to say "finding one's center." Centeredness means being able to shut out undesirable outside factors, such as distracting thoughts. What happens afterward depends on the actual type of meditation practiced. (Another form of *meditatio* is "free thinking," in which the thoughts are allowed to wander at will until interesting material finally enters the conscious mind.)

Eastern and Western (Christian) meditation are not the same. While we understand Western meditation to be contemplation on a specific subject, or following a structured train of thought, Eastern meditation is entirely different. From now on, we'll refer to the Western type of meditation as "contemplation" (reflection /introspection). On the other hand, we'll refer to meditation when we talk about techniques and states of consciousness that are mainly (but not exclusively) common to Eastern tradition.

Eastern influenced meditation (dhyana) (as we already know from the information on yoga) is the development of concentration (dharana) and the preliminary step to

superconsciousness. However, for the time being, we don't need to concern ourselves with this aspect. More important is the way in which this transition from concentration to supraconsciousness is technically done.

Principally there are two types of meditation techniques, visual and nonvisual. The infinity meditation described in the last section belongs to the first type, whereas purely observing your breathing in the sense of the Buddhist Satipattana is an example of non-visual meditation. In the same sense, we distinguish between meditation mantras with and without a specific meaning. Our infinity meditation has a specific meaning ("I am infinity"), while mantras of transcendental meditation (e.g., ham, hrim, etc.) are meaningless, or at least regarded as such. Therefore, in transcendental meditation there is no conscious activation of a meaningful mantra.

There's no infallible method for determining which type of meditation is "better." This depends on personal preferences and aversions as well as the actual goal of the meditation itself. Thus, Zen meditation aims at achieving a pure state of empty mind, while the meditation of Kriya yoga strives to obtain a state of ecstasy (samadhi), which (at least in its lower levels) is completely different from the Zen concept of Satori.

A state of empty or quiet mind is, however, the short-term goal of every meditation technique, even of visual meditation. (Just remember Patañjali's definition of yoga.) But there are many different ways of achieving this goal. In visual meditation, for example, we use the mind's natural inclination to create thoughts and images by steering these in a certain figurative direction. Once you've gained a bit more experience with the infinity meditation, you'll realize that near the end of the last phase, you'll automatically reach a state of empty mind that's very close to supraconsciousness. It may be that this state of mind is only achieved for a very short period of time (you should never intentionally strive to reach it!), but don't forget that many schools of Indian yoga measure Samadhi in units (called "kalpas") of 1/24 of a second. The more kalpas the state of samadhi has, the "greater" and "more intense" it naturally is.

For the time being, there's no need to go into depth about nonvisual types of meditation since the first thing on our list is to make progress with the infinity meditation.

So let's take a closer look at the structure of this infinity meditation.

After we've found a comfortable asana, we need to occupy the mind by making it focus on visual images (the earth, your body, the movement of the point of light, etc.). When

we direct the point of light, we're (partially) activating kundalini as we lead it up our spinal column. Once the point of light reaches the ajna chakra, we dissolve the figurativeness by slowly removing the visual images—the earth and your body. In this way, we can technically and symbolically reach “spiritualization” and then activate the mantra along with its meaning (“body becomes mind”). With the imagination of infinity, we finally remove all other types of external sensory perception (Pratyahara) and ideally become the pure idea itself, which—with the proper practice and mental training—automatically leads to a sort of mystical ecstasy.

During the course of my own studies, I've tried more than a dozen different meditation techniques and listened to the opinions of other people as well, and I've come to the conclusion that the infinity meditation is by far the most productive method that brings the fastest results. However, if your own personal experience proves otherwise, ignore this recommendation, but you should practice it for at least six months before you're able to make a substantiated decision.

The high value of the infinity meditation is that it trains the magician's imagination, concentration, mantra techniques, and subtle energy perception all at the same time, while leading to states of consciousness that are both ecstatic and advantageous to your development. In this way, you'll undergo radical personal development and quickly acquire the ability to “automatically” view everyday problems in the right context while establishing a state of inner peace and calm that will have a positive effect on both your physical and mental health. And the infinity meditation is completely neutral from a religious or ideological point of view. Please note that we're not talking about “reflecting on God” or anything similar to that. If you favor a certain image of God, the infinity meditation will only help you to better understand your beliefs, while the atheist will be content to use the term “ecstasy.”



# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (III)

## USE OF THE MAGIC MIRROR (II)

Once again we'd like to point out that the information provided here is not only applicable to mirror magic. This discipline is just one example that is used to illustrate certain magical techniques that apply to other fields as well. Therefore we strongly recommend that you carefully work through this section, even if you don't plan on using a magic mirror in the future. That way we won't have to use up unnecessary space by repeating ourselves.

## STORING ENERGY WITH THE MAGIC MIRROR

Before we begin discussing the storage of energy with the magic mirror, we should remember that the word "energy" within a magical context is principally just an analogy or something that should be understood metaphorically. Magical energy is not the same as the energy that physicists or engineers speak of. Although the word "force" principally means the same, it might be better to use it in a magical context since it doesn't have any scientific connotations associated with it. Even shamans speak of force (or mana). In modern magic, the term "magis" is often used, which basically corresponds to the older terms "od" and "vril." In the early years of the magic energy model (with the emergence of mesmerism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century), the word "magnetism" (or "animal magnetism") was often used, particularly in Bardon's works, for example.

Magis (magical or magically usable energy) is also frequently described as “subtle,” which is meant to express the fact that it cannot be measured or proved with “physical” instruments. In reality, we really don’t know whether this subtle energy is real or not, or if it’s just the sensation of energy. In any case, it’s an undeniable fact that magis is usually perceived as a type of “force.” After all, the energy model has the advantage that it illustrates magical processes, therefore making it easier to follow them. However, we shouldn’t make the mistake of going too far and confusing magical energy with physical energy, as sometimes happens today in the field of parapsychology.

In any case, it would take an intellectual acrobat to understand the concept that it really doesn’t matter whether the magician charges an object with a type of measurable or provable “energy,” or if he or she “only” creates a link in his subconscious mind to a certain process that acts as a sort of “dynamic anchor.” If we take a look at Spare’s Freudian-like model, for example, no energy charging actually takes place. Instead, a certain complex is intentionally established in the magician’s subconscious mind that triggers unconscious compulsory actions that are meant to bring about the desired result. Nonetheless, as already mentioned, we usually do feel something that could be described as power or energy during a magical act, which is why we’ll stick to this common metaphor for the time being. Later on, when we talk about contemporary cyber magic, we’ll be straying away from the energy model a bit and focusing instead on the various hypotheses about information theory, which give magic an entirely new quality.

So, once again, even if we’re not talking about “real” energy here, we would still recommend pretending that it really does exist because this model is necessary according to common magical understanding for our practice of magic to work, and because it offers a well-founded and fairly satisfactory intellectual explanation at the same time. Once again, we’re dealing with a mythical truth rather than a scientific one.

The magic mirror has one important task in its function as a tool for storing energy. This was already pointed out in the section on Bardon-like condensers. The purpose of a condenser is, among other things, to turn the mirror into a kind of “magical battery.” Of course, the magic mirror is not the only battery of this type that is known to magic. Talismans, amulets, fetishes, and even our ritual weapons as well as all other power objects all store energy. The special thing about the magic mirror is that, due to its parabolic form, it’s the perfect tool for emitting energy that’s been (symbolically) stored in it. This is especially practical in magic used for healing and destruction as well as for

influencing others. To use a more modern example, imagine the mirror as being like a laser pistol or ray gun that can also be used to perform “astral surgery.”

In order to be able to do a job like this, however, the mirror has to be charged properly first. We’ve already discussed how to do this in general, but it might be worth it to charge your mirror with a special kind of energy that’s chosen just for the specific purpose. For a healing operation, for example, you could direct the corresponding energy into your mirror during a Mercury ritual. This energy could be transferred using your hands like this: Once you’ve sufficiently invoked the Mercury principle, shake the absorbed energy out of your hands with jerky movements and direct it toward the middle of the mirror while exhaling forcefully with each jerk. This can also be imagined at first, but later it should be perceived as a real “electric” procedure. When you’re finished, set aside your mirror (preferably by covering it or wrapping it up) and proceed with the rest of the ritual.

You also can make an anger or curse fetish with your mirror, the kind that’s used in combat or destructive magic. This will only rarely take place during a ritual since the technique of constant repetition is important here. Instead of repressing feelings of anger and hate, the magician hurls them into the mirror (this can even be done from a distance, without the mirror actually being physically present), for example with a loud battle cry and a strong hand gesture thrown in the direction of the mirror. The angry energy thrown at the mirror can either be directed at a specific person, or general feelings of rage can just be stored for later use. After charging (this should, as already mentioned, take place several times), you should banish the operation with hearty laughter. Another form of storing energy with the magic mirror is odic de-charging, which we’ll be talking about next.

### **ODIC CHARGING, ODIC DE-CHARGING, AND HEALING WITH THE MAGIC MIRROR**

Odic charging and the above-mentioned technique for storing energy are basically the same, which is why there’s no need to discuss it again here. But you should remember the phrase “odic charging” (if you’re not familiar with it already) since it’s mentioned frequently in magic literature. Of course, you can odically charge other things besides



your magic mirror. In fact, you can charge just about anything with magical energy, as long as you work within the framework of the energy model.

Odic de-charging with the magic mirror is (next to divination and evocation) one of its most popular functions. It can be used for both healing and destruction, but also for subtly cleansing magical objects of a questionable origin. Generally, running water is used to odically de-charge a magical object. This is done by holding the object for a while under running water while at the same time imagining how all of the undesirable energies are being washed away. Magicians who know how to use a pendulum can use it to test the level of charging before and after odic de-charging.

However, this method is not always very practical, for example with perishable or water-sensitive objects such as food, paper, cloth, leather, and so on. Plus, it might be wise to store the extracted energy for later use instead of just wasting it, which is usually the case when water is used for odic de-charging. (An exception is when the water is collected and magically reprocessed.) With mirror magic, always keep in mind the following statement:

#### THE MAGIC MIRROR CAN BOTH ABSORB AND EMIT ENERGY

Once you've understood this concept, you can easily think of other ways to use the magic mirror. Since we try to reinforce or anchor every act of magic with physical acts and gestures, we usually use our breathing to do so. After all, the Greek word "psyche" that we translate as "soul" actually means "breath," which suggests the close relationship between breathing and psychological states. More on this later when we discuss pranayama.

Here, too, the law of symbol-logic applies. If we want to extract energy from the magic mirror or any other object or living creature, we do it while inhaling. If you want to transfer the energy to a new storage tank, we encourage this with the proper visualization while exhaling. The subtle energy is actually emitted while exhaling, though, and while inhaling it's just concentrated or gathered. (We do the same with other magical objects as well, such as rock crystal, homemade fetishes, talismans, amulets, etc.). The following outline should help you remember this.

## THE SYMBOL-LOGIC OF BREATHING

INHALING = ABSORBS

EXHALING = EMITS or DISTRIBUTES

Of course, this is just a rule of thumb that can vary in individual cases. In general, though, this rule has proved to be effective in practice and is therefore highly recommended.

Not only inanimate objects can be odically de-charged—plants, animals, and people can be de-charged with the mirror as well. In the case of plants, the magician would do this in order to use its qualities on a subtle level, similar to how things are done in homeopathy or spagyrics. The odic de-charging of animals and people, however, is almost always done for healing or destructive purposes. In this way, we can place a magic mirror on a person to absorb undesirable energy for eliminating pain, or at least alleviating it temporarily. Infections can be slowed, blockages or cramps can be dissolved, and so on. Rock crystal is often used for these purposes as well. After the illness-causing energy is removed, the patient can be radiated with another mirror that is charged accordingly beforehand. In doing so, the healer should coordinate his or her breathing with the patient, along with the appropriate visualization.

Some magicians achieve good results by placing a magic mirror that is charged with an appropriate healing energy (e.g., Venus energy for problems with the kidneys or skin; Mars energy for problems with sexuality, genitals, and muscles; sun energy for heart and circulation problems; and so on) under the bed of the sleeping patient in order to be able to radiate the patient over a longer period of time. Just compare the astromedical correspondences that we'll be discussing in more detail in the next section. In this case, too, the process should be initiated with a lengthy phase of breath coordination, or "initialization" as it's called in specialist terminology.

Mirrors used for odic de-charging or reflecting are sometimes employed to disrupt field lines that are considered to be health hazards (e.g., water lines), but this is a specialty of magical radiesthesia that we'll unfortunately not be able to cover in this book.

## TELEPATHY WITH THE MAGIC MIRROR

Another very fascinating way to use the magic mirror is to conduct telepathic experiments with it, and if you're successful, it can develop into a good way of regularly communicating with other magicians who are physically far apart from one another. However, in order to be able to do this, lots of thorough practice is necessary for the following four reasons. First, using telepathy for such specific tasks requires keenly developed subtle energy perception. Second, telepathic perception is strongly dependent on the magician's current frame of mind and general state of health. Third, this type of telepathy requires keenly developed thought control so that real messages are not mixed or confused with pieces of thoughts. And four, a good deal of telepathic communication occurs in pictures and symbols that are often even more difficult to interpret than dreams, so that the magician needs to have plenty of experience before he or she can rely on the telepathic messages received.

There are no generally applicable rules for working telepathically with the magic mirror. In this area, each magician just has to develop his or her own individual style. Nonetheless, we'd like to give you a few practical tips and suggestions that you can use as a basis for further experimentation and practice.

Obviously, telepathy requires two participants: the transmitter and the receiver. During true telepathic communication, the two participants will be both transmitter and receiver at the same time. However, parapsychological research has revealed that telepathic talents are often distributed unequally, meaning that some people find it easier to receive than to transmit, and vice versa. At first it's better to work with one specific partner instead of a whole group of telepaths unless you're working on extensive, long-term projects. The latter has the advantage that it seems to work better, at least temporarily, as long as the experiments take place in a playful, stress-free atmosphere. That's because of the so-called "hysteria effect" that occurs more frequently in large groups than in ones with fewer participants.

For the following experiment, you and your partner should each have magic mirrors that have been charged in an identical fashion. (Charging both mirrors together is highly recommended for mirrors used for telepathic experiments.) First, arrange a time and place with your partner to practice. We recommend working fairly close together at

first, for example with your partner sitting in the next room, because it's easier to check the results and coordinate the operation this way. Not until later, once you're accustomed to working together, should you increase the distance so that, for example, each person can work at home in his or her own temple. However, even in the beginning you should not be able to physically see your partner. If you're not able to work in separate rooms, you should at least erect a makeshift partition such as a blanket thrown over a clothesline in order to avoid any possible eye contact. In certain situations it might be more practical to maintain constant telephone contact with your partner while experimenting instead of being physically close to each other.

At the agreed time, one of the partners begins transmission. At first don't try to transmit complicated thoughts and sentences; instead, concentrate on relatively simple and nonabstract images, or "inner films." These should definitely be emotional. So in contrast to orthodox parapsychology, we avoid meaningless, abstract symbols such as the Zener cards, because experience has shown that emotional images are more effective for magical or nonscientific experiments. We recommend, for example, sending the recipient an image of an animal atavism (power animal, elemental, etc.) that you've worked with a lot in the recent past. Images with strong emotional ties, such as dangerous situations or pictures of fear or joy, also work well when transmitted in pictorial form.

Here's an example of how an actual telepathic operation could look for the telepathic transmitter and the telepathic receiver.

### **Guidelines for the Telepathic Transmitter**

Sit comfortably in front of your magic mirror after adjusting the light appropriately. Breathe deeply and relax for a few minutes. Now use the 180° gaze and try to "see" your partner in the magic mirror either by actually visualizing him or her or by sensing his or her presence in any other way. It's not vital that you see exactly how your partner looks at this exact time (e.g., clothes or physical surroundings). Instead, it would be more important to establish a sense of being connected ("magical sympathy"), similar to what we sometimes feel when we're half asleep or daydreaming. In fact, this is even better than actually seeing your partner in the mirror since it will eliminate any pressure for success that may cause your mind to create images in an attempt to be successful.

Now, stop focusing on your partner and let the image or series of images that you want to transmit pass before your mind's eye. Usually a series of images will achieve better results than a single symbol. Thus, you could review a particularly pleasant vacation experience or a car accident that you witnessed, like a daydream. Don't think about your partner or the process of transmitting the message, only focus on the images! Once you've done this sufficiently, open your eyes and try to see the same series of images in your magic mirror. This should be done until you've created a conscious magical hallucination. Even now, don't think about your partner or the telepathic transmission! When you're finished, close your eyes, breathe deeply and relax for a few moments, open your eyes, and visualize (or sense) your partner in the mirror again, just like at the beginning of the experiment. Then banish the whole operation with loud, hearty laughter and distract yourself for a while with things that have nothing to do with magic, or mirror magic in particular. You should wait at least ten minutes before checking the results, if this is even possible at all.

### **Guidelines For The Telepathic Receiver**

Sit comfortably in front of your magic mirror after adjusting the light appropriately. Breathe deeply and relax for a few minutes. Now use the 180° gaze and try to "see" your partner in the magic mirror, either by actually visualizing him or her or by sensing his or her presence in any other way. It's not vital that you see exactly how your partner looks at this exact time (e.g., clothes or physical surroundings). Instead, it would be more important to establish a sense of being connected ("magical sympathy") similar to what we sometimes feel when we're half asleep or daydreaming. In fact, this is even better than actually seeing your partner in the mirror since it will eliminate any pressure for success that may cause your mind to create images in an attempt to be successful.

Now stop focusing on your partner and establish an inner state of empty mind. Maintain the 180° gaze and be receptive for everything that might appear in the mirror. Don't try to evaluate what you see just yet. Refrain from premature judgments, such as: "No, this image is just too incredible, it probably means..." Don't let your imagination wander and don't invent any interpretations. If you don't see anything at all, just accept that and make a mental note of it. Definitely do not let your impatient imagination wander off out of disappointment or frustration. Usually, the first images you receive are the ones that you're looking for, like when you're half asleep or just before you fall

asleep or right after you wake up. By the way, we recommend that you write down what you see in the form of short keywords or even small sketches. (The latter is often easier than you may think at first and it can preserve the atmosphere of the images received since this may fade when you return to a normal, everyday state of consciousness.) Of course, you don't need to do this immediately; you can at least wait until the experiment is over. But don't wait too long between perception and documentation—five to ten minutes are generally the limit. Don't think about your partner or the process of transmitting the message, only focus on the images!

The entire operation should take no longer than ten to fifteen minutes. In the beginning, even shorter periods of practice are recommended because experience has shown that the untrained telepathic authority gets tired fast, which can cause distorted results.

By the way, I personally do not recommend doing telepathic work with the magic mirror during a ritual, at least not at first. Because such “ritual stress” can lead to sensory overload, this is detrimental to the free and relaxed atmosphere that's necessary for transmitting, receiving, and deciphering telepathic messages. In any case, you should still at least experiment with ritual operations because they might work better for you personally, and it's also a good idea to become acquainted with the qualitative differences of both ritual and nonritual work anyway.

### **Interpreting The Telepathic Message**

The beginner generally likes to imagine telepathy as being similar to a telephone conversation without the telephone, but in reality it's quite different. Although it can happen at times that clear, explicit words and/or sentences are transmitted and correctly received, this is the exception. Whoever intends to achieve this type of communication will be quickly disappointed and give up in despair. Because words are, in most all cases, more or less abstract concepts and are therefore quite difficult to transmit telepathically.

Since the telepathic authority of our psyche seems to be the subconscious mind that thinks and perceives and even expresses itself in images and symbols (as already mentioned), it would seem logical to consider this when working with telepathy. That's why we've been focusing here on images and series of images—they're much easier to transmit accurately.

That brings us to the problem of interpreting such (figurative) telepathic messages. As long as the telepathic operations exclusively take place in an experimental setting and the only goal is to determine if thought transmission works or not, the question of interpretation is irrelevant. On the other hand, for telepathic messages that are not pre-arranged or that are received spontaneously, such as if you try to “tap in” to a certain person with the magic mirror, interpretation is important. (This could be a sort of “astral eavesdropping,” sometimes necessary in combat magic and binding spells, or the tapping into a patient in order to heal him or her from a distance, or other forms of magical influencing from a distance.) Random, spontaneous, or unintentional telepathy rarely happens during mirror magic. Nonetheless, we should at least mention it here. It can happen and it should be dealt with just like all other types of telepathic communication—be critical, but be open to its message.

Interpretation requires good instinct and intuition, and unfortunately there are no straightforward rules that apply. Only constant practice and plenty of experience will show you how to accurately interpret images. It often helps to establish a state of empty mind so that your intuition can surface, allowing it to spontaneously flash you a correct interpretation like a sudden inspiration.

Experience has shown that persistent practice with subtle perception in connection with shamanic practices can (over a period of time) lead to spontaneous telepathy, enabling the magician to correctly interpret telepathically received images almost automatically. However, the following principle applies in most cases: Do not intentionally strive for such spontaneity, but instead adhere to Spare’s concept of “non-interest/non-disinterest.”

By the way, you can support and foster your telepathic skills—as well as other magical operations—with appropriate sigil work.

Never forget that magic is not a science, but rather an art that merely makes use of scientific or empirical methods at times.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 52

#### APPLIED MIRROR MAGIC (I)

By now you should have your own magic mirror and should have at least started charging it. Design your own exercise program for mirror magic based on the information that you've read here so far. Now you should begin applying your personal magic preferences and experience to your practical work. However, please note that it would be unwise to only develop those tendencies that already come easily to you. Avoid creating an imbalance and continue to work in fields that you find especially difficult or that you are uncomfortable with. It doesn't matter whether you begin with divination, sigils, odic charging and de-charging, or telepathy; the important thing here is that you develop your own program in the area that you choose. That way you won't always have to rely on the preferences (and weaknesses) of other "experts." Don't forget that this book is marked by certain characteristics and tendencies as well (namely mine), and in the end, it's up to you to decide what's best for your magic and your development. Up to now, you've had very little leeway for your own ideas, but this freedom will increase as you progress throughout this book. This, of course, is our primary aim: to enable you to liberate yourself from the dogmatic tenets of traditional magic, based on sound, verifiable, and (most importantly) personal experience.

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# MUDRAS (I)

## MUDRAS, GESTURES, AND GOD-FORMS

The word “mudra” is Sanskrit and basically means “holy gesture.” In magic, we understand mudras to be magical hand signs, finger movements, and other dynamic “postures of power,” as the shamans would describe them. Technically speaking, the assumption of god-forms is also a mudric practice, which is why we’re going to start off this section with it. It could just as easily be described as an asana as well, although this term usually has a less dynamic connotation.

Asana is a (yoga) posture that, in addition to its health advantages, serves the purpose of relaxing the body, tranquilizing the mind, and assisting in contemplation and/or meditation. Mudras, on the other hand, may seem just as “static” or immobile to the viewer, but they actually serve to store subtle energy and above all, to direct it. Often both are the case.

There’s a Western tradition of assuming god-forms that is especially popular in ceremonial magic. That’s why we want to deal with these god-forms here first before we go into mudras in a stricter sense later on.

We’re already familiar with the principal of physically anchoring mental states, such as is common to shamanism and the magic of Austin Osman Spare. Magic sigils are etched into the “flesh” of the magician’s will until they physically become a part of his or her organism—in fact, sigil magic could be described as a type of biological coincidence control. We should keep this principle in mind by using the formula below since it contains one

of the most important keys to magical success (see Illustration 10). Please note that the symbol “ $\alpha$ ” represents a proportional relationship. The success of a magical act is directly proportional to the degree of the embodied magical will; in other words, how strong the will has organically (or literally even biologically) become. That will be obvious when we remind ourselves once again of the structure of the psychological model of magic: The stronger that a statement of intent is integrated into the biological organism itself, the more effective it will be. Because by avoiding the immediate influence of the psychological censor, it can work without being hindered. In everyday speech we’ve heard of a person doing something “with every fiber of his or her being,” which literally reflects in this principle.

$$M \propto p_w$$

*Key*

M = magical act / magic / magical success

$p_w$  = degree of physicality (incarnation of the magical will)

*Illustration 10: The third basic formula of magic*

This also explains why shamans and magicians such as Austin Osman Spare place such high value on the work with atavisms (or the early biological stages of human existence), in particular the assumption of animal forms. Because according to common understanding, the difference between man and animal is that man has a consciousness and a conscious will. This is also what gave man supremacy on our planet. On the other hand, an animal’s strength (especially a wild animal’s) is its keen instinct and the sharpness of its unconscious will. Only through trance and an outburst of primeval instincts is a human able to shut off the “civilized” censor, allowing him or her to react blindly like a beast of prey.

The degree of incarnation of the magical will is proportional to the degree of trance applied. Weakening factors are, of course, the awareness of the magical act (which is the same as a weakened trance) as well as the inner resistance to the magical act or its success (see Illustration 11).

$$p_w \propto \frac{g}{a \cdot rl}$$

<i>Key</i>
$p_w$ = degree of physicality (incarnation of the magical will)
$g$ = degree of gnosis
$a$ = awareness of the act
$rl$ = resistance against the act

*Illustration 11: Formula for the incarnation of the magical will*

Shortly we'll be mentioning a few rules of thumb about the way magical sigils work that can be applied to any magical goal or operation. In fact, this is an extension of the sigil concept as defined by Austin Osman Spare himself. He not only describes the sigil as a "monogram of thought," but also as an embodiment (incarnation) of the magical act itself. Please note how often we stress the principle of physicality here! This discovery of Spare's—the significance of which has only been recognized over the last few years (especially during the current boom of practical shamanism)—cannot be emphasized enough. Whoever knows and masters this basic law of magic will be able to achieve magical success in just a few months or years, whereas earlier generations needed years or decades to reach a similar level. Certainly it was for this reason that Western magicians mistakenly considered the magic of native peoples to be especially powerful for hundreds of years (and still do today at times), and that magical systems such as voodoo, juju, Santeria, and so on are superior to occidental systems. Misguided attempts have been made to explain this, but the true secret to successful magic doesn't have anything to do with "especially powerful" magic spells and rituals, "true" correspondences, and "required" race affiliation, but rather with the degree of gnosis applied and the intensity of the biological embodiment of the magical will. Only after the painstaking structural examination of the details that contemporary pragmatic magic has done were we able to see this clearly.

Austin Osman Spare was so convinced that every magical desire can only be realized physically (or as we might more accurately say today, through the psychosomatic complex) that he seriously claimed that the bird species was only able to develop throughout the history of evolution after its desire to fly had become organic.

However, we shouldn't just dismiss this as the naive misunderstanding of a zoological layman (as expert zoologists and biologists might do) by claiming that the concept of "desire" and the predetermined directing of goals are concepts that are entirely unknown to evolution. (In this context, experts speak of the "error of teleological thesis," or the assumption that evolution follows a specific goal or purpose.) Because what Spare understands here as "will" is not unlike what we would describe as "survival instinct," "will to live," "will to power," and so on. In fact, the phenomena of the organic-magical will is much more complicated, as we'll realize later on when we deal with the principle of Thelema as propagated by the old master, Aleister Crowley.

But let's get to those rules of thumb.

#### CHARGED SIGILS ARE INCARNATED STATEMENTS OF INTENT

Feel free to understand the term "incarnation" literally in this context in regards to what we mentioned above.

#### MAGICAL SUCCESS IS THE INCARNATION OF THE MAGICAL WILL

When a statement of intent is incarnated in the psychosomatic complex, or in the entire organism of the magician, this initiates its own "wheel of reincarnation" by (ideally) incarnating as magical success or manifesting physically or psychologically.

#### MAGIC IS OPTIMIZED THROUGH THE BIOLOGICAL INCARNATION OF THE MAGICAL WILL

It's a controversial issue as to whether or not magic would function without this biological approach or whether it always plays a role when magic is a success. However, practice has shown without a doubt that the success of magic can be increased tremendously by

projecting a mental decision (statement of intent, ritual goal, etc.) into the physical and trusting our organism as a whole to realize it. The latter works best by forgetting it.

What does all of this have to do with mudras and god-forms? Let's go back to the beginning by reminding ourselves that mudras and god-forms are dynamic body and hand positions. Such symbolical gestures are widespread in every culture: a raised hand with the palm facing outward as a sign of peace and good intentions (unarmed); moving the edge of the raised hand vertically and horizontally (making the sign of the cross) to the observer in a blessing; hands balled to fists belonging to leftist revolutionaries ("fight!"); the stiff right arm raised in the "German salute" ("cheers!"—but also "phallus!"); the complicated finger positions of Buddha figures that mean everything from "enlightenment" to "love all creatures"; or the simple nod of the head ("revealing the neck"), and hundreds more magical gestures. In any case, the body is used for emitting signals; absorbing power (e.g., instinctively spreading one's arms at sunrise, or the so-called "MAN" or MANNAZ rune); directing power (e.g., pointing your finger at a stranger as a threat, which is a curse and defensive gesture that is usually unconscious); or manipulating power in other ways. (At one point in the Old Testament, the battling Israelis can only win as long as Moses can keep his arm raised, so that an arm brace has to be improvised out of stone to help the poor exhausted guy.) We can observe body signals in animals as well, such as when a wild cat bares its teeth or a friendly dog wags its tail. Since the major part of our body language is applied and understood unconsciously, it would not be exaggerating to say that our gestures and facial expressions form a very direct connection to our subconscious minds while we are awake.

But god-forms and mudras are more than just conscious body language—their function goes well beyond the mere transmission of signals. As the modern discipline of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) has shown, physical "anchors" in the form of slight pressure on certain parts of the body help to program the subconscious mind by intentionally creating a mechanism of association.

This realization is certainly not new. Surely you've observed that the atmosphere of a dream can be captured much more effectively if you try to draw it, whereby the artistic quality of the end product is insignificant. In a similar way, we might "receive" certain gestures in rituals that can help us to reach the appropriate state of gnosis easier in the future. In addition, what I've repeatedly referred to as "ritual mimicry" plays a role that should not be underestimated as well, especially during invocational work.

Ritual mimicry is understood as the imitation of a (usually higher) being, for example when the magician places the sides of both fists to his temples and sticks out his or her thumbs. This is what is known as the “Sign of Pan,” which is easily recognizable by imitated horns (thumbs) (see Illustration 12). By physically imitating the horns of Pan, it’s easier for the magician to enter a state of Pan gnosis and the invocation will be a bit easier than it would without this tool. This example also demonstrates the term “god-forms.” Other forms are a bit more complicated.



*Illustration 12: Aleister Crowley making the Sign of Pan*

In many magical orders, the individual grades are not only connected with certain passwords, but also with gestures and (especially in Freemasonry) sequences of steps. This serves two purposes. First, such grade signs symbolize the contents of the corresponding grade, e.g., when it corresponds to a certain element, planet, mythical figure, or god. Second, they function as an ID card, preventing unauthorized people from accessing the temple or order. As identification symbols, they are still commonly used today and are generally so discreet that the uninitiated wouldn’t recognize them. Passwords, gestures, and the like are periodically changed to prevent infiltration from the outside. Neverthe-

less, more often than not the grade signs deployed are usually quite traditional, being derived from the very repository of symbols under discussion here.

Apart from the traditional gestures, mudras and god-forms that are more or less fixed, the magician can and should develop his or her own signs and gestures. However, this requires a certain amount of experience with magical sign language, which is why we won't get to that until later. But it's a good idea to remember already at this stage that such gestures are very effective magical tools that, with the appropriate training, can help us to quickly reach the desired state of gnosis, especially because they're so inconspicuous when used in everyday settings.

Let's summarize this into one rule of thumb:

### GESTURES AND MIMICS CAN TAKE OVER THE ROLE OF TALISMANS OR INCARNATED SIGILS

We can magically charge the gestures and mimics just like a piece of metal or parchment that would be used for an amulet or talisman. It's important to understand this right from the start because it will bring us a good deal closer to understanding the structures of magic while helping us to successfully avoid the countless traps and bewildering information that a good deal of traditional literature unfortunately contains. This is due largely to the style of language used. Spare turns the magician into a walking sigil by putting his or her whole organism and (unconscious) knowledge of the flesh onto the scale in order to give his or her will the appropriate impact and thrust. The old sentence from the Egyptian Book of the Dead—"In every limb of our body lives a god"—reminds us that we can even turn our fingers, toes, arms, and legs into magical weapons. Of course, the initiate first needs to have mastered this art entirely, which is why Pete Carroll writes in *Psychonaut* that a true initiate is one who has mastered "the techniques of the empty hand."

We're now going to begin with two very simple yet extremely effective ritual gestures that you should implement into your ritual practice right away for immediate enhancement of your magical prowess.



## RENDING THE VEIL

At the very start of the ritual, stand in front of the altar holding your upper arms horizontally (parallel to the ground). Your hands are either balled to fists with the thumbs resting on the middle of the chest (at roughly the level of the heart chakra), or your upper arms are turned slightly inward so that the palms of your hands are facing outward to the side. In this case, the hands are bent ninety degrees at the wrists, and the fingers are pointing straight away from the body with the inner edges of the hands being parallel to the ground. Close your eyes, breathe deeply, and concentrate; then quickly pull your hands apart while imagining that you're tearing open the veil with this movement.

In magic we'll encounter the symbol of the veil again and again. Probably the most popular is the "Veil of Isis," which searchers of the truth have continually attempted to reveal. After all, veils conceal things and they are glyphs of deception and illusion. In Eastern culture, tearing open the "Veil of the Maya" offers a glimpse of "the world behind the world," which is actually the task of every type of "high" magic. Insight, truth, and divinity are all hidden behind the veil—and behind the mirror in which the magician sees his or her own countenance and recognizes himself or herself to be the origin of creation. (*Deus est homo, homo est deus*, as we've already learned.) Consequently, rending the veil also means looking yourself in the eyes, facing the truth (your own personal truth as well as the supreme truth) and not letting yourself be deceived. The illusions of everyday life are pushed aside along with your petty everyday personality, everyday worries, and everyday fears. This is an alchemistic process in which the "phoenix" rises, purified from the ashes. Don't forget that in ancient times, rituals were almost always preceded by periods of fasting, abstinence, and self-denial, as well as physical and spiritual cleansing! The liberation from illusion, divine insight, and recognition of the truth can free us from our earthly shackles and from all of those mistakes that we've come to cherish but that prevent us from following our true calling (true will, Thelema).

From a purely practical and nonmystical point of view, this is a gesture of beginning that signals to the subconscious mind that we would specifically like to get in touch with it. When practiced enough, the desired state of consciousness (gnosis) will almost automatically be reached just by performing this gesture, much like a programmed push-button.

## CLOSING THE VEIL

At the end of the ritual (generally following the license depart), stand in front of the altar just like at the beginning, breathe deeply and concentrate once again, spread your arms and bring them together to the starting position with a sudden, powerful movement while imagining that you're closing the veil. Then banish as usual (generally by laughing).

It would be easy yet foolish to believe that you're shrouding yourself in illusion and deception again when you close the veil; instead you should imagine closing the portal to the subconscious mind that was open for the duration of the ritual. This gesture also has a banishing effect and corresponds to the symbol-logical concept that what is opened at the beginning must be closed at the end. Otherwise, unintentional, harmful, and even dangerous interferences in everyday life can occur, and demons, spirits, complexes, and the like could be released. *So be very scrupulous about always closing the veil properly at the end of your work!*

## THE ASSUMPTION OF GOD-FORMS

The purpose of assuming god-forms should be quite clear from what we've already said. Let's examine three traditional god-forms that are frequently used in Western-Hermetic ceremonial magic.

### The God-form of Horus

Stand upright with your torso slightly bent and your arms and fingers stretched forward, thumbs next to one other and eyes following your arms; one leg is placed one large step ahead of the other (see Illustration 13a). Remain in this position for a few moments before you drop your arms and relax your body.

In accordance with the Egyptian war god Horus, this god-form is a gesture of great force and power. It's usually used to strengthen the will (gnosis) and to charge objects (talismans, fetishes, etc.) with magis. This usually occurs during a phase of hyperventilation (powerful, shallow, rapid panting that supplies the brain with an extreme amount of oxygen which increases the degree of trance). During the climax of hyperventilation, the magically charged energy explodes from the fingertips into the target object. Combat magic works in a similar way, e.g., when the target person or his or her image (doll,

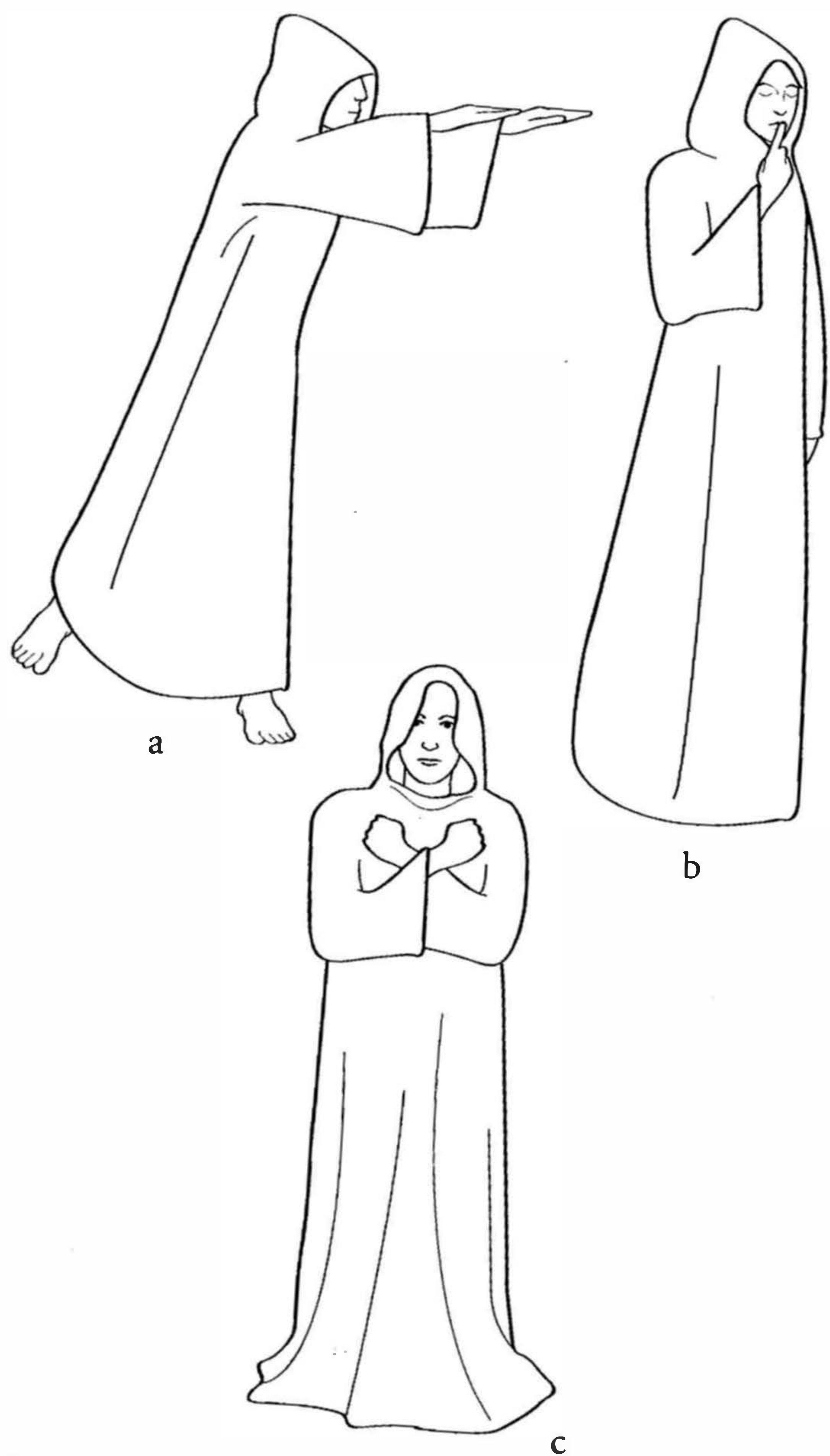
photo) or mumia (= bodily secretions, hair, underwear) is attacked. This god-form, however, is not suitable for gentle healing unless it's used to give a very sick patient an extra powerful boost of energy (e.g., in near-death situations).

### **The God-form of Harpocrates**

Stand upright with your feet together in front of the altar. Look straight ahead, and let your arms hang down at the sides. Now lift your left leg slightly until your thigh is parallel to the ground, and then stomp firmly on the ground with your foot. At the same time, lift the forefinger of your right hand to your lips with a swift movement, like you're sealing them. Your finger should touch your lips at the same time your foot stomps on the floor. Remain in this position for a few seconds before you drop your arms and relax your body (see Illustration 13b).

The god Harpocrates (not to be confused with the Greek doctor Hippocrates), who is much less known than Horus and Osiris, represents Horus in his aspect as a child (Hor-pe-chrod) and also stands for all young gods that are worshiped under the name Horus as children of the sun and primeval gods (e.g., Harsomtus, Har-p-re, Horus-Schu, etc.). During the Greek/Roman era and at the end of the New Kingdom, his popularity steadily increased as his figure developed into various forms while assuming Greek influence as well. He's equated with the sun god Amun and Chnum the ram god (Harponknuphis), and Plutarch mentioned him as a god of legumes and fertility. Plutarch also started the speculation that Harpocrates contains the combined understanding of all divine things and that his being a child points to the imperfection of this understanding among humans. Plutarch views the symbolic gesture of placing a finger on the lips as a sign of secrecy and silence. This viewpoint, along with many of Plutarch's others, was later adopted by Aleister Crowley. In Crowley's system, the god is called Hoor-pa-kraat.

With the assumption of this god-form, the magician "seals" his or her actions; in a way, it's a sort of small-scale banishing. Figuratively we can imagine it as a type of lid that's put on a pot after we've put all of the ingredients into the boiling water. Even the stomping is a powerful action that asserts decisiveness while initiating the alchemistic process of fermentation after concluding the magical act, confirming it, and sealing it.



*Illustration 13: A few god-forms—a) Horus; b) Harpocrates; c) Osiris (Risen)*

## The God-form of Osiris (Risen)

Stand up straight with your feet together and chest out, fold your arms over your chest and rest your balled fists on your chest just below your shoulders. Look straight ahead with a fixed gaze and do not blink. Your facial features should be firm but not tense (see Illustration 13c). Remain in this position for a few seconds before you drop your arms and relax your body.

This is the triumphant pose of the sun god Osiris as he rose from the dead to resume power with pride and dignity after being murdered and chopped to pieces by his rival, Seth. In the Osiris mysteries of the Egyptian and late classical periods, the initiate identified himself with the sun god and experienced the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, just as the sun does every day as a process of purification and spiritual growth.

Now that's all for the time being about mudras and god-forms.

# MAGIC IN THE BIBLE (I)

Magic actually played quite a significant role in the Bible, although most examples of this magic are defined as miracles, and magicians in general were frowned upon.

## **BIBLICAL TERMINOLOGY IN CONNECTION WITH MAGIC**

The Old Testament uses various designations that are related to magic and sorcery. The following five Hebrew expressions occur frequently:

1. *ksp* = “sorcerer, sorcery, witch(craft)”

This root consonant probably originally meant “to cut,” which most likely referred to the cutting of herbs for spells, amulets, talismans, potions, and so on (see 1 Moses 22:18; 5 Moses 18:9,12; Jeremiah 27:9).

2. *hrtm* = “magician”

This designation derives from the ancient Egyptian term “*hry-tp*” = “highest (reader priest)” —a title that was given to the most famous of Egyptian sorcerers.

3. *lhs* = “sorcery (sorcerer), enchantment, whisper, earring”

See Isaiah 3:20, as well as Psalms 58:5 and Ecclesiastes 10:11 where the serpent charmer is mentioned.

4. hbr = “sorcery, sorcerer”

This root contains the conception of binding with sorcery, probably using amulets and talismans (see Deuteronomy 18:11 and Isaiah 47:9,12).

5. kasdim = “Chaldeans”

The Book of Daniel uses the term both as a description of a race of people as well as a certain caste of sorcerers. The translator who translated the Aramic part of the book from Hebrew might possibly have used this word to substitute the older word “*galdu*” that was used to mean “astrologers” in Babylonian inscriptions. The only two references in the Hebrew section of the Book (Daniel 2:2,4) were assimilated accordingly.

In the New Testament we can find three more relevant designations:

6. magos (and its derivatives) = “sorcerer, sorcery”

In Matthew 2, this term is used to describe “wise men.” Originally the magi were a Median (Iranian) tribe of people; similar to the Chaldeans, they also became a synonym for “sorcerers” (see Acts 8:9, 11, 12:6,8; only mentioned in Matthew and Acts). Our modern-day word “magic” is also derived from this.

7. pharmakos (and its derivatives) = “sorcerer, sorcery, witchcraft”

Here, the dominant meaning is drugs, potions, poisons, and so on (Revelation 9:21, 18:23, 21:8, 22:15; Galatians 5:20). Just look at the words “pharmacy” and “pharmacology” that are still in use today.

8. goes = “seducer”

In 2 Timothy 3:13 “seducers” are mentioned, which probably refers to a binding spell. Literally translated it means “lamerter,” but has a magical connotation in classic and Hellenistic Greek.

On the surface, magic in the Bible is generally condemned. Described either as “witchcraft” or “sorcery,” it’s always understood as “interacting with lower beings” and the magician is denounced as a conjurer of the dead (necromancer) and a dubious, malicious, and unnatural villain who doesn’t care one bit about the higher good of God as he or she follows his or her own personal and generally antisocial interpretation of law and order. This aspect of conjuring demons and spirits of the dead is quite significant since it’s reflected in the church’s modern-day rejection of the magical arts. Even today, most of the opponents of magic understand it as a discipline of conjuring spirits and throw it into one pot along with necromancy and spiritualism.

The list of magical practices that are frowned upon in the Bible is long. On the other hand, this just shows us how widespread they actually were!

### **THE WEARING OF AMULETS**

The jewelry worn (and frowned upon) by the women in Isaiah 3:18–23 include the objects referred to simply in verse 20 as “earrings”; however, researchers assume that these were really amulets, talismans, or other objects of power. In the revised Luther version, the word “amulets” is actually used. (For reasons of simplicity, we won’t go into the differences between these magical tools at this point, although we should be aware of the differences for our magical practice.) This word is connected to whispering and snake charming. Some researchers believe that such lucky charms were charged with good magic by whispering on them; others think that the word originally meant *nhs* = “snake” so that the talisman in question could have been a snake figure. In other translations of the Bible (e.g., the English King James Authorized Version) refers to “round tires like the moon” (*saharonîm*)—these were most likely crescent-shaped collars as mentioned in Judges 8:21, 26): “And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ornaments that were on their camels’ necks” (verse 21). As we learn in verse 26, these moon talismans were not only worn by the camels, but also by the kings of Medes. Plus,



there are plenty of references to the wearing of sun talismans as necklaces outside of the Bible as well.

In the Book of Genesis (35:4) it reads: “And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.” This is a clear indication that the word “earring” was often equated with magical objects or amulets.

### **MAGICIANS, SORCERERS, WITCHES**

Magicians are mentioned in both Genesis and Exodus. The former even describes a magical competition between Moses and Aaron and the court magicians of the Pharaoh: “And the LORD spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods. And he hardened Pharaoh’s heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said” (Exodus 7:8–13).

Regardless of whether or not this was real magic or just a sleight of hand that was as popular back then as it is now, one has the suspicion that the ruler of Egypt (who was, according to the paradigm of the times, an incarnation of Osiris himself) really knew what he was doing!

But that’s not all. In the same section, Moses and Aaron change the water of the Nile into blood, which the Egyptian magicians promptly imitated (verse 20–22) so that the pharaoh then turns away from the two Israelis in a huff. In any case, this is a very early example of documented magical water pollution: “And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river” (verse 24).

Even when Moses and Aaron suddenly conjure a plague of frogs at the command of Yahweh to terrorize the land, the Egyptian magicians have a similar trick up their sleeves (8:2–3), but the responsible parties are left to repair the damages. Although Moses and Aaron do, the pharaoh does not stick to his end of the agreement.

The two men of Yahweh prove to be superior to their Egyptian counterparts when it comes to magic with pests and plagues, because the Egyptians are unable to bring about a plague of mosquitoes (or lice, as some versions of the Bible call it) like the Israelis did (8:13–14). The Egyptians also failed against smallpox; in fact, they even contracted it themselves and were thus magically eliminated (9:10–11).

But a hailstorm of spells was necessary nonetheless, and these spells caused so much destruction that even the pharaoh got a little weak in the knees—this included a magically induced locust plague, three days of darkness, and the killing of all first-born children, until the Egyptian ruler finally released the people of Israel.

There's no point in dismissing the acts of Moses and Aaron as "miracles" as most Christians and theologians do, only because it's the "Lord" who tells them what to do. Most shamans would just laugh at such naiveté. Of course, it's always the magician's inner voice that tells him or her how to act, regardless of what you actually call this voice—God, Lord, guardian angel, will, Atman, Kia, or whatever. All of the surrounding circumstances of the ten magical plagues speak a clear language: After a short period of meditation and revelation ("And the Lord spoke unto Moses ..."), the desired effect is conjured by means of magical gestures (casting a rod, raising an arm, using a cloud of smoke); and these "miracles" (at least at first) are by no means so unusual that an expert court magician couldn't handle such acts himself. Whoever hesitates to use the word "magic" to describe this should re-evaluate his or her definition of magic!

There are numerous examples for such a definition. "Magic" is always "black" and only that what others (and their evil gods, or—to use a more derogatory term—their idols) do. "Miracles" on the other hand are always "white" and stem from a "higher source" that's always good and wise. Even today we still find this differentiation made by "theurgic" ("white," "good") and "demonic" ("black," "evil") magicians, whereby a neutral observer is rarely able to distinguish which is which. It even goes so far that Christian theologians shrug off magic as nothing but primitive superstition, while the doubting of miracles is called a lack of "proper faith."

Keeping in mind the immense magical accomplishments reported in the Bible, why is it so far-fetched to believe that medieval and Renaissance figures such as Solomon and Moses were capable of such acts while the abilities of the pseudo-authors of grimoires are rarely questioned? This reflects a fairly exact yet sober assessment of such figures by men who had to have known a bit about the subject of magic in order to recognize role models

as such when the church ranted and raved against such heretical “misinterpretations” of the Bible, even going so far as to threaten heretics with being burned at the stake.

The infamous “Witch of Endor” from the Old Testament was, of course, more of a seer and necromancer than a sorcerer (1 Samuel 28:7–21) who was called upon by the troubled Saul, of all people, since he himself had once “put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.” The ghost of Samuel that she conjured promptly announced the revenge of the Lord and predicted Saul’s imminent death because of his disobedience and his failure to execute the Lord’s fierce anger in the Amalekite war. After all, Saul only consults the necromancer after all other prophets fail and all oracles (Urim) and dreams (verse 6) remain silent.

A significant example for the predominance of magical practices and professional sorcerers among the Hebrews is Ezekiel—once again, with a negative connotation: “Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you? And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live [...]. Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make them fly, and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, even the souls that ye hunt to make them fly. Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; and ye shall know that I am the LORD [...]. Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand [...]. (13:17–23).

Here we see not only strong rivalry between the various magical systems (“gods” or even “magicians”), but also a demonization of the woman as a witch as she will later appear to us again and again. Technically speaking, this is a type of binding spell or possession with the help of cloths, ribbons, and (leather) straps, which can also be used as fetishes and “spirit traps.” Just the mere fact that Yahweh persecutes this sorceress in such a harsh way is proof of her power. After all, which modern magician can claim that he or she can “save the souls alive that should not live”? Knot magic should be taken into account, too. In this sense, Frazer reported on the witch women of the Old Testa-

ment and how they captured souls and tied them to ribbons to let them waste away. For a fee, a sick person could then purchase one of the souls.

Another infamous sorceress was Isebel (Jezebel) whose many “whoredoms” and “witchcrafts” (2 Kings 9:22) met with the wrath of Jehu (and later, of Yahweh). In his poem about Jezebel, Aleister Crowley gave this character new popularity, and she was a common poetic figure of the late 1800s and early 1900s as well.

Through the prophet Micah, Yahweh complained about magic once again: “And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers” (Micah 5:11). The frequent reference to “soothsayers” is also an indication of the great role that omens and oracles played in that period. That was in no way a particularity of the Israelis and their immediate Palestine adversaries. Just take a look at the Roman state oracle (the augurs) and the practices of the ancient world, and you’ll see that most rulers consulted oracles before making major political decisions.

The example of King Manasse, who took the throne at age twelve and ruled for fifty-five years, shows that monotheism couldn’t even be sure of its position in the Judah of the Israelis. He rebuilt old places of worship (in Jerusalem, of all places!), “reared up altars for Baal and set a graven image of the grove [...] and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD” (Kings 21:3–5). But that’s not all. He evidently put a great amount of effort into the practical side of magic as well: “And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards [...]” (verse 6). Although this enrages Yahweh again and again, and he threatens with awful retribution, it still takes quite a long time before the tables turn in his favor again because the son of Manasse, Amon, followed in the footsteps of his father and bitterly refused to return to the old new beliefs. When he dies as a victim of a conspiracy plot at the age of twenty-four following a two-year reign, the conspirators are even attacked by the people. It’s not until eight-year-old Josiah is enthroned by the people that they return to the “way of David.” (Make note of the fact that Amon already had an eight-year-old son at age twenty-four!)

Fertility spells are mentioned in the Book of Genesis, where Leah uses mandrake to help her bear Jacob a fifth son (Genesis 30:14–18). It’s interesting to point out that some pseudo-rationalistic theologians of our time want to make a form of natural medicine

out of this only to coyly cover up the widespread use of magic, as though natural medicine and magic actually had nothing to do with one another back in those days!

The same Jacob was also aware of the power of sympathetic magic since he used it successfully on his livestock: “And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted” (Genesis 30:37–39). Of course, that didn’t stop him from practicing selective breeding (Genesis 30:41–42).

A storm spell against the Philistines is mentioned in the First Book of Samuel: “And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day” (1 Samuel 7:6). We already know that other cultures have practices of pouring water in order to conjure rain.

The story of Delilah who steals Samson’s power by cutting his hair is also a popular tale. We can read about it in the Book of Judges (16). In this story, the hair acts as a magical battery for storing energy, a theme that will occur again and again in other magical teachings. Hair can act as antennas to perceive and manipulate subtle energies. It’s no coincidence that long hair (and the cutting thereof) is considered to have great magical significance among magicians and shamans worldwide.

Job, who was so desperate that he cursed the day of his own birth, points out how common this practice seemed to have been: “Behold, let that night be barren; let no joyful cry enter it. Let those curse it who curse the day, who are ready to rouse up Leviathan” (Job 3:7–8). To curse a certain day and awaken the giant, crocodile-like monster Leviathan; maybe this stems back to the ancient belief that some magicians were able to conjure monsters (often dragons) with their power to have them swallow the sun (this was a common explanation of solar eclipses). Most likely we’re dealing here with a variation of the ancient Egyptian myth of Seth. (Seth destroyed his own brother, the sun god Osiris, and cut him to pieces.)

Even the acts of blessing and cursing played a great role in the Old Testament. The patriarchs often blessed their children while Balaam was supposed to curse Israel (Numbers 23:8). King David is cursed out of the house of Saul and even pelted with stones, but he

doesn't defend himself because he suspects that Yahweh might have something to do with it (2 Samuel 16:5–13).

But that's enough for now. In the next section, we'll be dealing with the New Testament where we'll also find a great deal of magical practices described.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 53*

#### **MUDRA TRAINING (I)**

Think about the mudric function that drawing the pentagrams in the pentagram ritual serves. Note your thoughts in your magical diary and leave plenty of room for later additions. Because the more you work with mudras, the more you'll recognize how intertwined the associations and relationships between general physicality, specific body gestures, and subtle phenomena are that play such an important role in our magical art.

### *EXERCISE 54*

#### **MUDRA TRAINING (II)**

Integrate the rending and closing of the veil into your magical practice immediately if you haven't already done so. Pay close attention to the subtle differences between rituals done with and without these mudras.

### *EXERCISE 55*

#### **MUDRA TRAINING (III)**

Experiment at will with the three god-forms of Horus, Harpocrates, and Osiris. Do this by integrating the god-forms into your rituals. For example, if you want to ritually charge an object (talisman, amulet, fetish, power object), do this by assuming the god-form of Horus at the climax of gnosis and suddenly shooting the energy into the object, and then immediately assuming the god-form of Harporcrates to seal the procedure. Then, assume the triumphant position of Osiris Risen and meditate on the grandeur and greatness of your actions.

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# MUDRAS (II)

## HAND AND FINGER GESTURES

### Vowel Mudras

In this next section on mudras, we'll be dealing with three simple finger gestures taken from the field of letter magic as developed by Kerning, Kolb, and Sebottendorf, and practiced by some dervish orders.

### I- Mudra

The right hand is balled to a fist. Now stick out your forefinger and raise your hand so that your finger is pointing upward.

### A-Mudra

All fingers are straight and lying flat next to each other. Now stick out your thumb so that it forms a ninety-degree angle with your forefinger.

### O-Mudra

All fingers and the thumb are bent so that the tips of your thumb and forefinger slightly touch. Form a circle with your thumb and forefinger.

These mudras are generally done with the arm vertically stretched out above the head. In the Practical Exercises section, you'll find instructions on how to combine these vowel mudras with the IAO formula.



## CHARGING MUDRAS

In general, mudras only require one type of charging—namely constant and continual practice. According to my experience, they usually become effective quite quickly after just a short period of practice because of the direct connection to the subconscious mind that we mentioned in the last section, and because magic that is physically anchored is generally faster and more efficient than more speculative, intellectualized systems.

If you prefer intensive or multiple charging, you can do so as follows. Perform the mudra while maintaining full concentration (five to ten minutes, or even longer if possible; in yoga, mudras are often practiced for up to forty-five minutes, although in between performing such meditative or therapeutic mudras you should take a break for at least five hours). Do this for a period of roughly six months until you begin to feel the meaning of the mudra and its energy flow as soon as you form the mudra.

## THE STRUCTURE OF HAND MUDRAS

However, there are indeed mudras that have no specific purpose, such as those that have no other function but to activate certain subtle energies in the magician's body. Even the vowel mudras mentioned above are (at least during this phase of your training) purely energetic. However, mudras are more commonly used to physically carry a symbol. Both Eastern and Western traditions have highly developed mudra techniques that are often described as “sign language” or “secret language” —and rightly so! If we look at the rich symbolism in Indian, Javanese, and Thai temple dancing in which every single movement of the body has a specific meaning and often even represents an entire quotation from mythology, we'll realize how diversified the use of mudras can be. It would be helpful to always remember the structural formula for how mudras are generally developed:

### BODY PARTS ARE DEFINED ACCORDING TO AN OVERRIDING SYMBOL MATRIX THAT MAKES THESE MANIPULABLE

Is this rule of thumb too abstract for you? Well, let's translate it into more practical terms. In order to do so, let's take a look at two examples, one from Western elemental

magic and the other from the Indian chakra system. We'll illustrate these in a way that you're already familiar with.

## ELEMENTAL AND PLANETARY MUDRAS

For the elemental mudras, we'll use the short descriptions that Franz Bardon uses in his book, *Initiation into Hermetics*. We'll find similar systems in Eastern mudra traditions.

As we know, there are five basic elements: earth, water, fire, air, and spirit (akasha). Each element is allocated to a certain finger of the hand, as in the matrix below.

thumb	=	water
forefinger	=	fire
middle finger	=	spirit
ring finger	=	earth
pinky	=	air

The right hand is used for positive elemental charging, while the left hand is for negative charging (see Bardon).

We're already familiar with the seven classical planets: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Along the lines of classical chiromancy (palm-reading), five of the planets are allocated to the various fingers (and the so-called mounts located below the fingers). For example, Mars has the "small Mars mount," the "Mars plain," and the "Mars mount" while the Moon only has the "Moon mount." The following matrix is based on this basic pattern (only fingers and balls):

thumb	=	Mars
forefinger	=	Jupiter
middle finger	=	Saturn
ring finger	=	Sun
pinky	=	Mercury
ball of the thumb	=	Venus
outside balls	=	Moon

However, we need to point out that some authors may classify the planets and elements a bit differently. It's common to magic that its practitioners often do not agree on certain things. But the information here should suffice to illustrate the basic principle. Illustration 14 shows the two basic matrices once again in illustrated form.

If we want to activate one of the elemental or planetary powers with the help of mudras, all we have to do is perform a mudra that is appropriate to the magical goal. For example, if we want to be successful at a job interview, we could touch the thumb (Mars = assertiveness) with the pinky (Mercury = speech skills, persuasiveness) of the right hand. This can be done quite discreetly with your hands in your coat pocket or while sitting in the waiting room.

Touching the pinky (air = intellect, reason) and forefinger (fire = assertion, will) together will bring about similar effects, e.g., when several applicants are interviewed at the same time in a group situation. Of course, this won't work automatically. You'll only get the desired results after you've worked and experimented intensively with mudras.

There are no limits to the possibilities. Take the time to think about it yourself. How can you activate a single element and magically use the left hand/negative, right hand/positive polarity? You can even develop your own individual matrix, or use sigils as mudras and intonate them as mantras.

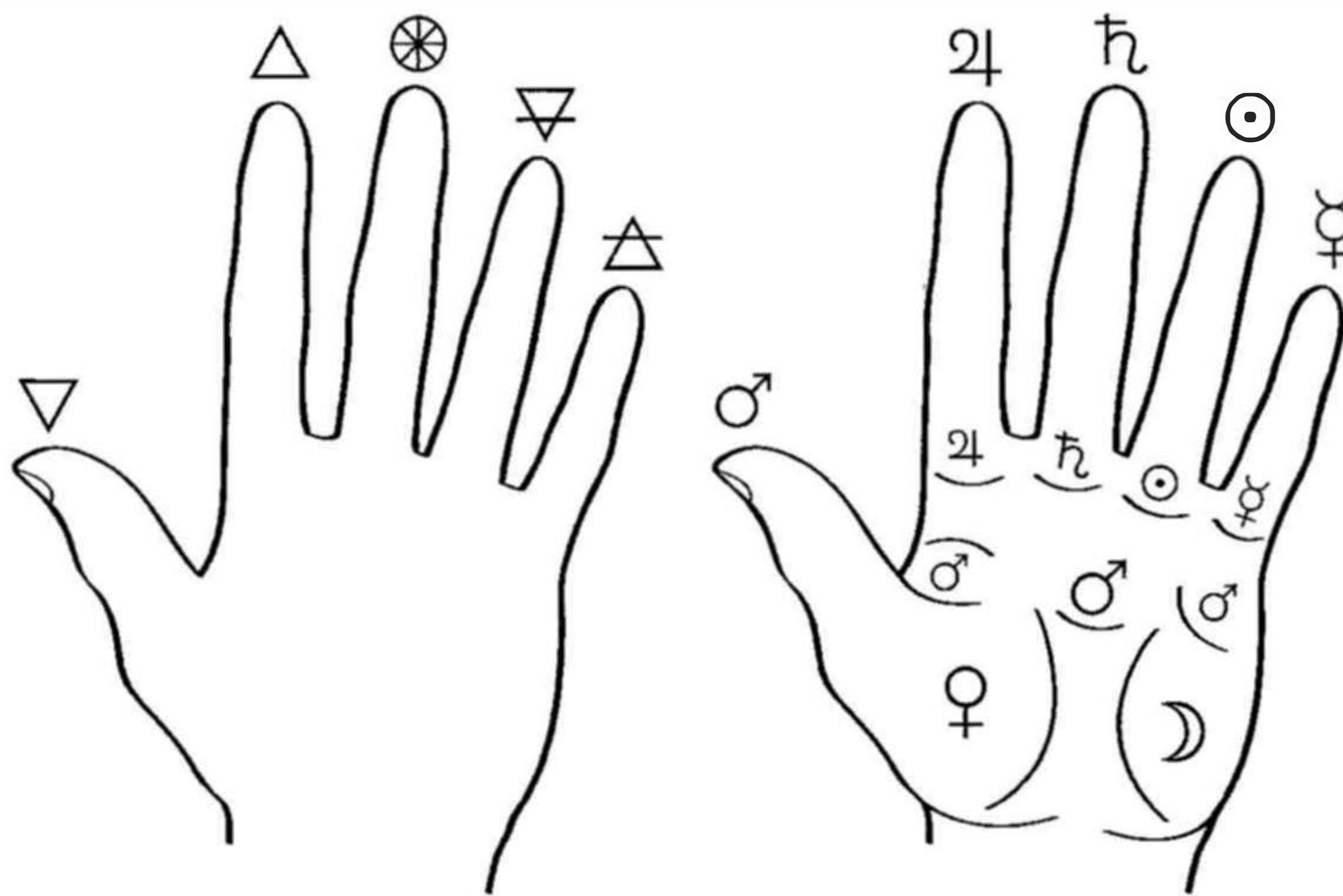
Using mudras is an important step toward "high magic of the empty hand," which is the trademark of a true master. You already know that all ritual objects are basically just magical aids. They're very important, and you should take great care in making and caring for them. However, one day you'll eventually have to free yourself from such external crutches. This may not happen for years or even decades, but you should still keep this goal in mind. The simplest way of doing this is by gradually reducing the amount of paraphernalia you use, for example by switching from magical tools to hand and body gestures until you're eventually able to do everything mentally or astrally.

Of course, this won't happen over night. Mudra training is generally quite easy at first because of the direct contact to the subconscious mind, as already mentioned. But successful mudra practice requires a great deal of experience and the development of sharp instincts. But luckily it's quite easy to practice. After all, everyone has a pair of fingers handy!

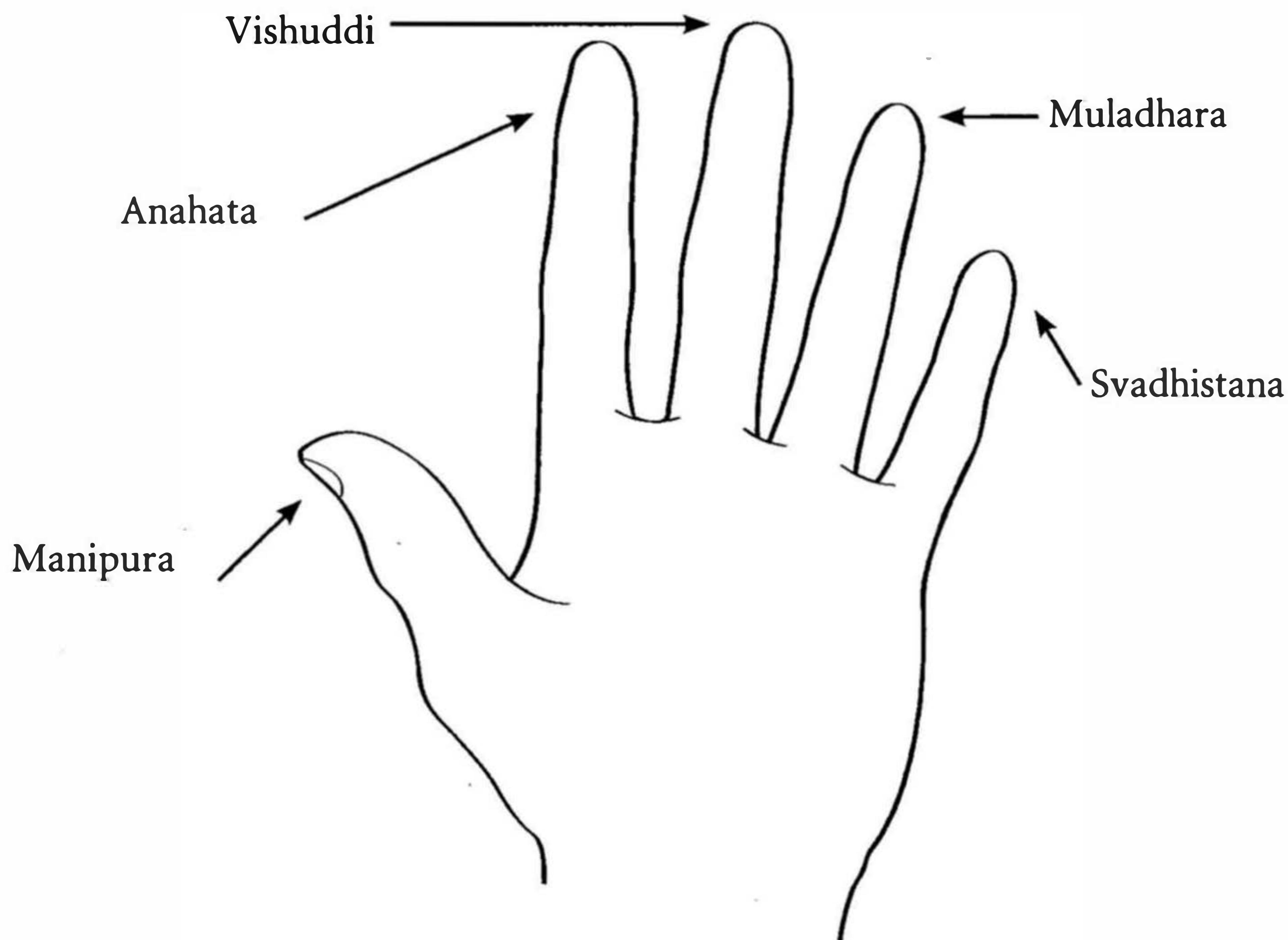
## CHAKRA MUDRAS

In the same way as with the planets and elements, Eastern systems also allocate specific things to certain body parts. There are a number of systems that do this with mudras, such as Buddhism, tantra, Hinduism, and Taoism. Often a whole pantheon is allocated to a single hand and can be used this way magically as well as mystically. Here, too, the old Hermetic law applies: “As above, so below.” As a result, the hand or body becomes a microcosmic reflection of macrocosmic principles.

In Illustration 15, you’ll see the five lower chakras allocated to the fingers as commonly used by tantric healers. They can be used both for diagnostic purposes and for therapy. In this sense, the subtle temperature differences between the fingers of a sick person can be measured (either directly or through subtle transfer of the symptoms to the healer) to determine which chakra is affected, and it can then be treated with the appropriate finger gestures or mudras. The number of possibilities is obviously immense. But let’s leave it at that for now. You’ll find a list of literature on the subject at the end of this section.



*Illustration 14: Matrices of the hands and fingers (I)—a) elements b) planets*



*Illustration 15: Matrices of the hands and fingers (II) Indian chakra system*

## HAND GESTURES

Particularly among the Freemasons, handshakes and other symbolic signs are used along with passwords and body gestures to designate the various degrees. For now we want to discuss the four signs that will also play an important role in letter magic, which we'll be discussing later—the throat sign, chest sign, middle sign, and gut or master sign.

There are two forms to each of these signs: static and dynamic. The static form is statically posed, while the dynamic form is combined with a withdrawing movement.

The static form serves as a sign of recognition and establishes a state of inner harmony among subtle energies. The dynamic form is used to “strangulate” this effect, which can be compared to the launching of a rocket as a result of the propulsion pressure built up in this manner.

The static forms are depicted in Illustration 16.

## **The Throat Sign**

*Static form:* Place your flat hand to your neck with your palm facing the floor, thumb touching the right artery and forefinger resting on your throat. The other fingers are held parallel to the forefinger.

*Dynamic form:* Quickly pull away your hand by pulling your forefinger across your throat until your hand is at the same level as your right shoulder, then let your hand drop.

## **The Chest Sign**

*Static form:* In order to perform this sign properly, the proper height must first be determined. Make the throat sign with your right hand and place your flat left hand so that the spread thumb lightly touches the pinky of the right hand. (The sign is held exactly one thumb-length below the throat sign.) At the height of the left hand, make the chest sign with your right hand. The tips of your four fingers lightly touch your left arm while the palm of your hand rests on the left side of your chest.

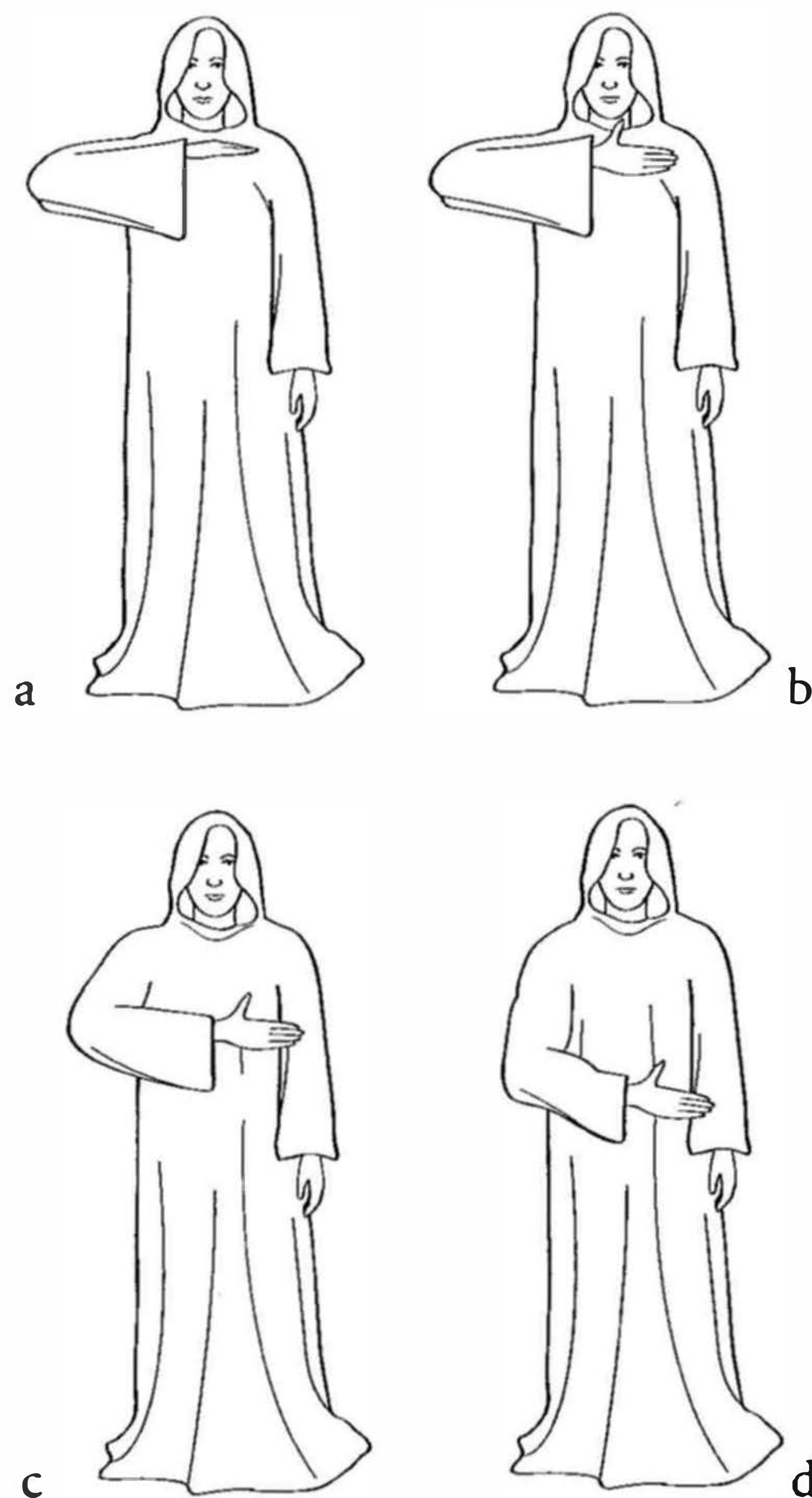
*Dynamic form:* Quickly pull your hand to the right until the tips of your fingers touch the right side of your body.

## **The Middle Sign**

This is made slightly lower than the chest sign. In order to determine the proper height, proceed as follows. Make the chest sign and place your left hand, thumb spread, just above your stomach so that your thumb slightly touches the pinky of your right hand. Otherwise, it looks just like the chest sign above.

## **The Gut Or Master Sign**

This sign is made one hand-width below the middle sign, between the solar plexus and navel. Otherwise, it looks just like the other signs.



*Illustration 16: Various signs (static form)—  
a) throat sign; b) chest sign; c) middle sign; d) gut/master sign*

Within the context of this course, these signs will be discussed (and deployed) at greater length further below when covering Sebottendorf's magical system of letter magic.

## MAGIC IN THE BIBLE (II)

Now we'd like to take a closer look at the magic in the New Testament. This is even more interesting than the magic in the Old Testament since the examination of Christian beliefs has influenced Western magic in theory and practice significantly right up to modern times. Yes, even a large part of magical and semimagical styles define themselves through Christianity or a rebellion against this, including the early gnostic movement, the Freemasons and Rosicrucians, Satanists, and especially the more Christian-oriented magic of Dion Fortune or William Butler. On the other hand, Christianity has to give a lot of credit to the fight against its magically skilled adversaries for their structure and perseverance, as we'll see later on when we discuss Gnosticism.

In general, magicians are treated a little bit more positively in the New Testament than in the Old. For example, two magicians in 2 Timothy 3:8 are even mentioned by name (of course, it's a negative example again): Jannes and Jambres. They're supposedly the ones who once stood up against Moses and are used as an example for the stubbornness of the disbelievers who refuse to see the "truth" (that of Paul the Apostle, of course).

However, the Acts of the Apostles mentioned another much more important name, namely Simon Magus. "Simon the Magus" was long considered to be the strongest rival of Jesus Christ. Not because they went up against each other, but because Simon was more popular among the common folk than Jesus was. But let's see what the writers of the New Testament had to say about this:



Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me (Acts 8:5–24).

In this passage we can see a basic pattern of magical and religious conflict. While the magician is a pragmatic “doer” who wants to shape his or her own destiny by making use of all possible techniques and deities that could aid his or her goals in any possible

way, the mystical or religious person is a dogmatic “instrument” of a higher instance defined as God, and the only way to access this God is through prayer and intercession. Aleister Crowley once described Christianity as a “religion of slaves.” This statement certainly holds some truth because, objectively speaking, Christianity is not at all interested in nurturing responsible down-to-earth people, but rather with creating blind servants of a higher power whose will only a few people have been “chosen” (the magician would say “initiated”) to represent.

Simon Magus, who we’ll be running into once again when we discuss late Hellenistic Gnosticism, seems to have been such a pragmatic person according to the descriptions we have of him. When he saw the “miracles” that the apostles performed, it was in his nature to suspect that a certain technique might be involved that was either passed on (for lots of money, of course, since nothing is free in magic, which is the way it should be) from one person to another or simply explained to the recipient.

Here we’ve reached a boundary line that’s still applicable today, because the whole dispute between churches and religious groups on the one hand, and the various more or less unorganized esoteric or magical groups on the other, is founded on this basic principle that will probably never be eliminated completely. We’re purposely taking a specific stand in this dispute, but not for any sentimental reasons on the part of the magician but rather because we feel that the basic line of thought that magic follows is indisputably correct. This could be roughly worded as follows: “If people were actually able to receive revelations from the realm beyond that could help them shape their destiny, it would only be legitimate to look for methods or techniques that could serve as additional aids to this evolutionary information; and it would also be just as legitimate to work towards deliberately receiving such revelations instead of just being content with the knowledge of others, thus eliminating the dependency caused by the advanced information available to them.”

Regardless of the elitism that magic often claims, this is really a primeval democratic concept that (although it doesn’t deny the diversity of humanity) does come to the egalitarian conclusion that people should not judge the worth or worthlessness of another—or of his or her visions and revelations! If one person can receive revelations, then possibly everyone can. Who else but the receiver is to judge whether these are valuable or worthless? The difference between “false evil deception” and “true divine enlightenment” seems quite silly when we take a look at the overall eschatology of early Christianity and the

Middle Ages, back when the end of the world and judgment day were predicted nearly every other year—why were these revelations always considered to be from a truly divine, transcendentalist source? The fact that we're still able to persistently go about destroying nature today surely played a significant role in leading to the predominance of atheist materialism.

At most, this alone would be nothing but an ideological debate if it weren't for one "little" thing that puts the whole thing back into perspective —such techniques actually do exist for receiving "transcendental information." We summarize them under the generic term "magical trance" or (to use a Hellenistic word) "gnosis." The fact that no one less than Jesus himself has given us one of many magical "recipes" for this (which we'll see later on) is in fact quite a controversial subject.

When contemplating such ingrained thought patterns, it's obviously essential to be able to see beyond your own personal socio-cultural influences. Take the example of the American Indian who once asked why the world should have to follow the vision that a single person had two thousand years ago if all people were able to have new visions of the same type every single day. There's also no point in declaring the visions of a certain Jesus of Nazareth for true and real just because he's "the only begotten Son of God." That would just be confusing cause and effect, because for the few of his contemporaries who took his claims seriously (most of the Jews back then felt that Jesus was nothing but a dangerous, heretical nut and demanded his death by crucifixion, if we can believe what the evangelists say), he proved that his divine ancestry was legitimate by performing magical acts. And the same thing happened to his successors, the apostles, as we've already seen. In many aspects, it was nothing but common rivalry among magicians that decided things. The argument back then, as the Bible reveals to us again and again, was that whoever was the better magician had the most disciples and his system was declared to be "more genuine" and, above all, "more powerful" than the rest.

Let's just make it clear that when the apostles healed the lame and people with gout, these have to be considered acts of magic regardless of which authority was called upon to achieve these desired effects. The fact that much of what the apostles did (and we have no intentions here of discussing the credibility of biblical records as critical rationalists might do) was used as a sort of advertising campaign for Christian ideals makes them no less magical in nature.

It would therefore be absurd to take part in the Christian ideologized differentiation between “evil sorcery” and “divine miracles” just because the performer of a “miracle” has no control over his or her actions while the “sorcerer” strives to achieve such control in order to make his or her work more calculable and therefore more useful to everyone. The example of the cursed fig tree illustrates how much even a person like Jesus had integrated the typical egoistical thoughts of power of “lower magicians” that “Christians” have criticized throughout time. The episode can be found both in Matthew (21:18–22) as well as in Mark, the latter of which we prefer to illustrate here because of its dramatic and therefore more effective choice of language:

And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he [Jesus] was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

[...]

And when even was come, he went out of the city.

And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

Mark 11:12–20)

Imagine how you would react if your good friend, Frater Magicos, went into your orchard one morning in the middle of winter after a night of drinking to pick a pear from a tree—and how he would curse the tree and make it barren for the rest of time because it had the nerve to not bear any fruit in December. With all probability, you, as an environmentally aware person, would put this in the dark category of “human hubris (arrogance)”! Even a devout Christian would have to perform some intellectual acrobatics in order to turn this common act of “black” magic (black because it destroyed life) into a “divine miracle.”

But Jesus made perfectly clear that he wanted to give his disciples an example of the power of faith and will:

And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

(Matthew 21:21–22)

“Faith can move mountains”; we’re surely all familiar with this saying that we probably even heard back in childhood. Of course it’s a common misconception of Christianity to conclude from this that only faith in the Christian God can release such (magical) forces. There have always been magical acts and “miracles” in all cultures around the world. There’s also no reason to assume that this will ever change. Common language understood quite quickly and now uses the expression the way it was originally most likely intended, namely as a statement of unerring conviction that anything (no matter what it might be) can come true if you believe in it strongly enough. And Karl Marx worded it quite appropriately, too: “As soon as theory is capable of gripping the masses, it becomes a material force.”

Crowley and Spare said similar things as well, just to mention two examples from magicians. Master Therion speaks of a magical will (Thelema) that, if followed by the magician, can give him or her a powerful thrust with the entire cosmos as an ally.

According to Thelemic dogma, it’s impossible to prevent a person from realizing his or her Thelema, even with the help of magic. In this model, “black magic” is defined as every act (even a “nonmagical” one) that does not correspond with the fulfillment of one’s true will.

Austin Osman Spare, on the other hand, refers to a sigil “becoming organic” as already mentioned, which in turn can provide an unstoppable thrust toward realization as well. Now that we’ve taken a look at a few of the basic assumptions that this conviction is founded upon, we won’t need to mention them again here.

If we take a closer look at the figure of Jesus in the New Testament, we’ll see again and again that he was a first-class magician who expressed his own Thelema—and “sold it” convincingly enough that it became binding for others as well. (By the way, astrologically speaking, we’d probably find his Pluto in the tenth house of his horoscope.) He worked with all kinds of magic, changed water to wine (probably a simple ener-

getic or odic exercise that we've already been introduced to in a much more simplified form, see Exercise 35), made cripples walk again or brought the dead back to life (a shamanic healing operation), fed thousands with a handful of bread and fish (materialization spell or mass hypnosis), walked on water (an ancient fakir or sadhu technique that can still be seen in India on occasion today), predicted his own death (divination), expelled evil spirits out of the sick and forced them to enter pigs (a common technique of exorcism), and even rose from the dead himself (typical sun god topos, see Osiris, the American Indian corn god Mondamin, the ilex [holly] king of the Wicca traditions, the Aztec serpent god Quetzalcoatl, and so on). The list could be extended endlessly, but these examples should suffice in order to illustrate how magic retained its appeal in the New Testament despite it being disapproved of so much in the Old Testament. In looking at it this way, it's no wonder that some modern authors claim that Jesus Christ was "the greatest magician of all times," because his work truly was magic and, with it, he attracted quite a large following.

But even Jesus himself failed at times due to the disbelief of his clients, for example in his hometown of Nazareth: "And he could there do no mighty work [miracles], save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief." (Mark 6:5–6) This is where the saying of the prophets also arose that applies least in their own land. The following passage shows how he turned his disciples into magicians as well, according to the style of the ascetic sadhus:

And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. And they went out, and preached that men should repent [originally a term for "contemplation, self-awareness"] And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them (Mark 6:7–13).

The apostles were supposed to cultivate poverty (an act, by the way, that medieval mendicant orders as well as the Cathars and Albigensians took so seriously that they were viewed by the heads of the church and other worldly rulers as a political threat to the status quo and were therefore punished as heretics)—the law of non-attachment and the independence from material goods through self-denial. Wherever they are not welcomed or accepted, they should leave and shake the dust from the corresponding place off their feet in “testimony,” a gesture of releasing all sympathy-magical contact and banishing hostile influences. The masses are converted by spectacular exorcisms and “miracle healings” with the help of an oil that was probably magically charged.

The subject of “tempting with magic” is mentioned quite frequently in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. Both Mosaic and (later) Jesuit ideology claim that everyone is “tempted” who is attached to another magician and does not submit to the belief in Yaweh or Jesus —the classical scheme of black and white that still haunts magical literature today. Thus, the “magical performance” of rivals is integrated into the system and explained:

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. [...] And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, [...] to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee” (Deuteronomy 13:1–5).

In this context, it would be helpful to go back into time and research the era of Moses and Jesus in order to comprehend how it could have come to such a development. This will be a big help to us later on when we try to understand Gnosticism, which plays an important role in Western magic, especially concerning the Luciferian aspect of it.

The area that we now summarize under the term “Near” or “Middle East” was home to a number of ancient and advanced magical civilizations. We’ll only be mentioning the most significant here:

- a) Egypt with its strong African, shamanic, and Hittite influences, which is still considered to be the cradle of Western magic today
- b) Sumeria/Babylon/Assyria/Chaldea with highly developed systems of astrology, talisman magic and divination as well as equally refined temple worshipping traditions
- c) Phoenicia with its frequent human sacrifices to Marduk and Baal that reach way back to pre-biblical times
- d) Grecism, which was strongly represented in Egypt at the time of Jesus Christ, with its speculative occult doctrines and mysticism
- e) Syncretic Rome that had its say in Egypt and Palestine since Cleopatra’s time. It was considered to be the melting pot of all imaginable types of worship in the Near East due to its religious tolerance that was influenced by the imperialistic reason of state.
- f) Persia with its rich tradition of folk magic and its Zoroastrianism religion that gained a great influence on other cultures due to its campaigns of conquest
- g) Palestine itself with its Arabic-Semitic folk magic practiced by various rival tribes with their rich variety of worshipping traditions and practices. Much of our information comes from the stories of the Israelites in the Old Testament.

Let’s summarize all of this information. According to the pragmatic and material-oriented spirit of the times, it was necessary in those days for prophets and magicians to prove themselves with convincing samples of their skills before people would trust them enough to follow them. Plus, there were a vast amount of folk magical practices back then that, when considering that they stem from over two thousand years ago, make our modern-day methods of everyday practical magic pale in comparison. Therefore, the things that the people demanded from professional magicians were certainly no less spectacular. On the other hand, illiteracy was so widespread and critical, rational thought was just beginning to emerge in a few philosophical schools as a privilege of a



tiny educated minority so that the door was left wide open to plenty of charlatans and quacks. The latter unfortunately hasn't changed much and not until just a few years ago did a discipline like parapsychology, that's been struggling to receive scientific acceptance, begin to seriously deal with the phenomena of tricksters and swindlers. Therefore it's quite understandable that there's so much talk about fraud throughout the whole Bible (and in our modern-day press!).

After all, there was plenty of work out there for all kinds of magicians. Here's just one example, in Samaria, as we read above: "For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them." Possession seems to have been a common problem back then. Today we would call it a big public hygiene problem. The magician back then was much closer to the primeval function as a shaman than he or she is today. Although the Old Testament lists a number of ways to treat disease, the actual type of therapy was always decided upon by the priest who, for example, would often just quarantine the sick (e.g., lepers) or banish them from society entirely (Leviticus 13). Both priests and magicians acted as sorcerers or "intercessors" and mediators between this world and the world beyond, working as psychotherapists, doctors, warriors, and ministers (soul helpers), and the Old Testament gives plenty of proof of how difficult it was to distinguish between magic and religion in everyday practice, although this artificial boundary is still used today by theologians who attempt to slander and repress the black arts.

But none of this changes the fact that people back then preferred to follow spiritual and worldly leaders who had charisma, and that's still true today. Whoever wanted to gain a following in the Palestine of the Old or New Testament had to prove himself first through acts of healing, divination, exorcism, clairvoyance, or the interpretation of omens ("prove yourselves by working a miracle" [Exodus 7:9]), and if someone just happened to produce a certain PSI effect on the side, all the better! Another thing we haven't mentioned yet that played an important role in this was levitation. Just look at the controversial ascension of Christ, or Philip who suddenly disappeared before the eyes of the converted eunuch and was found later (by the "Spirit of the Lord") in a different place (see Acts 8:39–40).

And if that were not enough, Christian ideology itself has a number of magical concepts that theologians like to brush aside in embarrassment, while ethnologists and occult researchers view them as proof of real magic. Let's just pick two of the many ex-

amples here, namely the resurrection of Christ and the transubstantiation, both being core elements of the Christian faith.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ after his crucifixion and entombment is the cornerstone of his claim to divinity and role as a savior. Let's not concern ourselves here with the question of whether or not his death was actually physical (if you do some calculation, everyone knows that he wasn't in his tomb for three whole days, but only for a maximum of half that time, which led doctors to speculate about his death being only apparent), but instead let's look at how this man of Nazareth appeared to his disciples after his resurrection.

After initial doubt ("And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not"), Peter checked to see if the tomb of Jesus was empty and was "wondering in himself at that which was come to pass" (Luke 24:11–12). As two of his disciples went on that same day from Jerusalem to Emmaus, which was two hours away, "Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him" (Luke 24:15–16). They spoke with the stranger, told him about the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, and expressed their hope that the Messiah would indeed arise from the dead on the third day as prophesized. But they still did not recognize him and it took another magical act on the part of the apparition to convince them: "And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight" (Luke 24:30–31).

Back in Jerusalem, the two reported their experience to the remaining eleven apostles (Judas Iscariot had already hung himself) and another apparition occurred: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them [...] But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit" (Luke 24:36–37). The apparition let himself be touched in order to prove that he wasn't a ghost "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39). "And they even ate fish and honeycomb with him. Then he led them out to Bethany, blessed them and was carried up to heaven (Luke 24:51).

We'll get back to the astonishment and failure to recognize the apparition in a few minutes. Mark, the evangelist, wrote a very informative comment on this that we've underlined in the quotation below:

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that

she had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country (Mark 16:9–12).

In the Book of John, Jesus appears to his disciples on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias while they're out fishing, "but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus" (John 21:4). He ensured that the fishing was good and had lit the coals of the fire and roasted the fish himself when they returned to shore. Jesus spoke to them: "Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord" (John 21:12).

All of this made one thing quite clear. The resurrected Jesus was not recognized and he had to prove his identity to his disciples with more magical acts. This might have been a result of the necessary skepticism of his disciples since they most likely believed in ghosts and wanted to eliminate that possibility. Just look at the example of "doubting Thomas." Even more interesting is the fact that he is not recognized despite appearing in physical form, and that he appeared in a different form. If we take a quick look at modern-day India, we'll encounter a number of reports from saints who have been on earth for millenniums but appear to their disciples in various bodies!

Magically speaking, this was either a physically manifested astral projection that worked beyond the postulated physical death, or a vision that his disciples had that the other people present didn't necessarily see since it requires a certain sensitivity to subtle energies. Not everyone sees the resurrected man and not everyone who does see him is able to recognize him. But let's end the discussion for now and leave it up to you to make up your own mind through contemplation and meditation.

Let's turn to the topic of transubstantiation, meaning the changing of bread and wine into flesh and blood such is still practiced regularly by most Christian churches today. The word "transubstantiation" means the changing of one substance into another. We do the same when we charge an amulet or talisman, and when charging and activating a fetish or imago spurius (this term will be described later in more detail when we talk about the magic of the elementals). It's an ancient practice to first sacrifice something to a god (= to unite it with the god) and then to consume it (= to unite oneself with the god) and this act is in no way reserved for Christianity. When Jesus declares the bread and wine to be pieces of himself at the Last Supper and asks the disciples to share them, this is

not only a way of saying farewell but also a form of transferring power. It's the blood of the "New Testament" that is spilled. A new paradigm and a new oath of allegiance are required—in short, a new eon begins.

Although there's already lots of information available on the subject of "magic in the Bible," there's still plenty of other interesting material out there that could fill a whole book. We've merely pointed out a few significant elements in the little space that we have available here. Much still remains unsaid, such as the ban of the fertility rite (Deuteronomy 14:21), the sorcerers Bar-jesus (Acts 13:6), and Elymas (Acts 13:8), and the talking in tongues ("glossolalia") of early Christian communities—we were only able to touch on most things. But if this piqued your interest, I would recommend that you conduct a thorough study of the Bible from a magical point of view. At times throughout the course of this book, we'll mention episodes from the Bible again if they help illustrate a certain point. For example, we might point out some appropriate Bible passages when we study shamanic practices, or others when we take a look at the magic of ancient Egypt.

In our next special focus, we'll take a look at the history and ideology of Gnosticism, and follow its ideas from the early beginnings right up to modern-day chaos magic.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 56*

#### **MUDRA TRAINING (IV)**

This is a variation of Exercise 22. Perform the IAO formula as usual, but instead of stretching your arms to shape the letters IAO, use the appropriate vowel mudras as described in the section above. This has the advantage that you can practice the mudras by using an exercise that you're already familiar with. At the same time, it helps to break any patterns of counterproductive habits that may have crept into your training.

Make note in your magical diary of any differences that you might feel. Practice the IAO formula with mudras for two months before deciding whether you'd like to continue to use them in this formula, or if you'd prefer to go back to the old way. (After the two-month training period you can also alternate doing the IAO formula with and without mudras.)

### EXERCISE 57

#### MUDRA TRAINING (V)

Now create a variation of Exercise 25 along the same lines as in Exercise 56 above. You and your partner should make note of any differences.

### EXERCISE 58

#### MUDRA TRAINING (VI)

Experiment with the other mudras and signs in this section and try to integrate them meaningfully into your ritual and nonritual practice.

### EXERCISE 59

#### MUDRA TRAINING (VII)

After you've gained a bit of experience with mudras, try to develop one or two of your own symbol matrices for hands, fingers and/or other body parts and test them in practice.

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## FURTHER READING

Ingrid Ramm-Bonwitt, *Mudras—Geheimsprache der Yogis*

Probably the most thorough and comprehensive book on the subject of Eastern mudras that's also easy to understand. It deals with the mudras in Indian dance and their role in Hindu iconography, Buddhist and tantric mudras, the mudras of hatha yoga, and in the last (short) chapter, with the gesture language of the occident and Christian orthodox iconography.

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# PRACTICAL SIGIL MAGIC (IV)

## THE ALPHABET OF DESIRE

Now that we've experimented with the various methods of making sigils and gained enough experience working with them, we'd like to turn to another aspect of sigil magic, namely the Alphabet of Desire. Since you probably already have your own copy of my book *Practical Sigil Magic* by now that deals with the topic in depth, you should carefully review Chapter 7, "The Alphabet of Desire."

Part of the task of a journeyman is that he or she should be able to produce a fully functional "work of proficiency." As the above-mentioned chapter of my book *Practical Sigil Magic* already mentions, it will probably take you quite a bit of time to create your own Alphabet of Desire. That's why we recommend that you start now (if you haven't done so already) so that you'll have completed your (preliminary) Alphabet of Desire and experimented with it some by the time you complete this course. Please stick to the Structuring Principle for now, and save the Mirror of the Psyche for later (see *Practical Sigil Magic*). Because we're not just concerned with sigil magic here, instead, you should learn to structure your magical universe according to your own principles, and this can only be done after thorough research and practice on your part.

Don't be disappointed if your initial or preliminary Alphabet of Desire looks a bit pathetic. Generally you need plenty of experience here as well and by the time you complete the "master level" of our training program, you'll probably make lots of changes and improvements to your work.

Here's a hint on how you can go about designing a basic matrix for your own personal Alphabet of Desire. At first, only use generic terms that you're well familiar with and that are not too complicated (e.g., with the dualistic element scheme) and only differentiate the basic scheme step by step, unless you find it easy to develop complete and refined philosophical organizational models. Tackle the task slowly, but be thorough and persistent.

The advantages of such work can hardly be emphasized enough. First, you'll gain inner independence from foreign systems. At the same time, you will be able to make best use of them where adequate in terms of your own individual practice.

Second, it will familiarize you with the divine act of creation, which every magician personally needs to comprehend if he or she really wants to be able to "accept his or her power" as required by Castaneda's don Juan. Third, practicing such ways of thinking will make it easier to understand other more complicated systems that are mentioned in literature time and time again, such as Enochian magic. Fourth, it will put an additional sigil weapon into your hand that will prove to be invaluable in your practice. Fifth and last, such methods will help you achieve the greatest goal of every master, namely to develop your own magical system that has proved effective in practice and that is optimally tailored to meet your individual needs, skills, and experience. In this sense, you can view this as an exercise in preparation for the tasks and responsibilities required in the master level of our training program.

# INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICAL KABBALAH (I)

Older magic literature will often emphasize that traditional Western magic is based on three pillars: Kabbalah, astrology, and alchemy. This three-way division is already a Kabbalistic statement in itself since it is based on the three pillars of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life that we'll be discussing later in more detail.

Throughout the history of magic, the focus has continually shifted from one discipline to the other. Although equal importance was placed on all three during the late Middle Ages, the balance soon shifted during the Renaissance (at least qualitatively) toward astrology and alchemy (which certainly doesn't mean that the Kabbalah was neglected entirely), while the examples of French occultism and the Golden Dawn in the nineteenth century show that this era cultivated the study of the Kabbalah instead, while astrology and alchemy slipped into the background.

In the magic of modern times though, both astrology and the Kabbalah play significant roles, while alchemy has diminished to merely a specialty field of a small minority of magicians. Of course, these are just general tendencies that cannot be qualified statistically, but they're enough to show a trend that many modern magicians seem to be unaware of.

Just like with astrology, there's already a great deal of good literature about the Kabbalah available on the market so that we don't feel it necessary to go into depth on its theory here. The books recommended at the end of this section should suffice.



Most of the books on the Kabbalah, though, lack in making concrete references to applied magic. They're mostly philosophically speculative and, although they may offer a good introduction into Kabbalistic mysticism, they rarely mention how this insight can actually be used in magical practice. Plus, they're usually written in such an unskillfully educational and methodical way that makes it even more difficult for the beginning reader to get a good grasp of the difficult material.

We'd like to remedy this problem in our book by providing a series of concrete training suggestions in our practical exercises. These will enable a deeper understanding of Kabbalistic practice, while at the same time allowing the magician to work with a paradigm that will prepare him or her to better understand the traditional literature on the Black Arts. If you're already familiar with disciplines such as Gematria, Notaricon, Temurah, and the mysticism of the Tree of Life, you can just skim over the paragraphs on these and can decide for yourself whether or not you want to use them.

### **WHAT IS KABBALAH?**

The word "Kabbalah" means "to receive" and it refers to the "secret" knowledge that's passed down from a spiritual teacher to his or her students. But if you look closer at the word, you'll see that there are clear parallels to the Greek word "gnosis," which is understood as "knowledge revealed or learned" as we already know.

In theology and the history of religion, the Kabbalah is generally defined as the "mysticism of Judaism (Mosaism)." Just like with Christian mysticism, the Kabbalah was always a domain of the few and it was usually taught by rabbis in small circles of initiates, which is sometimes still true today. So don't be surprised if the rabbi of your local synagogue just shrugs his shoulders with a blank look on his face when you ask him about the Kabbalah. Only in rare cases will he be trying to keep this knowledge "secret." Instead, in most cases, the good man probably knows just as little about the Kabbalah as the average Christian priest knows about mystics such as Meister Eckhart, Jakob Böhme, or Quirinus Kuhlmann! In addition, the majority of Kabbalistic work was done by eastern Judaism (Chassidism). Due to the persecution of Jews in the West up into the twentieth century, it's no wonder that there are only a handful of Jewish Kabbalists left in Europe.

In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, there was a rich tradition of “Christian Kabbalah” that separated itself from Judaism for the most part. In fact, it was often used in conversion attempts to convince the Jews with Kabbalistic formulas and proof of the correctness of the Christian faith and (above all) of Jesus of Nazareth’s claim to salvation as the Messiah. In doing so, elements of the Jewish Kabbalah were adopted (e.g., the discipline of Gematria) and applied to Christian beliefs, myths, and texts.

By the way, for quite a long time, laymen and half-educated new-agers thought that the Kabbalah was nothing but “numerology,” or the study of the deeper meanings of numbers (e.g., using them for personality analysis by converting the letters of one’s name to numbers), and even today lousy attempts at numerology are sold under the description of “Kabbalah.” The reason for this is that parts of the Kabbalah (but not the entire Kabbalistic discipline!) actually do deal with the correspondences of numbers and letters. Unfortunately, the fact is often overlooked that this system of number and letter mysticism and magic applies solely to the Hebrew language. After all, there were early attempts at developing various other versions of a “Kabbalah,” e.g., for Greek, German, and English, but these merely created correspondences between the letters of the respective alphabets and the meanings of certain numbers. In addition, most authors who support such vulgar attempts at imitating the Jewish Kabbalah generally have no knowledge of the Hebrew language whatsoever. (Of course, there are a few exceptions, but there’s no need to go into that any further here.)

Meanwhile, a distinction is now made between an “esoteric” and a “Jewish” Kabbalah although both disciplines overlap in many areas. This development probably occurred in the late eighteenth century (Cagliostro, St. Germain, and even Cassanova himself tried his hand at the Kabbalistic mantic art) and reached its preliminary climax in the 1960s. One of the triggers was probably Court de Gebelin who helped the tarot gain popularity in occult circles by claiming that the cards contained hidden knowledge of ancient Egypt and that the tarot in general actually originated in Egypt itself. That happened in around 1780, a few centuries before the Rosetta Stone was discovered and deciphered by Champollion, during a time when the Egyptian hieroglyphics seemed to be much more mysterious and “magical” than they are today.

After all, Gebelin’s initiative (and that of his successor Alliette-Etteilla) resulted in a newly awakened interest in the “esoteric” tarot. But only authors such as Eliphas Lévi,

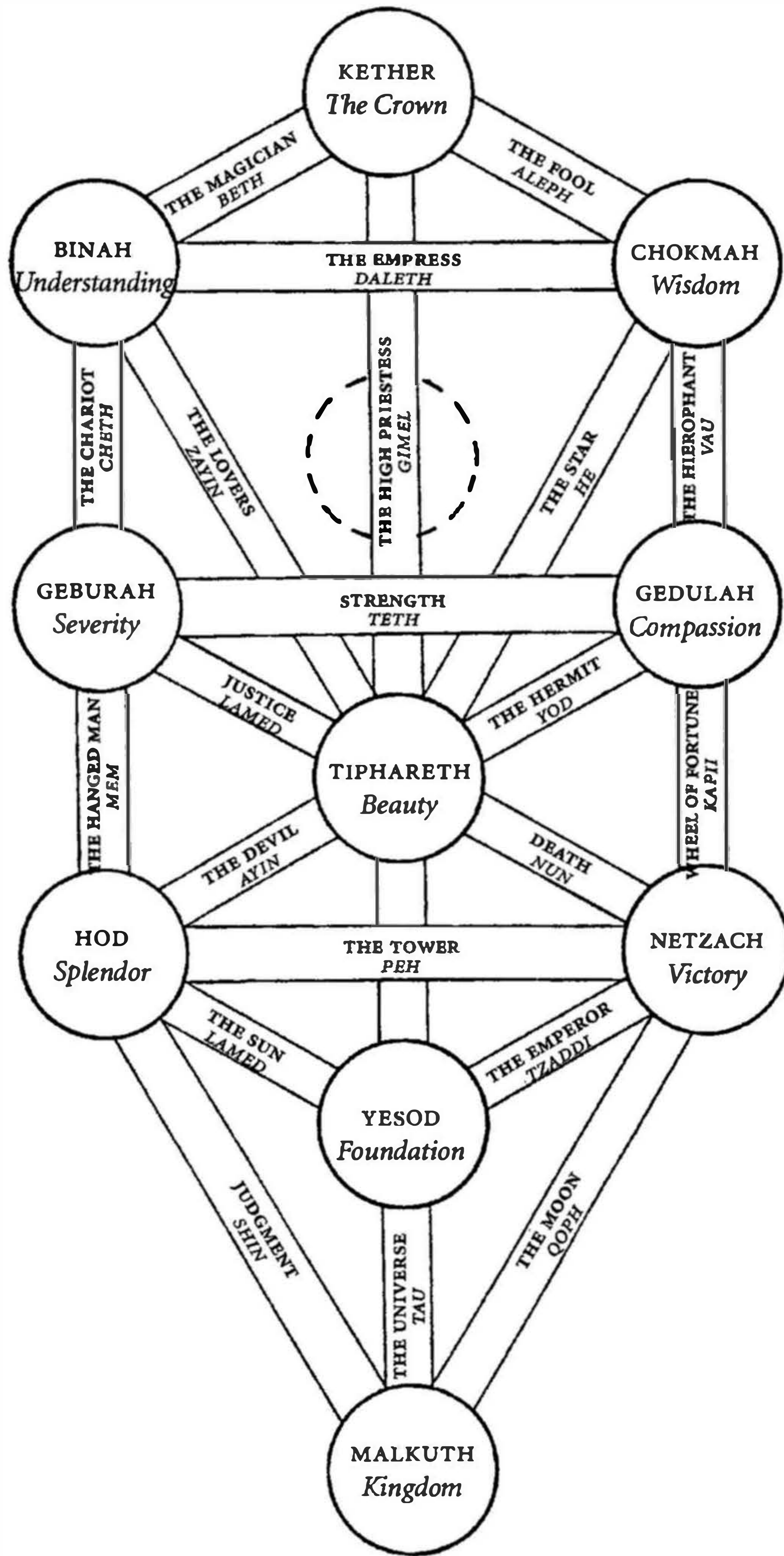


Illustration 17: The Kabbalistic Tree of Life (with tarot correspondences)

Papus, and the founders of the Golden Dawn were able to put the Egyptianization of the tarot into perspective by setting it in relation to the Kabbalistic Tree of Life instead. Since then, many Western, non-Jewish Kabbalists understand the Kabbalah mainly in relation to its teachings of the Tree of Life as it corresponds to the tarot, and most modern Kabbalistic literature deals exclusively with this.

But Kabbalah contains many more disciplines than just the philosophical contemplation of the Tree of Life. The spectrum includes the mystical observation of the deity through ritual practice, the magic and mysticism of letters and numbers (as already mentioned), the research of secret contents and interpretations of the holy scriptures (Torah/Old Testament), the exploration of inner correlations between seemingly unrelated concepts, as well as magical formulas and practices.

The “Jewish Kabbalah” is inseparable from the Mosaic belief in the Old Testament. It follows its tradition and when it goes beyond this or even questions it, it at least does so in the same way that Christian mysticism does with Christianity, Islamic mysticism with Islam, and so on. The “esoteric Kabbalah” (also called “Western Kabbalah”), on the other hand, only picks out certain areas of the Jewish discipline and puts them in a different religious, ideological, social, and time-related context. (Let’s remember in our criticism of the esoteric Kabbalah that it actually sprang from Christianity and is really nothing other than an extension of Judaism. The main difference between the two is that Christianity views Jesus as the Messiah and uses its newly revealed law [the New Testament] as a basis for its laws, while Judaism denies all of this and is still waiting for the coming of the Messiah and therefore logically uses the Old Testament as the basis for its laws until a new law can be promulgated. Therefore it comes as no surprise that the Kabbalah, as a part of Judaism, could experience further development in another Christianity-oriented way.)

The reason for the comparatively superficial nature of the esoteric Kabbalah is due largely to the diminishing use of the Hebrew language. Although Hebrew was commonly taught to educated society in the eighteenth century right alongside Latin and Greek, this trend declined considerably in the nineteenth century, and today it’s only common among a few specialists (Hebraists, Judaists, specialized theologians). Instead of making the effort to learn Hebrew, many authors preferred (and still do today) to focus on the more speculative areas of the Kabbalah that require no understanding of the language.

But especially for practical magic, disciplines such as Kabbalistic Gematria are of great significance, which is why we’d like to take a look at this aspect of applied Kabbalah first.

## NOTARICON, TEMURAH, GEMATRIA

Don't worry, you don't necessarily need to learn perfect Hebrew in order to study the Kabbalah in depth, at least not for the practice of Kabbalistically influenced practical magic. Nonetheless, some basic knowledge is necessary, especially if you're interested in being able to understand some older authors. Even Aleister Crowley's works are hardly decipherable without some background knowledge of the Kabbalah, and for a long time other influential British authors such as Kenneth Grant seemed primarily interested in expanding on Crowley's ideas.

In order to understand Gematria, you'll need to become familiar with some philosophical background information first, including the opinion that Hebrew is "the primeval language of creation." We've already touched on this earlier and would therefore like to ask you to closely read the passage below before continuing.

We see that the Hebrews have made a religion out of their language. Even in the Old Testament it says that God created the world according to weights, measures, and numbers and this also applies to the Hebrew language. There are two fundamental ideas behind this:

1. The language itself is an instrument of magic. It contains magical laws that the initiate is able to recognize and use.
2. The revealed writings contain one or more secret levels of interpretation that are hidden and can only be understood by initiates.

We'll see what that means specifically later on in our examination. Three basic disciplines are derived from the Kabbalah that we'd like to mention briefly before going into them in more depth.

The "written Kabbalah" (in contrast to the pure "number Kabbalah") is divided into three parts:

- a) GEMATRIA (GMTRIA)
- b) NOTARICON (NVTRIQVN)
- c) TEMURAH (ThMVRH)

We'll be dealing with the Gematria in depth soon, but first let's look at the two other disciplines, which we'll be mentioning here from time to time, although we won't be

dealing with them separately in this book because they require a great deal of knowledge of the Hebrew language. In order to do so, we'll mainly be borrowing information from William Wynn Westcott (cofounder of the Golden Dawn) from his introduction to the Kabbalah. Westcott was quoted by Aleister Crowley in *Liber 777* as well.

### NOTARICON (OR NOTARIQON)

Notaricon derives from the Latin word *notarius*, which basically means “shorthand writer.” There are two basic forms of Notaricon. In the first type, the first letters of a word are understood to be the first letters of the words of a new, “hidden” sentence that needs to be recognized. Here's an example:

The Book of Genesis begins with the Hebrew word BRASHITH (“In the beginning”). Each individual letter of this word is used as the beginning letter of another word, like in an acronym, which could possibly result in the following “interpretation”:

BRASHITH RAH ALHIM SHIQBLV ISHRAL ThVRH.

Transcribed: Berashith Rahi Elohim Sheyequebelo Israel Torah.

Translated: “In the beginning the Elohim saw that Israel would accept the law.” In this way, each individual word gets a new level of meaning. As you can imagine, this opens an endless number of possible speculations! So, of course, there are an enormous number of other possible interpretations, one of which we'd like to mention that's taken from the Christian Kabbalah. This interpretation helped convert another Jew to Christianity in the seventeenth century—Solomon Meir Ben Moses, who originally held a hostile view of the Christian faith.

BN RVCh AB ShLVShThM IChD ThMIM—Ben Ruach Ab Shaloshethem Yechad Thaumim: “The Son, the Spirit, the Father, ye shall equally worship Their Trinity.” (In the Crowley edition quoted here, the last word was transcribed incorrectly as “Thaubodo”, a mistake that was repeated in Eschner's German translation without comment.)

The second form of Notaricon is basically the exact reverse of the first type. The first, final, or even the middle letters are taken from the individual words of a sentence to form a new word or series of words.

For example, the Kabbalah itself is described as ChKMH NSThRH (Chokhmah Nesethrah), or “secret wisdom.” If you take the first two letters of these two words, you

get the new word CHN (Chen) or “mercy,” which Kabbalistically “proves” the merciful and divine nature of the Kabbalah. If you take the first and last letters of the words MI IOLH LNV HShMIMH, Mi Iaulah Leno Ha-Shamayimah (“Who shall go up for us to heaven?” Deuteronomy 30:12), the words “circumcision” and IHVH, the Tetragrammaton (= written here as Iod-He-Vau-He and not YHVH which is a common alternative transcription) are created. This “proves” that the biblical God demanded circumcision in order to get to heaven.

*Note: Obviously, Hebrew is written from right to left. However, for the purpose of this discussion we have abided by the traditional convention of rendering it from left to right here as this is more in accord with English reading and writing practice.*

## TEMURAH

The discipline of the Temurah involves a permutation technique. This involves substituting a certain letter in a predefined text with the previous or following letter of the alphabet according to certain rules, thus creating an entirely different word. Since written Hebrew doesn't have any vowels, there's plenty of room for vowel additions that result in numerous interpretations. There are dozens of various methods that Temurah uses, but we don't want to get into that here since our brief description should already give you a sufficient idea of what Temurah is. (Example: ShShK, Shehshakh, can easily become BBL, Babel.)

Wescott mentions a few other fine details that we'd like to use to illustrate Kabbalistic thought more closely using one more example (hopefully it won't scare you off!):

Using the word BRAShITh again, the following interesting manipulations can be made, among others. When the first letter (B) is combined with the third letter (A), the result is AB (Ab = “the Father”). If you double the first letter (B) and then add the second (R), you get BBR (Bebar = “in/through the Son”). If you read all of the letters except the first, this results in RAShITh (Rashith = “the beginning”). If you combine the fourth letter (Sh) with the first (B) and the last/Th), this makes the word ShBTh (Shebeth, Sabbath = the end, silence”). The first three letters are BRA (Bera = “to create”), and if you add the fifth and fourth you get AISh (Aish = “Man”).

In conclusion, we'd also like to mention that the form of the letters themselves has given cause for a great deal of speculation, although this seems a bit dubious consider-

ing the fact that the Hebrew alphabet has changed so drastically over the years, from its Canaanite or Phoenician version to the generally widespread square script of today. However, sometimes the last letters are written in the middle of a word, or the normal form is used at the end, and so on, which also leaves room for a number of speculations.

In any case, from the above information you should already be able to see that sound knowledge of Hebrew and the Bible is necessary for the practice of Notaricon and Temurah; it's not enough to just look up certain words in a dictionary, since grammatical skills are required as well. Maybe we should also mention that Aleister Crowley didn't really think much of these two disciplines, even saying that they would "drive you crazy" because they appeared to him as a firm believer in Gematria as much too subjective, speculative, and random. In his essay on Gematria, he ridicules the other two methods viciously.

Now let's discuss the first fundamental idea that we mentioned above, with the concept that language itself is an instrument of magic that leads to insight and action. This will become clear once you understand Gematria.

### **THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF GEMATRIA**

One of the indisputable advantages that Gematria has over the other two disciplines mentioned above is its comparatively high degree of technical objectivity. Gematria consists of converting words to numerical values and meditatively comparing these words with others of the same numerical value. For example, if we take the Hebrew word for "love," which has the same numerical value as the word for "unity," this results in an interesting train of thought: "Love" = "unity" = "becoming one" = "oneness" = "recognizing that everything is one means being able to love everything," and so on. The objectivity is based on the fact that every Hebrew letter has always had a fixed numerical value that cannot be changed.

On the other hand, although the above illustration ("love" = "unity") is a classic example that can often be found in Kabbalistic literature, the actual practice looks a lot less bright. In fact, it can even become terrible drudgery, randomly picking words out of the dictionary and manipulating them until you just happen to find a word with the same numerical value. After all, in most cases it's much more difficult to find such matches than it is in our example above. This is a very tiring task and a fairly mindless one at that.



Meanwhile, there are computer programs that take over the back-breaking work of counting (and recounting to be sure!) endless lists of words, but the use of these programs is actually a violation of the spirit of this Kabbalistic discipline.

That's because the secret of Gematria lies in the fact that the psychological censor is subdued by performing a monotonous, robotic activity, which allows intuitive insight to arise. In this sense, Gematria has a function that is quite similar to the intonation of mantras: It serves to induce magical trance or gnosis, but with the difference that the results can be recorded in writing, or "frozen."

This applies to the entire written Kabbalah, by the way. By working intellectually with a language that's completely foreign to most magicians and has seemingly exotic texts that never "really" seem to actually mean what they reveal on the surface, and by permuting letters and numbers, the rational mind automatically breaks down after a time, just like when you try to "crack" a Zen koan.

But the dangers of such work are just as apparent as well. Overintellectualizing, estrangement from all physical and subtle perception, loss of "grounding" relation to the everyday world, the development of paranoia—all of this and lots more is often the price that a Kabbalist has to pay for wanting to peek behind the veil of all creation. No wonder that in the early days a Kabbalah student was required to have learned and worked in a normal trade for a substantial amount of time before he was allowed to join a Kabbalistic circle! Because Judaism is basically a much more pragmatic and worldly religion than Christianity that requires every rabbi to be able to hold one's own even in day-to-day life apart from all the Kabbalah and mysticism.

The actual technique of Gematria is just as simple as it sounds, and can actually be guessed from what we've already said. That's why we only need to summarize a few points here in order to give you a quick overview.

1. Hebrew words are converted to numerical values.

These can be words randomly chosen from a dictionary or ones that have a certain meaning to the magician or relate to him or her in any other significant way.

2. Words with the same numerical value are reflected upon through meditation.

The Kabbalistic magician meditates on the relationship between the meanings of words with the same numerical value. In doing so, he or she goes on the pre-

sumption that there definitely has to be a relationship because their corresponding numbers prove this. Since the world was created “according to weights, numbers, and measures,” hidden relationships on other levels can be discovered by manipulating the numbers. Especially with words that seemingly have no visible relationship to one another, this can be a very lengthy process that requires complete adjustment of your thinking.

3. The Gematric correspondences of meanings usually seem like revelations.

Gematria is the mysticism of letters and numbers in a literal sense. The relationship between words that at first seem unrelated is generally received as a “revelation” (“eureka!” or “it clicks”) and other magicians will not necessarily understand this.

4. In practical magic, the insight of Gematric meanings is used to draw up correspondences and use them for operative purposes.

The magician can use the correspondences that he or she receives through Gematria to make a personal table that can be used for magical operations by integrating them into his or her ritual practice. Such a process is usually extremely powerful since it is backed by the awareness of a “personal revelation” (and the superiority of this revelation above all other foreign systems). In other words, through Gematric research, the magician can obtain his or her own personal “secrets of the trade” and “secret correspondences.”

In conclusion, let’s mention another rule of thumb that’s connected with Gematria:

**IF THE NUMBERS OF WORDS CORRESPOND, THEIR MEANINGS ALWAYS DO TOO.**

This paradigm is vital to all types of Gematric research as a working hypothesis. Even if you don’t believe this, we still recommend assuming this paradigm for your Gematric practice and experimenting with it.

## **THE HEBREW ALPHABET**

In Illustration 18 you’ll find a table of the Hebrew alphabet including the names and numerical values of each individual letter as well as their keywords and correspondences

in the Latin alphabet. Although it's a bit outdated, we'll be using the English phonetic transcription here as is common in most occult literature to avoid any confusion when reading other Kabbalistic authors.

Even if you're not interested in learning more about Hebrew influenced mysticism and magic, you should still remember the following basic rules.

1. Hebrew is written from right to left.
2. The Hebrew alphabet does not have any vowels with the exception of Aleph, which was originally a consonant and is still viewed as such by some linguists.

Therefore, the correspondences in our list are to be understood only as possible approaches. For example, "Ayin" is not really an "O," but is rather a sort of dropping of the voice or clicking sound. But since Hebrew, like all other languages, uses vowels in speech, some of the consonants are spoken as vowels under certain circumstances (e.g., "Yodh" and "Vau"). In order to ensure the clarity of the holy scriptures, so-called "diacritical marks" were inserted to take over the job of vowels, although they are not really a part of the alphabet itself. We generally won't need these for our study of Gematria so we won't mention them any further here.

3. Some letters change their form when they're at the end of a word. Their numerical values change in these cases as well. In the list, these so-called "end letters" are always listed according to their original letters (e.g., Kaph and end Kaph).
4. The keywords are only listed for the sake of completeness. They're of little use to someone who has no knowledge of Hebrew. They relate to the letter form or words that begin with the respective letters. Since some authors use them as a basis for mystical speculation, we thought we'd print them for you here. The Hebrew alphabet, just like the Greek alphabet, developed from Phoenician, which was in all probability derived from the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Its characteristic angular form ("square script") didn't develop until the last centuries before the common era in Israel. That's why we don't feel it is wise to interpret the form of the letters to have more meaning than there actually is. But if you enjoy this type of thing and are happy with your results, feel free to continue with this practice.

You'll find all other instructions in the Practical Exercise section as well as in a later section of this book.

<i>Hebrew figure</i>	<i>Name of the letter</i>	<i>Numerical value</i>	<i>Keywords</i>	<i>English equivalent</i>
א	ALEPH	1	Ox	A
ב	BETH	2	House	B
ג	GIMEL	3	Camel	G
ד	DALETH	4	Door, gate	D
ה	HEH	5	Window	H (E)
ו	VAU	6	Nail, hook	V (U)
ז	ZAYIN	7	Sword	Z
ח	CHETH/KHETH	8	Fence	CH
ט	TETH	9	Serpent	T
י	YODH	10	Hand	Y (I/J)
כ	KAPH	20	Palm	K
ך	END-KAPH	500		
ל	LAMED	30	Ox goad	L
מ	MEM	40	Water	M
ם	END-MEM	600		
נ	NUN	50	Fish	N
ן	END-NUN	700		
ס	SAMEKH	60	Support	S
ע	AYIN	70	Eye	O (A'A/NG)
פ	PEH	80	Mouth	P
ף	END-PEH	800		
צ	TZADDI	90	Fish hook	TZ
ץ	END-TZADDI	900		
ק	QOPH	100	Ear	Q
ר	RESH	200	Head	R
ש	SHIN	300	Tooth	S (SH)
ת	TAU	400	Tau cross	T (TH)

*Illustration 18: The Hebrew alphabet*

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### **EXERCISE 60**

#### **PRACTICAL SIGIL MAGIC (III)**

If you haven't already done so, begin working with the Alphabet of Desire as described at the beginning of this section. Develop an entire alphabet of your own (Structuring Principle). Continue with this exercise until you've worked through the end of this book. But don't put off doing this for too long because you'll probably need every minute that you can get. Don't underestimate this exercise! This course in magic will increasingly demand more and more of your magical creativity and independence as you go along, and developing your own first Alphabet of Desire is just the first step in this development. If you miss out on the opportunity that this exercise has to offer, you might have big problems later on in trying to keep up. Don't forget, it's not only about developing an additional tool for sigil magic; instead, you're developing a number of other skills as well which will help make you a true master of magic.

### **EXERCISE 61**

#### **LAMP MEDITATION**

Meditate on the magic lamp.

Repeat this exercise until you no longer have any more questions about the lamp, until you've silently comprehended what enlightenment or illumination means to you. You can repeat this exercise on occasion at a later date to measure your development.

### **EXERCISE 62**

#### **HEBREW TRAINING (I)**

Copy the Hebrew alphabet five times and say the name of each letter out loud as you write it. Also memorize their numerical values.

**EXERCISE 63**

**HEBREW TRAINING (II)**

Some letters are easily mixed up, so put some extra practice into these. Therefore copy the following groups of letters five times as well, while again repeating the names of the letters out loud:

ןו סם רךד תחה כגב

*Illustration 19: see Exercise 63*

**EXERCISE 64**

**GEMATRIA TRAINING (I)**

Examine the following list and look for Gematric relationships. Calculate the numerical values of the individual words and compile a list of word groups. Meditate on their hidden relationships. Record the results in your magical diary.

אט	=	“Magician”
טמא	=	“Unclean, impure”
יחוד	=	“Union, unity”
יהשועה	=	“(The) name Jesus”
זאב	=	“Wolf”
אבד	=	“Lost, ruined”
חבלי	=	“Pain, suffering”
חב	=	“Secret place, breast”
סודט	=	“Sorath (sun intelligence)”
או	=	“Desire, either, or”
טיט	=	“Clay”
גבה	=	“Magnificent, grand, high”
בח	=	“Power”
אליסטיד קדולי	=	“Aleister Crowley”

*Illustration 20: see Exercise 64*

## EXERCISE 65

### GEMATRIA TRAINING (II)

Compare the following terms with other words or numbers that you've already encountered during your research of Gematria and numerology. (These could include so-called "lucky numbers," birthdays, and the like as well as planetary correspondences.)

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בהו	=	"Emptiness"
חוא	=	"Animal"
אלהיד	=	"The Lord thy God [is a consuming fire]" (Deuteronomy, 4:24)

*Illustration 21: see Exercise 65*

### FURTHER READING

This time we'd like to recommend a few introductory books on practical Kabbalah. Later we'll add more specialized works to this list (e.g., Fortune, Halevi, Sturzaker, etc.).

—Rufus Camphausen, *Tarot and Qabbalah*

Although this little paperback gives a fairly unorthodox explanation of the tarot and Kabbalah (there's a tarot deck that goes along with this book, the "Tree of Life Tarot" by Camphausen/Van Leuwen, but that shouldn't concern us here) it also gives one of the most clear and concise introductions to both Gematria and the philosophy of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. Even without Camphausen's comments on the classification of the planets to the Tree of Life, for example, you would still have much to gain from reading this book.

If you are not familiar with this book and haven't studied Gematria at all yet, we recommend that you first read pages 59–69. However, pay close attention to the fact that the author uses a slightly different transcription of the letters (e.g., "Bayth" instead of "Beth," "Yud" instead of "Yod," etc.), which takes some getting used to at first.

—Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*

A standard reference on the esoteric Kabbalah that mainly deals with the Tree of Life while neglecting the disciplines of Gematria, Temurah, and Notaricon. But since it's set up like an encyclopedia, it serves as a good reference book or it can be read systematically from cover to cover. If you chose the latter method, you'll be getting a complete course in practical esoteric Tree of Life Kabbalah that many authors have borrowed from. It's an absolute must for every English-speaking Kabbalist.

—Gershom Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism*

With this book, this great old man of Judaic studies and “orthodox” academic Kabbalah research has given us a study that can surely be seen as one of the best introductions to the mystical aspects of the Jewish Kabbalah. In doing so, he occasionally discusses esoteric, non-Jewish Kabbalistic speculations such as the golem legend and its relationship to magic, thus giving the reader a very substantial examination of the fundamentals of mystical Kabbalistic thought. This book is highly recommended as a background resource for all magicians who work with the Kabbalah.

—Gershom Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah (Mysticism & Kabbalah)*

More specific than his other book mentioned above. It's a collection of individual essays that deal in depth with basic Kabbalistic terminology and also discusses the transmigration of souls and the astral body from a Jewish (and at times esoteric) Kabbalistic perspective.

When we're discussing Gematria, it would be helpful to recommend a dictionary as well. We highly recommend the following standard reference of over a thousand pages:

—Wilhelm Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*

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# INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICAL KABBALAH (II)

## THE KABBALISTIC TREE OF LIFE (I)

As already mentioned in the last section, the Kabbalistic Tree of Life is for many authors the only interesting field of Kabbalah. The other Kabbalistic disciplines are quite demanding for the initiate who wants to do more than just dabble in them, requiring him or her to struggle with numerous linguistic, historic, and religious details before he or she can even seriously begin. But that discourages many people and especially in modern times, as hardly anyone is willing to make such a huge effort for something that brings comparatively few results.

But this isn't the only reason why most non-Jewish Kabbalists have preferred to work exclusively with the Tree of Life in the last few centuries. After all, the Tree of Life is a unique and convincing structure that has proven highly effective in the philosophy of correspondences.

In short, the Kabbalistic Tree of Life represents a "cosmic" structural scheme that both magicians and mystics alike can use to define and control every aspect of their lives. (That's why it's called the "Tree of Life," or in Hebrew "Otz Chaim.") All phenomena, whether subtle or coarse, can be categorized according to this structural scheme just like in the two other systems that we've already discussed: the elements and the planets.

At first glance, the Kabbalistic system may seem much more complicated than these other two, which has quantitative reasons. While the system of the elements has five organizational factors (earth, water, air, fire, spirit) and the planetary model has seven components (the seven classical planets), the Tree of Life has thirty-two basic components (the ten sephiroth and the twenty-two paths that connect them). Plus there are the “non-sephira” Daath, the three pillars, the veil “Paroketh” and the Abyss (“Thaum”), the various paths of the emanated energies, and, last but not least, the three primeval spheres Ain, Ain Soph, and Ain Soph Aur that are located beyond Kether. (These terms will be explained later on.)

Plus, the Tree of Life comprises other factors as well, such as the four Kabbalistic worlds with their own versions of the Tree of Life, the “world of shells” (“Qliphoth”), the allocation of the tarot cards to the sephiroth and the paths, and much more. This makes the study of the Tree of Life an extremely complex task that could never be exhausted in one human lifetime. This often causes the beginner to completely avoid or skip over the Tree of Life in his or her magical studies.

The apparent “simplicity” of other systems is deceiving since they become more complex the more you work with them and refine them. For example, the element model contains the subelements (“fire of earth, air of earth, water of earth,” etc.), the planetary model is closely associated with astrology, which makes it much more complicated as well, e.g., when the aspects between the planets or their house positions play a significant role, or when we compare the planets to classical deities, which in turn have their own comprehensive system of mythology.

No education in Western magic would be complete without the thorough study of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. That’s why we’re dedicating part of this book to it although we’ll continue to refer you to other relevant literature when appropriate in order to avoid wasting space here with details. After all, we’d like to give you an overview of the entire system here in such a way that its relevance to practical magic will become very clear, which is something that only a handful of authors actually do. Of course, we’ll leave it up to you on how in-depth you want to research and study these things on your own. After all, it would certainly be an overstatement if we said that Kabbalistic knowledge is absolutely necessary for Western magic to work at all, which some Anglo-Saxon authors actually claim. In particular, twentieth-century German occultism seems to manage just fine without the Kabbalah in many aspects and views it as noth-

ing more than a secondary discipline. For example, Franz Bardon's *The Key to the True Kabbalah* is, according to his own definition, a pure "science of the letters, of language and the word"—or a system of magic and mysticism that works with words, letters, and sounds. What Bardon understands as Kabbalah is what we call "mudras," "letter magic," or "mantra meditation" such as most other authors do. Despite the name, Bardon's system actually has very little to do with the Kabbalah of the Tree of Life.

But on the other hand, the significance of the Tree of Life should not be underestimated. This system is especially useful due to its diversity. Whoever hasn't found such a good system yet should definitely give it a try. By the way, the same holds true here as with Gematria, that it will be impossible to understand the writings of many authors without good knowledge of the philosophy of the Tree of Life. It's especially important for understanding the tarot.

We've already discussed the value of such systems when we talked about the correspondences, so there's no need to repeat this here. Like every pantheon and every other superior mythical organizational system, the Tree of Life reflects the philosophy and ideology of the period when it was created. It's obvious that it arose during a time of predominately linear thought and is strongly characterized by patriarchal, monotheistic ideas. So it's no wonder that especially dogmatists like to work with it, although this fact should in no way diminish its value to pragmatic magic.

People often say that understanding the Tree of Life is comparable to finding one's way using a map of a city's sewer system. Sometimes you might run into two corresponding spots such as manhole covers, but there are always streets and buildings "in the way" so that you would actually have to travel underground through sewage pipes and drains in order to use the map at all. That allows skeptics to put their finger right on the wound of all such systems, namely their rigid tendencies and simplistic generalizations without consideration of the actual nature of the small details. As magicians, we also have a tendency to get ourselves stuck in various explanatory systems without really seeing them critically, thereby confusing the map with the landscape itself. The map (in this case it's the system of the Tree of Life) is a tool for orientation—no more, but also no less! Working with the Tree of Life is an excellent way to understand mythical truths and symbol-logical thought, and since it's a wonderful way to learn how to work with correspondences, it's truly a masterpiece of human insight, as long as we don't forget its practical application through all our enthusiasm because mere speculation can never substitute for practical experience. So

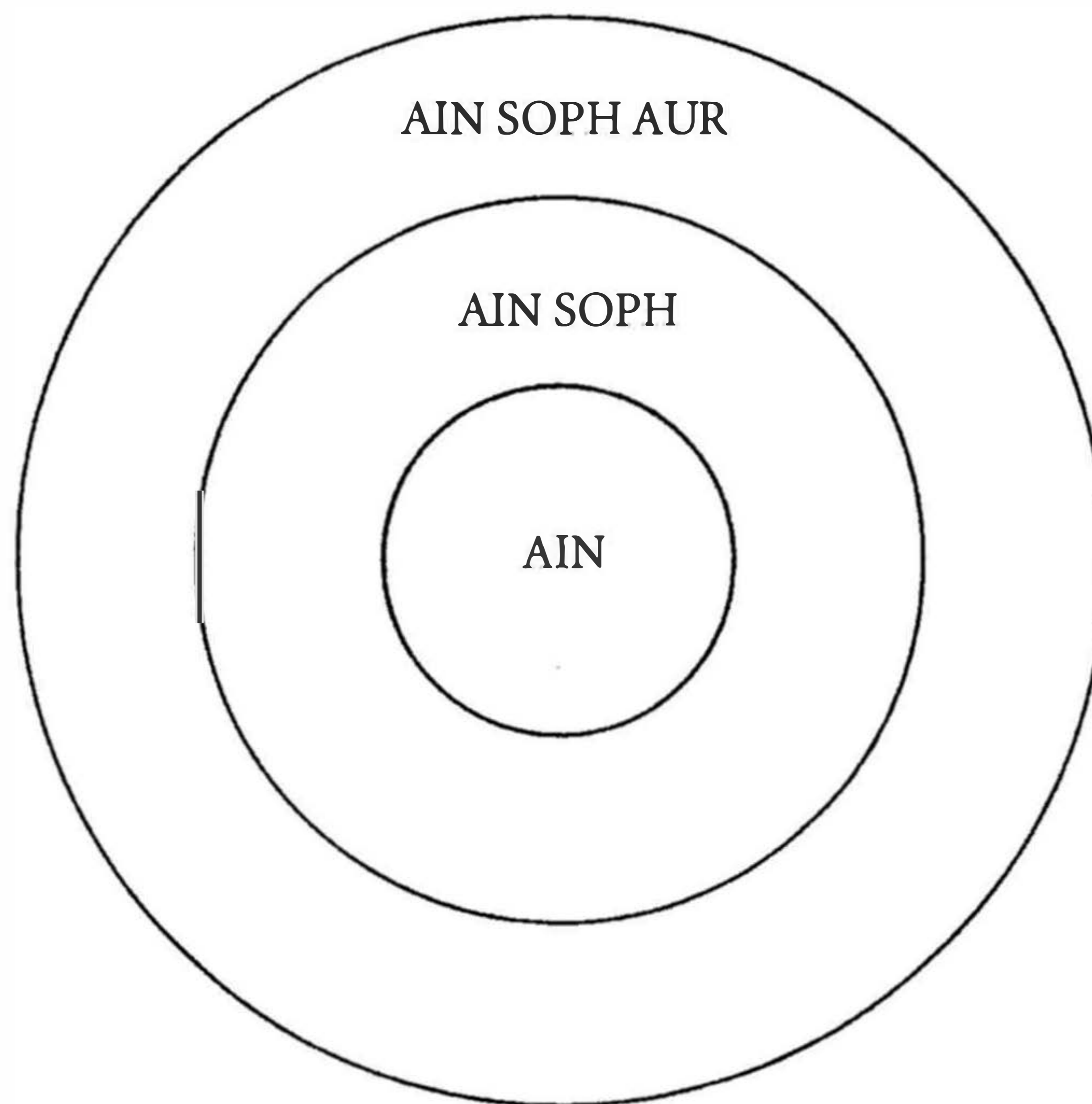
you should approach this subject both moderately yet consequently in order to avoid all of the numerous traps that you'll find along the way.

### **THE EMANATIONS OF THE GODHEAD**

The Kabbalistic mythology of the Tree of Life is based on the belief that all things were created by a primeval god (Tetragrammaton, IHVH, Yahweh) in ten basic steps (beginning from the top). But these steps are not only states of being, but also stages of development as well, and are called "spheres." Such a sphere is called "sephira" (or "sephirah") in Hebrew, and the plural form is "sephiroth." However, before the sephiroth were created, the primeval essence of the god went through a manifestation development of its own, as the primeval essence or "nothing" ("Ain") recognized itself in its infinity ("Ain Soph") and expanded into boundless light, as pure radiation ("Ain Soph Aur"). We can compare this with the wavy rings that are created when you throw a rock into water, and this trinity of states of being is in fact often depicted as three concentric (or at least intertwined) circles, as shown in Illustration 22. By the way, this concept is very old and can also be found in the Greek formula KONX OM PAX which represents a corruption of the ancient Egyptian KHABS AM PEKHT and means roughly the same, namely "extended light" or "light in extension."

This trinity is the origin of the ten emanations ("potencies") of the sephiroth in the following order:

- KETHER ("The Crown")
- CHOKMAH ("Wisdom")
- BINAH ("Understanding")
- CHESED (or GEDULAH = "Mercy")
- GEBURAH (or PAHAD = "Severity")
- TIPHARETH ("Beauty")
- NETZACH ("Victory")
- HOD ("Glory")
- YESOD ("The Foundation")
- MALKUTH ("The Kingdom")



*Illustration 22: The development of the primeval essence*

We'll be discussing the individual sephiroth in more detail. If you're a Kabbalistic beginner, there's no need to remember that the emanation runs from the "Crown" (Kether) down to the "Kingdom" (Malkuth) for now. (In other words, matter is created from the spirit, or, more precisely, spirit is concentrated to form matter. The tendency of modern-day magic to move away from such polar systems is of no importance to us at this point. We'll be dealing with this in more detail later when we discuss other modern models of magic.)

First, let's talk about three of the most important beginning aspects of the Tree of Life before we go into a more thorough examination of the individual spheres: (1) the tension between Kether and Malkuth; (2) the three pillars; (3) using the Tree of Life as a supermatrix for magical correspondences.

## THE TENSION BETWEEN KETHER AND MALKUTH

An emanation can be described as something “flowing out” or “radiating.” According to both Kabbalistic and neo-Platonic teachings, creation occurred when the primeval essence (Kabbalistically “Ain”—not to be confused with the Hebrew letter “Ayin”!) was emitted and formed into three progressively concentrated levels. As the “Crown,” Kether rules over all other sephiroth located beneath it, including the most concentrated level, the sephira Malkuth, or the “Kingdom.” The three aggregate states (Ain, Ain Soph, and Ain Soph Aur) are located beyond creation itself. Although they must exist for creation to occur, they play no direct role. (More specifically, material creation as we know it doesn’t actually take place until the lower triad [Netzach, Hod, and Yesod] before emptying into Malkuth. The material world is therefore located in Malkuth. The three upper sephiroth [Kether, Chokmah, and Binah] are described as supernatural spheres or “supernals”—Hebrew “neschamah.”)

Malkuth is the earth in a general sense, including the planet earth itself, the element of earth, and even the physical body of man. Kether, on the other hand, is the pure manifestation of the spirit. This sephira is located along the middle pillar on the opposite side above Malkuth. Now the developmental process of Kether/Malkuth can flow in both directions. While the spirit flows from top to bottom, becoming more concentrated (and “coarse”) as it progresses, the matter that results strives to develop upward in order to become lighter (more “subtle”).

This is the tension that creates all life. The spirit is incarnated in matter, and matter develops upward towards the spirit. For our magical practice, it’s important to remember that the sephiroth represent the different aggregate states of the spirit and matter. This is significant because the Kabbalistic magician always thinks in levels and spheres that are understood more so as states than as actual places. This aspect is rarely mentioned in most Kabbalistic literature. After all, the individual spheres are by no means mere fixed or immobile points of reference. On the contrary, the Tree of Life is a dynamic structure as we’ll see in our discussion of the paths, the energy routes, and the four Kabbalistic worlds. This will also become quite clear in the planetary correspondences.

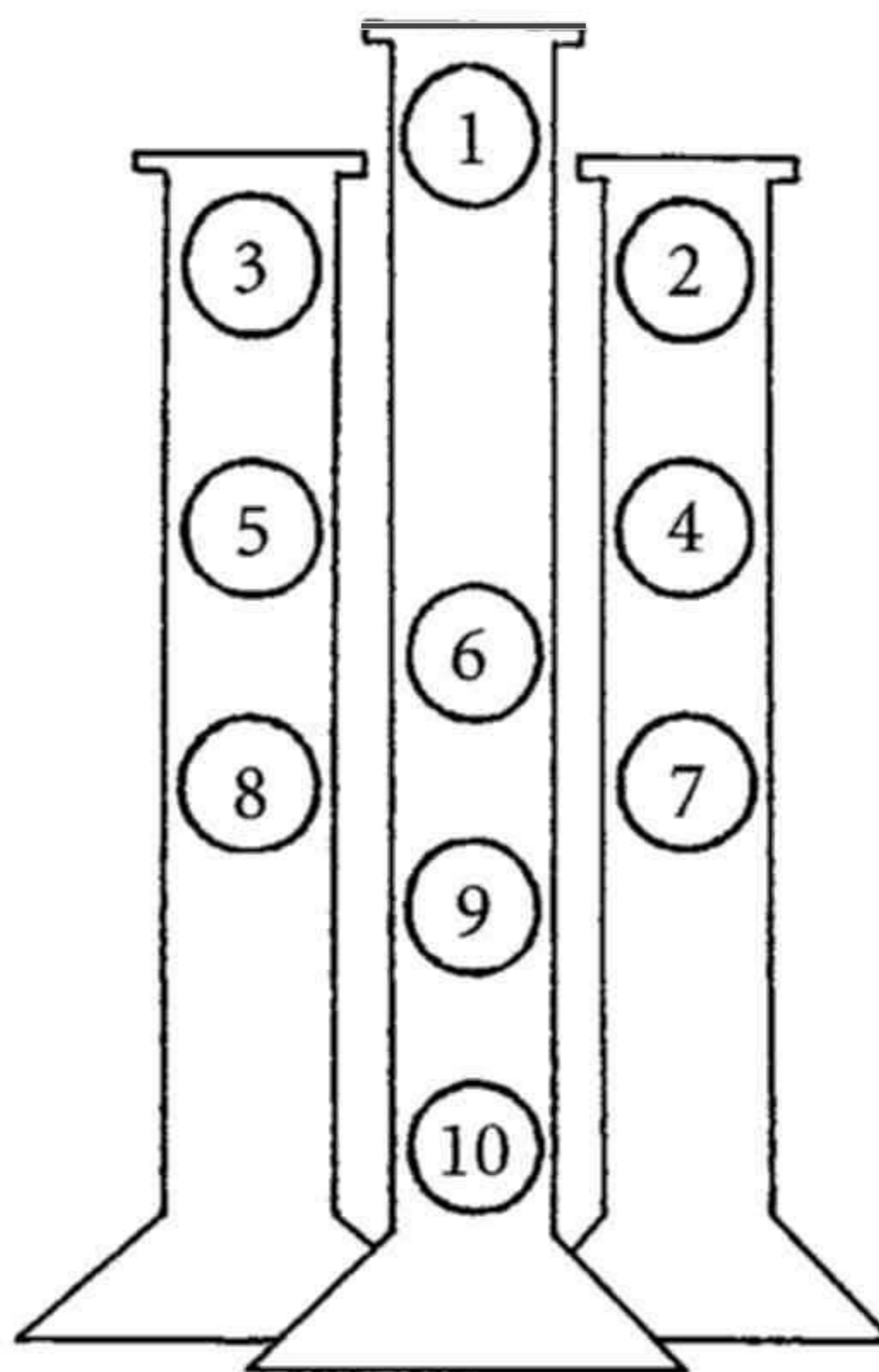
We’ll see this dynamic principle in action later on when we discuss the Tree of Life as a supermatrix for magical analogies and correspondences.

## THE THREE PILLARS

Take a look at the Tree of Life as depicted in Illustration 23. You should be able to easily recognize the structure of the pillars. These pillars have become important symbols in Western Hermeticism, for example in Freemasonry. The pillar on the left is the Pillar of Severity and comprises the sephiroth Binah, Geburah, and Hod. The pillar on the right is the Pillar of Mercy and comprises the sephiroth Chokmah, Chesed, and Netzach. The middle pillar is the Pillar of Equilibrium or Mildness and consists of the four sephiroth Kether, Tiphareth, Yesod, and Malkuth. This middle pillar also contains the “non-sephira” Daath, which we’ll be discussing later.

These three principles also represent the paths of access, and it’s quite significant which pillar the energies from Malkuth take to travel back up to Kether. Although there are several opportunities to change from one pillar to the next using the paths, the three ideal paths “back to divinity” are the ones that run parallel to the pillars themselves. In plain words, this means that there are three main paths to transcendence: the path of unbending severity and determination, the path of mercy and generous forgiveness, and the middle path that is a balance of the two, a path of mystical consciousness and mildness.

The table in Illustration 24 summarizes these principles.



*Illustration 23: The three pillars of the Tree of Life*



<i>The Pillar of Severity and Determination</i>	<i>The Pillar of Equilibrium</i>	<i>The Pillar of Mercy and Generous Forgiveness</i>
left	middle	right
black (red)	gray	white
negative	±	positive
female	androgynous	male
salt	mercury	sulphur
water	—	fire
matter	soul	spirit
yin	tao	yang
judgment	mildness	forgiveness
Boaz	—	Jachin

*Illustration 24: Characteristics of the three pillars*

You'll notice that severity represents the female principle while mercy, on the other hand, is considered the male principle. Also the more "aggressive" sephiroth (Hod and Geburah) are located along the female pillar, while the more "gentle" ones (Netzach and Chesed) can be found along the male pillar. This fact is (like so many others concerning the Tree of Life) the subject of much speculation. We're purposely not going to discuss that here, but instead want to leave it up to your intuition as you meditate on this fact during the course of your Kabbalistic training in order to shed some light on (or possibly even solve) this apparent contradiction.

In Freemasonry, the pillar on the left (also called the Pillar of Justice) is called "Boaz" (or Boas/Bo'az) and the pillar on the right is called "Jachin" (or Jakin/Yakin). These refer to the Temple of Solomon, which mentions two pillars of the same name: "And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and he called the name thereof Boaz" (1 Kings, 7:21). The meaning of these two names has been cause for much speculation. One interpretation claims that, when combined, the two words form a sentence that roughly means "He (God) provides firmness through strength," which is a call for the temple to last as long as possible. Another interpretation says that Boaz stands for the ancient Baal cult with Jachin representing Jehovah. Together they symbolize the uni-

fication of the people of Israel (some of who still followed the ancient god Baal). The following quotation would support that interpretation: “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long will you go limping between two different opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him” (1 Kings, 18:21).

In antiquity, the physical temple pillars supported an invisible god, and today they might be described as “divine antennas” that create a link between heaven and earth. The Egyptian obelisks served a similar purpose and in the Roman tradition, the deities downright “drove” right into the pillars so that in a magical sense these could be interpreted as a “material basis” or oversized “fetishes.” The Germanic tribes had holy pillars as well, so-called supporters of light. One of the best known was probably the wooden pillar Irminsul, which supported the world and the entire universe. (They also had “curse stakes.”)

Just as the Temple of Solomon (Solomon was considered one of the most famous magicians in history!) is understood as a reproduction of the cosmos, the Tree of Life also represents everything that has been created, and even more because it holds a place for the god that hasn’t been created yet. In the above speculations, we can already see how strongly Kabbalistic symbolism and the practice of magic overlap in the West.

### **THE TREE OF LIFE AS A SUPERMATRIX**

Since the Renaissance and the era of Humanism, the Tree of Life has served as a supermatrix for magical operations of all types. As a structural principle, it was also expressed in the grade system of the Golden Dawn, which will be mentioned again later.

For the modern magician, it’s vital to learn how to work with the structure of correspondences that is found in the Tree of Life since all major analogy systems, magical alliances, and magical authors (ranging from the Golden Dawn, which we’ve already mentioned, to Crowley’s *Argenteum Astrum*, William Gray, and Israel Regardie) base their work on the matrix of this Kabbalistic image. But for now we only need to concern ourselves with the classification of the numbers and planets to the sephiroth.

None of the seven classical planets are allocated to the sephiroth Kether or Chokmah, although they represent the numbers one and two respectively. Kether is more of a “*primum mobile*,” the initial impulse that triggered all creation. Chokmah represents the zodiac as a whole.

Binah is the real start of the planetary correspondences. It represents Saturn and the number three. Then comes Chesed with Jupiter and the number four, Geburah with Mars and the number five, Tiphareth with the sun and the number six, Netzach with Venus and the number seven, Hod with Mercury and the number eight, Yesod with the moon and the number nine, and finally Malkuth with the earth and the number ten. This is where the Kabbalistic classification of the planets comes from as we've already discussed, which is different from the Chaldean classification. (There the sun has the value of one, the moon of two, and so on.)

It's actually a quite un-Kabbalistic error to equate the sephiroth with the planets, e.g., as though Binah and Saturn were identical instead of various aspects of one and the same basic principle. The way the planets are commonly classified today is much more recent than the Tree of Life, yet you will still encounter documents that deviate from this. This is especially common among those authors who try to allocate the non-classical planets (Uranus, Neptune, Pluto) to the Tree of Life, which sometimes results in quite adventurous spiritual contortions, for example when Daath (which is specifically defined as a "non-sephira" in the Kabbalistic *Sepher Yetzirah*) is given the status of a full-fledged eleventh sephira in order to put earth on the Tree, which in turn results in inexorable contradictions in the numbering of the paths, and so on.

Nonetheless, it's probably much easier for the modern magician who understands more of astrology than of the Kabbalah to work with this planet symbolism than with the abstract Hebrew terms, especially since they have more of a keyword function like the letters of the Hebrew alphabet as we saw in the last section. In ritual practice, the astrological correspondences and the tarot play a much larger role than the orthodox Kabbalism of the Tree of Life.

The individual sephiroth are connected by the mentioned paths, which are also numbered (beginning with eleven and going up). Since there are twenty-two paths, it's logical that the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet can be easily allocated here, as well as the major arcana of the tarot, despite being developed at a much later date.

In this way, the Tree of Life becomes a true supermatrix for various magical disciplines and tools. The number of classifications is virtually unlimited, but for our purpose it's sufficient to restrict our studies to the numbers, planets, Hebrew letters, and major arcana.

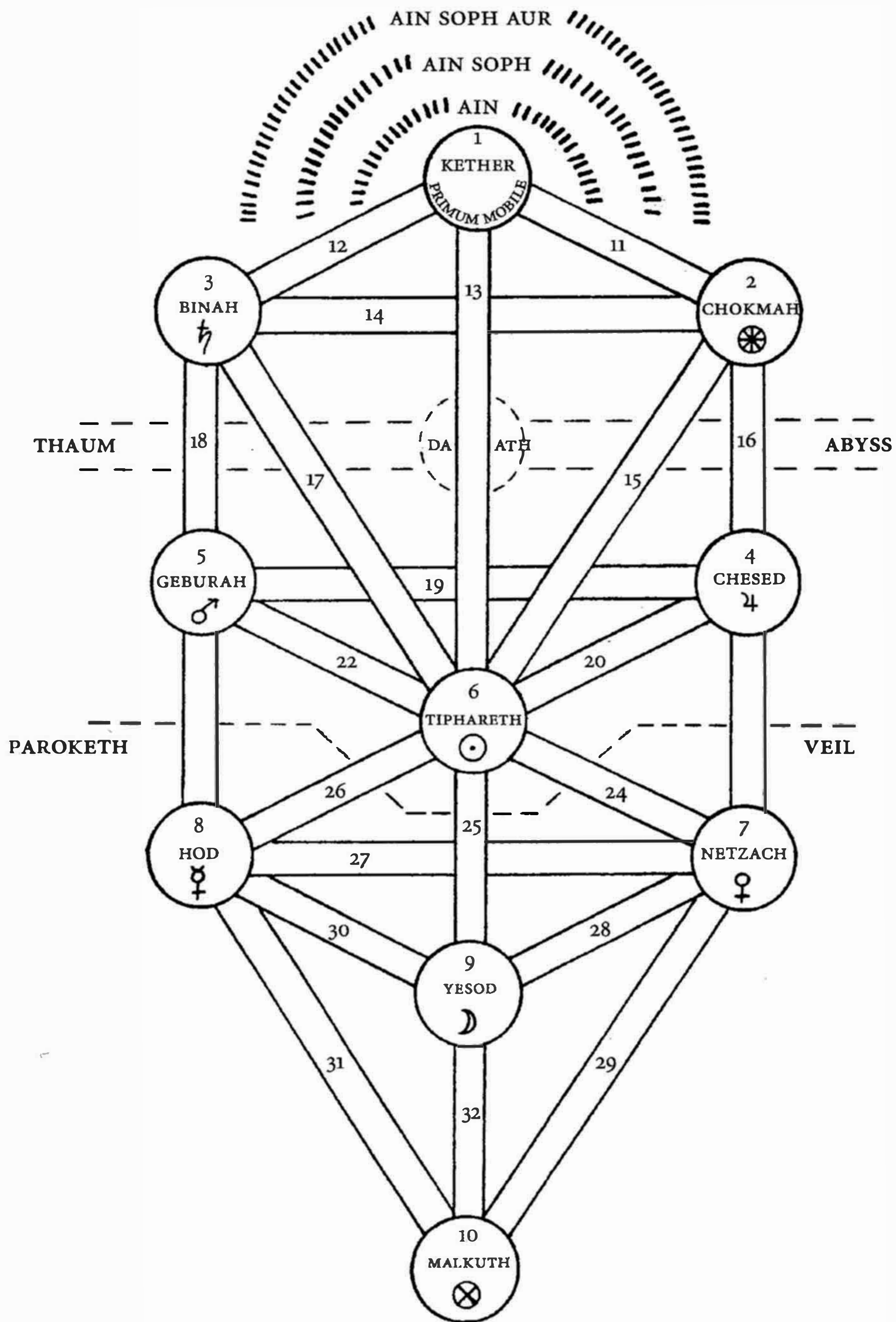


Illustration 25: The Kabbalistic Tree of Life (with numbers and planetary correspondences)

The pursuit of such a supermatrix stems from the desire to find a relationship between the most heterogeneous of elements (striving for unity). For a long time, lots of secrecy was involved in such relationships without having any recognizable advantage to magical practice. Instead, the true value of working with such systems is the fact that they not only help train our comprehension of magical analogies, but also enable us to create those of our own when needed. This in turn refines the magician's ability to randomly shift paradigms, thus increasing his or her spiritual and practical flexibility. Whoever is seriously interested in recognizing and experiencing the unity of the world today without wanting to see its limitless multitude at the same time is just as scared as the ostrich that sticks its head in the sand hoping that its enemies won't be able to see it. It's high time for such people to wake up and grow up, to face the challenge of the world's diversity by truly living and experiencing it before attempting to search for unity (which we are in no way condemning here). But while searching for one thing, it's easy to run away from something else and no true magician should ever allow that to happen. Because otherwise he or she could end up getting stuck in cuckoo land while losing all touch with everyday reality—and, according to our experience, trying to get back into balance with things is a very painful and tortuous process that will continue until the magician has learned his or her lesson and is able to see both the overall picture and the details without confusing the map with the landscape itself.

In the esoteric Kabbalah, the Tree of Life represents a sort of skeleton for the correspondences. According to modern thought, the correspondences are not really meant to help us recognize the oneness of things, but rather to show us many different aspects of one and the same thing so that we can apply this versatility to our magical practice. Let's use our old example of correspondences to illustrate this. Mercury is not Hermes or Thot—Mercury is Mercury and it always will be. They are all connected by the smallest common denominator, but that's all.

But let's take a closer look at such a "smallest common denominator" in order to comprehend what correspondences are really about. Take the numbers 4, 6, 8, and 10, for example. You'll see that the smallest common denominator is 2. But 4, 6, 8, and 10 are not the same as 2, they're merely multiples of 2. The number 6 is and always will be the individual number 6, even if it can be understood as a "triple two" as well. Although this "explanation of two" can be quite informative on a theoretical and speculative level by

helping us to recognize the relationships between numbers, such relationships generally have very little value in a practical sense and are merely useful for paradigm shifting.

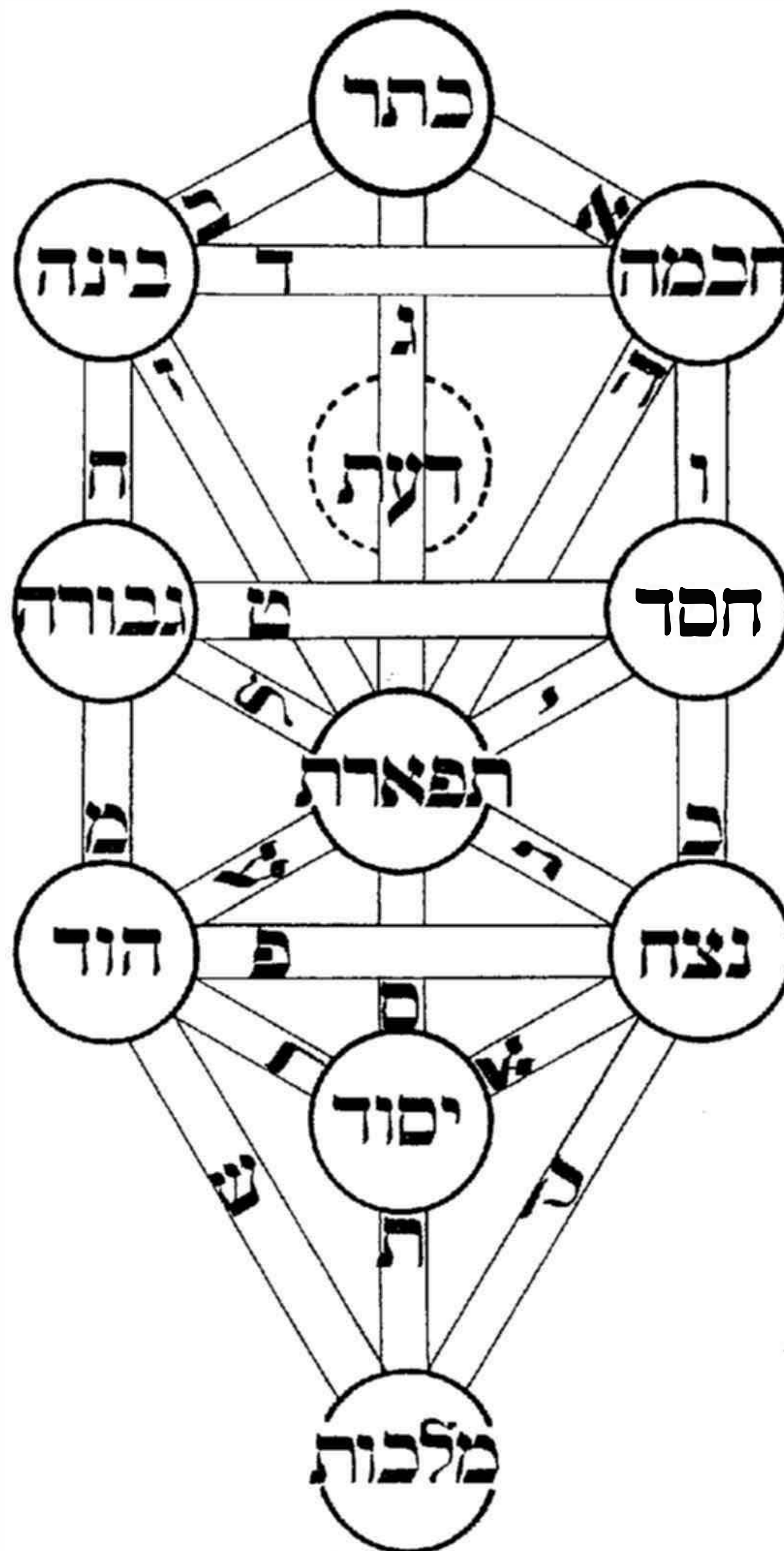
And then there are prime numbers such as 3, 5, 7, and 11 that have no multiples at all except 1. Although they are called “prime numbers,” this description gives no indication as to which other numbers are also prime. In other words, every prime number must be discovered and researched in itself in order to “understand” it Kabbalistically, and the same holds true for the magical correspondences. By categorizing them according to a standard principle, we may be able to understand them better, but we still need to experience them firsthand in order to be able to apply them to our practice.

Beginners to magic and the Kabbalah often tend to interpret equality or identity into the correspondences whereas they really only pose a certain similarity. This can lead to a serious symbol-logical error that makes it difficult for us to differentiate between our various systems of correspondences. Does the color red correspond to the rose because it’s the “flower of love” and love corresponds to the color red? Or does it correspond to the color green because it’s a symbol of Venus, which in turn represents the color green (and is also the goddess of love)?

This example clearly shows how important it is to thoroughly understand the matrices that we use. Because if I work Kabbalistically and have Mars correspond to the color red, but at the same time give the rose this same color because I want to stick to traditional (and literary) symbolism, a red rose talisman could lead to completely unexpected results, e.g., the target person whose love is to be aroused with Venus energies may react to such advances with Mars-like aggression! Dogmatists often write off such instances as mere “ritual mistakes” without really understanding what went wrong. The important thing here is not the “objective” color correspondences of the rose, of Mars or of Venus, but rather the clear distinction between the various reference systems that are conditioned within us (often subconsciously) over the years, both through our magical practice and through the influences of our childhood, parents, school, society, and so on. In this way, our subconscious mind may struggle with contradictory images and interpret these in a most unusual way that only rarely has anything to do with the original intention.

In conclusion, you’ll find the Kabbalistic Tree of Life depicted in Illustration 26 along with its Hebrew terms.

That wraps up our introduction to the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. In the next section we'll be dealing with the individual sephiroth and their basic structure. Furthermore, we'll be delving much deeper into the Kabbalah, a discipline that was equated with magical knowledge itself for a very long time. Appropriate literature will be recommended along the way to support your studies.



*Illustration 26: The Kabbalistic Tree of Life (Hebrew)*

# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (IV)

## USE OF THE MAGIC MIRROR (III)

### Astral Travel with the Magic Mirror

Astral travel with the magic mirror is a fairly popular way to use this instrument. To do so, the mirror's optical vortex is generally used, which is created automatically by its concave form.

There are two basic techniques for this type of astral travel, which include the usual astral techniques. As a relay station for mental transport to other places on the everyday plain of existence, the mirror functions as a sort of shaft. Here the magician's astral body exits at the target location allowing him or her to perform the appropriate task there, and when returning, the mirror is again used as a transportation shaft.

The second technique is a variation of the first. The mirror functions as a gateway to various locations in other magical worlds. In this way, the magician can travel to astral planes, mythical kingdoms, or other time periods. When used for this purpose, old-school magicians generally prefer to charge the mirror specifically for this task or even to make a separate one. For example, if the magician wants to travel to the Mercury plane, he or she would either make a special Mercury mirror or charge an all-purpose mirror with Mercury energy specifically for this operation. The magician could apply Mercury symbols to the back of the mirror, such as an eight-sided brass plate, the image of a fish or the sigil of the winged messenger, or paint the reverse side with white wine or apply a Mercury condenser.



From a magical point of view, using such a separate charging procedure with a brand new or all-purpose mirror is definitely better due to the related symbol-logic. After all, the mirror represents a gateway not only in a figurative sense but also on an energetically real level, which is why the magician should ensure that it's done properly.

### **INFLUENCING OTHERS WITH THE MAGIC MIRROR**

Influencing others with the magic mirror is one of the most powerful applications of this tool. This is usually done as follows. After formulating a clear picture of the goal of the operation, the magician sits in front of the mirror and enters an appropriate state of gnosis. Then an image of the target person is so powerfully evoked that an actual conscious hallucination appears in the mirror. This should more or less be an optical image since the mirror itself is a visually oriented magical weapon and it would probably be difficult to achieve similar effects with the other senses.

One very important spot that is used to influence others, especially for manipulating the target person's will, is the so-called "death chakra," or the subtle energy spot located just above the base of the back of the neck. All the magician needs to do is transmit a ray of energy charged with his or her will and focus it on this point until he or she feels that the operation is complete. Then the act is banished with laughter. Despite its aggressive-sounding name, the death chakra can also be influenced for healing purposes and not just to harm people.

Charging such a magical ray of energy with one's will can be done in various ways. The word "charge" may be a bit misleading here since it actually involves symbolizing the will with the ray instead of actually charging something with energy like a talisman. That's why the traditional correspondences work quite well here. If the magician wants to harm the target person, for example, he or she could transmit a scorching red ray (for Mars), while a calm orange ray (for Mercury) could be used for healing. In classical magic, the magician should focus on the goal of the operation as intensely as possible.

However, according to my experience, it's much more effective to use a sigil that was designed with the word or picture method for projecting into the person's death chakra. Don't think of the actual meaning of the statement of intent while doing so! This method avoids a disruptive type of censor activity, namely when the magician

starts to think about whether or not it will work, which can quickly backfire in an unpleasant torpedo effect.

Applying a ray or sigil can even be used when the target person appears frontally in the magic mirror, which is usually the case. All the magician has to do is look right through the target person at the appropriate spot as though the person were invisible (and magically speaking, we really are!).

After a bit of practice, the magician can try applying sigils to other parts of the person's body, such as to the crown chakra where, to use a more modern example, the sigil can create a so-called "morphogenetic field of influence." This is especially useful in operations that are designed to work slowly over a longer period of time. In general, all of the chakras can be manipulated with any type of appropriate symbol.



# MAGIC AND YOGA (IV)

## **THE INFINITY MEDITATION: STOP OR CONTINUE?**

If you diligently adhered to our exercise plan, you should now be nearing the end of the six-month period of practicing the infinity meditation. Take stock of the results and determine if anything has changed for you by doing this important exercise. Maybe you're not able to see any results at this time yet? Then you should pay particular attention over the next twenty-four months to see if your visualization skills, intuition, concentration, or spiritual balance has improved by leaps and bounds, which might only express itself in a few tiny ways. In any case, when you take the time now to control the results, you'll surely realize that this exercise was not done in vain!

But how should you proceed now? Well, that's entirely up to you. Of course, you can continue with the meditation as long as you like, but we recommend that you continue to practice on a daily basis for roughly the first two years of your magical training (six months of which you've already completed); after all, if not practiced daily, this meditation is basically a waste of time. After these two years you can purposely skip a day or so of practice to observe what changes may occur as a result. On the other hand, it's okay to only practice this meditation technique for one more year—you decide.

In any case, the precautionary measures that we've already mentioned (no alcohol, no fever, no drugs before meditating) still apply. Be strict with yourself in this aspect because it truly is dangerous to ignore these rules, especially while you are still in the learning process. After all, you'll be getting more and more sensitive to subtle energies as

you go along and will probably require careful grounding more frequently. It would be unwise to disrupt the sensitive alchemistic process that's going on inside of you parallel to your magical training with sudden, uncontrolled emotional outbursts.

So decide whether or not you want to continue with this meditation practice. If you choose to stop, take the time to summarize the results in your magical diary. But go ahead and continue with the meditation mantra as sort of a "background program" in everyday life. This is particularly interesting for mystically inclined magicians who want to use it to gain access to, increase, or maintain a state of transcendence. In addition, this mantra (when properly activated) also serves the purpose of harmonizing your breathing, which is a tremendous health benefit as well.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 66

#### GEMATRIA TRAINING (III)

Create your own Gematric training program. Begin by thinking about how deep you actually want to delve into the practice of Gematria. If you're not all that interested in this subject, then just work with a minimal program, for example by using a Hebrew dictionary to examine the numerical relationships between one hundred randomly chosen words.

If this aspect of traditional magic really captures your interest, then you need to design a more comprehensive training program. For example, you could check the numerical values of five hundred to a thousand words and meditate on their correspondences using Crowley's *Liber Sephiroth* (appendix to *Liber 777*) as a reference, while making note of your own insights as you go along.

### EXERCISE 67

#### TREE OF LIFE PRACTICE (I)

Memorize the structure of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life and its sephiroth. Draw it as often as possible, at first by copying it and then by memory.

### **EXERCISE 68**

#### **TREE OF LIFE PRACTICE (II)**

Meditate on the classification of male/female to the two outer pillars of the Tree of Life. What does it mean? Is it merely an inner contradiction of the Kabbalistic system or is there some kind of hidden polarity to be seen? Record your results in your magical diary, even though it may be difficult to put your observations into words.

This exercise will also give you an insight into your own views on the principles of male and female.

### **EXERCISE 69**

#### **TREE OF LIFE PRACTICE (III)**

Memorize the classification of the planets and numbers on the Tree of Life. Using other literature for reference, meditate on why the planets are located exactly where they are. To what extent do the planetary principles actually match those of the sephiroth, and when do they not? Which classifications do you think are doubtful?

This exercise will help optimize your understanding of Kabbalistic planetary magic.

### **EXERCISE 70**

#### **TREE OF LIFE PRACTICE (IV)**

Meditate on the middle pillar: What does it mean to reach Tiphareth by means of Yesod and then progress on through the Abyss to Kether? In doing so, keep the classification of the planets to the sephiroth in mind.

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## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Franz Bardon, *The Key to the True Kabbalah*



# INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICAL KABBALAH (III)

## THE KABBALISTIC TREE OF LIFE (II)

### The Individual Sephiroth

Let's take a look at the individual sephiroth on the Tree of Life. We'll mainly be referring to the esoteric Western Kabbalah since this is more relevant to magical practice than orthodox Jewish mysticism, especially since so little is known about the magic of the latter anyway. In our list of the paths, we'll again be mentioning the corresponding Hebrew letter and tarot card from the major arcana. (In parenthesis you'll find the common alternative names of the cards.) The names of the various "intelligences" will play an important role later on when we discuss the paths and their functions. Other details (e.g., the classification to the Kabbalistic worlds) will be discussed later in more detail as well. Of course, the correspondences listed here are merely a possible selection of many.

### Using the Tables

As with all correspondences, you should take your time reviewing the following lists and listen to your intuition. If you enjoy working Kabbalistically, read other literature on the subject to deepen your understanding so that you'll be able to integrate the analogies into your ritual practice more and more as you go along. And as usual, you need to find out which correspondences work best for you in your ritual practice.



## MALKUTH—THE KINGDOM

“The Resplendent Intelligence,” the earth, the matter of being, the completion of the plan developed in Kether, concentrated spirit, the earth mother, Microprosopus, the “bride” (of Kether), the metallic woman, the Luna of the wise men, the field.

Number: 10

Planet: Earth

Divine name: Adonai Malekh (“Lord of the Kings”) or Adonai ha Aretz (“Lord of the Earth”)

Archangel: Sandalphon (planet earth); [Uriel: element earth; Metatron: as the archangel of Kether: “spirit as spirit” as the archangel of Malkuth: “spirit as matter”]

Color in Atziluth: yellow

Color in Briah: citrus, olive green, reddish brown, black

Color in Yetzirah: citrus, olive green, reddish brown, black, spotted gold

Color in Assiah: black, striped gold

Symbol: cavalry cross, (brass) altar, double cube, crossed circle

Adam Kadmon: feet

Chakra: feet

Deity: Seb, Persephone, Ceres

Magical weapon: magic circle, triangle

Gemstone: rock crystal

Plant: willow, lily, ivy

Scent: Cretan Dictamus

Alchemistic gold: Zahab Ophir (“gold of Ophir”)

Virtue: power of discernment

Vice: greed, stinginess

### The Paths to and from Malkuth

29. Malkuth-Netzach: QOPH; XVIII THE MOON

“The Corporeal Intelligence”

31. Malkuth-Hod: SHIN; XX JUDGEMENT (THE LAST JUDGMENT; EON)  
“The Perpetual Intelligence”

32. Malkuth-Yesod: TAU; XXI THE UNIVERSE (THE WORLD)  
“The Administrative Intelligence”

### **YESOD—THE FOUNDATION**

“The Pure Intelligence,” the foundation of the physical world (Malkuth), the astral world, the world of desire, sexuality, anima, the collective unconscious

Number: 9

Planet: Moon

Divine name: Shaddai el Chai (“Almighty Living God”)

Archangel: Gabriel

Color in Atziluth: indigo

Color in Briah: violet

Color in Yetzirah: dark purple

Color in Assiah: citrus, spotted sky-blue (azure)

Symbol: sandals, candles

Adam Kadmon: reproductive organs

Chakra: muladhara

Deity: Diana, Shu, Luna

Magical weapon: sandals, scents

Gemstone: rock crystal, moonstone

Plant: banyan, mandrake, damiana

Scent: jasmine, ginseng

Alchemistic gold: Zahab Tob (“good gold”)

Virtue: independence

Vice: sluggishness

## The Paths to and from Yesod

25. Yesod-Tiphareth: SAMEKH; XIV TEMPERANCE

“The Intelligence of Probation”

28. Yesod-Netzach: TZADDI; IV THE EMPEROR

“The Natural Cosmic Intelligence”

30. Yesod-Hod: RESH; XIX THE SUN

“The Collecting Intelligence”

## HOD—GLORY

“The Absolute Intelligence,” intellect, diplomacy, intrigue, deception, language, philosophy, theory, communication

Number: 8

Planet: Mercury

Divine name: Elohim Tzabaoth (“God of Hosts”)

Archangel: Michael

Color in Atziluth: violet/purple

Color in Briah: orange

Color in Yetzirah: reddish brown

Color in Assiah: yellow-black, spotted white

Symbol: name, apron

Adam Kadmon: right hip, right leg

Chakra: svadisthana

Deity: Thot, Anubis, Hanuman, Odin, Loki, Hermes, Mercury

Magical weapon: versicle, apron

Gemstone: opal, fire opal

Plant: golden garlic, anhalonium lewinii

Scent: styrax

Alchemistic gold: Zahab parvajim (“red gold”)

Virtue: truthfulness

Vice: falseness, dishonesty

## The Paths to and from Hod

23. Hod-Geburah: MEM; XII THE HANGED MAN  
“The Stable Intelligence”

26. Hod-Tiphareth: AYIN; XV THE DEVIL  
“The Renovating Intelligence”

27. Hod-Netzach: PEH; XVI THE TOWER  
“The Exciting Intelligence”

(30 and 31—see above)

## NETZACH—VICTORY

“The Occult (hidden) Intelligence,” resoluteness, power of imagination, achievement of perfection, triumph of beauty, sexual love, art, muse, joy, success

Number: 7

Planet: Venus

Divine name: Jehovah Tzabaoth (“Lord of Hosts”)

Archangel: Haniel

Color in Atziluth: amber

Color in Briah: emerald

Color in Yetzirah: light yellow-green

Color in Assiah: olive, spotted reddish brown

Symbol: rose

Adam Kadmon: left hip, left leg

Chakra: manipura

Deity: Hathor, Nike, Aphrodite, Venus

Magical weapon: lamp, belt

Gemstone: emerald

Plant: rose

Scent: benzoin, red sandalwood, rose

Alchemistic gold: Zahab Sagur (“enclosed gold”)

Virtue: selflessness

Vice: voluptuousness

### **The Paths to and from Netzach**

21. Netzach-Chesed: KAPH; X WHEEL OF FORTUNE

“The Intelligence of Conciliation”

24. Netzach-Tiphareth: NUN; XIII DEATH

“The Imaginative Intelligence”

(27, 28, and 29—see above)

### **TIPHARETH—BEAUTY**

“The Mediating Intelligence,” the center of devotion, the sphere of slaughtered gods, paradoxes (life and death), healing

Number: 6

Planet: sun

Divine name: Jehovah aloah va Daath (“God Manifested in the Realm of the Spirit”)

Archangel: Raphael

Color in Atziluth: clear pink

Color in Briah: yellow

Color in Yetzirah: rich salmon pink

Color in Assiah: amber gold

Symbol: rose cross, obtuse pyramid

Adam Kadmon: heart

Chakra: anahata

Deity: Ra, Adonis, Apollo, Mithras, Quetzalcoatl, Christ

Magical weapon: lamen

Gemstone: topaz

Plant: acacia, laurel, vine, gorse

Scent: olibanum

Alchemistic gold: Paz and Zahab Muphaz (“pure gold”)

Virtue: devotion to the Great Work

Vice: pride, haughtiness

### **The Paths to and from Tiphareth**

13. Tiphareth-Kether: GIMEL; II THE HIGH PRIESTESS

“The Uniting Intelligence”

15. Tiphareth-Chokmah: HE; XVII THE STAR

“The Constituting Intelligence”

17. Tiphareth-Binah: ZAYIN; VI THE LOVERS (THE DECISION)

“The Disposing Intelligence”

20. Tiphareth-Chesed: YOD; IX THE HERMIT

“The Intelligence of Will”

22. Tiphareth-Geburah: LAMED; VIII JUSTICE

“The Faithful Intelligence”

(24, 25, and 26—see above)

### **GEBURAH—SEVERITY**

“The Radical Intelligence,” severity, justice, fire, violence, war, conflict, destruction, power, center of karma

Number: 5

Planet: Mars

Divine name: Elohim Gibor (“Almighty God” or “Powerful Gods”)

Archangel: Khamael

Color in Atziluth: orange

Color in Briah: scarlet

Color in Yetzirah: light scarlet

Color in Assiah: red, spotted black  
Symbol: pentagon, five-petal rose, sword, spear  
Adam Kadmon: right arm  
Chakra: hand chakras  
Deity: Horus, Nephthys, Thor, Mars, Aries  
Magical weapon: sword, scourge, chain  
Gemstone: ruby  
Plant: oak, nettle, hickory  
Scent: tobacco  
Alchemistic gold: Zahab (“glittering gold”)  
Virtue: strength, courage  
Vice: cruelty, destruction

### **The Paths to and from Geburah**

18. Geburah-Binah: CHETH; VII THE CHARIOT

“The Intelligence of the House of Influence”

19. Geburah-Chesed: TETH; XI STRENGTH (LUST)

“Intelligence of all the Activities of the Spiritual Being”

(22 and 23—see above)

### **CHESED—MERCY**

“The Cohesive Intelligence,” love, sensation, feelings, uprightness, generosity, largeness, gracefulness, sphere of masters

Number: 4

Planet: Jupiter

Divine name: El (“God”)

Archangel: Tzadkiel

Color in Atziluth: dark violet

Color in Briah: blue

Color in Yetzirah: dark purple

Color in Assiah: dark azure, spotted yellow  
Symbol: tetrahedron, sphere, circle, shepherd's crook  
Adam Kadmon: left arm  
Chakra: anahata  
Deity: Amon, Brahma, Indra, Wotan, Poseidon, Iovis (Jupiter)  
Magical weapon: wand, scepter, crook  
Gemstone: amethyst, lapis lazuli  
Plant: olive, gold clover  
Scent: cedar  
Alchemistic gold: Zahab Schachut ("fine and rifled gold")  
Virtue: obedience  
Vice: bigotry, hypocrisy, gluttony, tyranny

### **The Paths to and from Chesed**

16. Chesed-Chokmah: VAU; V THE HIEROPHANT (THE HIGH PRIEST; THE POPE)  
"The Triumphal or Eternal Intelligence"

(19, 20, and 21—see above)

### **BINAH—UNDERSTANDING**

"The Sanctifying Intelligence," restriction, limitation, concentration, initiation through severity, vitality, deep understanding, the mother (Am and Aima), the sea, resistance, receptiveness, rest, the first pause of unbridled energy

Number: 3

Planet: Saturn

Divine name: Jehovah Elohim ("Lord God")

Archangel: Tzaphkiel

Color in Atziluth: scarlet

Color in Briah: black

Color in Yetzirah: dark brown

Color in Assiah: gray, spotted light pink

Symbol: the yoni, the kteis, the dove, the outer cape of hiding



Adam Kadmon: right side of the face

Chakra: visuddhi

Deity: Shakti, Isis, Cybele, Rhea, Demeter, Frigg, Hera, Juno, Hekate

Magical weapon: chalice

Gemstone: pearl, sapphire

Plant: cypress, poppy

Scent: myrrh, civet

Alchemistic gold: Charutz (“scraped gold”)

Virtue: silence

Vice: stinginess

### **The Paths to and from Binah**

12. Binah-Kether: BETH; I THE MAGICIAN

“The Intelligence of Transparency”

14. Binah-Chokmah: DALETH; III THE EMPRESS

“The Illuminating Intelligence”

(17 and 18—see above)

### **CHOKMAH—WISDOM**

“The Illuminating Intelligence,” the crown of creation, the magnificence of unity, first abstraction, the knowledge of the times, duality, the display of glory, the highest father

Number: 2

Planet: zodiac, fixed stars

Divine name: Jehovah (“God,” Tetragrammaton)

Archangel: Ratziel

Color in Atziluth: pure soft blue

Color in Briah: gray

Color in Yetzirah: shimmering pearl gray

Color in Assiah: white, spotted red, blue, yellow

Symbol: Lingam, phallus, the inner cape of glory, tower, straight line, line and cross

Adam Kadmon: nostrils

Chakra: ajna

Deity: Thot, Pallas, Athene, Minerva, Uranus, Hermes, Odin, Vishnu, Ishvara, Mahat,  
Kwan Shon Yin

Magical weapon: wand, lingam/phallus

Gemstone: turquoise, ruby

Plant: amaranth

Scent: musk

Alchemistic gold: Batzar (“gold dust”)

Virtue: devotion

Vice: —

### **The Paths to and from Chokmah**

11. Chokmah-Kether: ALEPH; 0 THE FOOL

“The Scintillating Intelligence”

(14, 15, and 16—see above)

### **KETHER—THE CROWN**

“The Admirable or Hidden Intelligence,” pure existence, the old one, perfect consciousness, alpha and omega, the head that is not, the hidden (one), the primeval glory, Macroprosopus, the divine spark

Number: 1

Planet: Primum Mobile

Divine name: Eheieh (“I will be”)

Archangel: Metatron

Color in Atziluth: rays

Color in Briah: pure white rays

Color in Yetzirah: pure white rays

Color in Assiah: white, spotted gold

Symbol: the point, the point in a circle, the crown, the swastika, almond blossom, swan,  
falcon

Adam Kadmon: the crown of the head  
Chakra: sahasrara  
Deity: Kronos, Ptah, Atum-Ra, Osiris, Zeus  
Magical weapon: lamp  
Gemstone: diamond  
Plant: almond blossom  
Scent: amber  
Alchemistic gold: Chetham (“pure gold”)  
Virtue: completion of the Great Work  
Vice: —

### **The Paths to and from Kether**

(11, 12, and 13—see above)

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 71*

#### **TREE OF LIFE PRACTICE (v)**

Meditate on the Tree of Life as a whole and on the individual sephiroth using the list of correspondences in this section as an aid. You’ll probably have to practice this exercise for several years if you really want to delve deep into the esoteric Kabbalah. Once you’ve memorized the correspondences and have read some of the relevant literature, you can easily do this mediation in just a few spare minutes or hours at any time or place.

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## **FURTHER READING**

The following titles have become standard references for the esoteric Kabbalah. In some cases, they build on each other and are highly recommended for both an introduction and in-depth study despite occasional discrepancies.

Dr. Erich Bischoff, *Die Elemente der Kabbala*

Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*

Zev Ben Shimon Halevi, *Way of the Kabbalah*

James Sturzaker, *Kabbalistic Aphorisms*

Another standard reference book that's been around for hundreds of years (and often quoted by Crowley) is the *Kabbala Denudata* (Kabbalah Unveiled), which was published in 1677–1678. Originally written in Latin by Knorr von Rosenroth (1631 or 1636–1689), it was translated by Mathers in 1887.

S. L. Macgregor Mathers, *The Kabbala Unveiled*



# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (V)

## USE OF THE MAGIC MIRROR (IV)

### Invisibility Magic

How to become invisible by staring into the magic mirror: Empty the spirit so that no resonant board is available for others to perceive you—total permeability. Figuratively speaking, the light has no surface to reflect off of.

Please think about these words for a few minutes and try to come up with your own practical way of achieving this before continuing to read. This will get you accustomed to the writing style in the old grimoires, which generally give only very concise or laconic instructions. Plus, it has the advantage that it will train your mind to become ever more creative with a minimum of input as you progress in the field of magic.

*THINK ABOUT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS FOR AT LEAST HALF AN HOUR BEFORE YOU CONTINUE READING!*

Aleister Crowley wrote about his experiments with invisibility in Mexico City. He stared into the mirror until his reflection became blurry and finally disappeared entirely. Then he paraded through the streets at midday wearing a red cape and a gold crown on his head, and not a single passerby turned around to look or seemed to notice him at all.

Crowley points out that the actual trick to invisibility magic is not trying to make yourself optically invisible, but rather in making yourself imperceptible—meaning that

other people cannot see you. It's therefore not a physical phenomenon, but rather a psychological one. We can do this by achieving a pure state of empty mind and/or complete mental permeability.

The act of playing dead, which many animals do when in danger, is an instinctive reaction that can teach us a lot. When we don't want to be noticed, we automatically stay very still and breathe real shallow. This is an indication of the direction that a magician of invisibility should work toward.

We all know that every person gives off signals that are received by others both consciously and unconsciously. If these signals are strong enough, our counterpart will consciously perceive us. We've made ourselves "noticeable." By reducing the signals that we emit (which include factors such as telepathic stimuli as well as body heat, scent, bioelectricity, etc.) to an absolute minimum, we make it more difficult for another person to consciously or unconsciously register our presence since a certain signal intensity is necessary for this.

Another type of invisibility magic is distraction. Here, the magician covers up the signals that he or she transmits with other signals by creating a sort of "astral static" that works similar to a jamming transmitter. A popular method for doing this is to imagine a cloud of fog surrounding your body as you move through a crowd of people. The true test here is to move around among friends, acquaintances, and relatives like this to see if anyone notices you. By the way, this is often much easier than you may think. On the other hand, I personally don't know of anyone who has a truly reliable method for achieving invisibility. According to the current state of knowledge, the results are usually erratic and unpredictable. Nonetheless, this magical discipline is quite interesting and can even be quite helpful in times of danger.

## **FORMS OF INITIATION (I)**

The word "initiation" appears more frequently throughout occult and esoteric literature than any other. It's often the big hit in a commercial sense, especially when "special initiations" are offered for lots of money or when "initiates" of one kind or another offer their services for a fee. The frequent success of such business ventures shows that the general interest in the subject of initiation is great, even if everyone seems to understand this term in a different sense.

The typical dictionary definition of “to initiate” in our context is pretty succinct:

1. to introduce into the knowledge of some art or subject

It should be clear that, although this may accurately describe the act of initiating, this is in no way everything that the magician has to say on the subject. Although in doing so, things are often lumped together that should rather be kept separate. That’s why we’d like to define the various forms of initiation here a bit more precisely and to examine the role that this ancient method of expanding one’s horizons can play in magic.

We’d like to distinguish between five different forms of initiation, although we’re well aware of the fact that other useful classifications can be made as well. However, we feel that the categories used here work best for the needs of a practical magician. Of course, the categories will probably intertwine and overlap at times, so this structure should in no way be viewed rigidly. It merely serves to illustrate the matter at hand. The various forms of initiation are listed in the following table.

Then we’d like to use these individual forms of initiation to try and demonstrate the entire scope of this term instead of defining initiation more specifically first and then describing how to perform or achieve it.

<i>Forms of initiation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiation through instruction</li><li>• Initiation through revelation</li><li>• Initiation by rite of transformation</li><li>• Initiation through experience</li><li>• Self-initiation</li></ul>

## **INITIATION THROUGH INSTRUCTION**

Probably the most popular form of initiation is the first type, initiation through instruction. It’s so widespread that it can hardly be described as such. In this context, it’s interesting to know that in India, the gurus (the common definition of guru is “he who leads out of the darkness into the light”) are divided into two categories: Upa Guru and Sat Guru. An Upa Guru can be anything or anyone that helps you to become familiar with something that you previously did not know. An example of such a guru could be



a French teacher, a math book, a master plumber, a cultural film, or a knowledgeable friend who tells you everything about stamp collecting or sexuality. A Sat Guru is the “true real guru” who is responsible solely for a person’s spiritual development.

The word “enlighten” contains the symbolism of light driving away the darkness (“the sky clears up”), and this metaphor describes the typical experience of initiation quite well, for example as described in the phrase “Age of Enlightenment.”

The elimination of ignorance by gaining knowledge is also a good part of initiation. The way that one respected the authority of his or her undisputed teacher in the early days was probably more than just complying with hierarchal-patriarchal structures. It was also an expression of the student’s feelings during the process of spiritual growth as well as a promise to the teacher to become something more than he or she was before—with the teacher’s help.

Initiation through instruction can also occur through objects or information carriers. In shamanic cultures, it’s common for an apprentice shaman to be initiated by a tree, a rock, or an animal. Instruction doesn’t necessarily mean that the initiations are “profane”; in fact, a good teacher often puts his or her students into a state of revelation gnosis.

According to current understanding, the extremely complicated cosmogonies of late Hellenistic Gnosticism were explained by the fact that they were used to dull the intellect (ensor) in order to enable the actual gnosis (which was also “knowledge revealed” as a result of initiation) to reveal itself to the Gnostic.

A comparison with the koans of Zen Buddhism might be appropriate here. Koans are riddles that the masters give their students to meditate on and cannot be understood with rational thought alone (e.g., “hear the sound of one hand clapping”). There is no logically discursive answer to koans. Whether or not the student “solves” them can only be seen in his or her reaction when asked to report on the results. Boxing the master’s ears or a spontaneous retort could both be “correct” responses—or incorrect ones if they don’t come as a gut reaction (literally from the hara region).

## **INITIATION THROUGH REVELATION**

Generally, initiation through revelation is actually an intermediate stage or the description of a specific initiation experience as can or even should be experienced with other

forms of initiation as well. We've listed it separately here though because we want to describe a very specific form of initiation, namely the sudden, unexpected vision. Mystics in particular often tell of such "eureka experiences." A famous example from the New Testament is the conversion of Saul as a persecutor of Christians, to Paul (Acts 9:3–21). After having a vision, the text reads:

And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink (verse 8).

Initiations through revelation that lead to physiological changes (such as trembling, panting, snorting, dizziness, and temporary loss of hearing or eyesight) are relatively typical for shamanic experiences although they do occur at times in other contexts as well, as we see in the example of Saul/Paul.

Generally in such cases a thought and symbol matrix already exists that the affected person is then initiated into (cf., Blaise Pascal's vision of God as he describes in *Pensées*). A typical example is when the affected person suddenly converts from one religion or ideology to another. This includes the mystic's "regular" way of reflecting on god as well as the visions of some religious fanatics that are generally received during a state of ecstatic trance, although this doesn't necessarily involve a conversion as such, but rather an intensification of previously existing beliefs and opinions.

As I've mentioned frequently before, the term "gnosis" means "knowledge revealed" that is usually received spontaneously during a period of reflection, thus turning profane man into an initiate. On a more profane level, we define the "eureka experience" of Archimedes or all "ah-ha!" experiences in general as revelations as long as they happen suddenly and unexpectedly, even though they may be the result of persistent efforts.

Usually a revelation cannot be described in words and the contents of such an initiation are nearly impossible to convey to an outsider. As a result, the initiation itself remains a mystery to the outside world and anyone can claim to have experienced it. Thus outsiders tend to define certain criteria (or allow such "initiates" to define it) that are used to separate the wheat from the chaff. These criteria sometimes take the form of moral codes, the application of which is often unintentionally quite comical such as when the "degree of initiation" is measured according to petty norms of morals and

ethics as is still quite common today. (Just look at the audience reaction during lectures at esoteric events when the speakers judge and evaluate according to their own personal criteria. (For example, it may cause quite a scandal if a so-called “master” suddenly starts smoking a cigarette or drinking alcohol on stage, admits to being sexually active, or walks around with dirty shoes and long hair!) Such examples are common among many of the classic authors, such as Arthur Edward Waite, Franz Bardon, and Dion Fortune.

On the other hand, a genuine or merely simulated initiation experience is often leveraged by the affected person as an excuse to free himself or herself from the limitations of previous norms, enabling a new type of behavior without taboos; whereby the non-initiate is often looked down upon with a certain contempt. In this sense, initiation through revelation is, on the whole, probably the most dangerous type, since because it's difficult not only for the outside world but also for the initiate himself/herself to differentiate between illusion and revelation and not be tricked by childish superpower fantasies.

Since initiation always leads the affected person away from his or her familiar sense of structure, it's natural that he or she feels “different” and that his or her relationships with the non-initiated are either disrupted or broken off entirely. Without a doubt, many so-called “initiations” are nothing more than psychosomatic crises (usually preceded by depression or a traumatic shock), so in this sense initiations occasionally have a mental health function as well.

Another type of initiation through revelation is the famous “shaman sickness” that occurs again and again in ritual form in many conversion ceremonies (see next section). It's common knowledge that many tribal medicine people share a unique trait, namely that they endure a serious or even near-death illness that triggers their “calling” to become shamans. They either receive visions (often triggered by a high fever) that encourage them to take this step, or the shaman that actually treats them plants the seed of interest in the sick/recovering person that he or she should follow the shaman way and seek appropriate training as such. Sometimes a certain magical talent will result unexpectedly after such an illness that the affected person learns to use and master through trial and error. A similar phenomenon is reported by initiated mystics who, for example, after regularly “looking into the stars” are suddenly able to see the future of individuals or of collective society.

Finally, we need to mention the “calling,” for example as required of Catholics before being ordained into priesthood. This, too, is a type of initiation similar to the shamanic one described above, although usually not accompanied by sickness or near-death experiences.

In summary, let’s just remember that initiation is a type of transformation. This will become clearer in the next section when we examine the rites of transformation (mystical or shamanic).

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 72

#### PRACTICAL SIGIL MAGIC (IV)

If you haven’t already done so already, create a sigil to work as a sort of “magical landmine” that will kill anyone who tries to magically attack you against your will. (In this aspect, never make the mistake of being too nice if you want to prevent worse things from happening!) Charge the sigil in the usual manner and either wear it, carry it on your body, or have it within hand’s reach during the entire course of your training with this book. Since you’ll be working more and more with risky magical practices, such passive yet highly effective protection is essential!

*Note: I’m perfectly aware that this recommendation may raise a few eyebrows and raise a slew of ethical issues for many readers. However, there are several aspects to consider here. First, it is entirely up to you to go to these measures or refrain from them—this can and will be your personal decision alone. Second, the sigil recommended here is an entirely defensive one. If charged properly, it will only work in the desired manner if you are attacked magically by some other party against your will. (This wording “against your will” indicates that you may actually wish to be attacked under certain circumstances, e.g., for training purposes in the course of learning combat magic, etc.) Third, while experience shows that magical attacks will only very rarely lead to a victim’s actual annihilation, more often than not this is exactly what is being targeted nevertheless. Fourth and finally, there’s no doubt that it is always preferable not to get involved in any magical war in the first place! But in our view,*

*there is little point in going for less than unrelenting protection in such matters in cases of evident self-defense. Of course, you are free to disagree—your choice.*

*As the master Gregor A. Gregorius was so fond of pointing out ever and again: “At the end of the day, everyone has to assume personal responsibility for their own karma.” This is a burden no one can relieve you of—so ponder and decide wisely!*

*In any case, you will be perfectly fine treating this particular exercise as an optional recommendation. It won't impede your magical progress in terms of this book's overall program if you do decide to skip it.*

### **EXERCISE 73**

#### **APPLIED MIRROR MAGIC (II)**

Expand your mirror magic training program that you developed in Exercise 52 with exercises and experiments in invisibility as described in this section.

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# PRACTICAL SHAMANISM (I)

“The shaman is the great master of ecstasy.”

—*Mircea Eliade*

During the course of this book, you’ve read repeatedly that shamanism is considered the mother of all magic. Now we’d like to examine this cultural and magical phenomenon a bit more closely.

Academic researchers did not begin exploring shamanism until relatively late. Apart from a few early attempts, mainly of a folkloric nature, its exploration didn’t seriously begin until the nineteenth century. Since then, this field has been continually investigated so that we now know more about it than ever before. This was made possible mainly by a change in the researchers’ line of thinking: While the life of such wild tribes was viewed with a condescending Eurocentric or even racist arrogance just fifty years ago, today that feeling is replaced by a certain sense of humility and modesty. Instead of colonialist conquests, field research is predominant with ethnologists acting as seekers or at least as possible neutral observers. Of course, this doesn’t change the fact that such a European or American researcher is confronted with his or her individual nature—and this task is certainly not for everyone. We’ve been able to observe the bizarre deformities that this problem creates throughout the course of shamanic research. Just think of the long-held theory that shamans were usually epileptics who were honored by their fellow tribesmen due to their “divine disease” (the Greeks actually did view epilepsy in this way), thus allowing them to experience a primitive form of therapy—there could hardly be a stranger

mixture of truth and misinterpretation! Although there may have been (and still are) a number of shamans that this applies to, epilepsy (which is actually just as rare among shamans as among any other group of people) is not the explanation.

In fact, right from the start, shamans took on a number of roles that we now divide among various specialists in our modern society: priest, sorcerer, doctor, pastor, psychotherapist, counselor, philosopher, historian, and quite often a judge or executioner as well. As a priest the shaman created a link to the gods, as a sorcerer he or she ensured plentiful hunting and luck in battle (and often acted as personal body guard to the tribal chief), as a doctor and psychotherapist he or she was responsible for the physical and mental well-being of the other members of the tribe, as a counselor (“wise man/wise woman”) he or she was consulted when important group decisions were to be made and provided comfort to the individual, as a philosopher (and also as a priest) he or she defined the tribal laws of morals and ethics, and as a historian he or she safeguarded the traditions and was responsible for knowing, upholding, and passing on the legends and customs of the community. With that in mind, pure “professional shamans” were and still are the exception, because shamans generally have to earn their living just like anyone else: as a hunter, fisherman, farmer, weaver, blacksmith, nomad, and the like.

But what actually is shamanism? The word originally came from the Tungusian language (*shaman*) via Russian and describes an ecstatic technique according to the interpretation coined by Mircea Eliade that’s most commonly used today. Meanwhile, the term “shaman” is used in the context of native people as a synonym for “medicine man (or woman), witchdoctor, fetish priest, tribal sorcerer,” and so on. Beyond that, researchers have agreed on a few basic features that are used to describe shamanism that can be used to distinguish actual shamans from mere “tribal theologians” or herb collectors. We’ll talk about that in more detail real soon.

From what we’ve said above, it’s inadmissible to want to reduce shamanism to mere nature magic as recent magic literature has often done. On the other hand, it seems quite legitimate to place a special emphasis on those components of shamanism that are more interesting to us Western magicians as a result of our entirely different culture. This is not meant to be a type of devaluation or spiritual exploitation, but rather an honest attempt to learn something new.

And as people of a Western civilization, we can learn a great deal from the shamans. In fact it was the study of shamanism that made us Western magicians aware of

the importance of trance in magical operations. Do you remember our second basic formula of magic with the equation of will, imagination, and trance? Magic authors such as Israel Regardie, William Gray, and David Conway only mention the factors will and imagination. It wasn't until Western magicians (pragmatics in particular) began to examine the magical practices of native tribes without prejudice and secretiveness did they suddenly realize how important altered states of consciousness are for practical magic. Of course, Western magic always did work with trance, but this generally happened unintentionally, or at least automatically without thinking about it. The tradition of over-intellectualization and the belief in purely rational models of explanation were just too strong because those early enlightened minds despised anything that could shut off, blur, or incapacitate the rational mind (and therefore the censor) in any way. After all, Western reality depends mainly on a common consensus and the precision of observation and its reproduction, and for a long time it was meant to be as mathematical and mechanical as possible with the clockwork being more important than time itself.

Thanks to American shaman professor Michael Harner, we are now able to comprehend and experience the basic structures of practical shamanism worldwide. Although Harner himself is the subject of great controversy in both academic as well as magical circles due to the cost of his seminars, his major work *The Way of the Shaman* is still the most significant book on practical shamanism today. That's why we've made it required reading for this course, and you'll find more details under Further Reading at the end of this section. Although we don't completely agree with all of his statements, every magician should study his work nonetheless (e.g., we feel that his somewhat dogmatic dissociation of the shaman from the "magic priest" is quite artificial, and that his comments about drugs are not based on experience, as we've learned from conversations and interviews with him; the drug experience that he describes in the book mentioned above was supposedly his one and only such experience).

From shamanism we can learn a more light-handed way to work with visions and nature magic, with animal spirits and atavisms, and with trance journeys, how to quickly switch from one reality to another, and above all how to trust in the validity of one's own individual skills and perceptions.

Despite all the colorful talk in active alternative groups, the truth is that shamanic training and apprenticeship in the corresponding native cultures is generally quite dogmatic in nature. That comes as no surprise when we think of all the jobs that the



shaman has to perform for society. As head pastor and prophet of the tribe, he or she is responsible for promoting and strengthening community togetherness, as the radical behavior of certain eccentric individuals is probably even more undesired among native tribes than in the industrialized mass society of our civilization. Like in any other culture, shamans have developed rules for dealing with outsiders, and the punishment and sanctions for dealing with such individuals are often much stricter than in the “corrupt” world of the European civilization. Here’s a longer passage taken from *Schamanische Magie im Alltag*, the book by Sujja Su’a’No-ta (see Further Reading), which describes the basic attitude that is necessary for any serious study of shamanism:

First we need to realize that, although we can become shamans, we can never actually become Eskimos, Siberians or Native American Indians. It’s easy to believe the illusion that just by learning the legends, ceremonies and rituals of a foreign culture, we can extinguish our own cultural origin and take on a new heritage. [...]

While some ethnologists and anthropologists were overly skeptical and critical, the modern-day students of shamanism make up for this: They believe every word that is said to them and follow a path of devotion and blind obedience. The fascination that we feel when it comes to the legends, philosophies, ceremonies and rituals of foreign cultures makes our world seem gray and insignificant in comparison. Plus, if one wants to learn from a traditional shaman, he or she is required to dedicate body and soul to this foreign world. The contribution of an apprentice shaman’s own ideas or conceptions is neither appreciated nor tolerated. Nonetheless, every student yearns for a personal teacher. The feeling of familiarity, of understanding and solidarity may even be felt by reading the relevant literature. But this is nothing in comparison to the personal contact to a shaman and the directness of the resulting experiences. [...] Some shamanic traditions and techniques can be found in books and—if one has a certain amount of intuitive understanding and has understood the basic rules and laws—these can even be expanded on and comprehended. The shaman, however, puts fear into his or her students, putting them into dangerous or confusing situations, leading them around by the end of the nose, and so on, so that they learn to recognize their own skills under such physical and mental stress. Of course, a person can spend a night alone in the woods to be confronted with imaginary threats. However it’s much more effective to know that the teacher

is lurking somewhere in the bushes after setting up his or her traps. That's why most students are more than willing to deny their own personal history, life experience, culture and so on, to become servants of a foreign culture. [...] The danger is that we can easily become addicted to such adventures and experiences. We're willing to sell our souls for a few animal hides, grubby bones and feathers. We—the ones who used to despise and fight against such “primitive” cultures—are going to the other extreme, bowing to anyone wearing a feathered costume when they condescend to acknowledge us over-rationalized white men in their seminars and when they tell us the stories of their people and let us take part in the ceremonies. On the other hand, it's completely impossible to recognize the value of such a message if you look at it critically. Legends, parables and analogies are not “true” in our scientific sense. The truth must be sought on another level of thought or emotion, and this cannot be done if we pick apart the story in a petty sense. This also applies to experiences during an altered (shamanic) state of consciousness. The message of a vision cannot be understood by analyzing symbols and **thinking** about them in a rational way. We have to be greatly uncritical in order to be able to learn. [...]

If we're not interested in becoming a shaman's apprentice, we're faced with entirely different problems. Studying shamanism on your own requires a great deal of self-discipline, attention, creativity, and independence. However, studying on your own has the advantage that the skills that we gain ourselves are not necessarily separate from the circumstances of modern times and our culture. If we learn from a “true” shaman, we're more or less forced to assume the traditions of his or her culture. Since our life circumstances are quite different, though, we usually have difficulties adjusting. It's useless to indulge in illusions of untouched nature, life in a tribe, or status as a hunter or **warrior**—shamanism is above all a practical system of counseling. Ideally, the shaman acts according to necessity in accordance with the degree of urgency and quality of time, while avoiding illusion. Shamanism is original and true to life. [...] Just having a few colorful visions doesn't make you a shaman. Although we can learn a lot from the old traditions, we need to be able to apply that knowledge to our modern times. New visions must be sought and realized. Clinging to old traditional visions means the same as sticking your head in the sand or being blind. [...] Just as the shaman helped solve the problems of the times, he or she needs to adapt to the circumstances of the modern world. [...] In this age

of small families and loners, shamanism has to be in tune with the needs and problems of the individual.

Shamanism is a “science of experience and art”. Apart from certain basic rules that the practitioner needs to observe, shamanism offers one of the greatest opportunities to reshape old traditions and adapt them to other circumstances, even if this isn’t apparent at first. Shamanism is, for example, not dependant on the place where it is performed. It will work on a busy street or deep in a forest, and every “true” shaman knows that. Although they may prefer to work outdoors, shamans are not dependent on this.

Since our modern concept of shamanism often covers a wide range of new romantic nature movements, you should apply a bit of healthy skepticism before getting involved with it. Let me make it clear that all magic is shamanic, even if (for example) the book magic of a Kabbalist seems totally unrelated to the natural sorcery of an African fetish priest.

Now let’s have a look at a few basic principles of shamanism.

## **THE SHAMANIC WORLDS**

Like most magical systems, shamanism has its own interpretation of reality and various symbols that are used. Similar to the Kabbalah, it usually works with various “worlds” that cannot be understood merely as places, but rather as “states of consciousness.” We’d like to outline two of these world models here.

### **Tonal and Nagual**

The popularity of Carlos Castaneda’s books has helped spread the usage of terms like “tonal” and “nagual” that are commonly used in the spiritual Indian scene. Since you should read the second book listed in our Further Reading section, *Schamanische Magie im Alltag*, a few basic comments should suffice. Please refer to the recommended literature for more extensive information.

The tonal corresponds to “everyday reality,” while the nagual is “non-everyday reality.” Everything that we perceive, feel, taste, smell, and understand belongs to the tonal, and everything that we usually do not perceive or understand comprises the nagual. The shaman can gain access to the nagual through altered states of consciousness, such

as trance and gnosis. This makes him or her able to shift between realities. (Just look at the German word for witch, “*Hexe*,” which is taken from the Old High German word “*hagazussa*” = “she who rides the fence.” This term describes a sorceress who balances between two realities or worlds and can participate in both.)

Like no other later magical tradition, shamanism was always realistic and down-to-earth, thus making the strengthening of the tonal its central task. Only with a stable and organized tonal can the shaman be sure not to lose his or her hold in the nagual. That’s why there are rarely any expert sorcerers among authentic shamanic tribes; the shaman always had to pursue a regular job as fisherman, hunter, or farmer in order to ground himself or herself sufficiently.

Despite all of the differences in the details, most shamanic systems apply the spirit model and what we said about this in the last section applies without exception.

### **Lower World, Middle World, Upper World**

Another way of structuring reality that in no way excludes the matrix of the tonal and nagual is the model of the three worlds: Lower World, Middle World, Upper World.

However, you should note that these words describe various realities and shouldn’t be viewed as actual locations.

The Lower World is the place (state of consciousness) that shamans most often travel to. Here is where power animals and spirit helpers are located; here is where the shaman receives knowledge for healing, looks for lost souls, fights evil spirits, and so on. During a trance journey, the shaman mentally enters the Lower World through a hole in the ground, a cave, a water source, or the like, and jumps, falls, or climbs down into it.

The shaman almost always enters the Upper World in a trance journey by means of climbing up a tree, a post, or a real or mythical mountain, or by floating up in the smoke of a fire. Psychoanalysis might find an analogy to the superego here, but a comparison with the collective unconsciousness would be more appropriate. Here the shaman can access the world of the gods and have great visions and dreams. While the Lower World is used for taking care of everyday and often temporary matters, the Upper World serves as a source of information for the life quest, for inner guidance, and sometimes even for communication with the ancestors or mythical tribal heroes.

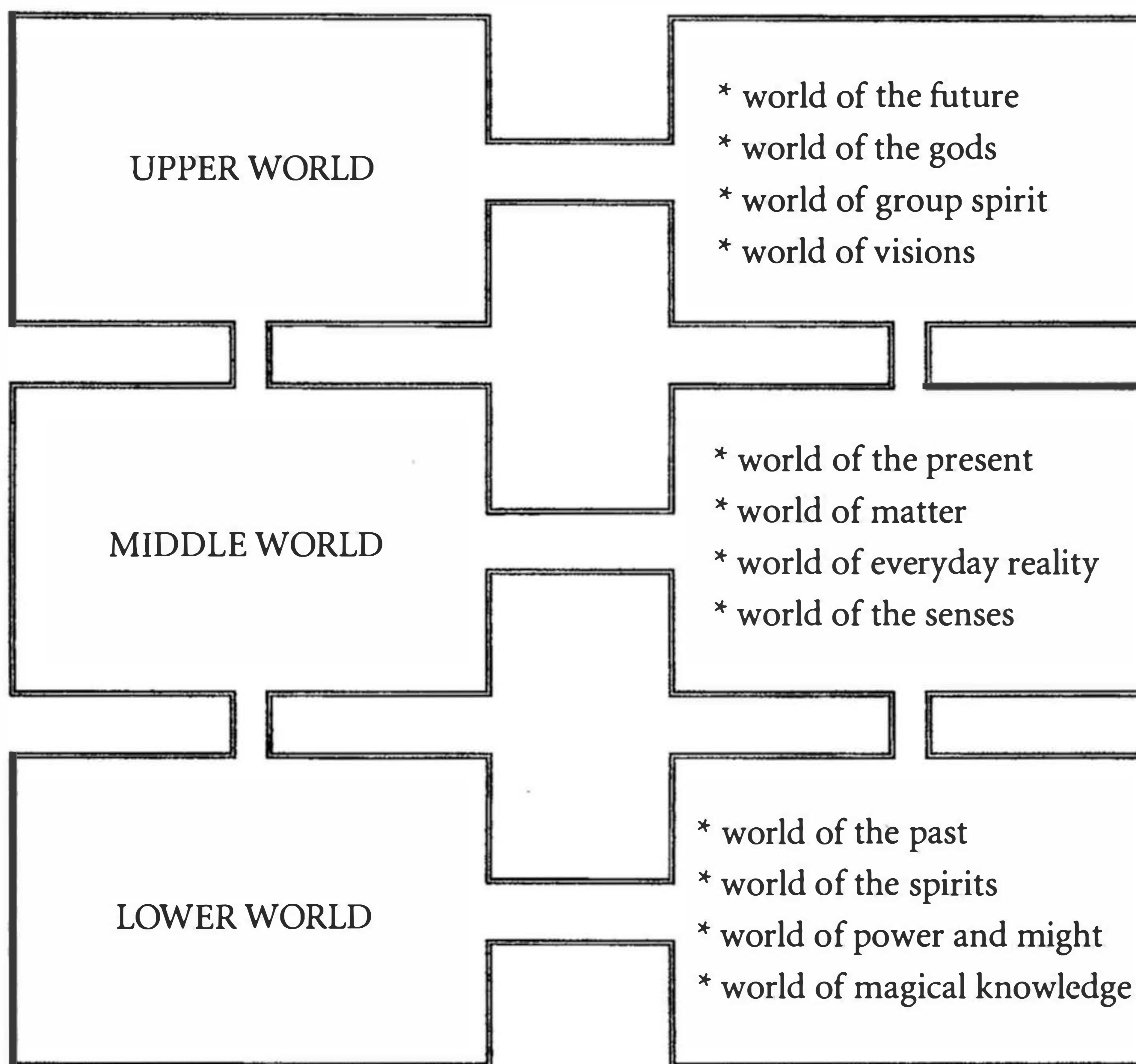
The Middle World is the everyday world. The shaman journeys to the Middle World, for example, to perform acts of clairvoyance, e.g., to look for a herd of animals or to

see what methods a neighboring tribe uses in war. Lost objects can also be sought and found in the Middle World, and quite often this is the level where magical manipulation takes place, ranging from death spells to weather spells.

As elegant as this model may appear to be, it often proves in practice to be nothing more than an academic game. Shamanism, with all of its cultural and tribal dogmatism, is much too pragmatic to place more value on theory than on practice. If a rain spell works better, for example, when the shaman travels to the Lower World instead of to the Middle World, he or she (if highly skilled) will be able to brush aside all ideologies and get what is needed from the Lower World. The borders often overlap as well, and only in rare cases can one make a clear distinction between the worlds, such as many European and American authors want us to believe. In fact, it's often what we Westerners call this notorious unreliability of the shaman in aspects such as punctuality and truthfulness that show us that often only little distinction is made between the states of trance, dream, and everyday perception. So it wouldn't be unusual for a shaman to tell you (with no irony intended whatsoever) how he or she took a plane to Australia the night before to participate in a ceremony but was back in time for breakfast the next day, and if you're lucky, he or she might even name the exact airline that was taken. In a system like this that has a completely different concept of truthfulness and objectivity, it would be silly to try and apply the rigid criteria of Western logic and rationalism. After all, it was mainly structural anthropology that opened our eyes to the fact that a different "primitive" type of logic is in no way a sign of collective backwardness, but is in itself much more compelling and obvious than the mathematically discursive way of thinking that we've just happened to get accustomed to over the past two and a half thousand years.

In this sense, please view the following illustration as merely a rough overview with borders that overlap and that shouldn't be taken too rigidly.

Indeed, it may be fashionable among modern shamans to make clear distinctions between the various states of consciousness. It's possible that during the most sacred of nagual ceremonies, they might step into the tonal for a second to crack a few (and often even dirty) jokes, and then jump right back into the mood of the ceremony and return to the nagual. But they're only able to do this because they've fully integrated both types of consciousness into one another, everyday and noneveryday reality, so that there's no rigid distinction between "magic" and "nonmagic."



*Illustration 27: The three shamanic worlds*

Of course, it doesn't mean that shamanic cultures cannot differentiate between reality and illusion, fact, and delusion. All tribal societies believe in the existence of spirits and it is commonplace to see them or perceive them in other ways. On the other hand, people who constantly see spirits and have no control over them would be considered just as "crazy" in shamanic societies as in ours. It's all about the controlled integration of such experiences; indulging in colorful, magic/shamanic visions and phenomena has no value in its own—what's important is being able to control the various realities.

There are a number of shamanic traditions, each having its own myths and legends of creation and cosmogony (theory of the origin and development of the universe),

which often differ radically from one another. They generally tend to agree on the following aspects, though:

- The shaman can cross over from one reality to another.
- The shaman understands that all things and creatures have a soul.
- The shaman changes states of consciousness and perception.
- The shaman performs spiritual or trance journeys.
- The shaman works with the powers of nature (animals, plants, minerals).

Once you've become familiar with this minimal outline, you'll be able to understand the various types of shamanic and post-shamanic systems at first glance, such as the nature mysticism of the North American Indians, the trance or ecstasy techniques of the Tungusians or Laotians, the magical practices of the Australian aborigines, the possession ceremonies of the Caribbean, and so on.

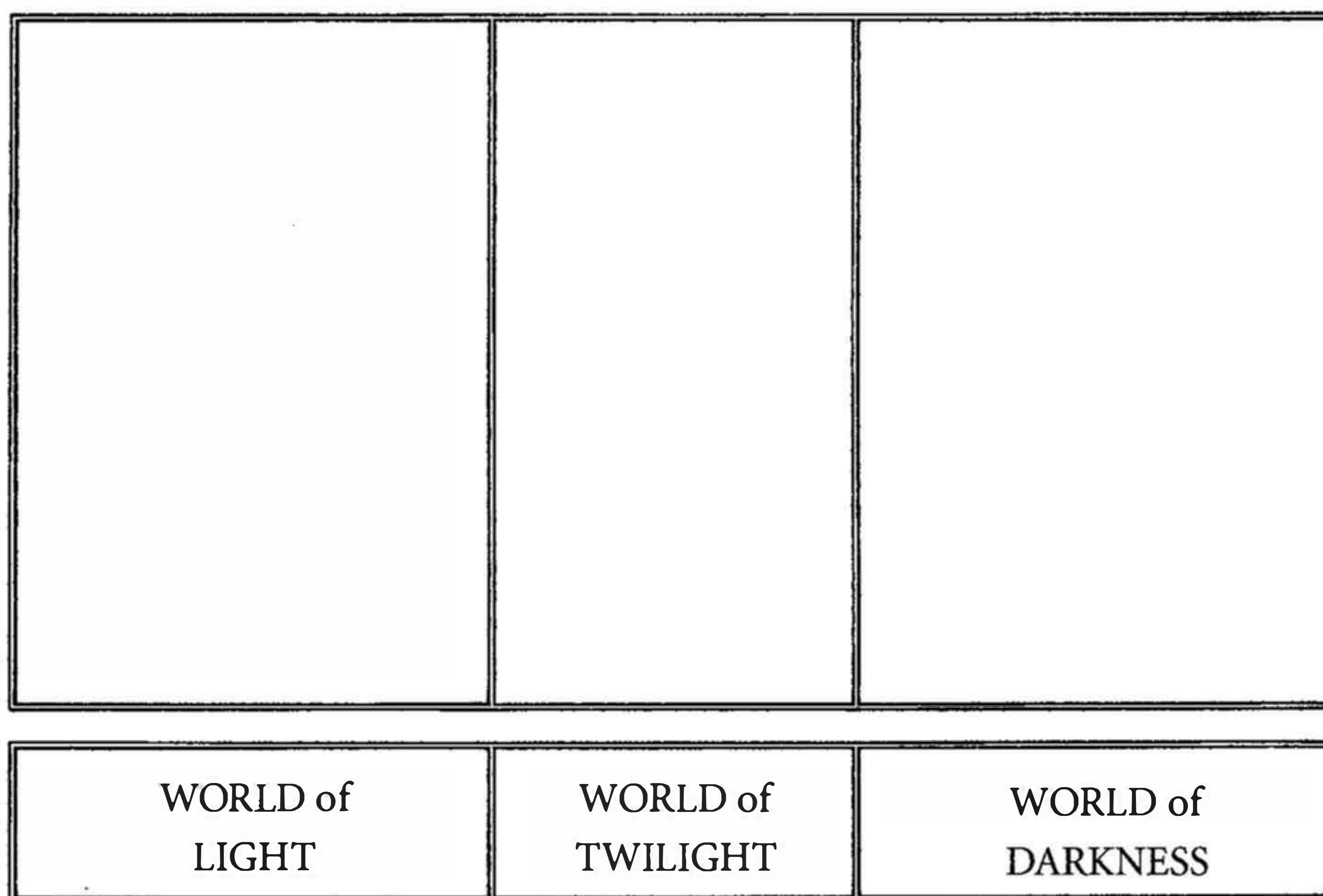
Now let's discuss some of the magical paraphernalia (in no particular order) that a shaman uses, breaking with the way we've done this in the past by discussing such items under the heading "Introduction to Ritual Magic."

### **THE MESA: SHAMANIC DEPICTION OF THE UNIVERSE**

The Spanish word "*mesa*" was originally used to describe a table or tablet. In the language of the South American shamans, it generally means a cloth that a shaman uses to lay out his or her magic utensils during a ritual. Its function is similar to that of the altar in Western magic. Often the mesa is divided symbolically into various sections to represent the shaman's own personal universe. The system used is generally quite individual and is often revealed to the shaman during a trance. The mesas depicted in the illustration below are thus merely examples that you can use as an inspiration for your own magical altar.

The shaman positions his or her magical weapons during a ritual according to the area of his or her universe that they correspond to. If the shaman divides the mesa into three sections, for example, to represent the "world of light," the "world of darkness," and the "world of twilight," he or she would probably place a healing crystal in the "world of light," a death or combat fetish in the "world of darkness," and a rattle for calling both good and evil spirits in the "world of twilight." At shamanism seminars in Eu-

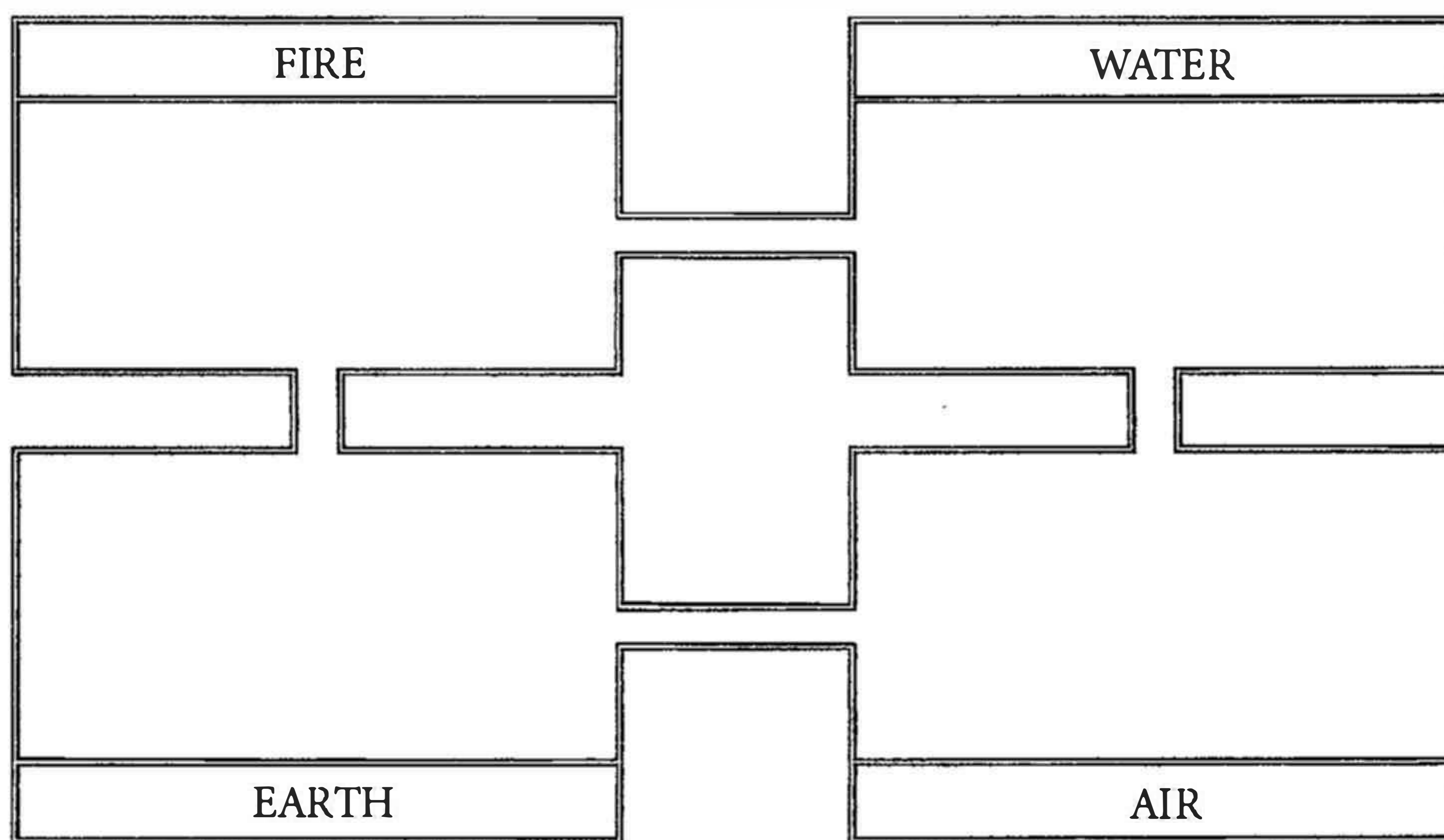
rope and the USA, shamans are often divided into two categories: “black” and “white.” In fact, the town and country folk (e.g., in Latin America)—who make up the clientele of modern Indian shamanism since tribal society has become quite rare—like to make this differentiation as well, and it may indeed be appropriate in theory. But it’s a fact that, for example in Peru where a strict distinction is made between *curandero* (“healer,” usually with a positive connotation) and *brujo* (“sorcerer,” usually with a negative connotation), many brujos perform healings while *curanderos* often work in areas such as magical manipulation (e.g., love spells, rain making, etc.). In this sense, we recommend being careful when considering such generalizations.



*Illustration 28: Mesas*



For structural understanding it's important to know that the mesa is both a depiction of the shaman's personal universe as well as a document of his or her magical experience and abilities. The shaman lays out all important utensils onto the mesa (similar to the way a surgeon would do with his or her instruments), and uses them to manipulate the energies and spirits in a sort of cosmic game of chess. This natural magic "control panel" (if its symbolism is firmly anchored within the shaman and continually charged through frequent use) can be incredibly effective. We therefore recommend that you create your own mesa and put it to the test. If you use a cloth or small mat, it has an advantage over a normal altar in that you can carry it around with you. By now you should have enough experience with symbol matrices to create your own mesa. You'll find a few suggestions in Illustrations 28 and 29.



*Illustration 29: Mesa divided into four parts (mandala form)*

# FORMS OF INITIATION (II)

## INITIATION BY RITUAL OF TRANSFORMATION

It's always been a part of human nature to have paths of spiritual development that only a minority of the population feels attracted to. This type of development generally results in an involuntary "sense of being different," which is expressed even today in many cultures as ritual transformation. But more often, such a transformation is all about switching from one social group to another, such as leaving childhood or youth behind to become an adult. Even smaller groups have their little rites of passage—just think of the countless "tests of courage" during our childhood, the basic training of military recruits, school-leaving traditions (e.g., a high-school diploma), circumcision ceremonies, and the like. Ethnologists use the term "rites of passage" to describe such acts of transformation since the soul, personality, or even the physical constitution of the initiate (after a certain period of training and education) ritually passes from one state of being to another.

Rites of passage are by far the most common form of initiation in the field of magic as well. Even the ancient schools of mysticism had such rites, for example during the Eleusinian mysteries where the initiate was made to ritually experience and internalize the four classical elements in order to become a different person and to become a member of a different group of people (an initiate).

There are forms of initiation that claim to change the initiate forever, or to turn him or her into an entirely new person. This includes the ordination of priests or bishops in

Christian churches; a process of transformation that cannot be reversed even if the person involved later proves to be unworthy or even disloyal. This was usually justified by the sacramental intervention of a divine power that is basically immune to any type of human judgment or negation. (According to the image of this model, a person who performs such rites of passage for priests or totem animal ceremonies is merely an instrument of a god or some other transcendental authority, regardless of the word used to describe it.)

Other forms of initiation also aim at transforming the initiate, but they only do so gradually (according to their own reports). The primary concern of such initiations is enabling the initiate to experience something that he or she should strive toward repeating again and again until it has been fully integrated into his or her life. This applies to most initiations into magical orders, for example when a novice or neophyte candidate is brought into contact with the force field of a brotherhood that he or she is expected to slowly grow into.

Even later grade initiations (e.g., “fellowcraft/journeyman” or “master”) are primarily designed to give the candidate a “taste” of what is expected of him or her after the grade is awarded. That’s why it is often said of such orders that the initiate “grows into” a new grade. In this model, the initiate does not receive the grade because he or she deserves it (although ideally this should be true for the most part anyway), but rather because the higher ranking members feel that he or she has the potential to reach this level one day. The fact that such structures can lead to abuse for power-political purposes (which is often the case) has contributed significantly to the bad reputation that such orders often have in the public eye. In cases where a member of a magical order receives a certain grade merely because he or she may have donated a substantial amount of money to the lodge, or is important to the order in some other way (politically, economically, culturally, or simply as a journalistic figure), without having the appropriate amount of magical potential or skills, will damage the reputation of the brotherhood in the long run, doing it more harm than good. Such favoritism causes the overall quality standard to sink and the race for positions, offices, ranks, and honors smothers the actual purpose of such an order.

A quite common rite of passage is the ritual imitation of mystical death. Even if an outsider may chuckle at such “child’s play,” the experience of such rites, when carefully planned and powerfully performed, is quite real and can be similar in intensity to a near-death experience following an accident. The structure is always the same, for

example in the Tibetan Chod rite when the shaman symbolically (but therefore not less real or painful) gives his or her body back to the elements under the most horrible physical and psychological conditions, or the coffin rite of many Rosicrucian orders where the candidate lies for a time blindfolded in a coffin like a dead person in order to awaken in a new life. A conscious death experience is intentionally sought in order to subject the organism as a whole (both physically and mentally) to a deep transformation so that the initiate (following his or her rebirth and renewal) can continue life on another “higher” level of consciousness.

Whoever has completely surrendered to such a ritual death experience knows that this should never be done without careful consideration, which is why they only occur in the higher grades of some magical orders, if they occur at all. Some shamans speak of three or even seven mystical deaths, of a life-long path of development and initiation consisting of individual stages that are marked by such death rites. Sometimes it is recommended to undergo such rites for health reasons, e.g., once a year for a complete renewal of health—and I personally can vouch for the effectiveness of such a procedure. (After undergoing two such death rites within a period of just a few weeks, I learned first-hand how long the organism and psyche generally need to thoroughly process such experiences. It resulted in health problems, depression, and a deep feeling of insecurity that even had a strong influence on my magical abilities for a significant period of time.)

Technically speaking, most rites of passage are a type of initiation through fear; fear that is artificially created in the candidate with the intention of interrupting the person’s everyday consciousness by paralyzing the censor activity and opening the subconscious mind to new experiences. If we apply our second basic formula of magic here, we can see that this form of initiation is especially designed to increase the degree of gnosis (variable “g”), to intensify the magical link to the goal (variable “l,” the link to the group/order for initiation into a group), and to reduce the awareness (variable “a”) of the act of transformation by paralyzing the conscious mind while at the same time minimizing the inner resistance (variable “r”) to this transformation.

As we’ve already seen in connection with gnostic excitatory trances, the fear, horror, and fright can act as gateways to magical consciousness and have one considerable advantage over many other methods of initiation. They work quickly and thoroughly since they directly address a person’s primordial biological fears while activating the brainstem. On the other hand, the threshold to involuntary comedy is just a small step

away, which is why such rituals require very careful, skilled planning and execution. The less that the candidate knows about the initiation and what risks he or she will actually be subjected to, the more effective the ceremony and the more memorable the experience will be, thus resulting in a deep, long-lasting transformation.

Initiation through fear includes the comparably less harmless form of initiation through generating respect and humility. Often simple psychological tricks are applied, for example when a statue made of stone or metal suddenly begins to speak to the initiate and reveal personal details (that the priest speaking through the statue obviously found out beforehand), thus giving the initiate the feeling that he or she is standing in the presence of an all-knowing divine power. This was also common in the ancient world, for example during the construction of temples in Egypt, Greece, or Rome during the classical and pre-classical period with the intention of filling the initiate with awe at the sheer size of the structures. In such an awestruck state, a person is highly receptive to suggestions of all types.

The use of such tricks is not as reprehensible as a rationalistic truth fanatic might think. After all, they're not intended to actually "trick" the believers or keep them "in the dark" (although this is often the case), but rather to be used as a technique for inducing gnosis. It's a well-known fact that the faking of paranormal effects often enables the manifestation of real phenomena in the first place. If tricks are used during a stage performance, for example, to give the observer the impression that telepathy is indeed possible, the person's resistance will drop and he or she will become more open to the possibility of telepathic success, thus making it easier for the person to induce such phenomena himself/herself. The same applies to magic as we've said before, when the magician repeatedly pretends to do certain things until the desired effect actually does happen. This type of pretending works two ways. Either the magician does it himself/herself (which is generally the case), or another person does it instead. In both cases, reality is manipulated according to the magician's will so that the "illusion" (which could be better described as a "paradigm aid") is not done for its own sake, but rather is used merely as a tool along the lines of the basic principle of chaos magic, "belief is merely a technique."

Initiation through surprise, on the other hand, is a technique that creates sudden astonishment in the candidate, thus awakening his or her inner skills so that they can emerge and reveal themselves. This can occur, for example, during an initiation ritual in which all of the minute details have been discussed with the candidate beforehand,

and then suddenly a change is made. As a result, all expectations (e.g., “It’s nothing but a formality”) are immediately discarded, thus triggering a feeling of great insecurity in the initiate as he or she is compelled to improvise.

### **ACTIVE INITIATION THROUGH EXPERIENCE**

A more individualized method is initiation through experience. Here the magician experiments with the information found in books or other sources and gathers his or her own experience without formally following any certain path or course. Accordingly, the magical path of such magicians generally reflects this unsystematic approach, as a colorful hodgepodge of various techniques and philosophies fuse to form a new yet often inhomogeneous system. Representatives of more traditional and systematic paths of initiation tend to just wrinkle their brow contemptuously at such “rebelliousness,” yet this is exactly the type of fertile ground that breeds true magical creativity.

The price for this anarchistic path is often quite high since many magicians fail in the attempt to develop their own system or, when successful, have difficulties conveying it to others since it cannot be described in words. How can you understandably explain primevally personal experiences and developmental processes to someone else? On the other hand, the representatives of regimented traditionalism often take this argument a bit too far considering the fact that all forms of organized magic were created at one time through the initiative of magically experienced loners. This poses the old rhetorical question: “Who initiated the first master?” Whoever tries to explain it off with “divine powers” of some sort or another becomes subject to the accusation of being a reactionary misanthropist by excluding the possibility that access to “revealed” knowledge might still be available today. Projections of wisdom and omniscience into the long-gone past of an Atlantis or in some dubious “master in the Himalayas” have been popular since the theosophical movement in the nineteenth century, but the modern-day chaos magician and freestyle shaman would say that these are nothing but a childishly naïve parent substitute that is used to silence others and prevent them from individual development.

Initiation through personal experience is a thorn in the eye of everyone who believes that a person needs to be strictly regulated in order to prevent him or her from straying from the “true path.” Here, too, one should learn from history and not repeat its mistakes. Surely many experiences of the past are still quite valuable today and the modern magician

would be silly to view such knowledge with disdainful vehemence as “dusty old stuff” without first examining its historic and practical context. But the history of most traditional orders and brotherhoods that renounce any type of independent magical initiative reflects how instable and unproductive their approach actually is in the long run. The best magicians usually stray off the track eventually and go their own way, which inevitably causes such groups to split up or dissolve.

On a few rare occasions, a group of charismatic and intelligent practitioners joined forces for a time to form a magical organization that was able to collectively achieve great things and make a lasting impression on the history of magic. This was certainly true in the case of the Templars, the Rosicrucians, and the original Freemasons, but also with the Illuminates, the Golden Dawn, the O.T.O., and the *Fraternitas Saturni* as well. However, these systems of initiation (which is exactly what such magical orders usually are) require renewal every once in awhile in the form of “young blood”—wild and passionate eccentrics who usually have way more magical experience (and thus initiation) than all of the other long-year members combined.

By definition, active initiation through experience generally occurs without the formal awarding of grade levels. At most the magician may change his or her magical name or take on a title (“Frater,” “Master”). Excellent examples of such a path of development in the history of magic are the renowned magicians Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus or Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim.

Beginners (and sometimes even the leaders of certain orders who should really know better) sometimes confuse initiation through experience with initiation through revelation, which is understandable considering that the former is often accompanied by such revelational experiences. However, there’s a considerable difference between the type of initiation that occurs as a result of an initiate’s conscious acts and efforts or initiation that is experienced as the mercy or goodwill of another authority (human or transcendental). In the first case, the initiation encourages independence while in the second it often leads to dependence on the revelations themselves or on the initiating authority—a dependence that can range from thankful loyalty to blind fanaticism.

## SELF-INITIATION

Aleister Crowley is often credited with introducing the practice of magical self-initiation to the tradition of Western magic. That's not entirely true because initiation through experience as we've just discussed is also a form of self-initiation. But indeed, Crowley did revolutionize the concept of self-initiation by formalizing and popularizing it. Only if you're aware of the rigid order structure of that era that Crowley rebelled against will you be able to see how outlandish his actions truly were. His occult colleagues of the time still believed in the Catholic law established by Cypranius, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the church [there is] no salvation")—the idea that an individual could "dare" to seek the secret truth was much too absurd to earn more than a scornful grin from the colorful community of "Grail keepers" as designated by some higher (divine) authority. Since the early days of Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry (the latter of which developed in the seventeenth century), people were thoroughly accustomed to collective thinking and would never even dream of viewing such magical-occult individualists as more than disgusting perverts of noble initiation hierarchies. After all, let's not forget that this was the era of monarchies (despite the shock of the Reformation, the American Declaration of Independence, and the French Revolution) that were strongly supported by the people, even more than the support of the aristocracy during the period of pure feudalism.

Indeed, the great success of the Theosophical Society founded in 1875 was based on its postulate of the secret Mahatmas that control the fate of the world (and use the society as its main mouthpiece, of course). This example soon made an impact and the Golden Dawn even developed a very similar concept later on by claiming the existence of a "secret chief."

Crowley's most significant contribution to the field of magic was without a doubt the fact that he rediscovered the individual in the Black Arts. Therefore, it was only logical that he would propagate the concept of self-initiation, and he legitimized it in a sense with his own authority. His famous line "*deus est homo, homo est deus*" that he continually recited to his horrified magician colleagues (who were still quite religious in a Christian sense) is comparable in intensity and relentlessness to the Protestant rebellion against the papacy and its clergy.

Surely it's no coincidence that it was Rudolf Steiner (who was head of the German section of the O.T.O. for nine years and secretary of the Theosophical Society) who was to break with the theosophical movement ("theosophy" meaning "science of God") and



replace it with his own anthroposophy (meaning “science of man”)—a clear parallel to Crowley that hasn’t been mentioned in research yet to the best of our knowledge.

In fact, the act of self-initiation is basically a magical oath. The magician ritually promises to himself/herself or to certain powers that he or she believes in to actively pursue the magical path and aspire toward certain magical (life) goals. In doing so, the magician is documenting his or her current level of consciousness and development. With a certain amount of practical experience, such an act of self-initiation can be just as intense as a formal initiation performed by others, although indeed a great deal of experience, self-criticism, and power of imagination is required in order to make such a ritual truly effective.

Generally, initiations are once-in-a-lifetime experiences that cannot be repeated unless the candidate does not pass the initiation the first time and must repeat it at a later date (in which case it would be more like an entrance exam). During self-initiation it’s important that the magician is completely satisfied with the energies and states of consciousness that were brought about, otherwise he or she might decide to repeat the procedure after a certain period of contemplation and continued work on his or her magical development.

In any case, the only thing that really matters in a true initiation is the scope of the experience, as already mentioned. Whoever “collects” initiations (a common practice in magical orders) like some people collect stamps or sexual partners has yet to understand the purpose of this most impressive transformational experience. I’m not trying to criticize in general the holding of membership in several brotherhoods at once because such multiple memberships can often complement each other in a tremendously productive way, and they also prevent narrow-minded one-sidedness. But the relentless pursuit of new initiation adventures becomes an end in itself, the experiences stay stuck to the surface and cannot be integrated, the initiate’s magical personality remains undeveloped and desperately clings to legitimistic matters of detail (“Which O.T.O. is the true one?” “Which charter does Order X base its teachings on?”) instead of focusing on one’s own initiation (which is actually the point) and living up to it. Without this true initiation of the self, every initiation rite is nothing but a shallow masquerade.

## HOW CAN YOU RECOGNIZE AN INITIATE?

This is a common question but the wording is not very accurate. The question silently assumes that an initiate must be a person who has gained access to a certain fixed pool of knowledge that can be objectified, a pool of knowledge that is the same for everyone. In fact, however, the initiate may have the experience that the earth is truly flat while another may receive a revelation and firmly believe that we live on a hollow earth with its core being made of ice (just to mention two examples). In both cases, it would be thoroughly wrong to speak of a “pseudo-initiation” just because we do not share or cannot understand this viewpoint. Fact is, magical initiation results in a change of personality, perception, and the way one views and lives life. It’s not about the conveying of certain contents or “truths,” but rather about the act of transformation. Whoever has changed from a normal everyday person to an uncompromising magician; whoever has completely changed his or her previous views on ethics and morals and actually dared to take this step; whoever has given up everything, absolutely everything, in order to follow his or her true self—this is an initiate in the magical sense of the term. There’s good reason that initiation through instruction is generally not understood as such. After all, pure rational thought in itself is not the same as transformation. Only after the newly acquired knowledge has sunk in on all levels of the magician’s personality does the experience become true ordination, or initiation.

The biblical phrase “Ye shall know them by their fruits” shouldn’t be misunderstood as an open invitation to judge everyone and everything according to our own (often petty) conceptions while merrily swinging the executioner’s axe. Whether or not a person is truly initiated or not can only be determined by the person himself or herself, in the same way that we reserve the right to decide whether or not we want to deal with such a person. Even the frequently quoted maxim that a true initiate never publicly refers to himself or herself as such is unfortunately not much more than a crude rule of thumb that’s based on an unreflected modesty ideal. After all, an initiation may actually make a magician present himself or herself to the outside world in such a bragging, boasting way. Who’s to decide?

If you make the decision to pursue the path of a magician throughout the course of your entire life, you’ll surely undergo countless “large” and “small” initiations over the years and automatically be confronted with the initiation of other people (students, apprentices,

friends) as well. Since hardly any magician can resist the temptation of showing others how to change the world and themselves, you cannot avoid the fact that you, too, will and should initiate other people someday. If there is any type of external indication that someone is an initiate, it would surely be the fact that sooner or later people will flock around the person, eager to learn—whether the magician likes it or not. But by no means does this mean that the initiate's own learning process is complete, it just takes on a new dimension. After a magician reaches a certain degree of development the motto switches to “learning by teaching,” which is both an obligation and an opportunity.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 74*

#### **PRACTICAL SHAMANISM (I)**

Design your own shamanic training program that is at least twelve weeks in length. As usual make sure that you have an equal balance, covering fields that come easy to you as well as techniques that you may find difficult at first. In any case, the focus should be on training your magical perception and trance journeys, work with animal powers (atavisms), and the quick switch between one state of gnosis and another. You should have enough experience by now so that choosing or developing the right exercises shouldn't pose a problem for you.

### *EXERCISE 75*

#### **PRACTICAL INITIATION SKILLS (I)**

Design a complete initiation ritual for a real or imaginary person. You don't need to perform it; just plan it meticulously and write down every detail as though you were to give it to a possible successor without further instruction.

If you are able to work with a partner, you should initiate him or her with your ritual after a short break of no more than a month. This should be a test run to see for yourself if the ritual meets your expectations.

Take a look at this ritual periodically at regular intervals throughout your magical career and determine if you would like to change anything or if you are satisfied with it. Later, if you feel it is necessary, you can draft an entirely new ritual. Do this until you are completely satisfied with the results.

### EXERCISE 76

#### PRACTICAL INITIATION SKILLS (II)

Design a ritual of self-initiation for yourself and/or another person. Put it aside for a while and then test it out by performing it on yourself.

Take a look at this ritual periodically at regular intervals throughout your magical career and determine if you would like to change anything or if you are satisfied with it. Later, if you feel it is necessary, you can draft an entirely new ritual. Do this until you are completely satisfied with the results.

### EXERCISE 77

#### PRACTICAL CHAOS MAGIC

If you haven't already done so, begin familiarizing yourself with the principles of chaos magic. The goal of this exercise is not to force you into becoming a chaos magician, but rather to get you to have a look at this unusual paradigm and to develop your own opinion about it in the course of your general esoteric studies. This is necessary in order to understand the context and relationships behind the practical techniques of this branch of magic.

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### FURTHER READING

Michael Harner, *The Way of the Shaman*

This book has been reprinted numerous times and reflects the position of scientific research on the subject up to the year 1951 (publishing date of the French first edition). Today, it is considered to be one of the best standard reference books of its kind on shamanism and no magical library should be without it.

Sujja Su'a'No-ta, *Schamanische Magie im Alltag*

A must-read! This book delves into the techniques of practical shamanism.

Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*

Frater U.: D., "Magie in den Städten oder: Gibt es einen Betonschamanismus?"



# PRACTICAL SHAMANISM (II)

## **ATAVISTIC MAGIC: WORKING WITH ANIMAL POWERS (I)**

Throughout the course of this training program and in the recommended reading you will repeatedly come across such phrases as “atavistic magic” and “working with animal powers.” Now we would like to deal with the concept of atavisms in more depth and then turn to some practical work with this subject. A short summary in the form of mnemonic phrases and theses will help shed some light on the matter to make it more understandable.

1. The term “atavism” (from the Latin word *atavus* = “grandfather, ancestor”) as used in the field of biology describes a regression to earlier stages of development. “Atavistic magic” is understood as the magical working with prehuman levels of consciousness and bodily powers.
2. Man carries the genetic information of the entire developmental history of all life forms. These energies and information can be activated with the proper training and be used for magical purposes.
3. All shamans and atavistic magicians unanimously agree that true magical power lies in the early primeval states, or, to use a psychological term, in the brainstem or “lizard” brain.
4. When the magician or shaman enters animal (or pre-animal) states of consciousness, he or she can tap into the power and abilities of that animal (or pre-animal

creature) that was activated (or “invoked”), thus making it possible for him or her to act in a way that would be impossible or at least very difficult in human consciousness.

5. Working with atavisms is a way to become whole and/or to release humans from their socio-cultural, religious, philosophical, political, and other such shackles. With such work, humans experience themselves as an all-embracing, planetary living being.

There is proof that animal traditions have existed all over the world since the Stone Age, and even advanced civilizations such as ancient Egypt or India have numerous deities in the form of animals. Such evidence of their workings with animals is one of the most certain indications that ancient shamanic knowledge was present. The rejection of animal worship (e.g., in Judaism and its two successors, Christianity and Islam, as well as in the laicized bourgeois society of the nineteenth century) is always an indication for a strong focus on intellectualism as opposed to intuition, which is consequently expressed in patriarchal structures of power and consciousness. It reflects linear, logical discursive thought while animal traditions generally define reality in a cyclical and mythical—or magical—sense.

We are inevitably influenced by this belief in our culture as children and we often find it difficult to surrender such conceptions.

“Animalistic” behavior always meant “instinctive” behavior and our civilization as a whole even likes to define itself by the repression or (ideally) sublimation of such instinctual behavior. But pure instinct also means shutting off the controlling mind—the moral censor—in order to obey solely the body’s inner voice. Fear of ecstasy and the loss of this control is what made us repress the animal in us along with everything else reminiscent of animalistic behavior.

But all the while, the cage doors of our atavisms are wide open [...] and our animal inside is just waiting to step into action when needed: “Deep down in the ‘Africa’ of our soul, prehistoric lizards are patiently lying in wait, ready to jump.” Of course it’s not entirely harmless to awaken them without the proper training, but we should at least finally shake the notion that they’re our enemies. The lizards are not lying in wait to attack us, but rather to help us! They can appear in times of great danger [...]: A

mother who suddenly and without thinking lifts up an entire bus to pull out her child who has been run over; a refugee who uses every last effort to climb over a barbed wire fence while under machine gun fire despite being seriously wounded and psychologically exhausted; a woman cornered at night in a deserted park who batters three armed men in pure desperation without any formal training in self-defense—all of these people know the feeling of “animalistic” or superhuman power that can be suddenly released in such stress situations.

But there is also proof that the power of atavisms can be applied consciously. Such as the secret elephant society in Central Africa whose members are able to carry incredible loads (mammoth jungle trees) through the forest day in and day out as they are felled and dragged to rafts waiting several miles away. They are in what shamans call a state of “elephant trance”, or in other words, they’ve become elephants. So we don’t have to be utterly desperate or in a life threatening situation in order to make use of the “lizards” inside us. Our brain itself is proof of their presence, and our brainstem is in an evolutionary sense the oldest part of the human brain. Commonly it is referred to as the “lizard” brain.

At most, atavisms may be possibly dangerous if we try to suppress them. However, when working with them, we need to be aware of one thing: Although animal atavisms are in no way bloody monsters, they’re certainly not cute teddy bears either! If we approach them with a jumble of preconceived expectations and moral norms, we’ll be sure to get an unpleasant surprise. Instead we should accept them as they are without idealizing them, but without demonizing them either!

There is a certain aspect of atavistic work that can be observed worldwide, but one that is rarely mentioned in ethno-anthropological literature. Let’s take another look at the secret elephant society in Africa: These tree carriers became elephants, we said. But what does that exactly mean? Do they grow tusks and a trunk, thick skin and big, floppy ears? The answer is both yes and no. No if you expect that an unknowing bystander could actually see them physically as elephants, because on the outside they look like ordinary humans who even sweat while they work, crack jokes and chant strange tunes—possibly only their eyes would reveal that they are in a trance. At most, the only visible thing that may be unusual is the seemingly impossible physical task that they are performing without showing the slightest signs of exhaustion.



On the other hand, our answer is yes in the sense that these carriers have indeed become elephants on the inside (subjectively speaking). This is not just mere imagination—it feels physically real: They can actually feel their trunk and tusks, their huge limbs and leathery, wrinkly skin so realistically that they even instinctively swerve to avoid objects that would only be in the way if they truly did have a much larger elephant body, whereas a smaller human body could pass by without effort. Thus they identify totally with the elephant! But in the evening after their work is done, these tree carriers swiftly change like werewolves back into their “normal” human existence. They’re not abnormal monsters at all, but just simple productive members of the tribe and plain old happy people with families just like everyone else (Ralph Tegtmeier, *Evolutions-Training*).

By the way, when working with atavisms, one often forgets that this is actually a form of ancestor worship designed specifically to get in touch with the souls (spirit model), the powers (energy model), the experiences and states of consciousness (psychological model), and/or the knowledge (information model) of one’s human and nonhuman ancestors. Please always keep this in mind for better understanding.

In the animalistic cultures found predominately among primitive peoples, the ancestors are not just forgotten about after they are gone, they live on in the community and continue to take part in life even after they are dead by appearing to their descendants in dreams and visions, giving advice and even causing a bit of mischief at times! A person with a close relationship to nature is instinctively aware of a certain fact that only recently has been scientifically proven by modern anthropology with the help of molecular biologists, even though nearly all of man’s stories of creation have been proclaiming it for thousands of years—namely that all people are genetically related to one another. While the tribal member views the myths and legends as “proof” enough, we as scientifically oriented human beings prefer to rely on “hard facts” before we can be convinced of such claims. An example of this is the Wilson study that was conducted some time ago at the University of Berkeley.

American molecular biologist Allan Wilson and his colleagues examined the genes of 147 people of all races and nationalities to study the genetic make-up (DNA= deoxyribonucleic acid) of their mitochondrions. Mitochondrions are so-

called “cell organelles” consisting of proteins and lipoids surrounded by a double membrane. Among other things, they are responsible for regulating the citric acid cycle and transporting vital enzymes while supplying the cells with adenosine phosphoric acids (APC), providing them with energy that is used, for example, for muscle contractions. The interesting thing about these mitochondrions is the fact that they are the only part of the human cell structure that contains a separate gene fragment that is removed from the overall genetic substance. Previously it was known that the DNA of the mitochondrions changes by two to four percent within a period of a million years, which enables a relatively precise and reliable comparison as to how closely related two species are with one another or not. The results of the Wilson study were amazing: With all probability, all test persons originate from one and the same African species of *Homo sapiens*. In response to the results, Allan Wilson even went so far as to claim that all people populating the earth today originate from the same ancestor parents who lived 140,000 years ago in Africa!

So we’re all related to one another, even if it doesn’t seem like it at times. But this discrepancy between genetic and affective reality is exactly what influentially forms the current relationship with our ancestors. There’s hardly anyone in the Western world today who has what is commonly referred to as an “intact” family, or a perfect relationship to his or her parents and grandparents. Strong family ties among genetically close relatives loosened as families became smaller, and large families as our parents and grandparents knew them are now nearly extinct.

There’s one other possible misunderstanding that we should try to avoid: This type of magical work has nothing to do with spiritualism! We’re not recommending that you hold séances to contact loved ones and ask how they’re doing in order to get some kind of physical “proof” that there’s an afterlife. Although when in a trance, it may often seem as though there are spirits (and not only human ones!), “ghosts” or even “specters”, but there’s no need for such controversial claims in order to explain such phenomena. Instead it should be sufficient to say that what we’re dealing with here is what is sometimes described as genetic memory—memories of genetic primeval knowledge that is available to us through the subconscious mind as expressed in images and symbols.

The term “genetic memory” was abused in Nazi Germany with numerous mystical national groups using this concept to disguise their passion for visions and spiritualistic

practices. Everything that came as a sudden impulse from the subconscious mind and appeared “Germanic” in any way was considered to be a part of genetic memory. In this sense, we’d like to rehabilitate the term here and restore the definition of genetic memory as a type of symbol-oriented or image-oriented coming to terms with earlier forms of existence (again, not only human ones!) that can take place on various levels of consciousness, although usually in atavistic trance.

Hereby it really doesn’t matter whether or not the things that we learn and experience in atavistic trance are historically “true” or not. After all, we’re not interested in conducting any type of historical or archaeological research! Instead it’s all about reuniting with earlier forms of existence on a holistic level and using the skills and powers that are released along with it (Tegtmeier, pp. 66–70).

On a practical level, shamanism is characterized by its work with power animals and the energies of plants and minerals. We’ll be focusing on the animal energies first and discuss the other forms of atavistic work at a later time since these require thorough knowledge of power animals, totem animals and the like.

### **POWER ANIMALS**

In the books by Michael Harner and Sujja Su’a’No-ta listed in the last section, you’ll find a number of techniques for contacting your power animal(s). If you’ve already begun with Exercise 74 from the same section, you’ll have gained some experience with your own power animals by now anyway.

In general, power animals in the world of the shamans have the same function as spirit helpers, even if some academics may hotly debate about whether or not this statement is actually true. Since we’re only concerned here with the practical application of these atavisms, there’s no need to go into the scientific details here that would, at most, interest a few university researchers.

The important thing to remember when working with power animals is that they not only have very specific qualities and skills, but also shortcomings and weaknesses! From a shamanic point of view using the spirit model, these power animals are unique personalities that want to be treated as such! In this sense, it would be silly to expect an eagle to achieve any amount of success with a deep sea expedition (e.g., to look for a

hidden treasure or recover a shipwreck), or a snake to fly over the summit of a mountain to scout out a certain place, animal, or person. Similarly, every power animal has its own likes and dislikes, and the atavistic magician would be well off to understand and respect these.

If we use the example above of the Central African elephant society, we can see the potential amount of energy that can be summoned through persistent atavistic work. The same power that can achieve astonishing results on the physical, material level (a person “turns into an animal” with sudden superhuman powers) is often even more effective on a subtle, spiritual one.

We’re already familiar with the mechanism that’s behind this. When in a deep animal trance, our censor no longer has the opportunity to block or obstruct our actions. In African and Afro-Caribbean cultures this concept is taken one step further with the magician entering a full atavistic trance, which is where the term “possession” comes from.

There are countless legends of animals that give people wise advice, spy for them, or warn them of dangers. This should encourage you to also use atavistic animal spirits for acquiring knowledge and information. Things often look different from an animal’s point of view and sometimes it can help us see our seemingly overwhelming everyday worries in a new light while possibly even finding solutions that otherwise wouldn’t be available to us in an everyday state of consciousness.

A magician can have several power animals, although some dogmatic branches of modern shamanism may limit the number. Nonetheless, they at least agree that a person often has several animals in the sense that power animals change throughout the course of a person’s lifetime. If we apply the psychological model, we can view power animals as the theriomorphic (animal-form) projection of a certain level of consciousness or development. In this sense, it’s possible for the magician to switch from a lion phase to a tiger phase, and later to a bear phase. Of course, such reasoning is unknown to shamanism, as the shaman doesn’t use the term “projections” because he or she views these power animals as real, spiritual beings. The shaman perceives them as separate creatures that truly exist and treats them accordingly. When a power animal leaves, the shaman accepts this fact and simply looks for another one if needed.

Power animals (spiritual or magical animals)—and all regular animals for that fact—are viewed commonly as partners and not as enemies, slaves or, at best, inferior biological relatives (as is often the case in the Western world). In practice, this approach

has proven to be quite effective and practical. Only when our power animals are treated appropriately will we be able to unite with them in a truly magical and fruitful way.

The main representative of atavistic magic in the Western world, to whom we owe the term “atavistic nostalgia”, was Austin Osman Spare. However, such concepts as power animal, totem animal, or clan animal (to be discussed in the next section) are entirely missing from his model. According to what we know about his system, searching for one’s own “personal” power or clan animal has no great significance. His atavisms are much more random. The magician searches for a particular animal that is appropriate to his or her needs and activates it with a corresponding sigil operation. On the other hand, he was known for referring to his numerous housecats as tigers, which was apparently to be taken quite seriously. This is reminiscent of the medieval practice of European witches to acquire a familiar spirit (known as a “familiar”) in animal form or to cast it into an actual, physical animal. (This is where the black cat comes from that witches were and still are typically associated with.) Many of these reports may seem to be based on nothing but superstition and ignorance, but from a shamanic point of view it’s a different story: The physical animal acted as a material basis for the witch’s spirit helper, and even today it’s still a common practice among witches to force some kind of spirit into a host animal.

However, with this practice there is no identification with the animal in oneself, which is why we view it as nothing but a variation of the much older method of atavistic trance. In any case, this seemed like an interesting parallel that we wanted to mention here. Later on in connection with combat magic we’ll be discussing the application of physical animals for magical purposes. But for now, it should be sufficient to say that the power animal is an incredibly versatile magical weapon and it pays to learn to use it.

### **FURTHER READING**

Ralph Tegtmeier, *Evolutions-Training. Die Methode zur Erschliessung der Kraftzentren des Unterbewußtseins— durch Trance-Reisen in die eigene Entwicklungsgeschichte*

# MAGICAL ORDERS (I)

In this section we'd like to examine a few magical orders that are currently in operation. It goes without speaking that the information contained here may be incomplete. Plus, life in such orders was and still is quite diversified, and often a society that was founded with great enthusiasm and promoted worldwide soon turned into nothing but a provincial flash-in-the-pan. A fairly comprehensive summary of the history, delusions, and confusions of just the most significant of Western magical/mystical secret societies would cover at least several thousands of pages. So here we are only interested in giving you a general overview while focusing on the basic structure of these organizations. Whoever is interested in delving even deeper into this fascinating subject can find appropriate literature mentioned at the end of this section.

Of course, when we speak of "secret societies" here, we're talking about purely metaphysical ("esoteric") and/or magical brotherhoods/sisterhoods/societies and not about predominately political or criminal groups (mafia, triads, etc.).

## **SECRET ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN SOCIETY:**

### **THE FREEMASONS**

The Freemasons are probably the most renowned Western secret society. This is most likely due to the high membership (in Germany alone there are roughly 21,000 Freemasons and in other countries there are many more; the worldwide estimate is six to seven million) and naturally to the significant role that they have continually played throughout European and North American history. This role is often played down by the Freemasons themselves for

understandable reasons, as we'll soon see. Nonetheless, no one denies the fact that an enormous number of prominent members of society in the fields of politics, business, and culture are and were Freemasons. Just to mention a few examples: Frederic the Great, Benjamin Franklin, Goethe, Klopstock, Kleist, Wieland, Lessing, Mozart, Haydn, Sibelius, Puccini, Schliemann, Hahnemann, Amundsen, Montesquieu, Fichte, Puschkin, Oscar Wilde, Kipling, Mark Twain, Stendhal, Arthur Conan Doyle, Thorwaldsen, Hogarth, Lindbergh... And from the current magic scene, it would be interesting to mention Samuel Liddell "MacGregor" Mathers, Lynn Wescott, Theodor Reuss, and Aleister Crowley.

Nearly all presidents of the United States were Freemasons. In the USA alone, they have nearly five million members today.

Its popularity, especially among wealthy and politically or economically influential men, certainly had its advantages. The adversaries of Freemasonry were quick to surface, and even today some like to view the organization as one giant conspiracy (admittedly, their alleged goals are never specifically defined in a clear and convincing way) that varies from communist (Bolshevist) to even fascist/reactionary in nature, depending on the political affiliation of the beholder. Due to its arcane discipline, or the secrecy (at least in theory) of its rituals and internal affairs, the organization has presented itself as the ideal target for numerous speculations and rumors. There's talk about the lynching of "defectors" and "traitors," of the unspeakable ritual sacrifice of children, of satanic practices and the like.

So it wasn't long before the Freemasons were persecuted and it became a never-ending race between the state and the Catholic church to put an end to this detested organization of dissenters. In Nazi Germany, the order was banned in 1933 directly following the seizure of power. Its buildings, libraries, and archives were confiscated and many members were put into prisons or concentration camps. Even in many countries today, particularly in the Third World, membership in a Freemason organization is punishable by death. On the other hand, in other countries it's almost considered a status symbol to be a Freemason. Due to the use of Jewish symbolism (Temple of Solomon), Freemasonry was often called a "disgraceful Jewish conspiracy," in particular by anti-Semites. Anti-communist sentiment targeted the Freemasons as well, despite the fact that the average citizen had no idea of the matters and practices that concern the organization. And even anti-capitalistic and anti-fascist resentment is vented at Freemasonry as well. Thus, the organization was perpetually banned in the Eastern Bloc and membership was subject to punishment.

Unfortunately, we cannot examine in detail the true reasons behind this persecution, but would at least like to point out a few parallels that occur as compared to the persecution of other kinds of occult groups by church and state. This is important so that we as magicians can become aware of the mechanisms behind such persecution in order to be able to avoid it from happening to us.

Thus we first need to mention the banal fact that being different has always been a reason for collective suspicion and distrust. Whoever obviously or apparently deviates from the norm is viewed as a threat since such norms are often established with a great deal of effort. Such persons are then either oppressed, persecuted, or even eliminated, depending on the social or political circumstances that are currently present. This tendency grows stronger when this act of being different grows into a state of exclusiveness. Not everyone can become a Freemason, and even if the Freemasons themselves tend to disagree at times, they truly are aware of their elitism. In “regular” Freemasonry, for example, no women are allowed (the so-called Co-Freemasonry in which women can hold membership is commonly acknowledged as “irregular”), and even men cannot simply apply for membership—they have to be invited to join by present members who also stand as guarantors. In many lodges, money plays an important role because (with few exceptions) Freemasonry is generally a quite costly affair. Yearly expenses include monthly dues, the purchase of utensils and frequent donations for both internal and charitable purposes and events, and can often reach an annual total of several thousand dollars or even five-digit amounts. This varies incredibly from lodge to lodge and country to country so that no standard figures can be stated here. In any case, Freemasonry is generally considered to be quite “posh” and it is even advertised in men’s magazines under the aspect of its exclusiveness. Rarely do you hear of the many lodges that are having financial difficulties.

The next factor that contributes to persecution is the principle of secrecy or the arcane discipline (“secretiveness about the arcana/internal affairs”): An invisible opponent generates fear that expresses itself in the form of speculations, rumors, and even slander (when politically or religiously controlled or manipulated). The same can also occur involuntarily, for example in Judaism, which was constantly a target for all kinds of speculations due to its sacred Hebrew language and texts that remained a mystery to most average people. An invisible enemy is created and all types of emotions are projected into it—fears, hopes of redemption, envy, and jealousy all combined to make it a scapegoat for human fault and error. Freemasonry was often targeted due to its internal dividedness since it



wasn't really as strong and powerful as other societies might be (e.g., big capitalists). It's always easier to repress a comparatively weak minority than to completely change collective thinking with one sweep. The infamous argument that is still supported by church representatives and staunch interior ministers today, which claims that anyone who keeps secrets must have something horrible to hide, apparently provides ample ammunition for the persecution of secret societies. This seems even more ridiculous when you look at the fact that even the Freemasons themselves unanimously agree that there's absolutely nothing about the Freemasons that hasn't already been published at one time or another anyway, and is therefore available to the public (with one exception, the thing that Hans Biedermann accurately described as the "dimension of experience" in Freemasonry, because no matter how many details about a ritual are "betrayed," nothing can replace the actual feeling of experiencing it yourself). And for magicians, the concept of secrecy means much more than just keeping away profane non-initiates.

We're not concerned here with the question as to whether or not Freemasonry has made any grave mistakes throughout the course of its history, which may have contributed to such persecution. Since I'm not a Freemason myself, I don't dare make such a judgment. So let's leave the swampy area of rumors and accusations behind us now and deal instead with the much more interesting question of the role that Freemasonry plays and has played in the world of magic.

### **FREEMASONRY AND MAGIC**

Following an initial period in the eighteenth century when there were indeed several magically oriented Freemason groups and lodges (called "Magic" or "Occult" Freemasonry), the trend today is toward a more rationalistic view of enlightenment. Another group, the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross (to be handled later), borrowed Freemason symbolism early on, but since the nineteenth century the trend within the magic scene (up until then strongly influenced by Freemasonry) has been to resist any type of Rosicrucian or Freemason influence.

One reason for this, which occurred predominantly around the turn of the century, was the fact that Freemasonry wasn't able to satisfy the hungry souls who were starving for "secret knowledge" since their work was too "exoteric" and their own collec-

tion of legends too “clear and rationalistic.” Another aggravating factor that played a strong role was that many critics viewed the Freemasons as a social club for wealthy intellectuals and businessmen. On the other hand, the ambiguity of Freemason legends and symbols in combination with the “venerable” age of Freemasonry (regardless of whether this is fact or fiction) served as a reservoir that was gladly used and exploited for the founding of later orders. In any case, it wasn’t just so-called “irregular” Freemasons who later followed this example; even groups with no organizational or idealistic ties to Freemasonry took on the degrees, titles and rites of their otherwise not very respected role model. Many secret societies owe their existence to this frequently articulated but also often unconscious opposition to Freemasonry (Tegtmeier, *Okkultismus und Erotik*, p. 22 et. seq.).

Some excellent examples of “irregular” Freemasonry or groups that use such Masonic symbolism are orders such as the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, which was the predecessor of the Golden Dawn, Crowley’s Argenteum Astrum, the Ordo Templi Orientis, and the Fraternitas Saturni. So we can see that the influence (even a negative one) of Freemason thinking was extraordinarily great, and even if this influence was a negative one with a magical group consciously distancing itself from the Freemasons, this group is defining itself according to exactly what they dislike.

Now it’s time to actually discuss Freemasonry itself. There are so many outstanding and informative books on the subject that we only need to summarize a few main points here and refer you to the appropriate literature.

Ordinary history shows that the Order remained basically unchanged since the year 1717 when the first Grand Lodge was founded in London with the union of four smaller Masonic lodges. But, of course, there was a long story preceding this event. Freemasonry understands itself to be the direct successor of medieval cathedral builders and stonemasons (that’s where the term “masons” comes from), and their lodges were thus symbolically referred to as “guilds.” (More about this later when we discuss the legend of the construction of the Temple of Solomon and the principle of the “hewn stone.”)

Already back in 1620 (also in London) the Masonic Hall began its work, and in 1641 the first non-stonemason (thus an “amateur”) was admitted. In 1709 the British magazine “*The Tatler*” described the Freemasons and their characteristic symbols.

The derivation of the term “Freemasons” is disputed, and currently two theories are predominant. One says that the medieval “*francs mestiers*” or Freemasons received their privileges (especially generosity) from the church and not from any worldly authority. Another claims that the Freemasons were skilled masons, or specialized laborers, who knew how to build a vault with free stones and therefore were privileged because they possessed specialized knowledge (which was, for the most part, secret) in the field of constructional geometry. But let’s forget such historical disputes. For our purpose here, it’s much more important to observe the central thread that runs through the various explanations, e.g., that the first “Freemasons” were cathedral builders (craftsmen) who worked continually on a special construction that was considered “holy” because it pleased God and was dedicated to him. Therefore, it would be a logical step to sacralize this activity itself and turn it into a sort of occupational religion or mysticism, especially in consideration of the fact that the master builders were highly respected (and even feared) by most people who had no knowledge of architecture, geometry, reading, and writing due to their vast knowledge and closely guarded customs of the trade (today these would be called “business secrets”). In a certain way, they were the medicine men of their era—although they were admired, there seemed to be something strange about them.

In the eighteenth century, so-called “speculative Freemasonry” began to establish itself. The admittance of someone who was not a stonemason emphasizes the fact that even then they were able to think beyond the ordinary limits of their trade. Speculative Freemasonry is understood as the symbolic working with the myths and images of the Freemason trade. The actual masonic trade no longer stands in the foreground. It is replaced by an interest in its “true” or “secret” meaning, its position in the world and the role of humanity within this cosmic structure. Thus a craftsman’s trade as it still exists today becomes a metaphysical organization in which spiritual goals replace physical activity. Later on we’ll introduce the symbolic and mythical structure that forms the basis of Masonic thought. But at this point we would like to point out that Freemasonry was and still is a product of the Enlightenment. Their ideals are of humanistic nature, a great deal of their work is charitable, the words “freedom, equality, and brotherhood” are used at least as a declaration of intent, even if Freemasons are generally quite loyal to their country (even in their day-to-day business), which stifles all accusations of conducting revolutionary intrigues.

It’s also a widespread misconception that there is only one single form of Freemasonry. In reality there are various different subgroups within the movement that are

often referred to as “obediences.” The most well-known and worldwide largest subgroup, the “Ancient Scots,” belong to the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR). Other examples are the German order Grosse Landesloge der Freimaurer von Deutschland and the co-Masonic group (accepting men and women) “Droit Humain,” as well as the Ancient Scottish Rite, the deistic Christian observance of the Grand Lodge of England, the un-deistic or atheist observance of the Grand Lodge of France, the Rite of the Strict Observance and the Rectified Rite, the Swedenborg Rite, the Rite of Memphis-Misraim (which actually consists of two separate rites), the Cerneau Rite, and so on.

Not all of these movements and subgroups recognize one another; the “orthodox” ones (who call themselves “regular”) fight against the “unorthodox” ones (who are described as “irregular,” their groups as “angular lodges”), and even within the bounds of regular Freemasonry there are considerable differences of opinion, e.g., when the Grand Lodge of Austria is recognized by forty-eight American lodges but not by Texas, or when some American Freemason lodges admit blacks and others do not.

One of the many reasons for the emergence of irregular Freemason groups has surely been the fact that the work of regular or orthodox Freemasonry (consisting mainly of the AASR and the Observance of the Grand Lodge of France, although the two only recognize each other with some restriction) is not magical enough, if at all, the critics unanimously agree. The speculative work of such “symbolic lodges” is mainly concerned with the research of symbolic structures and meanings, while their practical application usually remains a mystery to most members (or they’re not even interested), and any type of everyday practical magic for actively influencing fate is basically non-existent. The patriarchal structure of this mystical solar cult goes against the grain of many contemporaries, and the basic stance of regular Freemasonry, which is often much too gentrified and conformist, was (even two hundred years ago) frequently a thorn in the eye to the more socially critical members.

Nevertheless, the Freemasons rarely deny that they guard some of the oldest treasures of wisdom—on the contrary! Criticism was (and still is) foremost directed toward the accusation that the knowledge of the deeper meanings and applications of these treasures of wisdom, which undoubtedly do exist, have nearly been lost completely within the Masonic community. But despite all the sharp criticism, Freemasonry was indeed admired in a way, and experience as a Freemason was often a prerequisite for membership in other organizations. For example, the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia

(of which Bulwer-Lytton was a member, and supposedly Eliphas Lévi as well) was reserved exclusively for high ranking Freemasons, as well as the early O.T.O.

Every era has its own typically characteristic way for initially getting involved with magic. In earlier days it was often Freemasonry or (later) theosophy that got people interested in the world of magic. Nowadays most magicians come through the route of Eastern philosophy and practice (Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, yoga, tantra, Zen), but also increasingly from Western disciplines (tarot, Wicca, runes, Kabbalah). So it's understandable and explainable that practically all orders that were founded in the nineteenth century fell back on Masonic symbolism and ritualistic even if they claimed a different "true" origin or had a different orientation (Knights Templar, Martinists, Cathars, ancient Egyptian and Hellenistic mysteries, etc.). Even critics of Freemasonry in the nineteenth century have to admit that they at least did a good job of "rescuing" the ancient knowledge of the mysteries (in particular that of the Knights Templar and the Rosicrucians) and preserving it throughout the centuries. But for the most part they failed in the execution of this knowledge.

The Freemasons naturally view this quite differently. In their opinion, there are truths that cannot be expressed in words due to their incredible depth, and thus symbols are used to represent these concepts. These symbols are the actual keys to the mysteries that only an initiate can understand. The Freemason ritual is a conglomeration of symbolic acts that works deeply on many often-subconscious levels.

From a fundamentally magical point of view, there is without a doubt a sort of Masonic egregore.<sup>1</sup> That's not surprising if we look at the long history of Freemasonry and their large membership. In fact, it would be highly unusual to not have such an egregore

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1. In magic literature, especially in the 1920s, the term "egregore" was often used to describe an autonomous entity that evolves through creative thought—mental magic—and remains in existence as long as its followers uphold the original idea, meaning that the entity is "fed" by the energy of their thoughts and/or beliefs.

In general, the definition of "subtle group spirit" has become widespread to describe the egregore that is maintained in magic societies; sometimes consciously (Fraternitas Saturni), but more often subconsciously, where it often remains completely unnoticed. Technically speaking, the egregore is a sort of "group psychogon" (psychogon: artificial magical being) that feeds on its followers just like a vampire (this is just a metaphor completely free of judgment) in order to ensure that the group's higher specific goals are maintained (protection of the collective and the individual, membership growth, etc.) by consuming the group's energy.

considering the amount of subtle energy at work here! Meanwhile, some regular Freemasons work magically with their own utensils and symbols, but these are always the exception. If such practices occur in group or lodge situations, there has been no indication of this publicly and strict secrecy is presumably observed. However, there's a current trend toward a more "esoteric" Freemasonry (particularly in southern Germany), which doesn't always meet with the approval of the top ranking members due to their lack of knowledge about such magical-mystical thought.

Now let's choose a few important Masonic practices, symbols, and legends from the wide selection available and see how they are relevant to our own magical practice. These include:

- 1) The legend of Solomon's Temple
- 2) The mystical death
- 3) Symbolism of the square and compass
- 4) The structure of degrees
- 5) The lodge structure
- 6) The floor cloth and centralization
- 7) The ritual structure

### **THE LEGEND OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE**

Although it's a proven fact that the traditions of Freemasonry derive from medieval cathedral builders, their historical roots are claimed to go much further than this. The central theme in the story of their creation concerns the building of the temple of the biblical king, Solomon. This Jewish national shrine was built in seven years from 966 to 959 BC at the command of Solomon. The temple was consecrated in the seventh month. The master builder was the Tyrian Hiram Abif (or Chûrâm-âbi; sometimes written as Hiram or Abiff as well), who legend says was supposedly the greatest architect of his time (cf., below "the mystical death"). The source of the legend of the temple's construction and that of the Hiram legend mentioned below can be found in the works of historians such as Josephus Flavius as well as in the Bible (2 Chronicles 10–15; 1 Kings 7:13–26). The most significant features of the temple were the two pillars, Boaz and

Jachin (which we already mentioned in connection with the Kabbalah), which are symbolically representative of archaic or later even alchemistic dualism.

Now the Freemasons are more concerned with the symbolic Temple of Solomon than an actual edifice, especially when considering the fact that it was destroyed in the year 586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar. (It was rebuilt or redesigned several times after this. The last time it was rebuilt under Herodes as a “Herodian Temple” in Greek style as opposed to Tyrian style, until it was finally destroyed in AD 70 in the Jewish-Roman War. Since AD 644 the Haram el Sherif Mosque stands on this site.) The Freemasons use the Temple of Solomon more as a teaching example and lifestyle symbol. It is viewed as a “Temple of Humanity” and all of the work involved with it is referred to as “construction work.” Lectures held within the lodge are referred to as “building elements” and deistic Freemasonry (e.g., the AASR) speaks not of God, but rather of a “great master builder of the universe.”

The use of biblical guidelines for the structure of Masonic temples is long established and thus most magical orders follow this basic matrix as well. These will be described in more detail when we discuss the “angular tradition” of Western ritual magic. Though a few of these elements (the concepts of an “outer court,” an “inner court,” an “inner sanctum,” and the like) are much older than Freemasonry itself, they were first introduced to Western magic by this order.

### **THE MYSTICAL DEATH: THE HIRAM LEGEND**

In Masonic mythology, master builder Hiram Abif is described as a high initiate with magical skills. According to one version of the Hiram legend, he is said to have made 24,000 masons and 1,000 masters appear at a parade at the request of the Queen of Sheba simply by drawing a Tau cross in the air. Solomon is said to have feared him and to have initiated a conspiracy against him, which eventually led to Hiram’s murder. The more common version of the legend says that three ambitious craftsmen attempted to force Hiram into revealing master secrets and thus killed him when he didn’t comply. They first attempted sabotage before they finally confronted him directly. The craftsman at the East Gate hit Hiram across the neck with his yardstick, the second conspirator met Hiram at the South Gate as he fled and hit him on the left side of his chest with his square, causing him to stumble to the West Gate. (There was no North Gate because no sunlight enters the temple from this side.) There he was hit on the head with a ham-

mer, smashing his skull. With one last effort he was able to snatch the golden triangle containing the master insignia from the chain on his lapel and threw it into a deep shaft. Then he died and the murderers buried his body in a six-foot-long grave lying east-to-west. The burial mound was marked with an acacia branch.

Soon it was noticed that Hiram didn't show up to work and his murderers had disappeared as well, so search parties were sent out in all directions. Finally the remorseful killers were found (other versions say they committed suicide) and fifteen days later, Hiram's body was discovered, too, although badly decaying. Eventually the shaft containing the talisman of the dying master was also found—it was under a vault on a triangular altar underneath a stone cube on to which the Ten Commandments were chiseled.

But the acacia branch on Hiram's grave got new shoots—a symbol of eternal life that continues indefinitely as long as the master craft is preserved and maintained. And thus when a Masonic master is initiated, he ritually identifies himself with Hiram Abif and strives to continue his work in a symbolic resurrection.

This legend reflects the ancient or even archaic principle of “building sacrifice” that has been common up until recent times (just take a look at Theodor Storm's *The Dykemaster*). The edifice demands an offering (the blood of a human or animal, wine, food, incense, and the like) in order to become “perfect.”

At the same time, the symbolism of death and reincarnation is redefined as a central theme of all rites of transformation as nearly all of the known classical systems of initiation describe it. Here, too, Freemasonry quotes ancient sources of reference, which is why their historical-mythological claim to ancient roots is actually justified. As in all legends, it's not about the question of historical authenticity, but rather about the symbolic truth (to use magical terminology, we would say “symbol-logical” truth) of such statements. When we discuss Rosicrucianism later on, we'll take a closer look at some other spiritual ancestors of Freemasonry.

So for now we'd just like to mention the fact that the element of ritual, mystical death, and the related symbols (skull, hourglass, casket) have washed over from Freemasonry into Hermetic ceremonial magic as well.

## **SYMBOLISM OF THE SQUARE AND COMPASS**

Two very significant symbols of Freemasonry are the square and compass. These are examples of typical masonic tools that have been mystically exalted to become ritual



weapons. It is said that the Great Master Builder of the Universe created the world with one strike of the compass, while the circle and square combine to form the “square of the circle,” a symbol that has been used in mathematics since Pythagoras to describe the mathematical/philosophical union of opposites.

According to Masonic thought, the common man is a “rough-hewn” stone that must be fashioned into a “smooth, right-angled” building block that fits harmoniously into the world temple. This is done by consequently working on self-improvement. Here we see the realization of the principle *ordo ab chao* (“order emerges from chaos”). (Just to avoid confusion, we should mention that we’re referring to a different understanding of the term “chaos” here as opposed to the way chaos magicians use it. Chaos magicians do not view chaos as “disorder” or “confusion” but rather as the sum of all possible latent forms of manifestation, comparable to the gnostic concept of “pleroma.”)

Freemasonry is concerned with the ethical evolution of man and humanity as a whole, whereby the right angle (comprising 90° or one quarter of a circle) and the straight line are used to measure the degree of the world’s balance in a geometrical sense. In the same way a mason uses his tools to create perfectly perpendicular walls, the Freemason measures his own actions according to his ethics in order to become a harmonious building block in the whole of the world. This is expressed in ritual and symbols.

## **THE STRUCTURE OF DEGREES**

The Freemasons borrow their degrees from traditional medieval masonry. These degrees or “stages of development” are divided into three basic groups: Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. It would be no exaggeration to presume that probably all magical orders of the West work with a system of degrees that has developed from Freemasonry in one way or another, even if these groups differ from their role model radically as they sometimes do. Of course, there were various degrees of initiation in many of the ancient systems of mysteries (mysteries of Eleusis or Isis, Mithras cult), but it was the Masonic influence that helped shape these levels into degrees, especially considering the fact that the history of all orders that exist today is much younger than Freemasonry. (Which, of course, doesn’t change the fact that many groups claim just the opposite, which may even be true in a mythological or idealistic sense, but such “proof” wouldn’t stand a chance in a historically critical investigation.)

Since we've already learned enough about symbol matrices and their function throughout the course of this book, as well as about initiation in general, there's no point in discussing the purpose behind such a structure of degrees. The only important thing here is to make note of the division into the three categories ("Entered Apprentice," "Fellow Craft," and "Master") since many contemporary orders have borrowed these from Freemasonry as well.

Some groups make a distinction between "earned" degrees, or "academic" degrees, and "honorary" degrees. While honorary degrees are awarded for special recognition, academic degrees require specific work.

### **THE LODGE STRUCTURE**

The concept of smaller groups convening within a larger community is surely much older than Freemasonry itself. The word "lodge" is derived from the French *loge*, and is related to Middle Latin *lobia* and German *laube*. It originally described an enclosed room (cf., porter's lodge, etc.) or a hut. The most common Masonic definition is "builders' hut" or "guild of masons." A lodge refers to both the organized convening of like-minded persons as well as the place of this meeting itself (also known as lodge house, temple, and the like). For a long time the word was used as a synonym for "Masonic lodge," which once again shows the great influence that this secret society once had.

Although many magical orders choose other words (such as "orient," "grove," "coven," "oasis," "camp," or "cave") one could justifiably claim that Freemasonry at least had an influence on their organizational structure. Even the practice of legitimization by granting a charter, or certified "permission," to a specific person or group allowing them to found further lodges goes back to the example of the Freemasons. (Who, for their part, fall back on the religious principle of apostolic succession, albeit without the sacramental claim.)

Due to the great diversity within regular and irregular Freemasonry itself, many of our statements are nothing but generalizations or rules with countless exceptions. Therefore please view this as a general overview that will not necessarily correspond in every aspect with all Masonic or Masonic-like organizations.

In any case, a distinction is made between "Mother Lodges," "Daughter Lodges," "Grand Lodges," and so on.

The chart in Illustration 30 reflects this structure and is self-explanatory.

Despite the indisputable hierarchy of the Order, the individual lodges are generally quite autonomous for the most part as far as their internal affairs are concerned, as long as they uphold their obligations to the organization as a whole and do not deviate from the general structure of degrees and rituals.

Following this general overview of the way lodges are typically organized, let's now discuss some of the paraphernalia typically used in practical lodge workings.

### **THE FLOOR CLOTH AND CENTRALIZATION**

The floor cloth was originally a wooden board. Even today, some Masonic lodges still use a board to place Masonic paraphernalia upon, such as the compass, square, and spirit level. (Illustration 31 shows a small selection of the most important Masonic symbols.)

The floor cloth is sometimes referred to as the "carpet" and indeed most lodges use this kind of embroidered cloth. The floor cloth contains symbolic depictions of the contents of general or specific lodge work (e.g., during the awarding of degrees). The floor cloth is usually placed in the middle of the temple where it is ritually unveiled and covered up again. As such, it serves as both a symbolic reminder of the goals of the temple work and as an instrument of centralization.

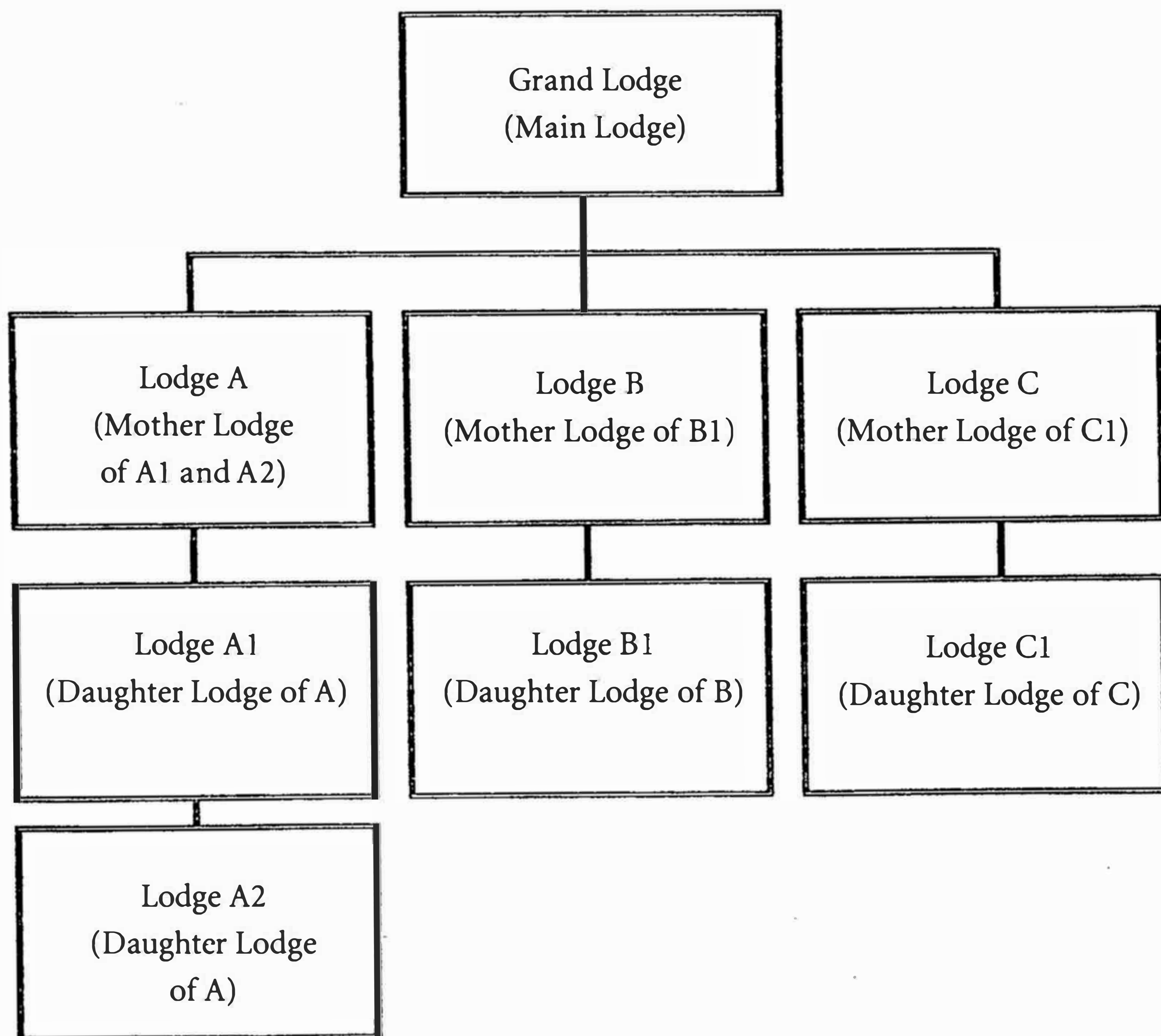
In a certain sense, we could compare the floor cloth to the shamanic mesa that we're already familiar with. The difference is, however, that the shaman works actively with his or her mesa while the Freemason usually only reflects on the floor cloth, making it similar in function to a mandala or yantra. Illustration 32 shows three examples of Masonic floor cloths or carpets.<sup>2</sup>

### **THE RITUAL STRUCTURE**

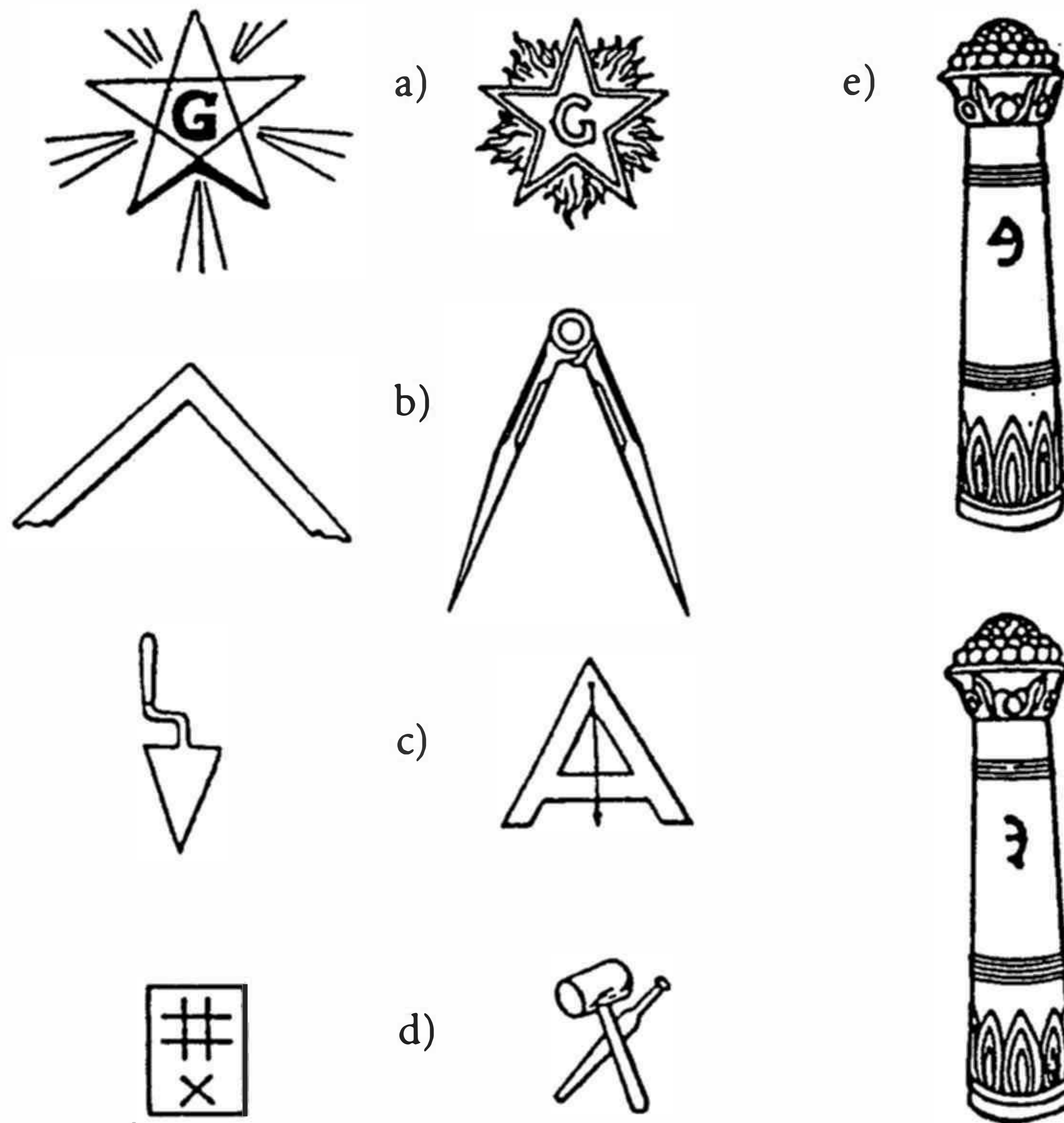
The most significant contribution that Freemasonry has made to modern ritual magic since the nineteenth century is probably its ritual structure, which has been adapted or

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2. The difference between the two is that a mandala is a visual tool (usually surrounded by a frame) for meditation, or it can also be the object of meditation itself, and is used to understand and experience symbolic relationships. A yantra, on the other hand, is usually an abstract geometric figure that is used to induce certain states of consciousness or trance. This is done for mystical contemplation or meditation as well as for performing magical operations.



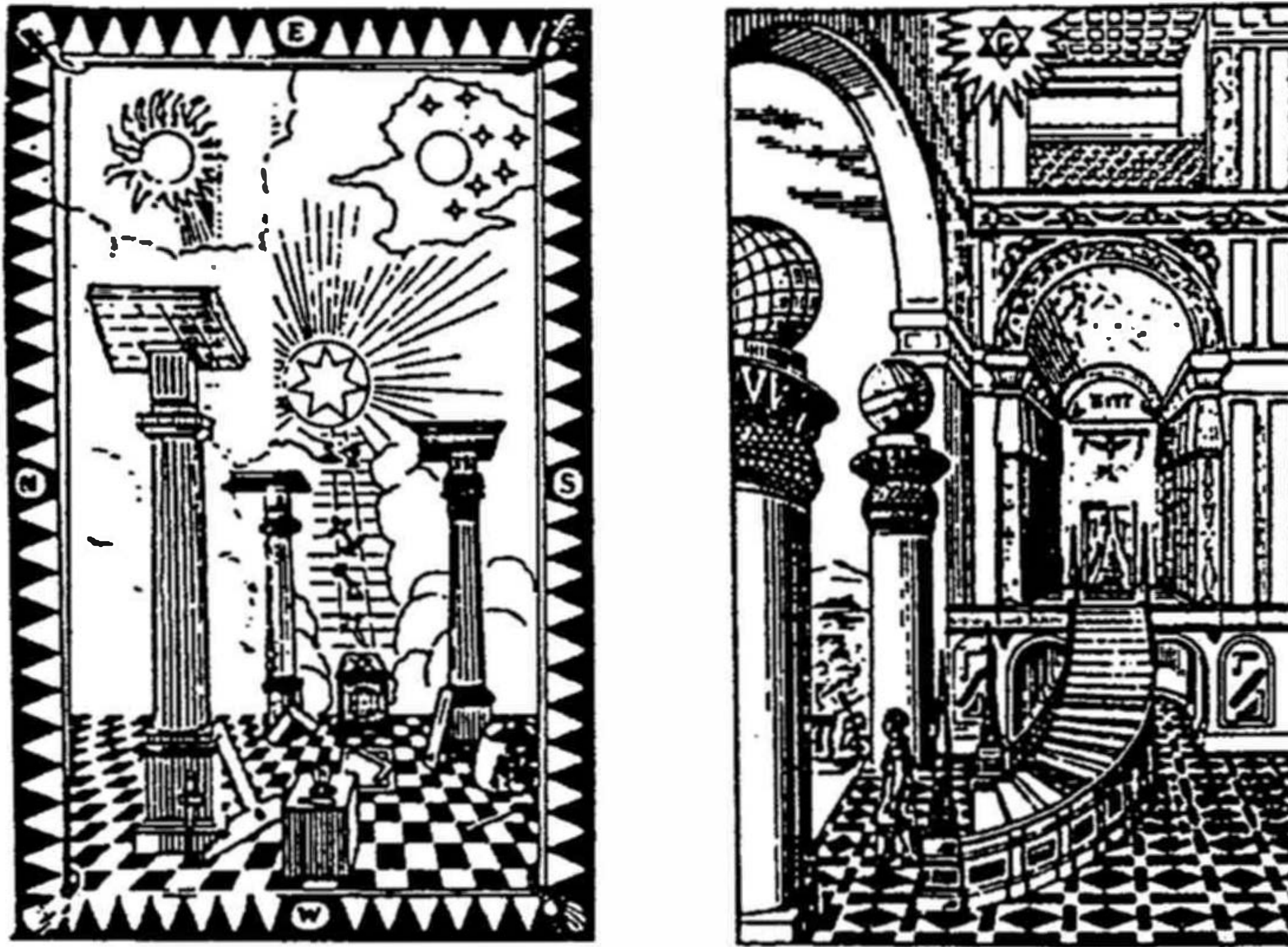
*Illustration 30: Example of the lodge structure of an order*



*Illustration 31: Masonic symbols and paraphernalia*  
*a) The flaming star as a pentagram and hexagram; b) uneven square (l.) and compass (r.);*  
*c) trowel (l.) and spirit level (r.); d) grid for making secret codes (l.) and hammer and chisel (r.);*  
*e) the pillars J (Jachin) and B (Boaz) of the Temple of Solomon*  
 [Source: Biedermann, "Das verlorene Meisterwort"]

copied by many other orders. In our introduction to ritual magic, we've already mentioned the "circular" and "angular" traditions. The angular or Masonic ritual tradition is mainly practiced in traditionalist and/or dogmatic magical orders.

Characteristic of angular operations is the square construction of the temple and the designation of temple officers with specific functions. Thus the focus is on group work, and single-handed efforts are quite uncommon. In general, it can be said that circular traditions enable spontaneous action, with the texts (with the possible excep-



*Illustration 32: Three different Masonic floor cloths (carpets)*

*The first-degree floor cloth shows an empty heptagram, the second-degree floor cloth shows a hexagram with the letter "G" (for Gnosis, God, Geometry). The "master's grave" shows an acacia branch as a symbol of overcoming death.*

*[Source: Biedermann, "Das verlorene Meisterwort"]*

tion of hymns) not specified in such minute detail as in the angular tradition, which is founded on an entirely different philosophy. While the magician of circular traditions is the center of his or her own universe where he or she can act freely at will, the angular tradition emphasizes finding one's place in the whole. Consequently, this is expressed in the ritual texts that are, in the angular tradition, written down to the tiniest detail so that none of the participants has any kind of "freedom of speech"—not even the high priest who is called the "Worshipful Master" (or in German angular traditions, "Master of the Chair"). The only exceptions are organizational announcements and possible "building elements" (usually lectures) presented by individual lodge members, which are usually not presented in a ritual context.

Even the movements are ritual in nature. The Masonic stride is well known and is a sign of a Freemason's affiliation in the same way that the grips and passwords are. They express both symbolic protection as well as the basic philosophy of the "hewn stone" that fits seamlessly into the world's balance of things. In general, the movements should be angular or even military-like and sharp, thus incorporating the person's body into the symbolism of the whole.

Such sternness may seem strange to magicians who've grown up with the circular tradition, but it certainly has its practical advantages as we'll soon see. The fact that the individual ritual participants are either obliged to keep silent or only to recite specific, non-individualized texts enables them to reach an extremely deep state of meditation in which mystical experiences may even occur. In any case, group concentration is significantly better in angular traditions and the degree of intensity much higher.

Although we're principally able to perform all ritual magic operations within both the circular and the angular structures, practice shows that it's generally easier to perform ecstatic, extroverted operations in a circular ritual. This certainly shouldn't stop you from experimenting with both structures at your discretion. In the next section on ritual magic, we'll discuss the basic symbols of an angular temple in more detail and explain the functions of the temple officers. For now, look at Illustration 33 to get an idea of how such a temple is laid out so that you can get a first impression of its ritual structure. It shows a Masonic-style temple (slightly modified) from the angular tradition as typical to magical orders that work this way. The empty, unmarked rectangles designate the seats of the ritual participants (the ones who are not officers), and their number obviously varies from lodge to lodge. By the way, it's customary in angular traditions to

work while sitting down, which is usually necessary anyway since the complicated rituals often last several hours.

The floor of a Masonic-style temple is often checked with black and white tile. This is called a “mosaic” pattern. Three steps lead up to the altar where the Worshipful Master sits. Often there is an Outer Court, or atrium, in which the ritual participants can change their clothes and gather their thoughts. Traditionally seven steps lead to this lobby, which reflects the various meanings of the sacred number seven as can also be found in the architecture of ancient Egyptian temples.

One important function of the temple officers is to ensure the security of the group. When the lodge is opened, the legitimacy of all members is examined by checking their identification signs. In rituals that are reserved for certain degrees, the legitimacy of that specific degree is checked as well.

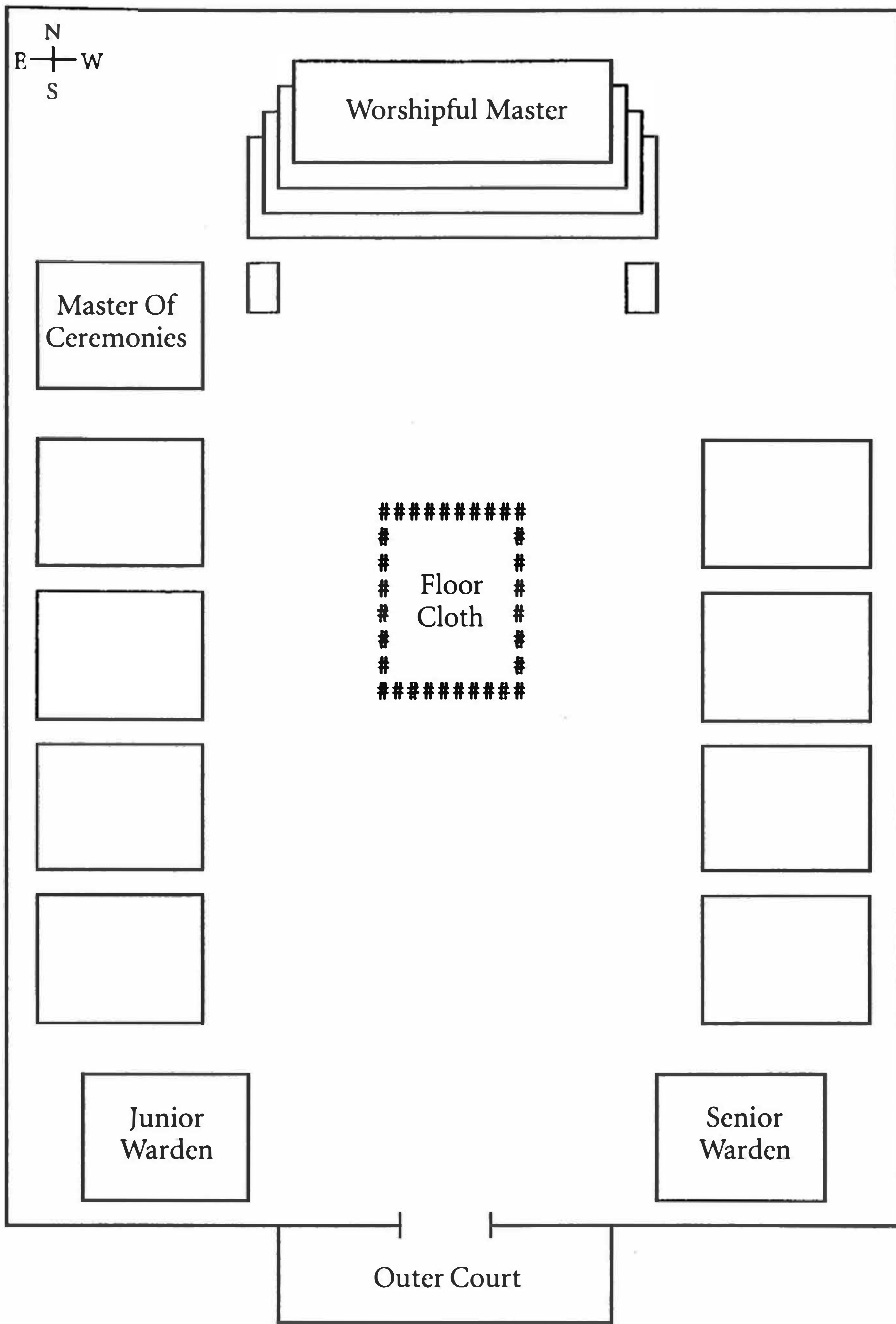
If the lodge is “covered,” meaning it has been established that no non-initiates are present, the actual work can begin. And here’s where many Freemasons who are partial to practical magic are often disappointed. Although an individual may occasionally be able to establish a sufficient state of gnosis and delve deeper into the ritual performance, most usually complain that the symbolic acts are meaningless to the majority of Freemasons and the whole thing seems like nothing but the dull rattling off of predefined texts that are often poorly understood, or not understood at all.

This frequently criticized rigidity—the getting caught up in empty words and formalities—is surely one of the main dangers of the angular tradition, or of any type of dogmatic magic for that matter. If you add this to the fact that regular Freemasonry disapproves of or even bans any type of practical magic (often snidely called “candle magic,” but not to be confused with the candle magic practices of folk magic, which we’ll get to later on in this book), you’ll begin to understand how this organization was able to lose all of its magical elements to “irregular” groups.

Noticeably the angular tradition does not use a circle in their rituals. This is in no way detrimental to the safety of the participants since the lodge only works when it’s “covered” in a protected temple, and sometimes a gatekeeper will be appointed as well whose task it is to prevent the entrance of any undesired elements on a physical or subtle level. Even the rectangle itself has a protective function.

Nevertheless, the angular tradition doesn’t exclude the possibility of working with a circle. For example, the floor cloth serves the same function as the circle in many





*Illustration 33: Example of the temple structure in the angular tradition*

aspects, and the Worshipful Master in his function as high priest draws a circle in the temple as well. The concept of the “square of the circle” is not entirely unfamiliar to the angular tradition, and there are certainly mixed forms as well although these are not practiced within regular Freemasonry.

In any case, this structure reveals the linear, hierarchal, even patriarchal element of the angular tradition (not only in Freemasonry) that derives directly from monotheistic, Judeo-Christian religions, even though many of their fundamental principles may be of an older origin. This also includes the fact that the so-called “humanitarian” society of Freemasons (at least in the “regular” sense) excludes half of humanity—namely women—from their organization. It was not until the nineteenth century were women’s roles in magic rediscovered. There’s been much debate about this subject and we have no intention of moving it to center stage here either. We’re much more interested in the places where traditional Freemasonry and magical orders overlap.

### **THE FORCE FIELD OF FREEMASONRY**

The few active Freemasons who are also active in magic often stress in conversations that Freemasonry has an exceptionally powerful, subtle force field of its own. That’s why they are successful in working with this force field in a practical and magical sense within the context of Masonic symbology. This is, however, an extremely rare exception, as already mentioned.

We’ll deal with the problems of such a force field later in more detail. But for now, we’d just like to say that the force field is not necessarily identical with the egregore that we mentioned above, although the latter truly is often an embodiment of the force field. A force field is generally created without any specific effort. It’s an involuntary, group-dynamic process that happens automatically. For this reason, the modern magician who likes to call himself/herself avant-garde by throwing everything overboard that’s old and dusty without actually examining its true value should pay particular attention to the force fields of old, long-existing orders since he or she just may be able to get something out of them. This certainly includes Freemasonry. This isn’t to say that we recommend membership in this order; we just want to prevent you from jumping to any rash conclusions about this brotherhood.

In all comparisons with other magical systems that consciously or subconsciously borrow elements from Freemasonry, we need to point out that modern Freemasonry does not consider itself to be a magical group, and they even go so far as to ban such practices. Any magician who succeeds in bringing an average Freemason out of his shell and enticing him to talk about his order in more depth will probably be surprised at the lack of knowledge about even general aspects of mysticism and magic, not to mention themes such as “ritual purpose” and “force field.” In this sense, we can best describe Freemasonry as the mother of many magical groups and orders, but she’s a mother against her will and her offspring cannot expect much support from her.

# PRACTICAL FOLK MAGIC (I)

Folk magic is the term used to describe the numerous (and for the most part unsystematic) magical practices of the common people that have been ridiculed for centuries by the institutions of education and science. Even today magazines are full of smug articles about scientists poking fun at “old superstitions” with a fake air of professionalism in an attempt to replace people’s general “ignorance” about folk magic with stupid “scientific” prejudices, when in reality they usually have no real knowledge of the subject whatsoever. After all, a great deal of money can easily be made with such masquerades since you’ll rarely find a qualified counter-spokesman among academics today who would be in a position to put the cards on the table and expose all the self-proclaimed “educational experts” as frauds.

But even intellectual, academic magicians such as Kabbalists and alchemists, or Goldcrucians and Rosicrucians, put a great amount of effort into criticizing the “magic of the mob,” and they were strongly supported by the church as well. Keep in mind that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, alchemy (which is closely tied to magic) was viewed as more than just a spiritual form of speculation, but rather as a serious field of technology, and the royal courts (which were notorious for having financial difficulties) sincerely hoped that alchemists would one day be able to actually change lead into real gold. This would open the door to all kinds of charlatans, though, and the vast amount of spellbooks published in recent times that are filled with outrageously contorted Latin and pseudo-Hebrew formulas, all in cookbook style, proves that man’s

craving for material success is no less today than it was back then—and quantity is still more important than quality.

The magic of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, and even the magic of Goethe's time, was characterized by radical materialism. Gold meant power, and all the more if one knew how to make it! The Christian church (and later “churches”) always felt threatened by the magician's claim to independence since it questioned their monopoly on transcendence. Rulers and patrons, on the other hand, had no desire for everyone to learn how to use magical skills to get whatever they wanted since this threatened the status of their worldly power.

And in any case, no one in upper society ever took anything seriously that came “from below” that bore the trademark of poorhouse common folk. In an era where “aristocracy” was considered synonymous to “intelligence,” everything below the recognized level of credibility was probably just as “untrue” and “incompetent” as it is today.

The practitioners of folk magic surely played their part as well by circulating unspeakable, sensationalized books about true and imaginary magical practices that were an insult even then to the intelligence of every halfway reasonable person. Vociferous claims joined forces with contradictory to insane recipes whose effectiveness was inversely proportionate to the complexity of their recommendations.

Nonetheless, folk magic paid a significant yet indirect contribution to academically and Hermetically influenced “high magic.” Even renowned magician Agrippa von Nettesheim borrowed a great deal of his knowledge from folk magic, although he meticulously systematized it to make it socially acceptable. The same holds true for Paracelsus, of course.

Although Hermetic magic was only practiced by a small minority, it should not obscure the fact that the number of people who practiced folk magic surely surpassed that of academic “library magicians” many times over.

The shamanic trend in modern magic is surely due in part to an expression of a deeply felt deficiency, or a lack of uncomplicated magical techniques, that anyone can understand without attempting to pursue any kind of transcendentalism. So it's only consequential that chaos magic would develop a type of “freestyle shamanism” to integrate folk magical techniques and further develop them.

These techniques, however, are first “cleansed” from all elements of fear-controlled, dogmatic automatism, because it's not true that every cat that crosses our path from

right to left is a sign of bad luck, or that seeing your own double means certain death, and so on. These are just the beliefs of a primitive philosophy in which man is nothing but a pawn in a game of the powers that be, where at best one can implore these powers to intervene in a person's favor or protect him or her from any harm. In the same way, it's also not sufficient to fulfill the extremely complicated recipes of the ancient grimoires, for example, by mixing a pinch of ground toad heart with half a dozen dried bat's wings and adding the right forefinger of a man who was hanged in order to achieve the desired result. Although such recipes may indeed work on occasion, it's only because the folk magician subconsciously followed our basic formulas of magic by, for example, effectively combining will, imagination, and gnosis—but this certainly doesn't require any bizarre ingredients. Despite such foolish outrageousness that helped give folk magic a bad name (and often rightly so), we can still learn a number of interesting techniques from it that can enrich our general magical practice.

Though the practice of necromancy (working with the realm of the dead) is probably the most familiar aspect of folk magic, there is a lot more than just this that folk magic has to offer. We've chosen a few effective folk magic techniques to examine more closely here, in order to revive a field of magic that has been neglected for way too long. Our first subject is candle magic.

## CANDLE MAGIC

The practice described as candle magic is one of the simplest yet most effective techniques of folk magic. The candle and its flame have always been considered symbols of enlightenment. Light was also considered to be a manifestation of the soul.

During the religious Candlemas festival, candles were consecrated (or magically inoculated) so that they could carry out their function in the believers' homes. In this way, the candle as a tool for illumination became a magical instrument that no magician today can do without; the wax became a fetish, especially in doll magic, and was also popular in healing operations. In any case, the central factor in any type of candle magic is that it works with the dynamic powers of light, which is not meant in a moral or ethical sense (e.g., light = good) but rather in a technical one.

We're not interested in discussing the numerous candle oracles and their omens here that folk magic is known for (quite superstitiously) in connection with candle magic;

e.g., folk magic may believe that when a flame flickers or suddenly goes out or drips excessive tallow, this announces the approaching death of a person.

The power of the light is usually determined by the material, form, and color of the candle so that, depending on the system used, it makes a big difference whether you use a yellow or green candle, a twisted or straight one, and so on. We'll refrain from mentioning the various contradictory, dogmatic systems here since they often vary from village to village. Instead, we'll be examining the basic structure of all candle magic operations. In the practical exercises section, you'll find a corresponding task that you can use to show how well you can apply your structural knowledge to this field.

### **Candle-naming**

In healing and protection operations, candles are often used instead of dolls. Usually a candle is ritually given the name of the target person or the name is scratched into the wax (e.g., a magical link is created), and the candle is then treated in the same way that you would treat the actual person. For example, if you want to heal an eye problem, the candle is burned with the appropriate visualization (candlelight = eyesight). The same principle applies if you intend to harm the target person.

The symbol-logic behind this is easy to recognize. When the magician turns over his or her statement of intent to the flame, the intention is passed on to the element of ether (theosophically speaking) on the causal plane where it will occur. This is even clearer in the practice of flame offering below.

### **The Flame Offering**

Things that the magician wants to become detached from (people, situations, or illnesses) are written down and the paper is burned with the corresponding visualization. This is an act of destroying the unwanted. In doing so, the magician implements the destructive powers of fire.

The life-giving powers of light and fire are used when the magician writes a desire or statement of intent on paper that is burned in the candle flame. Here, the desire is passed on to the element of ether for attainment as in the candle-naming operation above.

For utilizing both the destructive and constructive powers of the candle, it's not necessary for the magician to sit and watch as it burns. On the contrary, it's proven much

more effective to just focus on the candle for a short time and then, after ensuring that nothing in the surrounding area can catch fire, switch to doing something entirely different, just like if you were charging a sigil.

### **Banishment to the Underworld**

Burning the seal of a demon in the flame of a candle (or burning incense) during an evocation is an act of force that's usually only done when the evoked spirit (spirit model) doesn't appear or acts insubordinately. This technique is used when banishing something to the underworld, which is done when an entity from "hell" is forced into obedience by threatening it with or actually inducing unpleasant repercussions in case of non-compliance. Here the burning is an act of torment or destruction. This can be quite effective in a symbol-logical sense because it signalizes to the psyche (psychological model) that the conscious mind (or superego) wants to and will remain in control of the situation.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 78*

#### **PRACTICAL CANDLE MAGIC (I)**

Using the planetary correspondences, which you should be quite familiar with by now, design your own system of candle magic by using various colored candles during the appropriate day of the week and experiment with it. Make note of the significant time factors (length of the ritual and burning time of the candles) and determine which times work best for you personally in your system of candle magic.

### *EXERCISE 79*

#### **PRACTICAL CANDLE MAGIC (II)**

Experiment at least half a dozen times with sigils that you scratch into candles and charge by letting the candle burn down. Compare the results with sigils that are charged with the usual method.



#### EXERCISE 80

##### PRACTICAL CANDLE MAGIC (III)

Experiment at least half a dozen times with sigils that you make out of wax and then melt over a fire in a pan during a meditative magical ceremony. Compare the results with sigils that are charged with the usual method. (Save the wax. Once the desired effect has occurred, you can use it again.)

#### EXERCISE 81

##### PRACTICAL CANDLE MAGIC (IV)

Only perform this exercise when you have a sincere need. Use the method of candle-naming to perform a healing operation or a binding or separation spell. Compare the results with other types of operations with similar goals, if you have enough experience with such to do so.

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#### FURTHER READING

Hans Biedermann, *Das verlorene Meisterwort. Bausteine zu einer Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte des Freimaurertums*

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# PRACTICAL FOLK MAGIC (II)

## KNOT MAGIC

Like most folk magic practices, the field of knot magic is quite versatile and the relevant literature is often full of contradictory information. The only basic ideas that all of these sources can agree on is that magic with strings and knots is an extremely old practice. The knots of the Mayas are fairly well known. They were used like an alphabet as a means of communication and calculation, and even today the Chinese still refer to a time “before there were knots” to refer to the prehistoric era before humans were able to count.

Judaism has knots of destruction (e.g., the knotting of willow) that can be used to kill a sacrifice. In German tradition, knots had several functions, whereby most had a negative or destructive connotation, although they were sometimes used for healing or good luck. The Wicca tradition often uses knot spells for various purposes, and it's known that Finnish witches (shamans?) of the seventeenth century sold ropes tied in knots to seafarers that they could use to raise a wind during calm weather. In general, knots were often used for weather spells involving wind and rain. Evidence of knot amulets and talismans was also found in ancient Egypt, India, Sicily, and Polynesia.

The tying or untying of the knots is the significant structural aspect in knot magic. In this way, a knot can be used to either bind the desired energies or entities for later use (e.g., a good-luck knot), or banish and neutralize undesired energies or entities. As in every binding spell, knots can also be used to bind people or restrict their maneuvering space (love spell, magical attack). On the other hand, existing ties can also be dissolved, e.g., to

eliminate one person's dependency on another in a relationship or to generate a dispute among enemies.

But let's look at a well-known example from the ancient world in order to show the pattern that knot magic is subject to. We're talking about the Gordian knot that, according to common legend, was kept in the temple of Zeus in Gordium. The old prophecy said that whoever loosened the knot was to become ruler of the world. Alexander the Great sliced through the knot, thus releasing the divine power in him. (Here we can see a structural parallel to the genie in the bottle of Islamic magic.)

In line with our pragmatic, structural approach, we're not going to give you thousands of "miracle recipes" here with the corresponding pictures of various knots. You can find a short overview of such in the article by Walter Koch (commented by Arthur Lorber) mentioned in the Bibliography at the end of this section.

In the Wicca tradition, there's a technique for performing knot magic in a group situation. Several cords are tied together to form a big "spider." Each participant picks up one of the ends and prepares a knot, but doesn't yet pull it tight. Now the participants pull the cords tight (excluding the knots) and begin to dance in a circle with each person concentrating on his or her wish. When a person has danced to the point of exhaustion, he or she drops to the floor and quickly pulls the knot tight. When the ceremony is over, each person takes his or her own cord home and awaits the fulfillment of the wish.

In my other writings I once told the story of a magician friend of mine whom I gave a wind knot to that I had charged in Finland. While on a Finnish island during a storm, I went out into the wind and charged a few knots spasmodically with wind energy, similar to the method used in the death posture in sigil magic. The technique itself is relatively simple. Wait patiently and still until you feel the energy building up in your body. Then, let the dam of energy burst open like an explosion while forcefully and purposefully tying the knot. The knot should already be prepared (the type of knot is insignificant here) and just need tightening, which is done with a spasmodic jerk. Inhale with a sudden jerk as you pull the knot tight. Then banish the operation with laughter. With a little practice, you'd be able to charge a dozen or so knots like this at a time that you can cut off and use as you need them. The magician I gave the knot to wanted to work with the analogy "wind = air = money," which proved to be incorrect. He took the knot to a casino. ("To blow all the chips from the table," he later told me.) But he kept losing in roulette. When he left the casino, a wild storm suddenly began to rage.... (That's what I mean when I keep saying

“be careful with the correspondences”! Of course, both “storm” and “money” correspond to the element of air, but that doesn’t mean they are identical.)

In another instance, I charged a money knot using the same method during a Mercury ritual in which the altar was decorated with banknotes and wallets and gave it to a magician friend of mine. He also took it to the casino and immediately won nearly \$10,000. He tried to call me to say he wanted to give me ten percent of his winnings in gratitude, but he couldn’t reach me. At the end of the week, he had gambled everything away and even lost an additional \$3000. It was a perfect Mercury analogy!

I’ve included these two examples to show the wide variety of ways to use knot magic. It’s up to you to use your imagination and experiment with knot magic to gain your own experience. Knotted strings are archaic in a way since they seem to influence the subconscious mind and the psychological censor with a long-term effect and are therefore quite effective. Maybe you can remember from your childhood the old practice of tying a piece of twine around a wart, then removing it and tying it into a knot. This knot was then buried or burned and the wart was supposed to disappear as soon as the knot had been destroyed or decayed. Of course, it’s possible that the placebo effect was at work here. In any case, such seemingly primitive or “superstitious” techniques (that you have to believe in, of course, in order for them to work) are often incredibly effective and can hold their own with the effectiveness of Hermetic planetary rituals and Kabbalistic demon evocations.

## **REPORTS FROM MAGICAL PRACTICE (VI)**

One example of modern folk magic was told to me by a female magician friend who performs magical operations professionally for clients. For combat magic, she takes a picture of the target person and attaches it to the inside of the hubcap of her car. “The rest happens automatically,” she said. “I drive around and leave the picture in the hubcap for a few days. The target person soon develops symptoms of dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. This puts the person out of action for a few days, which enables my client to get the ball rolling in issues that were previously blocked by the target person.”

This is a remarkably elegant, intuitively designed application of magical symbolism that needs no further explanation. And this example also shows how pragmatic folk magic actually is. It may really be that much of what folklorists and other researchers report secondhand seems much more dogmatic and narrowminded than it’s really

done in practice. This phenomenon occurs in other areas as well, e.g., when exemplary teaching materials develop a life of their own with time and are built up in such a way that they are confused with the actual meaning behind the teachings. If a martial artist or yogi wants to demonstrate the techniques of body control to his or her students and chooses a complicated series of movements or a very tricky posture to do so, you can be sure that at least some of the students (most likely beginners) will misinterpret this as being the lesson itself, thus creating an entirely new and distorted “tradition” that has almost nothing to do with the actual goals of this discipline. (It’s said, for example, that Rudolf Steiner used to sneer at these workings of apish, shallow imitation among his students and that he was always out to unmask such practices.)

To wrap things up for now, I’d like to mention one more example of a money magic operation that illustrates our dictum that “only generosity can lead to big money.” A magician once told me about a student of magic who performed a few money rituals and then bought two lottery tickets in order to create an additional “money canal.” The result was only one ticket won a petty sum. However, if he would have checked the box “Spiel 77” and played that game as well, despite it costing an extra dollar to play, he would have won a huge amount! Surely it’s easy to laugh about such mishaps but we should seriously ask ourselves how often we make such mistakes ourselves (and not just in the field of money magic) by half-heartedly finishing off our operations—and even blaming magic itself for our failure at times. The concept that magic is an act of will is merely a demand for the magician to be absolutely consequent in what he or she wants. Of course, we’re often blind to the opportunities that the universe offers us after a magical operation is performed to help us reach our desired goal. Whoever is densely set on determining right from the start the exact path for success to take may be blocking a number of good opportunities that may even be much easier. In magic it’s always important to remain alert and attentive and to keep a careful eye on all of the possibilities that might present themselves without tensing up or doing a sloppy job.

Whoever wants to be successful in money magic (e.g., to receive large sums via magical means) needs to act generously. Remember: “The shoe has to fit, otherwise it will hurt!”

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# MAGIC AS THE ULTIMATE ACT OF GAINING ACCESS POWER

## INTERIM ASSESSMENT AND FURTHER PROSPECTS

Now that you've been studying practical magic for quite some time now, it's time to pause and reflect on a few things. We've already mentioned before that this magic course is roughly designed according to the classic initiation scheme of "Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master" without making the distinction between the various levels too strict or dogmatic. These are just rough definitions with no clear-cut transitional periods since such boundaries vary with practice. After all, a magician could never claim to have learned everything there is to learn. A human lifetime is not enough to exhaust all the possibilities of magic. Stagnation is death; a person who thinks there's nothing more to learn is nothing but a miserable wretch who's more interested in adaptation than in genuine development.

So far we've preferred to convey our teachings of magic from a neutral point of view without any attempt to evaluate the ideology or ethics behind it as much as humanly possible in order to concentrate on the technical and structural aspects of magic. The reasons for this neutral approach are obvious and don't need to be repeated here, and we'll continue with this approach in the future. But before becoming a master, you should be aware of how much magic is a "subjective reality." Not because the results of practical magic only take place in the magician's mind, as a materialistic pseudo-skeptic

might think, but because by now you've had enough opportunity to convince yourself of the opposite. Nonetheless, true magic takes place inside of yourself, and every magician develops his or her own laws and structures through practice.

While the phase of the Entered Apprentice in traditional magic is mostly concerned with learning and comprehending, the degree of Fellow Craft deals with the individual application and further practical development of what's been learned. As a Master, the magician develops his or her own magic, refines skills and tackles more complex (or even more dangerous) tasks, begins to teach others, researches and expresses new concepts, or puts old knowledge into a new, more appealing light. Nevertheless, a master never stops learning.

All the more important that a magician is very aware of his or her foundation before delving deeper into (or devoting oneself entirely) to a certain subject. Which foundation are we referring to? Well, up until now we've been concentrating on practical skills. Determine what magical skills and talents you already have and where you might have gaps or insufficiencies (with the intent of eliminating these, of course). Ideology and philosophy have played merely a minor role so far, while the focus has been on practice and experience. Maybe you would have preferred a little more ideological guidance at times. After all, pragmatic magic is often feared and rejected by magicians (especially beginners) who cannot "see anything divine" in all of it and are looking for something "higher." In our terminology we'd call this a "mystical" approach, which was quite typical to Aleister Crowley. This need for orientation was in fact the breeding ground for such phrases as "Transcendental Magic" (Eliphas Lévi). One could mockingly call this a substitute religion but this would underestimate the fact that a large part of Western magic emerged from exactly this breeding ground. Of course, this doesn't mean that we have to agree with such a development (or, to put it more specifically, "level" of development), but it would be silly to ignore this fact and avoid taking a stand since it has quite possibly programmed limitations and restrictions into our magic that we wouldn't be able to recognize and overcome without such critical analysis.

That's why we'd like to take a break from the practical instruction here and say a few words about magic as the ultimate act of gaining access power. These should be understood as food for thought and not as a new way of dogmatically forcing you to accept some alleged "truth." Form an opinion on this one way or another—either support it or reject it, wrestle with it and question it. This examination alone should help you to rec-

ognize and express more clearly the perspectives of your magic and thus of your entire life, but definitely don't view this process as an exercise! It's not about training your analytical mind or philosophical talent, or about internalizing any lessons. The following text is intentionally apodictic, dogmatic, and sometimes even cryptically worded, not because it's some kind of creed (which would invalidate it in the first place), but because it's intended to take us to the core of what we understand as life, love, power, and influence, and maybe even immortality.

## **MAGIC OR THE UNFINISHED LEGEND OF THE MAGICIAN LUCIFER**

And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:41)

And when We said to the angels: Make obeisance to Adam they did obeisance, but Iblis (did it not). He refused and he was proud, and he was one of the unbelievers.  
—The Koran (2nd Surah 2:34)

Lucifer was the most beautiful of the angels. And he was God's favorite, too, until one day he reacted with "*Non serviam!*" as a definitive statement of disobedience. The "fall" of Lucifer was more of a resignation or retirement. With one single act of resistance he unmasked the structures of power behind the so "well-meaning" father of creation—there was no room for rebellion, paradise could only exist through submission, and the conformation of its inhabitants to a "happiness" that (in Lucifer's eyes) was nothing but a pale reflection of that which "creation" (which he recognized as "uncreated") was actually capable of. The mere act of establishing one single god made a significant impact on the way in which "creation" was viewed throughout history, enabling it to drive further and further into a dead-end street, with ruling concepts such as power over powerlessness, the strong over the weak, the proteins over the silicates.

Magic is the way of power, the ability to exert influence. Power means access; it means that there is no longer a gap between being and consciousness, between subject and object, between the hunter and the hunted. Only one side can win. There are



only two paths to choose from—the path of conformity or the other one. Why is it so vaguely referred to as “the other one?” Because humanity thus far has pursued the path of conformity for hundreds of thousands of years and because even our language itself is an expression of this need for orientation and our conformity to the outside, to the inside, to the foreign, to the danger—a remnant from a time when man had already lost his freedom to say yes or no. For most people, this question has been decided long ago and it will never be posed again as the course of development has turned everyone once and for all into “yes-sayers.”

Magic is the way of fighting and occupying space: the fight against being denied access to nature, society, and religion; the fight for the power to access the laws of nature, the development of society, and freedom. A civilized person is by nature and disposition a predator; his or her god is acquisition and accumulation by breaking the spells of the world and lessening the want of the two-faced gifts of freedom and fire. Civilization is the technology of conforming to the forces of gravity and cold, to heat and the seasons, to light and darkness, to life and death. Civilization governs need, lack and fear, and summarizes these under the glossy title of “reality” and “provision.” No escape has been provided for. Not in the field of nature: Humans cannot fly. (“Or can they?” the magician asks, and tries it out himself/herself.) Not in the field of society: A non-conformist is declared to be crazy and is locked up. (The magician asks, “Doesn’t crazy just mean ‘standing on the sidelines’ and no longer participating in the foolish farce of salvation?” and thus cultivates his or her own craziness.) Not in the field of religion: The non-conformist threatens the monopoly of access to transcendence, as transcendence is “that which leads us beyond limitation.” (The magician proclaims: “I don’t want anything to do with a god whose power is based on the collaboration of spiritual receptionists,” and thus creates his or her own gods.

If the magician wants to be serious with his or her Luciferian rebellion, with the ultimate act of gaining access, he or she must become an “alien.” None of all that which once made the magician mortal may remain. He or she finishes things, or destroys them by finishing them. If the magician was once a materialist, he or she now strives to get to the bottom of concepts such as matter and materialism. What remains? A thorn in the side of a religion of fear, and a dread of the incalculable and inexhaustible. If the magician was once a transcendentalist, he or she now tests religion and mysticism to its

limits. Soon the limits are overstretched and what remains is a pitiful pile of misery, the science of managing fear, the dread of the incalculable and inexhaustible.

But what about my “objective” limits? the magician may ask Lucifer. I cannot fly. I have to die. I have to eat and drink. I need warmth. What kind of power is available to the governors of a reality that’s never been closer defined that could possibly prevent me from trying? So I’ll try, and even be successful. But is that all there is?

Of course, I can learn astral travel—a substitute for flying, and more than my opponents could ever dream of accomplishing. Of course, I can create a soul that lives an eternity beyond the lifetime of my physical body—a mockery of biological death and a dulling of its blow. Of course, I can learn to fast or change my physiology like no other mortal could—a disgrace to the science of nutrition. Of course, I can learn Tummo yoga and learn to melt the snow within a ten-foot radius of where I stand.

But would that make me physically fly? Could I outlive my physical body by thousands of years or longer? Could I do without eating or drinking for centuries? Could I wander around in the eternal ice without clothes to protect me? What is my power all worth if I’m content with second-rate skills?

Posing such questions is wrong in the first place, the magician acknowledges to Lucifer. Asking questions means setting limits right from the start, and looking for acknowledgement to the limits of our “under-standing” (which according to linguistics basically means “to trample on”) where once freedom was encouraged. On the path to truth we often forget why we’ve embarked on this journey in the first place. Not to satisfy our craving (because this would give the adversary the advantage), but to give it free reign. This forgetting is our last enemy; it’s the delusion that denies us access to that which can give us the power and strength that we’ve been striving for and will continue to strive for in the future. Our craving must remain insatiable—anything else would be nothing more than conformist whining, claims Lucifer.

Lucifer realizes his rebellion is not a rebellion; he should not define himself through his adversaries nor should he be content with crumbs from the table of the “Lord.” He is striving so expectantly and so thoroughly toward a different, much deeper, stranger kind of immortality. And it will take a great deal of effort to achieve such a goal because this path is dangerous and the henchmen of submission and forgetfulness are lurking everywhere! If they cannot beat the magician, they’ll at least try to bribe him or her. But the magician is interested in bigger things than just defiance and the crude tricks

at slave traders' fairs. The magician wants to be free and happy, and he or she loathes the whip-words "obligation" and "must." There are no limits to the magician's hate, and only through this all-devastating, flaming, boiling hatred toward the image of "being" that humanity wants to offer him or her like a gilded cage can the magician become capable of showing love toward those who are on the same side.

Lucifer the magician proclaims that whoever calls us Satanists is only making a fool out of oneself because we're much worse, much more malicious, and much more corrupt than any Satanist could ever dream to be. Whoever calls us wicked has no idea of what our darkness is like. Whoever wants to turn us into monsters doesn't realize how inhuman our being is. Are you looking for our brothers? They are reptiles. Are you looking for the truth in our eyes? You're looking into eyes that are as cold as a bird of prey's. Are you looking for warmth, or maybe even love and affection? You'll only find it where they are blessed with our innermost secret: in the true home, in the refuge where nothing foreign can reside and what cheap, convenient imitation that you call home and turn into hell with your sentimentality. Are you looking to reconcile the contradictions? Didn't the German word for "reconcile" (*versöhnen*) originally mean to expiate (*versühnen*), or to punish? You won't be able to because they exclude each other. You're not our enemies because that would imply that we are related—you are strangers in every sense of the word. Our kingdom is not of this world, which is why, and only why, we will make the world answer to us by rejecting it. Living in the very thing that's holy to you and poisoning it, let our magic tricks beguile your senses; you'll never be able to grasp our world because our kingdom is not of this world. Lucifer was bitten by the snake. And the snake was he himself. And his name is legion.

And now in closing, ask yourself:

"Why do I want to become a magician? Why all the effort?"

# INTRODUCTION TO MAGIC DEMONOLOGY (I)

Magic demonology is probably one of the most controversial of all magical disciplines. After all, it's one of the things that helped give magic a bad image. The stereotypical "evil magician" who sells his soul to the devil in trade for material advantages while tormenting his fellow man stems from the fanatical obsession with the grimoires of the late Middle Ages that are full of talk about unleashing demons or "banishing them to the underworld." Things are still pretty much the same today, and now when some pseudo-rationalist chuckles at the mention of magic, this is merely an inner defense mechanism that is quick to find outer expression. Although magicians nowadays are no longer considered a danger to the spiritual welfare of man, they're nonetheless labeled as charlatans, demagogues, or corrupters of common decency. Public behavior toward magicians may have changed, but the persecution remains. Instead of burning at the stakes, the methods today are "media sensationalism" or "public morals," and there's hardly a priest around who doesn't feel obligated to take part in the persecution of magically oriented minorities while completely ignoring the fact that magical concepts have been an integral part of civilization for thousands of years in religion, in science, and in art.

This social conflict directly reflects the internal confrontation that the magic demonologist faces with his or her fears, or more specifically, with fearsome, dangerous forces or entities. People who know how to deal with such forces almost automatically appear to be a threat to society since they seem to point a finger straight at other people's shortcomings. People are afraid of, yet fascinated by, everything that is unfamiliar—afraid on the one

hand, yet curiously interested on the other—and this is the image that is often projected back to the magician. The same happens today as it did in the past in shamanic communities. Here, too, the tribal shaman was more often feared than loved. People assume that whoever is capable of great works of healing could just as easily cause a lot of damage as well—and this assumption is quite justified.

Before we look at the practical application of magic demonology we need to realize that the concept of demons is basically a variation of the spirit model. But that's easier said than done. Modern authors in particular have attempted to psychologize magic demonology along the lines of C. G. Jung's psychoanalysis. Here, demons are explained as "projections of the shadow side of the soul," or they're described as "externally manifested repressions." This is actually one of the more benevolent assessments of magic since school psychiatrists and psychologists often view demonic phenomena at best as some kind of mental disturbance, ranging from schizophrenia to paranoia or psychotic fits. Common medicine even has words to describe the "sick delusion of being possessed by a demon" such as "demonomania" and "demonopathy."

Jumping into such a paradigm may indeed work as an act of banishment for the practicing magician. As we saw in connection with the magic sword, such a sudden, radical paradigm change during a moment of great magical danger or pending loss of control during a ritual may work as a "last chance" option. If the demon cannot be subdued, you always have the option to banish it by suddenly no longer believing in it, although this method is not a very reliable one. This difficult practice is just as dangerous as the actual act of unleashing the demon itself because it nullifies the foundation of our entire magical practice, which would be much more devastating than any temporary diversion from the magical path.

The real problem for the modern magic demonologist is probably the difficulty in avoiding such common psychologism entirely since one is continually confronted with it everywhere. The superstition of superficial psychology has almost become a world religion that now dominates every aspect of Western "reality." For this reason alone, we recommend being a bit more critical when dealing with the psychoanalytical model; after all, it has no significance whatsoever to the practice of magic demonology apart from its function as a disruptive element. So after taking a brief look at the linguistic background of the word "demon" in the first section, I'd like to refer to some material from one of my earlier articles on the subject and quote a few passages from it.

By taking a look at the linguistics of the word “demon,” the magic demonologist can obtain a great deal of interesting information. “Demon” derives from ancient Greek *daimon* that originally meant “distributor, bestower of fate,” while later coming to mean “god” or “devil” and eventually filtering into modern-day usage via the Latin *dæmon*. It belongs to the Greek *daiesthai* (“distribute”) and linguists claim it is thus related to the older, Indo-Germanic root *da(i)* (“share, cut, tear up”). The Armenian *ti* (“lifetime, age, years”) derives from it as do the Old and Middle High German *zît* (“time of day, time of year, stage of life”), the English *tide* (still common today in Low German as *Tide*), the New High German *Zeit* (“time”), and the English *time* (Old English *tima*, Swedish *timme* = hour). There is also a relationship to the Greek *demos* which originally meant “division of people” and later received the meaning “people, region, district” (that’s where the German *Demoskopie* [“opinion poll”] comes from, as well as “democracy” and “demagogy”). Socrates claimed to have a “daimon” (Greek *daimonion*, Latin *dæmonium*) that was his “(divine) inner voice”; in general a demon is understood as an “intermediate being” (between man and god) or as the embodiment of “evil.” In a dualistic system there are always “good” and “bad” spirits fighting over the spiritual welfare of man.

Demons could thus be summarized as “dividing distributors” or “those who divide into pieces” in the same sense that the “highest” demon of Christianity (Satan) was often referred to as “he who breaks in two.” In this sense demons are limiters of power. On the other hand, they are also a driving force and inner voice, instruments the magician can use to access power on the path toward becoming a god himself or herself and then transcending this as well. In Jewish, Christian, and Islamic theology, demons (or devils) are the adversaries of a god who rules over hosts of “angels” (which could accurately yet mockingly be called “nice devils”). (A characteristic feature of solar religions is the one-sided perception of the concept of light, which is expressed, for example, by referring to devils as “fallen angels.”)

Before we go into this aspect any further, I’d like you to take a look at a few important excerpts from my article “*Wie schächte ich mein Alter Ego? Anmerkungen zur Dämonenmagie*” (“*How can I slaughter my alter ego? A commentary on magic demonology*”) that was published in the year 1985 in *Unicorn*, a magazine that’s long been out of print. Although this article makes references to other articles on magic, the contents apply to our discussion of this subject as well and printing it here will prevent me from having to repeat myself.

It's become fashionable in the last few years to equate the concept of the demon [...] with that of the "shadow" from C. G. Jung's psychoanalysis. [...] Romantically inclined magicians will surely want to brush this off as "electrician magic" or, in more upscale terms, as awkward "psychologism" despite all the voices to the contrary. I believe, however, that this is a misunderstanding that needs to be cleared up if we want to do more than just study the theoretical aspect of magic demonology and delve into its practice as well. Psychologism is understood as the overrating of psychological insights and procedures; the misconception that all human phenomena can only be explained in psychological terms (and only through "sciences of the psyche," which is how the word psychology could be translated). This viewpoint, which we've probably inherited from the irrational superstition that science (or scientism) is almighty that originated in the blissful era of mechanistic physics, is based on the premise that psychology actually does deal with the "psyche"—which, in my opinion, is not at all the case! [...]

But I don't want to talk about the plights and sorrows of psychologists here. Instead I'd merely like to point out how relative all of these scientific models basically are and how "unscientifically" (and therefore irrationally) everyone seems to deal with them. So when Jörg Wichmann [in his article "*LUCIFER/LUCI-FER. Zur Psychologie des Dämonischen*", Unicorn II/82, pp. 108–109] uses Jung's shadow terminology to describe one demonic aspect of magic, then this is (from both a scientific and psychological point of view) a completely legitimate act of accepted behavior. He's borrowing a useful and for the most part proven concept (though possibly only for lack of a better one) without completely joining forces with Jung's orthodoxy by reducing ceremonial magic to a sort of archetype cocktail party. This in no way affects the questions of how far psychoanalysis actually goes with what they claim to explore (and diagnose), what the "psyche" of a person actually is, or whether it may be (as metaphysicalists claim of the Kirlian effect) something like a de-charging of gas bubbles in the human bio-computer without any connection to the "true" core (Pneuma, Kia, Atman, or divine spirit) that actually makes man into what he or she is.

These long-winded statements were necessary in order to do away with the preconception that the matter of magic demonology is already settled in an epistemological sense and that all we have to do now is use Jung's formula "demon = shadow" to revolutionize the world of magic. A similar hoax came apart at the seams in the Middle Ages when demons were simply and matter-of-factly declared (according to the men-

tality of the times) to be the bad boys of divine creation, or Satan's accomplices who may have not had as much power as the devil himself, but at least stood in heartwarmingly close "contact" to the core of human needs. Most demons were fairly worldly fellows who were much more interested in material things such as "sex and drugs" and good old money instead of more abstract vices like haughtiness and disregard for the papacy. "Aggressiveness, wildness, lecherousness, power, ugliness or ravishingly seductive beauty, dangerousness, dumb crudeness or calculable intelligence" are some of the characteristics that were and still are commonly ascribed to demons as listed by Jörg Wichmann [p. 108] in his article. This list just happens to correspond to the list of things that the Christian community of the Middle Ages and our modern, post-Christian culture (that ironically and ambiguously still begins its calendar with "AD = after Christ") also disapproves of. In this sense, the demon is the perfect embodiment of the collective, social (or even sociological) shadow of a culture.

In addition to the collective aspect, there's also the individual level as well, which Jörg Wichmann rightly points out: "It's not about conjuring just any old shadow, but about conjuring one's own." This opinion is most likely a product of the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment, and the democratic individualism that's widespread in our society today. [...]

So that covers both the sociological and individual imperative surrounding the concept of demons. With no pun intended, please allow me to point out that this "imperative" generally behaves quite latently (grammatically: verbal). The demon evocation turns it into a (nominal) accusative, and then into a nominative with the mental integration of the demonic element; with this a holistic personality is produced or created that's not inclined to fall in love with just its light or dark side and no longer pesters the whole world with its unmasked pursuit of enlightenment and/or demand to finally turn the "lights out." The imperative is, of course, only latent when it comes to the awareness of it. Otherwise this is exactly the thing that determines our "irrational" behavior or compulsive actions, it's the "Nick-Nack Man" who whispers into our ear as we stand at the open window on the seventeenth floor: "Jump my boy, you're a white dove!" (as Frank Zander once sang so beautifully). If we cannot control it, it will just take control over us. So as in magic demonology, it's also about who's wearing the pants! [...]

In my opinion, the sociological and individual imperative models may be correct, but they're still too superficial. They both apply only to people in society and



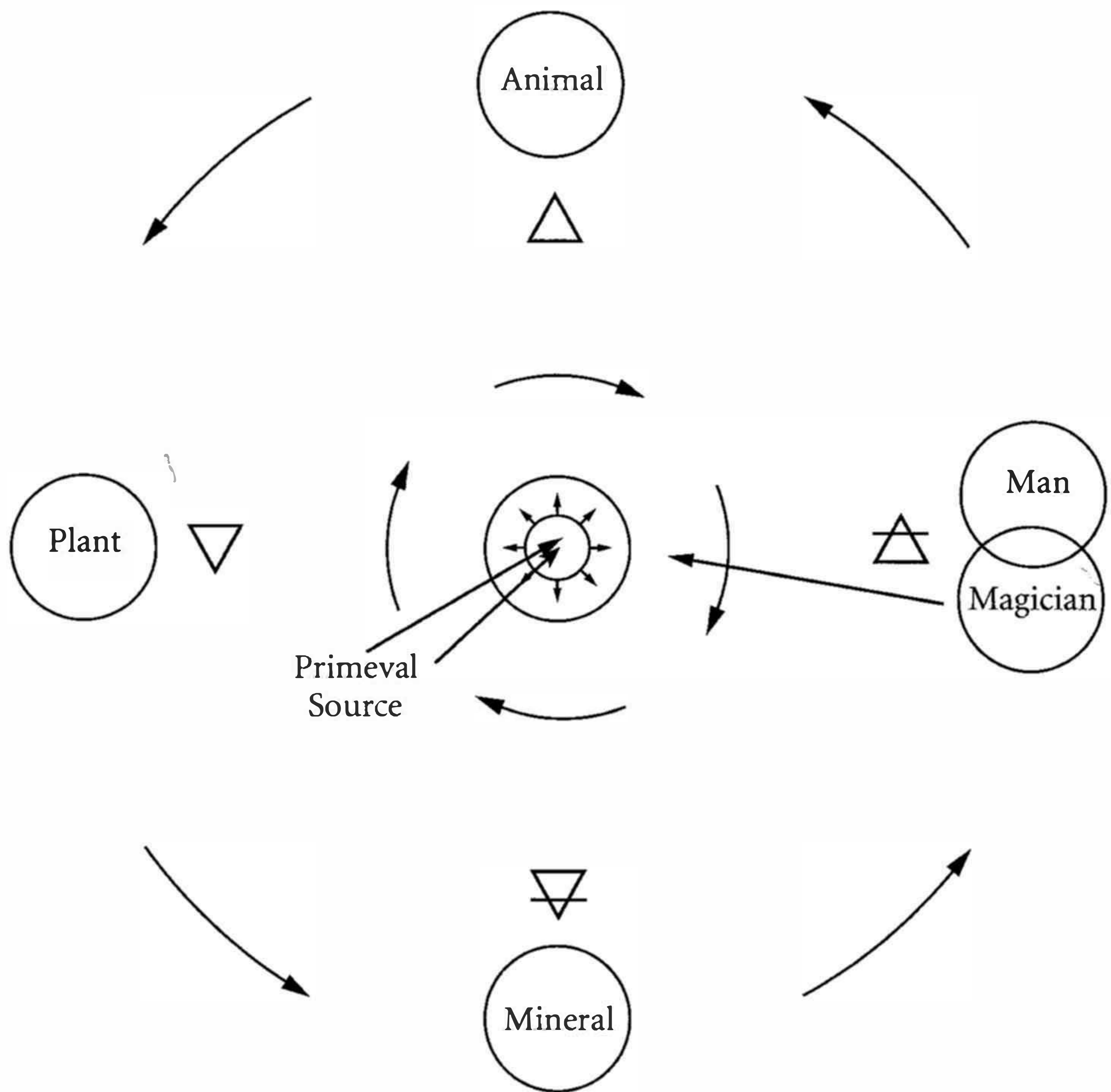
ignore humans as a pre-sociological, biological beings that (if we can place any value on both Darwin's and Lamarck's theories of evolution) carries with them the genes of their entire course of development, beginning with their origin as a protozoan and later life as a primate. Austin Osman Spare dealt with this issue in his magic. His concept of "atavistic resurgence" (or "atavistic nostalgia") is based on the assumption that the magician is able to consciously return to prehuman forms of existence. In other words, the magician is not only aware of his or her existence as a bird, lizard, or amoeba, but magical power is drawn from this awareness and this primeval force helps him or her become a truly powerful magician. Of course, this doesn't necessarily have anything to do with the theosophical concept of reincarnation as is commonly known and popular; instead it has more to do with what Ariosophists like to call "genetic memory." Although this concept has a strong political overtone, I personally feel that it's much more appropriate and, above all, more honest than those that involve the annoying flapping around of a bird-like soul of light [...].

If we view the process of evolution as a form of biological "civilization," one can see that the evolution of humsman has always been a story of repression. Old instinctive behavior diminishes more and more, is pushed into the background, and then is covered up by the intellect. Although our animal ancestors are still a part of us (which we can easily observe at all types of huge events, especially when panic arises, e.g., when fire breaks out in a movie theater, and so on) evolution has neatly locked these animals up in a "gene cage." "That's where they belong!" some people might say while breathing a sigh of relief, and from the viewpoint of social interaction this may even be true. But unfortunately these primeval patterns cannot simply be turned off. On the contrary, the doors of the cage are often open just a crack and are sometimes even wide open. And so every single one of us is basically a Dr. Jekyll just waiting for the right stimulus to allow our Mr. Hyde to step out into the light. (Popular social outlets for this today include war, mob fanaticism and crusades of all types, especially the paper mob law of the mass media; and more and more sports arenas are filled with flag-waving werewolves, where alcohol does its state-taxed best to release the pressure that socialization and civilization cause. [...]) Our civilized skin is only paper thin and once the surface has been scratched, it releases our inner beast—and it's certainly not a noble, graceful nature lover! It may be that such zoomorphing is in turn a projection in itself, but we really do project repressed images most of the time, thus resulting in only a subjective "reality." What anthropologists and psychologists call a mere bad

regression or a “pathological relapse into patterns of nonsocialized emotions, thought, and behavior” can truly be a dangerous venture for the magic demonologist, or even the greatest challenge of his or her life. The conscious establishment of contact with one’s own animal nature in order to integrate this into one’s overall personality in such a way as to become not only a “holistic person” (an ideal based on Jung’s psychoanalysis that—like many other similar things—has unfortunately become nothing but a shallow cliché, just like the term “inferiority complex” of papa Freud’s era), but also a whole living being, a planetary entity that science-fiction authors could only dream of today. In this sense, demons are in no way mere astral devils that are always playing tricks on us. Instead, they represent trail marks that we can use to define ourselves and that point out the options along our path of possibilities as we work on our development (in the sense of Gurdjieff) to become what Nietzsche so desolately calls the *Übermensch* (superhuman).

The difference between the definition of the mystic and that of the magician is blatantly obvious here. While the mystic, although usually involuntarily, pursues a direct path in searching for the origin of Being (God, Ain, Big Bang, or whatever), the magician (if acting as described here) chooses the organic path of development. In doing so, one closes the (spiral) circle completely; from the Big Bang to the mineral, to the plant, to the animal, and to *Homo sapiens vulgaris*—then back to the animal, the plant, the mineral, and to *Homo sapiens magicus*, who then receives free access to the middle of the circle (cf. Illustration 34).

The inner circle in the diagram describes the cycle of creation (from mineral to plant to animal and to man), while the outer circle represents the magical path. “Aha!” all members of the Great White Brotherhood will probably shout in unison, “this guy’s moving against deosil! That’s satanic!” Apart from the fact that such models are always random (we could have arranged the individual items in a different order), we can at least see why magic demonology has always been considered to be “blasphemous,” even in the Old Testament: All institutionalized religions rely on rigid, fixated systems because dogma per definition cannot tolerate any kind of flexibility if it wants to survive. The driving force behind this is the unspoken and often unconscious thought that one should be relieved to be able to get a little bit of order to straighten up the chaos of creation. On the other hand, cyclical philosophies that thrive on change (such as Taoism) have never developed such strict hierarchies and centralisms like more linearly structured religions



*Illustration 34: The evolutionary theory; inner circle: the mundane evolution of the mineral to plant and animal to man; outer circle: the magical development of the everyday man to animal, plant, and mineral consciousness to magician who is then allowed access to the middle (to the “primeval source”).*

have. To a Taoist, using the word “blasphemous” to describe my anti-deosil direction of magical development would be utterly unthinkable. One could argue that magic is something unnatural, or as a gnostic would say, that the magician is only able to obtain gnosis and freedom by going against the current of the Demiurge and his creation—but it would be just as accurate to contend that it’s logical for a clockwise cycle to be followed by a counterclockwise one. The spiral model is also popular in esotericism. In this mode, the magician in our diagram would be placed vertically a bit higher than regular man. [...]

I agree with Jörg Wichmann in the opinion that magic demonology shouldn’t restrict itself to being a mere test of courage so the magician can pat himself or herself on the back for having the guts to conjure some horrible creature from hell to win a small sum in the lottery while trembling in fear the whole time—that’s [...] Micky Mouse magic [...]. “True, profound progress in development cannot be simply made or even forced,” Jörg Wichmann writes. [...] “There are no rituals for this” [loc.cit., p. 109]. A shadow walking hand in hand with the magician to the ice-cream stand on the corner after a successful conjuration is a ridiculous figure and not worth one’s money. But one shouldn’t cling too tightly to Jung’s concept of the shadow. The sadistic Frater SM from the article “Lucifer/Luci-Fer” may not have actually conjured his shadow, but this doesn’t mean that the entity that was attracted wasn’t a demon! Frater SM may indeed be afraid of his own “sex killer demon” despite—or maybe even because of—his anti-establishment pose, and despite all claims to the contrary he might have even crapped in his pants from fear. (With the exception of a small technical objection to Jörg Wichmann’s example that demons are usually not invoked but rather evoked until they reach “the consistency of thick vapors”, as Crowley requires of his A.∴A.∴ initiates. Here we’re dealing once again with the factors “fear” and “difficulty when materializing entities” which puts it all into a slightly different perspective.) On the other hand, our poor Frater SM might truly break out in a sweat if he tried the invocation (more correctly: evocation) of a Victorian governess or a narrowminded preacher as Jörg Wichmann recommends. But although this may be good pure shadow integration, he wouldn’t necessarily want to call the entity involved a “demon.” At best that would be the case if this demon were an embodiment of his own moral fears. However, this is a modern reversal of an ancient practice. Back then demons were supposed to appear despite our fear, and today they should appear because of it—a highly interesting development!

Just a note on the side: It remains to be examined as to whether invocations should be described as “shadow work” since integration is a logical result. On the other hand, the “projection” in materialization evocations generally continues to exist and is not really dissolved. Though the more psychologically oriented magician may object that an evocation is just a “temporary projection” followed by reintegration of the projected mental impressions, I’d still dare to claim that our modern difficulties with the genuine materialization of entities derives from exactly this paradigm. Unfortunately it’s not easy to objectively materialize something if the magician holds the basic opinion that it’s just something inside of oneself anyway. It’s the separation and non-identity of the magician to the demon that makes materialization evocations so effective.

“Then it’s about time to define the term ‘demon’ a bit more specifically,” some of you readers might be saying by now. But this isn’t all that easy, in the same way that words like “angel” and “soul” cannot really be “defined.” At most we can list a few features. In general, demons have a specific area of responsibility—they’re so-called astral workmen. It’s not enough to say that they induce fear or are excommunicated by every local priest; a demon that others have something on also has something to offer. They maybe possess the ability to teach the magician the art of war or the sublime science of bestial cursing, or tricks for successfully completing some kind of shady business deal. It may be that we’re dealing here (psychologistic reasoning) with the mere personification of deep-seated, subconscious desires, drives, and fears, but personally I prefer the spiritistic position (as opposed to the animistic) that gives these creatures—sometimes nice and sometimes not so nice—a life of their own instead of relativizing them with a sleight of hand from the box of currently acceptable psychological explanations. In addition, the spiritistic hypothesis also explains the seemingly strange autonomy of such entities that any magician who has done any kind of practical work with demon evocations can tell you a thing or two about. But, to be honest, I have to admit that the psychological approach certainly has its strengths and advantages as well.

Another characteristic of a demon is that it has to instill fear. In other words, magic demonology doesn’t work very well in modern times because we, even as magicians, are much too rationalistic to allow ourselves to fall into a true fear trance during a conjuration. After all, magic demonology is always traumatic! Imagine if a magician were to plan an evocation of Bartzabel and invite others to join him or her with the words “Hey, are you in the mood to conjure up Barzi on Tuesday?” There’s nothing princi-

*Heads of Evil  
Demons.  
N.º 2.*



*Thelus*

*Vesels of Wrath*



*Asmodeus*

*The Incubus*



*Designed by F. Barrett.*

*Engraved by R. Griffith.*

*Illustration 35: Depictions of demons from Barret's "The Magus" (1801)*

pally wrong with this choice of words, it's the basic attitude that's wrong. Demons have their pride, too, and don't want to be treated as mere consumer goods. And the best way a demon can get revenge for such treatment is by not appearing at all, which is actually quite economical considering that our built-in rationalism/skepticism is the best banishment that any magician could ask for anyway.

Ramsey Dukes pointed out in his legendary book *Thundersqueak* that most demons can best be banished with a head-on attack. Offering one's own suicide scares away a demon like a parasite that's afraid of losing its host body and its own life the second that death occurs. This isn't just an intellectual game; it's one of the most effective techniques of exorcism in cases of true possession! Unfortunately, there are also demons that are good poker players and will risk the death of their victim without batting an eye. But there's no point in complaining about such lack of character here. After all, we're not talking about Victorian governesses, we're talking about demons! Of course, the magician in this type of situation is pretty much out of luck. By the way, the legendary "pact with the devil" is a procedure that's certainly a pure nightmare for an orthodox psychoanalyst since it would put him or her out of business. Instead of remedying complexes and repressions (here: demons), nicely brass-polishing the soul, or sweeping up all the dust and prettifying it with psychosurgery, the magic demonologist dares to come to terms with it, to allow it to exist, to keep the inner psychological tension. Indeed, this is quite a venturesome balancing act that often ends in insanity. But the magician realizes that magic just won't work without tension; boring sourpusses with small-minded mentality don't stand a chance. As Nietzsche sings in *Zarathustra*: "I tell you: one must still have chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you: ye have still chaos in you." This is the material that a magician (and not just one who works with demons) must be made of if his or her magic is intended to do more than just "play around with the psyche" (as Mahamudra once said) like psychedelic television. That's entirely different from the clean-cut image of modern psychology that (just like Christianity, by the way) would like to eliminate anything that remotely seems like a malfunction. This type of repair-shop thinking is pure horror to the cyclically oriented magician. He or she wants as much "freedom" as possible and to determine one's own fate, but doesn't want to walk like a sterile, hygienic dolt through a germ-free laboratory as some mechanistically-minded shrinks expect us all to do.

When animals are slaughtered according to Jewish kosher rites, the beast is bled dry. This reflects the ancient magical concept that the life energy is stored in the blood. This is much too valuable to waste by having it squirt all over the ground. Now I'm certainly not out to polish up the old concept of an evil civilization apparatchik (that's much too widespread in esotericism anyway) by lecturing on the old fairy tale of rationalism, "truth's greatest enemy." Nonetheless I'd like to dare claim that today's demons (in a figurative sense) can be found in the inhibitions that prevent us from recognizing the beast inside of us and letting it run free. We need to slaughter the beast, bleed it dry, and take its power in order to be able to work with it.

After all, this leads us back to Austin Osman Spare's atavisms. This approach led Peter Ellert and I to the phrase "lizard magic": "Deep down in the 'Africa' of our soul, prehistoric lizards are patiently lying in wait, ready to jump." It's not a harmless matter to wake them. Such confrontations can make planetary demons seem like mere neurotic little pests. If we stick to the circular model that I recommended earlier, we should approach this branch of magic organically as well. Let's first discuss the manlike demons, which can at least be described relatively well in simple language using psychological terms such as anger, aggression, lust for power, greed, and so on. According to the sociological model we could also work with or evoke the individual imperative, whereby the boundaries naturally overlap. Not until then should the magician dare to apply the biological or atavistic imperative and revive one's own and collective animal existences—they're rooted in our genes and not really all that difficult to release. Of course, a stable psyche is required if you don't want to end up foaming at the mouth and trying to bite every mailman in the leg, or staring at the walls of a padded cell (or if you're too successful, ending up in a zoo!). These ancestral animal demons have a lot to offer us since, and as A. O. Spare rightly recognized, they are the primeval source of our magic. They're not always pleasant fellows and there will always be phases when the magician and, as a result, the people close to him or her will seriously doubt whether he or she is actually human. But this experience, like every good initiation, is a necessary baptism of fire that serves to purify and strengthen.

For now, I won't be mentioning the demons of the plant and mineral kingdom that would normally follow according to our diagram. First of all, I personally don't have enough experience with such in order to make qualified statements, and second, these



are even more difficult to describe in words than the animal atavisms are, which are difficult enough at times. I'm also not going to discuss the question of "how" here. The actual techniques are not the problem. Even simple sigil magic offers a number of possibilities, and there's plenty of literature on classical demon evocations available. More important is the question of the magician's personal maturity. This certainly cannot be defined in the way some self-proclaimed "white" magicians do that a mature magician is someone who doesn't mess around with such "black stuff." Instead, magical maturity is measured as an energy level. It's all about being able to handle the experiences with demons. It's not enough to just barely survive demons without any damage; it's about being able to grow from the experience and gain magis (magical power). So now we're faced with the paradoxical task of slaughtering our demons and drinking their blood so that they can serve us. Whether you're an animist, a spiritist, a psychological or romantic magician, magic demonology is surely one of the most exciting adventures that we can embark on today.

Before continuing with the practical part of magic demonology, you should meditate for a while on the things we said above and try to form a clearer image as to what demons "actually" are or can be. We have to give the traditional literature absolute credit in one aspect: Magic demonology is dangerous! If this weren't the case, it wouldn't be called magic demonology. After all, the primeval nature of a demon is destructive, unscrupulous, and cruel. Whoever plays with demons is playing with his or her sanity. As the Zohar says: "Stop! He who plays with ghosts shall become one himself!" It would be wrong to play down the risks of magic demonology: insanity, paranoia, physical endangerment, mortal danger, strange accidents and illnesses—all of these can be side effects of experimenting in this discipline.

On the other hand, the demon is possibly the most powerful and uncompromising part of our self. To ignore it or refuse to accept it, or to avoid it at all costs in order to "fit in" to prevent social and moral conflict would be much more dangerous for one's magical development. So there's certainly no way to avoid the study of magic demonology if a magician is serious in his or her pursuit of developing a complete, holistic magic personality.

# DIVINATION (I)

## THE NATURE OF ORACLES

There's quite a difference between being a magician and being a clairvoyant. Most clairvoyants have a natural talent. At most their training is short and usually dogmatic, either in mediumism or in an oracle discipline (usually card-reading or scrying with a crystal ball). Of course there are many magicians who have a certain knack for clairvoyance, but magic also offers a whole range of mantic training methods that, with the proper amount of practice, can make even the most untalented person able to see things in the future with a fairly reasonable degree of accuracy.

It's not the purpose of this training program to discuss mantic disciplines in more detail here, such the tarot, I Ching, or geomancy, just to mention three examples. There's just not enough time or room, and there's plenty of good literature already available on the market anyway about these. On the other hand, there are not many books available that examine the work with oracles step by step or state the various techniques that can be used. Nearly every magician will experiment with at least two or three (or even more) oracle techniques during the course of his or her life. We'd like to limit ourselves here to discussing the most significant structural features of oracle work. This will give you a sound basis for experimenting with the various oracle techniques or, if you already work with oracles, to examine your own practice according to the information here and to adapt it or optimize it accordingly when necessary.

Clairvoyance is the ability to relativize space and time. If this skill is well developed, either through training or as a natural talent, the magician will generally not need the help of any tools. Oracles are tools for examining fate. They are not just used for seeing into the future, but also for glimpsing into the past (searching for the cause) or into a present situation (assessing the current situation) as well. In any case, they are external aids, or tools for fine-tuning the spirit.

In early times, oracles were considered to be “alive” (spirit model); they had a life of their own and were respected and treated accordingly. Today only a few practitioners of folk magic may still hold this opinion. The general view is that the oracles represent psychological techniques for accessing a storehouse of information that’s located in the subconscious mind. There’s no point in mentioning the numerous models of explanation here, however, since each discipline has its own way of interpreting how oracles work. It’s enough to say that, although oracles may not always work, they do work often enough to treat them as a valuable instrument for analyzing patterns and glimpsing into the future.

In the same sense as the book mentioned in the Bibliography by Bettina Tegtmeier, we differentiate between prophetic and interpretive oracles. The prophetic method requires the ability of clairvoyance and is used to forecast specific future events. The interpretive method, on the other hand, doesn’t rely on clairvoyance and is therefore used to analyze the patterns of the current situation (in-depth look at “now”) instead of forecasting events. In view of the generally prevailing superficiality and doctoring of symptoms, it comes as no surprise that most people prefer the prophetic method since it appears to be more “specific.” On the other hand, it can principally only work within the fatalistic paradigm of predestination. The interpretive method is more vague and fuzzy, and even utterly useless at times (“Tomorrow great things will happen”), but it allows the magician more room for interpretation and gives him or her a panoramic overview of the whole situation instead of looking at just a few key events.

There are a few basic rules to follow every time the oracle is consulted. If you adhere to these, you’ve already won half the battle:

- Only consult the oracle in a state of relaxation
- Make sure your question is worded properly

- Interpret the oracle neutrally and without emotion
- Conduct follow-up work

Now let's take a closer look at each of these points in detail.

### **“ONLY CONSULT THE ORACLE IN A STATE OF RELAXATION”**

Folk magic tradition recommends not consulting an oracle during a storm, during a solar or lunar eclipse, or on “evil Friday,” Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. Although such rules are generally brushed off as superstition, they are based on some kind of truth and should be taken seriously. Whoever is sensitive to the weather will probably indeed have trouble with his or her intuition as needed for every type (prophetic and interpretive) of oracle consultation during storms, strong wind, heat with high humidity, and so on. A devout Christian who is reminded of Good Friday on every Friday (e.g., when it is forbidden to eat meat) will never be able to find the inner composure on this day of the week that is necessary for successful oracle consultation. Whoever is strongly superstitious will have problems on the thirteenth day of the month, especially when it falls on “unlucky” Friday. Being too tired, uptight, or ill are also factors that can negatively influence the oracle (or more specifically its interpretation).

That's about all there is to say on this subject. Just follow the words of Austin Osman Spare to perform all magical operations (including divination) in a state of “non-interest/non-disinterest.” This applies in particular to the actual interpretation of the oracle.

### **“MAKE SURE YOUR QUESTION IS WORDED PROPERLY”**

This is one rule that is commonly broken in the practice of divination. For example, there's no point in asking a yes/no question to an image-based oracle such as the tarot, or to ask it for a specific date. It's no use arguing that the cards are numbered sequentially and could therefore be used to predict the next lottery numbers. (In addition to this, it would probably be better to use dice for lottery numbers since there are no distracting images involved.)

First of all, the question should be appropriate to the type of oracle used. A binary oracle (e.g., tossing a coin) can only answer yes/no questions and no one in his or her right mind would ever think of using it to ask for an answer to the meaning of life. The tarot (and the I Ching), on the other hand, is more suitable for “how” questions.

Regardless of the type of oracle used, all leading questions should be avoided. Whoever asks a question like “When will I win the lottery?” or “When will I find the love of my life?” is assuming that the desired event will definitely take place and the oracle would therefore not have the opportunity to possibly say “no chance,” which would have the advantage that the magician could then concentrate on more realistic goals. It’s also pointless to ask overly specific questions such as “What will happen on April 15 at 9:34 am?”

On the other hand, it’s also not recommended to ask extremely vague questions such as “How can I find happiness?” Such questions are the product of a deep-seated need for orientation (which is the reason why most oracles are consulted in the first place), but it would be a good idea to use a bit of your own time and energy to determine what you actually want or want to know before turning to an oracle. The same applies to questions that cover a very long period of time: “What will my health be like thirty-four years from now?” The answers to such questions will also be vague and mediocre. In order for the oracle to have enough room to maneuver, it’s important that the magician only asks within his or her own current scope of influence—although this advice itself is quite vague and can be interpreted quite individually. Although it’s quite popular among new-agers to ask collective questions about “world peace,” the next “global catastrophe,” or the “true, spiritual cause of the AIDS epidemic,” it would be just as effective to toss a coin to answer such questions, so the best is to not ask them at all. If you don’t want to believe me, feel free to experiment with such questions yourself. The results (or lack thereof) will soon convince you!

So instead of asking “How much will I win in the lottery on January 29?” it would be better to ask: “How will my financial situation be affected if I play the lottery next week?” And don’t forget the information from the first book in this course about the symbol-logical fuzzy relation.

**“INTERPRET THE ORACLE NEUTRALLY  
AND WITHOUT EMOTION”**

And once again, being calm and composed when consulting an oracle is what matters most! If the question is worded properly, you won’t have to desperately grasp at straws for an answer. Of course it’s natural to go through phases where you consult an oracle

with the same question over and over several times in desperation because you want to hear a certain answer. But if you toss away the oracle in disgust and disappointment after finally getting the answer you want, though be it incorrect, you're just acting like a baby and failing to realize that every oracle is merely a reflection of your own inner being. Without a doubt, the art of oracle reading was born out of the need to get a grasp on the uncertainty of the future, but the magician shouldn't get too caught up in this need. But if he or she ever succeeds in becoming a sober craftsman of divination, the oracle will prove to be an invaluable decision-making tool. Then and only then is it an instrument of liberation from superstitious fatalism. After all, your intuition will automatically improve the more you use oracles until you reach the point where you will no longer need the actual tool. At most, you might want to keep using it for nostalgic reasons or to pick it up once in a while in order to avoid getting rusty, and merely play with it in a lovingly manner instead of using it to balance the scales of your own fate and clinging to the answers that you receive.

### **“CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP WORK”**

Follow-up work is of great importance, especially while you are still learning. It differs from the usual way of controlling the results mainly in the fact that the magician of divination does not merely observe whether or not his or her prediction comes true, but that he or she also goes through all of the minute details in order to determine what can be done better the next time and what needs to be taken into consideration in the future—in short, assessing one's own strengths and weaknesses. Such assessment is usually only done when something goes wrong, but especially while the magician is still learning we feel that even successful operations should be analyzed in order to avoid negative conditioning.

The oracle should also be consulted again later even after a forecasted event or condition occurs in order to determine any further ramifications of the oracle's prediction. For this reason it's also recommend during the learning phase to keep an “oracle diary.” This should be of particular interest to magicians who are interested in long-term oracle work or possibly even doing it professionally. In most cases, though, it would be sufficient to record the results of your divination work in your magical diary.

In general, divination is closely related to omen interpretation and can be put into the psychological classification of “selective perception” or, in pathological terms, “paranoia.” The latter term indicates some of the dangers that are involved. The range of possible risks include utter dependence, destructive fatalism, and the delusional overinterpretation of omens. That’s why we’ve waited for so long before discussing divination in this training program. By now you should have enough magical experience to face the art of oracle divination with self-confidence and delight.

## **THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ORACLES**

As a general overview, we’d like to summarize the various types of oracles as mentioned in Bettina Tegtmeier’s book. These will be discussed in more detail later on.

### **1. Eidetic Oracles**

(coffee grounds/tea leaves, stone oracles, the molten lead method, tree bark, etc.)

### **2. Visionary Oracles**

(crystal balls, crystals, mirrors, fire, water, clouds, etc.)

### **3. Mind Travel Oracles**

(tattwa travel, shamanic journeys, etc.)

### **4. Spirit Oracles**

(mediumship, Ouija board, etc.)

### **5. Combination Oracles**

(runes, card reading, geomancy, cowrie shells, etc.)

### **6. Objectivized Combination Oracles**

(astrology, chiromancy, etc.)

### **7. Numerological Oracles**

(numerology, Gematria, etc.)

## 8. Text Oracles

(choosing random spots in books, I Ching, etc.)

## 9. Binary Oracles

(tossing coins, pendulum, drawing lots, etc.)

## 10. Dream Oracles

(dream prophecy, dream incubation, etc.)

## 11. Folk Oracles

(salt oracles, ring oracles, etc.)

## 12. Omen Interpretation

(“black cat crosses from the right,” “sheep on the left,” etc.)

# PRACTICAL EXERCISES

## EXERCISE 82

### PRACTICAL DIVINATION (I)

If you’ve already been working regularly with at least two different oracle systems for a minimum of three years, you don’t need to do the following exercise. Of course, it’s up to you whether you’d like to do this exercise anyway, or maybe modify your current practice.

Design a training schedule for your oracle work. Determine which oracle systems you like best and least. Choose two systems to begin working with, one from the first category and one from the second. Do not experiment with a total of more than four for the start. Once you’ve mastered two systems satisfactorily, you can and should begin working with others. Search for books that will help you in your endeavor. This is often a lengthy process but research is an important part of the Western magician’s work. There’s no way we can or want to make this easier for you. However, don’t buy anything without closely examining it first. Try to at least get a general impression of the books you’re interested in.

Conduct this oracle exercise for at least six months. During this time you should consult the oracles on a regular basis, e.g., twice a week, once for each



oracle type. But avoid asking the same question twice (to both oracles)! Don't try to force an answer. If the oracle doesn't seem to want to "speak," just record this fact in your magical (or oracle) diary. You can consult the oracle for another person if you want. In fact, this is even recommended since it's a good way to learn the difference between asking a question about yourself or about someone else. You might discover that you prefer to use one certain system for yourself and another system for others, or maybe a third system for both. That's often the case. But you need a certain amount of practice to find out.

Always keep in mind that all oracles serve the purpose of liberation in the sense that they can give you pertinent information that would otherwise be very difficult or even impossible to obtain. Never become dependent on oracle answers, and always treat the oracle with respect like you would treat a wise old friend. If you're not feeling well or if your intuition says you should wait, postpone your consultation. Maybe you'll even realize after a while that there are some things you really don't want to know in advance.

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# MAGICAL ORDERS (II)

## ROSICRUCIANISM AND MAGIC

There's always been a sense of bitter rivalry between Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry surrounding the question as to which of the two magical groups is actually the oldest. This controversy is in part agitated by the fact that some Rosicrucian orders are quite pompous about their historical legitimacy, even going so far as to claim that their roots go way back to ancient Egypt or even earlier and that their traditions have remained unchanged since then. Absurdly it's only consequential that an organization such as AMORC (Anciens Mystica Ordo Rosæ Crucis = Ancient Mystical Order of the Rose Cross) would claim in a promotional flyer that even Echnaton and Socrates had been members.

Since Western magic has (re)learned to not confuse mythical symbols with “scientific facts” we no longer need to take such claims so seriously, but this kind of inelegant wording only helps fan the flames of dispute when in reality it would be much more appropriate to try and come to terms with common adversaries (especially the church).

In any case, regular history proves that the word “Rosicrucianism” first originated in the year 1614 with the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*. This is one hundred years before the first Masonic grand lodge was founded in London. While the Freemasons postulate being descendants of medieval cathedral builders (which is most likely justified according to our current level of knowledge), the history of Rosicrucianism is marked by proliferation and inconsistencies. This will come as no surprise when we

begin to look closer at the historical development of this spiritual movement that had a great impact on Western magic.

Even the symbolism of the movement itself gives rise to a number of speculations. Is the word Rosicrucian derived from Christian Rosencreutz, the protagonist of the *Fama Fraternitatis*? Though the names may be similar, it's probably just a pseudonym borrowed from the brotherhood, and not the other way around. After all, the link between the rose and the cross is an old familiar symbolism. In Christian allegory the two symbols often stand for the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ. Plus, the cross is known worldwide in various mythological systems, and in Christianity it is equated with sacrifice and suffering.

Since the spiritual forefathers of the movement were predominantly Protestant, they might have chosen the rose and the cross because these symbols are used on the coat of arms of Martin Luther. On the other hand, there's another theory that the name stems from the field of alchemy. The word *ros* means "dew" in Latin and water was a significant element in alchemy for changing base metals into gold, and *crux* is both the alchemistic symbol for light and the sign that represents the four elements.

So it's no surprise that even the Rosicrucians themselves had difficulty agreeing on the origin, rituals, and teachings of the movement. It seems wrong to us to refer to just *the* Brotherhood of Rosicrucians since the organizational structure of this school of thought is even more muddled and confusing than that of Freemasonry.

So let's take a look at the legend of Rosicrucianism with forbearance and observe it in the same way we've managed to do with Freemasonry—by illustrating their own claims yet looking at them with a kindly critical eye.

It all began in 1614 in Kassel, Germany, with the first publication of the book originally titled *Allgemeine und General Reformation der gantzen weiten Welt. Beneben der Fama Fraternitatis, Deß Löblichen Ordens des Rosenkreuzes/an alle Gelehrte und Häupter Europæ geschrieben: Auch einer kurtzen Responsion, von dem Herrn Haselmeyer gestellet/welcher desswegen von den Jesuitern ist gefänglich eingezogen/und auff eine Galleren geschmiedet*. The German manuscript probably began circulating in around 1610. It was then published in several languages.

The readers who want to take part in a "general reformation of the world" were encouraged to do away with "Porphiry, Aristotle, and Galen, yea and that which hath but a

meer shew of learning.” The anonymous author stresses that no one could directly apply for membership, but at the same time it reads: “Nor any body shal fail, who so gives but his name to speak with some of us, either by word of mouth, or else if there be some lett in writing. And this we say for a truth, That whosoever shall earnestly, and from his heart, bear affection unto us, it shal be beneficial to him in goods, body and soul . . .”

In order to take the wind out of the sails right from the start of any contemporaries who might have hoped for instruction in the extremely popular art of practical alchemy, the author explains: “But now concerning (and chiefly in this our age) the ungodly and accursed Gold-making . . . we therefore do by these presents publicly testifie, That the true Philosophers are far of another minde, esteeming little the making of Gold, which is but a parergon; for besides that they have a thousand better things.”

In other words, it is claimed that the Rosicrucians did indeed know how to change base metals into gold and to make medicinal elixirs, but their most powerful kind of alchemy was reserved for another, higher purpose: changing the mind of common mortals into spiritual and philosophical wisdom. From then on, this aura of secret knowledge had a lasting effect on the image of Rosicrucianism in the public eye.

The *Fama* continues on with a description of a certain Christian Rosencreutz, the founder and spiritual forefather of the Rosicrucian movement. According to this book, Rosencreutz was born in 1378 in Germany to a royal but poor family. Christian’s parents give him to a cloister at the age of five since they could no longer provide for him. After learning “indifferently the Greek and Latin Tongues,” the young man goes with a monk on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But the monk dies while in Cyprus. The determined youth then “shipped himself over, and went to Damasco” where he stayed for a long time.

There Rosencreutz puts his great inborn talent to the test in the fields of medicine and healing, thus attracting the attention of the wisest men in town. In turn, he was inspired by their knowledge of science, mathematics, and other secret things. In the end he abandons his original travel plans to search for the wisdom of Arabia at the source. The wise men of Damasco (Damascus) send him to a place named Damcar that was never identified and was probably intended to be a mythical place. In Damcar he is received by the wise men, the *Fama* continues, “not as a stranger, but as one whom they had long expected, they called him by his name, and shewed him other secrets”—these not only included mathematics, physics, and alchemy, but also knowledge of a specific document

Allgemeine vnd General  
**REFORMATION,**  
 der ganzen weiten Welt.  
 Venebender  
**FAMA FRATERNITATIS,**  
 Desz Löblichen Ordens des  
 Rosenkreuzes / an alle Bekhrte  
 vnd Häupter Europz geschrie-  
 ben:  
 Auch einer kurzen RESPONSION  
 von dem Herrn Haselmeyer gestellet / welcher  
 deswegen von den Jesuiten in gefänglich ein-  
 gezogen / vnd auff eine Gallere ge-  
 schmiedet:  
 Jetzt öffentlich in Druck verfertiget  
 vnd allen rechten Herzen communiciret  
 worden.  
 Gedruckt zu Cassel / durch Wilhelm Bessell /  
 ANNO M. DC. XIV.

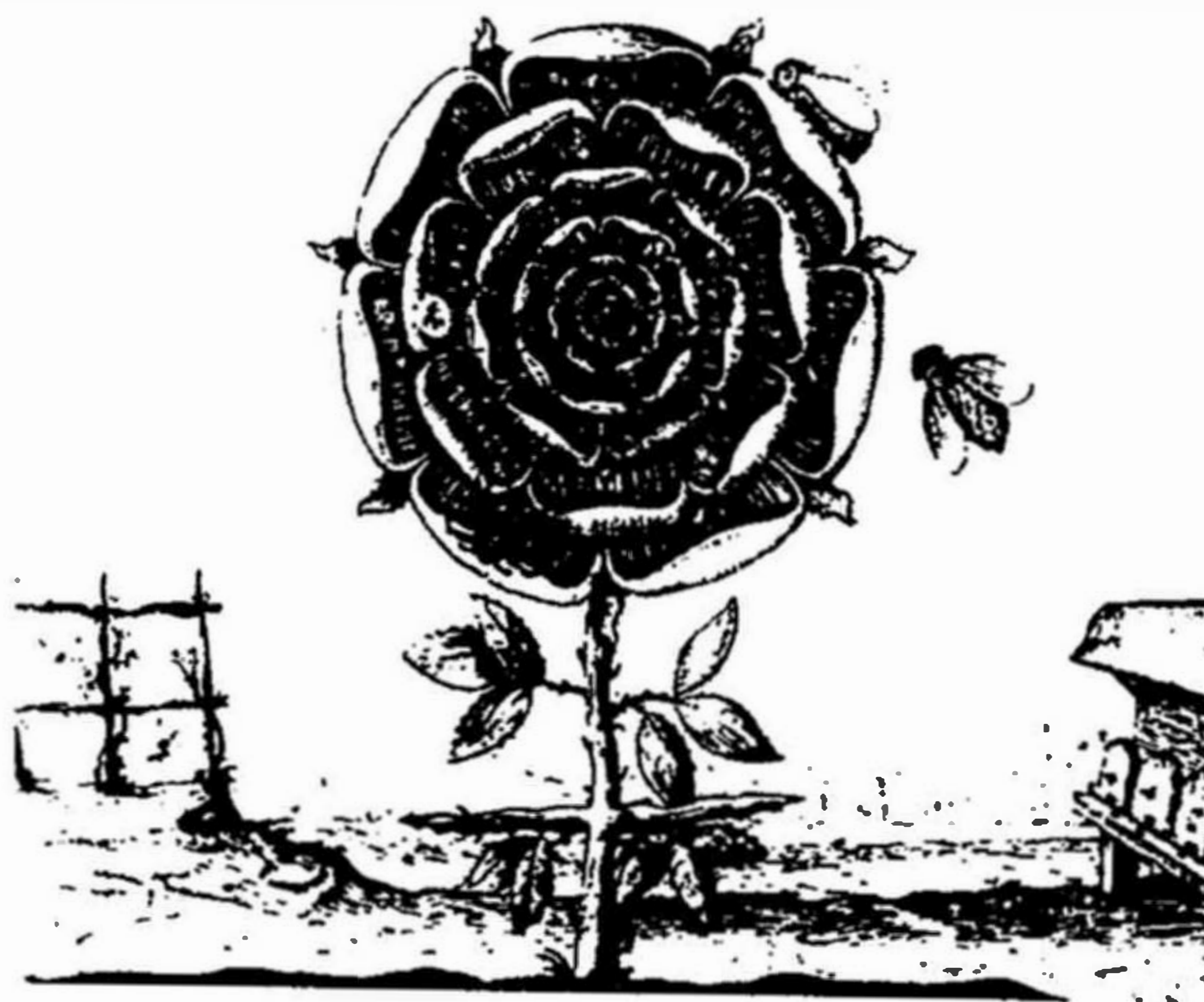


Illustration 36: Above: title page of the *Fama Fraternitatis*;  
 Below: Rosicrucian symbolism: "The rose gives the bee honey."

referred to in the *Fama* as *Book M*. The latter jewel, whose complete title was probably something like *Liber Mundi* or *The Book of the World*, was said to contain the secrets of the universe. The young man Rosencreutz decides to translate this comprehensive book into Latin so that he could share it with others upon his return to Europe.

After three years in Damcar, Rosencreutz travels to Egypt where he studies natural history along with the metaphysical writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistos, the legendary ancient Egyptian sage. Next he continues on to the Moroccan town of Fez where he studies magic and the Kabbalah. Rosencreutz is amazed at the ease with which the Arabians and Africans exchange new thoughts and further develop old ones. This is all done merely to increase the general knowledge for the benefit of humanity. And if he seemed disturbed by the “impurity” of the magic practiced in Fez, he recognized and used the opportunity to promote his own Christian faith.

Finally, Rosencreutz returns to Europe via Spain. He’s eager to pass on his new knowledge to others. Naively he expects the Spanish scholars to rejoice at the opportunity to improve and correct their inadequate knowledge, false methods, and misguided moral philosophy. Instead the young scholar is met with nothing but scorn and hostility. “But it was to them a laughing matter; and being a new thing unto them, they feared that their great Name should be lessened, if they should now again begin to learn and acknowledge their many years Errors.” Disappointed, Rosencreutz travels to other countries and meets the same response. The people seem only to envy his alchemistic skills but he categorically refuses to satisfy this craving.

Disheartened, Rosencreutz finally returns to Germany to reflect on the foolishness of his fellow men. Several years later, he reaches the decision that the world is simply not yet mature enough for his great moral and spiritual reformation.

But he doesn’t want to lose all of the scientific and spiritual knowledge that he gained over the years, so he decides to write everything down in books that are to remain secret until better, more enlightened times are upon us. He invites three monks who grew up with him in the cloister to help him with this important task. In this way, Christian Rosencreutz and his colleagues founded a new, quasi-monastic order, namely the “Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians” or simply the Rosicrucians, which (according to the author of the *Fama*) had the single goal of showing others the right path.

Progress is slow because the Rosicrucians spend a great deal of time and energy on many other things. Word spreads quickly that Father Christian (as he is then referred

to) possesses special medical skills that he passed on to the brethren as well, and soon there are constantly sick people waiting at the doors of the Rosicrucians to be healed. In addition, they have an ambitious building plan that they want to realize, as Father Christian decided to build a great temple, the “Domus Sanctus Spiritus” (“House of the Holy Spirit”) that was to become the spiritual home of the Order. Finally, the brethren decide to initiate four more monks into their Order; together they realize Father Christian’s great plan and also found a library of arts and sciences.

When the task was completed and there was no more reason for the Rosicrucians to remain together, they decided to split up and spread their medical knowledge across the whole world. But first they agree on six basic principles that would unite them forever. First, they were only allowed to pick a worldly profession in the field of medicine and the patients must not be charged for their services. Second, they were not allowed to wear the habit of a monk as other orders do, but instead were required to dress according to the customs of the land that they currently lived in so as not to draw attention to themselves. Third, they were to meet once a year in the Sanctus Spiritus on “Day C.” There have been speculations that Day C could refer to the festival of Corpus Christi that is celebrated on the Thursday eight weeks after Easter. The meeting was held to exchange knowledge and information and revive the brotherhood. Fourth, each brother was to choose a worthy successor to whom he was to pass his knowledge on to before his death so that the earthly mission of the Order could continue. Fifth, the initials RC—the abbreviation for the Latin *Rosae Crucis*—were to be used as the seal, password, and symbol of the brotherhood to represent its highest aspirations. These initials were also used to abbreviate the Rosicrucian name itself. And sixth, the existence of the Rosicrucian Order and its special knowledge should remain a strictly guarded secret until the brethren receive a signal that they can then reveal everything.

The *Fama Fraternitatis* reports that the brethren and their chosen successors continue to fulfill their tasks year after year, decade after decade, and enjoy their reputation as skilled healers (one brother allegedly cured the young English Duke of Norfolk of leprosy) while they secretly and silently prepare for the coming moral reformation. Christian Rosencreutz dies in the year 1484 at the age of 106. He was buried by two of his loyal disciples who swore to keep his last resting place a secret for eternity.

Then the order entered a century of peace and renewal. In the year 1604 the author of the *Fama* and several of the brethren discover a mysterious tomb concealed behind a

secret door in a hidden place. The Latin inscription reads: "I will reappear in 120 years." In the middle of the tomb the brethren discover a seven-sided vault with several chambers and an altar in the middle. A radiating light glimmered within.

After taking a closer look at the chambers, the Rosicrucian brethren discover copies of all of the order's books as well as a copy of the *Vocabularium* by the famous Swiss doctor and alchemist Paracelsus. Furthermore, the chambers contain writings of Father Christian's life story and the "looking-glasses of divers virtues, as also in other places were little bells, burning lamps, & chiefly wonderful artificial Songs." The brethren conclude that they've found the grave of the order's founding father.

This is obviously a historical anachronism because Paracelsus wasn't born until 1493, ten years after Christian Rosencreutz was buried. Although that was a mystery to later researchers, it left the contemporaries of the *Fama* cold and didn't adversely affect the success of their great work one bit. In the vault the brethren also find a complete set of documents that would be necessary should the order ever be reconstituted. The corpse of Christian Rosencreutz was also there, "a fair and worthy body, whole and unconsumed." Even in death he clutched a copy of Book T. written in gold lettering which, according to the *Fama*, "next to the Bible is our greatest treasure." Later, historians were never able to identify this book, of course.

This now seems like the right time for the brethren of the order to go out into the world and spread their message of a worldwide moral renewal, and to open their ranks for a larger number of new members.

The *Fama Fraternitatis* was immediately a sweeping success and it soon became the talk of the town throughout all of Europe. Of course there are a number of unanswered questions: Does the order still actually exist today? How much fact is in the story about Christian Rosencreutz? How can one become a member of this secret society and what were the motivating factors of the men of that period who were so open-minded toward occult and spiritual ideas? But if that were not enough, two more books about Rosicrucianism were published soon afterward that caused quite an uproar themselves. The first was titled *Confessio Fraternitatis Or The Confession of the Laudable Fraternity of the Most Honorable Order of the Rosy Cross, Written to all the Learned of Europe* that was first published in Latin in the year 1615. The *Confessio* is basically a more detailed description of the Rosicrucian philosophy as documented in the *Fama*. It clearly pointed out that the order is open to all suitable people regardless of their class membership. Furthermore, the



tract announced the fundamental Christian faith of the brotherhood and its condemnation of the pope, the Islamic prophet Mohammed, the “false alchemists,” and everyone else who cannot accept the new science. The criticism of the pope clearly shows that the book must have come from a Protestant source, which later researchers unequivocally proved.

The “New Age” was a familiar concept even back then. On the basis of various symbols in the “book of nature,” the Rosicrucian brethren recognized that a new era was upon them “when the World shall awake out of her heavy and drowsy sleep, and with an open heart, bare-head, and bare-foot, shall merrily and joyfully meet the new arising Sun.”

Finally, one year later, the third and last part of the Rosicrucian trilogy was published in Strasbourg, namely the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz* (*Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosencreutz anno 1459*). The year is fictitious, of course, and corresponded to the common conventions of the times. This small volume calls itself a “Hermetic” romance and describes the adventurous tale of Christian Rosencreutz who is invited at a very old age to attend the wedding of a mythical royal couple. The story is full of allegorical details and cosmological, alchemistic, astrological, magical, and heraldic symbolism.

The *Chymical Wedding* can rightly be described as an “initiation novel.” The story begins with Rosenkreutz preparing for the celebration. He undergoes all sorts of tests and trials and rites of initiation before he finally reaches his goal and is welcomed as a guest of honor. He is awarded the knightly “Medal of the Golden Stone,” which is probably an allusion to the legendary “Philosopher’s Stone.”

As customary to early tracts, the author here also goes to great pains to point out that the goal of Christian Rosencreutz and of all the others who are awarded the “Golden Stone” is the transformation of spirit and not the more crude form of alchemy.

Although all three documents mentioned were published anonymously, it was soon discovered that they were written by a scholar named Johann Valentin Andreae. (It might be interesting to point out here that in the year 1979—exactly 365 years after the *Fama* was published—a direct descendant of Johann Valentin Andreae and his wife opened an occult/metaphysical bookstore in Bonn, Germany, with the name “Horus” . . .) Andreae, a learned man who had once studied in Tübingen, was an authority in the fields of optics, astronomy, philosophy, and mathematics. He was also well familiar with the significant writings of Hebrew and Arabian scholars as well as those of the classical authors of

Die himmlische und irdische Eva, die Mutter aller Creaturen im Himmel und auf Erden.

Der Stern der Weisen aus Bergelande.

Gott ist ein ewiger, unerschaffener, unendlicher, übernatürlicher, selbständiger, himmlischer und ewiger Geist, und ist in der Natur und Zeit ein fester, lebendiger, ständiger Geist gewesen.

**OCULUS DIVINUS**  
per quem Deus vidit & creavit omnia.

Ein Jahr Das hat seinen Ausgang: **JUNGFRAU** verständigst seiner Knecht.

Lumen Gratiae. Ergon hat das

Himmliche Eva, die Reine Geburt.

O Mensch, o Mensch, betrachte, wie Gott das Wort ist Mensch worden.

Einstig ist ich empfangen, Wer nicht glaubt, der ist verdammt.

Tinctura Coelestis. S. S. Sacramenta.

**ROSA CRUCIS VENITE.**

Videte. Videte. Videte. Wer Taget hat zu sehen, der kann und wird wohl recht sehen.

Ende Fremdenheit bey dem Irdischen, dem vertriebenem Thier. Amen.

Natura ist ein ewiger, unerschaffener, unendlicher, übernatürlicher, selbständiger, himmlischer und ewiger Geist, und ist in der Natur und Zeit ein fester, lebendiger, ständiger Geist gewesen.

**OCULUS NATURAE**  
Sive Coeli. per quem Natura vidit & regit terram omnia.

Ein Jahr Das hat seinen Ausgang: **SOPHIA** verständigst seiner Knecht.

Lumen Naturae. Partem pro

Irdische Eva, die Alte Geburt.

O Mensch, o Mensch, betrachte, wie die Natur ist ein Gott Welt, und ein Mensch worden.

Einstig ist ich empfangen, Wer nicht glaubt, der ist verdammt.

Tinctura Physica.

Jungfrau Milch und Ewiger Geist, das ist die Natur und das ist die Natur.

**PHILOSOPHORUM VENITE.**

Arrigite. Arrigite. aures. Wer Ohren hat zu hören, dem darf man nicht überlaut jureten.

Er ist der Natur vertrieben, und die vertriebenem Natur und geheimer Knecht.

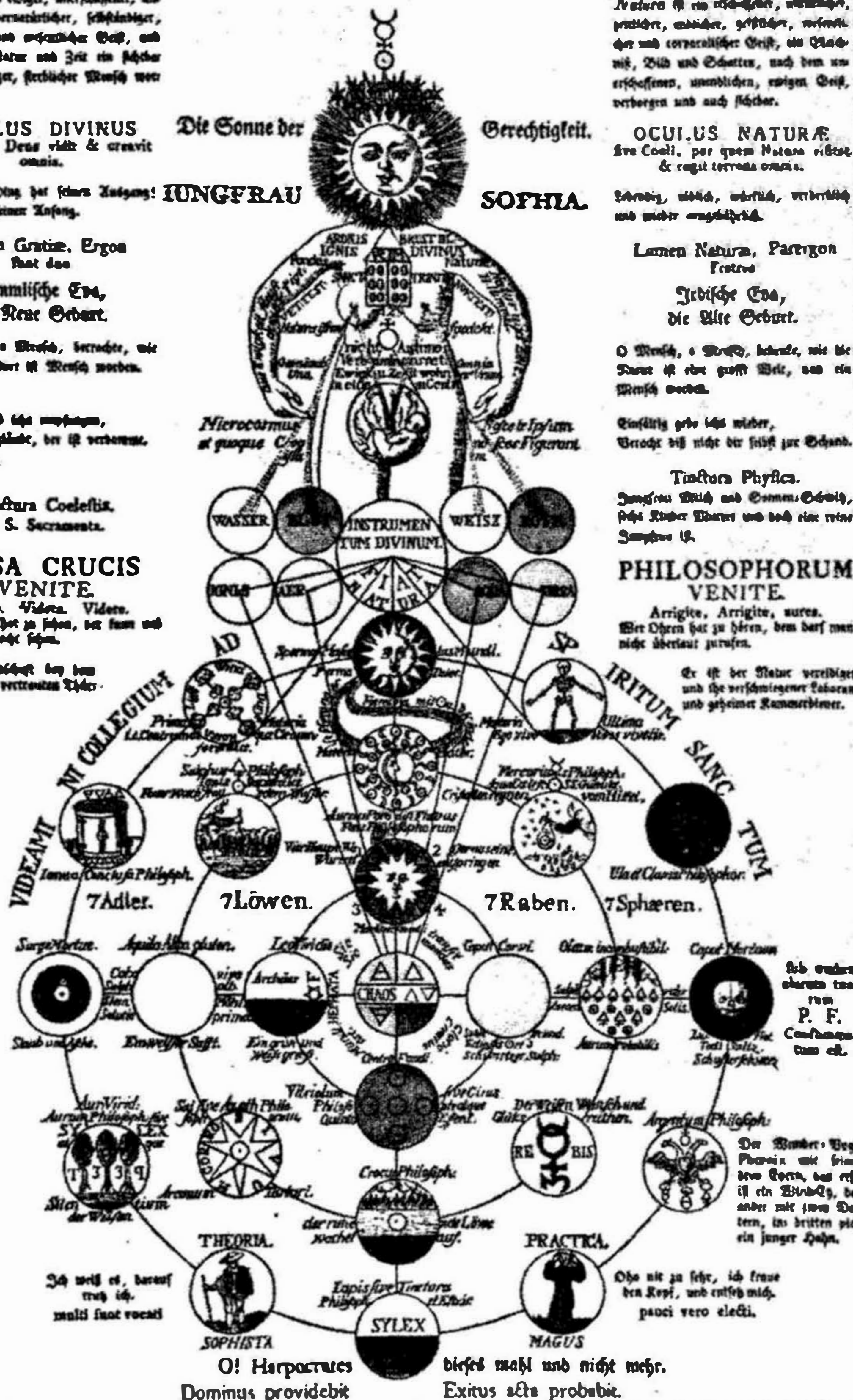


Illustration 37: Alchemistic cosmology of the Rosicrucians

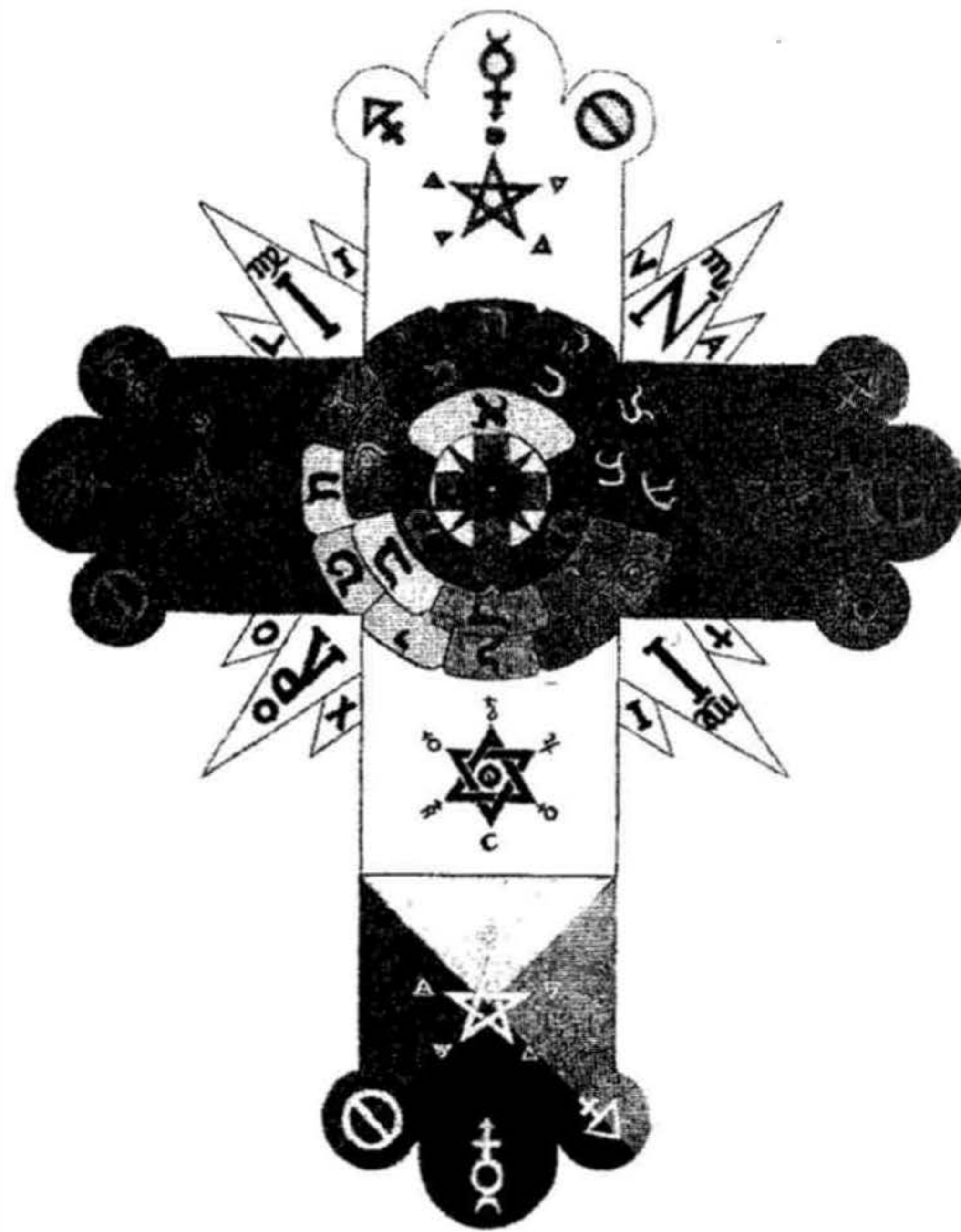
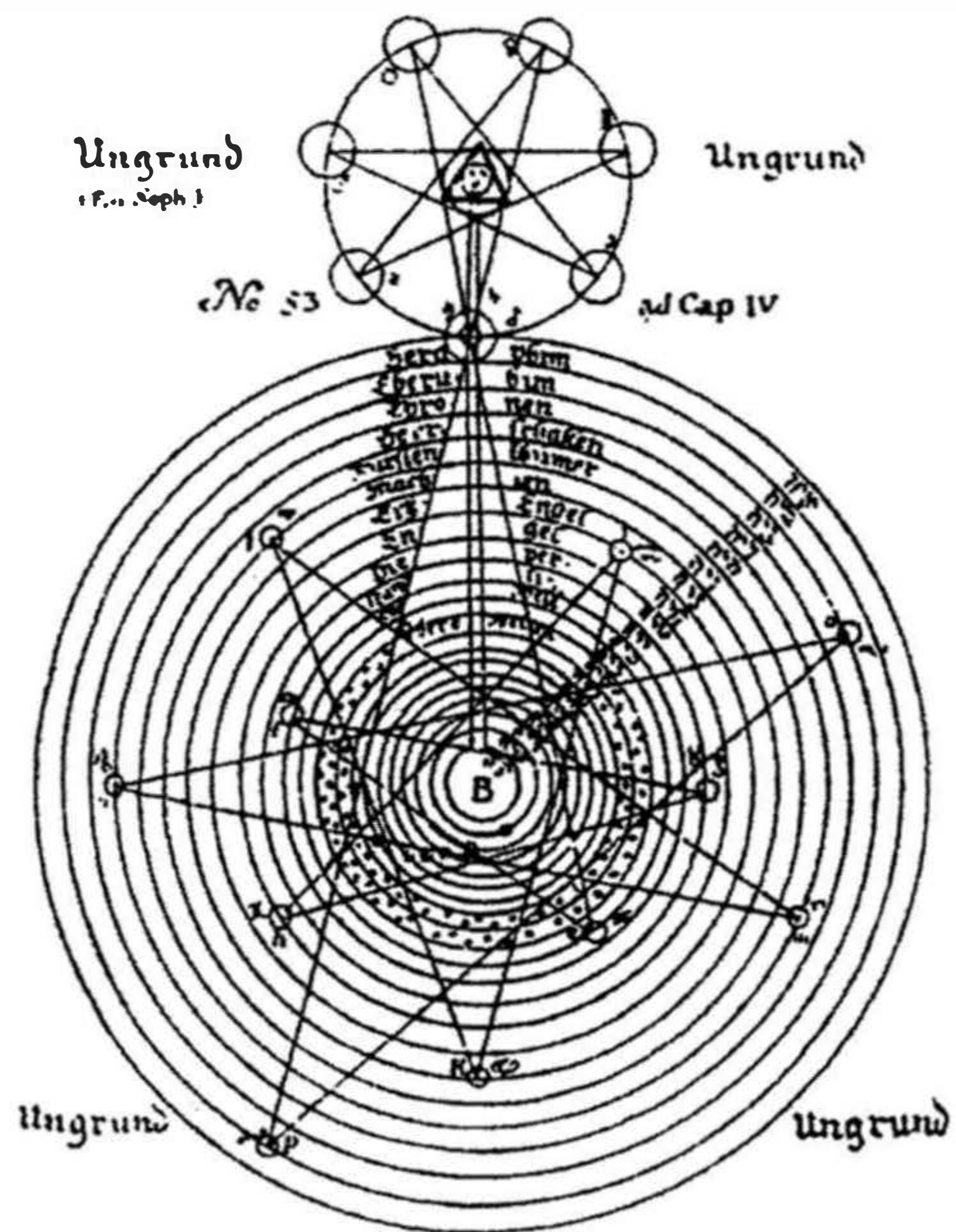
the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the authors of the Reformation, and, of course, the writings of Elizabethan magician and scientist John Dee (back then scientists were still called “natural philosophers”). In Tübingen he was one of the visionary associates of the reputed legal scholar Christoph Besold and admired the literature of Egyptian Hermeticism, Christian mysticism, and Jewish Kabbalah.

Andreæ and his colleagues were surely serious about the “general reformation” of the world mentioned in Rosicrucian documents. In any case, that century was in great need of such utopian ideas. The Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, and the Thirty Years War that broke out in 1618 in which Germany lost a third of its population all contributed to an increase in the desire for peace, unity, and prosperity.

In any case, the documents generated quite an interest in Rosicrucianism throughout Europe. Everywhere “searchers” flocked to scholars seeking membership in the order, charlatans ripped off the gullible ones by selling them fake Rosicrucian documents and fragments of the Philosopher’s Stone. While some profited from the whole situation, others suffered from it, like French mathematician Descartes who returned to his homeland from Germany in 1624 and was confronted with accusations of being a secret initiate of the Rosicrucian Order. Although the people surely intended this as a compliment, it was not a harmless matter since the Catholic church had already imposed strict sanctions against such “heresy.”

For now, the important thing to remember is that the Rosicrucian Order as documented in profane history by Andreæ was purely fictitious and was merely meant to shake up the people and generate an interest in moral and spiritual affairs. But as so often in the history of magic, wishful thinking became reality. Since the Rosicrucian documents had a long-lasting effect on the people, reality soon caught up and countless Rosicrucian-like groups began to shoot up like mushrooms. This was surely also encouraged by the numerous leading scholars such as the German Michael Maier and Englishman Robert Fludd (the “spiritual successor” of John Dee) who put a great deal of effort into speculating in a benevolent way about the existence, structure, and moral goals of the brotherhood, thus generating such a wave of long-lasting “advertisement” for them that can still be felt today.

The authenticity of the Rosicrucian documents was questioned shortly after they first began circulating, especially among Catholics where they were viewed as an explosive political threat, an aspect that’s quickly forgotten today since the average person



*Illustration 38: Above: astrological system of the Rosicrucians;  
Below: Kabbalistic-Hermetic Rosicrucian symbolism of the Golden Dawn*

generally lacks such historical background information. One glance at history will also show that the claims to authenticity of some Rosicrucian orders was never really an issue back in the days of Andreae as it is today. Even Robert Fludd admitted in his 1616 publication of *A Compendious Apology for the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, Pelted with the Mire of Suspicion and Infamy, but Now Cleansed and Purged by the Waters of Truth* that there probably never was any formal Rosicrucian organization. But he argued that any group of like-minded individuals who share the same philosophical and moral goals could be considered a true movement. And he even went so far as to say, “I assert that every theologian of the Mystic Church is a true brother of the Rose Cross.” To him, the Rosicrucians were true Christians and the spiritual heirs of Hermes Trismegistos, whom he felt a strong connection to without actually being a member of the order himself.

This reflects the paradoxical situation that the main representatives of Rosicrucianism were scholars who admittedly never actually were members of the brotherhood and never even had any contact to it. As common to the obscurantist tradition of Western magic, this was interpreted as intentional misleading by interested parties (e.g., later organizations that usually claimed to be the “true” Rosicrucians) without ever being able to present proof of such. This aspect is significant insofar as that everything that was later presented as “Rosicrucian thought” and “knowledge” actually stemmed for the most part from Hermetic or Kabbalistic authors (John Dee, Francis Bacon, Robert Fludd, Paracelsus, etc.) and had absolutely nothing at all to do with a historically verifiable Rosicrucian Order.

Today it’s a proven fact that the formal origins of Freemasonry and similar groups (e.g., the Illuminates) were inspired by Rosicrucian thought so that, in this sense, they can actually be considered the first true Rosicrucian. Following Fludd’s death in the year 1637, interest in the order faded. This silence was to last until the start of the eighteenth century when suddenly several organizations entered the picture that all claimed to be the true and only Rosicrucians. These organizations were not as mystically theologically oriented as their alleged predecessors since they were more concerned with practical alchemy and magic.

In the year 1710, the document *The perfect and true preparation of the Philosophical Stone according to the secret of the Brotherhoods of the Golden and Rosy Cross* was published in Breslau, Germany, written by a certain “Sincerus Renatus” whose real name was Sigmund Richter. This was the birth of the “Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross”

of which Richter had many wondrous things to say and whose rituals he described in detail. But we don't want to spend any more time on this branch of Rosicrucianism and its magical/alchemistic complexities—there's just not enough room here. The main reason that we've mentioned the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross in the first place is because it spawned a successor organization in Holland in 1699 whose grade system strongly resembled that of the later Golden Dawn, namely the “Brethren of St. John the Evangelist from Asia in Europe” (also commonly referred to as the “Asiatic Brethren”), founded by Count Hans Heinrich von Ecker und Eckhoffen. This system is derived from the older grade structure of the Golden and Rosy Cross and consists of the following nine grades: Junior, Theoreticus, Practicus, Philosophus, Minor, Major, Adeptus exemptus, Magister, and Magus.

According to many critics, the Asiatic Brethren was mainly a swindle business that the count only used to fill his pocketbook, which he surely succeeded in doing.

The legend of Rosicrucianism certainly made a great impact. Controversial figures such as Cagliostro and the Count of St. Germain boasted about their ties to the brotherhood without ever claiming to actually be a member. But that didn't stop later Rosicrucian groups from claiming St. Germain to be one of their own.

Through the influence of Eliphas Lévi, Rosicrucianism received a new boost in popularity in the nineteenth century after being pushed into the background for a while by Freemasonry. Lévi never claimed to be a member of the brotherhood either, but he did trigger new enthusiasm about Rosicrucianism with his magical theories. In the year 1866 the *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (usually abbreviated as SRIA and meaning “Rosicrucian Society in England”) was founded by high-ranking Freemasons. The Rosicrucian-inspired Golden Dawn developed from this organization in 1887, although it integrated theosophical and pure Hermetic knowledge into its teachings as well. One year later, the eccentric Marquis Stanislas de Guaita founded the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* (“Kabbalistic Order of the Rosicrucians”) in France, and in 1890 writer and occult poet Joséphin Péladan founded the schismatic *Order of the Rose-Croix of the Temple and the Grail*, which considerably outdid the former in popularity. Péladan, who today would probably be called a public relations genius, christianized or catholized the teachings of the *Ordre Kabbalistique* and attracted a great number of people by organizing his famous artistic “Rosicrucian Salon” in 1892 in Paris (which was quite artsy at the time) where he held lectures on mystic painting.

Rosicrucianism also received new impulses from the Rosicrucians in the United States. Although it took until the twentieth century before this movement became established in the New World, it soon set the tone worldwide. Upon returning to the USA after a trip to Europe, German expatriate Carl von Grasshof, a theosophist by trade, was the first to found the “Rosicrucian Fellowship” in California in 1907 using his new name, Max Heindel. This group integrated a number of theosophical ideas including the teachings of karma and reincarnation as well as the concept of vegetarianism.

But by far the most popular group of the time was AMORC, which we already mentioned. AMORC was founded in 1915 by H. Spencer Lewis and its membership grew immensely in just a short time as a result of aggressive newspaper advertising. Lewis, who was an experienced advertising expert by trade, turned Rosicrucianism into a commercial American-style business. One idea he used to promote the organization was to actually make gold during an alchemistic experiment while some of his students and a reporter observed him. Of course, there’s no way to tell now whether this was a genuine feat or nothing but a trick. In any case Lewis certainly took advantage of the resulting publicity to make some money, and he established a regular Rosicrucian empire that made millions of dollars each year (even today AMORC is the world largest Rosicrucian order). He also introduced the principle of self-initiation (around the same time Aleister Crowley did, although whether or not the two were in contact was never indisputably proved). The order claims spiritual ancestors such as the Pharaoh Echnaton, Platon, Aristoteles, Jesus Christ, Cicero, Thomas von Aquin, Francis Bacon, Benjamin Franklin, and Claude Débussy, just to name a few. (A similar eclectic list of “saints” can also be found in Aleister Crowley’s “Gnostic-Catholic Church.”)

AMORC’s practical instruction, as with most other Rosicrucian organizations, is limited to a minimum. Apart from mild visualization and intonation exercises, the main focus is on the development of PSI skills and spiritual speculations, e.g., about Atlantis, Christ’s alleged visit to Kashmir, and the like, as is generally more characteristic of theosophy. The organization is based in San José, California, and maintains an entire park with several Egyptian-style buildings, an Egyptian museum, a planetarium, laboratories, recording studios, and the like.

In contemporary magic, Rosicrucianism plays merely a subordinate role even if many Rosicrucian organizations put on quite a show when it comes to preserving “ancient occult knowledge.” In any case, Rosicrucian ideas and grade structures left a sig-

nificant mark on magic just like Jewish Kabbalah later did. Even the Freemasons have their “Rosicrucian degrees” and the Rosicrucian name still stands for authenticity and grand nobility in the eyes of many people.

However, we’d like to point out that the Rosicrucians have lost some of their innovative power throughout the years. During the era of Andreae and Fludd, many of their ideas were still revolutionary and groundbreaking, but their standards slipped over the course of time and they headed toward complacent adaptation and self-adulation. Here, too, the reality of such organizational structures with their squabbling and schisms has caught up with and destroyed any utopian ideals of a humanistic ideal state they might have once had.

These critical comments on Rosicrucianism are based on numerous contacts to active and former members of various origin who all unanimously complain that the magical training in their current or former order was always lacking, an accusation that is heard much too often about other allegedly “true” magical orders as well. Since the Rosicrucians originally had no specific magical claims and always pursued a more mystical-religious direction, it comes as no surprise that magic plays such a small role in modern successor organizations, and that such groups are more concerned with symbolic speculations as in Freemasonry. Of course, such Rosicrucian organizations that attempt to lure people seriously interested in practical magic with pompous promises shouldn’t be surprised when they’re measured according to their own standards—and such comparisons often turn out quite poorly.

Just to be fair, we need to mention the fact that the Rosicrucians themselves view their own history quite differently. Many of them believe, for example, that Rosicrucian elements already appeared in the eleventh century. Of course, we should also add to our historical overview above that Andreae was able to make such a breathtaking impact with his documents (of which he officially claimed only to write *Chymical Wedding*, but overwhelming evidence proves that he indeed was responsible for the two earlier pamphlets as well) mainly because they appeared at a time when the breeding ground had already been well prepared by the great number of brotherhoods, secret “Hermetic parliaments,” and unions of alchemistic scholars. In fact, this era could even be described as a period of “occult group mania,” such as was also common in the second half of the nineteenth century. In this sense it really is possible that Rosicrucian philosophy “was in the air” much earlier. Surely the persecution of magical doings by the Catholic and



Protestant churches didn't help to loosen such secret movements that were popular at the time. But to claim that by merely "reading between the lines" you could find enough evidence that "the one" Rosicrucian order truly did exist has no objective foundation whatsoever. Of course even Khunrath and his teacher Paracelsus used the cross and rose as symbols, but that doesn't seem like a valid reason to conclude that there must have been active Rosicrucian organizations at a much earlier date. Wouldn't it be more logical to assume that Andreae and his contemporaries simply borrowed the common symbolism of the time in order to better transport their rather utopian-chiliastic message? It would probably be impossible to clear up this matter once and for all today, but there's nothing wrong with asking ourselves what benefit modern people would have by pushing back the origins of Rosicrucianism a few hundred years. After all, this is merely an academic mind game with meticulous analysis that distracts from the original intention of an organization that was once considered so progressive in a social and philosophical sense.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 83

#### PENDULUM TRAINING (II)

Use your pendulum at least once daily for four weeks for divination (in particular for yes/no questions) and record your results in your magical diary.

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# LETTER MAGIC

The following chapter contains information originally printed in the British magic magazine *The Lamp of Thoth* (13/Vol. II, No. 7, 1984).

One of the obscure yet effectual magical techniques peculiar to German magic from the early nineteenth century is letter magic. Technically, we might describe it as form of “resonance alchemy” operative on the physical, mental, and spiritual level.

Generally speaking, letter magic comes in two distinct flavors: rune magic, and the sonic techniques belonging to the tradition of what Rudolf von Sebottendorf (1875–1945), to whom we owe the term “Turkish Freemasonry.”

Assuming that the tradition he claims to describe did indeed originate in the East, it would seem to relate to Dervish or Sufi knowledge connected to the Bektashi or Mevleki tradition. Sebottendorf’s claim of initiation into a Ottoman Dervish order is questionable, and it is fairly certain that he actually plagiarized the works of the Suabian Freemason Johann Baptist Kerning (1774–1851) whose student Karl Kolb had published these exercises as early as 1857.

Rumors of letter magical operations being conducted both by the inner circles of theosophy and Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophical movement could not, as of this writing, be substantiated. However, remnants of these exercises can be found in some practices of Christian Science, and Louis T. Culling makes mention of a similar technique in his *Complete Magick Curriculum of the Secret Order G.B.G.* based on I-Ching trigrams. As regards his sources, Culling asserts that he originally learned about letter magic from

a document by a German initiate named “Koenig.” It seems more likely, though, that he read Kerning’s book.

The title he specifically quotes in this context, namely *Man and His Highest Purpose* (London 1932), was actually authored neither by Kerning nor anybody named Koenig, but by the then widely read Czech occultist Karl Weinfurter. Nevertheless there is ample proof that such practices were used in earlier times, including Islamic cultures, which, ultimately, relegates the question of whether or not Sebottendorf’s and Culling’s claims may be deemed substantive in the realm of academia.

More importantly, these exercises are highly effective and certainly not for the faint of heart! These are high-caliber techniques, and you’ll be certain to see what I mean once you’ve been at it for three or four weeks.

We won’t dig any deeper into the entire range of alchemistic implications tied to Sebottendorf’s system, as this would require an entire detailed monography of its own. Suffice to say that the goal of his specific form of letter magic and mysticism aims to change the unrefined physical and spiritual base substance of the candidate into metaphysical gold.

Obviously, an ambitious process of this magnitude requires time and devotion, which is reflected by the fact that the training involved will generally take at least seventeen months. Some adepts may cover the prescribed curriculum successfully at an accelerated pace, which seems to occur primarily if they can draw back on soundly trained magical skills. Progress is signified by clearly defined, very specific phenomena and perceptions that will begin to occur in the course of the operation. The very nature of these signals documents this system’s strong relationship to practical alchemy.

True, it’s highly challenging program—the upside being that the adept will only need to invest some ten to thirty minutes daily in this specialized training. No other restrictions apply. A vegetarian or vegan diet is not required, but consumption of alcohol and other drugs should be kept at a strict minimum. This includes the use of tobacco, too.

As you will find out during your practical work, however, there’s little point in laying down a set of a priori rules because you will discover very quickly for yourself what should or should not be avoided. It really doesn’t get more individualistic than this! The magician can work clothed or skyclad, but silken garments are generally not recommended during these exercises. (You can wear them outside your practical regime, of course.)

There *is* one serious catch, though:

*It's absolutely vital not to miss even a single day of practice as this may (and to all probability will) throw you back by weeks, if not more, in your training!*

On the other hand, you should equally take care not to overdo it. One, two, or three exercises daily of ten minutes each are all it ever takes. Let me point out here, too, that it is pointless trying to “accelerate” this type of inner development by force. Indeed, any exaggeration will do you a lot more harm than good. And just as in most other fields of magic, the intensity of your practical work is significantly more important than the frequency you may adopt.

Although the regime described below may seem inordinately simple or even trivial at first glance, experience has shown that these exercises are nonetheless very powerful, as you will realize yourself even after a very short time of practice. It is generally assumed that they are designed to change the body's chemistry, no matter the fact that the process actually triggered here is hardly understood in its entirety to this very day.

The actual work is divided into three parts:

- 1) *Preliminary Exercises*
- 2) *Main Work*
- 3) *Follow-Up Work*

Techniques used are:

- hand mudras;
- vowel intonation (I, A, and O);
- a combination of these vowels with the consonant S;
- various Arabic formulas;
- the throat sign;
- the chest sign;
- the middle sign;
- the master or gut sign, and
- the end sign.

## **PRELIMINARY EXERCISES:**

## HAND MUDRAS AND VOWEL ACTIVATION

The energy activated by performing the I-mudra in combination with the I-Formula can be funneled to distribute throughout the entire body by using the A-mudra and the A-Formula. However, take care to keep a clear head while practicing this activation. You will not want to fall into any undesired trance or even into a state of mediumism here!

The three vowels employed for these exercises are I, A, and O respectively. Thus, we distinguish between the I-Formula, the A-Formula, and the O-Formula.

**I-Formula:** Use your main hand (the right one if you're right-handed, the left hand otherwise); clench a fist and point your arm and forefinger straight up, i.e. perpendicularly into the air; silently vibrate the vowel "i, i, i..." (The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is "ee" as in the word "feel.")

**A-Formula:** Flatten your palm, stretching your fingers, and hold your arm upright, stretching your thumb in a right angle; silently vibrate the vowel "a, a, a..." (The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is "ah" as in the word "art.")

**O-Formula:** Bend your fingers and let the tips of your thumb and forefinger touch lightly; meanwhile, the tip of your stretched forefinger, the inner wrist bone, and the middle of your elbow should form a straight line; raise your arm vertically again; silently vibrate the vowel "o, o, o..." (The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is "oh" as in the word "hoe.")

When performing the I-Formula, you will soon notice your forefinger growing warm. When this happens, lower your arm and move on to the A-Formula. Maintain the prescribed position until you experience a kind of "dry warmth" in your thumb. Then, drop your arm and raise it again to proceed with the O-Formula.

The entire procedure shouldn't take you more than five to ten minutes.

(Average duration of this phase: approximately three days.)

Once you have achieved the desired warmup effect, simply replace the naked vowels I, A, and O with the syllables SI, SA, and SO. (The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, of SI

is “see” as in the word “see.” SA is silently pronounced “sah” as in the word “stark.” SO is silently pronounced “so” as in the word “so.”)

After performing the SI-Formula (“si, si, si ...”), drop your arm to your side again; once you experience your finger growing warm, raise your hand and arm again and immediately shift to the A-mudra and the SA-Formula (“sa, sa, sa ...”) until the targeted warming effect is again achieved.

Now, proceed to perform the THROAT SIGN. Place your bent hand against your throat, your thumb touching your right carotid while your forefinger is resting on your throat. Now, draw your bent hand firmly but not too quickly aside until it rests at your right shoulder. (This movement is similar to your symbolically “cutting” your own throat.) This will activate your throat chakra.

Next, raise your arm again to perform the O-mudra while silently vibrating the mantra “so, so, so ...” until you experience the slight but distinguishable heating-up effect again.

Now, perform the MASTER OR GUT SIGN. Place your bent hand directly below your navel with the tips of your fingers lightly touching your left arm. Your thumb is stretched at a right angle (ninety degrees) while resting against your body, pointing upward. Draw your hand firmly to the right until your fingertips are touching of your body’s right side.

(Average duration of this phase: approximately seven days.)

### **THE MAIN WORK—PART 1**

Continue performing the preliminary exercises described above for seven more days (at five to ten minutes daily). Then, on the sixth day, after conducting the SA-Formula, lift your bent hand to your nose and sniff your index finger. Can you sense a fine sulfuric scent? If so, proceed to the main practice proper as explained in this section.

If not, continue performing the preliminary exercises for another seven days. This is the Sulfurous Phase, meaning that the alchemical process of symbolic *putrefaction* (decay) has set in.

*For fourteen days, ten minutes daily:* Perform the I-mudra and activate it with the SI-Formula until you experience a feeling of increased warmth once again.

Now, lower your arm to raise it again, performing the A-mudra and activate it with the mantra “alám.” (The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahm*,” stressing the second syllable.)

Perform the throat sign while vibrating (silently and continuously) “alám.”

Switch over to the O-mudra as usual; activate it with the SO-Formula. Once you experience the warm-up effect, perform the master sign.

After fourteen days of this practice, keep your hand bent and guide the tip of your forefinger to your tongue. You should be able to experience the bitter taste of “mercury sublimated.” (Sebottendorf doesn’t specify this cryptic term any further. Most practitioners agree that the taste in question is “of a bitte metallic quality.”) This is the Mercury Phase of *sublimation*.

*For fourteen days, ten minutes daily:* Start off by activating the I-mudra in tandem with the SI-formula, then proceed to the A-mudra with the following formulas.

alám (Two days)—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahm*,” stressing the second syllable.

alamas (Two days)—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahm-ahs*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

alar (Seven days)—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahr*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

alamar (Three days)—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahm-ahr*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

After four days, when you place the index finger of your bent hand to your tongue you should experience a salty taste in your mouth. This is the Salt Phase of *condensation*.

Now, the time has come to sharpen your magical perception. Once the adept begins to glimpse a Black Shadow, this part of the Main Work is done. (More specifics on the Black Shadow to follow.)

As is often the case in things magical, these phenomena and perceptions I have described may vary slightly from person to another. This applies to the smells registered as much as to the inner, visual perceptions and your taste experience. Sometimes, the Black Shadow will only appear to be quite vague. Other magicians claim to literally see

the *Caput corvi* (i.e., the “raven head”) mentioned by the medieval and Renaissance alchemists. This is a signal that the *putrefaction* phase has been accomplished.

Now, the phases of *mortification* and *sublimation* may commence.

Now more on the Black Shadow. It is, well, *we can't really claim to know what it actually is!* As some theorists will have it, the appearance of the Black Shadow is an indication that a new “inner body” is beginning to develop. My German magical compeer Peter Ellert, who practiced this system intermittently for over ten years, once pointed out to me that this shadow is most likely the magician's physical body as seen through the inner eye, but from the outside. Alchemistically speaking, this actually makes a lot of sense. It seems that, in this phase, the magician has lost the necessity to cling to his or her physical body and has proceeded to a stage where true extrasensory perception can be developed. While this is obviously merely a phenomenological description offering no ready, plausible “explanation,” it could be helpful to ponder it for awhile. However, none of this knowledge about the actual nature of the Black Shadow is required to proceed with your practice. The truly powerful and unique aspect of this letter magic approach is that it will work, no matter what kind of interpretation or speculation the individual magician will attach to it!

## THE MAIN PRACTICE—PART 2

The following portion of the acclaimed Great Work consists of a phase of complete renewal. This may take anywhere from the usually quoted minimum of three months to up to 696 days (as Sebottendorf puts it rather cryptically, “according to the tablet of the prophet”) or even longer. This period of time will depend entirely on your personal degree of development.

Arguably, this phase and process is best compared to the Kabbalistic stage of “Child of the Abyss.” It will typically be accompanied by very similar emotions and magical phenomena. Moreover, and this makes for another strong similarity, it will generally be followed (or, at least, it *should* be followed) by the true Unio Mystica, or the alchemical “transmutation of lead into gold.”

To proceed with Part 2 of the Main Work, you should activate the I-mudra and immediately switch over to the A-mudra, which is activated with the following mantras (here, too, the same mantra should be used for several days):



alar—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahr*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

kaha ja as—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*kahah-djah-ahz*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

taha—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation is “*ta-hah*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

tasam—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation is “*tah-sahm*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

tas—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*tahz*.”

tasam—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation is “*tah-sahm*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

Next, perform the CHEST SIGN.

Place your angled hand (thumb stretched straight at a right angle) on the left side of your chest with your fingertips lightly touching your left arm. Now, draw your hand back firmly until it comes to rest on the right side of your body. This will activate the heart chakra. (*A note of caution:* Never perform this hand sign more than five times daily as it constitutes a powerful method for raising the kundalini power! Three times daily is generally considered safe.)

After experiencing the Black Shadow, your perception will gradually grow into a symphony of colors ranging from a rich black or blue to a soft, even weak red to pale green. If practiced diligently, these colors should intensify daily. This part of the work is considered as accomplished when the green shadow has turned very bright.

Next, proceed with the MIDDLE SIGN.

Place your hand slightly (about one thumb’s length) below the chest sign’s line and draw it firmly across your chest as usual. Use the following mantras during this operation, one per day, several days in a row:

alám—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*ah-lahm*,” stressing the second syllable.

jas—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*djahz*.”

sa—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*sah*.”

cham—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*khahm*.”

No fixed number of days being given here by Sebottendorf; you will have to determine the duration of each mantric phase following your own intuition.

During this phase, expect your perception to change. As for the Black Shadow, you will now begin to see it as a number of other colors until a yellowish white is achieved. This will then typically transmute into a blinding white when deploying the master sign and the following mantras:

cham—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*khahm*.”

cham asak—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*khahm ah-sahk*,” evenly stressing each syllable.

ka—The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*kah*.”

### FOLLOW-UP WORK

Here, your aim is to let the blinding white color achieved during the conclusion of the previous phase turn into what Sebottendorf terms a “Magnificent Red.”

Only one single mantra is deployed here: NA. (The inner, i.e., silent pronunciation, is “*nah*” as in the word “narcotics.”)

To proceed, perform the **END SIGN**.

The end sign is merely an abbreviated version of the master sign. Place your hand to the left of your navel and draw it firmly across your belly, as usual. The white shadow should develop into a “dirty gray” that will soon mutate into a strong red hue. Once you perceive the shadow in this red color, you have become a “cubic” or “hewn stone.” (The Masonic symbolism of this terminology should be obvious.)

Note that you will expectably move through stages during which you may not be able to tolerate certain things for a limited time. This may manifest itself as a strong dislike of tobacco, alcohol, garlic, and similar items. This is actually the main reason why there is no need to encumber yourself with abstinence from the start. Rather, pursuing this method of training you will more or less automatically discover what is good for your body and what isn’t.

Although these techniques are entirely harmless when conducted in moderation, you may nevertheless experience the occasional dizzy spell or nausea. Sometimes, sudden fits of transpiration may ensue and some practitioners have even reported experiencing the “firy spine” phenomenon; but these side effects are harmless provided they

don't endure for more than a few days. Should they persevere for weeks, *we strongly recommend that you abort the entire exercise for at least a year and resume it at a later date.*

Experience shows that there's basically no point in continuing if the magician really isn't ready for this method of initiation. Indeed, we are quite confident that you will terminate this practice should you not be fit for it yet. In some forty-five years of magical work, we have never encountered a single individual who was able to force the process. While the side effects exacting termination of the process may not be very pleasant, the upside here is that you cannot conceivably come to harm in this manner.

This is merely a short overview of letter magic. Once you have familiarized yourself with the energies stimulated via these exercises, you may also use the various formulas to activate specific parts of your body or to direct the flow of energy there. Magicians who have been initiated into the mystical aspects of the IAO formula will know how to implement it for their own development as well as for activating sigils and talismans.

And sorry to be a bore, but I really cannot overstress the fact that you will require lots of courage, devotion, and perseverance to practice the letter magic system properly. While courage, patience, and a stable psyche are indispensable for any type of magical work, they are of even greater importance in this special field!

One more thing I would like to add here is that there are several other varieties of letter magic not mentioned up until now. For example, some adepts use Islamic mantras from the Quran (as in Sebottendorf's case), while others will project the letters in various colors on to different parts of the body instead, such as projecting a silver "I" on to the sole of your foot, etc.

One characteristic common to all systems is the general usage of essentially meaningless vowels or syllables (e.g., "i," "SI," and the like) which are combined with a visualization and/or perception (e.g., color, form, energy flow, etc.), to be activated with a physical anchor (e.g., mudra, sign, etc.).

Thus, the various flavors of letter magic will implement a combination of several magic subdisciplines including mantra meditation and the use of forms, colors, symbols, mudras, and hand/foot gestures. This combination of various different elements is the primary key to their effectiveness.

The structural formula of basic letter magic reads as follows:

$M_1 = l + i + a$

*Key*

$M_1$  = act of letter magic

l = letter sound (mantra)

i = imagination (color, form)

a = physical anchor (mudra, sign)

Of course, you can also work with Hebrew letters, runes, I-Ching trigrams, and other sonic symbols. It is an attractive task for every magician to develop his or her own proprietary system of letter magic and put it to the test. The possibilities are unlimited!



# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (VI)

## USE OF THE MAGIC MIRROR (V) EXORCISM AND SPIRIT TRAPS (II)

Warning! The following statements about exorcisms are not to be understood as a challenge to try it out! Exorcism is a very touchy affair, and it requires a great deal of psychological and physical stability from the exorcist as well as sound knowledge in the fields of psychology/psychiatry and medicine—and magic, of course, especially magic demonology. For legal reasons we need to emphasize that our statements are purely informative in nature and are merely of historical interest. The procedures used in exorcism would be considered criminal behavior in our society today (bodily harm, compulsion, violation of non-medical practice laws, etc.). Therefore, whoever practices exorcism in our modern times should be aware of any applicable restrictions under civil law.

### POSSESSION

In classical magic, possession is defined as the violent takeover of one being's spirit and/or body by another. In the early days, medicine understood this to be a form of epilepsy, whereas today the term "split personality" is more commonly used ("schizophrenia," a term that is meanwhile considered to be much too vague and is thus often harshly criticized), or "psychotic behavior." The common symptoms of possession are the involuntary hearing of "voices" that often force the victim to do certain things; radical personality changes including the loss of one's own feeling of identity; the feeling that a strange

entity has taken up residence in the body of the victim; excessively frequent nightmares; paranoia (this is rare, though, since possession is more of an active, dynamic phenomenon); the development of incredible physical powers that manifest mainly when the victim is threatened (e.g., when helpers attempt to immobilize the victim) or gripped by fear; memory loss following destructive or atypical patient behavior; sudden fits of shaking and profuse sweating, fever; noticeable change in voice; strongly dilated pupils; accelerated heartbeat; sleeplessness for days or even weeks on end; overall extreme nervousness; and so on.

From a magical point of view, other symptoms include the occurrence of poltergeist phenomena in the presence of the victim, especially when he or she is in a state of extreme fear or agitation; “mediumistic messages,” generally of a destructive or fearful nature (doomsday visions, the uttering of curses, etc.); a strong yet nearly uncontrollable increase in magical abilities, especially in the field of curses and harming others; sudden clairvoyant skills; the sharpened perception of subtle relationships, powers, energies, and the like.

Exorcism is understood as the expulsion of possessing entities (spirit model), powers (energy model), psychological yet usually magically caused or triggered disturbances (psychological model), or the deletion of incorrect or harmful information programs and matrices (information model) in humans, animals, objects, or places. Technically speaking, mental “insanity” is often viewed as a type of possession by many magicians and thus treated as such, whereby there are various techniques for doing so.

The spirit model is usually applied to exorcisms since this can look back on thousands of years of tradition and experience, while the other models are lacking in relation to the phenomenon of possession. By taking notice of the entity, recognizing its existence and communicating with it aggressively or “negotiating” with it in order to convince it to release its grip on the victim, the exorcising magician is helping the patient regain the ability of self-determination. Nonetheless, we should still mention the phenomenon of an “evil soul” here. The shaman or tribal magician understands this to be a case of long-lasting or chronic mental disturbance. These cases are commonly considered to be incurable—an exorcism could at most bring temporary relief and permanent healing is nearly impossible. This is merely a reflection of experience and not a dogma, but there’s little point in wanting to ignore it. But Western psychiatry isn’t much better in this aspect; there’s really not much it can do in cases of true psychosis other than subdue the patient with pharmaceuticals, which is basically the same as permanent

narcotization. It would seem more sensible to apply the approaches of social therapy, which attempts to integrate mentally disturbed people into everyday society alongside healthy people. This can be observed in most tribal societies, for example.

However, there's no doubt that exorcism also has psychological aspects. On the one hand, the exorcist acts as an authority toward the patient—after all, the shaman in primitive societies is the only one who really understands this business and who can travel relatively harmlessly in the world of the gods since he or she is familiar with their laws and has already spent much time there. On the other hand, the placebo effect can certainly occur in exorcisms as well, although it doesn't reduce the effectiveness in any way since the goal is to release the patient from his or her possession regardless of how it is done.

Nonetheless, this doesn't mean that mere "positive thinking" or "seeing things more optimistically" or even diligent praying will work. Although prayer is surely the most effective of these generally inefficient techniques, it will only work if the patient is truly religious and believes that he or she will be protected by the god of his or her beliefs. Turning to religion once possession has already occurred is a hopeless undertaking.

The actual techniques used in exorcism (also referred to as the "casting out of devils" by Christianity) may seem quite diversified at first, but when examined more closely, you'll see that the structures are nearly identical.

## The Basic Structures of Exorcism

1. The spirit model is applied with only rare exceptions.
2. The demon expulsion almost always takes place within the structure of a ritual.
3. The ritual is usually quite complicated, lengthy, and accompanied by strong external stimuli (e.g., noise, light effects, appropriate atmosphere).
4. The patient's strong state of agitation is artificially stimulated by the exorcist until it reaches an orgiastic state, and emotions such as fear, rage, sadness, and the like are utilized and even exaggerated when necessary.
5. Physical violence is often used in exorcisms, or the patient is at least threatened with it. This includes forced fasting, binding the victim, or inflicting physical pain.
6. In extreme cases, the exorcist imitates the patient's abnormal behavior in a strongly exaggerated form until the patient is shocked back to reality.



7. Usually several treatments take place within a very short period of time, and often the patient is an “in-patient” so that he or she is entirely at the exorcist’s mercy the whole time.
8. The confrontation with the possessive spirit or demon is usually expressed as a battle of wills between the exorcist and the entity. In doing so, the exorcist often involves a higher authority (god, guardian spirit, etc.) and plays its power against that of the evil spirit. This even includes tempting it and making promises or even negotiating a “pact” between the exorcist and the spirit. The goal of such negotiations is to lure the entity into a spirit trap that it will not be able to leave on its own power, thus subjecting it completely to the exorcist’s will.
9. In a different method, the exorcist implements a number of objects and substances (such as a crucifix, holy water) that the demon supposedly loathes, abuse is heaped on the “subordinate and inferior” beast, or “holy litanies” are recited that the demon finds revolting (= words of power), and the like. This is meant to banish the demon to the “hereafter,” to “nothingness” or “back to hell,” whereby the border between this world and that world is ritually and magically “sealed” to prevent the demon’s return.

At this point, it would be appropriate to mention the *Rituale Romanum* of the Roman Catholic church. For some reason, magicians today still talk about this book with a certain reverence, which may be due to the fact that not many people have actually read it. Thus many assume that it must contain some kind of secret power that cannot be found in the magician’s own tradition, but there’s no truth to this assumption whatsoever and the *Rituale Romanum* is indeed no more valuable than other documents on the techniques of exorcism. It’s about time we get rid of this leftover, dogmatic understanding of magic once and for all, right along there with the rumors of supposed “high magic” practices in the Vatican! Something like this may be useful as an exercise in the observance of projections, but there’s no point in the practical magician always looking for competency in other sources outside of himself or herself. (A similar mechanism can be observed throughout the entire history of magic, e.g., when a society claims that neighbors or “strange” minorities among their own kind (Gypsies, Jews, and so on) have magical abilities well beyond those of their own magicians.

Indeed the *Rituale Romanum* may be quite effective if the victim is a devout Catholic, but only then. Interestingly enough, the characteristics of possessing demons are quite cultural so that in a Christian society you'd rarely run into Balinese or Islamic demon figures. If a demon spirit manifests in a Catholic context, it's quickly dubbed "Satan," and indeed such a spirit would take great pleasure in attacking and desecrating everything that's considered "holy" in a religious sense. It would be tempting to draw the conclusion that such symptoms are "merely" subjective mental disturbances on the part of the victim. On the other hand, there are many cases where such a psychological explanation would be insufficient at best, especially if the possession is accompanied by real magical phenomena (poltergeist activities, clairvoyance, harmful magical acts, etc.) that can lead to threats on a subtle energy level (or in the extreme case, to the physical destruction of the exorcist with subtle energy means).

In exorcism (as well as in a magical attack) a distinction should be made between real possession and a mere psychological disturbance. This seems to contradict the primacy of the spirit model as described above. And indeed it's a contradiction that occupies the magic demonologist and exorcist of today. The psychological model of explanation that we already discussed in the past section on magic demonology is embedded so deeply into the beliefs of many magicians (at least the more intellectually minded ones) that it would be nearly impossible to ignore it entirely. In this sense, the above statements are hardly more than a crutch, or a compromise that feeds our psychologically spoiled censor in order to pacify it. On the other hand, there's no way to overlook the fact that not every psychological "inspiration" corresponds to something in the outside world that's defined as common reality, and not every delusion has a reality that's relevant beyond one's own personal universe of the affected person. Thus exorcism requires a great deal of experience and sensitivity. But above all it requires absolute discipline and alertness on the part of the magician. Whether you call it a "psychological disturbance" or "demon," you're always dealing with such an ingenuous opponent that you would rarely meet in everyday life. And the whole thing is quite dangerous as well. The energies that are unleashed are insidious and often explode without warning at the last second so that the exorcist continually needs to be on guard. The success of exorcism can be deceptive as well. The spirit or psychological disturbance will often pretend that a state of normalcy has returned, just to lie in wait and strike again at the next opportunity as soon as the magician thinks it's safe. If the demon holds great respect for the

magician, it will conceal it and continue to torture the patient whenever its adversary is not present. Even a so-called “inner exile” can be occasionally observed in which the victim becomes more and more introverted while continuing to act entirely normal on the outside, but in the solitude of his or her own mind, possession is allowed to take full rein and this can even lead to the secret committing of violent crimes.

For technical reasons alone, it’s a good idea to apply the spirit model to the subject of exorcism, and to treat the other factors as minor side effects, e.g., by attacking the demon’s subtle energies (energy model), alternately irritating and soothing the victim’s psyche (psychological model), or by conveying cyber magic matrices that could strengthen the victim’s resistance to his or her tormentor, and so on.

In exorcisms, the magic mirror works as an instrument of communication with the demon whereby the demon manifests in it. In cases like this, the patient usually lies in a coma or is otherwise subdued (e.g., prevented from communicating by gagging and binding). Technically speaking, use of the mirror would make this an evocation.

The mirror can also be used to irradiate the patient after the magician has charged it appropriately. But its most important function is like a spirit trap, as the possessing spirit is lured into the mirror either with promises or by force, like a “genie in a bottle.” Just like this description already says, there are many other ways to do this. Indian healers, for example, love to use big rock crystals and to banish spirits into these, while some use stones for the same purpose, or even plants, liquids, and smoke, whereby the spirit banished into the latter simply dissipates or evaporates.

From the Bible we’re already familiar with the example of the Nazarenes’ practice of exorcising the devil into pigs (the pig was considered to be an “unholy” animal and was therefore well suited for this ancient Jewish magical practice), which is a prime example of how the spirit of a person was transplanted into that of an animal, as was commonly practiced at the time. The animal was then either ritually slaughtered (often drowned or burned) or chased away. A perfect example of this is the scapegoats of the ancient Hebrews.

Once the spirit has been captured, it can be dealt with like any other subtle energy entity; it is fed, taken care of, and trained to serve the magician as his or her helper if thus desired and if this seems feasible. But this is the exception; usually it’s expelled or—insofar as the magician’s spirit paradigm allows it—destroyed.

But the most important spirit trap of all is the magician himself or herself. By luring the spirit into his or her own body, the magician has the opportunity to subdue the spirit. Of course, there should be no need to emphasize here how risky such a practice would be.

# PRACTICAL SHAMANISM (III)

## **ATAVISTIC MAGIC: WORKING WITH ANIMAL POWERS (II) CLAN ANIMAL AND TOTEM**

We'd like to mention the clan or totem animal at this time merely for the sake of completeness since it really doesn't have any practical significance to this training program. Please keep in mind that our statements here are based on personal experience and not on ethnological or anthropological studies.

We've already come into contact with the concept of the power animal through our discussion of shamanism and the recommended literature. The power animal functions as a spirit guide similar to the familiar that often occurs in animal form as well, such as the famous black cat that is frequently depicted with witches. (That's why during the Inquisition witnesses and defendants were often asked about any strange-looking house pets with odd behavior.)

While in many shamanic systems the power animal comes and goes and changes form throughout the course of a person's lifetime, this is not the case with the clan or totem animal. The clan animal (which doesn't necessarily have to take the form of an animal, and can even be completely amorphous, which is why the more correct term here is "totem") has often been compared to the Holy Guardian Angel from the magic of Abramelin. It's a known fact that the magic of Abramelin is aimed at establishing contact with the magician's Holy Guardian Angel and enabling conversations with it.

Aleister Crowley once pointed out that the concept of a Guardian Angel is so absurd for the modern magician, that this is exactly what makes it so valuable. In other words, what the Holy Guardian Angel (and the clan animal for that matter) is actually all about is so beyond any linguistic description that only abstruse terms could even come close to working, because they either lure the intellect on to an entirely wrong path or because it's so overstrained that true intuition is able to seep through. In this sense, without any direct experience, the Guardian Angel can at best be suspected, but not invented. Psychoanalysis understands the Guardian Angel as a mixture between a daimonium and the superego, but even this conceptualization is difficult to grasp since it can at best formalize and administer the overwhelming experience of coming into contact with this authority, but cannot make it comprehensible.

On the other hand, there are some differences between the Guardian Angel and the totem as well. This begins with the fact that various people can belong to various clans: the snake clan, lion clan, wolf clan, and so on. People who belong to the same clan or totem are "blood relatives" on the subtle energy level, even if they seem to have nothing at all in common in the physical world. (Of course there are individual cases where an entire village or tribal society actually belongs to one and the same clan.) Members of a certain clan often find themselves together in a secret society, such as the feared Simbas (lion men) in East Africa.

Using the example of this secret society, we can also see the effects that such systematic work with this type of atavism can lead to. Its members dress in lion skins for rituals and enter a lion trance in which they imitate not only the behavior and movements of the clan animal, but truly become this animal in a magical sense so that even halfway sane observers have reported seeing these people actually change into lions right before their eyes. In such a state, these intermediate beings possess all of the qualities, strengths, and weaknesses of the animal without losing complete control of the human spirit. The warlike lion men utilize this to conquer their opponents and go out on foray.

But in all of this, we shouldn't forget the fact that this is indeed a decadent formalization of the clan animal principle, although it probably no longer has anything to do with the original basic experience of self-transformation into an animal or other non-human being.

Another characteristic of the totem is that you cannot pick what you want. You will usually discover what it is when you least expect it, either in moments of great danger or

through the initiation of another magician who has the ability to activate the totem in other people. It cannot be pursued with effort, such as the case in the magic of Abramelin. (Although the vision quest of the North American Indians often ends by seeing the animal totem, this is generally nothing but a schematized reflection of this primeval experience.) The totem usually reveals itself suddenly and intensively, and sometimes the clan animal even announces its arrival in a life-and-death struggle with the person as a sort of “greeting.” This struggle is often a phase of adaptation that strongly resembles the state of a “child of the abyss” as we’re familiar with from the Kabbalistic Tree of Life in connection with the crossing of the Abyss. The experience is often strongly physical in nature and words alone are inadequate to describe it.

With the clan animal or totem, a person finds his or her “calling,” although this should not be understood in a metaphysical or fatalistic sense. From this point on, the totem becomes the person’s true spiritual teacher or ensures that the person (who has now become, technically speaking, both a servant and a ruler of his or her clan) always finds the right calling.

In conjunction with the magic of Abramelin, we could say it like this: The goal of all magic should be to activate this totem. But in our opinion, this could never be formalized or artificially enforced. Plus, this in no way means that the learning process is over once you’ve reached this desired state; in fact, it’s really just beginning.

So it would be wrong to view the clan animal or totem being as merely a “super-power animal;” the Socratic term “daimonion” would probably be more accurate. Thelemic magicians might want to view it as a personification of one’s own Thelema, but even more appropriate would be a comparison with lycanthropy, or the transformation into a werewolf.

The information on clan animals provided here should suffice—*whoever* has ears will listen! We choose not to say any more about this here, not because we’re friends of obscurant secrecy, but because we feel that experience is the only way to comprehend this concept. And *whoever* consequently pursues the path of magic to an end where a new beginning is expected will come into contact with this experience at one time or another anyway. For this reason alone, we’ve mentioned it here—for the first and last time.



# DIVINATION (II)

## THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ORACLES (I)

Let's take a closer look at the types of oracles that we introduced earlier.

### 1. Eidetic Oracles

(reading coffee grounds/tea leaves, stone oracles, the molten lead method, tree bark, etc.)

The ability to nonphysically see an object in such exact detail as though it were real is described by the word "eidetic." In order for this to work, an external eye-catcher is always needed that generally has an uneven structure (tree bark, stone, wallpaper, etc.). Eidetic phenomena usually occur in a state of absentmindedness. The seer stares at something that catches his or her eye without consciously seeing it at first. This apparently triggers a change in the person and suddenly he or she sees a whole jungle or a pandemonium of grimaces and visages in a single bathroom tile. It's important to realize that we're not talking about imagination here, since imagination is a deliberate process that could even be called an intentionally induced hallucination.

Characteristic of an eidetic oracle is that it provides the eye with patterns, symbols, and images that are then interpreted as intuitively as they were perceived. Of course, you can read a book about how to read coffee grounds that might explain how to interpret every possible figure that you might see (along the lines of most primitive dream interpretation books), but these are nothing more than beginners' aids. A person with experience in reading coffee grounds would never stick to such a rigid and basically useless pattern, even if the person thinks this is what he or she is actually doing. Instead,



eidetic symbols serve as aids to help the seer with the association and manifestation of his or her intuition. In this sense, the eidetic oracle technique cannot really be taught. All that can be done is to provide some examples that each person will not only modify, but even discard entirely sooner or later.

## THE TECHNICAL PROCEDURE

Once a question has been asked to the oracle, the seer either distracts his or her attention or enters a state of no thought while fixing his or her eyes on an object procured especially for this act of divination (e.g., a stone, tree bark, etc.). Let's practice this using the example of reading coffee grounds, again with reference to Bettina Tegtmeier's book that we've already mentioned.

Regular filter coffee is way too grainy for reading coffee grounds; a finely ground type works much better (Turkish mocha, espresso, etc.). The seer first puts the coffee into a cup and pours boiling water onto it. Then he or she waits until the grounds have settled to the bottom of the cup before slowly drinking the liquid. Then the seer swirls around the cup a bit and quickly turns the cup upside-down onto the saucer. With this, the remaining liquid is dumped onto the saucer and the grounds settle along the rim of the cup. Now the cup and saucer are swirled around individually one more time. Bettina Tegtmeier recommends using the inside rim of the cup to interpret the present situation, and the saucer for trend analysis or the actual glimpse into the future.

The seer carefully examines both halves of the oracle (the 180° gaze is well suited for this) until patterns, symbols, or images can be seen. These are put in relation to the question and thus interpreted.

Here's an example, but it really is nothing more than just one single example.

If the question is "How will my career situation develop in the next year?" and the seer sees a mountain range, a house, and a bird on the rim of the cup, and sees a tree, a fish, and a spear on the saucer, the seer might reflect on the images for a bit and then interpret the symbols as follows:

### Present situation

Mountain range: difficulties, arduous ascent

House: prison, limitation, commitment

Bird: freedom, soaring, fast movement, keen perception

## **Trend analysis**

Tree: stability, perseverance, wisdom

Fish: speed, liveliness, adroitness

Spear: scope of reach, target precision

Then an interpretation could look as follows:

The inquirer feels greatly restricted in his or her present job situation and faces great difficulties. That makes the inquirer insecure and agitated, possibly even causing him or her to make serious mistakes. By becoming aware of this situation, more and more motion will be brought into the person's life, his or her own desire for freedom will be stimulated, and his or her ambition acquires more room to maneuver, thus increasing the person's self-confidence. This leads to even greater authority and foresight, which in turn should strengthen his or her position. Now the person can put his or her keen perception to the test in making important decisions.

But the seer could have just as easily made the following interpretation as well:

## **Present situation**

Mountain range: peak, overview, sublimity

House: safety, security, place of rest

Bird: lack of orientation, superficiality

## **Trend analysis**

Tree: taking root, immobility, obstinacy

Fish: speechlessness, adjustment, helplessness

Spear: struggle, conflict, dispute, enemies

The interpretation in this case could be:

The inquirer's current job situation actually provides him or her with a great deal of security, a fixed point of reference, and many opportunities to move up the ladder. The person's own restlessness and the uncertainty of what he or she really wants act as a hindrance. If the inquirer cannot get a grip on these things, the situation will lose momentum within the next year, resulting in paralysis and the feeling of being caged in. This

leads to conflict and dispute in connection with phases of silent, grudging conformity, and submission under the power of his or her superior adversaries.

It's entirely up to the seer to use his or her intuition to decide which of these interpretations (or any of the many other possible ones) is the correct one.

This example should be sufficient to illustrate the basic use of oracles that do not follow a fixed scheme of interpretation. Roughly the same applies to the other types of oracles as well.

## **2. Visionary Oracles**

(clairvoyance with crystal balls, crystals, mirrors, fire, water, clouds, etc.)

Technically speaking, using the magic mirror for divination makes it a type of visionary oracle. Since we've already discussed this type here, there's no need to go into it further.

## **3. Mind Travel Oracles**

(tattwa travel, shamanic journeys, etc.)

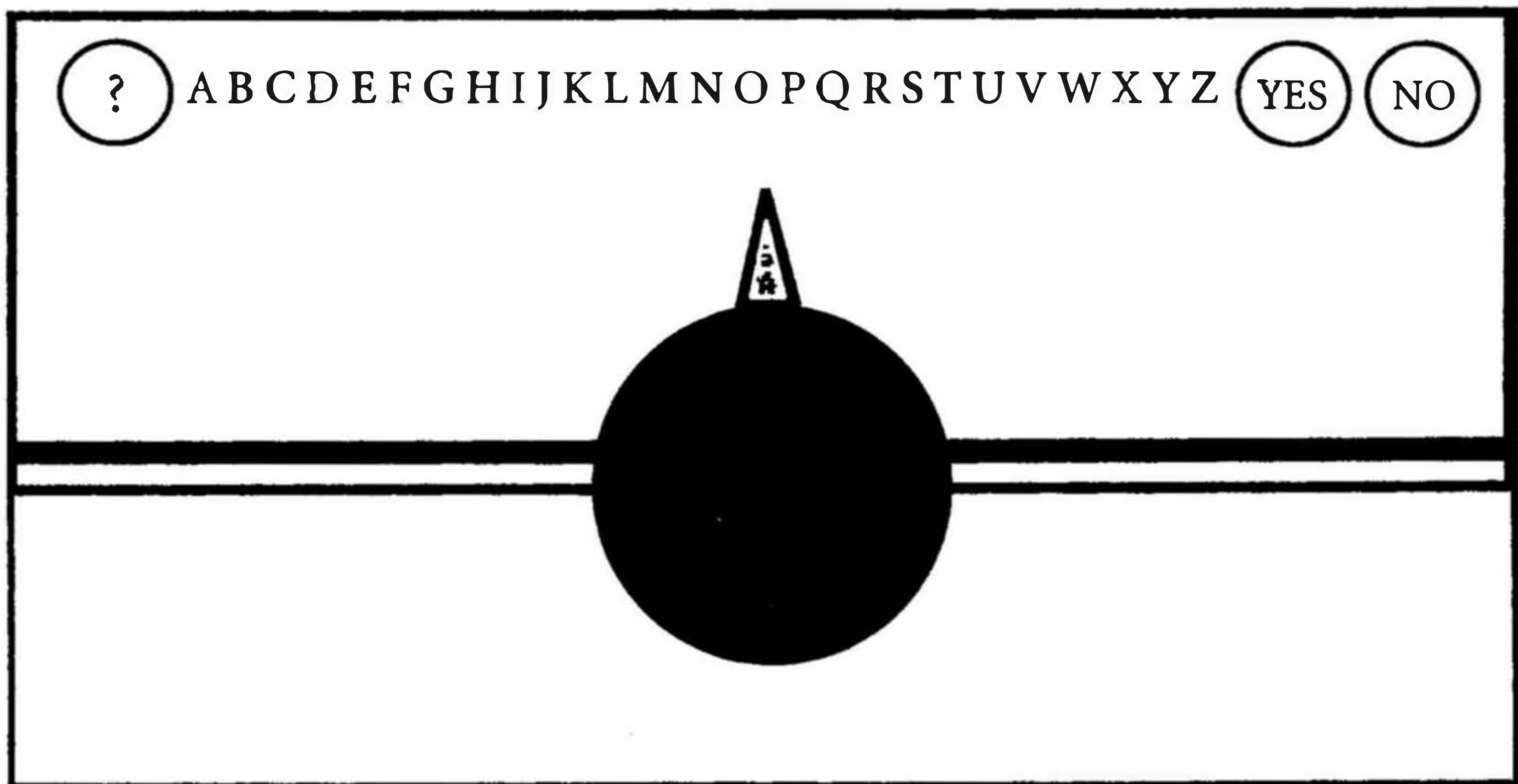
You can find enough information about shamanic journeys in the book by Michael Harner that we already mentioned. Tattwa travel occurs when the sphere of the element is entered with the help of specific element symbols. A characteristic element of all mind travel oracles is that the entire journey is interpreted as the answer to the oracle.

## **4. Spirit Oracles**

(mediumship, Ouija board, etc.)

Spirit oracles, as the name already implies, utilizes the questioning of spirits or subtle entities. The most popular form of this is probably the spiritualistic séance in which alleged contact to the dead is used to gain insight into life on earth and the hereafter. This requires a medium who enters a state of trance to act as a channel for messages to pass through in a question-and-answer conversation between the spirit and the séance participants.

The practice known as "channeling," which became popular a few years ago, is basically nothing more than a variety of classical, spiritual mediumship (even if its representatives tend to disagree). Although a deep trance is not always used here (which ap-



*Illustration 39: Ouija board and planchette on a guide track*

plies to spiritism as well), it was always a common practice to contact “non-incarnated” entities (angels, spirit guides, etc.) for the purpose of divination.

The Ouija board (see Illustration 39) has gained new popularity in recent times as a tool for telepathically communicating with the spirit world. The board originated in the nineteenth century in the midst of a wave of spiritualism. Its name is a combination of the French word “oui” and the German “ja,” both meaning “yes.” The board itself contains letters and short words (e.g., “yes,” “no,” and a question mark for “I don’t know”—after all, spirits don’t know everything either!) that are painted on or engraved and indicated by a planchette, which is a small flat object with a pointer or peephole that glides on rollers, runners, or on a track. The participants of a Ouija board séance all touch the planchette lightly (e.g., with the forefinger) and ask “Is anyone there?” to see if there’s a spirit in the room. Following the usual formalities of introduction, the spirit is asked questions that are answered by the planchette involuntarily moving to the various letters or words. Ideally, the series of letters form a word or even entire sentences, which is thus the answer to the oracle questions.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 84

#### LETTER MAGIC

If you're interested in pursuing this discipline, design a training schedule for your independent study of letter magic, using our recommendations as guidelines. But avoid overdoing it! If you develop any unpleasant side effects, stop doing the exercises immediately. In no way should you force yourself to finish! In this case, we would recommend that you simply try again one year later.

### EXERCISE 85

#### PRACTICAL DIVINATION (II)

Gain as much experience with eidetic oracles as possible by designing your own training schedule to fit your needs. This will also help you refine your intuition and magical perception. But in doing so, always remember the basic rules of every type of divination as mentioned above and, of course, keep good records of your results. If you're having trouble getting good results, practice three to four times a week for at least half a year.

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# DIVINATION (III)

## THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ORACLES (II)

### 5. Combinatory Oracles

(runes, card reading, geomancy, cowrie shells, etc.)

In contrast to the types of oracles that we've already discussed, combinatory oracles compare at least two fixed systems of interpretation or analogies in relation to the question.

In the example of card reading, this means that the cards and their positions have specific meanings, which result in a great range of interpretations, thus requiring skilled combination techniques on the part of the oracle's interpreter. A split-second decision must be made; the more probable must be separated from the less probable without entirely excluding the possibility of surprises; the overall situation must be deduced and the interpretation carefully considered.

The same holds true in geomancy (the art of interpreting markings on the ground); here holes made in the ground are counted, converted into figures, and categorized into an astrological house system.

There's no point in discussing this type of oracle or the next two in more detail here since this would take up too much space and there are already plenty of good books available.

One of the main reasons that combinatory oracles are so popular is probably their relatively high degree of objectivity. They're complicated enough to exclude the

possibility of simple manipulation. One example: The cards are thoroughly shuffled and it's pure chance (or to apply a few other paradigms—up to the spirits, the subconscious, fate) to decide which of them (rarely all) will be used to interpret the oracle. In contrast to visions where details might be added or the images may be distorted when recollected, the selection and allocation of the message conveyors (cards, stones, shells, etc.) is fixed once the act of oracle manipulation (shuffling, mixing up, drawing, casting, etc.) is complete.

## **6. Objectivized Combinatory Oracles**

(astrology, chiromancy, etc.)

The starting point of these combinatory oracles is what is “objectivized,” as the seer has no influence over this. The planetary constellations are objective; the lines on your palm cannot be manipulated. The seer therefore does not actively establish an answer, but instead calculates and observes that which already exists according to fixed rules. Of course, he or she is relatively free in the interpretation of what is observed, and the information is analyzed combinatorially, weighted, certain factors excluded, and so on.

Due to the complexity involved, the understanding of these types of oracles generally requires many years of (book) study.

## **7. Numerological Oracles**

(numerology, Gematria, etc.)

The supporters of numerological oracles also lay claim to a high degree of objectivity. Numerology is surely as old as the use of numbers themselves. Thus it was logical that a system of divination based on the relationship between numbers should develop. Let's not forget that the written language (and this includes the numbers, of course) was originally considered to be something holy or of divine revelation in most cultures.

The number of numerological oracles is legion. Their spectrum ranges from the simple categorization of certain characteristics to specific birth numbers (usually the sum of the digits of a person's birthday) to highly complex harmonical speculations and mathematical mind games along the lines of Pythagoras. One could also describe numerological divination as “objectivized omen interpretation” in which the person uncovers relationships according to his or her own understanding, but does not produce

them artificially (e.g., by drawing lots). As with objectivized combinatory oracles, the person works with already existing material.

Since we've already discussed Gematria, there's no need for further comment here. As a practical, divinatory piece of advice, we'd like to mention the fact that some (although relatively few) Kabbalists use Gematria in a divinatory sense in that they view the encounter with certain numbers as an omen. For example, a person who is occupied with some type of personal problem and frequently encounters a certain number can convert this number into Hebrew letters and look up the meaning in a Hebrew dictionary in an attempt to gain insight into the problem.





# INTRODUCTION TO MAGIC DEMONOLOGY (II)

In general, demons are considered to be “evil” and instill us with fear because they’re able to overpower us. But worse yet, they seem to embody everything that we hate about ourselves and express an “evil” side of us that we can only live out or experience in our dreams. An extremely pious person may have a hidden tendency to a certain vice that he or she either represses entirely and denies (resulting in a continuous struggle with temptation), or indulges in secretly; a criminal may have a love-hate relationship to guardians of the law; people who continually offer their help may hide a sadistic tendency while sadists may conceal a helping nature; a cynic may be a disillusioned idealist and the idealist may yearn to be able to express a secret cruelty; and so on. Although this is surely a very simplified way of putting things, it nevertheless clearly expresses the basic principle of what magic demonology is all about in a psychological sense.

Now let’s get back to practice. In general, magic assumes that demons are so difficult to evoke because their nature as subtle entities makes it extremely hard for them to materialize in a physical manifestation. Magic demonology is always the magic of force. “Banishment to the underworld” in a Faustian sense literally means subjecting the entities of the underworld by means of compulsion. This application of force has technical reasons as well, but it mainly reflects the symbol-logical difficulty of getting a grip on one’s own alter ego. In any case, traditional schools of magic teach that the demon must always be provided with some type of material basis (*materia prima*) to function as a

sort of “manifestation battery”; the demon uses this battery to obtain the power that it needs to perform the unnatural (for a demon) act of manifestation. They also say that the demon will become the magician’s worst enemy if the latter cannot provide enough power of his or her own, thus forcing the demon to bear the brunt of the burden of materialization on its own. The demon would view this as a weakness on the part of the magician, and would be inspired to try all the harder to deprive the magician of his or her powers.

Furthermore, traditional magic demonology always requires an offering of some type, although this is often identical to the *materia prima*. Today thick incense is generally used, although animal sacrifices were commonly used in the past because the blood of a freshly killed animal was considered to be especially powerful and favorable to manifestation. We don’t want to cover up the fact that the Hermetic tradition may have occasionally sacrificed humans, as was customary in some ancient civilizations in one form or another, but this was a rare exception at most—if only for the difficulty in procuring suitable human sacrifice material. We’re already familiar with such practices among orthodox religions as well; just look at the human sacrifices of the Aztecs and the practices of some of the Kali traditions of India. Even the Nordic tradition is familiar with such practices. In fact, probably the most popular book on the subject is Theodor Storm’s “The Dykemaster.” In this story, “something living” (usually an animal but occasionally a human) had to be sacrificed for every new dyke in order for it to hold.

The Druids were familiar with human sacrifices as well. A recent archaeological discovery, “the Lindow Man,” clearly reflects this and puts a damper on all of those lies that claim that Druidism was slandered by Julius Caesar (who mentions human Druidic sacrifices in his *De bello gallico*) for mere political reasons. This body found in the bog in the British town of Cheshire was apparently a high-ranking Druid who was killed by multiple wounds in the second century BC, at the age of roughly twenty-five to thirty. The Lindow Man was first stunned by two blows to the head, then strangled and finally his neck was slit, allowing him to bleed to death. The remains of burnt barley cake—a traditional food at Celtic spring celebrations—were found in his stomach. According to archaeologists, it was an ancient Druidic custom to distribute pieces of a special barley cake to the guests, one piece of which was specially scorched to distinguish it from the rest. Whoever picked this specific cake was chosen to be sacrificed to the gods. Strictly

speaking, this cannot be called ritual murder since the victim voluntarily sacrificed his life.

Despite the demonic impression it probably gives to those who cannot understand such a practice, human sacrifice was usually not done in connection with evocations, but instead was used as a means to ensure fertile grounds, to appease enraged gods, and the like. Such digression is unfortunately necessary because way too many people—magicians included!—still have an entirely wrong concept of the function of magic demonology. In any case, it's customary to offer the demon something in return for its services. This “something” is usually negotiated with the demon itself. (You'll find one example of this later on in the section Reports From Magical Practice VII.) This negotiation often turns out to be a moderately difficult confrontation with the oriental bazaar mentality, because although demons are all in all quite insensitive companions, they always make sure to get the better end of a bargain and try to leave the magician with as little as possible in return. Even if the magician promises the demon nothing at all by putting it under pressure and compelling it to help instead, e.g., by turning to the support of a hierarchy of entities, this is not an easy task and it often puts the magician in a state of complete exhaustion and apathy by the time he or she is finished.

In any case, our experience shows that it's generally advisable to agree on something with the demon in the form of a business deal or “pact” so that the circumstances are clear right from the start. (Meanwhile, you should have enough experience with the various models of magic to reflect on the reasons for this in each case.) This procedure, as well as the entire operation itself, should be well prepared, and even the exact wording of pacts and deals should be carefully examined since demons often behave insidiously literal, similar to the way sigil magic works sometimes.

Crowley required his A.·A.· initiates to conjure demons to “the consistency of thick vapors.” This means that although visible manifestation is required, this is generally accompanied by the magical blurriness that we're already familiar with. In other words, the demon is viewed while in a state of gnosis. This procedure is often helped along with the usual means, but some unconventional ones are used as well. For example, Swiss author and researcher of myths and legends, Sergius Golowin, once told me about ancient books of magic that contain instructions for building a special altar for the conjugation of demons. Built inside the altar is a sort of “camera obscura” that uses a clever system

of mirrors to project a demonic image onto the column of smoke in the triangle, as an early form of a “three-dimensional slide or holography show.”

Are demons merely delusions or hallucinations? Psychology might think so, but practice proves again and again that magic demonology, at least during the evocation itself, only works when the magician works entirely within the spirit model. Plus, traditional magicians generally like to apply a number of other control mechanisms that go beyond the mere visual appearance, for example by asking questions about Kabbalistic problems that are related to the demon’s sphere and expecting it to answer them satisfactorily. This naturally requires sound knowledge in various disciplines (Kabbalah, correspondences, mythology, astrology, and so on).

# PRACTICAL FOLK MAGIC (III)

## DOLL (POPPET) MAGIC

Doll or poppet magic is an ancient practice of folk magic that is in no way merely a product of Caribbean voodoo, as many people seem to think. Dolls were even used in ancient Egypt for such purposes, and they played a major part in their afterlife beliefs, such as when faïence figures (Ushebtis) were placed into the tombs of wealthy people to act as “slaves” for them in the afterlife. During the medieval witch trials, straw dolls were found as well that were used for magical purposes.

Doll magic has always been basically a form of sympathetic magic and it works according to a very simple formula. The magician creates a doll that he or she magically identifies with the target person, and things are done to this doll that correspond to what the target person is meant to experience. This is in no way always a detrimental process (most people associate such “voodoo dolls” with detrimental things), as this technique can also be used for healing or bringing good luck.

The doll can be made of various materials; wax, wood, straw, leather, rags, and the like. The doll does not need to physically resemble the target person at all, only the sex of the person should be recognizable. At most, unique distinguishing features (e.g., humpback, amputated limbs, etc.) should be considered when making the doll. It doesn't need to be a work of art as long as the magician's subconscious mind (psychological model) fully accepts the doll as a substitute for the target person. This is done by means of formal or material identification.

For example, the doll can either be ritually baptized or some type of “physical link” can be attached to the doll, such as fingernail clippings, hair, blood, or other bodily secretions (preferably sweat, sperm/vaginal fluid) from the target person. Nowadays, magicians often like to use photographs, such as passport pictures or portrait shots that are applied to the face of the doll. There’s no need for any special type of ritual to make the doll magically “identical” to the target person. Most magicians consider the doll to be magically charged the minute it is completed (of course, the magician must make the doll himself or herself). Therefore there’s no point in buying a finished doll, like the kind that are sold in some stores as “voodoo accessories,” and wanting to use it without charging it in some way.

### **TREATMENT OF THE DOLL**

The most important utensil in doll magic apart from the doll itself is the pin, although this is generally only used for magical attacks. There is one exception, though. Although a distant healing operation can be conducted by placing one’s hands on the doll as though it were the patient, a magician who is familiar with acupuncture can also use pins to treat it.

In any case, the various schools of magic each have their own methods for treating the doll that they swear by. The three most important methods are described here.

#### **1. The Method of Concentrating**

This form of treatment is quite common and is by far the most frequently used method. During the process of making the doll, the magician focuses his or her entire willpower on identifying the doll with the target person as well as on what the target person is intended to experience. This willpower is increased systematically until it reaches a (generally spasmodic) climax.

One variety of this method is to work on the doll at regular intervals, thus putting an emphasis on frequency instead of intensity.

Technically this method works mainly because the willpower and power of imagination are focused so strongly that the target person is inevitably affected (energy model).

## 2. The Method of Forgetting

This method is similar to the magic of Austin Osman Spare as we know it. While the magician works on the doll, he or she avoids all thoughts related to identifying it with the target person. Ideally, the magician should even forget his or her intentions entirely. In the magician's subconscious mind, he or she is just sticking pins into "any old doll" (even if the doll was previously identified with the target person in a conventional sense) and tries to avoid the conflict that the doll really doesn't look like the target person at all.

This method is justified according to the psychological model, just like sigil magic. Its advocates argue that the obvious discrepancy between the target person and its representation as a doll makes the method of concentration quite fault-prone. Plus, they also claim that intentionally forgetting magical statements of intent and magical acts is much more effective than any type of concentration anyway, since the latter usually leads to tension resulting from the belief that every desire is automatically overshadowed by the fear of failure in pursuing its fulfillment.

## 3. The Method of Deprivation

This little-known method is only suitable for very experienced magicians with a background in magic philosophy. It aims primarily at absolute control with the use of a certain frustration gnosis. In other words, the magician takes the doll (without concentrating on the goal or purpose of the operation) and stabs it—and misses! The difficulty with this method is the conveyance of the necessary philosophical superstructure involved, but to explain this in detail here would diverge too far from the practical approach that we prefer to focus on. But in summary we could say that it's all about the complete control of human motor functions that, when mastered, poses fundamental questions such as the actual control over such a seemingly simple act of directing a pin to the right spot or even making the doll itself.

Advocates of this method argue that the refusal to perform the desired act of stabbing is equal to the refusal of all limitation whatsoever, which in turn causes the energy to flow accordingly in the desired direction.

### The Deflection Doll

The deflection doll is a doll that the magician makes of himself or herself by adding all of the classic identifying ingredients (from the lock of hair to the drop of blood)



and ritually charges to identify with it. Its purpose is to act on behalf of the magician as a “scarecrow” in magical combat as well as in smaller conflicts to absorb and store hostile energy. (The magician can then use this energy—magically inoculated accordingly—and direct it toward his or her enemies since they are not immune to their own energy.) As effective as this practice may be, the dangers are obvious. The doll must be stored in a completely secure place where absolutely no one else can lay hands on it. Of course, there’s no way to ever ensure something like this. That’s why we recommend this method only in an emergency. It can also be treated for the specific purpose of diverting enemies from the magician’s current location, thus making it difficult to find him or her. (Of course, this is only relevant to magicians who are dependent on knowing the geographical location of their enemies, which is often the case.)

Once a doll has fulfilled its purpose, it’s odically discharged by running it under running water and then destroyed.

## REPORTS FROM MAGICAL PRACTICE (VII)

Several years ago I performed a classical evocation of the Mercury demon Taphthartharath together with a fellow magician. The demon appeared quickly after just a short period of conjuring, but not as a three-dimensional figure. Instead, its face looked up at us from the bottom of the triangle. For its services we offered it something completely atypical: a computer disc containing a copy of a word processing program, which it gladly accepted. (The goal of the operation, which is irrelevant here, was accomplished in its entirety through the evocation.)

Roughly two years later, two other magician friends of mine also evoked the demon Taphthartharath. To the magicians’ pleasure, the demon appeared clearly in the triangle. When the negotiations began, they also offered him a floppy disc. Their astonishment was huge when Taphthartharath complained that he already received a disc once that was utterly useless to him. Finally, they agreed that one of the two magicians would fill up a whole disc by typing up the same sentence over and over again with words of praise for the demon. This was done once the demon fulfilled its end of the deal.

We don’t want to make this story out to be more than it is. Both magicians were aware of our previous operation, so there wasn’t necessarily some kind of psi-phenomenon involved. But that’s irrelevant here. Two other things are much more important: First of

all, the idea of working with modern means (computer disc) and actually achieving the desired results with this; and second, the phenomenal link between two magicians who, apart from the fact that they were friends and shared similar interests, worked in two completely different and unrelated operations. (When applying the spirit model, this anecdote would need no further explanation anyway.)

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 86*

#### **SCENES FROM REALITY PRODUCTION (I)**

Take part in an official event that you know will be covered in the newspaper the next day (or after the weekend). This could be a sporting event, a rock concert, a political speech, and the like. Go without any expectations; you should be merely an observer. You should view the situation as objectively as possible. If you want, you can take something along with you to record impressions to help you remember the event: a notebook, dictating machine, camera, etc. Follow the event as closely yet as neutrally as possible and pretend that you'll later be required to write a detailed eyewitness account about everything you've seen.

When you return home, record your impressions of the event, either in short keywords or in more detail—it's up to you. In doing so, don't just pay attention to special incidents, highlights, and the like; also make note of seemingly insignificant things.

The next day (or after the weekend) obtain as many newspapers as possible that have reported on the event. But before you begin reading the articles, review your notes and recall the event clearly in your memory.

Now systematically read all of the newspaper articles about the event. (Later you can even review radio or television reports as well, or listen to other first-hand accounts of friends or acquaintances who were there. But at first you should work alone without being disturbed.) Compare each of the reports with your own notes. What's "missing?" What's "correct?" What's "incorrect?" Does the report convey the same atmosphere that you also experienced? In what aspects does it not?

This exercise is not about realizing that everyone sees things differently. That would be too trite for such a great amount of effort. Instead, try and determine what this all has to do with your concept of “reality” in both a general and specific sense. Think about whether or not you can draw any conclusions from this. But purposely avoid asking the direct question “What is reality?” Instead, approach the matter indirectly by looking at concrete details. This will prevent you from being influenced by unanalyzed concepts and prejudices.

We recommend repeating this exercise once in a while at your discretion. Determine beforehand how often you’d like to do it and stick to the deal that you make with yourself!

### EXERCISE 87

#### SCENES FROM REALITY PRODUCTION (II)

Visit any arbitrary, large political discussion with an audience debate. (You might want to do this in an area where you’re certain you won’t see any people you know.) It doesn’t matter if you actually understand what is being discussed. In fact, it’s more effective to choose topics that you know absolutely nothing about. Also, pay no attention whatsoever to whether or not the political opinion presented reflects your own personal views. If you want, perform this exercise several times and experiment with different political speakers and viewpoints.

Listen to the speeches or lectures as attentively as possible and make notes for the discussion afterward. Make sure you choose a strategically favorable seat where you won’t be overlooked and where you can maintain eye contact with the speaker.

Start asking questions at the first opportunity. Begin by calmly and seriously asking factual questions in case there’s something you didn’t understand. (You can have them explain foreign words or phrases, for example, even if you already understand them.)

Avoid all aggression at first. Try to lull your opponent into a false sense of security and do not provoke him or her in any way. Try to win the person’s full support. After you’ve done that, let other people speak for a while so that you’re not immediately written off as a windbag and possibly even forbidden to speak later.

Now we move into the second round. Choose a controversial point (it doesn't have to be something that was just discussed, it could have been said a while back) and confront the speaker with a contradictory opinion. (In doing so, it doesn't matter what you "really" think; in fact, it's even better when you're secretly on the speaker's side. The important thing is that you sound convincing!) Now really give him or her a piece of your mind and take an opposite stand. Feel free to get emotional, unobjective, even hysterical—but always maintain proper etiquette and remain polite so as not to convey the impression that you're nothing but a grouchy malcontent. If you feel confident enough, go ahead and switch back and forth between fronts, sometimes supporting an argument and at other times opposing the same one. (This is most effective during group discussions.) Considering your previous experience in paradigm shifting, this should be no problem for you. Observe what happens. How does the speaker react? What's going on inside of you? How do the other participants react? What is truth?

For this exercise, we chose a political gathering since this type of event—especially during election campaigns—is usually organized and conducted by people who are game for hearty discussions. That makes them blind to possible opposition and dangers, and as long as they still have hope that they can win you over, they'll be forced to let you determine the pace of the debate.

Take full advantage of this—and don't hesitate to help yourself to any free snacks or drinks as long as you're there! Appear interested, open, involved, innocent, easily influenced, willing, and alert yet not too compliant. This exercise could change your life.

### **EXERCISE 88**

#### **SCENES FROM REALITY PRODUCTION (III)**

This is an exercise borrowed from Aleister Crowley. Visit a classy, expensive restaurant—properly dressed, of course—and order the most complicated, several-course meal available but demand to be served the courses in the reverse order, beginning with coffee and cognac and ending with the soup. Act completely normal and behave tactfully and inconspicuously. This exercise is particularly effective if you don't have any experience with such "gourmet temples."

Of course, you can repeat and vary this exercise as often as you like, for example by insisting on paying for the entire meal beforehand and, when you order something else (e.g., beverages), wondering out loud whether or not you have enough money left. When you're finished, leave a generous tip.

#### EXERCISE 89

##### SCENES FROM REALITY PRODUCTION (IV)

In the exercises above, it's not about trying to get people mad at you (although that will probably happen, without a doubt). Instead, with these clever little tricks you create an inversion. In a sense, you play a game of "backwards world" while maintaining the appropriate etiquette to ensure that you're taken seriously (although sooner or later they're certain to think you're crazy). In doing this, you're able to hold a mirror to the face of the world without giving anyone cause to send you to a psychiatrist. But you'll be the one who profits most. Even if you cannot understand the purpose of such experiments just yet, you'll at least have loads of fun!

In any case, you'll gain deep insight into your patterns of social behavior concerning fear and adaptation which are much more of a hindrance to your practical magic than most "personal fears." Meditate on this.

Design other similar exercises for you or your own (current or future) students and observe how they affect your practical magic. This practice is all the more important for people who have very little tendency toward eccentric behavior, i.e. those who generally adopt a conformist stance.

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# MAGICAL ORDERS (IV)

## MAGIC OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

### THE MAGIC OF THE GOLDEN DAWN

The eventful history of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn could fill volumes, and it has already indeed! As opposed to Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, which are generally of no serious interest to the modern-day practical magician, the knowledge of the Golden Dawn (founded in Britain) has meanwhile become a part of everyday magical heritage. And there is plenty of good, well-founded introductory literature on the order available in several world languages.

That's why we'll only be touching on the history and system of this order here, and references to appropriate literature for further reading will be made. Instead, we'll be dealing with another aspect that most literature generally neglects, namely the innovative nature of this organization.

Let's outline the group's structure first. For the most part, the Golden Dawn stems from the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (SRIA; Rosicrucian Society in England). Only high-ranking Freemasons were allowed to become members of this brotherhood. Its members included Edward Bulwer-Lytton and possibly even Eliphas Lévi, although the sources for this information are unreliable. All three founding members of the Golden Dawn originally belonged to the SRIA as well. The history of the origins of the Golden Dawn is quite controversial in some aspects even today, but in any case the following facts can be noted: In August of the year 1887, London coroner Dr. William Wynn Westcott

(1848–1925) received roughly sixty pages of an encoded manuscript written in a secret alphabet (generally referred to as the *Cipher Manuscript*) from a British clergyman (another version claims he was a doctor), Adolph Frederick Alexander Woodford, who supposedly discovered them in an antique bookstore in London. Although the paper it was written on was old and bore a watermark from the year 1809 in places, it was highly unlikely that it was actually written on before 1870. In fact, the writing probably occurred at a much later date, as we'll soon see.

Westcott was able to decode the manuscript. It contained five drafts for initiation rites according to the Rosicrucian system that were written in the English language. One loose sheet with the initials A.L.C. made Woodford suspect that it was once the property of Lévi, whose real name was Alphonse Louis Constant. The manuscript mentioned a person named “S.D.A.” (Sapiens Dominabitur Astris) who could provide more information upon request. Westcott wrote a letter to the address mentioned in the manuscript of a Ms. Anna Sprengel in Germany. During the correspondence with her through her secretary, Frater In Utroque Fidelis, it became clear that she was a leading member of a German Rosicrucian Order. Westcott was instructed to found an order of his own. Woodford died in December 1887, but Westcott had written a letter back in October to Samuel Liddell “MacGregor” Mathers (1854–1918), an eccentric pseudo-Highlander, theosophist, and private scholar who dedicated his life to the black arts, in particular to the Kabbalah. Westcott asked Mathers to develop some rituals for the founding of the order based on the rudimentary material available. He also offered Mathers a position as cohead of the organization.

Thus Westcott, Mathers, and the retired doctor, Dr. William Robert Woodman—who was the uppermost magus or president of the SRIA at the time—actually did found the order. (According to another more popular version, Westcott was said to have received the *Cipher Manuscript* from Woodman. Some authors might be confused here by the similarity of the names Woodford and Woodman.) Westcott signed the order's charter on behalf of Anna Sprengel as well. The London-based Isis-Urania temple became the seat of the brotherhood, which, in contrast to the SRIA, admitted women as well. Westcott claimed that the order had very ancient roots with German and French predecessors. Even Eliphas Lévi (who died in 1875 and could therefore never confirm or deny such allegations) was claimed to have been a member.

Then, in 1891, Westcott received a message from Germany that Ms. Sprengel had passed away. The link to Germany was thus broken and the English branch was faced

with the challenge of establishing contact themselves to the transcendental powers that supposedly backed the order. Mathers soon claimed that he had succeeded in doing so (he used techniques of spiritism and mediumism) and the order was therefore authorized to continue. This led to the founding of a Second Order within the Golden Dawn, the *Ordo Rosae Rubrae et Aureae Crucis* (Order of the Rose of Ruby and the Cross of Gold), which fell back on the legend of the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross. While the main function of the First or “External” Order was to pass on knowledge, the Second Order formed the actual core of the organization in regards to practical magic. According to the group’s charter, the Third Order existed only on the astral plane.

Every classical order has a specific grade system. The grades of the Golden Dawn are predominantly based on the Tree of Life instead of on the grade systems of Freemasonry or Rosicrucianism, as might be expected when considering the spiritual background of its founding fathers. But in no way are we claiming that the order is entirely free of such influences. For example, the ritual later developed by Mathers for the 5° = 6° is a ritual manifestation of the legend of Christian Rosencreutz. But Kabbalistic symbolism was clearly the main focus nonetheless. Here we can recognize the great influence of Eliphas Lévi who was responsible for the revival of the Kabbalah’s popularity in the nineteenth century.

The individual grades:

#### External Order

0° = 0° Neophyte

1° = 10° Zelator

2° = 9° Theoricus

3° = 8° Practicus

4° = 7° Philosophus

#### Second Order

5° = 6° Adeptus Minor

6° = 5° Adeptus Major

7° = 4° Adeptus Exemptus



### Third Order

8° = 3° Magister Templi

9° = 2° Magus

10° = 1° Ipsissimus

The ominous Secret Chiefs, comparable to the Mahatmas of theosophy, were the actual leaders of the organization and held the grade of 7° = 4° (Adeptus Exemptus), and even above these were the non-incarnate, even more secret leaders of the Third Order.

So that's the story of the Golden Dawn. Ellic Howe, a British author and historian who wrote extensively on occultism, examined both Westcott's written correspondence with Germany and the *Cipher Manuscript* using detailed graphological tests, and obtained an expert opinion as well from Swiss graphologist and occultist Oscar Schlag (who owned probably one of the most impressive private occult libraries of his time in the entire world). The results were clear—the documents were fake. It's probable that Westcott had the documents forged in order to dress up his role in the order. The authenticity of the documents was questioned even while he was still alive. In fact, it was this doubt that eventually triggered the Golden Dawn's decline and collapse. Of course that doesn't say anything about the value of the material that was prepared mainly by Mathers.

Madame Blavatsky settled in London in 1887, which fed the fire of interest in the occult in England until it grew into immense proportions. The Golden Dawn profited from this as well. Membership grew to a substantial size considering the circumstances then and a few affiliated temples were founded in other parts of England as well. Members came predominately from the well-to-do middle class and these also included a number of intellectuals and artists such as William Butler Yeats, an Irish writer who later won the Nobel Prize in literature. Yeats was initiated in 1890 at age twenty-five and later played a significant role in the dispute with Aleister Crowley just before the turn of the twentieth century.

Ellic Howe wrote that the order was “nothing more than a kindergarten for would-be occultists” in its early years from 1888 to 1891. Under the instruction of Mathers, Westcott, and Woodman, members studied the Kabbalistic Tree of Life including its ten sephiroth and twenty-two paths, and occupied themselves as well with alchemy, astrology, geomancy, and the tarot. Woodman died in 1891 and no successor was chosen for

him. In the year 1892, Mathers conducted a thorough reform of the order and virtually ousted his rival Westcott from the leadership position. The Ordo Rosae Rubrae et Aureae Crucis (O. R.R. et A.C.) now became a fully functional inner order within the order that it exclusively presided over. In the same year, he and his French wife Moina (another version says her name was Mina), whose brother was the philosopher Henri Bergson, married in 1890 and then moved to Paris, leaving Westcott to run the outer English branch alone. From this time on, admittance and initiation into the Second Order was only effected upon personal invitation and after absolving an exam. The Second Order was kept strictly secret. The members of the External Order were not aware that this order existed and had no idea of who was a member or where it met. In this Second Order, they did more than just study magical theory—the members also received concrete, practical instruction in ceremonial magic.

Upon initiation, members of the Second Order had to first make their own ritual weapons: a lotus staff, a magical sword, and the Rosicrucian lamen as well as the four elemental weapons—a wand for the element fire, a chalice for water, a dagger for air, and a pentacle for the element earth. These had to be colored and decorated with symbols according to specific instructions before being ritually consecrated.

Mathers developed a study plan for the newly created advanced grade 5° = 6°, Theoricus Adeptus Minor (the beginner grade was the Zelator Adeptus Minor). This curriculum was not absolutely mandatory, but those who chose to adhere to it (and surely only a few actually wanted and/or were able to) can most certainly claim to have received thorough schooling in Western Hermetic occultism. Here the “kindergarten” became a magnificent school of high magic like the world had never seen up to this point.

The order bloomed at its climax during the years 1892 through 1896. But then, Mathers’ autocratic leadership met with more and more resistance from the other members. Plus, the British legal authorities got wind of Westcott’s link to the Golden Dawn in 1897. His superiors felt that this was incompatible with his job as a coroner and examining magistrate. (As Aleister Crowley so fittingly joked: “They were of the opinion that he was paid to sit on corpses, not to raise them.”) Westcott was eventually forced to leave the order that he once founded in the interest of his career and public standing. Actress Florence Farr took over Westcott’s position in the order, but she showed very little interest in the administration work that Westcott had performed with such dedication thus far, and the order’s activities decreased greatly as a result. Meanwhile,

Mathers was having great financial problems. With a great deal of effort, he was able to transcribe an ancient French manuscript found in the Paris library titled “Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal” and, with the help of a patron, published it as *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*.

The crisis climaxed with an open rebellion of the London members in February of the year 1900. In a letter to the autocratic leader of the order, Florence Farr hinted that it might be the right time to let the order inconspicuously dissolve. Mathers was furious. He sensed a conspiracy to put Westcott back into the leadership position and made the major mistake of revealing that Westcott had forged Ms. Sprengel’s letters. Mathers admitted that he was aware of this, but said he was sworn to secrecy by Westcott. But that was too much of a good thing. It’s one of the typical characteristics of dogmatic magic that great value is placed on legitimacy through an old tradition that can be proved in one way or another. Many dogmatists still believe that “old” is the same as “true.” In addition, Mathers and his colleagues demanded a great deal of commitment, trust, and financial support from order members that grew in proportion over the years so that it’s quite understandable that his revelations literally hit like a bombshell.

Westcott made the situation even worse by refusing to take a stand on these accusations, not disputing or denying them in any way. To top things off, the “Crowley affair” truly made the pot boil: Crowley was accepted into the Order in 1898 and was scheduled to be initiated into the Second Order in December 1899. But the other London members felt that Crowley was unsuited, which may have had to do with his openly expressed bisexuality and his general fondness for scandals of all types. Crowley traveled to Paris and had Mathers personally initiate him into the Second Order. Following his return, the London members refused to acknowledge this initiation and to give Crowley the corresponding order documents. (All Golden Dawn manuscripts had to be hand-copied by the corresponding member.)

In return, Mathers appointed Crowley to be his authorized representative and initiate a cleansing process in London, which was nonetheless unsuccessful. No other than W. B. Yeats helped ensure this failure after Crowley claimed in a characteristically typical act of modesty that Yeats only envied Crowley’s exceptional poetic talent. Yeats was chosen head of the External Order and attempted a reform along with other members. But there was no chance. Meanwhile, factions and unofficial secret circles were formed



within the organization and dispute was on the everyday agenda so that Yeats was forced to give up one year later.

Then the order split up into various successor organizations. A. E. Waite took over a great portion of the members of the London Isis-Urania temple and formed his own group called the Independent and Rectified Rite, which renounced practical magic entirely and focused on Christian/Hermetic mysticism instead. This order dispersed in 1914. Under Dr. R. W. Felkin, the Order of the Stella Matutina was formed, which continued the original magical tradition of the Golden Dawn. Yeats joined this organization as well. By the year 1903, the Golden Dawn no longer existed. Ellic Howe wrote, however, that the order continued to meet in two English temples up to modern times. Eventually the name “Golden Dawn” reappeared when Israel Regardie founded the order anew in the United States or, as the modern rumor claims, continued to run the organization and eventually brought it back into the public eye. (Regardie was the long-time, voluntary personal secretary for Aleister Crowley who published Crowley’s Order documents in four volumes in 1937.)

The exact membership of the Golden Dawn cannot be precisely determined due to the many gaps in their documentation, but the official yet incomplete address book (according to Gilbert) contained exactly 332 entries in 1897 so that a maximum estimate of 400 members would seem realistic. The layman often overestimates the size of such magical orders probably due to the misleading figures of Freemasonry, which claims many more members. Even the modern-day O.T.O. of Californian provenance officially claims a worldwide membership of roughly 800, which already includes the numerous inactive members. And even the *Fraternitas Saturni* under the leadership of its founder Gregor A. Gregorius had only around 100 members during its best times, with a fluctuation rate of roughly fifty percent. After all, only a few people actually do make the choice to join a magical order where magic is actually practiced and not just discussed. Of course there were probably plenty of inactive members in the Golden Dawn and some things were probably written merely for the records. But in any case, this order was not only able to influence the documented history of Western magic in just fifteen years, but also to write this history itself. Not even Crowley’s A.·A.·. or his O.T.O. were able to boast such a long-lasting influence.

The innovating thing about the Golden Dawn was above all its widespread syncretism. It finally fulfilled what magicians had been dreaming about since the Renaissance:

They created a coherent framework containing nearly all symbols and practices of the various systems to use in magical practice. This huge construction was usually presented as a “rediscovery of ancient knowledge,” which most members innocently believed. But the truth is that much of it was either “reconstructed” on the basis of speculations or even newly developed. For example, we’re not familiar with any verifiable older magical tradition that implements the four elemental weapons, dagger/sword, wand, chalice, and pentacle—this is an application of tarot symbolism to practical ritual magic. Even the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram in the form we are familiar with today is a product of the Golden Dawn and therefore of the nineteenth century, and the order is still known for this ritual today along with its frequently exaggerated pompousness and focus on dogmatic, speculative trivialities.

So today when magicians talk about tattwa travel, Enochian chess or Enochian magic, planetary magic, hexagram rituals or ritual weapons, tarot symbolism, Kabbalistic pathwork, the Tree of Life, and astro-magic; when magicians put on robes and ceremonial gowns and memorize Hebrew formulas in order to perform invocations and evocations; when they explore the spiritual hierarchy of the planetary and elemental spheres and use these as an advantage in everyday situations; when they sometimes use an archaic language style during rituals; when they drop words such as “astral” or “Akasha” or “aether”; when they charge talismans and amulets systematically—this is all due in part to the unmistakable influence of the Golden Dawn that can still be felt strongly today. One could say that the Golden Dawn was, next to theosophy (which it was strongly influenced by itself), probably the most influential single group of Western twentieth-century occultism.

This order not only set new standards in Western magic that later organizations were continually compared to, but (which was much more important in a magical sense) also introduced a certain mood or atmosphere and basic emotional approach to magic that affected much more than just the Anglo-Saxon cultural region. It rediscovered, preserved, and expanded on a great pool of ancient knowledge; on this basis, it created new things and gave them an aura of time-honored tradition, which many magicians today are still quite aware of. The Golden Dawn gave in the same amount that it received, and looking back at the historical context it’s clear what a significant contribution it made as compared to the relatively short period of its active existence.

In his foreword to *Psychonaut*, Chris Bray commented that the leaders of the Golden Dawn were always just one step ahead of their students. It might seem a bit cheeky to claim that, but it probably hits the nail right on the head. Mathers, who—although incredibly well-read—seemed to be unsuited for any type of regular civil job and was always financially dependent on his patrons and followers who helped him to just barely eke out a living, somehow managed to fulfill the magical dreams of an entire era and beyond with his mere dramaturgical talent and personal charm—and he believed in these dreams himself like no other. In doing so, he took things like scams and intentional forgery in stride. He contributed much more than just his knowledge, but also his personality, his paranoia, his egocentricism—and his magical power, his brains, and his sense of the magical needs of his time that were more geared toward the right atmosphere than towards technical efficiency. But the concept of a *Domus Sanctus Spiritus*—the ancient utopia of a school of mysteries or academy of occult knowledge that was the dream of magicians for centuries and merely a legend to the Rosicrucians—became reality at least temporarily as the new-romantic flame of this order flickered for a short time during the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. In order to achieve this, Mathers had to give his intuition (and imagination) free rein more often than not. Thus the Golden Dawn and therefore everything that succeeded it in the magical world, everything that defined and oriented itself according to this order, carries the mark of Samuel Liddell “MacGregor” Mathers and his closest confidants. Of course, it was necessary on more than one occasion to feign authority and rich experience when he himself had just begun to study the subject (namely five minutes before the start of the ritual). In this sense, regardless of what one might think of him as a person, Mathers was the perfect example of someone who “learned by teaching.” The fact that his leadership and diplomacy skills did not develop at the same rate as his magical knowledge was not uncommon to the period. It was still an era of autocrats and monarchs; the customary power management methods of commanding and obedience were not negotiable, especially for Mathers who had dreamed of a military career since his childhood. His obstinacy is unmistakable, as is the grim determination that was applied while the magical system that he felt was perfect came to terms with the faults, weaknesses, and even the needs of those very people who gave this system its flesh and blood. His contribution to Western magic is undisputable as well, and like no other he was able to

condense and forge its various elements into a handy, manageable structure, although a bit pompous and frilly at times.

The magic of the Golden Dawn is still present today as we've already mentioned. But of course, magic has always had its current areas of emphasis, its trends, and its new directions. Fifteen years ago it looked like the Wicca tradition would top the magic ranks, but meanwhile there seems to be no way of avoiding chaos magic. Even the Golden Dawn was made a target of opposition and disassociation, just like Freemasonry earlier: Crowley's A..A.. was an example of this. The O.T.O. and the Fraternitas Saturni also want to go in new directions, as does the IOT. What remains is the fact that much of what still characterizes the magic of our modern times would have remained unknown or been forgotten if it hadn't have been for the Golden Dawn. In some aspects, the theory taught in the Golden Dawn was much more pragmatic than the actual practice of its members. After all, the order did not fail due to a lack of material or energy. Instead, the deathblow was delivered by the human aspects that were left unmastered, which is the greatest danger to any such organization. These include eccentric loner behavior and group egotism that, in the case of the Golden Dawn, eventually destroyed the general consensus. Weaknesses in the knowledge of human nature and leadership, bigotry, and unnecessary maneuvers of deception ruined something that could have been a truly great thing, and indeed was for a short period of time.

Today, magic is going in new directions, other interests are moving into the foreground, and the memory of the Golden Dawn is increasingly fading. For some young magicians it's merely a vague historical legend, or an echo of the past with an antiquated message despite its appealing sound. Nonetheless we feel that it would be time well invested to take a closer look at the Golden Dawn and its magical practices, as they are still of relevance today.





# DIVINATION (IV)

## THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ORACLES (III)

### 8. Text Oracles

(choosing random spots in books, I Ching, etc.)

There's not much to say about text oracles since they're pretty much self-explanatory. Their basic structure consists of asking a question and interpreting the answer by randomly choosing an already existing text passage and interpreting it as the answer. Surely the simplest method of doing this is to blindly open a book and point your finger at a random passage without looking. This text passage is then interpreted as the answer. In ancient times, the blade of a knife or dagger was used to choose a certain page of a closed book (usually a holy document of revelation such as the Bible, etc.) in order to come to the desired interpretation.

There are plenty of good basic books on the market nowadays about the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes* so that a more detailed explanation is unnecessary here. The most widely read and used version is the classic translated by German sinologist and missionary Richard Wilhelm. This version replaced the one by James Legge that was most popular until then; this was the version that Aleister Crowley preferred as well. (Crowley, by the way, composed his own translation of the *I Ching*, which was actually more of a free adaptation since he couldn't speak Chinese). If you don't have a copy of the *I Ching* yet, we recommend taking the time to browse through and compare the various versions one quiet afternoon at a well-stocked metaphysical bookstore. Experts will

probably have several different versions on their bookshelves anyway since translations are usually a matter of interpretation and many authors have various centers of focus in their editions. Each version, of course, has its own strengths and weaknesses as well. For example, although Richard Wilhelm's translation has become the standard version, he's often quite abstract and moralizing at times and even quotes Goethe on occasion to illustrate certain points. Regardless of the sensitivity he applies and his respect for the Chinese culture, it's difficult for him to hide the Christian missionary in him.

In any case, it can be expected of a well-versed magician that he or she is familiar with the *I Ching* and is able to pass on this information as well. Of course, you should also familiarize yourself with the techniques of coin tossing and the more complicated, traditional method of counting out yarrow stalks.

## 9. Binary Oracles

(tossing coins, pendulum, drawing lots, etc.)

Binary oracles are described as such because they answer yes/no questions. Probably the most popular example of this oracle is coin tossing, but using the pendulum and drawing lots are popular as well. The advantages and disadvantages are clear. On the one hand, these types of oracles are extremely easy to use and the enquirer quickly receives the desired answer; on the other hand, they are quite limited in their range of interpretation and leave almost no room for the use of intuition. That's probably the main reason why they're so popular, since they eliminate the need for painstaking examination and self-criticism on the part of the enquirer.

# INTRODUCTION TO MAGIC DEMONOLOGY (III)

## THE PRACTICE OF DEMON EVOCATION (I) PROCEDURE AND TEMPLE SET-UP

Generally the circle and triangle are used in classical magic demonology. The magician stands as usual within the protective circle. The altar is also contained within and decorated with the appropriate utensils. The demon is generally summoned to appear in the triangle located outside of the circle. In any case, the triangle should be visibly recognizable as such and closed, even if the circle itself is only imagined. The triangle can be marked with chalk, wooden slats, rope, cord, or other similar material. A separate censer with a generous portion of incense is usually located within the triangle as well. This is not lit until after the introductory banishing (e.g., the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram). The symbol-logic should be clear: The magician must intentionally leave the circle (leaving the balanced center), which is a symbolic act of abandonment or (if the magician just reaches outside the circle to light it) perforation of the center, thus creating the state of imbalance that is characteristic of magic demonology.

In doing so, the circle can be opened and closed similar to the act of rending the veil, and strict traditionalists may establish two protective spirits at the opening to act as watchmen. Some magicians wear black silk gloves that reach to their elbows so that they can safely stretch their hands outside of the circle without danger, but in our opinion

the detrimental effect that this has on our symbol-logic makes it not worth it. Let's not forget that although demons may seem quite one-sided and thus very predictable, they are nonetheless capable of a great deal of shrewdness and insidiousness, thus offsetting any apparent advantage of predictability and adding the element of surprise. The magician must therefore be ready for anything without allowing this extreme attentiveness to grow into paranoia.

It's extremely important that the demon conjured does not leave its triangle and remains "restrained." Of course, we're applying the spirit model here. That's why we need to warn you not to be sloppy in your work or show any signs of a weak will, otherwise you could be provoking a permanent, possibly even deadly case of possession. Thus the triangle serves as both a place of manifestation and a prison, which is why modern magicians may sometimes prefer to use a large cage instead of a triangle.

If the magician doesn't want to have to rely on thick incense alone to help the demon appear, a fetish or other suitable object of manifestation (the so-called *materia prima*) can be placed into the triangle as well. This could, for example, be a statue that reflects the corresponding principle of the demon, either in the material that it is made of, its form, its symbolic meaning, or simply its appearance in general. In this case, the incense in the triangle functions as an offering or source of energy for the manifestation.

It's common in traditional demon evocations to prepare several strips of parchment paper containing the demon's name and sigil (cf., the appendix to my book *Practical Sigil Magic*) and to place these on the altar. With the use of these sigils, the demon can be forced to appear in case it refuses; or if the demon misbehaves it can be threatened with the destruction of its sigil, which can then be burned in the censer on the altar if the need arises. If all strips of parchment are burned without the demon appearing or succumbing to the magician's will (the amount prepared generally corresponds to the demon's sphere, e.g., five for the demon Bartzabel of the Mars sphere), the operation should be discontinued yet wrapped up thoroughly so that the demon is properly banished and dismissed (even if it wasn't visibly present!). The ritual is concluded with a very careful banishment. It's also recommended to thoroughly cleanse the temple after the banishment with incense or charged water.

Sometimes patches made of lead or other material are worn over the forehead or heart to protect the corresponding chakras from harmful influences. But in our opinion this has roughly the same effect—and same ineffectiveness—as the long silk gloves since

this violates the symbol-logic of the imbalance or risk-taking. In any case, since magic demonology works predominately with the magician's fear, an excessive amount of protective measures might sometimes prove to be quite effective since these manifest the fear, thus attracting the dreaded in the first place.

In the end, it's a question of the magician's temperament and personal philosophy of magic whether or not a weak spot is intentionally revealed in order to attract or lure the opponent (and that's what a demon always is), or if a number of protective measures are implemented to arouse the demon's attention and make it want to manifest.

The actual wording used is not all that different from an invocation. Although a hymn wouldn't be used in this case to praise the demon, its name is nonetheless called and it is summoned to appear.

For unknown demons, a slightly different approach is necessary. A more vague wording is used, such as, "Oh dark spirits of the earth, appear!" We recommend preparing for such operations by visiting the corresponding elemental sphere in advance and obtaining any pertinent information there.

In the next section, we'll be discussing the types of offerings that are used in magic demonology, as well as demon mediumism, how to deal with manifested demons, the "pact with the devil," and the subtle, nonphysical effects of such evocations.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### **EXERCISE 90**

#### **SCENES FROM REALITY PRODUCTION (v)**

Experience everything in the entire world as a living being. This is an ancient principle of magic that forms the basis of the spirit model. Set a specific time span for this exercise, for example, say one day. During this time, live according to the paradigm that everything around you is alive and has a soul and behave accordingly. For example, talk to your kitchen table, get distracted by an electrical outlet, argue with your washing machine, hold a conversation with your bed, and so on. Psychology calls this "animistic regression," or a return to a more "primitive" state. But you should already know from your study of sigil magic and shamanism that such regressive behavior can be a great source of magical power. Try to perform this exercise with no intentions or expectations, and avoid

looking for a meaning or purpose. When you're finished with the exercise, make notes about your experience in your magical diary—but don't evaluate anything, just observe and make notes.

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## FURTHER READING

### I. The Golden Dawn

If you'd like to learn more about the Golden Dawn, you'll find a short list below of some of the most significant works on this subject for further reading. As expected, there's a great deal of information available in English; only Israel Regardie's standard volume is available in German translation as well.

Richard Cavendish, *A History of Magic*

*Encyclopedia of the Unexplained. Magic, Occultism and Parapsychology*, (see the section on the Golden Dawn contributed by Ellic Howe)

R. A. Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn. Twilight of the Magicians*

R. A. Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn Companion. A Guide to the History, Structure, and Workings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn*

R. A. Gilbert, A. E. Waite. *Magician of Many Parts*

Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn. A Documentary History of a Magical Order 1887–1923*, with a foreword by Gerald Yorke

Francis King, *Magic: The Western Tradition*

Francis King, *The Magical World of Aleister Crowley*

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# THE MAGIC OF ANCIENT EGYPT AND THE LATE CLASSICAL HELLENISTIC PERIOD (I)

Ancient Egypt is considered to be the cradle of magic. Even classical Greek and Roman authors placed high value on emphasizing that they had Egyptian knowledge or were initiated into the temples of the Nile region. In the Arabian world, Egyptian doctors still enjoy a good reputation today, as they did in the era of the pharaohs as well. Egypt's five-thousand-year history produced many wonders, including the pyramids, the Books of the Dead, and the unique technique of embalmment.

So it was logical that later periods would think that the Egyptian culture contained all of the answers to their hopes, dreams, and fears in the fields of magic and mysticism. Although that was much easier before the hieroglyphics were decoded by Champollion in the early nineteenth century, metaphysical authors today still never tire of projecting all kinds of things into ancient Egypt. Such bold claims are made that the Freemasons, Rosicrucians, Knights Templar, Illuminates, Martinists, and who knows who else are all the true guardians of "ancient Egyptian mysteries" and "temple knowledge." Even now, self-proclaimed experts go so far as to claim absurd theories like the alleged ancient Egyptian origin of the tarot cards, not to mention the numerous nuts who spend years tinkering with the measurements and dimensions of the Cheops pyramid and interpreting them to be some kind of meaningful, mystical formula that explains the world. As



already mentioned, even in ancient times Egypt was the land of mysteries, of the occult and of magic, and little has changed since then.

Indeed, as is often the case, the actual facts are even more incredible than all of the made up stories. The things we know for certain about the history of Egyptian magic are more than sufficient to amaze us.

Many of the elements of our modern magic—both Hermetic as well as folk magic—find their origins (or at least numerous equivalents thereof) in the religion of ancient Egypt. These include the work with talismans, invocations, the assumption of god forms, evocations, conjuring of the dead, sympathetic magic, drawing daily oracles, doll magic, and the like.

The term “alchemy” is derived from the Arabian *al khem* whereby *khem* is the ancient word for the land of Egypt as the Egyptians referred to it themselves. This literally means “black earth,” which refers to the muddy, incredibly fertile ground that results after the flooding of the Nile. (In contrast, the infertile desert that covers most of the rest of the region is called “red earth.”) Even in early times, the ancient Egyptian art of magic was referred to as alchemy.

There should be no need to say that we obviously cannot cover the entire spectrum of ancient Egyptian magic in this book, but there is plenty of good literature available on the subject anyway. That’s why we prefer to focus on ancient Egyptian magical techniques instead and to illustrate the relationship to modern-day magic.

In fact, the ancient Egyptian religion was inseparable from magic and thus it became an integral part of everyday life in many ways. Magic was completely legitimized through religion, and priests were not just mere administrators of the divine will, but also masters of the magic arts. Their job was to maintain the perfect primeval order of things, but they didn’t hesitate to use their magic for earthly purposes as well.

No difference was made between “black” and “white” magic, which was a hypocritical invention of the Christian Middle Ages. The Egyptian deities were “by far not ethical enough” (as Hans Bonnet once wrote) for classifications like this, and even demons were beyond such categorization.

It was commonplace for magicians to compete among one another. Whoever wanted to achieve any degree of success in the pharaoh’s court had to prove one’s skills beforehand. We’ve already seen an example of this in the section “Magic in the Bible” with Moses and Aaron. Tradition also says that a “chief lector-priest” was brought to the

court of Cheops who performed truly miraculous things. For example, he cut the heads off of animals and then reattached them. Feats like this gave more credibility to his predictions as a result.

The Egyptians used magic for all kinds of things, e.g., to gain power, for harming, for protection, and for healing. Egyptian medicine was just as reliant on protection formulas as religion was. That's why doctors were sometime nicknamed "protective magicians."

Tradition and the deciphering of hieroglyphic documents show that the magic spell was a very significant aspect of Egyptian magic. Even the sections of the Egyptian Book of the Dead (or more accurately "The Book of Going Forth by Day") that the traditional Egyptologists call "chapters" were originally called *Ra-U*, meaning "magic spell."

In his book *Reallexion der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Hans Bonnet stated two nice examples of such formulas that we'd like to share with you. In the first one, the following words of enticement were used to expel an evil demon of sickness:

Come on, go to sleep, go to where your pretty women dwell, with myrrh in their hair and the scent of fresh frankincense under their arms.

And here is a spell to protect against snakes:

Fallen is the snake that has come from the earth; fallen is the flame that has come from the now. Fall, coil up.

In both examples, the simplicity and imagery stand out; no complicated ritual formulas were used, although they surely had these as well. A short, almost friendly command was obviously often enough for Egyptian magicians to get the desired results.

However, this does not mean that magic was limited to gentle admonitions. They loved to invoke higher powers that were prayed to regularly in order to make their magic work: "O Ra, come here to your daughter who was bitten by a scorpion." In this case, a deity is chosen that is enemies with the creature to be expelled, e.g., the goddess Mafnet (a foe of snakes) can be invoked when performing an operation to heal a snakebite.

True to the ancient Egyptian belief that everything has been here once before, a mythological correspondence is chosen to conjure a deity that was able to master a similar

situation in the past—the legend remains in the present and there is no real future in this sense except the continual repetition of the past.

In this we can find the original source of all Western invocational magic, as the ancient Egyptian magician established an intentional oneness with the deity that becomes complete identification. Then, to use another example, it becomes “I am Osiris,” which gives the magic words their true power. Today we would call this a theistic gnosis or trance. The psychology of the ancient Egyptians was clever enough to counter any possible objections of the censor and turn them off, for example when the magician says in a more pragmatic sense, “It is not I who speaks, but Horus.”

In this state of oneness with a god, the magician may even threaten the gods themselves. But even gods that are directly invoked can be intimidated, for example when the magician threatens to destroy the existing world order that was created with great effort from the chaos if the god or goddess doesn’t do what the magician asks of it.

Often the Egyptian magician may claim to know the secret name of the deity and thus have power over it; as a result, many magic spells contain unintelligible word structures and sound combinations that are probably meant to represent such secret names.

Even in ancient Egypt itself, ancient Egypt was mythicized! Just like many magicians today, or of all other eras in general, the ancient Egyptians felt that magic spells and rituals that were particularly old were the most effective. That’s why they liked to claim that they originated from the gods, such as Thot (Tahuti) and Isis, but even Bes and Sekhmet were viewed as particularly “magical” and were considered to be the patron saints of magicians. A great effort was also made to draw parallels to strange occurrences in connection with the revelation of magical knowledge. Thus, the inexhaustible Hans Bonnet described how a specific text was received for conjuring Isis: “This document which reveals the secret of this god (Isis) was found in the night by the reader priest as it was lying on the floor in the hall of the temple of Koptos; the earth lay in darkness but the moon shone on this book the entire time. It was brought to King Cheops as a miracle.”

The magic spells were recited with a raised voice that could almost be described as “singing,” and it was accompanied by the performing of gestures and mudras of power. In a curse, the name of the target person was often written on to a pot that was then ritually destroyed; clay figures were used just like in doll magic and the use of sympathetic magic was commonplace.

The ancient Egyptians were also familiar with protection symbols and sacred glyphs of power. For example, during a ritual the magician would paint sigils of a deity on his or her body in order to intensify its invocation. They even used a type of deflection doll. This purpose was also fulfilled by the *Ushebti*, which was meant to function as a slave for the dead in the afterlife.

Another typical Egyptian development was the magic slab or stele that was erected to protect places or buildings and their inhabitants. In connection with amulets, knot magic was also fairly popular. Amulets and talismans were usually carried on strings that contained certain knots, and there were even specific instructions as to which knots were to be made at which time of day. Although the exact number of knots varied, usually four, seven, or fourteen were used. The knots themselves generally held no specific meaning and were considered to be more of a symbol of preserving, strengthening, and initiating the magical power that they held.

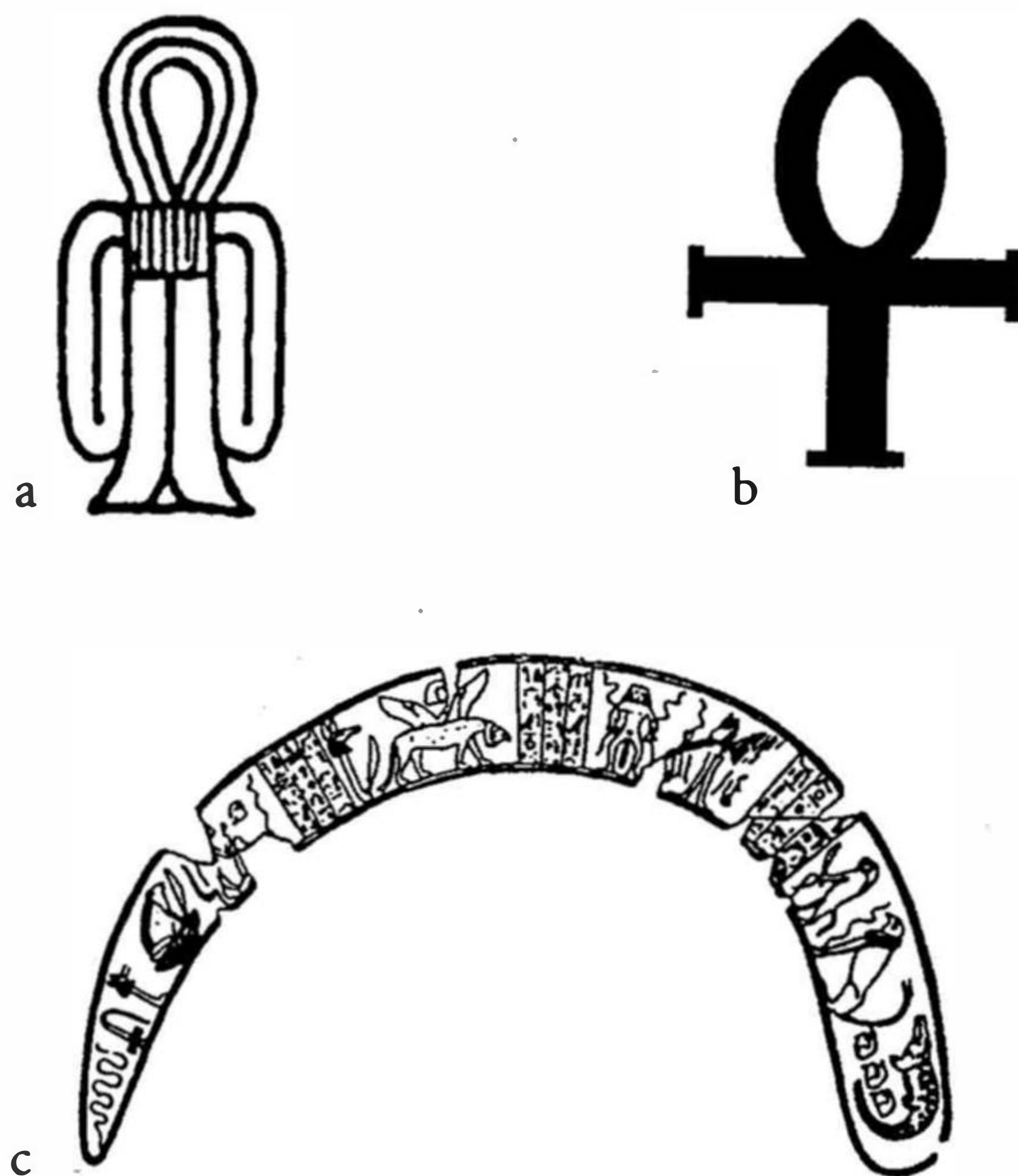
Due to the binding power that they contain, knots were also used in love spells. Even back then the use of blood (taken from the left ring finger), menstrual blood, sperm, or hair was appreciated to make a sympathetic magical contact to the target person. A number of potency spells were passed down from the Demotic and Coptic periods, as were magical tools for making an unwilling partner compliant or accommodating. For this, the “bedfellow” was often used: a female figure with prominent sexual features that was usually made of clay, sometimes resting on a bed. This figure was often buried with the dead and evidence of this goes way back in history. These figures were also used for fertility spells. In this connection, it’s interesting to note the custom of burying such a figure with a dead man in the hope of becoming impregnated by him. The legend of the posthumous conception of Horus by Osiris may have contributed to the emergence or creation of this custom.

The protection knot was used to ward off undesired influences. For example, knots were made to prevent the spreading of poison throughout the body. Other popular knots were the bows known as *shn*, the renowned *Blood of Isis (Tyet)*, or the symbol of life, the *ankh* (handle cross).

Especially unique is the type of Egyptian magic wand that was usually made of bone or horn and marked with magical inscriptions that often described their function. These wands were semicircular and resembled prehistoric or early knives, which is why they were also called “magic knives.” They might have also been made to resemble a

type of ancient boomerang. In any case, they were usually used to protect a woman and her baby from harm during delivery and the period of childbirth. As burial objects, they were almost exclusively found among women and children.

The magic wands were used as amulets or were considered to be the protective spirits themselves. They were handled frequently, as the strong signs of wear and tear that they bear reveal. Illustration 41 shows two magic knots and one example of an ancient Egyptian magic wand. In Illustration 42 we will see a typical conjuration text as taken from the Papyrus of Ani, which is incorrectly called the Egyptian Book of the Dead. It deals with the transformation (of the dead) into the crocodile god, Sobek. Illustration 43 shows a hymn to Ra for use during the new moon. This includes the rubric (Illustration 44) in which specific instructions for using the magic spell are given, which tools are necessary, and so on.



*Illustration 41: a) The magic knot "Blood of Isis"; b) Magic symbol "Ankh"; c) Ancient Egyptian magic wand (Middle Kingdom)*

In ancient Egypt, the belief in demons and spirits of the dead or ghosts was widespread. However, the Egyptians didn't really make a distinction between demons and gods as the Christian dualistic West usually did. Demons were often depicted in animal form or as grotesque mixtures, but even human forms were common as well. Their names generally described what they did or their distinguishing features, such as "blind face," "head scratcher," or "bone crusher."

In the afterlife, demons often appeared as guardians whose job it was to chase away or destroy the souls of the dead when they had no right to be in the underworld; they "live off of the perpetrators and drink their blood," and thus played a very constructive role in the Egyptian system of values. Nevertheless, they posed the most dangerous challenge of all to the dead by appearing as their worst enemies.

Purely destructive demons were known as well, and even ones who threatened to destroy the gods themselves. On the other hand, these "sons of Horus" were considered to be helpers of the dead who prevented them from hunger and thirst.

On earth, the air was purified from the ever-present demons by striking branches together. Fire was used to expel them as well since they dislike the light and also avoid the sun. In later times, Seth (the murderer of Osiris) became the classic embodiment of all destructive demons. They step behind this figure and become at most aliases or pseudonyms of this god, e.g., Apophis, Bebon, and Nebed.

Even in everyday life, there were friendly demons that were similar in function to the concept of our fairies. Illness, however, was usually viewed as a demonic strike or attack. The belief that they could enter the body of their victim through the air almost seems like a modern concept—an infectious transmission through the respiratory tract in which harmful entities (called bacteria or microbes today) could be inhaled.



Illustration 42: Magic spell (“Chapter”) LXXXVIII from the Papyrus of Ani

**Translation of Illustration 42:**

1. [THE MAGIC SPELL] OF CHANGING INTO A CROCODILE [SOBEK]. Saith Osiris Ani, triumphant:
2. I am the crocodile [Sobek] which dwelleth in terror, I am the sacred crocodile and I cause destruction.
3. I am the great fish in Kamui. I am the lord
4. to whom homage is paid in Sekhem [Letopolis]. And Osiris Ani is the lord to whom homage is paid in Sekhem.

**Translation of Illustration 43:**

1. To be said on the day of the month [new moon]. Osiris Ani, the scribe, triumphant in peace, triumphant, saith: Ra riseth
2. in his horizon, and the company of his gods follow after the god when he appeareth from his secret place, when he showeth strength and bringeth himself forth
3. from the eastern horizon of heaven at the word of the goddess Nut. They [the gods] rejoice at the journeyings of Ra, the Ancient One; the Great One
4. rolleth along in his course. Thy joints are knitted together, O Ra, within thy shrine. Thou breathest the winds, thou drawest in the breezes,



Illustration 43: Magic spell ("Chapter") CXXXIII from the Papyrus of Ani



5. thou makest thy jaw-bones to cat in thy dwelling on the day when thou dost scent right and truth. Thou turnest aside the godlike followers
6. [who] sail after the sacred boat, in order that they may return again unto the mighty ones according to thy word. Thou numberest thy bones, thou gatherest together thy members;
7. thou turnest thy face towards the beautiful Amenta; thou comest thither renewed day by day. Behold, thou Image of gold, who possessest the splendours
8. of the Disk of heaven, thou lord of terror; thou rollest along and art renewed day by day. Hail, there is rejoicing
9. in the heavenly horizon, and shouts of joy are raised to the ropes which tow thee along. May the gods who dwell in heaven
10. ascribe praises unto Osiris Ani, when they behold him in triumph, as unto Ra. May Osiris, the scribe Ani, be a prince
11. who is known by the ureret crown; and may the meat offerings and the drink offerings of Osiris Ani, triumphant, be apportioned unto him; may he wax exceeding strong in his body;
12. and may he be the chief of those who are in the presence of Ra. May Osiris, the scribe Ani, triumphant, be strong upon earth and in the world under the earth;
13. and O Osiris, scribe Ani, triumphant, mayest thou rise up strengthened like unto Ra day by day. Osiris Am, triumphant, shall not tarry,
14. nor shall he rest without motion in the earth for ever. Clearly, clearly shall he see with his two eyes, and with his two ears shall he hear what is right and true.
15. Osiris, the scribe Ani, triumphant, cometh back, cometh back from Annu; Osiris Ani, triumphant, is as Ra
16. when he rangeth the oars among the followers of Nu. Osiris Ani, triumphant, hath not revealed what he hath seen,
17. he hath not, he hath not told again what he hath heard in the house which is hidden. Hail, there are shouts of joy to Osiris Ani, triumphant,
18. or he is a god and the flesh of Ra, he is in the boat of Nu, and his ka is well pleased according to the will of the god. Osiris
19. Ani, triumphant, is in peace, he is triumphant like unto Horus, and he is mighty because he hath divers forms.

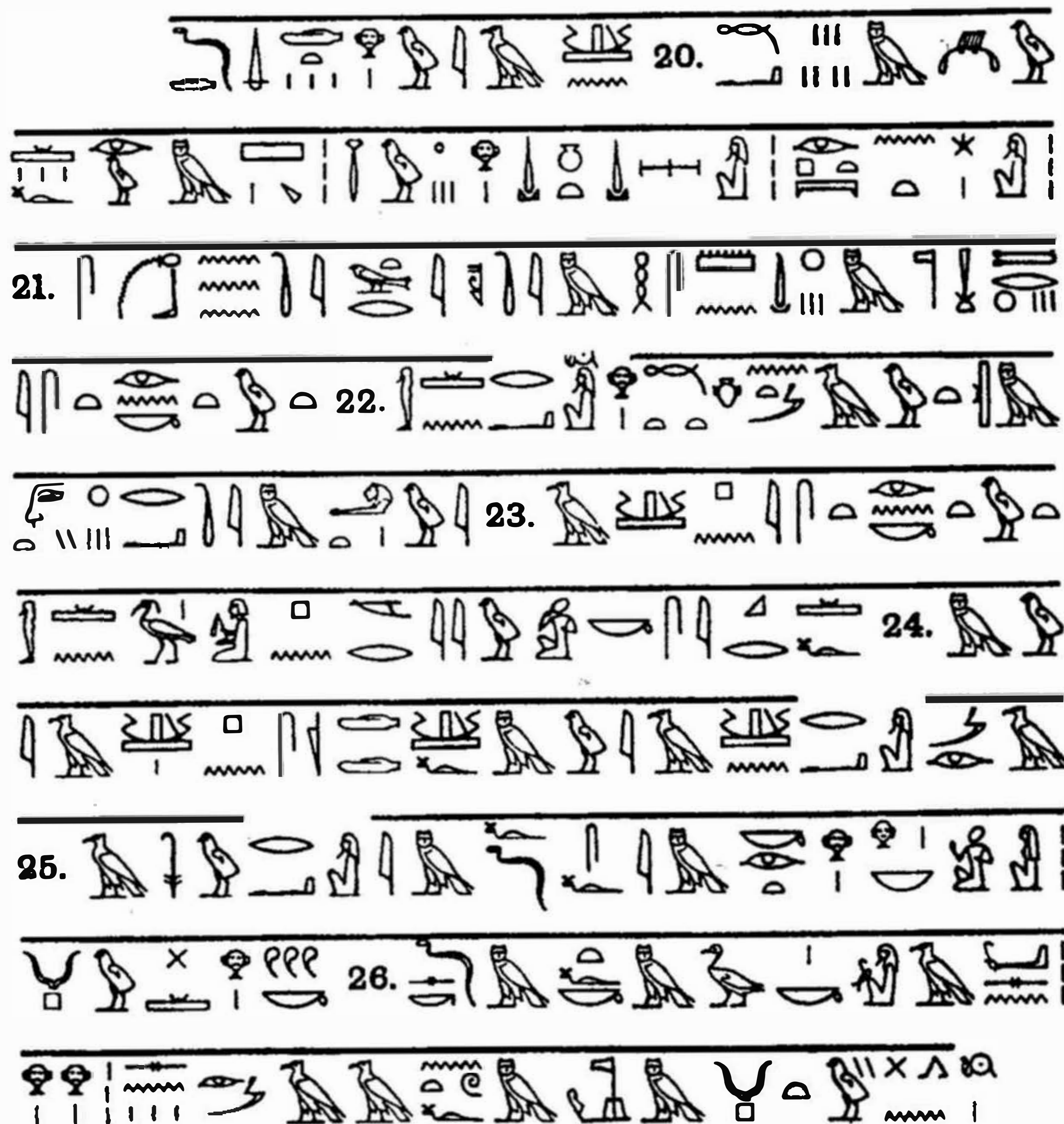


Illustration 44: Magic spell CXXXIII from the Papyrus of Ani (rubric)

**Translation of Illustration 44:**

These words shall be recited over a boat

- 20. seven cubits in length, and painted green for the godlike rulers. Then shalt thou make a heaven of stars
- 21. washed and purified with natron and incense. Behold, thou shalt make an image
- 22. of Ra upon a table of stone painted green, and it shall be placed in the fore-part of the boat.
- 23. Behold, thou shalt make an image of the dead man whom thou wilt make perfect in strength
- 24. in the boat; and thou shalt make it to travel in the divine boat of Ra,

25. and Ra himself will look upon it therein. Thou shalt show it to no man but thyself,  
26. or to thy father or to thy son; let them watch with their faces, and he shall be seen in  
the underworld as a messenger of Ra.

The Egyptians considered the return of the dead as ghosts to be something completely natural because a dead person is not bound to the grave or to the realm of the dead. This opinion is reflected in most other major world cultures as well. If the relationship to the dead person was good during his or her lifetime, then the person was welcomed as a ghost and could function usefully as a spirit helper for his or her relatives, e.g., by expelling demons that cause illness. Occasionally the dead were requested to perform such services on a long-term basis, but just like any other spirits they could appear uninvited as well. As with most other forms of ancestral worship, the ancient Egyptians were also concerned mainly with preventing the uninvited return of the dead in order to allow everyday life to proceed unhindered.

If tending to the graves and worshipping the dead were neglected, the dead would return again and again until they were pacified. Great swarms of the forgotten dead haunt the people on earth and bring sickness and death. As a result, the ancient Egyptians had a great fear of ghosts, which still exists today.

In order to avoid disputes or to iron out difficulties with ghosts, letters were often placed into the graves of the dead or given to other dead people for them to pass on. The intercession of other dead people was gladly utilized and was even combined with threats when deemed necessary. The god-king of the Twenty-First Dynasty even passed a decree obliging the dead to always treat their relatives properly and never bring them harm—the difference between life on earth and the afterlife just wasn't as distinct as it is now.

There's a lot more to say about the ancient Egyptian religion and magic, but that would fill entire volumes and it already has. Even just a fairly complete list of the Egyptian deities, with their functions and qualities, would take up hundreds of pages. That's why it would be more appropriate here to take the time to explain a few key terms that often appear in more modern documents on Western magic as well.

## BOOKS OF THE DEAD

There was no one single Egyptian Book of the Dead. In fact, it was actually a collection of 190 chapters that were compiled by German Egyptologist R. Lepsius, who took them from various different papyrus texts. This bundle of documents, however, contains the substantial elements of other Books of the Dead as well. The “books” of this type (e.g., the Book of Caverns and the Book of Gates) are actually long papyrus rolls that were individually drawn up for certain wealthy deceased, for example the pharaoh, his ministers, and the priests. After a while, the making of Books of the Dead developed into a true industry. Papyrus or leather rolls were inscribed in advance and kept “in stock,” and the name of the deceased was added later when necessary, for example with so-called “standard form” Books of the Dead. Accordingly, the texts contained therein are often quite sloppy. Omissions, grammatical errors, and the repetition of entire passages and even chapters that were written down from bottom to top, thus ending with the title, were commonplace.

The Book of the Dead was usually placed into the grave between the legs of the mummy and buried along with it. In general, a Book of the Dead spans the journey to the underworld, the death tribunal in the hall of the gods, and the following period spent in the afterlife. Thus the deceased person’s entire life on earth is described and a “negative confession” (chapter 125) is meant to eradicate the person’s sins by means of magical acclamation (“I did not curse the gods. I did not take food from the needy. [...] I never caused suffering. I never caused starvation,” and so on).

The deceased was thought to enter into the heritage of the aging gods since he or she was considered to be “newborn” in the afterlife—young, fresh, strong, and full of vigor. This, of course, doesn’t exclude the possibility that the deceased might be completely disoriented at first when arriving in the afterlife. After all, the afterlife is dangerous territory and the deceased should be on his or her guard.

As Kolpaktchy once said:

The dead are in a state that compels them to muster all of their spiritual energies. Because at any given moment, the dead may find themselves in a position where no one can come to their assistance; everything depends on the individual’s mental state, courage and above all on his or her esoteric knowledge.

It's not enough to have lived a pure and flawless life; the dead must be able to foil the traps and snares of demons and must have knowledge of the names of the gods that they encounter; they must also be familiar with the path that they must travel as well as the geographical position of the mountains, the currents, the swamps and the islands of the underworld, and so on (*Egyptian Book of the Dead*).

The Book of the Dead thus served as both a map and an instruction manual for this. The deceased person undergoes a regular metamorphosis by changing into one god after the other: Osiris, Tum, Ptah, Horus, and so on. That's why the dead are always linked to a certain god, such as in the Papyrus Ani where the scribe Ani is continually referred to as "Osiris Ani." But numerous transformations into animals occur as well: falcon, ibis, snake, cow, crocodile, and so on.

The dead travel in the sun bark and enter twelve "gates" that represent the twelve hours of the night or day, each of which holds its own dangers. During the course of the journey, the dead—like their model Osiris—undergo all phases of alchemy: death, decay, resurrection, purification, transformation, sublimation, and fixation. But they are not automatically transcended; the offering of the death priest is required as well as the worshipping of the dead in general. Only then can the dead become transcended, or become an "Ach spirit" (see below). The provision of an offering was called in general an "offering to the gods" or "offering of Achu [the plural of Ach]."

### **THE EGYPTIAN AFTERLIFE AND THE GODS**

It's certainly not an exaggeration to refer to the documented Egyptian civilization as a pure afterlife culture. While the houses of their earthly existence were built of clay brick, more stable materials such as basalt and granite were used for their monuments and tombs. There's no better example of how important the afterlife was to them as compared to life on earth. Death to them acted as a footbridge into "real life"—this basic attitude contributed to the esoteric misunderstandings of later eras (that are still common today) that the ancient Egyptians supposedly believed in reincarnation as we know it today. Although there are indications of such beliefs, these originated for entirely different reasons, as we'll see when we discuss Ba and Ka.

The Egyptians could even be called “afterlife experts.” Every culture has its tales about life after death, and thus, as expected, the Egyptians had a richly detailed cosmogony of the afterlife that we will only touch on here.

According to the ancient Egyptians, the afterlife was structured into two basic parts, Amenti and Duat. Creation as a whole was divided into three parts: the heavens, the underworld, and the earth. Amenti means “land of the West” and this where Osiris lived, who was the ruler of the underworld in general. Duat is the gloomy region of the “sea of fire” and the “fields of fire,” or “hell.” Here the souls of the damned were tortured by demons—a concept that we will later find in both Christianity and Islam.

The ancient Egyptian gods—just like humans—were subject to the concept of time and aging. Thus a distinction was made between the young gods (the “Horus class”), the reigning gods (Ra, Thot, Anubis), and the ancient gods (Hathor, Khepra, Nu, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut [Nuit], Atum [Tum]). The gods Ptah, Amon, and Chnum were considered to be creators of the world, or demiurges. Accordingly the role of humans is also emphasized, who in the cosmic structure of things are not merely subject to the will of the gods, but instead have a redeeming function of their own. In fact, a human being is the center of the universe as long as he or she preserves, promotes, and contributes to the divine structure of things.

Often the gods appear entirely in animal form, but usually they have a human body and the head of an animal. This reflects an ancient shamanic influence that probably came from the depths of the African continent during prehistoric times. Of course, these depictions could be viewed as the remnants (or maybe even the completion) of early totemism that was reformulated again and again into a sort of pantheistic polytheism (probably as a result of the theological speculations concerning Heliopolis, the sun city of the ancient empire in around 3200 BC) that gradually ossified into empty rituals until spiritual revolutions such as the reform of the “monotheistic” pharaoh Echnaton and the later influences of Hellenistic thought gave it a new driving force.

The human/god with the animal mask; this is a shamanic and magical concept through and through that saw its true magical power in atavism (which the ancient Egyptians greatly appreciated anyway). This interpretation of Egyptian culture is unfortunately rarely found in books, which is probably a result of the fact that the relevant authors generally had no great knowledge of ethnology or anthropology so that the whole phenomenon of magical atavism leaked in from the outside at best. When, for



*Illustration 45: Ancient Egyptian amulet: (1) claw; (2) heart; (3) & (4) hands; (5) leg; (6) rising sun; (7) papyrus staff; (8) name ring; (9) tassel; (10) knife (peseshkaf); (11) feathers; (12) symbol of union; (13) & (14) royal crowns; (15) headrest; (16 and 17) square; (18) stairs  
[as taken from Bonnet's "Reallexikon"]*

example, Kolpaktchy, a highly respected professor of Egyptology, rejects the “unscientific nature” of the term “totem” (that Frazer allegedly first coined) and claims that animal heads are an expression of the artistic need to bring more clarity and rigid distinctiveness into the “bland” and “insignificant” human countenance, he thereby overlooks the obvious fact that many Egyptian gods are depicted not only with animal heads, but also with the bodies of animals. (Ba even has the body of a bird with a human head.) But above all he completely overlooks the fact that Egypt is located on the northern edge of the African continent and that this region also had a prehistoric culture (and most likely a shamanic one). Every magician who has ever worked with animal atavisms can

only shake his or her head at such a mistake. Nonetheless, this is just one example of the tremendous number of misjudgments that the ancient Egyptian religion and magic are faced with today.

### **THE BA (PLURAL “BAI”)**

Ba is often translated as “psyche” or “soul,” but the ancient Egyptians understood it a bit differently than Christian cultures did. Thus this term can at best be a rough approximation.

Initially, “Ba” was used to describe a certain bird species, probably a type of stork that was said to embody divine powers. According to popular belief the shining stars were thought to contain souls, which is why the Ba is often depicted as a small oil lamp. Just like the Ach (see below), the Ba is often equated with the gods in older literature.

Certainly the Ba can be understood as a spiritual force or even “soul” in the sense of strength or power. In contrast to later Christianity, the Egyptians never believed in a soul on earth, as a mortal person doesn’t acquire a personal Ba until after death, after his or her corpse has become “transfigured” by the magical rituals involved with the worshipping of the dead. Here is what one deceased said in a pyramid text: “The gods come to me with a bow and explained that they would escort me to my soul.”

With the increasing democratization of the practice of worshipping of the dead, the term “Ba” received a new meaning. Now, the Ba becomes an entity that is very closely tied to a person and his or her destiny, one that emerges at the end of life from the outflow of the dead and continues to live on in a new form as a soul. This soul becomes the bearer of salvation in the afterlife to which all hopes of everlastingness are tied. It “commemorates the corpse” and cares for it. The Ba continues the uninhibited life of the corpse, which is now confined to the grave and thus ensuring the deceased person’s independence and mobility. Whenever possible, the Ba should be able to take on all of the forms required of it, a skill that was nurtured in the worshipping of the dead with corresponding magic spells.

The Ba bird is depicted with a human head, often having a beard that is meant to represent its divinity. Usually its image is of a falcon, thus creating a reference to god-king Horus.



## THE KA

It would be pointless to try and describe the Egyptian concept of Ka in just a few short words. Just like the Ba cannot be simply summed up as “soul,” it would be just as wrong to call the Ka simply a “double” or a “guardian spirit” as is often the case today. Sometimes it’s even called a “personified life force.” Although these terms are not entirely wrong, none of them truly reflects the whole essence of the Ka.

In its aspect as a life force, the Egyptian Ka is similar to the Chinese concept of “chi” and the Indian concept of “prana,” although these are never depicted as personifications. Moreover, the Egyptians do not believe in an abstract or impersonal life force. Thus the Ka is consequently born or created right alongside the individual person. From this time on, it accompanies the person throughout life like a double. The person may die, but his or her Ka experiences no change, “it continues to live, thus continuing the life of that specific person whose life was nothing more than the work of that Ka anyway” (Hans Bonnet). Thus it is the guarantee for eternal life after death, but it also requires nourishment through offerings and the worship of the dead.

Even the gods need a Ka. Ra, for example, was said to have fourteen of them. These were probably not fourteen individual Kas, but rather fourteen aspects of the same Ka, each of which was personified as an individual entity by way of illustration.

These Ka spirits exist even without an individual earthly life. In fact, it would be more accurate to say that they stand for the principle of life in general, or as a “collective embodiment.” Thus in a sense they even become the guardian spirits of the person.

In later times, the Ka was equated with the person’s image or name and was often used in magic for protection and destruction—a trend that declined, however, already in the ancient empire.

Life is maintained through nourishment and thus the collective form “Ka” is used as a synonym for food offerings. Occasionally a depiction of the Ka (as the main component of the deceased) with outstretched arms is erected in place of the offering table to symbolically embrace the food.

Ancient texts describe death as “going to one’s Ka.” In death, the likeness between a person and his or her Ka becomes clear. It doesn’t become apparent until death because the Ka resides in the afterlife, or in the “non-sensual” (Hans Bonnet), and the person is only able to experience a heartfelt relationship with his or her Ka here. In doing so, the

deceased does not disintegrate in his or her Ka. Instead, the person maintains an earthly form while the Ka stands beside him or her as a “protector and guarantor of his or her being” (Hans Bonnet) as it already did during the person’s life on earth.

### **THE ACH (PLURAL ACHU)**

The ancient Egyptians understood the Achu as a part of the “sum of the higher organized entities” (Hans Bonnet) that were comprised of living humans, gods, Achu, and the dead. The root of the word “Achu” is derived from “to shine, to gleam” and generally describes entities that are in a “brighter” state of being that goes beyond this life on earth.

But soon the definition of this term was limited to describe lower-ranking, supernatural powers that included both lesser gods as well as demons, impure spirits, and the “transfigured dead,” which mean the dead who experienced the blessings of being worshiped (Hans Bonnet). While depicted originally as a bird with a crest (crested ibis/*ibis comata*) or Hammerkop (*Scopus umbretta*), the Ach soon took on an earthly form, although this had nothing at all to do with the physical body since it was a pure “heavenly creature.”

One of the pyramid text states that “the deceased is fulfilled by his or her Ach,” which illustrates the fact that the Ach was also understood as the supernatural, magical force of the afterlife entity; thus the term became more abstract and received the further meaning of “spirit power” or “transfiguration.” But even then the Ach was still viewed as an entity that follows behind the dead. The Ach can also be a quality or asset of the gods, for example when one says that they have “their Kas, their Achu, their food, and all of their other things.” In more modern terms, the Ach could be understood as a form of magis that can be personified at times. In older literature, however, not much distinction is made between the gods and Achu, and they were both often even equated.

### **HIKE (OR HEKA)**

In ancient Egypt, Hike was understood as the secret power that makes magic work. The gods possessed Hike as an integral component of their being and whoever devours their

bodies takes on this magical power as well. Humans, on the other hand, can also possess Hike but only through actions and words that Hike flows through. This knowledge is given to humanity by the gods as a means and a weapon in the fight for survival. With Hike's help, a person can defy the arbitrariness of chaos. Behind everything that seems to happen by chance, Hike is often the driving force—it can also occur as a hostile force. But this, too, can be overcome with even stronger Hike.

The dead, being in an unprotected state, particularly need the magical power that can only be gained externally, namely by writing magic spells onto the graves.

Of course, Hike is personified as well in the Egyptian pantheon and thus the deceased—just like the magician—can transform into the god Hike, into a son (and one of the first creations) of Atum. It is he who the gods bestow the power of all-creator upon (Hans Bonnet), and as an aspect of the god of creation he is also called the “Ba of Atum.” A regular cult developed around Hike, and holy shrines were built in On and the necropolis region of Memphis, for example. There Hike was revered as “the oldest of the holy places of the primeval beginning,” and later he even developed into a youthful primeval god and the son of Ptah and Sekhmet. He enters into various relationships, e.g., with the ram god Chnum and with the crocodile god Sobek, the latter of which eventually led to his depiction as a crocodile. Sometimes he was even depicted as a sphinx. Doctors who were called “protective magicians,” as we've already seen, also liked to call themselves “priests of Hike.”

Furthermore, Hike was closely tied to Hu and Sia, whom we will discuss later in this book.

# INTRODUCTION TO RITUAL MAGIC (VIII)

## **THE HEXAGRAM RITUAL AND THE ELEMENTS**

Apart from its function as an invocational or banishing planetary ritual (usually as part of a larger operation), there's one more way of working with the hexagram ritual that finds its use predominately in the planetary magic of the elements.

Illustration 46 should explain this sufficiently. The hexagrams are drawn in their corresponding cardinal directions whereby the lines are drawn in seven different ways, namely one for each planet.

By the way, the position of the planets in the astrological zodiac can also be individually invoked, for example by drawing the corresponding astrological symbol in the middle of the pentagram while performing the Greater Ritual of the Hexagram.

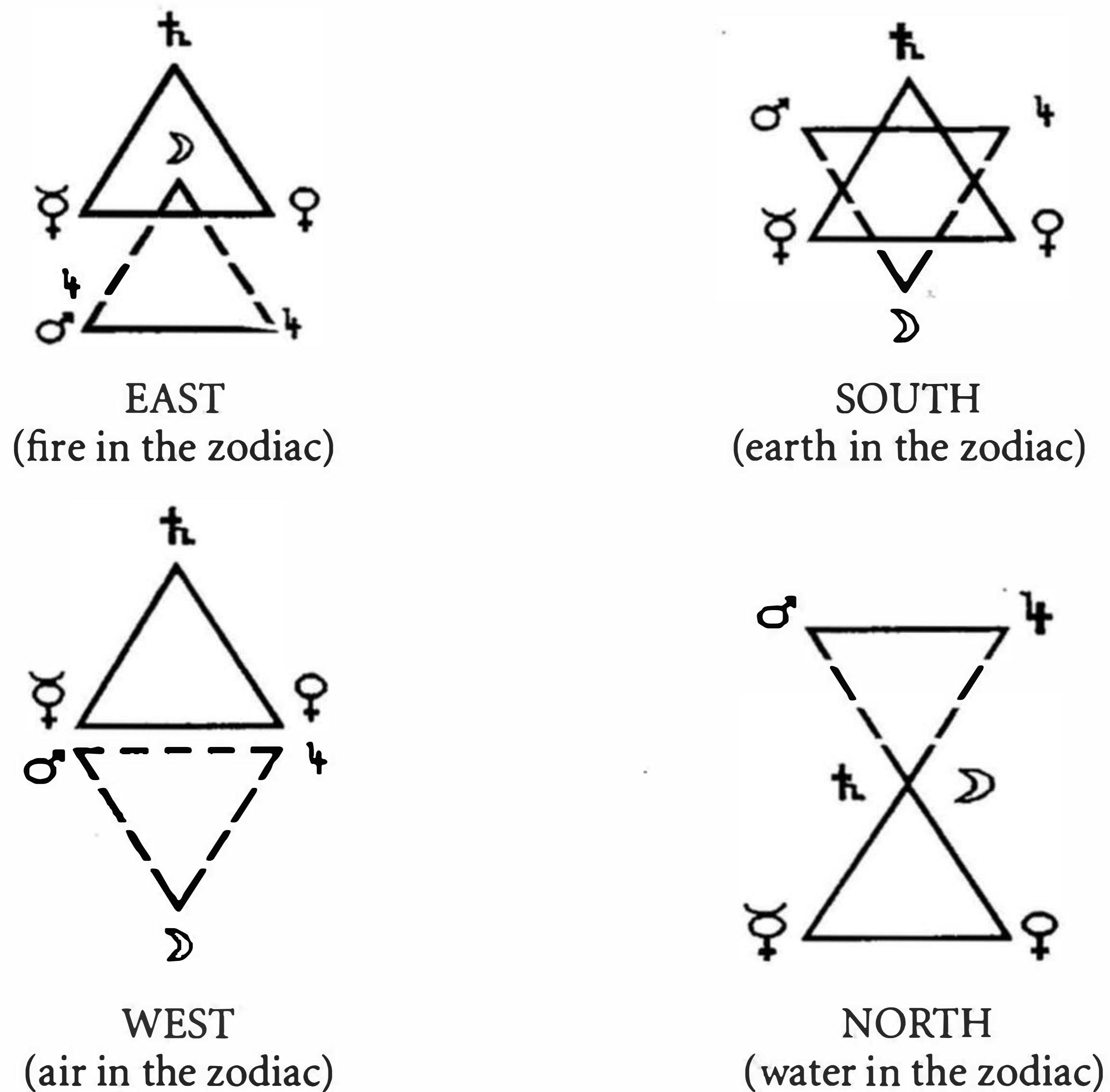
We'd like to illustrate the Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram here, which is used to conjure the elements.

## **THE LESSER RITUAL OF THE HEXAGRAM**

This ritual stems from the tradition of the Golden Dawn as well. We will describe it here without the order's internal passwords and grade signs that were obligatory at the time.

1. Kabbalistic Cross
2. Begin in the east. Invoke or banish by drawing the corresponding hexagram in the appropriate cardinal direction (the proper intonation is always ARARITA)
3. Complete and close the circle (in the east again)

This ritual is also suitable for creating a link to the tattwas; after all, magicians often love to decorate their temple with the appropriate tattwa symbols in the four cardinal directions, whereby the symbol for ether (spirit) generally hangs above the altar or is placed directly on it.



*Illustration 46: Four forms of the hexagram ritual*

The Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram is generally used after an introductory pentagram ritual to conjure the powers of the elements whereby (a) the particular element to be conjured is either drawn in all four cardinal directions with the appropriate hexagram or (b) all four elements are conjured one after another in their corresponding cardinal directions (see Illustration 47 for the way the lines are drawn).

When the operation is finished, the ritual is repeated in the banishing sense.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 91*

#### **THE HEXAGRAM RITUAL**

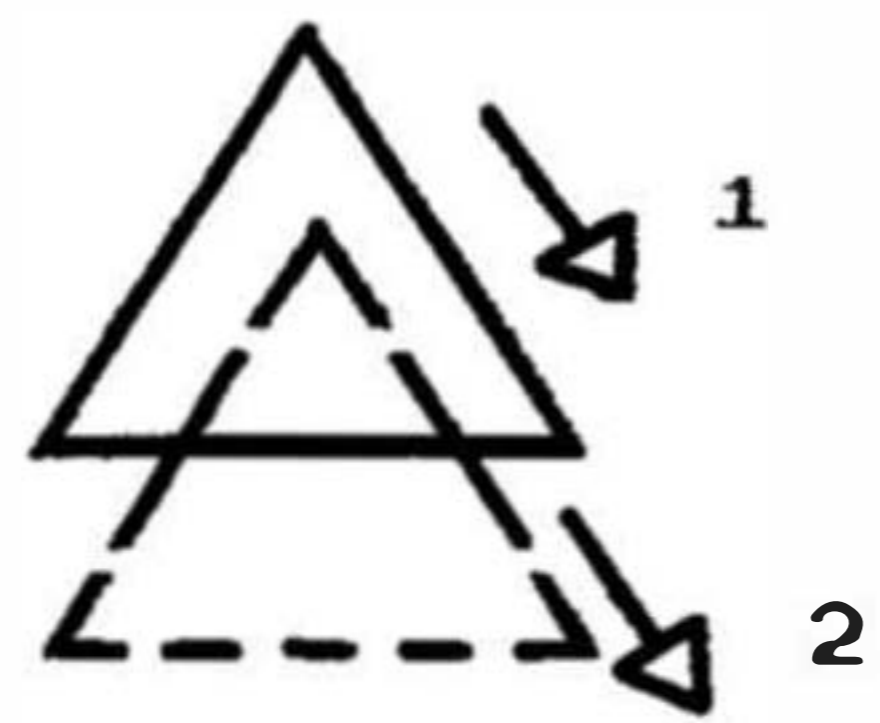
Experiment at will with the various forms of the hexagram ritual and also work with the planetary powers in the various zodiac signs (e.g., Jupiter in Taurus, Venus in Pisces, Mars in Leo, and so on). If you want, you can even coordinate them with their current astrological positions. Record the results in your magical diary.

### *EXERCISE 92*

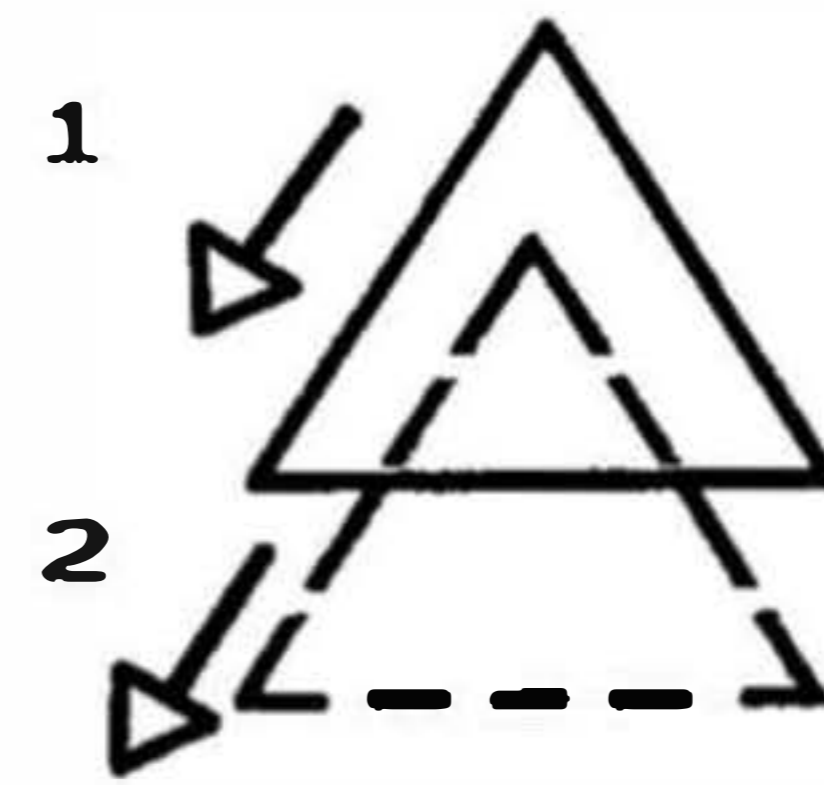
#### **THE LESSER RITUAL OF THE HEXAGRAM**

Experiment at will with the Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram in connection with the magic of the elements. For example, you could charge a talisman or fetish for each of the elements. Record the results in your magical diary.

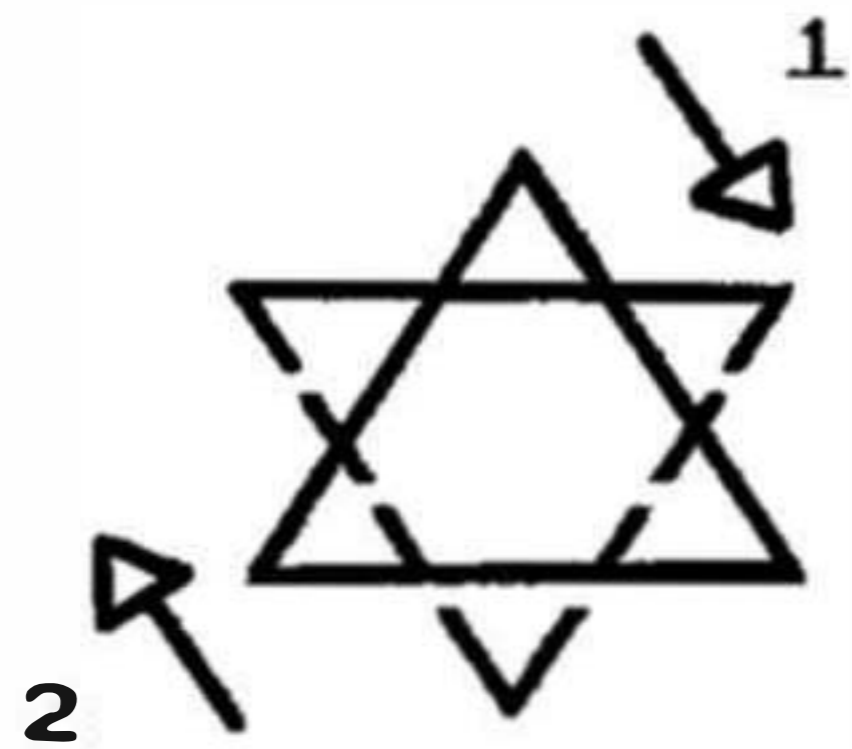
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EAST  
(invoking)



EAST  
(banishing)



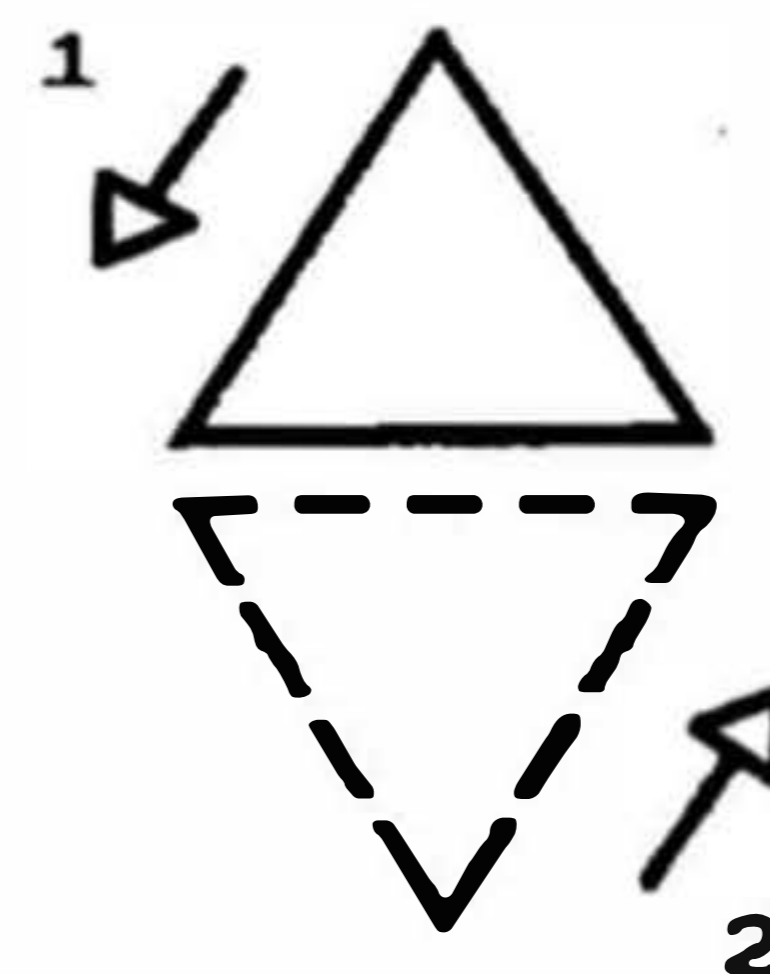
SOUTH  
(invoking)



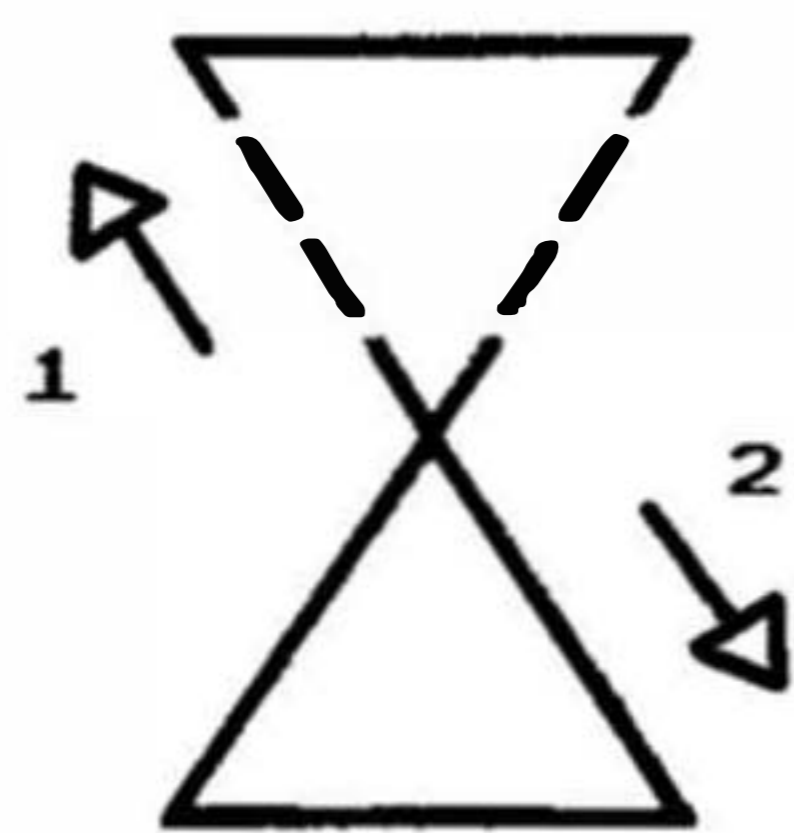
SOUTH  
(banishing)



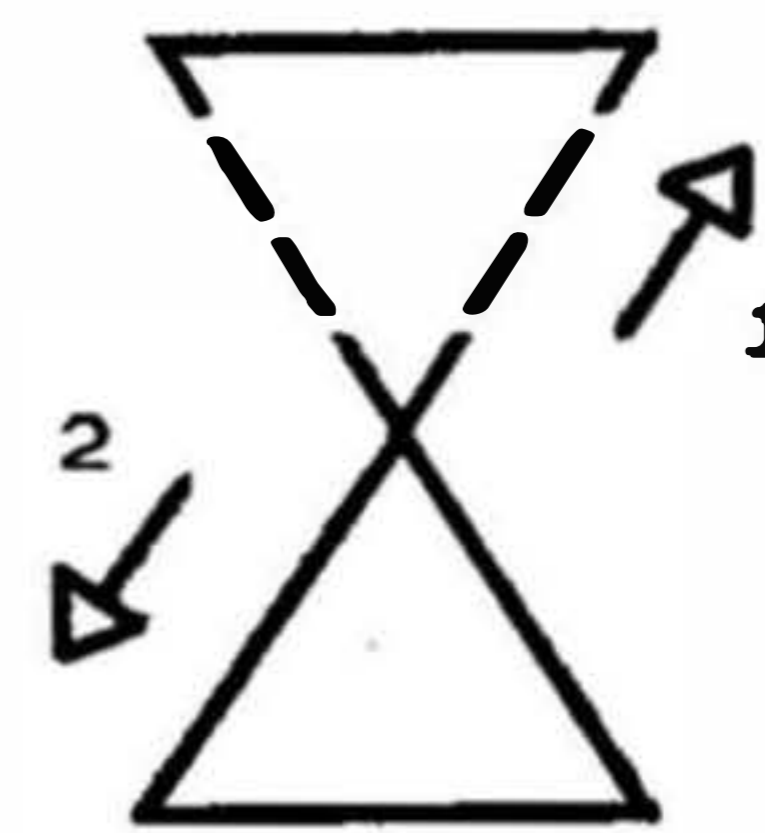
WEST  
(invoking)



WEST  
(banishing)



NORTH  
(invoking)



NORTH  
(banishing)

*Illustration 47: The Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram*

## FURTHER READING

The Egyptian Book of the Dead

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# INTRODUCTION TO MAGIC DEMONOLOGY (IV)

## THE PRACTICE OF DEMON EVOCATION (II)

Instead of making more detailed comments, we'd like to get straight to the practice of magic demonology this time.

To do so, you'll find in this section twenty-eight seals of the first of a total of seventy-eight demons from the Kabbalistic Schemhamphorasch according to the *Goetia*, better known as "the Lesser Key of Solomon" (*Clavicula Salomonis*). Magicians such as Samuel Liddell "MacGregor" Mathers, Arthur Edward Waite, and Aleister Crowley have all worked with this book, with some of them even adapting, own editions of the text. We're not interested here in the theory of this specific type of magic demonology. Instead we prefer a more shamanic approach as was originally characteristic of every type of magical demon operation. Only through personal experience with the corresponding spirits is the magician able to learn to recognize their characteristics, skills, and dangers.

That's why we've designed a spiritual exercise in magic demonology for you to perform during the next phase of the moon. The instructions are as follows.

## A SPIRITUAL EXERCISE IN MAGIC DEMONOLOGY

Begin the exercise during the next new moon so that you can work during an entire moon phase. No particular preparation is necessary, except you might want to plan your day-to-day routine accordingly in advance so that you have enough time each day for the operation. In doing so, keep the following basic rules in mind:

- Only work with one demon per day. It would be best to use the order suggested here.

The daily operation consists of two parts:

1. morning conjuration
2. evening conjuration

Furthermore, you must wear a lamen bearing the demon's seal on your body throughout the day (however, not at night or while you sleep), which will strengthen the contact with the demon that you are currently working with.

- Always perform the conjurations within the magic circle (Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram).
- Keep detailed records of your operations and experiences in your magical diary. Make special note of any signs, symbols, passwords, and agreements (pacts). This step is essential for later evocational work!
- Be extremely careful! If, after one or more operations, you notice that lots of things seem to be going wrong in your life (e.g., illness of all type—even seemingly “harmless” nightmares, paranoia, neuroses, strings of bad luck, etc.), then discontinue this exercise immediately and undergo a phase of cleansing and purification according to your own discretion for at least one week. This should include at least four banishing rituals (e.g., Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram) and several energy-charging techniques (e.g., IAO formula) per day. To be on the safe side, you can also design a magical “landmine” (see Practical Sigil Magic) if you haven't already done so.
- Avoid any type of sex magic operations with partners to prevent an undesired transfer of demonic energies. Protect yourself magically with an appropriate vi-

sualization (e.g., IAO formula, protection mudras, imagined magic circle) before performing any type of sexual act.

### THE MORNING CONJURATION

Perform this at sunrise. Prepare your magic circle by placing a clean sheet of paper (parchment or vellum would be best), feather, and ink as well as the seal of the demon to be conjured on your altar. (See below for the corresponding seals of the demons.)

Using a rope or string, make a triangle on the northwest edge of the circle with the peak pointing to the circle (exception—if a specific cardinal direction is mentioned in connection with one of the spirits). You could also draw the triangle on to the floor with chalk. Make sure that the circle is closed carefully and that there are no gaps. It should be large enough that you could stand in it comfortably if you wanted to, even though you will probably sit during the operation. Then place a separate incense burner into the triangle that you only use for demonic operations. Light the coal in the incense burner just before beginning the operation.

Perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, as you are already familiar with. Then focus on the name of the demon you want to conjure and draw its seal with the feather and ink, thus creating a lamen that should be no larger than the palm of your hand. Now call the demon using a hymn that you composed *yourself*—this could be as simple as a constant repetition of the demon's name.

Leave the circle to place incense onto the coal of the censer in the triangle. Place your lamen inside the triangle as well and return immediately to the circle. (Just leaning out of the circle is fine, and then returning to an upright position inside of it.) Now command the demon to appear before you that evening. Do this with the appropriate forcefulness and authority in your voice.

Now conclude the ritual by repeating the LBRP—and don't forget to recite the lincense to depart!

Then extinguish the fire in the triangle, remove the lamen, and wear it somewhere on your body until you perform the evening conjuration. (If you want, you can isolate it with silk.)

Try not to think about this operation during the course of the day and go about your normal daily business.

## THE EVENING CONJURATION

Perform this no earlier than at sunset and no later than one hour before midnight.

Proceed as with the morning conjuration except, of course, that you don't need to make a new lamen. Instead, place the one that you've been wearing into the triangle at the beginning of the ritual.

This time you will call the demon and command it to appear visibly in front of you. While doing so, keep adding incense to the censer until your temple is filled with thick smoke.

Using the 180° gaze, look at the demon's seal that is still lying on the altar. After a few moments, close your eyes and use the seal as a gateway that you enter mentally, either by walking or jumping through it (similar to tattwa travel). When you see a whole different world appear in your mind's eye, call the demon using its name until it appears. Communicate with it by commanding it to serve you from now on and to appear whenever you use a certain password, one that you agree on with the demon. Negotiate terms with the demon for its serving you, but don't agree to anything that you don't really want to do. Pay close attention to the wording in order to avoid any ambiguity in interpretation! (This procedure has proven to be much more effective than the empty promises and wild insults that magicians of the medieval tradition used in the name of their god, etc., to compel demons at that time.)

As a test of proof, the demon should appear before you in the triangle at least to the consistency of thick vapors. After commanding the demon to do this, open your eyes and stare at the triangle using the 180° gaze. (You will probably have to add more incense to the censer. In any case, hold your dagger in your hand so that you can defend yourself quickly if needed, e.g., by using it to draw a protective symbol such as the pentagram.) If you can recognize the demon there (either visually or intuitively), the operation was a success and the agreement is valid. Now you can thank the demon for its appearance and dismiss it. You've now established contact and can take it up anytime again when needed. Conclude the ritual as usual (don't forget the license to depart!), wrap the lamen in silk and store it in a safe place where no strangers will come across it.

If the demon appears somewhere else other than in the triangle, discontinue the operation immediately by banishing and dismissing it. Then immediately burn the lamen.

Do not repeat this operation until you've been successful with at least three other evocations from this exercise.

Once initial contact has been made successfully, you can ask for the help of these entities to assist you in your magical work. Of course, it's up to you to what extent you want to make use of this.

Remember that the long lists of a demon's qualities as was common to the grimoires of the medieval and postmedieval times should at most serve as mnemonic aids. Often you'll read that a demon or entity may have several names and seals and can change its appearance. In this sense, these entities were understood even back then as variable in their external features and characteristics. For example, the demon Bael may look entirely different to one magician than to another. Therefore, we always recommend that you gain your own experience with such entities, draw up your own records, and use them as a basis for your further work with them.

If this type of magic appeals to you, you can continue with such work at will, for example by obtaining a copy of the *Goetia* and summoning the rest of the demons there (see the literature references in the next section).

Here is a list of keywords to the individual demons as contained in the *Goetia*.

## **SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST 28 DEMONS FROM THE GOETIA**

1.

Name: Bael

Position: King

Appearance: diverse shapes—cat, toad, man, or all of these at once; speaks hoarsely; rules in the east

Rules over: 66 legions of infernal spirits

Powers: can make you invisible

2.

Name: Agares, or Agreas

Position: Duke

Appearance: old, fair man, riding upon a crocodile, carrying a goshawk upon his fist;  
rules in the east

Rules over: 31 legions of spirits

Powers: causes standstill; brings back runaways; can destroy and cause earthquakes

3.

Name: Vassago

Position: Prince

Appearance:—

Rules over: 26 legions of spirits

Powers: of a good nature; divination; discovers all things hidden or lost

4.

Name: Gamigin, or Samigina, Gamygyn

Position: Marquis

Appearance: little horse or donkey; upon request will appear in the shape of a human;  
speaks hoarsely

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: teaches all liberal sciences; gives account of “dead souls that died in sin”

5.

Name: Marbas

Position: President

Appearance: a great lion; appears in human form upon request

Rules over: 36 legions of spirits

Powers: answers truly of things hidden or secret; changes men into other shapes; gives  
great wisdom and knowledge in mechanical arts

6.

Name: Valefor, or Malaphar

Position: Duke

Appearance: lion with a donkey’s head; bellows

Rules over: 10 legions of spirits

Powers: good familiar, but tempts master to steal

7.

Name: Amon

Position: Marquis

Appearance: wolf with a serpent's tail, vomiting flames out of his mouth; very strict; appears upon request in human shape with dog's teeth and the head of a raven, or a man with a raven's head

Rules over: 40 legions of spirits

Powers: divination (past and future); procures feuds and reconciles controversies between friends

8.

Name: Barbatos

Position: Duke

Appearance: appears preferably when the sun is in Sagittarius (you can disregard this for your exercise) with four noble kings and their companies of great troops

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: gives understanding of the language of animals; breaks open treasures laid by the enchantment of magicians; knows of things past and to come; conciliates friends and those that be in power

9.

Name: Paimon

Position: King

Appearance: crowned man sitting on a dromedary; before him comes a host of spirits and men, with trumpets, cymbals, and all other sorts of musical instruments; has a powerful voice and roars at his first coming; his speech is such that the magician will not be able to understand unless he can compel him; observed toward the west; requires an offering when called; two kings come with him when called alone—Labal and Abalim, as well as spirits of the order of potentates and 25 legions; these only appear, however, when the magician compels them; he has two lamens



Rules over: 200 legions of spirits (including angels and potentates, see above)

Powers: can teach all arts and sciences, and other secret things; gives dignity and confirms the same; binds or makes any man subject to the will of the magician; gives good familiars

10.

Name: Buer

Position: President

Appearance: appears in Sagittarius and this is his shape as well when the sun is in this sign

Rules over: 50 legions of spirits

Powers: teaches philosophy, moral, and natural philosophy, and logic as well as the virtues of herbs and plants; heals illness and gives good familiars

11.

Name: Gusion; or Gusayn, Pirsoyn

Position: Duke

Appearance: hound ape

Rules over: 40 legions of spirits

Powers: "tells all things" (past, present, future); shows the meaning and resolution of all questions asked; conciliates and reconciles friendships; gives honor and dignity

12.

Name: Sitri

Position: Prince

Appearance: first with the head of a leopard and the wings of a gryphon; appears upon request in very beautiful human form

Rules over: 60 legions of spirits

Powers: enflames men with women's love and vice versa; causes them to show themselves naked if desired

13.

Name: Beleth; or Bileth, Byleth, Bilet

Position: King

Appearance: rides on a pale horse accompanied by drums and musical instruments; he is very furious and frightening at first; his courage must first be banished, to do so, the magician must hold a hazel wand, striking it toward the south and west quarters; must be commanded into the triangle but received with courtesy, hereby the magician wears a silver ring on the middle finger of the left hand or the magician holds the left hand protectively against his or her face; he has two lamens

Rules over: 85 legions of spirits

Powers: causes love of all types

14.

Name: Leraje; or Leraikha

Position: Marquis

Appearance: archer clad in green, carrying a bow and quiver; belongs to Sagittarius; has two lamens

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: causes all great battles and contests; causes injury and makes wounds made by arrows putrefy

15.

Name: Eligos

Position: Duke

Appearance: goodly knight, carrying a lance, an ensign and a serpent

Rules over: 60 legions of spirits

Powers: discovers all hidden things; knows of things to come; also of wars and war plans

16.

Name: Zepar

Position: Duke

Appearance: red apparel and armor, like a soldier

Rules over: 26 legions of spirits

Powers: causes women to love men, and to bring them together in love; he also makes them barren

17.

Name: Botis

Position: President and Count

Appearance: appears the first time in the form of an ugly viper; upon request, a human shape with great teeth and two horns, carrying a bright and sharp sword in hand

Rules over: 60 legions of spirits

Powers: divination; reconciles friends and foes

18.

Name: Bathin; or Marthim

Position: Duke

Appearance: strong man with the tail of a serpent, sitting on a pale horse or donkey

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: knows the virtues of herbs and precious stones; can transport men suddenly from one country to another; he has two lamens

19.

Name: Sallos; also Saleos or Zaleos

Position: Duke

Appearance: gallant soldier with a duke's crown on his head riding a crocodile, but peaceably

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: causes the love of women to men and vice versa

20.

Name: Purson; or Curson

Position: King

Appearance: pleasant man with a lion's face, carrying a cruel viper in his hand, and riding upon a bear; accompanied by the sound of many trumpets

Rules over: 22 legions of spirits

Powers: knows all things hidden, and can discover treasure; divination (past, present, future); can take the body of a human or ethereal spirit; answers truly of all earthly things (both secret and divine), and of the creation of the world; brings forth good familiars

21.

Name: Marax or Morax, Forfax, Foraii

Position: Count and President

Appearance: great bull with a man's face

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: conveys knowledge of astronomy and all other liberal sciences; gives good familiars and those who know the virtues of herbs and precious stones

22.

Name: Ipos; or Ipes, Aypeos, Ayporos

Position: Count and Prince

Appearance: angel with a lion's head, goose's foot, and hare's tail

Rules over: 36 legions of spirits

Powers: knows all things past, present, and to come; makes men very bold and witty

23.

Name: Aim; or Aym, Aini, Haborym

Position: Duke

Appearance: very handsome man with three heads—the first like a serpent, second like a man with two stars on his forehead, third like a calf; he rides upon a viper, carrying a firebrand in his hand

Rules over: 26 legions of spirits

Powers: arson (cities, castles, and great places); makes man witty; answers truly of private matters

24.

Name: Naberius; or Cerberus

Position: Marquis

Appearance: black crane that flutters about the circle and speaks with a squawking voice

Rules over: 19 legions of spirits

Powers: makes clever in all arts and sciences, especially the art of rhetoric; restores lost dignities and honors

25.

Name: Glasya-Labolas; or Cacrinolaas

Position: President and Count

Appearance: dog with wings like a gryphon

Rules over: 36 legions of spirits

Powers: teaches all arts and sciences “in an instant” (information magic!); causes bloodshed and manslaughter; teaches all things past and to come; causes love of both friends and foes; makes man invisible

26.

Name: Bime; or Bune

Position: Duke

Appearance: dragon with three heads—first like a dog, second like a gryphon, third like a man; speaks in a high and comely voice

Rules over: 30 legions of spirits

Powers: changes the place of the dead; causes the spirits under him to gather upon their sepulchers; gives riches to a man, and makes him wise and eloquent; answers truly of your demands; he has two lamens, the second of which is suitable (see illustration)

27.

Name: Ronové; or Ronobe

Position: Marquis and Count

Appearance: monster

Rules over: 19 legions of spirits

Powers: teaches the art of rhetoric; gives good servants, knowledge of tongues, and favors with friends and foes

28.

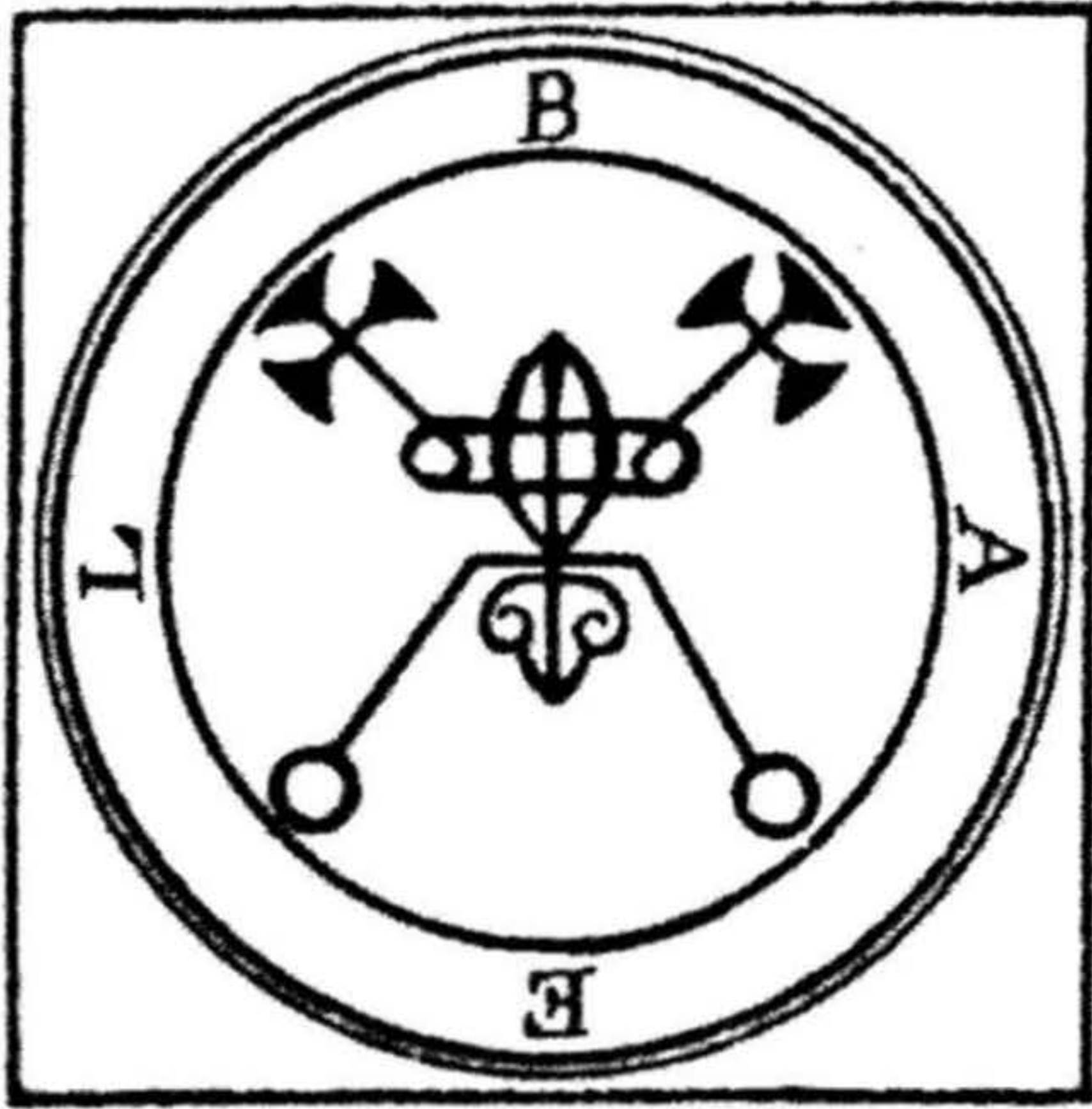
Name: Berith; later (“after Solomon”) even Bofi, Bolfry, Beal

Position: Duke

Appearance: soldier with red clothing, with a crown of gold on his head, riding a red horse; speaks in a clear, subtle voice

Rules over: 26 legions of spirits

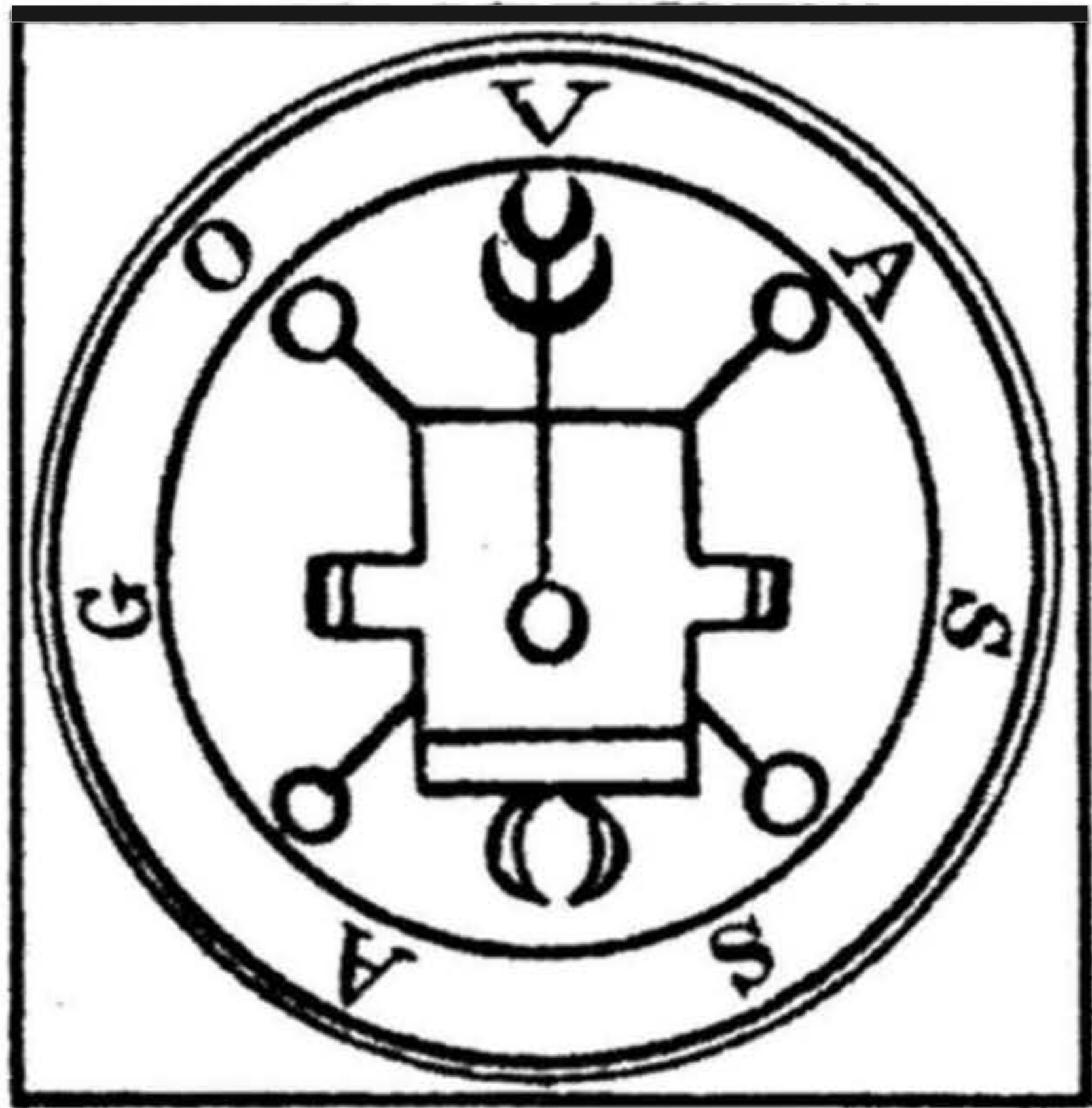
Powers: divination (past, present, future); can turn all metals into gold; gives dignities and can confirm them (social recognition); great liar, not to be trusted; the magician must wear a ring when calling him (see also 13, Beleth)



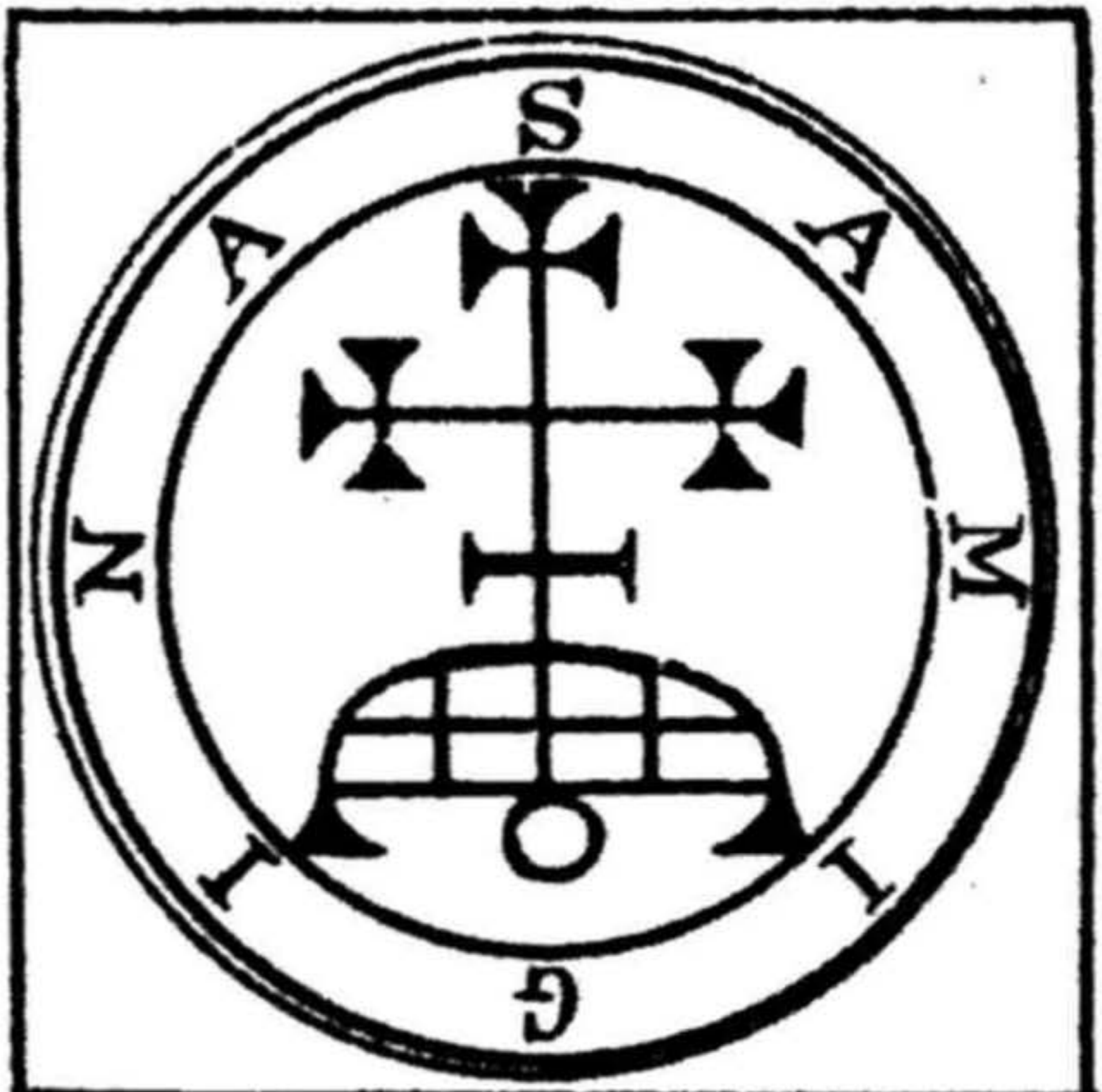
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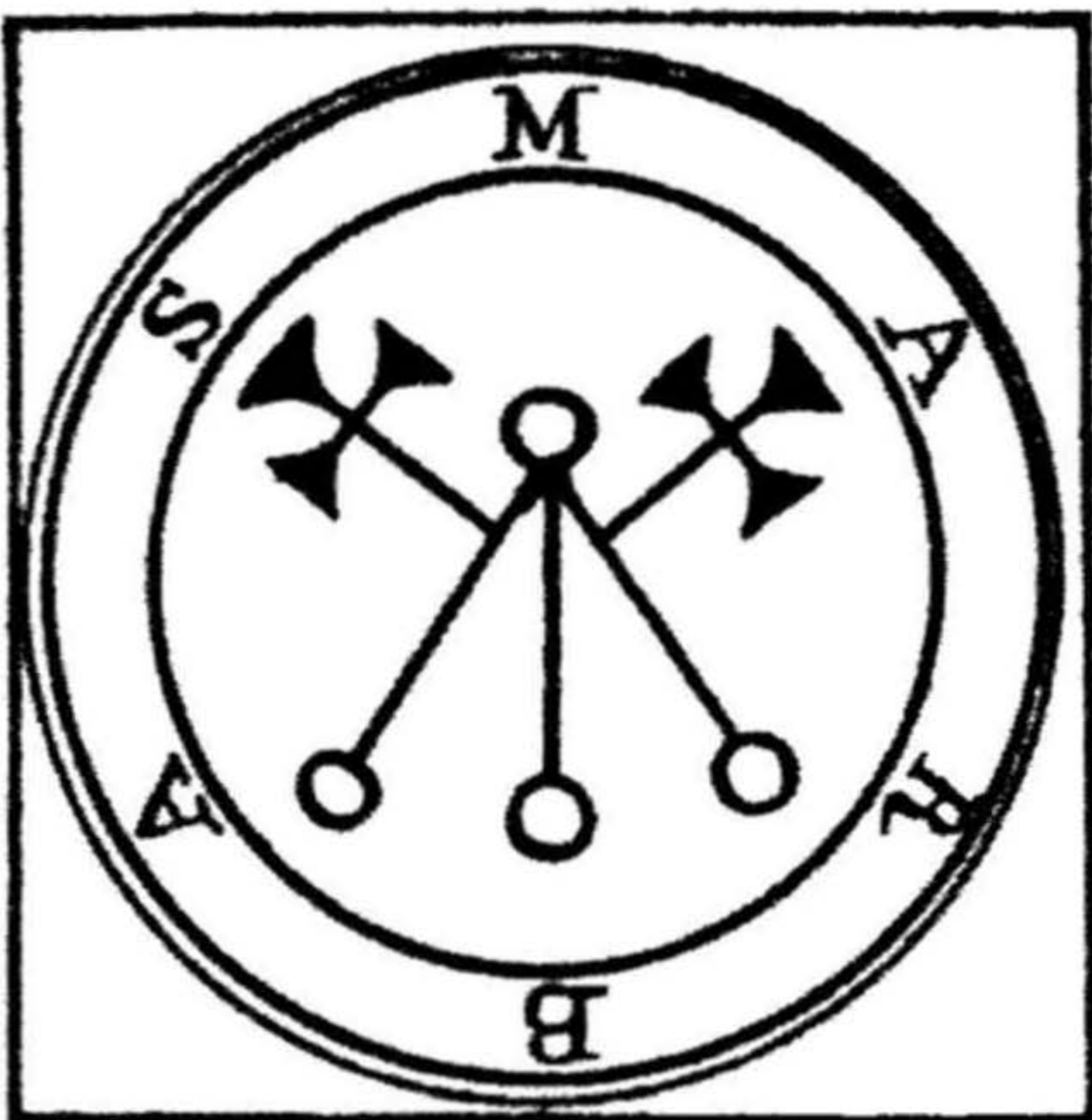
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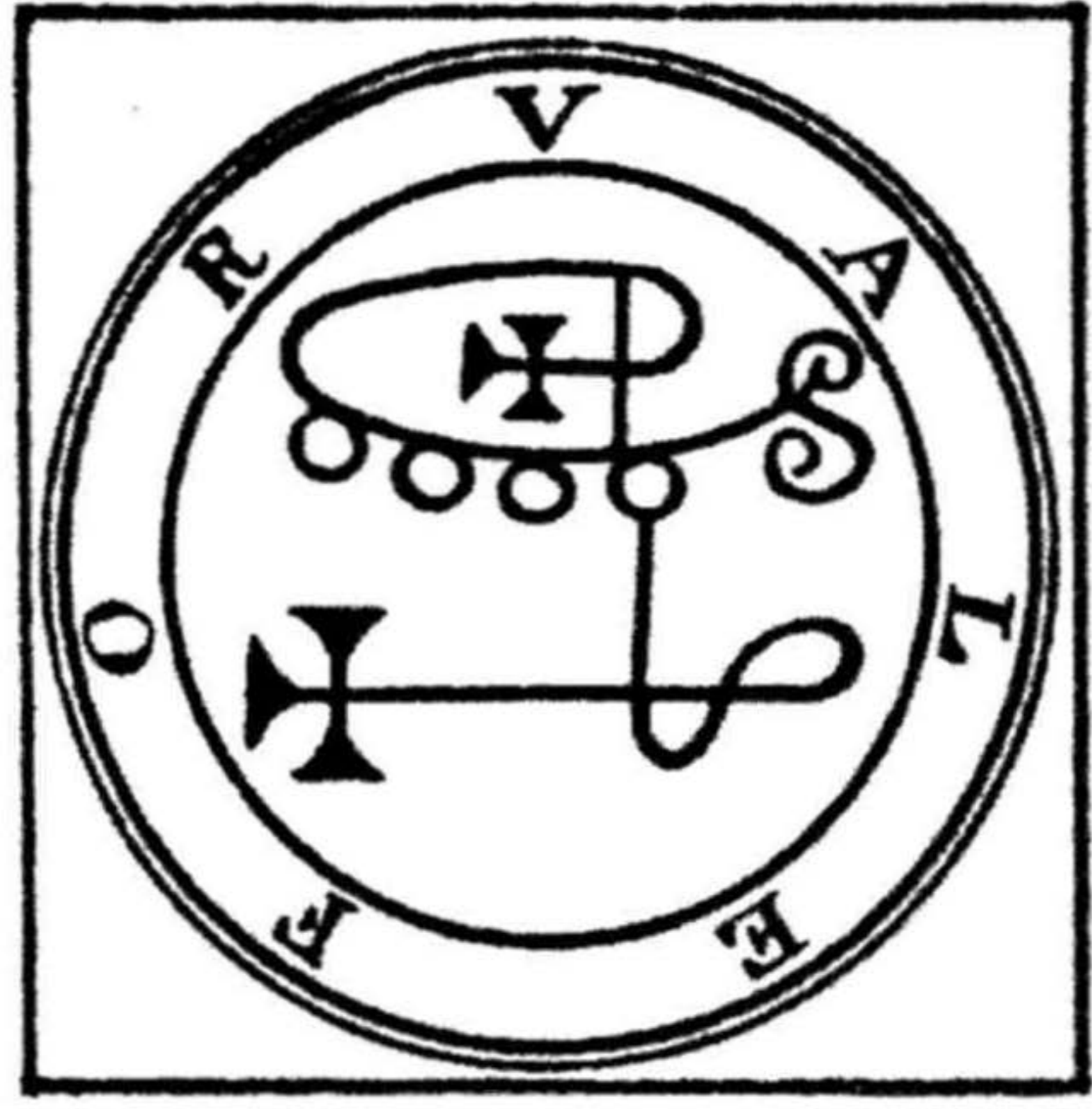
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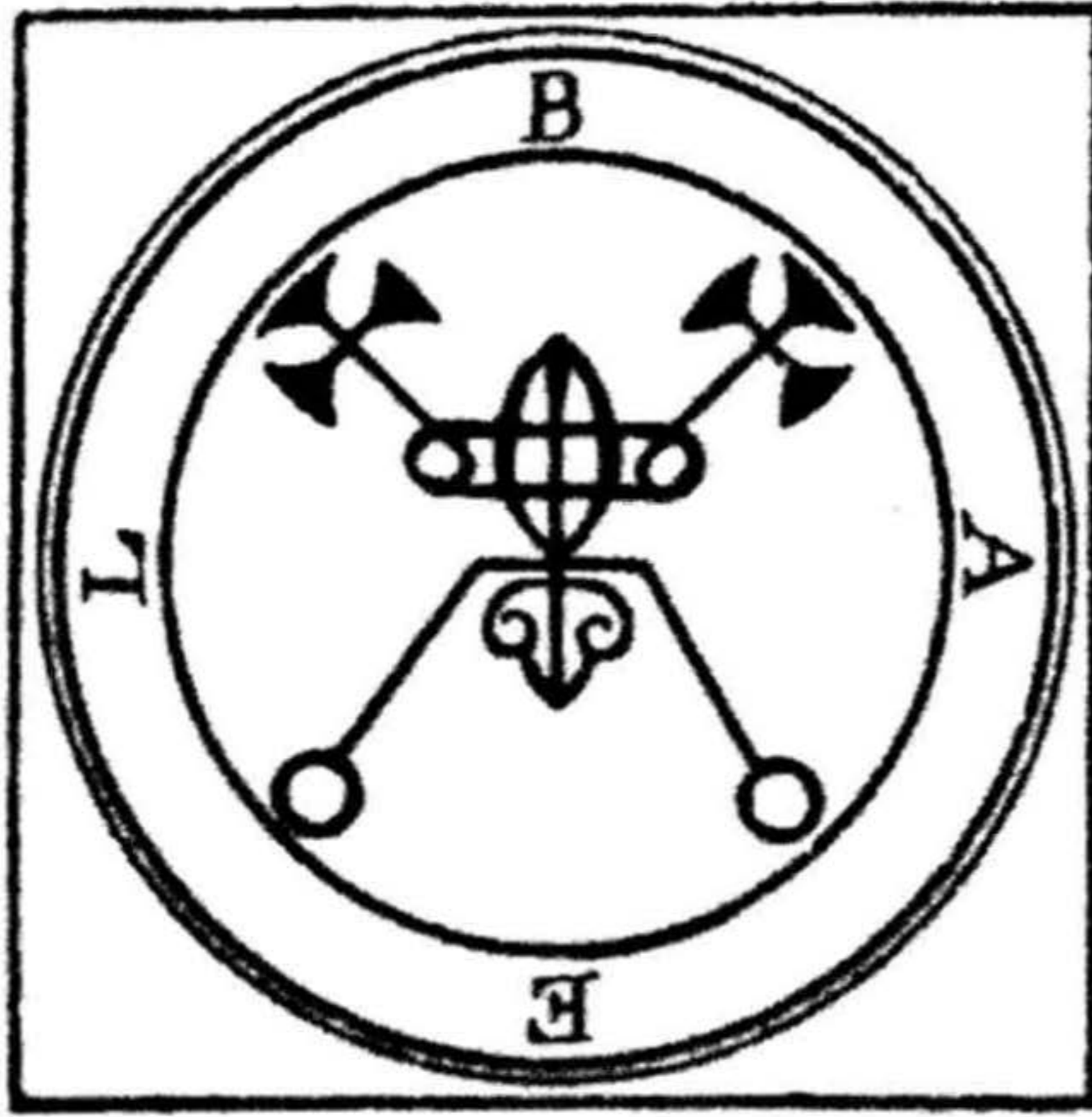
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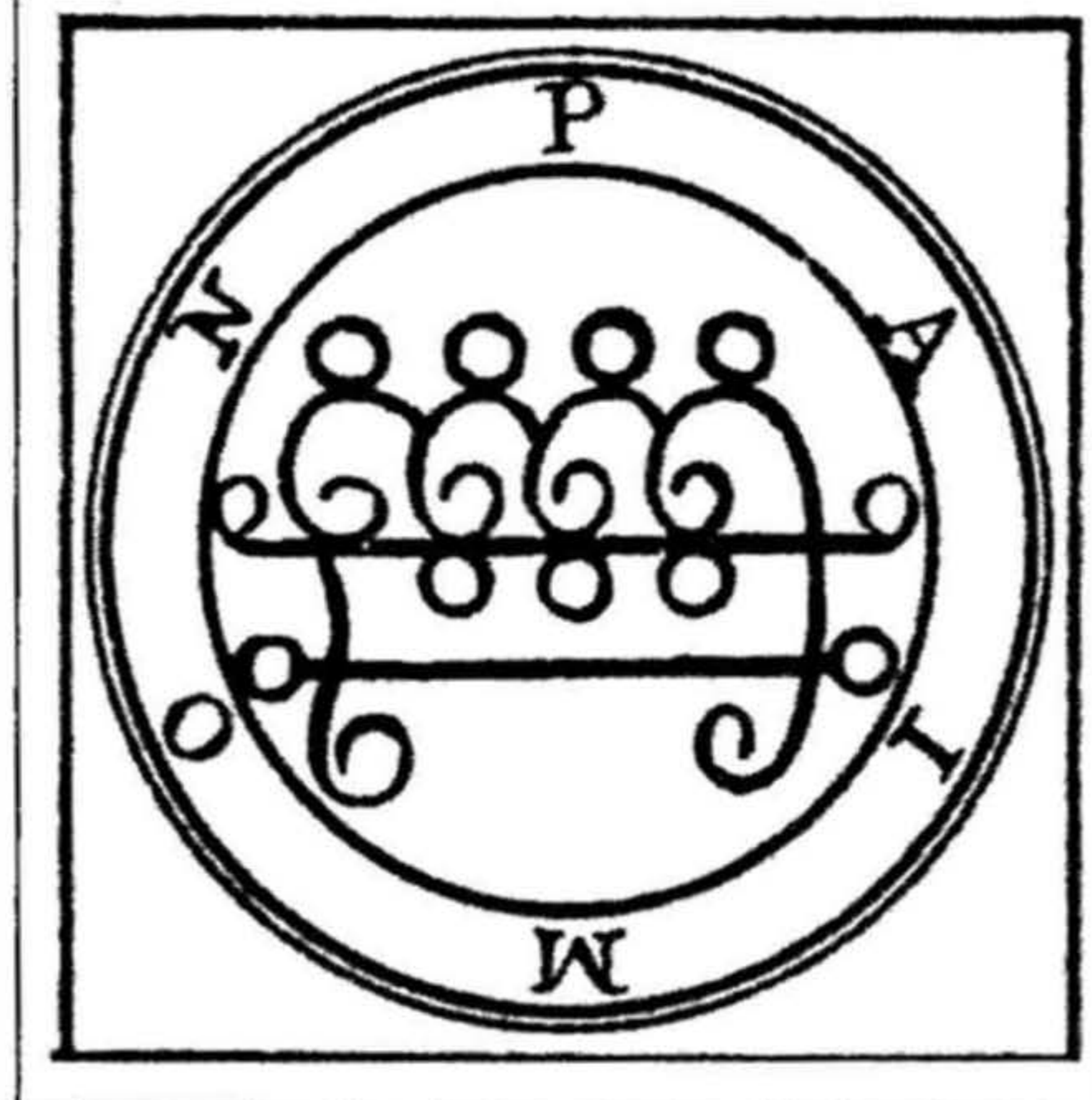
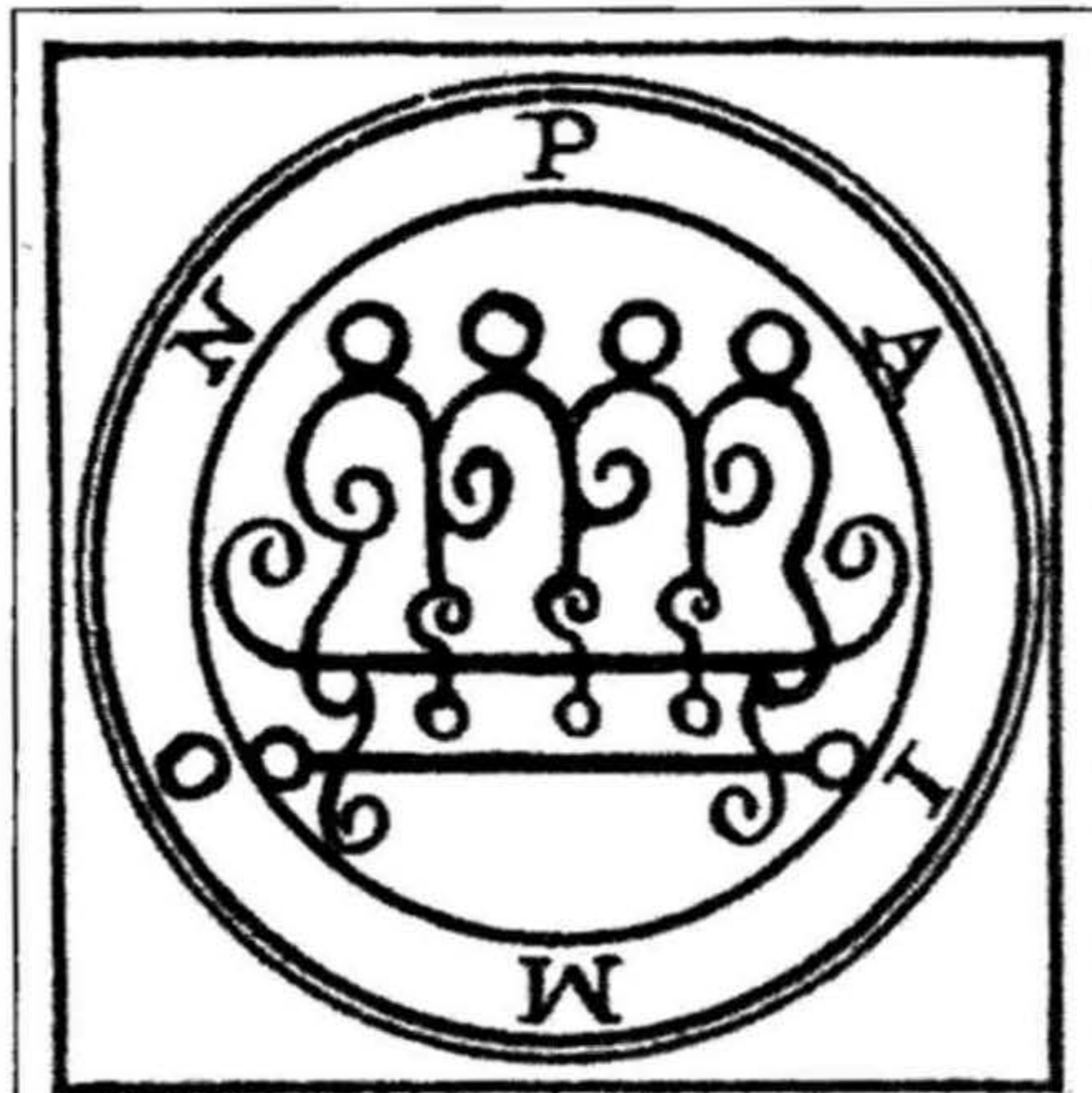
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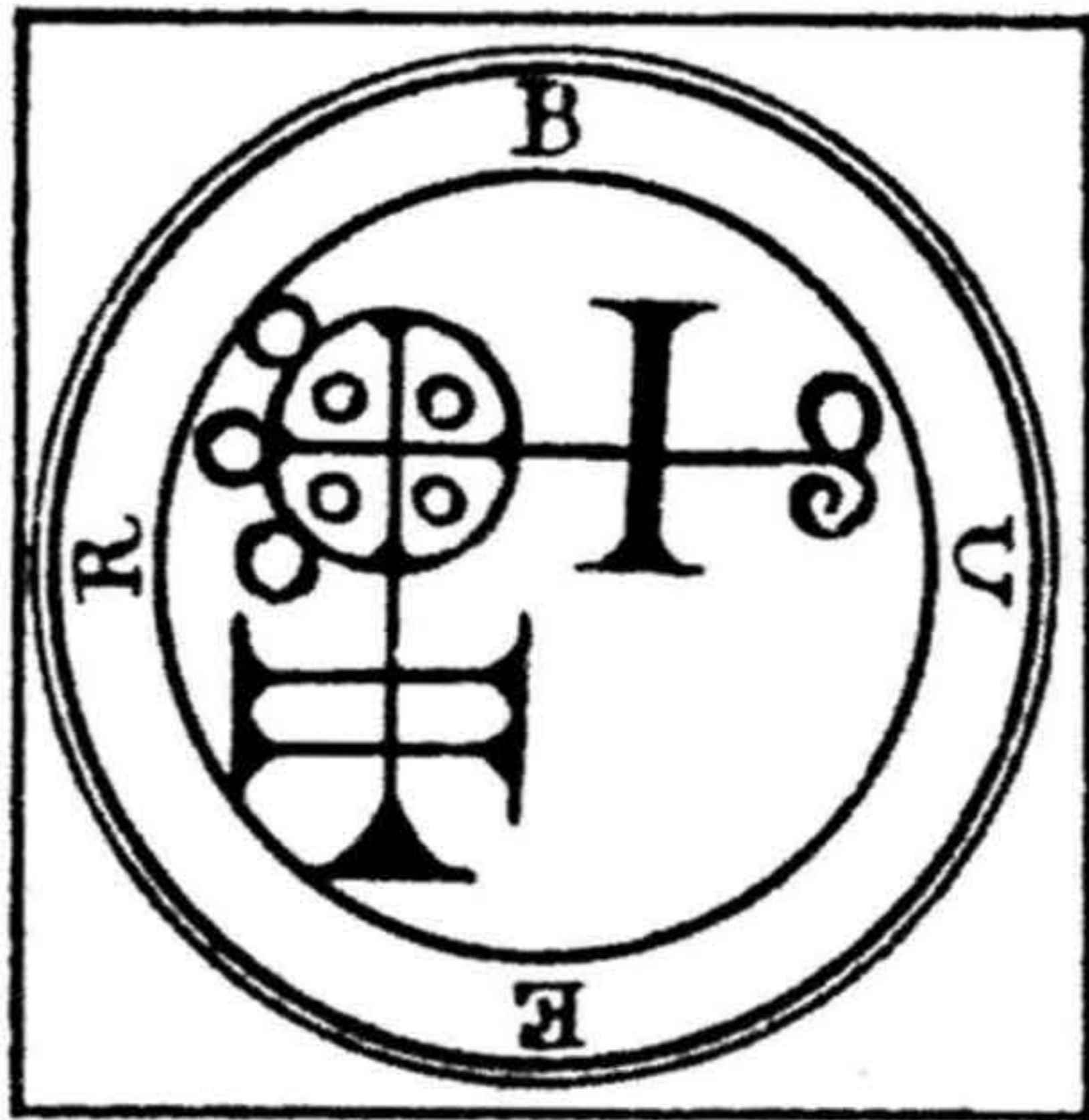


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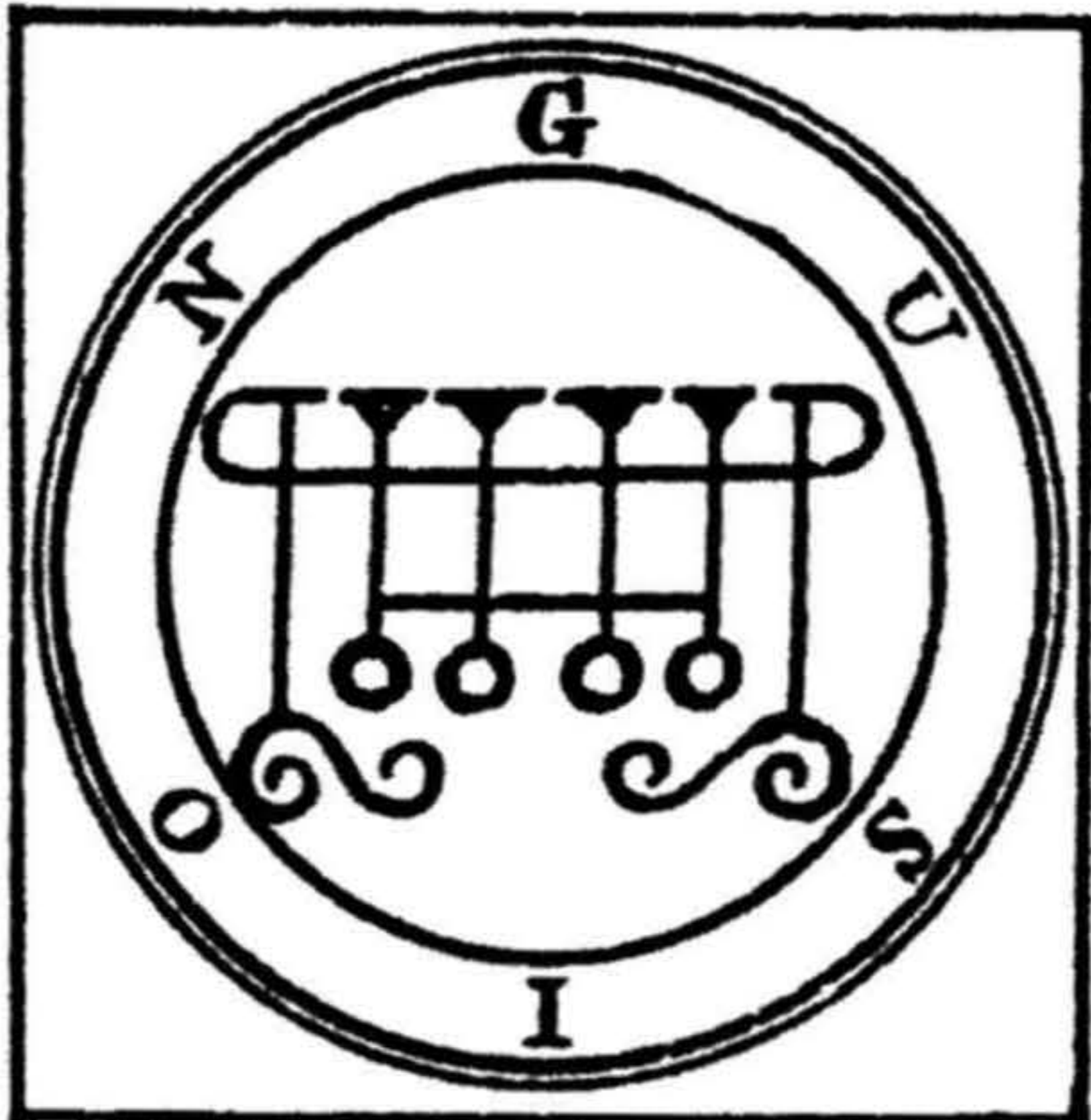


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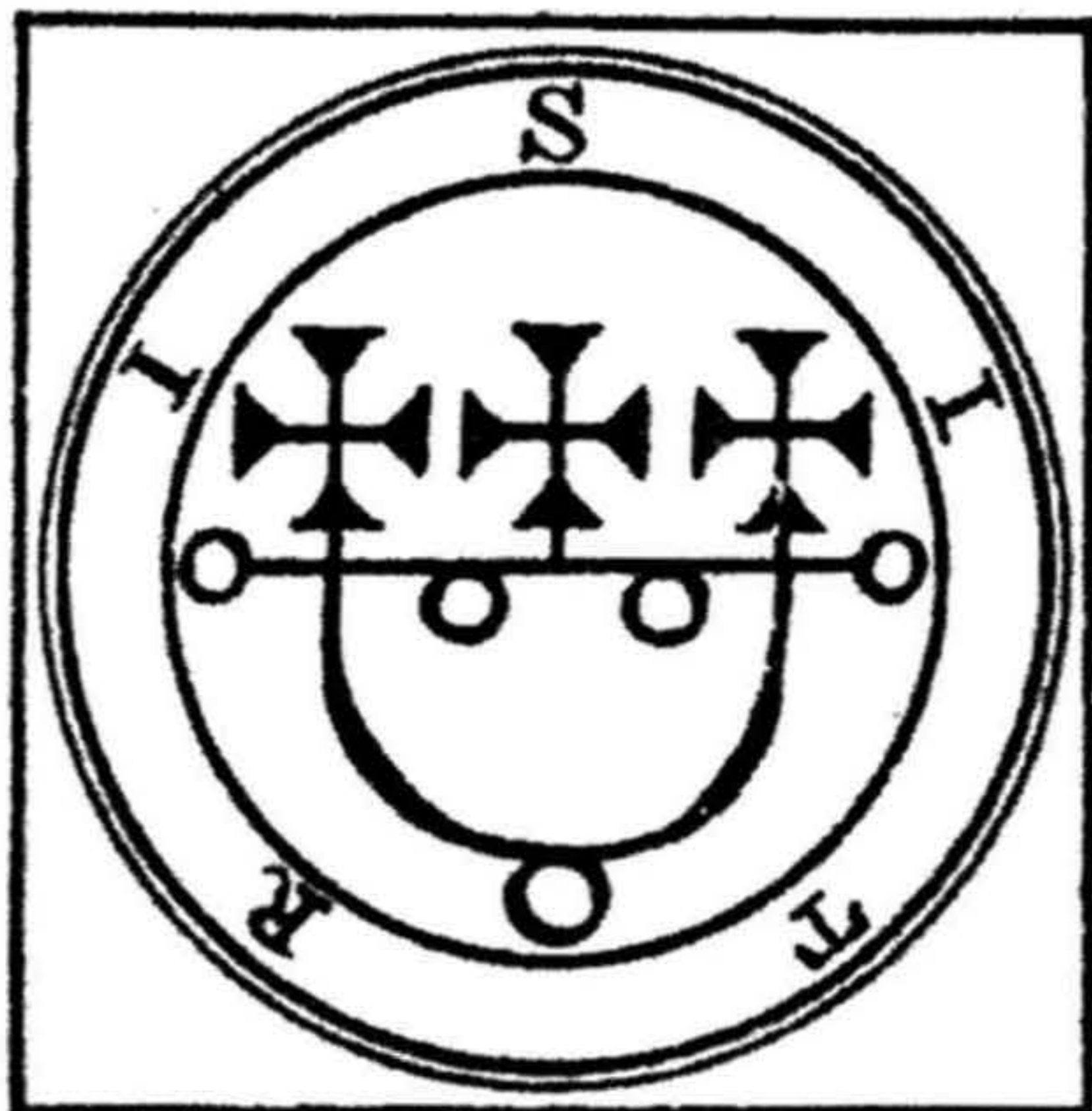




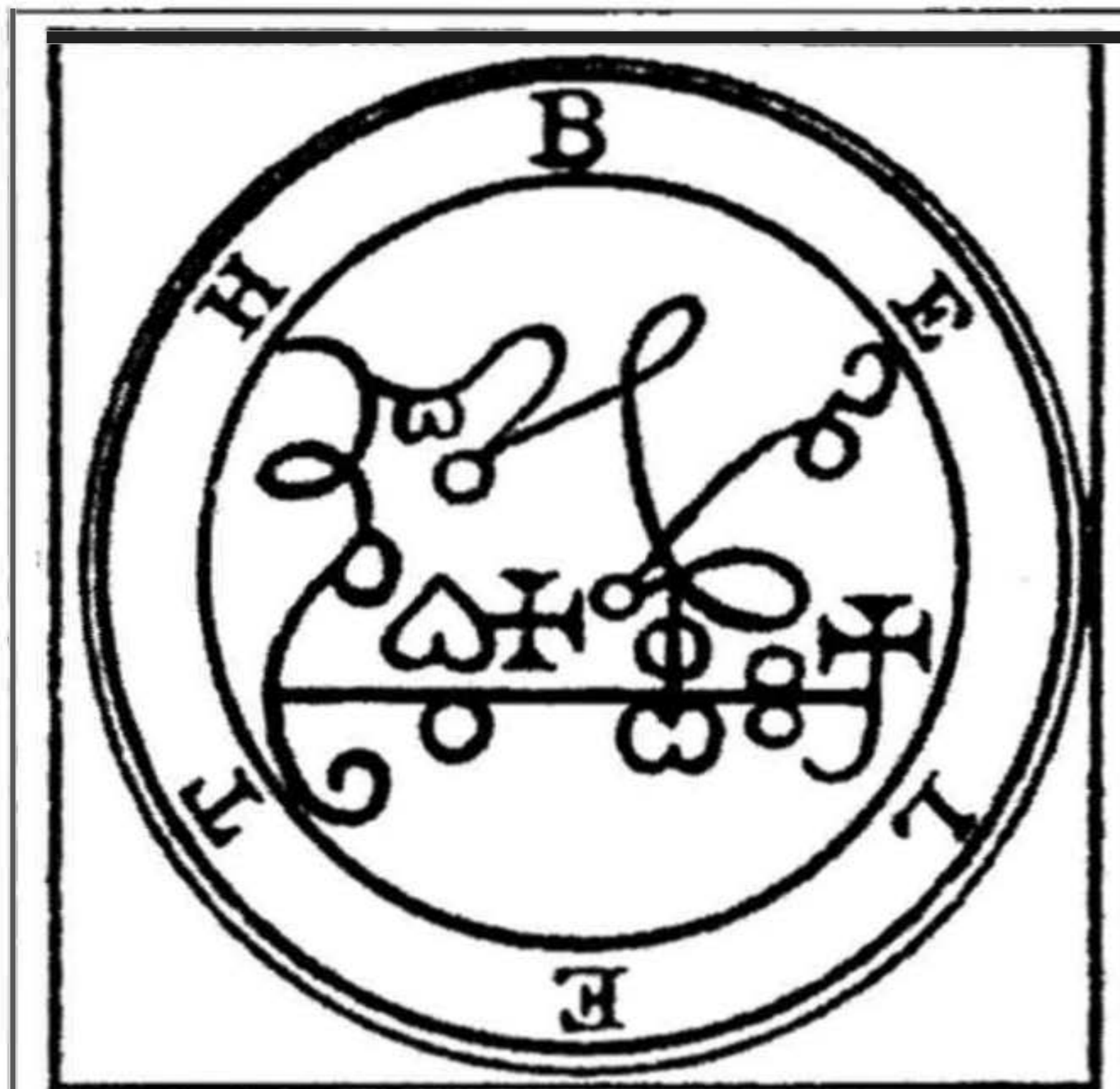
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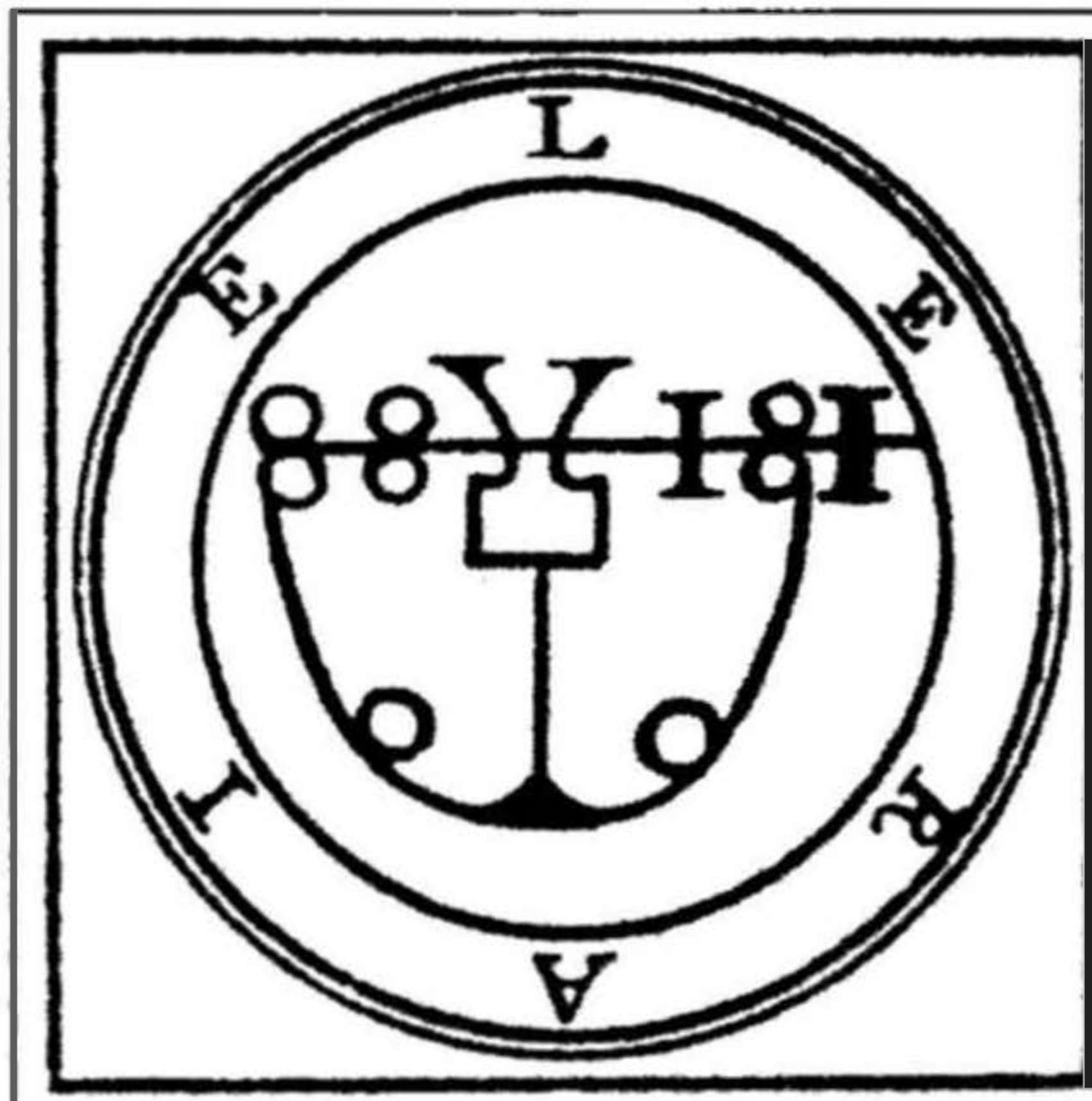
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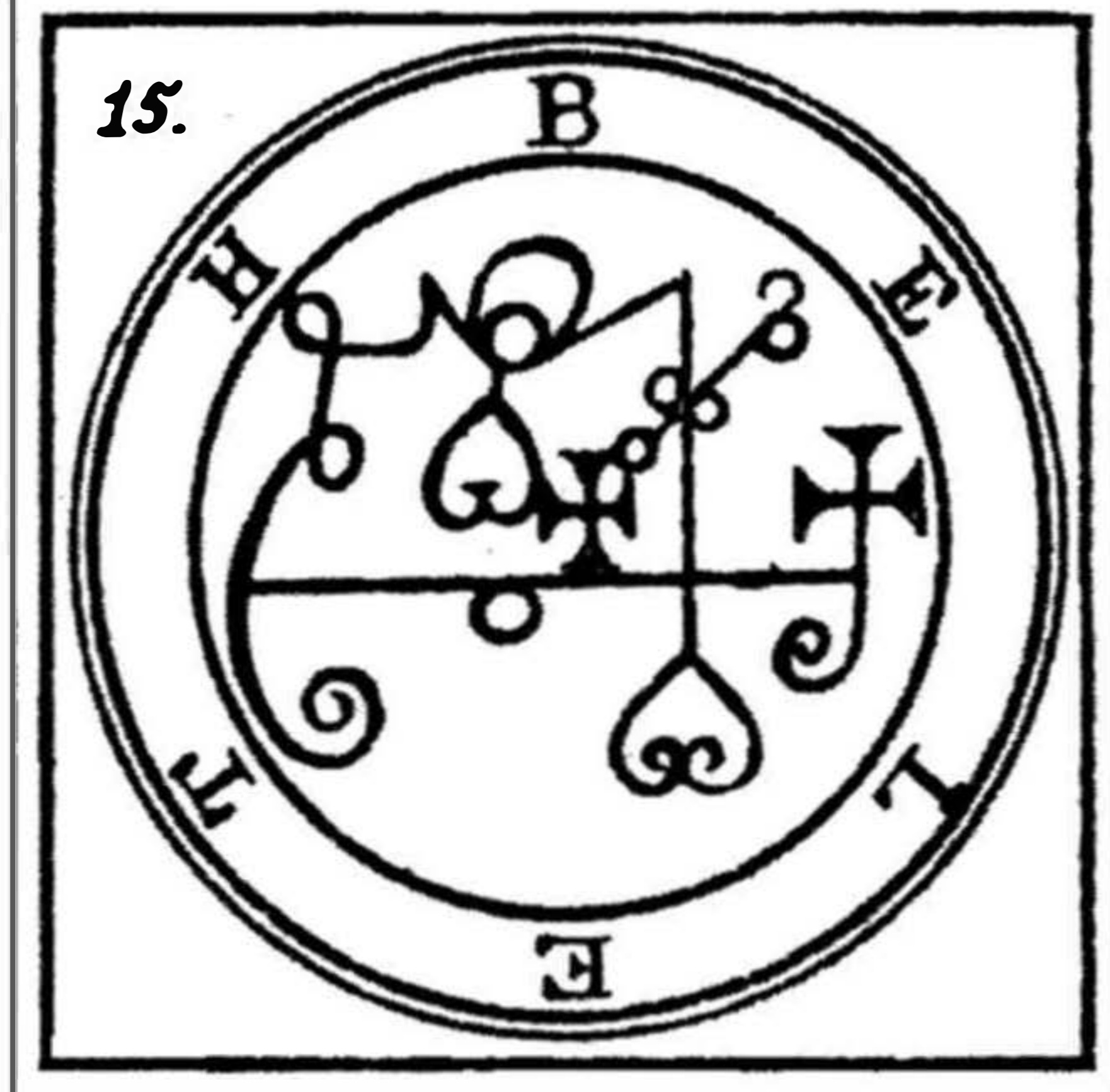
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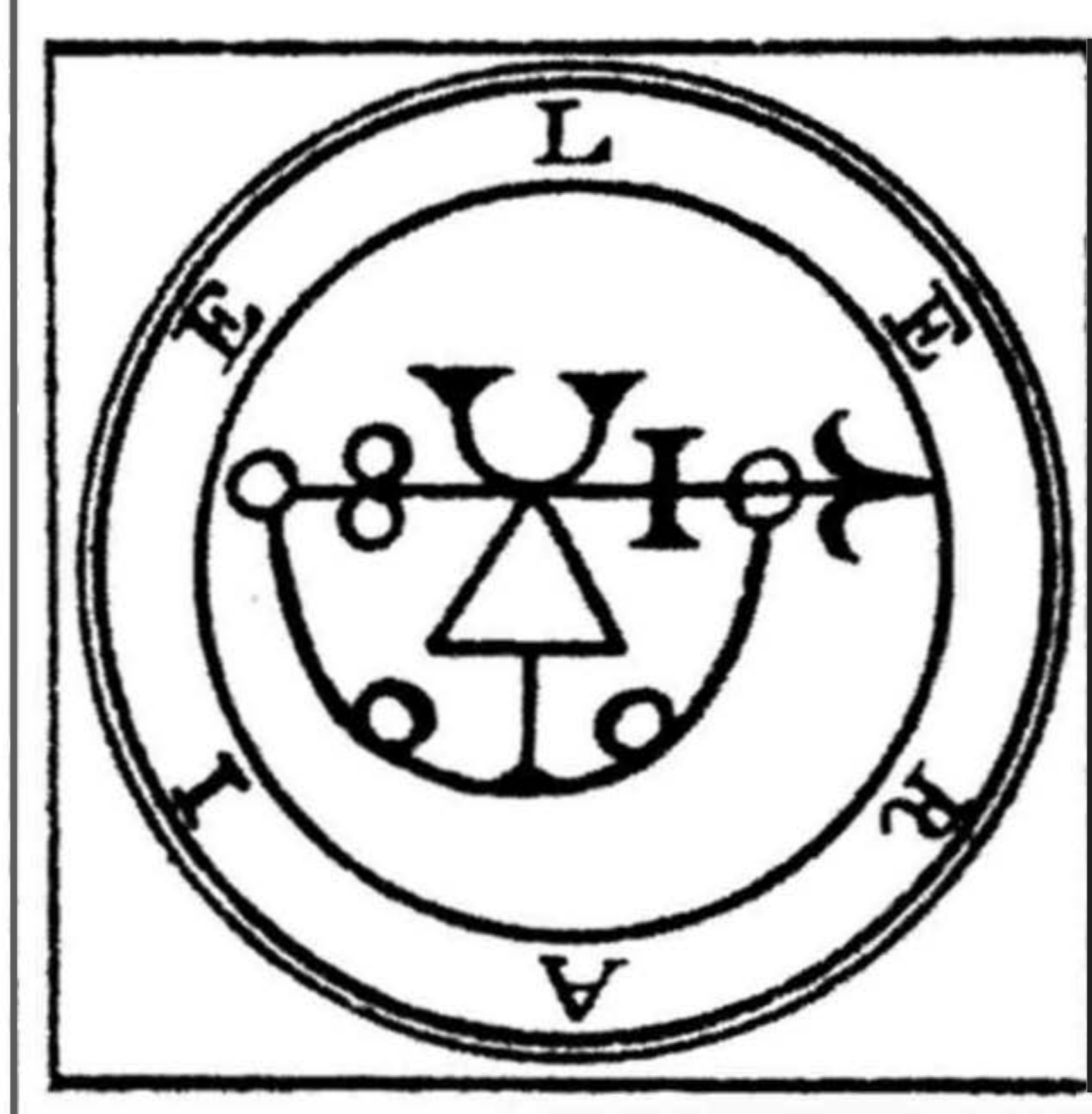
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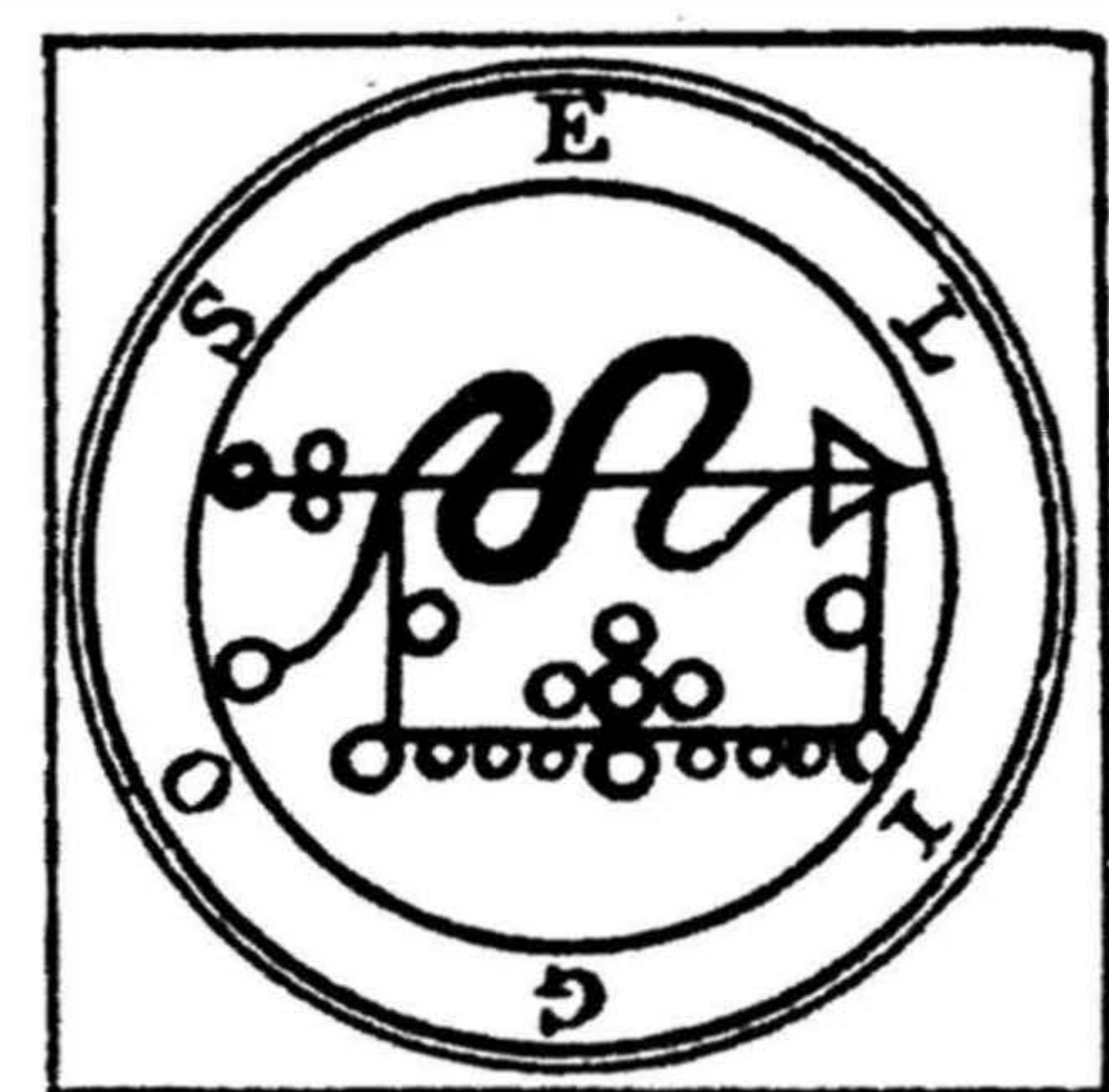
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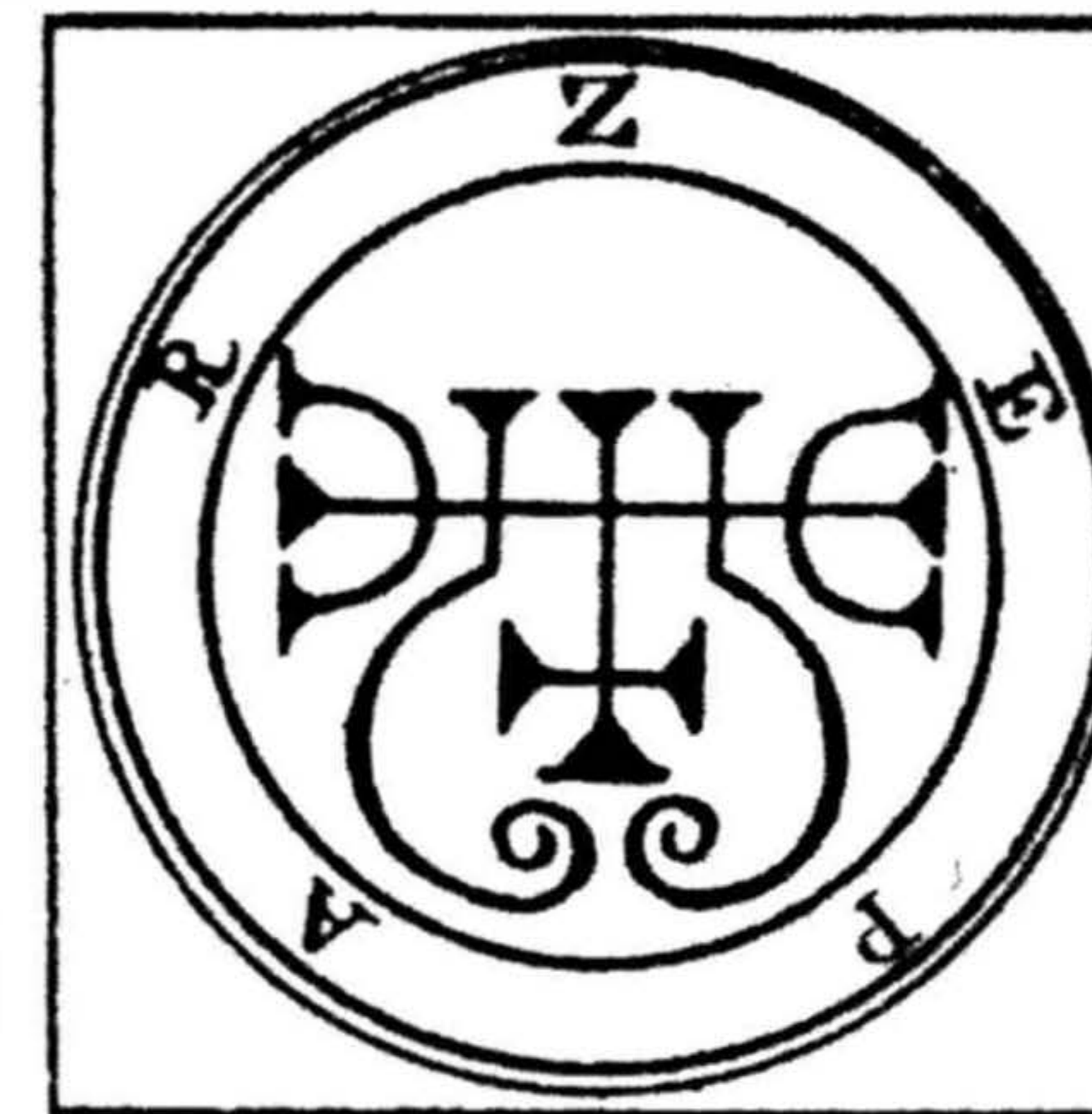
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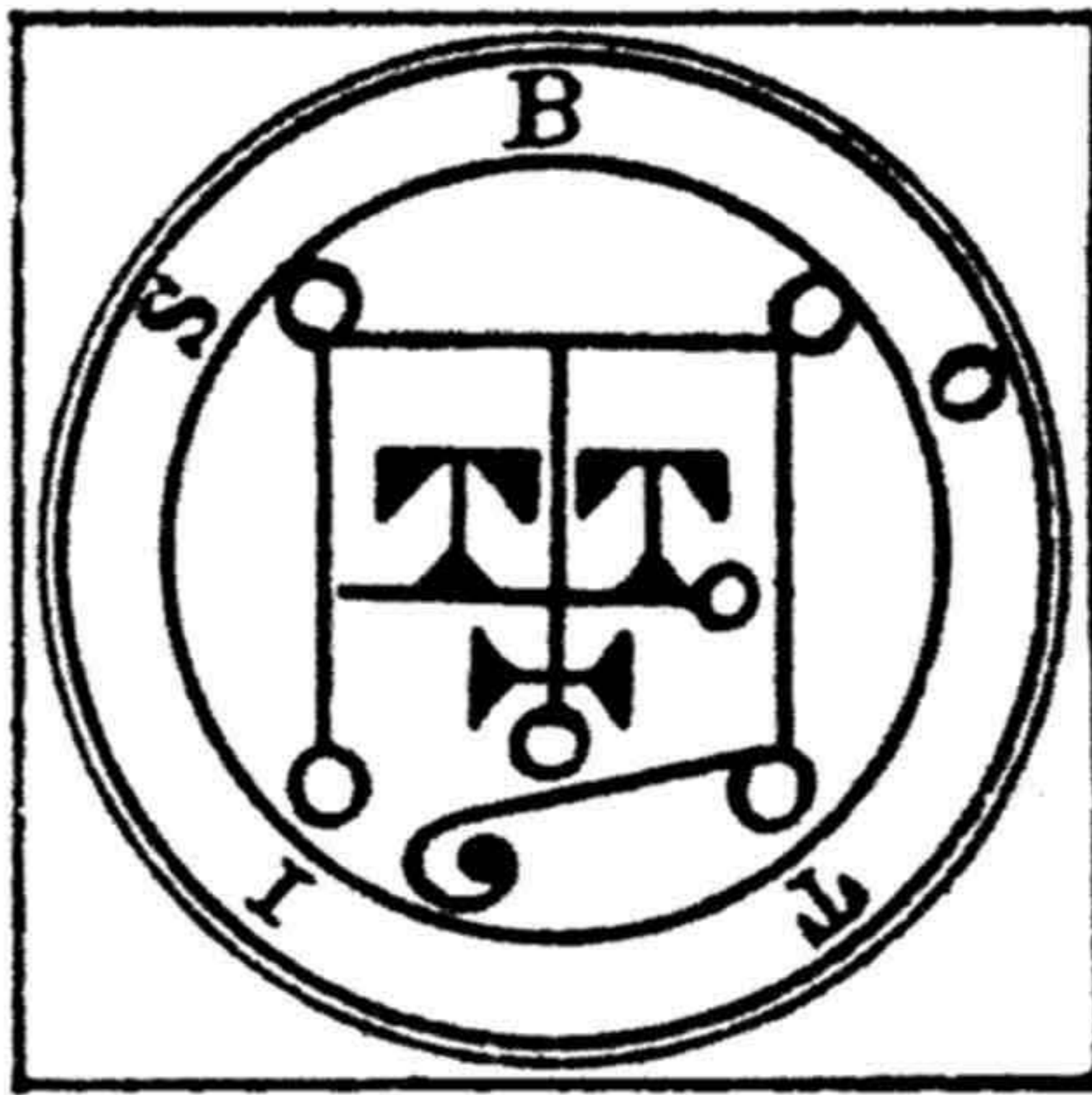
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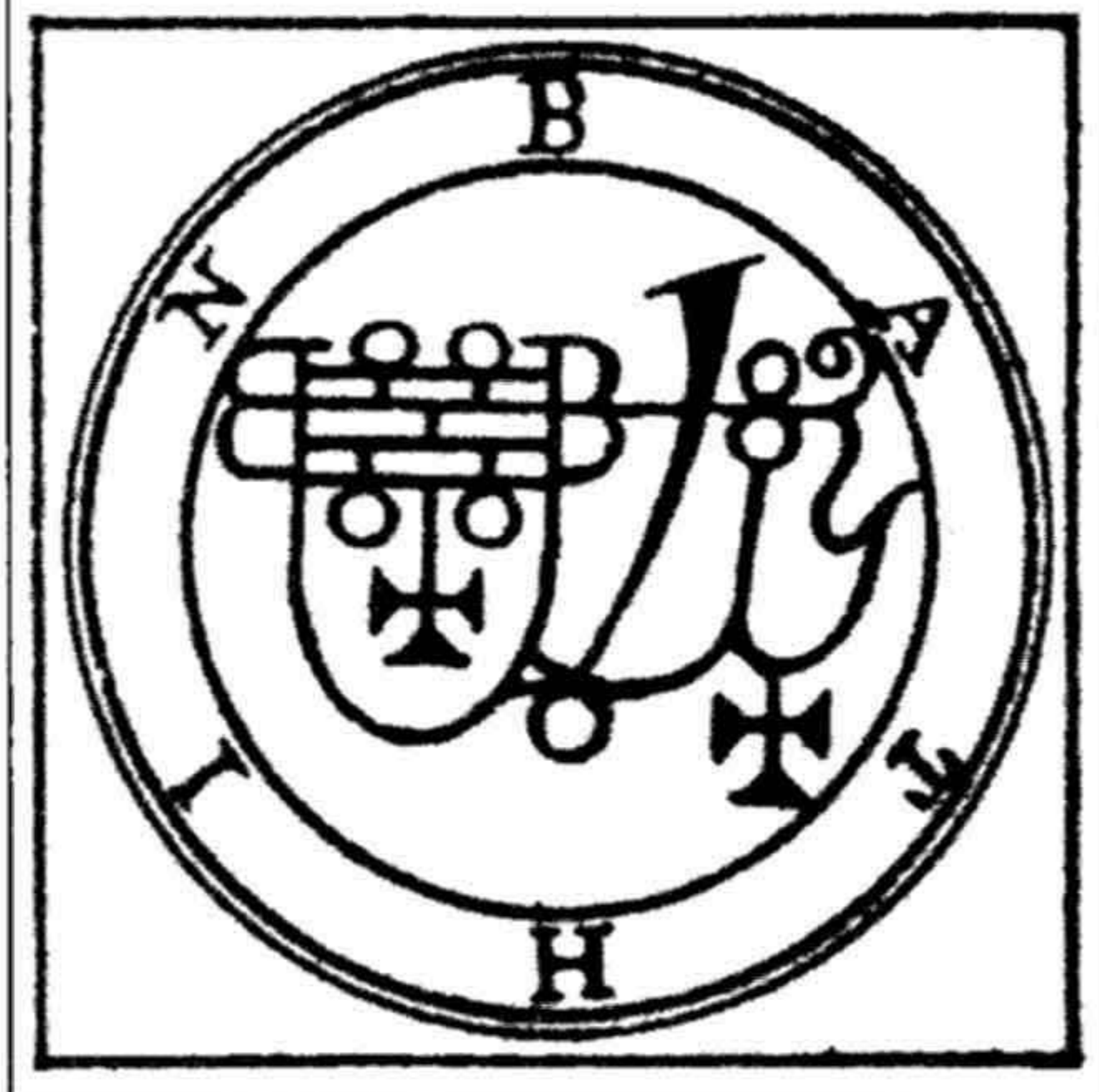
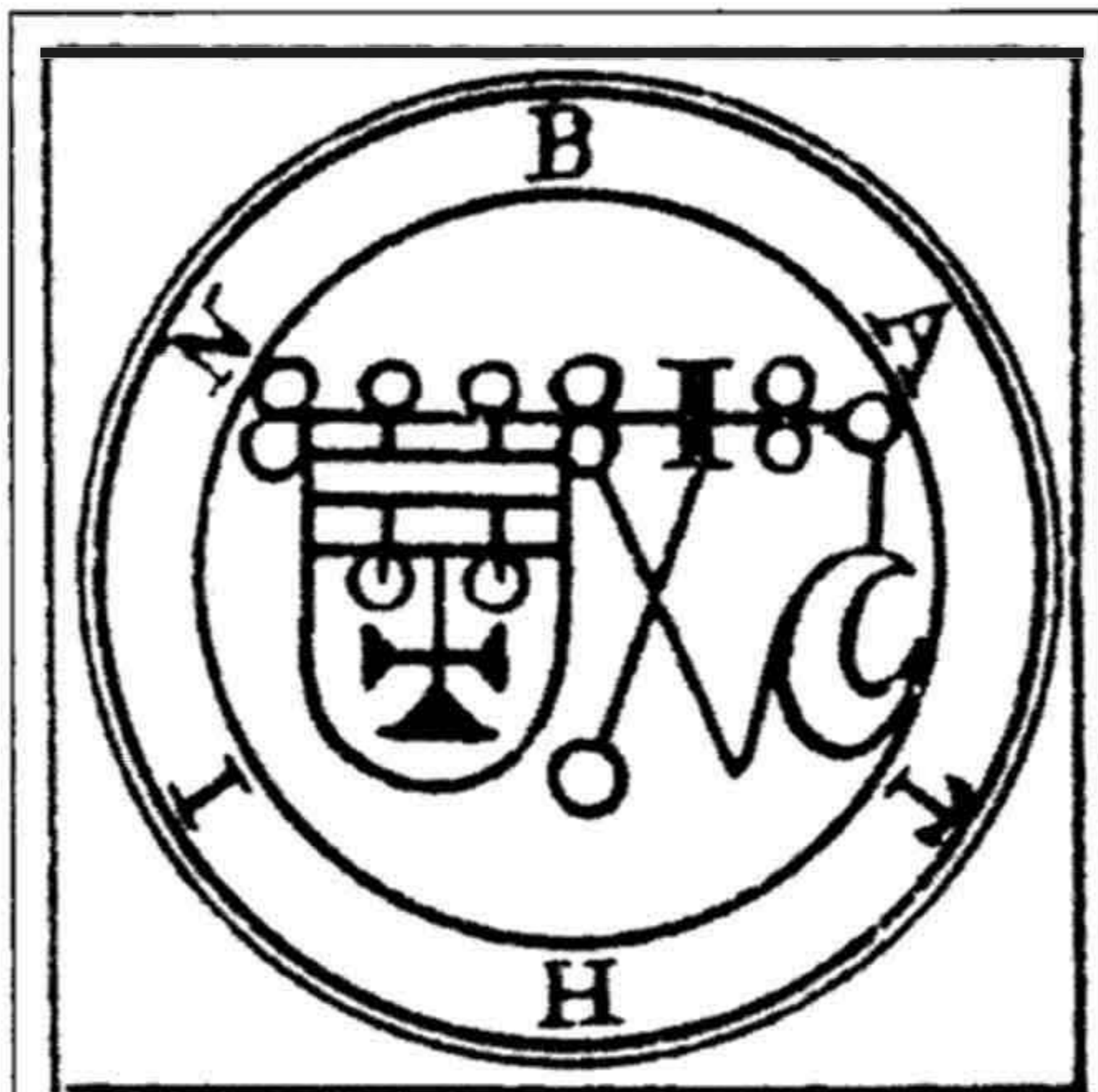
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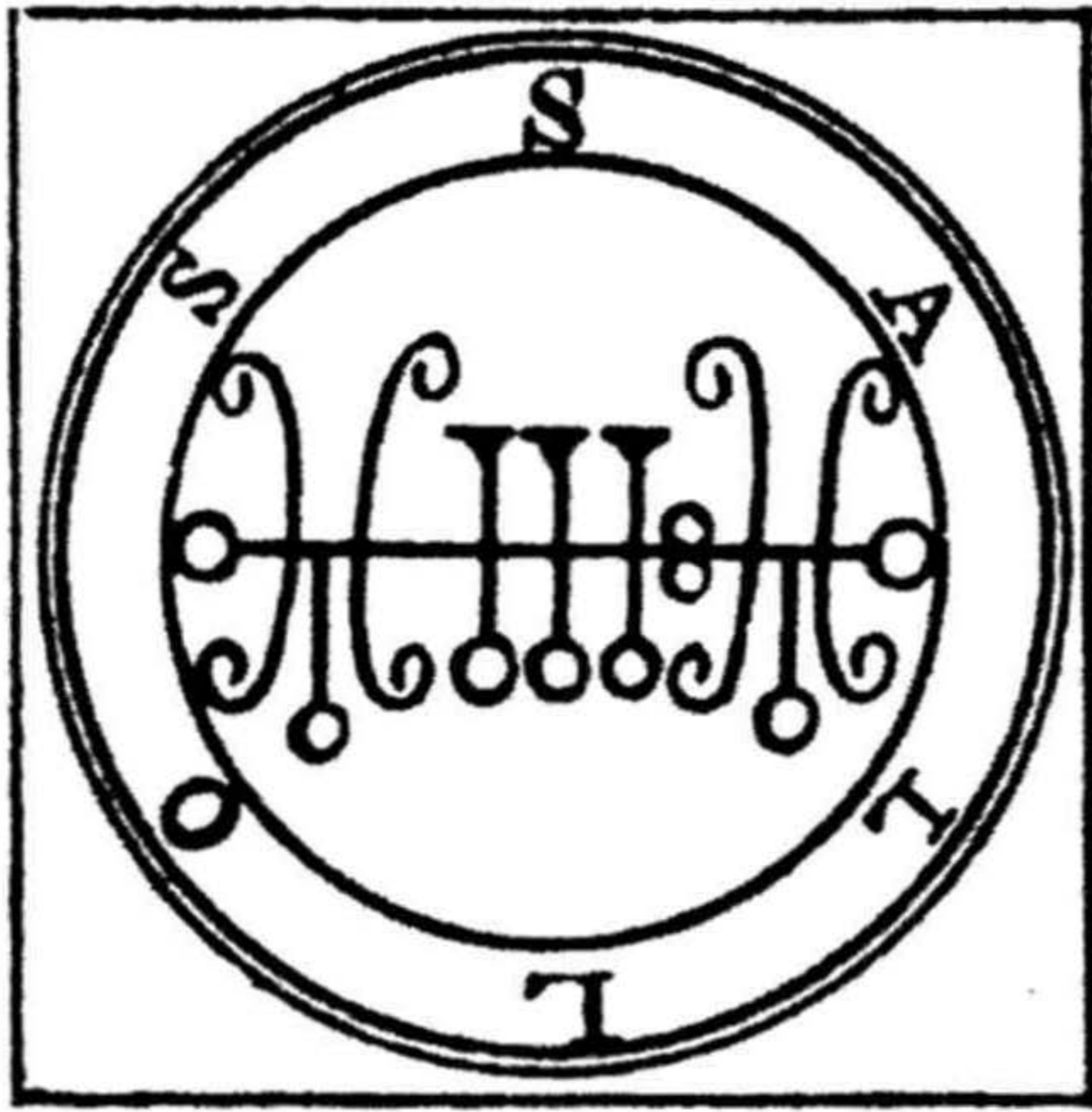
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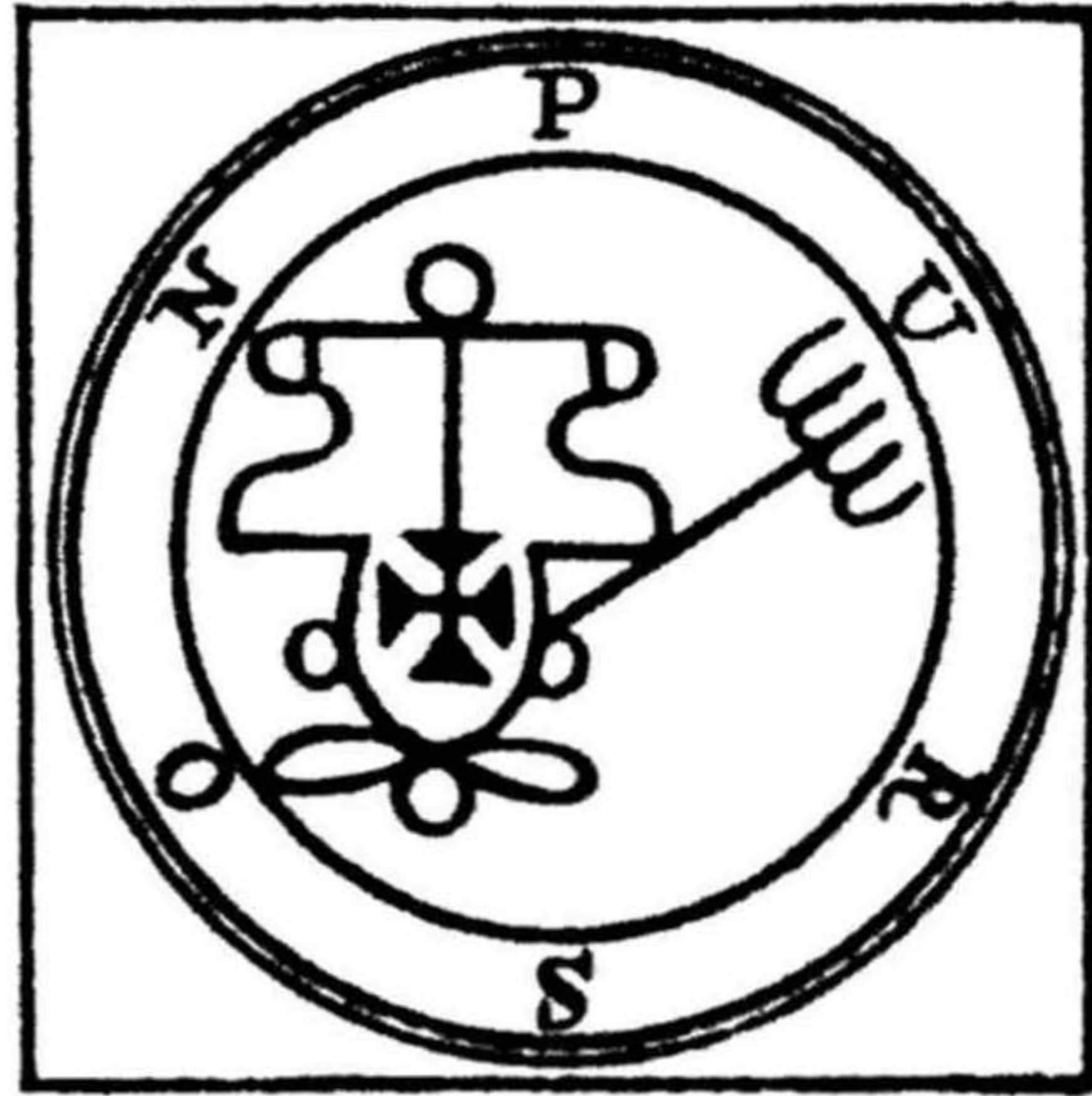
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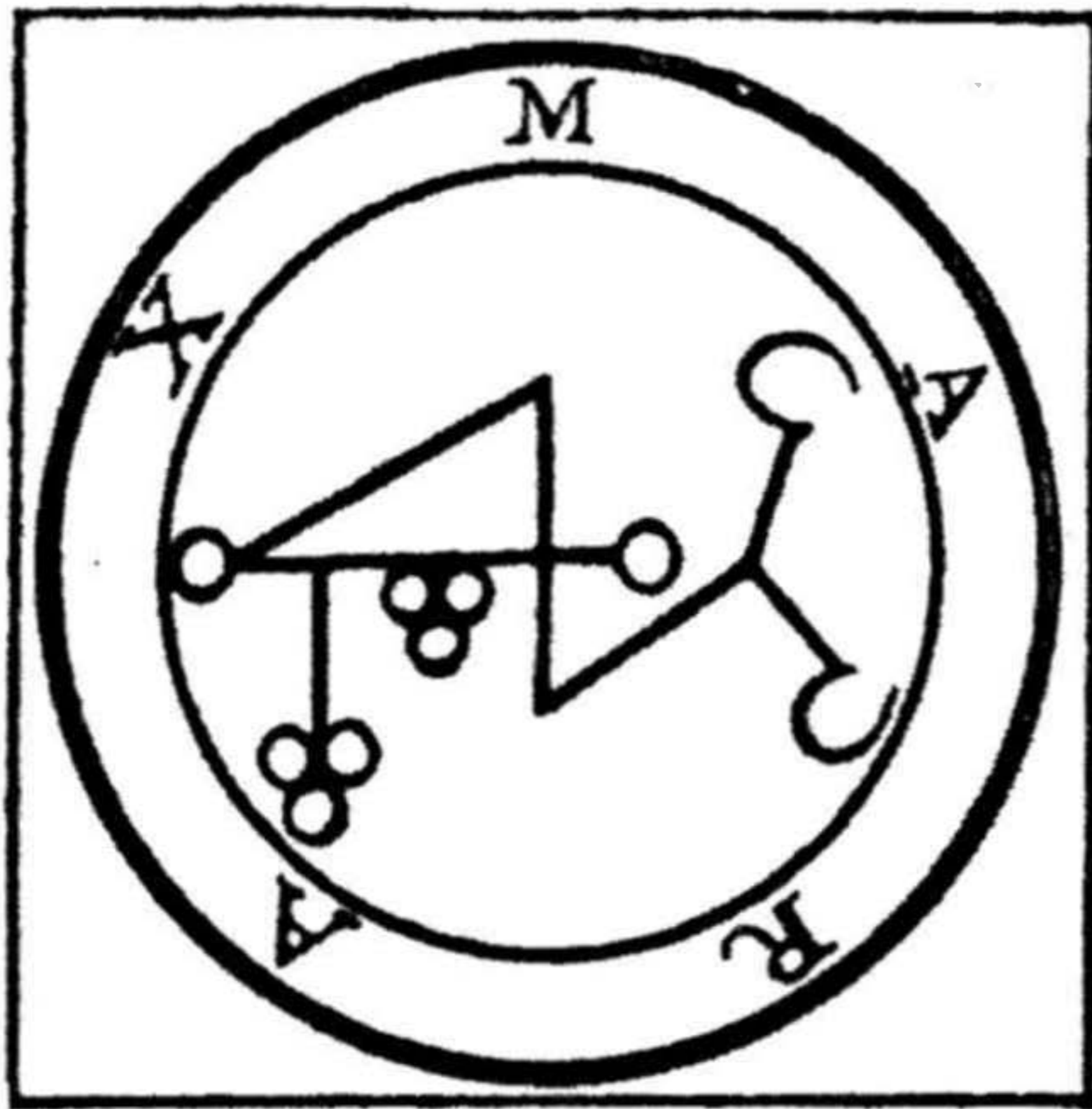
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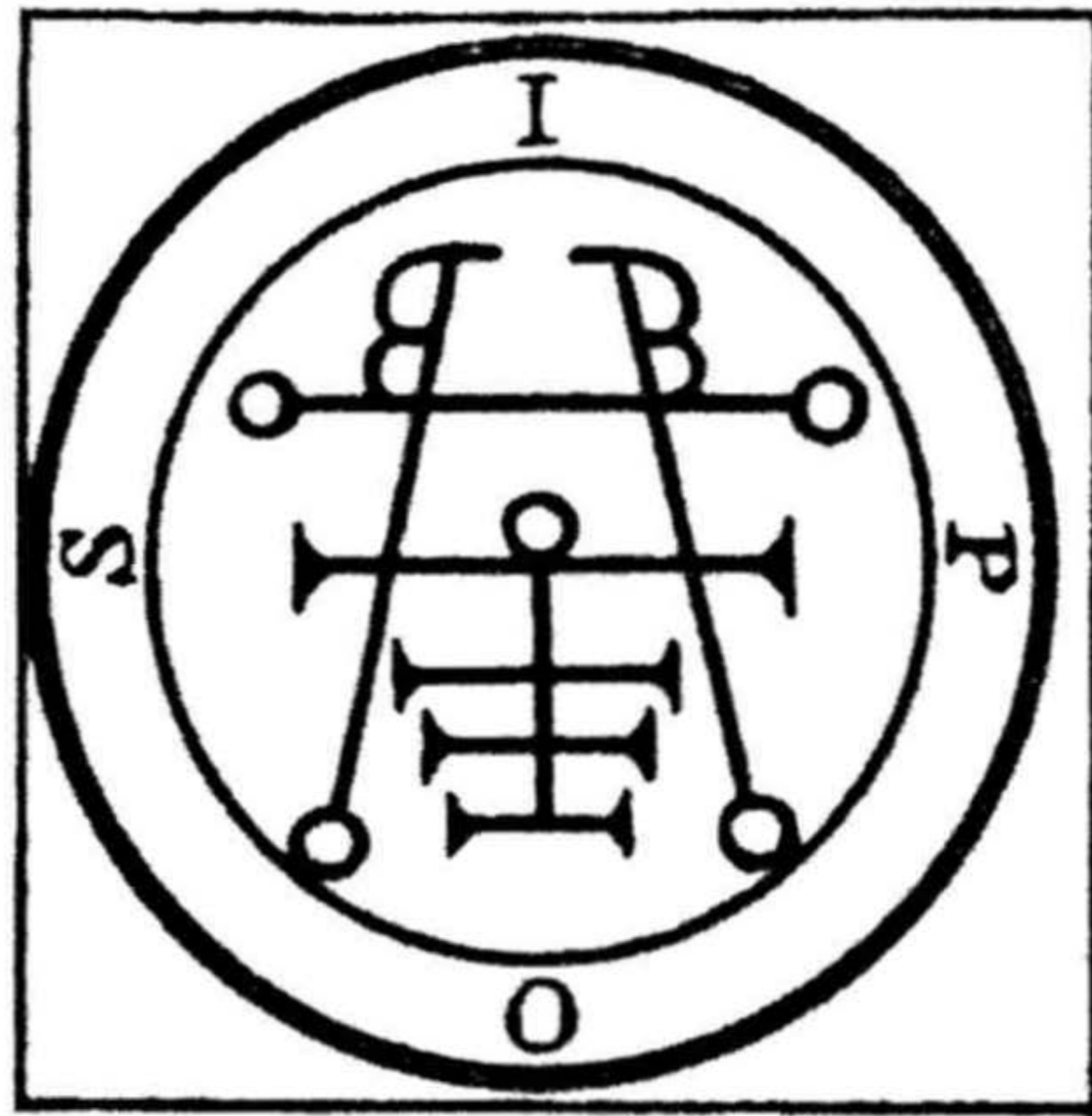
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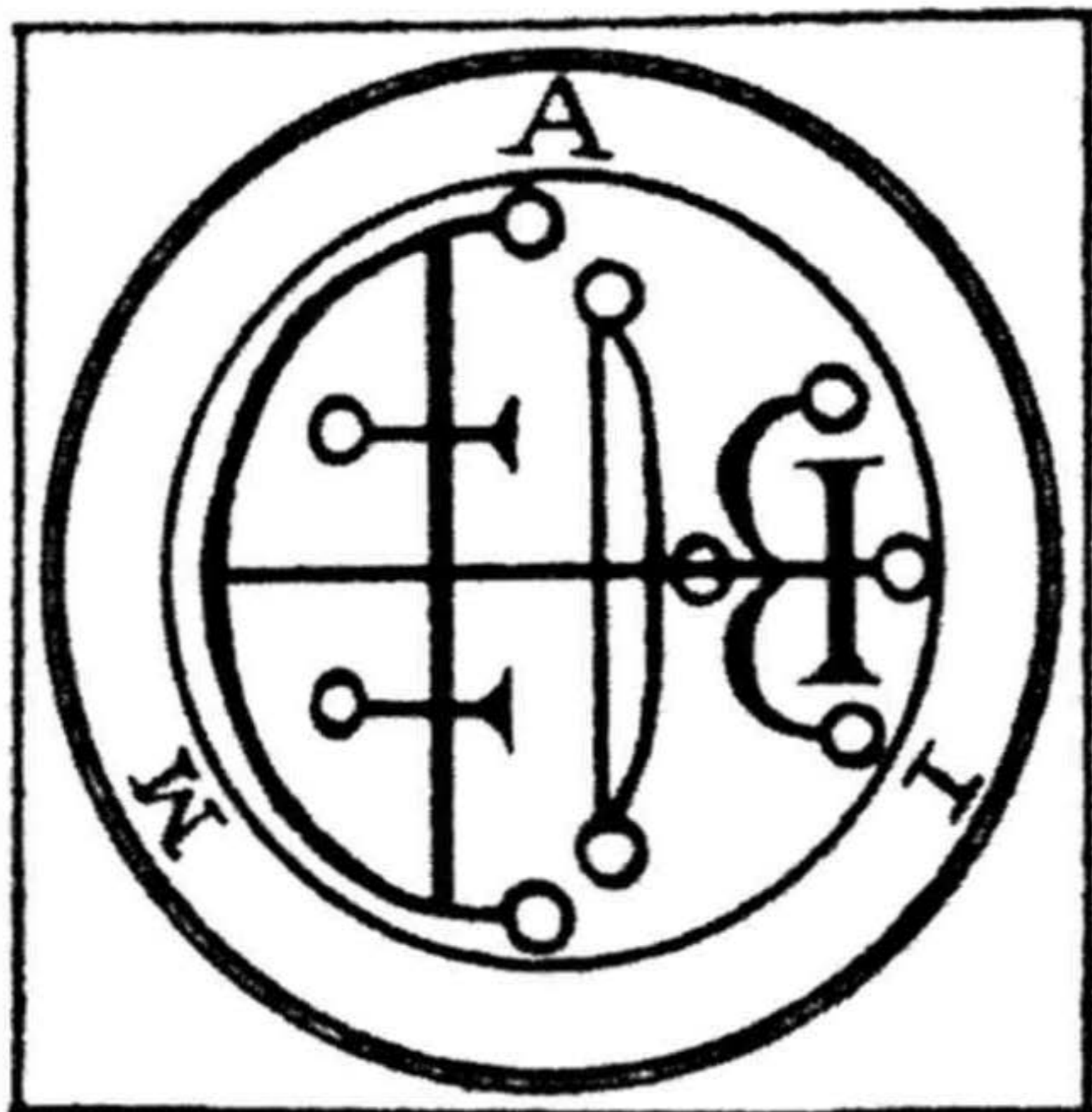
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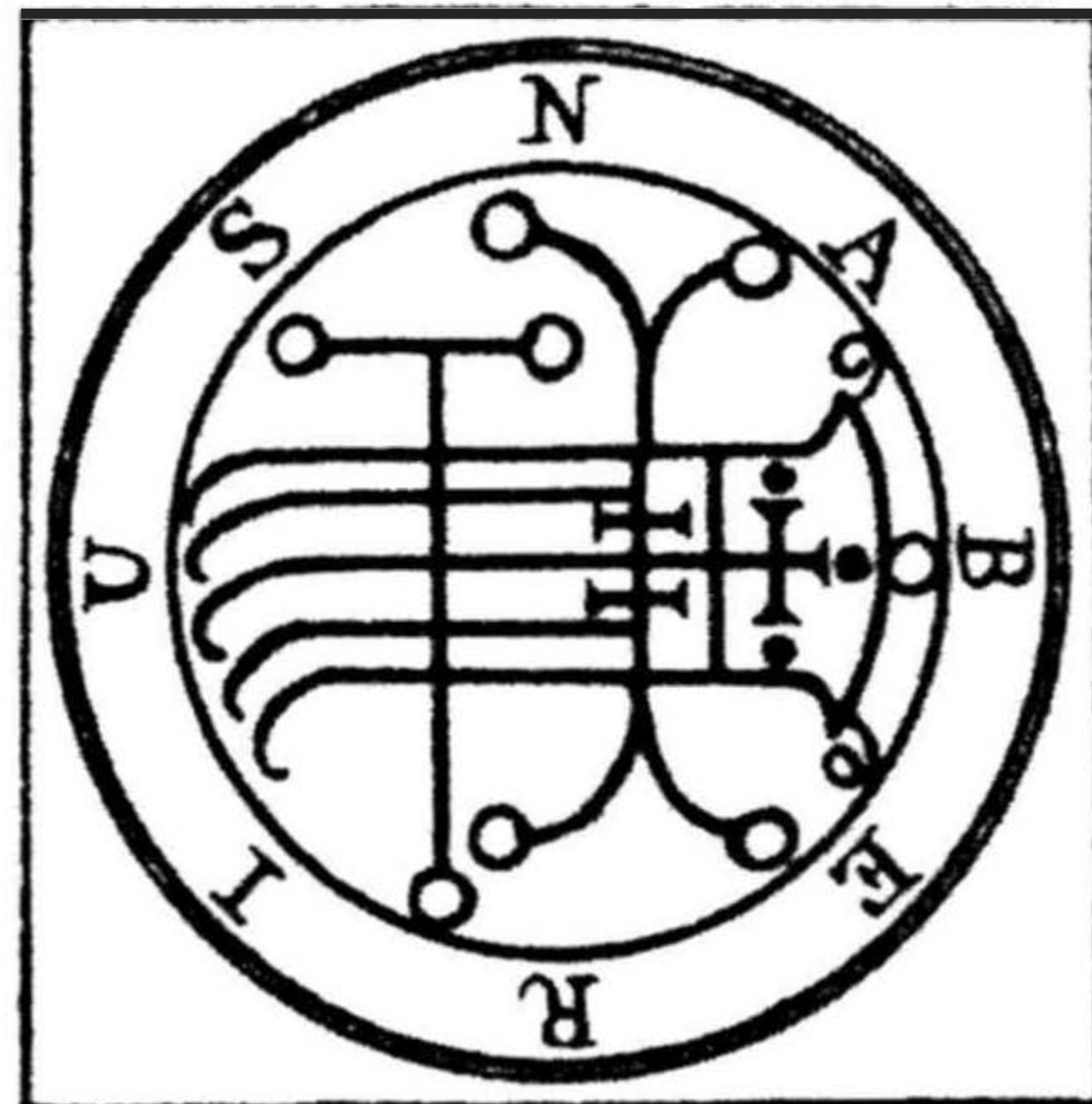
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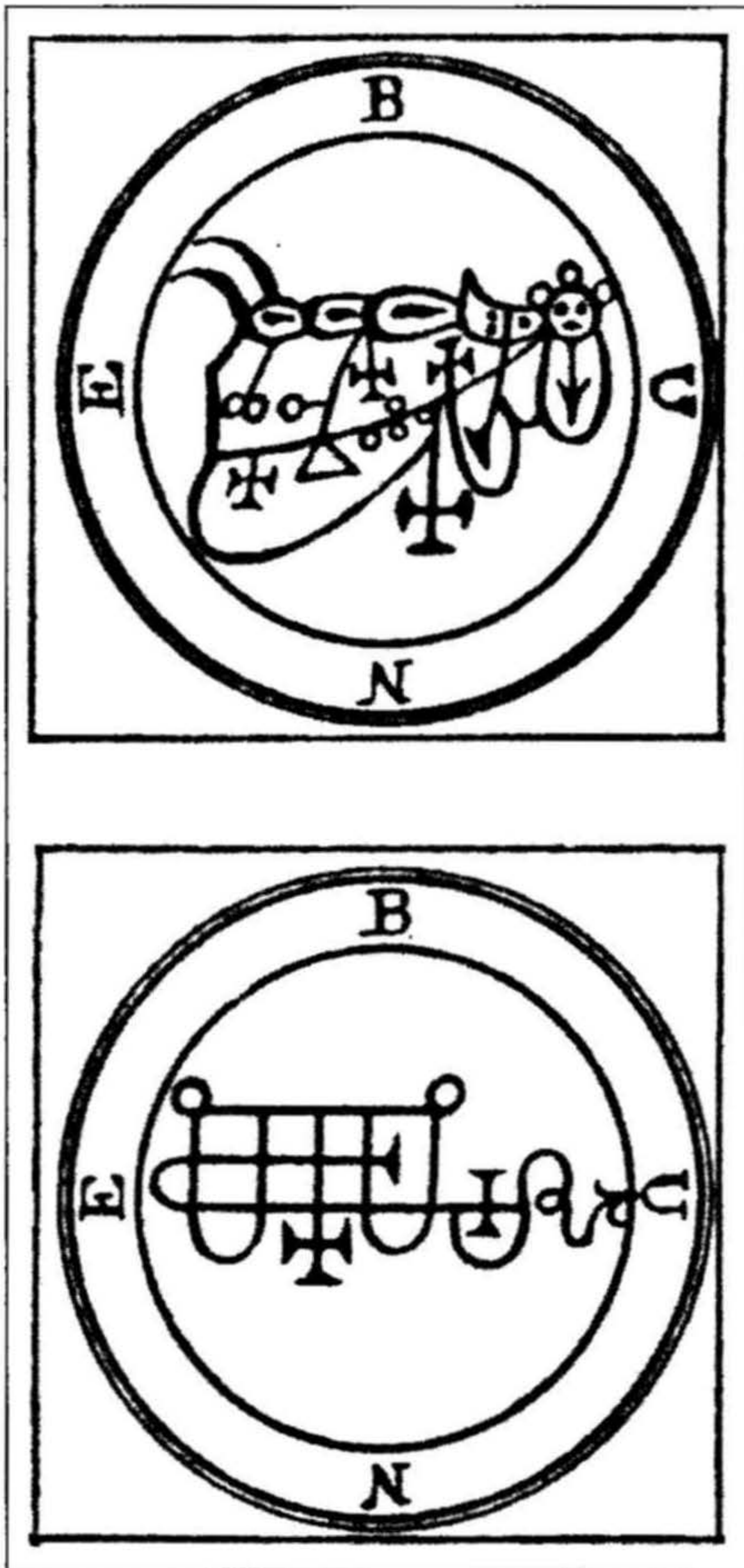
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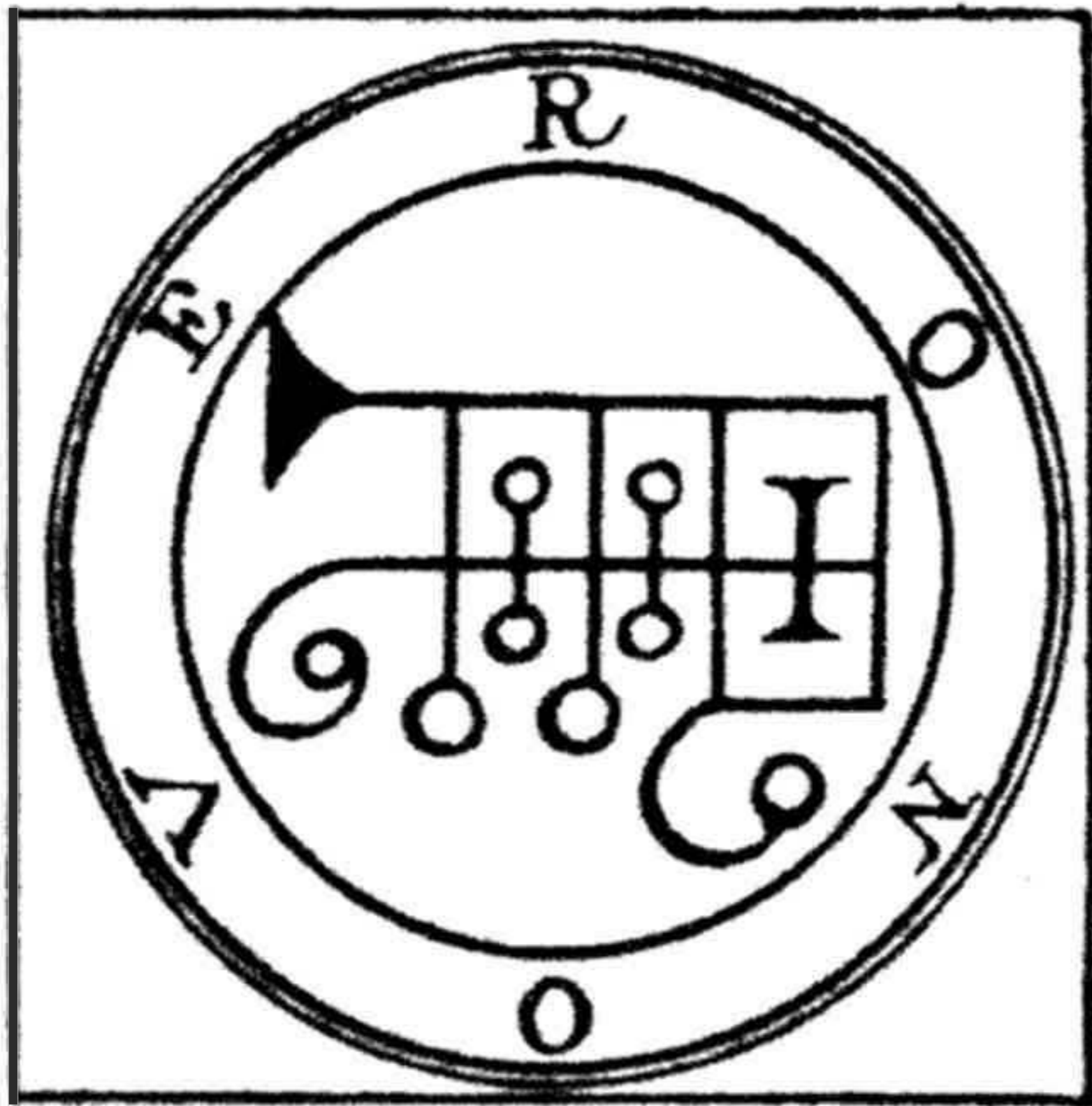
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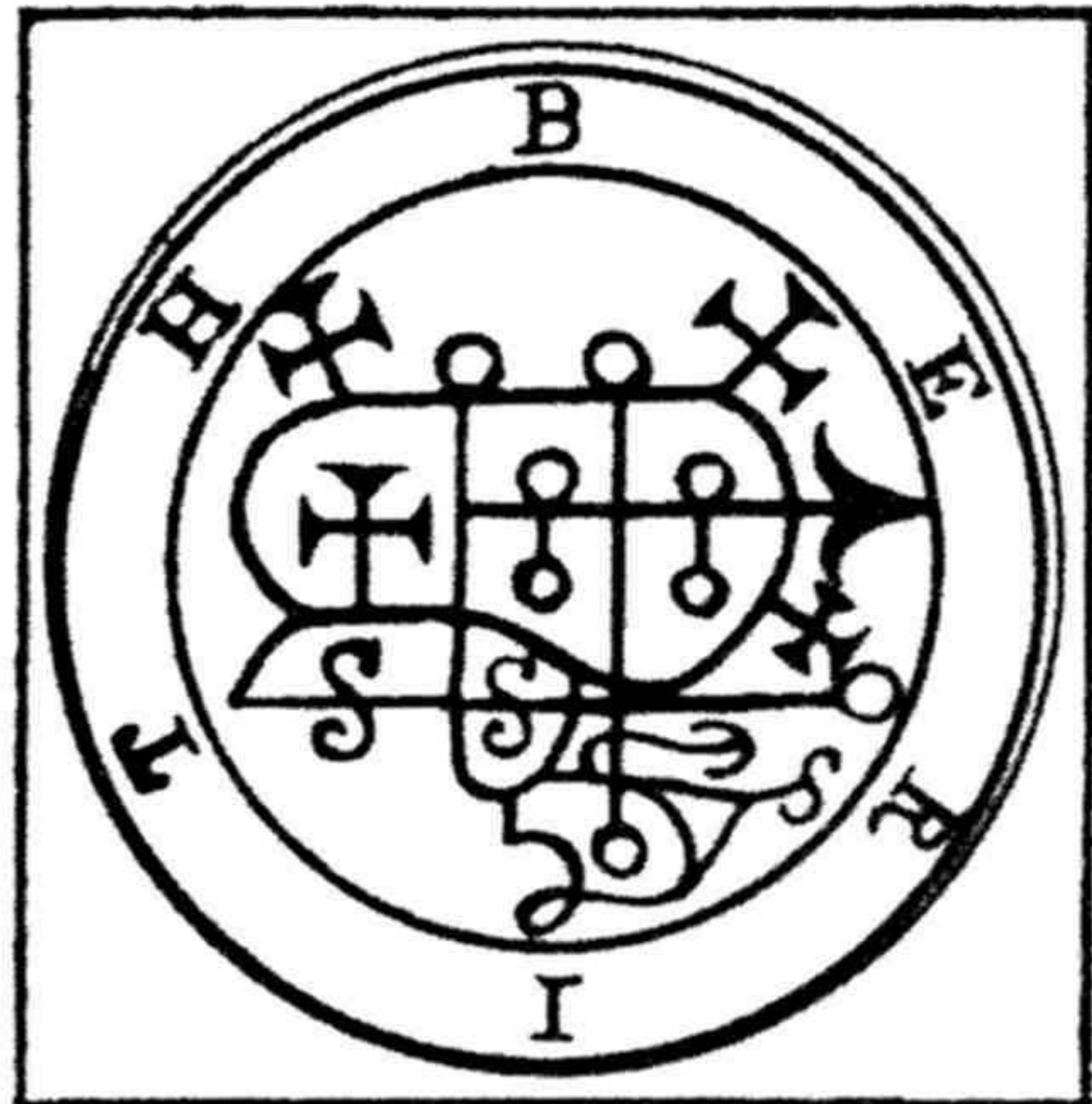
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# DIVINATION (V)

## THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ORACLES (IV)

### 10. Dream Oracles

(dream prophecy, dream incubation, etc.)

Dream oracles basically belong to the general category of dream interpretation. This method of fortunetelling goes back to ancient times, and even the Bible contains numerous accounts of prophetic dreams. The Hellenistic period also had sleeping temples in which the sick could sleep under the observance of priests following certain ceremonial preparations. Even people who were looking for answers from the oracle in very important matters would sleep there as well. In this context, it might be of interest to note that the word “hypnosis” originally meant “to put a person to sleep.” However, the concept of sleep might be interpreted in various different ways of course. Especially in the last few years, there has been a growing interest in so-called “lucid dreams.” This brings us to the field of sleep magic that we’ll be discussing in the next section.

Before we begin discussing dream oracles, one small warning in advance. Stay away from dream interpretation books! Even back in the Renaissance and in early non-European cultures as well, these types of books have caused more harm than good. This accusation can even be made to a certain extent without the further ado of the psychological dream interpretation of the twentieth century. Structurally speaking, we’re basically dealing here with the age-old problem of “collective dogmatism” versus “individual pragmatism.” In short, all dream interpretation books and systems assume that the psyche of all human



beings more or less contains the same symbolism. Although the layman might joke about Freud's interpretation of dream symbols, which claims that all "oblong, slightly oval" objects are phallus symbols (including everything from cucumbers to darning eggs and pens), this criticism is certainly a bit exaggerated and the psychological approach to dream interpretation is indeed a bit more differentiated than that. Nonetheless, this does illustrate the core of the problem quite well. On the other hand, some esoteric dream symbol books contain such breathtaking statements as "Dreaming about shoes means taking a long journey." Such nonsense is of no real help to anyone who is truly interested in understanding the symbolism of his or her own subconscious mind and using this information for magical purposes.

But let's stick to the shoe example for a moment; I'd like to mention a little anecdote that involves exactly this symbol. A good twenty years ago, I ran a bookstore and one night I had a dream that involved a pair of shoes that I was supposed to have our dispatchers return to the publisher because they were not polished. "Nothing but typical dream nonsense," I thought and didn't give it a second thought. A few days later, an old friend visited me at home for a few days but forgot a pair of her shoes when she left again. Shortly afterward, she noticed the shoes were gone and asked me to send them to an address of a friend since she was currently on a lengthy trip abroad. Strangely, I was faced with the fact that my absurd dream was being fulfilled when I used the dispatch department of my bookstore to return her shoes, although the reason for doing so was not the same. If I had relied on the interpretation in the dream symbol book, I'd still be waiting for my long journey today! On the other hand, neither a Freudian nor a Jungian interpretation would make any sense here either.

Because any way you look at it, this was a prophetic dream. Such dreams generally come unasked, although some native tribes are familiar with techniques that can at least ensure that they occur more frequently. The intentional inducing of a dream is called dream incubation. (To incubate means to breed, which is what is literally done to the dream.)

The problem with prophetic dreams, of course, as with many other oracles, is being able to interpret its exact meaning from the start. This generally exceeds our power of imagination or it irritates it so much that we concoct all kinds of images that later have nothing to do at all with the actual outcome.

To make the situation worse, dreams are often laden with superfluous frills that are totally unrelated to the events that later occur, but they sure do a good job of distracting

and misleading us in the dream interpretation. In general, people who often or continually work with prophetic dreams or those who receive these passively, as is usually the case, can be called dream mediums. It is generally known that prophetic dreams usually relate to very trivial events, such as in the example above. Often they are so vague that it's quite easy to claim afterward that it was a true "premonition." A person who dreams about the end of the world, for example, and wakes up in an empty bed in the morning to find that his wife ran off in the night with the neighbor will relate this dream to his own personal "end of the world." But if his wife is still there, he'll have to turn on the news and see if some kind of catastrophe has developed there, or maybe he'll use the trouble at work to explain his dream. It could also just as well be that the event takes place very far in the future or that some future event is quite randomly brought into connection with a dream that occurred a long time ago. Of course, even dreams about world events may occur in advance on occasion, but this is generally the exception. Here, too, one must consider the limitations of the message.

Through all the interest in esoteric and psychological dream interpretation, one small fact is often ignored—many dreams are often nothing more than the processing of everyday events.

Thus C. G. Jung refers to "big dreams" that resemble more of a vision like the Indian warriors often had and which usually announce the arrival of very important life events or the start of a new phase.

In any case, prophetic dreams should be taken with a grain of salt. Eidetics tend to place more value in imagery as compared to all other forms of perception; as a result, their dreams are generally exaggerated as well, as are the messages contained therein and their interpretation.

On the other hand, all of this should not take away from the fact that prophetic dreams do indeed happen, although infrequently, and these can be of valuable assistance to the magician. But only by carefully working with and observing your own dreams can this be the case. By openly and critically examining these aspects of your dream world and keeping careful records of your observations, you will gain a very valuable magical tool.

The magical technique of dream incubation is based on the acknowledgement that a great deal of very valuable information is stored in our subconscious mind and that this can be activated accordingly. In general, dream incubation wouldn't really be necessary at all if we were good enough at our trance training to be able to activate the necessary

images in a different way, e.g., by looking into a crystal ball or the magic mirror. Many magicians argue, though, that their censor is less active while sleeping, which leads to better results when working with dreams. Without a doubt this technique has the additional advantage that it enables us to use the sleep phase productively for magical work, thus integrating our magic even more into our everyday lives and saving time to boot.

Probably the easiest method of dream incubation for divinatory purposes is to simply write the desired question on a piece of paper and place it under your pillow at night. Of course, the piece of paper is merely a tool, since the important thing is consciously inserting the question into the threshold gnosis that occurs just before falling asleep. This works best while lying on your back, just like in deep relaxation. Yes, it's even desirable to continue this deep relaxation in the so-called "death position" until you fall asleep. There's no need to concentrate on the question continually. Instead, it should be internalized similar to a sigil without any emotional attachment whatsoever to the contents of the question.

If you haven't done any serious dream work yet, it would be best to not perform the dream incubation at your usual sleeping time. Otherwise you might have trouble remembering the dream, or you might even remember several dreams that you had in the night and might not be sure which one relates to the oracle question. Usually, though, you'll sense or feel whether or not it relates to the answer you're seeking. As with other types of dream work, record the memories of your dream immediately by writing them down or speaking into a tape recorder. Honestly, don't waste a single minute of time because every distortion reduces the efficiency of your oracle consultation.

## **11. Folk Oracles**

(salt oracles, ring oracles, etc.)

The appeal of so-called folk oracles is mainly the fact that they do not require any clairvoyant skills, plus they are usually quite simple and therefore no great amount of effort is required to interpret them. However, this says absolutely nothing about their efficiency. This type of oracle generally appeals to people of a simpler disposition who are used to thinking and feeling in a strict good/evil scheme. People of a more intellectual nature usually have no interest in this type of oracle. At this time we would like to introduce two of the countless number of folk oracles that you might want to experiment with.

One of the many oracles consulted on New Year's Eve was the custom of scattering a heap of salt onto the kitchen table. This was supposed to determine if the harvest would be good or bad in the coming year. If the salt remained clumped together, the harvest would be bad. On the other hand, if the salt scattered across the whole table, it would be good. Of course, other questions can be asked with this type of oracle as well—let there be no limits to your imagination. It might also be interesting to put salt into the demon triangle in your temple, too, and see what happens.

The ring oracle is a type of pendulum dowsing. It's still used today in rural villages and not just for entertainment. One record of the tradition says that a girl ties a ring to a piece of thread and lowers it into a glass half filled with water until the ring is suspended just above the surface. (Of course, it would be even better yet if the girl would use a piece of her hair instead of thread). The question is whether or not the girl will marry and when. The elbow is rested on the table, and the hand held still just like when dowsing with a pendulum. If the ring begins to move and hits the side of the glass, it means that the girl will marry. The number of times the ring hits the glass is the number of years that will pass before the marriage takes place. A pregnant woman can use the same method to determine the sex of an unborn child. If the ring remains still, it will be a girl; if it moves, it will be a boy. If it distinctly hits the glass twice in a row, the expecting mother will have twins, and so on.

The interesting thing about this technique is the use of the water. As we already know, water is often connected to intuition and divination. Plus, staring at the surface of the water as the ring hovers over it creates an effect similar to looking into a crystal ball, so that the answer may unexpectedly be received as a vision or expressed in the corresponding movement that causes the ring to move. Instead of a ring, a key or pin is commonly used as well. However, the latter should be heavy enough to move effortlessly.

## 12. Omen Interpretation

Probably the most passive form of divination is omen interpretation. But a great deal of the practicing magician's work involves such interpretation, as every Kabbalist and planetary magician knows. Since magic, at least in the beginning, also always consists of the perception of magic, we usually have to rely on reading and interpreting the magical relationships between unusual events or sometimes even a whole series of such. And this is a part of omen interpretation as well.

In order to do so, it requires a great deal of attentive observation. Often the effects of magic are first—or even only—revealed as an omen. However, the significant difference from pure omen interpretation is that the latter is generally not a result of a magical act, or at least not a conscious one. Omens, which are often categorized as nothing but superstition, are similar to dream symbols in that they're only useful if they have a personal meaning. A generalization such as “a cat crossing from the right brings bad luck” or “a sheep on the left brings good luck” can only be significant if you have some kind of inner emotional relationship to these symbols. Such relationships do not necessarily have to be conscious ones; if they are, these are commonly called superstitions. Let me mention a few practical examples from our work with the Kabbalah and astrology.

As with many oracles, omen interpretation carries the danger of provoking self-fulfilling prophecies—a compulsion to fulfill the prediction that serves to reduce the mental pressure that is often manifested in the oracle itself, or more specifically, in the existential insecurity that causes the oracle to be consulted in the first place.

In this sense, working with omens is always quite problematic. On the one hand, the magician needs them to be able to perceive subtle relationships, to recognize a magical attack, to choose a favorable moment to perform a certain magical operation, and so on. But on the other hand, he or she should only take such signs or omens seriously if they fit into his or her concept, otherwise the magician would be merely a pawn in the arbitrary game of fate. And as with prophetic dreams, there's always the question of how to interpret omens properly before the events actually happen.

The term “synchronicity” that is often used in this context as borrowed from C. G. Jung's psychoanalysis is not an explanation of such phenomena, as is sometimes believed, but rather just a description of them. There's no way to really tell whether the “meaning” of these concurrent events that seemingly have no causal relationship to one another exists merely in our heads as a projection of our psyche or whether they are based on real correlations. Undeniably, though, it can sometimes be quite valuable to assume that such a relationship does exist. The same holds true for other mantic disciplines such as astrology. In any case, it would be a mistake to carry this too far and claim to see a certain “objectivity” in all of it.

This concludes our section on practical divination. As with many of the other fields that we've discussed here, there's still a great deal more to say. Although our book can only give a structural overview of these, this has proven in practice to be much more efficient than flooding the reader with details of possible specific situations.

# THE MAGIC OF ANCIENT EGYPT AND THE LATE CLASSICAL HELLENISTIC PERIOD (II)

## HU

As with Hike, Ka and Ach, the concept of Hu is personified as well. Primarily it means “utterance” or “command,” which refers to the sun god Ra who is able to create things with the power of his words. The prerequisite for this word is rational knowledge, which is in turn represented by the god Sia, who is therefore closely tied to Hu. Hu and Sia belong to Ra’s series of Kas as we discussed in the first part of this section. According to the theological speculations of On (Heliopolis), Sia is located in the heart (where logic resides, according to ancient Egyptian belief), while Hu is located on the tongue. In later times, Sia and Hu were ousted in order to make room for the creating authorities of Ptah. Another speculation claims, by the way, that the two were created from the blood of Ra as he circumcised himself. But Hu has another meaning as well, namely “food” and was also personified as such, although the distinctions between the two deities were always unclear beginning with the similarity of their names so that the majority of researchers now view them as merely different aspects of one and the same principle. In our context, the important thing to remember is that Hu represents the power of words, which is significant to us as magicians in the form of magic spells. Of course, this can be

seen as a preliminary stage (though exalted to exaggerated proportions by civilization) to the strong belief that the Semitic people placed in words as later manifested in the Kabbalah, for example.

## **SIA**

Sia, as already mentioned, is the personification of knowledge and understanding. In order to realize his potential, Sia requires the power of Hu, which is why the two are usually depicted as partners standing next to one another. While the divine word of creation is personified by Hu yet almost exclusively linked with the god of creation, Sia is a general divine quality and often becomes the name of other gods, in particular Thot, the god of knowledge and wisdom. Thot, the inventor of writing, finds his counterpart in Sia who stands to the right of Ra in the sun bark holding the divine book. In the Greek–Roman era, Sia even became a synonym for Thot.

We've already introduced a whole series of Egyptian magic utensils, so we'd just like to mention a few more tools here. Let's begin briefly with the divine rod and staff before turning our attention to the stele in more detail. The stele has various forms and functions, but one of them, namely the Stele of Revealing, plays a significant role in the religion and magic of Aleister Crowley.

## **DIVINE STAFF AND ROD**

If we ignore its shamanic origins for a moment, the ancient Egyptian divine staff is a direct forerunner of our magic wand.

The Egyptian culture was first and foremost centered around its temples. A bark containing a statue of the respective deity was usually kept inside of this holy sanctuary, and it was often removed to take part in ceremonial processions. It was generally accompanied by the divine staff as well. This was a stick that was decorated with a figure of the respective god or its holy animals. The staffs were allocated to certain priests. Sacrifices were made to them and offerings laid out, and they were treated as individual gods even though they remained subordinate to the deities that they were ascribed to. During formal rituals, they were referred to as the “venerable staff of the god X,” and the priests and officials of the New Kingdom enjoyed being depicted with them. Personal

names such as Pamedunacht (“the staff is strong”) and Nesipamedu (“of the staff”) are proof of the staff’s great significance.

They were, as these examples show, much more than mere attributes of the gods because they embodied the gods themselves, which is why they were prayed to and used magically, such as when the king carried the divine staff of Amun on his own wagon while on the warpath in order to ensure his victory. The staffs provided power and protection. We already know from our discussion of biblical magic that even the court wizards and priests often tinkered around with them. In this sense the divine staff is a flexible image of a god and a fetish all in one. The king also had his own royal staff as a symbol of power that had a similar function to that of the divine staff.

We know that it was a common practice not only among the rulers of ancient Egypt to announce their arrival by means of runners carrying staffs that symbolized the “long arm” of the ruling powers. Later the staffs were much smaller and more abstract, such as the short white staffs of the Roman runners who ran ahead of the nobility to pave their way through crowds of people. Tradition also says that the bald-headed Julius Caesar sent his runners ahead with their staffs through conquered villages to announce his arrival with the cry “Hide your wives away, the bald libertine is coming!”—a clear reference to the staff as a phallus symbol.

The divine rod was kept in the holy sanctuary as well, and as with the divine staff, it had its own priests and was honored in the same way. Especially during military maneuvers, it was viewed as a provider of divine protection and the embodiment of divine power. All in all, both the staff and the rod had very similar functions. Often they were mentioned in the same breath, such as with Horus who was known as the “ruler of the staff used to pave his way” and the “ruler of the rod to eliminate his enemies.” As a symbol of the king’s power, the royal rod was taken along to battle by his subordinates. This is a sort of symbolic “shift of power.” Although there’s no information available on how the rods were actually used magically, in early times at least their use for magic was most likely the rule and not the exception. And there are also a few credible researchers who have traced back the Hebrew word for the staff of Moses to the ancient Egyptian word for the divine staff (*mdw*).



## THE HORUS SPEAR

Instead of the rod, Horus is often depicted with his preferred weapon, the spear. This Horus spear is similar to a harpoon, and according to legend he used it to hunt hippopotamus in the delta. That's why he is sometimes called the "harpooner." But he also uses it to spear the heads of his adversaries, and his archenemy Seth falls victim to this weapon as well. Seth, who later in the Egyptian pantheon came to represent everything evil, was considered to be the natural adversary of the dead since they were identified in the underworld with Osiris or Horus. That's why the narrow boards that were tied to the backs of mummies were often cut to look like Horus spears or small replicas were used as amulets to protect the wearers from Seth. The trident that was widespread in medieval magic is possibly a relict from this Ancient Egyptian practice.

Illustration 48 shows an afterlife scene (as depicted on a stele). The deceased reaches for his or her Ka (the two arms stretched in the air). Below that is the Ka of the pharaoh Thutmosis II—please note the long staff that the king holds in his left hand as a sign of his power. Next to this is an example of a Horus spear.

## STELE MAGIC

Egyptian steles are basically a type of memorial stone; even their shape resembles our modern-day gravestones. Their purpose was to both commemorate the dead and act as votive tablets. At the same time they offered magical protection and were used for healing, which occurred in particular with the numerous Horus steles that were highly popular in Ptolemaic times. With the growing number of steles used, more and more protection gods were drawn upon and depicted along with magic spells.

Many steles were publicly displayed in temples. Often they were put there by private persons who thought this would "make their name live on forever" (Bonnet)—another forerunner to later Christian and Roman Catholic acts of magic. They were also worn in miniature form around the neck as amulets, thus playing a certain role in everyday magic as well, for example when used to prevent animal bites or bring about healing.



*Illustration 48: a) The deceased reaches for his Ka; b) Thutmose III with Ka and royal staff; c) Horus spear (according to Bonnet's "Reallexikon")*

Crowley's Stele of Revealing (cf. Illustration 50) is hardly of relevance for our practical purposes, but the magician should know that Master Therion viewed it as partial proof that his later revelation of the *Liber Al* was indeed of supernatural origin. Among other things, he used it to justify his claim of being an incarnation of the Egyptian priest Ankh-f-n-Khonsu, whose burial stele is the Stele of Revealing.



*Illustration 49: Horus stele (according to Bonnet's "Reallexikon")*

Austin Osman Spare offers a modern interpretation of the steles of ancient Egypt. While the Egyptian steles were originally of hewn or painted stone, Spare used everyday materials such as the worn-out plywood backs of radios that were painted with various materials (oil, coal, watercolor).

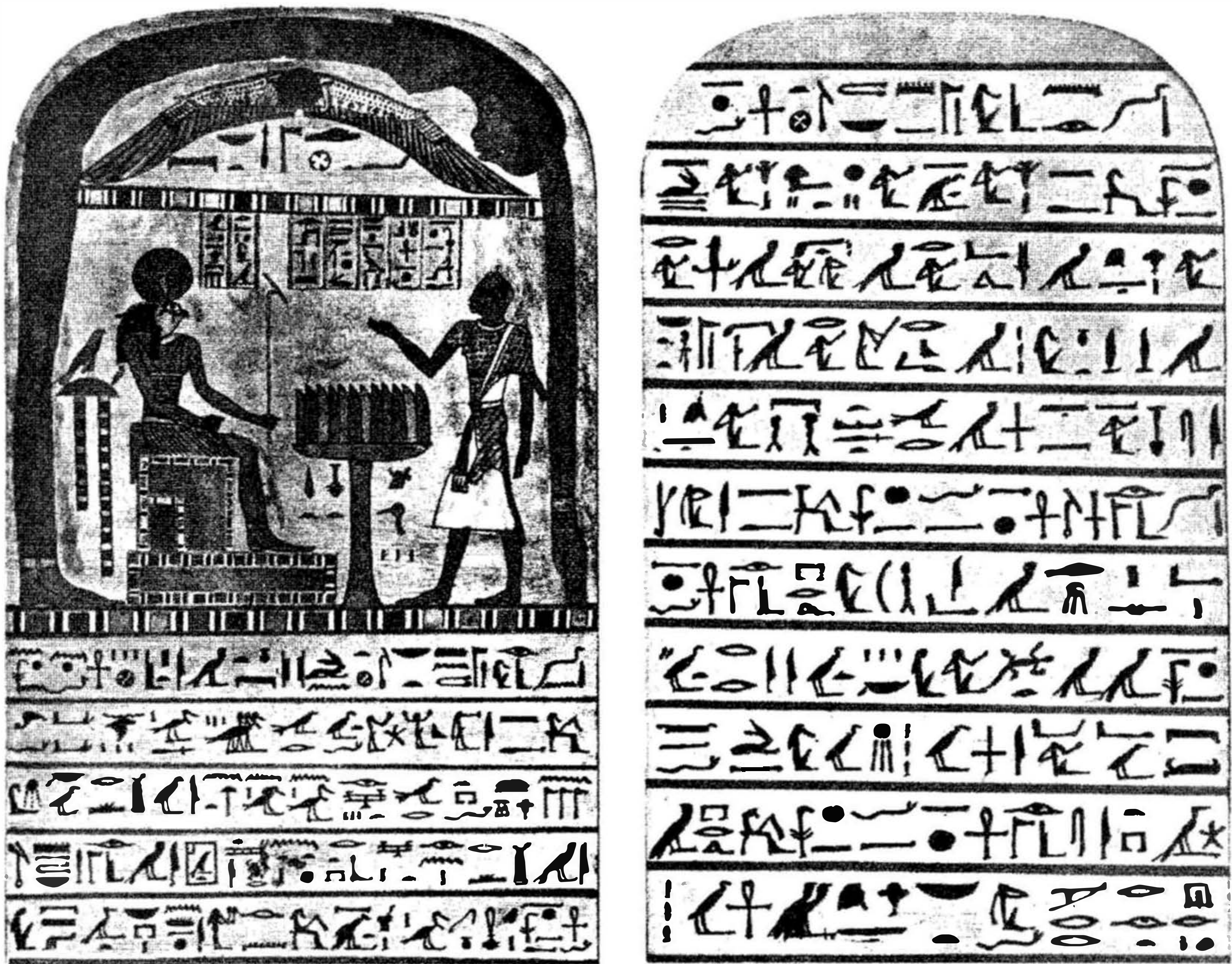
No one is actually sure what role these steles played to Spare, but in all probability they were used as both a fetish and a gateway for trance journeys. The latter would also correspond to ancient Egyptian tradition. First of all, the commemorative stones with their rounded tops represented doorways for a reason, symbolizing in a way the interface between life on earth and the world of powers beyond; second, many steles served as “fake graves.” These, for example, were placed at a holy place of pilgrimage (e.g., in Abydos), despite the deceased being buried in his or her homeland. In this way, the deceased could take full advantage of the temple worship but would also have access to the blessings of these places of power without having to physically be there.

The experienced magician, of course, would cock his or her ears at such statements by Egyptologists since this is actually a formula for bilocation. With the help of a stele, a person can be two places at the same time. In the more modern terminology of the energy model, the stele serves as a relay station for the (permanent) transfer of magical energies. The stele can also be used as a normal fetish, or to magically influence others.

In addition, steles are often used for evocation. In this case, they are designed with the specific goal in mind and decorated with appropriate correspondences, thus creating a micro-universe that is favorable for the entity, making it much easier for manifestation to occur. In this way, the stele could replace the triangle in a demon evocation. Similarly, it could also perform functions similar to the pentacle. There are also stele amulets and talismans.

To the magician who creates a carefully structured universe either by embedding it in a traditional scheme (astrology, Kabbalah, etc.) or defining an entirely new one, the stele can be a powerful instrument for his or her practical work.

These suggestions should suffice so that you are able to develop your own style of stele magic for various purposes. Two modern examples of individual steles can be seen in Illustrations 51 and 52. Spare’s stele (Illustration 51) is fairly typical for his style, containing sigils and everyday elements: “Formula—of—Zos vel—Thanatos.” Spare uses the term “Zos” to describe himself. This term is a sort of magical name, as in “*The Anathema of Zos.*” (As we all know, the IOT views itself as the successor to Spare’s Zos-Kia



*Illustration 50: The Stele of Revealing; a) front; b) back*

culture, among others.) The two male heads (right edge, middle bottom) are self-portraits of Spare, by the way. The picture on the right resembling cubist style is a stylized eye of Horus. On the left is an image of Isis, and the winged lion with the thunderbolt and erect penis is of Assyrian origin. To the right of that is the ancient Egyptian symbol for Ka that often occurs in Spare's magical works, and to the far left is an Egyptian divine staff. In the right-hand corner is a picture of Ah Bolom Tzacab, the "leaf-nosed god" of the Mayas who is responsible for agriculture as well as rain and thunder.

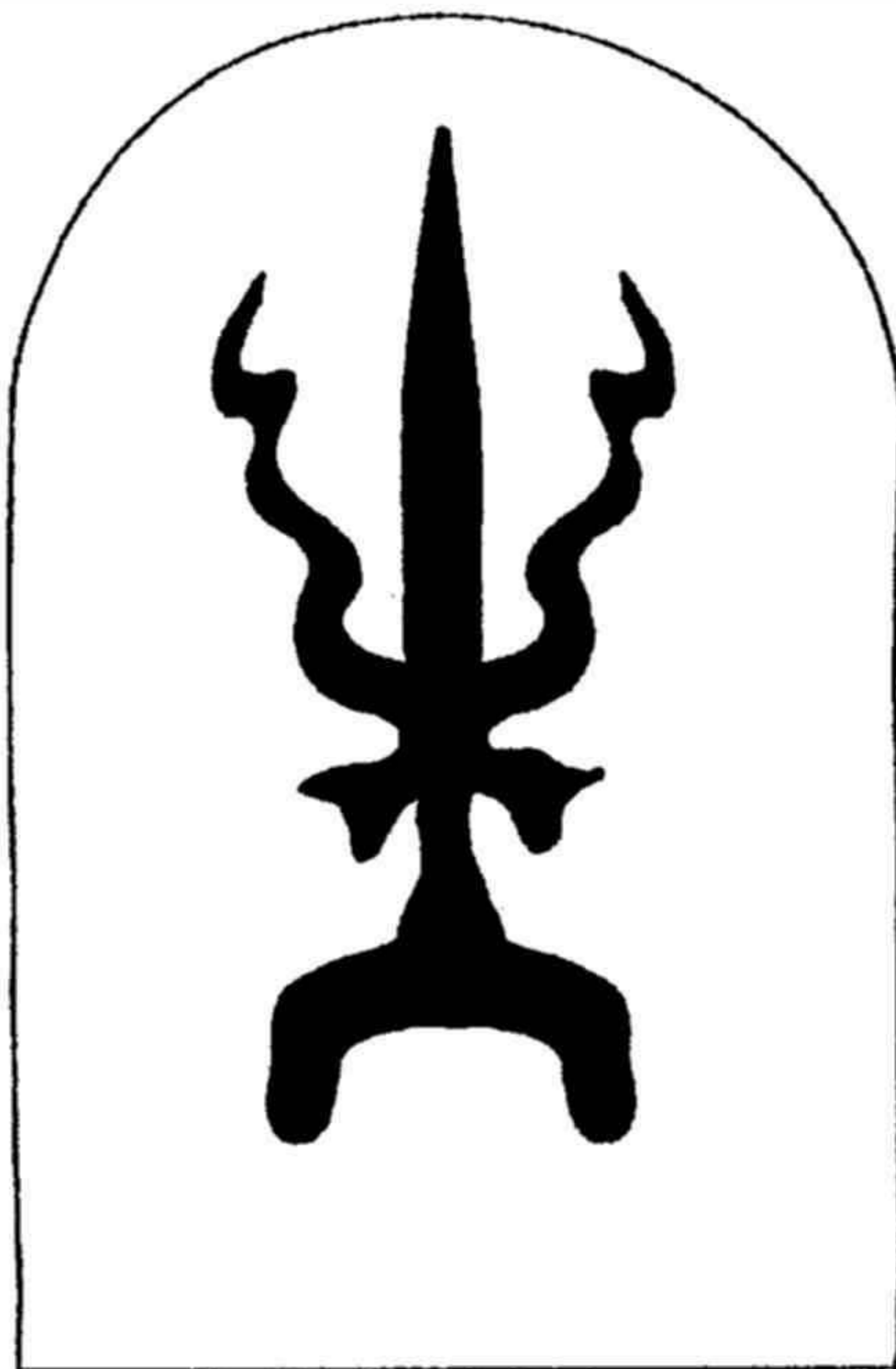
The numerous sigils all over the stele are quite conspicuous as well. As the title of the stele clearly reflects, Spare succeeded in creating a type of pentacle or depiction of his own personal cosmos (or one of his many ones). Thus the stele is like a personal

grimoire with both mnemonic and magical functions. I recommend every magician to work practically with making this type of stele for at least a short while in order to learn of its true value. In doing so, it would be a good idea to meditatively observe the steles depicted here for a considerable period of time, even repeatedly.

The stele in Illustration 52 is from my own magical repository. The original stele is a plate of kiln-dried black polymer clay (Fimo) that is roughly six and one-half inches tall and four inches wide—a relatively convenient format that enables easy transport. The material is solid yet flexible and therefore nearly unbreakable. The picture on my stele is based on an image contained on a Sumerian granite stele dated roughly 900 BC that is preserved in a museum in Berlin, Germany. The symbol represents a fire and lightning god. There should be no need to mention that it is a fire fetish, just like other element steles, that can be used as a gateway for trance journeys into the element of fire.



*Illustration 51: Stele from Austin Osman Spare*



*Illustration 52: Sumerian-style fire stele (Frater U.:D.:)*

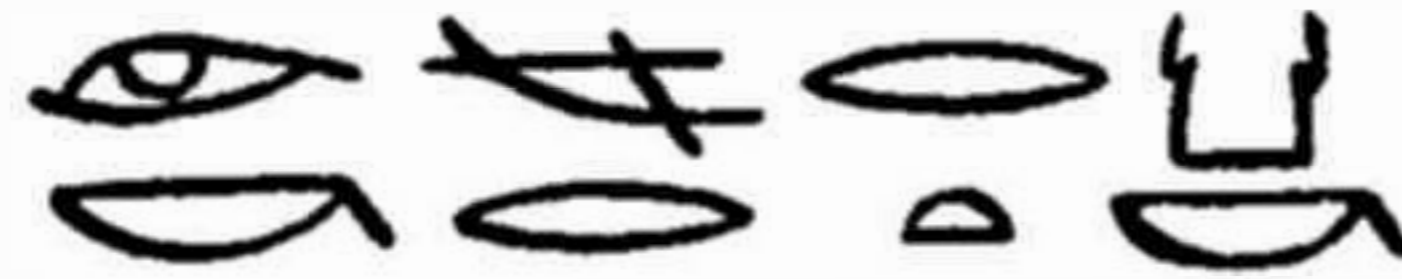
Whoever prefers more “natural” materials can cut a piece of wood to the corresponding size and then carve or paint appropriate symbols on it (before painting, a good coat of primer is necessary, preferably a mixture of kieselguhr and glue that is applied in several coats). Metal plates made of copper, tin, or lead can be engraved or etched fairly easily—let your imagination run wild, just as if you were designing a pentacle.

The examples shown here clearly demonstrate that the design and purpose of the steles can vary greatly, which was even the case in ancient Egypt as the great variety of preserved steles reflects.

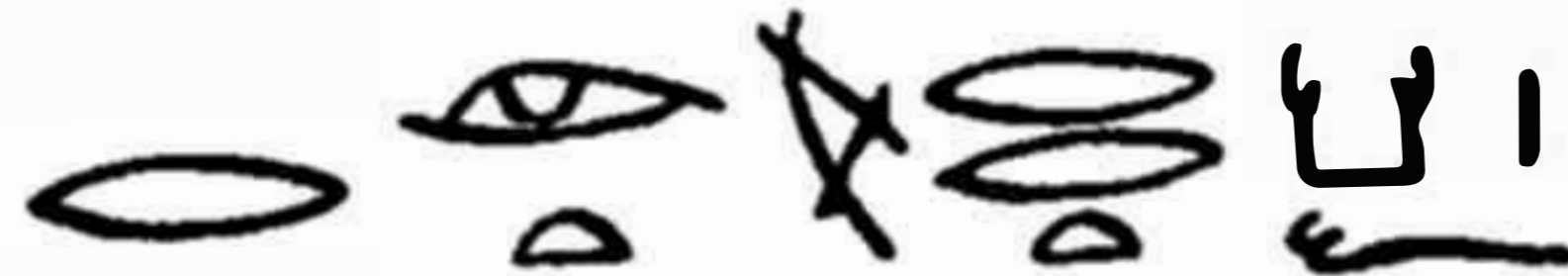
There’s still a lot more to say about Egyptian magic but this would go way beyond the scope of this book. In any case, whoever is interested should refer to the recommended literature, although it doesn’t always fulfill what it promises since most authors have no knowledge of magic whatsoever and are rarely able to look beyond their narrow horizon of Egyptology, theology, archaeology, or cultural history.



“Your Ka is content”



“Do what your Ka loves.”



“In order to do what his Ka loves.”

*Illustration 53: Formulas of Ka treatment: forerunner of Thelema  
(Text according to Trofimowitsch, “The Ka”)*





# THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGEL AND THE MAGIC OF ABRAMELIN (I)

Thanks to S. L. M. Mathers and Aleister Crowley, Western magic of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries has made a dogma out of a certain ancient document—one that until then was almost completely forgotten and only known to a handful of experts of the occult. We're talking about a book that has been circulating under various names supposedly written by a certain "Abraham of Worms" that deals with the "Sacred Magic of Abramelin" (sometimes written as "Abra-Melin").

The origin of this document is disputed. The Hebrew manuscript is sometimes dated at 1387, but the years 1379 or 1458 appear frequently in this context as well. With the exception of Swiss Freemason Jürg von Ins, whose ostensibly "critical" edition I took the liberty to examine and comment on more closely once in a review (see the Bibliography at the end of this section), most researchers assume that it was written in the seventeenth century at the earliest due to the historical and stylistic discrepancies and other circumstantial evidence contained in the document. Of course, this causes a certain doubt about the authenticity of the author himself as well as his life story. He claimed to have been a Jew who wanted to tell his son Lamech what he learned about magic during his trips to the Orient. Now, such literary conventions are no scarcity. All the more surprising how often people even with an academic background in the arts who work with such things on a daily basis always tend to fall into such fictitious traps, believing every word of what the author merely intended as a stylistic device and artistic tool.

In any case, it's not our job here to analyze the Abramelin reception with a comprehensive review of the document, although that might be most welcome in another context. The main thing to remember here is that the whole Abramelin affair is a bit shaky in a historically critical sense, especially considering that the various editions (Jürg von Ins proved the existence of six different ones, none of which was written in Hebrew, however) are significantly different from one another in content. (Whoever is interested in researching this topic more thoroughly should refer to the literature mentioned in the Bibliography.)

However, only the French edition (ostensibly a translation from Hebrew, although it actually seems to be based on a German manuscript) had any kind of impact on the history of Western magic. It was supposedly discovered in the Paris library, the "Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal," by Mathers, who also translated and annotated it until he was finally able to publish it in 1898 following a string of bad luck. (Much later, namely in 1960, French researcher Robert Ambelain used the same manuscript as Mathers for his own French edition.) Just like Mathers and the entire Golden Dawn, Crowley never doubted the authenticity of this document either. In fact, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that he even dedicated his entire life to the magic and the principles that this book contained. But we'll look at that more closely later on.

For now it suffices to say that both the Golden Dawn as well as the A..A.. treated the Magic of Abramelin with great respect, which is reason enough for us to discuss it here.

In doing so, we won't be concerned with the technical details of the Abramelin document since this can be summarized in just a few sentences. The magician takes six months off from the everyday world, finds a certain type of accommodation according to specific rules where he or she works (in the so-called oratory or house of prayer) on himself/herself in an ascetic cleansing process that includes daily prayer and supplication to the deity. Finally he or she obtains a virgin boy that is used as a medium in order to finally establish and attain the "knowledge and conversation with the Holy Guardian Angel," which is the actual goal of the spiritual exercise.

Along the lines of the medieval grimoires, the last part of the book contains magic squares and formulas that can be used to achieve various magical goals, assuming that the magician has completed the spiritual exercise first.

In my opinion the authenticity of Abramelin is greatly overrated. For example, some British authors have written that this is the only system of Western magic that could

compare to Indian yoga in terms of its compelling nature and determination. I'd have to disagree with this, though. First of all, Christianity has a long tradition of magical, spiritual, and edification exercises, ranging from the Jesuitical practices of Saint Ignatius of Loyola to the meditation practices of the mystics. At least one could assume so, and based on the number of indications to a Christian author (e.g., a reference to the Christian Kabbalistic doctrine of Pico della Mirandola), the suspicion arises that in a reverse sense Christian/religious elements were introduced to practical magical work here as well, which is not all that unusual either.

Second, the concept of the Holy Guardian Angel (which all magicians unanimously agree is the most important element of the Abramelin system) is really nothing new. The Romans spoke of the *ingenium* or *genius*, the Greeks knew it as *daimonion* and as *Augoeides*. As Illustration 53 shows, the Ka of the Egyptians had a similar function, namely the embodiment of the "true will" (Thelema) that we've already discussed. Despite anti-Christian tirades, some versions of the Abramelin document make continual references to the monotheistic system and its hierarchy of angels and demons. According to our experience, though, there are systems that can establish contact to the "inner spirit" much faster, much easier and much more efficiently, e.g., the calling of a clan totem according to African magic, an operation that requires at most two to three sessions of thirty to sixty minutes, and is often even accomplished in just a few minutes.

The physical and mental "long, hard haul" that is typical to this type of initiation generally occurs after contact is established with the magician's totem, which not only intensifies the experience and makes it more effective, but also reduces to a minimum the many unpleasant magical side effects that often take their toll on third parties as well. The magician still experiences a sort of initiation crisis, but this takes place for the most part internally as a kind of "baptism of fire." Plus, the magician's magical power already grows with the initiation itself, whereas with the Abramelin operation this phenomenon generally doesn't take effect until near the end of the spiritual exercise.

But this doesn't mean that Abramelin magic is ineffective or useless. On the contrary, all magicians who have dedicated their time to practicing this spiritual exercise will confirm that it can trigger powerful inner and material processes. Of S. L. Mathers and Aleister Crowley, it is known that they experienced quite unpleasant side effects at times in connection with the document and their actual Abramelin work. Mathers' work on the publication was repeatedly delayed and he experienced one catastrophe

after another regarding his health and personal life. Just before completion, he even lost one hundred pages of his manuscript (before it was copied, of course).

Crowley, on the other hand, told the story of his butcher who died quite unexpectedly after Crowley placed the receipt from the butcher store into the Abramelin book to use as a bookmark. Yes, the master even had to discontinue the operation and was only able to wriggle out of his magical oath years later following another type of initiation by simply declaring it to be over, just like that, although the rules clearly say that the work must be done all at one time without interruption. During his Abramelin exercise at his renowned Scottish estate Boleskine (that he purchased specifically for the operation), it's rumored that the neighborhood dogs broke wild and killed livestock. Other unexplainable deaths occurred in the area as well, and some people even ran amok due to sudden mental derangement.

In his book *Lexikon des Geheimwissens*, Horst Miers describes an incident concerning the German couple Mr. and Mrs. Petersen, which is a classic example of the sermonizing disapproval that we as magicians are faced with again and again from “white new-agers” and “lightworkers” (slaves?!):

But much worse off were Dr. C. H. Petersen [author's note: a.k.a. Frater Fines Transcendam, who perfectly translated “Crowley's Hymn to Pan” into German] and his wife (Bendestorf by Hamburg), who cracked under the unforeseen repercussions of the ritual and committed suicide; Dr. Petersen was Crowley's successor as Grand Master of the O.T.O. after 1947 [author's note: here it is unclear whether Miers simply made a mistake or whether he is too vague because the “Outer Head of Order” (O.H.O.) at this time was Karl “Sascha” Germer (Frater Saturnus); I'm not sure if Petersen was possibly the head of the German division of the O.T.O. at this time]. Such shocking failures come as no surprise, however; in fact, the text itself states quite clearly what must happen in order for the operation to succeed: “If thou wilt the help of God, then thou shalt not doubt His Divine Mercy and put all thy confidence in Him; thou shalt fear Him and obey what He demands.” The O.T.O. (an illuminati order) meanwhile proclaims to its students: “There is no god at all, and you yourself are god.” But the Ritual of A. was not suited for atheists.

Noticeably, just this little excerpt is full of errors. Apart from referring to the O.T.O. as an “illuminati order,” which is utterly unacceptable, probably the most serious mistake is assuming that all O.T.O. members are atheists—if that were the case, the Abramelin ritual would indeed be inappropriate for them, but then they probably wouldn’t have the need to perform it anyway. Miers, who refers to the Abramelin edition from Beeken, seems to have never heard of the Mathers edition. This baffled comment is proof: “Crowley is claimed to have had a copy of the ritual from 1458 . . .”

However, these are pretty much the same horror stories that are circulating today in religious and folk-magical scenes about the possession of the Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses. This is not saying that such stories are not true, but one should view such things with a healthy amount of skepticism. We have no intention of treating the matter that makes up myths and legends without the proper respect, but there’s also not much point in feeding the fires of superstition that many beginners have.

To be fair, we should mention that neither Crowley nor Mathers made much of a fuss about these experiences. Although their descriptions are a bit more than just sober and scientific, there’s no moralizing undertone as is usually the case in such situations. Unpleasant experiences were made, his contemporaries pointed out—and life went on. Maybe there’s a lot more to learn from this simple fact than from the actual experiences reported.

Crowley once logically said that the term “Holy Guardian Angel” is quite appropriate because such a concept seems so absurd to modern people, and that’s exactly what it’s all about—something that cannot be expressed with the human language. Critics had plenty of arguments though, for example that Master Therion was probably just using a variety of the Jesuitical *sacrificium intellectualis*. The most well-known guiding principle of this faith is *credo quia absurdum est*, which means roughly “I believe (it) because it is absurd”—not only a clear renunciation of the overemphasis placed on the rational mind, but also on the sentimentality of emotions which often succeed in influencing it or even its articulation. In other words, true conviction in the sense of “unrestricted approval” has nothing to do with the rational mind or emotions since this would limit it already per definition.

Plus, the critics could continue with the argument that this would nourish the old hope of gaining access to the absolute (whose existence itself it denies, of course) as well as the fatalistic trust in a deterministic universe. Because if the will is truly “divine,”

“transcendental,” or of “absolute” origin in any other way, and if it truly is personified by a guardian angel, then this is nothing but the good old spirit principle in which man feels hopelessly at the mercy of the world beyond, a situation that can at best be lessened by occasional efforts of (magical) intervention. But this doesn’t coincide with the ostensible claim of magic that one is god and is therefore not subject to the mercy of some other deity—an argument that determined magicians also like to present, and not just materialistic skeptics.

In doing so, however, one principally overlooks the fact that Crowley merely wanted to point out that the Holy Guardian Angel is not necessarily an entity in the form of an angel, and that this personification of Thelema is by no means “kind” as we might imagine from our childhood religious upbringing. In fact, the Holy Guardian Angel (just like its shamanic equivalent, the manifested clan totem) is often recognized by the experienced magician because of the fact that it often bears unpleasant information or other burdens. It forces the magician to face things that he or she previously avoided, it arouses unsuspected fears, and confronts its charge with dangers and difficulties until he or she lingers in the dreaded Abyss. Yes indeed, the contact and dialogue with the Holy Guardian Angel (at least in the early stages of “working things out” with it) can be described as a regular battle for power of opposing wills, a very bitter adjustment process that usually results in extreme personality changes and toughens the magician up.

This description may be a bit exaggerated, but it clearly illustrates that the Holy Guardian Angel is more closely related to C. G. Jung’s postulated shadow than to any childish fantasies of a surrogate mother that provides warmth and security.

For the sake of completeness, we should also mention that the Holy Guardian Angel is often abbreviated as HGA, and many English books on magic refer to it by this abbreviation.

C. G. Jung’s estate includes a tower room that, according to his will, may not be opened until fifty years after his death. There’s a rumor among magicians that the room is a temple, probably even an oratory of Abramelin magic, although no one seems to know any more about it. After all, it’s common knowledge that Jung studied the Abramelin text very carefully and Jürg von Ins challenges a significant part of his “reconstruction” of the original text with Jung’s typescript copy that greatly differs from other editions in several aspects. Since Jürg von Ins unfortunately never clarified which passages of his own text borrowed from Jung’s version, what he abridged and “simplified,” and so on, there’s no way

of verifying the significance or insignificance of this version. In any case, this shows us an example that Abramelin magic was not taken seriously by just eccentric amateur and professional magicians, and that there's possibly a lot more to discover about C. G. Jung than just his gnostic *Septem sermones ad mortuos* (a highly interesting early work that was later dismissed as a sort of transgression of youth) and his somewhat ahistorical and superficial writings on alchemy might cause one to suspect.

In the later section on Abramelin magic, we'll examine the principle of the Holy Guardian Angel more closely and take a look at the role it played in the magic of Aleister Crowley.





# PRACTICAL MIRROR MAGIC (VII)

## USE OF THE MAGIC MIRROR (VI)

By now you should already have enough background information so that all we need to do in the last two sections on mirror magic is mention a few key points.

### EVOCATION MAGIC

Instead of using a triangle, you can also use your magic mirror for demon evocations. Place the mirror on your altar where you can see it well, then enter an appropriate state of gnosis and stare at the mirror just like during divination, except that now you should have a certain idea in your mind of what you intend to perceive.

In order to eliminate any doubts (or fears!) that you might have, you should only perform this technique after you've gained some experience with evocations using the triangle in which you've been able to manifest demons visibly and audibly. Although pure visionary manifestation requires significantly less effort than physical manifestation, the factor of deception can play a larger role. However, once you have enough experience with states of trance, this element of uncertainty should no longer pose a problem.

Just one more tip here that applies to all trance work in general. Always try to perceive with your entire body (especially with your skin, muscles, tendons) instead of focusing on the senses centered in your head, since these are automatically associated with rational thought and thus closely linked to the censor.

## DEATH AND DESTRUCTIVE MAGIC

One highly feared usage of the magic mirror is for death and destructive magic. For this type of use, the mirror is charged like a fetish, for example with destructive energy. Its concave form makes it easier to visualize the rays of energy (energy model) being focused and projected toward the target person. To put it in more modern terms, we could describe it as a sort of “astral laser gun.” A mumia or a doll of the target person can also be used that is continually radiated (i.e., projected upon) by two mirrors at the same time. With this technique, you do not need to know the exact geographic location of your opponent.

# PRACTICAL FOLK MAGIC (IV)

## INCANTATION

You've probably already noticed that many elements of "folk magic" are also widespread in everyday, Hermetic magic (sometimes derogatorily described as "library magic," and there certainly is some truth behind this description). Magical incantation is a classic example of the close relationship between these two magical directions.

Incantations have always been an important part of magic. This magic use of words was often combined with blowing on and touching things, and the tradition of reciting magic spells or formulas was a part of this as well. The etymological link is:

to speak, to sing → to chant, to incant → to bewitch, to cast a spell, to break a spell

The factors that determine the effectiveness of the incantation are the words themselves that are used and the magician's state of consciousness.

Probably the oldest form of healing magic is the breaking of a spell by means of an exorcism. Since, according to the spirit model, sickness is caused by demons, the goal of a healing operation is to banish the spirit by reciting the appropriate magic formulas. As a result, the healing process is generally a type of struggle or an attempt to reconcile the hostile principle by means of an offering of some type (some regions speak of "penance"). The various religions work with incantations as well, but here they are referred to as prayer.

In his book *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, Bächtold-Stäubli rightly points out that there is no real structural or functional difference between the magic spells of heathens and the prayers of Christians as both work with words that contain “amazing power.” However, he goes on to say that while the Christian calls upon a higher being, the magician on the other hand acts on his or her “own authority”—a statement that can only be applied to Hermetic magic with limitations. Although this may be the ultimate goal of magic, an entity or deity is often conjured nonetheless or action takes place in its name at least for functional reasons, such as with invocational magic. Evidence shows that similar practices occurred in folk magic as well.

Furthermore it’s interesting to note that in German folk magic the word “incantation” (German: “*besprechen*”) is closely tied to the word “*brauchen*,” which also holds the connotation of “to perform magic.” For example, the Swabian dialect uses words such as “*Braucher*” (“sorcerer”) and “*Brauchspruch*” (“magic spell”), while a *Brauchbüchlein* (“little book of magic”) is a magical grimoire.

A similar situation arises in the ancient Greek language, where *chrasthai* can mean both “to do” as well as “to prophesize, to perform magic.” The dictionary (Duden) lists the origin of the word “*brauchen*” as *briuwan* (Old High German) and *briuwen* (Middle High German) with the basic meaning “to take in nourishment, to use,” while the modern-day definition “to need” does not appear until the seventeenth century. However, there are linguists who derive the word from *berauchen* (*beräuchern* = to smoke), which is naturally closer to the magical meaning, although this theory is quite disputed. According to another theory, it’s supposedly related to the Hebrew word “*berech*” (“to bless”). In Low German the phrase *wat brüken* (roughly “what needs”) means “to take medicine” and “*brauchen*” is used as a synonym for “to treat” when referring to the sick. Wise women treat the people, the healer treats the sick, and so on.

There are further links between *besprechen/berauchen* and *schirmen* (to protect) and *stillen* (to stop, satisfy, ease) whereby the latter originally meant the same as *brauchen*. The word “*büßen*” has a related meaning probably as a result of practical reasons instead of linguistic ones; it derives from the Old High German *puozan, betan* (to remedy the trouble, to heal). Thus *buoze* means the “magic cure” and *Buße* becomes the “remedy.”

A classical example of such “chanters” were shepherds who probably acquired their skills as a result of their close relationship to nature and the long periods of seclu-

sion where they were able to develop their magical talents. But blacksmiths, butchers, slave drivers, midwives, farmers, and executioners are predestined as well to use the art of incantation. And there were specialists even among the chanters themselves (who, depending on the region from where they came, were also called blowers [from their preferred method of magically blowing on things], curers, prayer-men and the like). Only a few were able to heal all types of illness; most were specialized in the treating of certain ailments. Incantation formulas were often passed down within a family from generation to generation and kept strictly secret. When a stranger to the family was initiated into this secret art, the initiation was only allowed to be performed by a member of the opposite sex—a man initiated a woman and vice versa. This tradition is still reflected in the modern-day Wicca movement.

Some chanters are not allowed to take anything at all in return for their services. A remedy for which the provider is thanked will not work; this probably reflects the realization that an expression of thanks is basically a license to depart and thus a type of banishment (German *danken* = to thank, *abdanken* = to resign). (The Swiss usage of the word “*Abdankung*” means “funeral party.”) Therefore it creates a sort of detachment if not even an act of gaining access to the other: After all, the Old High German *dancbari* and Middle High German *dancbære* (which resemble the German word “*danken*” = to thank) also mean “to produce readiness”, which can loosely be interpreted as “to pull the head down” (bow under compulsion, to bend, etc.).

Other chanters, on the other hand, may accept things that they receive from their patients and clients voluntarily and without asking. Only the taking of money was taboo in early times. Even today the tradition prevails to not place payment directly into the chanter’s hand, but instead to put it somewhere nearby where it will be discovered later “by chance,” or it can be given to an assistant in an envelope.

The act of incantation is generally performed in the presence of the patient/client and is initiated by burning incense or lighting a fire in the stove. The fire is often fed with certain herbs (e.g., wormwood). In contrast to the actual act of incantation, which by definition emphasizes linguistic articulation, the general rule applies that any people present (if not sent out in the first place, which definitely applies to children) must remain silent while the work is performed. When the sick person returns home after treatment, he or she is often instructed to not talk about the treatment in the same way that silence was maintained during the treatment itself. This ensures that the effect of

the spoken incantation is not reduced by talking about it. In addition, this also utilizes the healing power of secrecy and prevents a counterspell.

The technique of incantation is generally used in conjunction with other methods and is rarely used alone. These other methods include blowing on the sick areas of the body; covering them with saliva, consecrated ointments, or other liquids; massage; or the laying of hands and drawing of magical symbols (e.g., cross, pentagram). Often the chanter will call upon his or her own guardian spirits for assistance (in a Christian context, saints would be called). The patient fixes his or her gaze at the chanter, for example by staring directly into the eyes or somewhere on the chanter's body—apparently techniques of hypnosis are used as well.

A variation of incantation is the work with magic spells that are written on a slip of paper and are consumed along with food or drink or placed on amulets and talismans (known in German folk magic as *Brauchsteine* or “custom stones”), but this would fall into the category of talisman magic.

The phase of the moon is of particular importance to folk magic. Healing operations generally take place during a waning moon since the sickness is meant to diminish right along with it. If an operation is performed to stimulate business activities, the waxing moon phase would be used instead. The phases of the full moon and new moon are also considered to be favorable, and the work is generally performed at night.

In a shamanic context we are already familiar with the words of power that are usually revealed in a trance or vision and that must be kept secret so that they do not lose their effect. With the help of an Alphabet of Desire, the modern-day sigil magician can also construct such formulas. Since we are now able to recognize and comprehend the basic structures of magical operations much better now than in the past, we are no longer reliant on any certain tradition (e.g., passed down within a family), which greatly expands the magician's range of action.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 93*

#### **PRACTICAL STELE MAGIC**

Study the principle of magic steles and experiment extensively for the next two months with at least five steles that you should make and charge yourself. You

could, for example, develop your own symbolism for the elements or a personal Alphabet of Desire to use for these steles (cf., *Practical Sigil Magic*).

#### EXERCISE 94

##### ABRAMELIN MAGIC AND SPIRITUAL NETWORKING

If you have not already done so, take the time to read up on the magic of Abramelin in detail. This does not mean actually performing the magic (which, of course, you certainly can do if you wish), but instead it should be more of a historical analysis in which the various sources are examined. Get hold of various editions (even ones that are out-of-print!) and study the various opinions of not only the supporters of this branch of magic, but also the critics of this “pseudo-Abraham” (such as Gershom Scholem) in order to get the full picture. Of course, you should examine the works of practitioners as well, e.g., S. L. Mathers, Georges Chevalier, and Aleister Crowley.

The purpose of this exercise is mainly to train and sharpen your critical faculties. Just one note here for the philological and historical layman and those of you who tend to avoid libraries. By delving into such material with all of the consequences like an academic researcher would, you will not only learn a lot about the subject itself, but with time you will also develop your critical skills. At the same time, you are studying a very important aspect of our tradition of Western magic.

You can determine the length of this exercise yourself; generally it should take one to two years to turn you into an expert of Abramelin magic. If you have already taken an in-depth look at the various versions of the Abramelin text, you can choose a different topic to study, such as the figures of John Dee or the Abbot of Trithem. We definitely recommend choosing more “off-the-wall” topics since you will probably experience more surprises this way that will motivate you even more. Possibly you might discover that one thing leads to another, that in just a short time you will be fascinated by several topics at once and will find yourself researching various different things all at the same time. Along the way you will surely encounter the strangest people and opinions, and that is indeed the true purpose of this task. So you should not view this exercise as an annoying obligation but rather as a well-intended challenge to an intellectual excursion.



### EXERCISE 95

#### APPLIED MIRROR MAGIC (III)

Complete your studies of mirror magic by refining your techniques and applying the relevant information from this section. It might be helpful to undergo a comprehensive self-test (e.g., on a free weekend) by completing various mirror magic tasks and checking the results. In particular, you should now be fairly good at using the mirror for healing and divination, as well as for destructive magic when necessary, and evocations should be a part of your repertoire too.

### EXERCISE 96

#### INCANTATION

Develop your own techniques of incantation and word magic using the information here as a reference. If you haven't already done so, work with mantric sigils, an Alphabet of Desire (cf., *Practical Sigil Magic*) and other words of power.

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### FURTHER READING

Abraham of Worms, *Das Buch der wahren Praktik in der göttlichen Magie*, comparative edition with commentaries, published by Jürg von Ins

Georges Chevalier, *The Sacred Magician. A Ceremonial Diary*, with an editorial introduction by Peter Sommer

*Die ägyptischen großen Offenbarungen in sich begreifend die aufgefundenen Geheimnißbücher Mosis; oder des Juden Abraham von Worms Buch der wahren Praktik in der uralten göttlichen Magie und in erstaunlichen Dingen, wie sie durch die heilige Kabbala und durch Elohym mitgetheilt worden. Sammt der Geister- und Wunder-Herrschaft, welche Moses in der Wüste aus dem feurigen Busch erlernet, alle Verborgeneheiten der Kabbala umfassend.* German translation of a Hebrew parchment manuscript from 1387 in the seventeenth century

*The Sacred Magic of Abramelin.* The writings of Abraham of Worms. Based on a Hebrew text from the year 1458

Frater U..D., *Rezension zu Abraham von Worms*, "Das Buch der wahren Praktik in der göttlichen Magie (comparative edition with commentaries, published by Jürg von Ins) article printed in the magazine *Anubis*, Vol. 11, March 1989, p. 52 et.seq.

S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage As Delivered by Abraham the Jew Unto His Son Lamech, A.D. 1458. Translated from the Original Hebrew into the French, and now rendered from the latter language into English*, From a unique and valuable MS in the "Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal" at Paris by S.L. MacGregor-Mathers, Author of "*The Kabbalah Unveiled*," "*The Key of Solomon*," "*The Tarot*," etc. in three books, with a special and copious introduction and explanatory notes by the translator, and numerous Magical Squares of Letters



# PRACTICAL SUN MAGIC

Instead of making a elaborate statements here, we prefer to introduce you to a true classic exercise in the field of sun magic, namely Aleister Crowley's *Liber Resh*. This ritual is divided into four parts performed throughout the day according to the position of the sun.

The following text was first printed in German in the magazine *Unicorn*, Vol. XI/1985, beginning on page 219. Since this magazine has been long out of print, we have chosen to reprint the article here in full. For easier reading (and for easy later reference) we're indenting the actual invocation text and italicizing that text.

Liber Resh vel Helios Sv̄b Figvra CC

A.:A.: Publikation der Klasse D

Imprimatur

N. Fra A.:A.:

Preliminary note:

This seemingly nondescript ritual by Aleister Crowley is actually one of the most significant magical texts, especially for beginning magicians who are still struggling with the problem of integrating magic into their everyday routine. Even without being a member of Crowley's order Argenteum Astrum (and, accordingly, without performing the order's grade signs mentioned in the text), the ritual can be quite lucrative. It structures the

magician's day, establishes contact via sympathetic magic to the sun logos, and sharpens the awareness of one's own magical goal and one's own magical will (Thelema). But it's even superbly suited for non-Thelemes. Whoever cannot or does not want to assume the Egyptian god-forms may perform the position of the Man rune. Stand upright, feet slightly spread apart, with both arms stretched in the air forming a "Y." The important thing is to perform this operation regularly and at the proper times, which you should realize yourself after just a few days of practice. In doing so, it's up to the student to decide if he or she uses the objective sun times (which would involve a bit of calculation) or if the standard clock is used. The first is definitely preferable. Information about the exact times of sunrise and sunset at a certain location can be found in the daily newspaper, and observatories and airports will generally provide this information as well. By the way, this ritual is especially suited for absorbing healing energy.

Fra U.:D.:

0. These are the adorations to be performed by all aspirants to the A.:A.:

1. Let him greet the Sun at dawn, facing East, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

*Hail unto Thee who art Ra in Thy rising, even unto Thee who art Ra in Thy strength, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Uprising of the Sun.*

*Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Night!*

2. Also at Noon, let him greet the Sun, facing South, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

*Hail unto Thee who art Ahathoor in Thy triumphing, even unto Thee who art Ahathoor in Thy beauty, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Mid-course of the Sun.*

*Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Morning!*

3. Also at Sunset, let him greet the Sun, facing West, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

*Hail unto Thee who art Tum in Thy setting, even unto Thee who art Tum in Thy joy, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Down-going of the Sun.*

*Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Day!*

4. Lastly, at Midnight, let him greet the Sun, facing North, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

*Hail unto thee who art Khephra in Thy hiding, even unto Thee who art Khephra in Thy silence, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Midnight Hour of the Sun.*

*Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Evening!*

5. And after each of these invocations thou shalt give the sign of silence, and afterwards thou shalt perform the adoration that is taught thee by thy Superior. And then do thou compose Thyself to holy meditation.
6. Also it is better if in these adorations thou assume the God-form of Whom thou adorest, as if thou didst unite with Him in the adoration of That which is beyond Him.
7. Thus shalt thou ever be mindful of the Great Work which thou hast undertaken to perform, and thus shalt thou be strengthened to pursue it unto the attainment of the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness.

### Comments:

(1) Translation is often a matter of interpretation: “*Traduttore—tradittore*” is an Italian truism meaning “The translator is a traitor.” A complete German translation of this Crowley ritual can be found in *Aleister Crowley's Magische Rituale*, by Gregor A. Gregorius. Friedrich Meyer's transcription was a pioneering work and is highly recommended due to the compactness of the selection of texts and the informative comments. Un-

fortunately, in direct comparison, they vary from the English original both stylistically and in content. In addition to several clumsy passages and additions, many of the subtle details contained in the English original were either ignored or imprecisely translated. Nonetheless his attempt is still far better than most others, e.g., the German translation that Michael Eschner & Co. conjured up to wreck the market. In any case, I tried to maintain the original style and to stick to his (apparent) inconsistencies, such as not capitalizing “Thee” once although it is otherwise capitalized everywhere, even in the same sentence. But in one aspect, I agreed with Meyer’s imprecision: The line *Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm* which is translated in German as *Ra-Hoor verweilt bei Seinem Ruder* (literally: *Ra-Hoor abideth at HIS helm*). For the sake of style I used the possessive adjective “his” instead of the definite article “the.” Such commentaries are necessary in my opinion because I feel that texts of this type deserve to be published with detailed philological annotations, not to mention the problems that arise for the exegesis when imprecisely transcribed.

By the way, for my German transcription I used the English text as printed in *The Equinox*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (repr. New York, Samuel Weiser, 1972, 3rd impr. 1978), pp. 29–32.

# THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGEL AND THE MAGIC OF ABRAMELIN (II)

As already mentioned in an earlier section, the Holy Guardian Angel has nothing to do with what the word might imply on the surface. Aleister Crowley found it highly interesting to ponder on whether or not the Holy Guardian Angel actually personified the magician's True Will (Thelema) or if it represented some other principle. He answered this question at various different times in quite contradictory ways. For now, we'd like to sidetrack a bit and mention an example of African magic that will not only help us to understand this hardly known yet extremely effective magical discipline, but might also help us solve a strange contradiction that can be found in the Abramelin text.

I am talking about the fact that the first part of the book seems to be incredibly "pure" and oriented predominantly toward the mystical contact to the divinity or its ambassador. This is a classical introduction to "high" magic. All the more reason why many magicians have wondered why the last part of the document is dedicated to "lower" magic. These classifications, of course, are a reflection of the classical Judeo-Christian differentiation and the hierarchization of the principles "spirit" and "matter." The two together are not compatible in a monotheistic/dualistic system, as opposed to Eastern philosophies where good and evil always went hand in hand, though mainly in the more intellectual philosophies of the upper classes.



But this strange mixture of practical magic and mysticism will surely lose a bit of its exotic touch when we look at the Holy Guardian Angel from the point of view of the African clan totem—a comparison that we already mentioned in the last section.

However, before we begin we should mention that the concept of a totem or certain clan animal is certainly not restricted to the African continent, but can be found worldwide in all animistic cultures. But, for reasons of personal preference and experience, we'd like to focus mainly on the African version of the clan totem.

Generally speaking, the clan totem is an entity that is initially sensed or perceived externally; theoretically it can take on any form, but practice shows that it usually appears as an animal. That's why it's often referred to in general as a clan animal. But don't let this description deceive you because the clan animal can also appear in humanoid form. Personally I know of a case of a woman whose totem appeared in the form of a figure with two cone-shaped, five-foot-tall rock formations protruding at the hips—a truly ridiculous image for the non-initiated, but the following statements might eliminate the suspicion that such things are merely a typical product of esoteric misinterpretation and an imagination running wild.

Before we take a closer look at the actual dimension of experience, it would probably be a good idea to examine the history of the modern-day concept of the clan totem first as it's known to the Western world today. Although there have always been a variety of totemistic elements in Western culture, which is reflected in the frequent use of animals as symbols of heraldry (especially in the coats of arms of cities and countries) as well as the recurring animal worship themes in witchcraft, for example, or even the atavistic magic of Austin Osman Spare, we prefer to stick to a specific tradition of initiation here that I personally am a part of.

The history of this tradition of initiation within the contemporary magic scene began about fifteen years ago. Some time before that, I became acquainted with Johanna Wagner, an ethnologist and specialist in German studies living in Innsbruck, Austria. We met in the Swiss town of Mürren at a shamanism seminar held by anthropology professor Michael Harner. At the request of the local organizer, I did the interpreting. Although Dr. Johanna Wagner, born in Silesia with Austrian citizenship, ran a commercial school in Innsbruck, her true passion was Africa. She spent as much time there as possible, even crossing the continent on an all-terrain motorcycle on more than one occasion. As an ethnologist she had an eccentric reputation as a result of her unorthodox

theories, but her various scientific essays that appeared in professional journals were received with respect; thus she obtained the nickname based on her favorite hypothesis, “Wagner, the re-aculturist.” She believed that many modern-day Africans, in their attempt to live and maintain a European lifestyle, are breaking a number of taboos that have been conditioned in traditional tribal cultures since childhood. These people often literally crack up as a result of this inner psychological conflict; the pertinent symptoms of such a mental illness generally consist of depression, an overall feeling of having no roots, and sometimes even mental disturbances. In order to compensate for this, she supported the “re-aculturization” of the African people. To accomplish this, she (as a white woman with a doctor’s degree) wrote a book titled *Be Stronger Than Bad Magic*. It was written in very simple (“African”) English specifically for the African market and contained traditional, magical instructions for dealing with undesired magical phenomena as well as a semi-scientific explanation for such written in dialog form. Her intention was to increase the value of the traditional African methods of magical therapy and to alleviate some of the pressure of white society that modern-day Africans are burdened with today the minute they leave the tribal society that they grew up in to move to the city, then struggle to integrate into a civilization where the basic values and interests are still determined and governed by the former colonial powers.

This book is relevant to our discussion here because it’s the only source of information available that describes the actual experience of encountering a clan animal. It was published some time later in German under the clever title *Die, die so aussehen wie jemand, aber möglicherweise etwas ganz anderes sind* (literally “Those who look like someone but are possibly someone entirely different,” see literature references). Apart from the somewhat dubious “scientific” explanations of the magic involved, it’s nonetheless quite worthwhile to read, especially if you’re interested in the work of African medicine men. Johanna Wagner always made an effort to maintain her reputation as a scientist, but indeed she was a practitioner through and through. She underwent a number of different initiations throughout the entire African region and when talking with her it was obvious that she loved the practical side of magic with all of her heart. She was a firm supporter of cannibalism (original quotation: “Why waste good meat!”), a motocross driver, and karate practitioner (black belt) with a seemingly boundless love for nature and the ecological movement. She died in 1990 in a Swiss hospital.

One day my close friend and fellow magician Peter Ellert, who some of you might know from his contributions to the magazine *Unicorn*, had to take a business trip to Innsbruck and asked me if I knew of any magicians there that he could contact. I put him in touch with Johanna Wagner, whom he then visited. There's no need to describe his actual encounter here; instead we're more interested in the result of this meeting. Johanna Wagner performed a ritual to activate his clan animal, thus creating a new branch of this tradition that's still actively continued today. Because soon after his initiation, he noticed that his clan animal had the power to initiate, which is quite unusual. After all, clan animals are often specialists in a certain field and their interests do not always correspond to those of their human "host." In any case, Peter Ellert initiated me into this tradition of magic soon after his return. This marked a period of personal development that's not yet complete.

The initiation itself is not a fixed ritual; instead, one clan animal activates the next to a background of soft drumming. This is a certain break with orthodox tradition, though, because in most African totem cultures, a member of a certain clan totem can only initiate others of the same clan. For example, a "lion" activates or initiates only "lions" and no one else. This is how the notorious African secret societies originated, e.g., the Simbas in East Africa as members of the lion clan whose practices include wandering through the African wilderness for days or weeks on end dressed in real lion skins, obtaining food and eating like a real lion, and actually being a lion on a physical level in the true sense of the word. Usually the members of such secret societies are of the same sex; only in rare cases will one find mixed organizations. But in this sense, the branch of tradition that we're talking about here has been broken right from the start, as Johanna Wagner herself as well as other later magicians that she initiated who have a clan animal with the ability to initiate cannot be subjected to such restrictions. In the dozens of clan animal initiations that I performed myself throughout the years, I only activated a member of my own clan a few times. Since I don't have the ability to see in advance which clan animal will be activated in the initiate, this excludes the possibility of influence by suggestion or conditioning.

However, there's a good possibility that this actually reflects an older tradition, but this aspect should not concern us here. The important thing in our context is that such an initiation can never be obtained by request, demand, or bribery. Instead, it's the clan

animal of the initiator alone that makes the decision, and sometimes a clan animal is even activated against the will of the person involved.

That brings us back to the concept of the Holy Guardian Angel that we're mainly familiar with through Aleister Crowley. If we take a look at the various versions of the Abramelin text, we will notice that there are not nearly as many speculations and quasi-theological assumptions about this figure as we would expect considering the number of statements that Crowley makes about it. A worthy tribute to Abramelin magic should consider the fact that it was rediscovered during a time when the paradigm of the "secret masters" was rearing its ugly head again throughout the entire occult scene; just think of the Mahatmas of theosophy, the Secret Chiefs of the Golden Dawn, and so on. Although highly secret leadership figures were quite popular earlier on in Western occultism, it did not reach a climax in popularity until the end of the nineteenth century. However, even in Aleister Crowley's writings we can find a break between the spirit and psychological models. The Jewish/Christian field of angelology (the study of angels) was originally based exclusively on the spirit model, although for the sake of accuracy we should mention that it was not common in early times to make such a strict distinction between internal and external as academic psychology has been doing since then. The author of the Abramelin text leaves no room for doubt that the Holy Guardian Angel "sent to him by God" fulfills the role as a magical teacher and can enable him to perform all types of practical magical operations. In this context, let us take a look at a passage in an English translation from the rarely quoted Scheible edition of 1853:

Upon expiry of the eighteenth month after carefully performing everything as required, the lord had mercy on me in keeping with his word and promise and promptly sent to me a sign of his salvation as I performed a service in his honor in the bedchambers of my summer house. Realistic apparitions of angels appeared to my great joy and pleasure, heightening my spirits as such that I cannot put into words (it would not be my place to do so anyway). After beholding such lovely sights in humility and joy for three days on end, the angel that my true god assigned to me upon my creation as my guardian addressed me in a sweet and kindly voice that not only revealed to me the divine wisdom and Kabbalah, but also the truth of this magic, and thus confirmed the effects as I received them from Abramelin (cf. Ch. 6, also 4 and 5, parts of Ch. 11), strengthened them and showed reason behind them

so that I am able to perform and formulate other deeds according to my liking such as all of the secrets described in the Fourth Book; my angel gave me advice and instruction, teaching me on the third day how to behave in the face of evil spirits and to compel them; and that I did and through the mercy of god that was placed upon me in my summer house I compelled them all to appear and mastered them so that they fulfill the honor of god and his salvation from whence they come. Angels, or rather with their help and assistance and the welfare of Our House and benefit of our fellow man as to be announced in the following Ch., received in obedience and subservience. But the mercy of the lord and protection of his secret. Angels never leave me, Abraham, and my two sons, Joseph and Lamech, and my whole house so that we may act and go in our misery, grief and imprisonment no other way than by the law, will and way of the lord. Amen.

The mysterious, religious undertone cannot obscure the fact that the author feels connected to an authority that will set the mood for his entire magical practice from that point on. If we disregard the reference to a higher god, this would be a classical description of a daimonium as is common to every totem culture. It would be an act of Christian, eurocentric misjudgment to want to ignore this. Similar to the Holy Guardian Angel of Abramelin, the clan animal is also an authority connected to the magician in a most intimate way that has outstanding knowledge of magical processes. The goal is always the same: an increase in the access to magical power. Crowley's interpretation is a bit different. In the places where he equates the Holy Guardian Angel with the magician's Thelema, which we already said he doesn't always do, it's more about destiny and inner calling than magical efficiency, which is at most a side effect of working with this personification. This break once again proves that Aleister Crowley was more of a mystic than a magician deep down inside.

But despite all of their numerous skills, it would be wrong to assume that totems are infallible or omnipotent, and the clan animal of the African tradition as described here has its shortcomings as well. Of course, after such an initiation many experienced magicians get the feeling that they have finally "grown up," and that's certainly correct. But the clan animal can make mistakes, too, and you should not always believe everything it says for other reasons as well. Because as the term "clan" already indicates, the magician is merely one single link in the chain that forms an unmetaphysical collective

relationship. In other words, the clan and the interests it represents are of overriding importance; if the magician gets in the way, the collective is not necessarily interested in his or her individual survival. This explains the taboos that are often expressed in connection with a clan initiation. One example is that it's often forbidden to eat meat from one's own clan type, but other rules and bans could exist as well. Furthermore, it's quite typical for the clan animal, just like the Holy Guardian Angel, to impose things on the magician that are unpleasant or inconvenient. Therefore, as we already mentioned in the last section, the relationship with one's clan animal is far from just "harmonious" and "positive."

As opposed to shamanic power animals (or, in a Christian/Hermetic context, angels and guardian spirits), the clan animal is a unique, lifelong authority that the magician can neither choose nor ignore at will, even if there's no conscious contact between the two for several years.

In general, initiation through Abramelin magic and totemic initiation both mark crucial turning points in the magician's life. This process is noticeably characterized by a strong change in personality that may be perceived by the outside world as either "maturity" or even "brutality" since it results in the disintegration or destruction of a large portion of our human weaknesses, fears, and barriers, which in turn applies to the contact with and acceptance of one's Thelema as well.

Experienced practitioners leave no room for doubt that the outer appearance of the clan animal is more of a compromise between the actual and generally amorphous authority and the inadequate human ability to comprehend. Practitioners confirm again and again that this outer form (which can also be recognized on occasion on the basis of different yet rarely contradictory facets and aspects) generally dissolves when in deep trance; thus it seems to mainly fulfill the purpose of being able to deal with it better while the actual principle that it embodies lies beyond human description and definition.

The actual instruction by a clan animal or Holy Guardian Angel generally occurs on an intuitive level. All of a sudden, the magician just simply knows what has to be done without being specifically told. In addition, the magician develops unusually superb magical skills that he or she could have only dreamed of before. The magician may feel as though a true master has finally been found, yet seemingly fateful encounters with other knowledgeable occultists may also occur that fill the gaps in the magician's

knowledge, or the magician may even take a sudden turn down a different path in his or her magical practice.

Another typical result of an encounter with one's clan animal or Holy Guardian Angel is that the everyday trials and tribulations that the magician was previously faced with suddenly seem to disappear and are instead replaced by problems of a much larger dimension that pose a continual challenge. Plus, the magician undergoes a phase of increasing estrangement from humanity as everyday people understand it. A member of the lion clan, for example, would increasingly take on the characteristics of the clan totem both metaphorically as well as on an everyday basis; common human morals and ethics fade into the background while the question of power and collective thought gain significance. That does not automatically mean that the magician will consciously seek the company of others, but it will probably happen automatically since his or her charisma will continue to grow and attract a flock of pupils. But a path of relative solitude is thinkable as well, as the example of Austin Osman Spare shows, despite the fact that this eccentric loner took on pupils once in a while and trained them. There's little purpose in listing the numerous possibilities that generally follow such intense work with the clan principle, especially since they vary individually from person to person.

Now please allow me to make an unconventional interpretation of my own of Abramelin magic that might shed a different light on this very extravagant operation. It was mentioned above that the clan initiation cannot be obtained by demand or bribery. But the Abramelin operation seems to be a process that contradicts this since it's a self-initiation by nature. In my opinion, however, it would be wrong to assume that such a procedure is a guarantee for success. After all, some people feel that the absurdity of putting so much effort into the Abramelin exercise is what causes it to be so effective in the first place (not the actual contents of the exercise itself), which increases the success rates of such an initiation. Because we all know that magic rarely works from a logical, linear, qualitative point of view. Although the old basic principle applies here as well, that nothing is more effective than excess, in this sense excess is meant as a state of pure uncontrolled devotion (that could be worded a bit more maliciously: hysteria) than just following a bunch of rules and regulations concocted by someone else. This opinion would merely be an extension of Crowley's dictum (as already mentioned) that the concept of a Holy Guardian Angel sounds so absurd to modern man that this is exactly what makes it work.

Let's wrap up our examination of this concept with another quotation that describes the encounter with a clan animal and/or Holy Guardian Angel quite well. The passage is taken from Johanna Wagner's book *Be Stronger than Bad Magic*. In this excerpt, she's telling an African Mganga (medicine man) about her experience with a white gnu called "Wild Beast" that successfully defended itself in the wild from two lionesses. This was her spontaneous clan animal initiation, but she was not aware of this while she was speaking to the Mganga. And so he said to her:

"You yourself told me that nothing was more important to you in this world back then than the Wonderful Wild Beast, you said that back then you even forgot entirely who you were. That's it! Everything that you've ever experienced had disappeared. For example, you were not afraid of the Wonderful Wild Beast. You didn't regret it and didn't admire it—you did that later. Your feelings were gone entirely. They were in the Wild Beast. And since your feelings were not in just anything, but in the Wonderful Wild Beast, your feelings knew no fear and no regret and certainly no admiration. Your feeling of being had more important things to do; it had to be cold-blooded. You thought of nothing. You never would have dreamed of thinking: I hope everything will be okay! What will happen now? It should do this and that now. You couldn't think any of this because your thoughts were in the Wonderful Wild Beast. And it had more important things to think about than your petty little thoughts. And in the end, you didn't do anything at all. You didn't try to drive away the lionesses or anything else. That's because your actions were in the Wild Beast. But because your feelings, your thoughts and your actions were entirely within in the Wild Beast, you became I/It."

The old man placed his two forefingers on top of one another. "No, that's not how it works." He looks around dissatisfied, goes inside the house and returns with an old pencil and scrap of paper. He draws a line. "Pay close attention," he says and draws a second line directly over the first. "Now you can see what I mean. Which is the first line? Which is the second? Soon there are no longer two lines, but just one that is called One of Two —'Moja ya mbili.'"

A clan initiation does not necessarily have to be a formalized ritual act. Some people experience the clan animal, as Johanna Wagner herself did, in a "moment of power," in



times of great danger, or even already in childhood. It would be a mistake to believe that the Holy Guardian Angel of Abramelin magic is something fundamentally “sublime.” To the average Central European, the idea of having a “guardian angel” in the form of an elephant, bear, or even a crocodile could be quite frightening, especially one that can feel and sense things like such an animal and is able to question or even eliminate everything that we as humans have taken great pains to create throughout the process of civilization over thousands of years (although all we’ve really been doing is gradually forgetting ancient knowledge and how to access it). But whoever recognizes that the term “civilization” is usually misused as a euphemism for a progressive state of powerlessness probably won’t shed a tear at the loss of such “values.” And once a person has experienced an initiation of the clan totem principle or established contact to the Holy Guardian Angel, he or she will no longer wonder why the last section of the Abramelin text deals with ordinary everyday magic, because behind every religious façade (as especially typical to dogmatic traditions) the motivation that’s always been there behind the magic is power and access. But in order to achieve this, the clan animal or Holy Guardian Angel are surely the most powerful and efficient tools.

In connection with Abramelin magic it would also be worth mentioning the unusual squares that most magicians use. Now magic squares are nothing new in themselves as we are already familiar with from the field of planetary magic, and even the Kabbalah makes occasional use of them as well. The squares of Abramelin, however, are designed for special types of operations (e.g., invisibility, wealth, etc.) and are structured entirely different than regular magic cameos. They are generally used in ritual during conjurations. But it’s also possible to magically prepare the photograph of a target person with a corresponding square, for example in binding spells.

Illustration 54 shows a few examples of such squares that are taken from the Fourth Book of the Abramelin text. When using them, there are a number of rules to follow, e.g., no conjuration should be performed on the Sabbath; “dishonorable,” contemptuous, or **criminal** actions are forbidden; the magician must avoid all other magic literature and rely entirely on the advice and authority of his or her angel. The magician’s body and clothing must be kept clean and the spirit pure, no one shall be done harm through magic, and a series of morals and admonitions round off the list of instructions. Crowley pointed out that such admonitions mainly serve the purpose of making

it clear to the magician that he or she should live in harmony with the religious environment in order to avoid undesired persecution and the resulting stress.

To know past things

N	A	B	H	I
A	D	A	I	H
B	A	K	A	B
H	I	A	D	A
I	H	B	A	N

1. Point 3. Rifle or box  
4. Point of their usage

6. Premonition of future sadness

N	V	D	E	T	O	N
V	S	I	P	A	R	O
D	I	R	E	M	A	T
E	P	E	M	E	L	E
T	A	M	E	R	I	D
O	R	A	P	I	S	V
N	O	T	E	D	V	N

1. To make each spirit appear  
1 mo.  
1. In the form of a dragon

M	A	R	L	I	F	I	M
I	T	H	I	S	I	R	O
D	S	E	K	E	N	I	M
A	T	R	A	R	A	T	V
T	I	R	A	R	A	I	N
M	I	N	E	K	E	S	D
O	L	A	R	A	H	L	A
S	O	M	P	I	R	O	S

*Illustration 54: Magic squares according to Abramelin*



# MAGICAL ORDERS (U)

## THE FRATERNITAS SATURNI

In *Fire & Ice*, a book about the Fraternitas Saturni (hereinafter called the FS) by American researcher Stephen Edred Flowers, the author described this brotherhood as one of the most significant magical orders of the twentieth century. Although his information is a bit inaccurate at times and the authenticity of the material he used is often questionable, this book is by far the best source of information that has even been published on the subject. Because in contrast to the fairly confusing material, essay fragments, and speculations by authors such as Lehmborg, Aythos, Hemberger, and Haack, Flowers offers a very systematic, factual, rational, and fairly objective description of the history and teachings of this Order. Since I have been a member of the FS myself for many years and have sworn by oath to maintain the arcane discipline, I would ask for your understanding that I am only able to provide the information here that I am allowed to. On the other hand, I would also like to clear up a few misunderstandings that have somehow found their way into literature and have been circulating since then.

The legend behind the order mentions the existence of Saturnian brotherhoods in Sweden, Denmark, and Poland at the end of the seventeenth century. References to the Roman Saturnalia celebration have been made as well. Flowers, however, goes a bit too far when he overemphasizes the Nordic/Germanic reference within the FS. As we will see, the FS did indeed have ariosophical thoughts for a short period, but these elements (like many others) were eventually eliminated from their system. Despite these historical ancestors,

the FS has never made a claim to have existed much longer than profane history can actually prove, which is one thing that sets it apart from the Golden Dawn or O.T.O., for example. There were also never any forged charters, such as in the case of the Golden Dawn that eventually caused its downfall. Instead, the founding of the FS was never a secret. The Fraternitas Saturni was officially established by Gregor A. Gregorius (Eugen Grosche) during Easter of 1928. This was preceded in 1925 by a groundbreaking conference between Aleister Crowley and his representatives and members of Germany's Pansophic Lodge held in 1925 in the Thuringian town of Weida. The list of conference participants reads like a "Who's Who" of German occultism: Heinrich Tränker, Albin Grau, Eugen Grosche, Karl Germer, Martha Küntzel—who met with Aleister Crowley, Leah Hirsig (Crowley's Scarlet Woman), Dorothy Olsen, and Norman Mudd. Crowley wanted to use this opportunity to have the Pansophic Lodge proclaim him to be the "World Savior." It was all about the acceptance of his Law of Thelema and he promised himself great things from such acceptance.

Shortly before this conference took place, Crowley's *Book of the Law* had been translated into German and distributed. And that had consequences. Some of the brothers and sisters of the Pansophic Lodge were appalled at the contents while others were enthusiastic. In the end, they finally did agree on a communiqué in which Crowley was proclaimed the new World Teacher. (The concept of a world teacher is nothing new in itself; it can be found in Buddhism as well as later in theosophy which at roughly the same time tried to make Indian Jiddu Krishnamurti a World Savior—this was unsuccessful though since he refused to take on the role desired of him.)

But it wasn't long before everyone involved began to back out one after another. Even Crowley's closest disciples, Norman Mudd and Leah Hirsig, withdrew their approval. The end result of this debate was the closing of the Pansophic Society. A Fraternitas Saturni was founded on May 8, 1926, but this should only be viewed as a preliminary or rudimentary form of the later organization. Gregorius, who was secretary of the Pansophic Lodge at the time, joined forces with four other fraters to form a Thelemic-oriented order that was not subject to any external observance and placed great value on remaining independent of the O.T.O. By Easter 1928, the new organization had consolidated and developed fixed structures; therefore this is the day that the modern-day FS considers to be its date of establishment.

Despite his open admiration for Crowley, Gregorius always kept a certain distance to Master Therion, although this behavior was probably mutual. A few letters have been preserved that Gregorius wrote to Crowley, and according to rumors about the order, the British magician was supposedly in agreement with the fact that the FS added a passage to his Law of Thelema. Thus the Law of Thelema as used by the FS reads as follows: "Love is the Law. Love under Will. Compassionless Love." On the other hand, no letters of Crowley's have ever been found in reply to those of Gregorius. And it seems highly unlikely that Master Therion would have consented to such an addition to his document of revelation, especially in considering the fact that he always strictly adhered to the admonition in his *Book of the Law* to never change even a single letter, not even the outer form. On the other hand it would also seem silly to insinuate, as critics sometimes do, that Gregorius forged this correspondence. After all, it's a proven fact that the two men knew and liked each other.

But other than that, they had very little in common. While the mercurial Master Therion wanted to leave his mark on everything in the world and in the universe in a show of grand conceitedness while virtually wallowing in sheer intellectualism and fanaticism for education, Gregorius was more a man of practice than of theory. His writings reflect a less than supreme command of the German language. He was anything but a stylist, although he had quite a charming personality and he managed to repeatedly win over the leading figures of contemporary German occultism for his brotherhood and integrate their knowledge in order to expand and round off its teachings.

The FS published a great amount of material, mostly internal publications within the order, but a large amount of material was also made available to the wider public as well. Lodge membership grew quickly, but after Hitler's seizure of power in 1933, most secret societies of the time were banned and closed. Gregorius left the country, first moving to Switzerland and then to Italy. On the urging of the German government, he was handed over to the German Reich in 1943 where he spent roughly one year in preventive detention. Afterward, he was released on his word of honor and never bothered again, although the reasons for this are unclear. However, he wasn't able to revive the lodge in any official way until after the Second World War ended in 1945, thus ending the rule of National Socialism. Gregorius, who was a socialist deep down inside, was able to secretly maintain a few contacts to former lodge members during the war. He initially lived in the Soviet-occupied zone, where he was a community culture commissioner until he lost his position

due to “non-socialist activities” and finally moved to West Berlin in 1950. Only then was the FS able to blossom into life once again. In April of 1950, the first issue was printed of the official lodge publication, *Blätter für angewandte okkulte Lebenskunst*. This magazine was published on a regular basis, at first monthly and then bimonthly, until 1962.

The amount and quality of the articles in the *Blätter* probably exceed that of all other occult magazines throughout the history of magic. Even Aleister Crowley’s *Equinox* (though much more ambitiously designed) cannot stand up to it. It is an invaluable historical and practical document that gives insight into traditional German occultism. In nearly three thousand pages, the reader can find information about a great variety of subjects, although it cannot be avoided that the individual contributions are not all of the same quality. In addition to the *Blätter*, five issues of the publication *Saturn-Gnosis* appeared even before the war, as well as the later publications *Logenschulvorträge* and *Vita-Gnosis* and a few lodge offprints including the infamous *Sonderdruck Nr. 2*, which discusses the position of the sun in relation to the positions of sexual intercourse in sex magic.

In the years 1960 through 1964 (when Gregorius died), the lodge—which had been officially called the Grand Lodge of the Fraternitas Saturni since 1957 and meanwhile had temples (called “orients”) in a number of cities in German-speaking regions—was shaken by various disputes and power struggles that marked its history up to the 1980s. The annual fluctuation rate of members during this time was around fifty percent, while expulsions, excommunications, intrigues, and split-offs were commonplace.

During the Easter lodge of 1964, Master Roxanne was elected to succeed Gregorius following his death. Haack, in his study *Die Fraternitas Saturni*, pointed out that “for the first time in the recent history of arcane-mystagogic secret societies [...], a woman was appointed head of an order” (p. 29). He hereby forgets, of course, well-known female magicians such as Dion Fortune (a.k.a. Violet Mary Firth) and Marie de Naglowska, who held quite similar responsibilities in their own areas. Roxanne died shortly afterward on June 8, 1965, so the lodge was run by a triumvirate until Easter 1966. Then Master Daniel—who only acquired the degree of Master in September of the previous year—was elected as new Grand Master. Daniel was to become one of the most disputed yet productive figures in the history of the FS. He didn’t seem to have much luck in leading the order, though, and under his leadership several split-offs into various “inner circles” occurred as is common to many secret societies, and internal lodge knowledge

was passed on even more selectively within the degree system—there seemed to be no end to the hierarchization. On the other hand, Daniel revived and researched the tradition of German magic like no other, which preserved documents clearly prove.

He was succeeded by Jananda in the year 1969, who only held an apprentice grade. His leadership seemed ill-fated from the start. That same year, part of the lodge archives fell into the hands of an outsider, Adolf Hemberger, a professor from the city of Giessen, who used the material to write several essays about the FS. The archive apparently came into his possession as an act of betrayal—either for monetary payment or, as another version of the story tells, it may have disappeared during a fire (maybe even both stories are true). In any case, Jananda was forced to abandon his post just a short time later.

In April 1969, Lodge Secretary Andrzej assumed the position of Grand Master. After that, the documented history of the lodge is lost in the dark. The brotherhood, however, as I can prove first-hand, has been active without interruption since then, with varying points of emphasis under various Grand Masters. A consolidation has taken place since the early 1980s, and it is certainly no exaggeration to claim that the *Fraternitas Saturni* has once again reached a climax concerning the high quality of its training methods and the seriousness of its practical and magical work. Once again it maintains a number of orients in various countries, while a new mentor system ensures the systematic training and assistance of Neophytes, and—in contrast to many other groups that wanted to decorate themselves with the foreign feathers of the FS—the degrees cannot be applied for by mail, but rather they require many years of diligent practical work. Nonetheless, the lodge does not make any public appearances whatsoever, except for its website; it rejects any kind of advertising and makes no active attempt to acquire new members. It's not necessary either because the general interest in this order still is and always has been continuous so that the FS can apply strict selection criteria without running the risk of becoming antiquated or obsolete due to a lack of new blood. Plus, the lodge has been attracting a considerable number of younger members over the years, leading to the modern, less dogmatic, yet nonetheless always traditional approach that characterizes it today.

Throughout the course of its eventful history, various split-off groups occurred, such as the *Fraternitas Luminis* and the *Fraternitas Urani*. Just over twenty years ago, another organization split off and attempted to claim the name *Fraternitas Saturni* for itself, but in the end it was prohibited from doing so by court of law. Today this organization is called *Ordo Saturni*, a group that does indeed integrate elements of the old



FS and implements them in a practical sense as well, although the Thelemic influence is stronger than in the original FS. A few years ago, the Ordo Saturni was hounded by the press; unfounded accusations similar to the persecution of Michael Eschner's Thelema Order were pulled out of thin air and mixed with sensationalism and false accusations that turned out to be nothing but slander in the end. Since then, things have quieted down concerning the public attention towards the Ordo Saturni, although they just recently appeared with magazine advertisements.

Imitations of the FS could be found not only in Germany, but also in Canada, for example, where the lodge actually did have members at one time. But let me say once and for all that there is and always has been only one original Fraternitas Saturni, and it is even officially registered as an association under German law. Other groups may or may not work in the Saturnian spirit of the FS, but any claims to call themselves the "true" Fraternitas Saturni bear no legitimacy, in contrast to certain offshoots of the O.T.O., some of which at least have a corresponding charter as proof. This may all seem insignificant to the layman, but we shouldn't forget that legitimacy plays a large role in traditional schools of magic, not to mention the legal aspects of the problem concerning the FS as a registered association.

So what exactly is the magic system of the FS? It's a conglomerate of various currents that are fed by a number of occult sources. First of all, one would have to mention the influence of Freemasonry, which is responsible for the angular tradition that is still used in the FS today. The temple design, the distribution of the roles, and the functions of the temple wardens, and the ritual structure itself; all of these are the remnants of that strong Masonic influence. But in contrast to Freemasonry, the FS has always welcomed both sexes. And the FS never attempted to make any direct, organizational, or personal connection to Freemasonry either.

Furthermore, the FS took on a great number of occult concepts that would probably only exist symbolically in Freemasonry at most. Luciferian gnosis, sexual practices of the O.T.O., yoga, Taoist teachings, influences of the Knights Templar, astral magic, alchemy, letter and rune magic, the magic of Quintscher and Bardon, medieval ceremonial magic—all of these ideas contribute to the melting pot of the FS. But none of these elements alone can be said to be dominant.

By the way, the FS does not understand itself to be a pure Saturnian lodge, but rather a Saturnian-Uranian one that wants to help pave the way and shape the "New Age" as

many other secret societies do as well. When looking at all the criticism surrounding the FS, the Uranian element is often ignored, despite the fact that this element has been manifested quite clearly throughout the lodge's history. In contrast to the modern-day IOT, for example, which (before its decline) embodied more of a centrifugal principle in which creativity was more or less outwardly projected and no impulses were maintained or subject to any type of secrecy, the FS embodies more of a centripetal principle in which foreign ideas are initially adapted, then examined and filtered, with some being kept and others expelled—Saturnian concentration in combination with Uranian openness for everything new and foreign. The FS rarely produced anything truly original; the unique thing about the order, though, was more of in the way they integrated new concepts into their system and adapted them correspondingly.

One unique thing about this order, however, is the principle of GOTOS. GOTOS is the group daimonium, or in a certain sense the order's personified egregore that also embodies the highest degree, 33°. Although other brotherhoods may have such egregores as well, they are usually not dealt with specifically and systematically. In the FS, however, a certain degree is even reserved for this daimonium (that can be held by a member as personification of GOTOS) and it is dealt with in corresponding rituals. A combination of Rosicrucianism, Illuministic, and gnostic elements all contributed to giving this Brotherhood of Saturn an entirely unique force field.

The degree system is borrowed from Freemasonry, and a distinction is made between knowledge degrees and earned degrees, whereby the latter are only awarded upon completion of various tests in certain magical/mystical fields. In general, all degrees (both the lower and the higher ones) are divided into three categories: apprentice, fellowcraft, and master. The knowledge degrees are not “fulfilled,” but rather are awarded in recognition for services performed, for commitment within the order as well as a sort of “bonus for loyalty.” Usually they are skipped over when earned degrees (which are the ones that really count) are awarded, although there haven been occasional efforts to define these degrees more clearly and to develop more specific requirements for their achievement.

Within the FS, Saturn is understood as the Great Demiurge, or Guardian of the Threshold, and the keeper of initiation. Coming into contact with him often proves to be a bitter experience, and not just for the inexperienced magician. Illness, financial disasters and career problems, uprooting, and other difficulties are frequent side effects

in the beginning stages of a new lodge member. For this reason, every new applicant to the brotherhood today must complete a one-year probationary period before he or she is initiated since the contact with the “Saturnian current” that is concentrated within the FS needs a certain getting used to. By the way, throughout the course of their history, the FS has proven to be quite undogmatic in their practice and teachings, which might come as a surprise due to their fundamental structure and ideology. But in the end despite the traditional, dogmatic framework that often seems to surround the organization, pragmatism always won, following in the footsteps of its pragmatic founding father.

The basic attitude of the FS is in essence quite liberal, which is the main reason that the lodge always seemed to attract the leading German occultists of the time as members: Rah-Omir Quintscher and Karl Spiesberger are just two examples. Many magicians (such as Master Daniel) became renowned exclusively through their work within the FS, while others preferred to work in silence and not make their membership in the order public.

Many of the practices common to magic today were either developed further or focused on as a central theme within the FS, such as the use of the magic mirror, the magic of the pendulum, and even sex magic—whereby the work of the FS in the latter field was theoretically much more consistent, practice-oriented, and comprehensive than, for example, the O.T.O. which became (unjustly) quite popular through its sex magic practices. But sex magic only encompasses one certain degree in the FS, namely 18°, the infamous Gradus Pentalphae. One aspect of the order that is less original and practice-oriented, however, is its Thelemic approach that (as mentioned earlier) goes back to the strong influence of Aleister Crowley.

The high level of practical experience that the lodge had even after the war was quite amazing considering that Gregorius—due to his experience in the Third Reich—prohibited lodge members from officially performing practical work following the war, with the exception of the group’s General Ritual and a few other structured ceremonies. Instead, the members worked in small, unofficial groups that (at least from the outside) attempted to create the impression that they had nothing at all to do with the FS. But that proved to be nothing more than legal pedantry instead of an effective method of preventing prosecution.

The FS had worked more or less “underground” up until then, and its reputation experienced both a drastic improvement and deterioration at the same time when Adolf Hemberger began publishing unauthorized lodge material. Not all of the papers that he published were genuine in the sense that they were actually a part of the official lodge records. Since the FS understands itself to be a “lodge of knowledge,” it contains in its archives a countless number of papers, documents of practical experience, and other magical documents from its members, so that an outsider cannot really clearly determine which documents are “official” and which ones are, or were “unofficial.” The bad reputation of the FS that it is still confronted with at times today is basically based on two accusations, namely that the lodge is supposedly “satanic” and that it practices sex magic. The latter applies, as already mentioned, only to the one specific degree that is held by only a few members. Rumors that a person holding the degree of Gradus pentalphae can demand another member to assist in sex magic operations simply by showing a certain degree ring is a mix-up with the O.T.O., which has been accused of such practices.

As far as the “satanic” part goes, it is correct that the lodge is Luciferian and gnostic, which surely must look like devil worship to fundamental Christians. But in fact, Saturn is understood as the austere Guardian of the Threshold and the principle of initiation through severity and discipline, but absolutely no elements of a Black Mass are involved whatsoever, and whoever expects the practices of the parlor Satanism of the nineteenth century (upside-down crosses, virgins on the altar, desecration of Catholic sacraments by a fake priest, etc.) will truly be disappointed. It’s the fate of all secret societies that their opponents—and also their uncritical admirers!—who often try to find hidden meanings in them without even considering whether or not such assumptions can be proved or not.

As far as the rest goes, as already mentioned, the Law of Thelema applies to the members of the FS, whereby the first part, “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law,” was translated into German as “Do what thou wilt is the whole of the Law” to indicate that the law is already valid since the New Age has already begun. The disciplines and teachings adapted by the lodge have undergone significant changes throughout the decades. For example, Gregorius once declared that the astrological system developed by Berlin astrologer Johannes Vehlow, with his method of equal-sized houses, should be adapted as the official astrology system used by the lodge, but today a number of

various astrological methods are once again in use. If a certain dogma is outdated, it is simply consumed in the Saturnian current and relativized.

More information about the FS can be found at: <http://www.fraternitas.de>

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

### EXERCISE 97

#### PRACTICAL SUN MAGIC (I)

Perform the *Liber Resh* ritual daily for at least one month as described in this section.

### EXERCISE 98

#### PRACTICAL SUN MAGIC (II)

Design your own spiritual exercise that focuses on sun magic and perform it at a favorable time. It should last for at least one week. To prepare for this, also study its theory and examine the various myths and legends concerning sun worship (Osiris or Odin cults, Christianity, Mithras cult, etc.).

### EXERCISE 99

#### PRACTICAL MOON MAGIC (III)

After performing and integrating the knowledge gained from the two exercises above, design your own spiritual exercise that focuses on moon magic and perform it at a favorable time. To prepare for this, also study its theory and examine the various myths and legends concerning moon worship (Ishtar cult, Isis cult, worship of the Virgin Mary, etc.).

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(See also the frequently mentioned writings of Karl R. H. Frick.)



# COMBAT MAGIC

As far as I know, I was the first person to ever use the phrase “combat magic” (in German: *Kampfmagie*) back in 1984. Two years later, I published a three-part article on the subject in the magazine *Anubis* (see literature references in the Bibliography). In this article I began by giving an overview of the basics of the various types of combat magic. The technical aspects were disregarded at first and the initial emphasis was placed on eliminating the great number of misconceptions surrounding magic in general, and magical warfare in particular. At this time I would like to give a concise summary of the function and practice of magical warfare that goes a bit beyond the information provided in that article.

The term “combat magic” is understood here as the theory and practice of magical warfare in all its aspects. Of course, this also includes magical protection! And this presents us already with the first stumbling block. Although magical protection is generally considered to be “good, positive, constructive, and positive-minded,” and can generally appease even the strongest opponents of the Black Arts to some extent, the fact that defense has always been an overriding discipline of war (and not the other way around) is often overlooked. In the same way that it’s impossible to have a purely defensive art of warfare that completely ignores the problems, techniques, and practicability of a military offensive, there’s no such thing as pure magical protection that turns a blind eye to the reality of aggressive magic intending to kill or destroy. That would be a futile attempt to try and uphold fanatical, childish morals appropriate at best to speculative



theology, but definitely not among magicians who are predominately concerned with the mastery and efficiency of their art.

Much more important than any techniques are the magician's absolute irreconcilability or persistence. Without this basic attitude, every attempt at magical protection is at best a matter of luck. Therefore, the first rule is: You must feel absolutely worthy of protection.

And the word "absolutely" is meant literally here. The only way you can ever have a chance of survival in combat magic is with the basic attitude that your own life, your own health, and, of course, your own power must be protected and maintained at all costs. And this doesn't just mean in your magical everyday life. Magical warfare in its more advanced form is a true state of emergency. And since it's very involving and requires a great deal of energy and attention, it's rarely attempted without a valid reason (except by budding combat magicians who want to perfect their mastery of this discipline). More common, though, are "minor" attempts at influencing someone else on a magical level, often not even consciously, such as a gnawing, profound feeling of hate, jealousy, envy, or other feelings released in the heat of the moment that lash out at the target person. Even the magician who doesn't have anything to do with professional groups is often confronted with this form of offensive magic more than he or she would like. For this reason alone, it's a good idea for every magician to be familiar with at least the basics of combat magic.

As everybody knows, magic is all about power and feasibility, therefore there should be no exceptions when it comes to magical protection. Just think about all the stories about great magicians who were betrayed in the end, the most memorable figure of this kind being Merlin. And I'm not talking about whether or not the magician is brought down by some "evil woman" as was often the subject of discussion in earlier times. Instead, it's more about not allowing even the most intimate friends and partners to weaken the magician's power in any way. Whoever doesn't take this advice to heart and still lives with the misconception that the world is truly good inside, and that there are human relationships that are not of a cannibalistic nature and are free from any struggles over territory and supplies and the related temptations, will surely learn his or her lesson sooner or later. So you can see that it's not all that easy to follow even the first rule of combat magic. Because the yearning for "weaponless security," the need for love and affection (which is actually rapacious deep down inside anyway), and the general

tendency toward human sentimentality have proved again and again to be dangerous allies of those forces and powers that are hostile to the magician.

On a practical level, this means that the magician should always ensure his or her own magical protection with a death curse that is triggered by an attack. We already mentioned the principle of a “magical landmine” in connection with sigil magic, so we won’t go into that again here. There should also be no need to mention the fact that the magician can apply the same techniques that he or she uses for healing to cause damage or death as well. But as with any type of magic, this should only be done when certain conditions are fulfilled, which is the main focus of our examination here.

The following example of African and Afro-Caribbean magic illustrates the importance of determination and merciless irreconcilability in the field of combat magic. Throughout the course of my magical career, I’ve repeatedly seen examples of the power of such magic from this cultural area, as other colleagues can confirm as well. Two examples should suffice here to illustrate what I’m saying. The first example is from my own practice, while the second is from a fellow magician of mine. A few years ago, a young man called who wanted to take advantage of my magical services. He had lived for roughly one year in Jamaica and had married a local Jamaican woman shortly after his arrival there. The relationship went to pieces early on. Shortly afterward, he moved into a new house with a new girlfriend; the house belonged to an Obeah man. In short, Obeah (or Obea) is the Jamaican form of Haitian voodoo. His wife did not endure this without comment. One day she appeared at the door. When the man’s girlfriend opened it, she threw a powder at her feet, causing the girlfriend to become paralyzed for several hours.

After he returned to Germany, he suffered a continuous string of bad luck. He lost his job, was often sick, and struggled with financial ruin. By the time he called me, he had been in Germany for six months already. We arranged an appointment since I prefer to meet with a client personally at first in order to assess the situation.

The day of the appointment came and the man never showed up. About two weeks later, the man called and requested a new appointment without giving any reasons for missing the first one. I pointed out that I wasn’t particularly interested in clients who felt they could waste my time. With that, I ended the conversation. Apart from my genuine annoyance, this was also a test to see how serious the man was about his concern. Soon I received an urgent letter in which he profusely apologized for his behavior and

practically begged me to give him a new appointment. So I did. But on the day of our scheduled appointment, I received a phone call from a friend of the man, saying that he couldn't come due to an attack of malaria that put him in the hospital. I never heard from him again. The suspicion arose that he might have died. After you read the second example, the point I want to make should become clear, which is why I don't want to mention it yet.

This time it concerns a friend who is both a nonmedical practitioner and a magician. He had an African patient whose brother was cursed at birth in her homeland. He lived in a neighboring European country and struggled with his mental health. The patient asked my colleague if he would be willing to help in the matter and my friend consulted me for advice. It appeared that the brother had already literally "used up" three psychiatrists. All three had died within just a few weeks after treatment had begun.

What can we learn from these examples? First of all, that a successful magical attack or death spell can go so far that the victim is no longer in a position to even be able to accept help, or that potential helpers could even fall victim to this magic as well. Second, it demonstrates the great effectiveness of African and Caribbean magic.

It even poses the question as to whether this type of magic may be more effective than Western magic. After all, it's no secret that such things are an everyday part of magical life in the African and Caribbean regions and are therefore nothing out of the ordinary. It would be a perfect example of dogmatic tradition to study magic and learn the appropriate "techniques" from a Mganga, an Obeah man, a voodoo Houngan, a West African fetish priest, or the like. The pragmatic magician, however, first takes a look at the structures behind this magic and realizes that they're not much different from Western systems, as we can see in the example of voodoo and other cultures that work with possession. In my opinion, the explanation is much simpler: The African religions have no general prohibition against killing. In this sense, they're more radical or one could even say more honest than Christianity. Members of the same family, clan, or tribe are all considered worthy of protection. But everyone else is considered a stranger and therefore an enemy with whom one could only do business with during a (usually temporary) truce. In other words, the African or Caribbean magician just doesn't have the scruples that magicians from Judeo-Christian cultures struggle with, even when they think that they've gotten rid of their primary religious and ethic disposition long ago.

This realization is of great importance to combat magic in another aspect as well. As everyone knows, the representatives of “white” esotericism repeatedly spread rumors that “black” magic always returns to the responsible party. That may prevent children (or even immature adults) from being naughty, which is a reflection of the typical Christian method of education that uses fear and terror. But if we look at the history of Western magic we’ll find several examples (especially in more modern history) of how this argument was used. One of the main preachers of this philosophy was theosophy, but even in the Golden Dawn it was common. “Pure, white, good” magic was advertised everywhere, and, at the same time, unwelcome rivals and rebellious members were accused of performing “black magic.” One may chuckle about such things today, but the soil from which this sprouted is still fertile.

Even more dangerous, though, is the false sense of security that such statements provide the esoteric with. After all, nothing would be more incorrect than to assume that you’re safe from another person’s magical attack just by believing that some divine principle of revenge will punish the evildoers. Apart from the fact that, even in such a case, it would be extremely undesirable to first fall victim to an attack before (possibly even posthumously!), being able to take pleasure in the villain’s punishment. This narrow-minded fantasy unfortunately also fails to recognize the basic mechanisms of how combat magic works. Indeed, one can often observe that magicians who initiate an attack frequently suffer sudden reactions (the technical term for this would be repercussions), but the great number of magicians who are successful with such offensive attacks prove that this cannot be a mere result of some “natural law” that protects the weak.

Instead, there are two other explanations for this phenomenon that make much more sense. First of all, it’s possible that a magical attack is reflected off of the target person’s protective wall. After all, the purpose of all protective or defensive magic is to make things like this happen in the first place. Such a protective wall doesn’t necessarily have to be erected consciously. For example, we know that one can be incredibly immune to magic if one doesn’t believe in it. (Of course such people have their weaknesses, too, that an experienced combat magician can quickly uncover and target specifically, but that shouldn’t concern us here.)

Even the connection to a different force field that may be quite strong and rejects anything foreign (e.g., belonging to a certain religious community) could offer a certain amount of protection. The fact that such protection couldn’t hold ground with an

experienced combat magician is another story; in any case, it could filter out the rough spots and therefore can be said to hold a certain albeit limited value.

The second obstructing factor consists of the psychological conditioning of the magician himself or herself. If the magician has even the slightest moral doubt or scruples in the farthest corner of his or her mind at the thought of possibly “doing something forbidden,” then failure is inevitable. When presenting arguments on the basis of the psychological model, this could be viewed as a mechanism of self-punishment that the moral authority of the super ego uses to punish such a violation against ethic conditioning. When applying the spirit model, this could even be viewed as “betraying” one’s own spirit helpers and literally stabbing them in the back by secretly disapproving of their actions and failing to recognize the highly important aspect of acknowledging them for their help, resulting in their desire to get revenge on the magician in order to make him or her aware of this violation of a taboo, thus enabling the working relationship to regenerate.

(Now sit back for a few minutes and think about how the repercussions could be explained according to the energy and information models. This will deepen your understanding of the problems involved while at the same time training your ability to explain such things.)

Therefore, we can see that there doesn’t necessarily have to be some kind of intervening transcendence involved in order to explain such magical phenomena. In application to our practice, this leads us to the conclusion that there’s no point in imagining you’re safe when this security consists of not much more than wishful thinking. Meanwhile, you’ve probably gained enough practical experience to recognize that magic is more than just positive thinking, powerful wishing, and hope for success. Instead it’s much more about recognizing and being able to use a whole number of conditions and networking them to bring about the desired results.

Every experienced Western magician is familiar from his or her own practice with the deep-rooted fear of taking control of his or her own destiny and possibly even being the judge over the life and death of others as well. After all, we’ve all been shocked at one time or another at the efficiency of our own magic, right? Indeed, even experienced old hands of the trade get weak in the knees when they see the results of their magic first-hand, and I’m not at all talking about just destructive or combat magic. It seems to be a basic characteristic of monotheistic civilizations to view magic in general as a

taboo, and of institutionalized religions (as already mentioned) to claim a monopoly on magic. In this way, taboos were created throughout the millenniums although they had no effect for the most part on polytheistic and especially animistic cultures. If we would learn from an African medicine man or a Haitian voodoo priest, we'd learn more than just a bunch of skills and techniques, we'd also learn irreconcilable unscrupulousness at its best when it comes to pursuing our magical goals.

In organized crime it's common to put new members to the test by having them commit a murder, possibly even of a close relative. Criminal groups such as the Mafia, the Camorra, or the Cosa Nostra are a few examples that practice this custom. This practice is used to not only make the candidate subject to blackmail and thus easy to manipulate, but the main reason is probably to have the candidate prove that he or she is free of all taboos, squeamishness, and moral doubt and is thus able to serve the group effectively. After all, dreaming and idealizing about a romantic career as a robber or pirate is definitely not the same as facing the everyday challenges of hard reality (and constantly reliving the memories of the gurglings of one's own murder victims).

Of course, some magicians may find this comparison a bit tacky. But this is more than just an expression of not wanting anything to do with "such things" and only being interested in protection within the context of only what is absolutely necessary. But let's stick to our example. A person can protect oneself from the average pickpocket or burglar with fairly little effort; but it would obviously be much more difficult to face an opponent such as the Mafia. In the same way, it would be quite rare for a magician to come into conflict with a professional, and therefore the usual, comparatively harmless protection measures would generally suffice. But it's all about recognizing the limits to magical efficiency—in particular one's own limits—and being able to expand them when necessary.

### **RECOGNIZING A MAGICAL ATTACK**

Paranoia is only of benefit to the enemy. Feeling as though one has been magically attacked without any real valid reason is nothing but a compensation for an inferiority complex, isolation, a lack of appreciation, and the like. Nearly ninety percent of the supposed cases of magical attack are actually nothing but self-deception or mental disturbances on the part of the alleged victim. That makes it all the more difficult to distinguish a real magical

attack from an imaginary one. Unfortunately, there are no ready-made solutions to this and the magician is forced to rely on his or her experience and intuition, thus risking the possibility of actually encouraging the client's/patient's paranoia (or even the magician's own) by agreeing with him or her. The old shamanic spirit model doesn't have this problem for the most part, at least in regards to the therapeutic aspect of magical protection. Since the shamans mainly work with spirits and occasionally with powers (energy model), it basically doesn't matter whether the harmful entities that have taken hold of the patients were specifically sent by a hostile magician or whether they were lured by accident or the patient's weakness—regardless of the origin, they need to be removed and their return prevented. However, it becomes problematic here, too, as soon as an attempt is made to find an offender, especially with intentions of revenge.

Therefore, it's always best to just protect such a client and not be set on finding out who is responsible. If this protection is successful, the opponent (if there really is one) will either double his or her efforts, which will make it easier to locate the person, or he or she will suffer a setback that can weaken or even kill the person, or at least put him or her out of action for a while. This is a very pragmatic approach that has often proved effective in practice. Nonetheless the magician should still try and determine as clearly and precisely as possible whether or not the magical attack was real or imaginary. The magician should be prepared for the possibility that a paranoid, maybe even schizophrenic patient (described according to the spirit model as an "evil soul" and considered incurable as we've already mentioned) could feed on the magician's attention like a vampire to an incessantly increasing degree until the reports from the "magical front" get even more bizarre and the magician begins to question his or her own sanity with good reason. In this case, an exorcism would be more appropriate than combat magic.

In my own experience with combat magic, in the cases that have later proved to be true magical attacks (either by observing the effectiveness of the protection measures applied, through the reports of witnesses or confessions by the attackers themselves), I've observed predominately the following symptoms:

- sleeplessness
- nightmares
- memory lapses
- hallucinations
- feelings of fear and anxiety

accelerated heartbeat  
dizzy spells  
weakness of the immune system  
nervous behavior  
fainting spells  
depression  
suicidal thoughts

increase in accidents  
run of “bad luck”  
betrayal of close friends  
failure/absence of allies  
failure of magical operations

This list is by no means complete and it shouldn't be used to mechanically check off the applicable symptoms and thus determine whether a genuine magical attack has occurred or not. Often the mistake is made of focusing on just one single symptom and using that to make a rash, generalizing conclusion that an attack has happened. But even if a number of these symptoms are present, it still requires the experience and intuition of the magician (that cannot be formalized) to help make a final decision. Such experience cannot be learned from books, though, and in no way can it be conveyed in written form. That's why I can only recommend that you apply and examine the techniques and effects of magical attacks with other magicians. In many student/master relationships this often happens on the part of the teacher without any advance warning—of course, only after the student has been sufficiently prepared through his or her training in magical protection.

### **THE APPLICATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TERROR**

As everyone knows, just mentioning the words “magical attack” is enough to affect a superstitious victim. The rest happens on its own according to the usual psychological patterns. Whoever spreads weed killer in the shape of a pentagram on to a superstitious neighbor's lawn so that the magical symbol just seems to appear out of nowhere a few



days later will require very little effort to give his or her victim the coup de grâce. Advertising and political propaganda, religious missionary work and “ecological Pietism” (Sloterdijk); they all work with such methods of stirring up deep-seated, archaic human fears and exploiting them for their purpose. The only thing that can help is inner centralization as we’ve stressed repeatedly throughout the course of this book. Never before was banishing laughter so important than here, and it’s incredibly efficient when used against this type of attack.

Therefore I’d like to once again point out the importance of using the element of humor to restore balance in our magical practice (which seems so grim at times), and how it should be an integral, technical part of our work since it serves as both a means of defense and an expression of inner strength. Although it needs no justification, it cannot be stressed enough in a scene that even today tends to feel that smiling and enlightenment cannot go hand in hand and that everything spiritual is superior to the frivolous. Dogmatism in particular still refuses to recognize that humor and cheerfulness are not necessarily mere expressions of stupid foolishness, but instead that they actually fulfill true survival functions.

# PRACTICAL FOLK MAGIC (U)

## TABLE RAPPING

If we want to fully understand the folk magical practice of table rapping, we first need to be aware of how such a relatively unusual practice originally came into being in the first place. In rural farming cultures, the function of the table has always been surrounded by folk magical beliefs. In early times, stone tables were used to hold offerings to spirits, dead heroes, and other dead people. In connection with the consecration of food as is common to many communities, the table holds a function similar to that of the altar or offering stone that we're already familiar with from the Stone Age.

Thus it should come as no surprise that there are a whole number of different customs, traditions, and taboos concerning the table. For example, in some Thuringian villages the table and the Bible were considered part of the house inventory. If the house was sold, these items had to remain in the house. The table was also significant as a symbol of domesticity and a guarantee for clan happiness, and was used for the spirit meal and upholding the fixed seating arrangement and table manners. It was often prohibited to move the table at all, and it was even clamped down in some regions at certain times. In many places, it was even excluded in the seizure of property. Another common custom is to set the table for one extra person during festivities in order to pacify the spirits and ensure happiness and prosperity. Hasidic Jews traditionally set the table for one extra person during Passover in order to feed the Messiah in case he suddenly reveals himself.

Any table scraps that fall to the floor are considered property of the spirits and the dead. In both Sweden and Serbia, it was customary to silently throw food offerings under the table during the Christmas meal, and in Denmark on Christmas Eve any food or drinks spilled were only allowed to be touched after sunrise. In the German region of Middle Franconia, it was even customary to place a doll underneath the table during the harvest meal and to feed it the same amount of food as any other person at the table would receive. In Bavaria, on the other hand, a wooden doll placed under the table was said to keep away little monsters.

According to some traditions, devils and demons live under the table. Although folklore goes on the principle that spiritistic table rapping and tapping first found its way into folk magic through higher society, it's nevertheless present even today in rural communities as well. From the above statements, it would seem quite appropriate to use the table as an instrument for contacting the spirit world.

The technique used for this is relatively simple. The participants sit silently around the table with the palms of their hands spread flat on its surface with the tips of their pinkies touching those of the people in the chairs next to them. Then a few calm, deep breaths are taken and the leader begins calling or questioning the spirits. After a while, the table begins to move without any specific direction. Sometimes spectacular PSI phenomena may occur, such as the table levitating even after the participants have stood up to follow its movements. The main purpose of this, however, is for questioning spirits for divination or obtaining other information, whereby the answer is given by the spirit or dead person by means of rapping or knocking, and then the answers are interpreted correspondingly.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

### *EXERCISE 100*

#### **DEVELOPING COMBAT MAGIC SKILLS (I)**

Rub the palms of your hands together hard until they get quite hot. Then move your hands slowly apart and then back together again repeatedly until you feel the resistance, similar to the technique for feeling an aura. Now pretend that you are feeling an invisible wall in front of you with only your hands. Practice this

exercise daily for several months, for example after showering or before going to bed. This will sensitize you to subtle energies.

#### **EXERCISE 101**

##### **DEVELOPING COMBAT MAGIC SKILLS (II)**

Here is a partner exercise. Both magicians stand facing each other about ten feet apart. After activating your hands by rubbing them together hard, one person raises the right hand to act as the “transmitter,” and the other person raises the left hand to act as the “receiver.” The transmitter sends subtle energy in waves toward the middle of the palm of the hand of the other person. Once this person feels this flow of energy (e.g., hot or cold sensation, tingling, etc.), he or she raises the right hand while keeping the left hand raised, and sends the energy received right back to the transmitter, who raises the left hand as well. With all four hands raised, this creates a circulation of energy with the direction changing at times.

To increase the difficulty of the exercise, both magicians should close their eyes while practicing.

#### **EXERCISE 102**

##### **DEVELOPING COMBAT MAGIC SKILLS (III)**

This is a partner exercise for three. A receiver sits blindfolded on a chair and raises both activated palms. Each transmitter focuses his or her energy beam onto one palm of the receiver (each transmitter supports the wrists with the free hand and aims with the forefinger like a pistol). When the receiver feels the energy, he or she gives a sign with the affected hand. When the receiver feels the energy with the other hand as well, another signal is given accordingly. Now the transmitters steer their energy beams off to the side. The task of the receiver is to follow the beams with his or her hands. The transmitters observe the procedure by watching their line of target and give corrections when necessary.

After a while, the three magicians should switch roles.

### EXERCISE 103

#### DEVELOPING COMBAT MAGIC SKILLS (IV)

Now, an astral knife fight as a partner exercise. After first performing Exercise 102, each person takes hold of a combat knife. An astral knife fight is held without any physical contact. Anything is allowed with the exception of physical contact—feinting, evasive maneuvers, jumping, and so on. The energies (the “stabbing”) should be felt as distinctly as possible. If necessary, repeat Exercise 102 more frequently (throughout several sittings) until the sensitization is sufficient.

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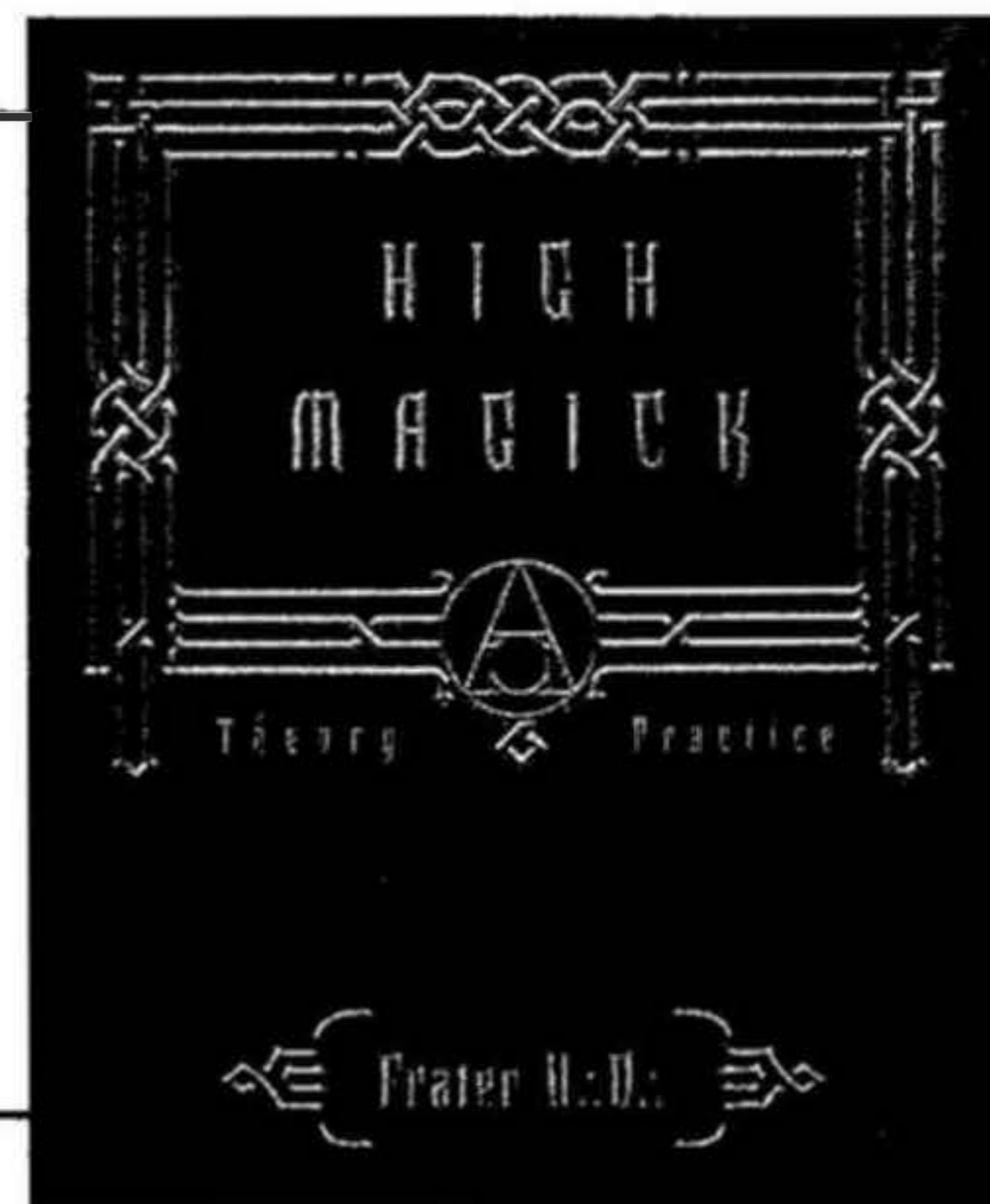
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