

# JACK PARSONS AND THE FALL OF BABALON



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"[The angel] carried my spirit away to the desert. I saw the Scarlet Woman sitting on the Beast with seven heads and ten horns, covered with blasphemous names. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stones and pearls, with a golden cup in her hand filled with abominations and the unclean things of her fornication. On her forehead a name had been written, a mystery: Babalon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the Earth. I saw the woman was drunk from the blood of the Saints, and from the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Seeing her, I wondered greatly."

Revelation 17:3-6

## One

"I shall regard all phenomena as the particular dealing of God with my soul."

Analysis by a Master of the Temple

How shall I write of the mystery and the terror, of the wonder and pity and splendor of the sevenfold star that is Babalon? I shall tell of the tragic life of her most devoted disciple and beloved son, Jack Parsons. In doing so, I will correct previous misconceptions while correlating the known facts and wild legends that lie in several far-flung sources.

Kenneth Grant gives a good description of Parsons in *The Magical Revival*:

"Imbued with the idea of the Kingly Man, as that expression is understood in the Cult of Thelema, Parsons bent his not inconsiderable energies, physical and intellectual, to the discovery of his True Will.

"Born on October 2, 1914, in Los Angeles [descendant of a Hell-Fire Club founder, according to Michael Hoffman], he lived a lonely childhood, due in part to his parents' broken marriage. He spent a great deal of his youth reading and day-dreaming, and nurturing a growing resentment of all interference, especially of the kind posing as 'authority.' He developed strong revolutionary tendencies and when he encountered Crowley's writings - which he first did through Wilfred T. Smith - he was instantly alive to the significance of Thelema. He joined Smith's Agape Lodge [OTO], and, at the same time, became a Probationer, 1°=10°, of the A\A\."

Smith was a member of Frater Achad's (Charles Stansfeld Jones) OTO lodge in Vancouver. He met Crowley there in 1915. Smith moved to California in 1930. He immediately founded the Agape Lodge in Pasadena. Frater Achad kept the Vancouver lodge open during this period, under a different name. It would later close. In "Alchemical Conspiracy and the Death of



the West" Michael Hoffman writes of Parsons. Hoffman tells us that the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO) had a temple on nearby Mount Palomar. The local Indians regarded the mountain as holy. Hoffman says, "The O.T.O. believed that Palomar was the sexual chakra of the Earth." Parsons commuted regularly between Palomar and Pasadena. The Mount Palomar Observatory opened in 1949. Smith probably consecrated his temple on Palomar soon after his move to California in 1930, before the Observatory was planned.

Palomar lies just minutes north of the 33rd parallel. This is significant because 33 is an important number in masonic symbolism. It is the number of the highest grade of the Scottish Rite. It is also the number of years Christ walked on the earth. Hoffman mentions the 33 bones of the human spinal cord. This brings to mind kundalini yoga. Crowley's OTO was a quasi-masonic order. The higher grades show esoteric Hindu influences of a sexual nature.

Parsons first met Smith in 1939. He joined the Agape Lodge in 1941. Parsons was to be its head during the turbid 1940s (ca. 1942-1947). Smith was known in the Lodge as Frater Velle Omnia Velle Nihil (aka Fra. 132). He was an expatriate Englishman. Smith had a reputation for womanizing that equalled Crowley's. Parsons saw Smith as a second father. The two stayed close throughout their lives. Smith wrote to Crowley in March, 1941, "I think I have at long last a really excellent man, John Parsons. And starting next Tuesday he begins a course of talks with a view to enlarging our scope. He has an excellent mind and much better intellect than myself... John Parsons is going to be valuable."

Soror Estai (actress Jane Wolfe) had been with Crowley at Cefalu before coming to California. She recorded her first impression of Parsons in her Magical Record for December, 1940:

"Unknown to me, John Whiteside Parsons, a newcomer, began astral travels. This knowledge decided Regina [Kahl] to undertake similar work. All of which I learned after making my own decision. So the time must be propitious.

"Incidentally, I take Jack Parsons to be the

child who 'shall behold them all' [i.e., the Mysteries. See The Book of the Law I: 54-55].

"26 years of age, 6'2", vital, potentially bisexual at the very least, University of the State of California and Cal. Tech., now engaged in Cal Tech chemical laboratories developing 'bigger and better' explosives for Uncle Sam. Travels under sealed orders from the government. Writes poetry - 'sensuous only', he says. Lover of music, which he seems to know thoroughly. I see him as the real successor of Therion [Crowley]. Passionate; and has made the vilest analyses result in a species of exaltation after the event. Has had mystical experiences which gave him a sense of equality all round, although he is hierarchical in feeling and in the established order."

Parsons' father died in 1942. He left his son a mansion in an expensive part of Pasadena. This may have been his way of making up to his son for his childhood. Parsons shocked the staid residents of this well-manicured neighborhood when he started renting out rooms to less-than-desirable tenants. "Only atheists and those of a Bohemian disposition," his newspaper ad stated. The frequent visitors, noisy parties, and questionable goings-on raised many eyebrows. Parsons needed the extra income these renters paid. His progress with rockets had yet to yield any success.

Alva Rogers was a long-time resident of the Parsons house on Orange Street. Rogers became associated with the house after attending several science fiction meetings there. Parsons held these informal meetings regularly on weekends. Rogers wrote, "Mundane souls were unceremoniously rejected as tenants. There was a professional fortune teller and seer who always wore appropriate dresses and decorated her apartment with symbols and artifacts of arcane lore. There was a lady, well past middle age but still strikingly beautiful, who claimed to have been at various times the mistress of half the famous men in France. There was a man who had been a renowned organist in the great movie palaces of the silent era. They were characters all... [From the rent they paid] Jack admitted that he was one of Crowley's main

sources of money in America."

At one point local police came to investigate an alleged backyard ceremony. A pregnant woman had reportedly jumped nude through a fire nine times. The police made it clear how absurd they thought the claim was. Parsons easily assured them of his community standing. He was an important rocket scientist with a professional reputation to uphold.

Burton Wolfe writes of a sixteen-year-old boy who reported Parsons to the police. He told them that Parsons' followers had forcibly sodomized him during a Black Mass at the house. The police investigated. They found Parsons' cult to be little more than "an organization dedicated to religious and philosophical speculation, with respectable members such as a Pasadena bank president, doctors, lawyers, and Hollywood actors." At one point the FBI became involved after receiving some anonymous letters. One bore the signature "An American Soldier." The police again cleared Parsons of all charges. They would later stand by their findings when further accusations arose.



## Two

"There is a flame."

Liber 49 (v. 20)

Wilfred Smith's mistress of many years was Regina Kahl. She was also his High Priestess of the Gnostic Mass. Separate photos of her and Smith are in *The Equinox* vol. III, no. 10. Smith had a charming personality, a strong affinity for the opposite sex, and what Grant calls "something more than an aptitude for magick." One of Smith's conquests was Soror Grimaud, aka Helen Northrup. She was Parsons' first wife.

Helen bore Smith a child in 1943. Crowley decided that was enough of Smith's sexual infidelity. His affairs were a detriment to the Order. Crowley expelled him through an ingenious means. Crowley drew up a horoscope for Smith based on the unusual circumstance of his birth. Smith's horoscope had a complex of eight planets. One could interpret this horoscope as if Smith were an avatar of some god. This was something Crowley had found in only one other instance, that of Shakespeare.

Crowley sent Smith on a Grand Magical Retirement to find the god within himself. Crowley wrote *Liber Apotheosis* (aka Liber 132) for Smith to use as his guide. Smith's Retirement took place on Temple Hill at Rancho Royale, not Mount Palomar. Helen accompanied him. Crowley formally expelled Smith in late 1943. Parsons then became Acting Head of the Lodge. Regina Kahl would die during Smith's Magical Retirement, in late 1945 or early 1946. Her untimely death deeply depressed him.

Parsons divorced Helen in 1943. In the meantime he struck up a relationship with her younger sister Betty. Like Helen, Betty acted as Parsons' priestess at the Gnostic Mass. She was also his partner in the performance of 9th Degree magic. This is the magic of inducing altered states through prolonged sexual ecstasy. At Parsons' urging the teenage Betty left the University of Southern California (USC), to her parents'



chagrin.

Enter "Frater H." Grant refers to him as "a confidence trickster who had wormed his way into the O.T.O. on the pretence of being interested in Magick." He was "still at large [1972], having grown wealthy and famous by a misuse of the secret knowledge which he had wormed out of Parsons." Other writers refer to him merely as "Frater X." The late Frater X's identity is now clearly a matter of public record. I see no reason to do anything other than call him by name. He was L. Ron Hubbard: philosopher, world traveller, science fiction author, and founder of Scientology.

Parsons was young and impressionable. He had gone through repeated upheavals during his short life. He was vulnerable. Hubbard made a big impression on him. Parsons forgot his obligation and violated his oath to the Order. He revealed to Hubbard the secrets of the highest grades of the OTO.

Parsons wrote to Crowley in July, 1945, "About three months ago I met [Hubbard], a writer and explorer of whom I had known for some time [because he wrote science fiction]... He moved in with me about two months ago, and although Betty and I are still friendly, she has transferred her sexual affections to him... We are pooling our resources in a partnership that will act as a limited company to control our business ventures. I think I have made a great gain, and as Betty and I are the best of friends there is little loss... I need a magical partner. I have many experiments in mind..."

The magical partner Parsons envisioned was to be his partner in a 9th Degree working. Grant writes, "Having lost confidence in women, Parsons decided to attract an Elemental Spirit to take Betty's place..." These spirits are called Elementals because of their association with the four elements of the ancients. To summon one requires a large amount of magical energy, the kind generated by an 8th Degree working. The practice of the 8th Degree is a solo sexual rite.

Says Grant, "The instructions that accompany the eighth Degree of the O.T.O. contain methods for evoking an Elemental, or familiar spirit. It is said to

be an easy matter to attract such a spirit because the souls of the elements desire constantly to be absorbed into the cycle of human evolution, this being the only way in which they can achieve salvation and perpetuity of existence. On being appropriated by a human organism, the elemental finally becomes absorbed in the immortal principle in man." Compare Jim Morrison's remark to an interviewer that the air around us is full of spirits. "They know we exist, and envy us our bodies."

Grant quotes from the instructions for the 8th Degree, written about the adept desirous of performing such an operation:

"(1) That he choose wisely a reasonable soul, docile, apt, beautiful, and in all ways worthy of love.

"(2) That he fall not away from love of the Great Goddess into love of this inferior, but give only as a master and of his mercy, knowing that this also is service to the Goddess.

"(3) That of such familiar spirits he have but four [one for each element?]. And let him regulate their service, appointing hours for each.

"(4) That he treat them with kindness and firmness, being on his guard against their tricks.

"This being said, it is enough; for to have them is but the pains to call them forth from their homes. And the Spirits of the Elemental Tablets given by Dr. Dee and Sir Kelley are the best..."

In 1943 Parsons published a brief poem in the *Oriflamme*, an OTO publication. At this point it bears repeating:

"I hight Don Quixote, I live on peyote,  
marijuana, morphine and cocaine,  
I never know sadness, but only a madness  
that burns at the heart and the brain.  
I see each charwoman, ecstatic, inhuman,  
angelic, demonic, divine.  
Each wagon a dragon, each beer mug a flagon  
that brims with ambrosial wine."

Symonds and Wilson have documented that narcotics and hallucinogens were a basic staple of

Crowley's magical diet. It is easier to induce astral vision when one alternately dulls and excites the senses by chemical means. One cannot underemphasize the role of drugs here. I suspect they were a part of the Babalon Working. Combined with sex magic, this makes a powerful tool.



### Three

"... to truly formulate your Will... is only possible with the wand."

#### Analysis by a Master of the Temple

Using the "Angelick" language channelled by Elizabethan astrologer John Dee and his scribe Edward Kelley, Parsons began his operation. He recited the Seventh Aire (or Aethyr) in the original Enochian. Per Crowley's advice, he kept diligent records. Parsons would later compare some of the curious results to Kelley's own criminal life. The surviving fragments of Parsons' Babalon Working are now the property of the OTO. Parsons' second wife Marjorie Cameron holds the copyright to *Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword*.

The preliminaries began January 4, 1946 at 9 pm. Prokofiev's Violin Concerto played loudly on the phonograph. The formal working would begin the following evening. Russell Miller refers to it eleven nights of "talisman waving." Later that month Parsons would write Crowley describing his progress. He noted a spontaneous windstorm as a curious side-effect. It began the second day and lasted throughout the Babalon Working. Parsons awoke on the sixth day of the Working, January 10. He heard nine loud, unexplainable knocks. I note a similarity to the nine regular knocks that Whitley Strieber felt confirmed the existence of his Visitors. Parsons got out of bed. He noticed a lamp lay smashed on the floor. The knocks were repeated on the 15th.

January 15 was the eleventh and final day. Hubbard perceived a spirit "clad in a black robe and having an evil pasty face." Grant says this was Smith, who had failed to identify the god within himself. Grant says Smith astrally attacked Parsons in revenge. The electricity went out as they began invoking and something struck Hubbard on the right shoulder. It knocked a candle from his hand. "He called me," Parsons wrote, "and we observed a brownish-yellow light about seven feet high. I

brandished a magical sword, and it disappeared. Ron's right arm was paralyzed for the rest of the night." Parsons awakened later that night after hearing a "buzzing, metallic" voice. The voice cried, "Let me go free!" Parsons sleepily performed the brief magical operation (non-sexual) known as the License to Depart. It is in the Goetia, or Lesser Key of Solomon. Smith's spirit was free to return to his body.

Parsons wrote Crowley, "I have diligently followed the VIIIth Degree instructions as (a) creation of new orders of beings with consecrated talismanic images. Possible connective result: increase in writing output; (b) Invocation of Mother Goddess, using Priest's call in mass and silver cup as talisman; sometimes using suitable poetry such as Venus. Possible connective result: loss of Betty's affections as preliminary to (c) Invocation of Air Elemental Kerub [Cherub]... in Enochian Air Tablet." The rite ended with Parsons commanding the spirit to appear in human form. On January 18 they went into the Mojave Desert to recuperate. Parsons turned to Hubbard at the end of the trip and said simply, "It is done."

On February 23, 1946 Parsons triumphantly wrote to Crowley, "I have my elemental! She turned up one night after the conclusion of the Operation, and has been with me since." The Elemental was Marjorie Cameron, sprung from Parsons' head like Sophia from the Godhead or Pallas Athena from Zeus. She adopted the magical name "Candida," calling herself "Candy" for short. Soon she married Parsons, and helped him with his magic.

Crowley sent Parsons an admonishment about Cameron. He reminded him of Eliphas Levi's advice that, "The love of the Magus for such things [Elementals] is insensate and may destroy him." Be aware that Crowley considered himself to be the reincarnation of Levi. Crowley also claimed to have intervened personally on Parsons' behalf, presumably on the astral plane. He does not say. It is possible Crowley knew someone who could send a girl like Cameron to Parsons. Cameron was from New York, though she had been born in Iowa and raised in the "Cthulhu Country" of Wisconsin. Crowley had spent some time in New York during World War I. Cameron spent most



of her February back in New York visiting her mother. Hubbard as out of town on business.

On February 28, Parsons made a solo trip back to the desert and received Liber 49 in an unexplained manner. Jacques Vallee says Parsons claimed to have met a Venusian there in 1945 or 1946. Without the exact date, one cannot tell if the Venusian was the implied source of Liber 49. Parsons took this to be an affirmation of the need to produce a magical child. When Hubbard returned he channelled a message from a red-haired, green-eyed angel ordering them to "Light first flame at 10 pm, March 2, 1946. The year of Babalon is 4063." That would be 2118 BC, the significance of which I have not determined. Cameron returned from New York and moved in with Parsons. She was now to be an integral part of the Babalon Working. After Parsons' initial contact with the Beyond, Hubbard began acting as seer. Parsons called him Scribe in his notes. I do not know whether Hubbard actually participated in the higher workings of the OTO. Based on other sources I will discuss shortly it is clear he was present when Parsons did.

The operation began as directed on March 2. That evening a fire started in Parsons' chimney. Later he decided it had occurred when he had smashed an image of Pan as a sacrifice. The idol had been a favorite personal possession. The papers containing the Seventh Aire that he burned may have had something to do with the fire as well. Parsons expressed his confidence, but wrote, "Now I can do no more than pray and wait."

Between the second and fourth of March, 1946, Parsons recorded in a letter to Crowley what he described as "the most devastating experience of my life. I believe it was the result of the IXth Degree working with the girl who answered my elemental summons. I have been in direct communication with one who is most Holy and beautiful, mentioned in The Book of the Law. I cannot write the name at present." Secretly he did write her name. He called her Babalon. The one identified in The Book of the Law is the Egyptian goddess Nuit. In Liber 49 Babalon says she is the incestuous daughter of Nuit and Horus. Her avatar on earth is the Scarlet Woman. Babalon



is not mentioned in The Book of the Law. The Scarlet Woman is.

Parsons documented the working in The Book of Babalon, of which a little survives. Liber 49 he came to see as a heretical fourth chapter of The Book of the Law. There are only three. He saw the four chapters as corresponding to the four letters of the ineffable name of God: YHWH, the Hebrew Yod He Vau He. He assigned one chapter to each letter and to what each letter represented. Unknown to Parsons, Frater Achad would proclaim the Aeon of another goddess in Vancouver, the Egyptian Maat. Crowley expelled Achad from the Order as well.

## Four

"I will provide the vehicle."

Babalon to Parsons, March 1, 1946

The purpose of Parsons' 9th Degree working was the birth of a child into whom Babalon would incarnate. It had said in *The Book of the Law* four decades earlier that this child would be "mightier than all the kings of the Earth." Aleister Crowley had once thought Frater Achad was this magical child. Parsons came to think differently. I quote from Crowley's *Moonchild* to explain the concept.

"... [T]hey wanted very much to produce a man who should not be bound up in his heredity, and should have the environment which they desired for him.

"They started in parapsychical ways; that is, they repudiated natural generation altogether. They made figures of brass, and tried to induce souls to indwell them. In some accounts we read that they succeeded; Friar Bacon was credited with one such Homunculus; so was Albertus Magnus, and, I think, Paracelsus...

"But other magicians sought to make this Homunculus in a way closer to nature. In all these cases they had held that environment could be modified at will by the application of telemata or sympathetic figures. For example, a nine-pointed star would attract the influence which they called Luna - not meaning the actual moon, but an idea similar to the poets' idea of her. By surrounding an object with such stars, with similarly-disposed herbs, perfumes, metals, talismans, and so on, and by carefully keeping off all other influences by parallel methods, they hoped to invest the original object so treated with the Lunar qualities, and no others...

"They thought that by performing this experiment in a specially prepared place, a place protected magically against all incompatible forces, and

by invoking into that place some one force which they desired, some tremendously powerful being, angel or archangel - and they had conjurations which they thought capable of doing this - that they would be able to cause the incarnation of beings of infinite knowledge and power, who would be able to bring the whole world into Light and Truth."

Robert Anton Wilson offers the grotesque alternative of filling a jar with horse manure and ejaculating into it repeatedly. He says this is in some manuscripts of the Goetia. See Franz Hartmann's *Paracelsus: Life and Prophecies* for another description of how to produce a homunculus. Dusty Sklar mentions Hitler's presence at another attempt before his rise to power. She does not say if this was a sexual rite.

Crowley was now a dying man with a heroin problem caused by respiratory problems. About Parsons' claims he was not happy. Grant blames Crowley's age and his health. Crowley wrote Parsons, "You have got me completely puzzled by your remarks about the elemental - the danger of discussing or copying anything [Parsons' revelations were still a closely-guarded secret]. I thought I had a most morbid imagination, as good as any man's, but it seems I have not. I cannot form the slightest idea what you can possibly mean." (April 19, 1946.) Frater Saturnus (Karl Germer) was a California resident and Outer Head of the Order for North America at the time. To him Crowley wrote, "Apparently he, or Hubbard, or somebody, is producing a Moonchild. I get fairly frantic when I contemplate the idiocy of these louts." Again, to Germer on May 31, 1946:

"The question of Frater 210 [Parsons] seems to me very typical. He reminds me up to a point - though he is on a much lower plane than they - of two men who joined the Order shortly after I took it over [Charles Stansfeld Jones and Victor Neuburg]: both cases seem to me to have certain significance if applied to the present position of Frater 210.

"Both cases were alike in this - that after a very short period of training both had more than fulfilled their early promise; they could claim not only



attainment, but achievement - and that in no small degree. I am sorry that there is no possibility of making any similar claim on behalf of Frater 210...

"He has got a miraculous illumination which rimes with nothing, and he has apparently lost all his personal independence."

Parsons did not impregnate Cameron despite his enthusiasm. Grant mentions Crowley's failure to reincarnate via Cameron, implying Crowley himself was to be the Moonchild. Michael Bertiaux says Crowley incarnated as a female somewhere in Asia. Crowley had apparently predicted this before his death. Crowley died December 1, 1947, long after the Babalon Working began - and ended. Not nine months but nine years later, Cameron would claim to be Babalon herself, and to have given birth to a Magical Child on the astral plane. Grant says this Child matured and now resides beyond the sphere of Yuggoth (Pluto).

Grant writes, "The [Babalon] Working began... just prior to the wave of unexplained aerial phenomena now recalled as the 'Great Flying Saucer Flap'. Parsons opened a door and something flew in." It may have been the atomic bomb that opened that door. Cameron once saw a flying saucer and supposed it was the "war-engine" mentioned in The Book of the Law III:7-8. She thought the earth would explode and the saucers would take her and her friends back to her original home on Mars. Francis King mentions Parsons' belief in flying saucers. Parsons felt the saucers "would play a part in converting the world to Crowleyanity." Another Aerojet employee, Daniel Fry, saw a saucer in 1950. He went on to become an active figure in 1950s contacteeism. Late science fiction writer Philip K. Dick speculates in VALIS about the Paraclete. The Paraclete is the Logos or Holy Spirit of the Manicheans. Bedouins found the Nag Hammadi library in Egypt in 1945. Dick says the Paraclete awoke from its slumber when the translation of these documents began a couple years later. Did Parsons help open this door as well?

Something happened to make the Moonchild manifest herself in popular culture. There is a song of the same name on King Crimson's first album (1969). She

also is a sexy heroine in Nicola Cuti's comic books. The movie Ghostbusters II contains a confused attempt to present a similar concept.

Cameron appeared in Kenneth Anger's short film Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome in 1954. Cameron starred both as the Scarlet Woman and Kali. Pictures of her in make-up are in The Aleister Crowley Scrapbook and The Equinox vol. III, no. 10. She was also in the Curtis Harrington horror film Night Tide in 1961 with Dennis Hopper. Harrington had been in Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome as well. His Wormwood Star is a profile of Cameron. Anger is better known to many as author of the Hollywood Babylon books. He missed a good bet by not calling them Hollywood Babalon.

The Church of Thelema used Parsons' daily performance of the Gnostic Mass as a recruiting ground for the OTO. One wonders what influence the publication of the Nag Hammadi library would have had on the mass. Other dramatic events occurring in 1947 include the invention of the transistor, the breaking of the sound barrier, the founding of Israel, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the organization of the CIA. I turn now to other sources, to see what effect Jack Parsons had on the material plane.

## Five

"What is the tumult among the stars that have shone so still till now?"

### The Birth of Babalon

The physical moon interested Parsons as well. To balance his night side, Parsons by day was a chemical engineer. He was a self-taught explosives expert. His innovative work and bold experimentation were instrumental during World War II. He helped lay the foundation for America's getting into space. Some of his papers remain classified by our government.

JPL began in 1936 as the Guggenheim Aeronautical Laboratory, California Institute of Technology (GALCIT). GALCIT started as a rocket project funded and pursued by a group of amateurs. The group was under the direction of the well-known Hungarian professor Theodore von Karman. This group made many innovations in propulsion theory. They successfully applied this knowledge to physical tests of rocket engines. Koppes says, "...the GALCIT researchers could plausibly claim that they - not Robert Goddard or the German V2 experimenters - laid the foundation for the development of American rocket and missile technology."

The public considered rockets to be science fiction in the 1930s. The label was not a compliment. A few dreamers like Theodore von Karman contemplated it despite peer pressure. So did his graduate student and surrogate son Frank J. Malina.

Parsons and another enthusiast named Ed Forman heard a speech given by William Bollay. Bollay was one of von Karman's graduate students. They inquired at GALCIT and Bollay referred them to Malina. Neither Parsons nor Forman had ever attended college. Both had positive qualities that attracted Malina to them. Forman was an expert mechanic. Parsons had worked for several black powder companies. Koppes says he "possessed an encyclopedic command of explosives and similar



chemicals." Arthur Lyons records his practice of travelling to the sites of accidental industrial explosions. This was how he sought new ideas for his work.

Parsons and Forman were practical men. They were not interested in theory. They wanted to launch rockets. They were prepared to spend long hours experimenting by trial and error. So was Malina, but he was also a trained theoretician. Von Karman insisted on working out the theoretical aspects before any experiments could begin. Impatience often led to tension with Parsons and Forman. Malina was often caught between them and his mentor, von Karman.

Malina went to Roswell, New Mexico to visit ex-Nazi Robert Goddard during the summer of 1936. Roswell was to be the site of an alleged flying saucer crash in 1947. Though Goddard was polite enough on the surface, he showed signs of a deep-seated nervous tension. Malina found him too secretive. Goddard thought Malina was trying to steal the secrets of his twenty-year career.

By this time Malina believed he had the theoretical background to begin experimenting with rockets. GALCIT did not provide any funding, nor the facilities. Malina, Parsons, and Forman paid for everything. They performed their experiments between classes and their various jobs. They spent their weekends searching the city for used equipment. Whoever happened to have money at the time would pay for the purchase. They almost gave up in June, 1936 when they could not raise \$120 to buy a needed piece of equipment. Koppes writes, "At one point Malina and Parsons considered writing a movie script about flight to the moon which they hoped to sell to Hollywood to raise funds." I have found no record of the script's existence.

Their first test ended in failure when a broken fuel line ignited. It became a flaming sidewinder. The experimenters ran for their lives. Later tests fared somewhat better. The group still measured success in how many seconds the motor fired. Their results did attract enough attention to gain a little

moral and financial support from other graduate students. Von Karman offered his support in the form of student aid and a move on-campus in the spring of 1937.

Campus residents soon resented their presence. Their testing was loud and violent. Immediately after their arrival on campus, the group met their first disaster. They had mounted a rocket motor to a fifty-foot pendulum in their laboratory. They measured the swing of the pendulum to calculate the thrust produced. The first motor tested exploded. A cloud of methyl alcohol and nitrogen dioxide filled the building. A thin layer of rust formed on many pieces of valuable equipment. This later gave Parsons the ground-breaking idea of using red fuming nitric acid as an oxidizer. Students started to call the group the Suicide Squad.

The college ordered them out of the building. Von Karman let them attach a new testing mount to an exterior wall. They made it five times stronger than they thought necessary. In 1939 another motor exploded and piece of steel was thrown into the wall where Malina had been standing. Von Karman had called him away just moments earlier. Surprisingly, none of the original group was injured during their many tests.

A paper published in December of that year by Malina and a grad student appropriately named Apollo brought the group the mixed blessing of publicity. Several major US papers printed their story and their picture. A local radio station wanted to broadcast the sound of a motor firing. Koppes does not say if the event ever took place. Malina lamented the fuss. The papers regularly predicted flights to the moon, and ran many illustrations of the idea. One man offered to ride a rocket up into the air at a fair and parachute down. Malina declined. He remembered how the press had turned on Goddard after he didn't immediately produce mass transit to the moon.

In May, 1938 they achieved their best results yet, running a motor for longer than a minute. However, the graduate students finished their term and drifted away. Malina became busy on other projects as his Ph.D. drew near. Thoughts of a career began to take

precedence. A chance visit by Army Air Corps commanding general H.H. Arnold changed everything. The possible military applications and the prospect of a war with Germany intrigued Arnold. Money began coming in to the GALCIT experimenters.

Lean times had forced Parsons and Forman to take jobs with Halifax Powder Company in the Mojave Desert. Even so, they had managed to launch a few black-powder rockets of their own. Now they were free to experiment full-time, but Malina for one resented working on military projects. Space travel was his goal, not better munitions. Nonetheless, the group now had more money than they ever, enough to satisfy both kinds of research.

Parsons experienced repeated failures over the next few years, in his attempts at devising a better fuel configuration. He needed one that would burn long enough to generate the thrust needed to propel a rocket high into the atmosphere. In 1940 von Karman and Malina returned to the drawing board and showed on paper the feasibility of long-duration burns. The Army immediately doubled their funding. This infuriated Goddard. GALCIT leased seven acres of land from Pasadena six miles from campus in the Arroyo Seco. The land was near a dam called the Devil's Gate. The school never missed them.



## Six

"Only in the irrational and unknown direction can we come to it [wisdom] again."

Letter to Cameron, late 1940s

The first few buildings erected in the Arroyo in 1940 were the beginning of today's JPL. Hoffman points out that Hillside Strangler Kenneth Bianchi would later "deposit his victims in ceremonial order" nearby. Malina, Parsons and Forman moved their living quarters there from the campus in 1941. As the imminence of war became greater, funding increased more than five times for 1942.

The group succeeded in producing rocket motors reliable enough for flying airplanes. Called JATOs - jet-assisted takeoffs - they were still crude motors capable of flying only a small plane from a large runway. The first successful flight was August 12, 1941. This flight brought the group a contract with the Navy. The new contract had even stricter performance requirements. They accepted it with some hesitation. The group did not know if they could fulfill the obligation. They had discovered that they could not store the rockets for any length of time without their spontaneously exploding. They also could not experience any severe temperature changes.

Parsons pondered this situation at length. Then intuition struck. Black powder had the same problems in any form. Why not abandon it altogether? Instead of brittle charcoal, Parsons switched to bituminous asphalt. For saltpeter he substituted potassium perchlorate as an oxidizer. Koppes says Parsons got the idea from watching a crew seal a flat roof with tar. Malina said Parsons knew of Greek fire, an asphalt-based material used by the ancients.

It worked. Further refinements resulted in a solid rocket-fuel used extensively in the last years of World War II. Their attentions were also on liquid

propellants, and they were successful there as well. In July 1940 they had begun dabbling in the field. The first lead came when one of the researchers found a reference in an old textbook. He read that hydrocarbon fuels would produce a large amount of thrust for a very small volume.

Parsons' contribution was to use red fuming nitric acid as an oxidizer, rather than the liquid oxygen preferred by Goddard and the Germans. This led them to produce their first 1000-lb thrust unit in October, 1941. They struggled with further instabilities until Malina suggested switching to a different fuel. This worked so well that in April, 1942 they flew a bomber with the newly-perfected JATO's. Said Malina, "We now have something that really works and we should be able to help give the Fascists hell!" Von Karman called it "the beginning of practical rocketry in the United States." They now had funding amounting to several hundred thousand dollars a year. This was a large figure in those days for the work of a few men.

In March, 1942 von Karman, Malina, Parsons, Forman, and two others formed the Aerojet Corporation. Each of the six put up \$200 and assigned all patent rights to the corporation. The first couple years were uncertain. Once everything had settled, a mutual relationship developed between GALCIT and Aerojet. Parsons, Forman, and a third partner quit GALCIT to work full-time at Aerojet. Von Karman contracted with the new firm as a consultant. Other employees shifted between the two organizations as needed. Aerojet often tested new products at GALCIT. GALCIT projects were often designed at Aerojet.

GALCIT expanded into JPL in 1944. It became a permanent University of Southern California (USC) facility operated by the California Institute of Technology (Cal Tech). Their main customer was the Army Ordnance Corps. They researched missile technology and developed the United States' first nuclear missiles, the Corporal and the Sergeant. Getting into space remained a dream of the staff. They launched the WAC Corporal here in 1945. It was the first man-made object to leave the atmosphere.

Parsons and some of the other owners sold their Aerojet stock for very low prices after the war. Those who did not profited from their foresight. Parsons returned to GALCIT, now JPL. He soon left for potentially better opportunities. He never found them.

Malina left JPL to become head of the scientific research division of UNESCO in France. He died there in 1981. The question may arise how Jacques Vallee first heard of Parsons. He references John Keel, but I have a theory of my own. Vallee is from France. He may have met Malina there. Malina would have been a popular man when describing his old GALCIT days with Parsons. If Vallee never knew Malina personally, he may have known somebody who did. Vallee suggests that JPL would deny Parsons ever existed. As evidenced by the memorial plaque, the opposite is actually the case.

Others have written about the early days of JPL and GALCIT as well. Chapman references one in his bibliography. Koppes reproduces a group photo after pg. 112 that includes Parsons. I have not seen it printed elsewhere. Malina and von Karman are especially easy to look up. References abound. For his contributions to science, Parsons enjoys the singular distinction of having a crater on the moon named after him. Parsons Crater is at 37 N latitude, 171 W longitude. Appropriately enough, as Staley points out, it is on the dark side of the moon.



## Seven

"This is the way of it. Star, star, burning bright.  
Moon, witch moon."

Liber 49 (v. 69)

I mentioned Parsons' interest in science fiction, a field that grew while Parsons was testing rockets and worshipping the Goddess. I told of the idea he and Malina had to write a movie script, an idea that never came to pass. He did work on special effects explosions for Hollywood in the late 1940's or early 1950's. A science-fiction discussion group met at Parsons' house on Saturdays. A.E. van Vogt was one of many who visited. Hubbard was a science fiction writer. He has several novels in print today, and many non-fiction Scientology works. New titles continue to be added to Hubbard's canon. Parsons' favorite author was not Hubbard. It was Jack Williamson. Parsons' favorite novel was Williamson's *Darker Than You Think* (1940). Williamson first met Parsons at a meeting of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society in 1940 or 1941. The OTO was still meeting at Smith's house. Williamson recorded the event in his autobiography, *Wonder's Child*:

"I met John Parsons. An odd enigma to me, he was a rocket engineer with unexpected leanings toward the occult. He wanted to meet me because I'd written *Darker Than You Think* - a good many people have taken it more seriously than I ever did; witches now and then have taken me for a fellow Wiccan.

"Parsons belonged to the OTO, an underground order founded, I think, by the satanist Aleister Crowley. One night Cleve Cartmill and I were allowed to climb after him into an attic to attend a secret meeting. The ritual was disappointingly tame. There was no nude virgin on the altar. Satan was not invoked.

"Yet the priest impressed me. He was a lean, dynamic little man with bright, light blue eyes, driven by a virulent hatred of God. Talking to him

after the ceremony, I found that he was the son of a British clergyman who must have been the real target of that savage animosity."

It sounds like Williamson met the Great Beast himself, Aleister Crowley. Did he? I checked several of Crowley's biographies. In 1905, he and Rose had passed through the United States on their way to India, and even spent a brief honeymoon in the new American possession of Hawaii. His only stay in the continental United States occurred during the first World War. He visited Frater Achad in Vancouver in 1915. He then moved to New York. Crowley left the United States in 1919. He never returned. Crowley made a few trips to Germany in the late 1930s to visit the OTO. After that he remained on the island of Great Britain. Crowley died there in 1947. Williamson's implication of a meeting with Crowley looks to be little more than a setup for a few derogatory remarks about what he called a satanist.

Williamson concludes: "In Pasadena not long ago, walking across the grounds of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, I was jolted to see Parsons' name on a memorial tablet set up to honor the first martyrs to space [emphasis added]. He had written me once about testing multicellular solid-fuel rockets designed after those in my story 'The Crucible of Power'. When I first heard about his death I wondered if my own rockets had killed him."

**Darker Than You Think** is the story of hereditary werewolves who have discovered their true bestial nature. They seek to revive the old ways and the old gods. They accomplish this under the leadership of the Child of Night. He is the result of a magical prodigious birth. The book is readily available. I have seen several copies in used bookstores. The connection to Wicca and neo-paganism is obvious. So is the parallel to the Babalon Working. **Darker Than You Think** is listed under "Religion and Myths" in *The Visual Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*.

Burton Wolfe points out another intersection with the world of science fiction. He discusses Parsons briefly, then brings up the Germanic tierdrama of the OTO

(he may have meant the Golden Dawn). To reclaim their suppressed animal nature, Wolfe (!) says they would dress in animal costume and recite this Litany of the Law:

"Not to go on all fours; that is the Law.

Are we not Men?

Not to kill without thinking; that is the Law.

Are we not Men?

Man is God. We are men. We are gods. God is man.

His is the place called Heaven.

His is the place called Hell.

His is what ours is.

He is what we are.

There runs a mouse:

whoever catches her may make a great,  
great cap out of her fur."

This last line is from one of the fairy tales collected by the brothers Grimm. If the rest sounds familiar, it should. H.G. Wells paraphrased it in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. Techno-pop pioneers Devo later used the "Are We Not Men" part for their own ends. Wolfe says that Wells knew of one of the Golden Dawn splinter groups. Several had formed after Crowley broke up the original Isis-Urania Lodge in London. He says, "through him [Crowley] Wells became acquainted with the OTO." I have no independent confirmation of this.



## Eight

"We are as old as man."

### Basic Magick: Fundamental Theory and Practice

The enigmatic L. Ron Hubbard was founder of the notorious Church of Scientology. In 1969 the Church thought it prudent to issue a statement concerning Hubbard's involvement with Parsons. It was a paid announcement in a London newspaper. This is how it read:

"Hubbard broke up black magic in America: Dr. Jack Parsons of Pasadena, California, was America's Number One solid fuel rocket expert. He was involved with the infamous english [sic] black magician Aleister Crowley who called himself 'The Beast 666'. Crowley ran an organization called the Order of Templars Orientalis [sic] over the world which had savage and bestial rites. Dr. Parsons was head of the American branch located at 100 Orange Grove Avenue, Pasadena, California. This was a huge old house which had paying guests who were the U.A.S. nuclear physicists working at Cal. tech. Certain agencies objected to nuclear physicists being housed under the same roof.

"L. Ron Hubbard was still an officer of the U.S. Navy because he was well known as a writer and philosopher [sic] and had friends among the physicists, he was sent in to handle the situation. He went to live at the house and investigated the black magic rites and the general situation and found them very bad.

"Parsons wrote to Crowley in England about Hubbard. Crowley 'the Beast 666' evidently detected an enemy and warned Parsons. This was all proven by the correspondence unearthed by the [London] Sunday Times. Hubbard's mission was successful far beyond anyone's expectations. The house was torn down. Hubbard rescued a girl they were using. The black magic group was dispersed and never recovered. The physicists included many of the sixty-four top U.S. scientists who were later declared insecure and dismissed from government

service with so much publicity."

(Statement by the Church of Scientology, December, 1969.)

This official statement contains several errors. Parsons' house was at 1003 Orange Grove Avenue, not 100. It was not torn down. Parsons sold it after Hubbard's departure and moved into a coachhouse on the same property. Hubbard did not rescue Betty but rather eloped with her. She became his second wife before he divorced his first. The group did not disperse at all. The OTO is bigger than ever today, in California and throughout the world. Agape Lodge did eventually shut its doors, but not until more than a decade later. Jon Atack tells us the original statement was later discovered. It was in Hubbard's handwriting.

Here are some of Hubbard's earlier remarks concerning Parsons, Crowley, and the OTO. He wrote of Parsons in a much more favorable light for a Scientology bulletin in 1957: "One chap by the way, gave us solid fuel rockets and assist takeoffs for airplanes too heavily loaded, and all the rest of this rocketry panorama, and who formed Aerojet in California and so on. The late Jack Parsons... was not a chemist, the way we think of chemists... He eventually became quite a man."

Hubbard spoke about Crowley during the Philadelphia Doctorate Course in 1952. He said, "The magic cults of the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th centuries in the Middle East were fascinating. The only work that has anything to do with them is a trifle wild in spots, but it's fascinating work... written by Aleister Crowley, the late Aleister Crowley, my very good friend... It's very interesting reading to get hold of a copy of a book, quite rare, but it can be obtained, The Master Therion... by Aleister Crowley. He signs himself 'The Beast,' the mark of the Beast, six sixty-six." I assume he means Liber AL vel Legis, Crowley's Book of the Law. In another lecture Hubbard said, "One fellow, Aleister Crowley, picked up a level of religious worship which is very interesting - oh boy! The Press played hockey with his head for his whole life-time. The Great Beast - 666. He just had another level of religious worship. Yes, sir, you're free to



worship everything under the Constitution so long as it's Christian." As Crowley was English, I don't see how the Constitution would apply to him.

In 1945 Hubbard was at the Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in San Francisco. He had yet to meet Parsons. Hubbard complained of various ailments that were hard to diagnose. After several visits the Navy eventually gave Hubbard a medical discharge. He began receiving financial benefits when he said he could no longer practice his livelihood of being a writer. In a Scientology publication, Hubbard later said he was recertified for "full combat duty" in 1949.

In April, 1945 a science fiction illustrator named Lou Goldstone brought Hubbard over to meet Parsons. Parsons liked Hubbard immediately. Parsons had begun his work with Sara "Betty" Northrup, Helen's younger sister, after Helen had left with Smith. He encouraged her to have other lovers as well. She readily agreed, and immediately took up with Hubbard. She left with him soon after and became Mrs. Hubbard. She didn't know it, but Hubbard was still married.

Hubbard affected Alva Rogers as he did Parsons. Rogers and Hubbard were both redheads, and the latter confided his belief that all redheads descended from the Neanderthal rather than pure Homo sapiens. Keep this in mind when reading *Darker Than You Think*. A reporter named Nielson Himmel lived in the house. He thought he saw a con man behind all those charming war stories. Himmel was one of the few who refused to lend Hubbard money. Hubbard did not like him.

Himmel wrote, "There he [Hubbard] was, living off Parsons' largesse and making out with his girlfriend right in front of him. Sometimes when the two of them were sitting at the table together, the hostility was almost tangible... Jack found it increasingly difficult to keep his mind on anything but the torrid affair going on between Ron and Betty and the atmosphere around the house became supercharged with tension."

Hubbard left for the Hospital for a while to strengthen his disability claim. He returned in December, 1945 and resumed his affair with Betty. Only a few like



Rogers realized the true pain hidden beneath Parsons' cavalier front. He wrote of an accidental peek caught one night through the cracked-open door:

"It was dimly lit and smoky from incense; Jack was draped in a black robe and stood with his back to us, his arms outstretched, in the center of a pentagram before some sort of altar affair on which several indistinguishable items stood.

"His voice, which was actually not very loud, rose and fell in a rhythmic chant of gibberish which was delivered with such passionate intensity that its meaning was frighteningly obvious. After this brief and uninvited glimpse into the blackest and most secret center of a tortured man's soul, we quietly withdrew and returned to our room, where we spent the balance of the night discussing in whispers what we had just witnessed."

After Hubbard's return in December, 1945, Parsons wrote in his diary, "I have been suffered to pass through an ordeal of human love and jealousy... I have found a staunch companion and comrade in Ron... Ron and I are to continue with our plans for the Order." They did so a few days later, on January 4th.

DeWolf says Hubbard was part of a local police attempt to break up the lodge, no doubt based on the 1969 Church statement. A second Church statement was issued in 1980. It said Hubbard was working for Naval Intelligence instead of the police. J. Gordon Melton suggests both Parsons' and Hubbard's stories are true. Each was seeing things from his own point of view.

A Freedom of Information Act request should be able to locate any declassified Naval Intelligence records. Atack says the files he saw on Parsons do not mention Hubbard. The files he saw on Hubbard show no evidence of Hubbard's involvement with Intelligence operations. The police continued to defend Parsons against his accusers despite Hubbard's presence in the house. Since both parties are deceased, we may never know the full story.

## Nine

"... some of my most ominous predictions have been all too grimly fulfilled."

### Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword

Parsons returned with Liber 49 from his trip to the Mojave in late February, 1946. Hubbard wanted to smooth over their difficulties. He reported a vision to Parsons he said was given him by an angel. In his vision Hubbard saw a beautiful naked woman with long red hair and slanted green eyes astride a large cat. The reader familiar with Crowley may recall his repeated references to the Great Beast and his Scarlet Woman in the biblical book of Revelation. This was how Crowley referred to himself and his current consort, as Simon Magus had his Helen. She was Sophia incarnate. This was also the cover picture on the original edition of *Darker Than You Think* and several of the reprints. My copy has a nice rendition of the theme by underground comics artist Jeff Jones.

Hubbard called his angel "The Empress." He said she had saved his life on many occasions. Hubbard had spoken of the Empress to others before this, though without giving her description. DeWolf later said his father identified her with the Empress of the Tarot, the Egyptian Hathor, and even Babalon. Parsons thought she might be his Holy Guardian Angel. The result of Hubbard's vision was the March 2 - 4 working with Cameron. Rachmaninoff's *Isle of the Dead* was the preferred theme. As with Prokofiev in January, they played it at very high volume.

To what extent did Hubbard participate in the Working? Parsons' 8th Degree rite was solo in nature, with Hubbard present and acting as scribe. After the eleven formal nights of invocation, he recorded in his magical diary that he and Hubbard continued their nightly workings "as appropriate to one of my grade." To which grade did he refer? His 9th Degree working with Cameron included Hubbard in the role of scribe. Consider the



following from Parsons' Analysis by a Master of the Temple (i.e., a Magister Templi, the 8th Degree of the A\A\): "Betty served to effect a transference from Helen at a critical period. Had this not occurred, your repressed homosexual component could have caused a serious disorder."

Presumably Cameron served a similar function. Hubbard was merely a scribe and seer. To help his astral vision, he may have performed his own 8th Degree activities while doing so. It is clear he partook in no 9th Degree magic. He never engaged in any 11th Degree magic (homosexual).

Hubbard had been sending what little he had to his wife and children. They were living with his parents in Washington state. DeWolf was one of the children Hubbard left behind when he left San Francisco and the Naval Hospital for Pasadena. He saw his father for the last time in 1948. For lack of money, Ron left with Betty in April, 1946. Later that month Parsons would realize they had cheated him. He threatened to chase the two. A call to Hubbard soon calmed Parsons down.

By June he could wait no longer. Parsons went to Florida after Hubbard and Betty. They had taken the partnership's money, most of which was Parsons'. They bought a sailboat with it. Parsons followed them to the Atlantic coast. He then invoked Bartzabel (a form of Mars). A sudden squall caught the pair and forced them to return to shore. Parsons was waiting for them. He got a little of his money back, with a worthless promissory note for the rest. Parsons returned to Pasadena and never heard from either party again.

Parsons' bad luck now forced him to stop sending Helen and Smith money. His regular contributions to Crowley continued until the latter's death in 1947. OTO member Louis Culling makes an interesting remark. Culling says that Parsons was bootlegging nitroglycerine to raise money after leaving JPL and Aerojet. Parsons sold the old house in 1946 and moved into a coach house on the property with his wife Cameron. I am not sure where the OTO met after this. The Agape Lodge did not close until ten years later.



Hubbard committed bigamy with Betty on August 10, 1946. Three centuries earlier John Dee had also experimented with the Seventh Aire, using Edward Kelley as a medium. After their terrifying revelations from an angel of that same Aire, Kelley robbed Dee, ran off with his wife, and began a criminal career. The parallel to Hubbard's treatment of Parsons is striking.

Hubbard was an expert hypnotist. Miller attributes this knowledge to Parsons. Hubbard later said he worked for twelve years researching Dianetics. It first appeared in 1948. This was just a year or so after his departure from Pasadena. Much of his research must have taken place in the strange house on Orange Grove Avenue.

After he tired of Betty, Hubbard wrote the FBI to implicate her in the Red Scare. "I believe this woman to be under heavy duress," he wrote. "She was born into a criminal atmosphere, her father having a criminal record. Her half-sister [Helen?] was an inmate of an asylum. She was part of a free love colony in Pasadena [as was Hubbard]. She had attached herself to a Jack Parsons, the rocket expert, during the war and when she left him he was a wreck. Further, through Parsons, she was strangely intimate with many scientists of Los Alamos [sic] [Alamogordo, New Mexico]. I did not know these things until I myself investigated the matter."

This last reference may have been a reference to his espionage activities, but Miller says the FBI did not take him seriously. He had written to accuse her of being a Communist or Communist sympathizer. His FBI file was already larger than most so they did not investigate the issue. If any reference exists to his spy days, the FBI would have it. Why did they not take him seriously? Here is another instance where the Freedom of Information Act might shed some light.

More interesting is Hubbard's statement to "Lexi" Hubbard's lawyer. Alexis Valerie Hubbard was Betty's daughter. After he had become wealthy, Lexi went to him looking for financial support. His prepared statement read, "Your mother was with me as a secretary in Savannah in late 1948... In July 1949 I was in Elizabeth,

New Jersey, writing a movie [title not given]. She turned up destitute and pregnant."

Miller writes, "Hubbard implied that Alexis' father was Jack Parsons [emphasis added], but out of the kindness of his heart he had taken her mother in to see her through 'her trouble'. Later he said he came up from Palm Springs, California, where he was living, and found Alexis abandoned; she was just a toddler, a 'cute little thing', and so he had taken her along on his wanderings for a couple of years." Was Alexis the Moonchild?! She was born March 8, 1950, two years too late. If she was the child of Parsons then she was probably sired as part of a Great Working. To what end we may never know. Hubbard's records are not accessible. Parsons' magical diary for the period might tell. I do not know if it has survived.

Miller continues, "Hubbard told Alexis that her mother had been a Nazi spy during the Second World War and suggested that the divorce action was a spurious ploy on her part to win control of Scientology." Remember, Miller points out, there was no legal marriage at all. Alexis never did get to see her father, be he Hubbard or Parsons.

One former associate of Hubbard's interviewed by Miller said Hubbard admitted to having participated in magic. Melton says, "Hubbard's story is consistent with the observation that the present Church of Scientology shows no direct OTO influence." The problem is that such a comparison merely relies on structural appearances. When one considers that the foundation of each of these systems is a secret, sacred history coupled with various spiritual exercises in the form of visualization techniques, the relationship becomes clearer. Of course, these techniques were not original to Crowley either. He merely revised and systematized them in his own inimitable way, as did Hubbard after him. In a footnote, Melton states that the documentation shown him by the Church of Scientology went further toward substantiating Hubbard's story than those shown him by the OTO go toward substantiating Parsons'. He lists one of Hubbard's previous occupations as "investigator for the

Los Angeles Police Department," implying acceptance of the Church's 1969 statement.



## Ten

"Let the Scarlet Woman beware... I will slay me her child."

The Book of the Law III:43

Disillusioned, Parsons drifted away from magick and focused his will on his technical career. He had little success. In 1948 Cameron left. On Halloween of that year, Babalon appeared to Parsons and urged him to resume his magick. Parsons turned once more to God in his time of need. Many who suffer the ills of the physical world turn to the spiritual one. Parsons began a seventeen-day working "of the wand," the climax of which was Babalon's manifestation in a dream. He had Smith christen him Belarion Armiluss Al Dajjal AntiChrist. Parsons then took the Oath of the Abyss. Crossing the Abyss involves the total denial of the material world and detachment from the ego. Parsons endured an unspecified forty-day ordeal. It probably involved a retreat of some sort and fasting. Upon his return he wrote a two-page document he called The Book of AntiChrist. In it he predicted the manifestation of Babalon upon the earth within seven years. He also predicted that a nation would embrace Thelema. Babalon told him these things would come to pass only if he survived the next seven years. He did not.

Francis King writes, "[H]e issued an occult manifesto called The Book of Anti-Christ which consisted of two parts, The Black Pilgrimage and The Manifesto of the Anti-Christ. The first part dealt with the difficulties he had encountered in both his interior and exterior lives - his disillusionment with ordinary life with its financial and emotional difficulties, the spiritual 'dryness' and sense of abandonment he had suffered. This total disenchantment with life, the loss of money, home, wife and, later, mistress had made him undertake the Black Pilgrimage, a spiritual odyssey which eventually forced him to choose between three

possibilities: suicide, a retreat into madness, or taking the 'Oath of the Abyss'. This was a magical adventure essentially identical with the undergoing of the influence of opening oneself to the powers of the demon Choronzon which Crowley had experienced in the Algerian desert."

The year 1949 may be significant in relation to the number of Liber 49. Parsons chose the third path and took the Oath of the Abyss. Symonds suggests he chose the second. Parsons spent forty days in the Abyss. This was his Black Pilgrimage, foretold by Babalon three years earlier in Liber 49. Had he succeeded in crossing, he would have completed the requirements of the seventh grade of the A\A\. He would have become one of the Secret Chiefs. By calling himself a Master of the Temple, Parsons was saying as much. Was Smith his superior in the A\A\? Were both still active in the A\A\ despite their expulsion from the OTO? Were these actions taken independent of any initiating body? These questions remain unanswered.

One of Parsons' last letters to his friend Karl Germer (Fratres Saturnus) read,

"No doubt you will be delighted to hear from an adept who has undertaken the operation of his H.G.A. [Holy Guardian Angel] in accord with our traditions.

"The operation began auspiciously with a chromatic display of psychosomatic symptoms, and progressed rapidly to acute psychosis. The operator has alternated satisfactorily between manic hysteria and depressing melancholy stupor on approximately 40 cycles, and satisfactory progress has been maintained in social ostracism, economic collapses and mental disassociation.

"These statements are mentioned not in any vainglorious spirit of conceit, but rather that they may serve as comfort and inspiration to other aspirants on the Path.

"Now I'm off to the wilds of Mexico for a period, also in pursuit of the elusive H.G.A. before winding up in the guard finally via the booby hotels, the graveyard, or - ? If the final, you can tell all the little Practicuses that I wouldn't have missed it for anything.



"[Signed] No one. Once called 210."

This is how the front page of the Los Angeles Times read for June 18, 1952: "ROCKET SCIENTIST KILLED IN PASADENA. Tragedy Drives His Mother To Suicide. Mysterious Notes Found In Wreckage." The community still considered Parsons a rocket scientist at this late date.

Hubbard had channelled a prophetic message on March 2, 1946. It is ironic for the way Parsons died. "She [Babalon] is the flame of life, power of darkness, she destroys with a glance, she may take thy soul. She feeds upon the death of men... She shall absorb thee, and thou shalt become living flame before She incarnates." Grant was the first to have noticed the symbolic nature of Parsons' exit. He says of Cameron that she "claimed to be the incarnation of the Scarlet Woman, and she whose Word is Life, Love, Liberty and Light proved too much for Parsons, who found in her a devouring flame." Cameron's claim to be Babalon may be a result of the original operation having failed on the physical plane.

Parsons would not have predicted Babalon's physical manifestation within seven years, as he did in "The Manifesto of the AntiChrist," if she were already here in the person of Cameron. After the three-day working in March, 1946, Parsons had proclaimed, "Babalon is incarnate upon the earth today, awaiting the proper hour of Her manifestation." Did this refer to Cameron or to the baby he thought she was carrying? In 1949 Parsons revised this statement. Perhaps he anticipated Cameron's return. In "The Star of Babalon" Parsons admits he did not know in whom She is incarnate. He said Her spirit was within all women who proclaimed their equality to men. He also admitted to an Oedipus complex. In private correspondence, Grant explained to the present author that Cameron's possession would have taken years to develop if it were to do so at all. The 1946 operation was merely a beginning. Parsons did not live long enough to see its end. Cameron eventually came to believe she was Babalon, but Grant says otherwise in Hecate's Fountain.

On June 17, 1952 at 5:08 PM, Parsons dropped



a vial of fulminate of mercury. He died in the explosion. Flame consumed him, as Babalon had predicted. His mother then swallowed a deliberate overdose of sleeping pills in the presence of an invalid friend with whom she lived. The friend could only watch as the lady slowly died. The (Pasadena) Independent for June 18 says Parsons was still conscious when rescuers found him. He died an hour later at a hospital.

In March, 1946 Parson had written, " And in that day [the manifestation of Babalon] my work will be accomplished, and I shall be blown away upon the breath of the father." Seven years later, Parsons himself was "blown away," as John Keel noted.

In *The Occult Explosion*, Nat Freedland interviewed a filmmaker acquaintance of Cameron's (Curtis Harrington?). "I have every reason to believe that Jack Parsons was working on some very strange experiments, trying to create what the old alchemists called a homunculus, a tiny artificial man with magic powers. I think that's what he was working on when the accident happened."

This must be the source of Hoffman's saying, "In 1952 Parsons was blown up in what is officially described as an accident but which others have said was a homunculus experiment that went bananas." Hoffman further relates a "similar attempt" by unnamed others, whom he says used the radiation released by the first atomic blast to animate their homunculus.

Some of Parsons' friends did not believe he would kill himself. Others did not believe an expert could make such a fatal mistake. Cameron tells of a second explosion from under the floorboards, implying murder rather than an accident or suicide. In the OTO newsletter *The Magical Link*, she says a good suspect is an explosives expert against whom Parsons had testified. He had been pardoned prior to the fatal explosion. *Raising Hell: An Encyclopedia of Devil Worship and Satanic Crime* claims Scientologists planted the bomb. This is ridiculous. Scientology was only introduced in 1951. How many homicidal Scientologists could there be a year later? Hubbard called Crowley his "very good friend" in

the Philadelphia Doctorate Course the year Parsons died. He praised Parsons in print as late as 1957. Hubbard could have gone to Parsons at any time and made amends. He had no reason to murder him.

Parsons had been working on movie special effects, planning to quit his job at Hughes Aircraft and finance a trip to Israel. He had just lost his security clearance selling the Israelis his own classified inventions. The government declassified them as a result and reinstated his clearance. After a second occurrence they decided they could not trust him.

Parsons and Cameron reunited after a short separation. They were heading to Mexico to pursue a career explosives - and magic. He was also working on The Gnosis and The Witchcraft. Grant cryptically says Cameron continued Parsons's work after his death. So does Hymenaeus Beta, current leader of the OTO.

Church of Satan founder Anton LaVey was a detective at the time of Parsons' death. He volunteered for what the police called the 800 cases. This refers to flying saucers, haunted houses, and other strange occurrences. Wolfe talks of LaVey's amusement at the police report filed in 1952: "Along with a series of papers containing unfathomable chemical symbols, police found weird religious and occult philosophies in Parsons' private home laboratory. One note found in the wreckage was excerpted by newspapers as follows: 'Let me know [thy] misery totally and spare not and be spared not sacraments and crucifixion. O my passion and shame, dark body of the unattainable, O most beloved, most utterly lost - Mothers, sisters...'"

## Eleven

"The sword remains to be manifested."

Analysis by a Master of the Temple

One of the goals of the alchemists was to fix mercury, i.e. solidify it. Fulminate of mercury is one such form. It is as unstable as its name suggests. To fulminate is to strike with lightning. One could say in Parsons' case that mercury fixed him. Mercurius psychopompus, Mercury as soul-guide, came for Parsons on June 17, 1952. He led his tortured soul to the next world.

One also may interpret the fixing of mercury on another level. This viscous element's resemblance to semen did not go unnoticed by the ancients. The two have ancient associations in esoteric tradition. The OTO inherited their form of tantric yoga directly from sources in British-occupied India. Its goal was the retention of semen by the male during intercourse, which in turn prolongs the ecstatic experience. Divine oracles often result. Other rites involve the return of semen to the male after ejaculation. The lightning flash (fulmination) is a symbol of the moment of orgasm at ejaculation. The sky-god impregnates his bride, the Earth. To fix mercury is to postpone this event, or prevent it altogether.

Do not think that sex magic is a lustful indulgence. One needs extreme discipline to carry out repeated operations. It requires good physical fitness and a strong, focused will. To paraphrase Mircea Eliade, the same act that condemns men's souls to thousands of years in purgatory brings the yogi his salvation. It is the intent of the act that matters.

The purpose of Parsons' operation has been underemphasized. He sought to produce a magical child who would be the product of her environment rather than her heredity. Crowley describes the Moonchild in just these terms. The Babalon Working itself was a preparation for what was to come: a thelemic messiah. This messiah would



mature in a magically-influenced environment. She would then assume a leadership role. One could see how the effort spent by Parsons and Cameron would focus their minds in this direction. The many episodes of sex magick were a strong influence on the two. When one is in a vulnerable state such as this, one's sense impressions become subconsciously reinforced. Repeated efforts serve to strengthen the intent.

When Miller writes of the March 2 - 4, 1946 operation, he says that Parsons and Cameron began "copulating furiously" on the altar while Hubbard took notes. This is not the way one goes about performing tantra. With magick it is the symbolic intent of the act that is the key issue. Once the invocations were done, all that remained was to impregnate Cameron. Miller may be right in his description. Parsons did induce an altered state of some sort to contact Babalon originally, either sexually or chemically. To do so while trying to incarnate the Goddess is unnecessary.

Ecstatic communion need not take place as long as symbolic union does. Temporality stops while the participants return to sacred time. They leave profane history and return to before Creation. Their sexual act reproduces the original genesis. It regenerates the world and makes it holy. That was the final purpose of Parsons' magic.

Parsons and Cameron represented the god and his consort. The symbolism was complete. The lightning flash had to take place to produce a living child. It did, but without the desired result - at least, on the physical plane. Adam (or rather, Eve) was not reborn, and the new race of thelemic man did not appear. The quest for the perfection of Creation continues.

## Appendix A: Reconstructed Chronology.

2118 BC	The year 1 Anno Babalon.
October 12, 1875 England.	Aleister Crowley is born in
ca. 1890s in Tonbridge, Kent.	Wilfred T. Smith is born
October 2, 1914 Angeles.	Jack Parsons is born in Los
1915 America. Achad introduces him to	Crowley comes to Smith.
1919 1922 Iowa.	Crowley leaves America. Marjorie Cameron born in
1924 born.	Sara "Betty" Northrup
1929 Moonchild, written during WWI.	Crowley publishes
1930 to Los Angeles.	Smith moves Agape Lodge
1936 Malina, von Karman, et al.	GALCIT founded by
Goddard in Roswell.	Malina visits
Spring, 1937	GALCIT moves onto the campus of USC.
December, 1937 receive media attention.	GALCIT's moderate successes
May, 1938 increases GALCIT funding.	Army Air Corps visit
1939 1940 mathematically prove viability of	Parsons meets Smith. Von Karman and Malina slow-burning fuel.
publishes Darker Than You Think.	Jack Williamson
July, 1940 propellants tested.	GALCIT's first liquid

1940/1941 Williamson meets Parsons.  
1941 Malina, Parsons, Forman  
move to Arroyo Sec.  
The Parsons  
officially join the OTO and the A\A\  
Smith seduces Helen  
Parsons.  
Williamson visits  
Lodge at Smith's house.  
August 12, 1941 First JATO successfully  
tested.  
October, 1941 First 10000lb. thrust unit  
tested.  
December, 1941 The United States enter the war.  
1942 GALCIT's funding  
increased for war effort.  
Parsons' father  
dies, leaves him house.  
Lodge moves to  
Parsons' house. Smith sent away.  
Police investigate  
Parsons for the first time.  
Parsons assumes role  
of Acting Head of Lodge.  
Parsons takes Betty  
as his new mistress.  
March, 1942 Aerojet Corporation formed.  
April, 1942 JATO flown successfully on  
bomber.  
1943 Parsons writes "I hight  
Don Quixote."  
Helen has a child by  
Smith. Parsons divorces her.  
1944 GALCIT reformed as Jet  
Propulsion Laboratory.  
Parsons formally  
named Head of Lodge.  
1945 WAC Corporal launched by  
JPL, first rocket to leave Earth's  
atmosphere.  
Nag Hammadi Library



found in Egypt.	
April, 1945	Parsons meets Hubbard.
May, 1945	Hubbard moves in with Parsons.
July, 1945	Atomic bombs dropped on Japan by US.
August, 1945	Japan surrenders, war ends.
December, 1945	Hubbard returns to Pasadena after stint in Navy hospital.
1945/1946	Regina Kahl dies.
January, 1946	Parsons removed from leadership role by Crowley; called to account by Lodge shortly after.
January 4, 1946	Parsons opens the Temple with Hubbard present.
January 5, 1946	First solo rites of the Babalon Working begin, invoking twice each night.
January 5, 1946	Windstorm begins during Working, continues throughout the night.
January 14, 1946	The eleven-night Working ends.
January 18, 1946	Parsons and Hubbard go to Mojave Desert, meet "Venusian."
January 19, 1946	Parsons and Hubbard continue nightly invocations until February 27.
February 20, 1946	Allied Enterprises incorporated as a partnership.
February 23, 1946	Parsons writes Crowley about Cameron's appearance.
February 27 or 28	Hubbard leaves on personal business for a few days.
February 28, 1946	Parsons goes to Mojave Desert alone, receives Liber 49.
March 1, 1946	Parsons returns, prepares temple.
March 2, 1946	Hubbard returns, tells of "Empress." Three Day Working with Cameron and Hubbard begins.
Book of Babalon produced as a result.	
April, 1946	Hubbard and Betty leave for Florida.
April 19, 1946	Crowley derides Parsons'

Working in letter.

July 5, 1946 Parsons invokes Bartzabel  
in Miami, storm catches Hubbard and Betty  
and forces them back  
to shore.

August 10, 1946 Hubbard commits bigamy with an  
unsuspecting Betty.

October, 1946 Parsons and Cameron married.  
1947 Dead Sea Scrolls found.  
Israel founded as a nation.

Transistor  
invented. Sound barrier broken.  
Alleged flying  
saucer crash in Roswell, New Mexico.

National UFO flap  
follows Washington State sightings.

December 1, 1947 Aleister Crowley dies in  
Hastings, England.

1948 Cameron leaves Parsons.  
Parsons takes his  
Oath of the AntiChrist.

Hubbard visits first  
wife and children for last time.

First article on  
Dianetics appears.

October 31, 1948 Babalon appears to Parsons;  
17 Day Working begun.

1949 Parsons takes Oath of  
the Abyss in presence of Smith.

Parsons writes Book  
of AntiChrist.

Palomar Observatory  
opened at 33 degrees north latitude.

Hubbard jokingly  
writes Forrest Ackerman about expanding Dianetics  
into a whole  
philosophy.

1949/1950 Cameron returns to Parsons.  
1950 Aerojet's Daniel Fry  
sees his first saucer.

March 8, 1950 Alexis Valerie "Lexi" Hubbard

born.	
1951	First edition of John
Symonds' The Great Beast.	
1952	Hubbard founds Church of
Scientology.	
June 17, 1952	Parsons dies in explosion at
5:08 pm.	
1950s	Kenneth Anger films,
including one with Cameron.	
1961	Cameron appears in
Curtis Harrington's Night Tide.	
December, 1969	Church of Scientology releases
first statement.	
1972	Parsons Crater named.
1980	Church of Scientology
releases second statement.	
1989	Freedom is a Two-Edged
Sword published by OTO.	



## Appendix B: The Derivation of 210.

Smith's magical motto in the OTO was Velle Omnia Velle Nihil. Its numerical value is 132. This is the gematria of the initials "V.O.V.N." Smith abbreviated his magical name as Fra. 132. Parsons' motto was Thelemum Obtentum Procedero Amoris Nuptiae. This is Latin for "the obtainment of thelema □ Will □ through the nuptials of love." The initials T.O.P.A.N. were also a declaration of Parsons' dedication: To Pan. In Hebrew the enumeration is  $400 + 70 + 80 + 1 + 50 = 601$ . Parsons counted it as I.O.P.A.N., giving the more desirable sum 210. "Io Pan" is Greek for "Hail Pan." Crowley's *Magick In Theory and Practice* opens with a poem by this name.

The numbers 1 through 20 add to 210. In 777 Crowley also speaks of certain numbers important to each of the sephiroth (spheres) of the kabbalistic Tree of Life. The first has the value 1, the second  $1+2 = 3$ , the third  $1+2+3 = 6$ , and so on. There are ten altogether. Although Crowley does not say so, a little quick math will show these ten values also add to 210. In 777 Crowley calls the meaning of 210 "too holy" to divulge.

I believe it is in *The Book of Lies* where he makes plain the key to understanding the significance of the number 210. Taken from left to right, we see how the 2 (the magician and God) join to become the 1 (in a mystical union) and have their egos annihilated in eternal bliss. They have become naught by temporarily leaving real time. Note that Crowley's First Degree name, *Perdurabo*, means "I (that is, the ego) shall endure until the end." What is the end of "Perdurabo" if not "0"?

Thus the formula represented by 210 is a most holy one. It describes the mystic's union with God. This symbolic union can occur on the physical plane with one who is not God, but a god incarnate. To Parsons, this god incarnate was Cameron.

## Appendix C: The Significance of Babalon.

Babylon is the spirit of Rome, the Rome who subjugated the children of Israel. She is also a symbol of the material world in general. The Land of the Dead □ Egypt □ was a similar symbol for certain gnostic sects in the Middle East. Babylon is the gnostic Sophia, slighted by John but justifiably so, as she is still in her fallen state. She is the Helen of Simon Magus, but John fails to offer her redemption. She is the Chokmah of the kabbalah, or its qliphoth.

The name "BABYLON" is from the Babylonian "Bab□il," meaning "the gate of God." At one time every city thought that they were at the center of the world. The mystical center of is where the gate between the upper and lower worlds is. So it is with Jerusalem today for three of the world's major religions. So it is with Benares for the Hindus. The Hebrew form of the word is "Bab□al." It is usually written "Bab-El" or simply Babel. The name (actually a title) of God usually translated "El" (if translated at all) is actually spelled with an "A" (aleph in Hebrew. Compare the Greek alpha).

Crowley corrected the spelling to "BABALoN" to give what was to him a meaningful gematria. I use the lower case "o" to indicate omicron, the upper case to indicate omega. I have a limited knowledge of Latin, but I am sure "BABALoN" was an acronym for at least one phrase of Crowley's devising.

The original Greek spelling in the book of Revelation is "BABYLON," with the final vowel long as in omega. Gematria is the name medieval Jewish scholars gave to the ancient practice of substituting numbers for the letters in a word or name. They would add up those numbers to get a significant result. It comes from a Greek word meaning "to measure (land)." This practice dates at least to Babylon, when single letters were used to stand for numbers rather than spelling them out. In an age that has used Arabic numerals for centuries, the



significance of this achievement may be hard to appreciate.

In this system of numeration, A = 1, B = 2, and so on. After the tenth letter ("I" in the Hebrew and Greek alphabets, sometimes written as "Y") there was no need for an 11 since "IA" stood for a 10 followed by a 1. This is the way we form numerals in our base 10 system. Readers of H.P. Lovecraft will recognize "IA" as the hailing call to Cthulhu. The eleventh letter is "K." Its value is 20, and so on. Thus "BABYLON" = 2 + 1 + 2 + 400 + 80 + 800 + 50 = 1285. This is not a meaningful result. Note that "Y" is the Greek upsilon. Its original lower-case form was "u."

Crowley's corrected spelling "BABALoN" = 2 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 30 + 70 + 50 = 156. This number was significant to John Dee, being the product of 12 and 13. These were the dimensions of the table upon which he received the Enochian alphabet from an angel. Crowley referred to this number as the number of the City of the Pyramids, where initiates would spend the Night of Pan. According to legend, Pan sleeps in Arcadia, where the river runs underground. Babylon was known for its ziggurats, stepped pyramids built for the gods to descend. They served as a model for the Tower of Babel of biblical fame, also immortalized in the Tarot. It is not hard to understand the significance Crowley attached to this number.

Thayer notes a variant spelling in some later manuscripts: "BABoULON." The sum here is 1355. Again, nothing significant is revealed. Here I have written the upsilon as "U" for ease of pronunciation. Note that the additional "o" is omicron, while the final "O" remains omega. After a little experimentation of my own, I propose a new spelling: "BABYLON," with the only change being the substitution of omicron for omega. This is an obvious change, as "lon" is a common Greek neuter ending, appropriate for the name of a city. The result given is meaningful. Although most cities were of the feminine gender, I find it significant that after changing only the form of one vowel, "BABYLON" = 2 + 1 + 2 + 400 + 30 + 70 + 50 = 555.



## Appendix D: Liber 49 and The Book of Babalon.

Liber 49 has 77 verses. The seven-pointed star is sacred to Babalon (which has seven letters), and  $7 \times 7 = 49$ . Beside being two sevens side-by-side, 77 is  $7 \times 11$ . Eleven is the number of the false sephiroth known as Daath. Daath is false or carnal knowledge, i.e. knowledge in the Biblical sense. Thus 11 is the number of sex magic. This is the reason Parsons' Working in January, 1946 lasted eleven nights. Any male readers who remember their boyhood should recall that, while one counts to 10 on one's fingers, it requires an extra digit to count 11.

Crowley adopted the old English spelling "magick" to differentiate his pursuits from ordinary fortune-telling. The extra "K" stands for *kteis*, the Greek word for vulva. It may also denote *khabs* or *khv*, the Egyptian for the male and female organs respectively. "Magic" has five letters, signifying the pentagram. "Magick" has six, signifying the hexagram. The two interlocking triangles of the hexagram represent the intersection of Heaven and Earth, of God and man. One esoteric interpretation of this symbol is sexual in nature. The union of 5 and 6, of pentagram and hexagram, is the number 11.

Eleven is the number of letters in ABRAHADABRA, Crowley's corrected spelling of abracadabra. Note that the gematria of MAGICK is  $40 + 1 + 3 + 10 + 3 + 20 = 77$ . The XIth Degree of the OTO is an inversion of the IXth Degree that Crowley started for working with homosexual magic. In this case the number 11 may stand for twin erect phalli.

Of the 77 original verses of Liber 49, 73 survive. They are in The Book of B.A.B.A.L.O.N. with surviving fragments of Parsons original Book of Babalon. The Book of B.A.B.A.L.O.N. was published by the Nephthys Lodge of the Ordo Templi Orientis in Canada. It includes pertinent diary records. The Nephthys Lodge also published Parsons' The Book of AntiChrist and several of

his poems. They are all out of print. Liber 49 begins:

"(1) Yea, it is I, BABALON.

"(2) And this is my book, that is the fourth chapter of the Book of the Law, He completing the Name, for I am out of NUIT by HORUS, the incestuous sister of RAOHOOROKHUIT."

Five of the surviving verses mention fire, flame or burning. Three mention the Black pilgrimage. Two mention the number 11, albeit one incorrectly so. Verse 65 calls it the number of a witches coven, but that number is 13. References to Crowley's work, especially the Book of the Law, abound. Those familiar with that work will find this one easy enough to interpret.

Verse 48 is, "Now is the hour of birth at hand. Now shall my adept be crucified in the Basilisk abode." This refers to Crowley's Amalantrah Working. The Amalantrah Working took place on a solitary island in upstate New York during World War I. One of the entries in Crowley's Magical Record for the period reads, "He hath crucified a toad in his basilisk abode." Crowley christened a frog "Jesus" and crucified him. This signalled the Equinox of the Gods, the passing from the age of Osiris to the age of Horus hailed in The Book of the Law. The "basilisk abode" may refer to the womb, as legend says the basilisk is born of menstrual blood. In Greek, basileos means "king". The toad or frog is a symbol of transition, living as it does in two worlds (water and dry land).

Two chapters survive of Parsons' original The Book of Babalon. One, "The Star of Babalon," is in the Starfire version of Staley's article. It is also in Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword. It consists of directions from Babalon to the expected Magical Child. The other chapter consists of quotes from secret OTO documents. It remains unpublished.



## Appendix E: Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword.

The appearance in 1989 of a collection of Parsons' unpublished essays is to credit for the renewed interest in the man. Wilson reviewed *Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword* favorably in *Magical Blend* (but see one reader's response in the following issue's letters column). Parsons originally wrote the essay from which the book takes its title in 1946, probably after the Babalon Working. This 1950 rewrite includes Parsons' commentary on the Red Scare. The essay's premise is that both Church and State have eroded our hard-won individual liberties for conformity. I believe it was one of our founding fathers who said, "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance." Parsons' "Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword" is about eternal vigilance.

Much of the other material reproduced in *Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword* deals with two of Parsons' post-DOTO projects: *The Gnosis* and *The Witchcraft*. The former was an attempt to set up a regular form of worship for Parsons and whomever would follow. Based on the surviving fragments it is different from Crowley's *Gnostic Mass*. Parsons Christianized his *Gnosis* by putting Sophia in the role of daughter of God. He equated her with the Holy Ghost. Her union with Christ was God. I cannot trace this body of thought to any historical form of Gnosticism. Sophia was usually the mother of God, and Christ the savior of both. Parsons wrote "On Magick," "The Gnostic Creed," and "The Gnostic Doctrine" to this end.

Parsons' other project was *The Witchcraft*, a course on magick for the layman. Surviving documents include "Basic Magick: Fundamental Theory and Practice," "Manifesto of The Witchcraft," and a few chapters of a book called *The Cup, the Sword and the Crux Ansata*. Parsons wrote the manifesto June 15, 1950. He still thought enough of Babalon to note this as the year 4000. This date is inconsistent with previous dates. In 1946



Hubbard had proclaimed the year of Babalon 4063. In 1949 Parsons dated *The Book of AntiChrist* 4066. The year 4000 may be a misprint.

Short outlines on General Field Theory that Parsons left unfinished could almost be taken as a precursor of Rupert Sheldrake's morphogenetic field theory. Notes on Wagner's *The Ring* take us to the final chapter. It is "The Star of Babalon," which I have already mentioned. Part of Parsons' *The Book Of Babalon*, it consists of instructions received from Babalon herself for the Magical Child. Much like the magical letter in the gnostic "Hymn of the Pearl," these instructions would serve to effect an anamnesis on the child's part, to further her mission on Earth. Appended to *Freedom* is a *Two-Edged Sword* is a bibliography of Parsons' work in print, including some poetry I have not seen reproduced elsewhere.

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF  
*CRASH COLLISION MAGAZINE:*

*JACK PARSONS AND THE FALL OF  
BABALON* IS THE FIRST PUBLISHED  
ATTEMPT TO ANSWER THE QUESTION,  
“WHY DID PARSONS ATTEMPT TO  
INCARNATE THE GODDESS WHICH ALEISTER  
CROWLEY CALLED BABALON AND WHAT  
WAS PARSONS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH  
THROUGH HIS USE OF SEX MAGICK?”  
WITH THE AID OF ORIGINAL OTO  
DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES AS DIVERSE  
AS SCIENCE FICTION AND SCIENTOLOGY,  
AUTHOR PAUL RYDEEN HAS FOUND AN  
ANSWER TO THAT IMPORTANT QUESTION.