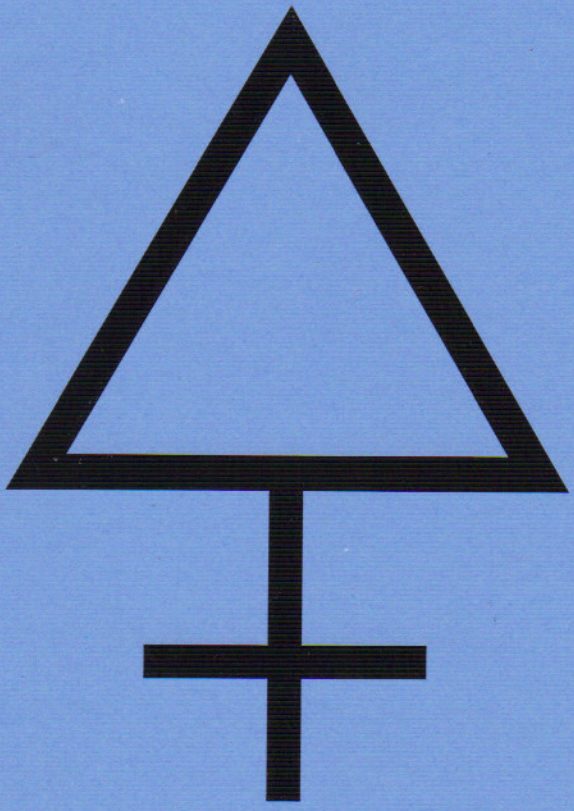
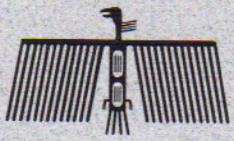
THE BLACK ARTS

J.F.C. FULLER



Crowley - Thelema Series
Number Six



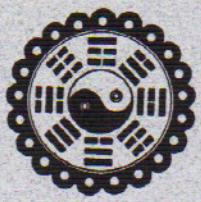
THE BLACK ARTS

Major-General

J.F.C. Fuller

Crowley-Thelema

Series VI



Contra/Thought

Man is human and a mystery; herein is to be sought all our sorrows, all our joys, all our desires, all our activities. Man is a troublesome creature, inwardly troubled by his consciousness, outwardly troubled by the unconscious, the things which surround him, the "why" and "wherefore" of which fascinate his mind and perplex his heart. We cannot fathom the origin of life nor can we state its purpose; we can but judge of it by inference, and inferences, if we probe them deeply, dissolve into an unknowable ether, an all-pervading miracle. Yet, such as these shadows are, we follow them, and as day creeps out of night so does the conscious emanate from out of the vast and formless body of that unconsciousness which softly enfolds us in its gloom.

Some lie still in the coffin of existence; these are the human sheep who, where the grass of life is green, browse peacefully, and, where it is dust, die or bleat helplessly to others. These others are those who tear their shrouds and hammer at the lid, and with bleeding brow loosen the nails of oblivion, and, through the chinks between mind and soul, peer into the beyond.

"Follow me," cries the priest, the king, the lawyer and the physician, and the human flock follows. Herein is to be revealed a mystery; not of the seeing leading the blind, for all are ultimately sightless, but of a spirit intangible, mysterious, which impels gross

human flesh to flow onwards in streamlets and rivers to some unknown and seemingly unknowable sea. This impulse towards movement, whether it be between star and star, atom and atom, or brain and brain, is the ultimate source of that ancient and yet ever youthful magic which, like a dark and wanton *courtesan*, decked in immortality, dances down the centuries, luring man through cloud and sunshine, Letheanwards, a shadow cast on a shadow.

He who can impel any creature or thing, living or dead, to move, is a magician; whether it be a speck of dust brushed from the table, or the mind of another deranged by his will; for he has made use of an incomprehensible power—gravity or thought. When this power is named, and when this name can be pronounced by all, and all have accepted the shadow for the substance, the image for the reality, hallucinated by the commonplace, man ceasing to think ceases to live intellectually. If a human being should arise, one who can tear away illusion, who can breathe a new life into the corpse, who can grope into the darkness, then his art is called *black*. Dark to him, it is still darker to others, and, disturbed from their slumbers, they pronounce him to be a harbinger of evil, a black magician, shrouded as he stands before them in the mystery of a little light.

What is the source of this impulse which, while millions slumber fitfully, awakens the few? This is indeed a difficult question. Yet, from a search through history, it would appear to be sometimes love, sometimes fear, sometimes ambition and more than sometimes despair. Nevertheless, whatever its source may be, the valleys through which the river of magic flows are built of the slothfulness of others, those who like sheep browse, but who possess not the understanding to plough, sow and reap, to rend conventions, to awaken the imagination and to compel it to take form, tangible or intangible,

real or ideal, it matters not which, for each is but a different aspect of the same shadow.

Thus history will tell us that the black arts are in reality but a revolt against convention, an insurrection against the satiety of images—a war against accepted words. They are black because they are unknown, evil because they unfrock the commonplace and take the bread from the mouths of mumbling priests. Sometimes these arts are terrible and infernal, sometimes they are sublime and celestial, but always they are powerful, compelling hostility or allegiance. Separating the goats from the sheep, they sound a "*Deus Vult*" and emblazon a new crusade: a crusade against ignorance and oppression, which like a living wind raises the dust of the unconscious and casts it mote by mote into that beam of light which we call the intelligence of man.

An animal is born into this world, it lives and it dies, and its life is its eternity. Man also is an animal, but he differs from the brute in that he knows that there was a time when he was not and that there will be a time when he, as he is, will be no more. The secret of good and evil is the secret of time. I was not, I am, I shall not be, and he who first discovered the truth of time was the first of all the magicians.

Naked and bestial, crouching in the shadows of the twilight, we watch this ancient seer rise in terror as in his mind this truth is born. Now, like a god, he realizes, dimly though it may be, that there are a beginning and an end—two voids spanned by a human arch without abutments. Yet, unlike a god, he cannot fathom what they hold, these twin abysses of eternity. Henceforth man measures himself against God, not for love but for envy; hence do we too measure ourselves against God, not for love but for understanding. Then, as God would not appear, did man invoke him, call upon

him, and demons were born, the powers which vibrate from the *Pleroma* of unconsciousness. Some are pleasant to look upon, and others fill our nostrils with their stench. Thus are angels and devils created from the inert as it ferments into the active. They are the reflections of a consciousness which to some is without and material, and to others deep within and secret; but, whether they be tangible beings or ideas, it matters not, for in either form they are equally potent.

Then, as the demoniacal hierarchy takes shape, are all things endowed with a semblance of immortality, that is a power over time and consequently over space, and all that space includes, for these are the visible attributes of God, the Timeless One. There are the gods of the rivers and the woods, the mists and the mountains, there are sun gods and moon gods, and star gods and gods of music, of dance, of death and of marriage, of love and of hate. All things become demoniacal, they possess the power to change, that is to quaff from the cup of time. Like unto men are they, eat, drink and wive do they, yet they are not men but the powers of men which, through things material, entice men onwards to states immortal, ultimately, that is, towards the timeless, the conquest of time and the accomplishment of godhood.

As demons walk the earth, so do those who follow nearest become priests, and those who follow at a distance, the congregations of the creeds. Propitiations grow into rituals, for there is an art in giving food and in offering prayer. Canons are evolved and inexorable laws are written. Thus are the Great God and all his servitors, his forces in time, planted in Vedas, Bibles, Zend-Avestas and Korans, and the followers are spoon fed on the narcotics of faith, and time and the knowledge of what time holds secret is wrenched from their

minds by obedience to the word of the priest, the terrestrial peddler of celestial chattels.

But thought is a combustible: leave it to man's will and like scattered gunpowder it burns with a little flame; but tamp it by oppression and it explodes, and sometimes will blast an epoch.

As the priest kneaded man's mind into his bread and trod out man's heart into his wine and on human woe and terror fed, some there were, men and also women, old and young, who fled his grasp, and, in the solitude of desert and mountain and forest, offered their souls as a eucharist to the demoniacal rulers of these places. They called upon them, and called not in vain, for in their calling they awoke within themselves the very powers which could set them free.

Wherever we look, from time to time do we hear the bugle note of the magical revolt against priestcraft and the enslavement of thought summoning the devils to form phalanx against the priest-conscripted angelic hosts. Thus were the wizard and the witch born, searchers after evil powers, for the good had deserted them, and evil enslaved them and made them what they were. Whither else could they turn? Living in dark places they turned to the spirits of night, for the spirits of goodness lay enchained in temples and in mosques, in the churches and in the cathedrals of the priests.

In Assyria, the cradle of sorcery, we hear the cry mount upwards:—

Urudu-Gar-Lig-Ga Ur-Sag An-Na-Ge
Za-Pa-Ram Me-Ne-A-Ni Hu-Luh-Ha
Gar-Hul Ba-Ab-Sir-Ra Su-U-Me-Ti
Ki Za-Pa-Ram Sum-Mu U-Me-Ni-De-A