

Spiritual Exercises of Thelema

Nathan Bjorge

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Dedication:

To my Teachers, most especially to:

Ebony Anpu (1950 - 1999)
Phyllis Seckler (1917 - 2004)
James Eshelman

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I would like to thank personally the following friends, mentors and fellow travelers during the period that this book was conceived and written:

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Preface to the 2007 Edition

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

Spiritual Exercises of Thelema was written in 2001 and distributed to a small circle of my friends. It forms the first third of *The Thelemic Trilogy*. The other two volumes are *Masks of the Self: Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot in Theory and Practice*, and a collection of writings on the theme of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel called *Penumbra and Corona*. If enough interest is expressed I hope these works may yet be made available.

My thanks to Bryce Churchill, whose editorial labors, friendship and patronage has allowed this book to be made available to a larger audience.

When I originally wrote it, *Spiritual Exercises of Thelema* was intended to serve three main purposes. These were:

1. To summarize the oral tradition of the practice of Thelemic Magick as I had learned it, both in Berkeley and from the community of practitioners that had formed around Grady McMurtry and the OTO revival of the '70s and '80s, as well as from those parts of the A□A□ tradition that I was in contact with.
2. To record my personal interpretations, experiences, and understandings of the Thelemic magical system as I was then seriously working my way through it, mostly from the perspective of the years 1996 - 2000 — to create a thesis of what I was doing and see what that looked like.
3. To present a constructive and positive alternative to authoritarian, fundamentalist, and incoherent versions of the tradition that I had encountered and was in revolt against. I wanted to outline a more explicitly open-ended, pluralistic, and self-critical approach.

In deciding to have this early work of mine put online I made a conscious decision not to alter or update my earlier voice significantly. I have my own opinions of the book's merits and shortcomings. However, I shall not further intrude my present self here and shall allow you, the reader, to draw your own conclusions unconfated with my own.

Here then is the first of my books of Magic.

Love is the law, love under will.

Nathan Bjorge
July 4, 2007 e.v.

Chapter I

Introduction —The Thelemic Tradition

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

It was in the schism of 1900, when the original Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn broke apart into separate groups, that the origins of the Thelemic dispensation lie. The Golden Dawn was (is) one of the West's most sophisticated organizations of practicing magicians, but it had disrupted its initial manifestation by abrogating its spiritual mandate in favor of social friction. A young man named Aleister Crowley, a high-grade initiate of the Order, became disillusioned and left Europe to travel the world in search of the roots of the Order's mandate. When he returned, he brought with him the seeds of a new spiritual tradition. He called it Thelema, a Greek word meaning Will.

Thelema postulates, as its fundamental premise, that each individual has a basic underlying purpose, destiny or direction in life, which it calls the True Will. Thelema is therefore at the bedrock level self-definitional since it is nothing other than the call to one's True Will. This self-definition is not, however, determined solely by one's personality, but rather by one's deepest true self. It is therefore necessary for each individual to themselves undertake the process of self-knowledge to discover their own True Will, and to do that True Will and nothing else.

This is the most fundamental concept of Thelema, by no means unique to it alone. Above and beyond this is the specific Thelemic tradition, deriving from received texts, teachings and practices laid down by Crowley and others, among which are the exercises described in this book. Their purpose is self-gnosis. They are not the only possible exercises to accomplish this, nor are they for everyone, but they are available to and intended for those whose will it is to undertake their discipline.

While Crowley is the historical progenitor of Thelema and its first (not last) prophet, Thelema is a tradition that is greater than him and is not limited to his own understanding of it. Crowley's fundamental teaching was for everyone to express their inherent individual divinity, to be themselves, not to be him. His system, as it has evolved over time, is intended as one possible tool for this aim. However, it is not necessary to be a Crowlian to be a Thelemite. This point being made, it should also be noted that the teachings and rituals of Thelema, including but not limited to those originating from Crowley, embody important and objective possibilities of being, based soundly upon a deep connection to the universal archetypes of the perennial tradition. Thelema rewards engaged contemplation of its traditions, but this is a world apart from uncritical, blind imitation of those traditions.

The Thelemic tradition is composed of several integral components. To use a Sufi distinction, it consists both of a *Tariqua*, or inner esoteric aspect, as well as a *Sharia*, or social exoteric way of being. The *Tariqua* of Thelema is synonymous with Magick.

Crowley wrote it ending with a 'K', its older Renaissance spelling, both to differentiate it from stage performance and to emphasize Magick as a continuation and synthesis of the Western Esoteric Tradition of alchemy, theurgy, Hermeticism, Solomonic magic, Rosicrucianism, Templarism, Kabbalah and other less well defined folk customs.

Magick is inclusive, not just of Western forms of practice, but of Eastern techniques as well. Crowley studied both Buddhist and Hindu forms of yoga in Sri Lanka and India and these are fully incorporated into the Thelemic synthesis of spiritual techniques.

Another important aspect of Magick are the Holy Books of Thelema, a series of inspired sacred texts received by Crowley in various trance states. Received intermittently from 1904-1911, the most important is *The Book of the Law*, written by supernatural dictation in Cairo, Egypt in 1904. A cryptic, challenging and dense text of 220 verses, *The Book of the Law* is fundamental to the Thelemic tradition, providing both its spiritual mandate and core teachings. It and the other Holy Books are more directly discussed in chapter 6.

Though no one can perform the process of self-gnosis for anyone else, it is nevertheless possible for people to assist each other. Therefore, participation in a community of individuals who share this common aspiration becomes of value. This is the purpose of the magical orders of Thelema, as well as of the general community of Thelemites. An Order is a place to practice Magick with others, to learn and to teach, and to receive initiatory empowerments. Some of these initiatory systems are discussed in chapter 4. Group work is the place where the *Tariqua* and *Sharia* meet in an integral linking, because in a group, as in the general world, the initiate is interacting with others, and must come into a relationship of mutual freedom with them.

The problems inherent in community cannot be left unaddressed in a personal spiritual practice because a person, in their total being, is not an autonomous monad, but is a social animal, always in interaction with a world of spiritually co-equal individuals. *Tariqua* and *Sharia* are therefore flipsides of the same coin, neither complete without the other. *Tariqua* is the inner, and *Sharia* the outer aspect of a single integral way of being.

Rather than endorsing some contingent, culturally specific set of behaviors, as in Islamic *Sharia*, Thelema instead posits, as its fundamental ethic of social interaction the so-called Law of Thelema. Derived from *The Book of the Law*, this is the statement: "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law", and its corollary: "Love is the law, love under will." (AL I: 40, I: 57)

Any Thelemic collective, to be such, must attempt to create an open society: a space of freedom and liberty such that every individual without exception may act to fulfill their own understanding of this Law. This realization of freedom is the direct responsibility of each individual as such, and necessarily entails the total and uncompromising respect and non-interference of the same right in others. Thelema *is* freedom, and this requires respect both for one's own freedom as well as the freedom of others.

If we succeed in making our own lives an example of these principles, then Thelema may yet help to save and sustain the world. Or, instead, it can be yet another tool for people to use to hate and to hurt each other. In the words of Andre VandenBroeck:

"Above, there can be found a diamond of ideas, each facet sparkling with creative light.

Below, it is business as usual: the same trite prejudices, the same failures of the intellect."^[1]

* * * *

Many individuals will come to Thelema by inner prompting and will find their needs met by the social community or by the rich intellectual possibilities of the system and its associated disciplines. This book is not written for these individuals, as sophisticated and rewarding as these exoteric pursuits are. Nor is this book intended as a totally general, from scratch introduction to Thelema or Magick. No general survey can be a substitute for engaging with a tradition's foundational texts. Rather, it is intended for individuals who have read some Crowley and who have experienced that irresistible need to pursue a deeper engagement with the esoteric aspect of Thelema, to uncover and engage with the spiritual root of the tradition: to seek the fullest possible self knowledge without compromise — but who might be confused how to concretely proceed. Various basic categories of practice are therefore explained, in a rough order. Most of the standard canon of Thelemic rituals are also presented, which can be used as is, or as a base for a more personalized practice. The rituals are provided with a symbolic commentary. It is in the nature of symbolism to be over-determined, and therefore the commentary provided should not be considered exhaustive or even necessarily 'correct'. Only through the considered, attentive practice of these rituals can the individual magician discover their meaning for themselves. It is hoped that the commentaries can be a tool for that task.

In work with correspondence, symbolism and archetype, the Thelemic tradition stresses the value of personalization. Symbolism is a living reality of diverse and fluid meaning, and to the extent that the magician strives to develop a personal synthesis, rather than simply a rote repetition, they will be rewarded. This book contains aspects of my own synthesis, which may be of help in this.

1. VandenBroeck, Andre, *Al-Kemi: A Memoir: Hermetic, Occult and Private Aspects of R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz*, Lindisfarne Press, Hudson, New York, 1987. Pg. 242.

Chapter II

The Theory of Magick

It is unnecessary to have a fully worked out theory of Magick in order to do Magick. This is the case with any skill or practice. A driver does not need a fully worked out intellectual theory of what a car is in order to drive one. Indeed, it can be argued that a really complete theory of anything is impossible. This is brought out in certain of the Platonic dialogs, where the character of Socrates deconstructs the preconceptions of his debating opponents, showing that radical intellectual inquiry will always destroy any merely intellectual position upon its own plane.[1]

Plato understood real knowledge, therefore, to consist in noesis or direct apprehension of the Forms (as he called them), the divine, underlying principles of reality. Dianoia, or dialectic, the merely discursive reason, does not in itself reach the level of noesis, but it can be used to dissolve false knowledge to pave the way, so to speak, for noesis.[2] Certain Hindu conceptions of Jnana Yoga are cognate with Plato's epistemology, likewise the idea of Gnosis in late Classical Gnosticism and its successors.

In the Greek Orthodox Church, Theory (Theoria) designates this kind of spiritual contemplation or experience which is itself the result of practice (Praxis), as opposed to the other way around.[3]

It is this kind of spiritual understanding or Gnosis that is the ultimate source of knowledge behind any real theory of Magick. We will need to draw upon this source in outlining such a theory. There are two primary means of access: the experience of others, and one's own experience, both of which should be checked with each other. The first is the perennial philosophy - the tradition of those who have gone before us on the path, acquired this Gnosis and attempted its articulation. This tradition provides us a map for further magical exploration. This map cannot be taken on faith, but must be tested in practice. We will touch upon some of these methods of verification in the second half of this chapter. Our second source will be this personal verification itself. This theory of Magick is therefore based to a large extent upon the personal spiritual experience of its author, and necessarily reflects his perspective.

What is Magick? Magick is perhaps best understood as a form of what the Greeks called Theurgy. Theurgy, as defined by the 4th Century Neo-Platonic philosopher Iamblicus, is the practice of rites to achieve union with the "One". Or, as Gregory Shaw writes, "to awaken the soul to the presence of the One that it bore unknowingly."^[4]

What is the "One"? The One is none other than reality, but reality in its true aspect, not as seen through the lens of the ego-personality. As it is One, it is not something outside of ourselves, but is our own innate essential Self. Nevertheless, this One, though it is our Self, utterly transcends the ego-personality.

It is helpful to use a model to further understand the relationship of Magick to the One. The model we will be using describes the self-emanation of this One reality through the traditional 4 worlds of the Jewish Kabbalistic system. Analogues of this scheme can be found in the Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist systems.

The 4 worlds model divides reality into 4 planes or ontological levels. These are: Atziluth — the One itself, Briah — the celestial or archetypal level, Yetzirah — the "Imaginal" realm, and Assiah — the spatial material world. There is a hierarchy to this model. The higher levels are ontologically prior to and are "more real" than the lower levels. At the same time there is an integral component to the 4 worlds as well. The lower levels are not best seen as fallen or corrupted shells or fawed creations of the higher levels, but as places of completion of the work or activity of higher levels. Theurgy is fundamentally an embodied practice. It acts, not to separate the levels of reality, but to disclose the unity of their integration in, as and through the transcendence of the One.

Assiah

The fourth world is called Assiah, the world of Action. Assiah is the world of the action of the manifestation of the divine spirit, through every conceivable multiplicity. Phenomena, seen from a certain mystic view, are eidolons of the infinite reality — expressions of divine attributes or aspects. In the Islamic tradition these aspects are called the Names of God. There are an infinity of such aspects, but these are subject to categorization into types. There are many valid systems for doing this, but the one used most often in the Thelemic tradition is the Jewish Kabbalistic tradition of 32 primary emanations of deity. These 32 'paths' signify the manifestation of divinity through sacred correspondence.

The Hermetic tradition posits that the divine reality shows itself in the physical world through correspondences or 'signatures' which are emanated archetypal symbols appearing in nature as well as in dreams and visions. "But none can read them unless he hath been in Thy School", reads a Rosicrucian prayer, meaning in its highest sense no physical school or occult order, but rather the invisible Inner Order or College of the Holy Spirit that all true outer vehicles attempt to make of themselves a clear channel.^[5] Working with correspondence through ritual, dream work, symbolism etc. is an exercise that follows its own rules of syntax and semantics. Correspondence is its own kind of language, a language of myth and symbol, very different then other kinds of discourse, but as rigorous, in its own way, as any form of logic or mathematics. It is able to very adequately describe matters of Spirit and Gnosis. It is less, or not at all, adequate for use in other domains of discourse such as physics, paying bills etc. Many errors in the use of correspondence arise from a misunderstanding of its context of use.

The Kabbalistic language of correspondence used in the Thelemic tradition is a powerful means of integrating mythical, intuitive and intellectual modes of thought and being into an experience of meaning. Kabbalistic analysis can appear at times fanciful, but good

Kabbalah is never arbitrary or made up. It is rather a deep contemplation of spiritual archetypes, based upon traditional methods, to bring out, articulate and work with them in a manner responsive to the archetypes themselves. Kabbalah means "that which is received" and as a form of meditation it can be exactly that. It is a technology of prophecy that bridges all of the four worlds.

The 32 categories of emanation/correspondence used in Kabbalah are traditionally arranged in a diagram called the Tree of Life. The particular form of the diagram as used in the Thelemic tradition (there are other valid forms) has developed over several distinct stages of Reception, over a period of at least two thousand years. The Tree of Life is a profound and sacred eidolon of the entire universe. It is fundamental to the understanding that Thelemic spirituality has of itself, and Crowley's writings and work are not understandable without thorough prior familiarity with it. Likewise, this book assumes that its readers have a basic general understanding of its system.

This is Assiah. Assiah is not a meaningless collection of matter in motion in space. Assiah is the light shining in the darkness. On the Tree of Life Assiah corresponds to the Sephirah Malkuth - the divine Kingdom ruled and directed by Spirit. It is this relationship of sovereignty that gives the name "Lord" to the highest levels of reality, Briah and Atziluth.

Yetzirah

At a subtler or less coarse level of reality is Yetzirah — the realm of formation. My preferred descriptive term is the Imaginal realm, a term created by scholar and esotericist Henry Corbin. Corbin writes:

"...Between the universe that can be apprehended by pure intellectual perception (the universe of the Cherubic Intelligences) [i.e. Briah] and the universe perceptible to the senses, there is an intermediate world, the world of Ideas, of archetypal figures, of subtle substances, of 'immaterial matter'. This world is as real and objective, as consistent and subsistent as the intelligible and sensible worlds; it is an intermediate universe 'where the spiritual takes body and the body becomes spiritual,' a world consisting of real matter and real extension, though by comparison to sensible, corruptible matter these are subtle and immaterial. The organ of this universe is the active Imagination; it is the place of theophantic visions, the scene on which visionary events and symbolic histories appear in their true reality." [6]

Yetzirah is the in-between zone, where pure spirit takes on form, and where that which is physical takes on a subtle or spiritual aspect. Eliphaz Levi calls it the astral light.[7] It exists as a kind of parallel creation, laid over and sustaining the physical realm of Assiah.

Yetzirah is not merely accessible to a rarified visionary consciousness. A simple exercise is to imagine a red rose in front of oneself. This rose has qualities. It has a sort of fugitive spatial location and it has duration, so it's a temporal phenomenon. Yet it doesn't exist in

the way a table does. It's not a physical phenomenon. It doesn't exist in Assiah. It exists in Yetzirah. Understood in this way, Yetzirah includes the whole realm of the imagination, and so it is called the Imaginal, but not the imaginary, because it is much more than that. This is the place of visualization, thought, dreams as well as emotion, intuition and abstract thought. The subtle energies of the body and of nature also have their being in Yetzirah. Prana, chi, inner heat, kundalini, odic force, orgone etc. There are a variety of names. Though there is a subjective aspect to some manifestations of Yetzirah, this is by no means always the case. There are auras and energies which can be perceived by multiple individuals. Often these effects can be visual — but it is a peculiar, subtle visual experience, as if one's eyes were out of focus. Lowered ambient light can assist. This visual phenomenon is difficult to describe and is often associated with an equally difficult to describe shift or expansion in consciousness. It is seen, but not like a physical object.

Yetzirah has its own geography — a kind of orientation of sacred space. This can be experienced either in pure visionary space or in our experience of the world about us - through sacred architecture, in ritual space and in certain types of comportment to the natural environment. The most important type of orientation is up and down. Eliade calls this orientation the axis mundi.[8] Located at the Imaginal center of the universe at the beginning of time is a mountain, world tree or lingam, which stretches from heaven to earth and to the underworld, linking all planes of existence. Emanating out from this spiritual axis or pole at the moment of creation are the four directions or quarters, which spread out into Assiah, and constitute the material world centered in this spiritual axis — which is found nowhere and everywhere. If one ascends the pole in the spirit vision one will find oneself at the source of its emanation. This is Briah, the next higher world of divinity as such.

Yetzirah corresponds on the tree of life to Sephirah 4-9. These Sephirah constitute 2 trinities — the reflection of the Supernals in the microcosmic and macrocosmic aspects of Yetzirah.

Briah

Briah is the second level of reality, as counted from the "top". It presents some difficulties to discuss due to its strictly deific character, for Briah is the divine realm as such. The various symbols and forms emerging in the astral light of Yetzirah, or the physical forms of Assiah derive the source of their sanctity from Briah. The sacred is Briah.

Traditionally, western mystics have described Briah in Platonic terms. To continue the same example used to understand Yetzirah — the rose we visualized exists in Yetzirah, but the roseness of the particular visualization, its meaningfulness itself as a rose, is Briatic. In Platonic terms, the form of the Rose. Roseness itself.

Atziluth is usually translated "archetype" in English. If, however, by archetype we mean something like Carl Jung does in speaking of the collective unconscious, then really Briah is the realm of the archetypes, and of the collective unconscious. Yetzirah then

functions as the personal consciousness into which various symbols are projected by Briah and experienced.

On the tree of life, Briah corresponds to Binah and to Chokmah. It lies above the abyss, and so is unity, but there can still be a perception of duality, particularly in its manifestations to lower levels.

Atziluth

Beyond Briah is the One itself, the absolute unity of Atziluth. Atziluth is never separate from the other layers, as its unity heads all things. As such it is somewhat outside of, or transcendent to, the progression of the other 3 worlds. If separation ends so does progression. There is no phenomenon that does not possess the taste of this unity. In Meister Ekhart's system, if Briah is God, Atziluth is the Godhead. It is Kether upon the tree of life.

I would like not to write further concerning Atziluth, other than to note that all phenomenon of the other 3 worlds are always already presupposed by its existence.

"Listening to the Logos and not to me, it is best to say that all things are One." — Heraclitus[9]

* * * * *

Having completed our discussion of the 4 worlds, we should now turn to the personal application of this map of the magical universe. To be a proper theory of magick, this theory must address itself to practice, for theory and practice are two sides of the same coin, never fully separate. A similar, idea is expressed in the Mahayana system where wisdom and skillful means, prajna and upaya, must be conjoined and jointly realized to produce enlightenment. This is represented by the bell and dorje held in both hands during meditation by the vajrayana practitioner.

How then, do we realize the reality of the divine presence of these 4 worlds? For Thelemites, we have inherited the possibility of using the system Crowley designed for accomplishing this. It is known as the A·A.. The structure of A·A.. is divided into 3 colleges or sub-orders. The precise delineation of this division is modeled by creating a map of stages of mystical and magical progression based upon the Tree of Life. This tree represents simultaneously the constitution of the universe or macrocosm, as well as the complete human being or microcosm. There is no difference. As above, so below. Exploration of one entails exploration and gnosis of the other. Therefore an interior exploration of one's self based upon the sacred tree will involve an uncovering of the 4 worlds upon that tree.

There are any number of Thelemic groups adding using this model of attainment, or some version of it, including many lineages of the Order called A·A.. The system is universal

in scope, however, and does not require membership in any organization to work, nor is it owned or controlled by any individual or group.

The three colleges or orders of A.:A.: are the Golden Dawn, or initiates, the Rose Cross or adepts, and the Silver Star, or A.:A.: proper, comprising the masters. There are many ways of understanding these 3 stages of spiritual development. Our way, in this chapter, will be to orient them against the background of an advancement in understanding or attainment of the 4 worlds. The initiate, therefore, is centered most strongly in Assiah, and works with Yetzirah in an attempt to get to Briah. The adept has mastered their control of Yetzirah, "reached" Briah, and works with Briatic levels of consciousness to realize Atziluth. The master is one who has realized Atziluth.

If we have an integral view of the 4 worlds, we must recognize that this ascent through the worlds does not eliminate or "free us" from the lower levels, but instead informs us with regard to them — informs us with regard to our True Will, our trajectory through all 4 of these planes.

The initiate works first then with Yetzirah. Not surprisingly, therefore, the first power systematically acquired by the A.:A.: initiate is that of the path of Tav. This is astral projection, using various techniques of active imagination, contemplation, visualization, and meditation. All of the various ritual activities engaged upon are likewise intended to build up one's persona in the realm of fantasy and imagination. Robes, capes, incense, swords, and strange conjurations; these are the trappings of Magick. This either becomes a method solely of ego aggrandizement, and therefore ultimately of black magic, or else these techniques and tools are directed towards the attainment of Briah.

Briah can be looked at as the plane of the personal god, and the relationship to that personal God, which in Thelema is known as the Holy Guardian Angel. Developing this relationship to the Angel is the chief task of the initiate to become adept. The method is love, love directed to God. Therefore "love under will," which is the very essence of the Law of Thelema.

This attainment is symbolized by the Sephirah Tiphareth. Frater Achad declares in The Egyptian Revival concerning the adept in Tiphareth: "The Beast, or Man of the Sun, represents, as I understand it, the Soul of Humanity, or of Man, between Spirit and Matter, ashamed of neither since both are essential to his existence." [10]

Symbolically, the absolute quality of pure love of the Angel is signified by the planetary symbol of Venus, which when laid over the tree of life covers all of the Sephirah. The exception is Daath, and so there is no falsity in true love.

This true love of the Angel must be cultivated. Phyllis Seckler likes to talk about 3 levels of love, through which one progresses to this refinement of rapture. [11] The first type of love is the most immediately available and the least in quality of perfection. This is the love of another human being or some object on the basis of our psychological projection on the basis of what we want them to be or see them as, rather than of how they actually

are. The second, more developed type of love is to love another in such a way as to allow them to be who they are without interference. This is a more Thelemic type of love, as it expresses an acknowledgement of others freedom to follow their own True Will. Unless one can respect the freedom of others, it is impossible to fully respect one's own freedom. Also, this type of love is appropriate to develop the love of the Angel upon, as one must be passive and receptive in this relationship, giving up oneself to it. One does not make demands of the Angel. It is the Angel that makes demands of us. The third and highest kind of love is pure Bhakti yoga, union of the lover and the loved in Samadhi, the infinite reciprocal giving and receiving of love under will.

The attainment of Briah transcends language, and so we can't limit ourselves to the previous formulation. We could simply call it Samadhi and drop all this nonsense of talking about 'God', as the Buddhists do. On the other hand, insofar as what is meant by the use of the idea of attaining communion with God by the traditional metaphysics is Samadhi, we might as well keep the term, as the Hindus do. The distinction is largely semantical. The next step for the Adept of love under will is to achieve mastery of this Samadhi. The Adept has achieved the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, and now she must integrate all the levels of her being with this attainment. The initial experience of Samadhi must be expanded. The Master of the Temple is said to be a master of Samadhi, and so the Adept must master this possibility of consciousness.

The non-dual consciousness of Samadhi is called by the Tibetan tradition the mind of clear light. The clear light, according to that tradition, does not arise only through advanced meditation. It is mind in its natural state and therefore appears in normal everyday life. These moments include the moment of orgasm, the moment of slipping from dream to dreamless sleep, and the moment of death. It can also occur in moments of shock, when passing out for example. The mind untrained by meditation is not able to properly utilize these states of consciousness.[12]

The Thelemic adept, experienced in meditation, and having experienced Samadhi during attainment of the Knowledge and Conversation of their angel, can more effectively utilize these naturally occurring moments of non-dual consciousness to enhance their identification with Atziluth. The chief task of the adept is to actualize the attainment of Atziluth, thereby constituting themselves as a Master of the Temple of the universe. Various A.:A.: techniques exist to accomplish this. Two of the most powerful are developed by the adept along the paths of Mem and Teth.

The traversing of the path of Mem involves the acquisition of the power of the Sleep of Siloam. In my understanding of the A.:A.: system this is analogous to the practice of clear light dream yoga in the Vajrayana system known as the 6 Yogas of Naropa.[13] Crowley describes the state achieved as follows:

"... to him whose physical Needs (of whatsoever kind) are not truly satisfied cometh a physical or lunar Sleep appointed to refresh and recreate by Cleansing and Repose; but on him that is bodily pure the Lord bestoweth a solar or lucid Sleep, wherein move Images

of pure Light fashioned by the True Will. And this is called by the Qabalists the Sleep of Shiloam ...".[14]

This state of consciousness might also be described in the Holy Book *Liber 65, chapter IV*, verses 9-10:

9. In the garden of immortal kisses, O thou brilliant One, shine forth! Make thy mouth an opium-poppy, that one kiss is the key to the infinite sleep and lucid, the sleep of Shi-loh-am.

10. In my sleep I beheld the Universe like a clear crystal without one speck.[15]

In an interesting parallel, Tibetan Dzogchen practice often involves the contemplation of a clear crystal ball as representing the mind of enlightenment.

To continue our Vajrayana analogue, the path of Teth corresponds quite explicitly to the yoga known as Karmamudra, or 'action seal'. That is, sexual intercourse with a real or Imaginal consort. The mind of clear light then arises at orgasm. This is represented by the Tarot trump associated with this path, which is called 'Lust'. Various practical, symbolic and magical aspects of this technique are taught in OTO, particularly within its Hermetic triad.

The Vajrayana system's terminology also allows us to help make more clear a distinction between the work of the initiate and the work of the adept. In that system a distinction is made between yoga practiced at the stage of Generation, and yoga at the stage of Completion. The first is preparatory for the second. In the former one practices visualizing and imagining that one has achieved Samadhi and possesses the Imaginal attributes of an enlightened entity. In the latter, one actually begins to really achieve this state of being due to the strength of one's invocations. In the Thelemic system, the adept can be said to practice at the stage of Completion with regard to her Magick, whereas the initiate prior to Samadhi is still in the stage of Generation. The outward rituals practiced by both may be the same.[16]

The attainment of mastery in the Thelemic tradition is a sacred mystery of the crossing of the Abyss between man and God, a subject upon which we shall, for the present, observe silence.

It is hoped that this chapter has served to provide maps for individual practitioners to articulate their spiritual practice to themselves and others. Every individual will have a unique approach to spiritual practice, appropriate to their own True Will. Different practitioners will find different maps appropriate to their practice, different ways of discussing, describing, and articulating spirituality, different theories of Magick. This has been mine.

1. See for example Plato's *Euthyphro* in Plato, *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*, Bollingen Foundation / Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1961, pp. 169-185.

2. See for example, Plato's *The Republic*, ibid. pp. 575-844. I am indebted to James Graeb for first pointing out to me the relevance of Plato's epistemology for the theory of Magick.
3. Elder Joseph the Hesychast, *Monastic Wisdom, St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Monastery*, Florence, Arizona, 1998, pg. 406, 408-409.
4. Shaw, Gregory, *Theurgy and the Soul*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1995, pg. 110.
5. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1989, pg. 437.
6. Corbin, Henry, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, Bollingen Foundation / Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1969, pg. 4.
7. Extensive discussions in Levi, Eliphas, *Transcendental Magic*, Samuel Weiser, New York, New York, 1972.
8. Articulated in several works, but especially see Eliade, Mircea, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Bollingen Foundation / Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1964, pp. 120-122.
9. McKirahan, Richard D., Jr., *Philosophy Before Socrates*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1994, pg. 120, Fragment 10:47.
10. Achad, *The Egyptian Revival*, Samuel Weiser, New York, New York, 1973, pg. 75.
11. Private class, Evalna on the Hill, 2000 e.v.
12. Cozort, Daniel, *Highest Yoga Tantra*, Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 1986, pp. 106-110.
13. The best description of this system is Mullin, Glenn, *Tsongkhapa's Six Yogas of Naropa*, Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 1986, pp. 69-72, 81-84.
14. Crowley, Aleister, *Liber Aleph vel CXI, The Book of Wisdom or Folly*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1991, pg. 18.
15. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1983, pp. 70-71.
16. Cozort, Daniel, Highest Yoga Tantra, pp. 41-47, 65-67.

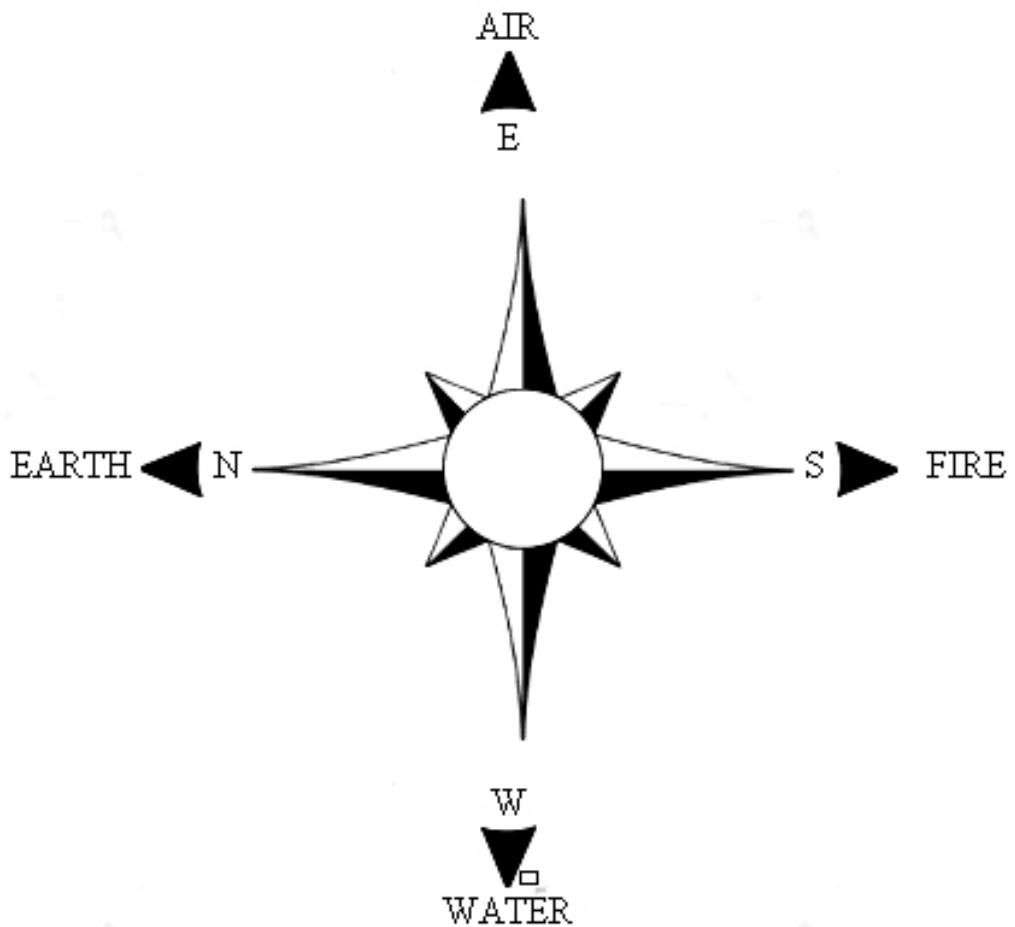
Chapter III

The Archetypes of Ritual

In this chapter we begin the move from theory to practice — from an intellectually grasped system to a lived experience. This process is that of an integration of the intellect with other means of understanding, with other ways of knowing, and should never involve the setting aside of the critical faculty. A primary method of practice in Thelema is through ritual, which is one of the most effective means of directing and unifying the various aspects of one's being. The ritual space is called a temple because it is a place where sacred space is established. It acts as a Mesocosm, or place of interface between the Microcosm of the magician and the Macrocosm of the greater divine reality. Its nature simultaneously reflects and is posited by both. It represents both the magician themselves and their psyche as well as the larger cosmos in an Imaginal aspect. The temple is therefore not only the universe without, but in the heart within.

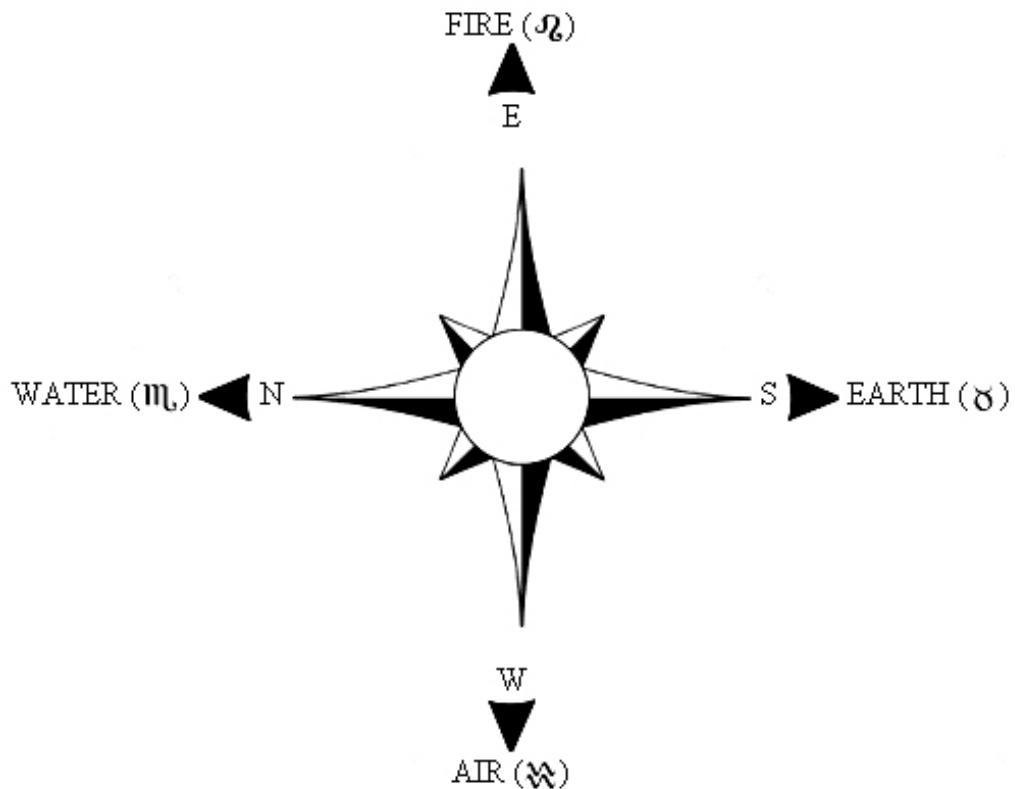
The ritual space is intended to operate through all four worlds, and in its higher aspects is "not built by human hands".[1] The temple can be built up gradually, both on the physical and Imaginal or visualized levels. It's often good practice to have an Imaginal temple whose complexity stays just slightly beyond one's ability to visualize fully, so that one is always working to concentrate harder. It is generally not necessary to constantly visualize the various elements in the temple during a ritual. Rather, just remain aware of the intention that they be in place, and review them occasionally.

There are many possible variations of symbolic layouts of temples. The most basic one widely used in the Thelemic tradition comes originally from the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, itself an evolution of the traditions of Freemasonry. Its basic spaciality uses the four compass points arranged about a central space where the magician performs their work. Often an altar is placed in the center as well. The central area and particularly the magicians physical body itself is the axis mundi, that Imaginal place at the center of the Universe where the worlds meet. Magick is possible at that point. The four directions are typically associated with the four elements, the center being Spirit. Which elements go to which quarters depends, in the Golden Dawn system, on the type of ritual being performed; whether it is 'Elemental' (predominantly related to Assiah / Yetzirah) or Planetary / Zodiacal (related to Briah / Atziluth). For rituals involving elemental Magick, or any general Magick not specifically related to Briah, the planets or the zodiac the attributions are "Terrestrial", or "By the Winds". There is a Classical origin to these correspondences, and they are used in Book I, chapters XII and XIII of Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*.[2]



Terrestrial Correspondences

Zodiacal and Planetary Magick use "Sidereal" correspondences, which are based upon the elemental attributions of the fixed signs of the Zodiac, which form a cross in the sky. East is assigned to fire.



Siderial Correspondences

These two sets of attributions have a whole range of additional meanings and uses that will be explored more fully in the body of this book. Generally, the Sidereal attributions are understood as being on a higher octave of type of Magick than those oriented By the Winds. A good way to imagine this is to see them as two stories in the same building. You start by entering Assiah on the first floor, which represents the elemental realm of and Yetzirah. The second floor is the planetary realm of Briah and ultimately the zodiac of Atziluth. Therefore, rituals that use the Sidereal correspondences will typically begin by establishing the quarters By the Winds, then proceed to lay over these the Sidereal ones. This is often said to be "raising" the temple to that level, an expression that comes from Freemasonry. In our example, this would be entering the first floor to go up to the second.

If the four quarters are the four elements, Spirit spatially corresponds with both the center and the east. The association of east with spirit is in addition to, and separate from, its elemental attribution. Placing Spirit in the east represents the direction where the Sun rises, showing the place where light, symbolizing Gnosis, enters the world. It is therefore common for Thelemic temples to place in the east a reproduction of the Stèle of Revealing, the 26th Dynasty Egyptian funerary monument which was a catalyst for the Cairo Working of 1904, during which Crowley received *The Book of the Law*. It therefore represents for Thelemites the epiphany of the reception of Liber AL, and serves as a

visual symbolic resume of the book's message. It also acts magically as a point of contact with the Thelemic current. The east is the place where this current of energy and consciousness enters the temple, which can be Imaginally visualized as a flow of magical energy coming from the east and circling the ritual space in a clockwise direction. The direction is clockwise because this is the direction the sun moves through the sky in the northern hemisphere.

Typically, clockwise or deosil movement in the ritual space acts to create or invoke, whereas counterclockwise or widdershins motion serves to banish or dissolve. When a ritual is in progress, there is an optional but very effective procedure of always moving about the temple in a clockwise direction. This serves as a kind of mindfulness exercise. By having a particular way of moving about the room during ritual, one constantly reminds oneself that it is a magical space one is in, thereby reinforcing the efficacy of the ritual. This kind of thing has a long term influence on the unconscious.

What goes into a ritual of Magick? Most basically, one wants to 1) create the sacred space of the ritual with some kind of opening, 2) perform the ritual itself, and 3) close or seal the sacred space. In addition to their other effects and symbolism, using a standard set of opening and closing procedures when doing ritual allows the microcosm to signal to itself that it is performing Magick.

Prior to the ritual proper, as part of the opening, it is good to attune to the sacred work about to be undertaken. Unplug the phone. If working with others small talk is good, as it creates a social synergy between people, but don't become distracted. No creating stress, arguments or bringing of outside problems into the space should be permitted. Ritual is a time to work towards overcoming our ego limitations, not to reinforce them. A period of quiet immediately before beginning is recommended. A quick bath is appropriate, if time and facilities allow. Ritual attire can be put on following the bath. A simple white or black robe can be used. Certain magical orders may provide additional embellishments. Wear whatever one is entitled to.

The moments of washing and of donning robes can be additionally sanctified by saying these invocations from *The Lesser Key of Solomon*:

In the bath: "Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, O Lord! And I shall be clean:
Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

While donning garments: "By the figurative mystery of this holy vestment I will clothe me with the armor of salvation [or substitute 'Gnosis'] in the strength of the Most High, Ancor, Amacor, Amides, Theodonian, Anitor, [or try: 'Nuit, Hadit, Ra-Hoor-Khuit, Aiwass, Therion, Babalon'] that my desired end may be effected through thy strength O Adonai! Unto whom the praise and glory will forever and ever belong! Amen!"[3]

The references to 'Adonai' and the 'Lord' in these and similar traditional invocations are interpreted in the Thelemic tradition as indicating the Holy Guardian Angel.

Standard procedure calls for a banishing to begin the ritual proper. This acts to clear the space magically of all distractions, to set the parameters of the ritual space and to signal the start of magical work. Some form of the ritual of the Pentagram, described fully in chapter 7, is recommended, as it recapitulates in its performance the Imaginal structure of the temple. Magically clearing a space of malignant forces will only be successful if the magician does not immediately invite them back into the circle. Personal conflicts or other distractions have no place during a ritual.

A Pentagram ritual can be sufficient for the opening, especially for a shorter ritual. In fact, it forms a complete ritual in and of itself. For more elaborate ceremonies, or for its own sake, a more extended opening can be performed. One of the best steps to add is a Purification and Consecration of the temple and/or a Hexagram ritual. These can be done in any order immediately following the initial banishing. The rituals of the Hexagram are described in chapter 12.

Purification and Consecration are two standard methods of clearing and preparing a sacred space independently of the banishing. As the space represents the magician's own being, these therefore simultaneously act to purify and consecrate the magician themselves. Purification cleans the magician and her space of overt and subtle influences which would distract from the purpose of the ritual. Consecration invites and dedicates the magician and her space to the overt and subtle influences which would contribute to the purpose of the ritual. Both Purification and Consecration serve to transform a profane space into a sacred one, but from different directions, so to speak. They are generally done together, Purification first, followed by Consecration. They represent Passives and Actives, Water and Fire, divine Mother and divine Father, Nuit and Hadit. Purification corresponds to the former, Consecration the latter.

Purification is done with water mixed with salt, which allows for the representation of both passives, salt being Earth. The salt is also the magician's consciousness, dissolved in the divine reality. Consecration is typically done with incense. This likewise represents both actives, the smoke being Air and the flame Fire. The rising smoke is also the aspiration of the magician. There are several possible methods of performance. A traditional Golden Dawn method begins by having the magician take the mixed water and salt to the East of the temple. A particular verse of The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster is associated with the act of Purification.[4] This is:

"So therefore first, the priest who governeth the works of Fire must sprinkle with the Lustral Waters of the loud, resounding Sea."

Crowley suggests that this can be replaced by Thelemites with a quotation from *The Book of the Law*:

"for pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is every way perfect." (AL I: 44)

Take some of the water and make a cross in the East, or a cross and circle, or simply sprinkle three times, or do something else that's coherent, consistent and meaningful. Go to each of the quarters in a clockwise direction and repeat the gesture, including optionally the verbal portion. The procedure for Consecration is the same. The Golden Dawn phrase is:

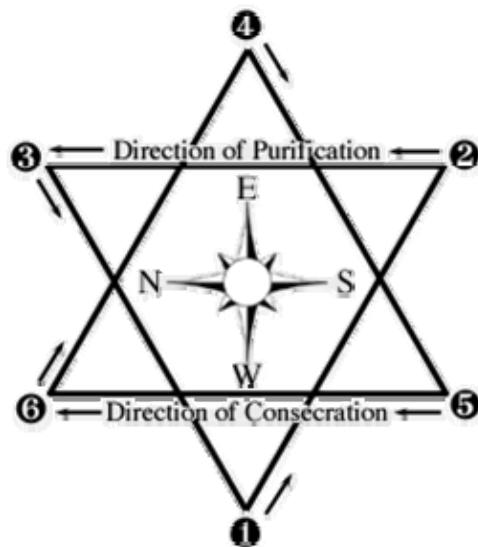
"And when after all the Phantoms are banished, Thou shalt see that Holy and Formless Fire, that Fire which darts and fashes through the hidden depths of the Universe. Hear thou the voice of Fire."

Crowley's substitution is:

"I am uplifted in thine heart, and the kisses of the stars rain hard upon thy body."
(AL II: 62)[5]

There is a more complicated alternative form of Purification and Consecration that originates with the Berkeley OTO.[6] Refer to the diagram below while reading this description. Taking the water and salt, go to the West of the ritual space. Recite *AL I:44* and sprinkle three times to the West. Next, go to the South-East corner of the room. Repeat the purification. Repeat again in the North-East corner. Return to the West to complete a triangle, but do not reconsecrate the West. Next, take up the incense and go to the East. Recite *AL II: 62* and cense three times to the East. Go to the South-West corner and repeat. Go to the North-West corner and repeat again, then return to the East to complete a triangle shape. Do not re-cense the East.

As shown in the diagram below, these two triangles create a Hexagram shape, composed of an Active and a Passive triangle. The active triangle is formed by clockwise movement, the passive by counter-clockwise movement.



If there is a need felt to verbally declare a specific statement of intent for the ritual it can be said at this point as well. This completes the opening.

Following the opening is the ritual proper which can be thought of as two-fold. First comes an invocation of a general balanced spiritual force. Secondly, the energy of that presence is applied to a particular purpose. In many cases, the opening itself can serve as the first step. Often, however, the magician may wish to make this general invocation more explicit as its own movement. If so, there are any number of possible short conjurations for this purpose, or one can create one's own. They include:

The Adoration to the Lord of the Universe: This is the short invocation used during the opening of the Neophyte initiation ritual of the Golden Dawn. Face East and recite the following:

"Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe.
Holy art Thou, whom nature hath not formed.
Holy art Thou, the Vast and the Mighty One.
Holy art Thou, Lord of the Light and of the Darkness.
Amen."^[7]

The Adorations of the Stèle of Revealing: This is also sometimes called 'Unity' or simply 'The Adorations'. The text and analysis of these verses can be found at the end of chapter 8. They consist of Crowley's poetic paraphrase of the Hieroglyphs on the Stèle of Revealing, specifically those portions that also appear in *The Book of the Law* itself.

The Middle Pillar: this is described fully in chapter 10.

Verse 1 of the Holy Book *Liber 65*: Refer to the body of that Holy Book for this text.^[8]

The Bornless Ritual: this is described fully in chapter 13.

The Star Sapphire: this is described fully in chapter 12.

Opening by Watchtower: this is discussed briefly at the end of chapter 7, but is not fully described in this book. See Israel Regardie's *Golden Dawn and Ceremonial Magic* for details.^[9]

The Supreme Ritual of the Pentagram: this is described in chapter 7.

The Greater Ritual of the Pentagram: this is described in chapter 7.

The First Enochian Call: also not described in this book, but readily available elsewhere. This call serves as a general summons of the element of Spirit.

Following this step the general force can then be applied to a particular aim, be it personal knowledge or enlightenment, the spiritual benefit or health of others or more

mundane ends. Any purpose of Magick is lawful if it serves to further one's True Will, or to assist others to do the same. Any other operation is, by definition within the Thelemic tradition, "black magic". Note that this definition has only a contingent relationship to culturally determined normative ethics.

These considerations may create a difficulty for those who may not yet consciously know the formula of their True Will. Until they do they can be assured that any Magick to assist in the discovery of their True Will can always be considered in accordance with the True Will. This generally includes experimentation for its own sake.

This phase of the ritual admits of diversity of method of execution. There are a few key factors, however. One of the most important is the Magical Link. This is the means, subtle or overt, whereby the magician connects the energy of the ritual with its target. An example is called for. Suppose one is performing a ritual to get a job. One can stand in the middle of a consecrated circle and shout "Job!" a few times. This may produce some effect, but in and of itself it is not an effective use of the principle of the Magical Link. Alternatively, one can print up a stack of resumes and charge them as talismans of Jupiter in the same circle, then hand them out to prospective employers. This is a use of the Magical Link. Whatever method of Magick is used, making good use of the link can be something to look out for.[10]

For ease of discussion, application of energy to a specific task can fall under two general modes: Invocation or Evocation.

In Invocation, oneself and one's consciousness forms the primary focus of the ritual, particularly on one's concentration on the desired end of the ritual. This can be performed by a variety of means including mantra, visualization, assumption of god-forms, music heard or performed, prayer or other specialized verbal declarations, symbolic enactment of an appropriate magical formula, as well as drugs and/or sex. Also, if the aim of the ritual can be associated with part of a correspondence set, like one of the planets for example, then that archetype can be particularly summoned and invoked into the magician to manifest the intended result.

Evocation involves many of the same techniques as invocation, but with one main distinction. Whereas in invocation the specific force is generated and focused through the magician themselves, in evocation the energy is directed through the medium of something posited as outside of the magician, which then acts autonomously of its own accord to effect the desired aim. Two primary forms of evocation are talismanic Magick and evocation of spirits. The Eucharist can be considered a special class of talisman. The Eucharist is discussed in chapter 11. General talismanic Magick and evocation of spirits are not dealt with in this book.

This completes the ritual proper. The closing follows, which acts to seal the ritual. There are several methods, but it should to some extent mirror the opening.

Beginning with a License to Depart is a good procedure. Say in a clear voice of command something along the lines of: "And now I say unto all spirits convoked by this rite, depart in peace unto your habitations and abodes, and may the blessing of the Highest be upon you, in the name of Nuit, Hadit and Ra-Hoor-Khuit. And let there be peace between us, and be thou ever ready to come when thou art called."

If the ritual was opened by Purification and Consecration, it is good practice to repeat them again in the closing, immediately following the License to Depart. Likewise, if the opening involved a Hexagram ritual, a banishing form of that ritual should be done. As a general rule, if nothing else, the closing should involve a banishing Pentagram ritual. This should only be omitted if the work has been with a general spiritual energy. The more particularized the type of energy worked with, the more magically important the general banishing is to restore equilibrium.

The previous structure applies principally to rituals of a Golden Dawn ceremonial form. There are innumerable other ways that Magick can be accomplished. The strictly devotional practice and the dramatic performance particularly stand out. (Greek drama originally served a religious purpose.) *Liber Astarte* is Crowley's instruction in devotional work, and his *Rites of Eleusis* provide examples of invocation through dramatic production.[11]

1. Traditional Masonic saying. See also Psalms 127: 1.
2. Ptolemy, Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos, Symbols and Signs*, North Hollywood, 1976, pg. 21-22.
3. Crowley, Aleister, *The Goetia*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1995, pg. 80.
4. Westcott, William Wynn, *The Chaldean Oracles Attributed to Zoroaster*, Holmes Publishing Group, Edmonds, Washington, 2000.
5. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1997, pg. 215.
6. Thelema Lodge OTO oral tradition. The author learned this technique from Michael Sanborn.
7. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 120.
8. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, pg. 53.
9. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 137-139. Regardie, Israel, *Ceremonial Magic*, The Aquarian Press, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, 1980.
10. See also Crowley's discussion of the Magical Link in Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 215-225.

11. Liber Astarte is included in Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 627-637.
Crowley, Aleister, *The Rites of Eleusis*, Mandrake Press Ltd., Thame, Oxen, 1990.

Chapter IV

Initiation

Initiation means to initiate, or begin something. Initiation is a ritualized entry into the spiritual awareness of the divine Inature of reality. It is therefore the first concern of the magician. Initiation can be either internal or external, inner or outer, spontaneously occurring or formally conferred. The former is real initiation proper, while the latter is a symbolized reenactment of this true inner attainment. Though inner attainment and outer initiation are not the same, there is nevertheless a relationship between the two. Outer initiation is a powerful tool to realize inner initiation, and acts as a magical working to accomplish this goal.

In a certain sense every ritual is an initiation. In an even deeper sense, so is every moment of life: an unveiling of some aspect of Nuit by herself. All ceremonial Magick and formal initiation is a recapitulation of this process within the ritual chamber as an act of remembrance of this process.

There are a number of systems of initiation that relate directly to Thelema and its esoteric mysteries. The present discussion will limit itself to the three most well known: the systems of the Golden Dawn, A.:A.: and OTO. This should not be taken to imply that other systems are not as valid or effective. Most traditions of Thelemic initiation involve simultaneous membership in some group, order or lineage, which attempts to embody the principles of Thelemic community. This mirrors the process of incarnation itself, of which initiation is a symbol representing as it does "second birth". Birth into the world is always a birth into a world of others. This includes other human beings, as well as other types of existences with which one must come into community with. It is this greater fraternity with the whole of the universal hierarchy that the lesser fraternity of an order mirrors. Thereby, with its lesser fraternity it trains towards understanding of the greater fraternity. As an example, the OTO constitution begins:

- "1. The OTO declares that Brotherhood of All Things Created is a fact in Nature.
2. The principal purpose of the OTO is to teach True Brotherhood, and to make it a living power in the life of humanity."^[1]

Which means what it says.

Membership in a group that works Magick together can be among the most powerful aids to practice available, but not every group is for everyone.

There is an ideal archetype for a religious community. No group ever fully achieves this or ever will. But through hard work together, a collective can more and more grow to conform to its ideal. There are moments, fleeting though they may at times be, when the archetype immanentizes itself through the structure of the group. At those times a divine

energy becomes present and accessible, far beyond what a single magician, lacking experience, is capable of invoking by themselves. To achieve this potential is an ongoing but always rewarding Great Work.

Nevertheless, it may be the case that a particular magician, by choice or circumstances, wishes to experiment with Thelemic Magick on a solitary basis, and to perform an appropriate ritual to initiate themselves into the current of the tradition. Therefore the following is a suggestion of a general Thelemic self-initiation ritual that is also suitable for periodic general use as well as personal modification.

Thelemic Self-Initiation Ritual

In a private room, clear of clutter, set up an altar in the center of the space with a candle, incense and a copy of *The Book of the Law*. Perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram or, if one hasn't learned this spell yet, say in a loud voice of command: "Hekas, Hekas, estai Bebeloi." (This means, "Away, away, all uninitiated.")

Light the candle and incense and knock once on the altar top to open the temple. Take a moment to pause, take a few deep breaths, relax and focus the mind. Take *The Book of the Law* from the altar and read aloud one chapter of your choice with intention. Hold the expectation that new insights will be given to you during this reading, but do not actively try to generate them during the recitation. Remain receptive and open to whatever spontaneous intuitions arise. When finished, replace *The Book of the Law* on the altar, knock once and say the oath: "I, [insert name or personal magical motto], do hereby swear to discover my True Will; and to do my True Will and do nothing else."

Formulate a strong personal commitment to carry out this oath. If the ritual began with the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram perform it again. Knock once on the altar to close the temple and extinguish the candle.

* * * *

When Crowley originally embarked on the spiritual path he became an initiate of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, joining in November of 1897. The system of that Order, among the greatest works of practical synthesis of the Western Esoteric Tradition, forms the foundation of the Thelemic approach to Magick. Its basic sequence of initiation is still worked today by many lodges and less formal groups. Completion of that sequence, which takes at least a year and usually several if done properly, is perhaps still among the best introductions possible to the practice of Thelemic spirituality.

The initiation system of the Golden Dawn is structured such that the initiate is first admitted to a First or Outer Order, also (somewhat confusingly) called the Golden Dawn. There is a general initiation called the Neophyte grade. Following this are a series of additional grades of initiation corresponding to the four elements and the four lowest Sephiroth of Malkuth, Yesod, Hod, and Netzach. Finally comes the grade of Dominus

Liminus which is assigned to Spirit, though not to a Sephira, except as a kind of prelude and probation for the Tiphareth initiation. This works out as follows:

Grade	Sephira Element	
Neophyte 0°=0	—	—
Zelator 1°=10	Malkuth	Earth
Theoricus 2°=9	Yesod	Air
Practicus 3°=8	Hod	Water
Philosophus 4°=7	Netzach	Fire
Dominus Liminus	—	Spirit
Adeptus Minor 5°=6	Tiphareth —	

The order of the elements is in the order of the four worlds from most manifest to most spiritual — i.e. from Assiah (Earth) to Atziluth (Fire). The First Order G.D. initiations therefore form a complete sequence, following which there is an initiation to the Second, or Inner Order, the Ordo Rosae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis, Order of the Red Rose and Gold Cross, or R.R. et A.C., to which passage through the 5°=6 grade constitutes admission. In this Second Order, the full Theurgic system of the Order is formally given to the magician, who has been prepared and trained for its practice through the initiations of the First Order.

The Golden Dawn, and A.:A.: system as well, bases its understanding of spiritual progression on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, which posits 10 progressively more inward levels of being existing both macrocosmically and microcosmically. The idea of levels of spiritual development is found in many traditions — the 10 level system of Shingon developed by Kukai, for example, or the 7 levels of St. Theresa's *Interior Castle*, as well as the Sufi stations of the soul.[2] The progression through the ten levels is also parallel to the ascension through the 4 worlds described in chapter 2, which is a more general model of the same process.

All of these levels are always active in a human being, but due to internal interaction amongst the levels themselves the full nature and form of the Tree is often hidden by itself from itself. Through successive attunement by spiritual exercises to the type of consciousness represented by the various levels of the Self, the Self reminds itself of *itSelf*. This is initiation. The exact nature of this attunement will take a different form for different people, for the Tree reveals a slightly different internal dynamic in each of its instantiations, that is to say, in each person.

In 1907 Crowley had begun to initiate into a new order that he had developed with George Cecil Jones, a fellow Golden Dawn Adept. The most important of all the systems associated with Crowley, its name was concealed by the initials A.:A.:.. There are several ways that A.:A.: is different than the Golden Dawn. The entire G.D. system is folded into the A.:A.: system, but constitutes much of the work of only one of its grades — Neophyte. Almost everything beyond that involves work of a more intensive nature. There is the addition of the full curriculum of traditional yogic mysticism. There is also a

de-emphasis on the social and political lodge based aspects of the original system in favor of emphasis on a direct, private, one on one relationship to a spiritual director. Finally, there is a total focus on the personal work of each individual initiate.

A·A· is designed around a system of 10 grades. These outwardly appear to be the same as the Golden Dawn grades, but there is a crucial difference. To use the distinction made at the beginning of this chapter, the Golden Dawn is a system of outer initiation, to lay the foundation for inner initiation, which is largely the responsibility of members of the Second Order. A·A·, in contrast, concerns itself directly and immediately with inner initiation. As a result, it does not use outer initiation as much as other systems, confining outer initiation only to its first few grades. The G.D. initiations are intended to symbolically and magically introduce a magician to each of the lower Sephiroth. There is, however, no requirement or expectation that the magician will have fully attained the level of consciousness associated with that Sephirah to advance to the next grade. A·A·, however, assigns a regimen of spiritual exercises and inner work to each grade which equilibrates the magician to that level of consciousness.

A·A· grades serve no political or social function whatsoever in and of themselves. Rather, they constitute a level of purely personal progress through a sequence of increasingly sophisticated and intensive stages of spiritual work. Individual engagement with this progression is a private matter between the initiate, their superiors, and their Holy Guardian Angel. Those who participate in the system also have a responsibility to pass on their knowledge at each stage to their own students. Their attainment is not for their own benefit alone. This procedure creates a lineage, traditionally overseen by a triad of Adepts who are themselves answerable to the so-called "Secret Chiefs", perhaps best understood as a symbol for the A·A· itself, of which any order or lineage is but an outer vehicle or emanation. All true religious movements, societies, orders and lineages partake, in the manner appropriate to their contexts, of the essence of this innermost assembly.

The work of each of the A·A· grades is simultaneously general and specific. A very good description of the system is James Eshelman's *The Mystical and Magical System of the A·A·*, which is published by the Jane Wolfe lineage of A·A·, but which provides a general description of the system applicable to any lineage or personal practice of the system outside of a lineage context.^[3] The following brief synopsis of the system is not exhaustive.

0°=0 Probationer — Is given full access to the practices of the Order and undertakes whatever exercises they deem fit for at least one year. The intention is for them to develop an awareness of their own pattern of work and initiatory needs. They must keep a diary of all work as well as memorize one chapter of their choice of Liber 65: The Book of the Heart Girt with the Serpent, one of the Holy Books of Thelema.

1°=10 Neophyte — Practices astral projection and other methods of attunement to the Imaginal reality. They attain full practical familiarity with the basic Golden Dawn system of magic, including the Inner Order R.R. et A.C. material. The diary record

continues, as it does for all levels of AA work, as does memorization from the Holy Books.

2°=9 **Zelator** — Begins intensive meditation practice, focusing on Hatha Yoga. Full proficiency in posture and basic Pranayama is achieved.

3°=8 **Practicus** — Works with awareness and control of the bodies internal energy. They also practice Jnana Yoga and refine their Kabbalistic study.

4°=7 **Philosophus** — Cultivates devotion and Bhakti Yoga. Also practices with evocation of spirits and talismanic magic.

Dominus Liminus — Focuses on advanced meditative practice.

5°=6 **Adeptus Minor** — Achieves the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.

Higher grades involve deeper work with the gnosis achieved by the Adeptus Minor, some of which is sketched in chapter 2.

Work above 5°=6 is generally a matter between the adept and their Angel, and there is much less of a fixed, set structure.

Since Crowley's death in 1947, AA has gradually expanded and evolved to encompass a number of independently operating lineages. While many AA lineages are composed of dedicated individuals sincerely engaged in spiritual practice, there has been an unfortunate tendency for some AA groups to engage in reprehensible cult behavior. There are also any number of perhaps well meaning but incompetent individuals who have given themselves some grade without having done any of the requisite work, and set themselves up as representing AA. Individuals approaching interaction with AA should make themselves aware and educated with regard to the operating procedures and background history of whatever lineage they may choose to associate with and use their own best judgment in evaluating them. Not all individuals and groups claiming to be Crowley's AA are what they present themselves as being. Ask questions. Who gave them their grade and the authority to initiate? If themselves, there is no a priori reason why this is spiritually invalid, but it is incumbent upon them to be honest and not lie about or conceal their background. That secrecy is the enemy of Truth. Also, successorship or lineage, no matter how exoterically valid (or invalid) does not in and of itself constitute the spiritual maturity and years of practical experience with the Order's system necessary to act effectively to guide others through it. As Thelemites, we are all ultimately responsible for our own actions. Any behavior that is detrimental to one's True Will in the name of AA is a debasement of the august and noble principles of this most sacred order.

The third major initiatory system to be discussed here is that of a mystical order known as the Order of the Eastern Temple, Ordo Templi Orientis or simply the OTO. Originally an

irregular German Masonic group, probably founded in 1904, OTO was a conglomeration of traditional Masonic rites which were seen as preparatory to initiation into the organization's inner circle, the so-called Hermetic Triad of three degrees. In these degrees information and instruction was provided into certain techniques of Western sexual magic and mysticism. These teachings derived, in part, from an earlier organization called the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, or H.B. of L., which had been led by a mysterious magician named Max Theon, about which very little is known.[4] There was also an additional source in the form of training the OTO's conceptual founder Karl Kellner allegedly received from Sufi groups in North Africa.

Crowley was initiated into the OTO's inner circle by its then leader Theodor Reuss in 1912, who delegated him authority to administer activity for the Order in the English speaking world. Crowley recognized in the then rather haphazard and chaotic structure of OTO a potential vehicle for his own work. In particular, he saw that the mysteries of the Hermetic Triad were also a central mystery of the Thelemic dispensation as well. He therefore set about reorganizing the Order. By 1918, he had finished revising new initiation rituals for OTO. Loosely based on the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Crowley condensed the 33 degrees of that system into 7 primary degrees and a number of sub-degrees. The Hermetic Triad was then worked directly beyond that. Though maintaining some of the general intent and background structure of the original Masonic rituals, Crowley's new degree structure is otherwise only slightly similar to the old OTO system. In other substantive ways it was a radical shift, as well as a dramatic and magical improvement over the older texts. In particular, the new system was now explicitly Thelemic. This further distanced OTO from its Masonic roots, as Masonry is a universal and non-sectarian movement which does not instantiate a particular religion. By making OTO a Thelemic order with a eucharistic public rite, Crowley was turning it into a church with an integral mystery school component, held together by the structure of a fraternal organization. Upon Reuss' death in 1922, Crowley took control of the OTO as a whole, thereby completing his reformation of the old Order along Thelemic lines, his initiatory system becoming normative Order wide.

The OTO initiations as practiced today are therefore three fold in purpose. First, they create a bond of solidarity, mutual support and fraternity between initiates. Secondly, they provide a magical initiation into the mysteries of the Thelemic religion. Finally, they seek, through symbolism and instruction, to create a Gnosis of the central mystery of the Order and its concomitant practical techniques.

The basic OTO degree system, including most of the main sub-grades, is as follows:

0° — Minerval

I° — Man and Brother or Woman and Sister

II° — Magician

III° — Master Magician

IV° — Companion of the Royal Arch of Enoch

P.I. — Prince of Jerusalem or Perfect Initiate

K.E.W. — Knight of the East and West

V° — Sovereign Prince of Rose Croix

K.R.E. — Knight of the Red Eagle (Senate of Knight Hermetic Philosophers)

VI° — Knight Templar of the Order of Kadosh or Dame Companion of the Holy Grail

G.I.C. — Grand Inquisitor Commander

P.R.S. — Prince of the Royal Secret

VII° — Sovereign Grand Inspector General

VIII° — Perfect Pontiff of the Illuminati

IX° — Initiate of the Sanctuary of the Gnosis

X° — Supreme and Most Holy King

XI°

O.H.O. (XII°) — Outer Head of the Order and Frater Superior

The I°-VII° correspond to Crowley's rewrite of the old Scottish Rite System. The VII°, VIII° and IX° are the Hermetic Triad. The X° is given to the administrative head of the Order in each country or major geographical area. The XI° is a specifically magical degree. The O.H.O. is the international head of the Order.

The OTO is furthermore divided into three triads. The system, very roughly, derives from Plato's *The Republic*.

Triad	Plato's Republic	OTO Grade
Hermits	Philosopher Kings	VIII° - XII°
Lovers	Guardians	V° - VII°
Men of Earth	General citizens	0° - P.I.

The Men of Earth are the general membership of the Order, including many initiates of great attainment who do not feel called to a deeper level of service within the context provided by the Order. Their duty is to discover and do their True Will.

Lovers provide for the hands on leadership and administration of the Order, particularly on a local level, and are bound by special responsibility and discipline towards it.

Hermits are the custodians of the full initiatory Gnosis of the Order. They attempt to embody and transmit its light to the Order and to the whole world. They are collectively charged with international oversight and responsibility for OTO.

That the degrees of OTO have an administrative, social function does not mean that they do not also have a magical aspect. However, OTO degrees are different from A□A□ degrees. As one OTO officer once put it:

"OTO degrees are not a recognition of attainment, they are an opportunity for attainment." [5]

It is unnecessary to be in OTO to be a Thelemite. Nevertheless, for those whose will it is to engage with its initiatory structure it can be a powerful series of empowerments designed to make an individual a potent magician, oriented towards their True Will and ready either to assist others to do the same or to get out of their way.

OTO today is one of the world's largest, most notorious and infamous Western occult magical orders, with thousands of members in dozens of countries. Much attention has been paid to its outer history, succession of leadership, etc. However, this is not the most important part of understanding what the OTO is about, any more than the meaning of Christianity can be discerned by a study of the political history of the Vatican, fascinating though this may be. The true importance of OTO has always been the community and fraternity created amongst its members, friends and guests, and the spiritual discovery occurring at its public and private rites, rituals and initiations. It is in these that the truths of the Order and of the Thelemic way are found.

1. Crowley, Aleister, *The Equinox Vol. III #10*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1990, pg. 186.
2. Kukai, *Kukai: Major Works*, Columbia University Press, New York, New York, 1972, pp. 162-224.
3. Theresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, Paulist Press, New York, New York, 1979.
4. Eshelman, James, *The Mystical and Magical System of the A□A□*, College of Thelema, Los Angeles, California, 2000.

5. What little is known is included in Chanel, Christian; Deveney, John Patrick; and Godwin, Joscelyn, *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1995.
6. Address of the Grand Master Sabazius X° to the 3rd OTO National Convention, Long Beach, California, August 2001.

Chapter V

The Practice of the Magical Diary

Keeping a diary of one's spiritual exercises, experiences, and reflections is one of the most important and effective activities the aspiring magician can dedicate themselves to mastering. Why is this?

Crowley was fond of describing his approach to magical training with the motto "the method of science, the aim of religion". This motto was used in every issue of his massive publication *The Equinox*.^[1] This idea of a scientific approach to mysticism and Magick is a key component of the Thelemic tradition, and is at the basis of the usefulness of the diary as well.

What is 'science' then? If we attempt to answer that question, we will discover that the word designates more of a variety of background assumptions, activities, and attitudes, rather than something really specifiable by a set of propositions that everyone would agree with. In the 18th and 19th centuries, 'science' was often used to connote any kind of knowledge arrived at through reason. Hegel uses the term in this manner, for example. Magick posits a transrational source of knowledge, however, so Magick is not scientific in this sense. Today, science is perhaps best understood as a set of methods for recognizing repeatable regularities. The goal of using these methods is not itself determined by the methods, so this kind of 'science' is not necessarily tied to a particular metaphysics such as materialism or physicalism. Many scientists are materialists. Many are not. This way of understanding the idea of science also has the attitude that beliefs, assertions, or theories should be subjected to some kind of appropriate testing or verification.

Crowley's Magick does legitimately have some features of this type of science, and in few places more clearly than in his use of the diary record. The diary functions explicitly as a kind of lab notebook for various investigations that the magician undertakes. What is the nature of these investigations?

The oath of the probationer of A.:A.: is to explore the nature of one's being. One's own being, one's self is therefore the phenomenon to be subjected to experimentation. The aim of the experimentation is "religion" and so this determines the type of experiments with which the phenomenon is interrogated. Our questions therefore are: what is this self, what is its nature, its limits, its meaning?

It may turn out, in exploring this phenomenon, that the self is not at all like a physical object, and that it is opaque to analysis in quite the same quantitative manner as are the chemical properties of H₂O, for example. Nevertheless, the method will remain scientific in the broad sense already outlined if one proceeds with attention paid to the observation of repeatable regularities, and if one refuses to be convinced of states of affairs by other

then conclusive results. Skepticism is an important element but, as in physical science, as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. The end is the attempted discovery of the meaning of one's existence. Most crucial to all of this is that a record of the procedure be made for oneself and others. This is the magical diary.

As for the actual practice of the magical record, here are a few personal reflections from my own work along these lines over the years:

First of all, don't worry too much about presentability in terms of what one writes on. Fancy manuscript books give a weight to the value of one's diary work — but loose binder paper sheets have become my own preferred means of recording entries. They transport easily and can be copied without difficulty. The value of the diary is what is written in it, not what it's written on. Nevertheless, a quality bound book has a real magical effect that should not be overlooked. This is a matter of preference, but don't be afraid to use a format that gets you to write, but doesn't look pretty.

Try to write something every day, even if it's "did nothing", because if you get that down you haven't done nothing, you've at least worked on your diary. Crowley would not advance anyone past Probationer in A·A· unless they could keep a complete diary for a year. He didn't care if what was attempted in it was completely successful, but they had to do something, and there had to be a record of it. Try holding yourself to the same standard and see what happens. I guarantee that whatever practices you are doing or experiences you are having, they will be enriched by writing them down. The self-reflection necessitated by the nature of the activity will act to deepen your spirituality.

Don't try to make too much of a distinction between your spiritual activities and your daily life. Let the record deal with your mundane goings on — let it be a regular diary at times — but keep in mind as you do so the ultimately religious nature of the record. Let that aspect of the diary bleed into and infiltrate your supposedly profane goings about. See how they tie into and are inseparable from your explicitly magical practice. Let yourself discover, through your diary work, exactly how it is that your whole life really is dedicated to the Great Work.

Finally, don't worry about how good a writer you are. The important thing is to write. If you're a poor prose stylist, keeping a regular diary will make you a better one.

There are many more kinds of work one can do with the record, above and beyond the basic use that has already been discussed. Two exercises I have found to be of particular value. These come originally from Phyllis Seckler.[2]

The first involves keeping a record every day for 3 months of issues related to your health. What are you doing to keep yourself healthy? Do you feel ill often or have chronic problems? What are you eating? Do you smoke and if so how much? Try each day to do something in a positive direction toward maintaining or enhancing your health. Make a note of it in the diary.

Many kinds of spirituality suffer from a kind of dualism, a belief that the physical body is somehow unimportant or inessential. This is a limited point of view. Thomas Aquinas says that the human existence is a unity of body, soul and spirit. These are distinguishable in some contexts, and yet if they are separated the human being ceases to be as such. In alchemy, the analogue is the presence of the three alchemical principles in all things. Salt is body, sulfur is soul, and mercury is spirit. This sacred triad further corresponds to the three mother letters and ultimately to the Supernal trinity — which is thereby manifest in all substance. You can't abuse a third of yourself and hope to succeed in your goals of a superior life. This health practice is designed to remedy that tendency to imbalance, and to keep one in a balanced and grounded state.

The second practice is to make notes, every day for three months, on one's process of psychological projection. That is to say, on one's tendency to interpret others, or to expect them to behave in a manner that has not to do with the way they actually are, but with the processes and prejudices of one's own psyche. This kind of thing goes on all the time to color our perceptions. It is not something which we can ever somehow stop, because all of our judgments and perceptions will necessarily be from some perspective. The task of this exercise is rather to become mindful and aware of our own process, so that we can learn to project in appropriate, rather than inappropriate ways. This kind of mindfulness is most necessary when one is working with a spiritual group, where projection issues are in continual danger of distracting from a frank commitment to the work that occurs there.

One good rule of thumb in the practice is always to remember that it concerns one's own projections only, not those of others. Making judgements about the projections of others is often its own subtle form of projection. It is also not the focus of the practice. So if the diary starts to fill up with what you think other people are doing wrong, those opinions may be right or wrong, but they are not the practice.

Both of these diary practices are intended to develop habits that should persist throughout one's life. They are mindfulness exercises, and while they have initial time limits, they can be returned to formally or informally in one's future journal work. They're tools, so to speak, which one may keep in one's kit to use when necessary.

We can learn a bit more about the diary from reading what Crowley has to say about it in his magnum opus *Book 4*. In part two of this work he devotes a chapter called 'The Book' to this subject.[3] He begins by writing:

"The Book of Spells or of Conjurations is the Record of every thought, word, and deed of the Magician; for everything that he has willed is willed to a purpose. It is the same as if he had taken an oath to perform some achievement."

In speaking of 'the Book' Crowley is here speaking of far more than the physical diary. That is here revealed to be a symbol of the very life as a whole of the magician. This Book is said to be a book of Spells and Conjurations, for one's life is itself a spell, the greatest spell that one will ever cast. It is the creation and conjuration of a reality, of a life. Everything in this life is said to be willed to a purpose. That is, every occurrence in

one's life is an expression, in one phase or another, of the True Will. Insofar as the diary comes to demonstrate this, it will come more and more to correspond to the sacred Book described by Crowley. The goal of the diary, therefore, is to make a record of this life, such that through its analysis the True Will can be shown. This is the ultimate purpose of the record.

"Now this Book must be a holy Book, not a scribbling book in which you jot down every piece of rubbish that comes into your head. It is written, *Liber VII, V* 22-29: 'Every breath, every word, every thought, every deed is an act of love with Thee. Be this devotion a potent spell to exorcise the demons of the Five.'"

One's life, one's career in Magick is not a meaningless, random sequence of occurrences. It is an expression of the True Will. Nihilism is not the ultimate philosophy. The discovery that this has always already been the case is the Great Work. How is this accomplished, and what part does the magical record have to play in this? The quoted passage from the Holy Books might give us a clue. It reads in full:

"23. Every breath, every word, every thought, every deed is an act of love with Thee.

24. The songs of me are the soft sighs:

25. The thoughts of me are very rapture:

26. And my deeds are the myriads of Thy children, the stars and the atoms.

27. Let there be nothing!

28. Let all things drop into this ocean of Love!

29. Be this devotion a potent spell to exorcise the demons of the Five!"[4]

The demons of the five are obscurations and distractions of Will, Thought, Emotion, Body, and Spirit away from the True Will — Qlippoth of the elemental realm. They are overcome through dedication of these components of the self to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. Then the deeds of one's will become the myriads of children of the living God — the stars and the atoms. One's thoughts become "very rapture". The songs of one's emotions become the "soft sighs". The life of one's body, the beat of one's heart, becomes the pendulum of love to the Angel. Finally, one's spirit becomes one pointed to the experience of what *Liber 7* calls in mystical language "the Nothing". All things, all experiences are then immersed into "this ocean of love" of gnosis of the Angel. This gnosis is the goal of all magical and mystical practice of the Thelemic initiate.

The task of the diary is to build mindfulness of this goal. The awareness of the angel is built in stages. One of the most difficult things for the beginning or even advanced

magician to overcome is a kind of forgetfulness of past moments of breakthrough experience. This becomes particularly acute during periods of ordeal. The record can be a weapon in this struggle. The passions and distractions of the moment may seem to overwhelm the larger trajectory of the True Will. The diary can bring us back to an awareness of that trajectory, back to what is essential. "All the sorrows are but as shadows; they pass & are done; but there is that which remains." (*AL II*: 9) This remembrance acts to bind and exorcise the demons of distraction.

"The Book must then be thus written. In the first place the Magician must perform the practice laid down in *Liber 913* so that he understands perfectly who he is, and to what his development must necessarily tend. So much for the first page of the Book."

This is a recommendation to undertake the practices laid out in the A□A□ instructional paper *Liber Thisharb*.^[5] These exercises are assigned to the Exempt Adept insofar as their successful completion results in the Gnosis of the True Will, and therefore passage through the Abyss to Understanding. Even though this Liber's tasks are specifically assigned to the Exempt Adept, anyone can undertake them in a preliminary manner. Some of these practices are very advanced in nature, but the general exercise is a very basic one. One must ask of oneself the three questions posed at the 1st pylon of initiation in *Liber Pyramidos*:^[6]

Who am I?

Where did I come from?

Where am I going?

In other words, ask seriously the big question — what is the meaning of my life? As we say in Thelema — what is my True Will?

The diary is one of the best ways to begin to approach this question, as it involves a study of oneself. Through this conscious study, carried out in the record, one can begin to grasp the parameters of the issues involved.

Completion of the task of *Liber Thisharb* is said by Crowley to constitute only the "first page" of the Book. After discovering one's True Will, one must then live it.

"Let him then be careful to write nothing therein that is inharmonious or untrue. Nor can he avoid this writing, for this is a Magick Book. If you abandon even for an hour the one purpose of your life, you will find a number of meaningless scratches and scrawls on the white vellum; and these cannot be erased. In such a case, when you come to conjure a demon by the power of the Book, he will mock you; he will point to all this foolish writing, more like his own than yours. In vain will you continue with the subsequent spells; you have broken by your own foolishness the chain which would have bound him."

Evocation, or more properly Goetia, is here again used as a metaphor for the confrontation in our lives of perceived obstacles to our True Wills. These must be summoned, faced and bound by the power of the Angel, by the power of the True Will. Insofar as we distract ourselves from our real purpose we are helpless before these forces of dispersion. We cannot control them and so they master and use us, rather than the proper relationship — where we should master and use them in accordance with our True Will.

The situation described in this passage is metaphor — and yet in some situations it can be literal. In *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage* the first task of one who has accomplished the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel is to summon the 4 great devils of the world and all of their legion of servitors.[7] These are evoked and bound by the traditional magical methods. The Adeptus Major in A□A□ is expected to perform or have performed some kind of analogous task. Some interpret it as assigned to the path of Lamed, corresponding to Libra the balances. This path involves the equilibration of one's past karma.

With regard to the practice of the diary, this passage involves an exhortation by Crowley to discipline and dedication in the execution of its writing. The more seriously one takes the exercise of the magical record, the more seriously it will be of value to one.

"Even the calligraphy of the Book must be firm, clear and beautiful; in the cloud of incense it is hard to read the conjurations. While you peer dimly through the smoke, the demon will vanish, and you will have to write the terrible word 'failure'.

"And yet there is no page of this Book on which this word is not written; but so long as it is immediately followed by a new affirmation, all is not lost; and as in this Book the word 'failure' is thus made of little account, so also must the word 'success' never be employed, for it is the last word that may be written therein, and it is followed by a full stop.

"This full stop may never be written anywhere else; for the writing of the Book goes on eternally; there is no way of closing the record until the goal of all has been attained. Let every page of this Book be filled with song — for it is a Book of incantation!"

These passages involve some rather deep reflections. Crowley seems to imply here the mystery and paradox that one can never completely realize one's True Will, that one can never achieve a completely perfect state, because imperfection and failure to achieve the True Will somehow is itself part of the True Will. Suffering and ordeal is part of the game of life, of a constant veiling and unveiling of the True Will by the True Will. To remove this completely and forever is to create a perfect stasis of that Will. This is a negation of the value of life. Being in a coma is not a state of perfect mastery.

So we can never stop this practice of the magical diary. We can never put down our pen and say — I've become enlightened, I don't need to practice anymore. That's death. Better to shun it for life.

"The pages of this Book are of virgin vellum, made from the calf which was borne by Isis-Hathor the Great Mother, to Osiris-Apis the Redeemer. It is bound in blue leather on which the word Thelema is written in gold. Let the pen with which the writing is done be the feather of a young male swan - the swan whose name is AUM. And let the ink be made of the gall of a fish, the fish Oannes.

"Thus far concerning the Book."

The life of the initiate is the product or issue of the dualities of existence, here represented by Isis and Osiris. Their child is Horus, the chief deity of the Thelemic pantheon, eidolon of the True Will. The book is blue to signify Chesed, which corresponds to the faculty of memory in the Qabalistic system. The name of the book is written in gold to signify Tiphareth and the True Will, and its title is 'Thelema' to signify the same. All of the other materials associated with the book are likewise divine. So is the life of the initiate. Let him try to understand this through its use.

1. Crowley, Aleister, *The Equinox Volume I*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1992.
2. These exercises are assigned as part of the course work of the College of Thelema.
3. The following excepts are from Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 107-108.
4. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, pg. 27.
5. Included in Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 647-652.
6. Included in Crowley, Aleister et. al., *Commentaries on the Holy Books: The Equinox Vol. IV #1*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1996, pg. 59-72.
7. Mathers, S.L. MacGregor (ed.), *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*, Dover, New York, New York, 1975.

Chapter VI

Working With The Holy Books

"It is certain that every letter of this cipher hath some value, but who shall determine the value? For it varieth ever, according to the subtlety of Him that made it."

— Liber LXV I: 521

This chapter is an attempt at a discussion of the Holy Books of Thelema[1] and various practices related to their understanding. There is one absolute rule with regard to the study of these texts within the Thelemic tradition, and that is that each individual possesses the right to interpret them for themselves. This right is total, and necessarily includes the right to not acknowledge the texts as relevant to one's self. No one can force another to accept a text as sacred. However, should one discover that a particular scripture, such as a Holy Book of Thelema, is relevant to them as possessing a sacred meaning, then there is a real issue in discovering and exploring that sacred meaning, for this meaning calls to us from beyond the restrictions of our preconceived, unenlightened world, from beyond the mundane ideas and profane expectations of the ego of everydayness, distraction and ignorance.

Within the Order A□A□, there is a system of classification of publications. The Holy Books of Thelema are identical to the various documents issued by that Order that are in 'Class A'. All of these texts Crowley considered divinely inspired.[2] They are:

Liber 1: Liber B vel Magi (Book B, or The Book of the Magus)

Liber 7: Liber Liberi vel Lapidus Lazuli, Adumbratio Kabbala Aegyptiorium (The Book of Wine, or The Book of Lapis Lazuli, Outline of Egyptian Kabbalah)

Liber 10: Liber Porta Lucis (The Book of the Gate of Light)

Liber 22: Liber Domarum Mercurii Cum Suis Geniis (The Book of the Houses of Mercury with Their Own Spirits) This is included as part of *Liber 231*. This is simultaneously the number of:

Liber 22: Liber Carcerorum ton Qliphoth Cum Suis Geniis. Adduntur Sigilla et Nomina Eorum (The Book of the Prisons of the Qliphoth, with Their Own Spirits) This is included as part of *Liber 231*.

Liber 27: Liber Trigrammaton (The Book of Trigrams)

Liber 31: Liber AL vel Legis (Book AL, or *The Book of the Law*) This is the designation of the original hand written manuscript of *The Book of the Law* itself, generally included in photographic reproduction with editions of *Liber 220*.

Liber 65: Liber Cordis Cincti Serpente (The Book of the Heart Girt with a Serpent)

Liber 66: Liber Stellae Rubeae (The Book of the Ruby Star)

Liber 90: Liber Tzaddi vel Hamus Hermeticus (Book Tzaddi, or The Book of the Hermetic Fish-Hook)

Liber 156: Liber Cheth vel Vallum Abiegni (Book Cheth, or The Book of the Wall of Abiegnus)

Liber 220: Liber AL vel Legis (Book AL, or *The Book of the Law*) This is the text of *The Book of the Law*, as distinguished from *Liber 31*, which is the original manuscript of that text.

Liber 231: Liber Arcanorum ton Atu tou Tahuti Quas Vedit Asar in Amenti (The Book of the Mysteries of the Atus of Tahuti Whereby Asar Makes His Way Through Ammenti)

Liber 370: Liber A'ash vel Capricorni Pneumatici (The Book of Creation, or The Book of the Goat of the Spirit)

Liber 400: Liber Tav vel Kabbalae Trium Literarum (Book Tav, or The Book of the Kabbalah of Three Letters)

Liber 813: Liber Ararita sub figura 570 (The Book Ararita under the figure 570)

(No number) *The Tunis Comment*. This text is considered by many to be in Class A. See discussion below.

(No number) *A Note Upon Liber 963. This is the brief one page note prefacing Liber 963: The Treasure House of Images, which is not itself in Class A.*

Additionally, both *Liber 415: The Paris Working, and Liber 418: The Vision and the Voice* were considered by Crowley to contain inspired reception, but intermixed with personal material in such a manner as to make it impossible for him to distinguish clearly between the two.[4]

It is common within the Western Esoteric Tradition to describe the sacred meaning of a text or tradition transmitted through a text in terms of a divine 'Word'. The somewhat cognate Greek word '*logos*' is also used. When the *New Testament* gospels, particularly John, speak of the 'Word', this is a translation of the Greek *logos*.[5] Thelema takes up this tradition, and Crowley often speaks of the core message of Thelema, expressed in the Holy Books, as a Word. This is a loaded term that requires some exploration. What might it mean for Crowley, and more importantly for us, to speak of the meaning of Thelema in this way? This can be examined by looking at two different traditional aspects of the concept of a Word or *logos* which Crowley is drawing upon, though we should not feel

necessarily bound to these ways of using the concept. They are 1) Protestant, and 2) Hermetic.

The Protestant component revolves around the idea of the 'Word of God', understood as being expressed in a scripture and in the form of a divine command which gives guidelines for normative behavior.

Crowley's Word fulfills these categories. However, insofar as the normative behavior is 'Do what thou wilt', the traditional Christian expectations as to the content of the Word are, in Thelema, subverted. There has been a Nietzschean transvaluation of values. The old Word has been rearticulated and stripped of its errors of limited perspective.

There is, furthermore, the absence of emphasis on faith in the Word of Thelema. There is a rejection of the fulcrum of Protestantism, as articulated by Luther's Theology of the Cross. The Cross symbolizes material suffering and material inadequacy extended in sacrifice upon and giving access to a dimension of vertical transcendence. In Thelema, this has been expanded by a theology of the Cross and Circle: of an infinite value within and without — of a universal goddess of sensuousness, manifestation and spirituality, forever embracing the individual perspective of experience of that body of being, bliss and consciousness.

The Hermetic aspect revolves around Crowley's religious and theurgic orientation towards the Greek metaphysical tradition of the philosophical use of the term '*logos*'. This is usually translated as 'word', but in Greek it also means thought, reason, discourse and meaning. Logos means meaning itself, and the forms that Meaningfulness takes in various kinds of communication and understanding.

The Greeks, always in search of the underlying essence, or basis of reality, found that the multiplicity of the universe was not random, but was rather organized in a meaningful manner. They designated the principle of this ordering, this fundamental cosmic meaningfulness, by the term *logos*. Its exact understanding varied from thinker to thinker, but there are a few general parameters. In particular, logos is inclusive of what we think of today as physical laws, but logos is not merely this. It is a spiritual, divine, metaphysical principle.

Hermeticism, the esoteric tradition of the West, has traditionally moved within the Greek intellectual climate, appropriating and modifying various concepts in light of its own approach to mysticism. This approach is affected by the other major influence on Hermeticism: magic. It is a traditional belief of magic that to know the name of a thing gives one access to its power. As the Gods have the greatest store of power, the magician therefore seeks through his knowledge of the names of Deity to attune himself to the hidden forces of reality. For Crowley, the task of the highest magician, or Magus, is to find a concise magical word or name which expresses the logos, or meaning of the universe. This Word then becomes the basis of a religion, through which it acts to guide others to an understanding of the cosmos, and their purpose within that cosmos. Crowley's Word as a Magus is 'Thelema', the Greek word for will. The Word of a Magus

is both an expression of the logos of reality, as well as a magical act to regenerate the world, by making this understanding available to others.

Paradoxically, this uttering of a Word by a Magus must ultimately necessarily fail. It is not possible to express the Absolute fully through a linguistic formula, or teaching, or system, because Truth transcends all of these. Nevertheless, the Magus, in their identification with the divine impulse towards the enlightenment and spiritual evolution of all beings must attempt to do so. Crowley calls this paradox 'the curse of the Magus'.

Revelation is progressive. It evolves as humanity evolves. Thelema is therefore not the final religion. Nor is it necessarily even the currently best religion for most people. It is the attempt by one Magus among many to articulate the nature of enlightenment, and the means to achieve that enlightenment, as appropriate to the context of this age. This will be relevant to those who 'hear' his Word, and irrelevant to those who do not.

For the Prophet, the reception of the Word came first from outside himself, from over his left shoulder. (This is a sign of the secret source of *The Book of the Law*.) It was only later that he came to realize his identity with this Word, whose vehicle was his own Higher Self, through the Knowledge and Conversation of which he came to conquer the universe in his life time with its truth. This became his motto as Master of the Temple of the Universe: "In My Lifetime I Have Conquered the Universe with Truth", Vi Veri Vniversum Vivus Vici or V.V.V.V.V. It was as V.V.V.V.V. that the Prophet received the other Holy Books, with no more need of a projected exterior intermediary. Ultimately, he became completely identified with the Word, and with the passing of his physical body it is all that remains of him.

How are we then to take up this Word, if it be our will to do so?

In the case of the Holy Books, if we have discovered their expression Word to have importance to us, that is to say to be an in some aspect or another of our own Word, then we must study them constantly to accomplish this.

This approach is most akin to the theology of Karl Barth, who within the Christian theological sphere was faced with similar challenges as we are. When all rational analysis of a text is said and done, when all scholarship is established, and historical contexts explicated — is one still left with a sacred text with sacred meaning? This is ultimately a personal, spiritual matter. If the answer to this question is found to be yes, and if one wishes to address this, what then? Can this meaning be spoken of and engaged with? Barth's answer is a radical yes.[6]

One may find that one's response to Thelema and its Holy Books is also a yes, and so one should respond to this by creating a relationship to the Holy Books. The idea of creating a relationship to a text is a very rich one, and we should try to bring out a little more of why it is appropriate to describe a religious engagement with the Holy Books as a relationship.

First, it indicates a process, rather than something that simply springs out fully formed and over and done with. It should not be expected that one will suddenly discover The meaning of some particular verse or portion of the Holy Books. One might discover A meaning, and its relevance will be based upon the relative, context dependent personal initiatory needs of the interpreter. Only the individual can evaluate these factors for themselves. These factors are not static, and neither should one's engagement with the Holy Books. One's understanding of the texts should evolve over time.

Secondly, a Relationship between two things in its most exemplary aspect is one based upon love. This emotion is most appropriate to addressing the Holy Books and their message, for these books are about passion. This is a passion towards God, towards creation, towards other human beings and towards our own works of creation. This passion is not one of sentimentality and irrationality. It is not a false love that justifies hate, like the fundamentalists of whatever faith who talk about love while nursing bigotry towards their neighbors. The love of the Holy Books is an integrative passion that engages all of the aspects of our being and directs them towards our True Will. It is love under will. Creating a relationship with the Holy Books can allow us access to this love under will, if we can find the discipline and strength to yield ourselves to it.

Finally, to speak of a relationship to the Holy Books is to acknowledge that our own interaction with these texts involves dialectical interaction or relationship of three factors:

1. The text itself
2. The individual reader
3. The interpretive community

None of these three does or can exist autonomously, but only relationally as part of a larger unity — and it is only within that larger unity that 'meanings' of the Holy Books can really be said to inhere, where the Word or *logos* of Thelema has its real manifestation.

Overbalance towards consideration of one of these three factors to the exclusion of the others leads to a misunderstanding of the real process involved in interpreting one of the Holy Books and finding meaning in it.

If the text itself is considered the 'infallible' source of meaning we are led into the error of all schools of literal interpretation. Likewise, if the individual alone is considered sovereign we are led inevitably to a problematic subjectivity. In this we increasingly cannot speak of a really existing text at all. Furthermore, interpretations become meaningless for any but the interpreting individual. This 'individual' is by no means really so individual, and always exists intersubjectively and in terms of their modifications upon an intersubjective background of understandings. Therefore the meanings will ultimately become meaningless for the individual, if they can be only theirs. Finally, if only the interpretive community is considered of exclusive value, then the unique perspective of the individual within that community will be obscured and trampled by homogeneity.

If these three factors are held in integral balance within our hermeneutics, however, then we are in a position to understand the individual perspective on really existing meaningful texts which occurs within a community of such interpretations. This is what is always occurring when a real interpretation of a text is made.

In trying to create a relationship to the Holy Books there are many methods, but I would like to discuss four that are of proven value. These are study, recitation, memorization and ritual.

Study

The first of these methods is study. This means much more than simply actually bothering to read the sacred texts of one's tradition. To really study a Holy Book is to consider, ponder and evaluate it. It means to have a critical engagement with one's spiritual tradition. To attempt to live the message of *The Book of the Law*, or any text of quality, means that one must understand that message — and this is an evolving process. One must not assume that one can simply read *The Book of the Law* and 'get it' completely in the first or even many readings. One should not assume that any number of readings will completely exhaust a really good text. Scholars spend lifetimes engaging and struggling with Ulysses or Paradise Lost. A true Holy Book has similar depth.

Study of a Holy Book is not merely an intellectual exercise. A Holy Book has an ultimately spiritual meaning, which transcends our full rational understanding. These meanings are not easily confined to language without great skill. The reduction of the meaning of a Holy Book to a set of ordered propositions is also to suppress the manifold of possible interpretations. The idea of the 'literal interpretation' is really an illusion. The literal interpretation is only an interpretation endorsed by some outer authority — with all the limitations that implies. Real sacred texts explode with hidden meaning, and we should try to be open to that. That there are multiple interpretations does not mean that there are not good and bad interpretations. However, this can only be determined by an individual interpreter, as it relates to their own relative, context dependent, personal initiatory needs. One of the beautiful things about *The Book of the Law itself* is how it deepens in meaning the further one engages with it and its call to a new way of life. *The Book of the Law itself* can be understood as implying this when it says:

"The fool readeth this Book of the Law, and its comment; & he understandeth it not. Let him come through the first ordeal, & it will be to him as silver. Through the second, gold. Through the third, stones of precious water. Through the fourth, ultimate sparks of the intimate fire. Yet to all it shall seem beautiful. Its enemies who say not so, are mere liars. There is success." (AL III: 63-69)

In the Tunis Comment, written by Crowley as a commentary on *The Book of the Law* and believed by many to be itself a Class 'A' document, or Holy Book of Thelema, statements are made which seem to imply that study of *The Book of the Law* is prohibited. It is worthwhile to quote this deliberately paradoxical comment in full.

The Comment

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

The study of this Book is forbidden. It is wise to destroy this copy after the first reading.

Whosoever disregards this does so at his own risk and peril. These are most dire.

Those who discuss the contents of this Book are to be shunned by all, as centers of pestilence.

All questions of the Law are to be decided only by appeal to my writings, each for himself.

There is no law beyond Do what thou wilt.

Love is the law, love under will.

The priest of the princes,

Ankh-f-n-khonsu[7]

One approach to understanding these statements might be to see them as descriptive rather than prescriptive. They are warnings, therefore, or perhaps promises. Such is the power of the book that if you study it, rather than casting it aside and destroying it, it will transform your life, making you a center of pestilence to the eyes of the corrupt consensus reality about you. Certainly this was the effect it had on Crowley and the early Thelemites who followed him.

There are other possibilities, of course. One great thing about the Tunis Comment is that it directly challenges the new reader of Liber AL. Action is immediately required. Even casually setting aside the book has dire prophesized consequences. So, what's your response? And why?

"All questions of the Law are to be decided only by appeal to my writings, each for himself." These words can be read as applying not only to interpretations of Liber AL, but to all of the teachings of the Thelemic tradition. Here is another challenge. If each individual is the final arbiter of the meaning of Thelema for themselves, then each individual is ultimately responsible for their own use or abuse of the Thelemic religion.

There exists a school of thought which challenges the idea of the Tunis Comment being in Class A at all, and rejects the need to engage with its pronouncements on this basis. This is one way to resolve its paradoxes. I don't necessarily subscribe to this school, as I find it undercuts the challenge of the comment, a challenge I personally prefer to leave intact. Also, I think Crowley pretty clearly saw the Tunis Comment as inspired, even if he

didn't explicitly give it a number and classify as such. Perhaps this is wrong? Who can say? More basically though, making the comment null so that I can ignore it is too easy of a dodge for me. I have found the Comment and its paradoxes to be very central to my understanding of Thelema. Much of the approach of this chapter is inspired by it. Better, therefore, to leave it in place and ask the interesting questions: what does this mean to me? And why?

There is another school of thought which does see the Tunis Comment as a Holy Book, and on that basis seeks to prohibit or proscribe within all or some contexts any open discussion or interpretation of *The Book of the Law*. There are several problems with this position. First, it is self-contradictory, as its argument for blocking interpretation of *The Book of the Law* is itself based upon an interpretation of *The Book of the Law*, for this is exactly what the Tunis Comment is. This approach is fundamentally logically fawed. Secondly, there is a political danger that it can be used by some clique in positions of authority hypocritically to reserve to themselves the right to make interpretations of *The Book of the Law* by exempting themselves from their own rule. (It's been done.) Finally, it is simply deeply problematic to see oneself as protecting a right of free interpretation by stopping the expression of interpretation. It can be argued that a real purpose of the Tunis Comment is to protect and preserve free engagement with *The Book of the Law*. To attack the freedom granted by the Tunis Comment in the name of the Tunis Comment is to succumb to the very enforcement of dogmatism that it attempts to overcome.

There are a multitude of positions that fall between these two polar views. Indeed, it has been my experience that every Thelemite has a slightly different personal understanding of how the Tunis Comment interacts with their relationship to *The Book of the Law*.

The only resolution to these competing views, in my opinion, is not for some authority to determine which position is correct and enforce this, but rather to hold to the simple truth that the Tunis Comment was originally written to assert — that all interpretation and understanding of *The Book of the Law*, including the Tunis Comment itself, rests with each individual separately, and this should not be controlled by an outside agency in any way.

All of these rights of interpretation of *The Book of the Law* apply to the other Holy Books as well, without exception.

One of the best ways of studying *The Book of the Law* is to keep a journal and write down thoughts and reflections about the text. A good method is to get a loose-leaf binder and 220 sheets of binder paper. At the top of each sheet write a verse of the book, with space for one's meditations below. As ideas or understandings come, write them in the binder, adding new sheets as needed. Note the date by the entries, as this is both a good habit to develop, as well as providing information one may want to have later. The journal should be a long-term project, kept at hand and returned to again and again over the years as new insights occur. It is perhaps best seen as a perpetual work in progress, never to be entirely completed. It can also be engaged with casually or intensively as appropriate to the rhythm of one's long term practice. Also, it should probably not be

written with an eye towards publication. Any commentary of this type will say as much about the commentator as the text. This journal is ultimately an exploration of oneself through the lens of the study of *The Book of the Law*. Aspects of this process may be relevant to others. These can and will arise naturally, but the focus of the journal should be upon one's own individual and personal relationship to *The Book of the Law*.

Meditation is a powerful method to develop this engagement. Select a particular verse or group of verses. Perform a banishing ritual, and sit in one's Asana. Get into a receptive state through a few minutes of rhythmic breathing, then contemplate the chosen passages, writing down one's reflections during or after the meditation. When done, add the notes to the journal's binder.

The other Holy Books of Thelema are susceptible to a similar process of meditation and journal writing. *Liber 65* is especially recommended.

Recitation

Many religions have sacred texts, either written or oral. The Bible and the Chinese classics are actually rather unusual in being concretized as written texts very early. Many religious traditions' sacred works were preserved for longer or shorter periods of time in an oral memorized form. The Homeric epics and the Quran are good examples of this. The Vedas and the Avesta were not committed to writing until the medieval period, even though writing had existed in the Indian and Persian cultures for upwards of a millennia prior.

The Quran is an interesting case that puts into relief certain issues. It conceives of itself as a written book, imaging itself as such within its own discourse. Simultaneously, the relationship the practicing Muslim is expected to make with this book is largely oral. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was himself illiterate and the Quran was delivered as a verbal recitation. The individual Muslim imitates the action of the Prophet by following the Quran's repeated injunction to "recite!" Canonical Quranic verses are recited with each of the five daily prayers. Every Muslim thereby incorporates the whole language of their revelation into their daily life. This language carries with it a whole manner of thinking about and conceptualizing the world. This background of practices and language carries with it the essence of Muhammad's (peace be upon him) message.

The Holy Books of Thelema likewise contain the essence of the Word of Aleister Crowley as Magus. The key text is *The Book of the Law*, about which the other books orbit, modulating the original light through various prisms of symbolism.

To access this logos is by no means automatic, however. As with the Quran, or any of the previously mentioned sacred texts, it is necessary to develop a relationship to the Holy Books, to their language, semantics, meaning and message. Verbal recitation is an effective means to engage with something like *Liber AL* or the other Holy Books.

One might take time, for example, in one's daily regimen of ritual work, to recite certain chapters of the Holy Books. One might also rotate through various of the books, gradually working one's way through all of them in a repeating pattern. This serves the function of continually reminding oneself of their content as well as keeping oneself in contact with the fountainhead of the Thelemic logos.

Group readings of the Holy Books can be especially effective. In many Thelemic communities it is the custom to gather together on the anniversary of the reception of *The Book of the Law* and recite its three chapters on successive days. In a ritual act inspired by the Tunis Comment, a bonfire is often lit on the third day, and copies of the book distributed to the audience, who throw them onto the flames. Liber 65, Liber 7, and The Vision and the Voice are also particularly appropriate for collective readings.

Recitation will be more effective if it leads to or is supported by memorization.

Memorization

Memorization is a deeper and more internal method of creating a relationship to the Holy Books. There is a story here:

Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War the Nazis banned all occult and Masonic secret societies in Germany to block their alleged subversive activity against the government. Various initiates of these societies were rounded up and arrested. One of these was Karl Germer, Crowley's eventual successor as head of OTO, though at that time he was Crowley's representative in Germany. Placed in solitary confinement, he was deprived of all outside contact, all hope of rescue, and all written materials. Nevertheless, Germer had a secret source of strength. As part of his A.:A.: training he had memorized *The Book of the Law* and certain other of the Holy Books. Prisoner as he was of the eidolon of everything Thelema stood against, he could nevertheless not be deprived of *The Book of the Law*. Memorized as it was, it could never be taken away from him. As the weeks passed he constantly recited the memorized chapters forwards and backwards, and as he did so his Holy Guardian Angel appeared to him and he achieved its Knowledge and Conversation. Through the strength of his meditation upon his memorizations, Germer was therefore able to accomplish his True Will even while to mundane eyes he was deprived of all possibility of such achievement. Such is the power of Magick.

This is an extreme case, of course. Nevertheless it brings to our attention the level to which memorization is discredited in our culture. While nearly universal literacy is a reality, this has been at the cost of much of the oral tradition possessed by older societies. We no longer understand or appreciate the value of the memorization of texts. People occasionally argue that memorizing a text will ruin it by removing the quality of original engagement by deleting the freshness of one's engagement with it. Nothing could be further from the truth. Memorization is the method of making a text most one's own, of engraving its message "upon one's heart", as Muhammad (peace be upon him) so effectively phrases the matter.

In what order should one go about memorizing the Holy Books? The first chapter of *The Book of the Law* is probably best, if only because Liber AL is the most important of the class 'A' libri, and because chapter 1 comes first in that text. *Liber 7* and *Liber 65* are the next most important Holy Books, and the next best in terms of memorization.

In A·A· memorization of certain of the Holy Books is mandatory as part of the assigned work of particular grades. The Probationer is required to learn one chapter of their choice of *Liber 65* by heart. The Neophyte is assigned one section of *Liber 7* and the Zelator has to memorize a chapter of *The Book of the Law*. The Practicus learns Liber Trigrammaton and the Philosophus part of Liber Ararita.

In certain modern Thelemic organizations it is also traditional to recommend or require the memorization of the first chapter of *The Book of the Law* as a foundational exercise.

Ritual Enactment

Another effective means of engaging with the Holy Books of Thelema is to use them in a ritual context. There are any number of ways this might be done. For example, one might create rituals based on interpretations of their symbolism, and/or passages of the books could be interpolated into an invocation. Various of the Holy books are especially associated with particular divine forces. For example:

Liber 1 is closely related to the Magus card in Tarot, the planet Mercury and the Sephirah Chokmah.

Each chapter of *Liber 7* is associated with one of the traditional planets. One highly recommended meditation is to invoke a particular planet through the methods described in chapter 12, then recite the corresponding chapter of *Liber 7* while seated in one's Asana to assist in the contemplation of the planetary energies. Conclude by banishing the planet.

Each of the five chapters of *Liber 65* corresponds to one of the four elements and Spirit. They can be used in meditation in the same manner as *Liber 7*. Also, this Holy Book is descriptive of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel in a very special way, and can be used in Magick related to the Angel.

Liber 66 directly describes a specific ritual, provided the key to its understanding is discovered by the reader.

Liber 90, *Liber 156*, and *Liber 370* are related to the Deities Horus, Babalon and Baphomet, respectively. *Liber 156* has an especially devotional character. *Liber 370* describes a specific type of ritual similar to that of *Liber 66*.

Liber 231 provides magical sigils for spirits associated with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet and their corresponding Tarot trumps. These can be used in Evocation, as well as work with Talismans.

Finally, *The Vision and the Voice* contains a massive amount of material related to the Enochian system of Magick.

1. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, pg. 57.
2. With noted exceptions all are printed in Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*.
3. Crowley, Aleister, *The Rites of Eleusis*, pg. 201.
4. Both are reproduced in Crowley, Aleister, *The Vision and the Voice: The Equinox Vol. IV #2*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1998.
5. E.g. John 1: 1.
6. Barth, Karl, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Oxford University Press, New York, New York, 1968.
7. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, pg. 196.

Chapter VII

Rituals of the Pentagram

"Those who regard this ritual as a mere device to invoke or banish spirits, are unworthy to possess it. Properly understood, it is the Medicine of Metals and the Stone of the Wise" — Aleister Crowley[1]

The essential function of the rituals of the Pentagram is to assert the dominion of the magician over the chaos of the elemental realm or phenomenal world. This is done through symbolically signifying and magically identifying the magician's alignment and participation in the spiritual ground of the cosmos.

When first learned, these rituals are usually engaged with in a strictly performative manner. Words and gestures are memorized and used without deeper reflection. Familiarity with the ritual can often breed forgetfulness that it is not merely a performance piece, however, but rather a profound prayer and moving meditation. Actual, not merely symbolized identification with the absolute is the true goal of the ritual. This requires mindfulness and concentration in the performance of the visualizations, gestures and vocalizations. Personal issues and problems should be set aside before the manifestation of the sacred space of the ritual. As *The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster* state:

"God is never so turned away from man, and never so much sendeth him new paths, as when he maketh ascent to divine speculations or works in a confused or disordered manner, with unhallowed lips, or unwashed feet. For of those who are thus negligent, the progress is imperfect, the impulses are vain, and the paths are dark."[2]

The Golden Dawn system of correspondence forms a sophisticated language of mysticism and Magick. It is possible to expend a great deal of energy and effort discussing and grappling with the various structural details of the language and its possible permutations. This addresses the syntax of Magick, so to speak. It is possible to get so caught up in this that the semantics of this language become forgotten and left unexplored. With regard to a ritual, for example, it is possible to achieve a very complicated understanding of the way the symbols are juxtaposed, but what is more important is what that juxtaposition means spiritually.

We should therefore ask ourselves to what purpose the establishment of elemental dominion is directed. If this is not to be a ritual of black magic, of mere dominion, this control must be directed by and towards the True Will of the magician. We will discover as we analyze this ritual that its symbolism makes this explicit.

Much attention has been paid in the explanation of these rituals to the Pentagram itself as a symbol. Just as important, however, are the other features of the ritual — the manner in which the movements and visualizations define the space of the performance and into which the Pentagram is inserted and integrated as a component of a larger ritual gesture. We can break the general structure of the most basic Pentagram ritual — the Lesser Invoking or Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (hereafter referred to as the LRP) — into a few basic components, which we will discuss in turn. These are:

- The Kabbalistic Cross
- The Pentagrams
- The 4 Quarters
- The Cross and Circle conjoined

Before treating these specific components to a symbolic discussion, some general remarks on the ritual as a whole are called for. The ritual itself, as slightly adapted from Crowley's *Liber O*, is as follows:

The Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram[3]

1. Touching the forehead, say **Ateh** (Unto Thee).
2. Touching the breast, say **Malkuth** (The Kingdom).
3. Touching the right shoulder, say **ve-Geburah** (and the Power).
4. Touching the left shoulder, say **ve-Gedulah** (and the Glory).
5. Clasping the hands upon the breast, say **le-Olahm**, Amen (to the Ages, Amen).
6. Turning to the East, make a Pentagram (that of Earth) with the proper weapon. Say (i.e., vibrate) **YHVH**.
7. Turning to the South, the same, but say **ADONAI**.
8. Turning to the West, the same, but say **EHEIEH**.
9. Turning to the North, the same, but say **AGLA**.
10. Extending the arms in the form of a Cross, say:
11. **Before me Raphael;**
12. **Behind me Gabriel;**
13. **On my right hand Michael;**
14. **On my left hand Uriel;**
15. **For about me flames the Pentagram,**
16. **And in the Column stands the six-rayed Star.**
17. Repeat (i) to (v), the 'Kabbalistic Cross'.

The invoking and banishing forms of this ritual are identical except for the Pentagrams. The invoking form uses the invoking Pentagrams of Earth. The banishing form uses the banishing Pentagrams of Earth. Explanations of these forms of the Pentagram will be given below. An illustrated chart is at the end of the chapter.

In the G.D. and Thelemic tradition of Magick, the words given in capital letters are vibrated in a special voice. This is done with traditional names of power, which are possessed of symbolic sanctity. The vocal vibration also serves to raise and direct the energy of the body at key points of the ritual. There are a number of methods of vibrating divine names, sometimes involving concurrent visualizations, but there should be at least a loud, deep, clear projection of the voice, with attention.

The names of God used in the LRP are pronounced "Yod-Heh-Vav-Heh", "Ad-oh-ny", "Ee-hay-yay" and "Ahh-lah". AGLA is an abbreviation using the initial letters of the phrase "*Atah Gibor le-Ohlahm Adonai*", and this can be said in the North in place of AGLA. It means, "*Thou art mighty unto the ages Adonai*." These four names are called

"tetragrammatic names" by Mathers, and share a four-fold structure in common.[4] They represent the Unity of the name as a whole, symbolizing Spirit, expressing itself through its four components, representing the four aspects of manifestation. Their placement at the four quarters therefore recapitulates the underlying structural meaning of the ritual as a whole.

There are visualizations used in the ritual. These are part of the oral traditions associated with this ritual and can vary greatly between individuals and communities of practice. The following is presented as a relatively standard set of suggestions. The individual magician should experiment and develop a personalized version.

While making the Kabbalistic Cross visualize a current of energy in the form of flaming, radiant white light descending through the body and then across the chest to form a cross. Visualize each Pentagram as it is drawn in either white light or a color appropriate to the corresponding element. While moving between the quarters draw a circle, again in white, about the perimeter of the space at heart level. Finally, picture the Archangels about the circle when calling their names. These can be relatively traditional angelic figures of giant stature, robed in their elemental colors and armed with various weapons. Raphael bears a sword for Air, Gabriel a grail for Water, Michael a staff for Fire, and Uriel a disk for Earth.

The Pentagram rituals are optionally performed with the use of a ritual dagger or sword, used to draw the various figures. There are several mutually compatible levels of symbolic interpretation of this action. A dagger can represent the element of air. This symbolizes Yetzirah, the Ruach and Tiphareth, which lies at the center of this layer of the Tree. The dagger therefore acts to summon Yetziratic energy in the ritual for the goal of the equilibration of the elements in the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. It also shows the dominion over Assiah by the immediately higher spiritual domain of Yetzirah, the Astral Light. If a sword is used, this represents the Sephirah Geburah most strongly in the G.D. system. This is the fifth Sephirah, representing the Pentagram, which has five points, as well as the active will, spiritual chivalry, and the disruption of demonic/unbalanced forces through the True Will. On another level of symbolism, the sword represents the lightning flash on the Tree of Life, the pure active creative energy of spirit encompassing all of the Sephiroth.

If no implement is used, it is an oral custom to vibrate the divine names of the quarters while making the sign of the Enterer, and following this with the sign of Silence. These two signs are paired together, and are the first symbolic signs given to the initiate of the Golden Dawn, corresponding to the Neophyte grade of that system.

The first sign is called the sign of the Enterer, or the Projecting sign, and is made by stepping forward with one foot and vigorously thrusting out the arms at the level of the eyes, the palms held flat with fingers extended. This symbolizes the projection of the divine Will of the magician out into their universe in the Imaginal form of a current of magical energy. The magician is thereby represented as a center of light in the cosmos. As *The Book of the Law* says, "Every man and every woman is a star." [AL I: 3] This

sign is also called the sign of Horus, and is associated with the active, martial form of this deity. Horus is a symbol of the power of the Holy Guardian Angel in *The Book of the Law*. Therefore this sign symbolizes the Holy Guardian Angel acting through the agency of the magician.

The second sign is called the sign of Silence, and is made by stepping back with the extended foot so that the feet are parallel. The right arm is dropped to the side while the left forefinger is placed on the closed lips, the other fingers being held loosely in a fist. It seals the current of energy released by the sign of the Enterer, and represents the magician at rest, absorbed in Gnosis. If the first sign is that of magic, the second represents mysticism. The sign of Silence is also called the sign of Harpocrates, the infant Horus.

The Kabbalistic Cross

The Kabbalistic Cross is self-contained and can be performed as its own ritual. It also interlocks within the larger framework of the LRP. As used by the Golden Dawn, it is based on an interpretation of a passage from Eliphas Levi, who wrote:

"The Sign of the Cross adopted by Christians does not belong to them exclusively. This also is kabalistic and represents the oppositions and tetradic equilibrium of the elements. We see by the occult versicle of the Lord's Prayer, which we have cited in our 'Doctrine', that it was originally made after two manners, or at least that it was characterized by two entirely different formulae, one reserved for priests and initiates, the other imparted to neophytes and the profane. For example, the initiate said raising his hand to his forehead, 'For thine,' then added 'is,' and continuing as he brought down his hand to his breast, 'the kingdom,' then to the left shoulder, 'and the mercy' — then clasping his hands, he added, 'in the generating ages.' Tibi sunt Malkuth et Geburah et Chesed per aeonas — a Sign of the Cross which is absolutely and magnificently kabalistic, which the profanations of Gnosticism have lost completely to the official and militant Church. This Sign, made after this manner, should precede and terminate the Conjunction of the Four [elements]."[5]

The Kabbalistic Cross is made on the body, signifying that one's self is an expression of the symbols and meanings described by the ritual gestures. The cross has a vertical and horizontal dimension. The vertical component represents the divine reality. The horizontal is material or manifest existence. The vertical line is drawn first to show the ontological priority of spirit, which extends to all planes of reality both above and below our world. The horizontal axis is then described, such that the two axes of matter and spirit meet in a point at the heart. A mathematical point has no extension, and so this point, which is in the heart, represents Hadit, the true Self. It is also the mystical nothing, that silent place where spirit and matter meet and are one.

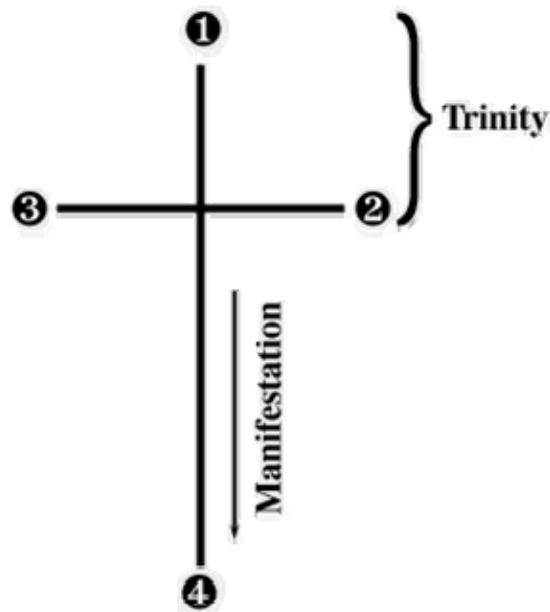
In a different and equally valid symbolism, the Kabbalistic Cross represents the manifestation of the Tree of Life on and as the human body. This expresses the Hermetic

concept of the unity of the macrocosm and the microcosm. The Tree of Life, representing the 'Body of God' and the aspects of the cosmos is shown to simultaneously be the body of the magician and the aspects of their being. Here is the doctrine of anthropocosmos — that the exalted physical and Imaginal body of the magician is the body of God.

The middle pillar of the Tree is first established, extending from Kether above the head to Malkuth at the feet. This shows that the equilibrium of opposites precedes and is more fundamental than the duality of contending forces represented by the Pillars of Mercy and Severity, which are designated by the horizontal bar of the cross.

There are other meanings of the Kabbalistic Cross. The cross generally represents the 4 elements, governed by and revolving about the central point of the cross, which stands for Spirit. Therefore the symbol as a whole represents manifestation as spatial extension radiating from the central point of Spirit. Different systems have different elements assigned to particular arms, but as a general symbol of the four-fold it is unnecessary to view particular arms as particular elements, but rather see the symbol as showing simply the idea of four elements in general. This symbolizes the body of the magician, or microcosm, governed and sustained by Spirit, located at the heart. The heart in the Kabbalistic Cross is therefore a symbol of Love and Will conjoined, as it is the site of an impulse to manifestation (Will), and is also traditionally the seat of the emotions and therefore of Love.

In its upright form the cross also represents the trinity heading the pendant lower levels of reality:



There are many more depths of meaning to the cross, which further reflection and contemplation can reveal. It is not merely a Christian sectarian icon. Probably the most thorough work on this subject is Rene Guenon's *Symbolism of the Cross*.[6]

Certain words are said when making the Kabbalistic Cross. The phrase is, "*Atah Malkuth, ve Geburah, ve Gedulah, le ohlahm Amen.*" This means, "*Unto thee is the kingdom, the power and the glory unto the ages Amen.*" This is the final line of the Lord's Prayer as given in the King James Bible, translated into Hebrew to emphasize the Kabbalistic manner with which the passage is interpreted in the Golden Dawn rituals. The manner of this interpretation is partially defined by the portions of the body touched while saying the phrase. Atah (unto thee) is spoken while touching the forehead to represent Kether. The 'thee' therefore refers to the highest spiritual being. *Malkuth* (kingdom) is said while indicating the lower portion of the body assigned to the Sephirah of the same name, which represents material reality. Therefore reality is the kingdom of the highest spiritual being. The horizontal crossbar is drawn while reciting *ve geburah, ve gedulah* (the power and the glory), indicating that the two Pillars of Severity and Mercy are referred to. The hands are then held over the heart while saying *le ohlahm Amen* (unto the ages, Amen). One way of understanding this whole movement is to see it as saying that reality and its apparent dualities, polarities and contradictions are eternally ruled by and reconciled in the highest Spirit as designated by the verticality of the cross and by the heart, in which the initial verticality comes to rest in union with the horizontal.

In making the Kabbalistic Cross there is a Thelemic tradition of touching the heart while making the vertical gesture, in between saying *Atah* and *Malkuth*, and vibrating the name Aiwass. This is the name of Crowley's Holy Guardian Angel and the narrator of *The Book of the Law*. This entity (or whatever Aiwass actually is) acts as a symbol of the mediation or communication between Thelemites and the divine reality through *The Book of the Law* and its message. It is appropriate to place this name at the heart because, as already described, the heart is the point of contact between the self and God through Will and Love. Therefore it is an apt location to signify the awakening of the Thelemic Gnosis. Additionally, the heart is associated with the Sephirah Tiphareth, which in the A□A□ system is the place where the personal Knowledge and Conversation between the Adept and their Angel first occurs.

There is an oral tradition amongst Thelemites that upon achieving knowledge of the name of one's own Holy Guardian Angel, that one should substitute this name for that of Aiwass when making the Kabbalistic Cross. If one's relationship to one's angel makes this appropriate, then this can certainly be a meaningful addition to the ritual, as well as a way of personalizing the performance to one's own initiatory current.

One powerful visualization that can be done while performing the Kabbalistic Cross is to see oneself as growing larger in stature. One should imagine one's self expanding during the ritual to tremendous proportions at the limits of one's imagination. This exercise at expansion of consciousness seems to have archetypal resonance, and its simplicity belies its effectiveness.

Tibetan Vajrayana techniques often involve the expansion of one's visualized body or the body of a deity to giant proportions. Sometimes the expanded body becomes sacrificed in some manner, as in the practice of Chod.[7] One is reminded of myths of a primal giant who is slain by some deity and cut in two to create the earth and sky. Odin and Ymir, for

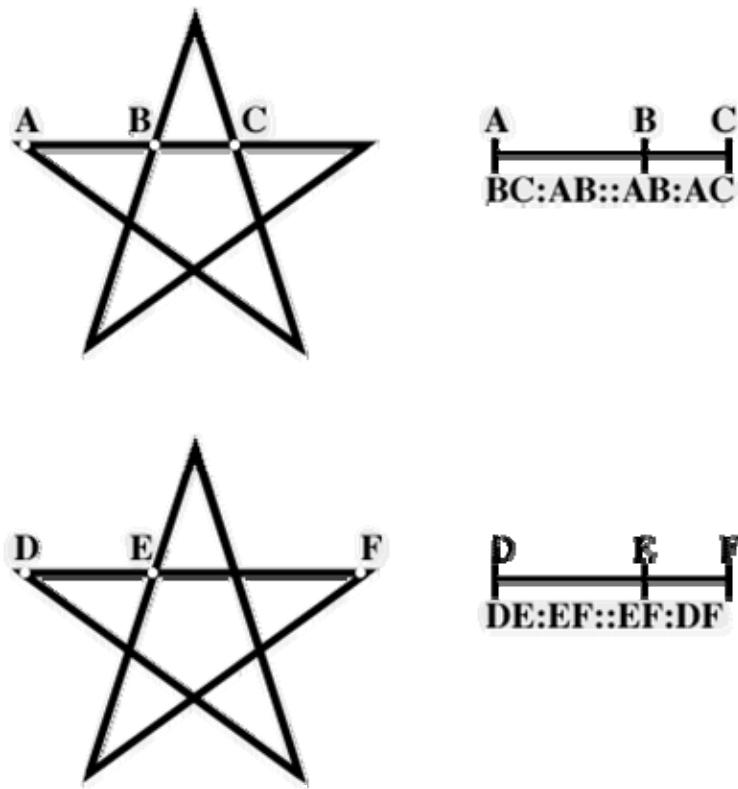
example, or Marduk and Tiamat. There is also Purusha, the primordial man in the Vedas, whose death is symbolized by the fire sacrifice. A basic idea held in common by these traditions is that of the Giant's body representing some aspect of the divine Pleroma which sacrifices itself, or is sacrificed for the world to come into being and/or be sustained. These are powerful associations when one considers that the sign of the cross is being made on the body during these visualizations. One is identifying oneself with the universal dying and rising god of regeneration and renewal, with all of the spiritual depths associated with this.

The Pentagrams

There are a number of immediately perceivable symbolic meanings to the Pentagram's form. It has five points, representing the four elements and Spirit. It is drawn with a unicursal, or single unbroken line, which shows the unbroken unity of that Spirit with its elemental emanations. The figure fits exactly inscribed within a circle, also demonstrating its dependence from the divine unity. It is in the shape of a human being, which shows the identity of the symbol with the magician themselves. It is in the traditional shape of a star. As it is written in *The Book of the Law*, "Every man and every woman is a star." [AL I: 3] The five points also represent the fifth Sephirah Geburah, showing the active power of the magician over the elements in service of the consciousness of the Angel. The five points carry the same meaning as the cross of the elements with the center point representing spirit. Additionally, the Egyptians used a five pointed star to represent the goddess Nuit. Nuit, in *The Book of the Law*, states that her symbol is, "The Five Pointed Star, with a Circle in the Middle, & the circle is Red." [AL I: 60]

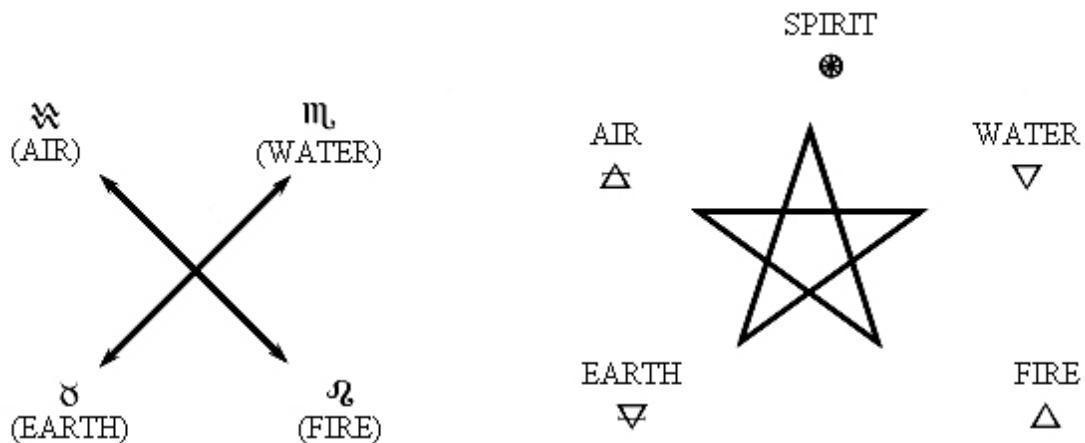
As we can see, the symbolism of the Pentagram serves as a visual resume of the entire ritual. Placing the Pentagram at each of the four quarters shows the elementals or other forces of those quarters the dominion of Spirit over them, as embodied in the magician.

This dominion of Spirit is explicitly encoded in the Pentagram's geometry. The line segments of the Pentagram are in exact extreme and mean proportion to each other. This means that in a line containing two segments, the proportion of the shorter segment to the longer segment is the same proportion as the longer segment to the line as a whole.



In sacred geometry, this symbolizes that the relationship of the microcosm to the lower planes is a reflection of the relationship of the macrocosm to the microcosm. Or as a mentor of mine put it concisely, "*We are an Angel to our demons, and a demon to our Angel.*"[8]

In the Golden Dawn system particular elements are assigned to the points of the Pentagram. These correspondences are based on the cross formed in the heavens by the positions of the fixed signs of the zodiac.



Particular elements may be invoked or banished, depending on how the Pentagram is drawn in relation to the elemental points. The general rule is that a Pentagram whose first line is drawn towards the point of a particular element invokes that element. A Pentagram whose first line is drawn away from the point of a particular element banishes that element. The exceptions to this rule are the Pentagrams of Spirit. These use the two line segments that are not used by the other elemental Pentagrams. These segments connect the two active elements of Fire and Air and the two passive elements of Water and Earth. To invoke or banish Spirit in its Active phase begin the Pentagram with the segment connecting Fire and Air. Begin the line sloping upwards to invoke, downwards to banish. To invoke or banish Spirit in its Passive phase begin the Pentagram with the segment connecting Water and Earth. Begin the line sloping upwards to invoke, downwards to banish. The forms generated by these rules are given on a chart at the end of this chapter.

In the LRP the invoking or banishing Pentagrams of Earth are used because this element traditionally can be understood as containing, or being a consolidation of the other three. In the Sepher Yetzirah, for example, Earth is the result of the equal combination of the three 'Mother' elements of Air, Fire and Water.[9] Therefore, the Earth Pentagram should be understood within the context of the LRP as a stand in for all of the other Pentagrams.

The difference between the invoking and banishing forms of the LRP is relatively subtle, and consists largely in a distinction of emphasis. The Lesser *Invoking* Ritual of the Pentagram invokes a current of balanced spiritual force into the ritual space. The Lesser *Banishing* Ritual of the Pentagram performs the same function, but makes more explicit the specific directing of that energy to dissolve and banish any unbalanced forces. As the LRP is often used to open a ritual space with a preliminary clearing of negative energy, the banishing form will probably be the one most used in this context. However, the invoking form can still be used for the same purpose and, especially if used less frequently, can often have an extra 'kick'. It is also particularly effective when performed by itself as a stand-alone ritual.

The Four Quarters

These are the four directions to which Pentagrams, divine names and angels are applied. The general attribution is to the four elements, to which the magician in the center stands as Spirit.

In the Pentagram rituals, the cross of the four quarters is understood as being formed by the intersection of the paths of Samekh and Peh on the Tree of Life. This is the central key point of equilibrium in the outer college of A.:A.:.. The Man of Earth, ascending in their aspiration along the path of Samekh towards Tiphareth must cross the path of Peh, the Tower. This represents the ordeals of elemental equilibration, of the alignment of the physical, emotional, cognitive and intentional aspects of the phenomenal self to the True

Will. The symbolism of Samekh and Peh is parallel to, but independent of the symbolism associating particular elements and archangels to the quarters, as these are not based on the Sephiroth that surround that point on the Tree.

At the cusp of each quadrant a Pentagram is inscribed, a divine name vibrated, and an archangel visualized and invoked. All four worlds are thereby placed in balanced equilibrium in relation to each other. The divine name is Atziluthic, the archangels are Briatic, the Pentagrams in terms of their existence as visualized objects are Yetziratic, and the performance of the ritual itself in a physical space relates to Assiah.

The Cross and Circle Conjoined

This symbol is formed by the circular movements of the magician about the four quarters. This implies the form of a circle and cross conjoined as such:



This is itself an important ensign of Thelemic Magick. The prototype is the symbol of the rosy cross, the emblem of the Rosicrucian movement. The Thelemic understanding of the rose cross is that it represents the union of subject and object in Samadhi, and the continual embrace of Nuit and Hadit. The cross is consciousness, extended upon the rose/circle of the infinity of possible experiences of that consciousness. The cross is life, and the rose light. Their union is of the nature of love, expressed through liberty.

A few things should be said about the original context of meaning of the rose cross, as used in the Rosicrucian manifestos.

1. It is very similar in type to symbols found in the so-called 'Emblem Books' of the 1600s. The cryptic emblems depicted in these volumes were not necessarily intended to have a single fixed meaning, but were rather designed to open the soul through their contemplation to a higher spiritual reality.
2. The rose cross comes from a Christian context, with all of the associations and depths the Christian mysteries give to the symbol.
3. It is very similar to Martin Luther's coat of arms. Rosicrucianism has historically been very closely tied to Protestantism. This connection is clear in The Manifestos themselves. Although this association only captures the exoteric context of the movement's initial matrix of manifestation, it nevertheless shows that Rosicrucianism has had a commitment to political and religious freedom as an integral aspect of its spiritual vision even in its initial manifestation. This has at times been obscured by its more capitalistic and/or ignorant manifestations, but

Thelema is an explicit inheritor of this aspect of its tradition. In this sense, as well as in others, Thelema is a Rosicrucian religion.[10]

* * * * *

The Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram forms a kind of basic framework upon which other rituals are based. In the rituals that have come down to us from the Golden Dawn, there are two versions of a more advanced Pentagram ritual. One is called the Greater Ritual of the Pentagram (GRP), and is found in Crowley's *Liber O*.[11] The second is given in Regardie's *The Golden Dawn* and is named the Supreme Invoking Ritual of the Pentagram (SIRP).[12] It is probable that the SIRP is a later ritual expanded from the older GRP and developed by the Stella Mautina, a successor organization to the original Golden Dawn. As the SIRP is identical to the GRP, except for the addition of a few gestures and words of power, the structure of the GRP will be addressed first.

The Greater Ritual of the Pentagram serves as a kind of higher octave, or elaborated version of the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram, with similar magical effects and symbolism. The ritual is as follows:

The Greater Ritual of the Pentagram

1. Perform the Kabbalistic Cross.
2. Go to the East. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Active, visualized in white light. Vibrate EHEIEH. Give the sign of the Rending of the Veil.
3. Make the invoking Pentagram of Air, visualized in yellow light. Vibrate YHVH. Give the sign of Shu.
4. Trace circle clockwise to South. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Active, visualized in white light. Vibrate EHEIEH. Give the sign of the Rending of the Veil.
5. Make the invoking Pentagram of Fire, visualized in red light. Vibrate ELOHIM. Give the sign of Thoum-ash-Neith.
6. Trace circle clockwise to West. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Passive, visualized in white light. Vibrate AGLA. Give the sign of the Closing of the Veil.
7. Make the invoking Pentagram of Water, visualized in blue light. Vibrate EL. Give the sign of Auramoth.
8. Trace circle clockwise to North. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Passive, visualized in white light. Vibrate AGLA. Give the sign of the Closing of the Veil.
9. Make the invoking Pentagram of Earth, visualized in green light. Vibrate ADONAI. Give the sign of Set Fighting.
10. Complete tracing the circle clockwise to East. Return to center. Perform Kabbalistic Cross.

To perform the banishing version of the above, simply substitute banishing forms for all of the Pentagrams.

The ritual follows the basic pattern of the LRP with a few expansions. First and most obviously, the specific invoking Pentagram of the particular elemental quarter is used, rather than the generic Earth Pentagram. These can be visualized in either of two sets of colors.

Element	Elemental color	Sephirothic color
Fire	Red	Green for Netzach
Water	Blue	Orange for Hod
Earth	Green or Black	Black for Malkuth
Air	Yellow	Purple for Yesod

I personally find the former attributions more immediately intuitively appropriate. They match the four colors used for the quarters in Buddhist Tantric Mandalas, although the specific attributions of colors to elements diverges in that system from that used in the Golden Dawn. Either green or black can be used for Earth. I prefer green, as it signifies more clearly that manifestation is the place of the completion or growth of Spirit (green being the color of vegetation), rather than the negation or opposite of Spirit. The alternative color correspondences relate to the lowest four Sephirah on the Tree of Life, to which the elements are assigned in the G.D. system.

In addition to the Pentagram of the particular quarter's element, an additional Pentagram is drawn at each of the four stations. These are the Pentagrams of Active and Passive Spirit. Active Spirit is given with Air and Fire, Passive Spirit with Water and Earth. The Spirit Pentagrams should be visualized in white light. The Spirit Pentagram is drawn at each quarter before the Pentagram of the specific element. This is to further reinforce that the invocation of any particular force is at the behest of, and under the authority of universal spiritual force. The divine name *Eheieh* is used with the Spirit Active Pentagrams, *AGLA* with Spirit Passive.

The divine names used with the elemental Pentagrams themselves are based on a Sephirothic correspondence, but a different one than that of the four lowest Sephiroth. The name used for Earth is *Adonai*. This is meant to be a shortened form of *Adonai Ha-Aretz*, the divine name of Malkuth. The divine name for the air quarter is *YHVH*, which is intended as a shortened form of *YHVH Eloha Ve-Daath*, assigned to Tiphareth. Water is *El*, for Chesed, and Fire *Elohim* or *Elohim Gibor* for Geburah. This gives the following correspondences.

Element Sephirah Sephirothic color

Fire	Geburah	Red
Water	Chesed	Blue
Air	Tiphareth	Yellow
Earth	Malkuth	Black

The colors are the colors of the Sephirah in the Queen scale, and are the source of this attribution to the elements, corresponding as they do to the first set of color to element correspondences given above. There is also a deeper meaning to this manner of associating these Sephirah to the elements. This can be seen by looking at the relationships of the Sephirah upon the Tree of Life. The Tree can be seen as an assemblage of three trinities, representing the same principles reflected at higher or lower levels of reality. The highest triad are the Supernals of Kether, Chockmah, and Binah, representing God in itself, so to speak. Below that is the triad of Chesed, Geburah and Tiphareth — themselves emanations of the Supernal triad representing through their colors in the Queen scale Fire (Red, Geburah), Water (Blue, Chesed) and Air (Yellow, Tiphareth). These in turn emanate Earth as Malkuth and/or the lower Tree. Therefore, through these names this particular part of the ritual is shown to be from the perspective of the Adept 'looking down' the Tree, from the perspective of the higher Sephiroth, rather than the initiate 'looking up', from the perspective of the lower Sephiroth as in the LRP.

The ritual calls for various signs to be given at the quarters. These are the signs of the various Golden Dawn Outer Order grades as aligned to the four elements. They are used to further reinforce the elemental symbolism in each quadrant. The signs are:

Element	Sign	Golden Dawn Grade
Spirit Active	Rending of the Veil	Dominus Liminus
Spirit Passive	Closing of the Veil	Dominus Liminus
Fire	Thoum-ash-Neith	Philosophus 4°=7
Water	Auramoth	Practicus 3°=8
Air	Shu	Theoricus 2°=9
Earth	Set Fighting	Zelator 1°=1

These signs are Western mudras. They are gestures and movements intended to signify and symbolize some aspect of spiritual truth. Their performance should be approached with both intention and attention. There is some variation in the oral tradition as to the precise formulation of these signs. The following are my own interpretations.

Spirit in its Active and Passive phases is symbolized by the signs of the Opening/Rending and Closing of the Veil. The sign of Opening or Rending the Veil is made by placing the palms together at the heart, then separating the hands while stepping forward, as if opening a curtain and passing through it. It represents Spirit Active. The sign of the Closing of the Veil is performed by taking a step backwards while bringing the extended hands together at the heart, as if closing a curtain. It symbolizes Spirit Passive. Both signs utilize the symbolism of a veil, representing the barriers of limited perception and understanding that conceal the spiritual nature of reality from us. The signs are those of the grade of Dominus Liminus, which stands before Tiphareth and represents by the passage through a veil (called Paroketh) the breakthrough of the personal consciousness of Yesod into the illuminated consciousness of Tiphareth and achievement of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. The beginning or ending of the signs is at the heart, the Imaginal seat of the Angel.

The sign for the element of Fire is that of the grade of Philosophus. The sign is made by raising the hands to form an upright triangle at the forehead by joining the tips of the thumbs and forefingers. This can be seen as representing the directing of the will, which corresponds to Fire, vertically in spiritual aspiration. An upright triangle also represents the element of Fire in traditional Alchemical notation. The sign is said to be that of the Egyptian goddess Thoum-ash-Neith, or Neith, typically represented with a human head and carrying a bow and arrows. In the Golden Dawn system this God-form is assumed by the four officer called the Daudachos, whose duty is to consecrate both the initiates and the temple with incense. The incense represents fire to the purifying water of the parallel officer the Stolstices.

The sign for Water is that of the grade of Practicus and is made by raising the hands to form a downward pointing triangle at the heart by joining the tips of the thumbs and forefingers. Just as the upward pointing triangle is the alchemical glyph for Fire, the downward pointing triangle signifies Water. Here the symbolism is that of the descent of the divine spirit of the Angel into the soul, centered at the heart, made receptive to its influence. The sign is also made over the heart to show that this divine receptivity is accomplished through love. This is said to be the sign of Auramoth, or Mut, the consort of Amoun at Thebes. This is the Egyptian God-form assumed by the Stolistes in the G.D. ceremonies to purify the temple and the initiates with water.

The sign of the element Air is the sign of Shu. This is the Egyptian deity of the atmosphere who stands separating the Sky (Nuit) and the Earth (Seb), allowing for the world to come into being in the space created between them. This represents the 'creation' or awareness of the world which is made possible by the minds ability to make distinctions, the rational faculty being represented by Air. The sign is made by imitating the posture of Shu holding up the sky. The hands are held above the head as if supporting an object, the elbows forming a right angle.

The element of Earth is associated with the sign of Set Fighting. It is made by stepping forward with the right foot while fully extending the right hand upwards and forwards. The left hand is extended downwards and backwards. Both palms are held open and facing forward. It represents the aggressive stance of the god Set. This deity is often approached in the Thelemic tradition as a personification of materiality, and the divine power expressed in matter, particularly through physical functions such as sexuality. Therefore, this god is aptly associated in this context with the Sephirah Malkuth, the grade of Zelator and the element of Earth.

All of the elemental signs can be enhanced in their performance by the adoption of the god-form associated with that sign. This procedure is discussed in chapter 9.

There seems no real reason why the archangels are omitted at the quarters, other than that the Spirit Pentagrams are perhaps supposed to fill the same role of symbolizing Briah. Depending on their preferences, individual magicians can fill in this step using the wording from the LRP.

The change in God names and the use of the specific elemental Pentagrams are the most important distinctions that differentiate the Greater Pentagram Ritual from the Lesser. The grade signs and other embellishments add emphasis on the particular elements, so as to increase the concentration of the invocation. The Supreme Invoking Ritual of the Pentagram, an elaboration on the GRP from the Golden Dawn's successor group the Stella Mautina, is identical to the GRP except for a few additional such emphases.

The SIRP really makes only two substantive additions to the GRP. First, symbols are drawn within the Pentagrams. The Pentagrams of Spirit all have the eight spoked wheel of Spirit drawn within them. The elemental Pentagrams all have the fixed sign of the zodiac associated with their element drawn and visualized within them. These are the signs of Aquarius for Air, Scorpio for Water, Taurus for Earth, and Leo for Fire. In the original G.D. material, the outline of an eagle's head is drawn in profile in place of the sign of Scorpio. The eagle is the Kerubic guardian of Water, as it represents the highest of the three octaves of Scorpio, the other two being symbolized by a snake and a scorpion.

Secondly, various words and phrases in the angelic language of Enochian are said, in addition to the divine names, while drawing the Pentagrams at the quarters. The words said with the Spirit Pentagrams are from the Tablet of Union and correspond to the lines of the four elements. The words declared with the elemental Pentagrams are drawn from the center line of the Enochian tablets of the appropriate element.

The SIRP also includes the archangels from the LRP and does not include the use of the Dominus Liminus signs with the Spirit Pentagrams.

The Supreme Invoking Ritual of the Pentagram

1. Perform the Kabbalistic Cross.
2. Go to the East. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Active, visualized in white light. Vibrate EXARP while drawing Pentagram. Draw wheel within Pentagram. Vibrate EHEIEH while making wheel.
3. Make the invoking Pentagram of Air, visualized in yellow light. Vibrate ORO IBAH AOZPI while drawing Pentagram. Draw Aquarius symbol within Pentagram. Vibrate YHVH while making this symbol. Give the sign of Shu.
4. Trace circle clockwise to South. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Active, visualized in white light. Vibrate BITOM while drawing Pentagram. Draw wheel within Pentagram. Vibrate EHEIEH while making wheel.
5. Make the invoking Pentagram of Fire, visualized in red light. Vibrate OIP TEAA PEDOCE while drawing Pentagram. Draw Leo symbol within Pentagram. Vibrate ELOHIM while making this symbol. Give the sign of Thoum-ash-Neith.
6. Trace circle clockwise to West. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Passive, visualized in white light. Vibrate HCOMA while drawing Pentagram. Draw wheel within Pentagram. Vibrate AGLA while making wheel.

7. Make the invoking Pentagram of Water, visualized in blue light. Vibrate EMPEH ARSEL GAIOL while drawing Pentagram. Draw the head of the eagle within Pentagram. Vibrate EL while making this symbol. Give the sign of Auramoth.
8. Trace circle clockwise to North. Make the invoking Pentagram for Spirit Passive, visualized in white light. Vibrate NANTA while drawing Pentagram. Draw wheel within Pentagram. Vibrate AGLA while making wheel.
9. Make the invoking Pentagram of Earth, visualized in green light. Vibrate EMOR DIAL HECTEGA while drawing Pentagram. Draw Taurus symbol within Pentagram. Vibrate ADONAI while making this symbol. Give the sign of Set Fighting.
10. Complete tracing the circle clockwise to East. Return to center. Invoke the four archangels and perform the Kabbalistic Cross, as in LRP.

All of the various rituals discussed so far in this chapter are held in common by both the Golden Dawn and Thelemic traditions. This is not surprising, as the entire Golden Dawn system is contained within the larger structure of Thelemic spirituality. Additionally, there are explicitly Thelemic rituals, written by Crowley, which utilize the G.D. rituals as inspiration. With regard to the Pentagram rituals, Crowley's version is a ritual known as the Star Ruby. There are two versions of this ritual, one published in *The Book of Lies* in 1913, the other printed in an appendix of the later *Magick in Theory and Practice*.[12] This chapter will focus on the later, more definitively Thelemic version from *Magick in Theory and Practice*. The two versions are identical except for the initial divine names placed at the quarters.

The title comes from a gemstone known for the 6 pointed star pattern that forms when light is refracted through the concentrations of a substance called rutile within the stone. The symbolism of the 6 rayed star and the rarity and value of the stone refer to the consciousness of the Adept in Tiphareth. There are several deeper layers of symbolism that can be gleaned from a close study of the Holy Book *Liber 66: Liber Stellae Rubeae*, where the Star Ruby is also the yoni of the Goddess.

The ritual is given the number 25 by Crowley. This is 5 squared, the number of the Pentagram enhanced by itself. The text of the ritual as found in *Magick in Theory and Practice* is as follows:

Liber 25: The Star Ruby

1. Facing East, in the center, draw deep deep thy breath, closing thy mouth with thy right forefinger prest against thy lower lip. Then dashing down the hand with a great sweep back and out, expelling forcibly thy breath, cry ΑΠΟ ΠΙΑΝΤΟΣ ΚΑΚΟΔΑΙΜΟΝΟΣ.
2. With the same forefinger touch thy forehead, and say ΣΟΙ, thy member, and say Ω ΦΑΛΛΕ, thy right shoulder, and say ΙΣΧΥΡΟΣ, thy left shoulder, and say ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΟΣ; then clasp thine hands, locking the fingers, and cry ΙΑΩ.

3. Advance to the East. Imagine strongly a Pentagram, aright, in thy forehead. Drawing the hands to the eyes, fling it forth, making the sign of Horus and roar THERION. Retire thine hand in the sign of Hoor-paar-Kraat.
4. Go round to the North and repeat; but say NUIT.
5. Go round to the West and repeat; but whisper BABALON.
6. Go round to the South and repeat; but bellow HADIT.
7. Completing the circle widdershins, retire to the center and raise thy voice in the Paian, with these words ΙΩ ΠΙΑΝ, with the signs of N.O.X.
8. Extend the arms in the form of a Tau and say low but clear: ΠΡΟ ΜΟΥ ΙΥΓΓΕΣ, ΟΠΙΣΘΩ ΜΟΥ ΤΕΛΕΤΑΠΧΑΙ, ΕΠΙ ΔΕΞΙΑ ΣΥΝΩΧΕΙΣ, ΕΠΑΡΙΣΤΕΡΑ ΔΑΙΜΟΝΕΣ, ΦΛΕΓΕΙ ΓΑΡ ΠΕΡΙ ΜΟΥ Ο ΑΣΤΗΡ ΤΩΝ ΠΙΕΝΤΕ, ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΤΗΙ ΣΤΗΑΗΙ Ω ΑΣΤΕΡ ΤΩΝ ΕΞ ΕΣΤΗΚΕ.
9. Repeat the Cross Qabalistic, as above, and end as thou didst begin (1 and 2).

As can be seen, the Star Ruby follows the basic structure of the Golden Dawn Pentagram rituals rather closely, and its general form and purpose can be understood in terms of the discussion of those spells. There are a number of interesting additional features as well.

The spell begins with the magician making the sign of silence while inhaling deeply — drawing down deep inside themselves to the place of the power of this Hermetic silence. Then from this silence breaks forth a divine command. This is "*Apo Pantos Kakodaimanos*" — "*Away from here all evil spirits.*" This serves to disperse all illusion of distraction and disruption such that only the True Will remains. Assuming that the entire purpose of the ritual is not accomplished in this moment, or should the magician wish to further signify, elaborate and/or celebrate this state, the rest of the ritual may be performed. To some extent this caveat goes for every element of this or any ritual. Any true magical symbol recapitulates the whole of the Great Work.

The Star Ruby version of the Kabbalistic Cross uses the same basic movements and symbolism but with Greek words giving a slightly different emphasis on its meaning. The words are:

Location on Body	Greek	English
Forehead	Soi	Unto thee
Genitals	O Phalle	Oh Phallus
Right Shoulder	Ishchuros	Strength, might
Left Shoulder	Eucharistos	Eucharist
Heart	IAO	IAO

The first vertical movement seems to affirm that the highest principle is identical with the 'Phallus'. Crowley means much more than the merely physical genitalia here, of course. Rather, referred to here is that "Lord secret and most holy, source of life, source of love, source of liberty, force of energy, fire of motion — that art the essence of every true god that is upon the surface of the Earth." [from the collects of *Liber XV*][14]

The gesture of the crossbar of the Kabbalistic Cross then affirms that this principle as it manifests in oneself is both "strong" (i.e. erect) and mighty as well as of the nature of a sacrament. It both gives and receives, and is both active and passive. It is of the nature of the synthesis of all planes and of all opposites. There is a complication at this point resulting from Crowley's use of a gender specific term (Phallus rather than Kteis) to refer linguistically to this principle. It is the interpretation of some prominent Thelemites that 'Phallus' (with a capital 'P') is meant as a gender neutral or gender inclusive term.[15] It seems that at times in Crowley's system this can be seen as correct, at other times this is a more problematic reading.[16] This is a complex issue and individuals should therefore be critical and mindful in their engagement with this aspect of the system. Some Thelemites use the phrase 'Phalle Kteis' at this point in the ritual. Also, the Omega used before the word Phalle in the ritual as it stands is probably intended by Crowley to represent the divine Kteis or Yoni.

IAO is a name of God used by the Gnostics. In the Thelemic tradition it is a divine name appropriate to Tiphareth. It also conceals a formula of justification through suffering which will be discussed at more length in chapter 12.

After making the Kabbalistic Cross the magician proceeds about the perimeter of the circle in a counterclockwise direction placing Pentagrams and divine names at the quarters, as in the standard format of the Pentagram rituals. This counterclockwise direction of movement shows that the Star Ruby is essentially a banishing ritual. The ritual calls for the Pentagrams to be 'thrown' out rather than drawn in the air. Some individuals who perform this ritual do nevertheless draw the Pentagrams, either the generic Earth banishing Pentagram used in the LRP, or the Pentagram of the particular element of the quarter. The significance of projecting out the Pentagram is shown by it being done in the sign of Horus from the Ajna Chakra, which represents the location of the Imaginal visionary faculty associated with the actual visualization process of the Pentagram itself.

The name of a particular Thelemic deity is placed at each quarter with the Pentagrams. There is a tradition of also visualizing some aspect of the god in question. The text specifies that the name of the deity should be said in a particular manner. One roars the name of Therion, says Nuit, whispers Babalon and yells Hadit. This serves to characterize the 'feel' of the gods. It actually works very well and is highly recommended.

The question arises as to which elements correspond to which quarters in this ritual. As discussed in chapter 3, there are two main directional schemes: By the winds/Terrestrial and Sidereal.

Deity	Direction	Terrestrial	Sidereal
THERION	East	Air	Fire
BABALON	West	Water	Air
NUIT	North	Earth	Water
HADIT	South	Fire	Earth

Consonant with the symbolism of the other Pentagram rituals one might expect the Star Ruby to use the Terrestrial attributions, and indeed the ritual is performable as such with appropriate elaboration of the visualizations. However, there are reasons to believe that Crowley may have intended the Sidereal correspondences to be used. The clue to this is the ritual *Liber 5 vel Reguli*, discussed in chapter 10.[17] In this ritual the identical Thelemic deities are placed to the quarters as in the Star Ruby. However, while Sidereal correspondences are used in Reguli, they are modified in a manner unique to that ritual (cf. chapter 10) and direct application to the Star Ruby is problematic.

The magician should determine their own answer to this question through experimentation with both attributions to find the one that works best for them. The Terrestrial correspondences are my own preference, and align the symbolism of the Star Ruby clearly with that of the other Pentagram rituals that have already been discussed. Nevertheless, the sidereal schema seems to some more appropriate to the stellar nature of the deities involved, acting to raise the ritual to a higher level, as it were.

When the particular Thelemic deities are given elemental attributions it produces some interesting meanings. Being deities, and therefore Briatic archetypes, these four characters can have multiple possible correspondences depending on the ritual context. By associating them to a particular element and direction it is possible to throw into relief important features of the god-forms. The following reflections use the Terrestrial correspondences:

As Air, Therion is the Ruach centered in the Sun of Tiphareth. He is the lion of light, a solar god mediating between highest and lowest, Malkuth and Kether meeting in Tiphareth — beast, god and man as One.

Babalon as Water shows her as the embodiment of the feminine divine principle. The weapon of Water is the chalice, which is here the Holy Grail borne by Babalon. Placed in the West, she is opposite her consort Therion in the East and further represents the presence of the divine feminine power over the apparent darkness of the setting sun. This particularly alludes to the Goddess — powers relating to the mysteries of death.

Nuit as Earth shows her aspect as the possibilities of experience of the manifest universe — as phenomenal reality itself. North is the direction of the pole star — the zenith of the vault of heaven. Nuit is also placed opposite her compliment Hadit.

Hadit is free. As such he is the innermost flame and free of the Self, the incarnation of the True Will. Will itself corresponds to free.

There are many deeper levels of meaning to these attributions which further contemplation can reveal.

The magician now returns to the center of the circle and makes the signs of NOX, meaning naught or nothing. There are five of them. Crowley describes them in the ritual *Liber 5 vel Reguli* (given in full in chapter 10) as follows:

Puella or girl is made by the magician "standing with feet together, head bowed, his left hand shielding his phallus, and his right hand shielding his breast (attitude of the *Venus de Medici*)."

Puer or boy is performed by the magician "standing with feet together, and head erect. Let his right hand [the thumb between index and medius] be raised, the forearm vertical at a right angle with the upper arm, which is horizontally extended in the line joining the shoulders. Let his left hand, the thumb extended forwards, and the fingers clenched, rest at the junction of the thighs [attitude of the Gods Mentu, Khem, etc.]."

Vir or man is done with "the feet being together. The hands, with clenched fingers and thumbs thrust out forwards, are held to the temples; the head is then bowed and pushed out, as if to symbolize the butting of an horned beast (attitude of Pan, Bacchus, etc.)."

Mulier or woman is made so that "the Feet are widely separated, and the arms raised so as to suggest a crescent. The head is thrown back [attitude of Baphomet, Isis in Welcome, the *Microcosm of Vitruvius*]."

Finally Mater Triumphans or mother triumphant is performed such that "the feet are together; the left arm is curved as if it supported a child; the thumb and index of the right hand pinch the nipple of the left breast, as if offering it to that child." [18]

These signs can be corresponded to the five letters of the Pentagrammaton as follows:

Letter Element	Sign (Latin)	Sign (in English)
Y	Fire	Vir
H	Water	Mulier
SH	Spirit	Mater Triumphans
V	Air	Puer
H	Earth	Puella

There is an oral tradition, probably deriving originally from the Berkeley OTO, which performs the signs in the order of the four worlds from Fire to Earth, followed by Spirit. This represents the descent of the divine reality through the four worlds into the circle, establishing the manifestation of Spirit.

Crowley himself seems to have used the signs in a somewhat different, and equally valid, manner.[19] NOX refers to the 'naught' or nothing of absolute Spirit. In the Golden Dawn system, the formula of attainment of Tiphareth is represented by the letters LVX, referring to the Latin *lux*, meaning light. For the A□A□ grades above Tiphareth, Crowley used the formula of NOX to represent the supernal nothingness, or "*the light higher than eyesight*" [AL II:51], in contrast to the LVX formula of the lower grades. These concepts are articulated in greater depth in The Book of Lies. For Crowley the NOX signs represent the following A.:A.: grades:

A□A□ Grade	Sign	Sephirah
Major Adept 6°=5	Puer	Geburah
Exempt Adept 7°=4	Vir	Chesed
Babe of the Abyss	Puella	Abyss
Babe of the Abyss	Mulier	Abyss
Master of the Temple 8°=3	Mater Triumphans	Binah

Under this usage the signs are given in the above order, to symbolize an ascent through these grades of attainment.

The supernal naught is called in *The Book of Lies* the Night of Pan, and so while making these signs the magician should intone IO PAN. Pan is the all, The Reality inclusive of all planes. The letters 'T' and 'O' of the 'IO' further represent the Phallus and the Yoni, respectively. The union of their duality discloses the unity of Pan.

The NOX signs, in either approach, serve as an invocation of Spirit into the center of the circle amongst the four elements, at the center of their cross.

Upon completion of the NOX signs, the magician says, "*Pro mou Iunges, ophistho mou Teletarchai, epi dexia Sunoiches, eparistera Daimones.*" This means, "*Before me Iunges, behind me Teletarchi, on my right Sunoiches, on my left Daimones.*"

These are the Star Ruby equivalent of the Briatic or Archangelic guardians used in the other Pentagram rituals. The names come from *The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster*, which presents a scheme of divine emanations from the absolute, itself described as a paternal fire of Mind (Nous). The *Iunges*, *Teletarchi* and *Sunoiches* are primary emanations lying above the demiurge (i.e. above the Abyss). *Daimones* is simply the Greek plural name for spirits. 'Demon' is the modern corruption of this word. In Greek, however, *daimon* refers to any spirit, not just an evil one. Its context in this ritual suggests that the higher Briatic *daimons* are meant, of which aspects of the Holy Guardian Angel can be experienced at times as a type. There are various traditions as to how to visualize these entities. The simplest is to see them as angelic figures as in the LRP.

Having established the Briatic hierarchy at the quarters, the magician now states, "*Phlegi gar peri mo aster ton pente, kai ente stelle ho aster ton hex hexsteke.*" Which means, "*About me flames the Pentagram, and in the column stands the six rayed star.*" This is exactly as in the LRP, but in Greek rather than in English.

The Star Ruby concludes with a repeat of its version of the Kabbalistic Cross.

We should note, having completed our examination of the major Pentagram rituals, that all of the ceremonies so far discussed invoke or banish the elements as a group. What should one do to invoke or banish a particular element? There is no single methodology in this, and there are a variety of oral traditions. Neither the original Golden Dawn, nor

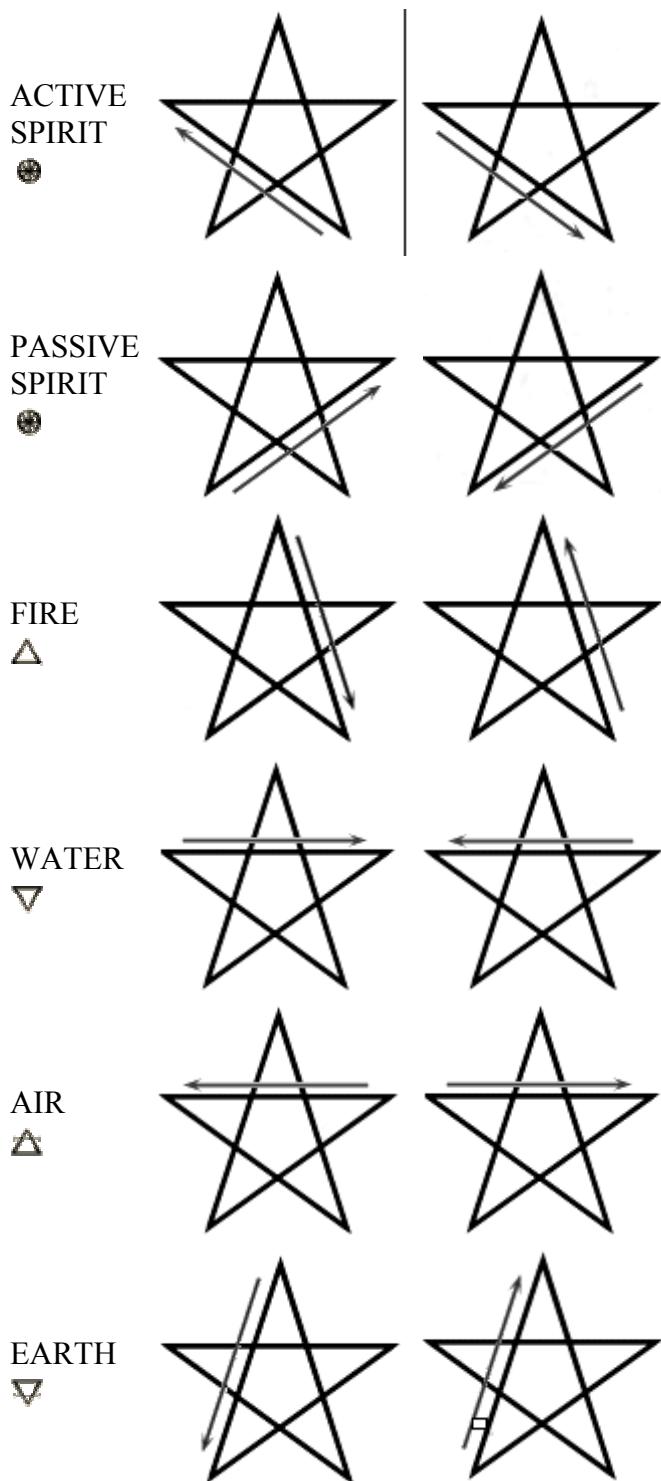
the Stella Mautina had a version of the Pentagram ritual to invoke a particular element, though other Golden Dawn groups and traditions of practice have developed various methods of elaborating the original Pentagram material to serve this purpose.

The original G.D. method of summoning the particular elements comes from the openings of the elemental degrees and uses the Enochian tablets. Less complicated is to utilize some kind of variation of the Pentagram ritual. There is latitude in this, but probably the simplest method would be to perform the LRP in its banishing form, then turn to the appropriate quarter of the element one wishes to summon. Make the invoking Pentagram of Spirit Active or Passive as in the GRP, then draw the invoking Pentagram of the selected element, visualized in the appropriate elemental color. Declare words to the effect that the element in question has been invoked. When it is time to banish the particular element and close the ritual space, turn back to the appropriate quarter. Make the banishing Pentagram of the element, again visualizing it in the requisite color. Follow with the banishing Pentagram of Spirit in either its Active or Passive form as in the GRP, then perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram in its entirety.

There is also a much more meditative rather than magical method. Sitting in one's asana visualize one's aura as glowing radiant white, which then gradually shifts to the color of the invoked element, slowly and fully filling the ritual space with light of that color. When the ritual is completed, the light is visualized as gradually drawn back to the personal aura and transmuted back into white. This is a very passive method, and is best used in contemplation of some spiritual aspect of the desired force, rather than in active use of the force for some end. A more magical method would be preferable for the latter aim.

The original Golden Dawn system's standard magical method for the invocation of a particular element is used during the opening of the four elemental grades of $1^{\circ}=10$ through $4^{\circ}=7$. This technique is generally today called "Opening by Watchtower". A concise outline of this procedure is given in Crowley's *Liber Chanockh*.[20] It is also presented in The Golden Dawn and in more detailed focus in Israel Regardie's book Ceremonial Magic. There is substantial use of Enochian material in these complicated but powerful rituals. They are probably best used by someone familiar with the G.D. system, perhaps one who has worked the elemental grades in question, or else one with a thorough understanding of the Enochian system. The method requires the use of a set of Enochian Watchtower tablets set at the four quarters. This technique is mentioned as a suggestion of a more advanced method. Readers are referred to the cited sources for details.

INVOKING BANISHING



1. From "Notes on the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram" in Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 692.
2. Westcott, William Wynn, *The Chaldean Oracles Attributed to Zoroaster*, pg. 40-41 (Fragment #183).
3. Adapted from *Liber O* in Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 618.
4. Mathers, S. L. MacGregor (ed.), *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, Penguin Arkana, New York, New York, 1991, pg. 31.
5. Levi, Eliphas, *Transcendental Magic*, pp. 233-234.
6. Guenon, Rene, *Symbolism of the Cross*, Sophia Perennis, Ghent, New York, 1996.
7. See, for example Sangpo, Khetsun, *Tantric Practice in Nying-Ma*, Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 1996, pp. 161-166.
8. Personal conversation with Ebony Anpu, 1997 e.v.
9. Eshelman, James (tr.), *Sepher Yetzirah: The Book of Formation*, College of Thelema, Los Angeles, California, 1996.
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11. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 619-620. This ritual has been rewritten for clarity for this book, but no details have been changed.
12. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pp. 285-286. This ritual has been rewritten for clarity for this book, but no details have been changed.
13. Crowley, Aleister, *The Book of Lies*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1980, pp. 60-61. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 569.
14. Ibid, pg. 590.
15. Hymenaeus Beta XI°, "Woman's Conference Address", The Magical Link — New Series #1, Fall 1997, OTO, pp. 8-10.
16. See, for example Maroney, Tim, "The Included Middle: Facts and Phallacies", The Scarlet Letter — Volume 5 #2, 1998, Scarlet Woman Lodge OTO, Austin, Texas, pp. 6-11.

17. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 573-583.

18. Ibid, pp. 574-576.

19. Ibid, pp. 782-783.

20. *Liber Chanockh* is included in Crowley, Aleister, *Gems from the Equinox*, New Falcon Publications, Scottsdale, Arizona, 1974, pg. 385-430.

Chapter VIII

The Mysticism of Light

"God is the light of the heavens and the earth. His light may be compared to a niche that enshrines a lamp, the lamp within a crystal of star-like brilliance. It is lit from a blessed olive tree neither eastern nor western. Its very oil would almost shine forth, though no fire touched it. Light upon light; God guides to His light whom he will."

"God speaks in metaphors to men. God has knowledge of all things." [Quran 24:35][1]

"Every man and every woman is a star." [Liber AL I: 3]

Association of the divine with light and with the Sun is one of the most deeply archetypal of human conceptions. Solar mysticism and the mysticism of light, therefore, are prevalent in many traditions. It is also a central theme in the Thelemic religion.

Concerning this Crowley wrote the following:

"Our religion therefore, for the People, is the Cult of the Sun, who is our particular star of the Body of Nuit, from whom, in the strictest scientific sense, come this earth, a chilled spark of Him, and all our Light and Life. His vice-regent and representative in the animal kingdom is His cognate symbol the Phallus, representing Love and Liberty. Ra-Hoor-Khuit, like all true Gods, is therefore a Solar-Phallic deity. But we regard Him as He is in truth, eternal; the Solar-Phallic deities of the old Aeon, such as Osiris, 'Christ', Hiram, Adonis, Hercules, etc., were supposed, through our ignorance of the Cosmos, to 'die' and 'rise again'. Thus we celebrated rites of 'crucifixion' and so on, which have now become meaningless. Ra-Hoor-Khuit is the Crowned and Conquering Child. This is also a reference to the 'Crowned' and Conquering 'Child' in ourselves, our own personal God. Except ye become as little children, said 'Christ', ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of Malkuth, the Virgin Bride, and the Child is the Dwarf-Self, the Phallic consciousness, which is the true life of Man, beyond his 'veils' of incarnation. We have to thank Freud — and especially Jung — for stating this part of the Magical Doctrine so plainly, as also for their development of the connection of the Will of this 'child' with the True or Unconscious Will, and so for clarifying our doctrine of the 'Silent Self' or Holy Guardian Angel."[2]

Crowley's thesis here is that, insofar as psychoanalysis posits that the essential dynamic of the total psyche is the Libido. Magically, this means:

Libido = True Self = True Will = Sun = Light = Holy Guardian Angel.

Or as Crowley most directly states:

"When you have proved that God is merely a name for the sex instinct, it appears to me not far to the perception that the sex instinct is God." [3]

Here Crowley is turning Freud on his head (as in Marx's famous claim to have turned Hegel on his head). While accepting the basic discoveries of the Freudian psychoanalysis of the time, he refuses to see them as reductionistic and instead asks the next logical question: what does this mean in a larger, integral, spiritual context? His answer is one of the central mysteries of Thelema, as well as specifically a central theme of the mysteries of OTO.

Crowley articulates this mystery from within a Hermetic framework of sacred correspondence. Ontologically higher levels of reality emanate, represent or mirror themselves through symbols and myths in Imaginal and physical space. As the emerald tablet of Hermes Trismegistus states: "As above, so below."

One possible descriptive model of how spiritual light manifests itself in sacred correspondence through each of the four worlds is as follows:

Assiah: Physical light with all of its strange properties. Taken in its broadest sense in physics this is energy in its many forms. Everything is composed of energy. It completely fills the universe and in an entirely literal sense is the universe. Science explores the facts of this light as a quantifiable, measurable phenomenon. Its qualitative meaning is ultimately a religious, not a scientific question. Physical light from the Sun is also the immediate physical source of life, as it provides the source of energy for the ecosystem.

Yetzirah: Insight, clarity and enlightenment, also consciousness and awareness in general. Yetziratic light also manifests itself as the aura and subtle energies of the body, which at times can be seen as visual phenomenon of light and color. Yetzirah corresponds to aspects of the planetary realm, as opposed to the lower elemental realm. This is ruled by the Sun at the center of the solar system, which in Hermeticism traditionally represents the primary emanation of the Unity of God. *The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster* state:

CXX. The Father congregated the Seven Firmaments of the Cosmos, circumscribing the Heavens with convex form.

CXXI. He constituted a Septenary of wandering Existences (the Planetary globes).

CXXII. Suspending their disorder in Well-disposed Zones.

CXXIII. He made them six in number, and for the Seventh He cast into the midst thereof the Fiery Sun.

CXXIV. The Center from which all (lines) which way soever are equal.

CXXV. And that the Swift Sun does pass as ever around a Center.

CXXVI. Eagerly urging itself towards that Center of resounding Light.[4]

Or in slightly different words from the collects of Crowley's Gnostic Catholic Mass:

"Lord visible and sensible of whom this earth is but a frozen spark turning about thee with annual and diurnal motion, source of light, source of life, let thy perpetual radiance hearten us to continual labour and enjoyment; so that as we are constant partakers of thy bounty we may in our particular orbit give out light and life, sustenance and joy to them that revolve about us without diminution of substance or effulgence for ever." [5]

Note the identification of the magical self with the Sun in this passage. This is an important key to understanding solar mysticism in Thelema.

Briah: Being, Consciousness, Bliss and Enlightenment themselves in their universal aspects. 'The Sun behind the Sun'. God or the Holy Guardian Angel as the absolute Gnostic light of the True Will. Gnosis itself. This is the light symbolized by the LVX formula, which will be discussed more fully in Chapter 12.

Atziluth: The absolute Unity as such. This can be represented by the mysticism of light. However, in its inclusive unity Atziluth transcends any attempt at representation, and is therefore beyond the limitations of 'light' or any other metaphor or conditional form.

The phenomenon of experiences related to at least the first three of these four classes of light are relatively clear. What is more difficult to understand is how these different 'tiers of light' interact and relate to each other. Are they all one type of substance, or distinct but parallel phenomena that can affect each other, due to their interaction through the integral totality of Atziluth? Some of the correspondences are archetypal metaphors, but other classes of phenomena are much more literal. A more sophisticated model is lacking.

The experience of light, and particularly of color is never merely a physical phenomenon. Understanding frequencies, retinas, nerve impulses and so forth leaves out something essential. This something is the actual experience in consciousness of color and light. The classic work on color from this perspective is by Wolfgang von Goethe in his influential book the *Fahrbienlehre*.[6] For Goethe, Newton's theory of color, while not incorrect, is an incomplete description of the essence of the phenomenon of color and light, which is its conscious experience. Consciousness, for Goethe, is always in an integral relationship with its world, and light and color are fundamentally as much an archetypal phenomenon of consciousness experiencing the world as they are a physical, measurable phenomenon.

Light and color are also physical phenomenon, but in our experience of them they are never only a physical phenomenon, nor is their archetypal nature built up out of the physically quantifiable characteristics of light and color. They are not reducible to such. Goethe writes:

"From among the lesser ancillary organs of the animals, light has called forth one organ to become its like, and thus the eye is formed by the light and for the light so that the inner light may emerge to meet the outer light.

"Here we are reminded of the ancient Ionian school which always placed a strong emphasis on the principle that only things of like nature may recognize one another. We also recall the words of a mystic in antiquity, translated as follows:

*Were the eye not of the sun,
How could we behold the light?
If God's might and ours were not as one,
How could His work enchant our sight?"*[7]

This book would be remiss without a necessary digression on the subject of the appropriation of solar mysticism by patriarchal ideologies. By this I mean to refer to mythological or religious systems where Gnostic light and solar symbolism are presented as predominantly or exclusively masculine in character. This tendency is very old. In the West the most obvious example is certain Gnostic schools of late antiquity, where the divine nous, Spirit or Gnostic light was seen as masculine while the material world, hyle or matter was feminine. The former male component was valued as good, the latter female aspect bad.

Nor is this theme merely western. The analogous hierarchy appears in the Indian traditions as well. In Patanjali, for example, the divine true Self or Purusha is male and the illusory, distracting principle of matter or Prakriti is female. The goal of practice for Patanjali and classical Indian yoga is to disengage Purusha from Prakriti. The idea is clear: get rid of the feminine and all will be well. There's more to classical yoga than that, of course, but there's also much use of this kind of formulation.

In Buddhism, a common and recurrent theme is that it is necessary to be male to obtain enlightenment. The best that a woman can do is to accumulate merit so as to be reborn as a man. This concept is frequently subverted in Buddhist texts, yet it often remains part of the normative exoteric discourse of Buddhist practice, particularly outside the West. In some texts women are said to be able to obtain enlightenment by generating a subtle or astral body that is male, thereby allowing them to use that body to achieve nirvana.

In some Hindu traditions the male god Shiva represents the true Self or Witness Consciousness and the feminine force of Shakti is his power or manifestation. This formula is a step forward in the sense that Shakti is a spiritual divine force, not merely the unconscious shadow of materiality that Prakriti is often presented as. Also, the two

principles must be unified and conjoined, as represented by the sexual union of the two deities, for the mind of enlightenment to arise. Nevertheless, Shiva is still privileged as part of an implied hierarchy. The feminine is acknowledged as a spiritual force, but it is still subordinate to the masculine.

Often in these systems of hierarchical correspondences one gets the impression that a ranking has been made of good things and bad things — and then the feminine is associated with the bad things, whatever those happen to be. Internal inconsistencies in these traditional schemas are generally ignored.

Interestingly, in Buddhist Tantra there is an inversion of sorts of the Shiva/Shakti formula. In the Buddhist system prajna or mind of enlightenment is feminine, while the activity of that enlightened mind to act to enlighten others or manifest itself is upaya, which is symbolized as masculine. Nevertheless, typically male deities are represented in the dominant position, facing the viewer and holding the implements of enlightenment in pictures with their tantric consorts. These consorts are drawn physically smaller and facing away from the viewer. One will often see male bodhisattva figures shown by themselves and female bodhisattva figures shown by themselves, as well as consorts with the male dominant as described above. One will generally not see consorts with the female dominant. It should also be noted that there is no traditional iconography to my knowledge of same gender consorts, though that's a different (but related) issue, which is only brought up here in passing.

There are a number of inversions and subversions within these systems, almost as if the divine feminine principle (or rather ultimately the ONE principle manifesting itself as feminine) were breaking itself free of the matrix of patriarchal interpretation obscuring it. Perhaps the most striking is the Hindu myth of Mahadevi, literally "Great Goddess", as told in the Puranas. In this myth the demons (called "Asuras" in Sanskrit) are making war against the gods, led by a particularly powerful demon represented iconically as a giant Buffalo. None of the gods can defeat the demons, so they come to the chief trinity of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma to ask them for help. They respond by going into meditation and springing out of the air above them comes Mahadevi, the true deity behind and superior to even the highest trinity of gods, appearing now as herself due to the seriousness of the situation. She goes into battle and cuts the chief demon and his army into little pieces.

There are other similar myths where roles which we are used to thinking of as masculine or feminine rotate and invert. There are few more predominant mythical themes in the west of the past two millennia than that of the dying and rising god. However, the earliest extant version of this myth is from Sumeria and involves not a god but a goddess — Ishtar who descends to the underworld, dies and is reborn.

One conclusion I draw from all of this is that the gender assignments of all of these fundamental spiritual principles are arbitrary, or rather context dependent, the principles themselves being transcendent in themselves of any absolute fixed gender association. As

spiritual powers they are able, indeed necessarily must, manifest under contingent, particular guise — while never being limited by that guise.

One further implication is that these transcendental archetypes can and do also manifest themselves through particular formulae. One of the reasons the Gnostic light and principle of consciousness can be represented as masculine, and the world of that masculine principle as feminine is because these principles can be experienced as such. The formula works. That there are other possible formulae doesn't negate this. It is also not necessarily problematic to not personally experience these other possibilities. The problem is to conclude that one's own experiences from one's own perspective are the only valid ones. That is the fundamental error.

One's perspective, cultural as well as personal, will provide the stock of possibilities of symbolic forms for the manifestation of the Briatic archetypes. The formless spiritual essence of the archetypes descends from above, while the form of the presence of the spiritual is gathered from and ascends from below. Nor is this dualism ultimate, for it is the formless itself that ultimately gives rise to even these possibilities of form.

We must now ask the next question, which is whether or not Thelema, as a spiritual tradition influenced by those that have come before it, includes some of this patriarchal overlay we have been discussing. The answer, unfortunately, is definitely yes. Therefore, it is important for us to be mindful in addressing this in our practice, and in our understanding of our practice. It is in our own enactment and understanding of the Thelemic tradition that patriarchal background issues will either be dealt with or become a problem. This is everyone's personal responsibility, and while critiquing Crowley's contribution is certainly an appropriate start to addressing the issue it is not in and of itself a resolution to the problem in our own practice. Even less effective is ignoring this problem in the futile belief that it will go away or that it does not really exist. Thelema is not a take it or leave it package deal system. In approaching any system, there should always be a critical engagement.

Therefore, keeping all that has been said in mind ...

The most explicitly solar ritual in Thelema is *Liber Resh vel Helios sub figura CC*, or *The Book of Resh or the Sun Under the Number 200*.^[8] The Hebrew letter Resh is assigned to the tarot card the Sun, the Hebrew word Resh itself meaning Sun. The number 200 is the value of this letter, and so this is also the number of the book. Usually, Thelemites refer to this ritual simply as 'Resh' for convenience, and the following discussion will follow this convention. The ritual itself reads in full:

Liber Resh vel Helios sub figura CC

0. These are the adorations to be performed by aspirants to the A□A□
 1. Let him greet the Sun at dawn, facing East, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice: **Hail unto Thee who art Ra in Thy rising, even**

unto Thee who art Ra in Thy strength, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Uprising of the Sun. Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Night!

2. Also at Noon, let him greet the Sun, facing South, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice: **Hail unto Thee who art Ahathoor in Thy triumphing, even unto Thee who art Ahathoor in Thy beauty, who travellest over the heavens in thy bark at the Mid-course of the Sun. Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Morning!**

3. Also, at Sunset, let him greet the Sun, facing West, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice: **Hail unto Thee who art Tum in Thy setting, even unto Thee who art Tum in Thy joy, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Down-going of the Sun. Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Day!**

4. Lastly, at Midnight, let him greet the Sun, facing North, giving the sign of his grade, and let him say in a loud voice: **Hail unto thee who art Khephra in Thy hiding, even unto Thee who art Khephra in Thy silence, who travellest over the heavens in Thy bark at the Midnight Hour of the Sun. Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm. Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Evening.**

5. And after each of these invocations thou shalt give the sign of silence, and afterwards thou shalt perform the adoration that is taught thee by thy Superior. And then do thou compose Thyself to holy meditation.

6. Also it is better if in these adorations thou assume the God- form of Whom thou adorest, as if thou didst unite with Him in the adoration of That which is beyond Him.

7. Thus shalt thou ever be mindful of the Great Work which thou hast undertaken to perform, and thus shalt thou be strengthened to pursue it unto the attainment of the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness.

The Egyptian style of the ritual is immediately obvious. There is actually a real Egyptian precedent for this type of prayer. Located on the Giza plateau are the remains of a series of Sun Temples. Built during the 5th dynasty of the Old Kingdom, these square shaped complexes featured an open central courtyard within which was a 36-meter tall obelisk. Before this obelisk, which was an eidolon of the Sun and its light (with obvious phallic associations) was an altar for offerings. These seem to have been made in conjunction with the worship of the Sun under three aspects. At dawn the Sun was worshipped as

Khephra, at noon as Ra, and at sunset as Atum.[9] This is very similar to the form of Resh. Also, like this Egyptian practice Resh is intended to tap into the awareness of the Sun's spiritual essence and power as manifested both physically and Imaginarily in its daily phases of appearance.

The other major influence on the structure of the ritual is the Islamic daily prayer or Salat. This is obligatory for all Muslims as one of the five pillars of faith, and involves facing towards the Ka'aba at Mecca and engaging in various devotional prostrations and recitations of the Quran. Crowley had been taught how to perform this prayer in his travels and must have seen its powerful effects in unifying a community through a common ritual of divine aspiration and devotion. Resh is the Thelemic equivalent of Salat and is intended to make an individual increasingly mindful of their aspiration to the Great Work through a ritual 'break' in the pattern of daily activity to reaffirm their spiritual unity and alignment with the source of light and life in our world. Or, as Crowley puts it succinctly in the text of the ritual itself:

"Thus shalt thou ever be mindful of the Great Work which thou hast undertaken to perform, and thus shalt thou be strengthened to pursue it unto the attainment of the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness."

The ritual text begins by stating: "*These are the adorations to be performed by aspirants to the A.·A.·*" The A.·A.· referred to here is by no means only the organized structure created by Crowley and George Cecil Jones in 1909. The key words are 'aspirants to the A.·A.·' which is intended to apply equally to those already initiated or linked to a formal A.·A.· lineage, as well as those who are not. The A.·A.· referred to here is none other than the '3rd Order' in and of itself — the state of being of realization of identity with the divine reality, i.e. enlightenment. Therefore, this is intended to be a ritual for all Thelemites to perform, if it be their will to do so, and not just formal A.·A.· initiates.

The ritual is said to be an adoration. This means that it is intended to be as much an exercise in devotion and intuitive understanding as intellectual comprehension of the correspondences and symbols involved.

Four different directions are faced during the ritual, in a system that derives originally from Freemasonry. At dawn one should face East because this is where the Sun rises. In other words one should face and look at the Sun. The same basic rule applies for the other directions. West is faced at sunset because this is where the Sun sets. In the Northern Hemisphere noon and midnight are the times when the Sun is at, respectively, the most southern and northernmost points of its movement through the celestial sphere, so the ritual is directed accordingly. Additionally, the South is also the direction of the element of Fire and the direction of the source of the Nile River. North is also described in the Neophyte initiation of the Golden Dawn as "the place of the greatest symbolical darkness".[10] The method of dividing space into four directions in Resh also carries with it the various connotations discussed in previous chapters.

The ritual calls for one to give the sign of one's grade. In its most direct interpretation this means to give the sign of one's A.:A.: grade, if one has one. If one does not have one, or if one is performing the ritual publicly and one does not wish to disclose this private information there are several oral traditions of how to address this.

One tradition is to give the most general A.:A.: signs of Horus and Harpocrates. One would make the sign of the enterer (or Horus) towards the Sun while hailing it, signifying one's exchange of spiritual, Imaginal, and physical energy with it. This sign is then naturally followed by the sign of silence as described in section five of the ritual text, signifying the acknowledgement of the sealing of the current of force.

There is a second tradition, which calls for the aspirant to give the sign of Set fighting. This sign gives a sense of hailing the Sun, as described in the vocalized portion of the text. Also it is the sign of the Malkuth grade of Neophyte in A.:A.:, the first 'full' grade in that Order, and therefore usable as a kind of general A.:A.: sign.

There is a third tradition, which bases itself upon a notation by Crowley in his personal copy of the Equinox. This reads:

"Where the aspirant has no grade, let him give ... the L.V.X. signs at dawn, 4°=7 at noon, 2°=9 at sunset, 3°=8 at midnight."[11]

This alignment places the magician at the intersection of Samekh and Peh, a key point of equilibrium on the tree for the outer college of A.:A.:, and the same position used in the Pentagram rituals. These signs are described in the chapter on the Pentagram rituals except for the full LVX signs, which will be discussed in the chapter on the rituals of the Hexagram (Chapter 12). There is a tradition originating from Los Angeles that at dawn Resh one can alternatively give the full 'analysis of the keyword' or simply the sign of Osiris Slain. To make this sign the arms are held out straight to the sides and the feet are placed together, making the body into a cross shape. This sign is intended to be a stand-in for the whole sequence, as well as to be like a hawk with its wings outstretched thereby identifying oneself further with Ra as Ra-Horus or Ra-Hoor-Khuit.[12]

In a letter to Hymenaeus Alpha 777 (Grady McMurtry), Crowley also indicated that OTO degree signs could be used at this point in Resh:

"Use at start signs of grades, 0°-III° OTO, and Sign of Enterer, followed by Sign of Silence, at the 'Hail'."[13]

Obviously, these signs should not be used in public, one of the previous options being substituted in this circumstance.

There are four God-forms used in this ritual, Representing four aspects of the Sun in its journey. The four gods are Ra, Tum (or Atum), Ahathoor (or Hathor) and Khephra. Two of these deities are male, one is definitely female and Khephra is ambiguous with regard to its gender. Khephra is male in the original Egyptian material, but it should be noted

that the actual scarab beetle that rolls its ball of dung within which to plant its eggs is female.

Ra is one of the most important, ancient and supreme gods of Egypt. He represents the Sun as well as the rulership of the divine reality over the entire Universe. So pervasive is this identification by the Egyptians of the Supreme Spirit with the Sun that the other deities of the Egyptian pantheon were often understood as being aspects of Ra. This was shown by combining their names with that of Ra. For example: Amoun-Ra. Ra was understood Imaginarily as traveling over the heavens in a great barge or boat. Crowley calls it a 'bark' in Liber Resh. This is the boat called 'Millions of Years' i.e. Eternity. In it are the whole company of gods, of which Tahuti and Ra-Hoor (that is, Ra himself) are singled out for mention in the ritual. Every day this boat passes over the heavens during the day and then through the underworld at night, only to be reborn again at dawn. This is symbolic of the continual veiling and unveiling of the divine reality by itself through the process of the phenomenon of reality. Through the practice of Resh we bring ourselves to an awareness of this continual process. The most common representation of Ra in Egyptian art is as combined with Horus. This is Ra-Harakte, or Ra-Horus of the two horizons. In *The Book of the Law* this is the deity Ra-Hoor-Khuit.

At noon the solar reality is revealed in its aspect as Hathor, cow headed goddess of fertility and fecundity. In her harsh aspect Hathor becomes Sekhmet, the lion headed goddess representing the burning fire of the Sun's rays. Hathor means 'House of Horus', and she is seen as mother of the god-king the Pharaoh. Many statues exist of Hathor in her cow form with the Pharaoh suckling her for milk. Hathor, ultimately, is the Goddess as such, manifesting as the Sun in its highest elevation and power.

At sunset the Sun is addressed in its aspect as Atum, a creator god, shown iconically as a bearded man. Spontaneously emerging of his own creation from the primordial waters of chaos, Atum then generated the other gods and the world of men and women from his blood and/or semen by either cutting his phallus or masturbating. The 'joy' of Atum referred to in the ritual is probably a reference to this act of self-sacrifice whereby the Universe came into being. This act is a kind of death, for in creating particular existence the universal existence is occulted and hidden. Therefore this is a moment of the setting of the Sun of the source of light and life. There remains, however, the potential of the particular existence to recognize the source of its creation, to reawaken to the eternal presence of that which has always already been the case. It is this Golden Dawn of remembrance which is the goal of Magick. For there to be an unveiling there must first also be a veiling, however, and in this there is also therefore joy. This is acknowledged in the practice of Resh. The sun at midnight is Imaginarily symbolized by the scarab beetle Khephra. This is the dung beetle, who rolls a ball of dung, often several times its own size across the ground and plants its eggs within it. From this ball then emerges a new beetle, seemingly spontaneously generated of its own power. This humble insect is shown in Egyptian art as carrying the Sun through the underworld at night, the seed of a new dawn. Likewise in our own night of ordeal and ignorance we carry hidden the seed of our own enlightenment to which we gather substance through our work upon ourselves and

our practice. Eventually, from this egg of potential bursts a new awareness. The name Khephra comes from the Egyptian verb Khepher, which means 'to become'.

The proper means of magically interacting with these deities is described in point 6 of the ritual, which reads:

6. *"Also it is better if in these adorations thou assume the God-form of Whom thou adorest, as if thou didst unite with Him in the adoration of That which is beyond Him."*

This means to visualize oneself as the deity in question, and to identify one's own magical reality with the reality of that God. This makes explicit that the course of the Sun's path and its experiences are none other than one's own. Also, there is a reference here to the 'Sun behind the Sun' — i.e. "That which is beyond Him" (the Sun itself or God-form). This means an acknowledgement that 'behind' the physical Sun and the particular Yetziratic image used for the God-form and its myths lies the true universal reality of Briah and Atziluth, whose light is the goal of this ritual.

5. *"And after each of these invocations thou shalt give the sign of silence, and afterwards thou shalt perform the adoration that is taught thee by thy Superior. And then do thou compose Thyself to holy meditation."*

"Thy Superior" is intended to be one's A.:A.: initiator, if one has one. Ultimately, however, one's true Superior is the Holy Guardian Angel. Therefore, if one does not have an A.:A.: initiator, through either circumstance or choice, then this passage can be understood to mean that one should perform whatever additional adorations or actions seem appropriate based upon one's magical experience. There are several oral traditions that can guide one in this choice.

From the Soror Estai or Jane Wolfe lineage of A.:A.: comes the instructions that Crowley gave to Jane Wolfe at Cefelu's Abbey of Thelema. These involve an implied interpretation of Liber AL III: 38, which can be read as identifying 'the adorations' text as the portions of Crowley's poetic paraphrase of the lines of on the Stele of Revealing which appear in *The Book of the Law* itself. The adorations are given in the attitude of the LVX sign of Osiris Risen while the following is said:

*I, I adore thee! wed!
I adore the might of Thy breath,
Supreme and terrible God,
Who makest the gods and death
To tremble before Thee: -
I, I adore thee!):*

*Aum! Let it fill me! Ra!
Open the ways of the Khu!
Lighten the ways of the Ka!
The ways of the Khabs run through*

To stir me or still me!
Aum! Let it fill me!):

The prophet Ankh-f-n-Khonsu! sume
Me: I have made a secret door
Into the House of Ra and Tum,
Of Khephra, and of Ahathoor.
I am thy Theban, o Mentu,
The prophet Ankh-f-n-Khonsu!):

Abide with me, Ra-Hoor-Khuit!
By wise Ta-Nech I weave my spell.
Show thy star-splendour, O Nuith!
Bid me within thine House to dwell,
O winged snake of light, Hadith!
Abide with me, Ra-Hoor-Khuit!):

There is a variant of this, which comes out of the '70s Berkeley OTO. This involves reciting the entirety of *Liber AL III: 37-38*, inclusive of the non-versed text at the end of verse 37.

These adorations are free poetical paraphrases, written by Crowley in 1904, of the hieroglyphic passages upon the Stele of Revealing. Crowley was instructed to include these passages in *The Book of the Law* during its dictation through intuitive indication.

The Stele itself contains partial versions of several spells from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*. Crowley's poetical interpretation takes significant artistic license with the Stele text, and while it follows the general gist of the hieroglyphs it is perhaps best approached as its own text. The portion used most commonly in Resh begins:

I, I adore thee! wed!
I adore the might of Thy breath,
Supreme and terrible God,
Who makest the gods and death
To tremble before Thee: -
I, I adore thee!):

This is a general acknowledgement of the Supreme reality of Atziluth. The spirit of its presence or 'breath' is said to be "Supreme and terrible" and to make death itself tremble before it, because the absolute Unity can never be destroyed or cease to be. Death is itself part of this Unity, a necessary phase in its unfolding of itself. This is the reality described in the *Adoration to the Lord of the Universe* in the rites of the Golden Dawn.

"*Amen.* Thou, Lord of the Universe!
Holy art Thou, whom nature hath not formed!
Holy art Thou, the vast and the mighty one!"

Lord of the light and of the darkness!
Amen.):"

Aum! Let it fill me! Ra!
Open the ways of the Khu!
Lighten the ways of the Ka!
The ways of the Khabs run through
To stir me or still me!
Aum! Let it fill me!):

The second stanza is an invocation, inviting the Supreme reality to "appear on the throne of Ra"; for the Briatic spirit of the absolute to indwell and manifest itself through the Yetziratic God-forms as well as through the physical Sun and its light. This acts to empower the various sheaths of the subtle body, filling them with Gnostic light and energy.

The prophet Ankh-f-n-Khonsu!sume
Me: I have made a secret door
Into the House of Ra and Tum,
Of Khephra, and of Ahathoor.
I am thy Theban, o Mentu,
The prophet Ankh-f-n-Khonsu!):

This stanza takes the previous invocation further. One now identifies oneself with the spiritual light. It is "mine" and "consumes me". The light is not an outside object being experienced as separate, but is none other than one's real self. This Gnosis consumes and absorbs the limited self or ego, freeing it of its limitation of false perspective towards itself.

One's magical connection with the four phases of the Sun is affirmed. The practice of Resh itself can be seen as the making of these secret doors. They give access to the "house" of the gods involved — i.e. to the mode of illuminated consciousness they each embody.

The final two lines of the stanza require some explanation. Ankh-f-n-Khonsu is the Theban priest whose funerary monument is the Stele of Revealing itself. Mentu is a falcon headed god very similar to Horus. Crowley felt a strong magical identification with this priest, sometimes using his name as one of his magical mottos.

There is an oral tradition of post-Crowley origin of substituting one's own magical motto in the adorations in place of Ankh-f-n-Khonsu's name. This works very well and I recommend trying it. There are other changes which could be made. One could, for example, change the line to read: "I am thy initiate, O Mentu, the prophet [own motto]." It is also certainly fine to use Ankh-f-n-Khonsu's name in the adorations instead of one's own motto as he serves as a kind of stand-in for any aspirant. It is also customary for

groups of Thelemites when saying Resh together to use the original form of this stanza, so that everyone is saying the same thing.

*By Bes-na-Maut my breast I beat;
By wise Ta-Nech I weave my spell.
Show thy star-splendour, O Nuith!
Bid me within thine House to dwell,
O winged snake of light, Hadith!
Abide with me, Ra-Hoor-Khuit!*

Bes-na-Maut and Ta-Nech are Egyptian proper names, and seem to refer in the Stele text to Ankh-f-n-Khonsu's parents. It is customary, in the aforementioned oral tradition, to substitute the names of one's spiritual preceptors and teachers in place of these names, as one's magical parents. This can be a very personal matter and it may be appropriate to use these names only in private performance of Resh. In public performance the original names of Bes-na-Maut and Ta-Nech would be used. But do what thou wilt.

The adorations end with a direct invocation of the Thelemic trinity of Nuit, Hadit and Ra-Hoor-Khuit.

1. *The Koran*, Penguin Classics, New York, New York, 1956, pg. 249.
2. Crowley, Aleister, *The Law is for All*, New Falcon Publications, Tempe, Arizona, 1996, pg. 163.
3. Crowley, Aleister, *Gems from the Equinox*, pg. 991.
4. Westcott, William Wynn, *The Chaldean Oracles attributed to Zoroaster*, pg.32.
5. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 590.
6. The best English edition is published in Goethe, Johann Wolfgang, *Scientific Studies*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1995.
7. Ibid, pg. 164. The quoted "mystic" is Plotinus.
8. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 655-657.
9. Wilkenson, Richard H., *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*, Thames and Hudson, New York, New York, 2000, pp. 120-121.
10. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 124.
11. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 655, footnote.
12. The author learned this technique from James Eshelman.

13. Ibid, pg. 786.

Chapter IX

Meditation and Its Methods

"Meditate you must, for it is not from without, but from the Hierophant within that your initiation shall come. You are a center of the inexhaustible treasure of the limitless substance of the presence of God." — Paul Foster Case[1]

The general theory of meditation is that the True Self and its Will is obscured by the activity of that Self such that it is distracted from its own Truth. Meditation dissolves this distraction by disengaging the essential Self from identifying itSelf with its contingent modifications. Thereby, according to *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, "The Self rests in its own unmodified state." [Patanjali I: 3][2] Often, in dualistic or ascetic traditions of the previous two millennia this process of disengagement is seen as a destruction of the modifications. This is not the goal of Thelemic practice, which sees the modifications ultimately as an integral expression of the Self's True Will. The intention of Thelemic meditation, therefore, is to discover the root source of the Will towards modification and thereby to inform the various levels of the Self's manifestation as to their most efficient orientation with regard to that Will.

Some of Crowley's personal reflections of his concerning the purpose of these modifications of the infinite Self are contained in his comment on chapter one verse 8 of *The Book of the Law*, "*The Khabs is in the Khu, not the Khu in the Khabs.*"

"We are not to regard ourselves as base beings, without whose sphere is Light or 'God'. Our minds and bodies are veils of the Light within. The uninitiated is a 'Dark Star', and the Great Work for him is to make his veils transparent by 'purifying' them. This 'purification' is really 'simplification'; it is not that the veils are dirty, but that the complexity of its folds makes it opaque. The Great Work therefore consists principally in the solution of complexes. Everything in itself is perfect, but when things are muddled, they become 'evil'.

"[...] This 'star' or 'Inmost Light' is the original, individual, eternal essence. The Khu is the magical garment which it weaves for itself, a 'form' for its Being Beyond Form, by use of which it can gain experience through self-consciousness ... This Khu is the first veil, far subtler than mind or body, and truer; for its symbolic shape depends on the nature of its Star.

"Why are we told that the Khabs is in the Khu, not the Khu in the Khabs? Did we then suppose the converse? I think that we are warned against the idea of a pleroma, a flame of which we are Sparks, and to which we return when we 'attain'. That would indeed be to make the whole curse of separate existence ridiculous, a senseless and inexcusable folly. It would throw us back on the dilemma of Manichaeism. The idea of incarnations 'perfecting' a thing originally

perfect by definition is imbecile. The only sane solution is ... to suppose that the Perfect enjoys experience of (apparent) Imperfection." [3]

There are many different kinds of meditation. From the perspective of both the Hindu and Thelemic traditions these can be classified into several broad categories. Meditation involving concentration of the mind and its will to achieve direct Gnosis of reality is Raja Yoga ('great yoga') which corresponds to the middle pillar and Tiphareth. Meditation involving devotion and love towards the divine is Bhakti Yoga, generally associated in its preliminary form to the Sephira Netzach and in its more developed forms to Chesed. Contemplation involving the reason or intellect is called Jnana Yoga and corresponds to Hod. In Thelema, this takes the form both of a radical Philosophical inquiry as well as methods of Kabbalistic meditation. There is also a type of Shamanic or visionary practice undertaken in Thelema, associated with the Sephira Yesod, which has no precise analogue among the Hindu 'yogas'. Karma Yoga, or the yoga of duty will not be fully dealt with in this chapter. In Thelema, it is the active doing of one's True Will through submission to the grace of the Angel, and the energy this grants. It is associated most fully with Geburah.[4]

The term *yoga* can refer to any kind of spiritual practice, but for the purposes of this essay will be used to connote the types of practices sketched above. Also, the above categories should not be considered exhaustive, even within the context of the Thelemic tradition.

One of the oldest and most canonical of meditation manuals is The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, which has been traditionally interpreted in terms of a sequence of eight stages of meditative practice known as the eight limbs of *yoga*, or Ashtanga *yoga*. These constitute the classical stages of Raja *yoga*. In Sanskrit they are:

1. Yama
2. Niyama
3. Asana
4. Pranayama
5. Pratyahara
6. Dharana
7. Dhyana
8. Samadhi

These stages are a progressive sequence of nested practices which build on each other.

Yama and Niyama

Yama and Niyama are two aspects of the same practice. In the original Indian context these are various ethical practices considered prerequisite to the spiritual path. From a Thelemic perspective Yama and Niyama are not, however, to be confused with relative cultural customs and prejudices. Rather, they are broadly understood as attitudinal practices of so aligning one's life priorities and circumstances so as to be undistracted

from one's spiritual practice. Gurdjieff calls this creating 'conditions of Work'. In ritual terminology, Yama is the purification and Niyama the consecration of the self to the Great Work. This is not to say that the original conception of Yama and Niyama as ethical is incorrect, but Thelema conceives of ethics as ultimately a call to be true to oneself, to one's True Will. Yama and Niyama are therefore both the first and last practices of Ashtanga yoga, as they are none other than the active doing of one's True Will.

Asana

Once the parameters for undertaking practice have been established one can undertake the actual practice of meditation itself. The first step of this is Asana, which simply means 'posture'. Patanjali says, "Asana is that which is firm and easy." [Patanjali, II:46][5] This is the most basic definition of Asana — a sitting posture for meditation which allows one to concentrate or perform other mental activities without distraction from the body. The three easiest postures and by far the best to start with are the god posture, the cross-legged posture and the dragon posture.

The 'God' posture is among the most basic and straightforward and is named after the characteristic seated posture of the Egyptian deities. One sits up straight in a straight backed chair with the head faced forward, the legs parallel and the feet planted flat on the floor. The palms are rested on the thighs.

The cross-legged posture is exactly that: sitting cross-legged on a pillow or cushion. Most people are already used to sitting this way and of thinking of it as a meditation posture, which can only enhance one's practice using it. It's a good idea to keep the back straight. Rolling the hips forward helps to prevent slumping.

There is also the half-lotus position which in Sanskrit is called Siddhasana.[6] Many people are comfortable sitting in this position, many are not. It is possible to sit longer in the half-lotus before the legs fall asleep, and this is a better posture for that reason.

The full-lotus position, or Padmasana, is quite difficult to perform and is not recommended for beginners.[7]

The dragon posture, or Virasana, involves kneeling on the ground and sitting back on one's legs with the palms resting on the thighs. This is one of the easiest postures to keep the back straight. It does, however, quickly cause the legs to fall asleep or cramp. This can be ameliorated by placing a blanket or pillow between the legs and thighs.[8]

The back should, as a general rule, be kept straight in these postures because this position most clearly signals the mind to be attentive. Also, traditional theory and experience holds that the subtle energy of the body distributes better when the spine is in its natural position, though these energies are unlikely to be important or noticeable to the beginner.

There are a few other basic Asanas that Thelemic practitioners should be familiar with. One of them is the so called 'Corpse' posture called in Sanskrit Savasana. This posture is ideal for deep relaxation and also works particularly well during astral projection (described later in this chapter). To assume this posture lie flat on your back. The legs are held stretched out and the arms straight at one's side. The muscles are all relaxed and the eyes closed.[9]

Also, there is the 'Wand' posture, called Tadasana in Sanskrit. This is just a fancy way of describing standing straight up attentively with the hands at the sides.[10]

There is a Thelemic variant of this called 'Dieu Garde', and is made in the same manner as the Wand posture, but with the hands held loosely in front of the body with linked thumbs. Dieu Garde is French for 'God Protect' and is a Masonic term for the position the hands are placed in to take an oath upon the book of sacred law. Lon DuQuette has pointed out that the position of the hands over the genitals in this posture therefore signifies a sanctification of this portion of the body.[11]

All of the signs of the grades discussed in previous chapters can be considered to be Asanas in a broad sense.

There are many more Asanas than these, the practice of which constitute Hatha Yoga, or yoga using the physical body as a tool for attainment. Hatha Yoga corresponds to the Sephirah Malkuth. Many of these postures have significant health benefits as well as effects on the energy of the subtle body. They are best learned from a trained instructor. Most basically, however, an Asana should at least be an easy, seated posture for mental concentration. It's important to work at not fidgeting or moving. If the body is kept unmoving for long enough it will become still of its own accord and the mind will no longer notice or be distracted by it. This constitutes the most basic level of success in Asana.

Pranayama

Upon achieving basic stilling and control of the body the breath is then addressed. The theory of Pranayama is that control of the breath will help to control the mind, because the two are linked together as aspects of the integral human existence of body, soul and spirit. The word Pranayama means 'control of Prana'. Prana is the physical breath, but it is also the subtle energy of the body and certain aspects of consciousness.

The simplest form of breath-work in the Thelemic tradition is called the four-fold breath. This is best done seated in one's chosen Asana and has a calming and concentrative effect. As it does not involve the physical exertion of more advanced forms of Pranayama it can be done for several minutes before other meditation or ceremonial work as a focusing exercise. Breathe in slowly and fully for a count of four. Hold that breath without straining for another count of four, then breathe out over a count of four. Wait for a count of four, then breathe in again as before. A very useful trick to avoid straining is to breathe using the chest muscles. Open the chest up while drawing air in and hold the

chest open to retain the breath. Don't use the throat muscles to hold the breath in. At first, concentrate on the breath itself and the counting when doing this exercise. As proficiency increases, and the breath becomes automatic, it can be used while engaging with other meditative activities, particularly those of Dharana.

A more advanced Pranayama method is given by Crowley in section IV of *Liber E*, an important instructional paper on meditation.

"1. At rest in one of your positions, close the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand and breathe out slowly and completely through the left nostril, while your watch marks 20 seconds. Breathe in through the same nostril for 10 seconds. Changing hands, repeat with the other nostril. Let this be continuous for one hour.

"2. When this is quite easy to you, increase the periods to 30 and 15 seconds.

"3. When this is quite easy to you, but not before, breathe out for 15 seconds, in for 15 seconds, and hold the breath for 15 seconds.

"4. When you can do this with perfect ease and comfort for a whole hour, practice breathing out for 40, in for 20 seconds.

"5. This being attained, practice breathing out for 20, in for 10, holding the breath for 30 seconds.

When this has become perfectly easy to you, you may be admitted for examination, and should you pass, you will be instructed in more complex and difficult practices.

"6. You will find that the presence of food in the stomach, even in small quantities, makes the practices very difficult.

"7. Be very careful never to overstrain your powers; especially never to get so short of breath that you are compelled to breathe out jerkily or rapidly.

"8. Strive after depth, fullness, and regularity of breathing.

"9. Various remarkable phenomena will very probably occur during these practices. They must be carefully analysed and recorded." [12]

This is the basic technique involving Khumbhaka, or retention of the breath. It involves significant physical exercise. Crowley gives much additional good instruction on Pranayama in *Liber Ru vel Spiritus*, not presented here.[13] Also highly recommended is the book *Light on Pranayama* by B.K.S. Iyengar, which is authoritative on the subject.[14] Many of these practices are advanced physical techniques beyond the scope of this book and are best learned under the guidance of a competent teacher.

Pratyahara

Pratyahara is defined as the withdrawal of the senses from the sense objects, resulting in the intensification of the concentration of the self upon itself. It is meditation proper, though it designates more the general form than the actual method. Crowley says, "It means for our present purpose a process rather strategical than practical; it is introspection, a sort of general examination of the contents of the mind which we wish to control: Asana having been mastered, all immediate exciting causes have been removed, and we are free to think what we are thinking about."^[15]

Therefore, after selecting and getting comfortable with an Asana the next basic practice should be to just sit for about fifteen minutes to a half hour at a time and try to empty the mind while performing the 4 fold breath. Don't be immediately obsessive about it, but just note any thoughts that come up and set them aside. At first this will either be very difficult or simply unsuccessful. Eventually, if one is persistent, the mind will suddenly, seemingly of its own accord and at first for only a few seconds, stop and become fixed. Very interesting things will begin to happen at this point. These should be carefully recorded in the magical diary. This is an experience of a deepening of concentration, which is best concretely developed by the practice of Dharana.

Dharana

If Pratyahara designates a general concept of concentration of the mind, Dharana is the specific method whereby this concentration is exercised and developed. This technique is a source of great magical power, as the ability of the magician to concentrate upon the object of their Magick is a key to its success. Ultimately, the focus of concentration will be upon the Holy Guardian Angel, and is one of the major methods taught by the AA on the achievement of its Knowledge and Conversation.

Crowley's basic instructions on Dharana are in section V of *Liber E.*

"1. Constrain the mind to concentrate itself upon a single simple object imagined.

The five tatwas are useful for this purpose; they are: a black oval; a blue disk; a silver crescent; a yellow square; a red triangle.

"2. Proceed to combinations of simple objects: e.g., a black oval within a yellow square, and so on.

"3. Proceed to simple moving objects, such as a pendulum swinging, a wheel revolving, &c. Avoid living objects.

"4. Proceed to combinations of moving objects, e.g., a piston rising and falling while a pendulum is swinging. The relation between the two movements should be varied in different experiments.

"Or even a system of fly-wheels, eccentrics, and governor.

"5. During these practices the mind must be absolutely confined to the object determined upon; no other thought must be allowed to intrude upon the consciousness. The moving systems must be regular and harmonious.

"6. Note carefully the duration of the experiments, the number and nature of the intruding thoughts, the tendency of the object itself to depart from the course laid out for it, and any other phenomenon which may present themselves. Avoid overstrain. This is very important.

"7. Proceed to imagine living objects; as a man, preferably some man known to, and respected by, yourself.

"8. In the intervals of these experiments you may try to imagine the objects of the other senses, and to concentrate upon them.

"For example, try to imagine the taste of chocolate, the smell of roses, the feeling of velvet, the sound of a waterfall, or the ticking of a watch.

"9. Endeavour finally to shut out all objects of any of the senses, and prevent all thoughts arising in your mind. When you feel that you have attained some success in these practices, apply for examination, and should you pass, more complex and difficult practices will be prescribed for you." [16]

Dhyana

Success in Dharana is the basis for the arising of Dhyana. The word Dhyana itself simply means 'meditation', because this is the point where real meditation, or the uncovering of the Self, begins. Dhyana is a breakthrough experience resulting from successful practice of Dharana. So far the mind has been working to fix its thought in concentration. That having occurred, something else is now free to emerge. This something else transcends everyday experience, so language, which is built up out of everyday experience, is inadequate to describe it. Up until this point, Raja Yoga may have been pursued for health or other mundane purposes but Dhyana is the beginning of a real Gnosis of something more.

Samadhi

Samadhi is the goal of Raja Yoga, and is defined differently in different traditional Hindu systems. For the purposes of this discussion, which is based upon Crowley's understanding and experience of the concept, Samadhi can be understood basically as an intensification of Dhyana. The 'something more' that first begins to be experienced in Dhyana is brought to its full disclosure in Samadhi. The exact distinction between Samadhi and Dhyana is vague beyond this and varies from system to system.

Traditional descriptions of Samadhi describe a dissolution of the subject/object distinction between the meditator and the object of Dharana. Vivekananda has some interesting things to say about this in his classic book Raja-Yoga:

"When the mind has been trained to remain fixed on a certain internal or external location, there comes to it the power of flowing in an unbroken current, as it were, towards that point. This state is called Dhyana. When one has so intensified the power of Dhyana as to be able to reject the external part of perception and remain meditating only on the internal part, the meaning, that state is called Samadhi. The three — Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi — together are called Samyama. That is, if the mind can first concentrate upon an object, and then is able to continue in that concentration for a length of time, and then, by continued concentration, to dwell only on the internal part of the perception of which the object was the effect, everything comes under the control of such a mind." [17]

This is a description of an essentially Platonic, or noetic experience. Part of the 'something else' that is uncovered in Samadhi is the Briatic reality underlying the multiplicity of the particular. Briah, being of the Supernal reality, is essentially unity, and so is Samadhi.

Samadhi is often characterized as union with God. The phenomenon seems broader than this, however. Patanjali and other authorities describe different types of Samadhi depending on the different kinds of objects meditated upon. Samadhi upon a god would, however, involve union with that god. One interpretation of Crowley's Abramelin diary is that he is attempting to do exactly that with the highest possible god, the Holy Guardian Angel. Raja Yoga, therefore, in the Thelemic system, is a method for achieving the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.

To summarize: while stopping thought is not, in and of itself, the real goal of Raja Yoga, it is something that this kind of yoga does use to achieve its real goal. One way to look at the sequence of Ashtanga Yoga is to see it as a progressive peeling back of sheaths or layers of the self to reach that which is at the center. If the self abstracts away and disengages itself from all of its experiences, all that will be left is experience of that self in itself. If you take away everything, what's left? This is therefore an inwardly directed process of withdrawal and analysis. In the Thelemic system this introvertive practice of mysticism is combined with a balancing regimen of magical practice which is extrovertive and engaged with the exploration of the outer magical universe. The goal of this is to avoid the emasculating dualism congenital to certain purely mystical systems where there is a belief that this world is a fallen illusory distraction from some other perfect reality. The divine is both within and without and a superior, more integral practice should engage with both of these realities, as well as grapple with their eventual identification.

One possible pitfall of Thelemic practice can conversely be the overemphasis of magic over mysticism. Concretely, this can manifest as an exclusive pursuit of particularly

aggressive and results oriented forms of ceremonial, such as Goetia, without a balancing practice of introspection and self-awareness. The result is often the exacerbation of ego-problems, usually projected onto others, and an abrogation of the kind of self-responsibility that is so essential to the Thelemic way of life. There are many ways to be mindful of and avoid this type of pitfall. One way is to have a meditation practice.

The stages of Ashtanga yoga can be roughly ascribed to the middle pillar of the Tree of Life. If this is done it also reveals the map of their relationship to the A.:A.: sequence of work. Yama and Niyama are concerned with the exterior circumstances of the initiate, the Sephira Malkuth, and the work of the Probationer and Neophyte. Asana and Pranayama achieve control of the physical body and begin work with the more subtle Prana. These practices are therefore associated with Yesod and the Zelator grade. The beginning of success in Dhyan through the practice of Pratyahara and Dharana allows passage through the veil of Paroketh before Tiphareth. This work is the concern of the Practicus, Philosophus and Dominus Liminus. Preliminary experience of Samadhi gives full access to Tiphareth and corresponds to the grade of Adeptus Minor.

There are other methods of attainment than that of Raja Yoga. Three other major types of practice in the Thelemic tradition are Shamanic work with the active imagination associated with Yesod, Jnana Yoga related to Hod, and Bhakti Yoga corresponding to Netzach.

The assumption of God-forms is one such technique of Yesod related mysticism. Crowley describes this in Liber O as follows:

"The student, seated in the 'God' position or in the characteristic attitude of the God desired, should then imagine His image as coinciding with his own body, or as enveloping it. This must be practiced until mastery of the image is attained, and an identity with it and with the God experienced." [18]

Visualization of oneself as a deity is a method of invocation, whereby one attempts to take on the mind, attributes and powers of that God. Use of this technique primarily with gods is therefore of value, as they are archetypal beings, easily invoked and providing the greatest store of Gnosis.

One model for understanding the process of this technique is the Egyptian. The Egyptians often worked with images of gods, and described the process of the indwelling of the presence of the god within their image as the descent of the Ka, or soul, of that deity. A similar process is at work with visualization, which is a type of image making. The Briatic archetypal essence of the god should descend and indwell the Yetziratic visualization. A very important aspect of this practice is that the magician visualizes themselves as the deity. The ultimate goal of Thelemic work with deity is not to worship it as an exterior entity, but to discover one's identity with the archetypes involved. Another use is in certain initiatory traditions, particularly that of the Golden Dawn, which call for officers in initiation rituals to assume various god- forms so as to manifest that magical energy upon the candidate.

Another meditative method is Astral projection. Much has been written about this heavily romanticized technique, but it is actually very easy and simple in its basic practice. Crowley's instructions are as follows:

"1. Let the student be at rest in one of his prescribed positions, having bathed and robed with the proper decorum. Let the Place of Working be free from all disturbance, and let the preliminary purifications, banishings and invocations be duly accomplished, and, lastly, let the incense be kindled.

"2. Let him imagine his own figure (preferably robed in the proper magical garments and armed with the proper magical weapons) as enveloping his physical body, or standing near to and in front of him.

"3. Let him then transfer the seat of his consciousness to that imagined figure; so that it may seem to him that he is seeing with its eyes, and hearing with its ears. This will usually be the great difficulty of the operation.

"4. Let him then cause that imagined figure to rise in the air to a great height above the earth.

"5. Let him then stop and look about him. (It is sometimes difficult to open the eyes.)

"6. Probably he will see figures approaching him, or become conscious of a landscape.

"Let him speak to such figures, and insist upon being answered, using the proper Pentagrams and signs, as previously taught.

"7. Let him travel about at will, either with or without guidance from such figure or figures.

"8. Let him further employ such special invocations as will cause to appear the particular places he may wish to visit.

"9. Let him beware of the thousand subtle attacks and deceptions that he will experience, carefully testing the truth of all with whom he speaks.

"Thus a hostile being may appear clothed with glory; the appropriate Pentagram will in such a case cause him to shrivel and decay.

"10. Practice will make the student infinitely wary in these matters.

"11. It is usually quite easy to return to the body, but should any difficulty arise, practice (again) will make the imagination fertile. For example, one may create

in thought a chariot of fire with white horses, and command the charioteer to drive earthwards.

"It might be dangerous to go too far, or stay too long; for fatigue must be avoided.

"The danger spoken of is that of fainting, or of obsession, or of loss of memory or other mental faculty.

"12. Finally, let the student cause his imagined body in which he supposes himself to have been traveling to coincide with the physical, tightening his muscles, drawing in his breath, and putting his forefinger to his lips. Then let him 'awake' by a well-defined act of will, and soberly and accurately record his experiences.

"It may be added that this apparently complicated experiment is perfectly easy to perform. It is best to learn by 'traveling' with a person already experienced in the matter. Two or three experiments will suffice to render the student confident and even expert."^[19]

Quite simply, this is an exercise in what Jung called active imagination. At first, the connection between the Imaginal body or 'Body of Light' and the physical body will be strong. As practice deepens, the Body of Light will become more and more real and autonomous. Probably the biggest stumbling block for those beginning this type of exercise is to think that they're not doing it because of how easy it really is; that something as natural as consciously directed daydreaming could be the vaunted 'astral projection'. There is also the converse problem of giving too much credence to one's visionary experiences. A dream shouldn't be taken literally, and neither should visions, but both are meaningful and can inform one with regard to the True Will, provided the key to their interpretation is known. One of the goals of astral projection is to so build up the awareness and consciousness of the subtle Yetziratic sheaths of the self such that breakthrough occurs to the next deeper, Briatic, level of the self, which then infuses consciousness with divine Gnosis.

One powerful method for achieving this breakthrough is called Rising in the Planes and is described by Crowley as follows:

"1. The previous experiment [of astral projection] has little value, and leads to few results of importance, but is susceptible of a development which merges into a form of Dharana — concentration — and as such may lead to the very highest ends. The principle use of the practice in the last chapter is to familiarize the student with every kind of obstacle and every kind of delusion, so that he may be perfect master of every idea that may arise in his brain, to dismiss it, to transmute it, to cause it instantly to obey his will.

"2. Let him then begin exactly as before; but with the most intense solemnity and determination.

"3. Let him be very careful to cause his imaginary body to rise in a line exactly perpendicular to the earth's tangent at the point where his physical body is situated (or, to put it more simply, straight upwards).

"4. Instead of stopping, let him continue to rise until fatigue almost overcomes him. If he should find that he has stopped without willing to do so, and that figures appear, let him at all costs rise above them.

"Yea, though his very life tremble on his lips, let him force his way upward and onward!

"5. Let him continue in this so long as the breath of life is in him. Whatever threatens, whatever allures, though it were Typhon and all his hosts loosed from the pit and leagued against him, though it were from the very Throne of God Himself that a Voice issues bidding him stay and be content, let him struggle on, ever on.

"6. At last there must come a moment when his whole being is swallowed up in fatigue, overwhelmed by its own inertia. (This in case of failure. The results of success are so many and wonderful that no effort is here made to describe them.) Let him sink (when no longer can he strive, though his tongue be bitten through with the effort and the blood gush from his nostrils) into the blackness of unconsciousness; and then on coming to himself, let him write down soberly and accurately a record of all that hath occurred: yea, a record of all that hath occurred."^[20]

The Latin title of this practice is 'Sagitta trans Lunam', which means 'Arrow through the Moon'. This refers to the arrow of aspiration and concentration of the magician penetrating through the Imaginal realm of Yesod, upwards along the path of Samekh to Gnosis of the True Will in Tiphareth. The path of Samekh corresponds to Sagittarius, the archer.

It is also possible to have visionary experiences without separating the Body of Light from the physical body. This is called skrying and often involves the use of an image void media to direct attention toward, such as a crystal ball, black mirror etc. Some people possess a talent to see images in these visionary media. Even if this doesn't come easily at first it is still possible to skry. Just find the part of the brain where the vision is going on and pay attention to it. Don't worry if this seems forced and artificial at first. Just go with it and write down what you get in the record and see how your skill develops over time.

The meditative tradition corresponding to Hod is Jnana Yoga, or the yoga of knowledge. 'Jnana' in Sanskrit designates both intellectual, rational knowledge as well as intuitive

wisdom and insight. The goal of this kind of yoga can be seen as the equilibration of these two related modes of knowing in a manner that allows for experience and understanding of the divine through them. In the West, this method is identical with the Classical understanding of Philosophy, particularly in the Platonic tradition. The very word Philosophy originally comes from the Greek 'Philo-Sophy', or 'love of wisdom'. Therefore, in *Liber 13*, Crowley defines Jnana Yoga for A□A□ purposes as 'Philosophical Meditation'.[21] The Philosophical Meditation of the Thelemic Tradition is synonymous with Kabbalah, which is a system of organizing and relating all knowledge as an interaction of divine categories. The word Kabbalah means 'to receive', and this describes the correct attitude towards the practice of the various modes of Kabbalistic analysis. They should not be a merely mechanical, intellectual exercise, but rather an integration of the rational and intuitive, receptive faculties.

One powerful method of Jnana Yoga, which can be of benefit to both beginners as well as the most advanced Kabbalistic practitioners is meditation on the Tarot trumps. For beginners this can be an excellent way to become familiar with the basics of the otherwise daunting Kabbalistic system, and serves as a bridge to more advanced practices. One of the most articulate advocates of this method is Paul Foster Case. It forms the foundation of much of his technique.[22] While Crowley's Thoth Tarot deck will be the most fruitful deck for meditation from a Thelemic perspective, Case's B.O.T.A. deck is a highly recommended supplement. Based very closely on the Rider Waite deck, they are sold black and white and are intended to be hand-colored with the provided directions. This is a great exercise, which I enthusiastically endorse.

The basic meditation practice is very simple. Spend one day on each card, rotating through the trumps in order, from the Fool to the Universe. Place the card in front of oneself and relax with a few minutes of the four-fold breath. Then contemplate the trump and the meaning of its symbolism. Think about the card, but remain receptive, with the intention that some insight or discovery will reveal itself to you. Keep the magical record at hand and record these reflections either during or after the meditation.

Case recommends that five minutes each day should be spent on this exercise.[23] I have found that at least 15 minutes on a semi-regular basis can also work well. The point, as always, is to actually do the exercise. As one's practice deepens contemplate the connection of the card's symbolism with its associated correspondences. Attempt to increasingly deepen one's internal understanding of the spiritual bases for these ways of connecting ideas.

The writings of William Heidrick, particularly his magical autobiography *The Road to the Sun*, available in an online version, are highly recommended for good material relating to this style of practice.[24]

The meditational methods appropriate to Netzach are those of Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga is broadly defined as union to the divine through the method of the love of that divine reality. Vivekananda, in his classic work *Bhakti Yoga*, distinguishes two stages of practice.[25] The first is Gauni-Bhakti, or preparatory Bhakti. This is a practice involving

aids such as images, prayer, rituals, myths and so forth. The second, more advanced type of Bhakti Yoga is Para-Bhakti, or supreme Bhakti. This is a kind of formless, direct engagement with God without need of the mediating tools of Gauni-Bhakti. In the A□A□ system these correspond to the work of the Philosophus and the Exempt Adept respectively.

Bhakti Yoga involves in many ways the easiest method of any of the four traditional types of yoga. It is among the most widely practiced forms of spirituality. Christianity, for example, is almost entirely Bhakti in its generally practiced form. However, despite, or perhaps because of, this ease it is also one of the most easily perverted modes of spirituality. 'Nishtha', or singleness of attachment to the loved object is essential in this practice, but this can lead directly to the worst kinds of ignorant fanaticism for those who are unable or unwilling to see that there are other possible objects of devotion beyond their own particular practice's forms. This danger is most acute in Gauni-Bhakti, but fades through the attainment of the more universal Para-Bhakti. To avoid this problem, an open and liberal attitude is necessary, but this should not be at the expense of intensity of focus towards one's particular chosen ideal, whatever this might be at the moment. A general balanced moderation in practice is always a good idea, with emphasis on the internal, not the external forms of Bhakti practice.

Both Jnana and Bhakti yoga arrive at the same 'Knowledge', though their method of achieving that knowledge is different. The ultimate goal of Bhakti Yoga in its Para-Bhakti phase is the constant remembering of that which is the object of meditation. In this case it is God, or as we would say in Thelema, the Holy Guardian Angel.

Gauni-Bhakti needs concrete aids — mythological, symbolic and ritual. These are essential and important in their place. All of the rituals in this book can be used in this manner. Additionally, in the A□A□ system Crowley's primary practical instruction in Gauni-Bhakti is *Liber Astarte*.

Indian Bhakti Yoga also has the important concept of what is called a 'Pratika'. A Pratika is a satisfactory stand in or substitute for the absolute. A Pratika is something like the absolute, but it is not itself the absolute. Through worship of a Pratika, however, one can be led through it to the absolute. Sankara says that the best four Pratikas are the mind, which is an internal Pratika, the Akasha, which is an external Pratika, the Sun and the divine Name.[26] The first three of these correspond very closely to Hadit, Nuit and Ra-Hoor-Khuit in the Thelemic system. Also, worship of any particular concrete cultural deity as the absolute is to use that God-form as a Pratika. The problem area of this practice is where the limited aspects of the Pratika itself are taken as the absolute. If, however, the worshipper is clear to themselves that the Pratika is a substitute or suggestion of the real object of worship than this practice can lead to good result.

What we have discussed in this chapter has barely scratched the surface of the rich mystical practices of the Thelemic tradition. The various A.:A.: instructional libri contain many more techniques, and I refer the reader to them for additional material.

1. Case, Paul Foster, *The Life Power*, unpublished, available online, 1922, pg. 9.
2. Author's own translation. See also Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Thorsons, London, 1996, pp. 48-49.
3. Crowley, Aleister, *The Law is for All*, pp. 32-33.
4. This interpretation follows Eshelman, James, *The Mystical and Magical System of the A.:A.:*, pp. 142-144.
5. Authors own translation. For a different interpretation of the same verse see Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, pp. 149-150.
6. For additional discussion see Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on Yoga*, Schocken Books, New York, New York, 1996, pp. 116-120.
7. Ibid, pp. 129-132.
8. Ibid, pp. 120-123.
9. Ibid, pp. 422-424.
10. Ibid, pp. 61-62.
11. Author's notes from a workshop on the Gnostic Mass, Portland, Oregon, 1998 e.v.
Unpublished.
12. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 609.
13. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 638-642.
14. Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on Pranayama*, Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, New York, 1998.
15. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 24.
16. Ibid, pp. 609-610.
17. Vivekananda, Swami, *Raja-Yoga, Advaita Ashrama*, Calcutta, India, 1982, pg. 92.
18. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 615.
19. Ibid, pp. 624-625.
20. Ibid, pp. 625-626.

21. Crowley, Aleister, *Gems from the Equinox*, pg. 48.
22. See in particular Case, Paul Foster, *The Tarot*, Builders of the Adytum, Los Angeles, California, 1947.
23. Ibid, pg. 201.
24. Heidrick, William, *The Road to the Sun*, Unpublished, Available online, 1973.
25. Vivekananda, Swami, *Bhakti Yoga*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, India, 1998.
26. Ibid, pg. 47.

Chapter X

Chakras and the Energies of the Body

Esoteric systems that work with the body have different words to describe its subtle energy. Prana, Chi, Orgone, Odic Force, or whatever one wants to call it, designates a directly experiential energetic force that permeates the subtle Yetziratic body. Imaginal in essence, it is nevertheless closely tied to the physical body, and therefore various physical techniques can be used to manipulate it. Due to its psychophysical, Imaginal nature it is not fully quantifiably measurable by medical or scientific means. Thoughts can't be measured, and neither can the subtle force except through its physical analogs. An electrical impulse in the brain is not identical to a thought, but it may be integrally related to one. Likewise, certain measurable electrochemical or other phenomenon in the body can be related to subtle energy phenomenon, but they are not in and of themselves that energy.

Ultimately, working with this bodily force is an experiential matter. It may take a great deal of practice before its presence can be felt. Additionally, given its Yetziratic nature one of the best methods of attuning to it is to imagine or visualize it. This has the dual function of actively creating and shaping the energy, as well as responding to its independent movements. Some models even go so far as to say that the subtle body does not exist at all until it is built up by inner work. This was Ouspensky's interpretation of Gurdjieff's position.^[1] It is not, however, the experience of Traditional Chinese Medicine, for example, which seems to work quite objectively with a subtle body dynamic regardless of the patient's awareness of it. The reader should experiment and draw their own conclusions.

Hatha Yoga, martial arts, Chi Gong, Tai Chi and many other practices manipulate and attune the subtle energy. These are all sophisticated techniques beyond the scope of this book, but are valuable tools for the kit of the aspiring magician. The emphasis of this chapter is on a more basic, relatively contemplative method of engaging with the body's energy through seven traditional focus points of that energy. These are called Chakras, which is Sanskrit for 'wheels', signifying a point of concentration and movement of energy.

The seven points and their physically correlated locations are:

Sahasrara — crown of the head or slightly above the head

Ajna — between the eyes on the forehead, slightly above the bridge of the nose

Vishuddhi — the throat about the base of the neck

Anahatta — the center of the chest

Manipura — solar plexus or abdomen

Svadisthana — the sexual genitals and their associated body cavities

Muladhara — the perineum or the base of the spine

Different texts and traditions will sometimes give slightly different anatomical locations for these points, and they are not necessarily as precisely localized as some authorities would assert.

The Siva Samhita has some interesting things to say concerning the Chakras. Mount Meru, referred to in this passage, is the world mountain at the center of the universe in Indian mythic cosmology. It is the Axis Mundi, or world pole.

"In this body, the mount Meru [the vertebral column] is surrounded by seven islands; there are rivers, seas, mountains, fields; and lords of the fields too. There are in it seers and sages; all the stars and planets as well. There are sacred pilgrimages, shrines; and presiding deities of the shrines. The sun and moon, agents of creation and destruction, also move in it. Ether, air, fire, water and earth are also there. All the beings that exist in the three worlds are also to be found in the body; surrounding the Meru they are engaged in their respective functions. He who knows all this is a yogi; there is no doubt about it." [Chapter 2, 1-5][2]

What is being described here is the presence within the microcosm of the physical and Imaginal body of a perfect mirror of the physical and Imaginal macrocosm. In astrology, the planets project, reflect and concentrate the magical energy of the Sun within the Solar system, thereby bringing out its different aspects. In the same manner, the Chakras, working individually or in sets, modulate the energy of the microcosm, throwing certain aspects into relief so they can be worked with.

There is a deeper doctrine here as well. The subtle energy of the body is also one and the same as the divine energy, or Shakti, of the cosmic universe. The patterns and dynamic of that field of universal forces is mirrored within the personal microcosm. They are magically linked, and one can affect the other.

The next obvious question is therefore to ask which planets go with which Chakras. Investigation reveals multiple different correspondence schemes, more than one of which is valid — which is not the same as saying that they are all arbitrary. A good model may be to see the Chakras as neutral or possessed of manifold potential in and of themselves. By giving them specific correspondences through visualization and other activities, magical and consciousness altering and enhancing phenomenon can be made to happen by thus shaping the subtle forces.[3]

There is also no reason that all seven Chakras must always be used. In the following, methods of working with them in sets of two, three, five and seven will be presented.

Used in a two-fold scheme, the most important centers are the top and bottom-most, the Sahasrara and the Muladhara. Between these two centers runs an Imaginal channel physically corresponding to the spine called the Sushumna. The other five primary Chakras are often (but not always) visualized as positioned along it. The idea is to charge the top and bottom points of this column as a polarity, so as to cause energy to flow along it, generally from the bottom up. The Muladhara is therefore posited as Hadit and the Sahasrara as Nuit.

In the simplest form of this exercise one simply concentrates awareness at the base of the spine and allows it to flow up and out the top of the head. At first this will be an exercise in visualization, but as concentration increases other results will follow. Often, a kind of expansion and increase in concentration of consciousness will occur as the attention flows out the top of the body. Several more advanced versions of this kind of exercise are described by Crowley in *Liber HHH*, section SSS, not here given.[4]

As a threefold set, the Chakras can be used to represent the trinity in its various forms. One of the best methods for achieving this comes from the Buddhist Tantric tradition, or Vajrayana. That tradition bases much of its ritual technology on a Trinitarian correspondence set called the Triratna, or triple jewel, consisting of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The Buddha is the archetype of any enlightened being, the Dharma is the teaching that leads to enlightenment and the Sangha is the religious community that puts that teaching into practice. The Buddha (or any enlightened being) is said to have three bodies, each of which aligns with an element of the Triratna. The Nirmanakaya, or Emanation Body is the physical, perceptible body of the Buddha, corresponding to the Sangha. The Enjoyment Body or Sambhogakaya of the Buddha is her astral body of light, consisting of her 'speech' or energy and corresponding to the Dharma. The Dharmakaya or Truth Body is that aspect of the Buddha which is united with the ground of being itself. It is said to be the mind of the Buddha, and corresponds in the Triratna to the Buddha themselves.

It is a doctrine of Vajrayana that these three bodies are purified or exalted forms of three aspects of existence already possessed by all sentient beings. In the Western alchemical tradition these are body, soul and spirit, which in turn correspond to the three mother letters of the Kabbalah. One further key is needed to create a full symbolic terrain for ritual use, which is that these three principles are assigned by the Tantras to three of the upper Chakras and to three bijas or seed mantras. All of this information is summarized on the following chart.[5]

Anahatta	Vishuddhi	Ajna
Buddha Mind	Dharma Speech/Energy	Sangha Body
Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
Truth Body	Enjoyment Body	Emanation Body
HUNG	AH	OM
Spirit — Mercury	Soul — Sulphur	Body — Salt
Aleph — Air	Shin — Fire	Mem — Water
Yellow	Red	Blue
Kether	Chokmah	Binah

One ritual use of these correspondences is to receive spiritual empowerment from deities.[6] The method is simple but powerful. By whatever magical or mystical means available actively invoke the presence of some god representative of the Great Work into their image, be this a mental or physical iconic representation. Ideally, the image should be directly in front and slightly elevated above oneself.

Vibrate the word "ALEPH". As you do so, visualize a yellow letter Aleph appearing at the heart of the deity. Vibrate the word "SHIN". As you do so, visualize a red letter Shin appearing at the throat of the deity. Vibrate the word "MEM". As you do so, visualize a blue letter Mem appearing at the Ajna Chakra of the god-form.

Sound the syllable "OM". Simultaneously, visualize a blue ray of light shining from the Ajna of the deity to your own Ajna. A blue letter Mem appears there. As it does so understand your physical body and subconsciousness to be infused with spiritual light. Sound the syllable "AH". Simultaneously, visualize a red ray of light shine from the Vishuddhi of the deity to your own Vishuddhi. A red letter Shin appears there. As it does so, understand your subtle energy body and ego consciousness to be infused with spiritual light. Sound the syllable "HUNG". Simultaneously, visualize a yellow ray of light shine from the heart of the god-form to your own heart. A yellow Aleph appears there. As it does so, understand your links to the highest reality, your superconsciousness, to be infused with spiritual light.

There is also a method of using this technique to receive empowerment directly from the Stele of Revealing itself, the eidolon of the Thelemic Gnosis. To make this work, the fundamental Thelemic trinity of Nuit, Hadit, and Ra-Hoor-Khuit are assigned to the three mother letters based upon their characteristics. Ra-Hoor-Khuit is the Hierophant, stand-in for the Holy Guardian Angel and quintessence of opposites. He therefore functions as Mercury, Spirit and Aleph. Hadit as the innermost self is Sulpher, the Soul, and Shin. Nuit as outer reality and experience is Salt, the Body and Mem. These correspondences are for within the context of this ritual and should not be considered as supplying exhaustive descriptions of the Thelemic trinity.

Look at the Stele of Revealing. Say: "*The unveiling of the company of heaven.*" [AL I: 2]
Vibrate the word "ALEPH". As you do so visualize a yellow letter Aleph appearing

within the solar disk crowning the image of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. Attempt to realize, as much as possible, awareness of the presence of this god through the medium of the stele image.

Vibrate the word "SHIN". As you do so visualize a red letter Shin appearing within the central solar disk of the image of Hadit upon the stele. Attempt to realize, as much as possible, awareness of the presence of this god through the medium of the stele image.

Vibrate the word "MEM". As you do so visualize a blue letter Mem appearing within the heart of the image of Nuit upon the Stele. Attempt to realize, as much as possible, awareness of the presence of this god through the medium of the stele image.

Vibrate the mantra "OM". As you do so visualize a ray of blue light come from the Mem at Nuit's heart to your Ajna Chakra. A blue letter Mem appears there. As it does so understand your physical body and subconsciousness to be infused with spiritual light.

Vibrate the mantra "AH". As you do so visualize a ray of red light come from the Shin in Hadit's central disk to your Vishuddhi Chakra. A red letter Shin appears there. As it does so, understand your subtle energy body and ego consciousness to be infused with spiritual light.

Vibrate the mantra "HUNG". As you do so visualize a ray of yellow light come from the Aleph in Ra-Hoor-Khuit's solar crown to your heart center. A yellow Aleph appears there. As it does so, understand your links to the highest reality, your superconsciousness, to be infused with spiritual light.

The standard method for using the Chakras in a five-fold set is the ritual of the Middle Pillar. This technique does not derive from the original 19th century Golden Dawn. Rather, it was developed within the Stella Mautina, an offshoot of the original Order by Doctor R. W. Felkin, who believed that he had channeled the ritual from the Secret Chiefs. It first gained widespread notice through the writings of Israel Regardie, and has since become a standard exercise.[7] Its basic conception is to take the five Sephirah lying along the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life and align these with five of the Chakras. Energy is then drawn down the Middle Pillar from Kether through the use of the God-names of the Sephiroth, simultaneously passing through the body of the magician and charging their aura. The ritual is especially useful as an invocation of a general balanced spiritual force directly into the magician, either for its own sake, or to be channeled for other ritual purposes. There is also an elemental attribution to the five centers used in this ritual which is not part of the original Felkin material, but which can be used to derive additional meaning from the ritual's structure. This information is summarized in the following chart.

Sephirah	Chakra	God-Name	Element
Kether	Sahasrara	EHEIEH	Spirit
Da'ath	Vishuddhi	YHVH ELOHIM	Air
Tiphareth	Anahata	IAO	Fire
Yesod	Svadisthana	SHADDAI EL-CHAI	Water
Malkuth	Muladhara	ADONAI HA-ERETZ	Earth

To perform the Middle Pillar, either stand upright in the Wand posture or be seated in one's Asana. Many people find standing to be superior. In either case make sure that the spine is erect and vertical. Take a minute or two to establish a four fold breathing pattern, calming and relaxing the body and mind. Now, visualize as strongly as possible a sphere of blinding white light situated about six inches directly above the crown of the head. Establish this by vibrating the God-name of Kether EHEIEH (E-hay-yay) several times. Visualize a column of white light descend from the sphere down through the center of the body to the throat where a second sphere of light forms. Vibrate YHVH ELOHIM (Yod-Heh-Vav-Heh El-oh-heem) a number of times. Again the white light descends to the heart center, where it forms a sphere. Vibrate IAO (ee-ah-oh) a few times. The light descends once more to the genital region and forms a sphere of white light. Vibrate SHADDAI EL-CHAI (Shad-eye el-khi) until this is well established. Finally, the light descends again. If standing, it goes down through the legs and forms a sphere at the base of the feet. If seated, the light descends vertically from the previous center and forms a sphere roughly at the perineum. Make sure that the two final spheres of light are fully differentiated and do not overlap or become conflated in the visualizations. When the lowest sphere of light is established, vibrate ADONAI HA-ERETZ (Ad-oh-nye ha-eretz) several times. Spend a few moments to review the features of the full visualization, then a few minutes to circulate this Imaginal light throughout the personal aura in time with the 4 fold breath. With each inhalation and exhalation send the light up the spine and circling around the outside of the body in a clockwise direction. Finally, concentrate some of the distributed light in the heart center.

There is a Thelemic variant of the Middle Pillar, in which the elemental attributions are used in a more explicit manner. It was developed jointly in 1997 by the author and the late Ebony Anpu. A different aspect of the god Horus is visualized at each point. The basic information is summarized in the following chart.

Sephirah	Chakra	God-Name	Element
Kether	Sahasrara	Hadit	Spirit
Da'ath	Vishuddhi	Horus	Air
Tiphareth	Anahata	Ra-Hoor-Khuit	Fire
Yesod	Svadisthana	Harpocrates	Water
Malkuth	Muladhara	Set-Ra	Earth

Either standing or seated in one's Asana, begin by visualizing a vast field of stars above the head. Direct attention to the one star, brighter than all the others, and silver in color,

that lies vertically at the exact zenith of the star field, along the line of the spine, at the limits of the universe. This star detaches itself from its position and descends downwards from an infinite distance to come to rest at the crown of the head. As it does so it takes the form of a winged golden globe with feathers of purple and green. Vibrate the name HADIT three times while holding this visualization.

The winged globe shrinks to only a few inches across and moves downwards through the body until it reaches the Vishuddhi Chakra. It transforms itself at the level of the throat into a falcon flying through a vast expanse of sky. Visualize this clearly while vibrating the name HORUS three times.

The winged disk reappears and descends to the level of the heart where it takes the form of the flaming disk of the Sun. Vibrate the name RA-HOOR-KHUIT three times.

The winged disk then moves downwards to the Svadisthana. Visualize it becoming an unborn infant within a blue egg, washed about beneath an infinite sea. Vibrate the name HARPOCRATES three times. Finally, the winged globe comes to rest at the Muladhara. It takes the form of the throned figure of Set. His throne is set upon a flaming globe of black fire. Vibrate the name SET-RA three times. The winged globe then rises to the heart, equilibrating the generated energy there in the form of a brilliant white letter Aleph. To conclude say:

"Through the midnight thou art dropt, O my child, my conqueror, my sword-girt captain, O Hoor! And they shall find thee as a black gnarl'd glittering stone, and they shall worship thee." [Liber 65, chapter 5, verse 6][8]

In this version of the Middle Pillar Hadit is assigned to the Sahasrara and the element of Spirit, the Kether of the Tree of Life of a particular individual. It is that aspect of our being in virtue of which we are 'the hidden god'. This is not some modification of the physical elements: Fire, Air, Water or Earth. Rather, it is the Spirit throned within, the Shin descended into YHVH. This is symbolized in the exercise through the spatial analogy of Hadit descending from its seat in the Sahasrara to spread itself over the other Chakras, assuming different guises at each station it passes through. This process is akin to that described in the Lurianic system: the descent of the fertilizing Yod into the void, creating the universe.

At the Vishuddhi Chakra is located the Sephirah Da'ath, which means Knowledge. This is the (false) crown of the Ruach. The Ruach as a whole corresponds to the element of Air, and this is therefore also the elemental correspondence of this point. Air is represented by the Vav in Tetragrammaton, the Son. In this ritual this is Horus the younger, the son of Osiris. His physical incarnation is the Pharaoh, the living God-King. As the king is triumphant over chaos in his upholding of Ma'at, Horus is set over the Da'ath center to show the power of this viceroy of the Supernals over the Abyss.

Ra-Hoor-Khuit is Horus in his form as Ra, the Sun. The Sun is associated with Tiphareth and with the Anahatta Chakra. The Sun is a center of fire and energy, and so this center is associated with the element of Fire.

Yesod possesses a feminine, reproductive and generative aspect, shown by its Sephirothic correspondence to the Moon. In this ritual, this is represented by Harpocrates, the infant form of Horus, and by the correspondence with the element of water. Set, in the Thelemic tradition, is the God of material manifestation, and is therefore placed at the Muladhara Chakra and the Sephirah Malkuth. This center is therefore also associated with the element of Earth.

Set is the twin brother of Horus, representing in Jungian terms his Shadow aspect. Set-Ra, if lettered in Hebrew as Samekh Heh Tav — Resh Aleph (סֵת־רָא) adds to 666 by Gematria. The compound god Set-Ra also contains the idea of what the Alchemists called the Nigredo stage of the Great Work. This consists in the dissolving of material into a dark stage (Set) in order to purify it to a higher grade of being hidden within it (Ra). Ra is the last God-name vibrated, so that just as the energy from Kether reaches the bottommost point of manifestation in Malkuth, it shoots itself back upwards to equilibrate at the Anahatta.

Finally there are methods of working with all seven Chakras together. As a set of seven, the Chakras correspond to the planets. There are several valid systems of attribution. Three possible systems are outlined in the chart below. The first is the system of Paul Foster Case, which is based upon his intuitive contemplation of the attributes of the Chakras. It has significant merits, but is unfortunately not well known.[9] The second set of correspondences is what I call the Chaldean system. Often used in modern popular texts, it simply ranks the planets in order of their visible or apparent speed and, following the Ptolemaic logic that the faster planets are magically closer, stacks them onto the Chakras with the fastest at the bottom and the slowest on the top. This is the same order as on the Tree of Life, and for this reason those with familiarity with that diagram will find that this order does give a sense of progression or building of energy. Its disadvantage is that, as this is the only logic for the assignment of planets to Chakras, one may find oneself at a loss as to deeper associations. The third system is an example of an Indian system of attribution. This particular set of assignments comes from Harish Johari's book *Chakras: Energy Centers of Transformation*.[10] This popular book has itself become something of a source text and its system is occasionally encountered.

Chakra	P. F. Case	Chaldean	H. Johari
Sahasrara	Mercury	Saturn	Stars/Moon
Ajna	Moon	Jupiter	Saturn
Vishuddhi	Venus	Mars	Jupiter
Anahatta	Sun	Sun	Venus
Manipura	Jupiter	Venus	Sun
Svadisthana	Mars	Mercury	Mercury
Muladhara	Saturn	Moon	Mars

One method of working with these kinds of correspondences is to perform a kind of Chakra empowerment which one person can give another. Lay on hands at each body center simultaneously visualizing it suffused with unblocked flowing energy while an invocation is said to generate a balancing of the Chakra's energy. The following sample invocations were written by Ebony Anpu and are susceptible to improvisation, being only intended as guides rather than as fixed rubrics. They assign various Egyptian gods to the Chakras, based on the Johari correspondences in the following manner:

Chakra	Planet	God-Form
Sahasrara	Stars/Moon	Nuit
Ajna	Saturn	Set
Vishuddhi	Jupiter	Amoun
Anahatta	Venus	Hathor
Manipura	Sun	Ra
Svadisthana	Mercury	Tahuti
Muladhara	Mars	Horus

The invocations are:

Muladhara: Thy Muladhara is under the protection of Horus, the crowned and conquering child — god of this aeon. The bright red flame. The tower. The army of the Men of Earth. The ability to take those things away from oneself that one wishes to banish. The art of war. Thy Muladhara is under the protection of Horus.

Svadisthana: Thy Svadisthana is under the protection of Tahuti. Tahuti, the moon in its fullness. Tahuti, the magician and the exorcist. Tahuti, utterer of the words of creation from Ra.

Manipura: Thy Manipura is under the protection of Ra. The center of balance in the body. The center of balance in the solar system. Thy center is the center of the solar system. As above, so below. As it is with the Sun and Ra, so it is with this person. Thou art centered. Thy Manipura is under the protection of Ra.

Anahatta: Thy Anahatta chakra is under the protection of Hathor, the goddess of love. The goddess of love protects the heart of this individual. Hathor, the cow of heaven, whose pillars are the four directions. Whose legs are the four children of Horus. Hapi, Kebekhsenuf, Imset, and Duamutef. Thy heart is under the protection of Hathor, the house and home of Horus.

Vishuddhi: Thy Vishuddhi chakra is under the protection of Amon. Amon, the hidden god. Amon, master of Thebes. Amon, to whom the largest religious edifice ever created was dedicated.

Ajna: Thy Ajna is under the protection of Set, the god who sees in the darkness, the god of the starry realm. May this person see in the darkness as Set sees in the darkness. Token erect of thorny thigh. Thy Ajna is under the protection of Set.

Sahasara: Thy Sahasara is under the protection of Nuit. The goddess of infinite space and the infinite stars thereof. Mother of all of the deities under heaven.[11]

There are few aspects of the Eastern mystical tradition that have captured the Western imagination as much as the Chakras. This chapter has only touched on the many magical applications of the system.

One ritual unique to the Thelemic tradition that integrates the symbolism of the Chakras with much of the material already discussed in this book is *Liber 5 vel Reguli*.[12] The number of this ritual is five for the Pentagram, and the ritual follows much the same basic form of the Pentagram rituals discussed earlier. Several symbolic expansions have been made in order to bring out explicitly Thelemic themes, therefore it is said to be, "an incantation proper to invoke the energies of the Aeon of Horus." Reguli is also perhaps the most 'Satanic' of the spiritual exercises of Thelema, provided this provocative but in itself almost meaningless term is understood properly within the context of the ritual.

'Reguli' in the title refers to the star Alpha Leonis or Regulus, which is the brightest star in the constellation of Leo, opposite Aquarius in the Zodiac. These two signs form an axis representing aspects of the expression of the energy of the Aeon of Horus, as the Sun lies in these signs on alternating Equinoxes during the astrological Age of Aquarius, which is associated with the Aeon of Horus. In this ritual Leo is Hadit and Aquarius Nuit. Additionally, Leo as the fixed sign associated with fire also represents the aspiration and True Will of the magician.

The ritual itself is as follows:

Liber 5 vel Reguli

A.:.A.: publication in Class D. Being the Ritual of the Mark of the Beast; an incantation proper to invoke the Energies of the Aeon of Horus, adapted for the daily use of the Magician of whatever grade.

THE FIRST GESTURE

The Oath of the Enchantment, which is called the Elevenfold Seal.

The Animadversion towards the Aeon.

1. Let the Magician, robed and armed as he may deem to be fit, turn his face towards Boleskine, that is the House of The Beast 666.
2. Let him strike the battery 1-3-3-3-1.

3. Let him put the Thumb of his right hand between its index and medius, and make the gestures hereafter following.

The Vertical Component of the Enchantment.

1. Let him describe a circle about his head, crying NUIITH! [or NUIT — ed.]
2. Let him draw the Thumb vertically downward, and touch the root of his phallus, crying HADITH! [or HADIT — ed.]
3. Let him, retracing the line, touch the center of his breast, and cry RA-HOOR-KHUIT!

The Horizontal Components of the Enchantment.

1. Let him touch the Center of his Forehead, his mouth, and his larynx, crying AIWAZ!
2. Let him draw his Thumb from right to left across his face at the level of the nostrils.
3. Let him touch the Center of his Breast, and his Solar Plexus, crying THERION!
4. Let him draw his Thumb from left to right across his breast, at the level of the sternum.
5. Let him touch his Navel, and the Root of his Phallus, crying BABALON!
6. Let him draw his Thumb from right to left across his abdomen, at the level of the hips.

[Thus shall he formulate the Sigil of the Grand Hierophant, but dependent from the Circle.]

The Asseveration of the Spells.

1. Let the Magician clasp his hands upon his Wand, his fingers and thumbs interlaced, crying LASH'TAL: THELEMA: FIAOF: AGAPE: AUMGN.

[Thus shall be declared the Words of Power whereby the Energies of the Aeon of Horus work his Will in the world.]

The Proclamation of the Accomplishment.

1. Let the Magician strike the Battery: 3-5-3, crying ABRAHADABRA.

THE SECOND GESTURE

The Enchantment.

1. Let the Magician, still facing Boleskine, advance to the circumference of his Circle.

2. Let him turn himself towards the left, and pace with the stealth and swiftness of a tiger the precincts of his circle, until he completes one revolution thereof.
3. Let him give the Sign of Horus (or the Enterer) as he passeth, so to project the Force that radiateth from Boleskine before him.
4. Let him pace his Path until he comes to the North; there let him halt, and turn his face to the North.
5. Let him trace with his wand the Averse Pentagram proper to invoke Air (Aquarius).



6. Let him bring the Wand to the center of the Pentagram and call upon Nuith!
7. Let him make the sign called Puella, standing with feet together, head bowed, his left hand shielding his phallus, and his right hand shielding his breast (attitude of the Venus de Medici).
8. Let him turn again to the left, and pursue his Path as before, projecting the Force from Boleskine as he passeth; let him halt when he next cometh to the South, and face outward.
9. Let him trace the Averse Pentagram that invoketh Fire (Leo).



10. Let him point his Wand to the Center of the Pentagram, and cry HADITH!
11. Let him give the Sign Puer, standing with feet together, and head erect. Let his right hand [the thumb between index and medius] be raised, the forearm vertical at a right angle with the upper arm, which is horizontally extended in the line joining the shoulders. Let his left hand, the thumb extended forwards, and the fingers clenched, rest at the junction of the thighs [attitude of the Gods Mentu, Khem, etc.].
12. Let him proceed as before; then in the East, let him make the Averse Pentagram that invoketh Earth (Taurus).



13. Let him point his Wand to the Center of the Pentagram, and cry THERION!

14. Let him give the sign called Vir, the feet being together. The hands, with clenched fingers and thumbs thrust out forwards, are held to the temples; the head is then bowed and pushed out, as if to symbolize the butting of an horned beast (attitude of Pan, Bacchus, etc.) (Frontispiece, Eqx. I-III).
15. Proceeding as before, let him make in the West the Averse Pentagram whereby Water is invoked.



16. Pointing the Wand to the Center of the Pentagram, let him call upon BABALON!
17. Let him give the sign Mulier. The Feet are widely separated, and the arms raised so as to suggest a crescent. The head is thrown back [attitude of Baphomet, Isis in Welcome, the Microcosm of Vitruvius]. (See Book 4, Part II.)
18. Let him break into the dance, tracing a centripetal spiral widdershins, enriched by revolutions upon his axis as he passeth each quarter, until he come to the center of the circle. There let him halt, facing Boleskine.
19. Let him raise the Wand, trace the Mark of the Beast, and cry AIWAZ!
20. Let him trace the Invoking Hexagram of the Beast.
21. Let him lower the Wand, striking the Earth therewith.
22. Let him give the sign of Mater Triumphans [The feet are together; the left arm curled as if it supported a child; the thumb and index of the right hand pinch the nipple of the left breast, as if offering it to that child]. Let him utter the word THELEMA!
23. Perform the Spiral Dance, moving deosil and whirling widdershins. Each time on passing the West extend the Wand to the Quarter in question, and bow:
1. Before me the powers of LA! [to West].
 2. Behind me the powers of AL! [to East].
 3. On my right hand the powers of LA! [to North].
 4. On my left hand the powers of AL! [to South].
 5. Above me the powers of ShT! [leaping in the air].
 6. Beneath me the powers of ShT! [striking the ground].
 7. Within me the powers! [in the attitude of Ptah erect, the feet together, the hands clasped upon the vertical Wand].
 8. About me flames my Father's Face, the Star of Force and Fire.
 9. And in the Column stands His six-rayed Splendour!

[This dance may be omitted, and the whole Utterance chanted in the attitude of Ptah.]

THE FINAL GESTURE

This is identical with the First Gesture.

The ritual begins with the magician facing Boleskine, Crowley's house at Loch Ness in Scotland. These instructions are inspired by Islam, where all worshippers turn towards the Ka'aba at Mecca to pray. Crowley interpreted certain passages of *The Book of the Law* to imply that Boleskine was to fulfill a similar function in the Thelemic tradition. The temple in *Liber 15: the Gnostic Catholic Mass* is also faced towards Boleskine in this manner.

The bell is rung 1-3-3-3-1 to signal the start of the ritual. This gives eleven total rings of the bell. Eleven is the number symbolic of Magick in the Thelemic tradition. Magicians who might find themselves performing Reguli without their regular tools and implements can substitute clapping their hands at this point with good effect.

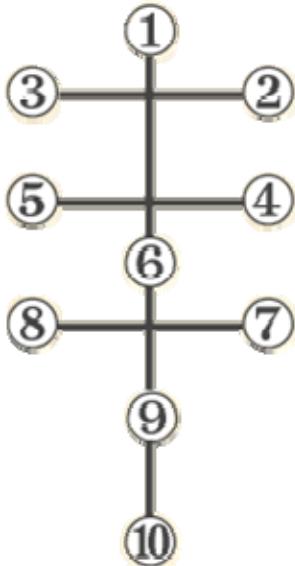
The thumb is placed between the index and middle finger when making various of the hand motions. This Thelemic mudra originates from folk custom in Italy, where it is an obscene gesture indicating sexual congress.

The first and final parts of the ritual are called the elevenfold seal and are expanded versions of the Kabbalistic Cross serving the same basic structural and symbolic function as in the Pentagram rituals. This involves the magician drawing a current of magical energy down from the axis mundi through their body. This is then equilibrated within the personal aura through the use of the Chakras and various associated Thelemic God-Names. This microcosmic energy will then be directed outward into equilibration with the macrocosm of the four quarters and the circle of the temple.

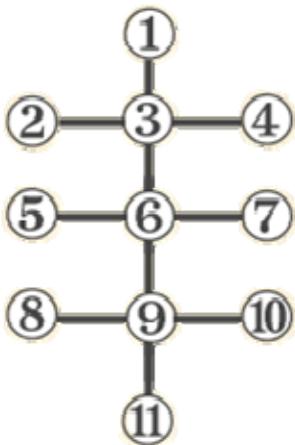
The first motion of the gesture posits Nuit as the Sahasrara, and Hadit as the Muladhara. Ra-Hoor-Khuit is in the heart, the place where the relative and absolute meet in Imaginal embrace. Aiwass is associated with the Ajna and Vishuddhi to represent speech and true sight. Therion relates in this ritual to the Sun center, the center of the body and to the Anahata and Manipura Chakras. Finally, Babalon corresponds to the Svadisthana and Muladhara Chakras, representing her identity with the sexual force as well as Kundalini itself — the root energy of the body and of the universe.

In this ritual, the location of the Svadhishthana is taken as the navel, and the Muladhara the root of the phallus. Women should touch a corresponding area.

Three crossbars are drawn across the body simultaneously with the vertical Chakra activation. These function to define the full Tree of Life on the physical body as in this figure:



This shape is also that of a three armed cross which in certain schools of Western symbolism is the shape of the scepter of the Hierophant of the mysteries. This is shown, for example, on the Hierophant card in the Rider Waite Tarot deck. This particular cross is associated by Hermetic tradition with the Templars. The name of this portion of the ritual as the elevenfold seal may derive from the eleven points of this cross.



This arrangement from top to bottom also provides one interpretation of the battery 1-3-3-3-1 which begins the ritual.

The fingers are then interlaced around the wand in an act of identification with the principle it represents and a series of Thelemic words of power are recited. These are: LASHTAL, THELEMA, FIAOF, AGAPE, and AUMGN. All of these words add to 93, the key Thelemic number. (AUMGN adds to 100, but contains within it the number 93, as explained below.) Thelema and Agape are Greek for will and love. The other three words are Kabbalistic formulae, constructed out of the correspondences of the Hebrew

alphabet. Their meanings are discussed in Magick in Theory and Practice. The descriptions provided here are based on this text, but also include my own reflections.

LASHTAL [13] לאטשאַל

Adjustment-Fool-Aeon-Universe-Fool-Adjustment

LASHTAL is the key formula of Reguli. It has three components.

LA (Lamed Aleph, לא), meaning naught or nothing. It adds to 31 and represents the Absolute in its passive phase.

AL (Aleph Lamed, אֵל) or 'El', a name of God adding to 31. It represents the Absolute in its active phase and is the formal title of *The Book of the Law*.

ShT (Shin Teth, שׁת) Set the god of materiality, also shit or feces, but also adding to 31, therefore shown as non-dual with the all and nothing of AL/LA. Shin is Spirit, and Teth the expression of Spirit through the union of opposites on all planes. Shin is also the Aeon in Tarot, which depicts Nuit and Hadit, the Macrocosmic correlates of the Microcosmic Babalon and Therion depicted on the Lust Trump. These four deities are placed about the magician at the quarters in Reguli. ShT is foremost a formula of Supreme Divinity, for it includes not just the formless Spirit (Shin), but form and formless conjoined as non-dual unity (Teth). About it, as further extensions of itself, are the formulae LA and AL, passive and active modulations of the divine Unity. In Reguli, these are corresponded to the passive and active Gods of the quarters while ShT is assigned to the central axis of Spirit extending both above and below.

The formula of LASHTAL as a whole adds to 93.

FIAOF [14] פְּעָיָה

Hierophant-Hermit-Fool-Devil-Hierophant

FIAOF is a variant of the IAO formula, developed by Crowley in 1921 and incorporating two silent Vavs surrounding the central IAO. It adds to 93 and expresses aspects of the path of initiation in the aeon of Horus.

Vav the Hierophant is ultimately the Holy Guardian Angel. This is Vav the Son of Tetragrammaton. Its number is 6, Tiphareth or the Sun. This is the essential divine Star-Self of the initiate. To express itself it begins by incarnating, as represented by the inseminating Yod. Born and achieving experience it becomes the androgenous Harpocrates, the pure Fool (Aleph) wandering about the Earth. He is completely enlightened, yet seems, even at times to himself, to suffer all kinds of misadventure only to emerge unscathed. Finally, the Fool matures into that which is represented by the Devil (Ayin). This is Baphomet and Set, the pure non-dual High God which is matter and spirit as One. This accomplishment causes the re-emergence of the essential Self, represented

again by Vav the Hierophant. This shows that the True Self has been unaffected in its original nature by its adventures, but has merely magnified its own essence.

All of the central 3 cards are androgynous and/or bisexual. Other versions of IAO portray it as a kind of family. Here it is explicit that there is only the One Self that generates itself as its own progeny.

This is also an illustration of the myth of Horus from a Thelemic perspective.

AUMGN [15] אֹםְגָן

Fool-Hierophant-Hanged Man-Priestess-Death

AUMGN is a Thelemic variant of the Hindu Pranava, typically transliterated into English as 'Aum' or 'Om'. AUMGN is an extension of the root AUM formula to create a similarity with the Hebrew 'Amen'. It is spoken or vibrated with the 'G' silent and the 'N' vocalized as an almost silent nasal termination of the 'M' sound.

The suffix MGN, which adds to the key Thelemic number 93, serves as a symbolic extension and elaboration of the final 'M' of the Pranava. AUM is triadic in form. MGN internally replicates and comments upon aspects of that structure. MGN itself has three letters. G is Gimel, which adds to 3 via Gematria. The symbolism of the associated Tarot trump, the Priestess, also relates on several levels to Sephirah 3, Binah, the Great Mother. N or Nun is Death, corresponding to Scorpio, which also has a triadic form in its three octaves of Eagle, Snake and Scorpion.

AUMGN has a basic threefold structure. 'A' is Aleph, the Absolute Self. 'U' or Vau represents, as in the FIAOF formula above, the mediate, Briatic, or Higher Self, emanated or reflected from 'A'. This in turn emanates 'M', the phenomenal or ego self. This phenomenal self then expresses the previous, as in the FIAOF formula, through a cycle of incarnations ('G', represented by the phases of the moon) and an ongoing dialectical process of change and transformation ('N').

The AUMGN formula also symbolizes the 3 colleges of A□A□. 'A' corresponds to the Hermits, the A□A□ or Absolute itself. 'V' is the Hierophant, representing the Holy Guardian Angel whose Knowledge and Conversation is achieved by the Adepts of the Order R.C., or Lovers. 'M' is the Men of Earth of the Outer College of the Golden Dawn. The Hanged Man, which corresponds to this letter, makes the shape of the cross and triangle which is the symbol of the G.D. 'G' is the path of ascent along Gimel to advance from the Order R.C. to that of the A□A□. 'N' as the Tarot Atu Death represents the method whereby progress from the Order G.D. to R.C. is achieved.

AUMGN adds to 100. Crowley notes that this "expresses the unity under the form of complete manifestation." By a Kabbalistic technique of dropping zeros known as Aiq Bakr, 100 reduces to 1, the number of Kether. 100 is 10 squared, or Malkuth multiplied

by itself. Finally, if each Sephirah is seen as containing a full Tree of Life within it, then 100 is the total number of Sephirah in this expanded Tree of "complete manifestation".

After these words are recited the bell is rung 3-5-3, signifying the principle of the Pentagram supported by the trinity, disclosing the number 11, the number of Magick. The 11 lettered word ABRAHADABRA is then declared, completing the opening gesture.

ABRAHADABRA [16] אַרְבָּהָדָאַהֲרָבָא

Fool-Magus-Sun-Fool-Star-Fool-Empress-Fool-Magus-Sun-Fool

Said to be the Word of the Aeon and of the Great Work. Discovered by Crowley in the 1890s as a variant of the older ABRACADABRA formula. ABRAHADABRA adds to 418, which is the value of Cheth spelled in full. Cheth is the chariot, whose rider represents the Holy Guardian Angel. The older source of this symbolism is the Bhagavad Gita where the chariot of Krishna represents the body and its world and the charioteer Krishna is the divine Self or Atman.

ABRAHADABRA divides into 3 components. ABRA-HAD-ABRA. 'HAD' is a form of Hadit, the inmost divine Self. 'ABRA' is the universe experienced by 'HAD', appearing in the form of duality, as does all manifest existence. The Self is surrounded fully by this universe, it flanks it on both sides. Both sides are the same, showing that the duality and multiplicity of reality is an illusion created by modifications of a more fundamental unity.

This fundamental unity is represented in its most absolute phase by Aleph, the Fool. Aleph is at the center of 'HAD' as well as of the Word as a whole, showing that the absolute can be found inwardly, at the center of the self. Alephs also flank each 'ABRA', showing that the outer universe is also an expression of the same absolute as the Self, but here found outwardly, at the limit of space. ABRA is therefore a form of Nuit. There are five total Alephs, representing the four elements crowned by Spirit (the centermost Aleph). These are the five points of the Pentagram of Magick. Five is also the value of Heh, corresponding to The Star in Tarot.

The central Aleph of 'HAD' is surrounded by the letter Heh 'The Star' and the letter Daleth 'The Empress'. This shows that the Absolute (Aleph) is manifested most clearly as a Star and as the Holy Guardian Angel. As it is written: "*Every man and every woman is a star.*" [AL I: 3] Also, the path of Daleth represents the Holy Guardian Angel as described by Aiwass in *The Vision and the Voice*, vision of the 8th Aether:

"For my name is called Aiwass ... and I am the influence of the Concealed One ... and that Gate is the Path that joineth the Wisdom with the Understanding. Thus hast thou erred indeed, perceiving me in the path that leadeth from the Crown unto the Beauty. For that path bridgeth the abyss, and I am of the Supernals."[16]

Aleph is Kether, Heh Chokmah, and Daleth Binah. Each 'ABRA' includes within it the letters Beth, the Magus, and Resh, the Sun. This expresses that the absolute, in its outer phase, manifests as and through spatio-temporal extension (Beth meaning container or house) and as the energy, spiritual and material, within that extension from which matter is built up. Beth as the Magus also represents the principle of the directing of that energy by the magician or other powers.

There are eleven total letters in this word, eleven being the number of Magick and of Nuit. It is called the word of double power, because it shows the formula of balanced manifestation of the divine absolute through the world of polarity and duality. It demonstrates the unity of the universal and the particular. It is a symbol of the perfected magical universe of the master, and of the means of transforming one's perceptions into this state. It is a symbol of the Great Work.

Having completed the first portion of the ritual, the magician now invokes the forces of the Aeon of Horus by moving in a counterclockwise direction around the circumference of the circle. This is contrary to the usual rule, which is that clockwise circumambulation invokes. Crowley notes with regard to this in *Magick in Theory and Practice*:

"Certain forces of the most formidable character may be invoked by circumambulation Widdershins when it is executed with intent towards them, and the initiated technique. Of such forces Typhon is the type, and the war of the Titans against the Olympians the legend. (Teitan, Titan, has in Greek the numerical value of 666.)"[17]

There is also a related explanation, which is that this is a type of antinomian (literally 'against the norm') practice. Any ritual or cultural pattern or norm when violated, desecrated or reversed in the proper manner can generate spiritual energy and liberation. An example applicable to Reguli is in Tibet, where Buddhists circumambulate sacred sites clockwise. The adherents of the rival Bon religion circle the exact same sites counterclockwise. Likewise, in Lavey Satanism the magician faces West and turns widdershins to invoke the infernal powers for reasons much the same as in Reguli.[18] (Reguli may itself be a source text for ritual technique in *The Satanic Bible*.)

In Reguli the magician is attempting to generate a force against the restriction of the True Will. This force can only be seen as 'evil' by that which is aligned with the restriction — including aspects of the magician's own psyche. Therefore Reguli summons the energy of the 'devil' in his guise as light bringer; eidolon of a force potent to empower the True Will and destroy all in opposition to it. Siva serves a parallel function in the Hindu Tantras. See also the formulae of LASHTAL and FIAOF above.

The magician circumambulates roughly three times. While doing so averse or upside down Pentagrams are drawn at the four quarters, corresponding to four principal Thelemic deities. The basic alignment is the same as in the Star Ruby. The four elements and the four fixed signs of the zodiac are corresponded to the gods of the quarters, the

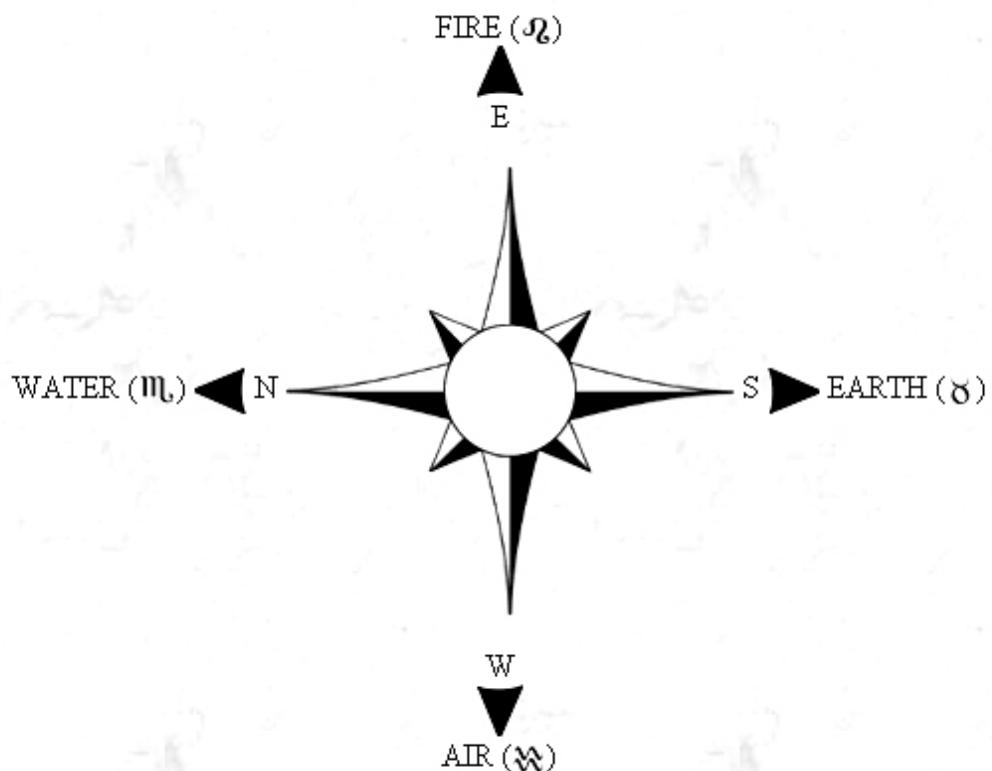
appropriate signs of NOX being given before them. (See chapter 7 for a full discussion of the signs of NOX.)

Direction God-Form Element Zodiacal Sign

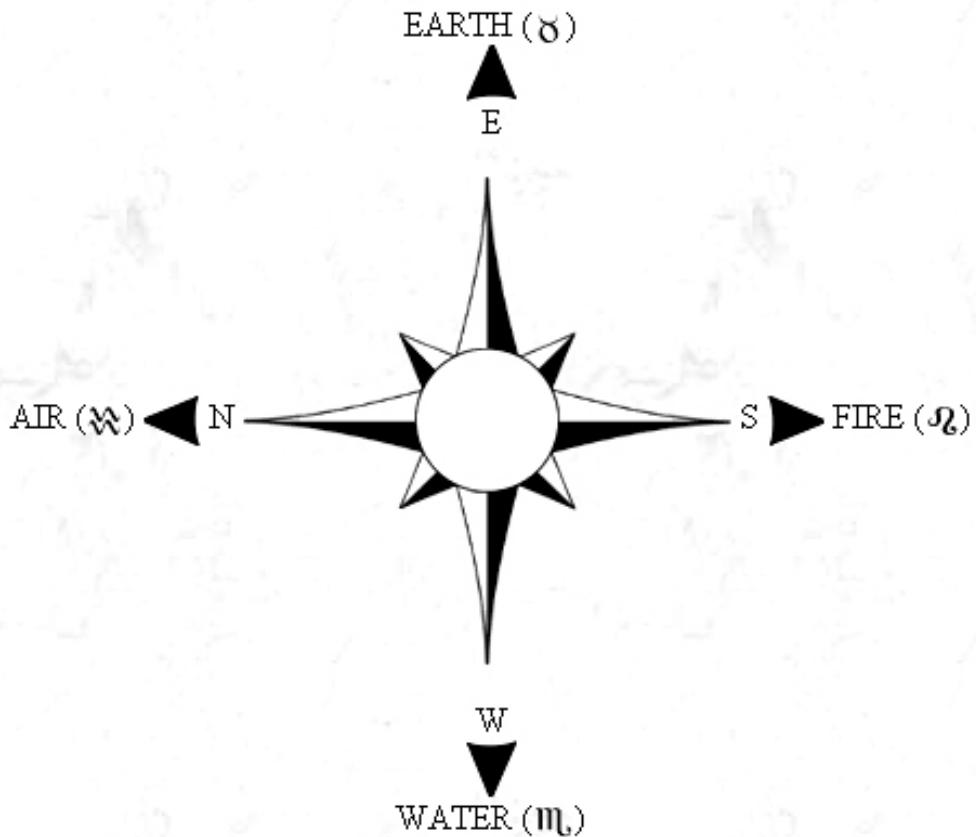
East	Therion	Earth	Taurus
South	Hadir	Fire	Leo
West	Babalon	Water	Scorpio
North	Nuit	Air	Aquarius

If we look at these signs as they are placed along the circle of the zodiac, vis a vis the circumference of the circle we discover an interesting fact. In this ritual the zodiac is inverted with regard to the ritual space.

Normal zodiac in heavens:



Circle of zodiac in Reguli:



The reason for this relates to the upside down Pentagrams. Basically, the Pentagrams are only upside down from the perspective of the magician. From the perspective of the zodiacal universe within the ritual space they are right side up. From this symbolism the concept is implied that which appears evil or reversed or bad is always based upon the context of a particular perspective. In other contexts it may be good or appropriate. Ethics is context dependent. This doesn't mean that ethics is invalid, but it is context dependent.

If the temple in Reguli is inverted with regard to the magical universe it also means that the widdershins circumambulation is also correct with regard to the Sun's movement in the zodiac. This may be part of the 'initiated technique' that Crowley so cryptically alludes to above.

Returning to the center facing east, the magician makes the sign of the union of opposites, the Mark of the Beast — either some form of the Sun and Moon conjoined or the cross and circle conjoined. The unicursal Hexagram is also drawn. The sign of Mater Triumphans is also given while saying the word Thelema. This completes the signs of

NOX while also showing the birth of awareness of the True Will due to the invocation of the energies of the Aeon.

Finally, the magician faces West, again for antinomian reasons. The formula of LASHTAL is then directly applied to the ritual. AL, God or 'all' is associated with the masculine gods, LA or 'not' to the feminine gods, representing the twin phases of the absolute. Shin Teth is spirit above and below. A certain dance described in the ritual can be applied at this juncture, or for those of a more sanguine disposition, the lines can be delivered facing West, the wand held upright in both hands.

The ritual ends with a repeat of the first gesture of the elevenfold seal.

1. Ouspensky, P.D., *In Search of the Miraculous*, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, New York, 1949, pg. 40-44.
2. Vasu, Srisa Chandra (tr.), *The Siva Samhita*, Oriental Books Reprint, New Delhi, India, 1979, pg. 16.
3. The author is indebted to James Eshelman for this model.
4. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 602-603.
5. For discussion of these points see Cozort, Daniel, *Highest Yoga Tantra*.
6. The author wishes to acknowledge Sam Webster M. Div., whose work combining the Thelemic and Vajrayana traditions inspired this section.
7. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 90-91.
Regardie, Israel, *The Middle Pillar*, Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1985.
8. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, pg. 76.
9. Case, Paul Foster, *The Tarot*, pg. 169-170.
10. Johari, Harish, *Chakras: Energy Centers of Transformation*, Destiny Books, Rochester, Vermont, 1987.
11. From an audio recording of a public class given at Ancient Ways, Oakland, California, September 1997.
12. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 573-583.
13. See also Crowley's own discussion, Ibid, pg. 577-579.
14. Ibid, pg. 158-165.

15. Ibid, pg. 170-173.
16. Crowley, Aleister, *The Vision and the Voice: The Equinox Vol. IV #2*, pg. 183.
17. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 196 (footnote).
18. LaVey, Anton Szandor, *The Satanic Bible*, Avon Books, New York, New York, 1969, pp. 129-140.

Chapter XI

The Eucharist and Its Rituals

"We have drunk the Soma; we have become immortal; we have gone to the light; we have found the gods. What can hatred and the malice of a mortal do to us now, O immortal one?" — Rig Veda 8.48 verse 3[1]

The Eucharist, in one form or another, is one of the oldest rites known to man. Aptly called 'Communion' within Roman Catholicism, it involves a bringing together of the divine and human realms through one of the most basic of human gestures of friendship: the sharing of a meal with the gods. It is an esoteric teaching that the whole of the magical hierarchy Imaginally partakes of the sacrament with the initiate in virtue of the magician being microcosm. A more radical symbolism is enacted in certain traditions, including Christianity and Thelema, where the meal consumed is itself the gods. The function of this, according to Crowley is to "*Take a substance symbolic of the whole course of nature, make it God, and consume it.*"[2] Something is made divine, then eaten or otherwise taken into the body by the magician to make themselves divine, by making that divine thing a part of themselves. Thereby, Crowley declares, by the regular practice of the Eucharist,

"The magician becomes filled with God, fed upon God, intoxicated with God. Little by little his body will become purified by the internal lustration of God; day by day his mortal frame, shedding its earthly elements, will become in very truth the Temple of the Holy Ghost. Day by day matter is replaced by Spirit, the human by the divine; ultimately the change will be complete; God manifest in flesh will be his name."[3]

This is the theory of the Eucharist.

With regard to the practice of the Eucharist, Crowley provides a list of seven types of sacrament in his classic presentation on the subject in chapter 20 of *Magick in Theory and Practice*.[4] While not to be taken as universally applicable, his model can

nevertheless provide a good guide for ritual construction within the Thelemic tradition. The subject divides based upon how many elements are used in the Eucharist, as this is susceptible of being of a composite character.

According to Crowley, the most powerful Eucharist is that of one element. Of this he wrote, "*It is one substance and not two, not living and not dead, neither liquid nor solid, neither hot nor cold, neither male nor female.*" He also stated, "*It is secret in every respect.*"^[5]

This last comment should give us pause. Perhaps the secret of this Eucharist is one that cannot, rather than should not, be revealed. In its highest sense it is perhaps none other than the One thing itself, the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, Samadhi, the Gnosis itself. This is ultimately the only thing that can be said to be secret in every respect, because its reality must be experienced individually by each person.

There is a distinct, but equally important conception of the Eucharist of one element being the human self, which magically constitutes a unity.

If we combine these two ideas, of the Eucharist of one element being that which is disclosed by the union of opposites, and of being a human being, we may gain some intimation of a way that this sacrament miraculously exists within the realm of nature in the form of a specific substance matching Crowley's description literally. If the nature and use of this most sacred sacrament are taught within certain sanctuaries of initiation within the Thelemic tradition, it lies outside the scope of this discussion, not merely for reasons of initiatory secrecy (however, *Matthew 7:6*), but because the perception of this sacrament and its use are equally a matter of direct Gnosis.

The Eucharist of two elements is the traditional Western sacrament of bread and wine, as originally practiced first in the Jewish Sabbath meal and later in the Christian Mass. Esoterically, these are matter and spirit, form and the formless, Samsara and Nirvana. Looked at slightly differently they are body and blood, or the physical form and its animating vital life-force. They are Salt and Sulphur combined and equilibrated to disclose their quintessence Mercury. In this understanding, the Eucharist of two elements implies the Eucharist of three through the dialectical union of opposites disclosing a greater reality. Interpreted differently again, the two elements constitute the 'passives' — bread is Earth and wine Water. During their consecration they receive the spirit of the actives Fire and Air as an expression of the formula of Tetragrammaton.

Crowley wrote two rituals specifically to represent this type of Eucharist. These are *Liber 44, The Mass of the Phoenix*, and *Liber 15, The Gnostic Catholic Mass*.^[6] The first is suitable for solitary performance, the second is a group ritual. The Mass of the Phoenix will be discussed first. Its number is 44 because this is the value in Gematria of the Hebrew 'Dam' (Daleth Mem) meaning blood. As 4×11 , 44 further signifies the extension of the number of Magick, 11, within and through the formula of the four fold cross.

Liber 44: The Mass of the Phoenix

The Magician, his breast bare, stands before an altar on which are his Burin, Bell, Thurible, and two of the Cakes of Light. In the Sign of the Enterer he reaches West across the Altar, and cries:

**"Hail Ra, that goest in Thy bark
Into the Caverns of the Dark!"**

He gives the sign of Silence, and takes the Bell, and Fire, in his hands.

**"East of the Altar see me stand
With Light and Musick in mine hand!"**

He strikes Eleven times upon the Bell 333-55555-333 and places the Fire in the Thurible.

**"I strike the Bell: I light the flame:
I utter the mysterious Name. ABRAHADABRA."**

He strikes Eleven times upon the Bell.

**"Now I begin to pray: Thou Child,
Holy Thy name and undefiled!
Thy reign is come: Thy will is done.
Here is the Bread; here is the Blood.
Bring me through midnight to the Sun!
Save me from Evil and from Good!
That Thy one crown of all the Ten
Even now and here be mine. AMEN."**

He puts the first Cake on the Fire of the Thurible.

**"I burn the Incense-cake, proclaim
These adorations of Thy name."**

He makes them as in Liber Legis, and strikes again Eleven times upon the Bell. With the Burin he then makes upon his breast the proper sign.

**"Behold this bleeding breast of mine
Gashed with the sacramental sign!"**

He puts the second Cake to the wound.

**"I stanch the blood; the wafer soaks
It up, and the high priest invokes!"**

He eats the second Cake.

**"This bread I eat. This Oath I swear
As I inflame myself with prayer:
There is no grace: there is no guilt:
This is the Law: DO WHAT THOU WILT!"**

He strikes Eleven times upon the Bell, and cries ABRAHADABRA.

**"I entered in with woe; with mirth
I now go forth, and with thanksgiving,
To do my pleasure on the earth
Among the legions of the living."**

He goeth forth.

The ritual is intended to take place at sunset. As the Sun passes below the horizon so too does the magician sink their awareness beneath the surface appearances of the mundane world, to enter through ritual and rite the secret universe of the collective unconscious, the Imaginal realm. Deep within is concealed the secret of the knowledge of the Self. When this is discovered there is a fery rebirth of the magician to a higher level of being. Therefore this process is symbolized by the Phoenix, a magical bird which immolates itself only to be reborn from the free of its own demise. This is the passage from Malkuth through Yesod to Tiphareth. Liber 44 is a ritual to attune oneself to this ongoing process, and receive empowerment for its successful completion.

Due to the symbolism involved, Liber 44 would be much less effective, or not effective at all, if done other than at sunset. Ideally, one should be able to see the Sun, so as to more directly create the magical link with this phase of its motion. This could be through westward facing windows, or in virtue of performing the ritual outdoors. Less ideal but certainly workable would be windows through which the onset of evening is visible. The quality of the light changes in the evening — during the interface between day and night. The Sun is in a process of transformation from one phase to another, the world is in flux and Magick is possible. There is additionally a powerful symbolism in the fact that the Sun is not affected in itself by this transformation, but only appears to change due to our terrestrial perspective.

The script calls for the altar to be equipped with an incense burner, two 'cakes of light', some source of fire, a bell, and a 'burin', which is a kind of awl or needle used in leatherwork.

The two elements of the Eucharist are the cakes of light and the physical blood of the magician. These are alternative correlates of the bread and wine of the Eucharist of two elements as discussed above. Cakes of light are a type of Thelemic Eucharistic wafer generally used for sacramental or other ritual purpose. Crowley and those who choose to follow his interpretation see them as directly described in *The Book of the Law*.

23. For perfume mix meal & honey & thick leavings of red wine: then oil of Abramelin and olive oil, and afterward soften & smooth down with rich fresh blood.

24. The best blood is of the moon, monthly: then the fresh blood of a child, or dropping from the host of heaven: then of enemies; then of the priest or of the worshippers: last of some beast, no matter what.

25. This burn: of this make cakes & eat unto me. This hath also another use; let it be laid before me, and kept thick with perfumes of your orison: it shall become full of beetles as it were and creeping things sacred unto me.

26. These slay, naming your enemies; & they shall fall before you.

27. Also these shall breed lust & power of lust in you at the eating thereof.

28. Also ye shall be strong in war.

29. Moreover, be they long kept, it is better; for they swell with my force. All before me. [AL III: 23-29]

There are various oral traditions providing recipes based on this description. Crowley's interpretation of verse 24 was that the blood "of the moon" is menstrual blood, "blood of a child" and "dropping from the host of heaven" is semen, followed by physical blood of "enemies", clergy, worshippers and animals. Thelemites often refer to these as the 'secret' ingredient. If the cakes of light are being made for personal use, they can be prepared in any way that the individual chooses to interpret AL III: 23-29. Should they be for use in a public or group ritual, however, issues of biological contamination are a factor. Various Thelemic communities have protocols for insuring sterility, generally involving baking procedures. Should individuals participating in such a ritual feel that these procedures deviate from their personal relationship with the description of the cakes of light in *The Book of the Law* the most appropriate way of addressing this legitimate issue is probably for them to bring cakes that they have made for themselves. These can be differentiated from the other cakes, used in the ritual and administered specifically to them.

In *The Mass of the Phoenix* the first cake is burned as incense, representing the immolation of the Phoenix of the Sun/magician. It also represents the burning up and destruction of the finite ego of the magician through the power of her invocations and prayers, so that the Infinite Self and its True Will can emerge.

The second cake of light is mixed with the physical blood of the magician, thereby combining the two elements of the Eucharist in a manner analogous to that at the climax of the Gnostic Mass. It is then eaten. The magician is called upon to cut themselves in the 'sacramental sign', which Crowley means to be some form of the Mark of the Beast. The cross and circle is probably the easiest to execute. There are a few safety concerns that immediately present themselves with this procedure, which calls for people doing this

ritual to cut their chest, possibly on a daily basis, as Crowley recommends this ritual to be performed at this interval. This is not necessarily for everyone, though many of individuals have had good success doing it. After several regular performances a small scar can be developed which can be reopened occasionally with minimal trauma. Should an individual wish to experiment with this method a small sterile blade or needle can be used to very lightly prick the skin at the chest, causing a few drops of blood to well up, which can then be mingled with the wafer. The actual incision should be as minimal as possible, the larger symbol being traced lightly. The blade should be resterilized before reuse and, it goes without saying, should never be shared.

Another method that does not involve physically cutting the body is to trace the sacramental sign on the chest without breaking the skin. When the wafer is placed over the heart, the prana or life force of which the blood is a vehicle is made to flow into the wafer by visualizing the body's energy flowing into it from the heart. This is a more subtle way of transferring the energy, working more on the level of Yetzirah than of the normative method, which is more fully grounded in Assiah. While it can be effective, it is harder to execute with conviction.

There is an additional exchange of energy occurring between the magician, the elements, and the setting Sun. The magician creates a magical link with this aspect of the Sun through performing this ritual mass. *The Mass of the Phoenix* can also be seen in some respects as an expanded version of sunset Resh.

The word ABRAHADABRA and the eleven-fold manner of ringing the bell are symbols of the Great Work. Their symbolism is explained in the previous chapter in the discussion of Liber Reguli. The bell is rung a total of 44 times in the mass, signifying the key number of the ritual. The invocation itself celebrates the liberation of the initiate from ignorant doctrines of a prior age. The adorations referred to are the same as in Liber Resh, as described in Chapter 8.

The second ritual written by Crowley for the communication of the Eucharist of two elements is *Liber 15, The Gnostic Catholic Mass*. While this elaborate group ritual includes some OTO specific symbolism and is intended to be a central public rite of that Order, it is by no means only an OTO ritual. Catholic means universal, and while the universal Gnostic church can and does manifest its archetypal pattern through specific organized 'churches', no single such outer community can claim exclusive monopoly over its Gnosis and sacraments. *Liber 15* is a heritage held in common by all Thelemites and has been practiced throughout the world for nearly a hundred years by many communities sustained by the wandering clergy called to serve them. Ordained visibly or invisibly, they transmit the Gnosis of the Holy Spirit through the sacraments of Thelema.

A full comment on this wonderful ritual is impossible here, so I will limit myself to a few general structural comments. I highly recommend interested readers looking for more information to consult the writings of Bishop Tau Apyrion, AKA Frater Sabazius X° OTO.[7] He presents a well informed OTO specific interpretation of the mass, which can be used as a basis for the development of a personal relationship to the ritual.

The Gnostic Mass features two principal officers, a Priestess and a Priest, both of whom represent the absolute. They begin the ritual by purifying, consecrating and empowering each other, then assume their ritual position in the East. The Priestess is enthroned upon the altar while the Priest alternatively stands or kneels before and facing her.

This ritual involves a Eucharist of two elements, so the activities of the Priestess and Priest concentrate upon the wine and cakes of light used in the rite, as well as upon themselves as magically identified with them. Through their interaction the Priestess and Priest are deified, and through them the elements. At the climax of the ritual the elements are combined within the Holy Grail and then consumed. This represents the union of opposites. Divine Mother and Divine Father combining to produce a Divine Child, revealed as the communicants themselves who likewise combine the elements within their own bodies as they consume them. They then proclaim:

"There is no part of me that is not of the Gods!"

Liber 15 has had significant influence outside of specifically Thelemic circles. A chapter of James Branch Cabell's *Jurgen* is based upon its symbolism.[8] Additionally, the Great Rite of traditional Gardnerian Witchcraft accurately embodies certain of the inner meanings of the mass.[9]

As this book focuses on rituals a single individual can perform, the text of *Liber 15* will not be included here in full. However, it is widely available.

The Eucharist of three elements relates to the symbolism of the three Gunas, or components of reality according to the Hindu system. These are Sattva (balanced calmness) Rajas (activity) and Tamas (inertia). Crowley suggests a sacrament involving the cakes of light for Sattva, a depressant for Tamas and a stimulant for Rajas.[10] As a more symbolic substitute the following original ritual uses the correlates of the Gunas with the three Mother Letters of the Kabbalistic system. Sattva is Mercury, the letter Aleph and the element of Air. Rajas is Sulpher, the letter Shin and the element of Fire. Tamas is Salt, the letter Mem and the element of Water. The ritual follows the basic pattern as laid out in the chapter on the Archetypes of Ritual. Certain aspects, particularly the empowerment of the elements with the Stele of Revealing are described more fully in Chapter 10.

The Eucharist of Three Elements

The Temple is arranged with the Stele of Revealing in the East. At the center is an altar. Upon the altar are a censer with incense, a red votive lamp and a chalice with water. These are arranged to form an equilateral triangle with the incense to the East and the water and lamp to the South and North respectively.

Perform a general Pentagram ritual and, optionally, a Hexagram ritual. (The Hexagram rituals are described in the next chapter.) The Star Ruby and the Star Sapphire are recommended.

Perform a Purification and Consecration of the temple using the chalice with water and the red lamp. Do not consecrate using the incense, as this does not represent Fire in this ritual. These are done either Golden Dawn style or in accordance with the method given in Magick in Theory and Practice, depending upon personal preference, and as described in Chapter 3.

Face East, standing to West of central altar. Invoke the supreme unity of spirit into yourself. First, perform the Middle Pillar. Then, look at the Stele of Revealing and say:

"Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. Holy art Thou, whom Nature hath not formed. Holy art Thou, the vast and the mighty One, Lord of the Light and the Darkness. Unity uttermost showed! I adore the might of thy breath, supreme and terrible God, who makest the gods and death to tremble before thee: I, I adore thee! Appear on the throne of Ra! Open the ways of the Khu! Lighten the ways of the Ka! The ways of the Khabs run through to stir me or still me! Aum! Let it fill me! The light is mine; its rays consume me: I have made a secret door into the house of Ra and Tum, of Khephra and of Ahathoor. I am thy Theban, O Mentu, The prophet Ankh-af-na-khonsu! By Bes-na-Maut my breast I beat; by wise Ta-Nech I weave my spell. Show thy star-splendour, O Nuit! Bid me within thine House to dwell, O winged snake of light, Hadit! Abide with me, Ra-Hoor-Khuit!"

Pause to feel effect of invocation.

Look at the Stele of Revealing. Vibrate the word **ALEPH**. As you do so visualize a yellow letter Aleph appearing within the solar disk crowning the image of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. Attempt to realize, as much as possible, awareness of the presence of this god through the medium of the Stele image.

Vibrate the word **SHIN**. As you do so visualize a red letter Shin appearing within the central solar disk of the image of Hadit upon the stele. Attempt to realize, as much as possible, awareness of the presence of this god through the medium of the Stele image.

Vibrate the word **MEM**. As you do so visualize a blue letter Mem appearing within the heart of the image of Nuit upon the Stele. Attempt to realize, as much as possible, awareness of the presence of this god through the medium of the Stele image.

Vibrate the mantra **OM**. As you do so visualize a ray of blue light come from the Mem at Nuit's heart to the chalice of water on the altar. This sanctifies the water within the chalice.

Vibrate the mantra **AH**. As you do so visualize a ray of red light come from the Shin in Hadit's central disk to the red lamp on the altar. This sanctifies the heat and light of the lamp.

Vibrate the mantra **HUNG**. As you do so visualize a ray of yellow light come from the Aleph in Ra-Hoor-Khuit's solar crown to the censer with incense on the altar. This sanctifies the smoke of the incense.

Say: I invite the magical hierarchy convoked by this rite to join with me in partaking of this eucharist, composed of the symbols of the three mother letters, for the purpose that all beings may come to the knowledge of their True Wills.

Make the sign of Horus over altar towards East, but not the sign of silence.

Take up censer and elevate it towards Stele. Use it to trace the sign of Mercury in the air.

Say: I invite you to inhale with me the perfume of this incense, as a symbol of air. Smell incense.

Replace censer, take up red lamp and elevate it towards Stele. Use it to trace the sign of Sulphur in the air.

Say: To feel with me the warmth of this sacred fire. Feel the warmth of the fire with your hands.

Replace red lamp, take up chalice of water and elevate it towards Stele. Use it to trace the sign of Salt in the air.

Say: And finally to drink with me this Water, the consecrated emblem of elemental water. Drink water, draining the cup. Replace chalice.

Say: So mote it be.

Say in a voice of command: **And now I say to all spirits convoked by this rite, depart in peace unto your habitations and abodes, and may the blessing of the highest be upon you in the name of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. Let there be peace between us, and be thou ever ready to come when thou art called.**

Perform a banishing Hexagram ritual if you began with one. Perform a banishing Pentagram ritual. The Star Ruby and Star Sapphire are recommended.

FINIS

The Eucharist of four elements, as described by Crowley, comes originally from the Neophyte ritual of the Golden Dawn. At the conclusion of that ritual the initiates of the temple partake of a sacrament consisting of a red rose, whose scent represents Air, a flame for Fire, a piece of bread mixed with salt for Earth, and wine for Water.[11] The following original ritual replicates the essential features of the Golden Dawn Eucharist, called the Mystic Repast. The prayer said over the elements is from Crowley's *Liber Pyramidos*.[12]

The Mystic Repast (Eucharist of Four Elements)

The Temple is arranged with the Stele of Revealing in the East. At the center is an altar. Upon the altar are a red rose in the East, a red votive candle in the South, a chalice of wine in the West, and a paten of bread and salt in the North. At the center of the altar is The Book of the Law. On the central altar or at a convenient place should be a chalice with water and a censer with incense.

Perform a general Pentagram ritual and, optionally, a Hexagram ritual. (The Hexagram rituals are described in the next chapter.) The Star Ruby and the Star Sapphire are recommended.

Perform a Purification and Consecration of the temple using the chalice with water and the censer. These are done either Golden Dawn style or in accordance with the method given in *Magick in Theory and Practice*, depending upon personal preference, and as described in chapter 3.

Face East, standing to West of central altar. Invoke a balanced spiritual force into yourself. First, perform the Middle Pillar. Then, look at the Stele of Revealing and say: **"Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. Holy art Thou, whom Nature hath not formed. Holy art Thou, the vast and the mighty One, Lord of the Light and the Darkness.**

"Unity uttermost showed! I adore the might of thy breath, supreme and terrible God, who makest the gods and death to tremble before thee: I, I adore thee! Appear on the throne of Ra! Open the ways of the Khu! Lighten the ways of the Ka! The ways of the Khabs run through to stir me or still me! Aum! Let it fill me! The light is mine; its rays consume me: I have made a secret door into the house of Ra and Tum, of Khephra and of Ahathoor. I am thy Theban, O Mentu, The prophet Ankh-af-na-khonsu! By Bes-na-Maut my breast I beat; by wise Ta-Nech I weave my spell. Show thy star-splendour, O Nuit! Bid me within thine House to dwell, O winged snake of light, Hadit! Abide with me, Ra-Hoor-Khuit!"

Pause to feel effect of invocation.

Say: **"I invite the magical hierarchy convoked by this rite to join with me in partaking of this mystic repast, composed of the symbols of the four**

elements, for the purpose that all beings may come to the knowledge of their True Wills.

"Behold! The Perfect One hath said
Tried and found pure, a golden spoil.
These are my body's elements
Incense and Wine and Fire and Bread
These I consume, true Sacraments,
For I am clothed about with flesh
And I am the Eternal Spirit.
I am the Lord that riseth fresh
From Death, whose glory I inherit
Since I partake with him. I am
The Manifestor of the Unseen.
Without me all the land of Khem
Is as if it had not been."

Make the sign of Horus over altar towards East, but not the sign of silence.

Take up rose and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "**I invite you to inhale with me the perfume of this rose, as a symbol of air.**" Smell rose.

Replace rose, take up red lamp and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "**To feel with me the warmth of this sacred fire.**" Feel the warmth of the fire with your hands.

Replace red lamp, take up paten of bread and salt and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "**To eat with me this bread and salt, as types of earth.**" Eat a piece of the bread.

Replace paten, take up chalice of wine and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "**And finally to drink with me this Wine, the consecrated emblem of elemental water.**" Drink wine, draining the cup. Replace chalice on altar.

Say: "**So mote it be.**"

Say in a voice of command: "**And now I say to all spirits convoked by this rite, depart in peace unto your habitations and abodes, and may the blessing of the Highest be upon you in the name of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. Let there be peace between us, and be thou ever ready to come when thou art called.**"

Perform a banishing Hexagram ritual if you began with one. Perform a banishing Pentagram ritual. The Star Ruby and Star Sapphire are recommended.

FINIS

The Eucharist of five elements is related to the five senses, as these are the means whereby consciousness experiences reality. This form of the Eucharist acknowledges this experience as a sacrament of the union of Nuit and Hadit. Crowley suggests the use of the following symbols to represent the senses:

Element Sense Symbol

Spirit	Sound	Bell
Fire	Sight	Flame
Earth	Touch	Dagger
Water	Taste	Wine
Air	Smell	Rose

The attribution of hearing to Spirit refers to the hearing of the 'inner voice' of the Holy Guardian Angel.

Crowley's own ritual for the five fold sacrament is actually the already discussed Mass of the Phoenix, but understood in a different manner then in the Eucharist of two elements. In this interpretation the bell is sound, the flame sight and the burin touch. The cake of light burned as incense is smell, while the one eaten is taste.

As an alternative, the previously given ritual for the Eucharist of four elements can be easily modified to fit Crowley's basic model of five elements by swapping out the bread and salt for a dagger and placing a bell at the center of the altar to represent Spirit. The following is an example of how this might be done.

The Eucharist of Five Elements

The Temple is arranged with the Stele of Revealing in the East. At the center is an altar. Upon the altar are a red rose in the East, a red votive candle in the South, a chalice of wine in the West, and a dagger in the North. At the center of the altar is a bell and The Book of the Law. On the central altar or at a convenient place should be a chalice with water and a censer with incense. Perform a general Pentagram ritual and, optionally, a Hexagram ritual. (The Hexagram rituals are described in the next chapter.) The Star Ruby and the Star Sapphire are recommended.

Perform a Purification and Consecration of the temple using the chalice with water and the censer. These are done either Golden Dawn style or in accordance with the method given in Magick in Theory and Practice, depending upon personal preference, and as described in the chapter 3.

Face East, standing to West of central altar. Invoke the supreme unity of Spirit into yourself. First, perform the Middle Pillar. Then, look at the Stele of Revealing and say: "Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. Holy art Thou, whom Nature hath not formed. Holy art Thou, the vast and the mighty One, Lord of the Light and the Darkness.

"Unity uttermost showed! I adore the might of thy breath, supreme and terrible God, who makest the gods and death to tremble before thee: I, I adore thee! Appear on the throne of Ra! Open the ways of the Khu! Lighten the ways of the Ka! The ways of the Khabs run through to stir me or still me! Aum! Let it fill me! The light is mine; its rays consume me: I have made a secret door into the house of Ra and Tum, of Khephra and of Ahathoor. I am thy Theban, O Mentu, The prophet Ankh-af-na-khonsu! By Bes-na-Maut my breast I beat; by wise Ta-Nech I weave my spell. Show thy star-splendour, O Nuit! Bid me within thine House to dwell, O winged snake of light, Hadit! Abide with me, Ra-Hoor- Khuit!"

Pause to feel effect of invocation.

Say: "I invite the magical hierarchy convoked by this rite to join with me in partaking of this Eucharist of five elements, composed of the symbols of the five senses, for the purpose that all beings may come to the knowledge of their True Wills. These I consume, true Sacraments,

**For I am clothed about with flesh
And I am the Eternal Spirit.
I am the Lord that riseth fresh
From Death, whose glory I inherit
Since I partake with him. I am
The Manifestor of the Unseen.
Without me all the land of Khem
Is as if it had not been."**

Make the sign of Horus over altar towards East, but not the sign of silence.

Take up rose and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "I invite you to inhale with me the perfume of this rose, as a symbol of Air and of scent." Smell rose.

Replace rose, take up red lamp and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "To view with me this sacred fire, as a symbol of sight." Gaze for a moment into the flame.

Replace red lamp, take up dagger and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "To feel with me the edge of this blade, as a reminder of touch and of Earth." Touch the blade just enough to feel its edge.

Replace the dagger, take up chalice of wine and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "To drink with me this Wine, the consecrated emblem of taste and of elemental Water." Drink wine, draining the cup.

Replace chalice, take up bell and elevate it towards Stele.

Say: "And finally to hear with me the sound of this bell, as the call to awaken to the True Will." Ring bell. Replace it at the center of the altar.

Say: "So mote it be."

Say in a voice of command: "And now I say to all spirits convoked by this rite, depart in peace unto your habitations and abodes, and may the blessing of the highest be upon you in the name of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. Let there be peace between us, and be thou ever ready to come when thou art called."

Perform a banishing Hexagram ritual if you began with one. Perform a banishing Pentagram ritual. The Star Ruby and Star Sapphire are recommended.

FINIS

Of the Eucharist of six elements Crowley writes: "The Eucharist of six elements has Father, Sun, and Holy Spirit above; breath, water, and blood beneath. It is a sacrament reserved for high initiates."^[13] The basis of the symbolism of this cryptic passage is to be found in the *1st Epistle of John*, chapter 5, verses 7-8. In the King James translation of the *Bible* this reads:

7. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

8. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

Within the teachings of the 5°=6 grade of the Golden Dawn, these passages were interpreted in terms of the symbol of the Hexagram — the symbol of the uniting of the microcosm and macrocosm through the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. The two interlaced triangles of the Hexagram represent the two triads of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost and breath, water and blood. Breath, water and blood are furthermore associated with the three Mother Letters Aleph, Mem and Shin respectively. These are sometimes concealed in certain formulae by the letter Heh, probably in part because according to the speech of the Hiereus in the opening of the Neophyte grade in the Golden Dawn, Heh is a symbol "of life; because the letter 'H' is our mode of

representing the ancient Greek aspirate or breathing, and Breath is the evidence of Life."^[14] Additionally, Father, Son and Holy Spirit correspond to the letters of the name IAO. I (Yod) is the Father. O (Vav) is the Mother. A (Aleph) is the Son/Word.



The unity of these triads is Kabbalistically demonstrated if the six letters are added together via gematria. Their value, 358, is the value of the word MShICh (Mem-Shin-Yod-Cheth) or Messiah. It is also the value of NChSh (Nun-Cheth-Shin), Nechesh or Serpent, familiar to readers of Genesis. This serpent is signified by the Hebrew letter Teth, whose associated Tarot Atu 'Lust' indicates the sacramental energy whose expression is that meant by Crowley in the passage quoted above.

The Eucharist of seven elements is the ritual the Star Sapphire, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

*Nor is it given to any son of man
To hymn that sacrament, the One in Seven,
Where God and priest and worshipper,
Deacon, asperger, thurifer, chorister,
Are one as they were one ere time began,
Are one on earth as they are one in heaven;
Where the soul is given a new name,
Confirming with an oath the same,
And with celestial wine and bread
Is most delicately fed,
Yet suffereth in itself the curse
Of the infinite universe,
Having made its own confession
Of the mystery of transgression;
Where it is wedded solemnly
With the ring of space and eternity;
And where the oil, the Holiest Breath,
With its first whisper dedicateth
Its new life to a further death.*

— from *The Sevenfold Sacrament*
by Aleister Crowley[15]

1. *The Rig Veda*, Penguin Classics, New York, New York, 1981, pp. 134-135.
2. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 267.
3. Ibid, pg. 269.
4. Ibid, pp. 267-269.
5. Ibid, pg. 267.
6. Ibid, pp. 571-572, 584-597.
7. Tau Apyrion and Helena, *Mystery of Mystery: A Primer of Thelemic Ecclesiastical Gnosticism*, Red Flame #2, Berkeley, California, 1995. Much of the material in this work is also available at its authors' personal website.
8. Cabell, James Branch, *Jurgen*, Dover Publications, New York, New York, 1977.
9. Farrar, Janet and Stewart, *A Witches Bible*, Phoenix Publishing Inc., Custer, Washington, 1996, pp. 48-54.
10. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 268.
11. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 132.
12. Crowley, Aleister, *Commentaries on the Holy Books: The Equinox Vol. IV #1*, pg. 71.
13. Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 268.
14. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 118.
15. Crowley, Aleister, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, Penguin Arkana, New York, New York, 1979, pp. 666-667.

Chapter XII

Rituals of the Hexagram

The rituals of the Hexagram, while sharing certain surface similarities to those of the Pentagram are related to an ontologically higher level. The Pentagram symbolizes the dominion of the equilibrated microcosm over its constituent elements. The Hexagram symbolizes the macrocosm, inclusive of and in union with that equilibrated microcosm.

The symbol is composed of two interlaced triangles and is known within the Jewish tradition as the Magen David, or Star of David. The triangles represent the union of God and Man achieved in the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. The figure's six points allude to the Sephirah Tiphareth, where this attainment occurs. Its ability to be inscribed exactly within a circle shows, like the Pentagram, that its significance devolves from the divine unity. Typically, the downward pointing triangle is understood to be that of Water, the upward pointing one that of Fire. These can be depicted as blue and red respectively. There is a counter-charged Thelemic variant of the Hexagram, which Crowley describes in *The Book of Lies* in the comment to Chapter 69.

"In the ordinary Hexagram, the Hexagram of nature, the red triangle is upwards, like fire, and the blue triangle downwards, like water. In the magical Hexagram this is reversed; the descending red triangle is that of Horus, a sign specially revealed by him personally, at the Equinox of the Gods. (It is the flame descending upon the altar, and licking up the burnt offering.) The blue triangle represents the aspiration, since blue is the color of devotion, and the triangle, kinetically considered, is the symbol of directed force."^[1]

There is an additional layer of symbolism of the Hexagram related to the seven Ptolemaic planets. If the Pentagram and its rituals represent the plane of the terrestrial elements, the Hexagram represents the plane of the planets, centered in the Sun, which is ultimately a symbol of the Holy Guardian Angel. Part of the work of the adept is to harmonize the aspects of the psyche with the Higher Self, of which the planets form the aspects. This is the ultimate purpose of planetary Magick.

In working with these archetypes the magician will quickly discover that they represent a higher level of divine energy and consciousness than that of the elemental archetypes. If the elemental forces are often below the level of magical coherence of the ego-consciousness of the magician, the planetary forces are likewise often above that level. As a result, working with planetary Magick is often as much being worked on by the planets. This can make this kind of Magick, if not precisely dangerous, at least difficult, as it requires the release of a certain direct agency to allow superconsciousness to work upon ego-consciousness. Failure to approach this kind of work correctly can result in the manifestation of the shadow or Qlipphotic aspect of the planetary archetype, usually directly within the psyche of the magician in the form of mood swings, emotional

problems and obsession. A thorough and full grounding in more general magical work is one of the best means of avoiding these difficulties. At the same time, beginners often can have excellent experiences with planetary invocations. With regard to readiness therefore, there is no definite benchmark. As always, personal experience will be the best guide.

In the Thelemic tradition, as well as in the G.D. system that preceded it, the rituals of the Hexagram provide a means of engaging with planetary Magick. They can be used to invoke or banish the planets, either singly or in concert. To do this, particular planets are assigned to the points of the Hexagram, exactly as with the elements and the Pentagram. The correspondences are based upon placing the Hexagram upon the Tree of Life, which aligns a Sephirah and its associated planet to each point. There are two exceptions. The Sun in Tiphareth goes at the geometrical center of the Hexagram, and Saturn in Binah goes at the topmost point standing in for the unity of all three Supernals.



Underscoring the symbolism of the planets as primary aspects or emanations of the divine Unity, each planet is associated with a letter of the Kabbalistic formula ARARITA. This word, which first begins to appear in Kabbalistic texts of the 17th century, is a notaricon formed from the initials of the Hebrew phrase: "Achad Rayshethoh, Achad Resh Yechidathoh, Temurathoh Achod." This means: "One is His beginning, One is His individuality, His permutation is One." In Regardie's papers that have come down to us from the Golden Dawn the assignment of planets to letters is done as follows:

Saturn — *Aleph*

Jupiter — *Resh*

Mars — *Aleph*

Sun — *Yod*

Venus — *Resh*

Mercury — *Tav*

Luna — *Aleph*

If placed visually about the Hexagram, this gives the following rather asymmetrical figure.[2]



Aleister Crowley gives a slightly different sequence of attributions. They are:

Saturn — *Aleph*

Jupiter — *Resh*

Mars — *Resh*

Sun — *Yod*

Venus — *Aleph*

Mercury — *Aleph*

Luna — *Tav*

When placed on the Hexagram itself, this gives a more symmetrical figure.[3]



Should the Ararita formula be used, the magician should select one of these two schemes.

The basic rule for drawing the symbol to invoke or banish a particular planet is simple. Starting from the point assigned to that planet, draw the first triangle clockwise from that point to invoke. Then draw the second triangle clockwise starting from the opposite angle than the one begun from. To banish a planet do exactly the same, but draw the two triangles counterclockwise. To invoke or banish the Sun the procedure is more involved. The invoking or banishing forms of the Hexagram for all six of the other planets are drawn sequentially in Ptolemaic or Tree of Life order. That is: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and Luna. This implies symbolically that the equilibration of all the aspects of the psyche will naturally disclose their central unifying factor in the True Will, as represented by the Sun. See the chart at the end of the chapter for an illustration of these forms.

There is a Thelemic tradition of using a variant of the standard form of the Hexagram, called the Unicursal Hexagram. It is called Unicursal because, unlike the standard form of the shape, it can be drawn with a single line. This form of the symbol has become almost synonymous with the Thelemic religion itself, and to use it with these rituals is to customize them to this tradition. The rule of how to draw this form is different, because due to the geometry of the symbol the clockwise or counterclockwise direction of the line does not stay uniform, but always reverses itself. (Trace it and see.) Therefore, it has

become customary to adapt the rule for drawing Pentagrams. To invoke a planet, draw towards its angle. To banish, draw away from its angle. The particular direction should also begin going clockwise to invoke, counterclockwise to banish. See the chart for examples. This form has the advantage of requiring only a single Hexagram to be traced for the Sun. There is, however, a choice as to which directions to draw to or away from to invoke or banish this central planet. The version given on the chart is that used by Lon DuQuette in his writings.[4]

The invoking or banishing Hexagrams of Saturn are suitable, within certain contexts, to act as a stand in for all of the other Hexagrams, exactly as in the use of the Pentagram of Earth in the LRP. This is done, for example, in the most basic of the Hexagram rituals — *The Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram* (LRH). This ritual is intended as a general invocation of balanced energy on the planetary plane. Its performance usually follows that of the Pentagram ritual. It can be performed with the magic sword, the wand, the hand, or with a specialized G.D. implement called the Lotus Wand.

In this ritual, the magician goes about to the four quarters of the universe, making a circle about the temple as she does so, exactly as in the Pentagram rituals and with the same range of meanings. The particular attribution of elements to the quarters is different, however. For the Pentagram rituals, the attribution was Terrestrial or By the Winds. In the Hexagram rituals the directions are Sidereal, based upon the cross formed by the fixed signs of the Zodiac in the heavens. Leo, for Fire, is placed in the East, and the quarters are read from that position. These Sidereal, as opposed to Terrestrial directions of the elements, show symbolically that the rituals of the Hexagram deal with a magically higher plane than those of the Pentagram. This attribution also serves to symbolically align the magician along the Aquarius/Leo axis of the Zodiac. These are the pair of signs associated with the astrological Age of Aquarius, which is closely tied to (if not possibly identical with) the Aeon of Horus.

The Golden Dawn documents that come down to us through Israel Regardie indicate beginning the LRH with the Kabbalistic Cross. Aleister Crowley's version of the same ritual in Liber O has it begin with something called the 'Analysis of the Keyword'. Both versions end with this analysis. Thelemic tradition has tended to follow Crowley's lead, though there is no a priori reason why the Kabbalistic Cross can't be used to open the ritual.

The particular 'keyword' that is analyzed are the initials I.N.R.I. which, interpreted according to a certain technology of initiation, reveal formulae of attainment. I.N.R.I., in the Christian tradition, are the Latin initials of "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". This is the inscription said to have been placed above Jesus by Pontius Pilate during the crucifixion. These initials have been assigned a variety of esoteric readings within the Western mysteries.

In the Golden Dawn, the letters are interpreted within the 5°=6 initiation. The initiated knowledge of this interpretation is said to open the vault of the Adepts — the tomb of Christian Rosencreutz deep within the mountain of Abeignis. The reading itself is a kind

of universalization of the mysteries of the Crucifixion. That is to say, the G.D. use of the I.N.R.I. formula is not specifically Christian.

The keyword I.N.R.I. is analyzed by first substituting Hebrew letters for the Latin. I.N.R.I. = Yod — Nun — Resh — Yod (יְהִי). Each of these letters has certain astrological correspondences within the G.D. system. The initials now give: Virgo — Scorpio — The Sun — Virgo. The repetition of Virgo shows a loop. This formula is therefore of a cycle that repeats itself in the life of the initiate.

The roots of the sequence are the first three components, Yod — Nun — Resh or Virgo — Scorpio — The Sun. The four-part I.N.R.I. formula now reveals a deeper 'core' formula of three parts. This is equated with the three-letter formula IAO. 'I' is Isis, the divine mother, for Virgo. 'A' is Apophis / Typhon, the destroyer, for Scorpio. 'O' is Osiris, the slain and risen, for the Sun. These gods and their myth show a powerful process in the life and spiritual practice of the initiate. One begins an endeavor with a sense of initial enthusiasm. Things proceed easily. This is the Isis phase. Then 'dryness' intervenes. The necessary difficulties besetting any undertaking threaten, and one's original enthusiasm gets used up. The real work begins. This is the Apophis stage. Finally, if one perseveres, a breakthrough occurs, and the work succeeds rewarding all effort. This is the Osiris risen phase.

The IAO formula is then tied back into the original crucifixion association of I.N.R.I. Four signs are given, assigned to the stages of the IAO myth. There is a sign for Osiris slain, a sign for the mourning of Isis, a sign for Apophis and Typhon, and a sign for Osiris risen. The arm movements of these signs form the letters L, V, and X, or LUX (light in Latin). This is said to be the 'light of the cross'. That is to say, by understanding and using the IAO formula hidden within the letters I.N.R.I., the initiate can access the spiritual enlightenment symbolized by the Cross.

There is a short ritual to enact this analysis. While the main body of description is canonical, the various gestures and symbols drawn, described in parenthesis, are from a Berkeley oral tradition of performance.

Analysis of the Keyword

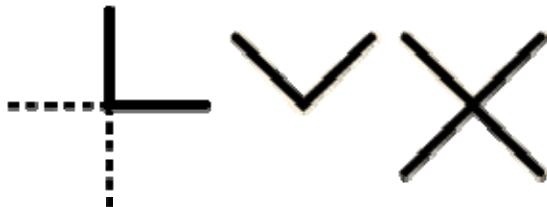
1. Face East. (If using a wand or other implement, hold it upright in front of the body.)
2. Say, **I.N.R.I.**
3. Say, **Yod, Nun, Resh, Yod.** (Inscribe these Hebrew letters in the air as you say them.)

יְהִי

4. Say, **Virgo, Isis, Mighty Mother.** (Inscribe the sign of Virgo in the air before you.)

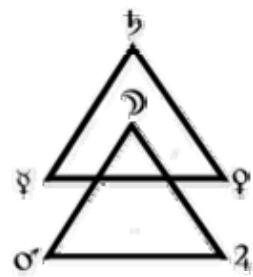
5. Say, **Scorpio, Apophis, Destroyer.** (Inscribe sign of Scorpio.)
6. Say, **Sol, Osiris, Slain and Risen.** (Inscribe the sign of the Sun. Begin the circle clockwise, starting at the top, then make the central point by thrusting the wand through the center of the circle.)
7. Say, **Isis, Apophis, Osiris IAO.** (While saying each of the first three names, make again the signs of Virgo, Scorpio and the Sun.)
8. Make the sign of Osiris Slain. (Stand with the feet together and the arms outstretched to form a cross.) Look forward. Say: **The Sign of Osiris Slain.**
9. Make the sign of the Mourning of Isis. (Point the right arm up, keeping the elbow square. Point the left arm down, again keeping the elbow square. Look down and to the left, towards the left hand.) Say: **The Sign of the Mourning of Isis.**
10. Make the sign of Apophis and Typhon. (Raise the arms above the head in a 'V' shape. Look up.) Say, **The Sign of Apophis and Typhon.**
11. Make the sign of Osiris Risen. (Cross the arms over the breast. Look down.) Say, **The Sign of Osiris Risen.**
12. Repeat the signs of Osiris Slain and Osiris Risen while saying, **L.V.X., the Light of the Cross.** (Or repeat all of the L.V.X. signs while saying, **L.V.X., Lux, the Light of the True Rose Cross.**)

This completes the Analysis of the Keyword. The letters L, V and X, which spell the Latin Lux or light, are understood as being formed by the signs of Osiris Slain, Apophis and Typhon and Osiris Risen, respectively as such:

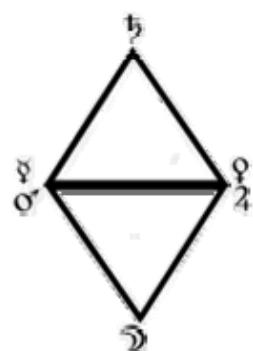


The *Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram* also uses three other variants of the regular Hexagram symbol, deriving originally from one of the illustrations in Add. MSS. #10862 of *The Greater Key of Solomon*. This was one of the seven codices used by Mathers to compile his 1888 edition of this Grimoire.[5] The alternative forms are:

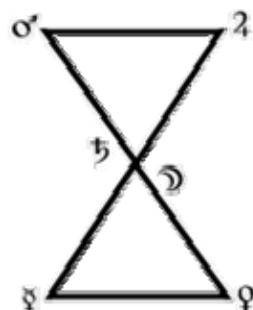
The Hexagram of Fire:



The Hexagram of Air:



The Hexagram of Water:



And the Hexagram of Earth, which is the traditional design:



Just like the Hexagram of Earth, all of these elemental Hexagrams have different forms depending on whether one is invoking or banishing any of the planets. These different forms follow the same rule as for the standard design of the Hexagram, as described above. See the chart at the end of this chapter for illustrations of all forms.

Like the LRP, the Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram moves clockwise about the circle of the working, regardless of whether or not its invoking or banishing form is being performed. These symbolic keys having been grasped, the ritual itself is quite straightforward.

Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram[6]

1. *Face East. Perform the Analysis of the Keyword.*
2. *Trace the Invoking Hexagram of Fire for Saturn in the East, saying ARARITA.*
3. *Move clockwise to the South. Draw the Invoking Hexagram of Earth for Saturn while vibrating ARARITA.*
4. *Move clockwise to the West. Make the Invoking Hexagram of Air for Saturn while saying ARARITA.*
5. *Move clockwise to the North. Trace the Invoking Hexagram of Water for Saturn, vibrating ARARITA.*
6. *Return to the center, facing East. Perform the Analysis of the Keyword.*

To perform the banishing form of this ritual, do exactly as above, including moving clockwise about the circle, but use the four banishing Hexagrams of Saturn. The original form of this ritual has the magician vibrate the word ARARITA while inscribing the Hexagrams. A common and effective variation is to first make the Hexagram, then thrust the wand through the center of the visualized figure while vibrating the word.

In the Regardie papers, reference is made to a *Supreme Ritual of the Hexagram*. One might suppose, in parallel with the rituals of the Pentagram, that this would be a more advanced form of Hexagram ceremony than the Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram. However, this appears not to be the case, and there is no such published surviving ritual from the original Golden Dawn. Instead, a close reading of the original instructional texts shows that by 'Supreme Ritual of the Hexagram' is meant the invocation or banishing of a particular planet, zodiacal sign or Sephirah through the use of the Hexagram. The exact procedure to do so is presented very unclearly in the original texts, and the tendency has

been for various oral traditions to arise with different approaches as to method. However, if all of the scattered instructions in the original G.D. material are collected, a coherent ritual emerges.

Supreme Ritual of the Hexagram[7]

To invoke a particular planet (original G.D. method):

1. *Perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram followed by the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Hexagram to clear the space.*
2. *Turn to the quarter of the heavens that the particular planet to be invoked is physically located. To do this create a horoscope chart of the heavens at the time of the ritual and place it on the altar with the ascendant facing East. Then simply look about the circle of the chart to find the quarter closest to where the planet is located along the ecliptic.*
3. *Perform the Lesser Invoking Ritual of the Hexagram, taking that quarter as 'East', and using the invoking forms of the four elemental Hexagrams appropriate to that planet.*
4. *Returning to the quarter of the planet, draw the invoking Hexagram of Earth of that planet. Then trace the symbol of the planet in the center of the Hexagram, tracing it left to right and clockwise as much as possible. Vibrate the God-name of the Sephirah associated with that planet. Vibrate the word **ARARITA** as well as the specific Hebrew letter of Ararita corresponding to the planet.*

To banish, as opposed to invoke, a particular planet begin with a license to depart and then perform the 'inverse' of the above. Unfortunately, there are no further details on exactly what to 'invert'. Presumably, one would again turn to the quarter of the heavens occupied by the planet and perform the *Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram* using the banishing forms of the four elemental Hexagrams appropriate to the planet in question. Upon completing the circle, one would trace the banishing Hexagram of Earth for that planet, followed by the planetary symbol and names as above.

There are a few additional details that can be extracted from the source texts. The G.D. papers give instructions to draw the symbol of the Moon as a leftward facing crescent when waxing ☽ and a rightward facing crescent when waning ☾. An empty circle should be drawn for the full moon ☽ and a dark circle for the new ☽.

To invoke or banish a Zodiacal sign, follow the basic procedure above, turning to the quarter of the heavens occupied by the sign. Use the elemental Hexagrams for the planet ruling the sign, and when making the final Hexagram, inscribe the astrological symbol for the sign. Though this is not specified, one would presumably then vibrate the names associated with the ruling planet, as above.

The Hexagram rituals can also be used to invoke or banish a Sephirah. The G.D. taught that the Hexagram should be used for this purpose rather than the Pentagram, as the Hexagram is a symbol of the Macrocosm, whereas the Pentagram only shows the

operation of the Sephiroth in the Microcosmic or elemental realm. One should use the Hexagrams of the planet associated with the Sephirah being worked with. The Hexagrams of Saturn are used for any of the Supernals, and those of the Moon for both Yesod and Malkuth. The ritual should probably begin facing East, rather than some other quarter. There are no instructions in the original G.D. material on what symbol to draw in the final Hexagram, or what divine names to use, so it is unclear how to differentiate the ritual from a regular planetary working.

The previous appears, based upon the original texts, to be the methodology of the original Golden Dawn, prior to 1900, but it is not the procedure used by most Thelemic magicians today. Instead, modern methods tend to be based on Crowley's Liber O, which presents a much more simplified set of directions than those above. Crowley somewhat confusingly refers to the invocation or banishing of a particular planet, zodiacal sign, or Sephirah as the Greater Ritual of the Hexagram, as opposed to the Supreme Ritual of the Hexagram, which is the G.D. designation. This does help us to differentiate the two schools of technique, however.

Greater Ritual of the Hexagram[8]

To invoke or banish a particular planet (modern Thelemic method):

1. Perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram followed, optionally, by the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Hexagram to clear the space. Optionally, use the Star Ruby and the Star Sapphire.
2. Either face East or turn to the quarter of the heavens where the planet is located.
3. Perform the analysis of the keyword.
4. Make the invoking or banishing Hexagram of Earth for the planet. Draw the symbol of the planet in the center of the Hexagram, tracing it left to right and clockwise as much as possible to invoke. If banishing, trace right to left and counterclockwise. Vibrate the God-name of the planet and the name **ARARITA**.
5. Repeat for each quarter moving clockwise to invoke, counterclockwise to banish.
6. Completing the circle, repeat the analysis of the keyword.

This ritual form can be modified, as above, to invoke particular signs of the Zodiac and Sephirah.

There is also a more meditative method of invoking and banishing a particular planetary archetype. Seated in one's Asana one should clearly visualize one's aura as brilliant white. Take a few minutes of rhythmic breathing to establish this. Gradually, the aura's color shifts to the color corresponding to the desired planet. This should be: Saturn — Indigo, Jupiter — Blue, Mars — Red, Sun — Yellow, Venus — Green, Mercury — Orange, Luna — Purple. The aura's light radiates outwards, filling the ritual space with astral light of the planet's color. To banish, visualize the light as drawn back into the personal aura, which then gradually shifts back to white. This method is particularly recommended in conjunction with recitations of corresponding chapters in the Holy Book *Liber 7*.

As with the rituals of the Pentagram, Crowley composed an explicitly Thelemic form of Hexagram ritual. This is *Liber 36, The Star Sapphire*.^[9] The Star Sapphire is among the most esoteric of Crowley's rituals. Ebony Anpu used to joke that there were two versions, 'stand-up' and 'lie-down'. This discussion will not be a commentary on the latter. Rather, it will largely limit itself to a general description of the ritual's outer symbolic aspects through which it shares much in common with the G.D. Hexagram spells already discussed. *Liber 36* is best first approached in this manner. The deeper levels of interpretation disclose themselves through this outer symbolic framework.

The number of the ritual is 36, which is the square of 6, the number of the Hexagram, of Tiphareth and of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. Numerologically, to square a number is to signify its magnification through itself. Therefore, this number symbolizes that the Star Sapphire is an enhancement of previously existing Hexagram rituals.

Liber 36: The Star Sapphire

Let the Adept be armed with his Magick Rood (and provided with his Mystic Rose).

In the center, let him give the L.V.X. signs; or if he know them, if he will and dare do them, and can keep silent about them, the signs of N.O.X. being the signs of Puer, Vir, Puella, Mulier. Omit the sign I.R.

*Then let him advance to the East, and make the Holy Hexagram, saying: **PATER ET MATER UNUS DEUS ARARITA.***

*Let him go round to the South, make the Holy Hexagram, and say: **MATER ET FILIUS UNUS DEUS ARARITA.***

*Let him go round to the West, make the Holy Hexagram, and say: **FILIUS ET FILIA UNUS DEUS ARARITA.***

*Let him go round to the North, make the Holy Hexagram, and then say: **FILIA ET PATER UNUS DEUS ARARITA.***

*Let him then return to the Center, and so to The Center of All (making the ROSY CROSS as he may know how) saying: **ARARITA ARARITA ARARITA.***

(In this the Signs shall be those of Set Triumphant and of Baphomet. Also shall Set appear in the Circle. Let him drink of the Sacrament and let him communicate the same.)

*Then let him say: **OMNIA IN DUOS: DUO IN UNUM: UNUS IN NIHIL: HAEC NEC QUATUOR NEC OMNIA NEC DUO NEC UNUS NEC NIHIL SUNT.***

**GLORIA PATRI ET MATRI ET FILIO ET FILIAE ET SPIRITUI
SANCTO EXTERNO ET SPIRITUI SANCTO INTERNO UT ERAT EST
ERIT IN SAECULA SAECULORUM SEX IN UNO PER NOMEN
SEPTUM IN UNO ARARITA.**

Let him repeat the signs of L.V.X. but not the signs of N.O.X.: for it is not he that shall arise in the Sign of Isis Rejoicing.

"*Let the Adept ...*". This ritual symbolizes the Magick of the Adept. That is, it represents the consciousness of the attainment of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, attained through the union of opposites; through the uniting of subject and object in Samadhi.

"... *Armed with his Magick Rood (and provided with his Mystic Rose).*" The Rood or Rod of the magician is their sacred Wand. This is a form of the cross upon which the rose blooms, understood in the Thelemic tradition as a symbol of the union of opposites. The Rood and Rose are therefore symbols of the divine polarity on all planes, including, but not limited to, the physical. Magick is extroverted, as Mysticism introverted, signifying that this ritual should involve a synthesis of both.

"*In the Center ...*". The center is the center of the ritual space, which symbolizes the Axis Mundi, the spiritual pole of the cosmos, which is ultimately the Angel itself. All contraries are reconciled at this point. This is also the center of the Rose wherein the Rood rests. The Center therefore simultaneously symbolizes the Rood, the Rose and their unity.

"*Give the L.V.X. signs*". This refers to the Analysis of the Keyword, described fully earlier in this chapter. These are the signs of Tiphareth, and represent the arising of consciousness of the True Self through the spiritual formula they represent.

"*Or ... the signs of N.O.X.*" These are described fully in Chapter 7, and constitute a higher octave version of the L.V.X. signs. They relate to the Supernal reality, disclosed by the deepening attainment of the Adept.

"... *Being the signs of Puer, Vir, Puella, Mulier. Omit the sign I.R.*" This means to perform the N.O.X. signs with the signs of Son, Father, Daughter and Mother, but to leave out the sign of Isis Rejoicing or Mater Triumphans at this point of the ritual. This sign represents the Quintessence of the four other principles which are set at the quarters, and will be momentarily disclosed at the Center following their dissolution.

"... *Make the Holy Hexagram*". Liber 36 does not specify which form of the Hexagram to use. There are various traditions on how to address this. The four forms of the invoking elemental Hexagrams for Saturn can be used, exactly as in *The Lesser Ritual of the Hexagram*. Ebony Anpu understood these to represent diagrammatically the form of sexual union of each quarter's couple. Alternatively, the Invoking Unicursal Hexagram for Saturn can be used at all four quarters, or the Invoking Unicursal Hexagram for the

Sun. Finally, one can use the Invoking Hexagram of Earth for Saturn. The magician should experiment with these various forms to find the one that works for them. In all cases, the interlocking components of the Hexagrams represent the Unity of the two aspects invoked at each quarter.

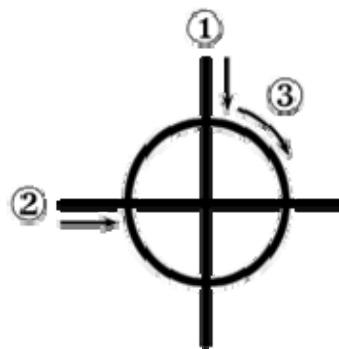
The aspects of the quarters are Latin. *Pater* is Father, *Mater* Mother, *Filius* Son, and *Filiae* Daughter. These represent the four basic aspects of reality — the four elements, the four worlds etc. Each quarter invokes one of the four possible combinations of these aspects. Their implied sexual union discloses their underlying unity as 'Unus Deus', 'One God'.

"Let him then return to the Center, and so to The Center of All."

"Also he taught me the holy unutterable word Ararita, so that I melted the sixfold gold into a single invisible point, whereof naught may be spoken." (Liber 65: Chapter 5, verse 15)[10]

"(Making the Rosy Cross as he may know how)". The magician effects the union of opposites within themselves in whatever manner and on whatever planes their level of initiation allows them to. This does not necessarily signify a sexual act, except insofar as a sexual act is a reflection of the true formula of the Rosy Cross, which is the union of subject and object in Samadhi, the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.

An oral tradition of performing a ritual gesture to symbolize this attainment is to inscribe a cross and circle in the air, visualized in white light, with three gestures, vibrating the word ARARITA with each movement.



The vertical bar of the cross is drawn first from the top down. The circle is inscribed clockwise, beginning with the uppermost point, where the circumference intersects the vertical line. These movements recapitulate some of the symbolism of the Kabbalistic Cross, as described in Chapter 7.

This is the most important moment in the ritual, and regardless of the ceremonial action taken the magician should at this point concentrate the whole of their available Will towards their highest possible Idea.

"In this the Signs shall be those of Set Triumphant and of Baphomet." These are alternative designations for the signs of Mater Triumphans and of Mulier, respectively.

The sign of Mater Triumphans is also called the sign of Set Triumphant. This requires some explanation. Set is Saturn, which corresponds to the Sephirah Binah. Set is triumphant in the murder of Osiris, whose death represents the slaying of the phenomenal ego in Samadhi, which discloses the Briatic reality of Binah. The Sign of Mater Triumphans, corresponding to Binah, is also called the Sign of Isis Rejoicing in *Liber 36*. This signifies the birth of Horus by Isis to avenge the death of his father, implying the victory of Set in the slaying of that Father. Horus represents the Holy Guardian Angel that is disclosed in the Samadhi of the Adept. Giving this sign at this point of the *Star Sapphire* also completes the Signs of N.O.X. which optionally began the ritual. Baphomet is the Thelemic Tantric deity of non-duality — male, female, God, man and beast as One. The essence of this God is disclosed by the execution of the formula of the Rose Cross. The sign of Mulier, which signifies this disclosure, shows that the magician is receptive to the accomplishment of the sacrament, yielding their ego in sacrifice upon the altar of their own Higher Self.

"Also shall Set appear in the circle." Set is also Malkuth, the most material and sensual manifestation of deity. Set is therefore the divinized magician themselves. In the context of this ritual Set is also the generative organs, among many other meanings. These are not understood merely as such, however. 'Kether is in Malkuth, and Malkuth is in Kether, but after another fashion.' Set can also be seen as an aspect of Baphomet. The Holy Book *Liber Capricornus* can be read as an expansion of some of the meanings of this part of the *Star Sapphire*.

"Let him drink of the sacrament and communicate the same." This refers to the Eucharist of One Element, generated as a result of the 'making of the Rosy Cross' above. See the discussion of this Eucharist in Chapter 11.

"Then let him say: OMNIA IN DUOS: DUO IN UNUM: UNUS IN NIHIL: HAEC NEC QUATUOR NEC OMNIA NEC DUO NEC UNUS NEC NIHIL SUNT. GLORIA PATRI ET MATRI ET FILIO ET FILIAE ET SPIRITUI SANCTO EXTERNO ET SPIRITUI SANCTO INTERNO UT ERAT EST ERIT IN SAECULA SAECULORUM SEX IN UNO PER NOMEN SEPTEM IN UNO ARARITA."

Which means, "All in Two, Two in One, One in None. These are neither Four nor All, nor Two, nor One nor None. Glory be to the Father and to the Mother, and to the Son, and to the Daughter, and to the Holy Spirit without, and to the Holy Spirit within, which was, is, and shall be, World without end. Six in One through the name Seven in One, ARARITA."

The invocation is an affirmation of the realization of the underlying divine non-dual Unity of all of the symbolic elements of the ritual.

This is an adaptation of a well known, but very cryptic, Christian prayer called the "Glory Be". As recited by Roman Catholics it goes like this:

"Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end, Amen."

"Let him then repeat the signs of L.V.X. but not the signs of N.O.X." The ritual ends with the Analysis of the Keyword, as do the other Hexagram rituals. The N.O.X. signs are perhaps not reused because their formula of annihilation has been accomplished by the ritual. All that remains is for this attainment to be reflected down upon the lower plane of Tiphareth, representing the child or issue of the union of opposites effected by the formula of the Rosy Cross. This child is magically the Adept themselves.

"For it is not he that shall arise in the sign of Isis Rejoicing". Isis Rejoicing, or Mater Triumphans is assigned to Binah, the Great Mother who gives birth to the Crowned and Conquering Child Horus as Tiphareth. The magician at this final point of the ritual is therefore posited as that child through the Signs of L.V.X. (The two concluding instructions of *Liber 36* are obscure, and these explanations are only presented as my own understanding.)

1. Crowley, Aleister, *The Book of Lies*, pg. 149.
2. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 289-292.
3. Crowley, Aleister, *Commentaries on the Holy Books: The Equinox Vol. IV #1*, pg. 193.
4. DuQuette, Lon Milo, *The Magick of Thelema*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1993, pg. 118.
5. Mathers, S. Liddell MacGregor, *The Key of Solomon the King*, Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Maine, 1974, pg. Ix, 17.
6. Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 294-295.
7. Rewritten from the version given in *Liber O*, Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pp. 621-622.
8. Reconstructed from Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn*, pg. 287-299.
9. Rewritten from instructions given in *Liber O*, as interpreted by modern oral traditions. Compare with Crowley, Aleister, *Magick: Book 4*, pg. 623.
10. Ibid, pg. 570.
11. Crowley, Aleister, *The Holy Books of Thelema*, pg. 77.

Chapter XIII

The Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel

There is a very finite limit to which the energy consciously generated and directed by our own ego can effect Magick. There is, however, a deeper, greater, infinite energy, which is not limited by our own limitations. The beginning of a full opening of ourselves as vehicles for the work of this energy, of the recognition of this energy as a greater form of our own Self, of a dramatic influx of this energy, is called the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. Knowledge and Conversation is the primary attainment of the Thelemic system, associated with the Sephirah Tiphareth.

There are innumerable models for describing this process. The previous paragraph involved one of mine. Only some of these models will be useful to an individual magician in their attempt to achieve the actual experience that these models attempt to describe. The relationship to the Angel is personal for each individual, and the specific method of invoking the Angel will also be personal to each individual.

In column XLV of Crowley's 777 there is a list of Magical Powers and Mystical States associated with the 32 categories of Kabbalah.^[1] The Powers are assigned to each of the 22 paths between the Sephiroth, and the States to the Sephiroth themselves. The States, or Visions, are keyed to the kinds of experiences that might be had by one attuned to the level of consciousness of that Sephirah in virtue of holding the corresponding grade in A□A□. The Mystical State associated with Malkuth is 'The Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel'. Every magician, regardless of their engagement or lack thereof with the A□A□ system, can be understood as being in Malkuth by the parameters of the system. It follows from this that every magician is entitled to receive this Vision in some form or another consonant with their True Will.

The Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel occurring in Malkuth is clearly distinct from the Knowledge and Conversation of the Angel in Tiphareth, but in what way? Crowley very rarely mentions the Vision, and never clearly defines it. My own definition, as used in this book, is that the Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel is any experience of the Angel that falls short of Samadhi — Samadhi being distinctive of the Briatic breakthrough disclosing Tiphareth. The awareness of and relationship to the Angel is progressive. It reaches a distinctive stage of intensity in the Adept, but awareness of the presence of the Angel can occur to the initiate as well. This is the Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel. It can (and will) occur spontaneously by the grace of the Angel itself, but it is also appropriate to invoke it. Indeed, it is the natural right of the magician to do so, though their results will necessarily depend upon their own ripeness to receive them. All of the practices in this book preceding this chapter are intended to act to so ripen the magician.

Just as with Knowledge and Conversation, the means to obtain the Vision of the Angel is a lock that each initiate must find their own key to open. Nevertheless, there are

traditional methods that may be of value. The major ritual within the Thelemic tradition for the invocation of the Angel is *Liber Samekh*.[2] This ritual may be appropriate for the accomplishment of the Vision. In the spirit of that possibility, therefore, this chapter will provide a commentary on this ritual, followed by an outline of one possible magical working using *Liber Samekh* to invoke the Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel. As with anything directly involving the Angel, this commentary and the appended working outline can only be suggestive, nor is the working even necessarily recommended.

The following text of *Liber Samekh* is a composite version prepared by the author for the purposes of this chapter. It is primarily based on an earlier version of the spell included in Crowley's 1904 publication of the Goetia. Omitted here is Crowley's own lengthy commentary, as well as his Kabbalistic analysis of the Barbarous Names of Evocation. While important, Crowley's commentary is aimed at an Adepts level of engagement with the ritual, whereas this chapter attempts only to provide a more general symbolic description. I highly recommend Crowley's discussion of the use of *Liber Samekh* by the Adeptus Minor, but refer the interested reader to the full presentation of this text in *Magick in Theory and Practice*.

Liber Samekh

*The Invocation of the Heart Girt with a Serpent,
Or, The Bornless Ritual*

Thee I invoke, the Bornless one.

Thee, that didst create the Earth and the Heavens:

Thee, that didst create the Night and the Day.

Thee, that didst create the darkness and the Light.

Thou art Ra-Hoor-Kuit: Whom no man hath seen at any time.

Thou art Ia-Besz:

Thou art Ia-Aphophrasz:

Thou hast distinguished between the Just and the Unjust.

Thou didst make the Female and the Male.

Thou didst produce the Seed and the Fruit.

Thou didst form Men to love one another, and to hate one another.

**I am [insert magical name] Thy Prophet, unto Whom Thou didst commit Thy
Mysteries, the Ceremonies of Khem [or Thelema]:
Thou didst produce the moist and the dry, and that which nourisheth all
created Life.
Hear Thou Me, for I am the Angel of Ptah-Aphophrasz-Ra: this is Thy True
Name, handed down to the Prophets of Khem [or Thelema].**

[In the East]

Hear Me:

**AR THIAO REIBET ATHELEBERSETH A BLATHA ABEU EBEN PHI
CHITASOE IB THIAO.**

**Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the
Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry
Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every
Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.**

[In the South]

**I invoke Thee, the Terrible and Invisible God: Who dwellest in the Void
Place of the Spirit:**

**AROGOGOROBRAO SOCHOU MODORIO PHALARCHAO OOO APE,
The Bornless One:**

**Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the
Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry
Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every
Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.**

[In the West]

Hear Me:

**ROUBRIAIO MARIODAM BALBNABAOTH ASSALONAI APHNIAO I
THOLETH ABRASAX AEOOU ISCHURE,**

Mighty and Bornless One!

**Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the
Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry
Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every
Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.**

[In the North]

I invoke Thee:

MA BARRAIO IOEL KOTHA ATHOREBALO ABRAOTH:

**Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the
Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry**

Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.

[In the Center, facing East]

Hear me!

AOTH ABAOTH BASUM ISAK SABAOTH IAO:

This is the Lord of the Gods:

This is the Lord of the Universe:

This is He Whom the Winds fear.

This is He, Who having made Voice by His Commandment, is Lord of All Things; King, Ruler and Helper.

Hear Me, and make all Spirits subject unto Me: so that every Spirit of the Firmament and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry Land and in the Water: of Whirling Air, and of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God may be obedient unto Me.

Hear Me:

IEOU PUR IOU PUR IAOT IAEO IOOU ABRASAX SABRIAM OO UU EU OO UU ADONAI EDE EDU ANGELOS TOU THEOU ANALALA LAI GAIA APA DIACHANNA CHORUN.

I am He! The Bornless Spirit! Having sight in the Feet: Strong, and the Immortal Fire!

I am He! The Truth!

I am He! Who hate that evil should be wrought in the World!

I am He, that lighteneth and thundereth.

I am He, from whom is the Shower of the Life of Earth:

I am he, whose mouth ever flameth:

I am He, the Begetter and Manifester unto the Light:

I am He; the Grace of the World:

"The Heart Girt with a Serpent" is My Name!

Come Thou forth, and follow Me: and make all Spirits subject unto Me so that every Spirit of the Firmament, and of the Ether: upon the Earth and under the Earth: on dry land, or in the Water: of whirling Air or of rushing Fire: and every Spell and Scourge of God, may be obedient unto me!

IAO SABAO

Such are the Words!

The title 'Samekh' refers to the path of Samekh along the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life, rising from Yesod to Tiphareth. The associated Tarot trump is Atu XIV 'Art' Samekh represents the way of ascent of the equilibrated magician to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Angel in Tiphareth.

The spell in its original form is approximately two thousand years old and comes from *London Papyrus 46*, in the collection of the British Museum. The translation used by

Crowley was published in 1852 by Charles Wycliffe Goodwin in his *Fragment of a Graeco-Egyptian Work upon Magic from a Papyrus in the British Museum*.[3]

In its basic structure *Samekh* is little different from the other rituals in this book. Its symbolism, like that of the rituals of the Pentagram, is that of the magician at the center of a circle of four quarters. Indeed, *Samekh* can be seen as the ultimate Pentagram ritual. The key to successful performance of *Samekh*, what can give it its special power, is described in Crowley's simple instructions to 'invoke often' and to 'inflame thyself in prayer'. Repeated regular performance of the ritual over a long period of time with the full focus of the devoted will and concentration of the magician will intensify the Imaginal archetypes to the point of ever increasing Briatic transparency. This Briatic contact is the initial goal of all Thelemic Magick, and *Liber Samekh* is a ritual where this is directly explicit.

There are various strange words said at each of the four quarters. These come from the original ancient Greek text of the spell and are examples of what scholars call 'Nomine Barbara', or as Crowley translates the term 'Barbarous Names of Evocation'. These are long strings of seemingly nonsense words which often appear in late Classical magical spells. For a number of good examples see the definitive *The Greek Magical Papiri in Translation* edited by Hans Dieter Betz.[4] There is speculation that the origin of some of these names may have been the widespread practice in late antiquity of speaking in tongues — a practice by no means limited to the Christian sects. Not all of the words are nonsense however. Some of them have important values in Greek gematria or are corruptions of divine names in other languages. To use just one example: the words IAO SABAO that end *Liber Samekh* are traceable as a Greek form of the Hebrew YHVH TZABAOTH, translated by the *King James Bible* as 'Lord of Hosts'. Some other words in *Samekh* are subject to this kind of analysis, but most have no readily discernable meaning. This does not mean they are meaningless, however. The various methods of Kabbalistic analysis and gematria can be used to uncover interpretations. Crowley considered the various Barbarous Names in *Liber Samekh* to be names or formulae of the Holy Guardian Angel, and the version of *Samekh* published in *Magick in Theory and Practice* includes various thumb-nail sketches of his analysis of them. Should one decide to experiment with this ritual these may be useful as a guide or inspiration, but Crowley's interpretations relate to his own interaction with his Angel, which will be of a different nature for another magician engaging with this ritual. Therefore, the best way of working with the Barbarous Names is probably to develop and explore one's own Kabbalistic analysis of them.

Crowley suggests that the Minor Adept perform *Samekh* Astrally in their Body of Light while seated in their Asana. Physical performance is probably adequate for the purpose of the Vision of the Angel. This also allows the magician to gain familiarity with the ritual's structure for later deepening of engagement.

"*Thee I invoke, the Bornless one.*" The Bornless One is that which 'nature hath not formed'. It is immortal, eternal, and the personification of the ground of Being. It is also 'One', the divine Unity.

"Thee, that didst create the Earth and the Heavens: Thee, that didst create the Night and the Day. Thee, that didst create the darkness and the Light." The Being of the Angel is ontologically prior to, and is the creator of, all apparent opposites.

"Thou art Ra-Hoor-Kuit." In the original Greek version of the spell, this had the name of Asar-Un-Nefer, or Osiris, rather than of Ra-Hoor-Khuit. Crowley understood this as referring to the God-form assumed by the Hierophant in the Neophyte hall of the Golden Dawn. Based upon his own interpretation of certain passages of *The Book of the Law*, particularly *AL I: 49*, Crowley understood that Horus had replaced Osiris as the Hierophant of the Thelemic mysteries. Insofar as the Hierophant represents the Holy Guardian Angel, Crowley has swapped these names in the ritual. Should the magician have received the name of their Angel, this could also be used in this place.

"Whom no man hath seen at any time." The Angel is not, in its most essential, transcendental aspect, a thing or object. It is that through which things or objects come into being. It is Being itself, rather than some particular being. Therefore, the Angel in its deepest essence is not something that can be objectified under any circumstances. One does not encounter the Angel as a separate being. One is the Angel. In the words of the Anthem of the *Gnostic Mass*: "Thou that art I, beyond all that I am".

"Thou art Ia-Besz: Thou art Ia-Aphophrasz." These are variant names of the Egyptian gods Besz and Apophis. Besz was a common household deity, represented as a small blue dwarf. With regard to the relationship of this symbolism to the Angel, Crowley writes: "But the 'Small Person' of Hindu mysticism, the Dwarf insane yet crafty of many legends in many lands, is also this same 'Holy Ghost', or Silent Self of a man, or his Holy Guardian Angel. He is almost the 'Unconscious' of Freud, unknown, unaccountable, the silent Spirit, blowing 'whither it listeth, but thou canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth'. [John 3:8] It commands with absolute authority when it appears at all, despite conscious reason and judgment."^[5]

The association of the Angel with the chaos serpent Apophis is explored in great depth in the Holy Book *Liber 65*, and is best studied in that text. Apophis represents the destructive aspect of the Angel, which destroys the false ego and its delusions.

"Thou hast distinguished between the Just and the Unjust." The Angel is the source of the True Will, which is the fundamental basis for personal integrity.

"Thou didst make the Female and the Male." Crowley notes that this statement declares that the Angel has "laid down the Law of Love as the Magical formula of the Universe, that He may resolve the phenomenal again into its noumenal phase by uniting any two opposites in ecstatic passion."^[6]

"Thou didst produce the Seed and the Fruit." The Angel is the source of the power of reproduction, generation and regeneration.

"Thou didst form Men to love one another, and to hate one another." The Angel is '*Beyond Good and Evil*' (Nietzsche). Illusion and distraction are themselves only phases of a more fundamental unity. There is nothing that is ontologically independent of and distinct from this unity.

"I am [insert magical name] Thy Prophet, unto Whom Thou didst commit Thy Mysteries, the Ceremonies of Khem [or Thelema]." The original version of this statement reads: "I am Moses Thy Prophet, unto Whom Thou didst commit thy Mysteries, the Ceremonies of Israel." Crowley recommended replacing 'Moses' with one's own magical motto, and 'Israel' with either 'Khem' (Egypt) or 'Thelema'.

"Thou didst produce the moist and the dry, and that which nourisheth all created Life." This can be read as a reference to the Eucharist of One element. See the discussion of this Eucharist in [Chapter 11](#).

"Hear Thou Me, for I am the Angel of Ptah-Aphophrasz-Ra: this is Thy True Name, handed down to the Prophets of Khem [or Thelema]." This declaration completes the first portion of *Samekh*. For the first time in the ritual, the magician briefly speaks as the Angel. Ptah is an Egyptian creator deity, and is directly associated with the element of Spirit in the Golden Dawn system. Aphophrasz is Apophis, for which see comment above. Ra is the Sun God. Ra's significance in a Thelemic context is explored in Chapter 8. This name indicates that the Angel is Creator (Ptah), Sustainer (Ra), and Destroyer (Apophis) of the Universe. If the magician has received their own name for their Angel, this could also be used in this place. The ritual originally read 'Prophets of Israel'. As above, Crowley recommended changing this to either Khem or Thelema. The 'Prophets of Thelema' can be understood as including both Crowley as well as the magician themselves.

This completes the first section of the ritual. In the second section, the magician proceeds about the perimeter of the circle, visiting each quarter and establishing it in the light of the Angel invoked in the first section. This is done primarily through the energy raised by the use of the Barbarous Names, which should be recited with force and vigor. The elemental attributions of the quarters are By the Winds. Though the quarters are visited in clockwise order, Crowley suggests moving about the circle counterclockwise, making the sign of Horus when passing the East. This involves making several complete circuits, and is probably in imitation of the similar method of circumambulation in *Liber 5 vel Reguli*, as described in [Chapter 10](#). The ritual also works effectively with more traditional, clockwise, movement, and the magician should make their own decision as to which method is more appropriate for their use.

Crowley suggests beginning each quarter by tracing the Pentagram of the quarter's element, followed by the sigil of the Enochian King of that element, then the appropriate A.:A.: grade sign. The Barbarous Names are then recited.

The symbols of the Enochian Kings are not especially amenable to tracing. As a suggested variation, Enochian tablets with the sigils already on them can be placed at the

quarters. To activate the tablet, point the wand (if using one) at it. Trace the Invoking Pentagram of Spirit, visualized in incandescent white light. This should be in its Active form for Fire and Air, Passive for Water and Earth. Make the sign of the Rending or Closing of the Veil, respectively. Follow this with the Invoking Pentagram of the element, visualized in the corresponding color. While making this second Pentagram say: "In the Name of [God-Name of element], I summon thee [insert name of King, e.g. in East TAHAOELOJ], and all powers under thee." The God-Names of the elements are: Earth — Adonai-Ha-Aretz, Air — Shaddai-El-Chai, Water — Elohim Tzabaoth, Fire — YHVH Tzabaoth. Follow with the corresponding A.:A.: grade sign, as described in Chapter 7.

In the 5°=6 version of this ritual, the magician assumes the God-Form of the Elemental King while reciting the Barbarous Names. This can be a useful inclusion for those experienced in the Enochian system.

At each of the four quarters, following the declaration of the Barbarous Names, there is the 'Charge to the Spirits'. This is the portion beginning, "Hear me, and make all Spirits subject unto me." There is an oral tradition of saying this with a single breath. The charge seals the Angel's energy over the quarter. It is very important to understand that the dominion invoked is not that of the autonomous ego, but rather that of the Angel itself. 'All Spirits' includes the component aspects of the magician themselves, which are informed with regard to their True Will by this ritual.

In the third and final section of *Samekh*, the magician returns to the center, facing East. The entire magical Universe having recognized its integral alignment with the reality of the Angel, the magician now concentrates their full energy on the greatest possible recollection of this Gnosis.

The third section of *Samekh* has two parts, corresponding to Active and Passive Spirit. First comes the acknowledgement of the Active dominion of the Angel over the elements and the magician. Make the invoking Pentagram of Spirit for Actives. Give the sign of the Rending of the Veil. Trace the Mark of the Beast. Perform the full Analysis of the Keyword. Recite the Barbarous Names.

"*This is the Lord of the Gods: This is the Lord of the Universe: This is He Whom the Winds fear.*" Crowley equates 'Winds' with thoughts, because they distract the Self from Itself.

"*This is He, Who having made Voice by His Commandment, is Lord of All Things; King, Ruler and Helper.*" 'Voice' is the divine logos.

Repeat the charge to the Spirits.

The final part of *Samekh* corresponds to the Passive aspect of Spirit, representing the fusion of the consciousness of the Angel with every plane of reality, as well as the deepest passive communion of the magician with their Angel in the depths of their heart.

Make the Invoking Pentagram of Spirit for Passives. Give the Sign of the Closing of the Veil. Trace the Mark of the Beast. Perform the Full Analysis of the Keyword. Declare the final sequence of Barbarous Names.

"I am He! The Bornless Spirit!" In the concluding invocation the magician fully reveals her identity with the Angel, speaking in the first person.

"Having sight in the Feet." The feet correspond to the Sephirah Malkuth. The Angel's feet are therefore Assiah, that part of the Angel's being that is the magician themselves in their existence as a particular being. 'Having sight' means that the Adept can see reality from the perspective of the Angel, rather than from only the ego's viewpoint.

"Strong, and the Immortal Fire!" The Angel is the source of Shakti, the fundamental energy of the Universe, physical, Imaginal and sexual. 'Strong' can also refer to sexual erection.

"I am He! The Truth!" The Angel is the innermost Truth-of-Self.

"I am He! Who hate that evil should be wrought in the World!" The Angel is the source of the True Will, the inner foundation of personal ethics.

"I am He, that lighteneth and thundereth." The Angel is the source of all magical power. This power, in its highest phase, is represented by the letter Aleph, whose shape is that of a thunderbolt.

"I am He, from whom is the Shower of the Life of Earth." The Angel is the fount of life and consciousness.

"I am he, whose mouth ever flameth." The Angel is the source of the logos, the basis of meaning itself.

"I am He, the Begetter and Manifester unto the Light." The Angel creates particular existence out of love, so that the Self can encounter the Self in love.

"I am He; the Grace of the World." The Angel is the inner guide, guru and Hierophant. It is the root of all that is true and beautiful in the world.

"The Heart Girt with a Serpent is My Name!" The Heart is the Adept. The Serpent is the Angel. This image should be studied in conjunction with *Liber 65*. Its origin is the Orphic mysteries, where the Universe was represented as an egg wrapped about with the serpent of Time.

There is a final repeat of the charge to the spirits, through which the magician should direct the greatest possible power.

"IAO SABAO. Such are the Words!" This is the Greek version of YHVH Tzabaoth, the name of God corresponding to Netzach. Netzach means 'Victory', and can be understood to refer to the success of the magician in their invocations.

There are a number of possible ways of integrating performance of *Samekh* with a working to invoke the Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel. My own purely personal suggestion is to perform a 22 day operation based on the 22 Letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each day's performance of *Samekh* is keyed to a different letter, in sequence, from Aleph to Tav. This should be understood as constructing a kind of magical ladder, down which the Angel descends the Tree, from Kether to Malkuth, striking the magician fully on the final day. The working can be timed such that the final day coincides with some astrologically relevant time, Equinox or Solstice, for example. This is inessential. What is more important is that the working be carried through fully, with few or no gaps between rituals. This regularity is crucial to 'build up the charge' of the working. If something happens to break off the working, one can always start over again with Aleph when returning to it. The individual magician must be the judge of this. Mathew 6: 5-6 is also of relevance. It cannot be overemphasized that the working should be undertaken with the utmost seriousness.

If possible, perform all 22 workings in a Temple space dedicated to that purpose, where each day the Tarot trump corresponding to that day's Hebrew letter is prominently displayed.

Upon entering the temple, Banish thoroughly with the rituals of the Pentagram and Hexagram. Purify and Consecrate. Make a statement of intent:

"I, [magical motto], do hereby declare that it is my will to achieve the Vision of my Holy Guardian Angel. Humbly yet frankly, I request my Angel to grant me this Vision, for it is permitted for the Man of Earth to see the Angel, though not to know or converse with it. To this end I open the gates of the paths from the Crown to the Kingdom, each in turn. May the Holy Spirit pass down them: and may the keys of Spirit unlock the way of the lightning flash to empower my soul, so that the veils may be lifted and my Spirit see. So Mote It Be!"

Look at the Tarot trump for that day. Vibrate repeatedly the name of the associated Hebrew letter. Declare: "I welcome my Holy Guardian Angel to descend through this path."

Perform *Liber Samekh*.

Recite aloud a chapter of one's choice from *Liber 65*.

Give the License to Depart: "And now I say unto all spirits convoked by this rite, depart in peace unto thine habitations and abodes, and may the blessing of the Highest be upon you in the name of Nuit, Hadit and Ra-Hoor-Khuit, and be there peace between us, and be thou ever ready to come, when thou art called. So Mote it Be!"

Purify and Consecrate. Banish using the rituals of the Pentagram and the Hexagram.

As the Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel is a personal relationship of the magician with their Angel, it is impossible to lay down precise details as to what the possible results of a successful working would be. The Angel interacts with us in accordance with our True Will and our receptive ripeness to be a proper vehicle for its Power. The God will not indwell a filthy Temple.

The magician should not assume failure due to a lack of spectacular result. The Angel often communicates itself to the soul in darkness, silence, obscurity and mystery. Indeed, in many ways this is a superior, deeper mode of communion. Conversely, should some dramatic success be obtained, the magician should humble themselves exceedingly, for the Vision of the Angel is the power of Malkuth, the lowest Sephirah upon the Tree of Life, and this constitutes the first, not the last, full step upon the path.

Whatever our results, we must understand that what wondrous experiences we may attain, or powers wield, are ultimately by the Grace of the Angel alone. Therefore, let us strive to put aside our self-distractions from our own divine course, and if it be our Will dedicate ourselves to the practice of the *Spiritual Exercises of Thelema*.

... Love is the law, love under will

Written in Service to the Work
Of the True and Invisible
Order of the Silver Star
In the 97th Year of the Aeon of Horus
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4. Betz, Hans Dieter (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papiri in Translation*, University of Chicago, Chicago, 1992.
5. Crowley, Aleister, *The Law is for All*, pg. 31.
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