

The Art Of Magic

by Israel Regardie

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Of all the subjects which comprise what nowadays is called Occultism, the most misunderstood of all is Magic. Even Alchemy, which to some of us is annoyingly dark and obscure, evokes far more sympathy and understanding as a rule than does Magic. For example, the psychologist Jung has observed of alchemy in his essay *The Ego and The Unconscious* that "it would be an unpardonable depreciation of value if we were to accept the current view, and reduce the spiritual striving of the alchemists to the level of the retort and the smelting furnace. Certainly this aspect belonged to it; it represented the tentative beginnings of exact chemistry. But it also had a spiritual side which has never yet been given its true value, and which from the psychological standpoint must not be underestimated." Yet Magic, strange to say, receives no such evaluation--except insofar as the term Magic is allied to the unconscious, and is said to represent a primitive attempt to cognise the Unconscious. There is, hence, hardly more than the barest minimum attempt to arrive at an understanding of its processes. For the moment, I do not wish to analyse the possible reasons for this amazing phenomenon. What is more to the point, however, is to provide some more or less intelligible approach to the subject so that given an initial glimpse of the bright light flooding the world of magic, more people may feel disposed to devote just a little of their energies and time to its study. The advantages and benefits are such as to make this effort extremely worth while.

Putting it simply and briefly, let me say at the outset that Magic concerns itself in the main with that self-same world as does modern psychology. That is to say, it deals with that sphere of the psyche of which normally we are not conscious but which exerts an enormous influence upon our lives. Magic is a series of psychological techniques so devised as to enable us to probe more deeply into ourselves. To what end? First, that we shall understand ourselves more completely. Apart from the fact that such self-knowledge in itself is desirable, an understanding of the inner nature releases us from unconscious compulsions and motivations and confers a mastery over life. Second, that we may the more fully express that inner self in every-day activities. It is only when mankind as a whole has reached, or perhaps when the more advanced men and women in the world have evolved, some degree of inner realisation that we may ever hope for that ideal utopian condition of things--a wide tolerance, peace, and universal brotherhood. It is to ends such as these that Magic owes its *raison d'etre*.

Approaching the matter from another point of view, it may be said that Magic deals with the same problems as Religion. It does not waste its or our valuable time with futile speculations with regard to the existence or nature of God. It affirms dogmatically that there is an omnipresent and eternal life principle--and thereupon, in true scientific fashion, lays down a host of methods for proving it for oneself. How may we know God? Here, as before, there is a well-defined and elaborate technique for dealing with the human consciousness as such and exalting it to an immediate experience of the universal spirit permeating and sustaining all things. I say advisedly that its technique is well-defined. For the system has an abhorrence of the attitude of those good-natured but

muddle-headed thinkers who, refusing to accept their human limitations as they are now, aim too high without dealing with the manifold problems in the way.

Let us assume that yonder building is ten storeys high. How may we reach the roof? Certainly not by ignoring the very obvious fact that at least two hundred feet intervene between us and the roof! Yet that is precisely the attitude of the so-called simplicity cult in mystical religion. God, they affirm, is an exalted state of infinite consciousness to which the microcosmic mind must be united. So far, so good--and here Magic is in accord with their view. Therefore, these people propose to attempt gaining the summit of attainment by ignoring the steps between man as we find him now and the supreme end--God. It is as though they wished to jump from the ground to the roof of the aforesaid building.

Magic adopts a slightly different attitude. It is one, however, which is markedly similar to the common-sense attitude of the mythical man in the street. To get to the top of the building we must either climb the various flights of stairs leading there, or else take the lift upwards. In either case, it is a graduated process--an evolution, if you wish. Man, holds the magical theory, is a more or less complicated creature whose several faculties of feeling, sensation, and thinking have slowly been evolved in the course of aeons of evolution. It is fatal to ignore these faculties, for evidently they were evolved for some useful purpose in answer to some inner need. Hence, in aspiring towards divine union, surely a laudable goal, we must be quite sure that our method, whatever it is, takes into consideration those faculties and develops them to the stage where they too may participate in the experience. If evolution is held up as a suitable process, then the whole man must evolve, and not simply little bits or aspects of him, whilst other parts of his nature are left undeveloped at a primitive or infantile level of being. Moreover, these faculties must be so trained as to be able to "take" the enormous tension sure to be imposed upon them by so exalted but nevertheless so powerful an attainment. Each faculty must be deliberately trained and carried stage by stage through various levels of human and cosmic consciousness so that gradually they become accustomed to the high potential of energy, ideation, and inspiration that must inevitably accompany illumination and an extension of consciousness. Failure to consider such a viewpoint in terms of its dynamics undoubtedly must account for the catastrophes so frequently encountered in occult and mystical circles.

To present a bird's-eye view of the entire field of Magic, let me summarily state that for convenience the subject may be divided into at least three major divisions. One--Divination. Two -- Evocation and Vision. Three -- Invocation. I will define each separately and at some little length.

With regard to the first division, the magical hypothesis is quite definite. It holds that divination is not ultimately concerned with mere fortune-telling--nor even with divining the spiritual causes in the background of material events, though this latter is of no little unimportance. On the contrary, however, the practice of divination when conducted aright has as its objective the development of the inner psychic faculty of intuition. It is an enormous asset spiritually to have developed an exquisite sensitivity to the inner subtle world of the psyche. When carried on for a sufficiently long period of time, the practice builds slowly but efficiently a species of bridge between the consciousness of man and that deeper hidden part of his psyche of which usually he is not aware--the Unconscious, or higher Self. In these deeper spiritual aspects of his nature are

the divine roots of discrimination, spiritual discernment, and lofty wisdom. The object of divination is quite simply, then, the construction of a psychic mechanism whereby this source of inspiration and life may be made accessible to the ordinary consciousness, to the ego. That this mechanism is concerned at the outset with providing answers to apparently trivial questions is by itself no objection to the technique itself. The preliminary approaches to any study may seem unworthy to or incompatible with that study. And divination is no exception to the general trend. Nor is the objection valid that the technique is open to frequent abuse by unscrupulous charlatans. But practised sincerely and intelligently and assiduously by the real student, consciousness gradually opens itself to a deeper level of awareness. "The brain becomes porous to the recollections and dictates of the soul," to use a current theosophical expression, is a true statement of the actual results of the training. As the object of analytical psychology is the assimilation of the repressed content of the Unconscious to the ordinary wake-a-day consciousness, so by these other magical means the human mind becomes aware of itself as infinitely vaster, deeper and wiser than ever it realised before. A sense of the spiritual aspect of things dawns upon the mind--a sense of one's own innate high wisdom, and a recognition of divinity working through man and the universe. Surely such a viewpoint elevates divination above the level of a mere occult art to an intrinsic part of mystical endeavour.

Geomancy, Tarot and Astrology, these are the fundamental techniques of the divinatory system. Geomancy is divination by means of earth. At one time, its practitioners actually used sand or black earth in which to trace its sigils and symbols--a typically primitive or mediaeval method. Today Geomantic diviners use pencil and paper, relying upon graphite in their pencils to formulate, theoretically, a magical link between themselves and the so-called divining intelligences or elementals of Earth. It is, so far as my own experience goes, a highly efficient technique, and I can claim at least an 80% degree of accuracy over several years. Tarot is the name of a set of cards, seventy-eight in number, which were introduced into Europe in either the fourteenth or fifteenth century from . . . ? No-one knows where they came from. Their origin is a complete mystery. At one period in Europe there were no such cards available, so far as we can see. At another time, the cards were circulating freely. Little mention need be made of astrology, since that has long been one of the most popular methods with which the public has been made familiar. Anyone who practises these methods with this objective in mind will assuredly become aware of the results I have described. And while, it is true, his querents for divination may receive perfectly good answers to the questions they have asked, departing from his threshold in the spirit of gratitude and wonder, the intuitive development accruing to him will constitute the more important side of that transaction. It is when we leave the relatively simple realm of divination to approach the obscure subject of Evocation that we enter deep waters. Here it is that most difficulty has arisen. And it is in connection with this phase of Magic that the greatest misunderstanding and fear even has developed.

In order to elucidate the matter, let me again turn to the terminology of modern psychology. The term "complex" has achieved a fairly wide notoriety during the last quarter of a century since the circulation of the theories of Freud and Jung. It means an aggregation or group of ideas in the mind with a strong emotional charge, capable of influencing conscious thought and behaviour. If my interest is Magic, then naturally

every item of information acquired, no matter what its nature, is likely to be built by association into that constellation of ideas clustering around my interest--becoming in the course of years a thorough-going complex. Mrs. Jones my dairywoman, because of her professional predilection, will have her complex centering about milk and cows and butter and the price of eggs.

Over and above this definition, however, is the more subtle one of a group of ideas or feelings congregating about a significant or dominant psychic theme, such as sex or the need to overcome inferior feelings, or some psychic wound of childhood, tying or locking up nervous energy. Thus, as a result of repression, we may find a complex of which the possessor is totally unconscious--a complex expressing itself in a sense of insecurity, obsession by morbid unreasonable fears, and persistent anxiety. Moreover, a constellation of feelings and moods and emotional reactions may exist which have become so powerful and yet so obnoxious to reason as to have become completely split off from the main stream of the personality. What modern psychology calls a complex in this sense, the ancient psychology of Magic, which had its own system of classification and nomenclature, named a Spirit. The system of classification was the Qabalistic Sephiroth or the ten fundamental categories of thought.

Thus, should we essay translation of terms, the sense of inferiority we might call the spirit of Tiphareth, whose name is said to be Soras, inasmuch as the Sun, one of its attributions or associations, is considered the planetary symbol of the individuality. Hence an affliction to the personality, which may be considered a general or rough definition of the inferiority sense, could well be referred to Soras--since the spirit in the case of each Sephirah is considered evil. That complex expressing itself in insecurity is the spirit of Yesod and the Moon, whose name is Chashmodai. This sphere of Yesod represents the astral design or foundation imparting stability and permanence to physical shapes and forms, in a word it is a symbol of security and strength. Should we be confronted with a case where the emotions were split off from consciousness-- this is the influence of the spirit of Hod and Mercury, Taphthartharath. One wallowing in emotional chaos, having refused to develop equally consciousness and the rational faculties, is subject to the spirit of Netzach and Venus, Haniel. A purely destructive or suicidal neurosis which causes one to exhibit the symptomatic tendency deliberately to break things, or to use them in attack against oneself, is of a martial quality, belonging to Gevurah and Mars, the spirit Samael.

This, naturally, is the subjective point of view. That there is a purely objective occult theory I do not deny, but that cannot be dealt with here.

How, nowadays, do we deal with the psycho-neuroses in the attempt to cure them--to eliminate them from the sphere of the patient's thinking and feeling? Principally by the analytical method. We encourage the patient to narrate freely his life-history, to delineate in detail his early experiences in connection with his father and mother, his reactions to brothers and sisters, to school and playmates and the entire environment. He is asked to dwell particularly on his emotional reaction to these earlier experiences, to re-live them in his imagination, to recount and analyse his feelings towards them. Moreover, his dreams at the time of analysis are subjected to a careful scrutiny. This is necessary because the dream is a spontaneous psychic activity uninterfered with by the waking consciousness. Such activity reveals present-day unconscious reactions to the stimuli of life--reactions which modify, even form his conscious outlook. In this way the patient is

enabled to realise objectively the nature of this complex. He must detach himself from it for a short space of time. And this critical objective examination of it, this understanding of its nature and the means whereby it came into being, enables him, not once and for all, but gradually and with the passage of time, to oust it from his ways of thinking.

Magic, however, at one time proceeded according to a slightly different technique. It too realised how devastating were these natural but perverse ways of thinking, and how crippling was the effect they exercised on the personality. Indecision, vacillation, incapacitation of memory, anaesthesia of feeling and sense, compulsions and phobias, besides a host of physical and moral ills, are the resultants of these complexes or spirit-dominants. So completely is the patient at the mercy of obsessing moods as almost to be beside himself, thus suggesting to the vivid imagination of the ancients an actual obsession by some extraneous spirit entity. So, in order to restore man to his former efficiency, or to the standard of normality, these afflictions must be eliminated from consciousness.

As its first step, Magic proceeded to personalise them, to invest them with tangible shape and form, and to give them a definite name and quality. It is the nature of the psyche spontaneously to give human characteristics and nomenclature to the contents of its own mind. In doing this, the magical system receives the official blessing, if I may say so, of no less a modern psychological authority than Dr. C. G. Jung. In his commentary to *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, Jung names these complexes "autonomous partial systems." Referring to these partial systems, he asserts: "Being also constituents of the psychic personality, they necessarily have the character of persons. Such partial-systems appear in mental diseases where there is no psychogenic splitting of the personality (double personality), and also, quite commonly, in mediumistic phenomena." It is, as I have said, a natural tendency of the human mind to personalise these complexes or groupings of special ideas. As another proof of this, we may cite the phenomenon of dreams, in which quite frequently the patient's psychic difficulties or complexes are given symbolically some human or animal form.

Proceeding a step further, the ancient science of Magic postulated that to eliminate this complex it was necessary to render it objective to the patient's or student's consciousness so that he might acquire some recognition of its presence. Whilst these subconscious knots of emotion, or astral spirits, are unknown and uncontrolled, the patient is unable to control them to the best advantage, to examine them thoroughly, to accept the one or to reject the other. First of all, was the hypothesis, they must acquire tangible, objective form before they may be controlled. So long as they remain intangible and amorphous and unperceived by the ego, they cannot adequately be dealt with. By a programme of formal evocation, however, the spirits of the dark underworld, or complexes of ideas inhabiting the deeper strata of unconsciousness, may be evoked from the gloom into visible appearance in the magical triangle of manifestation. Evoked in this technical way, they may be controlled by means of the transcendental symbols and formal processes of Magic, being brought within the dominion of the stimulated will and consciousness of the theurgist. In other words, they are once more assimilated into consciousness. No longer are they independent spirits roaming in the astral world, or partial systems dwelling in the Unconscious, disrupting the individual's conscious life. They are brought back once more into the personality, where they become useful citizens

so to speak, integral parts of the psyche, instead of outlaws and gangsters, grievous and dangerous enemies threatening psychic unity and integrity.

How are these evoked? What is the technical process of rendering objective these autonomous partial-systems? Magic parts company here with orthodox psychology. Many months of tedious analysis at enormous financial outlay are required by the present-day psychological method to deal with these problems, and few there be who are strong enough or patient enough to persist. The magical theory prefers a drastic form of emotional and mental excitation by means of a ceremonial technique. During the Evocation ceremony, divine and spirit names are continuously vibrated as part of a lengthy conjuration. Circumambulations are performed from symbolic positions in the temple--these representing different strata of the unconscious, different regions of the psychic world. Breath is inhaled into the lungs, and, rather like the pranayama technique of the Hindu Yogis, manipulated by the imagination in special ways. By means of these exercises, consciousness is stimulated to such a degree as to become opened, despite itself, to the enforced upwelling of the content of the Unconscious. The upwelling is not haphazard but is definitely controlled and regulated. For the Qabalists were thoroughly familiar with the ideas of suggestion and association, arranging their conjurations so that by means of association of ideas there would be suggested to the psyche the train of ideas required--and only that train. The particular partial-system is then exuded from the sphere of sensation and projected outwards. It embodies itself in so-called astral or etheric substance normally comprising the interior body which serves as the foundation or design of the physical form, and acting as the bridge between the body and the mind, of which it is the vehicle. The astral form now reflecting the partial system projected from the Unconscious, attracts to itself particles of heavy incense burned copiously during the ceremony. Gradually, in the course of the ceremonial, a materialisation is built up which has the shape and character of an autonomous being. It can be spoken to and it can speak. Likewise it can be directed and controlled by the operator of the ceremony. At the conclusion of the operation, it is absorbed deliberately and consciously back into the operator by the usual formula. "And now I say unto thee, depart from hence with the blessing of (the appropriate divine name governing that particular type of complex) upon thee. And let there ever be peace between me and thee. And be thou ever ready to come and obey my will, whether it be by a ceremony or but by a gesture."

Thus the defect in consciousness caused by the spirit obsession is remedied and, because of the accession to consciousness of the tremendous power and feeling involved in such a repression, the psyche of the operator is stimulated in a special way, according to the nature of the spirit. To recapitulate, the purpose of Evocation is that some portion of the human psyche which has become deficient in a more or less important quality is made intentionally to stand out, as it were. Given body and name by the power of the stimulated will and imagination and exuded astral substance, it is, to continue to use metaphor, specially nourished by the warmth and sustenance of the sun, and given water and food that it may grow and flourish.

Familiarity, of course, is requisite before this type of Magic should be attempted. It requires study and long training. Arduous and persistent toil needs to be undertaken with the appropriate formulae before one dare apply oneself to so formidable and perhaps dangerous an aspect of the magical routine. But it has this advantage over the analytical procedure. It is infinitely speedier when once the technique has been mastered and the

special association tracks have been familiarised, and considerably more thorough and effective as a cathartic agent. I hope one day to see a modification of it in current use by our psychologists.

There is an important variation of this technique. At first sight, it may seem to bear but little relationship with the Evocation method. But it too has as its objective the necessary assimilation of the unconscious content of the psyche into normal consciousness. Its object, also, is the enlarging of the horizon of the mind by enlarging the student's intellectual conceptions of the nature of the universe.

The elementary technical processes of this method call for the drawing or the painting of coloured symbols of the elements Earth, Air, Water, Fire and Ether. Each of these has a different traditional symbol and colour.

Earth is a yellow square

Air is a blue circle

Water is a silver crescent

Fire is a red triangle

Ether is a black egg

After staring intently at the symbol of some one particular element for several seconds, and then throwing the vision to some white or neutral surface, a reflex image of the complementary colour is seen against it. This is a normal optical illusion without having in itself any special significance. The optical reflex obtained, the student is counselled to close the eyes, imagining that before him is the symbolic shape and complementary colour of the element being used. The shape is then to be enlarged until it seems tall enough for him to visualise himself walking through it. Then he must permit the fantasy faculty of the mind full and unimpeded play. What is particularly important is that at this stage he must vibrate certain divine and archangelic names which tradition ascribes to that particular symbol. These names may be found in the first volume of my work *The Golden Dawn*.

In this way, he enters imaginatively or clairvoyantly by means of a vision, into the elemental realm corresponding to the nature of the symbol he has chosen. By employing element after element, he acquires a sympathetic contact with the understanding of the several hierarchical planes existing within Nature, and thus widens tremendously the sphere of his consciousness.

From the psychological point of view, we might understand the magical theory to imply that the Unconscious (which has been compared to the nine-tenths of an ice-berg concealed under water and not at all visible) may be classified into five principal layers or sub-divisions. These five levels correspond to the five elements, the most superficial being Earth, and the deepest being Ether or Spirit. By following such a vision or fantasy technique the candidate's ordinary consciousness is enabled to cross the otherwise impenetrable barrier subsisting between it and the unconscious. A link is formed between the two aspects of mind, a bridge is constructed, across which the psyche may pass at any moment. Entering these various psychic levels by way of an imaginative projection is analagous to forming an association track by means of which idea, inspiration, and vitality are made available to consciousness.

The vision thus obtained corresponds generally to a sort of dream, experienced however in a fully conscious state-- one in which none of the faculties of consciousness, such as will, criticism and keen perception are in any way in abeyance. The goal of

analysis, from the synthetic and constructive point of view, is accomplished readily by such means. A wide range of knowledge and feeling is thereby opened up and assimilated without strain or difficulty to the advantage and spiritual development of the individual. Interpretation of the vision is an important factor. The neglect of interpretation may account for the intellectual sterility and spiritual emptiness so frequently observed in those who employ similar methods. Acquaintance with the methods of Jung's symbolic analysis of dreams and spontaneous fantasies may be extremely useful here, providing a useful adjunct to the Qabalistic reference of symbols to the ten Sephiroth of the Tree of Life. Before passing on, it is interesting to note that Jung gives towards the end of his book *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* an account of a patient's spontaneous fantasy which is curiously similar to the tattwa technique I have just described. He calls it a " 'vision' which by intense concentration was perceived on the background of consciousness, a technique that is perfected only after long practice." It is so interesting that I am constrained to quote it here: "I climbed the mountain and came to a place where I saw seven red stones in front of me, seven on either side, and seven behind me. I stood in the middle of this quadrangle. The stones were flat like steps. I tried to lift the four stones that were nearest to me. In doing so I discovered that these stones were the pedestals of four statues of gods which were buried upside down in the earth. I dug them up and so arranged them around me that I stood in the middle of them. Suddenly they leaned towards one another so that their heads touched, forming something like a tent over me. I myself fell to the earth, and said, 'Fall upon me if you must, for I am tired.' Then I saw that beyond, encircling the four gods, a ring of flame had formed. After a time I arose from the ground and overthrew the statues of the gods. Where they fell to the earth four trees began to grow. And now from the circle of fire blue flames shot up which began to burn the foliage of the trees. Seeing this I said 'This must stop. I must go into the fire myself so that the leaves may not be burned.' Then I stepped into the fire. The trees disappeared and the ring of fire contracted to one immense blue flame that carried me up from the earth."

Divination, Evocation and Vision are the preliminary techniques of Magic. We have observed that there is considerable justification for their employment-- when there is adequate understanding of their meaning and technical procedure. But these are preliminary methods only. They are but steps leading to the consummation of the supreme sacrament. The inevitable end of Magic is identical to that conceived of in Mysticism, union with God-head. Magic conceives of divinity as Spirit and Light and Love. It is an all-pervasive and omnipresent vital force, permeating all things, sustaining every life from the most minute electron to the largest nebula of mindstaggering dimensions. It is this Life which is the substratum of the entirety of existence, and it is this primal consciousness in which we live and move and have our being. In the course of manifestation, cosmic centres develop within its infinitude, centres of lofty intelligence and power, whereby the cosmic high tension may be modified and reduced to a lower key so as ultimately to produce an objective manifestation. These cosmic centres of life are what for the moment we may name the Gods (not spirits)--beings of enormous wisdom, power and spirituality in an ascending hierarchical scale between us and the unknown and unnamed God. The particular hierarchy that they form receives in Magic a clear classification in terms of the Qabalistic Tree of Life.

In an earlier paragraph I gave the metaphor of a man striving to reach the roof top of a several storeyed building. Now Magic conceives of spiritual development in an analogous way. That is to say, it conceives a personal evolution as progressive and orderly. Divinity is the objective we seek to reach, the roof top. We, those of us cherishing the mystical ideal, are below on the ground. Not with one leap may we attain the summit. An intervening distance demands to be traversed. To reach the roof we must use either stairs or lift. By means of the magical technique we employ the invocation of the Gods, who answer metaphorically to the stairs or lift, and attempt union with their wider and vaster consciousness. Since they represent the several cosmic levels of energy and mind intervening between us and the supreme goal, as we unite ourselves in love and reverence and surrender to them, by so much the nearer do we approach to the ultimate source and root of all things.

Using the plan of the Tree of Life as his guide, the magician invokes the lower Gods or Archangels as they are named in another system, desirous of mingling his own life with, and surrendering his own being to, the greater and more extensive life of the God. Thus his spiritual perceptions become finer and more sensitive, and his consciousness becomes with time accustomed to the high tension of the divine force flowing through him. His interior evolution proceeding, he invokes the God of the Sephirah or plane immediately above. Following the same procedure, he attempts to assimilate his own essence, his own integrated consciousness, to that of the divinity he has invoked. And so on--until finally he stands upon the lofty Darien peak of spiritual realisation, united with the transcendental life of infinity, feeling with universal love and compassion, conscious of all life and every thing as himself with supreme vision and power. As Iamblichus, the Neoplatonic theurgist, once expressed it: "If the essence and perfection of all good are comprehended in the gods, and the first and ancient power of them is with us priests (i.e. theurgists or magicians) and if by those who similarly adhere to more excellent natures and genuinely obtain a union with them, the beginning and end of all good is earnestly pursued; if this be the case, here the contemplation of truth, and the possession of intellectual science are to be found. And a knowledge of the Gods is accompanied with . . . the knowledge of ourselves."

So much for theory. How does the art of invocation proceed? Most important of all is the imaginative faculty. This must be trained to visualise symbols and images with the utmost clarity, ease, and precision. The necessity for this springs from the fact that certain God-forms are to be visualised. Most popular in magical techniques are the Egyptian God-forms. There seems to be a certain quality of specific definiteness about forms such as Osiris, Isis, Horus and Nuit, for example, which renders them peculiarly effective for this kind of training. In another system, where the Archangels are synonymous with the divine Gods, forms are visualised based upon an analysis of the individual letters comprising of God-name. That is to say, should we employ the Jewish Qabalistic system, each Hebrew letter has attributed to it a colour, astrological symbol, divinatory meaning in Tarot and Geomancy, and element. When building up the so-called Telematic image of the Archangel in the imagination, we take each letter as representing some particular part or limb of the Form, and some particular shape, feature, or colour. Thus from the letters of its name, a highly significant and eloquent form is ideally constructed.

Seated or lying in a perfectly relaxed physical state, one in which no muscular or nervous tension can send a disturbing message to the brain, the student endeavours to imagine that a particular God-form or Telesmatic Image surrounds him or coincides with his physical shape. Sometimes but a few minutes suffice to produce a conscious realisation of the presence, though more often than not a good hour's work at the least is required to procure worthwhile results. As concentration and reflection become more intense and profound, the body becomes vitalised by streams of dynamic energy and power. The mind, too, is invaded by Light, great intensity of feeling, and inspiration. The name of the God or Archangel is meanwhile frequently vibrated. This vibration serves two ends. One, to keep the mind well concentrated on the ideal form by means of repetition. Two, the vibration awakens in the depths of the microcosmic consciousness that magical faculty which is akin or corresponds to its macrocosmic power. Rhythmic breathing likewise is undertaken so as to tranquilise mind and body, and to open the subtler parts of the inner nature of the omni-present all-permeating life. Visualisations of the letters of the Name moreover are practised. According to traditional rules, the letters are manipulated by the mind as moving within the forms, or occupying certain important positions on plexuses or major nerve centres. The totality of these methods conspire to exalt the consciousness of the operator, to lift up his mind by no devious or uncertain route to a nobler interior plane where is a perception of the meaning and transcendental nature and being of the God.

Over and above all these methods, or, more accurately, combining these techniques, is a final phase of Magic which I propose only to touch upon in brief-- Initiation. The necessity and rationale of this process depends upon the postulated ability of a trained initiate to impart something of his own illumination and spiritual power to a candidate by means of a ceremony. Such a magnetic transmission of power is conceived to stir up the inner faculties of the candidate--faculties dormant and obscured for many a sorry year. As Psellus, another Neoplatonist once remarked of Magic, "Its function is to initiate or perfect the human soul by the power of materials here on earth, for the supreme faculty of the soul cannot by its own guidance aspire to the sublimest intuitions, and to the comprehension of Divinity."

Since the divine principles of man are obscured and latent within him, so that consciousness, of itself and by itself is unable to climb to the distant heights of spiritual intimacy with universal life, Magic in the hands of a trained and experienced Magus is the means whereby that eclipse of the inner light may be overcome. By means of several initiations, the seeds of awakening are sown within the soul. Later they are fanned and stimulated into an active living flame lighting the brain, illuminating the soul, and providing the necessary guidance to accomplish the purpose of incarnation.

The number of ceremonies and their detailed implication must differ, naturally, with different systems, though in general meaning all are in complete accord. In one system of initiation which is of especial significance to me personally, the major initiation ceremonies are seven in number. The first of these is a ceremony of preparation, consecration and purification, bringing to the dull gaze of the neophyte some vague intimation of the Light to which he aspires and which seems lost in the dim darkness afar. The seed of the Light is sown deeply within him by way of suggestions embodied in ritual speeches so that, time and devotion to the work acting as incubating agents, it may grow and blossom into the full-grown tree of illumination and divine union. The next five

ceremonies are concerned with developing what are termed the elemental bases of the soul. Consciousness, placed under the surveillance of the Light, requires to be strengthened in its elemental aspects. So that when the Light ultimately does indwell the soul of man, the elemental self may be strong enough and pure enough to support the soul so that it may safely bear the full brunt of the divine glory. At first, this may not appear perhaps an urgent necessity. But if one remembers the pathologies of mysticism, the well-meaning but scatterbrained and unpractical people of this world who have been totally unfitted for the conquest of life by a mild species of psycho-spiritual experience, then the magical routine obtains some degree of justification. It is in vain that the wine of the gods is poured into old cracked vessels. We must make certain that the vessels are intact and strong, capable of retaining and not spilling the wine poured from above. The five elemental ceremonies having been experienced, and the seeds of the divine Earth, Air, Water, Fire and Ether sown within the human soul, the candidate is ready for the final initiation of this particular series. The central point of this initiation is the invocation of what commonly is called the higher Self, or the Holy Guardian Angel. This is the central core of the individuality, the root of the Unconscious. Before union with the Infinite may be envisaged, it is necessary that every principle in the human constitution be united so that man becomes one united consciousness, and not a disconnected series of separate discrete consciousnesses. The intelligence of the physical cells comprising the body, the principle of the emotions and feelings, the sphere of the mind itself, these must be united and bound together by a conscious realisation of the true nature of the Self employing them, the higher Genius. Integrity produced through the agency of the telestic or initiatory rites, then the whole human being, the entire man may set forth upon that lengthy but incomparable bright road which leads to the end, and to the beginning also, of life. Then, and only then, is man able to realise the meaning of life, and the purpose of his multitudinous incarnations on earth. No longer is a vague mysticism countenanced and idealised as a cowardly escape from the difficulties and turmoils of this life. With these latter he is now capable of dealing and, moreover, of completely mastering them, so that no longer do they enslave him. By no ties either of attachment or disgust is he bound to the duties of this earth--ties which must necessitate his further and continued incarnation until he has successfully severed them.

Freedom obtained through the acquisition of integrity in its truest and divinest sense, then the next magical step in evolution is possible of recognition and achievement--the conscious return of man to the divine Light from which he came.