

The Meaning Of Magic

by Israel Regardie

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We live today in a world of great material progress and mechanical ingenuity. On every hand is flouted the social advantages of the world-wide communication bequeathed to us by such modern inventions as aviation, radio and space-craft. Time seems to disappear in the face of such things, and space dwindles almost to nothing. The peoples of the earth are drawn far closer together than ever they have been before in recorded history. By way of paradox, however, simultaneously with this unique advance in scientific progress, a large proportion of mankind is supremely miserable. It suffers the pangs of dire starvation because scientific methods have yielded an over-production of foods and manufactured articles without having solved the problem of distribution. Yet modern science has become invested with a nature which originally was not its own.

Despite the chaos of international affairs, and the fear of another catastrophic war present in the minds of most people, it has become robed in a mighty grandeur, almost of divinity. Perhaps it is because of this feeling of insecurity and fear that this condition has come about, for the human psyche is a cowardly thing at core. We cannot bear to be honest with ourselves, accepting the idea that whilst we are human we are bound to feel insecurity, anxiety and inferiority. Instead, we project these fears outwards upon life, and invest science or any body of knowledge with vast potential of affect so as to bolster up our dwindling fund of courage. So science has become, thanks to our projected affect, an authority that hardly dares to be questioned. We cannot bear that it should be questioned for we must feel that in this subject at least is authority, unshakeable knowledge and the security we so dearly crave. The phenomenon is hardly dissimilar to that of a few centuries ago when religion, formal religion of the churches, was the recipient of this obeisance and respect. For many people, science has now become their intellectual keynote, by whose measuring rod--despite their own personal neuroses and moral defects--all things so ever are ruled, accepted or rejected.

Pursuits no matter of what nature which temporarily are not popularly favored, even though in them lies the hope for the spiritual advancement of the world, or subjects which do not possess the sanction of those who are the leading lights in the scientific world, are apt thus to receive as their lot neglect and gross misunderstanding. When many folk are introduced to Magic, for instance, the first reaction is either one of stark fear and horror--or else we are greeted by a smile of the utmost condescension. This is followed by the retort intended to be devastating that Magic is synonymous with superstition, that long ago were its tenets exploded, and that moreover it is unscientific. This, I believe, is the experience of the majority of people whose prime interest is Magic or what now passes as Occultism. It seems that just as their hope for security and their desire for unshakeable knowledge becomes projected upon science, so their inner fears and unfaced terrors are projected upon this maltreated body of traditional knowledge, Magic.

Disconcerting this reaction can most certainly be, unless criticism and the call for definitions immediately is resorted to. By these means alone may we who champion Magic obtain a begrudged hearing.

Science is a word meaning knowledge. Hence any body of knowledge, regardless of its character--whether ancient, mediaeval, or modern--is a science. Technically, however, the word is reserved primarily to imply that kind of knowledge reduced to systematic order. This order is encompassed by means of accurate observation experimentally carried out over a period of time, the classification of the behaviour of natural phenomena alone, and the deduction of general laws to explain and to account for that behaviour. If this be the case, then Magic must likewise claim inclusion within the scope of the same term. For the content of Magic has been observed, recorded and described in no uncertain terms over a great period of time. And though its phenomena are other than physical, being almost exclusively psychological in their effect, they are of course natural. General laws, too, have been evolved to account for and explain its phenomena.

A definition of Magic presents a rather more difficult task. A short definition which will really explain its nature and describe the field of its operation seems practically impossible. One dictionary defines it as "the art of applying natural causes to produce surprising effects." Havelock Ellis has ventured the suggestion that a magical act is a name which may well be given to cover every conceivable act in the whole of life's span. It is Aleister Crowley's suggestion that "Magic is the science and art of causing changes to occur in conformity with will." Dion Fortune slightly modified this by adding a couple of words-- "changes in consciousness." The anonymous mediaeval author of *The Goetia*, or *Lesser Key of King Solomon* has written a poem to that book where occurs the passage that "Magic is the highest, most absolute, and most divine knowledge of Natural philosophy . . . True agents being applied to proper patients strange and admirable effects will thereby be produced. Whence magicians are profound and diligent searchers into Nature."

Have these definitions taught us anything of a precise nature about the subject? Personally I doubt it very much; all are too general in their scope to tend towards edification. Let us therefore cease seeking definitions and consider first of all certain aspects or fundamental principles of the subject, Afterwards, perhaps, we may have sufficient trust worthy and evidential material at our disposal to formulate anew a definition which may convey something intelligible and precise to our minds.

Within the significance of the one term Magic are comprehended several quite independent techniques, as I shall mention on a later page, in another essay. It may be advantageous to examine some of these techniques. Before doing so, however, it might be well to consider a part of the underlying theory. I know many will say by way of criticism of this discussion, that it is nothing but primitive psychology--and only the psychology of auto-suggestion at that. There will be a decided sneer, barely concealed. However, this objection does not completely dispose of the subject by any means. A very great deal more remains to be said. Not that I would deny that in Magic the process of self-suggestion is absent. Most certainly it is present. But what I must emphasis here is

the fact that it is present in a highly evolved and elaborate form. It almost makes the technical approach of some of our modern experimenters look puerile and undeveloped. We are not to suppose for one moment that the innovators and developers of the magical processes in days gone by were naive or fools, unaware of human psychology and the structure of the mind itself. Nor that they refrained from facing many of the psychic problems with which we nowadays have had to deal. Many of the early magicians were wise and skilled men, artists and sages, well-versed in the ways and means of influencing and affecting people.

We know that they understood a good deal about hypnotism and the Induction of hypnoidal states. It is highly probable that they speculated, as have done innumerable modern psychologists, upon technical methods of inducing hypnoidal states without the aid and help of a second person. But they soon became aware of all the obstacles and barriers that beset their path. And these were many. I believe that in Magic they devised a highly efficient technical procedure for overcoming these difficulties.

When Coue some years ago burst upon our startled horizon with his spectacular formula of "day by day in every way I am getting better and better" many believed that here at last we were presented with the ideal method of getting down to brass tacks, of finally being able to impinge upon the Unconscious mind, so called. Hundreds of thousands of people surely must have gone to bed at night, determined to induce a relaxation that was as nearly perfect as they could obtain, and attempted to enter the land of slumber while muttering sleepily the magical formula over and over again. Others listened to music in dimly lighted rooms until they experienced some sense of exaltation and then mumbled the healing phrase until they felt that surely some favourable result must occur.

Assuredly some lucky people got results. They were, however, few and far between. Some of these did overcome certain physical handicaps of illness, nervousness, so-called defects in speech and other mannerisms, and thus were able to better themselves and their positions in the world of reality. Others were less fortunate--and these were by far the greater number, the great majority.

What was the difficulty that prevented these people, this large majority, from applying the magical formula until success was theirs? Why were they not able to penetrate that veil stretched between the various levels of their minds.

Before we answer these questions--and I believe that Magic does really answer them--let us analyze the situation a little more closely.

The unconscious in these systems of so called practical psychology, metaphysics, and auto-suggestion, is considered a slumbering giant. These systems hold that it is a veritable storehouse of power and energy. It controls every function of the body every moment of every day, nor does it sleep or tire. The heart beats seventy two times per minute, and every three or four seconds our lungs will breathe in oxygen and exhale carbonic acid and other waste products. The intricate and complex process of digestion and assimilation of food which becomes part and parcel of our very being, the circulation

of blood, the growth, development and multiplication of cells, the organic resistance to infection--all these processes are conceived of as immediately under the control of this portion of our minds of which we are not normally aware--the Unconscious.

This is only one theoretical approach to the Unconscious. There are other definitions of its nature and function which altogether preclude the practical possibility of resorting to suggestion or auto-suggestion for coping with our ills. For example, there is the definition provided by Jung with which in many ways I am in sympathy, and it might be worth our while to quote it at some length.

He wrote in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* that "man's unconscious likewise contains all the patterns of life and behaviour inherited from his ancestors, so that every human child, prior to consciousness, is possessed of a potential system of adapting psychic functioning . . . While consciousness is intensive and concentrated, it is transient and is directed upon the immediate present and the immediate field of attention; moreover, it has access only to material that represents one individual's experience stretching over a few decades.... But matters stand very differently with the unconscious. It is not concentrated and intensive, but shades off into obscurity; it is highly extensive and can juxtapose the most heterogeneous elements in the most paradoxical way. More than this, it contains, besides an indeterminable number of subliminal perceptions, an immense fund of accumulated inheritance-factors left by one generation of men after another, whose mere existence marks a step in the differentiation of the species. If it were permissible to personify the unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death, and, from having at his command a human experience of one or two million years, almost immortal.

If such a being existed, he would be exalted above all temporal change; the present would mean neither more nor less to him than any year in the one hundredth century before Christ; he would be a dreamer of age-old dreams and, owing to his immeasurable experience, he would be an incomparable prognosticator. He would have lived countless times over the life of the individual, of the family, tribe and people, and he would possess the living sense of the rhythm of growth, flowering and decay."

Granted this kind of definition, the whole idea of suggesting ideas to this "dreamer of age-old dreams" sounds utterly presumptuous. Only a simpleton, living a superficial intellectual and spiritual life, would have the audacity to dare give this "being" suggestions relative to business, marriage, or health. Such a concept then immediately rules out the use of suggestion, demanding more sophisticated approaches.

For the time being, and only for the purpose of this discussion, let us grant validity to the first concept of the unconscious as being a titan who will respond to suggestions if the latter can be gotten through to him. The theory goes, therefore, that if, in the face of some bodily ill or disfunction, we could literally tell the Unconscious what we want done, these results could occur in answer to our concentrated wish. Theoretically, the theory sounds all right. Unfortunately, for one thing, it does not take into consideration the fact that early in life an impenetrable barrier is erected within the psyche itself. A barrier of

inhibition is built up between the unconscious and the conscious thinking self--a barrier of prejudices, false moral concepts, infantile notions, pride and egotism. So profound is this armoured barrier that our best attempts to get past it, around it, or through it are utterly impotent. We become cut off from our roots, and have no power, no ability, to contact the deeper, the instinctual, the more potent side of our natures.

The various schools of auto-suggestion and metaphysics all have different theories and techniques with regard to overcoming this barrier. That some people do succeed is unquestionable. One meets almost every day an individual here and there who is able to "demonstrate"--to use the ghastly word they so glibly employ. These few are able to impress their Unconscious minds with certain ideas which fall as though upon fertile soil, fructify and bring salutary results. These we cannot deny--much as sometimes we would like to, so offensive is their smugness, their dogmatic attitude, their unthinkingness.

But by far the great majority of their devotees fail lamentably. They have not obviously been able to overcome this difficulty by the employment of the usual routines I am sure the ancient sages and magi knew of these problems--knew them very well. I am also quite sure that they realized that the technique they used was, amongst other things, a process of suggesting a series of creative ideas to themselves. But what I am equally certain of is this. They had perfected an almost ideal method which proved itself able to penetrate this hitherto impenetrable endopsychic barrier. They were able to reach this imprisoned titan locked up in the hearts of every one of us, and set it free so that it could work with them and for them. Thus they became almost lyrical in their descriptions of what could not be accomplished by the individual who employed their techniques with courage and perseverance.

As I say, they knew of the existence of this psychic armoring, and knew it only too well.

All their methods were directed to mobilizing all the forces of the individual, reinforcing his will and imagination, to the end that he could overcome himself to realize his kinship, his identity and unity with the unconscious self.

What these methods were, I hope to describe in some small detail in these pages. Some of them may appear irrational to us. They certainly are irrational. But that is no argument for rejecting them summarily. A great part of life itself is irrational. But it is incumbent upon us to accept life in all its aspects, rational and irrational as well. One of the very earliest things a psycho-analytic patient learns is this one fact--that he has at least two sides to his nature, a rational and an irrational side. Together they comprise a single discrete self, his personality. If he denies the validity or existence of either one of them, he does violence to himself and must suffer accordingly. Both of these two factors must be permitted to exist side by side, the one affecting the other. In this way, the individual grows, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, and all his ways will prosper. With denial, nothing but trouble, neurosis and disease can follow.

These irrational processes that were instituted of old as the technique of Magic comprise the use of invocation or prayer, of the use of the imagination in formulating images and symbols, of employing the religious sense to awaken ecstasy and an intensity of feeling, of rates of breathing that would alter the accustomed neuro-physiological patterns and so render more permeable the barrier within the mind itself. Everything that would conduce to a heightening of feeling and imagination, that would lead to the instigation of an overpowering ecstasy, would be encouraged, for it would be in this psychological state that the normal barriers and confines of the conscious personality could be over-ridden in a tempestuous storm of emotional concentration.

It was the ancient theory that the unconscious or the deeper levels of the psyche could be reached principally by two methods. These were intense concentration, and intensity of emotion. The former is extremely difficult of achievement. Certainly there are methods whereby the mind itself may be trained so to concentrate that eventually a funnel, as it were, is created by the mind, through which suggestions could be poured into the unconscious to work their way out in the various ways desired. But such methods are for the very few. There is only an individual here and there who has the patience and the indomitable will to sit by himself for a certain period during the day, and each day, and subject himself to an iron mental discipline.

The emotional intensity, while not easy to cultivate, at least is more within the bounds and possibilities of achievement than is the other. It was this method that the ancient magicians cultivated to a very fine art. They devised innumerable means whereby the normal physiological habits could be changed and altered, so as to permit of this impingement upon the underlying basis of the self.

To summarise, there is Divination, the art of obtaining at a moment's notice any required type of information regarding the outcome of certain actions or events. Fortune telling so-called is an abuse. The sole purpose of the art is to develop the intuitive faculties of the student to such an extent that eventually all technical methods of divination may be discarded. When that stage of development has been reached, mere reflection upon any problem will automatically evoke from the intuitive mechanism within the information required, with a degree of certainty and assurance involved that could never be acquired save from an inner psychic source.

Another phase--perhaps that which has been stressed more than all others--is Ceremonial Magic in its widest sense. Comprised within this expression, are at least three distinct types of ceremonial endeavor, all, however, subject to one general set of rules or governed by one major formula. The word "ceremonial" includes rituals for initiation, for the invocation of Gods so-called, and the evocation of elemental and planetary spirits. There is also the enormous sphere of talismans, and their consecration and charging.

Ceremonial is probably the most ideal of all methods for spiritual development since it entails the analysis and subsequent stimulation of every individual faculty and power. Its results are genius and spiritual illumination. But personal aptitude is so potent a factor in this matter, as well as in divination, that although the word "Art" may be applied to cover their operation it would be unjust to Magic to denominate it a Science.

The third, and in some ways the most important branch for my particular purpose at the moment, is Vision, or the Body of Light technique. It is with this latter that I shall deal exclusively in this essay, as it contains elements which I feel answer more definitely to the requirements of a Science than any other.

In discussing Magic, the reader's pardon must be sought if reference is continually made to a technical philosophical system named the Qabalah. They are so interlaced that it is well-nigh impossible to separate them. Qabalah is theory and philosophy. On the other hand, Magic is the practical application of that theory. In the Qabalah is a geometrical glyph named the Tree of Life, which is really a symbolic map both of the universe in its major aspects, and of its microcosm, man. Upon this map are depicted ten principal continents, so to say, or ten fields of activity where the forces constituting or underlying the Universe function in their respective ways. In man these are analysable into ten facets of consciousness, ten modes of spiritual activity. These are called the Sephiroth. I cannot enter more fully into an outline of this map here though I have repeatedly referred to it here and in other essays; but the reader will find it adequately described in various books or articles on the subject.

Now consider with me that especial Sephirah or subtle aspect of the universe called by the Qabalists Yesod. Translated as the sphere of the Foundation, it is part of the Astral Light--an omni-form plane of magnetic, electric, and ubiquitous substance, interpenetrating and underlying the whole of the visible perceptible world. It acts as a more or less permanent mould whereupon the physical world is constructed, its own activity and constant change ensuring the stability of this world as a compensating factor. In this world function the dynamics of feeling, desire and emotion, and just as the activities of this physical world are engineered through the modalities of heat and cold, compression and diffusion, etc., so in the astral are operative attraction and repulsion, love and hate. Another of its functions is to exist as the memory of nature, wherein are automatically and instantaneously recorded every act of man and every phenomenon of the universe from time immemorial to the present day. The nineteenth century Magus, Eliphas Levi, has written of this astral Light that: "There exists an agent which is natural and divine, material and spiritual, a universal plastic mediator, a common receptacle of the vibrations of motion and the images of forms, a fluid and a force, which may be called in some way the Imagination of Nature...." And again he registers the conviction that it is "the mysterious force whose equilibrium is social life, progress, civilization, and whose disturbance is anarchy, revolution, barbarism, from whose chaos a new equilibrium at length evolves, the cosmos of a new order, when another dove has brooded over the blackened and disturbed waters."

It is interesting to glance from this Theurgic concept to a psychological one, which is not very unlike it. The following paragraph is more or less of a paraphrase of Jung's ideas concerning it, culled from an essay of his entitled *Analytical Psychology and Weltanschauung*. It is an extension of the ideas previously quoted. He defines it first of all as the all-controlling deposit of ancestral experience from untold millions of years, the echo of prehistoric world-events to which each century adds an infinitesimally small amount of variation and differentiation. Because it is in the last analysis a deposit of world-events finding expression in brain and sympathetic nerve structure, it means in its totality a sort of timeless world-image, with a certain aspect of eternity opposed to our momentary, conscious image of the world. It has an energy peculiar to itself, independent of consciousness, by means of which effects are produced in the psyche that influence us all the more powerfully from the dark regions within. These influences remain invisible to everyone who has failed to subject the transient world-image to adequate criticism, and who is therefore still hidden from himself. That the world has not only an outer, but an inner aspect. That it is not only outwardly visible, but also acts powerfully upon us in a timeless present, from the deepest and most subjective hinterland of the psyche---this Jung holds to be a form of knowledge which, regardless of the fact that it is ancient wisdom, deserves to be evaluated as a new factor in forming a philosophic world-view. I suggest, then, that what the Magicians imply by the Astral Light is identical in the last resort with the Collective Unconscious of modern psychology.

By means of the traditional Theurgic technique it is possible to contact consciously this plane, to experience its life and influence, converse with its elemental and angelic inhabitants so-called, and return here to normal consciousness with complete awareness and memory of that experience. This, naturally requires training. But so does every department of science. Intensive preparation is demanded to fit one for critical observation, to provide one with the particular scientific alphabet required for its study, and to acquaint one with the researches of one's predecessors in that realm. No less should be expected of Magic--though all too often miracles are expected without due preparation. Anyone with even the slightest visual imagination may be so trained as to handle in but a short while the elementary magical technique, by which one is enabled to explore the subtler aspects of life and the universe. To transcend this "many-coloured world." To gain admittance to loftier realms of soul and spirit is quite another matter. One calling for other faculties and other powers, particularly a fiery devotion and an intense aspiration to the highest.

But with the latter, I am not just now concerned, even though it is the pulsing heart and more important aspect of Theurgy. It is with the scientific aspect of Magic, its more readily verifiable aspect, that I shall deal now. Elsewhere I have given as traditional attributions or associations to the sphere in question the following symbols. Its planet is said to be the Moon, its element Air, its number Nine, its colour purple--and also silver in another scale. The Pearl and Moonstone are its jewels, aloes its perfume, and its so-called divine name is Shaddai El Chai. The Archangel attributed to it is Gabriel, its choir of Angels are the four Kerubs ruling the elements, and its geomantic symbols are Populus and Via. The Tarot symbols appertaining to this sphere are those cards in each of the four suits numbered IX, and closely associated with it also is the twenty-first trump card

entitled "The World." Here we find depicted a female form surrounded by a green garland. Actually this trump card is attributed to the thirty-second path of Saturn, which connects the material plain to Yesod. How, now, arises the question, how were these symbols and names obtained? What is their origin? And why are they so called attributions or correspondences of that Sephirah called the Foundation?

First of all, meditation will disclose the fact that all have a natural harmony and affinity one with the other--though not perhaps readily seen at the first glance. For example, the Moon is, to us, the fastest moving planet. It travels through all the twelve signs of the zodiac in about twenty-eight days. The idea of rapid change is there implicit, revealing the concept that the astral, while almost a timeless eternal deposit of world events, is nevertheless the origin of mutations and alterations, which later influence the physical world--in the same way that impulse and thought must precede any action. Its element is air, a subtle all pervading medium--comparable to the astral light itself--a medium without which life is quite impossible. Nine is the end of all numbers, containing the preceding numbers within its own sum. It always remains itself when added to itself or multiplied, or subtracted, suggesting the fundamental all-inclusive self-sustaining nature of the realm.

What is still more important, however, from the scientific viewpoint is that they are things, names, and symbols actually perceived in that sphere by the skryer in the spirit-vision. As a matter of solid proof, one could quote numerous visions and astral journeys obtained by different people in different places at different times, in which all the traditional symbols appear in dynamic and in curiously dramatic and vital form.

Magic, as already remarked, is a practical system, and every part has been devised for experiment. Each part is capable of verification using appropriate methods. Each student may check it for himself, and thus discover the realities of his own divine nature as well as of the universe both within and without him, independently of what any other man may have written in books. We ask for experiment; demand it even, for the sake of mankind. We invite the earnest and sincere student to experiment for himself with that technique described in Chapter Ten of my book *The Tree of life*, and then compare his results, the journey to any one Path or Sephirah, with the correspondences briefly delineated in my other work *A Garden of Pomegranates* or in Dion Fortune's book *The Mystical Qabalah*. It is with the utmost confidence that I say one hundred astral journeys obtained in that way will correspond in every instance with the major symbols, names, numbers, and ideas recorded in the several books of the Qabalah.

Let me quote from the record of a colleague an illuminating passage or two illustrating what I mean. The following is a "vision" or waking dream--fantasy of the so-called thirty-second path. "We marched down the wide indigo road. There was a cloudy night-sky--no stars. The road was raised above the general level of the ground. There was a canal each side beyond which we could see the lights of what appeared to be a large city. We went on like this for a long way, but then I noticed in the distance a tiny figure of a woman, like a miniature--she seemed to be naked, but as she drew near, I saw a scarf floating round her. She had a crown of stars on her head and in her hands were two

wands. She came towards us very quickly, and I gazed fascinatedly at a string of pearls reaching from her neck to her knees--and gazing, found that we had passed through the circle of her pearls, and she had disappeared!"

The student of the Qabalah who has only a passing acquaintance with Tarot symbolism, will recognize here the twenty-first Atu of "The World," the path attributed to Saturn, linking the physical to the astral worlds. He will probably be very surprised to learn that the symbols on these cards represent dynamic and exceedingly vital realities. But I must pass on to a brief description of the entrance to Yesod.

"Now the sky is clear and full of stars... The Moon, a great yellow harvest moon, rises slowly up the sky to a full arch . . . and we saw the moonbeams shining on the high purple walls of a city. We did not delay to look about, but marched quickly to the centre of the city, to an open space, in the midst of which was a round temple like a ball of silver. It was approached by nine steps, and rested on a silver platform. It had four doors.

Before each was a large angel with silver wings... Inside, we were in a very airy place. Light breezes lifted our clothes and our hair--the interior was very white and clear silvery--no colours. Suspended in the centre was a great globe, like the moon itself... While we looked we saw that the globe was not suspended in the air; it rested on immense cupped hands. We followed the arms up and saw, far up near the roof, deep dark eyes looking down, dark like the night sky. And a voice said . . ."

Little point would be gained to continue with the rest of the quotation. This passage is given here solely that the reader may refer to the description of the astral plane in the textbooks, and then to the recurrence in this vision of the major symbols, and the dynamic form of dramatization. Let the student take good notice of the presence of the correct numbers, colours, planetary attributions, and above all the hint as to how much valuable knowledge may be acquired. Note the four doors to the Temple--representing the four major elements of fire, water, air and earth. For this astral world is also referred to the Ether (of which the element Air is a surrogate), the fifth element, quintessentialising the lower elements, the Temple to which the other elements are but doors. Suspended in the centre of the temple was a globe, symbolic possibly of the element Air itself which, in the Hindu Tattwa system, is represented by a blue sphere.

Before each of the doors stands an angel. These are the four Kerubic Angels, the vice-regents of the four cardinal quarters and elements ruling over a particular elemental world under the dominance of one of the letters of the Tetragrammaton. Possibly they are representations of the interior psychic delimitation of the soul's spatial area, so to speak, the absence of which would indicate an unhealthy diffusion or de-centralization of consciousness. Also the four cardinal points of space would be represented by these four angelic figures--concretizations, too, of the double play of the moral opposites. East is opposite to west, and north opposite to south, whilst each of these quarters has attributed to it some particular moral quality or psychic function. The sense of being in an airy place with light breezes bears out the formal attribution of air--a curious confirmation of the duality of meaning implied in pneuma, wind and spirit, a duality which occurs not only in the Greek, but in Hebrew, Arabic, and a host of primitive languages.

Individual after individual has been trained independently to visit this and other Sephiroth. While each vision is somewhat different in its detail and form to that here quoted, nevertheless there is a startling unanimity so far as concerns the essential symbolic features. This constitutes definite scientific proof of the supreme reality of the world of Magic, and demonstrates the possibility of personal experiment and research. Scientific research is possible in this world of astral or Unconscious realities, because they are effective things, that is, objective influences that work and influence mankind. This sphere is the deposit of the world experience of all times, and it is therefore an image of the world that has been forming for aeons, an image in which certain features, the so-called dominants, have been elaborated through the course of time. These dominants are the ruling powers, the gods and archangels and angels--that is representations of dominating laws and principles functioning in the cosmos. And since it is a world functioning in the brain structure and sympathetic nervous system of every individual it is a world which is open to every one who wishes to overcome the fear which centuries of mal-education have projected upon it, and discover for himself anew the reality of its dynamic urges and influences.

With but little ingenuity, specific tests may be undertaken with the object of testing the relationship between geometrical symbols, the vision obtained there from by means of the body of light technique, and the correspondences of these figures recorded in the proper books. It has been written that various elements--Fire, Water, Spirit, Air and Earth---are attributed to the five points of the Pentagram. Depending entirely on the direction in which the lines are traced, so will the figure invoke or banish the beings pertaining to that element. For example, if the student traces the invoking Pentagram of Fire in each of the four cardinal quarters, and then employs the sensitive sight of the Body of Light which previously he has cultivated, he will see appear almost immediately the fire elementals or Salamanders, the personalized fiery constituents of his own psyche. The tracing of the banishing fire pentagram will see them literally scuttle away without hesitation, subsiding into the Unconscious realm to which they belong, and from which they were called. Or let the student do this experiment in the presence of a reliable clairvoyant, not mentioning what figure is being traced. The results will be highly illuminating. I know some objection may be raised by immediately responding "telepathy." But so far as I can see, the response arouses far more obscure problems than the rationale to which objection is made, for telepathy certainly requires explanation along scientific and dependable lines, quite difficult at this stage of the game. These and a host of other rigorous tests constitute definite and precise scientific experiment of a significant and highly authoritative nature.

In the sense that several people may travel to certain paths and there undergo experiences wherein the essential features are identical or in which the psychic dominants coincide,

Magic may be assumed to be a definite, coherent science. It is precise and accurate. Magic is the accumulated record of psychic and spiritual experience which we have inherited from the past, from former generations of mankind.

On the other hand, it is clear that each of these visions would differ materially as to context, that is in the dramatic sense. The context, act and scene so to speak, depend entirely upon personal idiosyncrasy, intellectual integrity, and the spiritual capacity to discover and absorb the truth, whether it is painful to the ego or not. Where the personal element enters so powerfully as it does here, the adventure must be labeled an Art. Creative imagination in one person will be used to formulate with an established conventional set of symbols a whole string of incidents and experiences--illuminating and tending to the expansion of his consciousness--which to the vision of a simple unimaginative person would occur in far simpler and matter-of-fact form.

Sophisticated people, with a smattering of modern psychology, are likely to assume that Magic discloses nothing but the hidden depths of the Unconscious. They will say that these journeys are comparable to dream experiences, which are referred to the working and dramatizing power of the subconscious mind. What difference does it make if the Qabalists named this sphere or type of consciousness the Foundation or Astral World and the moderns the Unconscious? The terms are cognate, and the symbols interchangeable; both mean the same thing, when all things are considered. If Magic possesses weapons that are more penetrating and incisive than scientific ones, shall we reject them because Magic is the discredited house where they are stored? If magical methods reveal our secret selves more directly, and unlock the vast store of wisdom and power within our souls, showing us how to control them in ways that neither psycho-analysis nor any modern science has succeeded to do, should we not be foolish to reject its benefits?

Magic is a scientific method. It is a valid technique. Its approach to the universe and the secret of life's meaning is a legitimate one. If it assists us to become more familiar with what we really are, it is a Science--and a most important one. And to the scientist, whether he be psychologist or physicist, it will open up an entirely new universe of tremendous extent. If it succeeds in making us better men and women, a little more kind and generous, a little more aware of the spiritual heights to which we are capable of climbing with but a little exertion, then it is the religion of religions. And should it spur us to greater efforts in order to render life and living more beautiful and intelligible, should it make us more anxious to eliminate ugliness, suffering, and ignoble misery, surely it is an Art before which all other Muses must bow the head and bend the knee in reverential and perennial praise!