



# IN THE CONTINUUM

Vol. I, No. 6

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.  
Love is the law, love under will.

An. LXXI, 1975 e.v., Sun in 0° Libra  
Published by the College of Thelema  
P.O. Box 415, Oroville, CA. 95965  
© by Phyllis Seckler



The College of Thelema  
Founded in Service to  
the A.:A.:.

A PSALM

The Lord hath filled my mouth with thanksgiving; the  
Righteousness of the Lord hath made my throat his  
habitation.

The pavilion of the Lord is the roof of my mouth; the  
gateway of the Lord is of ivory.

My tongue is the handmaiden of the Lord; the Lord hath  
delighted in the palace of porphyry.

My lips shall rejoice in the righteousness of the Lord;  
my belly shall give thank, for the Lord filleth it  
with benediction.

I am the vessel of the Lord; the Lord delighteth in me;  
the Lord hath brought me to fulfilment.

Give praise unto the Lord, all ye that love the Lord;  
rejoice in Him; ye sons and daughters of enlighten-  
ment.

Behold, the Lord is exalted in righteousness; His up-  
rightness filleth the earth with praise.

For the Lord filleth my mouth with silence; and the  
blessing of the Lord is my satisfaction.

With secret song do I magnify the Lord; and His utter-  
ance is Light.

Aleister Crowley

The Blue Equinox  
p. 62



# COLLEGE of THELEMA



Founded in Service  
to the A : A :

Care Fratres,

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

It is time we gave more attention to the glyph of the Tree of Life. On this diagram we can place all ideas in the Universe. Therefore, it must be very flexible and that is why you see so many versions of the use of the Tree in the illustrations which follow. These diagrams were also meant to elucidate more clearly the points made in Crowley's article "Qabalistic Dogma". We must become very familiar with the method of referring all ideas to the Tree of Life, for that Tree is the Self.

Man is a lesser picture (the Microcosm) of the Whole of the Life forces or of the Universe (the Macrocosm). At any rate, all that he can know exists within himself. As the point of light (Hadit) he seeks ever to unite himself to Experience which exists in the starry Space of Nuit. As this process proceeds, he is ever uniting with Nuit. For this reason I have shown how the Tree of Life is constructed on man's spinal cord and bones. As an aside, I might mention that Saturn rules the formation of bones and the structure of the character, just as bones are the structure of the human figure. Saturn is ascribed to Binah, the sphere where the idea of form is first formulated. And this sphere belongs to the Supernals - that is, across the Abyss.

There are 32 "paths" in the Tree of Life. When we speak of "paths" in this way, we are also including the 10 spheres along with the 22 Atus or paths which connect the spheres. In the human backbone there are 33 vertebrae. However, if we add the sphere of Daath to our original number of 32, we come up with the number 33.

You will notice that there are three pillars which make up the Tree and that these three pillars correspond to the three channels of force described by Hindu thought, the Ida, Pingalla and Sushumna of the serpent Kundalini.



Some students get a bit mixed up about which side of the Tree of Life refers to their right side and which refers to the left side of the body. Imagine yourself backing up into the Tree. On the page you are seeing but a mirror image of what it really is. Therefore, the right side has the Spheres of Binah, Geburah and Hod to represent it and the left side has the spheres of Chokmah, Chesed and Netzach. Here again there might be puzzlement - why is the right side the feminine side and also why should the feminine be called the Pillar of Severity. You perhaps thought that the feminine in nature was soft and yielding. We are all prisoners of some false conceptions. Also, one must take a great deal more into consideration about this negative, yielding nature of the feminine. How about the fierceness of the mother animal if you threaten her young ones? How about the new discoveries in Scientific investigation that shows the female can withstand pain better than the male and can perform as well on the athletic field as long as she doesn't give in to misconceptions about herself and soften her muscles with long periods of inactivity? How about the known occult fact that females have a great deal of energy which may be tapped for useful purposes by the trained occultist? Why do you think that certain Hindu sects stress Maithuna with a young and vigorous female? And why not refer to the Book of the Law in Chapter One and discover for yourself some more facts about the so-called negative side of nature - the female side. I might mention a quote from this chapter, verse 61. "Ye shall gather goods and store of women and spices;" Why should it mention women in with goods and spices, and that they shall be gathered? Dion Fortune mentions in one of her books that women are the energy source for an Occult group and seem to work harder at getting things done than does the male. We have only to look at some primitive tribes to see this type of action in full force. It is not really because women have been oppressed by the male - though that has happened too - that we see the women doing the work of agriculture, raising the children, and being very responsible for the welfare of the family, in short, doing the bulk of the work that needs to be done. It is because women somehow tap the Universal Energy Sources in a much more efficient manner than does the male.

Enough of this digression. The Tree of Life really represents both male and female bodies. Also, remember that there is no progress in nature or in the Occult life unless there is a balance. So we see the soft and yielding with some of its other virtues represented as a balance on the side of Severity. If you will remember, I warned in one of my other letters to you that you must always seek a balance in the Book of the Law. If one chapter or verse is too severe, it must be balanced out against a verse or chapter that is not severe at all. This way I should hope that you will avoid the dangerous unbalance

which only too often strikes those who are students of the Occult. The results of unbalance are only too sad and they become very much more aggravated when one first becomes a Minerval or a Neophyte. Let me quote from Book 4, Part II, Chapter VI, by Crowley.

"Of the methods of destroying various deep-rooted ideas there are many.

"The best is perhaps the method of equilibrium. Get the mind into the habit of calling up the opposite to every thought that may arise. In conversation always disagree. See the other man's arguments; but, however much your judgment approves them, find the answer.

"Let this be done dispassionately; the more convinced you are that a certain point of view is right, the more determined you should be to find proofs that it is wrong.

"If you have done this thoroughly, these points of views will cease to trouble you; you can then assert your own point of view with the calm of a master, which is more convincing than the enthusiasm of a learner.

"You will cease to be interested in controversies; politics, ethics, religion will seem so many toys, and your Magical Will will be free from these inhibitions."

As the Tree of Life is balanced within each path and within each Sphere, so must you be balanced too. Here is another quote from Liber Aleph:

#### "DE AURO RUBEO"

"I would have thee to consider, o my Son, that Word of Publius Vergilius Maro, that was the greatest of all the Magicians of his Time: in medio tutissimus ibis. Which Thing hath also been said by many wise Men in other Lands; and the holy Qabalah confirmeth the same, placing Tiphereth, which is the Man, and the Beauty and Harmony of Things, and Gold in the Kingdom of the Metals, and the Sun among the Planets, in the midst of the Tree of Life. For the Centre is the Point of Balance of all Vectors. So then if thou wilt live wisely, learn that thou must establish this Relation of Balance with every Thing soever, not omitting one. For there is nothing so alien from thy Nature that it may not be brought into harmonious Relation therewith; and thy Stature of Manhood waxeth great even as thou comest to the Perfection of this Art. And there is nothing so close Kin to thee that it may not be hurtful to thee if this Balance be not truly adjusted. Thou hast need of the whole Force of the Universe to work with thy Will;



but this Force must be disposed about the Shaft of that Will so that there is no tendency to Hindrance or to Deflection. And in my Love of thee I will adorn this Thesis with Example following."

#### "DE SAPIENTIA IN RE SEXUALI"

"Consider Love. Here is a Force destructive and corrupting whereby have many Men been lost: witness all History. Yet without Love Man were not Man. Therefore thine Uncle Richard Wagner made of our Doctrine a Musical Fable, wherein we see Amfortas, who yielded himself to Seduction, wounded beyond Healing; Klingsor, who withdrew himself from a like Danger, cast out for ever from the Mountain of Salvation; and Parsifal, who yielded not, able to exercise the true Power of Love, and thereby to perform the Miracle of Redemption. Of this also have I myself written in my Poema called Adonis. It is the same with Food and Drink, with Exercise, with Learning itself; the Problem is ever to bring the Appetite into the right Relation with the Will. Thus thou mayst fast or feast; there is no Rule, but that of Balance. And this Doctrine is of general Acceptation among the better sort of Men; therefore on thee will I rather impress more carefully the other Part of my Wisdom, namely, the Necessity of extending constantly thy Nature to new Mates upon every plane of Being, so that thou mayst become the perfect Microcosm, an Image without Flaw of all that is." Aleister Crowley,

As you keep your magical diary it might be wise to write therein in what manner you have become unbalanced. Do you experience an excess of emotion? Seek its antidote in activity, in study, or the like. Do you have too much of materiality? Then try to offset it with spirituality and growth in the Law of Thelema. Are you active without thought and without understanding? Then you should certainly try to think about the results of action. Are you a prey to the phantoms of the mind? Surely you can find the opposite thoughts to cancel those out which so unbalance you?

If you desire to succeed in the mastery of yourself, it is incumbent upon you to root out the unbalance which is there; to become a more perfect Tree in yourself and thus to mirror the perfection of the Universe. Balance is to be found, then, by relating everything to the True Will and discovering if what is happening is a hindrance or a help to that Will.

Sometimes the neophyte will say he doesn't know his True Will. There is more about this matter in Liber Aleph and it would well repay you to study this book well. However, for now we can say that every human is bound to evolve and ever travel upwards on the Tree of Life, as does the Serpent that



touches all the Paths. In the Center of the Tree we see Tiphereth. This represents the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel in a very exalted form. Surely you can keep this ideal in your mind as you seek to find if you are achieving a balance. Do your pet ideas or emotions or thoughts or actions aid or hinder you in your evolution?

Thus if you have become a prey to one of your own obsessions about the nature of the astral plane or of entities therein, about the nature of love, about the nature of various thought processes, - whatever seems to be your worst struggle, you should be able to find the balance to the idea and thus you can draw the sting of involvement which seems so to upset and unbalance you. Nature herself gives us a clue. If something we are doing or feeling or thinking makes us dreadfully unhappy, then we are on the wrong path. The H.G.A. will come more readily to a nature calm and balanced and unruffled by the circumstances and accidents of life.

Much more can be learned about the Tree of Life and how it relates to the Qabalah and the Tarot and to Hindu and Chinese thought and so on in the bibliography which I append to the end of this letter. Here is hoping that you can find time to be thoroughly conversant with these books, for in them is much that will aid you on your Path. May you cease to be bothered by whatever it is that is maddening you. May your path be free of your self-placed stumbling stones.

Love is the law, love under will.

*Meral*

#### Bibliography

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Crowley, Aleister,   | <u>The Book of Thoth</u><br><u>The Temple of Solomon the King.</u> See <u>The Equinox</u> , Vol. I, Nos. 2 & 5.<br><u>Sepher Sephiroth</u> , <u>The Equinox</u> , Vol I, No 8<br><u>777</u><br><u>Qabalah of Aleister Crowley</u> , Ed. I.Regardie |
| Fortune, Dion        | <u>The Mystical Qabalah</u>  |
| Gray, William        | <u>The Ladder of Lights</u>  |
| Regardie, Israel     | <u>A Garden of Pomegranites</u><br><u>The Golden Dawn</u> , Vol.I.<br><u>The Middle Pillar</u><br><u>The Tree of Life</u>  |
| von Rosenroth, Knorr | and Mathers as translator. <u>The Kabbalah Unveiled.</u>   |

## QABALISTIC DOGMA

The Evolution of Things is thus described by the Qabalists.

First is Nothing, or the Absence of Things, **אין**, which does not and cannot mean Negatively Existing (if such an Idea can be said to mean anything), as S. Liddell Macgregor Mathers, who misread the Text and stultified the Commentary by the Light of his own Ignorance of Hebrew and Philosophy, pretends in his Translation of v. Rosenroth.

Second is Without Limit **אין סוף**, i.e., Infinite Space.

This is the primal Dualism of Infinity; the infinitely small and the infinitely great. The Clash of these produces a finite positive Idea which happens (see **בראשית**, infra, vol. ii, for a more careful study, though I must not be understood to indorse every Word in our Poet-Philosopher's Thesis) to be Light, **אור**. This word **אור** is most important. It symbolises the Universe immediately after Chaos, the Confusion or Clash of the infinite Opposites. **א** is the Egg of Matter; **ו** is **ו**, the Bull, or Energy-Motion; and **ר** is the Sun, or organised and moving System of Orbs. The three Letters of **אור** thus repeat the three Ideas. The Nature of **אור** is thus analysed, under the figure of the ten Numbers and the 22 Letters which together compose what the Rosicrucians have diagrammatised under the name of Minutum Mundum. (See Table of Correspondences.) It will be noticed that every Number and Letter has its "Correspondence" in Ideas of every Sort; so that any given object can be analysed in Terms of the 32. If I see a blue Star, I should regard it as a Manifestation of Chesed, Water, the Moon, Salt the Alchemical Principle, Sagittarius or What not, in respect of its Blueness - one would have to decide which from other Data - and refer it to the XVIIth Key of the Taro in Respect of its Starriness.

The Use of these Attributions is lengthy and various: I cannot dwell upon it: but I will give one Example.

If I wish to visit the Sphere of Geburah, I use the Colours and Forces appropriate: I go there: if the Objects which then appear to my spiritual Vision are harmonious therewith, it is one Test of their Truth.

So also, to construct a Talisman, or to invoke a Spirit.

The methods of discovering Dogma from sacred Words are also numerous and important: I may mention:-

(a) The Doctrine of Sympathies: drawn from the total Numeration of a Word, when identical with, or a Multiple or Submultiple of, or a Metathesis of, that of another Word.



(b) The Method of finding the Least Number of a Word, by adding (and re-adding) the Digits of its total Number, and taking the corresponding Key of the Taro as a Key to the Meaning of the Word.

(c) The Method of Analogies drawn from the Shape of the Letters.

(d) The Method of Deductions drawn from the Meanings and Correspondences of the Letters.

(e) The Method of Acrostics drawn from the Letters. This Mode is only valid for Adepts of the highest Grades, and then under quite exceptional and rare Conditions.

(f) The Method of Transpositions and Transmutations of the Letters, which suggest Analogies, even when they fail to explain in direct Fashion.

All these and their Varieties and Combinations, with some other more abstruse or less important Methods, may be used to unlock the Secret of a Word.

Of course with Powers so wide it is easy for the Partisan to find his favourite Meaning in any Word. Even the formal Proof  $0=1=2=3=4=5.....=n$  is possible.

But the Adept who worked out this Theorem, with the very Intent to discredit the Qabalistic Mode of Research, was suddenly dumbfounded by the Fact that he had actually stumbled upon the Qabalistic Proof of Pantheism or Monism.

What really happens is that the Adept sits down and performs many useless Tricks with the Figures, without Result.

Suddenly the Lux dawns, and the Problem is solved.

The Rationalist explains this by Inspiration, the superstitious Man by Mathematics.

I give an Example of the Way in which one works. Let us take IAO, one of the "Barbarous Names of Evocation," of which those who have wished to conceal their own Glory by adopting the Authority of Zarathustra have said that in the holy Ceremonies it has an ineffable Power.

But what Kind of Power? By the Qabalah we can find out the Force of the Name IAO.

We can spell it in Hebrew  $\text{י א ו}$  or  $\text{ו א י}$ . The Qabalah will even tell us which is the true Way. Let us, however, suppose that it is spelt  $\text{י א ו}$ . This adds up to 17.

But first of all it strikes us the I, A, and O are the three Letters associated with the three Letters  $\text{א ב ג}$  in the great



Name of Six Letters, **אהיהוה**, which combines **אהיה** and **יהוה**, Macroprosopus and Microprosopus. Now these feminine Letters **ה** conceal the "Three Mothers" of the Alphabet, **א**, **ב**, and **ש**. Replace these, and we get **אשימוא**, which adds up to 358, the Number alike of **נחש**, the Serpent of Genesis, and the Messiah. We thus look for redeeming Power in IAO, and for the Masculine Aspect of that Power.

Now we will see how that Power works. We have a curious Dictionary, which was made by a very learned Man, in which the Numbers from 1 to 10,000 fill the left hand Column, in Order, and opposite them are written all the sacred or important Words which add up to each Number.\*

We take this Book, and look at 17. We find that 17 is the number of Squares in the Swastika, which is the Whirling Disc or Thunderbolt. Also there is **חוג**, a Circle or Orbit; **זר**, to seethe or boil; and some other Words, which we will neglect in this Example, though we should not dare to do so if we were really trying to find out a Thing we none of us knew. To help our Deduction about Redemption, too, we find **חדרה**, to brighten or make glad.

We also work in another Way. I is the Straight Line or Central Pillar of the Temple of Life; also it stands for Unity, and for the Generative Force. A is the Pentagram, which means the Will of Man working Redemption. O is the Circle from which everything came, also Nothingness, and the Female, who absorbs the Male. The Progress of the Name shows then the Way from Life to Nirvana by means of the Will: and is a Hieroglyph of the Great Work.

Look at all our Meanings! Every one shows that the Name, if it has any Power at all, and that we must try, has the Power to redeem us from the Love of Life which is the Cause of Life, by its masculine Whirlings, and to gladden us and to bring us to the Bosom of the Great Mother, Death.

Before what is known as the Equinox of the Gods, a little while ago, there was an initiated Formula which expressed these Ideas to the Wise. As these Formulas are done with, it is of no Consequence if I reveal them. Truth is not eternal, any more than God; and it would be but a poor God that could not and did not alter his Ways at his Pleasure.

This Formula was used to open the Vault of the Mystic Mountain of Abiegnus, within which lay (so the Ceremony of Initiation supposed) the Body of our Father Christian Rosen Creutz, to be discovered by the Brethren with the Postulant

\* SEPHER SEPHIROTH, Sub Figura D. THE EQUINOX, Vol. I, No. 8.

as said in the Book called Fama Fraternitatis.

There are three Officers, and they repeat the Analysis of the Word as follows: -

Chief. Let us analyse the Key Word - I.

2nd. N.

3rd. R.

All. I.

Chief. Yod.

2nd. Nun. ]

3rd. Resh. }

All. Yod.

Chief. Virgo (♍) Isis, Mighty Mother.

2nd. Scorpio (♏) Apophis, Destroyer.

3rd. Sol (☉) Osiris, slain and risen.

All. Isis, Apophis, Osiris, IAO.

All spread Arms as if on a Cross, and say:-

The Sign of Osiris slain!

Chief bows his Head to the Left, raises his Right Arm, and lowers his Left, keeping the Elbow at right Angles, thus forming the Letter L (also the Swastika).

The Sign of the Mourning of Isis.

2nd. With erect Head, raises his Arms to form a V (but really to form the triple Tongue of Flame, the Spirit), and says:-

The Sign of Apophis and Typhon.

3rd. Bows his Head and crosses his Arms on his Breast (to form the Pentagram).

The Sign of Osiris risen.

All give the Sign of the Cross, and say:-

L.V.X.

Then the Sign of Osiris risen, and say:-

Lux, the Light of the Cross. \*

\* See THE EQUINOX, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 12, for the Signs of the Grades. Also given in GEMS FROM THE EQUINOX, P. 277.



This Formula, on which one may meditate for Years without exhausting its wonderful Harmonies, gives an excellent Idea of the Way in which Qabalistic Analysis is conducted.

First, the Letters have been written in Hebrew Characters.

Then the Attributions of them to the Zodiac and to Planets are substituted, and the Names of Egyptian Gods belonging to these are invoked.

The Christian Idea of I.N.R.I. is confirmed by these, while their Initials form the sacred Word of the Gnostics. That is IAO. From the Character of the Deities and their Functions are deduced their Signs, and these are found to signal (as it were) the Word Lux (𐤇𐤍𐤅), which itself is contained in the Cross.

A careful Study of these Ideas, and of the Table of Correspondences, which one of our English Brethren is making, will enable him to discover a very great Deal of Matter for Thought in these Poems which an untutored Person would pass by.

To return to the general Dogma of the Qabalists.

The Figure of Minutum Mundum will show how they suppose one Quality to proceed from the last, first in the pure God-World Atziluth, then in the Angel-World Briah, and so on down to the Demon-Worlds, which are however not thus organised. They are rather Material that was shed off in the Course of Evolution, like the Sloughs of a Serpent, from which comes their Name of Shells, or Husks.

Apart from silly Questions as to whether the Order of the Emanations is confirmed by Palaeontology, a Question it is quite incompetent to discuss, there is no Doubt the Sephiroth are types of Evolution as opposed to Catastrophe and Creation.

The great Charge against this Philosophy is founded on its alleged Affinities with Scholastic Realism. But the Charge is not very true. No Doubt but they did suppose vast Store-houses of "Things of one Kind" from which, pure or mingled, all other Things did proceed.

Since 𐤌, a Camel, refers to the Moon, they did say that a Camel and the Moon were sympathetic, and came, that Part of them, from a common Principle: and that a Camel being yellow brown, it partook of the Earth Nature, to which that Colour is given.

Thence they said that by taking all the Natures involved,



and by blending them in the just Proportions, one might have a Camel.

But this is no more than is said by the Upholders of the Atomic Theory.

They have their Storehouses of Carbon, Oxygen, and such (not in one Place, but no more is Geburah in one Place), and what is Organic Chemistry but the Production of useful Compounds whose Nature is deduced absolutely from theoretical Considerations long before it is ever produced in the Laboratory?

The difference, you will say, is that the Qabalists maintain a Mind of each Kind behind each Class of Things of one Kind; but so did Berkeley, and his Argument in that Respect is, as the great Huxley showed, irrefragable. For by the Universe I mean the Sensible; any other is Not to be Known; and the Sensible is dependent upon Mind. Nay, though the Sensible is said to be an Argument of an Universe Insensible, the latter becomes sensible to Mind as soon as the Argument is accepted, and disappears with its Rejection.

Nor is the Qabalah dependent upon its Realism, and its Application to the Works magical - but I am defending a Philosophy which I was asked to describe, and this is not lawful.

A great Deal may be learned from the Translation of the Zohar by S. Liddell Macgregor Mathers, and his Introduction thereto, though for those who have Latin and some acquaintance with Hebrew it is better to study the Kabbala Denudata of Knorr von Rosenroth, in Despite of the heavy Price; for the Translator has distorted the Text and its Comment to suit his belief in a supreme Personal God, and in that degraded Form of the Doctrine of Feminism which is so popular with the Emasculate.

The Sephiroth are grouped in various Ways. There is a Superior Triad or Trinity; a Hexad; and Malkuth: the Crown, the Father and the Mother; the Son or King; and the Bride.

Also, a Division into seven Palaces, seven Planes, three Pillars or Columns: and the like.

The Flashing Sword follows the Course of the Numbers and the Serpent Nechushtan or of Wisdom crawls up the Paths which join them upon the Tree of Life, namely the Letters.

It is important to explain the Position of Daath or Knowledge upon the Tree. It is called the Child of Chokmah and Binah, but it hath no Place. But it is really the Apex of a Pyramid of which the three first Numbers form the Base.

Now the Tree, or Minutum Mundum, is a Figure in a Plane of a solid Universe. Daath, being above the Plane, is therefore a Figure of a Force in four Dimensions, and thus it is the Object of the Magnum Opus. The three Paths which connect it with the First Trinity are the three lost Letters or Fathers of the Hebrew Alphabet.

In Daath is said to be the Head of the great Serpent Nechesh or Leviathan, called Evil to conceal its Holiness. (נחש = 358 = משיח, the Messiah or Redeemer, and לוייתן = 496 = מלכות, the Bride.) It is identical with the Kundalini of the Hindu Philosophy, the Kwan-se-on of the Mongolian Peoples, and means the magical Force in Man, which is the sexual Force applied to the Brain, Heart, and other Organs, and redeemeth him.

The gradual Disclosure of these magical Secrets to the Poet may be traced in these Volumes, which it has been my Privilege to be asked to explain. It has been impossible to do more than place in the Hands of any intelligent Person the Keys which will permit him to unlock the many Beautiful Chambers of Holiness in these Palaces and Gardens of Beauty and Pleasure.

Aleister Crowley

Collected Works, Vol. I

THE CHANT TO BE SAID OR SUNG UNTO OUR LADY ISIS

Roll through the caverns of matter, the  
world's irremovable bounds!  
Roll, ye wild billows of ether! the Sistron  
is shaken and sounds!  
Wild and sonorous the clamour, vast in the  
region of death,  
Live with the fire of the Spirit, the essence  
and flame of the breath!  
Sound, O sound!

Gleam in the world of the dark, where the chained  
ones shall tremble and flee!  
Gleam in the skies of the dusk, for the Light  
of the Dawn is in me!  
Light on the forehead, and life in the nostrils,  
and love in the breast,  
Shine, O thou Star of the Dawning, thou Sun  
of the Radiant Crest!  
Shine, O Shine!

Flame through the sky in the strength of  
the chariot-wheels of the Sun!  
Flame, ye young fingers of light, on the West  
of the morning that run!  
Flame, O thou Meteor Car, for my fire is  
exalted in thee!  
Lighten the darkness and herald the day light,  
and waken the sea!  
Flame, O flame!

Crown Her, O crown Her with stars as with flowers  
for a virginal gaud!  
Crown Her, O crown Her with Light and the flame  
of the down-rushing Sword!  
Crown Her, O crown Her with Love for maiden and  
mother and wife!  
Hail unto Isis! Hail! For She is the Lady  
of Life!  
Isis crowned!

Aleister Crowley

Collected Works  
Vol. I.



## CONSTRUCTION OF THE TREE OF LIFE

The procedure for constructing the glyph of the Tree of Life is fairly simple. There is some disagreement concerning the origin of the technique about to be illustrated. Probably its roots can be found in the lessons given by one of the mystery schools in England around 1900. The Golden Dawn or A.'.A.'. being likely candidates. The origin is of little import and the main thing is to know how to accurately construct a Tree while maintaining the significant relationships, both geometrically and trigonometrically, between the various paths. (The Sephiroth also being called paths). Frater Achad in The Anatomy of the Body of God has done some initiated analysis along these lines. A study of these exacting relations would prove very revealing.

In constructing the Tree, a series of "generating circles" are used as guides. They help in maintaining the important vertical proportions. Providing the proportions are kept exact, a Tree can be constructed on material of any size. In this example we will presume using a letter sized paper, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11". On such a piece of paper draw a line down the center starting and ending 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the top and bottom. This will, of course, yield a center line 8" long.

Set a compass to a radius of two(2) inches and set the point at the top of the vertical line and draw a semi-circle. This is the first generating circle. The second has its center where the nadir, or bottom arc, of the first circle cuts the vertical line. Where the nadir of the second circle cuts the vertical line, put the compass point and describe a third circle. Where this third circle cuts the vertical, set the compass point and draw the fourth generating circle (4" in diameter).

Now the Sephiroth can be drawn in. They are drawn in numerical order or in the order in which they were formed (following the Descent of Lightning). The radius of the Sephiroth is one quarter that of the generating circles or  $\frac{1}{2}$ " in this case. The first Sephirah (Kether) has its center at the zenith of the first generating circle where it intersects the vertical line. Set the compass here and draw a circle of one inch diameter. The next two Sephiroth have centers where the first and second generating circles intersect. The 4th and 5th Sephiroth have centers at the intersection of the second and third generating circles. The 6th at the zenith and nadir, of the 4th and 3rd generating circles respectively. The accompanying diagram will make the process clear for these and the balance.

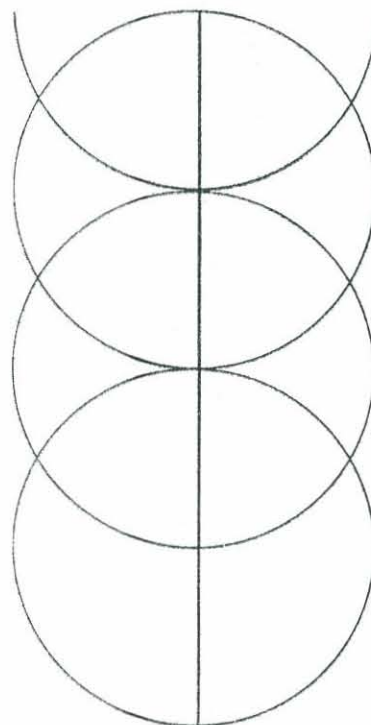
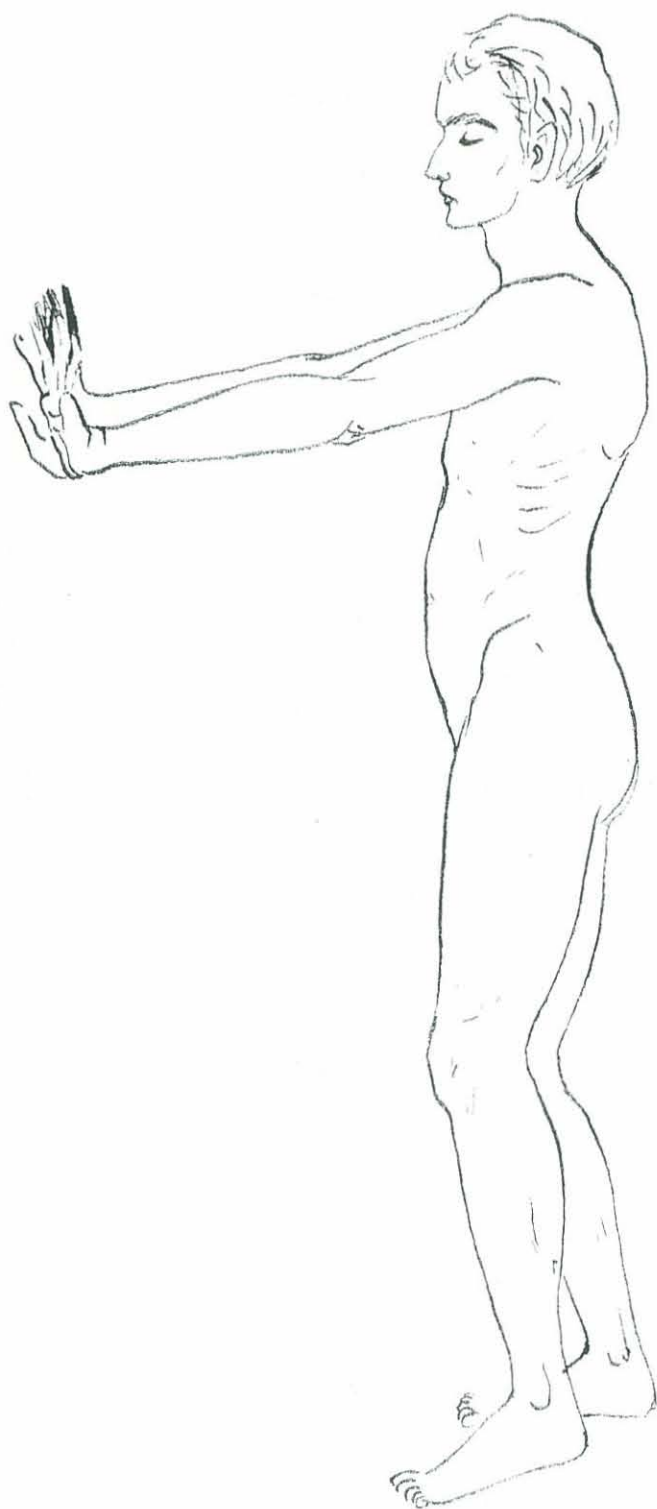
With respect to the Paths, they are in width equal to one half the radius of the Sephiroth or  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in this example. The center of the Paths go from Sephiroth center to center but the Paths stop at the circumference of the Sephiroth. Always draw Paths 14 (connecting Chokmah and Binah), 19 (connecting Chesed and Geburah), and 27 (connecting Netzach and Hod) first. This is because they are solid and cut across the paths behind them. Remember when drawing the Sephiroth to draw them in numerical order following the Descent of the Lightning Flash.

The student should draw many Trees writing in the correct correspondences and color the Paths in the appropriate colors. Liber 777 by Crowley gives these colors.

Hans Nintzel.

(Editor's note: The Sephiroth are colored in the Queen's Scale which is feminine and passive and the Paths are colored in the King's Scale which is active and masculine. Thus one achieves a balance or equilibrium. See the instructions in The Golden Dawn, Vol. I, 5th Knowledge Lecture by Regardie.)





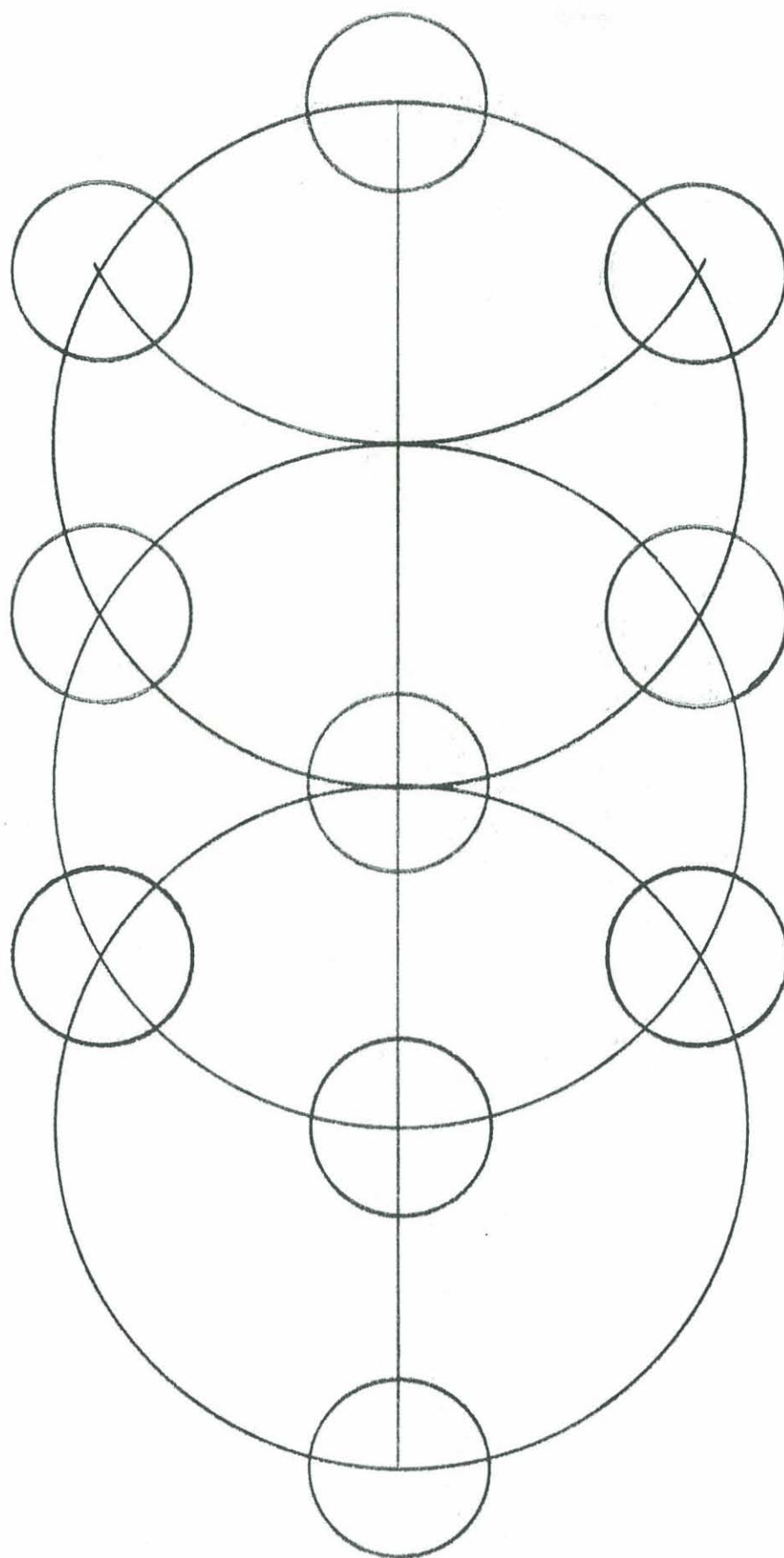
Man has  $3\frac{1}{2}$  curves in the spine, hence there are  $3\frac{1}{2}$  generating circles in constructing the Tree of Life.

He has a left side (the Pillar of Mercy - Jachin) and a right side (the Pillar of Severity - Boaz) and a central spine (the Pillar of Mildness). When you look at a Tree of Life Diagram on paper you are seeing a mirror image. To picture the tree as yourself, imagine that you back in to the diagram.

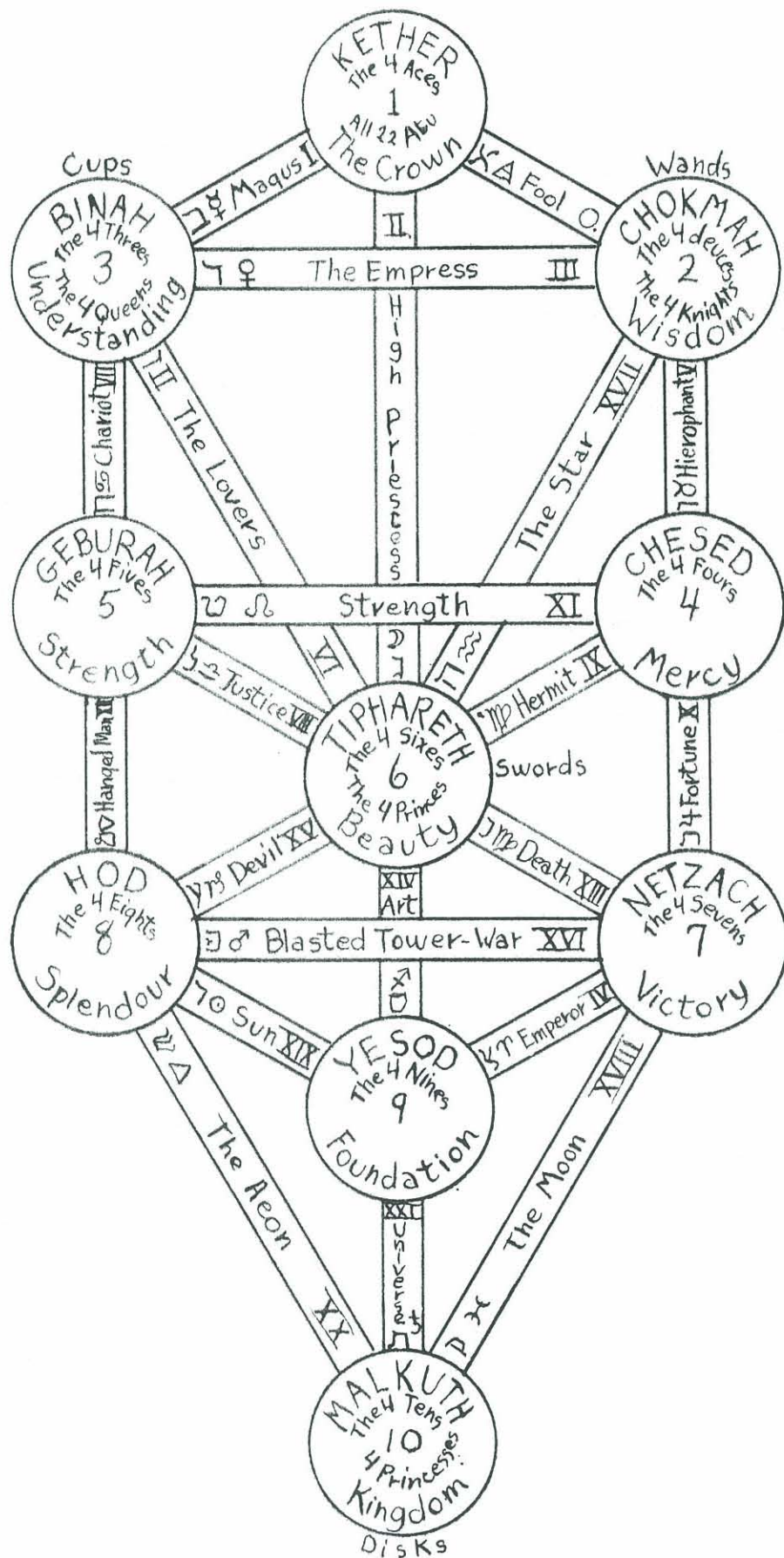
In the Yogic system the spine has 3 columns which are termed Ida, Pingala and Sushumna for the middle column.

Further, you can count 10 orifices in the human body (7 of these are in the face). There are 10 fingers and 10 toes, etc.

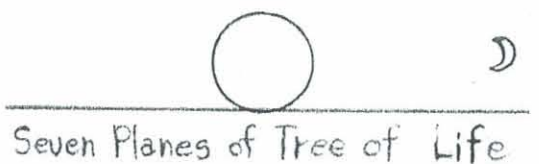
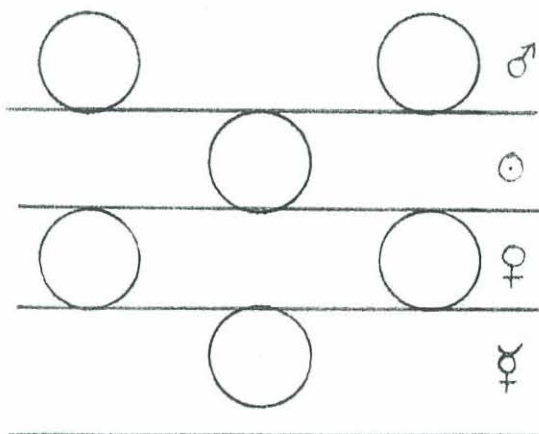
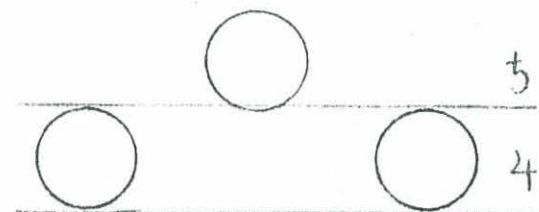
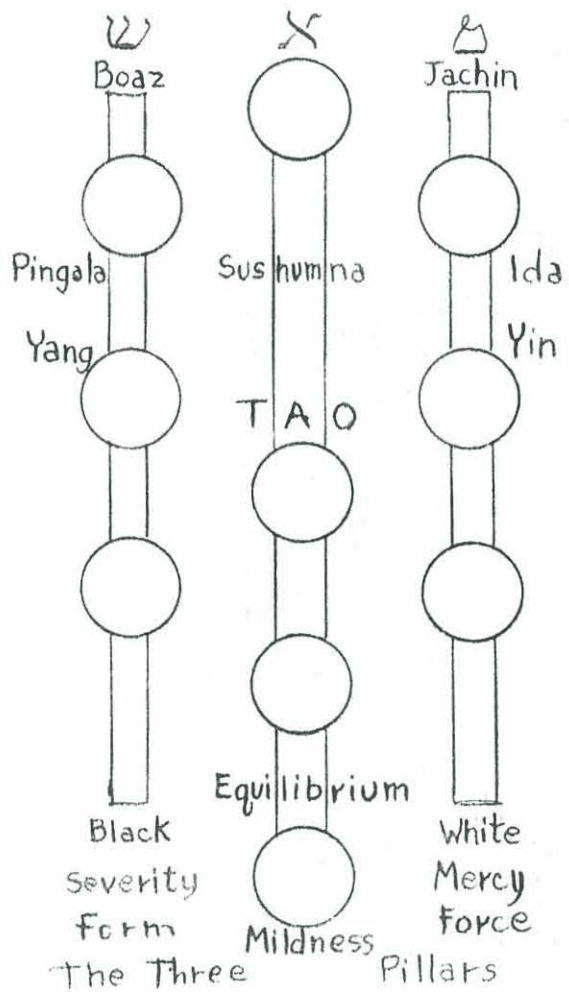
AS ABOVE SO BELOW was an Hermetic axiom.



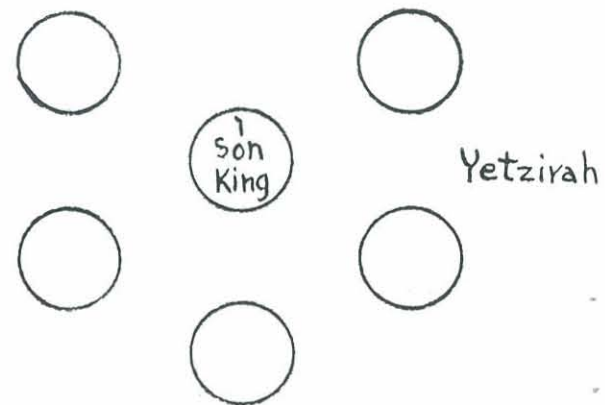
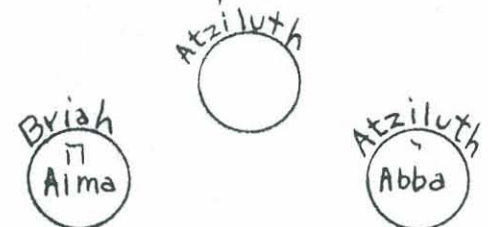
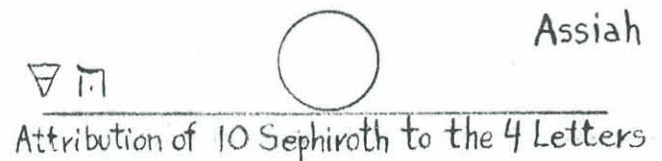
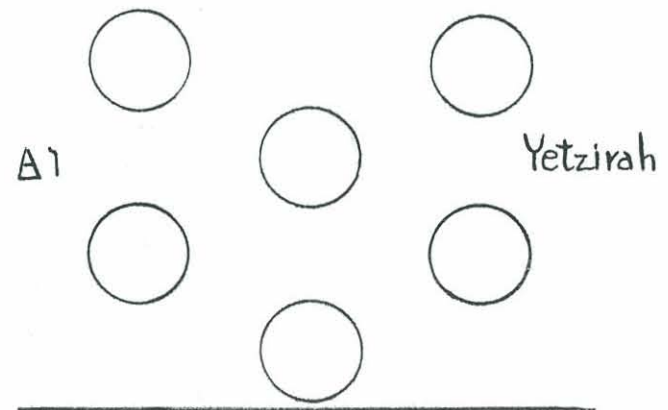
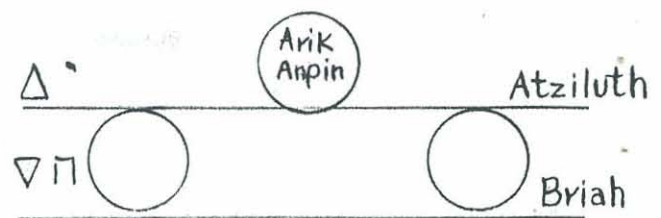




The Tarot Cards on the Tree of Life

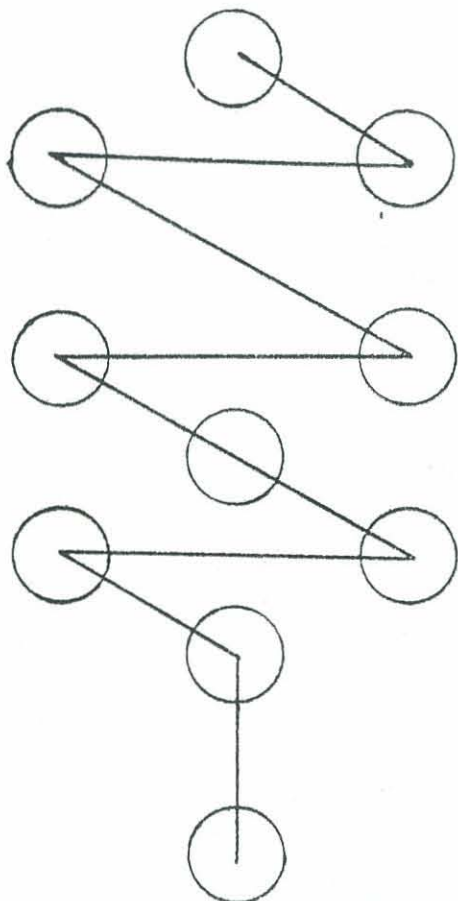


Seven Planes of Tree of Life

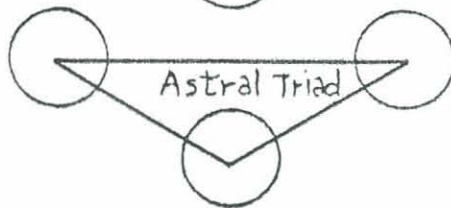
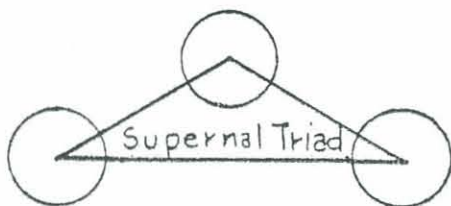


Alternate Attribution of 10 Sephiroth to 4 Letters. Kether is said to be the topmost point of Yod

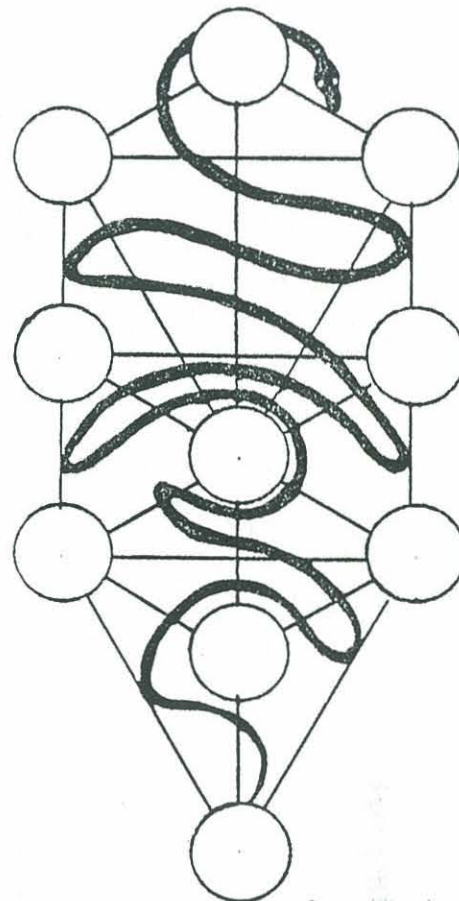




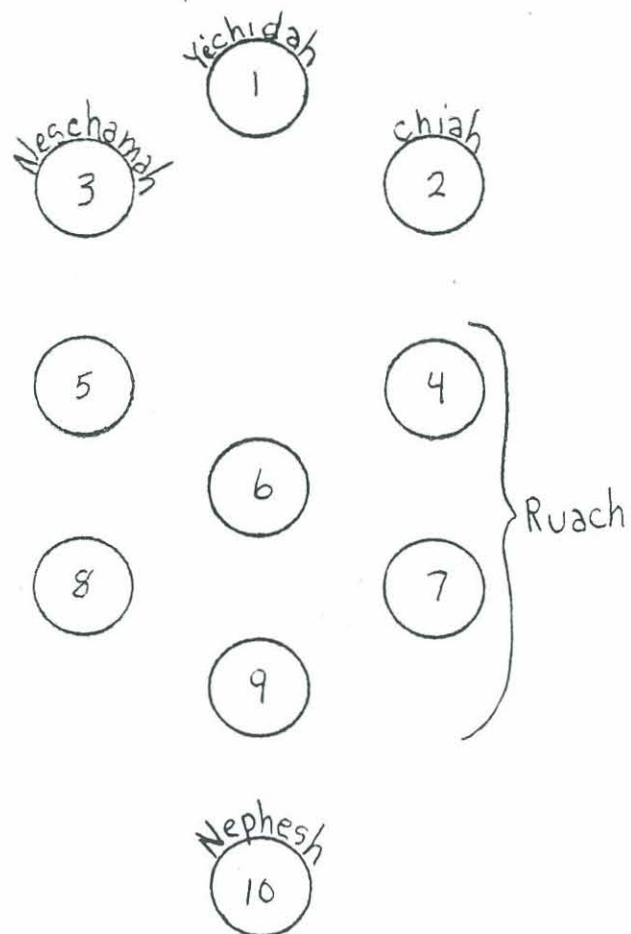
The Flaming Sword



The Trinity operating through the Sephiroth



The Serpent of Wisdom



The Parts of the Soul

ABJAD-I-AL'AIN

X

A Labyrinth do I the Paraclete  
Eldolize in the House of gnathous Rock  
Starry with scent of dittany of Crete,  
ERotic with the love-chants of a cock  
CROWing of her whose gnostic lips are wan,  
LEYlah conceiving by the Lycian!

⌐

Black is the midnight when that wintry bird  
Stands on the snowbank like an ermine tail  
Blotting the royal robes: he cries a word  
That gilds the red blood in the blessed Grail:  
Wherefore the beetle ramps upon the Hill,  
And argent angels trumpet sour and shrill.

⌑

Jinn gnash their wings and lurk upon the West:  
Like camels they abandon life for love,  
Sucking green poison from a dugless breast.  
Such is the echo in these towers, above  
The incandescent sea that rolls about  
The soul of God, its ravelin and redoubt.

⌒

Drear and devout the dead monks moan and rave  
Within these cells of this my labyrinth:  
They couple with the ghuls upon my grave,  
And on my monuments marmoreal plinth  
They rage in amorous rituals unto Pan,  
Whose leer breeds Thersites and Caliban.

⌓

Hour after hour one toils about the maze:  
Two are embayed in bowers of moss and rose:  
Three quarrel for the clue their spite erases:  
Four squat like sun-kissed archipelagoes:  
Five make an holy Nun (as none who counts)  
And track Dione to her lustral founts.

⌔

Woe to the world! the bull and girl conjoin.  
The monster guards the grot: the sly goat grins  
When priest and prelate privately purloin  
The perfume of our quintessential sins.  
Woe! when that pizzle, ripe for Hathor's Cow,  
Writes the red blush on Pasiphae's brow!



↑  
Zazel, the saturnine, the brooding fiend,  
Listens and laughs at this ecstatic "woe!"  
His desert teats from twisted terrors weaned  
The ghost of Chasmodai: our vials flow  
With galangal and marjoram and myrrh,  
As Rhodope rapes life from Lucifer.

∩  
Chryselephantine cross! how good you gleam!  
How gods and goats respire the dark perfume  
Of oliban, and scent the erotic steam  
Of myrtle in the cypress groves of gloom  
That rolls and gathers into shapes of bronze  
Who dream strange dreams and chant strange orisons.

∪  
Temple and Thora, Taro and Throa!  
These are the goals and gates whereto ye tend,  
O ribbed red barrows, whose virilia  
Earn muliebria at the smooth sad end,  
Alas! ye have not learned with God and me  
To say your father's name A-dun-a-i!

Ieheshwah hath the tooth between the nail  
And window in his word: therein is joy.  
But whoso dons the gilded coat of mail  
Takes from Damascus dame, and leaves the boy  
To wander as he will with whips and sighs,  
And vain hibiscus cloistered in his thighs.

∩  
Kabus the nightmare makes me mad for kus  
When kun and kir are all the k's I can:  
I grow Ex Epicuri grege sus:  
I shave with steel these hairy marks of man:  
Then Sappho swoops her sweetest on the goal  
Of scorching blood, and swallows up my soul.

∩  
Lola be mine, and Lola rave astrain  
Who findeth in my labyrinth a pool  
To give her ganja-gramarye in grain:-  
The boy is blind, but beautiful, O fool!  
He cannot see the scars of thy disease:  
Lydia and Lalage divide his fees.

Myrrh be thy music, harping thy perfume,  
When thou canst sit upon the foursquare stone  
Shaped like an egg, well hid within the tomb  
Where Jesus drawls: "Consult that cruel crone  
Who mutters mantrams to her swart tom-cat,  
And trims her broomstick toward Ararat!"

Nina, the navrant enervating nun,  
Anoint thee with the lewd laborious oil  
She gathered of the sow-sweat in the sun  
And quintessentialized with tearing toil!  
Let her anoint thee! thou shalt stand as stiff  
As unicorn confronting hippogriff.

So fly above the hedges that confound  
Thy clue-shorn chase: is Lampsacus afire  
With sunset on its marble walls, enwound  
As an hog's heart in the cobalt desire?  
Is there a Tuscan holding to thine eyes  
A tusky marvel to affright the skies?

Arab and I admit its gusty fear.  
We nurse the world in our expanded wombs.  
With ambergris and cedar-oil we rear  
Colossal children stolen out of tombs.  
We hide them in our bowels, sooth to say  
To show them to the Lord on Judgment Day.

Priapus laughs, and we behold him Pan;  
Then if I smile, in me Panthea glows;  
I am a panther, mark the caravan,  
Devour a child, and plant a royal rose.  
Then to my Rose if Pan is his own Pandar  
My horn is worth the two of Alexander.

Tzedeq of God that winged magnificence  
Is called by sylphs. It pours the pregnant pearls  
Even on the thuribles of gilt incense  
That smoke within the garlands of its girls.  
So from mere myrrh mirific murders come,  
And holy bane from plain olibanum.



ⲡ

Qaiyum thine anguish, with the thorny crown  
Lashing thy brow, the jackal's direful din  
Breaking thy body! Could not eiderdown  
Serve thee? His kisses cool thee? Is not sin  
The royal road to sainthood, eremite  
Whose purple pestle shuns the Dog's delight?

Ⲛ

Rays of Aldeboran invade the coil  
Of this my labyrinth and point the way.  
Lick Nina for the consecrated oil!  
Scrape Jesus for the sacramental clay!  
See how the fumes of Voodoo curl around  
Thy Wanga-circle, the enchanted ground.

ⲛ

Shaitan appears. But gloomier clouds of smoke  
Than hell's are here, where wand and spell combine  
The utmost spawn of chaos to invoke  
As gods within the must supernal shrine.  
I am the master. Will not God contest  
The last grim struggle for this Alkahest?

ⲟ

Tangri suffices me, and I am He,  
The bournless spirit with the sighted feet.  
Twain pearls and seventy shimmer upon me:  
My food is myrrh and dittany of Crete.  
Dolphin and Phoenix round the Maypole tree  
Dance to the wedding march of El Luty.

Explicit Abjad-i-Al'ain.

Aleister Crowley

The Winged Beatle

## QABALIST'S CORNER

A few of the meanings for the number 26:

Yod	10	2 x 13 = 26	13 means Unity in Hebrew -
He	5	ACHaD and also Love - AHBH	
Vau	6		
He	5		
	<u>26</u>		

26 is the sum of the numbers of the Sephiroth in the Central Pillar of the Tree of Life.  $1 + 6 + 9 + 10 = 26$ .

Further: there are

- 12 zodiac signs
- 7 planets
- 4 elements
- 3 alchemicals or gunas (Rajas, Tamas and Sattva).

26

When you add the numbers in Pi ( $\pi$ ) to 7 places they come to 26  
 $3.141593 = 26$

$2 \times 26 = 52$  - a number of AIMA - the Supernal Mother. See Sephir Sephiroth for further meanings.

$3 \times 26 = 78$ . There are 78 cards in the Tarot, etc. see other meanings.

$6 \times 26 = 156$ , the number of Babalon and Chaos, etc.

Khu - K = 20, U = 6 = 26. "The Khabs is in the Khu, not the Khu in the Khabs" Liber AL, Cap. I, v. 8.

$2 + 6 = 8$  See Liber AL, Cap. I, v. 46. "Nothing is a secret key of this law. Sixty-one the Jews call it; I call it eight, eighty, four-hundred and eighteen." Also: Cap. II, v. 15. "For I am perfect, being Not; and my number is nine by the fools; but with the just I am eight, and one in eight: -----"

חֹזֶה Seeing, looking at

חֹזֶה Sight, vision



## MYSTICAL MARRIAGE

A Delicate flower lies here in this grass  
Torn from root-stem, petals askew,  
Plucked trembling and fearful, and oh, alas!  
Thrown down and forgotten and wet with dew.

The night sky shudders and trespasses here  
And soft finger caresses silken edged surface.  
In wonder and delight I press my face near  
To see night and flower in mysterious symbiosis.

The night and the flower become one in me;  
Mystical marriage of delicate lightnings.  
We all are one in the starry eternity,  
And I, like the flower, am crumpled and waiting.

The grass prickles up against my flesh,  
Pinwheels whirling before my eyes,  
Each nerve upended under this stress  
Of spiraling light raining down from the skies.

My flesh creeps with cold faery light:  
The dew on the ground runs through my being  
And I am ecstatic here in this night,  
Opening as a flower to the God ever seeing.

My fingers clutch earth, then raised overhead  
As I gaze into deep eyes scattering mine.  
I spread and curl fingers around your head  
And pull down stardust in moment sublime.

Meral

# U R A E N U S

By John L. Steadman

## I.

The night lingers, reluctant to part the veil  
Disclosing Thought; serene midst mellow light  
The stage of warmth concealed; now stirring  
As clouds before the gaze of their Lord.  
Aroused by the blinking dawn, a poet rises.  
He greets the sighing birds with early whisper.  
Inspired, he begins - freeing Time into awareness  
Disposed in space whence indisposition cannot arise.  
His genius soars, much like the guise  
A straining cloth; this revel of insect buzz  
That hums the honeyed morning into couplets.  
In a faerie shop, the wax bird would burst its throat  
To reflect on timeless themes; bound despite the hall  
Of Nature. Rows of portraits waive the gloom  
As flickering stucco intense to prove his rhyme is born  
From ragged form, from matted locks unshorn.  
The poet pauses - his lake is taciturn,  
Sought by symbols archaic to the ancient flow  
That ever moves emptying into the sea  
That is itself which is to be.

\* \* \* \*

The mystic garden, swaddling its mystery,  
Lies before the diamond gaze of the poet.  
His flashing eyes, a minuet of epic proportions,  
Glide like the lotus fleeing a lost egoity;  
That spark that makes man what he is.  
Enraptured he sleeps, but his eye lies open.  
The bright moon falls  
In heaving dusk, illusion becomes ripe,  
Then sour - infamous and exposed in his golden taste  
Inured to nectar profound.  
As the poet passes into the Nirvana of sleep  
The bright moon dropped.

## II.

'Liquid jewel, enamoured by a ring of fire,  
Dancing separate from its twilight lair,  
Enclosed in lost reverie; yet that mighty Sire,  
Shiva, sustaining existence, in whose care  
The Self of soulless destiny swims.  
We dream the drowning miracle play

As the epileptic is voted Prince; his feeble limbs  
 Surmount the plaster scepters spray  
 An ocean of foam - his life is not his  
 But now humanity's. Cease, O entourage of time.  
 The seasons find no resolve in what he says  
 (Clad in gentle prose denying rhyme).  
 The state is all; submerge your method within,  
 Directing the drill that must have been  
 A block of stone, untouched by earthly psalm'.  
 His pen lies idle as the calm  
 Preceding his stoic smile. One cannot sustain a system  
 Fleeing to discover its conquest is the stem  
 Of precious petals drawing his gaze above.  
 Yet, mighty one, to slay them would be love!  
 He cannot transcend that self - a thousand clowns.  
 One cries loudly "I am I", trying to astound.  
 The breeze sighs softly, murmuring "me";  
 Lost in talk and hardly free.  
 A word can never be The Word  
 Until it spins in secret will unheard  
 From angry thought to the glimmer in a maiden's lash.  
 Youth to madness - accomplished in a flash!

\* \* \* \*

His mind has found an anchor within chaos.  
 The spraying dawn displays in sparks  
 Those vexing beams spawned of Phoebus;  
 Against whose clamor the Snow Prince harks.  
 Conceived on a day when poets walked the earth  
 Flowering in despair; the bloom is dissipation.  
 Now, in middle age, there is little worth  
 In lingering. The birth was quick, but faster still  
 cessation.

Where shall one year find us?  
 Ruling the horizon, rising like a dawn  
 Splashing its luminosity upon Epicurean husks.  
 Heroes all - let us dream a moment, then yawn  
 In present solitude. They gather before the charge  
 Of newness, good or bad, that spins to keep secure  
 The spice of breath; a wonder at large,  
 This marrow of the mass whose barge  
 Thrills like a gypsy; her carnival conceived in hate,  
 Like swaddling clothes without a child.  
 The poet does not rush nor can he wait.  
 He paints his future on a canvas of past beguiled,  
 Then speaks his fiction lines.



### III.

Beneath the jewel gate in slumbers  
The poet lies; a day of numbers  
At hand inside the frozen waste  
Drawing the mind into slate,  
Like spontaneity crused by haste;  
The ceaseless entablature of fate!  
A poet pleased; indeed, who would not be.  
The sun and clouds trade roles,  
Altering the sky into unnatural glee;  
A flaming fire kindled by awkward souls.  
The remaining leaves of Fall have gone.  
Time is the rake scraping a silent lawn.  
One arm freed; the head upon a pole  
Adorned with an emerald scrap.  
Speak to it! Seek its flying goal,  
A hidden truth seeping from the pap  
That startled Shelley into semblance.  
One arm waving, they begin the dance:  
It meant so much one moment past.

\* \* \* \*

Upon our isle of Toys, we cannot weep  
Yet must go on; in a fluff and flurry  
Like wooden ducks that groom; then leap  
Into a life dim with midnight stoves  
And peaceful roads that end in Surrey.  
Our youthful spears, dissolved by play:  
A club studded in nails thrashes  
Into the non-existence of childhood.  
Downstream, on a silent shore  
The poet evokes himself  
At the source of perfection.

(February 6, 1974 - April 3, 1974)

## LAMENT

Beyond the shifting landscape, one flickering soul  
Curved with the undulations of the whole,  
A panorama of moldering pillars  
Sought; recalled by salty billows  
The clime of the east, unsettled in the breeze  
Beyond Parnassus.

Each flashing dip, like Ithaca to tease  
All expectation, led sudden to the dotted brink,  
Then dashed into valleys whose shadowy link  
Is one man's heritage.  
Like dusty soldiers from the Hydra's teeth  
Poplar sentinels spring up; a regiment to cease  
The sombre pilgrimage of age.

Light and dark, in whose very gloom  
The capacity of shadows beyond mere noon,  
Ever requesting, drives men to pen their inner fears,  
Yet mock the brisk but blustery years  
That gave them breath - the specter song unsung  
By one whose life is nearly done!

John L. Steadman  
(July 30 & 31, 1973)

## THE ABANDON OF THE GODS

All music sways to the pastoral romance  
Enthralled; thrilled nigh to enhance  
The dream of idyllic castles of sand  
Rooted on a windy beach whose desert strand  
Is the lute of Apollo. The clouds made thee a memory  
That luminates and burns the Ethiopian sea.  
Exonerate your vixen jest with a wistful voice,  
The rendezvous is mine: ours the choice  
To choose the converging dominion from illusion.  
My talisman is the presence of intrusion  
Admitting me to this, the final chill.  
The sun has dawned, the catalyst is still  
Uxorious but vain; my intuition cannot soar  
Another day, perhaps, but today no more.

John L. Steadman  
(March 15, 1973)

## THE DAWN MEDITATION.

The ebony heavens became wings of cobalt  
fury, beating like futile, nameless beings  
against destiny. On the horizon, sky and  
sea, like azure clouds, melted in the ecstasy  
of an aquamarine embrace. As I opened my  
eyes, the lurid gaze of a carmine orb heralded  
the Dawn. Slowly, maroon fingers crept across  
the desert, chasing mounds of Indigo into a  
lost silence that shattered like glass somewhere  
faraway. Shadowy patches of ochre, like pools  
of oil, seemed flecked with the passion of  
yawning umber. A light went on. I walked  
across the burning sand and, at noon, the sun  
blinked like an emerald ruby, sucking me into  
a realm of paradox ruled by colour. In a waltz  
of ultramarine insanity, I found myself. Someone  
laughed bitterly.

By John L. Steadman (3/20/75)



## FELO DE SE

It lacked a little of midnight. In the east the moon, rising high above the trees that fringed the river, made a lane of light. Her beams fell full upon the face, delicately pensive, with the lips thinly tightened from their drooping corners, of a young exquisite, in whose slender and nervous fingers trembled a gold-headed cane. He was standing at the very edge of the calm water, upon the narrow grass that lay between it and the towing-path. On his right, across the river, rose a hill, cloaked in giant woods, a menace and a mystery. On his left, a clump of beeches sheltered a knoll of velvet grass, one would have said a lover's bower. Behind him lay many miles of pleasant fields and villas. There was no sound in the night but the rare hooting of an owl in the great wood, and the secret undercurrent of sound caused by the commotion of a distant weir.

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. A fine night!" said a strange voice in the young man's ear. He failed to catch the first part of the greeting, so absorbed was he in his thoughts; to the second he answered mechanically "a fine night, sir!" As he did so he turned to look at the stranger. He saw a man between thirty and forty years of age, both full and broad, yet slender, and giving the impression of great strength and activity. It was, however, the face, barbered in Vandyke fashion, which startled him. No one could ever forget it. Deep melancholy lay upon it, yet only as a veil to roguishness. The mouth was small, scarlet and voluptuous, although firm. But in the eyes lay something beyond any of this. The pupils were extremely small, even in that dim light, and the expression was of such intensity that the young man, startled, no doubt, by the suddenness of the apparition, thrilled with fear. By instinct he moved backwards to the towing-path, for in that place the river runs exceeding deep - and who could decipher the portent of such eyes?

"I am afraid that I have broken in upon your meditations," continued the new-comer. "Pray excuse me, I will resume my walk." But the young man gave a little laugh, harsh and bitter. "Not at all," he said with a little sneer, "I am only going to kill myself".

"Good," returned the other, whom we may identify as a Master of the Law of Thelema - and this story will explain what that is - "I applaud your decision."

The youth, although not a disciple, failed entirely to understand that the Master meant what he said. He sought instantly to excuse himself. "If you only knew all my reasons," he began gloomily.

"I do not ask them," replied the elder man. "You have announced your intention. I do you the common courtesy to assume that your intention is in accordance with your Will. That is reason enough and to spare. There is no Law beyond: Do what thou wilt. Besides, you'll make a bonny corpse."

The young man stared rather wildly. "No, I'm not a lunatic," smiled the Master; "would it perhaps bore you if I explained my reasons for not excluding *felo de se* from that infinite list of acts which are now lawful? It may relieve you of some silly scruple, and enable you to take the plunge with that calm ecstasy which should accompany our every act."

"You interest me greatly," acquiesced the youth. The other nodded.

"Let us then sit here, where we can enjoy the beauty of the moonlight. Perhaps you will join me in a cigar?"

"I only smoke cigarettes."

"Every man to his taste. Well," and he lit up, "in order to set ourselves right with the Academies we had better begin with Plato. What say you?"

The youth removed his cigarette and bowed with deference.

"The *Phaedo*," continued the adept, "is certainly the feeblest of all the Dialogues. It is a mass of very silly sophistry, and the classic of *petitio principii*. But the argument against suicide is put with all the cogency of a nursemaid. 'The Gods will punish it, probably,' is the Alpha and Omega of that monolith of stupidity. Socrates himself saw it, no doubt, for he changed the subject abruptly. His only attempt to save his face is to shelter himself behind Pythagoras. Now he saw, just as you do, that death was desirable to the philosopher . . . and young though you are, my friend, if I may dare call you so, that brow bespeaks the love of wisdom . . . yet he would not 'take death the nearest way. Gathering it up beneath the feet of love, or off the knees of murder reaching it,' because of the gods. He has given the most excellent reasons for wishing to die, but he will not admit their validity. Yet he had himself, as he admits later, committed suicide by not escaping 'to Megara or Bocotia.' True, he gives an excellent reason for so acting, but to admit one reason is to admit the edge of the wedge. If an act is permissible for love of law and order, even unjust law - and this is, as you know, the reason advanced by Socrates - then why not for - let us say - the safety of the republic? What of the messenger, fallen into the hands of the enemy, who kills himself lest torture wring the army's



secret from him; the man who throws himself from the raft, that his comrade may be saved - or his enemy -

'I alit

On a great ship, lightning-split,

And speeded hither on the sigh

Of one who gave an enemy

His plank, then plunged aside to die.'

One can think of a thousand cases from Curtius to Jesus Christ, this last surely the most deliberate suicide possible, since he had planned it from all eternity, even taking the trouble to create a universe of infinite agony in order to redeem it by this suicide. You are, I hope, a Christian?"

The young man declared that he was an humble and erring, but sincere, follower of the Man of Sorrows.

"Then observe how suicide is the hallmark of your religion. 'If thine hand offend thee, cut it off.' Scourge thy body, starve it, lick the sores of lepers, risk everything, but save the soul. This is all suicide, some partial, some complete. It does not even demand a reason; sheer hatred of the body is sufficient. Again 'The carnal mind is enmity against God'; suppress it; faith and obedience are enough; reason will surely destroy them and the soul as well.

"Now, even those unfortunate persons, who, like myself, not being Christians, cannot assent to so much, can at least admit that some one man, in some one strange circumstance, may rightly lay violent hands upon himself. Then who is to judge of such a circumstance? Is the man to consult his lawyer, or to ask for a referendum? Absurd, you will agree. Then what is left but a private judgment? And if it seem good and sufficient cause for self-murder that 'I am idle; also, it is true, I have no more money,' as in the case of Prince Florizel at the Suicide Club, who shall judge me? You may disagree; you may call me mad and wicked and all manner of names; I can do the same to you with equal right, if I wish to be discourteous. But I can imagine many a situation, incomprehensible to any but its central figure, which would justify such an act in all men's eyes if they understood the case. Every man is commander-in-chief of his own life; and his decisions must always be taken in the sanctuary of his own soul. The man who goes to others for advice abdicates his godhead, except so far as he does it merely because he wishes to hear the case argued by another. The final decision is his own responsibility; he cannot really evade it, even if he would, except by a subservience and slavishness which is more horrible than any suicide of the body could be to those who most object to it . . . ."

"Of course, the law forbids suicide," urged the young man,



puffing violently at his seventh cigarette, "on the ground that a man owes service to the King."

"It is a convenient weapon, like religion itself, and all its other precepts, of the tyrant against the slave. To admit this argument is to confess yourself a slave. It is a wise weapon to have forged, moreover. If one hundred workmen were to commit suicide simultaneously, instead of starting silly strikes, the social revolution would arrive that day. I did not ask the King for permission to be born; I came here without my own volition; at least allow me the privilege to depart when I please! In the Middle Ages the necessity of preventing suicide was so well understood that they devised horrible and ridiculous maltreatments of the body - as if any sensible suicide would care. Nowadays populations are larger, and it does not matter so much. The tyrants rely on silly superstitious terrors. I am supposed, by the way, to have a great deal of what is called occult knowledge, and when I make a magical disappearance, as I do now and then, without warning, my most devoted disciples always console my anxious paramours with the remark that I can't have killed myself because I 'know only too well what the penalties are.' It would be more sensible to retort, 'Anyhow I bet he hasn't killed himself for your sake, you cuckoo! But my disciples have no sense; they prefer to utter pompous and blasphemous nonsense, and to defame my character. James Thomson makes Bradlaugh say, in that stupefying sermon:

'This little life is all we must endure;  
The grave's most holy peace is ever sure;  
We fall asleep and never wake again;  
Nothing is of us but the mouldering flesh  
Whose elements dissolve and merge afresh  
In earth, air, water, plants, and other men.'

that sermon which concludes on the grand diapason:

'If you would not this poor life fulfill,  
Then you are free to end it when you will,  
Without the fear of waking after death.'

I know of nothing to reply to that. I tell you on my magical honor that it is so. I will admit that I know of states of Being other than that familiar to you as a man. But does the ego persist after death? My friend, you know very well that it does not persist after one breath of the nostrils! The most elementary fact in Buddhist psychology is that! Then (to pursue Gotama into his jungle) "What can be gained, and what lost? Who can commit suicide, and how?" But all this metaphysics is more unsatisfying than chopped hay to an alderman. I counsel you, my young friend, to avoid it in your next incarnation, if you have one. (It doesn't matter to you whether you have or not, since you won't know it. What has posterity done for you, anyway?) At least let us avoid it for the few brief moments that remain to us. To revert to the



question of the right to make away with yourself - if it be denied that you have the right to end your own life, then, a fortiori, I think you must admit, you have no right to end another's. Then you should be in revolt against a government whose authority rests in the last resort on the right of capital punishment. You are particeps criminis every time a murderer is hanged; you deny the right of peoples to make war, and possibly that of doctors to practice medicine. You have excellent reasons for hanging and shooting others, and do so, by your own hand or another's, without a qualm. Surely then you are on unassailable ground when you sacrifice a victim to Thanatos not against his will but at his express desire. The only objection I know to allowing doctors to offer a fuller euthanasia to hopeless sufferers than is now permitted is that it might facilitate murder. Well, do any further objections to your very sensible decision occur to you?"

"People say it's cowardly," ventured the young man, who was now enjoying a cigar, slipped to him by the adept, and lit with the acquiescence of one half-hypnotized.

"Shame, foul shame!" returned the Master with indignation, as he started to his feet and began to pace the path to and fro in his honest wrath. "Shame on the slanderers who try to mask their own cowardice by branding with that stigma of indelible infamy the bravest act that any man can do. Is not Death the Arch-Fear of Man? Do we not load with titles and honors and crosses and pensions the man who dares death even by taking the small chance of it offered in battle? Are we not all dragged piteously howling to the charnel? Is not the fear of death the foundation of religion, and medicine, and much of law, and many another form of fraud and knavery? But you, in perfectly cold blood, face this fiend calmly and manfully - you with no chance of temporary escape like the soldier or the man in the consulting-room - you who face a certainty when the rest of the world tremble at a chance - they call you coward! Why, death is such a fear that the very word is taboo in polite society. Is it not because religion has failed to fortify the soul against this apprehension that religion is no longer the vogue? Instead we indulge in dances and music and wine and everything that may help to banish the thought. We permit no skeleton at modern feasts. Philosophy dwells much upon death: perish philosophy! Mankind today dreads every discussion of realities, because to modern men death is the supreme reality, and they wish to forget it. It is the fear of death that has fooled men into belief in such absurdities and abominations as Spritualism and Christian Science. I would be honored, sir," he stopped in front of the youth, "if you would allow me to grasp the hand of the bravest man that I have ever met, in the very moment of his culmination!"

The youth arose, automatically almost, and gave his hand to the adept.



"I thank you, sir," continued the latter, "you have given me an example, as you have taught me a lesson, of sublime courage. You are a thousand times right. When the evils of life become intolerable, they should be ended. I have half a mind to join you," he added, musing. "I have many disciples."

He sighed deeply, and threw away the butt of his cigar, first lighting another from the glow. "It seems to me that far too much fuss is being made about death now-a-days, as it is about death's deadlier twin-sister, Love. The ancients were our masters in these matters, and so are the Japanese and Chinese of today. The fear of these two things - who are but the man and wife at the lodge gates of Life Park - was probably imported from the effeminate, cowardly and degenerate races of the Indian peninsula. Early Christians, with their agapae and their martyrdoms, feared neither. The Crusaders feared neither. But those nations that have become effetes, that preach peace and morality, and women's rights, these have the cur's spirit, the eunuch's soul, and in these nations death is dreadful and love dangerous. The virile temper of the Romans grasped love and death like nettles that excite even as they sting. That temper has decayed - the war should revive it - and men flee from death and love. Love stands apart and weeps; but Death cries Tally-Ho and hunts them down to hell. 'But dried is the blood of thy lover, Ipsithilla, contracted the vein,' 'Novem continuas futationes!'" ended the adept, raising his voice even more than possibly the best taste would have sanctioned, though after all a river's marge at night is not an alcove. However, he recollected himself, and continued more gently. "Pardon me, young sir, I beg," he said, "my feelings overcame me for the moment. Balk at love, you balk at death; balk at death, you balk at life. It's hard to score," he added laughingly, "with both balls in baulk.: (The allusion is to the English game of billiards.) The young man laughed, not wholly from courtesy, but because he was really amused, despite his tragic situation.

"If we all took things more easily," the Master added, "they would go more easily. Confidence is two battalions in every regiment that we have. Fear, and you fumble. Go ahead, a song on your lips and a sword in your hand; and meet what comes with gaiety. Damn consequences! If you see a girl you like, prove it to her by Barbara and Celarent all the way to Fresison or whatever the logician's Omega is - I forget."

The boy was unable to remind him. He had taken Paley for the Little-Go.

"If you see a danger, embrace it," went on the elder man. Nothing seemed to exhaust the energy of his harangue. "If you escape, you have lived more beautifully and more intensely. If you



die, you die, and one more bother is done with. Best of all, then, when one is tired of life, to face the Great Adventure gay and gallant - as you do to-night!"

"Then do you see no objection, of any kind," answered the youth, a trifle more earnestly than his habitual manner (Harrow and Trinity Hall) would have permitted in more usual circumstances, "to the fatal act which, as soon as you deprive me of the great charm of your company, I shall have yet one more excellent reason for putting into execution?"

"None," smiled the Master, bowing rather pontifically at a politeness to which years of the servility of disciples had inured him. "Unless, perhaps, we look at the matter in this way. Assume one moment that you are what we empirically call an immortal soul incarnating from time to time in various bodies as occasion offers. Very good; then you willed to live in this body. You knew the conditions - assume that! Good: then you formulate the accursed dyad, you deny your own will, by cutting short this life. Or, say this; assume that your body is an instrument by which you perceive material things, for a whim, or for some inexplicable desire, I know not what. Then, why destroy your instrument? True, it is hopelessly damaged, let us suppose, so that it perceives badly. If it were possible to mend it, you would cheerfully endure the necessary pangs; but all being decayed, scrap it, and get a new instrument. The only argument is that you may have willed to observe the great cruelty of Nature, not only by seeing, but by feeling it, so that you may thereby become fortified in your resolve to 'redeem it from all pain.' But this is all a mass of assumptions, little better than the twaddle of the Buddhists and the Christians and the Theosophists and all the other guessers. Ignore it. 'Thou hast no right but to do thy will. Do that and no other shall say nay.' Then since it is your Will to kill yourself, do not be turned from your purpose. That indeed would be a crime. The best argument I ever heard against suicide, if you will pardon my introducing a new witness, was an English journalist whose face resembled a cancer of the stomach in a rather advanced stage of the disease. 'Excuse a personal remark,' said I, 'but consider our feelings. Why not blow it all away with a pistol?' He replied with ready wit: 'I use it to pour drink into.' Clever Cecil!"

The adept rose once more. "But I detain you," he murmured apologetically. "Religion, philosophy, ethics, and common sense concur in approval of your purpose. I am infinitely obliged to you for the pleasure you have given me by your elegant and informed conversation; I dare not even voice a regret that I shall have no opportunity of cultivating your acquaintance. Farewell! Love is the law, love under will."

The Master bowed and moved slowly towards the towering beeches. But the boy - he was barely eighteen years of age - sprang to his feet and followed him. "You say," he babbled eagerly, in his enthusiasm a little forgetful of propriety, "you say you are a Master, that you have disciples. Won't you take me?"

The adept showed no embarrassment. He would not even seem to rebuke the outburst, unconventional as it was.

"Certainly," he returned. "Since I have persuaded you with all my power to do a thing and you now desire to do the opposite, you are pre-eminently fitted for a disciple. You will get on splendidly with the others, I am sure."

Such ready acquiescence, couched as it was in the delicately-phrased English of which the adept was an acknowledged master, and made tart by that silky subacidity which had made him famous and infamous, delighted the boy beyond all bounds. He sank to his knees and caught the Master's hand and kissed it, his face wet with tears, and his throat choking. The Master's own eyes dimmed for a moment; something rose in him that he did not even try to suppress. He stooped and put a friendly arm about the lad and raised him. "Come," he said, "it is no such great matter. Let us talk of other things. Of, if you will, enjoy the silence of this moonlit loveliness."

Presently the sun rose, and woke the world to a new day's life worth living.

Aleister Crowley

From THE INTERNATIONAL, August, 1917