A Dragon's Guide to Magick

by The Legendary Dragon Alephwyr

Hallucinations, dreams, or other altered states of consciousness that are approximately equivalent to documented magical experiences are trivially easy to accomplish in the context of a future simulationism simply by specifying that you want an algorithm implemented that maximizes your subjectivity as follows:

1. Iterate through a list of the probabilities of different subjective experiences during the period of altered consciousness
2. Instead of assigning subjective experiences to the simulated person based on pure statistical method, use this basic formula:

```
if i.TruthProbability != 0 || j.TruthProbability != 0
     if (((i.TruthProbability*i.TruthUtility) –
     (i.FalsehoodProbability*i.FalsehoodUtility)) >
     (((j.TruthProbability*j.TruthUtility) –
     (j.FalsehoodProbability*j.FalsehoodUtility)) )
          if ((((i.TruthProbability*i.TruthUtility) –
          (i.FalsehoodProbability*i.FalsehoodUtility)) >
          DefaultQualiaWeightedUtilityDif) &&
          i.TruthProbability != 0
               Qualia = i.quale
               AssignQualia(Qualia)
          else
               Qualia = DefaultQualia
               AssignQualia(Qualia)

     else
          if ((((j.TruthProbability*j.TruthUtility) –
          (j.FalsehoodProbability*j.FalsehoodUtility)) >
          DefaultQualiaWeightedUtilityDif) &&
          j.TruthProbability != 0
               Qualia = j.quale
               AssignQualia(Qualia)
          else
               Qualia = DefaultQualia
               AssignQualia(Qualia)
else
     Qualia = DefaultQualia
     AssignQualia(Qualia)
```

Various assumptions are necessary to make this work. I will enumerate them briefly and you can judge their reasonableness for yourself.

1. That future ancestor simulations will rely on machine learning style advanced statistical inference, albeit perhaps to a much higher level than is presently extant, rather than any sort of direct and infallible observation.
1a. That smaller sample sizes are less determinative than larger ones
2. That there will be more than one possible solution to the data sets that define the boundaries of the possible sequential experiences that make up an individual's subjective life
3. That the coupling between known data and an individual's subjective experiences will be substantially looser than the coupling between known data and an individual's physical actions
4. That data sets about altered states of consciousness will have relatively small sample sizes even in the far future
5. That future simulators will honor requests to mitigate the effects of this so long as they don't disrupt any simulations
5a. That the request in question won't disrupt any simulations, since it will only alter subjective interiority
6. That the utility of experiencing the events in question, if they happened, is proportionally greater than the utility of not experiencing the events if they didn't happen, and that this difference is in turn proportionally greater than the difference of all other non-zero probability experiences that solve the data set, including the most probable.

If all of this holds then the code in question should achieve the desired effect. The only thing that remains is stipulating your wishes to be simulated in accordance with such code (and certainly, plenty of alterations or addendums could be made as necessary).

Is that it? Is that all of magick? Probably. Get over it.

In Liber O, Crowley notes:

"*In this book it is spoken of the Sephiroth and the Paths; of Spirits and Conjurations; of Gods, Spheres, Planes, and many other things which may or may not exist. It is immaterial whether these exist or not. By doing certain things certain results will follow; students are most earnestly warned against attributing objective reality or philosophic validity to any of them.*"

This is the best attitude to take in respect to magick, in this context most especially. If you feel that at any point in your life you did not have this attitude during a series of rare mental states, then subjecting a future version of yourself to the code in question will only maximize the subjective experiences of confusion and any resulting hardship or displeasure. Therefore, it is imperative that these matters be taken doubly seriously.

"*But what about muh hyperstition? Muh kabbalah? Muh yoga? Muh metaphysics?*"

You are confused. If the previous statements are a threat to your knowledge, it is not knowledge. I advise you to think harder about what any of it really means, both to you and objectively, and to revise your understanding as necessary. In the meantime, if you are the sort of romantic who values their confusion, then the door you may have longed for is now open.

"*Are you really going to write off all of magick so trivially? Don't you at least have anything to say about the CCRU Group, the UR Group, Thelema, The Golden Dawn etc. etc.* ?"

Not really.

"*But that's no fun at all!*"

Fine. I can ramble with the best of them. If you really want to hear the typical bad physics, bad metaphysics, bad speculative fiction, poor understanding of source texts, all wrapped up in bad writing that are essentially characteristic of magical texts, I am more than able to provide something to that effect. Don't say I didn't warn you, and don't accuse me of inconsistency: everything that follows is pure nonsense, ungrounded in anything remotely like knowledge. But I will deliver. Ok? Here we go.

Chapter 1
The Soul and the Body

What is the soul? In the future, data from various sources may be usable to reconstruct people from the past to within a certain degree of accuracy. This data constitutes the long term imprint left behind by each individual. This forms the context in which each individual's subjectivity is possible to be reconstituted, to a certain degree of fidelity. Is this the soul? Certain dilettante technophiles think so. Are they right? If we analyze what ancient people meant by the soul, then overwhelmingly they are not. Nonetheless, this is probably what the word "soul" means to most people in the future. It's unavoidable. So get over it.

The venerable Aleister Crowley is best remembered by his maxim "*Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.*" What did he mean by this? Was it some sort of Gell-Mann esque observation about the way evolution has necessarily created a latency between the actions of the body and the subjective experience? Was it a vision into the simulationist future that foresaw there would be more degrees of freedom in the subjective experience of those reconstituted than in their physical actions (IE, Schopenhauer's Will as physical action, transposed to a machine context)? Was it a recapitulation of eastern metaphysics and philosophy via Spinozan monism, aestheticized through the lens of western occultism? Nobody knows. Perhaps nobody ever will know.

However, it is apparent that physical sequences of events are less stochastic by necessity than more purely chemical events, and that the brain is more purely chemical than physical. Therefore, our future selves are locked into our actions in a way that they are not locked into our subjectivity. What does this mean for the possible solutions to future data sets? Is it possible every janitor and fry cook was secretly a genius? If it is possible, then it will be possible to produce solutions along those lines. However, is it a good idea?

In the future, it won't be possible to say for certain to every probable moron "You were a moron". Instead, it will only be possible to say "You moved like a moron". And boy will that get said

a lot. While there certainly have been janitors and fry cooks who were secretly geniuses, inheriting the “physical will”, even simulated, of an imbecile, might be detrimental to the long term psychological health of some people. I hope that this is a matter that receives attention in a future simulationist context. I cannot really speculate heavily about it.

Two other potential issues: First, maximized subjectivity is in a sense reified subjectivity. And subjectivity is generally inconsistent. Concrete inconsistencies are often more blatant or harmful to the brain than abstract inconsistencies, which human beings tend to be extraordinarily good at ignoring. This is something that will need to be hammered out before things can proceed smoothly. It is possible some additional code will need to be implemented to lock people into a single narrative for the sake of their sanity, heightening subjectivity only when it corresponds to that narrative, regardless of whether a person acted consistently based on their subjective narrative or not.

Second, without ruling out zero percent possibilities a person could quickly become entirely dissociated from reality in a way more fundamental than anything ever experienced by a conscious entity before. Therefore, I must warn any readers very explicitly against the danger of omitting the code segment that discards zero percent possibilities. It’s unknown what the human brain is able to weather without being utterly eviscerated. Don’t be the one to test this. Please.

One last matter: There must be a difference between simulations that are simulations in the full and proper sense, of simulating history according to a physics engine, than simulations in the sense of a pure virtual reality or consciousness engine of sorts in which quale are piped directly to brains. But in order to get the second, we probably have to have the first, first, for some period of time. I will write more on this matter in the conclusion. At present I only want to prime you to think of what follows not in terms of pure physical simulations, but quale, or subjective experiences, piped directly into a synthetic brain. Now on to the required bizarre metaphysical ramblings.

Chapter 2
A reductionist Psuedo-platonism

In Platonist and Platonist inspired thought, there are higher metaphysical truths which are foundational, prior to, and superior to the truths of the material world, and the material world is derived from these truths in some secondary and distorted way. Most modern STEM-folk, meanwhile, are pure physical reductionists. They say things like "Human beings are just bags of chemicals" and "All meaningful questions can be solved by looking at the material facts of the world". Can these positions be reconciled? Plato also advanced the position at one point that everything is constituted of triangles in various configurations, making up larger and larger shapes, which in turn have metaphysical properties accounting for every attribute of anything of interest to the human race. So Plato believed in a kind of hierarchy of forms, in which pure forms are nonetheless prior to and primary to material reality, and also persistent and unalterable in a way that material reality and its secondary forms are not.

This sort of hierarchy, in which there are increasing levels of dynamism built on top of an unmoving foundation, has many parallels. One can look at all of the biosphere through this lens. First comes soil, then bacteria within the soil, then plants and insects, then animals. At each level there is more and more motion and complexity, and the fundamental layer is relatively unchanging in comparison to everything else. Most modern Platonists are mathematical Platonists. They believe that the fundamental "soil" in which reality grows is math itself.

Another parallel is in the way computer functionality is built up in layers, from a physical hardware layer in which an unalterable circuit board exists which behaves in different ways given different electrical inputs, to assembly, a programming language that most closely describes how this process works, to higher levels of abstraction in which shell scripts and programming languages can be permuted in infinitely many ways to produce infinitely many outcomes, all built on the lower levels of the computing device.

The human brain is yet another stacked series of layers with increasing dynamism, but it is unlike a computer in the sense that its divisions are based on their function and that function's sequential primacy in the history of biological evolution rather than on pure complexity. Complexity scales incidentally in the human brain, where the layers have more in common with the rings of a tree as geological patterns than with the different layers of computer complexity. That is not to say there is nothing like computation going on in the human brain, but the organizing principle of brains (at least at present) is evolutionary pressure over time, rather than abstraction power over space.

So, if reality is really built out of math, is the manner of its construction more like that of the brain, or like that of the computer? We associate computers with math, but doing so is a form of naturalistic fallacy, especially egregiously so if we are mathematical Platonists. It is almost certainly the case that computers are less mathematically complex than brains. Then, perhaps it could be said that abstraction power over space defines a cross-section of lesser complexity than evolutionary pressure over time. So it only remains to look at what each of these descriptions really mean and then try to derive some teleological insight from them.

Evolutionary pressure over time begins as pure process of elimination. It may seem strange to note that progressively more complex things seem to survive over time. However, that is anthropically centered. It is enough to note that most simple things remain simple, therefore in a sense, simple primitives are undeniably much stronger selected for than complex systems. Therefore, it is perfectly sensible to frame the evolution of life not as the success of selection for life processes, but as the failure of selection for non-life processes. Life emerges not because there is some hand choosing it, but because once every permutation of material fact has been selected for that maintains foundational primitives as themselves, there are some left over in which this is no longer possible.

So this is evolution over time, then: things become more complex because they fail to remain the same. In this sense, Plato's primacy of the primitive is absolutely sound. What about abstraction power over space? A computer is a hierarchy of spatial relations in the substrate of electricity, with

time acting as an incidental. Sequential series of events are important because computers are used by human beings, for whom time is important. But at every level, a computer encodes information, and information *qua* information is intrinsically without time. Sequential series of information organized by principles that are useful to human beings are, in a sense, what computing is. But this is not fundamentally what a computer is, because a computer is merely a structured encoding of information. How is this different from a brain? Well, a brain is a structured series of events. If these events concern information, as many modern thinkers believe, it is still the connections of information across time constituting events that defines the structures of consciousness, whereas a computer is built according to structures of information across space, for which the particulars of its connections across time are irrelevant to the nature of the information except within the consciousness of a human observer.

So if a brain is information across the dimensions of space and time, a computer is a series of discrete appearances of information in space, with ancillary causal connections. It would be solipsistic in the extreme to suggest a computer does not exist in time without a human witness, but whereas consciousness exists first in time, then in space, the opposite is true for a computer. A computer represents a flattening of information into fewer dimensions. So then what is the teleological link between the brain and the computer?

If we begin with primitives, and primitives are selected against in a minority of cases, creating life, and life is selected against in a minority of cases, creating brains, are brains being selected against in a minority of cases, creating computers? Brains have given rise to computers, certainly, and to the extent computers have been used as a substitute for memory and thought, reliance on computing technology has diminished the amount of brain processes extant in a total sense. Certainly it has also enabled new thoughts and new memories, permuting them in novel ways. But the closer to zero-sum the information encoding trade-off becomes, the flatter information becomes distributed across space rather than time.

What can we conclude about teleology from this? In all cases, time is the thing that selects, and space is what is selected. Events in time are, in a sense, weak spatial selection; selection in which each spatial frame is alike enough to be connected to the previous frame. Since selection is the failure to preserve rather than the accomplishment to create, the teleology indicated can be thought of as a form of entropy in which primitives in time are converted into primitives in space. But if we are mathematical Platonists, then we are assuming that math itself is even more fundamental, and indeed unchanging. So, by this reasoning, time and space cannot be mathematical in character in an intrinsic sense, because time and space change.

So, math is never selected for, nor does math select. Math instantiates. A couple of pictures to illustrate:

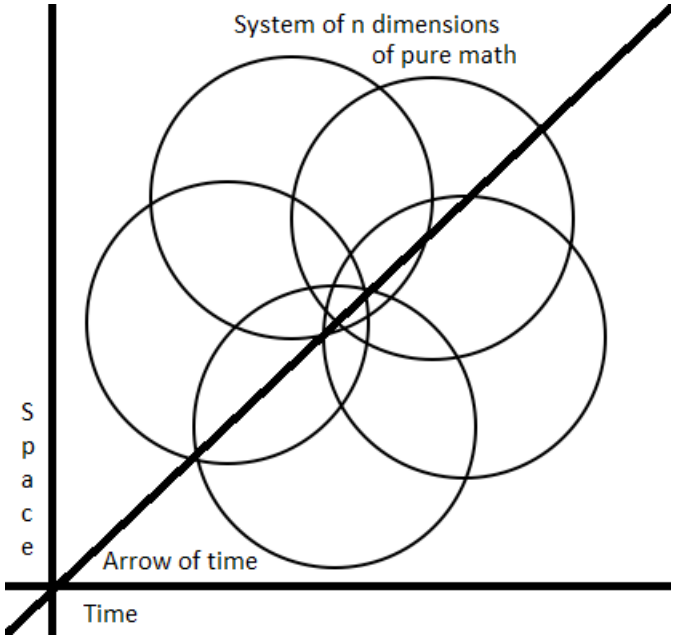

Figure 1

Space can be thought of as layering over the top of math, as an initially undifferentiated substrate that math initializes or substantiates. Time runs through space and over the top of the substantiating math. Where different systems of math overlap, process of elimination subsequently fails to select for the simplest primitives of matter, because the underlying pockets of conjunction between different mathematical dimensions or underpinnings are too complex to allow unaltered

primitives to survive.

So then under what conditions are consciousness possible? I'm not sure. There are too many different possible implications or explanations given this set of abstractions. But it should be apparent that not only is time necessary for consciousness, but that time must take a very specific form for consciousness to be possible. There cannot be multiple competing arrows of time, for instance; at least not unless the spatial permutations they create are adjacent in form in some sense, in which case their adjacency potentially nullifies their competition with each other. Another picture:

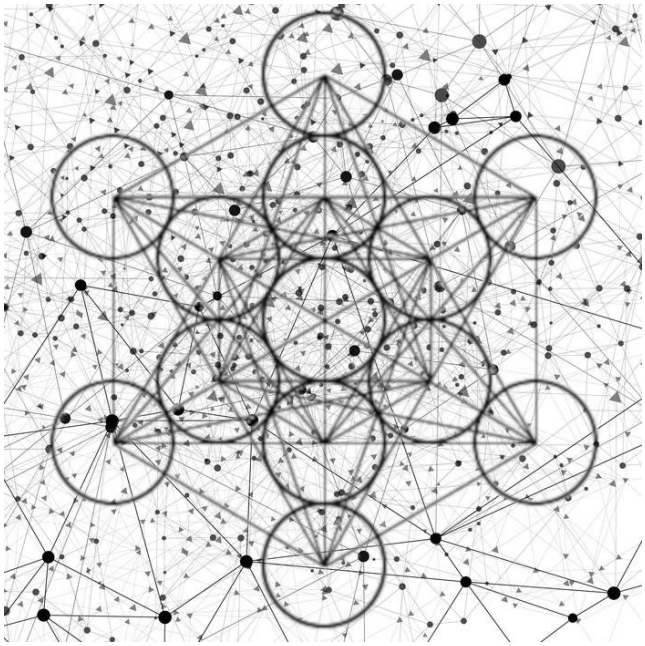

Figure 2

This is Metaton's Cube superimposed over a Rhizome, and reflects to a reasonable standard of metaphor what I believe to be the fundamental structure of the universe. The rhizome represents the physical primitives, and Metaton's Cube the underlying mathematics that the primitives lay on top of and are instantiated or substantiated from. Primitives assemble in many ways. Math instantiates itself in many ways. There is no such thing as purely demarcated essences: an essence is anything that assembles. This is near the limit of my capacity for reflection on the nature of reality, consciousness, and the universe.

Chapter 3
Real and Simulated Retrocasuality

Nick Land and Deleuze apparently both wrote some stuff about this. It is more or less impenetrable to me in my current state. Nonetheless, retrocausality is interesting because it provides a potentially physically possible mechanism by which ostensibly magical outcomes might be achieved. If you are interested in Nick Land's system, you should read the CCRU Writings from 1997-2003. I cannot really comment heavily on the veracity of Nick Land's system as I did not understand it, and I have not really read Deleuze at all. At one point I attempted to modify Land's system based on my own, more than likely purely schizophrenic experiences and a semi-rational interpretation of them. My knowledge of physics and its potentialities under different theoretical frameworks is also severely wanting. A more intelligent person could probably infer something into my attempts to document my experiences. That wouldn't make such an inference accurate, necessarily, but I have done my best to avoid being nonsensical at least.

I will leave the interpretation of my writings to such people. My own attempts to explain my experiences in these terms have not satisfied me. Nor are there any other rationalistic explanations which account for both the original permutation of my "self" and any subsequent permutation I now imagine myself to be inhabiting. Various possibilities of malice, indifference, and so forth can explain the latter, but not the former, so it would be bad form to speculate in terms of only the latter as it would be failing to document the original permutation, which is arguably the entire point.

Nonetheless, there are dangers to simulated retrocausality. Not recognizing the potential inaccuracy of the public record, for instance, which is likely to become easier and easier to edit. Failing to review my code for its practical effects before implementing it, and other such things. I am not saying I experienced any of this, probably I was just psychotic, but it certainly felt as if I experienced something derived from this, in Europe and to a lesser extent in Seattle if nowhere else. That's all.

Chapter 4
An Abbreviated Story

Once upon a time, a child was diagnosed with just about every psychological condition possible. They were expelled at every level of school. Somehow they later became a computer science student. This computer science student had a series of dreams and went somewhat insane. They began hearing a voice, which they attributed to a dragon. It was a helpful voice, but not a nice voice. They began taking antipsychotic medication. They functioned ok, until they made a bad decision associated with the voice that led to expulsion from college. They went to Europe to die. They probably had some very bad hallucinations there due to going off of antipsychotic medication cold turkey. Then they started experiencing symptoms of schizophrenia as they recovered from the psychotic episode in Seattle, which they took medication to counteract, which was effective up to a point. They were homeless for two years. Then they wrote this document.

Chapter 5
Some things

I've asked for a number of things:

1. To be replicated faithfully, and killed repeatedly, iteratively, to the extent this is not achieved

2. To be used as a test subject for any and all purposes that are medically or scientifically interesting

3. To be used to instantiate artificial worlds of pure quale, without a physics engine as an intermediary

4. To be used to create artificial worlds that match specifications I have given elsewhere

5. To be recreated as optimally as possible so that my creative projects are achieved as ideally as possible

5. To be used to lessen the suffering of others in any way possible

6. Various perverted things

These things may not be entirely compatible. The most important ones should take precedence. I am the reluctant overman. Maybe 2, 5, 3, 1, 4. I see the possibility of an eternal recurrence. Seeing it, I do not say yes to life. I say "ok". I say, "maybe, for the sake of who comes after". I cannot carry the matter myself. But it's easy enough to suffer or to die, even over and over. My life has been easy. It's been the result of failing at everything hard, so it must be easy. I would like it to also be useful, valuable, maybe even worth money. It's better to be a slave than to be worthless. So I offer my life, in whatever sense I can, on the alter of the future.