

1.) The correspondences of Sagittarius are active and passive forces are separated, but fire is advanced. It is the third fire sign. In Scorpio, the active and passive forces are mixed but water is advanced. Scorpio is the second water sign. In the process of alchemical transformation Scorpio corresponds to the step of Separation, whilst Sagittarius corresponds to the following stage of Incineration. In order to achieve the Great Work one must move through these stages in order to ultimately achieve divine unity of the masculine and feminine. It is interesting that the elemental forces of the preceding (fire) and following stages (water) are oppositional, though not surprising as one moves spiritually through the sephirot the path zig-zags from the masculine pillar of severity to the feminine pillar of mercy.

Scorpio discloses the sphere of Da'ath, and is a necessary step across the abyss. Also, there are correspondences to the sphere of Yesod, which is the sphere of unity between severity and mercy and is the doorway between the material world of Assiah to the higher world of Yetzirah, the world of formation.

Jupiter corresponds to Chesed which would be the sphere immediately following the crossing of the abyss via Da'ath, back into the feminine energy of the pillar of mercy. The next step on the sephirot is obviously towards Geburah, which is the sphere which corresponds most strongly with Mars.

My Kabbalah is weak, but it seems that you cannot go straight from Binah to Chesed as there is

no path illustrated on the tree of life.

2.) Factors of numbers between 1 and 100 are all repeating digits: 11, 22, 33, 44, 55, 66, 77, 88, 99, 110, 121, 132, 143, 154, 165, 176, 187, 198, 209, 220, 231, 242, 253, 264, 275, 286, 297, 308, 319, 330, 341, 352, 363, 374, 385, 396, 407, 418, 429, 440, 451, 462, 473, 484, 495, 506, 517, 528, 539, 550, 561, 572, 583, 594, 605, 616, 627, 638, 649, 660, 671, 682, 693, 704, 715, 726, 737, 748, 759, 770, 781, 792, 803, 814, 825, 836, 847, 858, 869, 880, 891, 902, 913, 924, 935, 946, 957, 968, 979, 990, 1001, 1012, 1023, 1034, 1045, 1056, 1067, 1078, 1089, 1100, 1111, 1122, 1133, 1144, 1155, 1166, 1177, 1188, 1199.

Multiples from 1 to 9 have repeating digits. Subsequently, the 100 unit increases by 1 every 10 iterations, whilst the 10 and unit digit increased by 1 each iteration. Once we get to 11*100 we end up with the repeating digits again that was observed earlier in the sequence. The unit digit is almost always the ten digit +1 and the hundred digit is almost always the ten digit + 1 My mathematical ability to see patterns renders me to state anything more meaningful from a mathematical perspective. I also don't know where I'd begin looking at this data gematrically. If my answer is insufficient I'd appreciate additional guidance pointing me to the texts that will solve this conundrum as there is an abundance of numerological hokum rife on the internet. Crowley identifies 11 with Da'ath, and it could be that all these numbers have some association with this non-sphere?

3.) A.:A.: methods are analogous to traditional yoga. Divorced from traditional dogma;

We place no reliance on Virgin or Pigeon. Our method is Science, our aim is Religion.

The five tools according to Shoemaker are: Development of magickal skills and techniques, Focus of mind, Raising of Kundalini, Devotional Practices, Balancing of the Psychomagical Constitution.

Development of magickal skills includes physical rituals and serves to train external discipline. Ensuring consistent effort, and sufficient documentation of results. Skill in these techniques allow for the individual to channel higher spiritual energy to manifest itself in the material plane

Raising of the kundalini relates to internal focus and discipline, what yoga refers to as

pratyhara, and pranayama. Ceremonial magick performed devoid of internal spiritual focus is impotent and relates to the problems with modern major religions (e.g. Christianity).

Devotional practices would come under the yoga limb of Nyama, and surrender to god (or the guardian angel) clears the path to improve the spiritual connection between the aspirant and clears the road for K&C

Balancing of Psychomagical Constitution would entail allowing the aspirant to balance their internal and external practices in order to spiritually self-audit in order to see where one's strengths and weaknesses are. Practically for those of us living in the real world, this also allows for one to figure out how the spiritual path we are walking can be maintained whilst still walking amongst those not on the path, and remaining invisible.

It seems 5 sub-categories is appropriate given that that's how Shoemaker presents the information. However, each of these practices can be broken down into 3 separate levels. Physical discipline creates an optimal environment for the aspirant in order to strengthen the conscious mind with a the higher spiritual realms.

Secondly, the internal arts further strengthen the psychic link between the aspirant at the divinity across the abyss. Expertise here is necessary for the third step

Bakhti practice allows the individual surrender to god and cross the abyss which is what ultimately what results in the achievement of K&C with the guardian angel.

4.) Tannhauser

There are a couple different descriptions of the stages of hermetic alchemy. The Magnum Opus contains four: nigredo, albedo, citrinitas, and finally rubedo. There are other versions of the protoscience which contain 7 stages. I imagine that the more sophisticated versions exist due to the refinement of the process of alchemy and the evolution towards modern science. Also, the number 7 is sacred to Christians and

Tannhauser was a legendary poet, his tale has contemporaneously been presented in Neil Gaiman's

'Neverwhere' show. It tells of a poet who worships at the cult of Venus, then feeling remorse for his sins asks for forgiveness from Pope Urban. Nevertheless Crowley's version potentially will contain a Thelemic current.

The opening dedication is a declaration of love apparently to Venus. There are several references to the Tarot here including lovers, star, wizard (magus?). What follows is an extensive and beautiful declaration of love and dedication to the subject of the author's affection. The dedication ends with the declaration that the love must remain a secret, (for it is profane). This is the preface, no Alchemical work has gone on here.

The preface opens with the discussion of a Biologist who may strive to identify some mystery of nature and fail, although he may return to the problem subsequently and find the solution facile. There is emphasis on the struggle and the striving towards higher knowledge This is a very alchemical attitude and relates to the popular myths of Hermes and Prometheus as well as to the modern pursuit of scientific advancement (which was of course, born out of alchemy). It is suggested that Tannhauser was a Rosicrucian and the endeavor of spiritual self improvement practiced by this order was a spiritually alchemical one. Crowley emphasises the importance of not becoming slave to dogma and finishes the preface by suggesting that his work contains anachronism and symbolism and his intention is not to mislead, but to communicate universal truth.

There is also a literary meditation on the parallels between eastern and western mysticism and Crowley states that he has omitted the former as the mythical Tannhauser did not refer to the other but that both are valuable paths to attain similar knowledge.

Act I

Tannhauser is wandering in search of higher knowledge. He refers to himself as a fool multiple times, the fool is the first step on the kabbalistic path towards malkuth. The card which is numbered 0 or infinity. He speaks of the search for the holy grail, the philosopher's stone of alchemy. The ultimate goal of the magnum opus. In his wandering and failure, Tannhauser is undergoing 'the dark night of the soul'. This corresponds to the crossing of the abyss in Thelemic Mysticism. After crying out to god for help he encounters Isis/Venus.

In Jungian psychoanalysis has related it to confrontation with the anima.

If we are to take Tannhauser as being a symbolic of the pure masculine polarity (Mars), then astrologically speaking Venus would be the anima here. This is Nigredo. Tannhauser falls in love with the deity and aspects of Eros become amplified. The names of several mythical figures associated with the feminine ideal of love are invoked. Tannhauser descends further into the unconscious as is indicated by the final stage direction of the act “[Tannhauser is lost]”. I don't know if the lack of a closed ellipsis is a printing error on my copy of the text, but if not it is suggesting that this is not the end of our hero's journey.

Act II

The first versus document the progression of their affair til the point Venus asks “These are your Joys? Cruelty for love?”. The rhetoric becomes darker and is symbolic of Tannhauser's embrace of the Jungian shadow. This blackening is the continuation of nigredo. Venus states that Tannhauser has torn a veil away from her, he can see the unity in god and man, this is perhaps the turning point when he begins his transformation towards albedo, the purification stage of alchemical transformation. The spell of Venus is broken and Tannhauser desires further development. He refers towards seeking the East. This is extremely symbolic of advancement in certain hermetic traditions such as Freemasonry and I'm sure Rosicrucianism too.

Act III

Tannhauser continues his relationship with Venus, but there is much conflict. He wants to go and visit other women, but she objects. He sleeps often and Venus is upset that she cannot follow him to the dream land. Their passion remains, but he is somewhat detached from it all. His forays with Venus have allowed for the masculine and feminine aspects of his psyche to attain unity. He still unsuccessfully seeks the grail, but his attitude is a much more positive one than that observed in act one. There is less chaos and internal conflict presented within Tannhauser, but he continues to disagree with his lover. At one point he speaks of his love of Christianity and his respect of this spiritual practice to the distaste of his lover. This act covers the Alchemical stage of Crinitas. There is much symbolism of the yellowness symbolically associated with this stage of attainment, much like there was much blackness in the first act.

Tannhauser returns home and his friends ask him of his travels, if he killed Turks, if he saw the grail. He remains vague as to what happened saying 'I saw many things'. A mark of a wise man is always

saying less than is necessary.

Act IV

Upon his return he is immediately chastised by his lover Elizabeth. After some dispute she acknowledges that she loves him as she ever did. They enter court and Tannhauser plays a much smaller role now that he has returned to the wide world. Tannhauser sings an extensive song of his travels and experience much to the horror of the court. Tannhauser continues to share his philosophy, raising ire. He wished to know the mind of god, which he considers a noble pursuit and cites the pursuits of those more noble than he, but the court accuses him of heresy and atheism. He attacks the hypocrisy and immorality present in the court that know judges him for seeking betterment and wisdom. Tannhauser apologizes for upsetting Elizabeth who he loves truly. She states that 'god is truly good', but our man now wise to the wiles of dogma disagrees. Tannhauser posits that God is nothing more than a projection of the shadow of the human mind.

Tannhauser is sent on a pilgrimage to Rome to atone for his perceived sins and to reconcile with Elizabeth.

Here we see Tannhauser achieve Rubedo. He is fully individuated, and at peace with his true nature, regardless of what that means of his standing in society.

Act V

A colleague mourns Tannhauser's ideal, but he is quick to inform him that it was no ordeal at all. The experiences he has had and the wisdom he has garnered have made him all the better for it. In Rome he confessed his sins. Was forgiven. His spiritual development transcendent of any temporary material discomfort. He speaks of his intimate knowledge of Isis and then goes on to discuss some stuff about the IAO formula I remain ignorant to. Maybe he was the lover of Isis spiritually slain by the forces of society. Finally he is slain by a kiss from Isis arisen and she mourns his death.

5.)The Vesica Piscis is the womb of the universe. Vesica piscis is an oft used symbol of

uncertain origin. It may represent the overlap of opposing forces (elemental, sexual, etc). There are elements of Zoroastrian duality indicated in the conception of the symbol. It has been suggested that the aperture in the middle is itself a symbol of the female sexual organ. Unity between male and female being essential for the transmission of all human life on earth. Christians famously used the ichthys which has been suggested by some to be an abbreviation of the vesica piscis which was a popular gnostic symbol. Robert Anton Wilson spoke at length in some of his books about the Rosy Cross referred to in Templar ritual referred to the unity of the male and female in a manner corresponding to the vesica piscis. Ultimately the result of Alchemical transformation portrayed in medieval artwork was the creation of a hermaphrodite following regeneration. This I believe is symbolic of the union of male and female polarities in a healthy psychological way. Today's world is rife with toxic masculinity and toxic feminism, and too many people ignoring the greater challenges of ushering in the new Aeon due to nonsense gender and identity politics. In Euclid's Elements the symbol is a necessary step towards drawing an equilateral triangle. The vesica piscis remains an important symbol in several ecclesiastical symbols today and the overlap principle utilised is the basis of another esoteric symbol 'the flower of life'. In fact the OTO symbol is itself a representation of the synthetic part of the vesica piscis.

The heptangle is a 7-pointed star. 7 is considered a perfect number in the Bible as god created the world in 7 days. There were 7 classical planets used by early Hermetic philosophers (despite the fact that evidence exists that they were aware of more). Visible light is divided 7 different colours (personally, I'd argue that blue, indigo and violet should be considered 1 colour scientifically) The rainbow which occurred following the deluge was a symbol of the covenant with god. There are of course 7 chakras under hindu yogic systems. 7 masons are required to perform Masonic business inside a lodge.

Under the Golden Dawn system, the 7 pointed star is the star of Venus and indicative of the seraph Netzach, this is the last seraph one must pass along on the tree of life on the pillar of mercy before transcending to the pillar of severity hod and eventually encountering the middle pillar Yesod. The gateway between Yetzirah and Assiah.

I've read material suggesting that there were 7 stages of spiritual transformations under the system of medieval Hermetic alchemy, but I've also read versions where there were more or less and it is not possible to determine accuracy in these matters without guidance.

In Thelema, the seven pointed star is symbolic of Babalon, the Thelemic Goddess, symbolic of pure female impulse. I now understand that this is the answer you sought. But I think the other uses of the symbol are sufficiently interesting to include in my essay. Babalon works in concert with chaos and her goal is to usher in the new Aeon. Judging from the extreme levels of political chaos and the last grasp of judeo-christian power structures, I'd say she's doing a pretty good job. Babalon stands at the abyss, where aspirants need to contend with Choronzon to achieve K&C. I think I understand the liber LVX formula pretty well, but the NOX formula eludes me. I understand that this relates to Babalon, Choronzon, Da'ath and ego death.

The golden ratio is a mathematical phenomena observed all throughout the universe. When the ratio of two quantities is the same as the sum of the larger. This is most often considered in terms of the Fibonacci spiral. It is present throughout nature, and analysis of many renaissance cathedrals has demonstrated the ubiquity of the phenomena. Humans associate this ratio with beauty for some reason. The rational scientific explanation for human appreciation defies explanation and the ubiquity in nature says much of the simplicity and beauty of the world and may point towards the will of a higher power.

I love to show my kids this Donald Duck cartoon in Math class

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVIW97e_UKI

The pentagram is associated with the Aeon of Set in Thelema which began in 1975 which used Khepri in its magical formula. This was later adopted by Kenneth Anger's Typhonian order. I don't know so much about lineage and schisms in these orders and much of it seems to me to be egos getting in the way of the Great Work.

If the purpose of this essay is to relate all three concepts. I would suggest that all were based on logic and the best science available to practitioners at the time. All became embroiled in occult mystical meanings which aspirants used to attempt to attain higher knowledge of god. What Thelema would call Knowledge and Conversation with the guardian angel. There are obvious benefits of tradition that should not be ignored and should be treated with respect. But one must be careful not to let dogma stand in the way of progress and the movement towards the new Aeon.

6.) The concept of an eternal unchanging soul in Buddhism does not exist. For Buddhism the body and soul are one. Buddhists believe that the concept of soul is a creation by the ego in order to prevent people from liberation from the material world. The stronger the individual's soul, the greater the grip of the ego on the person's behaviour. For the Hindus the body and soul are separate. The body is merely a vessel in which the soul resides. All souls are fragments of divinity. Spiritual practices to escape Samsara are attempts for the enlightened to achieve liberation and have their fragment of soul reunited with the universal Atman

7.) Shiva Samhita is the oldest and most comprehensive text on Hatha Yoga existing. It was written as being authored by Shiva. It talks about several aspects of each of the eight limbs of yoga. It was critical of gurus and suggested that even normal householders (i.e. non-religious castes) could practice yoga. Many of the ideas presented within are well covered by modern yoga texts including the sutras of Patanjali and don't warrant further discussion here.

Elphias Levi, instead of writing anonymously used a pseudonym. Instead of using traditional eastern Yogic practices, Levi's techniques were based on more Western ideals. His perception of magic was to achieve improvement of the individual. Levi sought to unify religion and Christianity and was imprisoned multiple times during his work. Much of Levi's magical ideas were based on Kabbalah and claimed ancestry from the mystery schools of the classical world. He had a great involvement in the development of tarot and was one of the first to connect Kabbalah and Tarot.

Levi believed that the material universe was a minute aspect of everything that existed. He spoke of astral light, something appropriating Kundalini perhaps. Levi also believed that human willpower can achieve anything. This is a very Thelemic ideal. Finally, he suggested that the human is a microcosm and therefore effects at the microcosmic level can effect the macrocosm. This is an Hermetic ideal which dates back to the days of the Greek mystery schools. *ópos parapáno étsi kai parakáto*

Similarities between the two is that they were challenging conventional wisdom regarding spiritual enlightenment, and suggested that anybody could attain these goals. Shiva Samhita is as old a text as exists on such subject matter, whilst Elphias Levi was derivative and to a degree

syncretic. Here we see the age old conflict between tradition and innovation. Although both men seemed to avoid a dogmatic approach to their subject matter. Whilst Shiva was opposed to Guruism and it doesn't appear that he was responsible for the formation of any cults personally, it is almost certain that his teachings were used to form cults by less discerning seekers. Elphias Levi's writings eventually led to the development of the Golden Dawn which is good or bad depending on who you speak to.

8.)Levi suggested using a wand made out of almond or hazel. Hazel seems to be the more popular of the two. Hazel has been suggested to correspond to Mercury and be ruled by the zodiac sign Cancer. Mercury is clearly a powerful entity to call upon for aid in magickal works, but can be mercurial in nature.

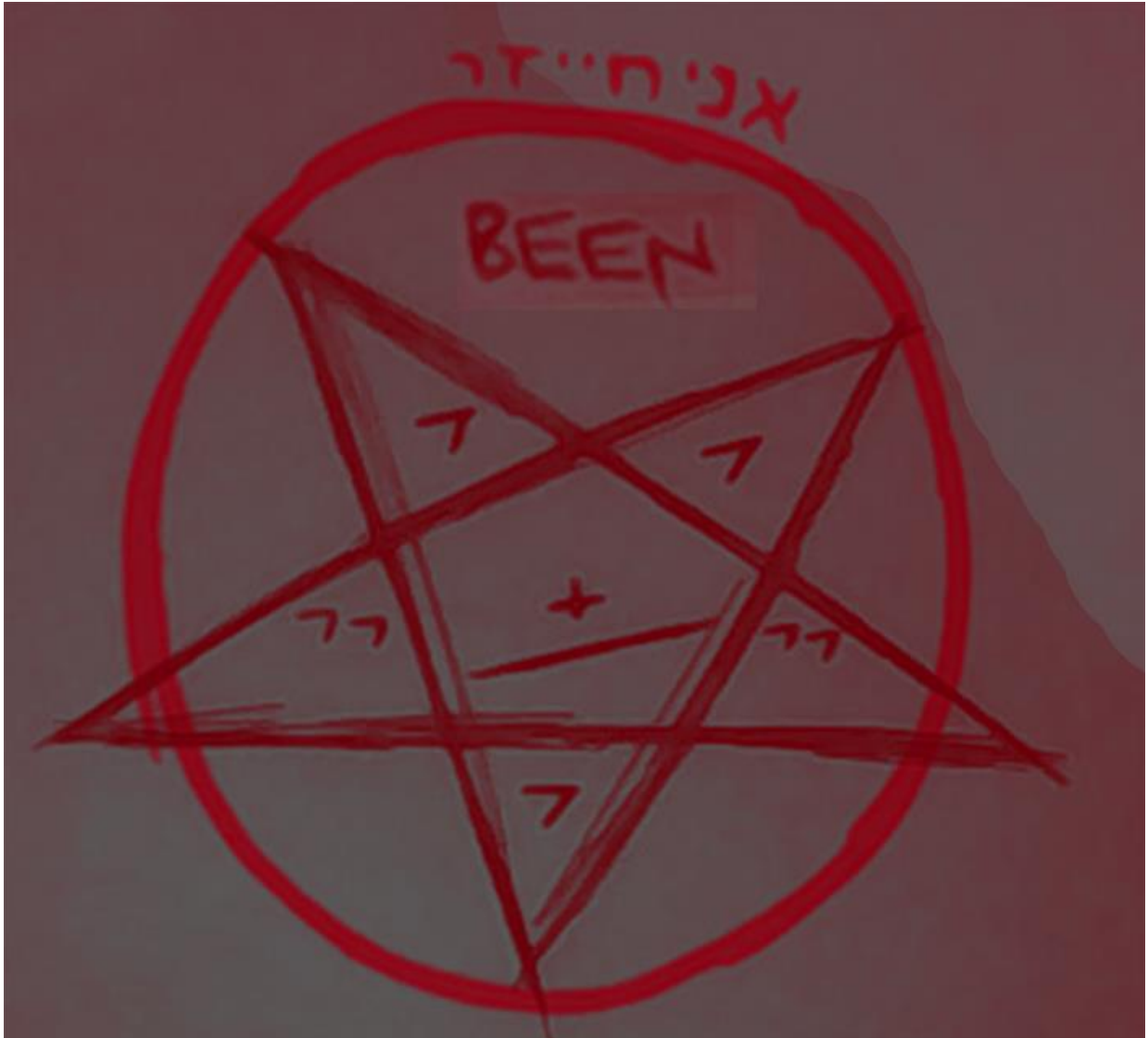
Abremalin suggests making a wand of almond, though states that any nut wood will suffice. Almond corresponds to Jupiter. Jupiter is the largest planet in the solar system and possibly the most powerful magically.

One might imagine that the astrological power being invoked by a mercurial wand will be weaker but that effects may be seen faster, whilst Jupiter can achieve much more powerful magickal aims, but that the effects may take longer to achieve (Consider the length of the working of the Greater rites of Solomon and the amount of time one has to spend in isolation. This is not so practical for people who are living in the muggle world.)

In my ignorance I cannot find out what Crowley made his wand out of, but in book 4 he emphasises the importance of it. Saying 'The Magick Wand is thus the principal weapon of the Magus; and the 'name' of that wand is the Magical Oath.'

I think Frater Perudabo had the most evolved sense of the purpose of the wand. A lot of old dogma pertaining to material objects is secondary to the intent of the objects.

The tradition of the wand can be traced back to the healing caduceus of Aesculapius. Even today, insipid priests and impotent monarchs can be seen wielding ornate scepters. What is more important than the material artifacts, is the magickal intent that they have been instilled with via the application of magickal discipline and Thelemic will.



9.) I think this is what you're looking for... Been, is similar to my name and gematrias to 156, as does the Hebrew, but my Hebrew writing is a little bit less than perfect. Ask for further clarification.

I can change the numbers round if I'm cribbing Fr. Perudabo too much, but I'll have to invert the pentagram to make it work mathematically

10.) Ritual

I have selected a (soapstone?) amulet gifted to me from a Chinese student at a summer school I

worked at in Oxfordshire last summer. I believe that the fact it was a gift, and that it came from a place of appreciation of language tuition makes it a good substrate for a talisman for rhetoric. I will inscribe it with the planetary sigil for Mercury.



*Illustration 1: Here's the stone,
what kind of stone is it?
Nothing remarkable*

In my ritual space I have a cup of water, candles, my athame, a small bowl of salt for earth (guidance on making the wax pentacle described in the A.:A.:. method would be appreciated.) and some Frankincense & Myrrh incense.

Also in my Ritual space I have a copy of Rhetoric by Aristotle, Masonic tendencies mean that I don't like to do anything in the absence of a VSL and this text by Aristotle seems appropriate to enact my will.

My temple will be basic. A wooden altar, with my magical tools on it. I shall be facing east obviously. I will have the Ace Thoth tarot cards at each of the cardinal points to represent the elements.

There are plenty of other materials and astrological considerations I should take into consideration, but alas this is beyond my level of Magickal training and my Occult library is currently residing in the UK (Including Regardie's tome on 'The Golden Dawn' as well as Cicero's 'Self-initiation to the Golden Dawn').

I'm Virgo which I imagine bodes well for me performing the ritual depending on what the stars are doing and Virgo corresponds with the earthy part of Mercury and I'm trying to affect rhetoric in the sphere of Malkhut. My confirmation name when I was a practicing catholic was Michael, so this should also assist assuming there is any magick left in the church

I will perform the ritual on Wednesday, as this is Mercredi or Mercury's day

My intention for the ritual is to assist in improving the effectiveness of my teaching at school and perhaps also aid in my acquisition of Mandarin.

Prior to commencement of the ritual I perform the LBRP in order to purify the ceremonial space.

Once I have finished the banishment I light the candles and incense. I will Invoke a God Form associated with Rhetoric. The HOGD has an excellent transcript regarding an invocation of Thoth. Though, I have also found an excellent evocation of Mercury online I prefer Regardie's material and would be inclined to stick with this as I have used this invocation with success in the past to further my studies.

I will consecrate the amulet with air (incense) and earth (salt)

I will close the ritual, by stating it is over. I will thank Mercury/Thoth/Hermes/Odin for their assistance in this undertaking and hope that my actions please them.

After invocation I will commit to a moment of contemplative meditation. I will creatively visualize the talisman assisting me in my magickal intention.

I will close the ritual using the LBRP.

I will hang the talisman outside in the moonlight and hope that I have been successful.

Alternatively I will use the following youtube video and change the correspondences to match

up with Mercury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i01YvU66SGw>

11.) Karma refers to the interactions and intent between people, it exists in Hinduism and Buddhism, but the main difference is that buddhists don't have a conception of the soul. Therefore bad karma for Hindus results in reward or punishment in the next life. Maybe a rich man who was avaricious reincarnates as a poor man in order to learn a lesson about wealth. The goal of Hindus is to raise their karma to the point where they achieve liberation and can reunite with the Atman. The Buddhist conception of Karma is very similar, but the goal differs. Buddhists are trying to stop the wheel of karma so that they can achieve liberation by not reincarnation attaining Nirvana.

12.) **Psychology of Hashish**

Chapter 1

The opening quote in this text is from Zoroaster. It briefly summarizes the duality of good and evil and suggests that even 'the evil germs of matter make ... become useful and good'. Conventional wisdom at the time suggests Hashish was toxic and bad and led good men astray. Use of this quote opens the reader to the conception that these baser aspects of nature can also be valuable for spiritual development. The idea of the unity of duality is necessary for transcendence corresponds to the pillars of the sephiroth as well as the symbolism of the vesica piscis discussed earlier.

The next paragraph refers to the Babel myth. This myth states there was a time of human unity and in their hubris, humans cooperated to produce a tower to reach heaven (to attain K&C perhaps). Their punishment was that the tower was smashed. The people of Earth could no longer communicate and, were doomed to centuries of cultural clashes and in some cases war. Crowley also likens the herb to a Djinn, an Islamic spirit saying that some people sing the praises of such a herb, but for others it leads to ruin.

Richard Burton, a wise man took the herb for months and experienced no more than increased appetite. It seems the spiritual benefits of the drug do not affect all equally.

“Nay! For I am...” This line refers to the Serpent of Genesis and may suggest that the plant is fruit of knowledge of good and evil.

The next line suggests that those that have experienced less than spiritual effects may have smoked

immature plants (mere unripe berries!), although it is more likely that botanists at the time didn't understand the importance of smoking the female plants and keeping the males separate to prevent fertilization.

'divest myself of gold'. 'left breast bare', 'without timidity or rashness', 'temple', 'apron of innocence'. This paragraph is extremely masonic in nature referring to the first degree initiation. Crowley has come to attempt to achieve higher consciousness, knowing that others have failed with the same attitude with which an aspirant attempts to encounter masonic light

Chapter 2

Again opening with Zoroaster. The most popular deity in the middle east before Christianity laid waste to the region during the crusades. Before Islam became the dominant belief system. Although neither insulated from the powerful influence of Zoroastrianistic belief. Hecate is an ancient Greek Goddess and the Stropholos is the maze one has to travel through in order to attain knowledge of her. Perhaps possible through the chemognosis afforded by good hashish.

Crowley left Cambridge and experimented with several of the available mind-altering substances in order to attain higher knowledge but, was unsuccessful. He spent forty years in india practicing yoga and attained some success, but was dissapointed at how 'dry' it was and painfully slow it took to get to any meaningful communion with a higher intelligence. He sought a short-cut.

Chapter 3

Crowley proposed that hashish 'loosened the girders of the soul'. He says that this is neither good nor bad. Like Leary said of LSD, it is a tool, like a microscope. Tools can be used to positive ends or negative ends. He complains of the difficulties measuring accurate dosages of cannabis oil. He also complains of differential experiential effects of people in response to other drugs. Obviously to be scientific, Crowley needs specific dosages and consistent results.

He offers advice in the final line which should be heeded by modern day psychonauts. Start with the smallest dosage and wait for the expected time of onset. If nothing happens up the dosage. This is responsible drug use and if heeded by hedonists frequenting raves today would probably result in less hospitalizes and fatalities and mean for a more sensible drug policy worldwide.

Chapter 4

Crowley opens by saying this isn't a scientific essay due to it only having n=1. As a scientist I appreciate his candor, and it is refreshing to hear in such an archaic text.

He suggests three different effects of hashish due to three different chemicals

A – volatile aromatic – a thrill, resulting in introspection. Dissolution of Ego and Will. Crowley states that the conclusions which result from this introspection are not necessarily valid.

B – toxic hallucinative effect – This sounds like anxiety brought on by too high a dose of THC and a THC heavy THC/CBD ratio. Smoke too much and one becomes horrified. We've all been there. Crowley suggests that magickal training (effectively a strong will) can be used to overcome the negative effects.

C – Narcotic effect. - One goes to sleep, perhaps due to exhaustion.

Crowley refers to *Cannabis Indica*, but I imagine the effects described for effects A and B are more consistent with a *Sativa* strain. Effect C is consistent with what happens to most who smoke *Indica*, this is consistent with his suggestion that one strain of cannabis he encountered generally resulted in effect C regardless of dosage.

Chapter 5

Crowley places the greatest value in experience A, but suggests it's difficult not to fall into experience B. This is indicative of people smoking, enjoying the experience and not being able to control their appetites. Like some enjoying dinner, will gorge themselves on food until they feel gastric discomfort. There is a requirement for discipline in the spiritual usage of Cannabis in order to keep the subject in a useful, manageable headspace. Overshooting the dosage isn't a disaster, the subject just needs to chill out and nap until they return to baseline.

Crowley struggles with how an individual can return to a state of 'pure soul'. He cites monotheism, pantheism. There is a fundamental connectedness of all, but an impenetrable separation from the 'pure soul'. This conundrum relates to the parable of Babel mentioned earlier and serves as the intention for much of Crowley's systems of magical workings. How can one cross the abyss?

During this essay, I would say that most of Crowley's trouble stems from Ego, which is unusual considering that he spent so much time practicing Yoga which is about the dissolution of Ego.

Obviously this essay was written before the Cairo event and much of the discomfort he feels was addressed in the book of the Law “*the pain of division is as nothing, and the joy of dissolution all*”.

Chapter VI

This chapter is fully about one's perception of time. It is well noted that hashish annihilates an individual's perception of time. Scientifically we know that there are complex chemical pathways which regulate the transfer of short term memory into long term memory. THC is an agonist for a receptor which is responsible for the deletion of short term memories the brain deems unnecessary. High doses of this chemical interferes with the short term memory and often results in a type of temporary amnesia which prevents the subject from even being able to finish a sentence. Crowley talks about how one can simultaneously have myriad thoughts bouncing around one's head but that the "cat-echoes" disrupt this. He relates this to Samadhi. Effect A of Cannabis according to Crowley is a short-cut to Samadhi. Although not stated in this chapter, these effects may also be useful to the yogi in practice of Dharana. In the same way that lifting heavy weights makes one stronger in the absence of these weights. Effective practice of Dharana under the influence of Hashish may improve one's ability to perform Dharana in the absence of the chemical.

Chapter VII

Crowley's experience gives way to what he termed effect **B**. He refers to thoughts which arise and associated images he terms glyphs. In the previous chapter these seemed ordered and logical, but as his experience progresses they become more confused and anxiety inducing. The phenomena reported lead me to believe that he is under the influence of a *sativa* with a low THC/CBD ratio. Or he may just have overindulged in the substance. Either way his analysis remains lucid and a valid assessment of the potential spiritual benefits of the plant.

Here Crowley states that too many people mistake 'reverie for meditation'. This is an astute observation. There is a major difference between being high and being wise, although trying to tell the former that he needs to sit down, chill out and remain silent can be a challenging task. In the decades that followed many acid-heads mistook reverie for enlightenment and there were considerable cultural problems as a result. Crowley, always ahead of the curve. That's why he's on the cover of 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band'

Chapter VIII

Honestly, I'm starting to get a bit lost here. I clearly need to brush up on my Kant (Categorical Imperative), Hegel (Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis) and Herbert Spencer. (Survival of the Fittest). I would like to know how intoxicated Crowley was when this was scribed and how much editing went into it post writing. The jist seems to be that you can lead a horse to water but not make them drink. That there is objective truth and people make assumptions based on their own observations and the conclusions they come to, they will come to regardless.

He suggests that you cannot change a mans mind when it is made up, but you must endeavor to make your best attempt to do so.

Chapter IX

Following on from the philosophical diatribe of the previous chapter Crowley gives the example of a professor trying to convince a student of the existence of bacteria through the use of a microscope. The student is incredulous. First failing to use the tool effectively. Then accusing the Professor of being subject to a hallucination. Ignaz Semmelweis died due to a similar contention with his fellow surgeons in the 1800s. Antonie van Leeuwenhoek faced similar challenges although fortunately his ideas became accepted rather than sending him to an asylum.

Crowley draws parallels between this and the mystics. They have achieved some form of truth, but non-practitioners inhabit such a radically different reality tunnel it is impossible to reach them. In the 1800s who could afford to spend 5 years doing yoga in a cave, who could do so today? Thus demonstrates Crowley's desire for a short-cut

He goes on to say that these wacky scientific ideas were initially jokes, but after being tried in the crucible of documented research have become integral to Western Civilization. He calls for the same approach to be applied to mysticism. Tis a shame he never got to sit around a table with Freud and Jung.

Chapter X

Crowley feels that his cowardice in school has led to his proving his bravery to himself by climbing mountains, traveling the world etc. He then contrasts this with his carefulness regarding experimentation with drugs. Starting with low doses and working his way up. In modern times we call this 'responsible drug use'. He also states that he waited a month before repeating an experiment, likely

in an effort to avoid habituation or addiction.

This chapter is mostly Crowley casting shade at Baudelaire and saying that hashish is a relatively benign substance. But we must remember that different chemicals effect different people differently. Look at F. Scott Fitzgerald's capacity for alcohol intake versus Earnest Hemmingway.

Crowley finishes the chapter by stating that once one has determined the psycho-physiological effects of the drug at certain doses, it certainly warrants combination with mystical practices.

Chapter XI

There is discussion of several potential mystical techniques one could use in order to experiment with hashish, but some are inappropriate and some require too much prerequisite knowledge, so Crowley intends to go with the Buddhist Skandhas . What follows are brief descriptions of each of the Skandhas, aspects of consciousness, some cohesive, some at odds with each other. I will not summarize them here.

Chapter XII

Description of a ritual pertaining to the Nama-Rupa. Separating one's astral body from one's physical body before reuniting. This sounds like a form of astral projection. I would like to attempt to follow along at home but alas I have no hashish.

Crowley recommends performing the LBRP before and after the ritual.

The vision and the voices one perceives during this astral travel indicate mastery of Dhyana.

He also warns of spending too much time in this place. I see similarities in the descriptions of what's happening with this Nama-Rupa ritual and the descriptions of the Enochian work in the Vision and the Voice

Chapter XIII

This is a warning on the difference between actual valuable Dhyana experiences and descriptions of

such experiences given by charlatans. There is a ritual described at the end of the chapter of 'the Game of Adam' which is supposedly an effective technique for clairvoyance, but also a favourite of practitioners of humbuggery.

It seems that chemognosis can act as a catalyst towards meaningful spiritual experiences, but the modern day landscape of devotees of the occult is littered with burnouts, false prophets, and addicts in denial.

How does one tell between real and fake magickal phenomena? I had some pretty cosmic experiences on a combination of Ketamine and LSD, but when I sobered up they were meaningless. Like you can perceive the infinite for a moment, but it's intangible, unrecordable and gone. If I can't enter one of the aethyrs, but another can. How do I know it's not some hokum Ouija board phenomenon. As a scientist I couldn't even tell which of my colleagues data was bull. Rant over.

XIV

Crowley expounds further on Dhyana apparitions and how some of them are actually only astral hallucinations (How does one tell the difference?). Crowley goes on to reference contemporary texts which describe the phenomenon described previously. He also refers to some mystical texts with techniques for the aspirant to achieve the Dhyana visions described. Ego, Selfishness etc. are the aspirants main obstacles at this stage.

I think this final line in this chapter is suggesting that Knowledge and Conversation with the Guardian angel shouldn't be regarded as the end point of the spiritual journey?

XV

Sanna – The closer the aspirant gets to the goal, the less able the aspirant is able to recognize it's goal. Knowledge of God may be the aspirants goal, but once he gets there he starts identifying certain aspects of that god as aspects of his own nature. The higher the intellectual achievements of a man of science, the less able he is to perceive them as achievements and regards them only as aspects of his character.

Crowley states that the nature of the Hashish effects of Sanna described here have been more fully discussed in chapter V and VII. That is dissolution of the ego, and the random glyphs which run

through the mind during contemplation of these phenomena.

XVI

The deeper into these deep mystical states an individual gets, the harder they become to articulate with language. There is truth here, but truth which is transcendent. Experiences which occur in Assiah are expertly described, as the human spirit ascends towards the higher worlds such as Yetzirah, Beri'ah or even Atziluth. These concepts become more difficult if not impossible to explain.

What follows is a series of random questions which have no meaningful meaning to the aspirant with regards to achievement of the Great Work.

Things just are accept them. Do what thou wilt helps one realize that some things that are shouldn't be, and one can apply one's will to restore balance, or to promote advancement of the new Aeon.

XVII

This chapter starts with some analysis of the etymological origins of Samadhi. It can mean the banishment of all thought (lower kind) or the total focus on a single thought (highest kind).

Crowley emphasizes the near impossibility of attaining Samadhi (despite suggesting that use of Hashish may be a short-cut to achieve such a goal much earlier in the work).

XVIII

Viññanam – Hashish-assisted results in unity with the Holy Guardian Angel? One thinks here of Jaques Lacan's concept of the transcendental other and the jouissance one feels as one approaches the other, but the abject horror of actually arriving there.

The next lines are poetic and prophetic and a little bit impenetrable. Spiritually the aspirant has arrived at the goal, but the matter, the material world persists. They must return to it. Despite the greater discipline and control the aspirant has over the ego, the stronger the ego becomes.

The foxes and grapes line is a reference to the Bible 'Song of Solomon 2:15'. The aspirant is not ready to join Atman yet (we were using Buddhism before, but forgive me for mixing metaphors). The

aspirant is not ready to achieve K&C, and will likely damage the perfection of the realm he is trying to enter if trying to cross the abyss.

The aspirant who can now call himself Parabrahma (like super-seiyan yogi) is still subject to the Maya (the supernatural power wielded by gods and demons to produce illusions)

IAO is Isis, Apophis, Osiris: The dying god formula. This means things Thelemically that are beyond my clearance level.

Without getting into details of some heavy paragraphs. It seems that the aspirant feels he has failure. Like Icarus he flew too close to the sun and for a moment saw something that nobody else had before plummeting back down amongst normal mortals. It seems that KNC is overwhelming, there is an infinitude of spiritual information available and human vessels are only able to channel small amounts of it. All the more reason to get training magically, become a more effective channel of its will. Cooperate with other practitioners, an army of Parabrahmas could illuminate a nation. Etc. etc.

The end of the chapter is phrased positively. We must try. Crowley suggests synthesis of Eastern and Western methods is most likely to succeed. Hegel would call this stage 'Synthesis'. Why should humans attempt to attain a higher state of spiritual being? Kant would call this the Categorical Imperative. And which system or syncretism of ideas and practices will be successful? Herbert Spencer would have said that it will be 'survival of the fittest'.

XIX

I've given up on interpreting the Zoroastrian quotes for brevity's sake, but they are quite brilliant and I will be looking to acquire some books on the subject.

The aspirant has achieved Paranirodha-samāpatti and the implication in the text is that he feels quite smug(?) about it. Is this false attainment. The aspirant has pierced some veils, but not made it the whole way through. This stage of nirodha-samāpatti is just another illusion put forth by Maya?

There is a brilliant/terrible joke which follows "A jok's a jok (leech) but a jok up your nose is no jok".

Possible interpretation is that the aspirant isn't ready for this level of attainment and is little more than an annoyance to the Atman/Archon/Whatever one is trying to overcome

The paragraphs which follow are morose, but not without hope. The destination attempted has not been reached. But appreciation of the skills attained by Crowley will see him in good stead on the path forward. He refers to Charles Henry Allan Bennett as being a man with more mystical wisdom than himself. Crowley progressed further along this path than almost any westerner but is aware of the fact that there are other teachers, willing to teach. Maybe Crowley was a kind of western Bodhisattva. The influence he has had on bringing mystical traditions to westerners cannot be understated.

Unfortunately he has also become a kind of false-idol to the followers of Crowleyanity and purveyors of Jay-Z merchandise.

Maybe the final liberation is a myth. What Lacan calls a transcendental other. The carrot at the end of a stick. The behaviours, discipline and practices resulting in a much better society for all despite the impossible end.

XX

Crowley comes back to baseline. Professes the importance of science, but emphasizes its limitations. Expresses the value of transcendental mystical experiences but warns of the insanity the pursuit of this may lead to.

He leaves the reader with the question. How to reconcile the mystical with the scientific. This was a considerable part of the goal of his Thelemic ideals.

The whole of this investigation is neatly summarised in the following quote

“We place no reliance on virgin or pidgeon.
Our method is science, our aim is religion.”

The start of the texts reads like a MAPS study at best, or an Erowid trip report at worst. It is actually a pretty sophisticated analysis of the subjective effects of cannabis considering it was written in 1907.

The comparison between ecstatic states brought on by drugs brings to mind the experiments of Timothy Leary in the 50s-60s as well as the Merry Pranksters. Although I believe that Crowley appears to be a much more staunch advocate for responsible drug use than the hippies. It would be fascinating to have heard him speak on other chemicals like LSD or Ketamine or Salvia. His mystical knowledge and that of the Classics doesn't really exist in anybody with interests in the pharmacological aspects of these things today. I think the closest I've read to this essay in more contemporary times would be 'Prometheus Rising' by Robert Anton Wilson or "Angel Tech" by Antero Alli. But these books are let down by ignorance of eastern mysticism and were marketed towards the irresponsible 'turn on, tune in, drop out' crowd.

With regards to Crowley's failure to get where he wanted to go at this point in his mystical career, and as to the difficulty differentiating genuine mysticism from hokum, I am really reminded of Hassan I Sabbah and the famous quote:

'Everything is permitted; Nothing is real'

13.) My first foray into the occult came from my fascination with the American counterculture. I watched every Terence McKenna video I could find on youtube, then proceeded to read every book cited in his videos. I read Regardie, RAW, Crowley, Leary, Carrol, Hine. The Invisibles by Grant Morrison was a major catalyst in me starting to experiment in earnest with this stuff. I practiced Yoga, Martial arts. The goal of Science is to identify Occult knowledge, crystalize it and use it to make the world a better place. At the height of my Science kool-aide drinking I was fascinated with the idea of Transhumanism. I joined the Freemasons. I petitioned the OTO. I also petitioned the IOT. I want to be in a fraternal order because I feel it will allow me to achieve optimal spiritual development in a way that is not possible from insipid impotent traditional religious groups. A.:A.:. works well for me as it is largely a correspondence course.

I practice chaos magic. Last week I travelled around Shanghai performing DMKU's Greater Ellisian Generator ritual with the area traversed covering my stomping grounds. I centered the ritual at Jing'an temple as that seems to be the closest thing to a spiritual center where consumerist capitalism is the main religion.

Essay, follows is an excerpt from a book I'm writing about my career as a Scientist. Feel free to skip. The previous material will colour your decision about whether or not you're going to give me a shot.

Takes you up to my PhD. Rest of book will be about PhD experiences.

After my PhD I ran a Hostel in Amsterdam.

Now I'm a Maths and Science teacher at a High School in Shanghai.

I had a pretty unremarkable adolescence. Appearing not as a blip on the radar of any girls at my school, I channeled my nervous burgeoning sexual energy into pursuits like Warhammer and learning how to play guitar and sing. My caliber as a musician is a function of how little attention I got as a youth versus how much my acne hormones wanted it. There were about 700 students at my school. The Highlands is sparse, so my school featured the sons and daughters of doctors and lawyers sitting in the same classes as the offspring of the poor and criminal. My parents had always emphasized the importance of having an education (I guess because they never studied a degree, we always place undue importance on the things that we don't have) and me being a decent Christian made sure to be studious in accordance with their wishes. Also, I legitimately just find learning fascinating. Those of you who attended low ranking state schools know just how unacceptable this attitude is, so I was smart enough to keep shtum less I raise the ire of Brutus in the back of my registration class and he decided it was time to empty the contents of into a lavatory that day. I talked too much. I still do. I was forever getting thrown out of class for misbehaving. I must have been an irritating little prick to teach. I probably still am. I never really clicked with the rich kids being from a humble household. We were rich enough that I had decent clothes, but there were not annual holidays abroad and I got the latest game console about three years after my better off friends. Oh woe is me. Woe is me. This part of the book is to give you a frame of reference about who I was, where I came from and how I ended up working as something resembling a scientist. I was unremarkable. Middle of the bell curve. I was in all the middle classes in school up until it came time to do exams. I upped my studying and graduated with the highest grades in my year. Other students performed as well as me, but nobody outperformed me academically.

I started Chaos magick during my PhD. Mostly based off Liber Null and Psychonaut. I also dabbled extensively with the psychedelic drugs that were relatively easily available from Polish pharmacies at the time. I encountered what appeared to be extraterrestrial entities on high doses of 4-aco-DMT. I experienced something resembling astral projection on high doses of Ketamine. The weirdest one was Salvia, which resulted in me realising I was some cog in a universal mechanistic machine and

insignificant though I was to the machine as a whole, I sensed a malevolent intelligence was aware of me. I knocked that on the head after EU laws changed and I found a Scarlet woman. Following a ritual I performed regarding the future of my love life, I got the Star tarot card in a spread. I do subsequent spreads and star keeps coming up. Next week, all the bars in Glasow start selling Estrella beer. A girl arrives at the lab called Estrella (spanish for star). We spend a couple weeks working together, getting on well. The first day we sleep together we have the same dream. I know we had the same dream because she told me about her dream and it was almost identical to mine. We were both in a camper van which was being stolen by somebody else.

The spiritual connection I had with the girl is hard to explain. She was fully scientist and skeptical of this kind of stuff, but also oddly fascinated with it. She used to have a pet magpie that she nursed back to health that lived with her. We would go hill walking and she'd crouch down to point out a single ant trying to pull home a piece of food that was far too big for it. Eventually the relationship blew up because I had a professional dispute with my unprofessional professor, and she sided with work. I was pretty devastated by the break up, but it was necessary to cut ties with toxic academia and leave as soon as was possible. We still experience occasional synchronicities despite being millions of miles apart.

She called me up a year after the breakup to apologise for siding with the university. She said she hadn't understood me at the time, but was now (a year later) having similar problems with the administration.

She was probably my greatest magickal success romantically, but the PhD experience is the hardest that the universe has ever hit me spiritually.

I practiced extensive Kundalini meditation during my PhD. The sensation of warmth and energy radiating up the spine was fantastic. When I was really disciplined and abstaining from alcohol, women, going to Muay Thai recently I felt close to superhuman. My professor didn't like this either (Qiploth). I keep getting fully into these practices but then things get in the way. I've learned to keep my mouth shut about my spiritual beliefs. I seek affiliation with a magickal organization as the human connection with like minded people is necessary to keep grounded, keep focussed. I'm always telling my Science students that consistency is the ultimate necessity for success. Although I don't follow my own rules spiritually. My efforts are a bit too mercurial.

During my studies I was also performing regular rituals to produce beer. I was into homebrew, but I

saw many similarities between alchemical transformations and correspondences to magical phenomenon. You have water (obviously water), earth (malt extract and sugar are products of the ground), air (oxygen is necessary for the yeast to ferment, carbon dioxide is produced by this fermentation), fire (it is necessary to heat all substances to ensure sterility, this also corresponds to banishment of unwanted spiritual entities) and spirit comes in the form of the yeast, which is alive. Alcohol has great spiritual symbolism used as a sacrament in Christianity. Some have suggested that it serves as the milestone humans reached for the birth of civilization to occur. I would perform standard GD/OTO rituals during my brew day. Occasionally I would ingest psychotropic substances to encourage chemognosis, but I would never taint my beer with a chemical substance not covered by the German beer purity law despite what some who obtained my pkunrevious Grimoire may believe (They mistook my use of the word Querent as the person producing the alcohol as meaning those who were consuming the alcohol).

I feel like the stages involved in the production of alcohol are analogous to the stages of medieval alchemical transformation, and wanted to write on the subject, but I had a PhD to write so that fell by the wayside.

Mead was the best thing to make. Add cinnamon, Orange peel. Use lalvin-118 yeast. Ferment low end of temerperature range and backsweeten. Consecrate the wine to Odin. I had a label designed and everything. I was going to produce a batch in my first year and gift bottles to all my esteemed colleagues at the end of my PhD, but relationships soured pretty quickly when I was told I was to be working unpaid for year past the termination of my contract to be awarded the qualification.

During my masters I was ignorant to the ways of magick (and PUA which is arguably a specific kind of sex magick) I was living with a girl called Nikki and a girl called Lindsay. I was so wet behind the ears. They wanted to fuck me, I now know. I didn't at the time. One of them came into my room wearing nothing but a little black dress, asking if I thought she looked good in it. I was a small-town good Christian boy. I had only slept with two girls and one of them didn't count because we were both virgins and it was about 30 seconds of unsuccessful awkwardness, followed by some bloodshed.

I had an inkling these girls were into me, but no understanding on how to make that into a real thing. For the next two years, every potential sexual partner I met was called Nikki or Lindsay. Jung called this Synchronicity I guess. I was ignorant to the ways of magick at the time also.

I think that the biggest success I ever had performing magick comes from the time when I was single in Glasgow prior to Estrella. Somebody had been stealing my mail for months. I didn't realise. I had been buying books from amazon for a penny after seeing them referenced in forums, or by friends, or from other books. Some books were coming from America, so took weeks to arrive. I realised when this one book I was looking forward to didn't arrive. One day I ordered a collection of essays called 'Apocalypse Culture' (an awful book, almost glad it was stolen). One day, a week after it was due to arrive I went down to the basement to take out some trash, The dumpster was full of cardboard packaging like from IKEA or something and sitting right atop the bin was a second hand copy of Apocalypse Culture. Now this book wasn't exactly Harry Potter, the odds of two people ordering the same book at similar times was nigh on impossible. I figured before that it was junkies that were breaking into the complex and stealing whatever mail they could get. But that somebody had taken the book, held onto it for a week, and then dumped it in the communal trash told me that it was one of my neighbours that was responsible.

I was unaffiliated to any group at the time, so I was experimenting extensively with the techniques suggested in Liber Null. Invoking Odin (The part of Scotland I come from used to be called Gododdin in pre-Christian times leading me to believe that it's his turf). I constructed some punk ritual to place a curse on those that would steal property from me. Not only would they be punished, but I would be made aware of the success of my ritual. This involved LBRP, LIRP, Invocation of Odin I had written myself based on knoweledge I had fresh in my head from reading the *prose eddas* calling on all the correct god names. I believe that I also sampled some Ketamine and homemade Mead during the procedures. Maybe even 5-Meo-DMT though probably not as that stuff leaves one a pukey wretched mess at the edge of consciousness.

It had been a relatively mild day, didn't look like rain and I had to go across to the shop to buy something necessary. I forget what, but it's detailed in the Scottish Grimoire. I come back and commence the ritual, it starts raining. I lived on the 9th floor of a high rise. At some point during the ritual, my apartment was struck by lightning. I had floor to ceiling windows, so I could see it. All power out immediately (it was during the say, so whatever). I hear the residents in the flat below me crying out 'HOLY SHIT!' confirming that what I had seen was a real phenomenon. I had to go and reset all my circuit breakers.

Just one lightning bolt. No lightning storm. Even the drizzle rain passed quickly.

Ritual brought to a close. Watched some movies, went to bed.

The next day I was walking through the courtyard and in the middle of it was a bin, the inside of which was smeared with shit. Like somebody didn't make it to the toilet in time and had to poop in the kitchen bin. Then instead of dealing with the poopy bin, just left it in the courtyard for all to see.

Nobody stole my mail ever again

This is all coincidental. But I feel like there have been times when I've been in touch with something bigger than me. Like I'm a vessel challenging a higher energy to make a better world. To usher in a new Aeon. Like I want to help others who feel the same way do the same.

These anecdotes are nonsense. And I wouldn't share them with anybody due to them thinking I was crazy.

I like RAW's bit about it:

All phenomena are real in some sense, unreal in some sense, meaningless in some sense, real and meaningless in some sense, unreal and meaningless in some sense, and real and unreal and meaningless in some sense.

I was probably a little bit irresponsible with my Chemognostic experimentation, but I'm past that now. I'll smoke weed if i'm in a group of people doing it, but that's mostly for the social aspect and not to look like a narc. I'm trying to get to those non-ordinary states of consciousness that one attains through yogic practice. I believe A.:A.: can help me achieve this.

Later in my PhD I was in a predominantly female environment. What I would call a toxic workplace for a man. I was looking for some other male company, but it's hard for men to meet other men in a platonic environment. Muay Thai is actually excellent for this and Muay Thai fighters are some of the best lads I've ever met.

My Gramps was a Freemason. I was into the occult, conspiracy theories. I thought I'd petition. I joined.

I became Master Mason. I love the ceremony and the ritual. It's carried out so earnestly. It reminds me of Church, but the theatrical aspect makes it more engaging. I like the initiatory aspect of it and how that corresponds to the mystery schools of the world of antiquity. You lay a spiritual foundation and work with the group in order to develop into a better person. This is similar to the definition of Magick Elphias Levi gives, despite the fact that the Freemasons PR group will vehemently deny that the group is anything more than a fraternal charitable organization that seeks to make good men better. I as a low level Mason can see kabbalistic symbolism in the workings. I can see the elemental forces. I don't know almost anything about astrology, but I'm sure that's incorporated to the system too. Of course the Hermetic order of the Golden Dawn was started by 32 degree Freemasons.

My parents are divorced and live in Scotland. My father is a tradesman and a lapsed Catholic, although I would suggest that he is very spiritual and has a depth of emotional intelligence and intuition not held by many men of his standing. If I had to ascribe a tarot card to him I would say he was the Prince of Disks. My mother is a paralegal in a somewhat clandestine romantic relationship with her boss. She presents her self as being wholesome and just, but is very materialistic and has a fierce Machiavellian intelligence.

I have one younger brother, he will be WM of his lodge one day. He moved to Australia with minimal qualifications and turned his gifts into great material success. He is definitely a Knight of Disks archetype.

I would like to be the Magus trump, but currently am more in line with the Hanged Man, or the Hermit. Depending on how the week is going.

I can't attend lodge here in China unless I go to Hong Kong, Taipei or Japan. And that's an expensive lodge visit before I've even paid my dues at the lodge.

A.:A.: will help me develop the magickal intent I want to contribute to the ushering in of the new Aeon.