



A STUDY GUIDE FOR MAGICK IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

by BILL HEIDRICK
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Since we will have only one meeting of the Magick in Theory and Practice class this month, owing to the finish-up of the Rites of Eleusis, I thought it would be a good idea to provide this study guide for the book. I originally wrote most of it back in Ô77 e.v. for the second issue of the old O.T.O. Newsletter. Enjoy. -Wm. Heidrick

Note that the chapters of Magick in Theory and Practice are numbered to match the Tarot Trumps or Atus. This can be something of a help in understanding the why and what of Crowley's writing. There are many footnotes and references throughout the book, and most of these can be ignored on a first or second reading. One particular exception, the matter of the letter F: This letter is sometimes the Hebrew letter Vau. Watch for it in formulas especially.

In addition to several other aids, the reader of Magick in Theory and Practice will be better armed for the fray with a copy of Magick Without Tears (not the Motta pirate edition, despite his assurances to the contrary, the book was significantly altered by Motta. The Falcon Press is going under contract to O.T.O., at last report, and is Regarding's editing work). This book is composed of letters written by Crowley to Jayne Wolfe. These letters explain many of the more difficult points in Magick in Theory and Practice. Grady McMurtry and Karl Germer were also involved in editing and publishing the first edition to varying extents. Crowley assigned Grady 25% of the copyright, personally.

There is also a slender volume sometimes published separately under the title Book Four. This is an introduction to the technical aspects of Magick, especially the physical equipment and more basic methods. Liber Aleph is also very useful in this study.

[1] Magick in Theory and Practice is roughly divided into two parts: Theory and Practice-hence the title. This Study Guide will chiefly concern itself with the Theory part. Notes will be added on some of the Rituals, but they require a more extensive discussion than is possible here.

Obviously the first thing to do with the book is to have a good look at it. Mark especially the diagrams of the signs at the beginning and the list of recommended reading found in the middle. There are additional signs and gestures described in the essay with Liber V vel Reguli in the latter part of the book. Many of these signs derive from the Order of the Golden Dawn.

[2] INTRODUCTION This is intended to perform several functions. For a person already able to confront Magick without undue scepticism, it may be unnecessary. For the beginner, it includes a pseudo-rational exposition of the Magical world-view. I consider this introduction to be a series of images and tropes. It is intended to begin an opening of the more closed minded and to trap those who should not study this work. Crowley's definition of Magick is here, but that definition seems to reduce itself to include almost any deliberate action. Perhaps that is not so far off.

Chapter O Basic philosophy and method.

This is the real introduction to the book. Some knowledge of Qabalah, especially the Tree of Life, is necessary to make sense of it. Note also that Crowley espouses a Hegelian concept of "Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis" in his approach. This is also drawn from Qabalah.

Chapter I Definition of terms and fundamental advice.

Learn this before going further. The material is relatively light. Any difficult points may be returned to later. Such difficulty will be more a matter of trying to find problems that aren't there, then it will be of confronting real obstacles.

Chapters II - VII Magical formulas.

These are mental ways of organizing thought and ritual. The reader will not be able to understand them perfectly at first. They must be perfectly understood before any of the rituals can be fully mastered. Each of these chapters should be studied and learned in succession before any but light reading of the rest is undertaken. Crowley provides a minimum set of correspondence columns from Liber 777 in the latter half of Magick in Theory and Practice. These chapters will teach you how to use that material, and therefore also how to use Liber 777 to some extent.

Thelema Lodge can still supply copies of Liber 777 to O.T.O. members for \$1.00 + postage and for \$2.00 + postage to non-members. Crowley's formulas are his original contribution to Magical method.

[3] Chapter VIII This sets the method for the whole of the Work. It must be studied well. It may be studied along with Chapters II through VII without full mastery of the former material first.

Chapter IX Basics of use of sound and general notes on working. Necessary for ritual, but not absolutely necessary for understanding of general theory. Some valuable points of philosophy are to be found here.

Chapter X Method of physical action in ritual. Necessary for the rituals.

Chapter XI The critical work of performing Magick rests in the development of the Body of Light. This chapter introduces the method and concept. Master the ideas here before going on. Techniques come later.

Chapter XII Technical instruction. Not all of this material is to be taken literally. Those who wish to become involved in this level of working should proceed cautiously and with instruction from those they can accept as teachers. Learn before you burn. Bloody sacrifice is not all it seems.

Some of this refers to preconception birth control. Postpartum birth control is murder. Don't get the two confused! When Crowley says that he has sacrificed a child, he means that he has diverted the act of conception to magical ends. (or as M. Aquino put it, "...made a wish").

Chapters XIII and XIV This must be studied closely. The material here is of very wide application in all workings.

Chapter XVI, part 1 The main point is not to take a magical Oath until you are ready to set the pattern for your life's work.

Chapter XV Read and reread this material until it becomes an integral part of your thought. This is absolutely basic material and attitudinal orientation. You can't even disagree with it until you at least understand it. Until you have a working understanding on these levels, you are a dabbler.

[4] Chapters XVI, part 2 and XVII This is not generally important unless you are going into Go'tic or Solomonic style working. If you like Faust, this is for you!

Chapter XVIII Very important. Study closely. This material is essential to successful working and control. Without the knowledge presented here, your Body of Light will be effectively blind and blundering.

Chapter XIX Specialized work again. Study it if it appeals to your interest. References here are mostly to the Rites of Eleusis, and you may still catch some of them in the San Francisco Bay Area by the time you [...read this]. Dramatic ritual involving significant numbers of people.

Chapter XX This will appear obscure at first. It is the advanced theory of ritual design. Without this material, one cannot understand some of the shorter rituals given in the rest of the book. Some of the ideas presented here are misleading if looked at lightly. Study of this chapter is especially suited to extended work of a particular sort with a Magical Journal or Diary. In that, you would devote extended portions of your writing to developing ideas presented here. Devise

experiments to make them real (not that easy!), and restate the ideas at greater length in your own words.

Chapter XXI The material here is mostly advanced philosophy or Magick. Some parts will appear clear on first reading. This chapter may be read chiefly for entertainment until one has read The Book of the Law. While the theory chapters of Magick in Theory and Practice are being studied, one should practice several rituals. Study of Appendix III on pages 245 and 246 of the shorter edition of the book is advised. Rituals for special attention include Liber E (general exercises), Liber O (especially the Lesser Pentagram Banishment), Liber Resh (daily). The student is advised against Liber III in instruction #2, the basic method is excellent; but this particular technique is not for most people, including the most promising students.

[5] Here is a brief note on some of the rituals in the ÒPracticeÓ section of the text.

Liber Samekh Excellent for gathering magical force. Should be performed only in conjunction with banishing rituals or in a consecrated place. The injunction that no names be used unless understood perfectly may be considered a trope. This is re-written from a Greco-Egyptian 6th century exorcism ritual, and contemporary material will be found in the Leyden Papyrus (Dover Books sells that, as well as an inexpensive edition of Magick in Theory and Practice). O.T.O. published a study of this ritual and its precursors by Regardie in O.T.O. Newsletter #6, 1978 e.v. (out of print). Liber Samekh is especially useful to study with the formula chapters, as a sort of work-book of the method.

Appendix VI: "Grimorium Sanctissimum" The Latin portion beginning this section. This material may be interpreted as a method for securing the fluids of the sex act for magical application. It is unwise to attempt this work without instruction, an effective Body of Light under control, and either someone you know well or a clean H...3 test.

Liber XXV Difficult. Successful performance of this ritual may be a goal to set in testing your own comprehension of this book. This ritual is the most important for those who would seek to understand the magical nature and invisible working of the O.T.O. Degree initiations. By comparison of this ritual with its explanations to the initiation rituals received in O.T.O., the initiate will be able to learn how to perform unique ritual and Magick for each degree in O.T.O. Such a study is a very fit object for the K of E &W Thesis.

Liber XV This is the principle group ritual of the O.T.O. and the central act of worship of the Thelemic Gnostic Catholic Church. It is also a complete, though symbolic, presentation of the IX technique advocated by Crowley in his private instructions.

Appendix VII, Liber HHH Mostly in the line of the Order of the Golden Dawn. Alteration and adaptation to circumstances is valid.

[6] Liber E Very important to take up with the study of the theory sections.

Liber O Golden Dawn rituals for practical working. This material should be relatively easy to understand and is the basis for Crowley's own education in ritual Magick. It is assumed knowledge for the more elaborate workings presented before and after it in the text. The Lesser

Pentagram Ritual is the single most important ritual to learn in the entire body of Golden Dawn and Thelemic literature. The version given here sometimes carries a typo. Find it also in O.T.O. Newsletter #4 (available from THELEMA LODGE for \$1.00 + postage), tape M-6 (\$3.50 + postage, O.T.O. members on this one), and Magick and Qabalah #1 (members 50¢, non-members \$1.00, both plus postage).

Liber Astarte Very useful. It may be undertaken without reading the rest of the book. Because the elements in it which can kill or drive the practitioner mad are not generally effective until considerable progress is made, it is better to study this material before you know enough to get hurt.

Liber RU Yoga instruction. Should be taken up as an independent practice throughout one's working and study. It furthers all efforts.

Liber YOD Another item that may be considered a sort of self-proficiency test. Very good mental yoga when attained. It furthers all efforts. Some hazards for the overly determined.

Liber Thisharb For very advanced working only. Do not attempt it until skilled in all other workings and experienced by several years of magical practice. It may be studied, if the temptation to practice it can be mastered, at any level. The traditional hazards of Òickness, insanity and an early death apply. Still, what's life without some fuss or other?

Liber B Its value is invisible for those who are not ready to understand it.

[7] Liber Resh Daily use by all.

Liber III Excellent discipline, if the part about the razor is not taken rashly. Crowley must have his little joke.

Those who are more interested in A\A\ should read One Star in Sight and collect the library in the middle of Magick in Theory and Practice. There is also Liber 185, published in Regardies Gems from the Equinox. The original A\A\ still exists, and is reached at 418 LODGE, P.O. Box 415, Oroville, CA. 95965 USA. Soror M, in residence, received A\A\ membership directly from Jayne Wolfe, who had it directly from Crowley. Soror M. is also approaching her Golden Anniversary of 50 years as an O.T.O. member in a few years, and only one other living person can make that claim!

Sage advice: If you cannot stand going to a plastic supermarket, you are meditating or medicating too much. Agoraphobia is nature's way of warning you that your work in Magick needs a break. This is not to be confused with disliking plastic supermarkets or the government. That can be symptomatic of good, mental health. Losing function is the thing to watch out for.