

From: *The Book of Solomon's Magick*
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*Know that the Jinn which mighty Solomon
Did conjure in the Triangle of Art
Were formed in the reflection of his face
For they were the aspects of his soul,
Each agreeing unto a Quadrant,
A planet and a metal thereof
Which when burnished did reflect
Even as a mirror*

*And when thou holdest the lighted tapers
In thine own hands
And thou dost gaze deep into thine own eyes
Know that thou dost perform The Art
In the very manner in which it was truly done*

from *The Book of Astarte* by Frater Aleyin (Thabion)

CHAPTER TWO: THE SECRET OF THE DARK MIRROR

MY ILLNESS AND MY QUIXOTIC attempt to cure it through hypnosis had driven me into the shamanic tradition of my ancestors -- and, as the saying goes, "when the student is ready, the teacher appears". In this case the teacher came in the form of a book. My first introduction to Western Magick still stands as the best survey work written on the practical aspects of the subject: *The Black Arts* by Richard Cavendish, published in 1968. Using Cavendish's excellent bibliography I quickly acquired Waite's *The Book of Black Magic & Pacts* along with the Mathers-Crowley *Goetia*, Mather's *The Key of Solomon the King*, and Francis Barrett's *The Magus*.

The medieval *Key of Solomon* provided an authentic handbook for making magical regalia, implements and talismans but it was the more notorious *Goetia of the Lemegeton*, the so-called *Lesser Key of Solomon*, that was the real wizard's *Liber Spirituum*. The *Goetia* (pronounced Go-EY-sha) cataloged and described 72 rebellious spirits that, according to a Talmudic legend, old King Solomon has imprisoned in an enchanted Brass vessel submerged in a lake in Babylon. This read like a fabulous tale from *The Arabian Nights* but in my irrational state I was convinced that there was a hidden truth behind the fantastic story. Like Aladdin's wonderful lamp or Ali Baba's "Open Sesame" there was a Secret Key to calling up those mighty princes of the Jinn that Solomon had imprisoned so long ago -- and I was determined to find it.

Years later, when I was doing graduate studies in cultural anthropology I realized that back in 1969 I had crossed over into a realm of divine madness that few Anglo-Americans had ever experienced. I had gone through a true shamanic initiation, that mortal illness and vision quest that brings the shaman in touch with his gods and gives him the power to practice his craft . . .

It was during that season of my madness, when agony alternated with ecstasy, that I had discovered, or more properly re-discovered, the lost secret of the magical Art and I wrote *The Book of Astarte* from which the key passage that heads this chapter is drawn. (see Note 1.)

I had studied the writings of the ancient and modern magicians. They had filled their books with the most detailed instructions on how to build, inscribe and decorate all the necessary equipment, all the signatures of the spirits and even the hours in which to summon them -- but the most important element, that method by which one could make the spirit physically appear, was always missing from the old grimoires and not explained in the recent texts,

I knew that over a dozen ancient and modern writers on magick could not be involved in one big, long-standing conspiracy to suppress this final secret, so it seemed obvious that at some time after the 17th century and before the middle of the 19th century the practical keys to the magical evocation and invocation processes had been lost.

This turned out to be true. The ancient writers had hidden the secrets in plain sight – as you will see when we examine the old texts – but the Victorian age magicians of the Golden Dawn school, with their phobia against hypnosis and their commendable distrust of passive spiritualist mediumship, had de-emphasized the actual methods of renaissance evocation and invocation in favor of a Western Tantra in which images are carefully built up in the imagination and then allowed to provide psychic feedback. Instead of the traditional crystals and dark mirrors for visionary work, they preferred to use abstract colored symbols to stimulate the imagination. These methods are different in conception and technique from the shamanic calling down or summoning up of spontaneous visions from that great storehouse of images renaissance magicians knew as “The World Soul” and we now refer to as “The Collective Unconscious”.

If I hadn't been touched with divine madness at the time I probably would have accepted the Victorian reconstruction of magick and put aside my yearning to actually conjure spirits to visible appearance in Solomon's Triangle of Art. I would have agreed with critics like Professor Eliza Butler that those who practiced out of the old grimoires were credulous and self-deluded. However Arthur Edward Waite, who was also a ruthless critic of the Art Magical, had conceded that they had achieved results. In the introduction to his 1898 *Book of Black magic & Pacts* he wrote: --

“It would, however, be unsafe to affirm that all persons making use of the ceremonies in the rituals would fail to obtain results. Perhaps in the majority of cases most of such experiments made in the past were attended with results of a kind. To enter the path of hallucination is likely to ensure hallucination, and in the presence of hypnotic and clairvoyant facts it would be absurd to assume that the seering process of ancient magic – which were many – did not produce seership, or that the auto-hypnotic state which much magical ritual would obviously tend to occasion in predisposed persons did not frequently induce, and not always in the predisposed. To this extent some of the processes are practical, and to this extent they are dangerous.”

This paragraph was one of the clues that set me on the trail to discovering the secret of Solomon's Triangle. It should be noted that I had first read all the available 16th and 17th century material before I got into Regardie and the Golden Dawn. Therefore my original perspective was, and still remains, that of a renaissance magician rather than a Victorian occultist (even though I will be the first to concede our tremendous debt to the Golden Dawn). I think it is important to mention this because there is a natural tendency for people to be heavily influenced by their first impressions in any field of endeavor.

This was especially true in my case given my near-terminal illness and altered state of consciousness. I literally devoured the books listed above with the obsession of a religious fanatic. But even in the grip of a toxic psychosis, I hadn't lost my intellect. Madness is known to stimulate genius. I was on the verge of discovering, or re-discovering, an extraordinary secret hidden in these quaint, and apparently whimsical, books of forgotten lore.

I knew there had to be a way to make Solomon's traditional operations actually work without resorting to drugs, fasting or endless conjurations to produce hallucinations through hysteria and exhaustion.

A century ago Aleister Crowley had tried to conjure one of the Lemegeton's Goetia demons out of incense smoke. He had very little success after a great deal of effort. As a self-taught hypnotist this did not surprise me. Trying to form an image, or commanding a spirit to produce an image out of curling, twisting smoke was more of an experiment in telekinesis than a scrying process. Crowley obviously did not know the technique but he certainly understood the philosophy. He stated it clearly in his 1904 edition of *The Goetia*:

“But can any of the effects described in this our book *Goetia* be obtained, and if so, can you give a rational explanation of the circumstances? Say you so?

I can, and will.

The spirits of the *Goetia* are portions of the human brain. Their seals therefore represent (Mr. Spencer's projected cube) methods of stimulating and regulating those particular spots (through the eye).

The names of God are vibrations calculated to establish:

- (a) General control of the brain. (Establishment of functions relative to the subtle world.)
- (b) Control over the brain in detail. (Rank or type of spirit.)
- (c) Control of one special portion. (Name of the spirit.)

The perfumes aid this through smell. Usually the perfume will only tend to control a large area; but there is an attribution of perfumes to letters of the alphabet enabling one, by Qabalistic formula, to spell out the spirit's name.

I need not enter into a more particular discussion of these points; the intelligent reader can easily fill in what is lacking. If then I say, with Solomon: "The spirit Cimieres teaches logic," what I mean is: "those portions of my brain which subserve the logical faculty may be stimulated and developed by following out the process called "The Evocation of Cimieres."

I have quoted the above passage at some length because it made such a strong impression on me when I first read it. It is certainly not romantic or artistic; in fact it is downright analytical – like wiring a ballet dancer with electronic sensors so we can get a scientific read-out on Swan Lake – but it serves an absolutely necessary purpose. Crowley's statement places Solomon's Magick squarely within the parameters of a psychological system.

"Solomon's spirits are portions of the human brain."

But the human brain is only the hardware for the greatest computer system ever designed: The Human Mind. A modern hacker-magus would say we run our Solomonic Magick program on an operating system designed by Carl Jung using a language called "Agrippa 777."

For those who are not yet magical cybernauts that needs some explaining: Crowley's conceptions of Magick pre-dated Carl Jung's Archetypes in the Collective Unconscious theory. Crowley knew that magical manifestations involved altered states of consciousness and could produce psychosomatic effects but he may not have been aware that entire pantheons of ancient Gods and Goddesses, choirs of Angels, and hordes of demons might exist in the deepest reaches of everyone's mind.

Actually the theory was not very modern. Around 200 A.D. Hermes Trismegistus, the mysterious founder of Hermetic Philosophy, had written in his *Asclepius* that: "The Gods of the Zodiac are eternal but man creates his own lesser gods." The implications of this statement are awesome. If we create gods, then we control them! And if we can control them, are we not Gods ourselves? (En Tuo Templo, Tu Es Deus!) This is why the late Warburg Institute scholar Francis Yates called *The Asclepius* "The charge of dynamite behind Renaissance Neoplatonism."

Echoes of that explosion reverberate in the words of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa written in 1527: "...Such things are delivered and writ by great and grave philosophers, whose tradition who dare say are false? Nay, it were impious to think them lies: only there is another meaning than what is writ with the bare letters. We must look for the principle of these grand operations without ourselves; it is that internal spirit within us which can very well perform whatsoever the monstrous mathematicians, the prodigious magicians, the wonderful alchemists and the bewitching necromancers can effect."

In the 1920's Jung declared that beneath and beyond the personal subconscious mind there flowed a vast, deep sea of dream images and forgotten lore he referred to as "The Collective Unconscious". This mysterious psychic ocean was not the exclusive property of any individual human being. It was a dimension shared by us all! Here one might discover the great Archetypes of mythology: the heroes, the beautiful courtesans, the martyred saints and monstrous villains of our past. Here were the mysterious man-created gods which Hermes Trismegistus had written about so long ago. Here was the World Soul of the Renaissance magicians. Here were the demons of Solomon's Brass Vessel.

When Jung discussed his theory with his famous colleague, Sigmund Freud, Freud was horrified. "Carl!" he whispered. "If you reveal this to the public you will release a black flood of occultism!"

However it would take more than just a theory to release the flood of occultism Freud feared. Theories by themselves do not produce results. For results the magician still depends today, as he did thousands of years ago, on methods and techniques.

Since time immemorial magicians have placed themselves and others into states of trance during which visions and oracles were received. We now know that this process was hypnotic and that all the phenomena we have come to associate with modern hypnosis were in fact known and practiced by ancient sorcerers under the guise of 'fascination', 'spell-casting' and 'enchantment'.

The powerful hypnotic effect achieved through a fixed gaze at a reflective surface is the reason why the crystal ball, or shewstone, and the dark mirror (the speculum), were used by wizards of olden times as their spiritus locii, the actual place where the angels and spirits could be conjured to visible appearance. This was and still is a hypnotic process. . . However the final secret of how to use these magical aides was always missing. With all the philosophy, the atmosphere, the paraphernalia, the powerful conjurations and the hypnotic techniques, such spontaneous visions in a crystal or in a dark mirror, still depended upon some special psychic talent. To make it really work one had to be a natural medium – Now, with all my hypnotic experiments and my toxic fever dreams, I had certainly become a mystic . . . but not a clairvoyant.

This is a very important point. Mediums, psychics and clairvoyants have dominated the mystic arts for centuries because most of us have assumed that they are the only ones gifted with the abilities to see and hear the spirits. This situation was so pervasive that even great magicians like Abramelin the Mage, Dr. John Dee, Count Cagliostro and the later Frederick Hockley thought they had to employ specially talented scryers or gifted children to do the actual receiving for them. If I had been in a fully rational state of mind at the time I probably would have accepted this historically established handicap – but obsessed genius knows no bounds.

I was convinced there had to be a way, a method by which anyone with the desire and the determination could summon spirits to visible appearance and converse with them. This was what Solomon had promised and – like the indefatigable amateur archaeologist Henrich Schlieman, who had actually discovered Troy right where Homer said it was – I was sure that the medieval ‘Solomon’ was telling the truth.

I could place a crystal ball into the triangle, but then if I stood back inside the magick circle, as the operator was supposed to do according to the ancient texts, even a 60mm ball would appear the size of a door knob – but I knew something had to be placed in that triangle: something fascinating, something hypnotic, and something large enough to provide a viewing surface....Obviously the speculum, the dark mirror....And what better entrance into that realm the mystic poet Coleridge had called: “Caverns measureless to man.”

It had to be the dark mirror! But how to use it? How to make it actually work, I asked myself – then something I had read the year before jogged my memory – something I had read somewhere about the use of dark mirrors in the Far East....?

That all-important clue had been sitting right there on my book shelf! The secret was in a work called *Tantra, The Yoga of Sex* by Omar Garrison published in 1964. In this book the author explained an ancient Oriental method of conjuring up images of previous incarnations from the reflection of one’s own face....in a dark mirror....flanked by candles!

As I re-read this passage in Garrison’s book I felt a shiver of excitement. I was experiencing the same tingling exhilaration that an archaeologist must feel when he brushes away the sand and looks down at the unbroken seal of an ancient royal tomb! I tried Garrison’s experiment and found that it worked with remarkable effectiveness. If a person in a darkened room stares for several minutes into a mirror flanked by candles, a strange phenomenon will almost always happen: the familiar reflection will fade out and disappear. The mirror will go black and, when the image returns, it will be the face of someone or something else!

This experience is usually accompanied by a profound sense of other-worldly presence...It was obvious that this phenomenon must have been discovered long before any concept of reincarnation. It probably went back as far as the paleolithic when stone-age people stared fascinated at their reflections in dark, still pools of water, seeing the strange transformation occur – and being convinced they were in the presence of their Gods!

I suspected that in a ritual setting, using traditional conjurations and symbols, specific spirits and even ancient Gods and Goddesses might be summoned from the ‘Other Side’....This might well be the ancient secret behind that strange passage in the Bible that reads: “God fashioned Man in His own image.”

It was certainly the reason why Solomon has us command the spirit, often described as a monstrous hybrid, to “Appear in fair and human form and speak unto us in a clear, intelligible voice in our mother tongue.”

After this discovery the use of the magick mirror in an elevated triangle seemed obvious. Our late 17th century *Lemegeton* manuscript, Sloane 2731, clearly shows a large black-filled circle in the center of Solomon’s Triangle. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 1. – Detail from British Library Sloane MS. 2731 showing and describing the Triangle used in *Goetia* workings.

Note that the instructions written around the Triangle say: “Two foot off from the Circle and three foot over.) – Not “Three foot across,” as the published version has it. The Triangle was intended to be raised up to eye level. . . .

This is clearly shown in a drawing from a 17th century manuscript by the mysterious D. Thomas Rudd, which depicts a mirror on a stand with Solomon’s Secret Seal from the *Goetia* of the *Lemegeton* clearly rendered on the reverse side. . . (See figure 2.)



Figure 2.
– The back of the magick mirror showing the Secret Seal of Solomon from the *Goetia*, drawn by Peter Smart 1699.

We know that polished obsidian mirrors were used in the neolithic Middle Eastern city of *Katal Hyuck* as far back as nine thousand years ago – before the Great Flood. And later, in the time of Solomon,

the Egyptians and Canaanites made mirrors of polished copper and of silver, metals attributed to the planet Venus and the Moon....

Let your mind travel back to those ancient times and imagine what might have happened when a priestess sitting before her mirror, putting her make-up on in the dim light, saw her face change and become The Goddess! Perhaps she would call the high priest to witness the transformation. They would both be familiar with possessions and trance states and would be quick to see the possibilities.

Now I am certain that some of my magical colleagues will cluck in their beards and say: "Well Runyon developed an effective system – but it's modern." They will cite the fact, already mentioned, that Cagliostro, Dee, Hockley and others had to employ sryers to do their visioning. If these worthies hadn't know the reflection secret, then who had known?

My answer is that the medieval Arabian magicians probably knew it as these quotes from C. J. S. Thompson indicate: "*According to Arab tradition, magic or 'sihr', which means 'to produce an illusion before the eyes' was revealed by two angels in Babel, named Harut and Marut, who instructed mankind in this art . . . When a miracle was deemed a 'sihr' it was regarded as an optical illusion or due to an illicit dealing with demons . . . The use of the magic mirror – which was made of metal or glass with a polished surface – for seeing spirits, was known to the Arabs at an early period. The image was said to Appear in a cloud or vapor floating between the medium used and the gazer's eye. . .*"

Ceco d' Ascoli, Dr. Thomas Rudd and others may very well have known but kept it secret. The method was so simple that there was no need to write it down. It could have been passed from mouth-to-ear (and yet the hints in the Sloane 2731 *Goetia* are almost too obvious). We should recall that the *Goetia* was not a system magicians felt comfortable writing about back in the days of the Inquisition.

And they did not need Carl Jung's subjective psychological theories to justify using their own reflection as a focal point. There was a haunting Orphic myth about Dionysus being entranced *by his own reflection in a mirror*, caught by the Titans and torn to pieces, his parts rescued by Zeus and given to Apollo to plant in the earth – from which he rose reconstituted and revived.

Here we have the modern psychological concepts of fragmentation, reintegration and individuation of the personality; we also have our seventy-two all-encompassing spirits let out and put back into The Brass Vessel. The ancients did not create such fables for idle amusement.

But my most telling argument sits in every grammar school class in the country. Along with playing hopscotch on The Tree of Life, children have a game called "Bloody Mary" (Clive Barker's *Candyman*) which they have been scaring each other with as long as there have been mirrors to look into. Any modern magician who thinks his predecessors didn't discover this same phenomenon ages ago and made use of it doesn't hold them in very high regard – but to those who still insist that this method of magical evocation is modern, I will be most happy to accept credit for it. (See Note 2.)

In the week following my remarkable discovery (or re-discovery) my illness overcame me to such a degree that my doctor was compelled to conduct a more thorough examination. At that he discovered the truth and advised me that only an operation could save my life – but that I was too debilitated and inflamed to undergo the surgery. I asked the Archangel Raphael to heal me and Prince Ba'al to give me strength – then (because the Gods help those who help themselves) I went out and found another doctor. When I recovered from my surgical operation, health and sanity quickly returned – but I remember what I had learned during my sabbatical in Tartarus and, to my surprise, I discovered that Solomon's Magick was still as effective – and even more so when contrasted with my otherwise rational state of mind.

To my even greater surprise, I found that this ancient system would work for any sincere person who could concentrate on a fixed point long enough to achieve a light hypnotic trance.

I extended my experiments to include others and I soon discovered that the process was just as effective if I – as the magician – stood behind a passive 'receiver' who would only need to hold the candle sticks and concentrate on the mirror.

At that time I was a bachelor in my thirties, living in a beach-side Southern California apartment and riding a motorcycle. This put me in a position to recruit young women willing to transform into the Goddess Astarte. These experiments, harmless as they were, made me notorious.

According to one published account one of my Astartes disappeared off the face of the earth – and yet I saw her socially a week following the operation.

It did appear that women made the best, or perhaps the most enthusiastic, receivers but for the most part my female volunteers were not clairvoyant. Those few who were natural psychics would receive their vision "off-face" after the mirror blacked out. Non-psychic receivers (most of us) will see a different face replace our familiar reflection. However, it is important to note that this transformation process for

non-psychics is, if anything, a more intense and consciousness-altering experience than the more familiar visioning process the psychic undergoes.

So I had the secret. Like Dr. Frankenstein, *I had learned how to do it* – but even though I may have been just as obsessed as the fictional Victor Frankenstein, *I didn't want to make his mistake*. Before I opened the Brass Vessel and released these spirits into the world again, I wanted to understand the philosophy and the spiritual significance behind a process that had been kept such a closely guarded secret for thousands of years. I had to ask myself, was it possible there were slumbering demons from our past that – as the late Howard Phillips Lovecraft had suggested – *might better be left un-awakened?* How and why had the beautiful Goddess Astarte and her handsome consort, Prince Ba'al, the Thunder God, become demons in the forbidden books of medieval balck magick? . . . I found some of the answers to these questions in the long-lost Biblical *Book of Enoch* . . .

Notes on Chapter Two:

1. This passage may be familiar to some occult students outside of the O.T.A. *The Book of Astarte (Liber Astarte)* has been pirated and circulated in the occulted underground since 1979 even though it was copyrighted under my pseudonym by a major university in 1976.
2. In actual fact the method has become so popular that one of my former students privately took credit for it and started three mini-lodges of his own. Another O.T.A. defector offered a typescript expose of the mirror-reflection *Goetia* technique in 1979 – then in 1988 a popularizer of of magick admittedly drew on the earlier expose for a chapter on *Goetia* evocation in a book issued by a major publisher. He and his publisher followed this up with a simplistic mass-marketed pamphlet on the *Goetia* Dark Mirror method in 1994. This finally prompted us to go into production of *The Magick of Solomon* video and *The Book of Solomon's Magick* to present the real story behind modern *Goetia/Almadel magick* and teach the proper methods of practice.

Other Chapters in *The Book of Solomon's Magick* include:

Hypnosis and Yoga, Fallen Angels and Pagan Gods, The Secret of the Holy Table, The Kabbalah of Wizardry, Arabian Origins of Magick and Witchcraft, and Solomon's Sex Magick, and more. . .

There are numerous reproductions from ancient manuscripts, including all of the original sigils of the Goetia spirits, the sigils of the Shemhamphorash Angels and the Demon Kings of the Quarters.

The book contains two full color plates showing the Four Great Archangels of the Quarters and The Solomonic Master Mandala.

***The Book of Solomon's Magick* may be ordered direct from the publisher, C.H.S., Inc., for \$24.95 postpaid in U.S. (\$26.95 Canada).**