



The Upper Triad Material

Topical Issue 7.4

Magic

The Art of the Seventh Ray



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Chapter 7.4

Magic



The Art of the Seventh Ray

Magic is a particular aspect of occult endeavor, and properly requires more attunement and insight than fundamental occult training. While occult practices in general involve wielding (and focusing) of various energies (forces), magic implies more participation in the energy or force being evoked and wielded. Like some of the more fundamental occult techniques, magic can involve relatively straightforward formulae which can easily overextend the ability (understanding) of the untrained practitioner. In a broader sense, magic implies the evocation of consequences or effects through attunement with higher (deeper) cause and effect relationships. There is no magic, except as one believes and understands and has the capacity to recognize. Otherwise, things just happen.

In a sense magic is simply the art and science of psychic evocation and projection. This encompasses a fairly wide range of talent (and training (or not)) resulting in a fairly wide range of effectiveness and potency.

Magic

Magic is generally defined as the use of certain means believed to have supernatural power over natural forces. Those means include a very wide range of resources and their associated activities; such as concentration and mental programming, visualization and creative effort, and prayer or invocation. Magic usually involves some sort of formula, whether it is fairly objective in the form of prayer, meditation, symbols, mantras, etc., or fairly subjective in the form of abstract mental exercises. True magic involves the use of force on some level of consciousness to accomplish some purpose, creative or otherwise.

The magical forces are not really supernatural; they are actually quite natural, yet drawn from superphysical levels of consciousness. The use of magical forces is traditionally a head-centered experience since the mind is the primary instrument, and therefore magic is rightly considered essentially an occult phenomenon rather than a mystical one. However, there are many aspects of magic which involve mystical or heart-centered experience (and in true, esoteric experience, the occult and mystical forces are perfectly blended). Magical force has both ceremonial (seventh ray) and magnetic (second ray) aspects, and where magical forces are combined with religious ceremony (personal or otherwise) there arises a distinct mystical (heart-centered) form of magic.

Though magical forces (through invocation and evocation) can be employed on any level, the mature esoteric student works almost entirely on mental levels. Those who are less prepared or untrained work primarily on emotional or etheric levels, consciously or otherwise (for very much of normal, relatively unconscious human experience along mental and/or emotional lines involves magical forces); the difference being that those who are properly trained are potent and use these forces deliberately and purposefully, while the untrained (and unprepared) use (some) magical forces either unconsciously or without real understanding. Experimentation in magical or psychic matters is discouraged, since these forces can be quite potent and (without understanding) dangerous.

The basic mechanism of magic is that of energy following thought. As the mind is properly focused, the thought-forms attract (magical) energies which are then

directed or programmed in some fashion. Thus, magical expression is essentially creative. Magical constructs (thought-forms on mental, astral, and/or etheric levels) can exist for considerable lengths of time depending on the their potency. Magical constructs can actually take on a "life" of their own, interacting with other phenomena according to the deliberate (or careless) rules implied or specified in their creation. Many such constructs are evoked carelessly through intense mental or emotional effort.

Magic can also refer to the powers involved and to the products (constructs) as well. In this sense, magic refers to an extraordinary power or influence (apparently) arising from supernatural sources. A physical object, for example, may be infused with magical potency by deliberate concentration and magnetic induction. Similarly, prayers (mantras) (combinations of words and sounds) can be magnetically infused. Such products become, in themselves, secondary and tertiary sources of magical energy. Since magic involves creative force, it also interacts with consciousness. Another definition (implication) of magic is enchantment. In this sense, the reactionary minds and emotions of human beings are particularly vulnerable; and the spiritual student is consequently urged to develop self-control (poise) and indifference to imposed (external) forces. In this (particular) context, the entire orthodox world-picture is a magical construct (enchantment) (illusion) of tremendous extent and potency.

« Commentary No. 1183

The Basis of Magic

Everything in the manifested universe is comprised of energy in one form or another. Even what appears to be material is really just energy in the form of matter. It is this field of manifested energy, then that forms the basis for magic, for invoking and evoking and wielding various energies (qualifications) and forces (applications of energy).

There is energy on the dense physical plane, particularly that which is locked within form (the energy of matter), but it is not readily available for magic. Energy on etheric levels is much more readily available, is available in abundance, and is relatively easy to work with. If the student is properly

trained, then etheric energy can be evoked and applied in a variety of means for constructive ends. Etheric energy lends itself most readily to vitalization and healing, though in order to sustain the “work” there needs to also be a complementary adjustment in consciousness. Energy on astral and concrete mental levels is also readily available, but much more subject to the limitations of the human personality than is etheric energy, i.e., to work safely with astral and/or concrete mental energy one needs to be integrated and somewhat refined, else there is a strong tendency for the energies being evoked to be on the lower sub-planes and rather difficult to handle.

Depending on motive and relative quality of consciousness there is an important distinction between black magic (self-centered and inherently separative or counter-evolutionary in nature) and white magic (unselfish and inclusive and evolutionary in nature), and another distinction between lower magic (based on form and involving the lower (personality) consciousness) and higher magic (based on higher consciousness). There is a natural flow of energy on every level of consciousness. That flow has lower and higher components, lower in the sense of karma (causal relationships) (chaos) (resolution) (incremental restoration of balance on lower levels) and higher in the sense of a more subtle, inherently evolutionary flow (restoration of balance on broader and higher levels).

While the basis of magic rests with the source and availability and nature of energies on etheric, astral (emotional), and concrete mental levels, the other two factors are the flow and the magician-occultist-student who consciously or unconsciously, intelligently or otherwise, evokes energies and forces that may or may not be manageable. If the student apprehends the flow, can actually sense the nature and character and quality (and implied purpose) of the energy, then the student can cooperate intelligently and constructively. If the student fails to apprehend the flow, cannot sense these things, and/or has personal motives, then there is introduced an anomaly which then has to be dealt with in the overall scheme. A lot has to do with training (knowledge, understanding), but more has to do with motive (wisdom) (quality of consciousness). Without both proper training and proper intent, there are otherwise unnecessary difficulties introduced into the magical system.

The supply of energy is effectively unlimited. The range of character and quality of energy is diverse, and comparable to the range of consciousness (people of coarse consciousness generally evoke coarse energies while people who are more refined generally evoke more refined energies). It is fundamentally a matter of resonance. The student works with energy and force that is resonant with his or her own personality consciousness. Except that through carelessness or lack of proper motive and/or lack of proper training, energies and forces can be evoked that are rather coarse, destructive, and inherently unmanageable.

« Commentary No. 1184

Earth Magic

Earth magic is that source and practice of magical energy that is derived from the earth or lifeforms associated with the earth (and the aura of the earth). These are very natural energies and appeal to people who are more attuned to the earth (the planet) and nature.

There are two fundamental types of earth magic, that of the material earth and the lower nature and that of the earth in the sense of being directly linked with the non-material (i.e., etheric) consciousness of the planetary logos. In either case, it is lower (external) magic (based on form) but still potentially and generally effective. Virtually all of ceremonial magic falls into this category of earth magic. Although ceremonial techniques can be applied to higher forms, there is generally no need to do so.

Earth magic is tapping into the energy field of the earth and the various forces of nature (and the various lives that are embodied through the various forces of nature), including the energies of air and water and fire (in this sense, all of earth and air and water and fire are considered earth magic) (some schools of magic specialize in one or another). Earth magic is inherently natural, although it can be abused where there is selfish intent or unqualified practice. There are many lives involved in earth magic, from the various mineral, plant, and animal lives that are readily apparent to the non-psychic vision to the various deva lives that correspond to these three lower kingdoms. One can tap into and wield the energies and forces associated with any lower lifeform (mineral, plant, animal,

and to some extent deva). But there are ethical considerations, and few who wield these forces have the conscience to wield them effectively and harmlessly.

Thus the effective magician (at this level) works cooperatively with the lower kingdoms, with a sense of conscience, and without selfish intent. But the forces of the lower kingdoms can be very potent and therefore very dangerous. When one eats meat, for example, one is ingesting animal magnetism that has a substantial effect on consciousness. When one works very closely with animal (plant) (mineral) energies, one should be very careful to discern the boundaries between the animal (plant) (mineral) realm and one's own aura (energy) (consciousness). Otherwise, one will become attached or entangled with that kingdom (and unnaturally so). Working with the animal kingdom is the most dangerous (potent), followed by the mineral kingdom, followed by the plant kingdom (the order of difficulty or potency has to do with polarity). The plant kingdom is rather more sympathetic to the human kingdom, though it, too, can be abused. Of course the energy of matter that is locked in form is the most potent of the lower forms of energy. If one finds the key to unlocking these forces, one is generally destroyed in the process.

But with proper intent (and some training), earth magic can be quite beneficent. Those who work properly with earth magic are involved in healing the planet and its various lives. Those who work properly (creatively) with earth magic are part of the process of restoration of balance and do so as a consequence of human consciousness (not because they are actually creative). But nature is a complex consequence of many forces and scales, and so natural energies are often evoked in widespread eruptions of force that help restore the equilibrium (e.g., so-called natural disasters). The planet is inherently self-healing (it is after all, merely the lower body of a planetary logos), but what people can do to facilitate that healing is evolutionary, and what people can do to undermine that healing (e.g., self-interest) is counter-evolutionary.

Section 7.41



Black Magic and White Magic

An important distinction exists regarding motives and magical methods. There are basically two types of magic (from this perspective of motives and methods): black magic and white magic. Black magic is basically self-centered and dependent on (mostly lower) external forces. White magic is more group-centered (unselfish) and dependent on (mostly higher) internal forces. It is a matter of employing somewhat similar means but being inspired in distinctly different ways.

Black Magic and White Magic 1

An important distinction exists regarding motives and magical methods. There are basically two types of magic (from this perspective of motives and methods): black magic and white magic. Black magic is basically self-centered and dependent on (mostly lower) external forces. White magic is more group-centered (unselfish) and dependent on (mostly higher) internal forces.

Black magic depends almost entirely on the potency of the concrete mind (personality) and its ability to control external forces. Those external forces are usually the forces of etheric or astral matter (substance) and lower life-forms. Black magic is usually not constructive, since it is (by definition) the magical domain of the potent, predominantly selfish, self-centered, individualistic (separative) personality. Since the motives in black magic are essentially selfish, the black magician is usually not concerned about the effects of his methods or actions upon others, except where the self-interest is served. Or in other words, in black magic there is usually a disregard for ethics, morals, or responsibility. The methods and means merely contribute to the desired objective. This is not the case with white magic.

White magic does also depend upon the potency of the mind (personality), but it depends on the potency of the soul as well, and upon the degree of alignment (rapport) (cooperation) that exists between the mind and the soul. White magic therefore depends heavily on internal forces (the divine, natural forces of the soul itself, or higher forces drawn by the soul onto mental levels). Those forces are drawn from atomic, buddhic, or manasic (mental) levels, and rarely from lower levels. Those forces may, however, be applied on concrete mental levels and can have substantial effects on lower (astral or even etheric) levels. White magic is (by definition) a constructive, cooperative endeavor, serving group (human or higher) purpose and without regard to personal benefit. Thus the motives involved in white magic are relatively pure, refined, and unselfish; and the methods used are carefully cultivated and utilized for constructive results, as the esoteric student takes into consideration all potential effects of the applied forces. Consequently, with white magic the esoteric student demonstrates a

considerable regard for ethics and responsibility. The methods and means must be as appropriate as the objective.

Though the basic distinctions between black magic and white magic are relatively clear, in practice there exists a relatively broad, grey area between the extremes (of well-defined black magic or white magic). This problem arises in part from the use of the imperfect but (hopefully) elevated personality in white magic, and in part to the relatively common heritage of black magicians and white magicians. A (true) magician is one who has achieved potency in dealing with occult (magical) forces. The magician must necessarily have a well-integrated personality, dominated by the well-developed mind.

The magician must also have a considerable amount (and quality) of training and experience in occult matters. The vast majority of people who invoke magical forces are not magicians, for they lack the proper qualifications. But where the basic qualifications are present, there is little difference between the black magician and the white magician; in fact, most black magicians have received their preliminary training along spiritual lines. The difference arises where the black magician fails to develop heart quality and remains or becomes self-centered, and fails to commit himself to the spiritual path; while the white magician develops the heart quality and remains firmly committed to the spiritual path and to constructive (group) evolution.

« Commentary No. 268

Black Magic and White Magic 2

The distinction between black and white magicians is relatively sharp, with the methods and motives relatively well-defined, but the distinction between black magic and white magic is complicated considerably by the large number of people who dabble in magical matters and who have not reached the status or potency of the magician or wizard. Such people generally have little knowledge or training in these matters and simply experiment vainly with forces that they can attract but cannot properly control. Such people usually also fail to discern the significance (effects) of their efforts and fail to exercise ethical discretion. Since most of these people are lacking in spiritual quality, they often fall victim

(seriously or incidentally) to the black magician (less likely) or to the vibratory forces of black magic (more likely).

The black magician usually works alone (meaning that he serves no one beside himself) but manipulates and controls others wherever needed to serve his own purposes. He works predominantly with lower (coarse) mental and astral (emotional) matter (forces) and easily draws upon the resources (and vitality) of others. Fortunately, black magicians are very few in number and are, in themselves, relatively insignificant. Karma (in general) discourages the black (left-handed) path and the farther the individual progresses along that path the greater is the karmic force that he must ultimately reckon with. Karma (usually) eventually forces his return to the mainstream of human evolution (and if he has purified himself, he is welcomed without prejudice). In the meantime, the black magician is virtually ignored (treated with detached compassion and understanding) by those who are more enlightened. The true peril of the black magician (and those who dabble) is simply one of selfishness and ignorance.

The dangers inherent in magical/psychic activity are considerable, particularly where spiritual motive (and preparation) is lacking. The majority of those who dabble in occult matters (without any real training or understanding) lack the self-control and integration necessary to reach the spiritual (finer) levels of consciousness, and are therefore relatively vulnerable along (coarse) astral and mental lines. The problem lies not in falling prey to the black magician, but in falling prey to the (coarse) forces and (lower) superphysical entities that those who dabble deal with (whether or not they are aware of what they are dealing with). To deal with magical forces on lower levels (with an unrefined and undisciplined personality) is to attract relatively potent, subhuman entities (and ignorant, earthbound, disincarnated human beings). These entities often develop a compelling influence over those who dabble (whether the victim realizes what is happening or not).

Also, without proper training, the magical (magnetic) forces evoked by the untrained may be much more potent than can be handled. These forces are (on psychical levels) (potentially) as destructive (or constructive) as the forces of the physical atom. It is mostly a matter of proper knowledge, understanding. Those who play with fire usually fail to recognize these dangers.

However, the spiritual student (an apprentice of white magic) concentrates on personality cultivation (refinement) and self-discipline, learning gradually how to deal properly (safely) with these (potent) superphysical forces. The spiritual student requires considerable patience, for these lessons come slowly, and the spiritual potency is acquired only where all prerequisites are properly met and the student can be trusted to work responsibly with the magical forces, selflessly and impersonally, for the good of the group and ever in accordance (cooperation) with the divine evolutionary plan.

« Commentary No. 519

The Roots of Black Magic

The later stages of human development (leading properly to the spiritual path and subsequently (ultimately) beyond the realm of human evolution) involve exposure to the tension of the pairs of opposites (to be resolved upon the path itself). The vast majority of humanity eventually survive the tests and trials of the paths of approach and the subsequent pressures of the spiritual path proper, and ultimately achieve (relative) perfection and release from the human sphere. A small minority are the pioneers who tread the path in advance of the bulk of humanity, each of whom must conquer the lower nature, develop the appropriate talents, achieve the requisite quality and wisdom, and complete the human experience. But in spite of the considerable (eventual) success of almost all of the candidates, some (very few) succumb to the temptations of the left-hand path (of black magic) and are destroyed.

Consequently, it behooves every spiritual student to recognize the nature of the black path and the temptations which lead in that direction, for all are potentially vulnerable (yet so few are so corrupted by black magic that they are unable to free themselves eventually). There are two principal roots of black magic, each being a natural part of human life (for part of the lessons of human experience involves facing and overcoming these two natural roots). The first root of black magic is coarseness, the temptation and distraction of matter itself (and the unresolved tension implied in that matter). Coarseness includes materialism and the attachments (distractions) associated with physical, emotional, and mental coarseness (excess) (indulgence). The second root of black magic is ego (egoism), a more subtle form of coarseness (material

vulnerability). Egoism includes the more extreme forms of individualism which are separative and (potentially) ultimately destructive.

The problem of coarseness is that it prevents or inhibits the integration of the personality and it prevents subsequent alignment of soul and personality (i.e., it prevents the personality from being responsive to the soul, and therefore to the spiritual path (and God)). That is fine for ordinary (relatively coarse) humanity who are still struggling with absorption in the material world, but it does nonetheless mean that they are vulnerable to imposition to the extent of their coarseness and it means that they are vulnerable to the temptations of the black path to the extent of their coarseness and to the extent of their development. The more highly developed yet relatively coarse are the most vulnerable, for strength and coarseness of personality lead naturally to self-indulgence, self-centeredness, and separateness. Strength and coarseness of personality also lead naturally to egoism and the various temptations (paths of destruction) of the ego.

The proper development of the personality is a rather difficult business, for the personality must be strengthened and refined and then subordinated to the soul. If the personality grows strong while remaining relatively coarse, then the emotional and mental potency of the personality will feed the fires of ego (individualism) (separateness) and lead to a more potent self-centered existence. As this is happening, of course, the ego seduces (deceives) the mind and heart of the personality and the ego then begins to dominate the personality and to seek to influence (dominate) its environment (including the people in that environment (on some scale)) toward its self-centered objectives.

If on the other hand, the personality is refined at the same time it is strengthened, then the temptations of the ego can be ignored and the student can proceed without fear.

The Futility of Black Magic

While coarseness and egoism are the roots of black magic, the individual becomes a black magician only when he has the power and the will to impose (force or energy) upon others. The longer one continues the course of imposition (no matter how sincerely), the further one is seduced by the power of the ego (which is really the coarse power of matter manifested on a larger, composite scale) (which is the source of power for black magic). The worst (most potent) kind of black magician is one who has mastered some degree of occult training before falling prey to the temptations of ego. The black occultist is the least likely to be able to achieve freedom from the evoked forces, and the most likely to be destructive and (ultimately) to be destroyed. Those who fight (blindly or emotionally) for causes, who view ends as justifying means, or who seek to sustain or increase their personal influence (power), are the most likely to succumb to the (left-hand) path of destruction.

The pursuit (or manifestation) of black magic (the dark path) is necessarily and ultimately futile. It cannot succeed in the long term (or be sustained by the individual (or group) for very long) because it is naturally separative and self-destructive. Cosmic law supports (sustains) progressive evolution according to the logoc plan. Any activity not in accordance with that plan (on whatever level or scale) is ultimately dissolved and thereby eliminated, by natural forces (which are a consequence of that evolutionary qualification).

The existence of coarseness (and the temptations of matter and ego) is natural and plays a role in the grand scheme of things, as a matter of experience and growth (progress) by virtue of that experience, but to be renounced progressively as the life and consciousness become (naturally) more aligned with finer forces (group evolutionary goals). Much can be learned by facing temptations and overcoming the lower urges, but where coarseness (and ego) are entertained to excess, then considerable are the resulting dangers.

The right-hand path (of white magic (cooperative evolution (refinement) (expansion) of consciousness)) is essentially constructive, inclusive, and relatively selfless. This means that group activities that are aligned with the

path (and where personality-centeredness is effectively renounced) are basically cohesive. More progress is made on behalf of the greater group by virtue of (positive) group activity than is the case for individual activities (which may be nonetheless sincere and appropriate). But none of this holds true for black magic, which is basically self-centered and imposing rather than group-centered and based upon free association and commitment. Group activities along the dark path are not cohesive, since the participants are basically self-centered (coarse) and the association is one of convenience to the individual or involuntary. Since the framework for black magic is not cohesive there is no supporting hierarchy for continuity of operation.

From time to time organizations of black occultists are formed or reconstituted, but none can survive over the long course of human evolution since the principals are gradually (eventually) destroyed by natural forces, either at the personality level (as the personality matrix is dissolved by the soul) or at the soul level (as the solar matrix (and causal body) is destroyed by the monad). Rogue consciousness at any level is transient and undefendable. Black occultists futilely seek to sustain their powers from one lifetime to the next in face of increasingly intense karmic consequences. In short, the pursuit of black magic is unnatural and doomed to failure. The spiritual student should proceed without fear, as honestly and sincerely (and selflessly) as possible.

« Commentary No. 1185

White Magic

In a sense the lower magic is either black or white, while the higher magic is always white. Earth magic and/or ceremonial magic, for example, can be employed constructively or destructively (disruptively), but the magic of the higher Self can only be employed constructively, in accord with the evolutionary flow.

White magic in this higher sense is a matter of attunement to the higher nature (the soul (atma-buddhi-manas)) and allowing that nature to manifest itself through the personality, through the aura, and into the surrounding (outer) atmosphere. In order to do this, one must become intelligently transparent,

tempering the lower nature and leading the mind (intellect) (ego) into non-passive quiescence. It is a matter of quality. If the quality of (lower, personality) consciousness resonates with the higher Self, then the energy of that Self is naturally evoked. Thus white magic in this higher sense is largely a matter of preparation (temperance) (refinement) and alignment rather than a matter of invoking and evoking. The soul energy is evoked naturally wherever there is accommodation, wherever the person is responsive, and it cannot be otherwise.

While there are methods and rules associated with all forms of magical practice, those of white magic in this higher sense are rather more subtle and less a matter of knowledge, understanding, and training than a matter of realization and living in accord with the quality of the Self. For white magic in the lower sense, it is largely a matter of training and ethics. One simply recognizes the need to evoke (magical) force and so it is. In fact, one need not recognize the need consciously, indeed, it is often more effective, less encumbered, for this to happen unconsciously. Thus it is important to simply live in accordance with spiritual principles, and allow what needs to happen to happen. Spiritual students are naturally and thereby occultists-in-training and mystics-in-training. White magic is, in this sense, a bridging between the two worlds of proper occult (head-centered) and proper mystical (heart-centered) endeavors.

While black magic is necessarily rooted in form (matter) (lower consciousness), white magic is necessarily rooted in higher consciousness. While black magic is necessarily self-centered and personality-centered, white magic is necessarily not so. While black magic is necessarily head-centered, white magic is necessarily heart-centered (though there may (should) be a balance between the head and heart nature, the practice of white magic is inherently heart-centered). If one attempts white magic through strictly head-centered means, however sincere the person may be, it is simply occult practice, and not magical practice.

The rules of white magic are really quite simple and straight-forward. They are also the rules of the path in the higher sense. One must become and remain honest, with others and with oneself. One must become harmless and practice harmlessness. One must become and remain humble. One must live in accordance with conscience. One must live in accordance with spiritual principles as they are understood. One must take full responsibility for all

energies and forces evoked, for all circumstances and situations faced, for all consequences. One must temper the lower nature and devote time and energy to the inner experience, while serving effectively in the outer world. One must learn from one's experience, and assimilate that experience en route. One must listen continually if not continuously to the Voice of the Silence.



Section 7.42



Ceremonial Magic

Magic in the more esoteric (subjective) sense is properly the domain of the first ray (will) and the second ray (wisdom). But magic in the more exoteric (objective) sense is properly the domain of the remaining rays, and particularly that of the seventh ray. It is the seventh ray which encompasses the most objective field of magic, that of ceremonial magic. In ceremonial magic are found a wide variety of magical forms and methods, dealing predominantly with physical and etheric forces.

Ceremonial Magic

Magic in the more esoteric (subjective) sense is properly the domain of the first ray (will) and the second ray (wisdom). But magic in the more exoteric (objective) sense is properly the domain of the remaining rays, and particularly that of the seventh ray. It is the seventh ray which encompasses the most objective field of magic, that of ceremonial magic. In ceremonial magic are found a wide variety of magical forms and methods, particularly objective, and dealing predominantly with physical and etheric forces.

To properly understand ceremonial magic, the student should first understand the seventh ray domain and all of the implications and correlations of the seventh ray. In one sense, the physical plane (the seventh ray domain) is a reflection onto objective levels of the other six rays; or in other words, each of the (other) six rays contribute in some fashion to the most highly manifested (differentiated) plane of consciousness. Consequently, ceremonial magic is linked in various ways to all of the seven rays, though the seventh ray provides the best qualification and the domain of expression.

Ceremonial magic is that aspect of magic that is most involved with the form or method of creation. The procedures of ceremonial magic were well-known in the ancient mystery schools and were actually introduced to the novice or apprentice in order to demonstrate the utilization of the involved forces. But as the mind of the student is properly developed, these (ceremonial) methods are no longer necessary, since the same effects can be more properly evoked or created using simpler, internal methods. The student begins with ceremonial methods because no special training is needed; anyone can follow an objective, ceremonial procedure to unveil or release magical forces; but only with proper training can the student acquire the proper control and understanding of the evoked forces. In other words, it takes a great deal more than mere ceremony or invocation to safely control and apply the magical forces. Thus the ceremonial methods were intended only as a preliminary step, until the student could develop the proper faculties under supervised training.

The basic problem of ceremonial magic is two-fold: dependence on external forces and dependence on the ceremonial form. With emphasis on the form, the form itself may become a distraction and lose its potency and/or meaning. Thus, care should be taken in any ceremonial effort to maintain the significance (purpose) of the activity in mind, at least until the objectives have been accomplished or the effort is no longer warranted. Ceremonial magic is essentially a creative effort that depends on the instrumentality of some form of ceremony or ritual and the forces attracted by that ritual. The ceremony itself involves both mental and physical procedures, usually including a series of mantras or words of power (invocation). Sometimes words are not even needed, for the physical procedure may suffice to attract the desired forces.

The ceremonial methods are actually quite straight-forward, in principle. The actual method must first be associated with the invocation of a particular force. Through that association or correspondence, the procedure transmits the will to the necessary forces and draws them into manifestation. Through considerable repetition and practice, patterns are established on subtle levels so that the form (ritual) alone can be used to draw upon associated forces. But there are usually few, if any, safeguards built into the ceremonial forms. The methods can be quite potent and the forces unmanageable. Thus, purely ceremonial or psychic methods are discouraged, as the student learns to utilize the higher, internal faculties (that are more easily controlled).

« Commentary No. 275

Magic and Religion

The domain of religion is qualified primarily by the sixth ray, though other ray elements are usually present. The ceremonial element (via the seventh ray) plays a major supporting role, but it is the sixth ray energy proper (and its analog in the second ray) that provides the basis of any religion. The type of religion is determined primarily by the particular ray through which it is developed and qualified. A seventh ray religion, for example, will normally emphasize the ceremonial aspects, while a first ray religion will normally emphasize first ray elements.

Where the seventh ray influence provides the ceremonial aspects and associated magical forces, the sixth ray influence (basic qualification) provides magical forces of a different order. Seventh ray magic is largely ceremonial and deals primarily with physical (etheric) forces; sixth ray magic is largely personality-centered and deals primarily with emotional (astral) forces. Magic along sixth ray lines is particularly potent due to the coincidence of magnetic (astral) (personal) forces. Those magnetic forces are particularly useful in any religious movement from the standpoint of impelling influence. There are, of course, advantages (merit) and disadvantages (defects) to magnetic methods. The primary advantage is the ease with which the religious movement can become influential, particularly as the movement grows in scope and potency, and as adherents are attracted and influenced (hopefully) along positive (constructive) lines. The primary disadvantages are the tendency toward the extreme (including imposition), and the undermining of free will.

Sixth ray magic is probably most obvious in the religious leaders who have cultivated a strong personal magnetism and who are usually quite potent along magical (magnetic) (emotional) lines, particularly with those who do not really think for themselves (and who are therefore easily influenced). This is a natural and almost necessary step at some point in the evolution of human consciousness; but, the hypnotic element of any movement that draws upon the emotions and the mind can be easily misused as beliefs or values are imposed rather than presented for consideration. As humanity evolves, so does religion evolve, so that a wide spectrum of influential religions exists, including some which have a mature character and cultivate the intelligence of adherents, and others which are less mature and merely imposes values.

The cultivated image of the founder or central figure can easily exceed the potency of the individual, as magical forces are used to sustain or enhance a powerful thought-form (on concrete mental and astral levels). As more adherents are attracted, the central image is strengthened (unconsciously) even to the extent that the psychic image can interact directly and actively with anyone who visualizes the image or calls upon its influence by name or ceremony. A particularly potent religious movement can be sustained for thousands of years, but the character and temperament is likely to change (gradually) (continuously) according to the mass consciousness of the adherents.

The practical basis of any religion is usually centered in its idealism. Through magical forces, that idealism can be a potent and constructive influence for human progress (culturally, morally, and spiritually), particularly where the individual consciously and intelligently chooses to cooperate. But the dangers of extreme idealism should be tempered or discouraged by moderation and balance. Spiritual students of all faiths are encouraged to work within the domain of popular religion wherever they are comfortable, as the (broader-minded) spiritual students actually serve as a moderating evolutionary force.

« Commentary No. 554

Divination

Divination is the art, practice, or process of foreseeing future events or discovering otherwise hidden knowledge, by interpretation of omens and through intuitive perception. There are a number of fallacies associated with divination which effectively distract many who are attracted to the lesser mysteries without proper qualification.

The first fallacy is that the future can be foreseen with any accuracy or consistency. Even the most talented who view the future field can only effectively generalize the future tendencies or patterns, because the future consists of a vast number of dynamic karmic threads, ever changing as new inputs are added and old ones fulfilled, and since all causes and consequences are interactive (interdependent) with all other causes and consequences, the resulting complexity (the chaos of wisdom) is at best probabilistic and generalized (bias is another problem altogether). Very few consequences are stable enough to be accurately predicted, and therefore all perception of the future field must (properly) be considered suspect (i.e., biased by the process of perception, probabilistic and generalized at best).

The second fallacy is that there is any real significance to predicting the future. Very few are properly trained and qualified to properly perceive the future field, and they are employed mainly to perceive the long view (the evolutionary plan) in general terms, working to link the current momentum to the intended, generalized, evolutionary objective. Those who are properly trained and

qualified are not concerned with (the illusion of) particulars and do not make predictions. Predictions of future events (however relatively accurately) serve no real purpose, particularly for those upon the spiritual path. What matters is the quality of consciousness embraced in the present and the proper expression of that quality of consciousness. Knowing some particular impending future event affords no greater opportunity to evade or change the consequences, for all is governed by karma and evasion is not possible nor can consequences be changed without merit. One can only progress or evolve through learning and understanding (the incorporation of wisdom).

A third fallacy is that the purpose of divination has anything at all to do with foretelling the future. Divination is properly a process of developing and refining the intuition as an instrument of perception and assimilation of experience and the realization of wisdom. Divination is properly a process of evoking the intuition in the recognition and evaluation of cause and effect relationships. Divination is properly a process of developing the faculties of discernment, discretion, and discrimination in the framework of the spiritual intuition (buddhi). Therefore one should not confuse the exercise with the objective. The tools and instruments resorted to (i.e., astrology, the tarot, etc.) are merely catalysts for evocation of faculties and not particularly significant in themselves. Of course the truly talented (properly trained and qualified intuitive) needs no resort to outer tools or instruments.

A fourth fallacy is that divination is or can be a science. Divination is an art, necessarily and properly subjective and qualitative, a science only in the sense of being (possibly) a structured (objective) approach to (trigger) the evocation of subjective and qualitative processes. If viewed as a science or as an end in itself, divination remains an entertaining diversion and without significance. But viewed as a symbolic and artistic process, divination has a considerable potential for intuitive realization, provided that the student avoids the various associated glammers and illusions (distractions).

Ritual

A ritual is an established ceremonial form or pattern, customarily repeated in association with some implied purpose, often part of a series or chain of such forms or patterns in some greater association. A ritual can be as simple as a mentally-voiced word of power (mantra) or prayer, or as complex as the ceremonial form (pattern) of an entire incarnation. Rituals can be effective or ineffective, depending on the quality, intention, consistency, and character of the form (format) and the energies so linked or evoked. Rituals can similarly be applied toward more or less constructive objectives.

The power or potency of a ritual depends on the intensity, character, and consistency of the energy invested and the ability of the (occult) (esoteric) (spiritual) student to properly qualify and sustain the pattern evoked. Although the means and methods vary widely, all rituals involve impressed or qualified energies and some deliberate (or indeliberate) symbolic associations (correspondences). Those associations or correlations are implied catalysts for additional qualified energies, so that the result of a proper ritual is an energy pattern of some stability and duration having some particular attributes or applications. The student who is aware of the associations and who properly qualifies all aspects of a particular ritual form is one who is most effective. For having invested the time and energy in properly establishing the ritual form, the student can easily evoke the form without reinvestment, revealing intended purposive energies and forces.

The most essential rituals for the spiritual student are proper meditation and self-qualification. The meditation form is essential to spiritual continuity (achieving and maintaining the alignment of a purified and integrated personality with the soul (and all that that soul represents)). Self-qualification is essential to maintaining habits of continued refinement, balance, clarity (freedom from mundane absorption), service, etc. The repetition of meditation forms and self-qualification exercises strengthens the ritual patterns and brings about a considerable momentum. However, considerable care must be applied in the proper establishment of ritual forms to prevent improper momentum and unanticipated detrimental associations (dissolving a potent ritual form can

require considerably more time and effort than was required for establishment) and the student must endeavor to remain aware of the associations in order to remain effective (a ritual maintained without awareness is much less effective) (the student can of course establish a ritual form (pattern) (habit) that evokes awareness).

The tools or instruments of ritual vary widely among the various paths (traditions) and the various levels of consciousness involved. For example, the seventh ray approach is more ceremonial and more dependent on physical devices in its lesser manifestation (less so in its greater manifestation), while the first ray approach is more direct (more mental) and less reliant (if at all) upon intermediates. All ritual properly evokes structure or patterns on some level (etheric, astral, or mental) or combination, but some (higher) forms are evoked directly from the mental or buddhic plane without recourse to etheric or astral instruments (e.g., an etheric pattern can be evoked using etheric means, astral means, or mental means, according to the means of the student).

In general, a ritual is properly a way of constructively associating various forces and energies, blending them and qualifying them toward some object, reinforced by repetition until a considerable momentum is achieved. As such, the ritual can be an effective instrument for the student upon the path.



Section 7.421



Wicca

The Wiccan religion or witchcraft is a relatively diverse collection of various pagan and neo-pagan faiths and traditions. Wicca is an expression of respect or reverence for nature. It acknowledges God in both male and female aspects, and generally embraces reincarnation and various forms and practices of ritual magic.

Witchcraft

Witchcraft is defined (in the conventional or popular sense) as the use of sorcery or magic, where sorcery implies “the use of power gained from the assistance or control of evil spirits” and where magic implies “the use of means believed to have supernatural power over natural forces.” Unfortunately, these notions (witchcraft, sorcery, magic) do not effectively characterize (proper) witchcraft and much misunderstanding and superstition has resulted from the conventional fear-of-the-unknown (and popularization of the dark side).

Thus in the popular vernacular, witchcraft is generally associated with occultism, with the feminine practice of magic, and with evil or selfish intent. Yet, in practice, witchcraft is not limited to feminine practice (though women tend to have more affinity for and sensitivity toward the natural forces) nor with the dark side of occultism. That which is occult may be “good” (beneficent) (constructive) (selfless) (based in wisdom) or “evil” (maleficent) (destructive) (selfish or self-centered) (based in ignorance), depending on the motives, methods (practices), and relative understanding of the practitioner. More properly that which is occult is generally somewhere in between. Witchcraft, likewise. If one knows what one is doing (i.e., through proper training, understanding, etc.) and if the motives and practices are relatively pure, then witchcraft is a “positive” experience and expression.

The real basis (relative goodness) depends on the associated morals and ethics. If witchcraft is utilized properly (constructively), without any taint of selfishness or imposition (i.e., with sound moral and ethical consideration), then the whole process is qualified by the (more) noble aspect of human nature. Conversely, if witchcraft is utilized improperly (destructively), with selfish intent or with imposition (i.e., without sound moral and ethical consideration), then the process is tainted by the lower human (animal) nature. This is a very important aspect, for the relative quality of “involved” consciousness determines the quality and nature of the spirits or forces attracted and utilized. The human animal nature (being lower or coarse) will naturally attract relatively coarse spirits (elementals, etc.) and draw the practitioner into or toward the dangers inherent in the lower astral and the left-hand path (of black

magic). Conversely, the higher or more noble human nature will naturally attract relatively refined spirits and generally avoid the pitfalls associated with the lower manifestations.

Even when properly practiced, witchcraft is not without its temptations (e.g., sincere but misguided imposition), for with “power” come to the surface the lesser aspects of the human nature, and so the opportunity to face up to them and transform those weaknesses into strengths. There are, however, two aspects of witchcraft that must be transcended: (1) reliance on external forces (control of the elementals and lesser devas) rather than internal forces (collaboration with the higher devas) and (2) reliance on or focus on the earth-water-air-fire (mother) (nature) (material) elements (form) rather than reliance on the non-material elements (life and consciousness). These two aspects are of course the same, from different perspectives, but the student does need to transform the craft into inner union rather than outer absorption, however natural that outer absorption may be (for the personality nature).

In the final analysis, there is a dark side and a light side to witchcraft, a male side and a female side, a lower (external) aspect (personality-centered) and a higher (internal) aspect (soul-centered). If the light side is embraced, then the lower aspect will eventually be drawn into (unto) the higher.

« Commentary No. 1364

Wicca 1

The Wiccan religion or witchcraft is a relatively diverse collection of various pagan and neo-pagan faiths and traditions. Wicca is an expression of respect or reverence for nature. It acknowledges God in both male and female aspects, and generally embraces reincarnation and various forms and practices of ritual magic.

Wicca is relatively individualistic, both in the sense that Wiccans are free to interpret their faith and make it what they will, and in the sense that Wicca tends to attract people who are individualistic, i.e., who have strong (separative), independently-minded personalities. The basic principles of Wicca

are quite sound, but given the diversity of personalities involved and the dynamic range of beliefs and practices, there is therefore, as is the case for most religions, a spectrum of spiritual qualities, ranging from very noble to relatively coarse and self-centered. There are many and various Wiccan groups, and a number of relatively well-defined traditions or collections of practices (methods) that appeal to one group or another.

The God and Goddess of Wicca are not anthropomorphic. There is one supreme creative force encompassing all forms and all lives and all levels of existence and expression. Natural laws (and natural forces) are expressions of that one supreme creative force. The God and Goddess of Wicca are simply the masculine and feminine aspects of that supreme creative force. The focus of Wicca is upon living in harmony with the earth and the forces of nature, and utilizing those forces for good. In principle, and largely in practice, Wicca or witchcraft is a noble craft. But like most things good-in-principle, the quality and nobility of the particular craftwork depends on the quality and nobility and motives of the individuals involved. Thus Wicca properly does not embrace satanism or any obviously self-centered, self-serving practices. But satanism does embrace many of the practices and methods of witchcraft.

The fundamental problems of Wicca or witchcraft (or the practice of magic) are the source of energy and the motives of the people engaging its methods and practices. Natural (divine) forces can be embraced in two ways, through the lower self and through the higher Self. In Wicca, much of the embrace is through the lower self, and consequently there tends to be a strengthening of the ego or personality and its role in Wicca. Where the embrace is through the higher Self there is a weakening of the ego or personality, with much more noble emphasis and more noble results. But because natural forces are more easily encountered through the lower self and lower practices, there is an inherent vulnerability in these practices. There seems to be little emphasis in Wicca upon personal refinement, but there is a not inconsiderable appreciation for the dangers of magic evoked in the wrong ways or for the wrong reasons. In some sense Wiccans have pioneered popular appreciation for occult safeguards, for psychic self-defense practices. Which is necessary due to the overall (popular) appeal of witchcraft. But if the emphasis were to include personal refinement (self-discipline, purification, etc.) then the protections would be more natural and more effective (coarse energies are attractive and competitive, refined

energies are attractive and non-competitive) (coarse energies and refined energies are not (mutually) attractive).

Wicca is really quite experiential. Wiccans tend to feel the energies they are working with, to feel the connections with the earth and with nature and natural forces, much like true mystics feel their inner, higher communion with God. And in the higher sense, Wicca is also a mystical path.

« Commentary No. 1365

Wicca 2

Thus like most religions there is an outer, popular tradition in Wicca, that appeals to a diversity of peoples (and perhaps especially to those who are disaffected by the rigidity and “failures” of more orthodox practices), and an inner, less popular (less realizable), more mystical tradition to Wicca. There is ordinary, outer-nature-based magic. And there is a higher, deeper soul-based magic. Thus a common theme in Wicca is apprehension and expression of magic, particularly in its ritualistic form.

Magic comes from within, but it can be evoked in the lower sense through the ego (personality), drawing from the lower forces of nature (which is more properly perceived as external), or it can be evoked in the higher sense through the soul. Most Wiccans (like most people) are not able to touch the soul, and must rely on the lower magic. With proper training and proper (relatively selfless (self-less)) motive, these (lower) Wiccan practices can be quite effective (for good). It is a matter of being fit, being strong, being properly trained, understanding what one is doing, etc. But this is an active magical practice. One must properly actively and consciously control the evoked energies and forces. If one is passive in these regards, then one is easily engulfed by the forces and associated (unfortunate) entities. The higher magic is much more natural, requires not active control but simply intelligent and competent allowing of the energies and forces to flow as they need to. But the higher magic can only be evoked through higher (personal) qualification (refinement) (attunement to the soul). While the lower magic can seem (and be) quite natural, it is natural in a lower sense. Living in harmony with nature, in the

lower sense, is to be entangled in nature. Living in harmony with nature, in the higher sense, is something else entirely.

Wicca has in some sense been greatly and badly misunderstood by the masses, and a few abuses here and there have been allowed to misrepresent the entirety of this religious tradition. Sometimes people attack that which they do not understand or apprehend, that which in ignorance they fear. But there is nothing in Wicca that should be feared, indeed there is much there to be appreciated. The potentials for abuse are there, but this is true also for other religions. Wicca is really quite honest in its approach to magic, while most religions embrace magical practices without admitting it (and usually without apprehending it). The differences between Wicca and Christianity, for example, are primarily in perceptions (perspective) and emphasis (focus), but these are not fundamentally mutually exclusive. Indeed, the higher principles and practices are actually quite similar.

Some think of Wicca and witchcraft as different and evil, but in fact they are similar if not synonymous, and there is no more (or less) evil in witchcraft than there is in Christianity. Wiccans tend to be tolerant of other faiths but also tend to react badly (humanly) to impositions. No faith has exclusive insights or an exclusive relationship with God. And no faith has the right to impose on others. Each contributes to the whole. And Wicca contributes nonetheless. The focus and domain of Wicca provide its contributions, namely appreciation for nature (to live in harmony with nature, without exploitation), and appreciation for magic as a legitimate means of experience and expression.

Some religions emphasize submission to the (perceived) will of God, while Wicca tends to emphasize individual will (tempered by the golden rule). Thus the challenge for Wiccans is to gradually cultivate the inner, higher senses, so that the needs (will) of the soul can emerge into the daily life.

Wicca 3

There are a number of terms utilized to some extent in Wicca, in some cases differently than in other practices. An amulet is a magically, magnetically charged object for protection. The aura is the energy field that enfolds the human being (and all lives). Bane refers to that which is counter to life and consciousness. To banish is to magically exclude the influence of some entity or force. To bind is to magically constrain some entity or force. A Book of Shadows is a personal diary relating to magical experience (lore) and insight.

Calling refers to the invocation of divine or natural forces. The chakras are the energy centers within the human vital body, which are utilized in some magical practices. Charging refers to the deliberate qualification of some object or practice with personal energy or intention. Charms are simply amulets or talismans, infused with personal (magical) energy for some purpose. Circles are magical (sacred) spaces for working magic and ritual. They are means of containing and intensifying energy prior to its release or sending forth. Circles also provide protection. Cleansing refers to the purification of some object or place, removing unwanted influences. A coven or grove is simply a group of witches (usually thirteen or fewer) who practice magic together or who engage together in religious ceremonies.

Divination is (properly) a practice of obtaining insights. Earth magic refers to the natural magic (magical power) derived from natural objects. The natural elements are earth, air, fire, water, and the ether or akasha. Elementals are relatively primitive creatures associated with the elements. Fascination or mind-bending is an unethical practice of attempting to influencing others. Folk magic refers to personal magic, often utilizing herbs and crystals. Grounding is a practice of maintaining stability in magical work and relieving excess energies.

Hand-fasting refers to a pagan wedding. Incense refers to the utilization of aromatic practices for attunement and facility. The left-hand path is the path of black magic, or magical practice that is selfish or self-serving, or which seeks to influence others (the right-hand path is the path of white magic, or magical practice that is more noble and selfless). Magical systems are specific systems

or traditions of magic, each with their own set of practices and principles. Occultism refers to head-centered magical practices, for good (white magic) or ill (black magic). That which is occult is simply that which is hidden or not apparent to the mass consciousness. Paganism and neo-paganism are more general terms than Wicca or witchcraft. The pentacle is an encircled upright pentagram (five-pointed star), a symbol of Wicca and the five natural elements, while an inverted pentacle is a symbol of satanism (much like the swastika is a genuine religious symbol and the inverted swastika is a misappropriation or blasphemy).

Projective hand refers to the hand as a point through which magical force (personal energy) is conveyed. Receptive hand refers to the use of the hand(s) to receive energy. Rede is the Wiccan formulation of the golden rule, "An it harm none, do what thou will." Runes are sets of symbols used in magical work, sometimes also in divination. Sabbats are the eight seasonal festivals (Samhain or November eve, Yule or the winter solstice, Imbolc or February eve, Ostara or the vernal equinox, Beltaine or May eve, Litha or the summer solstice, Lammas or August eve, and Mabron or the autumnal equinox). A solitary is a pagan or Wiccan who works alone. Spells are magical rituals to address (or redress) some need. Sympathetic magic involves the principle of attraction.



Section 7.43



Music

Music is one of the various artistic endeavors, one which has particular relationships with magic and has direct effects on etheric and astral levels.

The Effects of Music

The effects of physical plane music on the human personality are many and varied. The two primary variables (factors) are the quality (and form) of the music and the quality (responsiveness) of the personality. Much depends upon the nature of the mind and the degree of independence present in the physical and emotional bodies. The whole process involves the interaction of energy (music) with energy (the aura and the personality).

The quality of music depends primarily on the purity of the tones produced and the concordance or harmony of the various tones and instruments. Music is essentially qualified vibration. On one extreme is music (noise) that is produced with many impurities and an absence of harmony. Much of the popular music today is produced with varying degrees of impurity, with many coarse and discordant notes (which are not recognized as such by those for whom that music is appealing). On the other extreme is much of what is called classical music, music noted for its purity, clarity, harmony, and constructive effects. Not all of the classical music can be considered in this category (of the highest form of physical plane music), for even classical music varies widely in form and quality. Coarse popular music carries with it a (potentially) destructive element. Refined classical music carries with it the potential for constructive interaction between the soul, the mind, and the entire personality.

The quality of the personality determines the response of the personality (on its physical, emotional, and mental levels) to the various forms of music. A coarse, discordant personality (aura) will usually find coarse, discordant music to be appealing. A refined, purified, and disciplined personality will usually find refined (classical) music to be far more appropriate. The bulk of humanity fall somewhere between these two degrees, and the taste or responsiveness of the personality to music may vary considerably even for a particular individual. The environment or atmosphere also plays an important role, for music can sustain a particular atmosphere for quite some time.

Coarse, discordant music tends to stimulate the lower astral; other forms of popular music usually stimulate the emotional body on intermediate levels.

Whenever the emotional (astral) body is stimulated by music, the physical form tends to move in response. In other forms of music, in which the mind (rather than the emotions) predominates, the emotional body is calmed and relaxed while the physical form is not normally engaged. Much of the popular music can create tension and frustration (even in very subtle, unconscious ways). By observation and consideration, the spiritual student should be able to recognize the effects of various forms of music on his own aura and temperament, and take appropriate action to improve and qualify the situation.

Physical plane music can produce quite profound effects on emotional and mental levels, and some forms of (quiet, classical) music can actually encourage and evoke the alignment of soul and mind (and heart). Loud or coarse music can be quite stimulating in the lowest sense, while quiet and refined (mostly classical and semi-classical) music can be gently stimulating in the highest sense. Meditation music (if used) should be chosen for its gentleness and purity. The higher forms of music can be participated in with interesting and constructive effects. For the spiritual student at least, the lower forms of music are distracting and unproductive (if not counter-productive) (and should be avoided or tuned out). With proper discretion the various forms of (refined) music can be utilized quite effectively, but first the student should understand himself and observe first-hand the interaction of music and personality.

« Commentary No. 879

Music and Magic 1

Music is one of the great and practical facilitations of creative and destructive processes, and is therefore and thereby a tool for (creative) magical work on various scales. Through history (and pre-history), music has had a considerable influence on both culture and consciousness, and, at the same time, culture and consciousness have been reflected in the various forms and qualities of music.

In the highest, extra-planetary sense, music (i.e., the music of the spheres (the sound of manifestation (the sound of the processes of creative manifestation))) appears to be causal and inductive. But in fact, music is the intermediary between the creator and the created, between the cause of manifestation and

manifestation per se. Thus music is not causal, either as a force or as a reflection or indication of consciousness. Consciousness is causal, and music interacts with consciousness, in both directions (as each influences the other). But music is a tool of consciousness and facilitates causally induced processes and their consequents.

As above, so below. Music on "human" levels is a result of the creative process, inspired or otherwise from various levels of consciousness, within or beyond. Music formulated through man, however inspired it may be, while not in itself causal, is nonetheless consistent with the "karmic flow" of man's consciousness. Music influences, and potentially a great deal, but not causally. Music is more properly viewed as an indication of man's and a country's consciousness, both concurrently and in the sense of anticipation. The higher forms (more refined quality) of music inspire (more properly, encourage inspiration) to higher levels. The lower forms (more coarse quality) of music tend to sustain or encourage one's measure of coarseness. The higher forms anticipate higher consciousness and encourage those who are responsive to embrace that encouragement.

Music is related to glamour and illusion, and to their overcoming. Since music inspires, consciously and unconsciously, there are associated consequential (responsive) feelings and thought-forms which, if reinforced individually or collectively, can be sustained for long periods of time, further encouraging (or enslaving) (depending on the respective quality and the nature of one's consciousness). Harmonious music tends to encourage or sustain. Discordant music tends to break up or destroy the habits in feeling and thinking to which that music is directed. Music is also a relating mechanism for humanity and the deva kingdom, as the devas are actually involved in the form, character, and quality of music (as they are to some extent in all aspects of manifested existence). Those devas who work with or are evoked into activity by music are drawn to music or are involved in the impact of music (respectively) according to their quality, character, and temperament.

Music can also be quite depictive, and thereby convey potentially a great deal of insight, consciously or otherwise, to those who are suitably responsive. So it is not only a matter of qualitative encouragement and/or inspiration, but of conveyance of energy (and ideas) as well. The variety of music available, both

in terms of form and quality, is an indication of relative freedom and flexibility within a culture, and an indication of variety in consciousness. The “tone” of music can be utilized constructively or oppressively, according to intent (and karmic allowances). That which is conveyed by or through music is inherently related to the consciousness of those involved (human and deva) and inherently involved in the respective group and individual karma.

« Commentary No. 880

Music and Magic 2

The principal application of music in the more personal sense is as a means to facilitate self-qualification. The magical properties of music lie in the ability of music to influence on physical, emotional, and/or mental levels, according to the music’s nature and according to the needs and responsiveness of the person. In the less personal, more general sense, the principal application of music is in the establishment of a suitably qualified environment.

The power of a given piece of music may be on one level or another, with lesser strength on other levels (e.g., with power principally on emotional levels and secondarily on physical and mental levels). On the other hand, in general, people respond distinctly differently to a given piece of music, with some responding primarily on physical levels, some on emotional levels, and some on mental levels. But on the average, the power of music on a given level is coincident with the majority response. The majority of people are emotionally polarized and response to music is primarily on emotional levels, but the quality of music (and emotional response) varies considerably. Growing numbers of people are becoming mentally-polarized and able to respond to music without becoming entangled in physical and emotional effects. Yet most who respond favorably to more refined music (e.g., classical) are themselves emotionally-polarized and responding emotionally, while the relatively few who are mentally-polarized can respond mentally to both classical and sub-classical music.

In the lower sense, any response to music that involves physical movement implies a physical-emotional polarization that limits the ability of the student

to respond on higher levels. In the higher sense, with the physical body stilled and the emotions uplifted, the student can function quite effectively on mental and intuitive levels. The real key is whether or not one can become oblivious to the separateness of the personality. One must learn to participate in the unifying aspect of music (through the soul) rather than participate in the separative aspect of music (through the personality).

For the emotionally-polarized spiritual student, more refined music (than that which the personality would prefer) can be used to calm, refine, and uplift the emotional body and make it more responsive to the mind, culminating in the integration of the entire personality. Similarly for the mentally-polarized spiritual student, more refined music can be used to lift the waking-consciousness from concrete mental to abstract mental and intuitive levels. But care must be taken not to rely on the means of music (nor upon any external or artificial means) for achievements in consciousness (i.e., someone who can achieve a given state of consciousness only with the aid of musical means has not really achieved that level and cannot evoke that level at will).

But music can be used effectively to facilitate and encourage, to break down various impeding habits in consciousness (and other conditioning factors), to establish and sustain a more spiritually-amenable environment, on group levels as well as on individual levels, and to condition and qualify the personality in deliberate ways. As a means of encouragement, music is ethically sound. As a means of imposition, music may be quite practical, but imposition per se is ethically unacceptable (for the spiritual student). The magic of music is both inherent and amenable to direction or associative qualification. Music (sound in general, music in particular) is inherently magical (superphysical) in its application and effects on consciousness. And music (like symbols) can convey energy and understanding that lies beyond language and the ability of people to articulate.