

Monastery of the Seven Rays

Monastery of The Seven Rays,
IVth Year Course in Esoteric Magic,
Part I. The History of Modern Zothyrian Philosophy,
Lesson 15, 1910 - 1930, The Ontological School of Essence
and Substance:

A. THE "REALISTIC" ELEMENT IN ONTOLOGY:

Ontology can be viewed either abstractly or concretely. Abstractly, it becomes a matter of the logic of modality. Concretely, it becomes a kind of Voodoo witchcraft or sorcery, based upon abstract modal logic. The more concrete it becomes, the more "realistic" it is, so that eventually it becomes entirely a matter of concrete experience, witchcraft-artistic phenomena, and voodoo magical practices. In this sense there developed a school of "English Voodoo", or "English sorcery", as a more extreme form of "English witchcraft". Hence, this voodoo must not be thought of as a Haitian voodoo in any sense; because while Haitians could be admitted into it (and Docteur Jean-Maine was initiated by Asutin O. Spare) this magic was to be thought of as a system complete in itself and based upon certain mystical artistic experiences, which developed out of the school of empiriological constructions. Such a system was considered as a whole as basic sorcery and as a very unique and interesting system. This world of artistic experience and sorcery often went under very strange and somewhat fanciful names, such as, for example, ZOS-KIA-THYRIOS; or in the case of the English master of this system and artist, Austin O. Spare, ZOS-KIA-THANATOS; or in the case of Clark Ashton Smith, ZOS-KIA-THIKOS. English sorcery, then, can be understood as a magical response to the total environment and as a system which seeks to combine certain artistic elements with certain ideas taken directly from the UNCONSCIOUS or SUBCONSCIOUS states of the personality. Ontology is concerned with empiriological constructions applied to the structure of the psyche. The "empirio-factor" is the substantial factor, while the "logical-factor" refers to the essential factor. By experience we mean that the substance of the universe, which is the true reality of the psyche and its symbols, is composed of various levels of sorcery which relate to the subconscious, the unconscious, the conscious, and the superconscious. The initiations of sorcery which seek to bring out the unity of the psyche have as their purpose the making of experience into a continuous field or continuum of states of awareness rather than keeping the psyche divided up into four isolated parts, which do not interconnect and hence cause mental illness. The alternative to mental illness would then be the initiations of sorcery, which is the living psychotherapy of voodoo witchcraft. In this sense, voodoo ontology was viewed as therapeutic and hence initiation is restored to its original meaning of a healing of the soul, and restoration to the original state of ideal being (as in the initiation of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin) prior to the fragmentation of incarnate existence is both demonstrated and developed by means of the life and work of the sorcerer.

B. THE INITIATIONS OF ONTOLOGY:

The initiations of ontology were essentially the traditional initiations of sorcery. By this I mean that such techniques as sexual magic and esoteric logic were applied and found suitable for the proper development of magical consciousness. However, because of the emphasis upon the concrete, it was determined that the initiations of ontology should be expressions of the fundamentals of the arts of sorcery. Consequently, the entire scope of magic became more and more manifested by means of painting and rituals which were expressive of the arts of colour and space. This was a normal part of the "English voodoo" or the witch cult, which came to be expressive of the unity of the psyche and hence of its total powers and goals and purposes. Initiation came to mean the restoration of total experience, where before experience had been seen as limited and confined to certain limitations of awareness. The new experience and empirical viewpoint was that of a completely unified experience, and the sorcerers by means of all of their techniques were able to bring together all of the elements of experience in a concrete and intuitive expressionism. In a sense, expressionism as a form of art -- with the implied feelings of colour, space, and motion -- was mixed with magical expressionism, a form of voodoo in the sense that voodoo is expressionism but not voodoo, as it is usually understood, in any African sense; for we must realise that our sorcerers were English, French, Irish, and Belgian, and they were not living in any West Indian community, however enjoyable it would have been or no matter how much they would possibly have wished it. But in as much as expressionism meant a freeing of the mind from academic restraints, it meant that man as magician was now occultly free to express his innermost psychic fantasies. Thus, expressionism led to fantasiaticism, or the magical use of fantasy. Fantasy developed into futurism, or the speculative examination of future possibilities. In order to accomodate these developments, the Rite of Memphis-Misraim had to implement its fantasiatic or fantastic and futuristico-logical patriarchates. In a sense, these patriarchates gradually assumed control for the entire process of magical initiation in ontology. By this we mean that the fantastic and futuristic forms of sorcery came to control more and more the whole field of initiation about the year 1930. In this connection, the writings and influence of the magical schools of Clark Ashton Smith and H.P. Lovecraft were most significant.

C. THE TRANSITION FROM MODAL LOGIC AND ONTOLOGY TO NEO-MAGICAL METHOD.

At one time, it was taken as a fact that neo-magical method would gradually replace the use of abstract logic. This was admitted by all magical schools because it was certain that at a certain stage of development, the magical mind would naturally tire of abstractions, especially when it was shown that the content of experience in both phantasy and futurism was seen to far outweigh the dry formalism of abstract ideality. Consequently, there did occur a natural transition from abstract logic to a natural expressionism and emphasis on fantastic

content. This of course did not imply that the fantastic school of neo-magic did not have as its basis the exact formalism of the abstract logical sciences. This it did have and in no sense was the axiomatic ground-work lacking. But by means of the use of the disjunctive calculus of probability, it was possible for the magician to arrive at a purely and totally fantastic viewpoint by means of a deductive procedure which combine logic and imagination. By this means, the most extreme visions of total reality were expressed as scientific laws of being. In a sense this was true, for scientific laws and fantasy had their basis in abstract logic as did, certainly, all forms of deductive futurism. However, magic came to become more and more a definition of reality and more and more science and magic -- positivism and fantasy -- came to be merge and united as one real and absolute experience. In this sense, again, fantasy and futurism came to be identified in the neo-magical outlook which considered futurism as a field capable of expressing certain voodoo qualities. Voodoo came to be thought of as the most futuristic form of magic, suitable for the 21st and 22nd centuries in a way in which it was not understood to be suitable and ~~understood not to be suitable~~ for the 20th century. English voodoo, therefore, came to be understood as the ideal subject-matter for future development. But it must be noted that this voodoo would be expressed precisely and properly in the terms of absolute positivism and transcendental logic. For this reason there was developed a unified field theory of neo-magical constructionism. This view was entirely within the expectations of magical art. In fact, this neo-magic came more and more to occupy the attention of the sorcerers and fantasiastes, for they had discovered what it was like to create the universe of exact science.

D. THE UNIFIED FIELD THEORY OF NEO-MAGICAL CONSTRUCTIONISM:

This new magical creation will be discussed in terms of its major features as a fantastic and futuristic system of ideal and magical symbols. It is my wish to formulate certain ideas which combine the positivistic and fantastic aspects of sorcery. It is my intention to comment on what was at one time considered a very bold attempt at a futuristic and fantastic positivism of magic. Certain schools of magic have continued to make use of these scientific constructions which are of an entirely neo-magical rise up out of a thought atmosphere created by fantasy, futurism, and positivism. In order to teach this doctrine of fusion, it was necessary to have a model for exhibitive exploration and experimental analysis. As usual this model was created by the logical section of the Rite of Memphis-Misraim. What follows is an explanation of the neo-magical model now in actual use in introductory programs of the sorcery of fantastic positivism. Now, I do not wish it to be understood that this is the only model in use among the various schools of fantastic and neo-magical positivism. However, it is my view that this model will serve to orient the new student of neo-magical methods in relation to the exact methods of positivism and idealistic logic. At the same time, it is almost certain that the use of this model will enable the students to develop their own magical awareness to such an extent that they will be able to create similar if not -- and this

should be expected -- somewhat improved models for the construction of a total world view of magical reality as a scientific system. Again, we have the use of H.P. Lovecraft in this development because for a very simple reason it has come out in magical researches that this American author has influenced the futuristic and fantastic magicians greatly, especially by means of the intellectual freedom, yet scientific restraint, of his writing style. His influence as a magical authority can not be in any sense denied. It is significant that his impact upon developing neo-magical method should be so highly appreciated by the inner retreat. At this present period, two of the scholars of the inner retreat are planning a 4 volume commentary upon and study of the neo-magical systems of H.P. Lovecraft and A.O. Spare, because they are considered to have been developed within the initiatic tradition of the Monastery of the Seven Rays.

Michael Capricorn

¹ Frater Joseph and Frater Zothyrius, ZOS KIA THANATOS: The neo-magia of H.P. Lovecraft and A.O. Spare (in 4 volumes), forthcoming.