

The Qabalistic Cross

An essay explaining the performance of the elementary magick ritual,
“The Qabalistic Cross,” together with a description of its purpose
and its method of operation.

by

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Sun in 26° Virgo, Anno IVxv

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THE Qabalistic Cross (the “QC”) is a simple ritual with two ends in mind:

1. To expand the magician’s sphere of consciousness; and
2. To bring down the divine light.

We shall examine what both of these mean below. Much has already been written about the QC, so we will not reinvent the wheel here. We shall outline the basic procedure, and then describe the essential points.

To perform the QC:

1. Stand facing the East, where the sun rises;
2. Touch the index finger to the forehead and say “Eheieh”;
3. Touch the index finger to the solar plexus and say “Malkuth”;
4. Touch the index finger to the left shoulder and say “ve Geburah”;
5. Touch the index finger to the right shoulder and say “ve Gedulah”;
6. Clasp the fingers together and hold the hands to the centre of the chest, and say “le olahm amen”;
7. Touch the index finger to the closed lips.

The aspirant should take some time to practice this. It is important in the beginning to actually stand, actually move the hands, and actually say the words out loud. As proficiency is gained the entire procedure can be performed mentally, but the aspirant should not rush to do this; he is looking to make a definite change, and this is best achieved by involving as many parts of his being as possible, by

performing actions he would not usually perform, by entering into the spirit of things.

Once mechanical proficiency has been obtained, and the procedure committed to memory, the aspirant can begin refining the process. The first refinement relates to the way in which the words are spoken. Tradition has it that the words should not be merely enunciated, but *vibrated*. This is a practice which is difficult to describe, but actually simple to discover for oneself with a little practice. The aspirant should experiment with changing the tone of his voice until he finds a note which causes his body to vibrate. This note may be higher or lower than his normal speaking voice. He is looking for a sonorous quality which, if done effectively, should cause him to shiver, and “shake him to his marrow.” In reality, the physical effect will not be quite so dramatic as this, but it should give the aspirant an idea of what he is aiming for. With a little trial and error, he should have little difficulty finding an effective tone. The words should be pronounced slowly and evenly, each syllable taking the same amount of time. In the beginnings of his practice, the aspirant may wish to vibrate each word more than once before moving on.

Once this is satisfactorily achieved, the aspirant should use his imagination to direct the vibration, so that he is able to make individual parts of his body vibrate when he speaks. The relevant parts are the crown of the head, the feet, the left and right shoulders, and the centre of the chest. The reason behind this will become clear shortly.

There are two really important parts to this practice, and the first one is this: before performing the ritual, the aspirant should close his eyes, and imagine his body growing upwards. In his mind’s eye, he should see the perspective of his room changing as his head gets closer to the ceiling, then his neighbourhood coming into view as he breaches the roof. He should imagine himself continuing to grow, his field of view increasing, the buildings, trees and mountains becoming increasing smaller and flatter as he does. His head will move up to and through the clouds, details on the ground becoming more and more remote, and he will begin to perceive the curvature of the earth. Continuing his ascent, he will perceive the sky growing dark as his head leaves the atmosphere, and the brilliance of the stars should strike him. He should continue his growth until the Earth is a small ball between his feet, at which point he should stop and pause.

At first, the aspirant should take time with this process, building up the visualisation in his mind so that he really *feels* the expansion, and the enormous sense of *scale*. As proficiency builds, he will find he is able to obtain this sensation far more quickly, and will be able to

“expand” in a matter of seconds, quickly recalling to mind as a result of familiarity that sense of size and majesty. Also, at the close of the ritual (i.e. before the last step) he should visualise himself shrinking back down to his normal scale.

The point of all this is to “expand the sphere of the aspirant’s consciousness” as we have previously stated. This phrase can sometimes cause problems. What exactly do we mean by it?

Here are some interesting quotes from people who have actually been into space:

It was hard to believe that everybody I have ever known or seen on TV, and the places where they lived and played were all on that little blue-and-white marble. — *Alan Bean*

It suddenly struck me that that tiny pea, pretty and blue, was the Earth. I put up my thumb and shut one eye, and my thumb blotted out the planet Earth. I didn’t feel like a giant. I felt very, very small. — *Neil Armstrong*

The Earth reminded us of a Christmas tree ornament hanging in the blackness of space. As we got farther and farther away it diminished in size. Finally it shrank to the size of a marble, the most beautiful marble you can imagine. That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate, that if you touched it with a finger it would crumble and fall apart. Seeing this has to change a man. — *James Irwin*

My view of our planet was a glimpse of divinity. — *Edgar Mitchell*

These astronauts have quite literally moved outside the entire sphere of their previous existence. Previously, their entire lives were confined to the Earth; everything they ever knew, the vast expanse of their history, their dreams for the future, their families, friends, careers, everything is contained within that “little blue-and-white marble” that they are looking at now, actually looking at, not imagining.

In a smaller way, most people will have experienced something like this when travelling. We live our lives pre-occupied with our daily doings, our families, our jobs, our daily commute, our homes, our little problems. When we travel to a new place, we see people living totally outside of our little world, totally unconcerned with our own problems. It provides us with *perspective*, and it is exactly this perspective that we are talking about when we speak of “expanding our sphere of consciousness.” In our daily lives, we are completely unconcerned with the same worries, problems, and tribulations experienced by Mr.

and Mrs. Bisto in Nimrod, Minnesota, and it is this same total lack of concern that we are trying to generate — temporarily — for our own concerns.

Thus, by “expanding the sphere of consciousness” in this way, he imagines himself to grow to a scale where not only all of his own problems, but all the problems he could possibly conceive of, are confined to that “little blue-and-white marble” between his feet, while his body has expanded out of that into a much wider universe. This is the perspective he should look to generate, of the solar system, of the galaxy, of the universe, spinning around in its own timeless inexorable order, to the point where he finds it impossible to question the complete insignificance of his own life and his own problems. He attempts to put his life in the perspective of not his “everyday” self, or even of his “true” self, or his family, or his town, or his country, or of the whole world, but in the perspective of the *universe*. We on Earth see a supernova through our telescopes and wonder at the marvel of it all; it concerns us not that that phenomena may be destroying countless worlds, countless lives. This is the perspective the aspirant should seek to develop of his own world and his own life, to the point where it never even occurs to him to take any concern over it. This is what we mean by “expanding the sphere of consciousness.”

This feeling will, of course, not be permanent, and soon he will return to his everyday worldly concerns. With repeated practice, however, he can reach a point where this perspective is always somewhere in the background of his mind, so that even when he is deeply involved in his problems, he is always aware that there is another perspective, and this awareness will give him a small, but *permanent* expansion in his sphere of consciousness. Moreover, with proficiency he knows he can always return to his fuller awareness through this practice. And this is of no mean benefit to him.

The second end of this practice that we mentioned is to “bring down the divine light,” which is an even more troublesome phrase.

The final refinement to the ritual to bring this about is as follows:

1. After his expansion, but before his first vibration, he should visualise an intense ball of light just above the crown of his head. This ball should be at least the size of his own head, but no more than twice its size. When vibrating the first word, it is to this sphere that he should direct its vibration, although he should feel the effects of the vibration on the crown of his head.
2. The aspirant should, before his second vibration, visualise a bar of light pulsing downwards from this sphere to his feet, ending

in an identical ball of light encompassing his feet.

3. Before his third vibration, the aspirant should visualise an identical ball of light at his left shoulder.
4. Before his fourth vibration, the aspirant should visualise a bar of light pulsing across his chest from his left shoulder to his right shoulder, ending again with a ball of light emanating from his right shoulder. Done properly, he will now be visualizing an intense cross of light within his body.
5. Before his final vibration, clasping his hands at the intersection of the cross, he should visualise the bars of the cross extending infinitely outwards to the utter ends of the universe and beyond.
6. At the close of his practice, before shrinking himself back down to size, he should imagine the extended bars retracting, the balls of light at his feet and shoulders shrinking, the bars of light being absorbed back into the ball of light above his head, and then the light from this ball descending into the head and being absorbed by the body.

The point of all this is to mentally form a *connection* with the entire universe. When extending the bars of the cross infinitely, the aspirant should try to visualise the vast extent of the universe, the infinite possibilities out there, all the galaxies and worlds. He should push this feeling of infinity until a type of ecstasy is excited within himself. He should imagine that this cross of light extending from himself is going out and touching these possibilities, and because the centre of this cross is within himself, he should feel a connection with it all, the light touching all the wonders in the universe, and acting as a conduit between himself and them. He should in this way be able to see himself as a part of a vast *continuum*, and begin to feel an *identification* with the universe. When he imagines himself retracting the arms of the cross, he should feel that they are bringing a part of all these wonders with it, being absorbed into the sphere above his head, and then being dissipated and integrated into his being.

We can now see the purpose of this ritual as being twofold:

1. To expand the aspirant's sphere of consciousness to a universal scale; and
2. To make the entire universe a part of himself, or more accurately, to realize himself as a full and necessary part of it.

In a neat and simple ritual, this practice essentially sums up everything we are trying to achieve. In one way, we can look at the “Great Work” as merely being the completion of this ritual. This is without question one of the very best practices available to the neophyte at the beginning of his work, and frequent use should be made of it.