

23 GROSVENOR AVENUE  
EAST SHEEN  
LONDON  
SW14 8BT  
ENGLAND

20.5.85

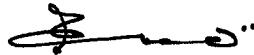
The Editors  
BLACK MOON PUBLISHING  
Box 1343  
Cincinnati  
Ohio 45201  
USA

Dear Black Moon;

very many thanks for your recent letter about the Archives Project. This is certainly a venture in which I would be happy to participate, and am glad to have the drawings you mention used in this way.

For information I enclose a list of titles of the works and some further documentation which you may find of interest. As you can see 28 of the pictures are from three cycles of Rapidograph drawings: Personae Non Grata, Rictus Sardonicus & Resident Aliens. Ectospasm (1977) is a preparatory study.

With all best wishes,

  
A.C. Evans

4/85  
- L1/L2  
- NOTE, include  
DRAWINGS IN  
Ⓢ?

23 GROSVENOR AVENUE  
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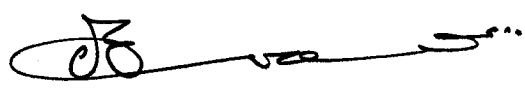
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THE EDITORS  
CINCINNATI JOURNAL OF CEREMONIAL MAGICK  
CONQUERING CHILD PUBLISHING Co  
P.O. BOX 1343  
CINCINNATI  
OHIO 45201  
USA

Dear Sirs;

Please find enclosed a number of drawings you may care to  
publish in your magazine.

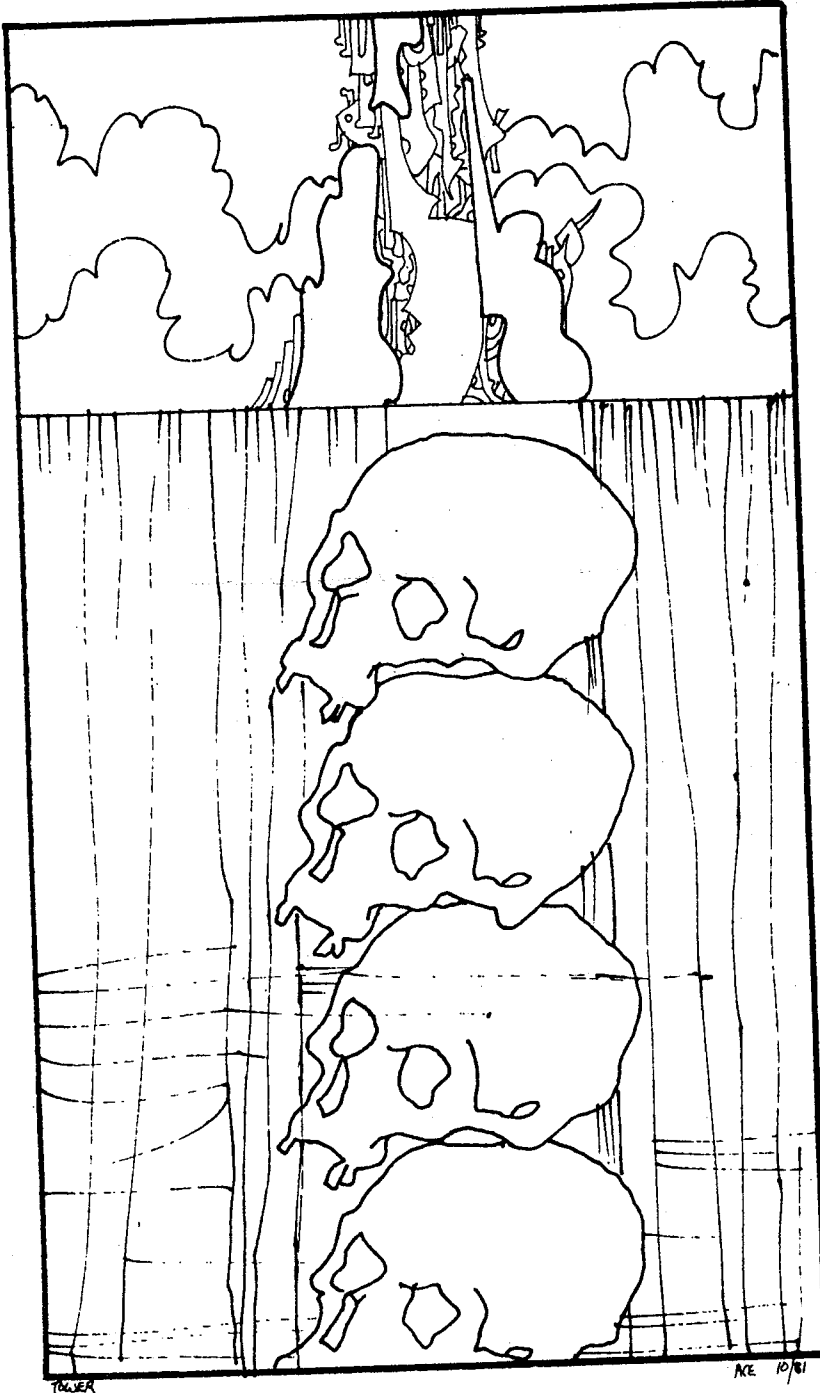
Yours faithfully,



A.C. EVANS

A.C. EVANS

RESIDENT ALIENS



TOLVER

ACE 10/81

RESIDENT ALIENS  
Rapidograph drawings

PART 1 (1981/1982)

1. ORPHEUS 1.	9.81
2. MORUS	9.81
3. CURSE	9.81
4. MERCURIUS	9.81
5. DEATH	10.81
6. ATAVISM	10.81
7. LE PENDU	10.81
8. CATHEDRAL OF THE FUTURE	10.81
9. CATHEDRAL OF THE PAST	10.81
10. SILENCE	10.81
11. TOWER	10.81
12. IN THE MADHOUSE	10.81
13. ORTHOGENESIS	10.81
14. DANCER	10.81
15. IN THE CATHEDRAL	10.81
16. NUIGH	10.81
17. EVOLUTE	10.81
18. PERIHELION	10.81
19. TRANSEPT	11.81
20. ADEPT	11.81
21. REBIRTH CONTROL	11.81
22. SUPER NEW ROSES	11.81
23. SHARDS (MUSIC)	11.81
24. DEATH ON MARS	11.81
25. OCCULTATION	11.81
26. HERMETIC SYMBOLS 2.	11.81
27. CRYPT	11.81
28. CRYPTOCOCCUS	11.81
29. MELPOMENE	11.81
30. THE FIRST DAY	12.81
31. ORPHIC NARCISSUS	1.82
32. ANOREXIA NIRVANA	3.82

RESIDENT ALIENS

PART 2 (1982)

33.	RESIDENT ALIENS 1	11.82
34.	HIS SHADOW LIVES ON	11.82
35.	EXOSPHERE 1.	11.82
36.	EXOSPHERE 2	11.82
37.	TINGUELY CATHEDRAL	12.82
38.	SICK RESIDUA	12.82
39.	CRYPTOGENESIS	12.82
40.	HERMETIC SYMBOLS	11.81/12.82
41.	FAMILIAR SPIRITS	12.82
42.	DEADLY NIGHTSHARDS	12.82
43.	UNKNOWN SUPERIOR	12.82
44.	HORUS 2	12.82
45.	THE ANATOMY LESSON	12.82
46.	SPHINX	12.82
47.	APASTRON	12.82
48.	SPECTRAL WAVES	12.82
49.	THE OPEN SECRET	12.82
50.	EIRONEIA FANTASTICA	12.82
51.	BEASTIAL VIRGIN	12.82
52.	DOUBLE MEANING	12.82
53.	LE GRIMOIRE	12.82
54.	VISIONS	12.82
55.	TOWER OF SILENCE	12.82
56.	BEYOND THE EXOSPHERE	12.82
57.	THE HOMUNCULUS	12.82
58.	ASTRAL WIDOW	12.82
59.	ANGEL OF THE EXOSPHERE	12.82

A.C. EVANS



**Rictus  
Sardonicus**

RICTUS SARDONICUS (1970-1973)

It is said that the agonised screams  
of children burning on the altars of  
antiquity constituted sardonic laughter

- Tondriau and Villeneuve

PRELUDE

1. CHAOS 1. (air/water) (1970)

STROPHE

2. REGINA (1970)
3. ANTI-REGINA (1970)

Dream Cycle 1

4. BIRTH (1970)
5. VERTIGO (1971)
6. LE PENDU (1971)
7. TRANSFORMATION (1971)
8. DREAMS (1971)

INTERLUDE

9. THE TOWER (1971)
10. THE DESCENT (1971)
11. THE MAGUS (1971)
12. THE PROCESS (1971)

ANTISTROPHE

13. REX (1972)
14. DEATH (1972)

Dream Cycle 2

15. DEMONS (1972)
16. FURIES (1972)
17. ANGELS (1973)
18. THE CATHEDRAL (1972)
19. THE MILLENIUM (1972)

CODA

20. CHAOS 2. (fire/earth) (1973)

PERSONAE NON GRATA (1966-1974)

- 1 Destruction 1971
- 2 Mist 1970
- 3 And there fell a graat star 1972
- 4 Whore of Babylon 1973
- 5 The Great Forest 1972
- 6 Nykticorax 1969
- 7 Angel for the End of Time 1972
- 8 The Antivirgin 1973

RICTUS SARDONICUS (1970-1973)

- 9 Chaos 1 1970
- 10 Regina 1970
- 11 Dreams 1971
- 12 The Descent 1971
- 13 Rex 1972
- 14 The Millenium 1972
- 15 Chaos 2 1970/71

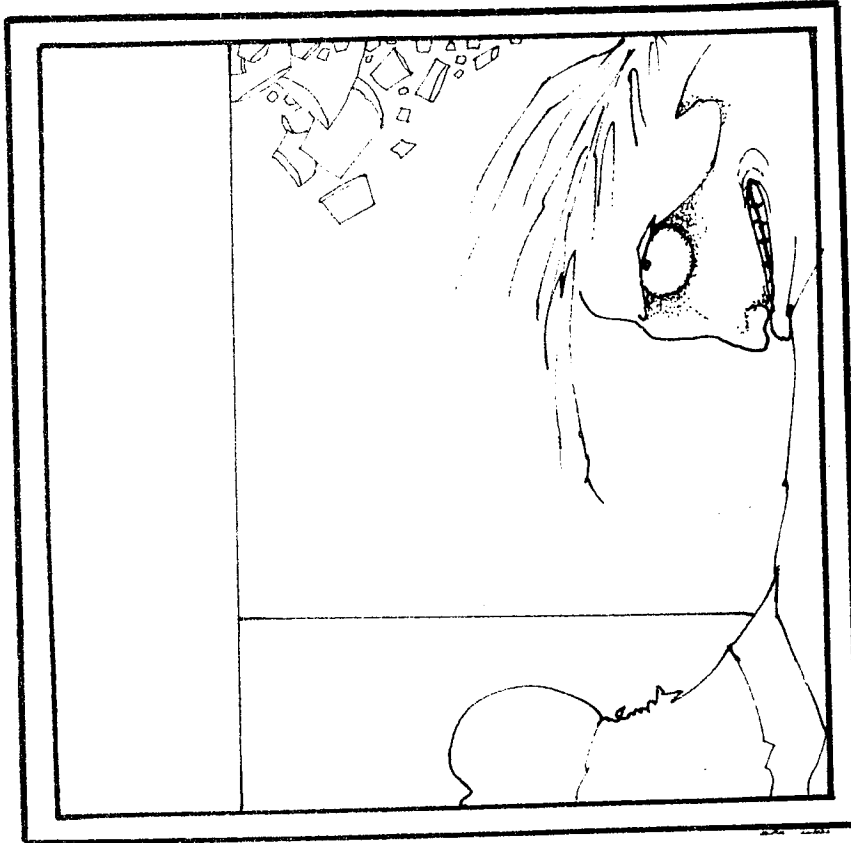
RESIDENT ALIENS (1981-1983)

- 16 Atavism 1981
- 17 Cathedral of the Future 1981
- 18 Silence 1981
- 19 In the Cathedral 1981
- 20 Nuigh 1981
- 21 The Curse 1981
- 22 Death 1981
- 23 Orthogenesis 1981
- 24 Head of Mercurius 1981
- 25 In the Madhouse 1981
- 26 Horus 1 1981
- 27 Cathedral of the Past 1981
- 28 The Tower 1981

\* \* \*



# AC Evans



EVANS, A.C. (1949- )

English graphic artist and writer. Lives in Mortlake, London. His hermetic drawings, influenced by Ernst, Tanguy, Bellmer and fin de siècle linearism are examples of Post-Surrealist art. His writings include poetry and criticism.

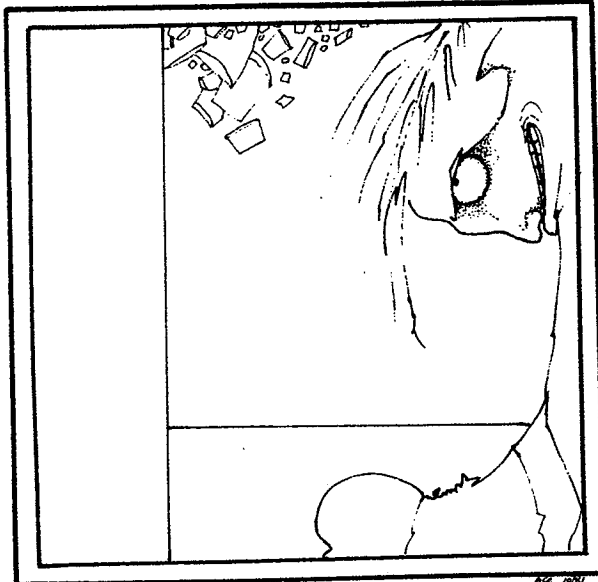
Drawings and articles have appeared in the following magazines: Sothis, The Daath Papers, The New Equinox, Stride and The Lamp of Thoth.

AESTHETIC INVESTIGATIONS:  
Studies in Art & Magic

- 1 The Paranoia Magic of Salvador Dali  
The New Equinox, Vol 5. Part 3. Feb 1981
- 2 Huysmans, Decadence & Dissociation  
Part1 The Lamp of Thoth Vol II, No.2 Dec 1981  
Part2 The Lamp of Thoth Vol II, No.3 Apr 1982
- 3 Symbolic Art & Sigillization  
Part1 The Lamp of Thoth Vol II, No.3 Apr 1982  
Part2 The Lamp of Thoth Vol II, No.4 Jul 1982
- 4 Initiation & Illusion: The Nightmare of Rejection  
Part1 The Lamp of Thoth Vol II, No.6 Jun 1983  
Part2 The Lamp of Thoth Vol III, No.1 Feb 1984
- 5 Beyond the Reality Principle  
unpublished
- 6 Hermetic Art: Gnostic Alchemy of the Imagination  
unpublished

\* \* \* \*

A C Evans



HERMETIC ART

*A.C. Evans*

# The paranoia magic of Salvador Dali

BY A. C. EVANS

My paranoia magic never ceased bothering the Surrealists, as it was too true an expression of the Surrealism they dreamt of.

Salvador Dali (1973).

The question of the significance of Surrealism should be an important one for all those engaged in magical practice, for like magic itself Surrealism demands a dynamic transformation in our perception. For too long Surrealism has been presented as a "fine art" phenomenon, or as an "era" of cultural history. For too long its basic ambition - existential transformation - has been misunderstood and categorized by "critics" from both inside and outside the academic industry as a typical (if not respectable) recurrence of mysticism which neutralises those elements which provide both magic and Surrealism with such a forceful impetus for change.

Because it was not an "art movement" or a "school of painting" but rather an attempt to harness the powers of the mind in the service of the greatest creative dreams of mankind Surrealism is of considerable importance in any attempt to evaluate the cultural - historic position of magic in the 1980s. This article will briefly examine one case - the case of Salvador Dali (b.1904) - which because it raised problems of a fundamental ideological nature for the Surrealists themselves illuminates certain parallels between Surrealist thought and the magical tradition.

Dali's career had been meteoric. A friend of the poet Lorca, a native of Catalonia in Spain, he had been expelled from the San Fernando Institute for outrageous behaviour. In 1929 he had come to Paris riding on a wave of notoriety caused by the screening of the film Un Chien Andalou for which he had written a script overloaded with scatological and sadistic imagery. Dali's paintings were soon being reproduced in the magazine La Revolution Surrealiste and in November 1929 he had a one-man exhibition at the Goemans Gallery.

Originally influenced by Cubism, Futurism, Pointillism and the Metaphysical paintings of Carra and DeChirico he had rapidly evolved an illusionistic style of Surrealist painting which, in such pictures as Unsatisfied Desires (1928), The

Cubist style version of a key Dalinian motif.



Great Masturbator (1929), Inaugural Gooseflesh (1928), Senility (1926/7), and The Enigma of Desire (1929) blended the anamorphic forms developed by Miro, Arp, Tanguy and Ernst with the less respectable influences of Gaudi's distinctive Catalanian style of Art Nouveau and Böcklin's Isle of the Dead. From the start the most disturbing aspect of Dalí's work was the polymorphous perversity of the imagery, the blatant exposure of the libido. In the catalogue of the first exhibition Andre Breton wrote:

"The art of Dalí, the most hallucinatory known until now, constitutes a real menace. Absolutely new and visibly mal-intentioned beings hereupon enter into play. It is with a sinister joy that we watch them pass by unhindered....."

Paranoia-Criticism is Dalí's great contribution to Surrealist thought. He defined the system as a "spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on an interpretative-critical association of delirious phenomena". It is a paradoxical blueprint for achieving transformation and the total subversion of accepted norms. In it alchemy and revolt fuse to form a praxis: a radical magical formula based upon the principle of reversion.

Dalí's Paranoia-Criticism of the visual image made a considerable contribution to the formulation of the idea of the Surrealist Object. This concern with the hallucinatory qualities of objects deprived of their normal perceptual context, a logical extension of Surrealism into the concrete environment, may be said to originate with Marcel Duchamp's Ready-Mades (found objects, usually mass produced, designated as objets d'art by the artist, by adding a signature) but it was Dalí who precipitated serious and systematic activity in this area. Just before his break with the group he participated in the first Exhibition of Surrealist Objects, contributing his Buste De Femme Retrospectif, a head and shoulders figure of a woman garnished with a collar of corn-cobs and surmounted by a long piece of French bread which was to be fortuitously eaten by Picasso's dog before the exhibition closed.

The Surrealist conception of the alienated object - an element of the concrete world isolated or diverted from its normal or expected role - provides the focal point for a fusion of artistic creativity and archaic sorcery utilising charged or "charmed" objects as fetishes which act as transformers or transducers of psychic energy.

Consider, to begin with (leaving aside the complex question of "paranoia power"), the theme of universal analogy. It is useful to discuss analogy in broad terms because it is not only a subject basic to both art and magic it also is a topic

which illustrates a radical divergence between Surrealism and modern magic.

The Surrealists inherited the idea of universal analogy from the Symbolists who elevated it to an all-pervading aesthetic doctrine, substantiated by the writings of Eliphas Levi and Papius. The precursors of the Symbolists: Rimbaud, Baudelaire and Gerard de Nerval took over the idea from the early Romantics, particularly from Hoffmann and Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg). It is about this time that the term "synaesthesia" was used to designate the phenomenon of interchangeable sensory perceptions which is considered the physiological manifestation of the "law of correspondences". The classic exposition of this doctrine is Baudelaire's poem Les Correspondances from Les Fleurs du Mal. The early Romantics, including the English visionary artist William Blake, took the idea of universal analogy from the mystical-theosophical writings of Emanuel Swedenborg and Jakob Boehme who were themselves drawing on an age-old magico-hermetic tradition the origins of which are lost in the mists of antiquity.

In mystical usage the law of correspondences refers to an "archetypal" system of symbolic analogy by which the natural world (the microcosm) interlinks with the divine world (the noumenon, or macrocosm). This is how the Symbolists and their predecessors originally understood the idea, however, during the nineteenth century another, different, approach to symbolism emerged. This was hermeticism (in the literary, not alchemical sense) a style of writing which coexisted with more orthodox uses of symbolic analogy for a considerable time, thus causing some confusion. In Rimbaud's famous sonnet Voyelles (1871) the colours of the alchemical process are correlated with images derived from a private repertoire of symbols. This procedure was developed by certain Symbolist poets in the later half of the nineteenth century, particularly by Mallarme, who feeling strongly that all previous traditions were exhausted, set about creating a new poetry of private imagery designed to affect the reader through sensuous word-music rather than through logical communication. This development marks an important break with rationalism in Western European culture and is the basis of the conception peculiar to the Decadents and the Symbolists that a work of art must be accessible only to the 'initiated'. This important trend however did not affect the occultists of the second revival who, under the influence of Eliphas Levi were in the throes of synthesising ancient traditions and expounding their universal validity. It is hard to resist the idea that at least one of the reasons for this was the ever-widening gulf between the public (floundering in a void of belief, nostalgically looking back to previous periods when poetic language was universally comprehensible) and the avant garde continually seeking new discoveries each more hermetic or "obscure" than the last; needless to say this gulf is still with us in 1980.

The question of analogy gives rise to an important distinction between Surrealism, which is an anti-mystical ideology, and modern magic, which, by and large, accepts the validity of much mystical thought. In an important essay entitled Rising Sign (1947) Andre Breton has defined the analogical process in the following terms:

"For me the only evidence in the world is commanded by the spontaneous extralucid, insolent rapport which establishes itself, under certain conditions, between one thing and another, and which common sense hesitates to confront".

The importance of analogy for both mysticism and Surrealism, writes Breton is that "it transgresses deductive laws" and allows the apprehension of "the interdependence of two objects of thought situated on different planes". But poetic analogy differs from mystical analogy in that it does not require the presupposition of "an invisible universe tending to make itself manifest". Furthermore:

".. it maintains itself without any constraints in the sensible or even the sensual structure and without displaying any propensity to orient itself towards the supernatural."

Rising Sign contains an important statement of intentions which all those attempting to reconcile Surrealism with magical tradition must take into account:

"The first duty of poets and artists is to re-establish analogy in all its prerogatives, taking care to uproot all the rear-guard spiritualist thought, always carried along parasitically, which citiates or paralyses its functioning".

Space does not permit a discussion of the problems raised by these pronouncements which highlight the totally materialistic basis of the Surrealist endeavour and which are simply quoted here to provide historical background to the discussion of Dalinian Paranoia Criticism which incorporates as a basic precept the Surrealist (not the mystical) conception of the analogical method. It is this materialistic basis which renders Dalinian Paranoia such a potent formula for transformation, particularly when applied to the object as well as the image. It should be pointed out that the Surrealists were virulently opposed to Abstract Art, which like mysticism they defined as "reactionary" (see Dali's text The Cuckolds of Old Modern Art).

As indicated in The Visible Woman the basis of the closed-circuit paranoiac vision that Dali demands be imposed on reality is the image (in magical terms "the symbol"). In many surrealist works based on the collage principle (particularly the paintings of Magritte and the protosurrealist works of De Chirico) the analogical process is revealed through the shared significance of apparently unrelated objects brought together in an alien environment. In the paintings of Dali which utilise the paranoia method the same effect is more powerfully achieved by the multiple image; the "disappearing" bust of Voltaire, the reflections of swans which become elephants. The



transformation of reality (or our perception of reality) is achieved by undermining the certainty of the material environment. Not only does the paranoiac image reveal "associations and facts" beyond the comprehension of the initiated (i.e. it reveals the network of universal analogy), it also unleashes a charge of "paranoia power" (psychic energy) which can undermine or "destroy" reality. Space does not permit a survey of the idea of magical energy in all its manifest forms (from "Fohat" and "Prana" to "etheric force" and the "orgone") which will be familiar to readers of this magazine. Suffice it to say that psychology and anthropology testify to the widely held belief in the existence of energy in some pure state (charisma, numinosity "mana") which has a considerable role to play in social and psychosomatic relationships. This is the power which the ritual magician seeks to intensify through initiation, through the augmentation of the latent powers of the will and the imagination.

By undermining the stable integrity of objects and images the Surrealist or Dalinian assault upon normality restores them to their magical context. The Lobster Telephone, The Retrospective Bust of a Woman, and The Rainy Taxi become fetishes: talismanic objects responsive to the magical power of the artist, invested with a charge of emotional force or psychic energy like the sigils of Goetic magic which may be used to invoke atavistic powers from the depths of the subconscious. In Freudian psychology such a charge of psychic energy is called a "cathexis". Any object may be invested with this power. In establishing such a psychological link (or "projection") a channel is created between the observer and the observed: the observed object then becomes "attached" to the observer; it becomes an integral part of his mentality; he considers it to be "familiar": if not "normal" and "meaningful" because he can easily identify with it. But the Dalinian image or object is ambiguous, it does not possess the reassuring "normality" which provides that spurious sense of "meaning" we look for in a stable environment. Not only does it defy identification it undermines, by implication, its surroundings. The Surrealist disruption of reality is complete because it is revealed by the paranoiac object as a relativistic projection. Hence the claim that "paranoia power" can destroy reality; what is destroyed is that rational, stable "normal" projection we confuse with reality.

It is important to grasp that the Paranoia-Critical Method is, in essence, a self-initiatory process. This is easily overlooked because Dali continually stresses the effect of the method upon others rather than upon himself. As in the case of Arthur Rimbaud, whose Theorie du Voyant (with its doctrine of the "systematic derangement of all the senses") is an important precursor of Dalinian Paranoia, artistic creativity is defined as a spiritual exercise; an instrument for altering perception and promoting individuation. "Organic participation" is Dali's term for magical perception; the initiated state of the Voyant or visionary artist-poet-shaman who mediates

SLAVE MARKET WITH DISAPPEARING BUST OF VOLTAIRE

SALVADOR DALI 1940

An excellent example of the paranoid image, where the head of the atheist Voltaire ironically incorporates two coifed nuns who form the features.



between the tribe and the cosmic forces which surround them.

Certain modern magical conceptions of initiation incorporate ideas of transgression ( or reversion ) and dissociation which throw some light on the initiatory aspects of Dali's philosophy. These conceptions of magic are derived in the main from the discoveries of C.G.Jung, particularly the notions of the "archetypes" and the "collective unconscious" and the writings of Carlos Castenada and Mircea Eliade who have presented in great detail the techniques and philosophies of tribal shamans in such a way as to render them prototypes of the modern ritual magician. Shamans are both poets and sorcerors. They mediate between the tribe and pathogenic spirits, they are the guardians of souls and the interpreters of dreams. In their visionary journeys down into the underworld or to heaven they represent the collective interests of their people, reinterpreting myths and mysteries, conserving and propagating tradition, using paranormal powers of prophesy and spirit mastery to convey the wishes of tribal ancestors.

It is not too outrageous to suggest that in our modern Western European society many of these functions are provided by artists, particularly, as Brian Eno has pointed out, by musicians and performers who become "superstars" and experience on behalf of their audiences the agonies and ecstasies of initiation and exorcism.

Surrealism is the end result of a Romantic tradition based firmly on the unique powers of the individual creative mind, it is the culmination of a tradition which has assigned a supernatural aura to the artist, the poet and the musician: William Blake, Nerval, Poe, Baudelaire, Lautreamont, Mallarme, Rimbaud, Byron, Artaud are some creative geniuses who have become myths, the heroes or demigods of our culture - a comprehensive list would include almost every well known name in the history of western art and poetry. They have interpreted our dreams, interceded with our ancestors and tried to guide us through the most critical spiritual crises of our times, becoming surrogate deities in the absence of god. The most popular "superstar" of Surrealism is Salvador Dali who incorporates in his public persona all the trappings of the tribal sorcerer; the magician who constantly re-invents reality. Dali's work and philosophy embodies the spritual crisis of our times, his Paranoia-Criticism is a philosophy of perversion and dissociation which teaches that reality is a controlled hallucination. Surrealism embodies western man's final attempt to gain power over the hallucination.

In order to achieve a break through in plane, a term used by Mircea Eliade to mean either the experience of magic flight or the alteration of perception to comprehend the infinite magical realities of existence, the shaman initiate is taught to undermine received ideas or "descriptions" hitherto accepted as the only determinants of reality. To achieve this dissociation effect extreme techniques are employed - isolation

masochistic practices, ritual sex-acts, anointings with toxic pastes, the intake of mind-manipulative drugs (like peyote), etc., etc. Because these practices transgress taboos, defy conventional morality and generally run contrary to accepted standards of "normality" many observers have tried to classify tribal shamans as madmen; however, as Eliade tells us the shaman achieves initiated status precisely because he emerges from the psychic crisis of initiation (the decathexis of reality-projections) unscathed, indeed renewed or "reborn" This is what Dali means when he says "the only difference between a madman and myself is that I am not mad."

It often appears that the products of modern art fly in the face of accepted notions of beauty, taste and style. This is because art in our society is a symptom of spiritual distress, a profound, collective psychological crisis which like all such crises is an ordeal. If the ordeal is endured and handled correctly society will attain a degree of "initiation" - as in the case of shamanistic initiation the crisis has taken the form of dissociation from accepted ideas of normality and moral correctness. The objective of this dissociation is the liberation of perception, the attainment of that break through in plane described by Eliade. As August. K. Weidmann has shown the "resolute destructiveness" and "self-professed primitivism" of avant garde art derives from a large-scale concerted attempt by poets and painters to "dislodge" their "natural perceptions", to "liberate the senses from the tyranny of the object and its unrelenting chain of associations". Like other critics Weidmann traces this project to undermine preconditioned perceptual frameworks back to the early Romantics, to precursors of Symbolism and Surrealism like Hoffmann, Novalis and Blake. Dalinian Paranoia teaches the artist to impose new chains of associations after first destroying the old. Paranoiac images become hermetic sigils engaged in a dynamic dialectic with the energies of the unconscious mind for the incarnation of desire. Objects diverted from their normal roles discredit history and normality.

In Aleister Crowley and the Hidden God (1973) Kenneth Grant outlines his modern interpretation of viparita karani ("remaining upside down"), the Tantric doctrine that teaches how the extracted essences of "things that provoke disgust" should be used in the great work of the perfection of man. In Grant's system this formula of reversion is extremely significant. The very formula of magick itself is that of a "sudden reversal" of energy currents. Tantra shows that the practical application of this theory begins at the mundane level with a reversal or transformation of moral values. It is interesting that in his resume of the doctrine Grant refers to Salvador Dali:

"The magical ecstasy liberated by union with grotesque or hideous images usually associated with aversion, repulsion, or horror, is super-abundant compared with that released by

union of usually accepted opposites. One is reminded of Salvador Dalí's observation that the wished-for treasure islands manifest precisely in those images of horror and dread that are naturally repellant to the conscious mind".

Indeed there is an important parallel to be drawn between Tantra, that heretical cult of sexual ecstasy, and Surrealism. Surrealist conceptions of transgression, love and transrational perception are revealed, when related to this ancient doctrine, as manifestations of an age-old struggle to free the imagination from the constricting taboos of social organisation and the spiritual monopoly of religion. Dalí has demonstrated the need to re-activate our desire in the realms of scatology, death and putrefaction for only by assimilating these "negative" processes in an alchemical coniunctio oppositorum can we resolve the spiritual crisis of our time. All "contradictions" must be assimilated, not negated. Duality must be accepted and reversed. It is the violent decaethesis of so-called "normality" and the subsequent overthrow of all absolutes (physical, moral and divine) which allows Dalí to propagate his doctrine of polymorphous perversity: "Beauty," he once wrote, "is only the conscious sum of our perversions".

Like Austin O. Spare's doctrine of the New Sexuality, Dalinian Paranoia Criticism translates the moral struggle to the aesthetic plane. The initiate is required to cultivate ugly and bizarre images and transmute them into a new beauty. Ugliness is an ancient paradigm for the immoral and "...he who transmutes the traditionally ugly into another value has new pleasures beyond fear" (Spare). In both Paranoia-Criticism and the New Sexuality the purpose of this reversion is the same as in viparita karani: the overcoming of inertia through decaethesis, the augmentation of the powers of the imagination through the assimilation of the energy charge so released and which was previously bound up with, or invested in, the ideologies, works of art and systems of belief that constitute the "world" (Spare's "inferno of the normal"). This freeing of energy will inevitably involve a dissociation from normality precipitating a psycho-spiritual crisis which can only be resolved by a descent into hell. But as Dalí says the result of this procedure is an ecstatic condition: a "deeper sense of reality" that reinforces "organic participation" and leads to the reconstitution of those magical powers lost by man at the time of the fall. Spare has called this condition the "theurgy of making the word flesh" and "the seizure of potential in ecstatic immediacy". Mircea Eliade has called this condition a modification of the sensibility, a "hierophany" when

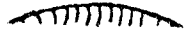
"...the "elect" becomes "another"; he feels himself to be not only dead and re-born but born into existence, which while it is lived to all appearances in this world of ours is framed in other existential dimensions".

Ultimately Dalí and the Surrealists are united in their quest to restore or achieve this condition, conceived by them as the original condition of man uncorrupted by the

original sin or reason and morality. The object of the Dalinian or Surrealist endeavour is the creation of the shaman of the future. Like Rimbaud he will manipulate the images of the world in a synaesthesiac illumination of hermetic analogies; like Malloror he will inhabit the bodies of animals, converse with inanimate objects, flout moral convention and incarnate an infernal, atavistic beastiality. Through the Dalinian system of Paranoia-Criticism he will bring about a fusion of dream and reality and incarnate the marvellous in the light of the image.

Mortlake

Aug/Sept 1980



# INITIATION & ILLUSION

## The Nightmare of Rejection

"Is there a heaven? I'd like to think so."

By A.C. EVANS.

Bryan Ferry (1973)

Initiation is the basis of magic and the basis of initiation is self-knowledge. It is the procedure of self-knowledge which brings about crucial changes in perception of both Self and the World. Pursued to its limit, the procedure as self-knowledge precipitates a psycho-spiritual crisis: The Nightmare of Rejection; a critical ordeal. Initiated status depends solely upon how the neophyte copes with this crisis. It is the nature and significance of this "dark night of the soul" which is the subject of this article, for an understanding of the psychological, cultural and ontological implications of the initiatory process throws light on, not only the function and nature of magic itself, but also on the enigmatic quality of recent cultural history. Magic, like art, or politics, is a socio-cultural phenomenon. This must be recognised. Ignorance of the relationship between magical disciplines and the cultural forces that mold them renders accurate definition of the role of those disciplines impossible. In the following paragraphs aspects of initiatory experience will be described and discussed with references to facets of modern literature relevant to the overall theme of crisis.

The objective of initiation is transformation. Its practice rests upon the supposition that changes in the personality, and even physiology, can be brought about through processes designed to induce psychosomatic development. The following quote from Eliphas Levi's The Key of the Mysteries (1897) is a clear statement of intent:

"To create God, to create oneself, to make one's self independent, immortal, and without suffering: there certainly is a programme more daring than the dream of Prometheus. Its expression is bold to the point of implety, its thought ambitious to the point of madness...."

Modern interpretations of the early stages of initiation practices describe them in terms of "deconditioning" or "dissociation". From the start is proposed that, in order to achieve a breakthrough in plane self-knowledge requires the initiate to reject or disengage himself from those received ideas which he had hitherto accepted as his only definition of reality. Often the initiate will physically cut himself off from the outside world by entering a retreat, like the monks of religious orders, with whom he is not, nevertheless, to be confused. The consequences of this deconditioning are difficult to assimilate. After a certain point the initiate feels that the process has taken him over. He may be swept into a maelstrom of bizarre, "neurotic", conditions during which his behaviour will run contrary to accepted standards of normality. He will realise that purification means, above all, disengagement from "the inferno of the normal". To begin with he will dislodge his usual moral standards by deliberately cultivating "perverse" tastes: he will engage in rituals of "sense-reversion", embarking, with delirious pleasure, the "forbidden fruits" of "immorality". Like the tribal shamans he will employ all manner of extreme techniques including hallucinogenic drugs, sadomasochistic sexual rites (mortification of the flesh), meloynpnosis and wild dancing. Eventually the neophyte may lapse into a condition of pseudoinsanity, a self-induced delirium. The following is a quote from Eliade's Myths, Dreams and Mysteries (1957).

"...the future shaman marks himself off progressively by some strange behaviour; he seeks solitude, becomes a dreamer, loves to wander in the woods or desert places, has visions, sings in his sleep...becomes violent and easily loses consciousness, takes refuge in the forests, feeds upon the bark of trees, throws himself into the water or fire or wounds himself with knives... undergoes hysteric or hysteroid crises, may flee into the mountains...live upon animals "that he catches directly with his teeth" and then returning to the village, dirty, bloodstained, savage. It is only after another ten days that the neophyte begins to stammer some incoherent words".

In the ultimate stages of the crisis the neophyte will experience a mental condition in which the borderlines between "fantasy" and "reality" are erased. He will penetrate other, and indeterminate, Barbo-realms of existence during a simulated death ritual. His body will be overtaken by disease and he will be torn apart by the Demon Masters of Initiation in an archetypal experience of "Hell". In alchemical lore this crisis-phase corresponds to the distractio or "separation of the bodies".

The term Nigredo was also used to designate a general condition of horror and dissociation during which the artifex confronted the unregenerate chaos of the massa confusa. A number of images were used to express this condition of "universal blackening": the black sun (Sol Nigred); the Raven's head (Caput Corvi); Coronis, the Crow-Maiden, and the Rabid Dog. According to the Rosarium Philosophorum the Nigredo is a "blackening of the brain". In the Aurelia Occulta, the condition is described in terms of weakness, senility, entombment, weakening of the flesh and torments inflicted by a fiery sword. At the height of the Nigredo the whole world turns black. The Earth is accursed. Everything is enveloped in dreadful night. As Eliade says, the assumption behind these attempts to invert the prevailing order is that the norms which govern everyday existence must be overcome. This reversal is accomplished by "going backwards", by swimming against the tide, by working Contra Naturam; a rebours.

The risks of failure are great: 'The neophyte may never emerge from a hell of endless night. His organism may collapse, riddled with inexplicable psychosomatic diseases; he may destroy his identity. But the neophyte may learn to assimilate his condition. Occultist Nevil Drury has pointed to the dangers:

"The Shaman, confronted with the spectacle of a transcendental cosmic drama, could well be expected to lose complete control of his perceptive faculties, he may be overcome by awe. However it is precisely his ability to remain composed, even in his mythological confrontations, which distinguishes him from the schizophrenic."

The magus achieves initiated status by emerging from the psychic crisis not merely unscathed, but actually renewed, or "reborn".

In The Romantic Roots of Modern Art (1979) August Weidmann pointed to the far-reaching artistic consequences of a widespread attempt by writers and artists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to "dislodge" their "natural perceptions" and "liberate the senses from the tyranny of the object and its unrelenting chain of associations". This "liberation" required the destruction of "visual habits" and the "breaking-up of perceptual as well as conceptual codes".

Weidmann also noted that while any art which breaks new ground must deviate from established convention (Mannerism, for example), Modern Art is an extreme case: never before, he said, have art movements been dominated by such "resolute destructiveness and self-professed primitivism".

Weidmann, like other critics, traced this dissociative pattern to the early Romantics, to the "cleaning" of perception advocated by William Blake and the unleashing of the mysterious called for by Novalis. Like neophyte shamans the Romantics resorted to drugs (Opium, hashish) in order to undermine orthodox perception and, like men in the grip of psychic crisis, they were noted for their wild behaviour and a morbid fascination with death. Historically, it should be noted that early Romanticism emerged in European culture most exactly contemporaneously with the first major modern occult revival: hermetic Masonry (c1717), Stigand Richer's Rosicrucianism (c1710), Von Hund's Templaric Struggle Observance (c1756), Pasqually's Elus Cohens (c1760), not to mention Pempey's Illumines d'Avignon (c1765), Weishaupt's Illuminati (c1776) and Mesmer's Order of Universal Harmony (c1778). Space does not, unfortunately, permit a comprehensive survey of the ensuing interconnections between literature, painting, music and occult revivalism. For the purposes of this article we shall concentrate on briefly outlining some intriguing parallels between more recent post-Romantic literature, both poetry and prose, in the context of the typical initiatory crisis described above.

Erika Ostrovsky, in her book Celine and his Vision (1967) focussed attention on a "hidden current" in modern European literature. She has been one of the first to remark upon the fact that the most important stylistic and thematic advances have been made by a small group of writers mainly French, whose "central preoccupation has been with the sordid, absurd, desperate aspects of existence." The subject of her book, L-F. Celine is just one representative of a tradition of writers which includes some influential names: Sade, Poe, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Huyssmans, Jauréguemont, Dostoievsky, Mallarme, Laforgue, Jarry, Strindberg, Kafka, Artaud, Genet and Beckett.

It is worth noting that this post-Romantic tradition of avant-garde literature coincided with a second occult revival partly inspired by the works of Eliphas Levi: during this period modern occultism emerged in the form we know it today: the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (1865); Anna Sprengel's Licht, Liebe und Leben (c1870), Blavatsky's Theosophical Society (1875); Gautai's Kabalistic Order of the Rose-Cross (1885); The Golden Dawn (1888); Peledan's Catholic Rose-Croix (1890); Kellner's OTO (1895); Crowley's AA (1907); Steiner's Anthroposoph Society (1909) and Dion Fortune's Fraternitiy of the Inner Light (1922).

Whilst some major artistic personalities were overtly involved with these groups - Yeats was a member of the GD, Piet Mondrian and Kandinsky were influenced by Theosophical teachings - the great majority of the crucial figures remained isolated and apart, and even, like Mallarme and Artaud, condemned occultists for siding with reactionary forces or just being plain out-of-touch with the most progressive aspects of their own cultural milieu. In an essay entitled Rising Sign, Andre Breton, the founder of Surrealism, commanded poets and artists to "uproot all the rearward spiritual thought" which bitates and paralyzes analogical thinking. The reasons for this split between art and occultism will be touched upon in later paragraphs.

Let us now consider some specific instances of overlap between magical and aesthetic initiatory experience.

1. THE Objectives

The clearest statement in respect of the initiatory intent of the poetic enterprise was made by Arthur Rimbaud in May 1871 in texts known as the Lettres du Voyant (nb "voyant" is a French word meaning "visionary seer"). The poet should become, he wrote, "a seer of an angel exempt from all moral law". Other statements of a similar nature have been made by Antonin Artaud, Andre Breton, Rene Daumal, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Stefan George.

2. Psychic Crisis

In an epoch of cultural crisis, the specific tone of crisis is in large part due to the writings of the authors under discussion, particularly Artaud and Beckett. Many key works have been written as a result of personal crises: Beckett conceived a consolidated vision of his mission during a "turning point" crisis in 1946. Artaud experienced a particularly catastrophic breakdown in 1937; Strindberg endured a protracted period of delirium in Paris between the years 1894-1896 (the "Inferno Crisis"), Paul Valery rejected the viability of conventional poetic language in a crisis in 1892; Rimbaud experienced a similar, if more violent crisis between the years 1871-1874 during which time he wrote his epoch making works, including Les Illuminations and Une Saison en Enfer. The poet Mallarme, perhaps the most significant French poet of the late nineteenth century, underwent a "crisis phase" at an early stage in his career. This crisis, known as Les Nuits de Lournon, are recorded in his letters and many written texts notably, Herodiade, Igitur, and the poem call the Sonnet in X. Other notable crises would be William Blake (in 1787), Thomas de Quincey (in 1813) and Heinrich von Kleist, who shot himself in bizarre circumstances in 1801.

The following quote from Rimbaud's A Season in Hell may be compared with the quote from Eliade describing the initiatory crisis of the neophyte:

"I succeeded in erasing from my mind all human hope. Upon every joy, in order to strangle it, I made the muffled leap of the wild beast. I summoned the executioners in order to bite the butts of their guns as I was dying. I summoned the plagues, to suffocate myself with sand and blood. Misfortune was my god. I stretched myself out in the mud. I dried myself in the air of crime. And I played some fine tricks on madness, and Spring bought me the horrifying laughter of the idiot..."

3. Withdrawal

During the late nineteenth century the withdrawal or dissociation of the artist from society was a dominant theme, especially among the post-Romantic Decadents and Symbolists. In Mallarme's Igitur, the hero (a distillation of Hamlet and Poe's Usher) sits withdrawn from the world in a chamber surrounded with heavy drapes. Later he descends into the tomb, a representation of that withdrawal into the innermost recesses of the mind which is the essential prerequisite of poetic development. The classic expression of withdrawal was, however, Huyssmans' A Rebours (1884), which described, in great detail, the consequences of isolation in a specially prepared retreat, a house on the outskirts of Paris. Many other instances of this theme could be cited: the "dream-chambers" of Edgar Allan Poe, the real-life retreats of William Beckett, W.B. Yeats and the painter Fernand Khnopf. In all cases the chamber or house becomes what R.G. Cohn has termed "a cosmic site for meditation", the sacred territory where rituals and ordeals of transformation are performed or endured. In his essay on Marcel Proust (1931) Samuel

Beckett wrote:

"The only fertile research is excavatory, immersive, a contraction of the spirit, a descent. The artist is active, but negatively, shrinking from the nullity of extracircumferential phenomena, drawn into the core of the eddy."

Perhaps more than any other, Beckett's works illustrate the pains of withdrawal into the mind they present, in agonised purity, the desolate ordeal the initiate must endure when he realises that he must define himself without reference to externals. Beckett has traced this process through an extraordinary series of prose texts starting in 1934 with the short stories More Pricks than Kicks moving into the essential works of his crisis period (1946-1953): Molloy, N Malone Dies, The Unnamable, "Exits for Nothing", and continuing with his later prose which depict anonymous, fragmentary personages inhabiting indeterminate post-mortem Baroque realms: How It is (1960), Imagination Dead Imagine (1966) and The Lost Ones (1966/70). Beckett progresses beyond narcissistic ultracosmism into a dialectic of exorcism and purification which results in prose texts of great purity and compactness and which have become the ultimate examples of the literature of negation. The trilogy of novels Molloy (1951) and The Unnamable represent the ultimate development of the withdrawal theme. Written in a stripped-down ironic style they have been described by A. Alvarez as a "stage by stage assassination of the novel... an underlying withdrawal from both: the exterior world and... the traditional novel... a terminal vision... a terminal style... a terminal aesthetic". We will return to the crucial figure of Beckett later.



4. Blackening  
 "Black" is an adjective that has been applied to certain works which, like Goya's "Black" paintings in the Quinta del Sordo, embody the corrosive vision of nihilism and deprivation that characterises the "dark night of the soul". L-F Celine actually used the term "Blackening" (Noircissement) to describe the process of relentless desecration embodied in his novels *Voyage au bout de la Nuit* (1932), *Mort a credit* (1950), *Guignol's Band* (1952) and *Nord* (1960).  
 In *Celine and his vision*, Erika Ostrovsky writes:  
 "One can follow Celine on a very lap of his relentless journey which stretches across his four greatest novels and lasts for nearly three decades. If we consider these works as a unity, we find that the "blackening" of man from womb to coffin proceeds with great clarity and almost absolute consistency"  
 Castigation of others is only one aspect of Celine's *Noircissement* he also advocated the blackening of oneself which the author must achieve via a grotesque irony or "comic lyricism"  
 Ostrovsky says:  
 "Celine's view of man is so black that any presentation of the latter, in all his nakedness, is more like presenting an open cadaver with his rotting entrails exposed than a display of imper grandeur...it is a defiant picture of the self... Celine is eager to condemn himself... the admission of sin and crime is made in the manner of a provocative challenge..." The writer becomes "an atheist in spiritual agony" and his "arraignment is self-Flagellation".  
 This Blackening is a search for deeper self-knowledge, or even a procedure for the creation of a new personality. This self-knowledge explains the close connection between artistic processes and occult initiation. Rimbaud wrote:  
 "The first study for a man who wants to be a poet is the knowledge of himself, complete. He looks for his soul, inspects it puts it to the test...he searches himself, he consumes all the poisons in him, and keeps only their quintessences. This is unspeakable torture..."

( Part 2 of "The Nightmare of Rejection" A. Evans will appear in LOT 13)

# INITIATION & ILLUSION

## The Nightmare of Rejection

BY A.C. EVANS (2nd & concluding Part)

### 5. Illness and Death.

The catastrophic consequence of the Nigredo stage of the initiatory procedure have been vividly portrayed by Ilyusmans in his seminal novel *A Rebours*, the "breviary of Decadence". In it, the decadent, aesthete-hero, Des Essientes, shuts himself away in his retreat but is forced to return to the world outside because his health is ruined by the perverse regime he imposes upon himself, a Reversal of normal life. In real life Huysmans was subject to endless illnesses and problems due to his own hypersensitivity. He used to say he was as sensitive as a man who has been flayed alive". In the nineteenth century the myth of the "maudit" the accursed poet or artist possessed a real and ominous significance. Many poets and artists were indeed, "exemplary sufferers", (to borrow Susan Sontag's phrase), and many works were conceived during bouts of lethal or near-lethal illness.

The culmination of the initiatory ordeal is the Death Ritual, the descent into the underworld, or *Katabasis*. Two of the most important names in European literature, Mallarme and Beckett are linked by works that explore the problematic exigencies of the death experience. In Mallarme's *Herodiade* the poet identifies with St John who experiences ritual decapitation and transfiguration at the hands of the cold anima figure, the princess Salome (*Herodiade*). In his enigmatic Sonnet in X he records the sensation of absence created by the descent into the underworld and the coterminous "death" of all illusions, while, in his initiatory text *l'gitur* the hero descends an archetypal spiral staircase (escaliers de l'esprit humain) which as R.G. Cohn points out represent the spiral shape of the human psyche, in emulation of Dante's descent into hell. At the climax of the drama, *gitur* experiences "absurdist psychic death" (Cohn) involving full acceptance of *l'absurde* (chance, hazard, the void) and the possibility of death-rebirth into this life.

A. Alvarez defines Beckett's work as the product of a man "born with the taste of death in his mouth". In his crucial crisis-period trilogy, Beckett evolved a stark, ironic form of prose-poetry that accurately represented his theme of "depression deepening to the point of death and annihilation". In *Malone Dies* the text is the monologue of the dying Malone who lies, incapacitated in a bare room bathed in grey light. He is the writer of the black tradition, shorn of all but the meanest trappings of civilization: his bed, his stubby pencils, his stick. He whiles away the time as he decomposes telling cruel stories. Beckett's biographer Deirdre Bair said the following about *Malone Dies*:

"While he was writing it, everyone close to him feared that he might quite literally die when it was finished. As Malone's efforts to write grew more painful and exhausting, so did Beckett's...Beckett's relentless pursuit of himself through Malone continued..."

In the follow-up novel, *The Unnamable* Beckett presented his experience

## INITIATION & ILLUSION

This situation engenders pleasant feelings of security which, are, nevertheless, undermined as the growing entity learns to disengage itself from its surroundings and perceive itself as unique and different from others. As Jung explains, these unconscious projections falsify our worldview and become a blockage in the path of development because they impede self-knowledge which must be based upon an objective perception of oneself as a self-contained identifiable entity.

An essential phase of Individuation, therefore is the withdrawal, or transference, of these projections in such a way as to shift the centre of gravity of consciousness from the rudimentary everyday, primitive consciousness which Jung (following the anthropologist Levy Bruhl) saw as an "enchantment" called "participation mystique", to a superior form of objective consciousness, "a national, spiritual psychic position over against the turbulence of the emotions". In so doing the adept gains a deeper understanding of himself, a prerequisite of the transmutation process.

In the *Tavistock Lectures*, Jung stressed the power and significance of these unconscious projections, describing them as "purposive and the compensatory functions of the utmost importance". He emphasised the danger that they may represent to the unwary analyst. Via a process of transference one may become "infected" as the patient transfers his powerful need to identify from a repressed or painful psychic content to the analyst (or, shall we say his guru? ) Jung has suggested that the power of these projections derives from charges of repressed psychological energy which, when disturbed, may have devastating effects on the sympathetic systems of those involved in the transference process. One may become "psychically infected and poisoned by the projections to which he is exposed". The disruptive power inherent in the projections may even effect the nervous system causing "illness which does not fit in with known medical symptomology." Jung remarked that the archetypal content of these projections "produces a "magic"...an overpowering effect".

Rites of transition are methods for detaching man from his "natural" state of secure identification and creating within him a more mature, regenerated, spiritual being. But there are complications. The unconscious projections distort the truth and enforce a seductive feeling of belonging.

Projections distort reality and cover up painful spots with a darkness we do not wish to illuminate:

"This stripping off of the veils of illusion is felt as distressing and even painful...this phase demands much patience and tact, for the unmasking of reality is as a rule not only difficult but very of ten dangerous."

Individuation, the first stage of initiation, must require the rejection of "infantile assumptions and attachments" which do not in fact exist. These attachments, projections or identifications represent charges of energy invested in so-called "normality", and, as Jung says, the progressive withdrawal of them; through rituals of dissociation, reversal and disengagement, through development of the Will in magical disciplines and the active exaltation of the imagination in the melothesis of poetic creation, brings us to a frontier of consciousness - an absolute horizon - an abyss - a void. The adept will begin to perceive that "normality" is an arbitrary construct, that "meaning" is a human creation, that, without the veil of unconscious projection to pro-

of the terminal phase of identity disintegration as the unknown character passes into oblivion. Beckett himself said: "...complete disintegration. No "I", no "have", no "being" no nominative, no verb. There's no way to go on."

Having explored the nature of the initiatory procedure in both occultism and literature a number of questions have emerged.

Firstly: is there a psychological basis for the idea of initiation?

Secondly: why should self-development (initiation) involve suffering?

Thirdly: is, self-development (a Eliphas Levi suggested) an impious or blasphemous exercise?

Fourthly: Why should there be a division between artists and occultists, despite the fact that the process of initiation is common to both groups.

Fifthly: What is the general significance of the initiatory tradition in modern art and literature?

The first question is the most important because its answer provides keys for answering the other questions.

Carl Gustav Jung is possibly the psychologist who has had the greatest effect on modern occultism, particularly those aspects of his system which deal with the questions of the Collective Unconscious and Archetypal Symbols. Jung also proposed another set of ideas which have occult or magical implications: the theory of Individuation, which he formulated from both observation of his patients and from a close study of alchemical texts.

Jungian individuation is a "natural transformation process" resulting in the emergence, or "rebirth" of the "whole man". Jung found that this experience of integration was often formulated in religious terms although the wholeness principle itself was regarded as a substitute for rather than a reflection of, god.

Jung also noted that "wholeness" can only be achieved through suffering because it entails a reconciliation with, or assimilation of, the negative, inferior, repressed side of the personality. He also emphasised that Individuation was not in any way a pathological or abnormal process.

Individuation differs from the initiatory schemes of shams, magicians and poets like Arthur Rimbaud because it is a gradual process developing throughout a person's life and, more noticeably in later life as the image of death becomes more potent.

For the Magus, or the poet, however, this gradualist approach is not good enough: he wishes to induce self-development artificially by specially designed rituals of reversion or dissociation. He also, as Levi pointed out, wishes to pursue self-development well beyond the simple integration of the personality, into the realms of the supernatural: he wishes to usurp the powers of the gods.

In his influential *Tavistock Lectures* of 1935 Jung outlined a mental phenomenon which he termed Projection: it is this idea which provides an essential factor in the understanding of the problems we have raised. Psychic or unconscious projections are best described as primitive, instinctual, *identifications* with otherness (other people, the environment, external objects, systems of ideas, ideologies, etc.).

In the non-individuated on un-initiated state the undeveloped mind relates to the world almost exclusively via these identifications... Just as the new born infant, or the foetus in the womb, feels itself to be *part of the mother*, so the primitive, undeveloped, mentality feels itself to be united with the world.

ject him from the truth, the world is a relativistic void of non-signification.

"Reality", wrote William Burroughs, "is apparent because you live and believe it. What you call "reality" is a complex network of necessity formulae...association lines of word and image presenting a prerecorded word and image track".

The horror of alienation that results from this "stripping off of the veils of illusion" is the initiatory "dark night of the soul" the alchemical Nigredo. To experience Nigredo is to cross an absolute horizon, there is no turning back.

We have begun to answer some questions. The psychology of the procedure and the nature of the suffering are now understandable, to a degree. But IMPIETY? Yes. Absolutes are, like normality, arbitrary constructs. Worship, the basis of religion is a way of reinforcing projections transferred from an unacceptable reality to a substitute secure object ("god" or the "nature" of the pantheists). The withdrawal of all projections must entail the cessation of the need to identify with anything. Belief and worship are therefore injurious to self development and irrelevant to the process of initiation. This is why Andre Breton dissociated Surrealism from mysticism and why there is no room for god in Samuel Beckett's world of deracinated desolation.

If the archetypal projections which constitute the spirit of the age are destroyed there remains nothing - a gulf, a void, an abyss devoid of god and meaning. This spiritual vertigo turns our epoch into an age of crisis.

The poet Mallarme said that to compensate for his reduction to an "empty form of matter" in the face of the Void man must realize that he is great because he has created god and his own soul. He must accept that the universes of the creative imagination and "proclaim in the face of the nothingness that is truth...glorious falsehoods!" "proclaim in the face of the nothingness is truth...glorious falsehoods!"

The idea that "reality" is a phantasmal cultural construct may be unacceptable but it is the source of the creative powers of both artists and magicians.

A.C. Evans Mortlake.

## NETWORK OCCULT CONTACT SECTION

FEMALE Arian Student RHP only, Interests, Ritual, Tarot, I-Ching, Crystal, Candle-magic, Rune Magic, Astral etc. etc. Many Books & much equipment, situated close farmland, Require Pencils in Occult initially, to aid each other, Pool Knowledge; do ritual, D.O. Dane Veiu, Dyrham Close, Parkfarm, Morton, Thornbury Avon BS12. MALE 20's interested in the Kabalistic art, esp. Solomon's Names: The Armadel. Want to contact any experienced person to teach me in the practice of this Art as a beginner. Write B. Singh, 20, Dunsmore Road, London N16. I AM 26 AND INTERESTED in joining a coven (not satanism) in the Merthyr, Aberdare, Penlydydd Area. Prepared to learn, if you can help write to; Tim, Keobane, 13, Tyllwyd Street, Penydarren, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glam CF479LE. WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM GENUINE PEOPLE following the Left Hand Path who, like myself would like to form a group (no sensation seekers and no callers.) Please write to: Patrick, 61, High Street, Walkern, Nr Stevenage, Herts. SG27 enclosing an S.A.E. if you require a reply. MALE WITCH seeks contact with other Wiccans/Pagans in Plymouth or nearby. No callers initially, write to: Richard Weaver, 11, Old Woodlands Road, Crownhill Plymouth, Br Tel: Plymouth 700531