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Patria 7: Asterion
A Pataphysical Hierophany *
R. Murray Schafer
Draft: Winter 2009

"What lies beyond is full of marvels and unrealities, a land of poets and fabulists, of doubts and uncertainties."
Plutarch: Life of Theseus

"If we wish to outline an architecture which conforms to the structure of our soul..., it would have to be conceived in the image of a labyrinth."
Nietzsche: Aurore

"Nothing is so frightening as the labyrinth with no centre."
Jorge Luis Borges
*Hierophany: A Sacred Drama
Pataphysics: "The logic of the absurd." Alfred Jarry

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1. LABYRINTHOS

A lecture is about to be given on Cretan mythology at a university. It does not matter where, nor does it matter who the lecturer is. Whether many people have gathered to hear the lecture, or few, or none at all, is also unimportant. The lights in the hall are dimmed as the lecturer bends over his notes and begins. At this moment a person standing by the open door at the back of the hall becomes intrigued and, entering, takes a seat at the back. This is what is heard.

* * * * *

It is rare in drama when an artifact figures more prominently than the leading characters of the story, but such is the case with the labyrinth at Knossos in Crete, the site of a drama concerning Theseus, Ariadne and the Minotaur, later to be immortalized in Greek mythology. The labyrinth Daedalus built for Minos to house the Minotaur is not merely the scenery to the drama: it is the drama. And the image of the labyrinth still holds, transposed to countless baffling contemporary structures and situations, each seemingly controlled by an invisible force at the centre, dark and malignant. All ancient accounts agreed that anyone entering the labyrinth would never return.

Either they would become lost among the endlessly forking paths, or they would be devoured by the Minotaur who prowled there. Theseus was the only person who ever returned, and he did so by means of a thread given to him by Ariadne. Somewhere in the labyrinth he met the Minotaur, killed it, and escaped, taking Ariadne with him, then later abandoned her. The myth, it is said, was invented to explain the destruction of the Minoan empire by the Greeks, sometime after 1400 B.C. It took over three thousand years before Sir Arthur Evans was to excavate the palace at Knossos, but he failed to discover any convincing archeological evidence of a labyrinth there.

⁽¹⁾ In a later study, the paleontologist, Hans Georg Wunderlich, has suggested that the palace itself, far from being a habitation for living kings and queens, was actually a huge necropolis where embalming rituals were carried out.⁽²⁾

The Minoan labyrinth was not the only one known. Many existed in ancient times, and Pliny (in his Natural History) called them "the most stupendous works on which man has expended his labours." The Egyptians had one that the historian Herodotus considered more fascinating than the pyramids.

It has twelve covered courts - six in a row facing north, six south - the gates of one range exactly fronting the gates of the other, with a continuous wall around the outside of the whole. Inside, the

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building is of two stories and contains three thousand rooms, of which half are underground, and the other half directly above them.

Herodotus was allowed to visit only the upper rooms, those below being reserved for the tombs of the kings who built the labyrinth, and also the tombs of the sacred crocodiles. The upper rooms, on the contrary, I did actually see, and it is hard to believe that they are the work of men; the baffling and intricate passages from room to room and from court to court were an endless wonder to me, as we passed from a courtyard into rooms, from rooms into galleries, from galleries into more rooms, and thence into yet more courtyards. The roof of every chamber, courtyard, and gallery is, like the walls, of stone. The walls are covered with carved figures, and each is exquisitely built of white marble and surrounded by a colonnade. Near the corner where the labyrinth ends there is a pyramid, two hundred and forty feet in height, with great carved figures of animals on it and an underground passage by which it can be entered.(3)

We do not know what rituals were associated with the Egyptian labyrinth if any. Evidently it was not an administrative centre; the Egyptians did not build airtight office blocks for their slaves. Nothing of the Egyptian labyrinth remains and no myths have been preserved concerning it. The Cretan labyrinth alone provided the spectacular drama, or rather vestigial drama, celebrated in mythology. I say vestigial because no details of what transpired within its walls were ever made known; the sole survivor never spoke of his experience there.

Though many myths and legends were associated with his name, Theseus was not a god. He is believed to have been a historical person, the founder of Athens, and it is as such that Plutarch treats him in his Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans; but, unlike Greek heroes, Theseus associated freely with divine figures, notably Ariadne. As the eldest daughter of the moon queen Pasiphae, Ariadne was destined one day to inherit the queendom in that matriocentric society, had not love intervened. In aiding Theseus to escape the labyrinth she abandoned her country for love, only to be abandoned in turn. Mythology provides two conclusions to her story; either she died of sorrow on the isle of Naxos, or she was discovered by the wine god Dionysus, who raised her up as the queen of a cult of love. Certainly she had none of the hubristic cunning of her sister Phaedra, whom Theseus eventually married, and who sought to bring down her husband by falsely accusing her stepson, Hippolytus, of violating her.

The legends concerning Theseus, as preserved by Plutarch, adequately provided him with super-human powers. Believing they were descended from the gods, not ascended from the apes, the

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lives of all ancient heroes inclined upwards; they set themselves extraordinary tasks and aspired to awesome goals. Odin and Osiris, probably historical figures like Theseus, actually became gods. Aeneas was divinely protected in the execution of his mission. Such faith kept the back straight and the eye firm throughout life's adventures and adversities. Heroic myths are not popular today because there is no room in them for mediocrity. Either one wins or loses. And winning is not to win the lottery or inherit a tax-free fortune. Losing was more frequent. Even in the days before republicanism dwarfed everyone, society was conspicuous for its losers, the victims, whose only claim to memory was that they provided Minotaur with his dinner. I doubt if much has changed. There is still massive subjection, and the world is full of contrivances to prevent us from achieving illumination, even though the classrooms of all our educational institutions are packed full of citizens desperately cramming techniques for personal advancement. The modern megalopolis advertises conviviality and produces loneliness, exploitation and an environment increasingly unhealthy and dangerous. Many of the victims of these streets are unwilling, but equally as many destroy themselves willingly. There is as much meanness, vulgarity and determined ignorance as there is poverty or lack of opportunity. One might say that an unwritten article in the republic's constitution is the right to remain ignorant. What has changed is the approach to solving these problems. The victims are treated as invalids, requiring crutches and social workers rather than the inspiration of heroes and heroines. The artist is not a social worker, but can serve a valuable social function if art is allowed to inspire even a few people to raise themselves up and move forward with dignity, confidence or a new-found sense of purpose. It is strange, then, that even during eras when the arts were expected to provide inspirational leadership, the Theseus-Ariadne story did not attract the attention we might expect. There are few plays and fewer operas (Monteverdi, Strauss), but none present the heroic aspect of the drama effectively. Like Wagner's Siegfried, Theseus seems to be a very simple hero, without doubts, sufferings, reflections or conflicts of conscience; he was totally unconscious of his actions, driven by instinct rather than premeditation. We know nothing of what he thought while he groped his way through the labyrinth, nothing of the dialogue of words or eyes that took place between himself and Minotaur. Nor do we know how he felt about Ariadne, whether he loved her or why he abandoned her.

If heroism becomes chronic, says Jung, it ends in a cramp. The problem with Theseus is that he is never not a hero. It is the same problem Virgil had with Aeneas and what makes him a

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cardboard figure despite the poet's genius. If a work celebrating the Cretan myth was to become capable of firing the modern imagination, Theseus would need to be provided with a more subtle character, Ariadne's role would require expansion, and the Minotaur would need special treatment, either by giving him the intellectual cunning of a Nietzsche or the physical prowess of a Nijinsky. But how would that be possible within the cramped space of a labyrinth, where the corridors are so narrow that two people could scarcely pass? Clearly, the execution of such a work would require something quite unlike the traditional theatre as a performance space. I know some people believe that the newer technologies are creating formats for intense one-to-one confrontations; but what is missing is terror - the smell of the beast and its roaring in the darkness everywhere. You cannot produce darkness on the light medium of the computer. A few years ago there was a ritual drama called Ra where the participants were initiated into the cult of the Egyptian sun god. All participants were robed. Priests instructed them as they passed through the underworld. They died with the god after sunset and were reborn with him in the rising sun of the next morning. But the experience for the most part was collective. Any drama in a labyrinth would have to be experienced individually, one on one; and that is why traditional theatre or opera couldn't deal with it.

That Crete was a matriocentric civilization has been mentioned by many researchers. Though classics' scholars of the past (mostly male) developed this theme less ambitiously than modern feminists, the theory is that Cretan religious and civic life was dominated by the worship of an Earth Goddess or Mother Goddess from earliest times up until the destruction of Knossos. Certainly women are very much in evidence in Cretan iconography, appearing as boxers, acrobats, charioteers, potters and hunters. As priestesses they often dwarf their male companions. Animals associated with the Mother Goddess were snakes and bulls; the emblem was the two-headed axe or labrys, depicted everywhere, and presumably employed as a sacrificial instrument. Robert Graves has pointed out that the two crescents of labrys symbolized the waxing and waning of the moon,⁽⁴⁾ the planet most often associated with woman since it measures the rhythms of fertility. In Crete the moon goddess takes helios as her spouse in the form of the bull; Pasiphae ("the one who shines for all") rules with her consort Minos "the moon's creature," according to Graves's suggested etymology. If all this sounds convincing, would it be too far-fetched to equate the labyrinth with the feminine body? A body of dark passages anticipating penetration by the male, absorbing him, devouring him, exulting over his demise.

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The bull cult of ancient Crete is quite well known and there are many illustrations of women turning somersaults over the backs of bulls as if to arouse their passion. Perhaps they were slaughtered in ritual sacrifice by the two-edged axe that was so conspicuous among the decorations of the Knossos palace. In the myth, Pasiphae has Daedalus construct a cow in which she may hide to court the bull and couple with him. But Pasiphae's coupling with the bull could also be a distortion or pollution by the Greeks of an earlier story in order to discredit the bull rituals so prominent throughout the Middle East. In any event, the incident gave rise to one of the most disturbing and unforgettable characters of any mythology: the Minotaur. Then who or what does the Minotaur symbolize? Traditionally he was a chthonic figure, dark, blood-thirsty and evil. With his cloven hoof or horns (for he is sometimes depicted as a bull with a human head and sometimes as a man with a bull's head) he is a prototype of the devil, ruling his underworld labyrinth with a ferocity that chilled the hearts of the entire Aegean. But just as there is ambiguity about his appearance, we cannot forget that this dark prince was the progeny of the Moon Queen Pasiphae. Might he not have had a more incandescent identity among the bull worshippers of Crete, rather than the blood-thirsty beast the Greeks made him out to be? Might we dare to call him Asterion, acknowledging the celestial light he inherited from his mother? At any rate, he retains the mystery of everything we do not know or cannot know, and as such he may be said to prowl in the unconsciousness of each of us.

His presence is revealed long before he is encountered in the intangible worlds of smell and of sound. The labyrinth is an odour: a miasma, a sewer, an abattoir of rotting human corpses, overlaid perhaps with rich perfumes and incenses to beguile the visitor. Its odiferous leit motif is the tawny smell of the Prince of Darkness, whose identity is also made known by the clattering of his hooves and his bellowing roar. We hear him throughout the labyrinth, now near, now echoing further away. At times he may howl or whine or mewl or growl. At times his voice reaches our ears deceptively as enchanting music.

None of the characters in the Cretan myth are real people. They neither talk like real people nor do they develop like characters in realistic drama or even hyper-realistic opera. They are archetypes, symbols of the psyche, paradigms of exemplary behaviour, drawn from both the light and dark sides of our nature and presented for inspection in order that we might know ourselves better. There is nothing new in this; it is the function of all mythology and folklore to turn the dimly-perceived intuitions of the unconscious towards consciousness so that they can be

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interpreted and integrated. When an idea is clear and straightforward, there is no reason for more than one name for it. But when it is little known or can be envisioned from many angles, then a multiplicity of forms is needed to express its mysterious or unsettled nature. When society was homogeneous and accepted more uniform dogma, these figures were clearer and were more easily accepted, but in today's shifting and unrooted society their function is cloudy and their forms less easy to identify or name. Joseph Campbell put it this way:

There can be no question: the psychological dangers through which earlier generations were guided by the symbols and spiritual exercises of their mythological and religious inheritance, we today (in so far as we are unbelievers, or, if believers, in so far as our inherited beliefs fail to represent the real problems of contemporary life) must face alone, or, at best, with only a tentative, impromptu, and not very effective guidance. This is our problem as modern "enlightened" individuals, for whom all gods and devils have been rationalized out of existence.

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If a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, digressions will lengthen it so that the eternal digression of the labyrinth, one might say, is the flight from death. Death might be endlessly avoided if we could go on inventing increasingly complex diversions and imaginary stratagems to escape it. This is not the way of Theseus. He would move by the most direct route to confront the enemy without delay.

But the nature of the hero has changed in our day. No longer is he a warrior with a sword ready to gore everything in sight. No longer is his aptitude merely that of the swash-buckling youth. No longer is he necessarily masculine. There are heroes of faith, heroes of perseverance, heroes capable of realizing the most fragile dreams without any visible weaponry at all. These are the heroes of a different order, I don't say higher, but certainly in possession of talents badly needed in the modern world. And so let us allow Theseus to dissolve back into the mists of Greek mythology and preserve only the vehicle by which anyone, male or female, young or old, might test whatever heroic strengths they possess or aspire to. The crucible in which this perilous, puzzling, profound and illuminating experience takes place is the labyrinth. For ancient man, their meandering paths, imitated in initiation dances, ceremonies and complex ritual objects, represented the archetypal endeavour to merge into the world, or to be born anew. This reincarnation theme interested the romanticists also. For them, one must descend into darkness,

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confront the adversary, some sort of evil Doppelgänger or Mephistopheles, triumph over him, and emerge transfigured into the light of higher reality.

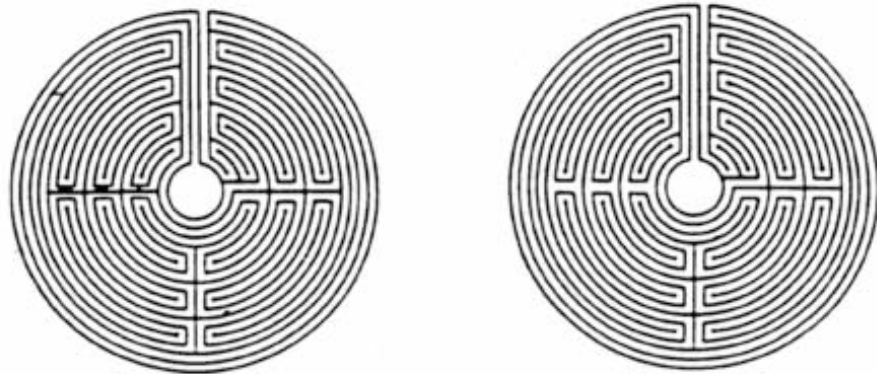
But the experience of a quest amid diversions is not merely a romantic notion. It fans out into life itself and is replicated in the plans of all civilized communities. The labyrinth is in the alleys of the Middle Eastern bazaars, as well as in the intricate plotting of the thousand and one tales of Shahrazad. It is in the twisted passageways of catacombs, strewn with the bones of martyrs; and it is in the plan of the city with its endless network of streets and shopping malls. The palace is a labyrinth to anyone but a king. Government administrations adopt the labyrinth as their model, and all institutions have followed their example. The hospital may be a labyrinth, and also a school or office building. The mazes of the library are equally inexhaustible to anyone who fails to understand the cataloguing system. And books themselves can be labyrinthine, especially those in which endless digression becomes the theme: Sterne, Diderot, Musil.

Then there is the map. How baffling are the towns and cities with unpronounceable names. Then the victim is anyone who gets lost in the unknown metropolis, with its dangers of traffic, hooligans and muggers. Does one ever find a destination, or is one condemned to eternal wandering? Does one want to find a destination? Isn't it easier to remain a flâneur, wandering about town like a visitor with plenty of time and money in one's pocket? Ah yes, it would be a mistake to think that the labyrinth's victims are all killed off at the entrance. Some wander amazed and contented for years without realizing their predicament, for the labyrinth serves opiates of all varieties to the gullible. The Minotaur will find them eventually in whatever trough they slurp, ramming his horns into their flabby bodies, no matter which Ariadne they cry out to in mortification. Then there are the labyrinths of the telephone system in which the enquirer, seeking perhaps some elusive information, is shunted from dead ends to busy signals, endlessly ringing phones, answering services, decoys, changed numbers, operators who refer the caller to further sequences of new numbers, and so on. And there are labyrinths beneath the streets, in the waterworks and sewer systems, or above the streets in the coursing of electrical pulses and the wave forms of broadcasting, amplifying and cancelling each other in turn. Here is the real labyrinth of modern life, from which one seeks release in weekend visits to the country. But there, too, stands another labyrinth, the densely productive labyrinth of nature, the jungle, the forest, the swamp with its myriad forms of life, even the tall grass and weeds that crowd in on the garden and ploughed field, erupting from nowhere to choke out all botanical designing. And

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finally there is the labyrinth of your own body: of the ear, of the stomach, of veins and arteries, neurons and synapses leading to the brain with its millions of tiny charges, memories and traces of half-comprehended or half-forgotten thoughts. What the youth found and finds outside himself, the middle- aged person finds within. Thus the labyrinth is an invertible figure, both exotopic (outward facing as in the life of the adventurer) and endotopic (inward facing as in meditation). Both processes are necessary in the search for individuation. But how could anyone presume to arrange a series of experiences suitable for everyone? The folly of the labyrinth is the folly of life: experiences rarely arrive at the moment when they could be most useful, that is, to stimulate existential change. Any arrangement of experiences in a linear sequence is bound to seem contrived, like an unrelieved exercise in religious dogma or an educational curriculum. The means of breaking it is the forking path, and the insertion of a sufficient number of these into the labyrinth immeasurably increases its complexity.

Like no other construction on earth, the labyrinth seeks to create maximal complexity and tension within minimal space. To be so near and yet so far from victory or from death — just a wall away — that is its appeal. One wrong turn and one could be lost forever; but by some miraculous accident of correct turns one might equally well find the treasure. The original Cretan labyrinth was unicursal with a single path leading from the rim to the centre; or at least this is how it is presented in the innumerable motifs on Cretan seals and coins.



This has led some researchers to believe that such diagrams do not replicate the real labyrinth but suggest, by means of the number of turns to the left or right, the solution to the puzzle. This can

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be appreciated by removing the key. If, for instance, we take out a single straight line on the left side, the figure is at once exceedingly difficult to solve.

The Minoan labyrinth is usually depicted as being round, though the same network of passageways was sometimes presented in rectangular form. In all cases it was a very concentrated use of space, in fact a maximal use of space. Of course, building codes would prohibit the construction of a labyrinth today. Fire regulations would make that impossible. To circumvent these problems the circularity of the structure could be topographically altered into a snake-like construction spread over a wider area, perhaps even incorporating some open areas with topiary or other natural features.

The planning of any ritual space would invariably involve the magic of numbers, particularly as they might affect the volumes and shapes of the structure. There are countless studies of number mysticism as it affected the building of temples, cathedrals and shrines. The Golden Section, or some proportional series equivalent to it, has appeared repeatedly in architecture as has the Fibonacci series (1,2,3,5, etc.), which, as a matter of fact, has been shown to be the design principle of the palace at Knossos, where it evidently extended beyond architecture to govern even the shapes of artifacts such as gaming tables.⁽⁶⁾

Seven is a restless number, the number of "Chance." Iamblichus calls it an "unwed virgin" because it is born neither of mother (of even number) nor of father (odd number). Nevertheless, seven has always had special significance in both Eastern and Western cultures because of its relationship with many natural phenomena. There are seven days of the week, seven colours in the spectrum, and seven tones in the scale. There are seven vowels (alpha, epsilon, eta, iota, omicron, upsilon and omega) and seven alterations in pronouncing them: with an acute, grave or circumflex accent; aspirated or unaspirated; short or long.⁽⁷⁾ Ancient Hindu, Persian, Chaldean and Egyptian scriptures made numerous references to "seven worlds." The Phoenix was thought to have been reborn seven times.

Seven is said to be the number of primary concord (4:3) when presented as four numbers connected by three intervals. Multiples of seven are also significant. Four times seven is the duration of the lunar cycle. The conjunction of seven with four is particularly significant since it unites energetic instability with balance and order. Starting with the monad and doubling (1,2,4,8,16,32,64), the seventh number, sixty-four, brings us to the double quaternity of eight squared, a number of rich significance. Seven multiplied by itself (forty-nine) is the number of

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days the soul must remain in the Bardo state after death in Tibetan Buddhism. The audacity of constructing or reconstructing with mathematical precision such an experience as I have been describing is obvious; and yet such an attempt has been made, perhaps an impossible attempt, but an attempt nevertheless. The formula, in so far as we can understand it, is based on the square of the numeral 7: 49, divided in the following manner: 4 is the number of preparatory episodes before the labyrinth can be entered, of which this lecture, with all its faults and omissions, is evidently the first, to be followed by three others. Then it would appear that the labyrinth itself consists of a diminishing cycle of events as follows: an Ennead of Encounters, an Ogdoad of Trials, a Heptad of Experiences, a Hexad of Contemplations, a Pentad of Revelations, a Tetrad of Arcana, a Trio of Deceptions, a Duet of Lovers and a Finale. In what order these events manifest themselves we cannot be certain. In fact the entire arrangement is conjectural since no one knows the actual makeup of the labyrinth except Daedalus, who built it, and Asterion, who inhabits it. But if we are correct in our assumptions, the following pattern emerges:

7 times 7 equals 49

4 plus 45 equals 49

4 plus 5 equals 9

9 plus 4 equals 13

1 plus 3 equals 4 (the Quaternity)

4 minus 3 equals 1 (the Monad: Asterion)

To those who think our calculations immoderately simple we will respectfully take comfort in Plato's comment that "Daedalus would look a fool if he were to be born now and produce the kind of works that gave him his reputation."⁽⁸⁾ Despite changes of circumstance or fashion, each artificer labours with his futile genius. And that is all that is possible in this imperfect world. In conclusion, I apologize if these opening remarks have seemed confusing or mystifying. As Plutarch has said: "What lies beyond is full of marvels and unrealities..." For those wishing to undertake the journey from darkness to light, application forms have been left on the table.

2. MINOTAUR-ASTERION

The lecturer packs up his notes. Suddenly there is darkness. Then slowly, in a dull spotlight, the contours of a head appear. Who can say what it looks like? There is nothing frightening in its demeanor. No mask. A neutral face, mature, sexless, but strange, owing to the protuberance of three small horns on the brow.

Asterion: ONE OF US IS A PHANTOM. WE DO NOT BOTH EXIST. FOR US BOTH TO EXIST, THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE TWO WORLDS, YOURS AND MINE,

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WHICH IS IMPOSSIBLE. SO WE ARE MERELY EMBODIMENTS OF ONE ANOTHER ON DIFFERENT PLANES, GIVING US EACH AN ILLUSION OF INDEPENDENCE. IN REALITY WE ARE THE SAME, HEARING TOGETHER, SEEING TOGETHER, MOVING TOGETHER, KNOWING TOGETHER. ALL YOUR LIFE YOU HAVE FEARED FACING ME. SUDDENLY I AM HERE, YOUR DELIVERER. WOULD YOU KILL ME THEN? CUT ME IN HALF AND I AM TWO: MINOTAUR AND ASTERION. BUT THE KILLER AND THE KILLED ARE ONE, AND THE KNIFE THAT KILLS IS ALSO THAT WHICH IS KILLED. IS THIS FOLLY? AM I A DECEPTION?

MINOTAUR. ASTERION. DARKNESS AND LIGHT. TWO FORCES UNITED IN ONE GOD. TO KNOW THE LIGHT YOU MUST SEEK THE DARKNESS; FOR A KNOWN GOD IS NO GOD. I AM THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS. I AM THE DARKNESS IN THE LIGHT. NEITHER IS VANQUISHED BY FORCE; ONLY BY ACCEPTANCE AND SUBMISSION.

THE DEATH OF THE GOD IS ALSO THE BIRTH OF GOD. AND KNOW THIS ALSO: THERE ARE NO GODS ON EARTH IF YOU ARE NOT YOURSELF A GOD. I AM THE THOUGHT YOU ARE THINKING. IF YOU WOULD KNOW YOURSELF, DIE BEFORE YOU DIE; DARE TO ENTER THE DARKNESS BEFORE YOU AND WITHIN YOU. TRACE THE LABYRINTH OF YOUR DAYS.

I WILL BE WITH YOU EVEN UNTO DEATH, POURING LIGHT INTO YOUR LIFE UNTIL THE GREAT EXTINGUISHER FRACTURES YOUR SPIRIT AND SENDS IT HURLING THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE.

The figure withdraws. Eventually the light returns. Those who wish may pick up copies of the application form for a visit to the labyrinth, mentioned by the professor.

The person at the back of the hall picks up a copy and departs.

3. APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Date of birth _____

Gender _____

Education _____

Religious affiliation _____

Allergies or medical problems _____

Answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

1. WHY DO YOU WISH TO EXPERIENCE ASTERION?
2. WHAT DO YOU BRING TO OFFER TO THE EXPERIENCE?
3. WHAT DOES FEAR MEAN TO YOU?
4. WHAT DOES COURAGE MEAN TO YOU?
5. WHAT DOES PAIN MEAN TO YOU?
6. WHAT DOES FRIENDSHIP MEAN TO YOU?
7. WHAT WOULD YOU REGARD AS YOUR PRINCIPAL DEFECT?

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8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE COLOUR AND WHY?
 9. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO LEARN FROM ASTERION?
 10. DO YOU BELIEVE IN LIFE AFTER DEATH, AND IF SO, IN WHAT FORM?
- The questions are answered, and the application is mailed to an address provided.

4. THE MEETING

Those whose applications are accepted (which does not mean everyone) are informed by return mail. A date, time, and meeting place are given. Applicants are also provided with a general outline of what to expect and how to prepare themselves. At the appointed time, the participants are met, blindfolded and transported to the site of the labyrinth, the exact location of which they should never know. Arriving there the blindfold is removed and shoes are exchanged for sandals that can be removed and put on quickly. Perhaps there is also an appropriate change of clothing. The entrance is indicated without speech and each neophyte enters the labyrinth alone.

Patria 7: ASTERION

First Series: THE ENNEAD OF ENCOUNTERS

[Encounter 1: HELIM](#) [completed|Jerrard 2008-9]

[Encounter 2: THETIS](#)

[Encounter 3: ARIA\(DNE\)](#)

[Encounter 4: SHADOW](#)

[Encounter 5: HARUT-MARUT](#) (The Gallery of the Deceived) [in progress Jerrard]

[Encounter 6: ICARUS](#)

[Encounter 7: DAEDALUS](#) [Michael Waterman 2012]

[Encounter 8: THESEUS](#)

[Encounter 9: PHAEDRA](#)

Second Series: THE OGDOAD OF TRIALS

[Trial 1: FIR'AUN](#) (The Old Man)

[Trial 2: MIGDOL](#) (The Tower)

[Trial 3: RAPHAKA](#) (The Sword)

[Trial 4: AZEROTH](#) (The Magnetic Currents)

[Trial 5: THE GOLDEN GOBLETS](#)

[Trial 6: IROTH](#) (Isolation)

[Trial 7: OPHION](#) (The Lizard)

[Trial 8: FIR BALOOM](#) (Feet of Baal)

Third Series: THE HEPTAD OF EXPERIENCES

[Experience 1: BUTHON](#) (The Palace of Mythical Beings) [Reinhart Reitzenstein 2012]

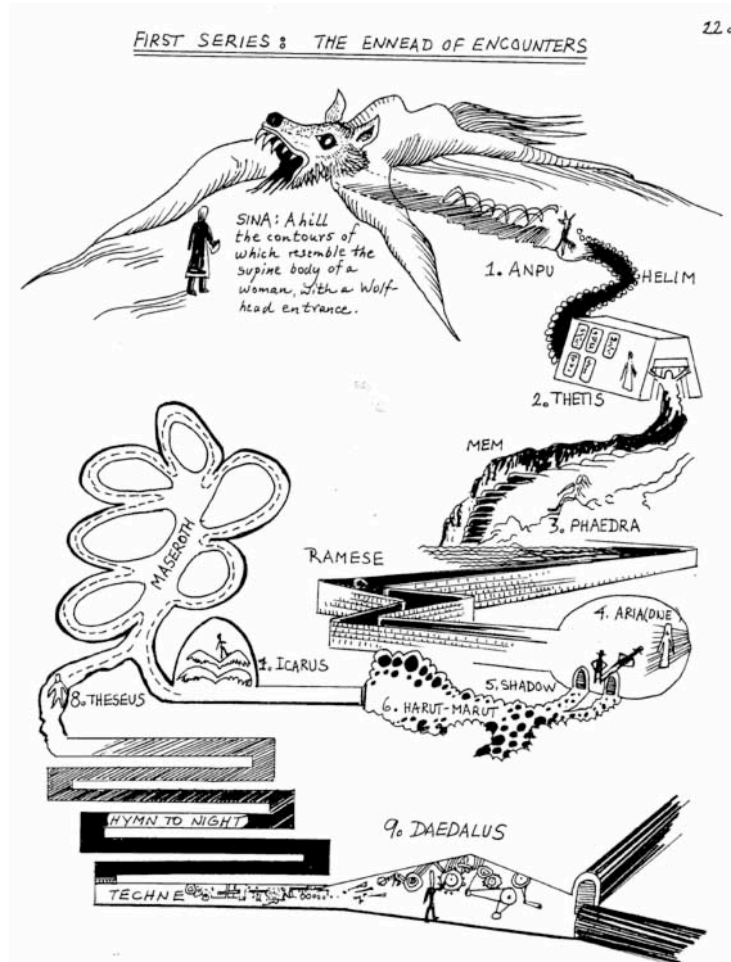
[Experience 2: HERACLITE](#)

[Experience 3: BELLUM](#) (Forest of Brass) [done in a small way - now in cedar path]

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Experience 4: LIFOLD (Gauze Curtains) [we have the curtains]
Experience 5: EOS (Hall of Mirrors) [in the works 2012 Jerrard]
Experience 6: KIBROTH (Tombs of Lust) [some exist from House of Horrors]
Experience 7: RATHMA-RAPHADON (Education of the Hands and Feet)
Fourth Series: THE HEXAD OF CONTEMPLATIONS
Contemplation 1: MANDALA
Contemplation 2: THE CHALDEAN INSCRIPTION
Contemplation 3: PAI-K'O HSIANG-YIN (The Incense Clock)
Contemplation 4: PALINDROME
Contemplation 5: QUADRIX (The Spice Garden)
Contemplation 6: MYTHOS (The Immaculate Perception)
Fifth Series: THE PENTAD OF REVELATIONS
Revelation 1: SOCHOTH (The Headless Wonder)
Revelation 2: THE PALACE OF GREATEST CLARITY
Revelation 3: CASA DEL LABYRINTHO
Revelation 4: NASUN
Revelation 5: ALUSH (Sap of the Moon Plant)
Sixth Series: THE TETRAD OF ARCANA
Arcanum 1: KHIDR (The Fish)
Arcanum 2: BANAIM (Balance)
Arcanum 3: THESEUS'S BOAT [complete 2006 Maria Michaelis-Posidis]
Arcanum 4: THE SPHERE OF SELFHOOD
Seventh Series: THE TRIO OF DECEPTIONS
Deception 1: ANPU RETURNS
Deception 2: THE THREE HORNS
Deception 3: MINOTAUR
Eighth Series: THE DUET OF LOVERS
Duet 1: THESEUS AND ARIADNE
Duet 2: ABANDONMENT
Finale: O NOBLY BORN

First Series: THE ENNEAD OF ENCOUNTERS



The Entrance: SINA.

The neophyte enters the labyrinth through the open jaws of a wolf, set between the inclined legs of a woman, and moves down a long, straight corridor, wide enough for only one person to move through at a time. In a niche where the passage turns, stands the jackal-headed god Anubis, slightly illuminated.

Encounter 1: HELIM

Anubis: I AM ANPU, GUARDIAN OF THE ANDROGYNOUS ENTRANCE

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THROUGH WHICH YOU HAVE JUST PASSED. YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE RIDDLE OF THE LABYRINTH. IT IS AN HONOUR TO BE ALLOWED TO PASS UNMOLESTED THROUGH THE FANGS OF WOLF AND THE VAGINA DENTATA OF THE MOTHER. EVERY SITE OF INITIATION, EVERY SANCTUM OR TEMPLE, IS SO GUARDED, BY DRAGONS, BEASTS, DEVIL-SLAYERS AND GARGOYLES, TO PREVENT THE UNINVITED FROM ENTERING.(9) WE ARE THE THRESHOLD PROTECTORS OF THE HIGHER SILENCES WITHIN.

Anubis turns and calls down the passage, his voice echoing into the distant darkness.

Anubis: O BEINGS OF THE CORRIDORS OF THE DEAD. IT IS I, ANPU, WHO CALLS TO YOU. I HAVE WITH ME A NEOPHYTE, NOBLY BORN, WHO WOULD BE INSTRUCTED IN THE WAYS OF DEATH AND LIFE. KNOWING THE RISKS, KNOWING THE PENALTY, KNOWING THE REWARD, FEARING NOT DEATH IN THE JAWS OF MINOTAUR OR SUFFOCATION FROM NEGLECT, KNOWING THAT HAVING ENTERED, THERE CAN BE NO EXIT BY THIS ENTRANCE, THE BEING I SEND TO YOU WOULD ATTEMPT TO PASS THE FORTY-NINE STAGES INTO THE CLEAR LIGHT OF KNOWING THAT OPENS BEYOND DARKNESS. RECEIVE HIM (HER) AS YOU WILL.(10)

Anubis turns to face the neophyte.

YOU HAVE COME VOLUNTARILY AS OTHERS HAVE COME BEFORE YOU. WHAT YOU EXPERIENCE WILL DEPEND ON YOUR PREPAREDNESS AND THE TRUST YOU PLACE IN YOUR OWN ABILITIES. YOU WILL BE HINDERED, BUT YOU WILL ALSO RECEIVE HELP. THE REMAINDER IS UP TO YOU. PASS NOW INTO THE DARKNESS.

Passage: SCRIPTA MINOA

The passage descends between rough walls of stone, terminating in a narrow entrance to a chamber which is twelve feet long, seven feet six inches wide and eight feet high, sloped inward slightly towards the ceiling. The walls of the chamber are completely covered by nineteen tablets of Ectocretan script describing the story of Theseus and Ariadne. At the far end of the room there is a low doorway with a heavy stone lintel above it. The raised arms of a woman are painted on either side. Thetis stands in the centre of the room holding a lamp or candle. She wears a loose-fitting gown of pale blue and green. Her hair is adorned by a delicate crown of coral. As she speaks she moves about the chamber drawing the neophyte's attention to the inscriptions of the story she is narrating.⁽¹¹⁾

Encounter 2: THETIS

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Thetis: WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO EXPERIENCE WAS WRITTEN DOWN MANY CENTURIES AGO IN THE ECTOCRETAN LANGUAGE.

(Tablet 1)

IT TELLS THE STORY OF THESEUS AND ARIADNE, THE MINOTAUR AND THE LABYRINTH. IT TELLS HOW ARIADNE BETRAYED HER COUNTRY FOR THESEUS, WHOM SHE WOULD MAKE A HERO.

(Moving to Tablet 2)

IT TELLS HOW KING MINOS MARRIED PASIPHAE, QUEEN OF CRETE,

(Tablet 3)

AND HOW MINOS MADE AN ALTAR TO THE SEA GOD POSEIDON; AND HOW POSEIDON SENT A GREAT WHITE BULL FROM THE WATERS; AND HOW THERE WAS A FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF THE BULL, AT WHICH VIRGINS LEAPED IN SOMERSAULTS OVER THE ANIMAL.

(Tablets 4 and 5)

IT TELLS HOW POSEIDON, ANGRY TO OBSERVE THIS SPORT, CURSED THE COURT OF CRETE BY AFFLICTING QUEEN PASIPHAE WITH A LUST TO MATE WITH THE BULL.

(Tablet 6)

MINOS, IN DISGUST, DESERTS THE COURT IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURES OF HIS OWN.

(Tablet 7)

PASIPHAE CONSULTS DAEDALUS, THE FAMOUS INVENTOR AND CRAFTSMAN, ASKING HIM TO BUILD FOR HER A WOODEN COW IN WHICH SHE MIGHT HIDE TO ATTRACT THE BULL.

(Tablet 8)

PASSIONLESS DAEDALUS FULFILLS HIS QUEEN'S REQUEST AND CREATES A COW IN WHICH THE QUEEN LIES, MAKING MEWING SOUNDS TO AROUSE THE ANIMAL.

(Tablet 9)

MONTHS PASS. THE PLEIADES ARE FALLING. THE AIR IS DARK AND THE WINTRY WIND IS ON THE SEA. MINOS RETURNS WITH THE SPOILS OF PLUNDERING. THE KINGDOM IS GLAD TO HAVE HIM BACK. PASIPHAE IS PREGNANT WITH AN ISSUE HE BELIEVES TO BE HIS OWN. NAMES ARE CONSIDERED: AMTHITRYON...ONEOPION...ASTERION...?

(Tablet 10)

PASIPHAE IS IN TORMENT. SHE SCREAMS IN AGONY. THE PELVIC GIRDLE CRACKS. THE MOTHER FALLS BACK...DEAD! THE ISSUE IS DRAWN FORTH. O HORRIBLE HOUR! O NAMELESS CREATURE! TWO DIFFERENT NATURES, MAN AND BEAST, JOINED IN A SINGLE COUNTENANCE.

(Tablet 11)

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THEY HAVE ALL FLED. ARIADNE ALONE REMAINS, SUSPENDED BETWEEN PITY AND REVULSION, UNDECIDED WHETHER HER HALF-BROTHER IS HUMAN OR BEAST. IT IS SHE WHO GIVES HIM HIS SECOND NAME: ASTERION - STAR CREATURE.

(Tablet 12)

BUT THE SCANDAL SPREADS QUICKLY. THE EVENTS AT KNOSSOS MAKE A NASTY TALE. SOME SAY THAT MINOS HAS BEEN TRICKED BY THE GODS AND THAT HIS EMPIRE WILL COLLAPSE.

(Tablet 13)

MINOS CALLS ON DAEDALUS, THE WILY INVENTOR. FOR MINOTAUR-ASTERION TO BE SEEN WOULD BE A DISGRACE, YET AS THE OFFSPRING OF POSEIDON'S BULL AND THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, THE CREATURE CANNOT BE KILLED. THE WILY INVENTOR PONDERES THE PROBLEM AND COMES UP WITH A PLAN: FOR THE BULL-MAN HE WILL BUILD A PALACE OF CORRIDORS LEADING NOWHERE, OF ENDLESS CIRCUITS AND DEAD ENDS, TRAP DOORS AND CISTERNS - A PALACE OF DARKNESS FOR THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS.

(Tablets 14 and 15)

AND SO MINOTAUR-ASTERION IS DELIVERED TO THE LABYRINTH. ONE PROBLEM REMAINS: WHO WILL PROVIDE HIS DINNER? (Tablet 16) MINOS WILL FEED HIM SLAVES AND PRISONERS. HASN'T A BOATLOAD OF PRISONERS JUST ARRIVED FROM ATHENS? WHO WILL BE THE FIRST TO BE FED TO THE MONSTER? "I AM THE FIRST," CRIES A VOICE. IT IS THESEUS, SON OF AGEUS, KING OF ATHENS, WHO HAS DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A SLAVE WITH THE HOPE OF BRINGING DOWN THE ENTIRE THE CRETAN EMPIRE.

(Tablet 17)

MINOS AND HIS COURT DEPART BUT THE EYES OF ARIADNE LINGER ON THESEUS. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN HE AND MINOTAUR-ASTERION MEET? WHO WOULD SURVIVE: THE STAR-CREATURE OR THE HUMAN?

(Tablet 18)

NIGHT THROWS HER SHADOW ON CRETE, BUT ARIADNE'S HEART FLUTTERS LIKE A PATCH OF SUNLIGHT AGAINST A SEAWALL.

(Tablet 19)

SHE CREEPS TO THE PRISON AND WHISPERS TO THE PRISONER, "WHATEVER TRANSPIRES WITHIN THE LABYRINTH DEPENDS ON YOU ALONE. BUT IF YOU SURVIVE, I CAN ASSIST IN YOUR ESCAPE. TAKE THIS THREAD, UNROLL IT AS YOU ENTER, AND IT WILL LEAD YOU OUT AGAIN." THAT IS THE STORY AS WELL AS IT IS KNOWN. SOME SAY ARIADNE FELL IN LOVE WITH THESEUS AND ENTERED THE LABYRINTH TO ASSIST HIM. OTHERS SAY SHE SANG TO HIM AND HER VOICE LED HIM SAFELY THROUGH THE PALACE OF DARKNESS. LOOK HOW THE INSCRIPTIONS ARE FRACTURED AND BROKEN, ENDING IN CONFUSION. I DO NOT KNOW THE

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END OF THIS STORY. ALL I KNOW IS THAT RETURNING TO THE BEGINNING
IS IMPOSSIBLE. THEREFORE YOU MUST PROCEED.

Passage : MEM

Thetis motions for the neophyte to proceed down a long, dark passageway. As it is entered the voice of a woman is heard singing the aria Hymn to Night,⁽¹²⁾ accompanied by chamber orchestra.

Encounter 3: ARIA(DNE)

Ariadne: DAS ALLERFREULICHE LICHT -
(Heartwarming Light -
STRAHLEN - WOGEN - FARBEN.
beams - waves - colours.
ATMET ES DIE RIESENWELT -
The whole world breathes it -
ATMET ES DIE RASTLOSEN GESTIRNE
the restless stars, floating
DIE IN SEINEM MEERE SCHWIMMEN -
in their azure flood, breathe it -
ATMET ES DER FUNKELNDE STEIN -
the glittering stone breathes it,
ATMET ES DIE SINGENDE PFLANZE
the sensuous plants breathe it,
UND DAS TIER -
and the animals.
UND VOR ALEM
But above all,
DIE HERLICHEN FREMDLINGE
the glorious stranger
MIT DEN SINNVOLLEN AUGEN
with the thoughtful eyes,
DEM SCHWEBENDEN GANGE
the hesitant walk,
UND DEM TÖNENDEN MUNDE -
and the singing voice,
WIE EIN KÖNIG.
breathes it like a king.)
ABWÄRTS WENDE ICH MICH,
(I turn aside
ZU DER HEILIGEN, UNAUSSPRECHLICHEN,
to the holy, ineffable,

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GEHEIMNISSVOLLEN NACHT.

mysterious night.)

(6'00")

The voice fades out leaving only the sound of an Aeolian harp in the darkness.

Encounter 4: SHADOW

Suddenly a bright light flashes up on a figure dressed in a black tuxedo with a top hat. The light casts a long shadow across the floor, almost to the place where the neophyte is standing. The voice echoes as if the space behind it consisted of limitless empty chambers and corridors.

Shadow: YOU HAVE BEEN ATTRACTED BY THE SINGING. YES, HERE NEAR THE ENTRANCE, IN THE LAST FLICKERING OF LIGHT BEFORE THE BLACKNESS, HERE WHERE ARIADNE AND THESEUS PARTED, WE MEET. YOU MAY CALL ME SHADOW. YOU HAVE A BODY WHICH CASTS A SHADOW. NOW OUR SHADOWS BLEND. I AM YOUR SHADOW AS WELL AS MY OWN, AND THEREFORE I AM YOURSELF, OR RATHER, THE SHADOWY SIDE OF YOURSELF, THE BLACK SIDE YOU RARELY RECOGNIZE, THE REPRESSED, GUILT-RIDDEN SIDE.(Shadow laughs sardonically and the laughter echoes into the distance.) WHERE DOES SHADOW LIVE? IN THE LABYRINTH OF COURSE. (Laughter.) AND WHAT IS THIS LABYRINTH: IT IS YOU TURNED INSIDE OUT. EVERYONE HERE CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR OWN MIND AND BODY: ARIADNE, WHOSE VOICE ENCHANTS AND BEGUILLES; FEARLESS THESEUS, WHO LUSTS AFTER EVERYTHING; AND DAEDALUS, WHOSE INTRICATE MIND IS ALWAYS TICKING INTRIGUES AND DECEPTIONS. ME? I COME FROM THE DEEPEST REALM OF NIGHT, AS YOU WILL EVENTUALLY LEARN. TO SOLVE THE LABYRINTH THERE CAN BE NO GUIDE, BUT YOU ARE SO INEXPERIENCED THAT I FORESEE YOU WILL NEED MANY KINDS OF ASSISTANCE. SHADOW HAS SUPERVISED ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS ON YOUR BEHALF. BUT ABOVE ALL, REMEMBER ONE THING: ONLY A FOOL CARRIES A LIGHT INTO DARKNESS. THE WISE PERSON WAITS IN THE DARKNESS AND LEARNS. ON EITHER SIDE OF ME IS A DOOR. PASS THROUGH ONE AND MOVE INTO A REALM OF NIGHTMARES. TAKE THE OTHER AND PASS INTO A STATE OF BLISS. WHICH DO YOU CHOOSE? CHOOSE NOW, QUICKLY - MY PATIENCE IS SHORT.

Shadow laughs derisively as the light fades and two doorways are illuminated, one glowing red, the other glowing green.

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Encounter 5: HARUT-MARUT (13) (The Gallery of the Deceived)

Both doors lead to the same place. Entering by either, the neophyte finds a space filled with pastel colours and subdued lights. Sheaves of flowers shine with supernatural luminescence in tall vases decorated with serpentine whorls. Low couches are scattered on rich carpets and above hang burners filled with spiced incense, the fumes of which clog the vision as well as the nostrils. On the carpets and couches figures recline, their bodies drooping and sometimes touching one another with erotic suggestiveness. They seem drugged; their eyelids are heavy. The experienced observer will notice many characters here from earlier Patria works: Primavera Nicolson, Hieronymous Knicker, Eddie le Chasseur, Nellie Frencheater, Cecil Blish, Massimo Quigg, Sam Galuppi, Zip the Idiot, Hermann Geiger-Torel, Little Bobby Cooper and other victims of the artificier's feverish imagination. Some are eating from silver dishes or drinking from crystal glasses. A few, who seem to be children, smoke water- pipes. Many of the figures are anatomically distorted, with bulbous or atrophied limbs, perhaps even with eyes in their stomachs or with two heads. Still, the atmosphere is one of tranquil relaxation, and soft electronic music mixes with the incense, luring one to remain. Passing through the Gallery of the Deceived the neophyte finds in one corner a tray of glasses filled with green liquid, over which is an elaborately-lettered plaque reading:

WE, THE INMATES OF THE GALLERY OF THE DECEIVED, WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU BUT WE HAVE NO TONGUES. WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO TRY A LITTLE AMBROSIA PREPARED BY INNANA? IT DEADENS THE PAIN. HERE WE ARE HAPPY, CONTENT TO LOVE AND DREAM UNTIL OUR TIME RUNS OUT. SOME OF US HAVE BEEN HERE FOR YEARS. SOME WERE BORN HERE. THERE IS NO WAY OUT, JUST USELESS GROPING. BETTER TO RELAX AMONG FRIENDS. WON'T YOU REMAIN? ONE DRAFT OF DELICIOUS AMBROSIA...
Across the bottom of the plaque a childish scrawl reads: PRESS THE SIDE OF THE MIRROR TO ESCAPE ICARUS

Encounter 6: ICARUS

The neophyte touches the side of a large mirror beside the plaque. It swings open and some distance down a passageway behind it a young boy's voice is heard:

Icarus: QUICKLY! REPLACE THE MIRROR. THE GALLERY OF THE DECEIVED IS ONLY FOR VICTIMS. REPLACE THE MIRROR AND COME THIS WAY, DOWN HERE, UNDER THE LIGHT.

The neophyte moves down a corridor, reaching a place where two enormous pairs of wings are mounted under a cupola. A spot of light in the apex of the cupola fans down to illuminate the wings. The boy's voice seems to come from a harness somewhere in the upper pair of wings.

Icarus: BEAUTIFUL, AREN'T THEY? MY FATHER BUILT THEM. MY FATHER, DAEDALUS. THIS IS HOW WE ARE GOING TO ESCAPE. DO YOU KNOW MY

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FATHER? HE IS THE ARCHITECT OF EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. HE'S A GENIUS. EVERYONE IS AFRAID OF HIM; EVEN MINOTAUR DOESN'T DARE TOUCH HIM BUT ALLOWS HIM TO GO ABOUT THE LABYRINTH ADJUSTING A MECHANISM HERE OR A MIRROR THERE. AND WHEN HE IS FINISHED WE'LL ESCAPE TOGETHER AND FLY TO THE SUN, THERE, THROUGH THAT LITTLE HOLE. DON'T ASK ME HOW WE'LL DO IT, BUT FATHER KNOWS. HE CAN THREAD A STRING THROUGH THE WHORLS OF A SEA-SHELL. PERHAPS YOU'LL MEET HIM. HE'S JUST DOWN THE CORRIDOR FIXING A FEW TRICKS. DON'T BE AFRAID, EVEN IF HE SEEMS COLD AND INDIFFERENT. IT'S ONLY HIS WAY. AND IF YOU DO SEE HIM, TELL HIM TO HURRY UP. TELL HIM I'M WAITING FOR HIM. I WANT TO FEEL THE WIND IN MY HAIR AND THE SUN ON MY SKIN. LISTEN, IF YOU KEEP YOUR RIGHT HAND TOUCHING THE WALL, YOUR LEFT HAND WILL ALWAYS REMAIN FREE. YOU SHOULD TRY TO KEEP SOMETHING FREE HERE. LEFT-HANDED FORKS COULD LEAD TO DISASTER SO BEWARD OF FORKING PASSAGES. PERHAPS WE'LL MEET AGAIN IN THE SUNLIGHT. THEN I COULD SHOW YOU HOW TO FLY. PEOPLE SAY IT'S IMPOSSIBLE BUT FATHER SAYS "IMPOSSIBLE" IS A WORD THAT BELONGS ONLY IN THE VOCABULARY OF FOOLS. AND IF YOU MEET MY FATHER, REMEMBER TO ADDRESS HIM AS "MAESTRO." HE LIKES TO BE FLATTERED - AND HE DESERVES IT.

The neophyte again moves down the corridor, right hand on the wall, as instructed. Various ramps and inclined surfaces may disorient the visitor. In the distance fragments of Ariadne's aria, Hymn to Night, can still be heard.

Ariadne: ABWÄRTS WENDE ICH MICH,
(I turn aside
ZU DER HEILIGEN, UNAUSSPRECHLICHEN,
to the holy, ineffable,
GEHEIMNISSVOLLEN NACHT.
mysterious night.
FERNAB LIEGT DER WELT, IN EINE TIEFE GRUFT VERSENKT -
Far below lies the world. Sunken in a deep pit -
WIE WÜST UND EINSAM IHRE STELLE!
Waste and solitary is its state.
TIEFE WEHMUT WEHT IN DER SAITEN DER BRUST.
Deep sadness stirs the strings of the heart.
FERNEN DER ERINNERUNG, WÜNSCHE DER JUGEND,
Distance of memory, desires of youth,
DER KINDHEIT TRÄUME, KOMMEN IN GRAUEN KLEIDERN
dreams of childhood, come dressed in grey,
WIE ABENDNEBEL NACH DER SONNE UNTERGANG.
like the evening mist after sunset.)

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(4'00")

Encounter 7: DAEDALUS

A door opens to reveal a corridor of softly whirring machines and flickering lights - a laboratory of dazzlingly useless technology. A man is seen adjusting a mechanism of some kind. He has an enormously elongated head and his body seems to give off a faint whirring noise like that of computer peripherals. This is Daedalus.

Daedalus: FOOL! WHO DARES TO ENTER HERE? THIS IS NO PLACE FOR WEAKLINGS. FOR YEARS I'VE LABOURED TO RAISE HUMANITY OUT OF ITS INFANCY. BEFORE I INVENTED THE COMPASS AND THE WHEEL, HUMANS WERE BARBARIANS. THE MECHANICAL TOYS I MADE FOR ARIADNE AND PHAEDRA WHIRL IN PERPETUAL MOTION. ABSOLUTE PERFECTION! THEY'LL REMEMBER MY NAME WHEN THEY START DATING CIVILIZATION. AND NOW THIS, THE MOST STUPENDOUS OF MY CAREER: A STRUCTURE IN WHICH THE HUBRIS OF HUMANITY MAY STIFLE ITSELF. A MIRROR HERE, A TRAP DOOR THERE. WALLS THAT MOVE. CORRIDORS LEADING IN ALL DIRECTIONS AND IN NO DIRECTION, TAXING THE INTELLIGENCE AND THE IMAGINATION UNTIL THE BRAIN BURSTS. FOR YEARS I'VE LABOURED TO CREATE THE PERFECT LABYRINTH. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT IS? ONE WITHOUT A GOAL, WITHOUT A SOLUTION, WITH NO CENTRE. THIS IS WHAT YOU'VE COME TO STUMBLE THROUGH. THEY SAY THERE WAS A CHINESE INVENTOR WHO CARVED A BEAUTIFUL PAGODA AND HAD HIMSELF ENSHRINED IN IT, TO HIS OWN EVERLASTING GLORY. I'VE CONSIDERED THAT THE PERFECT SYSTEM - TOTALLLY INDECIPHERABLE IN ITS PERFECTION. ALL GREAT CREATIONS SHOULD KEEP THEIR SECRETS IN ORDER NOT TO BE ABUSED. HARM ONLY COMES WHEN IDEAS ESCAPE INTO THE REAL WORLD, INTO POLITICS AND MORALS. ONE INVENTS CRUELITIES IN ORDER TO COME INTO CONTACT WITH GREAT PROBLEMS, BUT SUCH CRUELITIES MUST NEVER BE DETECTED. THUS MINOTAUR IS THE PERFECT CRIMINAL! NO TRACE OF THE CRIME. NO HABEUS CORPUS. WELL, THAT'S YOUR WORRY, NOT MINE. I CAN LEAVE WHENEVER I WISH. I'M JUST STAYING ON A LITTLE LONGER TO POLISH THE PLACE UP AND MAKE SURE ALL THE DECEPTIONS ARE WORKING. EVERYTHING IS SET AND READY TO TRIP INTO ACTION. LOOK HERE! SLIDE THAT PANEL TO THE LEFT AND IT LEADS TO THE OGDODAD OF TRIALS. SLIDE IT TO THE RIGHT AND IT WILL TAKE YOU TO THE HEPTAD OF EXPERIENCES. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHICH YOU CHOOSE. EITHER WAY, YOU PASS INTO OBLIVION!

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Both doors lead to the same passageway: an extended series of straight and curving corridors angling in different directions through which the neophyte will pass listening to Ariadne sing the concluding moments of Hymn to Night. One wall is decorated in black arabesques and geometrical patterns on white backgrounds, the other is decorated in white arabesques and patterns on black backgrounds. The text of the song (by Novalis) may be embedded in the patterns.

Ariadne: ZUGEMESSEN WARD DEM LIGHT SEINE ZEIT -
ABER ZEITLOS UND RAUMLOS IST DER NACHT HERRSCHAFT!

(Light had its measured time,
but timeless and spaceless is the dominion of the Night!
FÜHLT ES IN DER GOLDNEN FLUT DER TRAUBEN,
IN DES MANDELBAUMS WUNDERÖL,
UND DEM BRAUNEN SAFTE DES MOHNS.

Feel it in the golden flood of the grapes
in the almond tree's wondrous oil,
and in the brown juice of the poppy.
PREIS DER WELTKÖNIGIN,
DER HOLDE VERKÜNDIGERIN HEILIGER WELTEN.
Praise to the Queen of Night,
the high herald of sacred realms.

SIE SENDET MICH DICH - ZARTE GELIEBTE.

She sends me to thee - tender beloved.

NUN WACH ICH - DENN ICH BIN DEIN UND MEIN -

Now I awaken - for I am thine and mine -

DU HAST DIE NACHT MIR ZUM LEBEN VERKÜNDERT -

MICH ZUM MENSCHEN GEMACHT -

You have proclaimed the Night as life -

and made me human

ZEHRE MIT GEISTERFLUT MEINEM LEIB -

DASS ICH LUFTIG MIT DIR INNIGER MICH MISCHE

UND DANN EWIG DIE BRAUTNACHT WÄHRT.

Consume my body with spirit-fire

that I may fuse my inmost being with thee

in the eternal bridal night.

Encounter 8: THESEUS

From somewhere in one of the loops of the tunnel a man's voice can be heard approaching.

Theseus: THE VOICE...THE THREAD...THE SONG... THIS IS THE WAY THE SUN

REJECTS THE SHADOW. TO ACCOMPLISH THE DEED ONE NEED TO BE

BEWITCHED. DARK DEED. WOMAN IN THE LIGHT OR HALF- LIGHT.

WAITING FOR IT TO BE DONE, SINGING SWEETLY... MAKING MY FINGERS

ITCH TO KILL FOR HER. YES...AND WHEN I'M FINISHED, I'LL BRING

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FLOWERS TO HER...THE VOICE HAS GONE...WHERE IS SHE? SING AGAIN TO
GUIDE ME...SING AGAIN...SING...

Suddenly the muscular body of man lunges past the neophyte and rushes into darkness. The voice of Ariadne returns to conclude Hymn to Night.

NUN WEISS ICH WENN DER LETZTE MORGEN SEIN WIRD -
WENN DAS LICHT NICHT MEHR DIE NACHT UND DIE LIEBE
SCHEUCHT - WENN DER SCHLUMMER EWIG EIN TRAUM SEIN WIRD.

Now I know when the final morning will be - when the light no longer frightens away Night and Love - when slumber shall be an eternal dream.

GELOBT SEI DIE NACHT! GELOBT DER EWIGE SCHLUMMER!

EWIG IST DER DAUER DER SCHLAF -

HEILIGER SCHLAF.

Praised be eternal Night!

Praised be eternal Slumber!

Eternal is the duration of Sleep -

Holy Sleep.

(6'15")

The singing concludes but the aeolian harp continues softly.

Encounter 9: PHAEDRA

The sound of dripping water as the neophyte continues down a winding passage, then the lapping of waves, as if on pebbles. The tunnel opens into a small enclave surrounded by trees and bushes. This is the first time the neophyte has seen the light of day (or night) since entering the labyrinth. Seated on a stone, combing her long hair, is Phaedra.

Phaedra: YOU MUST BE RELIEVED TO SEE LIGHT AGAIN AFTER YOUR WANDERING.

MY NAME IS PHAEDRA. CAN YOU PRONOUNCE THAT? I KNOW MY SISTER ARIADNE IS MORE FAMOUS, BUT I'M MORE BEAUTIFUL. ANYWAY THE ORACLES HAVE PREDICTED THAT I, NOT ARIADNE, WILL MARRY THESEUS, EVEN THOUGH SHE LOVES HIM AND I DO NOT. THESEUS SEES THE LABYRINTH AS A PLOT AGAINST HIM AND HE WANTS TO SMASH IT. BUT THAT'S NOT THE WAY. THE LABYRINTH NEEDS TO BE FONDLED LIKE A LIVING CREATURE: CURVES FOLDING IN ANTICIPATION, MUSCLES TREMBLING WHEN TOUCHED, BLOOD AND SALIVA IN MOTION, OPENINGS TO BE ENTERED, CORRIDORS TO BE CARESSED, SENSATIONS TO BE AROUSED... WILL THEY EVER COME AGAIN, THE LONG NIGHTS, THE LONG WHITE NIGHTS, FULL OF DANCING UNDER THE CLOUD OF STARS? WHEN SHALL I FEEL THE DEW ON MY THROAT, AND THE WIND-STREAM IN MY HAIR? WHEN SHALL MY FEET DANCE IN THE DIM EXPANSES, LIKE THE HOOVES OF FAUNS, ALONE IN THE GRASS AND LOVELINESS? LEAPING FOR JOY, FREE OF THE HUNT, FREE OF THE BEATERS, FREE OF THE NETS AND HOUNDS, FREE OF ALL CONFINEMENTS. (14)

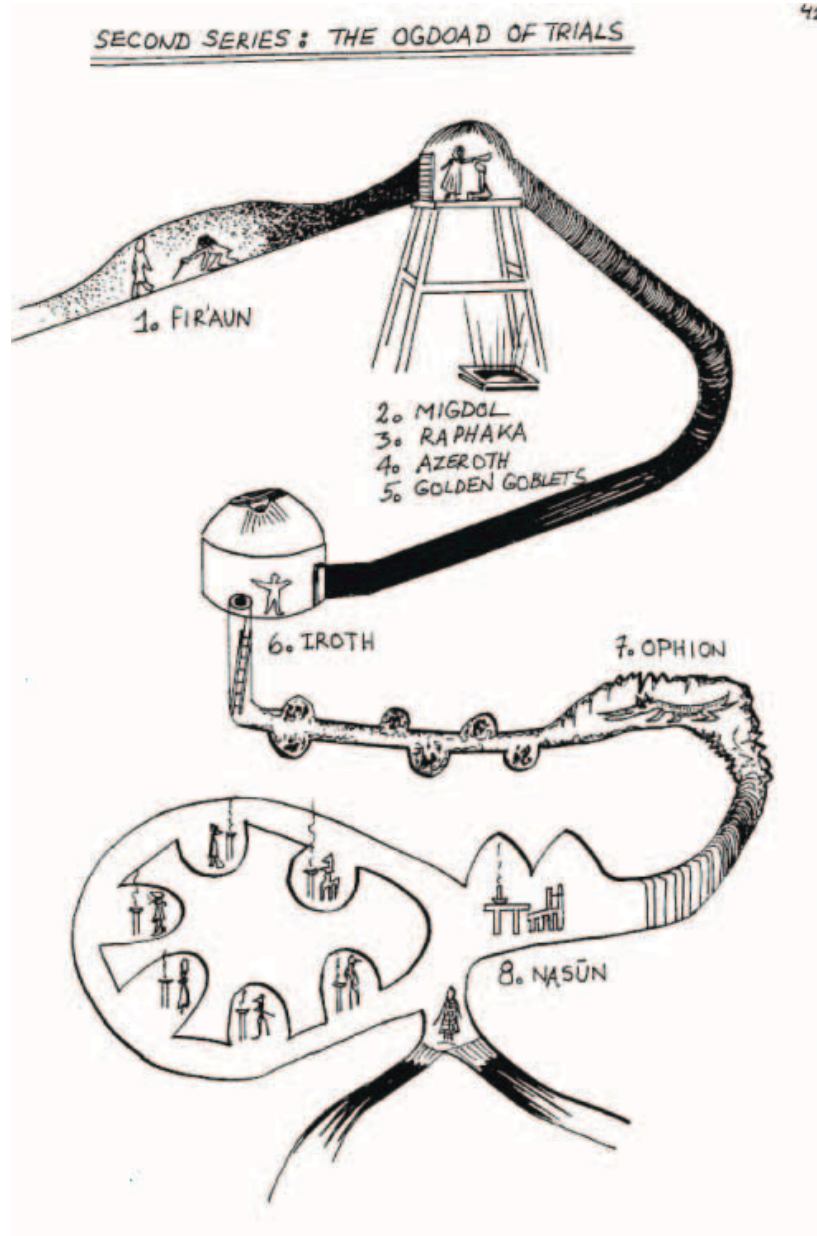
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LISTEN TO ME. I CAME TO WARN YOU. ARIADNE AND I USED TO PLAY HERE BEFORE DAEDLUS TURNED THE PALACE INTO A PRISON FOR OUR HALF-BROTHER. I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A LAST CHANCE. I KNOW THE WAY OUT. WE COULD LEAVE TOGETHER. THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE. DAEDALUS HAS SEEN TO THAT. EITHER YOU LEAVE NOW OR YOU GO ON TO THE BITTER END.

SHALL I SHOW YOU HOW TO ESCAPE? YOU HESITATE...MAKE UP YOUR MIND.

(The neophyte decides either to continue or to accept Phaedra's offer to leave. If he or she decides not to continue, Phaedra shrugs and indicates the way out. If the neophyte wishes to continue, Phaedra points to a tunnel leading to the Ogdoad of Trials.)

Second Series: THE OGDOAD OF TRIALS



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Trial 1: FIR'AUN (The Old Man)

The passage is narrow and dark. The walls are dry and the floor is smooth stone. At a certain point the tapping of a cane is heard approaching. When it stops the voice of an old man is heard, very close.

Fir'aun: I SMELL YOU. (Sniffs.) YOU SMELL OF INCENSE. (Sniffs again.) THE SWEETNESS OF WOMAN IS ABOUT YOU. SO YOU'VE BEEN WITH HER. WAS IT PHAEDRA YOU KISSED? THE WAY SHE USED TO LICK WHEN SHE KISSED ... IS SHE STILL YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL? I'VE LOST TRACK OF THE YEARS. I'M BLIND NOW, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER. I HEAR EVERYTHING. JUST NOW I HEARD THE WHIRRING OF WINGS BEATING AGAINST THE WALLS, SEEKING RELEASE. IT FELL BACK AND WAS STILL. THE MINOTAUR RULES HERE. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME. YOU WILL DIE OR WANDER AIMLESSLY WAITING TO DIE. THERE WAS ONCE A MAN WHO LEFT A PIECE OF HIS CLOTHING AT EVERY FORK HOPING TO RETRACE HIS WAY OUT. FINALLY HE WAS NAKED AND WANDERED IN CIRCLES, PISSING LIKE A DOG ON EVERY STONE UNTIL THE MINOTAUR FOUND HIM. OTHERS THINK THEY CAN ESCAPE BY FINDING THE SECRET FORMULA OF SEVEN WORDS AND END UP HOWLING GIBBERISH. THE FIRST THING MINOTAUR EATS IS YOUR TONGUE. SOMETIMES THAT'S ALL HE TAKES AND LETS YOU WANDER ON WITHOUT IT. THEN PERHAPS JUST A HAND OR A FOOT. SELDOM IS ANYONE KILLED OUTRIGHT. IF YOU WANT TO SURVIVE AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, LEARN TO TRUST YOUR EARS AND YOUR NOSE. FIR'AUN(15) THEY CALL ME. I WAS ONCE A KING. WHAT IS THAT TO YOU? I'VE BEEN WANDERING IN THE DARK FOR HALF A LIFETIME. NOW I AM JUST A RAT WITH A VOICE. IF YOU WANT TO GO ON, YOU'LL HAVE TO WALK OVER ME. GO ON, KICK ME OUT OF THE WAY ... OTHERWISE RETURN TO THE GALLERY OF THE DECEIVED AND AWAIT YOUR FATE ... GO ON, SHOW YOUR COURAGE.

A wheezing cough follows. Since there is no room to pass in the narrow corridor, the neophyte must climb over the old man, who groans under the weight.

Trial 2: MIGDOL (The Tower) (16)

The tunnel continues and begins to incline upwards. A long ramp leads up to a high platform, illuminated in pale blue light. Suddenly there is a crashing noise - something between the sound of a great slab of stone being dragged and the roar of Minotaur. The light goes off and the neophyte is again in total darkness.

A voice speaks from behind.

Hierophant: STOP! REMAIN WHERE YOU ARE. YOU HAVE SHOWN COURAGE TO HAVE COME THIS FAR. MANY ARE DECEIVED BY FIR'AUN, THE OLD MAN YOU HAVE JUST TRAMPLED TO DEATH. THAT WAS THE FIRST OF THE EIGHT TRIALS YOU MUST PASS.

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I AM THE HIEROPHANT. I ADMINISTER THE TRIALS OF MIGDOL, RAPHAKA AND AZEROTH, JUST AS, LONG AGO, I PREPARED THESEUS IN THE SAME WAY FOR HIS CONFRONTATION WITH MINOTAUR. YOU MAY NOT SEE ME, BUT LISTEN CAREFULLY TO MY VOICE. YOUR TOTAL CONCENTRATION IS REQUIRED. IF YOUR COURAGE FALTERS FOR ONE MOMENT, YOU WILL PENETRATE NO DEEPER INTO THE MYSTERIES OF THE LABYRINTH. DO EXACTLY AS I COMMAND. BEGIN TO INCH YOUR WAY FORWARD, SLOWLY, CAREFULLY. STOP WHEN I TELL YOU. YOU ARE ON THE TOWER OF MIDGOL. BELOW YOU IS A TERRIBLE ABYSS. FORWARD THEN ... CAREFULLY ... CAREFULLY ... STOP! YOU ARE ON THE EDGE OF A PRECIPICE. EVEN NOW A TRAP DOOR IS BEING OPENED BEFORE YOU TO EXPOSE THE TERRIBLE PIT. (Sound effects of a metal door being opened in front of the neophyte.) IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE, DO NOT MOVE. CROSS YOUR HANDS ON YOUR BREAST AND WAIT.

Far below the neophyte there is a rushing sound of wind that howls up as through a funnel.

Within the wind, shrill voices are heard shrieking.

Voices: IN THE SOUTH SCREAMS THE IBIS!

IN THE EAST THE LION ROARS!

IN THE WEST THE SNAKE HISSES!

IN THE NORTH HOWLS THE WOLF!

Trial 3: RAPHAKA (The Sword)

The voices subside, the wind abates.

Hierophant: YOU HAVE ENDURED THE TRIAL OF THE PRECIPICE. DO NOT TURN AROUND. MOVE SLOWLY BACK FROM THE TRAP DOOR. SLOWLY ... SLOWLY ... STOP THERE. FOR THE NEXT TRIAL YOU MUST DESCEND TO YOUR KNEES. DOWN THEN, AND WAIT ... IF YOU WOULD PROCEED, YOU MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU HAVE NO FEAR OF DEATH, WHATEVER FORM IT MAY TAKE. IN MY HAND I HAVE A RAPIER. BEND YOUR NECK FORWARD TO PROVE THAT YOU HAVE NO FEAR.

A sword cuts the air above the head of the neophyte, once, twice, three times.

Trial 4: AZEROTH (The Magnetic Currents)

Hierophant: YOU HAVE PASSED THE TRIAL OF RAPHAKA, THE SWORD. YOU MAY STAND IN PREPARATION FOR THE TRIAL OF AZEROTH. ON EITHER SIDE OF YOU ARE CONDUCTORS OF MAGNETIC CURRENTS. WHEN I TOUCH THE SWITCH, THESE CURRENTS BEGIN TO FLOW. WOULD YOU DARE TO RAISE YOUR ARMS SLOWLY TOWARDS THEM? SHOULD YOU ACCIDENTALLY TOUCH ONE YOU WILL DIE INSTANTLY.

The Hierophant switches on the currents. A crackling noise is heard on either side of the neophyte.

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Hierophant: I COMMAND YOU TO RAISE YOUR ARMS AND EXTEND YOUR FINGERTIPS TOWARDS THE CURRENTS OF AZEROTH.

After a few minutes the currents are switched off.

Trial 5: THE GOLDEN GOBLETS

Hierophant: YOU HAVE SHOWN GREAT COURAGE. TURN NOW AND FACE ME.

The neophyte turns to see the Hierophant for the first time. The upper part of his face is masked. He wears a long robe embroidered with strange signs. In his hands he holds two goblets.

Hierophant: TWO GOLDEN GOBLETS. THE CONTENTS OF ONE ARE POISONOUS. THE OTHER IS FILLED WITH A MARVELLOUS ELIXIR. I COMMAND YOU TO SEIZE ONE OF THE GOBLETS WITHOUT REFLECTION AND TO EMPTY IT AT A SINGLE DRAFT.

If the dismayed neophyte hesitates, the roar of the Minotaur is heard and at once a black veil drops from above. Immediate deportation to another part of the labyrinth follows. If the neophyte drinks the contents of one of the goblets the Hierophant pours the other goblet out on the floor where it flares up in flame.

Hierophant: YOU HAVE CHOSEN FORTUNATELY. BUT THERE IS A COURAGE MORE IMPORTANT THAN QUICKNESS OF DECISION, AND THAT IS THE VOLUNTARY HUMILITY THAT TRIUMPHS OVER VANITY. ARE YOU CAPABLE OF SUCH A VICTORY OVER YOURSELF? IF SO, TURN AND DESCEND FROM THE TOWER OF MIGDOL TO THE CHAMBER OF IROTH, WHERE YOUR PATIENCE WILL BE TESTED.

DESCEND NOW... DESCEND NOW... DESCEND NOW...(voice fading).

Trial 6: IROTH (Isolation)

Moving slowly forward in the darkness, the neophyte realizes that the precipice announced by the Hierophant a few moments ago does not exist. Instead there is a descending stairway followed by a dark passage leading to a doorway. As soon as the door is passed it is closed and bolted from outside. The room in which the neophyte is imprisoned is small and perfectly round, or so it would seem to the exploring hands. The walls are smooth, seamless, and shiny. A long time passes in this darkness, perhaps an hour. Then very slowly a red light grows from within a cavity in the ceiling. Brighter and brighter it grows until the great beam of a single red eye shines out of the hole and for a long moment stares directly at the neophyte, then slowly retreats again into darkness. The isolation continues in darkness for another extended period. Then abruptly the covering of a manhole slides back in the floor, revealing a hole beneath the room, barely wide enough to crawl into. The walls of this tunnel are earth.

concern about timing

Trial 7: OPHION (The Lizard)

A new voice is heard from above, a rough, impatient voice.

Voice: CRAWL! CRAWL ON YOUR KNEES AND THEN ON YOUR BELLY LIKE A BABY! CRAWL BENEATH THE MOUNTAINS OF VANITY LIKE A WORM, FOR THAT IS

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WHAT YOU ARE, A MERE WORM. WHEN YOU MEET OPHION, THE LIZARD,
WHISTLE THEN CLICK YOUR TONGUE LIKE A BEETLE: CLK, CLK, CLK,
CLK ... LET THE LIZARD KNOW YOU DO NOT CONSIDER YOURSELF
SUPERIOR TO LIZARDS AND PERHAPS SHE WILL LET YOU PASS.

The neophyte crawls through the twisting tunnel in darkness. At times the tunnel broadens so that it is possible to crawl on one's hands and knees. At other times it is so tight that one must wriggle through. Along the way there are little openings in the wall, niches with tiny scenes in them of subterranean life, illuminated with pale green or blue light. The passage may at times reek with strong odours, and the walls may crumble.

Reaching the den of Ophion, the neophyte whistles and clacks according to the instructions. The Lizard blinks but makes no move. Continuing on, the tunnel begins to grow more spacious so that finally the neophyte is able to stand up again. The walls become straight as the corridor rises. A warm light can be seen in the distance.

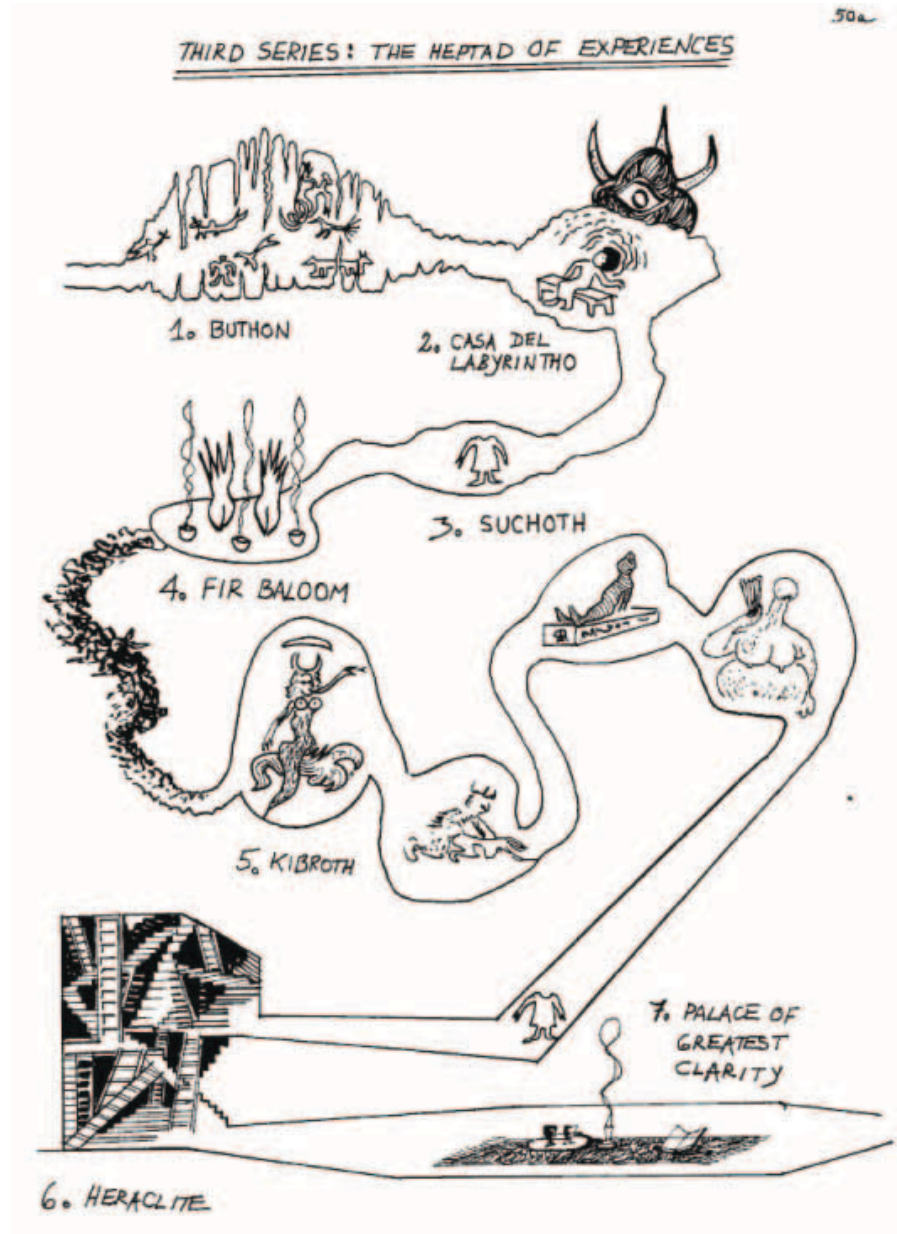
Trial 8: FIR BALOOM (Feet of Baal)

The corridor leads to two enormous cloven hooves of a creature who, if projected in scale, would be fifty metres high. From somewhere a recorded voice hurls out the following words, accompanied by a rumbling noise.

THE MASTER OF DARKNESS DWELLS ALONE,
AT THE CENTRE OF THE FOUNDATIONS HE DWELLS,
AT THE CENTRE OF THE GREAT QUAKING HE DWELLS,
PIVOTING, MOVING, SLIDING UNSEEN,
AMBLING AT LEISURE
THROUGHOUT HIS EMPIRE,
THE AVENGER AND EXTINGUISHER,
THE FIRST AND THE LAST,
LIVING FOREVER
ON THE FOOD OF HIS OWN EXCREMENT.

A deep vibrating roar accompanies the neophyte's passage between the feet through a bed of mud and manure.

Third Series: THE HEPTAD OF EXPERIENCES



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Experience 1: BUTHON (The Palace of Mythical Beings)

In the dim light the neophyte enters a kind of grotto in which stalagmites and stalactites ascend and descend to limitless heights. Here and there behind the outcroppings lurk strange creatures of no known species. All are hybrids, combining wings, snouts, paws and tails in startling combinations and vivid colours. All appear to be stuffed or sculptured, but each is constructed so that some small part occasionally moves or twitches: an eye blinks, a head tilts slightly, a tail swishes, a claw slowly opens. The movements are very widely spaced (separated by many minutes) so that the observer may doubt whether any motion has been seen at all.(17) Soft electronic music accompanies the neophyte's passage through the Palace of Mythical Beings.

Experience 2: HERACLITE

A very tall room, two stories or more. Over the entrance is an inscription: THE WAY UP IS THE SAME AS THE WAY DOWN. The room consists entirely of ladders and stairways, both descending and ascending in all directions, sometimes to blind walls, sometimes to doors or openings that seem to exist but merely lead back into the same space. Despite its contradictions, the room does contain one exit, and, finding it, the neophyte enters another room.

Experience 3: BELLUM (Forest of Brass)

The room consists of a forest of brass and stainless steel rods of varying lengths through which the neophyte must pass. It is impossible to see where one is going because of the density of metal rods. Over the vibrations of the brass a recorded male voice cries out:

Voice: BELLS! BELLUM! BELLA! BELLOW! BELLS TO COVER THE SACRIFICE!
TRAGIC BELLS WITH BLOODY MOUTHS! TRIUMPHANT BELLS WITH
GOLDEN TONGUES! BELLS THAT DANCE! BELLS THAT PRAY! COLOURED
BELLS - BLUE, GREEN, GOLD AND SILVER! BELLS FOR THE SACRED
RITUAL! BELLS TO PROTECT AND BELLS TO WARN, RIPPED FROM THE
DARKNESS OF THE EARTH, BELLS OF STARS AND BELLS OF MOONS, DIVINE
BELLS, QUIVERING, AND HOLDING...QUIVERING ...HOLDING(18)

The neophyte enters the Forest of Bells and they resound with a glittering tintinnabulation under a bright silver light.

Experience 4: LIFOLD (Gauze Curtains)

After the Forest of Brass has been passed through the bells will continue to vibrate as the neophyte moves through a series of billowing gauze curtains, illuminated in different colours. Occasionally another image or figure may be briefly seen: Theseus? Ariadne? Minotaur?

Experience 5: EOS

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A maze of full-length mirrors is encountered. The neophyte must carefully move through it distinguishing reflections from openings. Occasionally another image may fleetingly be seen. Theseus? Ariadne? Asterion?(19)

Experience 6: KIBROTH (Tombs of Lust)

A dark passage, twisting and turning back on itself. At different points a series of quick, almost subliminal images light up one after another. The images are three-dimensional models of well-known Patria characters as follows:

1. Melusina, from whose mouth the head of a snake is slowly emerging.
2. Beast is seen copulating coitus a tergo (animal fashion) with the child, Beauty.
3. A mummified Osiris rises slowly out of a coffin.
4. The very fat Queen Pasiphae sits with a fan before her face. Slowly it slides aside to reveal, instead of a head, the large erect penis of a bull.

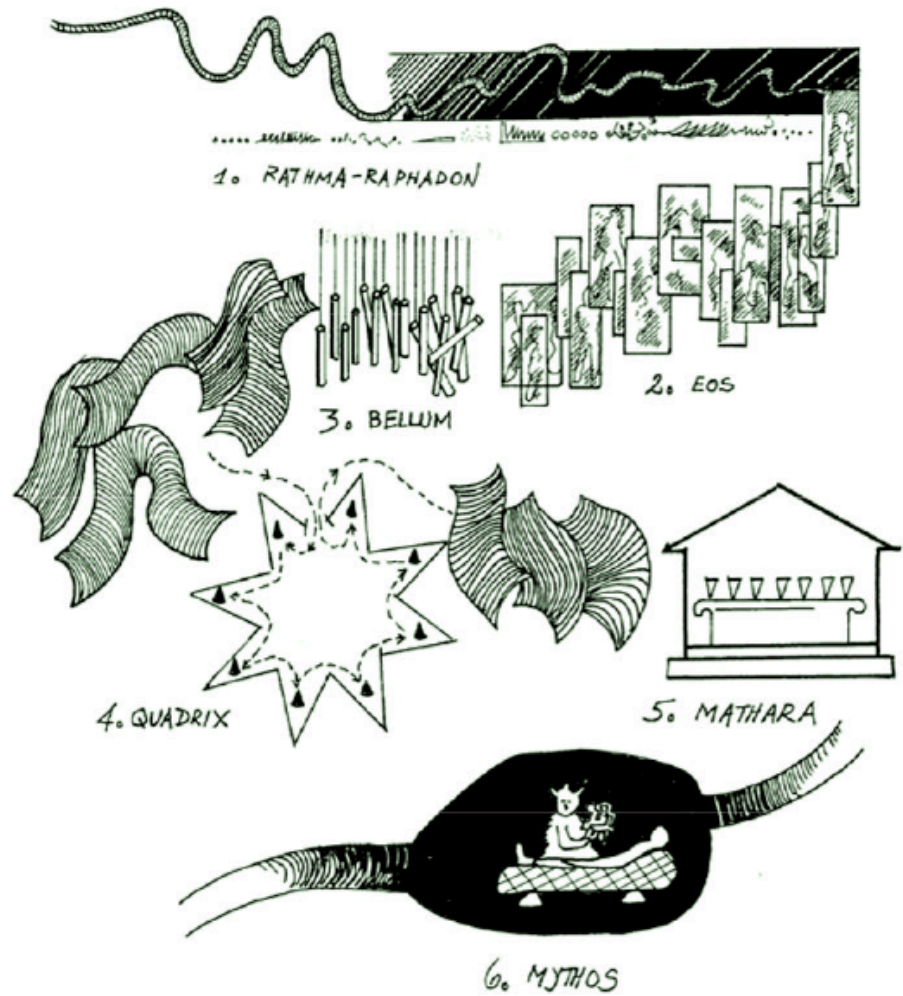
Experience 7: RATHMA-RAPHADON (The Education of the Hands and Feet)

An entrance revealing a rope, stretched along the wall and leading into blackness. The neophyte takes it and follows it down a winding tunnel. The rope is a tactile experience: at times it is as soft as fur, at times prickly or barbed; the materials from which it is made are limitless: seaweed, grass, wool, wire, skin, bark, beads, etc. The tunnel through which it passes is totally dark but contains many twists and turns. The neophyte should be barefoot for this Experience. The reason becomes evident as he or she passes down a corridor in which each footstep brings a different sensation of temperature or texture, now warm, now ice-cold, now flaky, now moist, now rough, soft, slimy or sandy.(20)

Fourth Series: THE HEXAD OF CONTEMPLATIONS

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FOURTH SERIES: THE HEXAD OF PERCEPTIONS



Note: The passages connecting the Hexad of Contemplations, by contrast with those in previous series, are on a single level. They may be narrow but are not cramped. Some of them have high

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ceilings, and a few may be decorated with arabesques or geometrical patterns in colour or in black and white. They tend to be long and straight with right angles, so that illuminated paintings or objects can be seen at the intersections from some distance. Chairs or cushions are also placed before these so that one may linger and meditate. The neophyte feels safe here.

Contemplation 1: MANDALA

A long, straight corridor, at the end of which is a well-illuminated and richly-coloured mandala, slowly revolving counter-clockwise. Around the mandala, among elaborate patterns is the following text:

SEEKER OF THE TRUTH, YOU HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE ENNEAD OF ENCOUNTERS, YOU HAVE SURVIVED THE OGDOAD OF TRIALS AND THE HEPTAD OF EXPERIENCES. YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE HEXAD OF CONTEMPLATIONS. HERE, IF YOU ALLOW IT, YOUR SPIRIT WILL GROW IN PREPARATION FOR WHAT LIES BEYOND. YOU MAY LINGER AS LONG AS YOU WISH. YOU WILL NOT BE DISTURBED, FOR MINOTAUR IS PREVENTED FROM ENTERING HERE. BE CALM AND CENTRED. LET YOUR REFLECTIONS ROTATE AT LEISURE AS YOU PASS THROUGH THESE CHAMBERS, CONTEMPLATING THE CIRCLES WHICH INCLUDE YOU AND THE ONES FROM WHICH YOU MAY AS YET BE EXCLUDED.

Contemplation 2: THE CHALDEAN INSCRIPTION

Down a long, straight corridor the neophyte sees nineteen tablets, at first merely calligraphic patterns, but gradually gaining coherence until on the last tablet the complete text is revealed.

I AM ALL THAT IS
ALL THAT HAS BEEN
ALL THAT SHALL BE
AND NONE MAY LIFT MY VEIL.(21)

Contemplation 3: PAI-K'O HSIANG-YIN (The Incense Clock)

A small circular chamber in the centre of which is an incense clock. This is a horizontal dial of very hard wood (mountain pear) or stone, inscribed with lines or pathways, rather like those of a unicursal labyrinth. The clock itself sits on a low stand in the centre of the room. The pathways inscribed on the clock's surface are just deep enough to take powdered or caked incense, which has been lit and slowly burns down the channels. Various kinds of incense are used so that the aroma changes from hour to hour. The points at which the incense changes are decorated with astrological or mythological signs or images. The dial, or the stand on which it rests, contains the following inscription:

The Ten Virtues of Incense

1. Companion in Solitude
2. Brings peace amidst activity
3. Keeps one alert

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- 4.Purifies the body
- 5.Stimulates the mind
- 6.Elevates the spirit
- 7.Evokes the transcendent
- 8.Promotes satisfaction in small things
- 9.Always remains faithful
- 10.Does no harm to anyone

The incenses in the clock's pathways are arranged to burn as follows:

- 12 o'clock: clove
- 1 o'clock: lotus
- 2 o'clock: sandalwood
- 3 o'clock: cade
- 4 o'clock: civet
- 5 o'clock: cinnamon
- 6 o'clock: geraniol
- 7 o'clock: cedarwood
- 8 o'clock: jasmine
- 9 o'clock: opopanax
- 10 o'clock: turpentine
- 11 o'clock: musk (22)

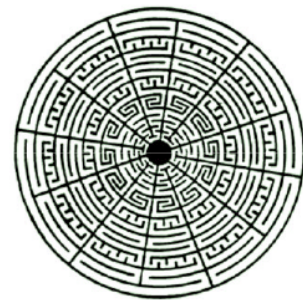


FIG. 1. One hundred graduation incense seal.
From *Man, Time, Music, etc.*

The minutes of the hour are subdivided by means of a set of five monochords with moveable bridges, arranged around the Incense Clock. Beginning on the hour, the deepest monochord plays the fundamental. Then each minute the bridge moves automatically to a new position and the mallet falls again to sound each of the intervals in turn: 1:2 (octave) 2:3 (perfect fifth) 3:4 (perfect fourth) etc. This sequence is then taken up in the same manner by the second lowest monochord during the next twelve minutes, and so on with the other higher monochords each sounding in turn until the hour is reached when the incense will change and the lowest monochord begins the sequence again. (23)

Contemplation 4: PALINDROME

Leaving the area of the Incense Clock, the neophyte passes a palindrome, the first part of which appears in white on black, then reverses to black on white with the reversal of the message.

White on black back-ground

APPROACHING THE CENTRE OF THE LABYRINTH WITH ARIADNE,

I SAW HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME,

PEERING FROM BEHIND A WALL,

A SHAPE AMID SHADOWS,

GLEAMING EYES...

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THREE HORNS...
A CLOSER LOOK -
I KNEW ITS SECRET.
Black on white back-ground
A CLOSER LOOK -
THREE HORNS...
GLEAMING EYES...
A SHAPE AMID SHADOWS,
PEERING FROM BEHIND A WALL,
I SAW HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME,
APPROACHING THE CENTRE OF THE LABYRINTH WITH ARIADNE.

Contemplation 5: QUADRIX (The Spice Garden)

A star-shaped room with eight points. Each point contains a mound of a particularly redolent spice as follows:

- 1.Cumin
- 2.Coriander
- 3.Cardamom
- 4.Dill
- 5.Anise
- 6.Ginger
- 7.Nutmeg
- 8.Cinnamon

The visit to Quadrix is accompanied by a recording of the third movement of Schafer's Third String Quartet.

Contemplation 6: MYTHOS (The Immaculate Perception)

A winding tunnel leads the neophyte to a round room in the centre of which is a couch. The room is illuminated by a single candle. A figure in a long robe with face veiled motions the neophyte to lie down on the couch. The candle casts shadows on the ceiling as the robed figure moves about. Then a cloth is draped over the eyes of the neophyte and the entire story of Theseus, Ariadna, the Minotaur and the Labyrinth is told by a sequence of aural, tactile, olfactory and gustative sensations. Perhaps the sensations are introduced with a few paratactic phrases or single words, as follows:

<u>WORD</u>	<u>SOUND</u>	<u>TOUCH</u>	<u>SCENT</u>	<u>TASTE</u>
OCEAN	waves	waterspray	seaweed	
SAND	distant waves		sand;	wind seaweed -
SUN		heat lamp	geraniol	
FEAST	dance music ?		?	cake; sweet wine

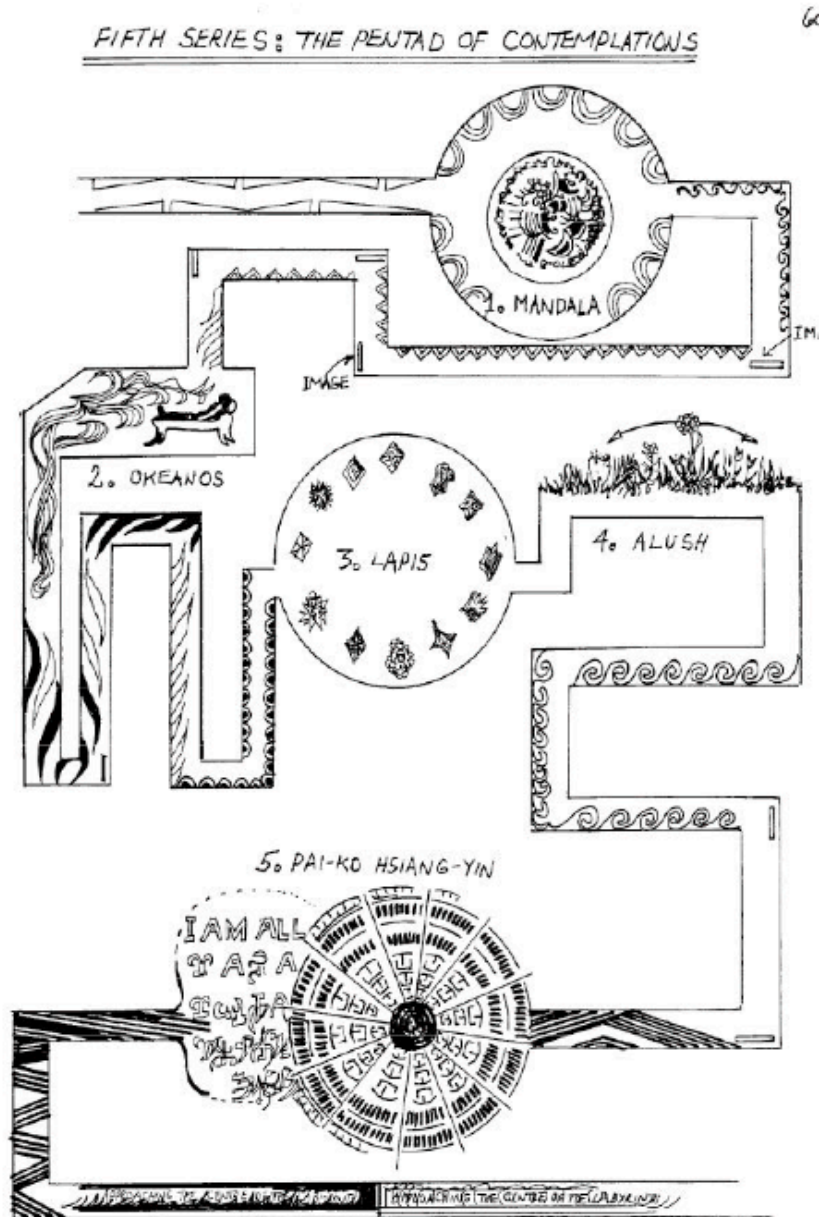
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SLAVE chains musk -
PRINCESS jewelry fabric jasmine -
(ankle bells) (silk)
MOON - coolness; moonstone - -
LOVE whispering voices jasmine & musk
LABYRINTH - a miniature labyrinth through which the fingers may pass.

The neophyte is encouraged to explore all the corridors of the labyrinth with a finger. At the end a hand grasps the initiate's hand firmly. The hand feels furry. Perhaps there is a strong animal smell accompanying the touch of the hand. Another hand or paw removes the blindfold. The candle has been extinguished so that the room is in total darkness. Slowly a drape is removed from a secret doorway revealing a creature without a head: Socoth.

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Fifth Series: THE PENTAD OF REVELATIONS



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Revelation 1: SOCOTH (The Headless Wonder)(24)

Socoth wears a shabby coat. His hand is thrust out as if asking for alms. It is impossible to discern what the voice is saying. It just mumbles incoherently, though perhaps with a slight pleading quality. The hand plucks at the neophyte; he wishes to conduct him down a corridor that will eventually open out into a forest.

Socoth conducts the neophyte through a woodland labyrinth of twists and turns, muttering from time to time but quite incoherently. The forest labyrinth is strewn with bones of deceased animals (or humans) and other relics from the past, such as the “carcasses” of old cars. The path also exhibits statements such as the following:

YOU DON'T GET LOST IN A LABYRINTH. YOU FIND YOURSELF.

YOU DON'T MEET THE MINOTAUR IN A LABYRINTH.

YOU MEET YOURSELF.

*

A HONEY POT FOR ALL THE GODS.

A HONEY POT FOR THE MISTRESS OF THE LABYRINTH.

(Minoan Linear B inscription referring to Ariadne)

*

IF WE WISH TO OUTLINE AN ARCHITECTURE WHICH CONFORMS
TO THE STRUCTURE OF OUR SOUL IT WOULD HAVE TO BE
CONCEIVED IN THE IMAGE OF A LABYRINTH.

Eventually the trail leads to a beehive-shaped room.

Revelation 2: THE PALACE OF GREATEST CLARITY

On a tray stand two cups of tea. One cup bears the inscription: “The Water of Forgetfulness.”

The other cup bears the inscription: “The Water of Memory.” The first tea is salty, the second sweet. The tray also contains a book or register in which the neophyte is asked to record answers to the following questions:

1. What has been the strongest experience in the labyrinth up to now?

2. What would I like most to forget?

3. What will I never forget?

4. What have I learned within the labyrinth?

5. What advice would I leave for those who may come after me?

The neophyte may linger here reading the comments left in the book by other visitors, including comments from Theseus, Ariadne, Daedalus or unknown visitors to the labyrinth who have long since perished. (25)

After a short while Socoth, who has left the neophyte alone, returns to lead him on through the forest maze.

Revelation 3: CASA DEL LABYRINTHO

In a grotto there is a crevice before which is a stone bench. If seated on the bench, one might hear a whispering voice coming from a small hole in the crevice:

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Voice: CAN YOU HEAR ME? I DARE ONLY WHISPER SO AS NOT TO AROUSE MINOTAUR. WHO AM I? A VICTIM JUST LIKE YOU. ISN'T IT AMAZING TO THINK THAT FREEDOM MAY ONLY BE A WALL AWAY? ON ONE SIDE THE VICTIM; ON THE OTHER SIDE GOD...AND THIS IS HIS PALACE OF DUNGEONS AND BALLROOMS - BOTH ARE NECESSARY. YOU KNOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN WATCHED CONSTANTLY, EVEN IN THE DARKEST PLACES? I DON'T MEAN BY CAMERAS, I MEAN BY EYES, REAL EYES, EITHER THE BEADY EYES OF INSECTS, OR THE SOFT EYES OF... BUT DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE DECEPTION.

I'M TRYING TO SOLVE THE RIDDLE, JUST LIKE YOU. I CALCULATE IT LIKE THIS: TO GET FROM A TO B, YOU FIRST HAVE TO GO THROUGH C, WHICH LIES BETWEEN THEM; BUT BEFORE THAT YOU MUST PASS D, BETWEEN A AND C. AND SO ON IN INFINITE REGRESSION SO THAT GETTING ANYWHERE IS ACTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE. I'M CONVINCED NOW THAT THE LABYRINTH IS ONE OF INFINITE REGRESS TO A CENTRE THAT DOESN'T EXIST.

THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT: EVERY ADVANCE LEADING TO A RETREAT, QUESTIONS AFTER ANSWERS; AND THE MORE THE SEEKERS, THE FEWER THE FINDERS. SEEK NOTHING... YOU WILL LIVE LONGER. THAT'S THE ONLY

-

A monstrous roar interrupts the voice. This is one of the roars of the Minotaur that has been heard intermittently at different places and times throughout the labyrinth grounds. Simultaneously with the roar Socoth reappears and points down the path in the direction the neophyte must travel.

Revelation 4: NASUN

At the side of the path there is a tent in which there is a table and a chair. On the table are arranged seven coloured strips of paper. Above them is an inscription reading as follows:

ON THE SEVEN STRIPS OF COLOURED PAPER WRITE DOWN THE SEVEN MOST PRECIOUS THINGS IN YOUR LIFE - THOSE THAT MAKE IT MOST WORTH LIVING. WHEN YOU HAVE DONE THIS, PROCEED DOWN THE PATH.

After completing the assignment the neophyte moves down the path. At six different points there are niches, inhabited by full-size statues of Egyptian gods: RA, The Sun God; NUT, Sky; GEB, Earth; SHU, Air; TEFNUT, Moisture, and THOTH, Magic. An inscription above the first statue says:

GIVE ME THAT WHICH YOU LEAST CHERISH. PLACE IT IN MY MOUTH. YOU MUST LIVE WITHOUT IT.

Having done this, the neophyte continues on to the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth statues, each of which requests that which is cherished least and requires it to be surrendered. The neophyte now has only one strip of paper left on which is written whatever was considered the

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most precious of all. Down the path Balsides is waiting. He is wearing a long, Egyptian- style robe, but wears no mask. He speaks gently.

Balsides: GIVE ME THE PAPER YOU HAVE KEPT WHILE RELINQUISHING ALL THE OTHERS.

Balsides takes the paper, looks at what is written on it, then looks at the neophyte for a long while, and finally burns the paper in an ashen urn.

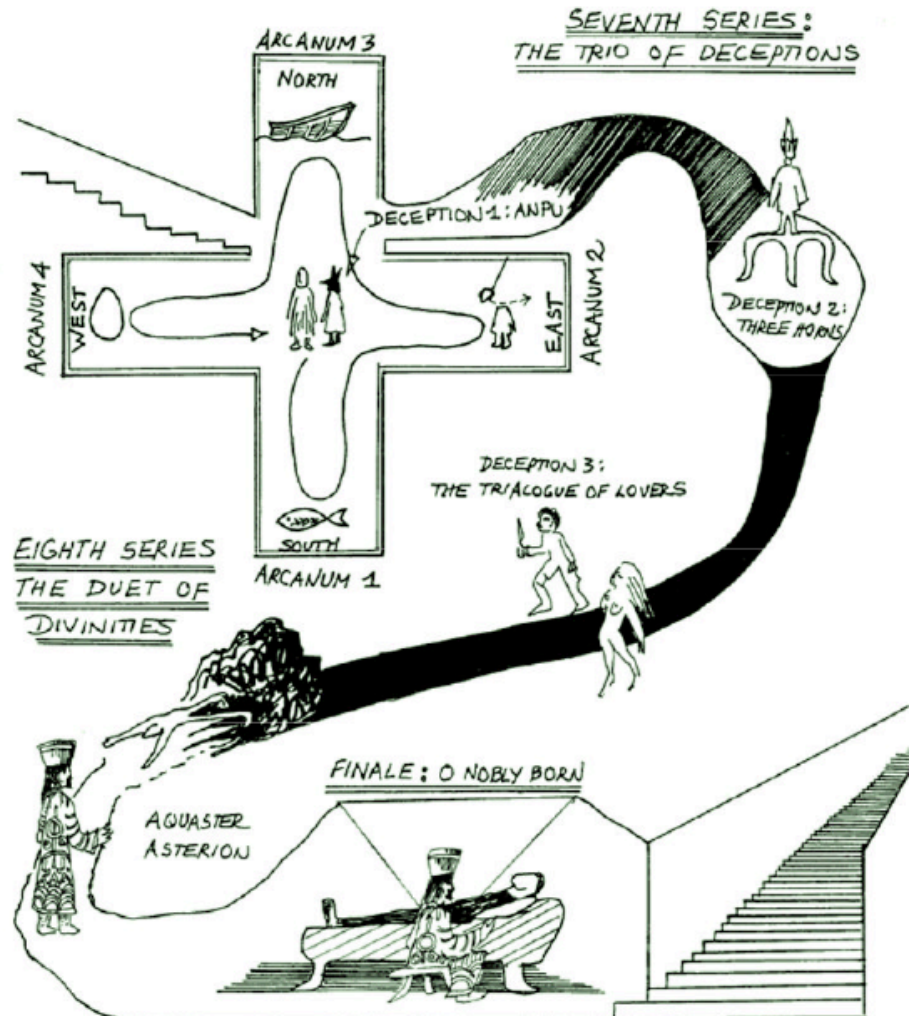
Revelation 5: ALUSH (Sap of the Moon Plant)

In an opening of the forest the neophyte approaches a chair. A sign invites him or her to sit in it and admire the view. Perhaps the view is across a pond. A variety of trees are visible. While observing the scene the neophyte is astonished to see one tree moving slowly across the horizon and back again to its original position.

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Sixth Series: THE TETRAD OF ARCANA

SIXTH SERIES: THE TETRAD OF ARCANA



From the distance Hermes Trismegistos approaches. He wears an elaborately-embroidered robe. He stops some distance from the neophyte and speaks:

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Hermes: SO YOU HAVE PENETRATED SAFELY AS FAR AS THE TETRAD OF ARCANA. THE ARCANA ARE LIMITLESS IN NUMBER BUT FOUR HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO EXPLAIN THE ENIGMAS AND CONTRADICTIONS OF THE LABYRINTH OF ASTERION. FOUR ARE THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS: FIRE, AIR, WATER AND EARTH, AND FOUR ARE THEIR POWERS: HEAT, COLD, WETNESS AND DRYNESS. ENDLESSLY THEY CROSS, RENEWING AND EXTINGUISHING ONE ANOTHER. FIRE CONSUMES EARTH AND AIR AND IS EXTINGUISHED BY WATER. AIR FEEDS FIRE, EVAPORATES WATER AND IS STABILIZED BY EARTH. WATER FEEDS EARTH, EVAPORATES IN AIR AND IS ARRESTED BY FIRE. EARTH IS NOURISHED BY WATER, CONSUMED BY FIRE AND RESISTS AIR. THE CREATIVE DESTRUCTION OF THE ELEMENTS IS ENDLESS AND UNQUENCHABLE.

Arcanum 1: KHIDR (The Fish)

Hermes Trismegistos moves down a short path to the south that leads to the edge of a small lake or pond. The effigy of a fish painted gold and silver is mounted at the edge of the water.

Hermes: ONCE THREE MEN WERE IN A BOAT FISHING. THEY CAUGHT A BEAUTIFUL FISH WITH A HEAD THAT WAS GOLD AND A BODY THAT WAS SILVER. THEY CAME ASHORE TO DISCUSS WHAT TO DO WITH THE BEAUTIFUL FISH. THE FIRST MAN SAID: "I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A BEAUTIFUL FISH. IT MUST BE THE TRICK OF A MAGICIAN. WE SHOULD THROW IT BACK INTO THE LAKE." THE SECOND MAN SAID: "MY RELIGION FORBIDS ME TO EAT FISH UNTIL AFTER SUNDOWN. LET US REST UNTIL SUNDOWN AND REFLECT ON THE MATTER. THEN WE WILL DECIDE WHAT TO DO."
THE THIRD MAN SAID NOTHING, SO THEY LAY DOWN TO REST, AND DOZED OFF TO SLEEP. WHEN THEY AWOKE, THE FISH WAS GONE. "WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE BEAUTIFUL FISH?" EXCLAIMED THE FIRST TWO MEN TOGETHER. THE THIRD MAN REPLIED: "IN MY SLEEP, GOD APPEARED TO ME AND SAID 'EAT THE FISH,' SO I AROSE AND ATE IT."

Arcanum 2: BANAIM (Balance)

Hermes Trismegistos now moves down a path to the east. A figure, identical to Hermes, is seen here. Approaching it, Hermes pushes the head and it begins to swing back and forth, free of the body. It is hanging from a long pendulum.

Hermes: EAST, SUMMER, AIR, SOLSTICE.
EVERYTHING RUNS TO ITS OPPOSITE,
SUMMER TO WINTER, WINTER TO SUMMER.
BENEVOLENCE RUNS TO WEAKNESS,
DISCERNMENT RUNS TO CRAFTINESS,
FAITH RUNS TO OBSTINACY,
GENEROSITY RUNS TO EXTRAVAGANCE,

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HONESTY RUNS TO AWKWARDNESS,
COURTESY RUNS TO SOPHISTICATION,
FRUGALITY RUNS TO MEANNESS,
COURAGE RUNS TO BESTIALITY,
AND EVERYTHING RUNS BACK AGAIN.
THAT WHICH IS BELOW IS THE SAME AS THAT WHICH IS ABOVE,
THAT WHICH IS RIGHT IS THE SAME AS THAT WHICH IS LEFT,
TO ACCOMPLISH THE SAME MIRACLE.(26)
TO ASCEND WITHOUT DESCENDING,
TO FLEX WITHOUT RETRACTING,
TO GRATIFY WITHOUT SURRENDERING
IS STERILE, AND LEADS TO DEATH.
HURRY SLOWLY - THE DOLPHIN AND THE ANCHOR,
THE BUTTERFLY AND THE CRAB,
YIN AND YANG,
OPPOSED, UNITED.
THIS IS THAT.

Arcanum 3: THESEUS'S BOAT

Hermes next moves down a path to the north, where the ribs of a boat are seen sunk in sand.

Hermes leads the neophyte to it and speaks.

Hermes: HE TRAVELLED OVER WATER TO ACHIEVE FAME. HE WAS A STRONG YOUTH AND BOLD. HE COULD HAVE AVOIDED GOING, FOR THE VICTIMS WERE SELECTED BY LOT, BUT HE VOLUNTEERED. HE WAS FILLED WITH DESIRE TO RID THE AEGEAN OF THE CURSE OF THE MINOTAUR. WITH THE HELP OF ARIADNE HE SUCCEEDED - BUT YOU KNOW ALL THIS. HE RETURNED TO ATHENS, WHERE HE RULED AS KING UNTIL HIS DEATH. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS DEATH ARE UNCERTAIN. ALL ATHENS MOURNED HIS DEATH. HE WAS BURIED IN THE CENTRE OF THE CITY AND HIS BOAT WAS PRESERVED AS A MONUMENT TO HIS TRIUMPH IN CRETE. AND THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE THIRD ARCANUM: THESEUS'S BOAT. THE MATTER HAS BEEN DISCUSSED BY ALL THE PHILOSOPHERS: XENOPHENES, HERACLITUS, PARAMANIDES, EMPHEDOCLES; EVERYONE OF NOTE. I HAVE MYSELF PARTICIPATED IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS. WELL THEN, AT FIRST THE BOAT WAS EXHIBITED AS A PRECIOUS RELIC OF THE SUCCESS IN CRETE. BUT WITH TIME IT BECAME NECESSARY TO DO SOME RESTORATION WORK ON IT. FIRST ONE BEAM AND THEN ANOTHER ROTTED AWAY AND HAD TO BE REPLACED, SO THAT IN THE END EVERYTHING OF THE ORIGINAL HAD BEEN RECREATED, INTRODUCING THE FAMOUS PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE AS TO WHETHER THE VESSEL WAS STILL THESEUS'S BOAT. CAN SOMETHING BE PERFECTLY TRANSFORMED INTO SOMETHING ELSE? CAN ANYTHING OUTLIVE ITS ORIGINAL FORM,

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AND STILL BE TRUE TO ITSELF? IS SOMETHING LESS VALUABLE WHEN IT IS COPIED, OR DOES IT RETAIN ITS VALUE?

YOU ARE CHANGING EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE. NOT A CENTIMETRE OF YOUR SKIN OR BONE REMAINS THE SAME. YET YOU THINK YOU ARE TRUE TO YOURSELF WHILE YOU ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING INTO ANOTHER SELF, AND ANOTHER SELF, AND ANOTHER... YOU LIVE IN AN AGE THAT ADORES REPRODUCTIONS. YOUR WHOLE LIFE IS SURROUNDED WITH DUBS AND FACSIMILES. SO I IMAGINE THAT FOR YOU THE DEBATE IS SETTLED IN FAVOUR OF THE COPY, PROVIDED IT IS ENGINEERED WITH ABSOLUTE PERFECTION.

WHY NOT? TWO TRUTHS ARE BETTER THAN ONE. BUT YOUR FAITH IN THE MECHANICAL COPY WOULD DIMINISH IF WE APPLIED IT TO YOU YOURSELF. CAN THERE BE ANOTHER PERSON EXACTLY LIKE YOU? CAN THERE BE ANOTHER PERSON LIKE THESEUS, AND ANOTHER, AND ANOTHER, PENETRATING THE LABYRINTH JUST AS HE DID TO CONFRONT AN IDENTICAL MINOTAUR WITH THE IDENTICAL CONSEQUENCES? IS THIS A PERFECT REPLICATION OF THE LABYRINTH? AM I HERMES TRISMEGISTOS? IF I AM NOT, THEN ALL IS FALSE. THE BOAT IS FALSE, THE LABYRINTH IS FALSE, HERMES IS NOT HERE AND YOU ARE NOT HERE EITHER.

Arcanum 4: THE SPHERE OF SELFHOOD

Hermes Trismegistos moves down the western path. At the end of it a large egg-shaped sculpture is illuminated in warm, yellow light.

Hermes: THE SELF IS ONE.

UNMOVING, IT MOVES FASTER THAN THE MIND.

THE SENSES LAG, BUT SELF RUNS AHEAD.

UNMOVING IT OUTFRONS PURSUIT.

OUT OF SELF COMES THE BREATH THAT IS THE LIFE OF ALL THINGS.

UNMOVING IT MOVES,

IS FAR AWAY, YET NEAR,

WITHIN ALL, OUTSIDE ALL.

THE SELF IS EVERYWHERE,

WITHOUT BODY,

WITHOUT SHAPE,

WHOLE, PURE, WISE,

ALL KNOWING,

SELF-DEPENDENT,

ALL-TRANSCENDING.

THE CENTRE OF SELF IS EVERYWHERE,

THE CIRCUMFERENCE IS NOWHERE.

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IT IS EVERYTHING; IT IS NOTHING.
THE SELF CIRCLES ENDLESSLY WITHOUT CAUSE.
HOW THEN CAN IT DIE OR BE KILLED?
WHOEVER THINKS THE SELF CAN DIE OR BE KILLED
IS IGNORANT.
WHOEVER SAYS THE SELF IS UNKNOWN, KNOWS.⁽²⁷⁾

Hermes Trismegistos remains for some time gazing at the egg before leading the neophyte down a lengthy fifth path through the forest.

Seventh Series: THE TRIO OF DECEPTIONS

Deception 1: ANPU RETURNS

Hermes Trismegistos puts on the mask of Anubis to speak to the neophyte. The voice of Anubis is different from that of Hermes - harsher and rather cynical.

Anubis: YOU ARE NEARING THE COMPLETION OF YOUR LIFE IN THE LABYRINTH. YOU ALONE KNOW TO WHAT EXTENT THE EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN VALUABLE. WE ARE MERE INSTRUMENTS IN THE PROCESS - ACTORS WITH MASKS AND DISGUISES, WARPING OUR IDENTITIES, MOUTHING LINES BEQUEATHED TO US FROM SCROLLS OF HISTORY AND LEGEND. I SUPPOSE WE MIGHT CALL THIS THE FINAL COUNTDOWN: A TRIO OF PROTAGONISTS: THESEUS, ARIADNE, AND MINOTAUR- ASTERION. AND THEN THERE IS YOU - ARE YOU HERE TO PLAY THE PART OF SURVIVOR OR VICTIM? WELL, THAT'S NOT MY CONCERN. I RETURN NOW TO THE ENTRANCE WHERE WE FIRST MET TO WAIT FOR OTHERS SEEKING ENLIGHTENMENT THROUGH DARKNESS. WE WILL NOT MEET AGAIN.
OH, THE DENOUEMENT IS IN THAT DIRECTION. FAREWELL.

Deception 2: THE THREE HORNS

A path leads the neophyte towards a meadow, where Daedalus is encountered polishing a statue of three shiny horns.

Daedalus: PRECISELY ON TIME! A MAGNIFICENT EFFIGY, ISN'T IT? OH, YOU THOUGHT THEY'D BE WORN ON MINOTAUR. THAT'S ONLY WHEN HE GOES PROWLING. NOT IN THE LABYRINTH. VICTIMS SUCCUMB WITHOUT ANY NEED TO SPEAR THEM. WHY THREE HORNS, YOU WONDER? OTHERS HAVE ASKED THE SAME QUESTION EVER SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE AFFAIR. LET ME EXPLAIN IT TO YOU. THE INTERIOR OF THE HORN HAS TWO CONTRASTING CHARACTERISTICS: EITHER IT CAN BE FILLED WITH SOMETHING OR IT CAN BE EMPTIED OF SOMETHING. EITHER IT IS A RECEPTACLE OR A CORNUCOPIA. IT EITHER GIVES OR RECEIVES. THE POINTED EXTERIOR, HOWEVER, HAS ONLY ONE FUNCTION AND THAT IS TO

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PENETRATE SOMETHING MORE PLIABLE THAN ITSELF. THESE THREE CONTRASTING CHARACTERISTICS MAKE IT A VERY DECEPTIVE TOOL, AND THEREFORE APPROPRIATE FOR THE PROTEAN CREATURE POSSESSING THEM. BUT WHY THREE HORNS, WHEN ONE OR TWO WOULD DO? AFTER YEARS OF BURNISHING THEM, I'VE COME TO SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THAT. THE FIRST HORN SYMBOLIZES CREATION. IT PUNCTUATES EACH DAY WITH ASSERTIVE THRUSTS IN ALL DIRECTIONS. BUT CREATION IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT DESTRUCTION. FOR EACH NEW THING TO LIVE, SOMETHING MUST DIE. THE FIRST CONDITION OF ALL NEW CREATION IS THE SACRIFICE OF LIFE. TO INVENT IS TO KILL. THAT IS THE MEANING OF THE SECOND HORN. THEN WHAT DOES THE THIRD HORN SIGNIFY? THE BLIND HOPE THAT THIS CYCLE OF CREATION AND DESTRUCTION LEADS TO ADVANCEMENT. THE FAITH THAT EACH NEW INVENTION IS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER ITS SLAUGHTERED PREDECESSOR. BLIND HOPE IN PROGRESS. MOUNT THESE HORNS TOGETHER AND WHAT DO YOU GET? THE GREAT HETEROCLITE OF LIFE IN ALL ITS DECLENSIONS, ROMPING, GRAPPLING, HURLING, DRAGGING ITSELF TO ITS OWN INELUCTABLE DESTINY. IT'S THE LAW THAT RULES THE UNIVERSE, FROM THE INVISIBLE ATOM TO THE PLANETS AND THE STARS, FROM THE INFUSORIA TO THE HIGHEST GODS OF HEAVEN. ALL POSSIBLE SITUATIONS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE HORNS OF CREATION, DESTRUCTION AND BLIND HOPE. THE LABYRINTH ITSELF IS A CREATION TO BE DESTROYED BY THE HERO OR HEROINE MOST BLINDED BY HOPE. THAT IS THE DRAMA INTO WHICH YOU HAVE WILLED YOURSELF. GO ON NOW, INTO THE DARKNESS, INTO THE BLINDNESS, HOPEFULLY.

Daedalus blindfolds the neophyte and departs.

Deception 3: MINOTAUR

A long pause. Then a figure is heard slowly approaching the neophyte. At times a pawing of the ground is heard suggesting a large animal with hooves. The steps stop in front of the neophyte. Pause, then a voice is heard.

Minotaur: WE HAVE MET BEFORE IN THE CORRIDORS OF ASTERION. I COULD HAVE EATEN YOU FOR MY DINNER, BUT I SPARED YOU. WHY? NO PARTICULAR REASON. AND NOW HERE WE ARE NEARING THE END OF YOUR JOURNEY. THE FIGURES YOU HAVE MET HERE HAVE ALL RETURNED TO THEIR PLACES FOR FUTURE VISITORS, AND WILL ACT OUT THEIR ROLES AGAIN IN AN IDENTICAL MANNER. FOR THEM EVOLUTION IS IMPOSSIBLE. THEY CANNOT BREAK FREE OF THEIR OWN MYTHOLOGY. THESEUS WILL GO ON KILLING MINOTAUR. ARIADNE WILL GO ON SINGING BEAUTIFUL SONGS TO INSPIRE HIM; AND DAEDALUS WILL GO ON DIVISING DECEPTIONS. AND I? YES, OF COURSE I WILL GO ON KILLING AND DEVOURING WHOMEVER I

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PLEASE. WE'LL MEET AGAIN - IN YOUR NIGHTMARES. FOR
NOW...FAREWELL.

The hoof beats move off followed by a long pause.

Eighth Series: THE DUET OF LOVERS

Duet 1: THESEUS AND ARIADNE

Two voices are heard, one on each side of the neophyte, whispering intensely.

Ariadne: SHSHSH! SOMEONE'S HERE. I HEARD THEM.

Theseus: I HEARD NOTHING.

Ariadne: I CAN SMELL THEM.

(Pause)

Theseus: IT'S YOUR IMAGINATION. GIVE ME YOUR HAND.

Theseus and Ariadne each take a hand of the neophyte and slowly
move forward.

Ariadne: YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO KILL A GOD.

Theseus: I KNOW MY JOB.

Ariadne: CUT IT IN HALF AND YOU DOUBLE IT.

Theseus: ONE STROKE IN THE RIGHT PLACE IS ALL IT WILL TAKE.

Ariadne: THEN I WILL GUIDE YOU OUT.

Theseus: YOU ARE MY GUIDE...

Ariadne: I AM NAKED.

Theseus: VOICE LIKE A VIRGIN, BUT IN REALITY AN ANIMAL.

Ariadne: DON'T DISMISS THE PROFANE THAT REVEALS THE SACRED.

Theseus: WHEN YOU CAME TO ME IN THE MOONLIGHT THAT FIRST TIME YOU
WANTED ME TO TRIUMPH.

Ariadne: YOU WERE SO FAIR, WITH GOLDEN HAIR AND EYES BLACK AS A
RAVEN'S.

Theseus: BUT YOU KNEW I NEEDED TO TRIUMPH OVER THE MONSTER. I'VE OFTEN
WILLED VICTORY FOR MYSELF ALONE, BUT WITH YOU IT'S DIFFERENT.

Ariadne: THE VICTORY WILL BELONG TO US BOTH. DO YOU HAVE THE KNIFE?

Theseus: YES.

The three figures move forward cautiously. Suddenly, the roar of Minotaur is heard very close.
The neophyte is pushed to the ground. The flapping of wings moving into the distance is
followed by silence.

Duet 2: ABANDONMENT

The neophyte is left alone for a long time. Perhaps there is some music faintly heard from the
distance. Perhaps not.

Finale: O NOBLY-BORN

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After a long pause a hand is extended to the neophyte who is still on the ground. On rising, the blindfold is removed and the neophyte stands before a figure dressed in white. The face is that of the lecturer in the prologue to Asterion - a neutral face, mature, sexless, with three small horns on the brow. After staring intently at the neophyte for some time, Asterion speaks.

Asterion: ALL YOUR LIFE YOU HAVE FEARED FACING ME. NOW I AM HERE AS YOUR DELIVERER. YOU KNOW THAT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED HERE HAS COME FROM WITHIN YOURSELF. THE FIGURES YOU HAVE MET ARE PROJECTIONS FROM YOUR DREAMS. THE EXPERIENCES YOU HAVE LIVED THROUGH, THE HORRORS YOU HAVE OVERCOME, ARE THE NIGHTMARES OF YOUR OWN MIND. O NOBLY BORN, NOW YOU WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY WISH TO CLING TO IT OUT OF WEARINESS. GO NOW INTO THE LIGHT THAT IS BEFORE YOU. ENTER THE BRIGHTNESS THAT YOU MISTOOK FOR DARKNESS. THE DEATH OF GOD IS THE BIRTH OF GOD; AND THERE ARE NO GODS IF YOU YOURSELF ARE NOT A GOD.

Asterion kisses the neophyte who then turns towards a final maze; but this is unicursal and merely three or four feet high. It is painted with bright colours and perhaps the text which a children's choir sings (recorded) as the neophyte departs, is printed on the walls of the exit.

Choir: NOW YOU HAVE PUT AWAY ALL DESIRES.

YOUR SPIRIT IS STABLE IN ITSELF.

YOU HAVE REMOVED ALL CRAVINGS OF THE HEART.

YOU ARE ILLUMINATED.

YOU ARE NOT SHAKEN BY ADVERSITY.

YOU ARE NOT TOUCHED BY SORROW.

YOU ARE FREE FROM FEAR, FREE FROM ANGER,

FREE FROM DESIRE FOR PLEASURE.

YOU ARE ILLUMINATED.

WHEN YOU ARE LUCKY YOU DO NOT REJOICE,

WHEN YOU ARE UNLUCKY YOU DO NOT WEEP,

THE BONDS OF THE FLESH ARE BROKEN.

YOU ARE ILLUMINATED.

AS THE TORTOISE DRAWS IN ITS LEGS,

YOU DRAW IN YOUR SENSES

TO BECOME ILLUMINATED.

RESTRAIN YOURSELF,

REMAIN DISCIPLINED,

THINK ON THE HIGHEST,

REMAIN ILLUMINATED.

BUT EVEN ONE WHO KNOWS THE PATH

CAN BE DRAGGED FROM THE PATH

BY UNRULY SENSES.

THE MIND CAN BE CARRIED TO DESIRE.

FROM DESIRE ARISES WRATH,

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FROM WRATH ARISES INFATUATION,
FROM INFATUATION, LOSS OF MEMORY,
FROM LOSS OF MEMORY, LOSS OF MIND.
THEN YOU WILL PERISH.
BUT WHEN YOUR MIND IS DISCIPLINED,
YOU MOVE AMONG THE OBJECTS OF SENSE
WITH THE SENSES FREE OF ATTACHMENT.
SORROWS MELT INTO CLEAR PEACE.
YOU REMAIN ILLUMINATED. ⁽²⁸⁾

ENDNOTES

- 1) Sir Arthur Evans, *The Palace of Minos*, 7 Vols. (New York, 1964).
- 2) Hans Georg Wunderlich, *The Secret of Crete*, (New York, 1974).
- 3) Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 2 (Penguin Books, 1954), pp.188-94.
- 4) Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, (New York 1955), p.297.
- 5) Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (New York, 1949), p.104.
- 6) Donald A. Preziosi, "Harmonic Design in Minoan Architecture," *Fibonacci Quarterly*, VI, vi (1968), pp.370-85.
- 7) Iamblichus, *The Theory of Arithmetic*, trans. Robin Waterhouse, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1988), p.87ff.
- 8) Plato, *Greater Hippias*, Trans. B.Jowett (Oxford, 1953), p.282a.
- 9) Reference: Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Princeton University Press, 1972, pp.91-92.
- 10) Compare Editing Unit 13 of RA.
- 11) The Inscriptions in Ectocretan are from Schafer's book *Dicamus et Labyrinthos*, (And let us speak of labyrinths).
- 12) The text is by Novalis, with music by Schafer.
- 13) Harut and Marut, are angels of Babylon sent to deceive, mentioned in the Koran 2:102.
- 14) Paraphrase of Euripedes' *Bacchae* 862 by R.M.S.
- 15) Fir'aun - Arabic for Pharaoh.
- 16) This and some of the trials to follow, are mentioned in Paul Christian's *The History and Practice of Magic*, The Citadel Press 1969.
- 17) An inventory of some possible creatures is given in *Patria 3: The Greatest Show*, Editing Unit E 5. Also see Borges' *Book of Imaginary Beings*, Avon Books, New York, 1969.
- 18) Pythagoras called the sound caused by striking on brass "the voice of a daimon enclosed in the brass." Porphyry, "Life of Pythagoras," *Pythagorean Sourcebook*, Phanes Press, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1987, p. 131. There is a relationship between the words spoken here and Magister's speech in *Patria 4: The Black Theatre of Hermes Trismegistos*, (E.U. 1) The word bell derives from the Anglo-Saxon word *bellum*, meaning 'to bellow', and is probably related to

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the Latin bellum, meaning 'war'. Hence the play on words.

19) "Mirrors and copulation are abominable because they increase the number of men." Jorge Luis Borges, *Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius*.

20) Note from Rabindranath Tagore, "My School," in *Lectures and Addresses*, London 1955, pp.23-24. "Naturally the soles of our feet are so made that they become the best instruments for us to stand upon the earth and to walk with.

From the day we commenced to wear shoes we minimized the purpose of our feet. With the lessening of their responsibility they have lost their dignity, and now they lend themselves to be pampered with socks, slippers and shoes of all prices and shapes and misproportions. For us it amounts to a grievance against God for not giving us hooves instead of beautifully sensitive feet."

21) R.M.Schafer, *The Chaldean Inscription*, Arcana Editions, 1978.

22) "Another aspect of the incense clocks in Japan is the possible use of several incense recipes for indicating the time intervals. It is entirely possible that the pegs or tablets marked with the zodiacal characters inserted along the incense trail to denote time intervals could in actuality be tablets of hard-paste incense, each made from a different recipe. When the progressive burning of the path reached one of the markers, the marker too would be consumed and the resulting variants in aroma would be detected by the priest in attendance, so that he could tell the particular hour which had elapsed from the scent." ("The Scent of Time," Silvio A. Bedini, *Translations of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, Vol.53, Part 5*, Philadelphia, 1963), p.37

23) See: *The Pythagorean Sourcebook Library*, ed. Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie, Phanes Press, 1987, pp.327-28

24) The image of the headless beggar comes from a dream I had on October 6, 1994. My first thought was that it must have been an apparition from Asterion, which I had been working on for several days. It then occurred to me that it was my body crying out against the exertions of the head and its consequent neglect.

25) In his *Guide to Greece*, (vol.1, p.395), Pausanias relates that after visiting the oracle of Trophonios at Lebadeia (Boiotia), the initiate was required to write down all his experiences in a secret book or register.

26) See *The Smaragdine Tablet of Hermes Trismegistos*, and compare E.U.3 of *Patria 4: The Black Theatre of Hermes Trismegistos*.

27) The essence of this Arcanum comes from the Isha-Upanishad. The reference to centre and circumference being everywhere and nowhere is the well-known definition of God of the Medieval Schoolmen, viz. St. Bonaventure, quoting Alan of Lille, "God is an intelligible sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere." *The Soul's Journey Into God*; Bonaventure, Paulist Press, New York, 1978, p.100

28) Source: *The Bhagavad-Gita*, II: 55-64 paraphrased. This is the same text that accompanied Editing Unit 33 of *Patria 1*: Wolfman, though there it was

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set in the original Sanskrit. The text was also set in English at the close of The Fall Into Light, sung by a children's choir.