

ET CUSTOSI TUTELAE™ PAPER

Essaier LXIV



Memos of Michael Freedman IV & V

By Michael Freedman

Memos Michael Freedman IV (Magic and Science)

I personally believe that even to use a phrase "magic v. science" holds the possibility of an adversarial debate, rather than an examination of how the two disciplines can be compared in order to yield useful information about both.

I once was forced to work out the differences between magic and science for my own comfort during the years when I was actively involved in postgraduate psychological research at my university at the same time as I had covertly become the senior member of an order of ceremonial magicians, whose legends [for what they are worth] claim was founded during the 12th century in Spain.

My own 'breakthrough' came when I realised that while, ideally, the methods of magic and science are the same, there **are** differences, and they lie partly in their subject matter; and partly in the fact that in discussions about their relationship, we tend to overlook the concept that science itself falls into two distinct divisions.

About 20 years ago, I read a paper by someone whose name I now forget on the subject of "Science Mark I and Science Mark II". Its point was that Science Mark I consists of observation and the development of hypotheses; while Science Mark II consists of testing hypotheses under controlled conditions. A typical example is the distinction is between the Ethnology of scientists like Konrad Lorenz [Science Mk I] and the work of the Comparative Psychologists in the laboratory [Sciencer Mk II].

My point here is that:

[a] Magic is always working at the very fringes of human experience. Magicians are often explorers of unknown realms, for which we have no language in which to describe our experiences. The intrepid explorer returns home and draws his map and scrawls across it: "Here be dragons". Three hundred years later, we tap into the natural gas flows in the area. [b] Therefore, magic like many esoteric crafts is essentially a Mark I science. Only when a great deal of information is collected and scrutinised as carefully as any scientist should can [a] useful hypotheses be developed; [b] appropriate Mark II methods be used to test them. Some magical crafts cannot really be tested rigorously. "Let's take Jupiter out of the Solar system and see if it makes any difference to people's personalities"? *grins*

There is a saying: The esoteric becomes the exoteric. The classical era alchemists looked for gold, and found the techniques of alloying and gilding. The mesmerists looked for a mysterious force, and found the powerful effects of focussed suggestion human behaviour. Women like Margaret Murray and Jessie Weston wrote strange and often rather inaccurate things about an ancient earth religion. Other women and some men began to do weird rites skylad in groves and isolated quarries. But, such reverence for the Earth as Goddess played a part, albeit small, in building a climate of opinion that has led to the pre-eminent position of ecological approaches in many of the life sciences and such exoteric organisations as Greenpeace and Friends of the earth.

Groups of magicians [Wynn Westcott et al.] and Theosophists [Blavatsky et al] in the late 19th century developed magical systems with a lot of rather curious mental exercises of one kind and another designed to "open people up to the astral and inner planes." By the 1980s, public seminars on developing right brain skills are using very similar exercises. Nobody had the faintest idea that the two hemispheres of the brain functioned differently before about 1950.

This makes the point that occultists and magicians rarely know what they are doing at the time. It is only with hindsight that we can understand the full implications of their techniques.

Hence my own magical teacher' of repeated injunction: "Don't take any notice of what the occultists *say* they are doing; Find out what they are really doing."

My students at this stage of my chats on this topic usually ask the same hard question: "What are the occultists and magicians doing *now* that will be an exoteric science in a hundred years time?"

Memos Michael Freedman V (Email)

On Mon, 18 Mar 1996, Michael Freedman wrote:

At 10:33 AM 17/3/96 +0000, you wrote:

>> It sounds very interesting, I am hoping to do some serious study of the >Qabalah, but don't have time at the moment. What type of ceremonial magic >do you do, and how did you get into it and find out the existence of your >Order?

Although I was "magical" in a rather superstitious kind of way from a very early age, I was 18 when I read Dion Fortune's newly published [then] "The Mystical Qabalah" and knew that I had found my home, as it were. I spent the next many years acquiring information about magic, the qabalah, etc. a difficult task in those days. By the early 1950s, I knew that I could go on acquiring information and I had a great deal by then, but I needed to meet with someone or some group who could teach me the knowledge needed to make proper use of it. In 1955, I wrote a series of riddles based on the Tree of Life and the Triumphs of the Tarocchi, had it duplicated and distributed it through the occult lending library I had opened as a weekend hobby. I hoped to meet someone who at least knew as much on these topics as I did. Remember, this was long before the hippy consciousness revolution of the 1960s and 1970s.

It used to shock little old theosophical type ladies who read it, because the riddle relevant to Key 15, The Devil card [if you solved it] was: "Old Chinese proverb: A woman for breeding, a boy for pleasure and a goat for sheer delight."

It was four years later [1959] that one of my borrowers came to me and said "I showed your riddles to a man I met recently who lives in the mountains [outside Melbourne, Australia]. He has asked me to bring you to see him."

We drove up into the Dandenongs a couple of days later. I was taken to one of the many strawberry farms in the area, and taken into the house. An elderly man was standing waiting for us. On a table was my set of riddles and he held it down with one finger. I was introduced to him, and he said immediately, without other greeting: "Don't say that. Say 'We must learn our ABCs without the arts of black magic.'" I looked down at the riddles and saw that his finger was on The Devil riddle.

I knew immediately that he understood my riddles and that he was probably the teacher I had waited for so long. I studied with him until his death in 1967, and became a member of the Guardian Order to which he belonged and eventually its senior member on his death. In 1970 I moved the order to Mount Eden in New Zealand, where we have been ever since.

We are a solar order, tapped into the Ancient Solar Mysteries. We have no connections with any other Order. We are not so much a cohesive group as a college of independent magicians who share a common language enough to carry out our annual cycle of twelve solar rituals together. We each have our own apprentices and individual ways of doing things. I have been fortunate enough to have three good apprentices in my lifetime. One of them will succeed me as head of the Order on my death; one of them has established his own Order, but he is still one of our company. The third is my current apprentice who has lived at the Sanctuary for the past three years, having previously been a correspondence student for five years; since he was 14 years old, actually. I did not meet him until he was 19 years old at the time he was received into the Order as an apprentice. He specialises in the Norse magical systems. I specialise in more Middle Eastern matters and astrology.