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Otherworlds Review: Afterwords

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The Orphic initiators of antiquity, the *Orpheotelestai*, were said to travel from city-state to city-state healing ancestral curses, performing initiations, offering deliverance by way of sacrifice, and distributing piles of magical books. One such book, the *Orphic Hymns*, contains ritual technology for the invocation of the gods in nocturnal rites. Another, the lesser known *Orphic Lithica*, functions as a handbook on the magical uses of stones by the ritual practitioner. Stones figure prominently in the reemergent magical traditions of the present, and these traditions are beginning to wake up to the danger posed by the commodification of sacred stone and plant allies. This danger is nowhere more evidenced than in the aesthetic-extraction frenzy of crystal addiction. Crystals are traded en masse, entirely divorced from the worlds and cosmologies of meaning from which they emerge. Millions of stone beings stand locked up in the museums, storefront display cases and collections of stone hoarders spread throughout the empire; millions waiting to be liberated by the illegalist arts and put into circulation through the web of conspiracy between

friends and accomplices as gifts. Gift economics: the ancient anarchist tradition of passing talismans from hand to hand to be mobilized in the process of co-creating free lives. The Dionysian occultist Georges Bataille recognized that the act of gifting imbued an object with otherworldly force and forged a powerful bond between the recipient and the giver.

We submit these seven transmissions, now bound together as another sacred book, as a gift to the anarchist galaxy. In this, we recall that Dionysos marked Ariadne's apotheosis by placing a circlet upon her head and thereafter raising it to the heavens as a constellation of seven stars. This book is our crown. It hangs in the heavens challenging us – as with the mystery cultists and theurgists – to uncover, following Kirsten Brydum's *Spiritual Anarchism*, the divinity within ourselves. In a sense, this has always been the path of the anarchist: to realize our capacity to engage the world at the level of story, to weave with meaning itself, to actualize the miraculous. Among the higher anarchist epiphanies we find the capacity to conjure – seemingly from nowhere – a black clad group to lay ruin to the avenues where the powerful live. Like the Harii, the shadow army who painted themselves black and ambushed the Roman legions under the dark moon, the anarchists employ this magic to interrupt (even momentarily) the ceaseless skyward piling of carnage euphemized as development. This leap into the void has been debated, refined and put into praxis by the practitioners of anarchist magic around the world.

Shortly after the publication of our final communique, the repressive apparatus of the occupied territory known as Ontario arrested seven anarchists under suspicion of having taken part in one such nocturnal conjuration. In their press conference, the mouthpieces of the State begged the public's assistance in identifying a yet unknown twenty-three others believed to have conspired with the seven under arrest. 23 others. 23 masked ones. 23 in clandestinity. Here the State falls into its own trap. For generations, chaos magicians (those committed to finding the ways of magic) and Dis-

cordians (those devoted to Eris, goddess of chaos) have studied the numerological mysteries and weirdness of the number 23. This ritual inquiry permeated the work of several groups, including the Temple of Psychic Youth:

What the central TOPY ritual consisted of, at least structurally, was that on the 23rd of each month, at 2300 hours, the dedicated adepts would perform a sigilising ritual in and/or on an artwork designed by themselves specifically for the desired goal. This piece of highly charged talismanic art was then sent in to a TOPY “station” (bigger and more administrative headquarters than the Access Points). The idea was to “impose” or inspire self discipline and regularity, to unite with other adepts in time, to initiate personal empirical research about ritual magick and, not forgetting, to honor the weird synchronistic concept of the number 23, as “inherited” from TOPY mentors William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin. The augmented level of 23 consecutive sent-in “23-sigils” was reached by very few individuals connected to the TOPY EUROPE headquarters. Usually, however, that level of commitment to an experimental (yet communal) goal manifested itself in other ways too and thus quite a few people were able to achieve quite a lot.

In this method, we see the diffuse and subversive potential of the anarchist methodology applied to magic, the joining of forces together for a particular effort and the subsequent diffusion of those forces again when the aims have been achieved. We assume the incompetency of the State and thus the radiant innocence of everyone they’ve ever accused. All power to the ineffable 23 who evade capture, and what’s more, understanding. The State claims to have identified seven but can never capture 23, for that number

belongs to the otherworlds. Sacrifice opens a doorway between one world and another. We relinquish our ownership of these seven stars – sacrifice them to the otherworlds – in pious yearning for the twenty-three unwritten. This doorway is the narrow gate, a state of exception, an inversion inflected upon reality, a sun in the underworld, a black flame in ours.

A rare and anomalous stone, found only in a specific cave near Thunder Bay, Ontario, was discovered in recent years – a chevron amethyst (a stone itself born out of Dionysos’ regret following an episode of killing rage against human civilization), similar to the “super seven” stone of Brazil, but with inclusions of twenty-three metals and minerals – known curiously as Auralite 23. This combination of elements is found nowhere else in the world, and has lead some to theorize that the ancient stone was formed either from the flux of creation early in the earth’s creation or by a meteoric impact which brought the specific combination of metals and minerals from the heavens and forged them into a purple stone of primordial and otherworldly energy. The stone, like the orphic initiates, is thus a child of earth and starry sky. Its frequency, like the 23 appended to its name, is harmonized with the anarchic frequency and nothing short of initiatory. During the solar eclipse which inaugurated this project, we arranged eight of these stones as a chaosphere pointing in all directions to the limits of this world.

Birthing in eclipse, six issues were published under the full moon, one under the dark moon. Six under the mirror of the sun, one when the moon was fully masked up. In Hesiod one reads of the Golden Age in which humanity had no need for agriculture because “the fruitful earth, unforced, bore them fruit abundantly and without stint,” followed by the Silver Age and then the Bronze Age, each epoch inferior to the previous one. There is a primitivist memory of Eden embedded within this text, but in the valuation of these metals and the pessimism about the possibility of a different sequence of events, we see King Abacus rear its ugly head. As anarchists and animists, we reject that imposition of value and that

its weapons and its techniques
its powers and its current limits
and as you are called
engage, dance, chant, listen, debate,
speak blessings, throw curses,
share drinks, make music, sing,
pray, commune,
attack
as long as you desire
until you are finished
thank the powers who assisted
snuff the candle and cleanse again
record any
observation, epiphany
experience, thesis,
oracle, attentat,
which emerged
repeat this ritual
as often as needed
alone or with friends

offerings of
wine and water
word and song
to the muses
to anarchy itself
to the anarchist dead
to your dead friends
especially those
who worked magic
who lit fires
with whom you made pacts
with whom you conspired
who still fight beside you
to any other being:
god, star, planet, place
plant, animal, body of water,
with whom you have affinity
now all together
open up, step outside, suspend time, walk through,
work yourself into an ecstatic state
by whatever means, by
dance, chant, breath, sex, entheogenic substances,
meditation, a fight
and contemplate
the black flame
the anarchist magic

determinism, but we can still see, following astrological correspondences, that a Golden Age is a solar age and a Silver Age a lunar one. Anarchy too has had its alternating solar and lunar phases: solar when our orators and communards and propagandists of the deed bring the blazing light of the Beautiful Idea to the world as a freely given gift; lunar when we retreat into magic, mysticism, introspection, and the reflective and nurturing aspects of our subterranean networks and cultures. While we eschew periodization and progressivism, we posit that the next aeon is naturally and necessarily a Stellar one, an age of many suns.

Looking again at the six and one issues of this project, we see that the full moon issues are Solar, and the dark moon issue Lunar. The end of *Otherworlds Review* and the publication and dissemination of this book is the beginning of the Stellar phase of the greater spiritual anarchist project, an explosive and expansive leap into the multiplicitous unknown. We quoted Feral Pines in our first issue: “Blow up the sun.” Like all good insurrectionaries, we want to see our attacks reproduced and generalized. Anyone can write and speak and act in the name of the Otherworlds. We’re just “some anarchists,” after all. Nameless, masked, collective, ethereal, everywhere. Like the FAI, CCF, ELF, and ALF before us, among others.

Otherworlds Review is over, but the Otherworlds themselves are always (t)here, and our texts contain keys and clues to the doors and guides by which you might find us within. Just as the moon is a mirror, so too is the word “Review” which we chose for our title. We wrote from the perspective of the Otherworlds, gazing upon and analyzing the news and events of the so-called material world, this chess-playing automaton of yours. We looked back, we “re-viewed,” like the Angel of History, like Epimetheus, like 2Pac “starin’ at the world through my rearview.” And in doing so we held up a mirror by which you, the readers, might see yourselves for the starry and Otherworldly insurgents you are. As we now review the project itself, we offer you the invitation to participate in an “Otherworlds Pre-view,” to direct your own gaze into the Other-

worlds and see what they have to offer for yourselves, to leap into your Promethean and Luciferian potential. Just remember that the Otherworlds will gaze back into you as well.

In seven stars you could glimpse a constellation. The most successful strategies of war. You, the smudged rendering in these mirrors with your claws and fangs, be free in your anarchist visioning and trajectory. Autonomous magic, armored, spills freely into the fortified containers of the vast heart of insurgent action, tended by the bright guides, dark shadows, and burning black flames who reside in the throneless ruins at the eternally obscured and readily revealed location of the Otherworlds.

If you've followed us this far, allow us to speak freely in these final words:

Our transmissions have lead us, like all previous anarcho-spiritist endeavors, to a chasm spreading out below us between the written word and that which cannot be spoken. Now is the time to jump. Suffice to say, the anarchists need magic and the magicians need anarchy. We must equip ourselves with the songs of the green ones and the stars and stones. Our situation demands the means to open onto other worlds. This one will not be saved. The horizon of revolution has been metabolized by a varied apocalypse spread throughout all layers of existence. Mere survival is as insufficient as it is unlikely. We will have no meaning but what we weave ourselves. The most dangerous among our enemies already consciously employ ritual forms. We invite you to arm your desire that you may fight back on all levels.

We have never fought alone. This is an invocation. A call, yes, but not in the way the word has come to signify – within some corners of the anarchist galaxy – a particular aesthetic. Our gesture aligns more with the ancestral and experimental ritual techniques by which humans call to presence the polyvalent divine.

We call, to this place and this moment, the anarchist spirit. We make this invocation only by the grace of the multiple currents of insurrectionary tradition which tend in this direction and we offer

Spontaneous laughter can also profoundly aid in breaking the link between a sigil and its creator and returning the operative to the “sane” world. Even something as simple as three deep breaths can serve to calm the body and mind. The energies raised in the charging and casting phases of sigil-craft are partially bioelectric in nature; they ascend like coiling flame up the spine and tear across the firmament of the brain like lightning and can damage your nervous system if not returned to their quiet source.

Suggested Readings

Liber Null and Psychonaut by Peter Carroll

Chaotopia by Dave Lee

Apocalyptic Witchcraft by Peter Grey and Alkistis Dimech

The Invisibles by Grant Morrison

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Ritual Inquiry Into the Black Flame

Assemble an altar and place upon it

a black candle

water

wine

a bowl

pen and paper

and anything else your spirits require

at the altar light the candle

and cleanse with

blessed waters

burning herbs

sound or candlelight

call and pour out

of *ekstasis* – ecstasy – the place where one is altered and *one stands beside oneself as gods do*. This process essentially requires you, the operative, to induce a state of transcendental consciousness, hold the completed sigil in your mind’s eye, and imagine it filled with ecstatic power. Once this is accomplished one must move immediately to the next step...

Step Five: The Casting

Imbued with energy, charged with eldritch light, the sigil is released into the Void. The physical material of the sigil itself is usually then destroyed – though in certain situations it can be hidden – and *the image must be forgotten*. It is the forgetting which releases the thought-form and gives it autonomous power. It is this willful destruction of memory which gives you *plausible deniability* and allows the sigil to make it past your internal Psychic Censor: anarchists and other criminalized rebels have somewhat of a head start on this process, as we must sometimes erase or obscure people, places, events, and times in our memories to protect them in case we are caught by agents of the Law. One ritual by which the charging and casting can be easily combined is in the use of a candle: one simply draws the sigil on paper, holds it to the candle’s flame, imagines the fire burning away the image, your body, the world, the entire universe, and when the flame has consumed the paper you allow it to burn the very tips of your fingers and release the sigil with the pain.

Step Six: The Grounding

After a sigil is charged and cast, the operative would do well to engage in some simple practices of banishment to cleanse the mind, body, and space of working, so that you return to your normal “ground-state” consciousness and unbind any psychic “anchors” by which the sigil may remain tethered to you and hamper its effectiveness. Rituals of banishment and grounding can be exceedingly simple: the burning of sage, cedar, or other purifying incense, for example, is a pan-cultural technology of auric cleansing that seldom fails to work, as are bioenergetic practices such as qi gong.

thanks to those spirits who brought us to this point. We call to all those ancestors of path whose lives and struggles lend us language and means amidst the low key apocalypse of this decaying social order. Lend us your wisdom so we might learn from your mistakes. Walk with us to heal these generations worth of trauma. Hold us so that we might hold on in turn.

Blessings to the original inhabitants of this land and to the war for survival waged on this continent for more than five hundred years.

Blessings to those spirits brought to these shores as chattel, included only as the outside, whose descendants foment slave insurrections and tend subterranean lines of flight, evading capture and slaying masters in order to build worlds inside the void left by the two fifths of humanity stolen in the foundational document of this so-called nation.

Blessings to the immigrant anarchist currents which have crisscrossed this continent for generations – the conspirators, assassins, translators, underground printers, forgers, propagandists by the deed, teachers of the peoples’ chemistry, devotees of the Idea who’ve endured waves of deportation to live without borders.

Blessings to the abolitionists, destroyers of the apparatuses of capture, dreamers of negation against the prison world.

Blessings to the mystics, the queers, the ranters, the animists, the walkers between veils, denizens of the liminal, the freaks – exiles from all but the worlds built between us.

Blessings to the flesh, which provides the ground for revolutions that will have occurred but remain imperceptible. Blessings to the forgotten.

Blessings to the wild and those who fight on its side. Blessings to all that blooms and crawls and flies. Blessings to the waters and the flames, to the stones and the stars and the trees that stretch between them.

As this project draws to its close, we pray for the loving complicity of all assembled spirits. As we speak, secret associations

convene in the name of spirit war. The collapse continues, may we meet it together and joyously. Our enemies have stayed in power by appearing as, to quote James Baldwin, “disenchanted, and in this, also lay the authority of their curses.” The curse is lifted; their authority refused. Everything is on the table. We do not lack for ways.

As penned by one of our high priestesses in her revolutionary letters:

ALL POWER

TO JOY, which will remake the world.

Written in blood and ash, our last words echo those spoken by countless martyrs before us:

LONG LIVE ANARCHY!

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APPENDICES

We receive and transmit the following submissions from our readers:

I Am Named After My Grandfather

On a very small peanut farm
outside of Montgomery, AL
there is a dusty trailer
full of memories
belonging to my grandfather

They are dead, like him.

Forgotten by time, apathy, estate lawyers, jealous second wife, dust

plaid cloth

raccoon in a ravine while walking along a road; when they more clearly wrote “I want to see a raccoon playing on an oak branch” (probably closer to their original hope) they saw a giant raccoon frolicking on a mighty oak in the woods a week later. While any event can have totally unforeseen outcomes, it is necessary to allow a time of silence and deliberation before proceeding. There can be no real quantification of this process: *this is the time of understanding.*

Step Three: The Scribing

Once the desire is sufficiently formed, it must be transmuted from legibility into abstraction, from the realm of known symbols to the realm of unknown icons. The methods by which one can accomplish this are as many as the the Ways of Art. Some operatives create a sigil by drawing or painting images which arise in their waking mind’s eye or dreams while meditating on their statements of intent. Another simple and proven method is to remove the vowels and repeating letters from the statement and to combine the remaining consonants via multiple re-drawings and simplifications into a single entity. The point of this step in the craft is *to lose sight of the original meaning of your statement.* It is important for the sigil to be scribed upon a sheet of paper, cloth, skin or other object which can eventually be hidden or destroyed.

Step Four: The Charging

A sigil, once realized, can then be filled with power from other planes of reality and released. Because Western civilization has rooted out, disembodied, or buried all cultural rituals used to reach gnosis, or “true knowledge,” this step requires some experimentation and courage. Techniques used to charge a sigil, like the arts of scribing, are manifold, numberless, highly individual. The induction of pain, deep meditation and breathing (as in the yogic practices of pranayama), physical excitation by sprinting or dancing, the use of body-altering medicines, and the experience of orgasm are all ancient practices used to raise the fire of the spirit. Any action by which your normal, reasonable self is able to reach a state

this small text will only cover the basic components of sigil-craft and the metaphysical powers that pertain to it. They operate by enshrouding their creators' intentions in the shadow of the collective unconscious, and thereby smuggling those intentions through the internal checkpoint which stands between our conscious and unconscious selves, a gate guarded by the being chaos magicians call the Psychic Censor and we anarchists know as *the cop in our heads*. The materials you will need are simple: a piece of paper, a writing implement, your body, and an instrument with which to eventually destroy the sigil you have created.

Step One: The Seeing

This step may appear to be the easiest aspect of the crafting process, but it is *by far the most difficult*. Because sigils are images formulated with intent and then cast out into the collective dream-realms, the forms in which they manifest in our material world rely on unpredictable, chaotic, and chance-based forces. Sigils are simply ideas which are sent high into the formless aether and then allowed to drift down into our dense materiality, like dust which rises from the footprints of a desert wanderer and settles in a known shape. Thus in order for a sigil (or any form of magical spell or charm) to “work” the practitioner must be highly intentional and specific. Utilizing a language you are fluent in is crucial to maintain the clarity of your intention – many operatives simply write a sentence to begin.

Step Two: The Grasping

One must consider every possible effect of a hope or idea becoming real. Imagine yourself at distinct moments in as many possible futures as you can. Your original expression may go through a number of refinements before you are ready to unleash it. It can be common for desires formulated and cast as sigils to become real via unexpected means, or with unexpected consequences, and these unmeant outcomes are *directly related* to the specificity of your original statement of intent. For example, a former comrade once wrote “I want to see a raccoon” and the next morning saw a dead, rotting

drawings of trees
filing cabinets
carefully typed diary entries no one wants to read
mercury dimes
pictures of my grandmother
so many pictures of her
pictures of me before I left the family
aerial bombing photos from World War 2
little toy trucks
Alabama Trucking Association coasters

When she died, everything good of his died too.
Anything good that survived the basement furnace in
Tennessee
where he worked as an orphan
died with that cancer.
I guess he didn't trust himself with it.

old before he was old
looking back forever
spotted and cantankerous
a scots irish callous
swollen by whiskey, pipe smoke,
and the pride of whiteness.

He called me once
out of the blue

drunk
to complain about the sp*cs
at least they work
not like the n****s
he said
HAHAHA coughing, gurgled, he broke up
I started yelling
and hung up the phone.
A 2 minute rehearsal for my relationship to my blood-
line

He's rotting now.
still dying
always resurfacing
being exorcised
He whispers in Charlottesville
and Charleston
and Las Vegas
everywhere
a bitter man calls his grandson with proud acid nostal-
gia on his tongue.

I threw out everything I was given
that survived the dusty death of that trailer
except for a framed "R"
made out of old quarters

It hides under my bed, as a reminder, I guess.
I don't know of what.
To not store the only decency I have left
far away.
to trust myself with it
to open it
to feel something other than bitterness and anger

I'm trying not to live in that basement furnace
But living out in the open is getting dangerous
and there's a storm coming
with my grandfather's words
on the wind.

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Sigils: A Simple Primer for the Brave

Sigils are user-crafted image-symbols charged with magical power. Magic is a body of practices which approaches the undefinable, though accepted definitions range from the traditional "*science and art of causing change in conformity with the will*" to the more anarchic "*spiritual technology of organic belief*." The dayside reality in which we live and struggle is traversed by hidden powers, beings, entire worlds, and they contain unknown allies, untapped energies, even the spirits of our fallen comrades and ancestors. Magical techniques such as sigil-craft utilize natural forces which cannot be fully controlled by the techno-industrial Authority or its state religion – Science – and they remain potent tools of self-empowerment. No servant of order can take away these secret weapons in our great mutiny.

Sigils are a profoundly accessible form of magic and range from the exceedingly simple to the vastly complex; for the sake of brevity