THE LIBRARY ANGEL & HER ORACLE

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I. Telepathic Tomes and Living Libraries

I've never met a magician, occultist, witch, or esoteric seeker of any other stripe who didn't love books, who didn't have some secret kernel of bibliomania living inside them. All the mages I've had the pleasure of meeting have been devoted readers and quite as often great writers as well. Books have long been one of the archetypes associated with magical power. This is as true in popular culture as it is inside the circle of a coven or the inner chamber of a lodge. Images of magicians and their books are prolific, as are the types of books they use: grimoires and other books of summoning, books of spells, books containing the secrets of all nature and the secrets of creation, and the most important book for any occultist, their own magical diary.

Everything about a book has at some point or other been considered magical. Alphabets started out as symbols whose primary purpose was the ordering of the universe. Each letter was identified with a force or principle of nature. From letters names can be formed and to name something is an act of magic. To know the name of something is to be able to identify it, a first step towards establishing sympathy, a link between the self and other. These links of commonality between people and places, animals, objects, and the spirit world give the enterprising magician a means for conducting sympathetic magic.

Stringing words together narratives and texts can be constructed. But to do all this the writer needs paper and ink. As we all know paper comes from plants and trees. In traditional cultures plants and trees have been associated with nature spirits. Even when the trees or other plants were transformed into paper, something of its spirit or essence still lived on, animating the page. Vellum, made from calfskin, was also used as a way of preserving texts. In this case the spirit of the animal was bound into the book. The making of ink was once considered an alchemical art, requiring knowledge of how to skillfully combine plants, animals and minerals, using fire to coagulate the ingredients into a substance capable of sticking to and staining the medium.

Binding is itself considered a magical art. When sorcerers speak of the evocation of a spirit, they often use the word binding to describe how they will persuade the spirit to be bound to their will, to do their bidding. The way a book is bound together in special leather skins or woven cloth, the way the

pages are sewn together all become part of the process of binding the magical spell which is a book.

The final glamours are cast into a book when finished with beautiful marbelized endpapers, gilded edges, ribbons, and other decorative flourishes. These glamours are further enhanced when books are signed, inscribed, or printed in limited editions. The presence of these elements makes for a highly engaging aesthetic experience, bringing a book to life, while the relative rarity of a given text makes it a treasured artifact, something that stands apart from mass produced pulp.

Even when lacking all the fine craftsmanship that can go into bookmaking, the essential value of a book is what is written in the text and what it transmits to the reader. Good books are spoken of as the products of genius. They are written not so much by the individual human as by his or her daemon, oversoul or guardian angel, depending on your spiritual *lingua franca*. Words come from spirit, the part of a person which is at home in the Otherworld. Writers leave traces of their genius infused into their books, and these become memories for mankind, a way for generations to communicate with each other across vast distances of space and time.

This is how books become living entities, from the first inspirations of spirit, to the writer ensouling those inspirations as text, onto the care of editors, publishers, and craftsmen who pour their own energies into the work, until it is finally given birth as a publication. Now a living entity it can speak on many levels and becomes capable of telepathy.

If individual books are magical and associated with bound spirits and the traces of genius, then libraries are the places where a multiplicity of daemons congregate, coming together to mingle and communicate with each other.

Libraries are humanities attempt to order our collected knowledge of the universe we inhabit, to collect memories, musings, and flashes of poetic insight. Those who walk the path of the Western Mystery Tradition are well acquainted with this desire to order the universe.

The Qabalistic Tree of Life is the image par excellence for what we know and what we think we know about the unknown. The Tree of Life can be used like a map for finding out how things correspond and fit in relation to each other and what paths connect them. Libraries are another kind of map and are essential for learning about things we want to know, places we want to go, about people, ideas, philosophies, and for exploring the entire corpus of our recorded knowledge. The Qabalah is a tool for mapping the internal and external universe and libraries are a tool for reading and researching the transcribed memories of previous voyagers.

I've been an employee at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County in Ohio for over a decade. The library is a great place for this writer and magician to earn a living and is one of the few institutions I can be at home in with my own values and ethics. Working in a facility with over two million books has also given me the opportunity to lead a robust and healthy textual life. The Canandian scholar Northrop Frye once wrote, "A big library really has the gift of tongues & vast potencies of telepathic communication." Books are telepathic and they speak to us and through us. There is also an entity whom exists to help the intelligence and memory contained within one book communicate and share with the intelligence in another. Blessed with an abundance of available material to read, making a choice and settling into the spirit of a book can sometimes be overwhelming. This entity helps us make those choices, telepathically communicating to us those memories from mankind vital to the present moment.

II. The Library Angel & Her Oracle

The Library Angel is such an entity. She speaks through her Oracle which are libraries and archives or any place where there are many books collected together. The Library Angel is an entity who brings in an element of delightful play and fractal chaos to the order and quiet of the library. She shuffles books into new arrangements, much in the same way as tarot cards are shuffled into a spread showing a potential future. She shows the way to create new patterns of knowledge by skillfully combining diverse

disciplines and areas of study into a magical cauldron of inspiration. Hybrid sciences and mutant arts are born from those who drink from the Angels cauldron of words.

Perhaps you've already acquainted yourself with the Library Angel. Perhaps she has cast her spell on you at a library, or while in an independent or used bookstore. Then you already know that she works through synchronicity, coincidence, and chance operations. Because she speaks through verbal and written communication you will know to be patient with her; as an Oracle her voice is often ambiguous and her moods are as open to interpretation as any of the texts she will send your way. Let me assure you that the work you put into sustaining a long term relationship with her is worth all the effort because she provides the ultimate form of bibliomancy, or divination by books.

The Library Angel helps us choose what we need to be reading now, picking for us those books which are most relevant to our current development on those particular paths we have chosen to walk, spiritual and otherwise. As a specialist in tantric word play the Library Angel knows exactly what is going to turn each one of us on. She brings the written word alive in all of its sensual glory and makes reading an act of erotic discovery, an experience of awakening to the power of text, as well as offering seasoned word lovers a way of maintaining a deep intimacy with the books in our lives. She keeps us textually curious and textually satisfied.

I first heard of the Library Angel in a book by Robert Moss, a dream teacher who has developed his own unique synthesis of core shamanic techniques, ancient and contemporary approaches to dreamwork and an array of techniques from the Western Mystery Tradition. Robert borrowed the term "Library Angel" from the novelist and scholar Arthur Koestler. In 1972 a book by Koestler was published called *The Roots of Cooincidence*where he explored the nature of chance and synchronicity in people's lives. After its appearance in 1972 people started sending him letters of their own experiences of synchronicity. Of these were a large selection of verbal and semantic oriented synchronicities he later dubbed "Library Cases". Koestler was later inspired by the following passage in the works of French philosopher and lawyer Joseph De Maistre, "L'Ange Distributeur des Pensees" which translates roughly as "the Angel Distributor of Thoughts". Koestler's term the "Library Angel" evolved from this phrase and his study of synchronicities involving books. He stated that this being is "in charge of providing cross references".

In my own job at a large Public Library my co-workers and I have noticed innumerable "Library Cases", cross references and instances of synchronicity surrounding books. As a matter of routine the Library Angel turns up what otherwise might be an obscure book that none-the-less relates to the topic of conversation in the workroom, or a subject I happen to be deeply engaged with at the time or as an ongoing concern. Alternately, the Library Angel turns me on to books I might not otherwise take a stab at. This helps to deepen my inherent curiosity about a plethora of subjects and furthers the ongoing project of lifelong independent education.

One day at work I was digging around online to find the exact book where Arthur Koestler first mentions the Libary Angel. Meanwhile I was checking in items returned from the express bookdrop. In working with books I've made it a habit to periodically and intuitively select a book without looking at the title from the bookdrop, cart, or shelf, open it to a random page and read a sentence or two from it, to see how it might apply to current projects or life situations. In tarot, cards are shuffled. In bibliomancy books and the pages within them are shuffled. In this case the book I grabbed was *Endgame: Bobby Fischer's Remarkable Rise and Fall -From America's Brightest Prodigy to the Edge of Madness*.

I didn't know much about Bobby Fischer except that he'd been a World Champion chess player who later fell into obscurity. I've never been much of a chess player myself so when I paged through the book it was with casual flippancy. Then I saw the pictures of Iceland, a country I've long been fascinated with, dream of often, and have plans of visiting one day. I soon learned Bobby lived in Iceland during his later years. Curiosity satisfied, I checked the book in and didn't think much else of it.

Two hours later I'd sleuthed my way to the title where Arthur Koestler first discusses the Library

Angel, *The Challenge of Chance: A Mass Experiment in Telepathy and It's Unexpected Outcome,* written in several sections by three authors, Alister Hardy and Robert Harvie being the other two. When I had a free moment I fetched it from the stacks, opening it quickly to the section penned by Koestler. As I started to read chills went tingling up my spine, a sensation I associate with the apprehension of uncanny truths. The passage in question convinced me that books really are telepathic and that higher orders of intelligence step in when research is afoot. Koestler wrote, "In the spring of 1972 the Sunday times invited me to write about the chess world championship match taking place between Boris Spassky and Robert Fischer, which was to take place in Reykjavik, Iceland. Chess has been a hobby since my student days, but I felt the need to catch up on recent developments, and also to learn something about Iceland, where I had only spent some hours in transit on a transatlantic flight during the war. So one day in May I went to the London Library, St. James Square to take home some books on these unrelated subjects...I hesitated for a moment whether to go to 'C' for 'chess' or 'I' for 'Iceland', but chose the former because it was nearer. There were about twenty or thirty books about chess on the shelves, and the first that caught my eye was a bulky volume with the title: *CHESS IN ICELAND AND IN ICELANDIC LITERATURE* by Willard Fiske." I was spellbound.

Koestler went on to write, "This type of coincidence involving libraries, books, quotations, references or single words in special contexts, is so frequent one almost regards them as one's due." I later learned that Willard Fiske was the first University librarian at Cornell whose reputation had been made due to his command of Northern European languages, his forte being Icelandic. A meticulous bibliophile he bequeathed much of his own collection to Cornell as well as giving endowments to Icelandic libraries in support of their poets and scholars.

I don't know if Arthur Koestler, himself a secular Jew, had any inkling that there exists an angel of libraries within the literature of the Qabalah. As an initiate of the Western Mystery Tradition, when I learned in the spring of 2010 from a post on Robert Moss' blog that the Library Angel had a Hebrew name, Harahel (also transliterated as Herachiel or Herochiel), I was immediately intrigued. The revelation that the Library Angel had a name was as much of a surprise to Robert as to myself. He hadn't been looking for the name of the Library Angel but stumbled across it while reading *The Way of the Image,* a book by Jungian psychoanalyst Yoram Kaufman. Suddenly a new branch of the Tree of Life was opening up for me to explore and I was certain that Koestler's Library Angel was the same as the Qabalist's.

Harahel is the name of one of the seventy-two Angels contained within what is termed the Shemhamphorasch, or the Name of Extension. The Shemhamphorasch is a seventy-two fold name for God, comprised of 216 letters. When the 216 letters are divided into threes the seventy-two names are given; by adding Yah or El, comprised of Yod and Heh and Aleph and Lamed respectively, to the combinations, names for seventy-two angels are obtained. Each of these Angels governs some aspect or function of the universe.

Harahel is the fifty-ninth Angel of the Shemhamphorasch. The Hebrew letters making up her name are Heh, Resh, and Cheth, with the addition of Aleph and Lamed.

Harahel rules over archives, libraries, cabinets containing rare and precious objects and books. Harahel influences printing, the book trade and all those involved in this wonderful business, and she can be called upon for advice involving study, research, learning or getting published. Harahel is not only a Library Angel but a Literary Agent.

Each Angel of the Shemhamphorasch is associated with a verse in the bible. In the case of Harahel it is from Psalms chapter 113, verse 3. "From the rising of the sun, to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised!" (Which "lord" is of course up to you.) This verse can be used in constructing a ritual to call upon Harahel, meditated upon when her presence is needed, or as a bibliomantic incantation. I like to chant it before going into the library, or with my hand over a large dictionary or book before bibliomantic divination.

The Tarot Card associated with Harahel is the Seven of Pentacles which indicates success in

endeavors that require much time and effort such as the work of writing a book, or the Great Work itself. This card can be useful to contemplate when engaged in prolonged research and study. By contemplating this card the Angel Harahel can be drawn to you, a technique that works through application of the law of correspondence.

Dreams form a cornerstone of my own magical praxis. As such the Library Angel has often given me reading assignments which serve to deepen this area of my work. When on a whim I popped open *Uncorking the Past*, a book about ancient alcoholic beverages, I hadn't counted on the possibility of slipping into the world of Neolithic Chinese shamanism. Nor had I expected to learn about how a dream inspired the label for a brew released by Dogfish Head, one of the best breweries in operation. This brew, Chateau Jiahu, in turn is a recreation of the world's oldest alcoholic beverage, dug up by biomolecular archaeologist Patrick E. McGovern, who wrote the book. At the time that this happened my dreams had been leading me to explore the various forms shamanism takes in the East, and in the form of this book the Library Angel had given me another clue to follow.

The discovery of this early alcoholic drink sprung up from Jiahu, a Neolithic site in the Henan province of North Central China. Among the items discovered at the site were instruments made from shell, flutes, bones, and drinking vessels. Chemical analysis of residue on the vessels put the historians on a path of research leading to the scientific literature and further study in the field to investigate what plants were in the area at the time. They were able to conclude that the people in the region brewed and drank a complex beverage consisting of a "grape and hawthorn-fruit wine, honey mead, and rice beer." McGovern speculated on how this beverage may have played an important role in a "shamanistic funeral feast associated with the musicians of Jiahu", though he also surmises the imbibing of the beverage to be widespread throughout the community. The drink is around 9,000 years old.

McGovern sought the help of Sam Calagione owner of Dogfish Head and his experimental brewer Mike Gerhart. After facing many challenges, false starts, and near misses they were able to recreate the magical brew. Later with the help of another Dogfish Head brewer the formula was tweaked to impart a sweet and sour flavor matching Chinese food. It was during this time when "Sam had slipped into shamanistic revelry. He recounted a dream in which a naked Chinese Neolithic girl, with long hair flowing down her back and buttocks, had approached him with the beverage." Acting on the dream he commissioned designer Tara Macpherson to create the label. Tara "placed a seemingly enigmatic tattoo, which had also been part of Sam's dream, on the lower back of the the celebrant" gracing the label. The sign is the Chinese word for "wine". The brew was named Chateau Jiahu, and it's gone through a few incarnations. My own action plan based on this sequence of events was to find a bottle of the liquid and crack it open. This has since been accomplished and I can say it is quite good, perfect for Sabbatic celebrations and musical revelry.

The Library Angel helps us to revisit these kinds of old memories and practices, bringing them once more into the present where they may serve the needs of the living.

Harahel mixes inky beverages together, combining both familiar and exotic ingredients into a bubbling fermentation, a roiling cauldron of preexisting stories, characters, and ideas. The individual who drinks from it becomes the alembic who then distills something else altogether from the combination. During the process her or his own genius is infused into the work, while the final product contains strong strains and light traces from the original essences as well. This is one way to become a deliberate practitioner of the Ars Combinatoria, or Art of Combinations, whereby new patterns in the arts and sciences can be constructed for the benefit of humanity.

III. Chance Operations and Ars Combinatoria

The Qabalah is a strong system. Some of that strength comes from being versatile, from its ability to absorb other systems into a readily adaptable framework. Qabalists express this in the creative word play they love to engage in, the Shemhamphorasch being a prime example where the 72 names of God

and the names of 72 Angels were found through the careful rearrangement of words and letters, in effect, extracting the secrets of nature from a book. To derive the Shemhamphorasch the Qabalists took three verses from the book of Exodous, each of which contained 72 letters in the Hebrew bible, and wrote them out in *boustrephedon*, or as the ox plows, from right to left, left to right, and right to left. Then the letters were grouped into columns of threes and from this the 72 Names of God were formed.

This method of taking a fragment of a text, writing it backwards and forwards, and deriving names from the new combinations of letters has much in common with art practices popularized in the twentieth century. In these art practices it was not just sacred text that was rearranged at random or according to different sets of rules, but sound and image as well. John Cage, who utilized the I Ching as a tool for composing music made a career of working with chance operations. Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs advanced the cut-up techniques of the Dadaists and Surrealists using them to rearrange and splice together all types of literature, creating a new form in the process. Both Cage and Burroughs were instrumental in taking their chosen art forms, classical composition and the novel respectively, to places they hadn't been before. It is also interesting to note that the I Ching is one of the oldest forms of divination and that Burroughs also thought of the cut-up technique as a means for predicting the future, saying "when you cut into the present the future leaks out". These art practices are oracular.

Though it is practical to plan things out in advance we still want to leave enough room in our lives to allow for the play of the random, the indeterminate, for the kind of chance operations exemplified by bibliomancy and other forms of divination. Remaining open to serendipity helps us to get to places we might not otherwise go. John Cage wrote, "the whole idea of chance operations is that the field of awareness that's now open to us is so big that if we're not careful we'll just go to certain points in it, points with which we are already familiar. By using chance operations we can get to points with which we're unfamiliar." This is an important point to make in regards to bibliomantic research. A well-stocked library can turn up leads on projects and inquiries we might not otherwise pursue, whereas the internet, for all its supposed choices, has become a place dominated by a superpower of a search engine whose first results more often than not turn up an entry in Wikipedia. As a quick reference the internet has its uses. As a tool for going to places we haven't been to before, for the serendipitous acquisition of new source material for our internal cauldrons, it has its limitations which can easily lead to boredom.

But we need never get bored. We do not have to repeat the same moves over and over again. While there is a certain comfort in familiar patterns and rhythms, in order to grow we need to be able to stretch our limits and be able to move beyond the limits other people impose on us. Chance operations can help us move into the unfamiliar, and like chess can be played an infinite number of times with infinite permutations, combinations, and variations. There is always something fresh to discover, new ways of doing things, and new ways of being.

Those new ways of being might be necessary for our survival as a species. One of the most poignant experiences I've had with the Library Angel illustrates how she can not only give us a clue to the meaning of a dream, but also give us strategies for navigating the challenges currently facing humanity.

In late 2009 I dreamed I was in the entry way of a vast contemporary arts museum, slick, and clean with wide open spaces. I passed a receptionists desk and went into one of the display areas. I looked at a mutlimedia sculpture that involved circuit-bending, a contemporary folk-art that involves the creative short circuiting of small electronic sound devices, enabling them to create new, aleatoric chance-found sounds. This sculpture had earbuds attached for listening. I looked at it and then went around the corner where I saw something that reminded me of the work of the West Coast artists collective, Survival Research Labs: a mechanical robot with a taxidermied animal head. The dead animal head was a combination of a dog and a duck; I thought it very strange. Then this thing that combined robotics and taxidermy in a horrific and grisly spectacle started coming after me and I snapped awake, startled, heart racing.

I wrote the dream down, a good practice for anyone who wants to learn more about themselves and the multiverse we inhabit. My dream had me fired up about the ways dreams themselves are a kind

of Survival Research Laboratory, preparing us for current and future challenges, opening us to guidance from non-physical sources, expanding our creativity, and our sense of who we are. And let's face it, there are many challenges facing our species and the planet. It would do us all well to spend more time in the laboratory researching and working out the means of survival. Dreams, art, magic and the imagination have a leading role to play in the survival of the human species and I sketched out a whole slew of ideas about these interrelated topics.

But I still hadn't penetrated what the image of the taxidermied dog/duck meant. What was it and why was it chasing me?

I had seen Survival Research Labs on the campus of Antioch College where I attended school for a year and a half. Their live show was full of mechanical flame throwing robots. And a friend had once shown some footage of their performances to me, so I knew they often attached taxidermied animals and roadkill to their mechanical sculptures. I appreciate their anti-industrial message, but I'm much too squeamish to go pick up roadkill, let alone use it as a medium for art. Yet the dream haunted me and I thought of the dog/duck on and off all day as I went about my work scanning in books and putting them away at the library.

In a random moment just before I got off work I looked down at the book I was about to shelve on a cart, by a biologist named Glen Chilton. It was titled, *The Curse of the Labrador Duck: My Obsessive Quest to the Edge of Extinction*. Struck by the title and by the picture of the taxidermied duck on the cover, a wave of kundalini energy coursed up my spine. I felt hot and cold, my skin prickly with goosebumps. The Library Angel had delivered the key to my dream and the meaning was unlocked. Labrador is a name most people associate more with the dog breed, but here was a duck species who shared the moniker. Reading the inside flap I quickly learned that the Labrador duck is now extinct. I delved into the volume as soon as possible. It's about how Chilton went on a quest to examine every known taxidermed specimen of the duck in the world. That wasn't what interested me so much, and I never finished the entire thing, but the message was clear.

The conjunction of dream and a Library Angel synchronicity really brought home for me the stark reality of extinction, the sobering thought that our own wanton destruction of other species might be the downfall of our own. The exact reasons for the extinction of the Labrador Duck are unknown. It wasn't considered to be tasty, so was not over hunted as a food source, though they may have suffered from the feather trade and their wild eggs may have been over harvested, resulting in lower birth rates. Another factor in their extinction seems to be the decline in their own food source of mussels and other shell fish on the Eastern Seaboard, resulting from the growth of human population and industry. The Labrador Duck may have been more dependent upon this one food source than other duck species in the area. In my mind this shows the dangers that come from being too specialized in any one field, of seeking out only the familiar.

I also see parallels between the Labrador Duck and our own human species who are increasingly dependent on corn and soybeans, most of it genetically modified. We are also addicted to the cheap energy afforded us by fossil fuels, finite resources becoming ever more exhausted. This is why we need to play in the survival research laboratory of dreams and magic. By practicing bibliomancy and other divinatory arts, we can be shown the way to go beyond our established feeding grounds to areas that we're previously closed to us.

Stories can be more important than a meal however. On another Library Angel occasion I was led to the wonderful children's novel by Barry Lopez, *Crow and Weasel*. In it Lopez wrote, "the stories people tell have a way of taking care of them. If stories come to you, care for them. And learn to give them away when they are needed. Sometimes a person needs a story more than food to stay alive. That is why we put these stories in each other's memory. This is how people care for themselves."

Stories feed the imagination and it is just as important to know more than one story as it is to have more than one food source. John Michael Greer, Archdruid of the Ancient Order of Druids in America and a widely read author on the subject of peak-oil wrote that "Knowing many stories is wisdom.

Knowing no stories is ignorance. Knowing only one story is death." The Library Angel helps us to learn a multiplicity of stories. This is a good thing if we wish to foster diversity in our diets, both of food and the media we consume. Everything we read, listen to, and watch has to be digested by our nervous system.

IV. The Museum of Mnemosyne

Our imagination is perhaps our most subtle sense and great imaginations belong to highly attenuated nervous systems. Fugues and sonatas can be played on a well-tuned nervous system and books can be composed on them. The spinal cord is like an antenna and the brain is a transceiver, a device capable of reception and transmission. As individuals we each have a personal baseline frequency, but through the practice of magic we can learn to change our frequency and tune in to other beings of intelligence, the Libary Angel being just one of many.

The famous British Magus Aleister Crowley observed that "there are beings of intelligence and vaster power of a far higher quality than anything we can conceive of as human; that they are not necessarily based on the cerebral and nervous structures that we know, and that the one and only chance for mankind to advance as a whole is for individuals to make contact with such Beings."

One way to tune in with beings who possess mutidimensional knowledge is to make a visit to your own personal astral library, a type of memory palace where not only the things we know are stored, but things we don't yet know we know. Exploring your own personal library is one of the great adventures any creator can have and in doing so one helps to bring back magical gifts.

In visiting our own libraries on the astral plane we can find the scripts for the books we are going to write in the physical world; information about the soul families and mystery schools we are connected to; see the masks we wore in past lives, and the ones we will don in the future. Whatever field you work in, you can find something pertinent to its advancement on the shelves of the inner library, or as I like to think of it the Museum of Mnemosyne, a place of memory. Hackers can dream in code, sculptors can see new work waiting to be carved from marble, or assembled from societies detritus, painters can step into a painting they see hanging on the library wall and learn how to mix the perfect hue. Musicians will listen to recordings yet to be made and see the scores for symphonies and songs waiting to be composed.

How to get there? In vision. Shamanic drumming is a traditional technique, whereby the monotonous sound of the drum can power an imaginal voyage into the library. Dream incubation is another method. Before falling asleep set the firm intention to travel to your astral library, and upon waking write down your dreams. While at first glance a given dream may not seem to take place in a library, is it not possible that a dream could be taking place inside a book? The sigil of Harahel with the angels name written as a telesmatic image in Hebrew can be placed under the pillow before going to sleep as another form of incubation.

Psychedelic Science-Fiction writer Rudy Rucker is well acquainted with internal libraries. He noted that "if you read a lot, you develop a large inner library of words and phrases that you love, not to mention a repertoire of story twists, attitudes, and styles of thought. The inside of a working writers head is like the backstage wardrobe room of a theatre. In your apprencticeship you stock the wardrobe, then you begin assembling costumes from it, and perhaps at some point you're designing new garments of your own." Characters and sets soon follow, emerging from the writer's theater of memory.

In a vision following a ritual of the Silver Dusk the prolific Australian Sorcerer and Alchemical Artist Oryelle Defenestrate-Bascule found himself in what he called a Lunar Library. In a private communication he wrote of the experience, saying "strange silvery light bathed the books which were incredibly magical. As I turned the pages elementals would coruscate kinetically through the pages, weaving their way in and out of manifestation -these were living books. After a while the Librarian laid out before me a sequence of four books which fitted together into a web which could be read together in spiral formation." Oryelle then had the realization that this is what he was doing with his *Tela*

Quadrivium bookweb, the first three volumes, *Conjunctio, Coagula*, and *Solve* already available from Fulgur Limited. In Oryelle's vision he looked up at the librarian and saw his own face looking back at him, grinning. The librarian then took off the mirror image of Oryelle's face to reveal the face of Hermes Trismegistus pointing with one hand Above and with the other Below. Then his feathery earwings elongated and stretched down onto his -and then what became her- back, as the librarian transformed into Baphomet, the upwards and downwards-pointing gestures becoming those of Solve and Coagula.

These are the kinds of experiences that await working magicians who voyage into their own personal libraries, or as in the case here, a collective library associated with the work of a magical order.

Many of the new ideas that have been born to the world are those brought to us by people who have made contact with spiritual beings. These entities, whom as Crowley says are not necessarily based on "Cerebral Intelligence" are the powers behind and beyond this world, subtle engines of history, responsible for many of humanities evolutionary leaps. By activating the transceiver station of our brains we can make our own contacts and receive our own books. I contend that Aleister Crowley's *Book of the Law*, Nema's *Liber Pennae Praenumbra*, Oryelle Defenestrate-Bascule's *Book of Going Back By Night,* Kenneth Grant's *Wisdom of S'lba*, and Aion 131's *The Book of Gate* are all books that previously existed in an astral library but awaited the right conditions of time, place, and person to be penned down.

The multidimensional library is an akashic archive waiting to be tapped containing stories and poems that need to be told, tales of the Otherworld, of Goddesses, Gods, Angels and nature spirits, all waiting for the right scribes to tune in to their frequency and copy the contents of their astral books into Earthbound copies.

After these new titles are scribed they still remain in need of midwives, editors, agents, publishers and publishing guilds who will help foster these books from infancy to the time when they can stand on their own. And once published they are furthered along by collectors, librarians and other people will care for them as they grow into old age.

V. The Keepers of Sacred Memory

In some cases the Library Angel does not come to our aid so much as she seeks help from us, to give foster care to the books which are her children. I've received gifts from the Library Angel, material that I feel was put into my hands because of my alignment with the Double Current of Horus and Maat, and because I am a magician with in an interest in the esoteric history of my hometown, Cincinnati.

Down by the loading dock at the bibliotech where I work there are often boxes and bins full of discarded materials. Unlike Borge's infinite Library of Babel our building doesn't contain every possible book and every possible permutation thereof. The stacks aren't endless, so as the collections development team acquires new material, the other librarians are faced with the task of deciding what is to be thrown away. Many of the discards are sold at the annual book sale fund raiser, and sad as it is some do go straight into the trash. Imagine my surprise when I salvaged the first two issues of the *Cincinnati Journal of Ceremonial Magick* from the rubbish bin.

Librarians are generally a very liberal bunch of people and the American Library Association is not in favor of censorship or banning books. But the choice of what gets saved and what does not can be looked at as a subtle form of censorship, a way of deciding which histories are important and which are not. Or something like the *Cincinnati Journal* could simply have been thrown away because the librarian making the decision wasn't aware of the items rarity, value, and worth.

The *Cincinnati Journal of Ceremonial Magick* was a project of the Cincinnati Chapter of the Crowned and Conquering Child. Its members included Nema and Louis Martinie, both natives of Cincinnati, among others. The first issue of the first volume of the journal contains the first printing of *Liber Pennae Praenumbra*, a transmission pertaining to the Aeon of Maat received by Soror Nema. This *Liber* has gone on to influence a whole generation of magicians, including Aion 131 who went on to found Horus-Maat Lodge with Nema. Oryelle Defenestrate-Bascule has also been deeply influenced by

the Current of Maat. Louis Martinie, having left Cincinnati some time ago, went on to do much work in New Orleans in service to the Loa, helping to further establish the unique qualities of New Orleans style Voudon. With his history and background in Thelemic magic he has also provided an interface for the mingling of these two approaches to magic, becoming a conduit for what *The Book of the Law* has called the Obeah and the Wanga. In all of these cases a younger generation of magicians have come along and built upon the foundation work of their elders.

Documents like the *Journal* are too important to be casually thrown away as they form part of the magical record of just one of many magical communities. They contain our history and they need to be preserved. But as I have shown, those who do not understand the value of such a book may cast it aside in favor of something else.

Worse than ignorance though is the deliberate throwing away or burning of a book because it represents a point of view, spiritual practice, or religion a person wishes to suppress, usually because of fear. Even as recently as the McCarthy era the books of Wilhelm Reich, whose work remains heretical to mainstream psychology and medicine, were systematically burned.

So who should those in the esoteric community entrust our collective history to?

Ourselves. A number of projects to preserve this type of material have already been begun.

The Seattle Metaphysical Library was begun in 1961. Now over fifty years old this non-profit holds a collection of over 13, 000 books plus hundreds of titles in a variety of other media. This membership based library is "dedicated to personal transformation and evolving global consciousness by providing access to metaphysical, transdimensional, and unusual material."

Louis Martinie and his partner Mishlen Linden are both publishers and archivists who hold within their care many letters and original manuscripts relating to the *Cincinnati Journal of Ceremonial Magick* and their publishing concern Black Moon. One of the projects they have planned is creating a PDF file of their entire archives, making it freely available to students of the occult and the public in general. They also plan to release a series of chapbook's containing selected materials from the archives in the future. Around a dozen titles are already available from Black Moon with more to follow.

John Michael Greer initiated the Cultural Conservers Foundation. As part of that work he started a project to preserve books called The Sheneset Project. Sheneset was the ancient Egyptian name of a small town on the eastern bank of the Nile in Upper Egypt. Sometime in the fourth century a librarian from a Gnostic monastery buried a clay jar containing a collection of forbidden texts in the desert outside the town of Sheneset. Many centuries down the line the name of the town had been changed to Nag Hammadi. In 1945 a jar containing a collection of Gnostics texts was discovered. This was certainly the work of the Library Angel. Those texts are now known as the Nag Hammadi Library.

John Michael Greer feels parallel steps need to be taken to preserve the cultural heritage of the past and present into what is a potentially difficult future. With this in mind he encourages supporters of the Sheneset Project to take up one or more of the following projects, first "collecting at-risk books, especially those being discarded by public and university libraries," secondly "learning methods of preserving and curating books for long term survival, and of transforming digital resources into forms that can endure and be used in the absence of specific technologies," and third, "establishing local, private, subscription-based lending libraries, especially where public libraries are being shuttered or stripped of useful materials."

Libraries hold the memories of mankind. As such they are also under guard from Mnemosyne, Memory, Mother of the Nine Muses. The Library of Alexandria was but one part of the greater Musaeum or Temple of the Muses. It was a damn shame what happened to the original Library of Alexandria, but a pagan group on the East coast of America, the Assembly of the Sacred Wheel, have followed their own Muse and have established what they call the New Alexandrian Library.
On March 7th, 2011 as reported on Jason Pitzl-Waters pagan news blog The Wild Hunt, materials for the building of the geodesic dome that will form the home of the New Alexandrian Library were unloaded in Georgetown, Delaware. On December 18, 2011 a ground breaking ceremony was held and

building commenced.

The New Alexandrian Library is inclusive of all spiritual traditions, and will work to preserve rare and damaged documents. This library will also serve as a place to collect the history of our varied magical communities for future generations. They also expect for their library to become a place where a "diverse confluence of minds and resources would result in great leaps forward in the theory and practice" of magic and they hope the library will become a "magnet to draw together teachers, authors, and scholars from many traditions". Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki gifted the library with painting of the four archangels by Dion Fortune.

I applaud all of these valiant efforts and wish each project the highest degree of success in their work. But to further the interest of protecting esoteric knowledge, and of building a truly magical culture, even more such libraries and archives need to be established around this country and around the world. The New Alexandrian Library, Sheneset Project, Black Moon Archives, and Seattle Metaphysical Library can all serve as models.

This is the charge of Harahel, the Library Angel and the charge of Mnemosyne, Memory, Mother of the Nine Muses, to preserve, protect, and nurse our written stores of wisdom for future generations.

-Justin Patrick Moore
Cincinnati, Ohio
January, 2012

Note: This is the third version of a work that begin its life as *A Writers Guide to the Library Angel and It's Oracle* first published online in *Silver Star: A Journal of New Magick* in 2010, and then printed in a limited edition chapbook by Ouroboros Press as a giveaway to deluxe ticket holders at the 2011 Esoteric Book Conference. The second version, very close to what is presented here, was my expansion upon the original essay into the talk *The Library Angel and It's Oracle* which I gave at the aforementioned conference. That material was further refined, with some slight additions, into its present form, a triple distillation.

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