

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Preface and introduction

1.1 Preface

When I was considering which subject to study for a whole year, which seemed like an eternity back then, before I knew any better, I wanted to write about religious experiences. The theme seemed conspicuously absent from the literature provided in the courses I had taken in religious studies, which of course made it all the more appealing. When reading up on the subject however, I learned why it had not been addressed to any great extent. Past researchers and scholars had echoed my initial, untrained assumptions that there must be some core or base experiences that are then filtered into multiplicity through the various cultural and religious constellations that interpret them. By working from that base assumption, complexities and variations had been lost, definitions of religion that centered around the term “religious experience” rose to prominence, and religious populations reframed their beliefs to fit this narrative, thus protecting themselves from various modes of criticism. My professors heard a naïve student talk excitedly in a similar vein, and rightly feared that I would make the same mistakes. But the study of religious experiences moved on, with different scholars proposing new ways to approach the subject without making theologians of ourselves or declaring everything to be socially constructed. Dr. Aspren and Professor Levy, my advisor, both recommended that I read Ann Taves’ *Religious Experience Reconsidered* (2009), as they thought it showed promise in addressing the issues of the field I was so keenly interested in. I found myself suitably fascinated by her retelling of the history of the field, her theories and the approach that she sketched out through the pages of her book. At this point, I decided to contact her and Aspren, who were working together at the time, and ask them for advice. I wanted to write about religious experiences, but at this point I had not yet decided on the specifics. Through consulting them, I hoped that I could provide a thesis that would be of use or at least interesting to their research. To my infinite gratitude and mild shock, they responded kindly and enthusiastically. Aspren was working on the subject of astral projection through his “Occult Minds” research program (<http://occult-minds.com>), basing his approach around Taves’ building blocks, complex cultural concepts, attributions and ascriptions. He knew from our previous chats and exchanges that I was interested in western esotericism in general and Aleister Crowley in particular. He put two and two together and suggested that I study Thelemic astral projection, and based my

theoretical framework around Taves' book. They had not covered the subject of astral projection within that particular tradition and population, so by basing my research on the same theoretical framework, my humble efforts could potentially be of use to their work. My mind bubbling with enthusiasm at this prospect, I got to work.

1.2 Introduction

This study is constructed to explore a novel field of inquiry, and to add to the future efforts of Asprem and Taves. They are researching how different complex cultural concepts that are pointing at experiences, such as “astral projection”, “gnosis”, “revelations” and “mystical experiences” involve interpretational processes that revolve around “events”, under the assumption that “experiences” are “events”. As a primary theoretical framework, they build upon Ann Taves' theory of ascriptions and attributions, and to utilize attribution theory to inform their analysis. Another article of hers that further develops this framework from its conception in *Religious Experience Reconsidered* is, at the time of writing, under review at the journal *Religion, Brain and Behavior*; but this latest conceptualization of their framework has been unavailable to me during the process of researching and writing this thesis. This study aims to add to their inquiry by exploring the complex cultural concept of astral projection within a different population and tradition, namely Thelema, while working from Taves' theoretical framework as it had been expressed and conceptualized in *Religious Experience Reconsidered*.

To “map” this concept as fully as possible, this study needs to address a series of questions. Which practices or events do Thelemites identify as astral projection, and how? How do they connect these practices to the wider body of beliefs and practices encompassed within Thelema as a cultural formation, or other cultural formations? Why do they seek to astrally project, how, and how do they extract meaning from it? How do they represent and narrate the event?

Unfortunately, this study is, as all things, bound by time constraints. More specifically by a deadline approaching with increasing rapidity, which communicated the need to delimit and focus the scope of this study as much as it communicated the usual sense of impending doom. This delimiting was done in an attempt to distill as many of these points of interest as possible into as few research questions as possible, and provide some indication of how all these factors influence one another. This thesis will focus on: “How do Thelemites come to identify an event as astral projection, and how do they connect it to Thelema?” By this question I indicate that the focus of interest mostly concerns

composite ascriptions, or how things deemed special interconnect to create more complex cultural and belief-oriented formations.

How Thelemites come to identify an event or an experience as astral projection is interesting for many reasons. At some point they must draw a line between experiences or events they consider similar, but not astral projection as they understand it, which implies that at some level there are sets of criteria that must be met or another form of reasoning. They should provide reasoning as to why an experience is given a simple ascription, that is being seen as special, and a composite one, where it is connected to another set of special things. They could connect their representations in many ways, connecting the perceived value or characteristics of the event to their criteria, which implies different ascriptive processes and resulting composite ascriptions. Similarly, they might connect their conception of astral projection to related practices. How they connect their conception of astral projection to Thelema provides a similar look at assumedly diverse processes that connect to and form different composite ascriptions. From the totality of the composite ascriptions provided, we can indicate ways in which the complex cultural concepts of astral projection and Thelema respectively interact with one another and other components through individual acts of ascription, attribution and valuation.

With the target more clearly in mind, we can assess the preparatory stage of this thesis. I started by looking up texts in Aleister Crowley's massive bibliography that might relate to the subject in question. Crowley was the founder and prophet of Thelema, a notorious British magician who "received" *Liber Al vel Legis*, The Book of the Law, in 1904, which declared the beginning of a new age with a corresponding moral code; the law of Thelema (Asprem, 2007a: 24). In his writings, a few texts stood out. *Liber O vel manus et sagittae sub figura VI* or simply *Liber O* from now on, takes the form of a practical guide (Crowley, 2012: 613). It places the practice of astral projection within a curriculum, where certain practices must be "mastered" before the student should move on to the next. This framework is interesting to me, as it creates a series of composite ascriptions where diverse practices are grouped together in relation to each other, implying that they belong to the same or similar subsets of special things. This implied relationship between different practices could indicate that other practices are likewise deemed to relate to one another in differing ways by individual Thelemites, constructing multiple composite ascriptions and a form of categorization based upon these perceived relationships.

Taves theorizes that things can be deemed special by virtue of being considered to connect to something special. This can happen in many ways, but the example that seemed the most relevant to

my study was the path-schematic. A special goal can be connected to a set of practices deemed efficacious at reaching that goal, thereby relating the two and making the practices special in the eyes of those who consider them an effective way to reach a goal they consider special (Taves, 2009: 47). If Thelemic practitioners connect these practices as Crowley did in *Liber O*, an intricate layer of composite ascriptions might connect and frame the practices in question. How would such a mechanism incorporate new practices into its corpus? Adversely, how would it retain stability and orthodoxy?

These questions serve to underscore the interconnectedness between my research questions and what I consider to be fields of interest for this study. There is a relationship between event characteristics, that might produce salience and thus more likely to be seen as special, and the composite ascriptions where they are connected to other sets of special things. Some characteristics of astral projection are present in Crowley's instructions, such as the notion of a visualized "subtle body" or "body of light" utilized during the practice (Crowley, 2012: 242). Perhaps Thelemites identify their experiences as astral projection specifically by referring to an expected set of characteristics, that might be similar to or at odds with those described in *Liber O* or *Notes towards an astral atlas*. That's just it, we don't know, which makes this study all the more interesting. Crowley's status as prophet and principal author of the literary corpus of Thelema should, in my opinion, be an indication that his authorship could provide a good starting point when considering what Thelemites of today consider astral projection to be, and how they connect and demarcate their conception of it to and from other beliefs and practices. I cannot however, be sure of how this translates into actuality. Other beliefs, other definitions and other practices might be prevalent within the Thelemic community of today, so I must be ready to step away from my reading of *Liber O* and similar texts. This concern informed my choice of methods. I wanted flexibility, and I needed to be able to investigate avenues of inquiry that may break with my expectations in unforeseeable ways.

When considering the question of methods, I reminded myself just what I wanted to investigate. Both of my research questions relate to individual beliefs and interpretation, and if my suspicions were correct, then both of these questions were interrelated with complex, nuanced sets of belief structures that could connect to areas of inquiry I would be unable to predict. Qualitative studies excel at approaching subjects such as these, and seemed to suit the "mapping" effort I had in mind. A qualitative study does not aim to prove causal relationships, but to provide a look into the Lebenswelt, the lived world of individuals, where subjective or intersubjective interpretational processes belong and

where they intermingle and interconnect with complex sets of factors and influences (Flick, 2011: 12, 15-16). There are a lot of different methods that can be utilized in a qualitative study, like interviews, observation and the interpretation and analysis of texts, visual data or mediation. Again, I kept my research questions and overarching goal in mind when considering which to use. I decided on a set of semi-structured interviews. The loose structure would allow me the flexibility I needed to address unexpected twists and turns in the course of my research, and an interview guide based around specific fields of interest would allow me to guide the interviewee towards topics that I thought could relate to my research questions. Thus it seemed to be the method best suited to answer the questions I had synthesized from Taves and Aspren's suggested inquiry.

1.3 Reflexivity

I do, at the time of writing, consider myself a Thelemite, and have done so for several years. This provides me with a few advantages. I have access to the local community of Thelemites socially and through Thelemic organizations like the Ordo Templi Orientis, and some understanding of what Thelema is, both in the sense of a literary tradition and through the fellow Thelemites I have met and conversed with. If I do not manage to separate the roles of believer and scholar properly, this could of course become a problem. On the one hand, I could read my preconceptions of what Thelema and astral projection is, and how they interrelate with one another into the answers provided by my informants. On the other hand, I could become so scared of committing that first error that I shy away from discussing my own ideas and intuitions. I believe that I have, with the good help of my advisors and friends, managed to walk this tightrope without committing either sin. The reader is, however, the ultimate judge of this issue, which is why I thought it best to provide this necessary information in this introductory chapter. This transparency is necessary because all research, including this study, is undertaken by people with motivations, preconceptions and needs. Leaving these factors unexamined presents an incomplete picture that could misrepresent this piece of research and the research process (King & Horrocks, 2010: 127).

1.4 Gathering and analyzing data

Contact was established with lodges of the Ordo Templi Orientis active here in Norway. The O.T.O. is a fraternal Thelemic organization, and by far the largest and most visible of its kind (Pasi, 2006b: 905). When doing so, I presented myself as a researcher intending to study Thelemic astral

projection for his thesis, and asked them if they would pass my e-mail along to their members or interested parties that self-identified as Thelemites. An informational note was attached to each of the e-mails, which can be viewed in the appendix. This note described the study in question, how the anonymity of the participants would be protected, and asked anyone who was interested in being interviewed for this purpose to contact me directly. After a while I was contacted by five individuals, and started scheduling the interview appointments. I decided to do these interviews in a one-on-one setting, avoiding group interviews and remote interviewing. Group interviews would, I judged, open my questions to debate, where one view might take the spotlight away from the true complexity and variety of views in my small population, and distract from the fact that I am primarily interested in the meaning-making processes of individuals, rather than groups.

According to Bertram Malle's theory of attribution, explanation takes on a social dimension where it aims to regulate the explainer's relationship to the ones he or she is explaining him or herself to (Malle, 2004: 27). The Thelemic community in Norway is a comparatively small one, so in grouping them together they might be keener to manage social relations with people that could be quite close to themselves, and thus have an impact on their daily lives. Remote interviewing has similar drawbacks. Technical issues are always a factor that is, in my humble experience, best avoided by including less technical factors altogether. A textual interview through e-mail or similar devices could be less likely to gain access to the individual beliefs and experiences of the interviewees, since it would give them time to check their answers with sources they deemed authoritative, be that a literary source or another person, prompting them to adjust their beliefs accordingly.

Time is also a factor. When I did my preparatory studies before starting on the thesis proper, I had the good fortune to try a few interviewing methods. E-mail interviews tended to arrive late, or be postponed until the very latest acceptable date of collection, a tendency I did not wish to be repeated when working on a deadline. Remote video- or voice-interviews could be subject to a host of technical difficulties and issues. First of all, it would restrict my population to those able and willing to undergo that kind of interviewing, thus narrowing my informants down to Thelemites with certain technical aptitudes that are still associated with younger rather than older generations. Secondly, the sound quality could become a problem. With an in-person interview, I am able to mitigate this by utilizing high quality recording equipment, but I have little influence on which microphones my potential informants would have available and be comfortable utilizing, not to mention their bandwidth or cell phone coverage.

These arguments informed the decision to complete five scheduled semi-structured in-person interviews. As with all methods, this has its conceivable drawbacks and limitations. The semi-structured approach puts much import on the actions and reactions of the interviewer during the interview situation. If I missed something important, and did not ask follow-up questions, then an area of inquiry might close off, and an opportunity would be lost. If I asked the wrong questions or framed them in an unfortunate way, then the flow of the conversation might stall or stagnate, resulting in similarly lost opportunities and closing off access to data that might have been of interest to the study. As a Thelemite I'm also a part of a small community, and as such my informants could potentially be people I have met earlier outside my role as a researcher and scholar of religion, or people that know of me. This means that they might have an image of me, which could trigger explanations that attempt to modulate our social relationship. I tried to mitigate this by repeating before each individual interview, that I was interested in their subjective views, opinions, beliefs and experiences, and assuring them that there was no such thing as a "wrong" answer. The sheer variety of data, views and beliefs presented through the interviews indicate, to my best judgement, that no particular or discernible modes of explanation were adopted to placate me as an interviewer. If their explanations were influenced by a conscious or unconscious desire to modulate our social relationship, then at least they seemed to adopt different ways of doing so.

Transcribing the interviews would be a time consuming effort. Since I was less interested in the microexpressions, tone of voice and so on that might interest a psychoanalyst, than the content of their explanations and narratives, I decided to do this as simply as possible. Since I am working, in a sense, on a given assignment, I also take on the role as facilitator. I have to make my data available to others, including researchers who do not speak Norwegian. The interviews were conducted in the native tongue of both myself and my informants, as this aids the flow of conversation during the interview situation. I reasoned that it might also accommodate the presentation of subjective ideas, beliefs and experiences rather than the repeat of descriptions and explanations given in English, since this is the language of most of Crowley's writings, and as such most of the Thelemic literature. To present my data as thoroughly and comprehensively as possible, I decided to include the full transcriptions of the interviews, in Norwegian, in the appendix, in a form that is easy to read thanks to the simplicity of the transcription. I also provided English translations of quotes from the interviews in appendix 2, grouped categorically after which subject they were addressing. This categorization was deemed necessary because of the associative nature of the answers provided. One informant might stop in the middle of a

narrative representation of an event they considered special or identified as astral projection, to explain briefly what they consider to be some characteristic of the astral plane, where another might start talking about another subject entirely. In the interview situation, and considering the accumulation of relevant data, this is a good thing, and partly why I chose my method in the first place, but it makes the presentation and facilitation of data clumsier, and reading through it more time-consuming.

Choosing the categories was a task I spent some time on. They should be relevant to what I wanted to do with my analysis, what I considered to be interesting for Professor Taves and Doctor Asprem's research, and they should reflect my data in a way that did not commit the error of descriptive reductionism, reducing the presented data to something it was not. Wayne Proudfoot describes the pitfalls of descriptive reductionism as such; "Descriptive reduction is the failure to identify an emotion, practice, or experience under the description by which the subject identifies it" (1985: 196). He argues that by removing the descriptors utilized by the informant we end up addressing something else entirely. If we remove religious language from the description, when that was the language the informant employed, we reduce the description to something else, similar to removing fear from a narrative concerning a phobia. From this I decided to produce my categories in a dialectic between material, theory and Taves' analytical categories. To further avoid descriptive reductionism, each translated quote is referring back to the original transcripts where they can be viewed in their original context. The categories and the reasons for which they were chosen specifically is addressed more fully in chapter 5.

The analysis is similarly informed by my research questions and Taves' theories. Bertram Malle's attribution theory has been utilized to add to the "four factors" of Spilka, Shaver and Kirckpatrick as it adds the dimension of agency to their analytical framework, as per Taves' observations (Taves, 2009: 100). A description of Taves' and Malle's theories is provided in chapter 3, while the analytical approach is covered more fully in chapters 4 and 5.

1.5 Research overview

This study relates more significantly to future research than that of the past. I am working within a certain framework to accommodate this, utilizing Taves' theories and Malle's amendments to attribution theory, as explained more fully in chapter 3. While no other studies have been done on the subject of Thelemic astral projection, a few efforts have been done on similar subjects or subjects that bear some relation to this theme.

Tanya Luhrmann's "*Persuasions of the Witch's Craft*" is based on her ethnographic work within British circles interested in magic, the occult, Wicca and esoteric freemasonry during the mid-1980s. She attempts to describe the process by which magicians and similarly inclined practitioners come to alter their perceptions of the world through their commitment to a magical practice. What she calls "the Western Mysteries" is probably the closest approximation in her study to Thelemic "Magick" and ritual practices, and she describes, amongst other things, the use of "The Lesser Banishing Ritual", similarly to the instructions in *Liber O*, a Thelemic "training manual" of sorts that we will cover more fully in the next chapter. Luhrmann is a keen observer, and provides interesting descriptions on how magical practice can become meaningful in the eyes of a modern practitioner, but she does not address Thelema or astral projection specifically.

Susan J. Blackmore's "*Beyond the Body*" investigates "out-of-the-body experiences" and phenomena, folklore and claims that she deems to be similar or related to her favored category. She describes astral projection as it is represented in the literature of Theosophy, and provides interesting narratives from people who claim to have experienced such an event. This provided me with some insight into the history of astral projection as a complex cultural concept, a few indications as to how the narratives of my own informants could play out, and some indication of which phenomena they might compare their own experiences to. In her book she argues that a host of various phenomena, practices and narratives are in some way related to her category of out-of-the-body experiences, and then she attempts to provide explanations for why her reduced category occurs. By doing so she removes all the various phenomena and practices from their context, and reduces them to a small part of what they have been described as. This descriptive reductionism struck me as a warning that I should not repeat her mistake even in the context of a single practice within a single cultural formation.

Egil Asprem's "*Kabalah Recreata*" provided me with a look into the "qabalistic" system contained within Crowley's *Liber 777*, which Asprem describes as typical of what he dubs the "programmatically syncretism" of fin de siècle occultism. By programmatically syncretism, Asprem points to the tendency to appropriate and reinterpret available esoteric data from myriad sources into a pragmatically improved form, all done with a perennialist agenda. He goes on to describe how the contents of *Liber 777* are intended to produce testable esoteric data, in that the experiences and visions of magicians are put to paper and then scrutinized for correspondences that "fit" or not within this system. In "*Magic naturalized*," he examines Crowley's ideal of "Scientific Illuminism" and argues that this represents a step in the naturalization of the conception of "magic". The text further elucidates

how Crowley's system of "qabalistic correspondences" is intended to allow practitioners to "test" or "verify" the validity their visionary or astral projection-related experiences retrospectively. Asprem does however not have access to any other data than Crowley's writings, leaving us unable to discern how Thelemic practitioners today make sense of, identify or evaluate their experiences with astral projection and other practices they consider related. Asprem's "*Èn vilje, hinsides godt og ondt: Etikk og livssyn for det nye aeon,*" has similarly informed my view on the Thelemic concept of the "Will", the progression of "aeons" and how both concepts relate to Thelemic ethics.

This study contributes to Asprem's studies on Thelema's diverse features and how they interconnect, it builds on and is informed by Luhrmann's studies on contemporary magical practices as they are understood, explained and represented by individual practitioners, and it concerns a specific practice or subject that is briefly touched upon and placed in a historical context by Blackmore. The primary discussion that this study aims to inform and contribute to is, however, as of yet unpublished. As stated earlier, Asprem and Taves are interested in astral projection, and have little data on how this is practiced and understood by Thelemites today. The *raison d'être* for this piece of research stems from their involvement and interest in a subject that they considered to be fruitful or helpful to their future studies.

Chapter 2: Thelema, Magick and Astral Projection.

2.1 Thelema and Magick

So, what is Thelema? Is it a religion, or something else entirely? I find that the answer depends entirely upon your definition of the term, and since this study utilizes the reverse-engineering method, we have the luxury of allowing Thelemites to tell us themselves. The trouble is, they themselves seem unsure, wavering between distancing Thelema and Magick from the "old" and "oppressive" religions, and declaring Thelema to be religion "as it ought to be", as well as numerous other positions (IAO131, 2013). We have seen this before though, where some proponents of Christian particularism, amongst others, declare their faith to be true or defined it as "a personal relationship with God", and thus not religion or superstition (Martinez, 2014). Defining themselves in contrast to other religions could be seen as a kind of polemic rhetorical device, yet it tells us a lot about what this specific population sees as encompassed by the terms religion or religious, as well as how and where they place their own beliefs and practices within that landscape.

Aleister Crowley, the founder and prophet of Thelema, defined being a Thelemite as requiring the acceptance of their central holy text, *Liber Al vel Legis* (The Book of the Law), which includes the central tenet of this tradition, The Law of Thelema: “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law” (Crowley, 2012: 307. Crowley, 1995b: 5).

The Law of Thelema was first presented and Thelema itself was founded when Aleister Crowley wrote the primary religious text of this tradition, *Liber Al Vel Legis*, or The Book of the Law. This happened in 1904, with, according to Crowley, help from a disembodied voice he perceived as a non-corporeal entity named Aiwass, which he later identified as his own Holy Guardian Angel. Aiwass proclaimed the Law, while Crowley acted as his scribe, or so the story goes. This alleged meeting with a non-ordinary power was described as the culmination of a ritual event in Cairo, in a time when Crowley self-identified as a Buddhist, and visited Egypt as a part of his extravagant honeymoon. He describes his wife at the time as being the driving force behind the ritual, and his own attitude towards it as initially amused, yet skeptical, while gradually becoming more invested and convinced of the authenticity of her intuitions (Crowley, 2012: 434. Asprem, 2007a: 24-25).

Under the supervision of Crowley, three distinct organizations were founded or reformed to provide options for Thelemites with different callings (Pasi, 2006a: 282-287). The Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica is presented and described as a Thelemic religious environment, in which they perform the central ritual called the Gnostic Mass, and provide services such as weddings, funerals and ordinations (OTO USA, 2015b). The clergy of this church are members of the Ordo Templi Orientis, a masonic initiatory order dedicated to the promulgation of Thelema as well as providing training in how to integrate Thelema into one's daily life, and insight into some of the esoteric elements of Thelema as a whole (OTO USA, 2015a). The third organization is simply known as the A.'.A.'. and is dedicated to personal training in Thelemic esotericism and magical practice (OTO USA, 2015c). A Thelemite may join any or none of these organizations in any combination.

Thelemic “magical” practice is of particular interest to this study, since it, as a system, provides reasons for attempting to initiate astral projection as well as guidance on how to achieve this. It is based upon the esoteric system of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, where Crowley was trained during his youth, but reformed to concur with the goals, worldview and symbolism of Thelema (Pasi, 2006b: 284). This syncretism is easily explainable within the context of the system itself, since it identifies a change from the “Aeon of Osiris” to the “Aeon of Horus” in 1904 CE. At this point in time

a new age is understood to have dawned where the natural relationship between mankind and the world it resides within has changed to one best expressed by the law of Thelema (Asprem, 2007a: 26-27).

Through the eyes of a Thelemite, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and the other old religions were in a way right for their time, but are now living relics in a world that has moved past them. It seems typical for the era which formed Crowley and other esoteric thinkers and practitioners of his time, as Egil Asprem has pointed out (2007b: 135), to “reinterpret and recontextualize the available sets of religious and esoteric data” in a way that appears scientific as well as conforming to the grand narrative of progress. Progress as a meta-narrative is in a way present in Thelema within the progression of Aeons, with their evolving moral codes and ever-expanding repertoires of magical attainment, and the internal discussion on the religiousness of Thelema seems to be another indicator, as parts of the argument seem centered on creating a distance from older, more “superstitious” or “oppressive” religions. Scientism is very much in place, in the form of the ideal of “Scientific Illuminism”, as illustrated by the motto of *The Equinox*, one of Crowley’s periodical publications; “The method of science, the aim of religion” (Ibid: 135). Syncretism, reinterpretations and recontextualizations are everywhere, as most symbols and methods from diverse religious and esoteric traditions are appropriated with gusto, and found a place within the comprehensive library of correspondences laid out in *Liber 777* and Crowley’s “revised Hermetic Qabalah” (Crowley, 1986).

The system of Thelemic esotericism as outlined in texts considering the A.'.A.'. has, according to Crowley, several goals. The first group of degrees is constructed to produce an Adept, that is, to prepare the candidate to achieve the transformative experience identified as the “Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel”. From this point on, this entity, which is variously understood as being a disembodied external figure, or an expression of one's inmost being, will guide the candidate to “The Abyss” which must be crossed, upon which the candidate will attain the grade of Magister Templi, and eventually Magus and Ipsissimus (Crowley, 2012: 488-498. Gunther, 2014: 10). Several religious figures of other traditions, such as Lao Tzu, Gautama Buddha, Moses and Muhammad are like Crowley seen as having attained the degree of Magus, as they are seen to have expressed a formulaic word that depicts the nature of initiation as it had evolved in their time (Crowley, 1997: 68-74).

The nature of the Magi, and the view that the entity that announced the Book of the Law to Crowley, who simply put it to paper, was Crowley's Holy Guardian Angel, Aiwass (Crowley, 1998b: 146) or one of the “Secret Chiefs” does explicitly tie the Thelemic understanding of practices they

deem “mystical” and “magical” to the greater concept of Thelema. To put it simply, one might simply accept the ethical ramifications of the law and consider oneself a Thelemite, but the Book of the Law also makes claims that it was unveiled by methods and entities that are tied to a complex esoteric system, which one is seemingly free to explore or ignore at one’s own leisure.

Astral projection is an important part of this system, usually seen as a method one adopts to be able to attain the principal goals of this path, such as the “Knowledge and Conversation” experience, but also as a means to self-discovery and a way to interact with other practices and rituals. In *Liber O*, Crowley wrote short instructions on what practices he deemed efficacious at training the faculties he deemed necessary for or related to the task, and how to initiate it when properly prepared (Crowley, 2012: 613). In the short text *Notes for an Astral Atlas*, Crowley provides a description of his understanding of the astral world and guidelines for how to interpret and judge astral projection experiences. He notes how any experience or event, “let it dazzle and thrill as it may”, is not necessarily in accordance with the “True Will” of the one undergoing the event, and as such of little value (Ibid: 505). To understand what Crowley means by this process of valuation, we need to investigate the Thelemic concept of the “Will”.

2.2 True Wills and the Laws that govern them

Central to Thelema is the Law from which it takes its name. This maxim is summed up in two sentences in *Liber Al vel Legis*, or the Book of the Law, the primary religious text of this tradition: “Do what thou wilt shalt be the whole of the law” and “Love is the law, love under will” (Crowley, 2012: 307-308). This is expanded upon in Thelemic literature which provides guidelines for correct interpretation of this law, entailing a whole ethical system. *Liber Oz* (Crowley, 2012: 689) serves as a Thelemic declaration of human rights, while the text *Duty* expands on the ramifications of accepting this Law as a guide in all things, such as a Thelemite's duty towards other men and women, animals and him or herself (Asprey, 2007a: 35. Crowley, 1998a: 135-145). Glancing from these principal texts we can make out an ethical system based upon principles that seem similar to classical liberalism and libertarianism, in that they focus heavily on the freedom of the individual.

The duty a Thelemite has to him or her self is based upon discovering and enacting what they call the “True Will”. This is variously described as the culmination of one's own being, the path in life that fulfills that particular individual, or one's fate. This is to be pursued at the exclusion of every other action (Asprey, 2007a: 30-31). The ethics of Thelema deny the existence of a common human nature

from which an egalitarian ethical position could be developed, and instead focuses on the pursuit of an individualized “Will” (Ibid: 32-33). All people are equally presented as having the right to express and pursue their Will, which makes infringement on such a freedom a crime against “natural law” and a “direct spiritual violation of the Law of Thelema” (Crowley, 1998a:142).

The Will is differentiated between a finite and an infinite one. Crowley illustrates the nature of the former by pointing at different occupations, and the latter by alluding to the True Will and the Great Work, as explained in further detail elsewhere in this text. As Crowley writes,

And to each will come the knowledge of his finite will, whereby one is a poet, one prophet, one worker in steel, another in jade. But also to each be the knowledge of his infinite Will, his destiny to perform the Great Work, the realization of his True Self (Crowley, 1995a: 103).

2.3 Magick and ritual

“Magick” as Crowley preferred to spell the word, inhabits a significant role within Thelema. He defined it as “the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will” (Crowley, 2012: 126).

Coupled with the Thelemic understanding of the True Will as discussed above, this means that a great many actions are understood to be magical acts, without necessarily involving the trappings of ritual magick. Magick and mysticism are given specific meanings within the context of Thelema, where they are seen as two tools, one active, the other passive, that may be utilized on the path to realizing and fulfilling one's “True Will”. Advancing from everyday magick, as in intentional acts as a whole, to the use of rituals and the practices they categorize as “mysticism” is, in other words, completely optional, and depends on the whims, nature and faculties of the individual in question.

The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, in which Crowley became a member in his youth, provided him with training in and an understanding of what he categorized as mysticism and ritual magic. This influence included some aspects of the symbolic system of the qabalah as understood in the western esoteric traditions, initiation ceremonies, meditation techniques, astral projection and much more that we still see within the framework of Thelema (Pasi, 2006a: 282). These techniques are employed and taught primarily within the Thelemic order founded by Crowley known as the A.'.A.'., where they are employed in the pursuit of “spiritual attainment” (Ibid: 285). Within Thelemic esotericism and the groups that Thelemic esotericists draw inspiration from, certain “mystical” or

“special” experiences or events are tied to the gradual process of discovering and understanding one’s own nature. Within the A.'.A.'. , the first 5 degrees of their initiatory system is constructed to prepare the candidate with the tools necessary to produce the “Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel”. This is described as an experience in which the magician comes into contact with his or her “Holy Guardian Angel,” another term which has been in use in the Golden Dawn, and has been reinterpreted and integrated within Crowley's system. At various points in his writings, Crowley described it as “the Silent Self”, or a separate being entirely (Ibid: 285). The perceived utility of the experience is to grant the magician a better understanding of his or her True Will (Asprem, 2007a:31), and was considered by Crowley to be of such importance that he saw it as the first of the two primary goals of any magician, and considered any act of magick not related to its achievement as “black magick” (Crowley, 2012: 275).

Astral projection is one of these tools deemed efficacious at producing the aforementioned experiences, since it is described as one of the primary skills or practices necessary for the proper practice of ritual magick. It is described using various terms such as traveling in the body of light, rising through the planes, or simply astral travel. Crowley published some basic instructions on how to learn this skill, most notably in *Liber O* which has been used as a training manual by Thelemic organizations still active in some form today.

2.4 Astral projection

The notion of "the astral" has most likely found its way to Crowley and Thelema through Eliphas Levi. Born Alphonse Louis Constant, this French ceremonial magician was a tremendous influence on the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the initiatory order in which Crowley was trained. Arthur Edward Waite, a prominent member of the organization, translated Levi's magnum opus "Transcendental Magic, Its Doctrine and Ritual" into English. Blavatsky's Theosophical society had also a tremendous impact on fin de siècle occultism, and Crowley was familiar with their ideas and publications. Their notion of astral projection is likely to have been an influence on him either directly or through the Golden Dawn (Pasi, 2006a: 284).

The concept of "subtle bodies” or using them to travel to unknown or nonphysical realms is not a new creation of the religious fringe debate during the late 1800s and early 1900s, but was in a way the product of thoughts and ideas imported from the east at the time, or at least presented as such. Subtle body practices are a part of many Indian, Indo-Tibetan and East-Asian traditions, as well as old

esoteric lines of thought with a more occidental origin, such as the cultivation of the Ochema Pneuma from Neoplatonism, though these seem to be less frequently cited in Crowley's writings and his sources of inspiration than the former group (Addey, 2013: 149).

Today, astral projection is a term adopted with gusto by a wide variety of groups within the cultic milieu. Groups as varied as satanic esotericists, new age healers, scientific out of body experience enthusiasts and converted Hindus are all employing the same term, emically loaded with a variety of different interpretations and probably obfuscating a similar multitude of markedly different practices.

From this we can see indications that astral projection, as a complex cultural concept, has a lineage that can be traced back to diverse roots, and has followed a distinct path up to its acceptance and prevalence in the cultic milieu of today. I assume that one reason for its success and wide adaptation is that modern religious movements and the community of seekers within the cultic milieu have a tendency towards syncretism, which often allows for declaring two or more similar phenomena to be essentially the same, or diverse manifestations of the same underlying principle.

In examining the term as it is understood by my Thelemic population I hope to aid in the effort to disaggregate the concept and see what practices, beliefs and other complex cultural concepts hide behind the all-encompassing, fuzzy terminology, and hopefully gain some insight in how they interact with one another as well as with the overlying concept of Thelema. As a step in this process, I will examine the instructions given by Crowley in *Liber O*, a text which is framed as a training manual of sorts composed of various practices related to and including forms of astral projection.

2.5 Magical training regimes: the instructions of *Liber O*

The first instruction seems to advocate a particular perspective of skepticism and an almost utilitarian view of the symbols and entities that one is to interact with during astral travel. Crowley writes;

In this book it is spoken of the Sephirot and the Paths; of Spirits and Conjurations; of Gods, Spheres, Planes, and many other things which may or may not exist. It is immaterial whether these exist or not. By doing certain things certain results will follow; students are most earnestly warned against attributing objective reality or philosophic validity to any of them. (Crowley, 2012: 613)

Crowley goes on to state that “the student should be in good health, and have attained a fair mastery of asana, pranayama and dharana”. These three are the basic forms of yoga, meditation and mysticism within Thelema. Mysticism is considered to be the passive twin of the active magick, both of which are necessary tools on the path to attainment.

Asana is the practice of sitting still in one of the prescribed positions, with the goal of achieving stillness of the body, so that it “may be trusted to send him no message that will disturb his mind” (Ibid: 17). Pranayama is a collective term for various meditative breathing exercises (Ibid: 18), and dharana is the training of concentration and visualization by imagining a geometric form, keeping it completely still, and focusing upon that form exclusively (Ibid: 27). These practices are employed to train basic faculties deemed necessary for more advanced tasks, as well as serve as methods in their own right towards particular experiences that are described as being of specific import or value, and considered to belong to the subcategory “mystical”. The regular and immersive practice of dharana is said to result in the experience of dhyana, to name one of these perceived correlations (Ibid: 29, 31).

From this point on, the student is instructed to obtain a thorough understanding of *Liber 777*, especially a delimited set of correspondences that are to be committed to memory. The system described in said book functions “as a classificatory tool and a mnemonic system, mainly for practical use in magical rituals” (Asprem, 2007b: 133). In *Liber 777* one might find such seemingly diverse topics as precious stones and Nordic deities all subject to the same form of categorization, where the Hebrew letter Resh will correspond to the tarot trump “The Sun”, the lion in the animal kingdom, and the color orange, the Egyptian god Ra, and so on.

With this knowledge acquired, and the basic training in various forms of meditation completed to a satisfactory level, the aspiring magician is instructed in three more advanced techniques that build upon those of the preliminary level. First, the student is instructed in the assumption of God-forms. This is an exercise in visualization in which the student is to sit in the posture associated with Egyptian deities, while picturing a visual representation of the chosen god, which is to coincide with his or her own body, or as enveloping it. “This must be practiced until mastery of it is attained, and an identity with it and with the God is experienced” (Crowley, 2012: 615).

Next, Crowley describes the “Vibration of God-names”. This practice combines visualization exercises with specified physical movements and regulated breathing. Crowley describes the various postures as associated with specific deities, reminiscent of the aforementioned practice of “Assuming God-forms,” now repeated in a way that includes elements from other practices. The regulated

breathing seems to be an aspect borrowed from pranayama, and the various postures are now in a standing position, imitating the more advanced asana postures. He goes on to specify a set of conditions that he considers to be signs that the practice has been undergone successfully. In both the assumption of God-forms and the vibration of God-names, he deems that “all consciousness of anything but the God-form and name should be absolutely blotted out; and the longer it takes for normal perception to return, the better” (Ibid: 618). For the vibration of God-names specifically, he states that a single instance should “entirely exhausts his physical strength. It should cause him to grow hot all over, or to perspire violently, and it should so weaken him that he will find it difficult to remain standing”. He adds to this by stating that the student should hear the name of the God “vehemently roared forth, as if by the concourse of ten thousand thunders” as if the voice did not originate from him or herself.

The next step in the training regimen concerns a set of ceremonial rituals. The rituals of “banishing” and “invoking” presented in this text are described as the lesser and greater rituals of the pentagram and the hexagram. The gestures, spoken words and God-names remain the same within the specific ritual, but the pentagrams and hexagrams are drawn differently depending on which element (pentagram) or planetary force (hexagram) the magician wishes to be the object of the ritual, and if he or she intends to banish or invoke it.

Crowley notes that “These rituals should be practised until the figures drawn appear in flame” (Ibid: 624). By this, he seems to address the importance of making the visualizations seem “real”. I consider this to be interesting because of the gradual learning curve implied by the instructions in this text. The learning curve and increased complexity of the practices seem to imply that, just like the “Vibration of God-names” built on practices the student was suggested to “master” earlier, that astral projection, one of the final lessons in this course, is considered to utilize similar techniques or skillsets.

Success in "banishing" is known by a "feeling of cleanliness" in the atmosphere; success in "invoking" by a "feeling of holiness." It is unfortunate that these terms are so vague. But at least make sure of this: that any imaginary figure or being shall instantly obey the will of the student, when he uses the appropriate figure. In obstinate cases, the form of the appropriate God may be assumed. (Ibid: 624).

Again, Crowley describes a set of criteria by which the success or failure of the practice can be judged. As with the sets of skills and techniques covered above, this recurring feature could possibly be

utilized by Thelemites practicing astral projection, in that they might judge whether or not they were successful based upon a set of expectations of criteria.

Success in these verbal invocations is so subtle a matter, and its grades so delicately shaded, that it must be left to the good sense of the student to decide whether or not he should be satisfied with his result (Ibid: 624).

While this is an instruction concerning the rituals of the hexagram and the pentagram, the pattern in the text suggests that it might be applicable or considered to be applicable to the practice of astral projection by our informants. It suggests that while the process of identifying the practice as a success or not is based upon a set of criteria, Crowley, a source many Thelemites might consider to be authoritative on the matter, opens the door for extensive subjective reasoning. This could mean that both lists of expected criteria and personal intuitions or reasoning might be prevalent within the population I intend to study.

With this body of techniques, correspondences and attitudes covered, the final portions of the text proceeds to instruct the student in how to travel in the body of light, and the practice of “Rising through the Planes” which I find prudent to quote in its entirety due to their obvious relevance to this study. This is the primary instruction on how to initiate astral projection within Crowley’s writings.

1. Let the student be at rest in one of his prescribed positions, having bathed and robed with the proper decorum. Let the place of working be free from all disturbance, and let the preliminary purifications, banishings and invocations be duly accomplished, and, lastly, let the incense be kindled (Ibid: 624.)

The instructions begin by listing a set of practices that are considered to be efficacious or helpful at producing the intended event. This is interesting as it suggests a set of composite ascriptions, and establishes previously described practices as stepping stones on the path towards astral projection.

2. Let him imagine his own figure (preferably robed in the proper magical garments and armed with the proper magical weapons) as enveloping his physical body, or standing near to and in front of him (Ibid: 624).

Then it moves on to a visualization exercise, another set of skills that has been prominently featured in the preceding practices listed in the text.

3. Let him then transfer the seat of his consciousness to that imagined figure; so that it may seem to him that he is seeing with its eyes, and hearing with its ears. This will usually be the great difficulty of the operation (Ibid: 624).

This “transfer of consciousness” seems to be described as a visualization exercise, especially by the use of “so that it may seem to him”. In other words, the expectation is not that the student should see through the eyes of the imagined figure in a physical or actual sense, but it should “seem” this way. As this phase is not described to any great extent, I expect that the informants will provide differing narratives when and if they address this part of the practice, since they have little in way of textual authority, if they do consider this text to be authoritative, to rely on, opening the subject for individual variations and subjective interpretation.

“4. Let him then cause that imagined figure to rise in the air to a great height above the earth” (Ibid: 624). This part of the visualization exercise seems vague and open to interpretation. How the student is to “cause” the imagined figure to “rise” is not specified, neither is what Crowley means by “above the earth”. Vagueness suggests variations in practice, variations that have been unavailable before this study.

5. Let him then stop and look about him. (It is sometimes difficult to open the eyes.)

6. Probably he will see figures approaching him, or become conscious of a landscape. Let him speak to such figures, and insist upon being answered, using the proper pentagrams and signs, as previously taught (Ibid: 624).

Here Crowley seems to suggest that the aspiring magician should be able to perform the rituals of the pentagram, as previously described, while astrally projecting. It strikes me as interesting that astral projection is considered to be a practice into which other practices and exercises can be incorporated. The wording of this section suggests a number of important questions for this study. Which other practices do Thelemites combine with astral projection, and why? Crowley also suggests that an event can occur while in this state, such as seeing and communicating with figures that appear. If my informants consider Crowley an authoritative source on astral projection, this might influence their expectations, making them open to or even expect to “meet figures” and being able to converse with them. Are there other sub-events they consider possible within the confines of the overarching projection event? These questions address what the informants will expect astral projection to be like or able to include, in the form of other combinable practices or available sub-events, which can then influence how they come to identify an experience as astral projection, and which other formations they connect to the practice.

7. *Let him travel about at will, either with or without guidance from such figure or figures.*

8. *Let him further employ such special invocations as will cause to appear the particular places he may wish to visit (Ibid: 624-625).*

These two sentences address what Crowley considers himself and others able to do while astrally projecting. “Travel about at will” implies the freedom to move, act and explore. Utilizing “special invocations” to cause places he or she wishes to visit to appear seems to imply that the “astral plane” is governed by special rules that are different from that of ordinary reality, rules that can be learned and utilized to cause effects that would not normally occur in another state. In asserting that “invocations” cause “places to appear,” Crowley seems to assume that these rules are constant, or at least he expects them to behave in a particular way.

9. *Let him beware of the thousand subtle attacks and deceptions that he will experience, carefully testing the truth of all with whom he speaks. Thus a hostile being may appear clothed with glory; the appropriate pentagram will in such a case cause him to shrivel or decay.*

10. *Practice will make the student infinitely wary in these matters (Ibid: 625).*

“Testing the truth” implies a form of valuation, where something is deemed to be false and of little value, or true and of comparatively greater value, and Crowley seems to imply that this is a skill that is learned with practice. This process of valuation is interesting to me, as valuation efforts can connect practices and beliefs together in various forms of composite ascriptions, and can be utilized when categorizing an experience as “mystical”, “ordinary” or other categories. Crowley again asserts the causal nature of his conception of the astral plane, where he now expects a “hostile being” to be harmed or reduced by “the appropriate pentagram.”

11. *It is usually quite easy to return to the body, but should any difficulty arise, practice (again) will make the imagination fertile. For example, one may create in thought a chariot of fire with white horses, and command the charioteer to drive earthwards. It might be dangerous to go too far, or to stay too long; for fatigue must be avoided. The danger spoken of is that of fainting, or of obsession, or of loss of memory or other mental faculty (Ibid: 625).*

“One may create in thought” suggests that visualization is considered to be able to alter the flow of events during astral projection, creating imagined objects or creatures that is expected to interact with the projection experience. Crowley also establishes a practice deemed efficacious at “ending” the

event, if ending it should become difficult, adding to the repertoire of practices that are considered to be includable within astral projection, and tying the practice to a single, discernable goal that the practice is considered to be able to cause. Warning that there are mental health hazards to astrally projecting too long or too far implies that, if the warning is taken seriously by my informants, that they are evaluating the event as they undergo it, attempting to discern “how deep” they have gone and how long they have been undergoing the practice. If so, by what set of criteria do they deem something to be “too deep” or “too long”?

12. Finally, let the student cause his imagined body in which he supposes himself to have been travelling to coincide with the physical, tightening his muscles, drawing in his breath, and putting his forefinger to his lips. Then let him "awake" by a well-defined act of will, and soberly and accurately record his experiences (Ibid: 625).

This is a very specific instruction on how to end the practice “properly”. I am left wondering if other variations are utilized, what they believe the consequences of diverting from this form will be, and how they explain it. This procedure also adds to the collection of sub-practices that are considered related to or includable within astral projection.

It may be added that this apparently complicated experiment is perfectly easy to perform. It is best to learn by "travelling" with a person already experienced in the matter. Two or three experiments will suffice to render the student confident and even expert (Ibid: 625).

The idea of “travelling with” another person implies yet another sub-event and -practice to the tally, which again can influence which options and occurrences Thelemites consider to be open or will expect when undergoing the practice. The suggestion that “two or three experiments” can make the “student” an “expert” underscores the theme that these practices in general are framed as skills to be learned and mastered in a practical fashion, with training and experimentation. This view asserts the existence of a set of composite ascriptions, where one “special” or “mystical” practice is grouped together with another by virtue of being considered a way to reach a common “special” or “mystical” goal or being able to train the similarly special abilities.

1. The previous experiment has little value, and leads to few results of importance. But it is susceptible of a development which merges into a form of Dharana --- concentration --- and as such may lead to the very highest ends. The principal use of the practice in the last chapter is to familiarize the student with every kind of obstacle

and every kind of delusion, so that he may be perfect master of every idea that may arise in his brain, to dismiss it, to transmute it, to cause it instantly to obey his will (Ibid: 625).

Here Crowley ties the practice described previously to a set of goals, thereby creating another composite ascription in the form of a path-structure. The framework takes on the form of that of sets of practices that are connected to skillsets, that when trained enable the utilization of more advanced practices that again train more of the skills connected to the basic practices simultaneously, or in a different way. The object of the practice is very specific, which leaves me wondering if individual Thelemites will echo these goals or implement others, and if so on what grounds, and how do they connect it to the overarching ascriptive framework. The first sentence provides grounds for evaluating the practice and making value judgements, implying that Crowley considers some events to be more valuable than others.

2. Let him then begin exactly as before, but with the most intense solemnity and determination.

3. Let him be very careful to cause his imaginary body to rise in a line exactly perpendicular to the earth's tangent at the point where his physical body is situated (or to put it more simply, straight upwards) (Ibid: 625).

This section repeats a similar stage in the previous one, but adds that the student should do so with “the most intense solemnity and determination,” suggesting that it is differentiated from the previous practice. Increased “solemnity” and “determination” could imply that Crowley categorizes this second practice, if done “correctly” and “successfully,” differently than the first, and perhaps values them differently. This could be an indication that there are other practices that are similarly seen to be related, but of different value and belonging to different emic subcategories of special things and practices.

4. Instead of stopping, let him continue to rise until fatigue almost overcomes him. If he should find that he has stopped without willing to do so, and that figures appear, let him at all costs rise above them. Yea, though his very life tremble on his lips, let him force his way upward and onward! 5. Let him continue in this so long as the breath of life is in him. Whatever threatens, whatever allures, though it were Typhon and all his hosts loosed from the pit and leagued against him, though it were from the very Throne of God Himself that a Voice issues bidding him stay and be content, let him struggle on, ever on (Ibid: 625-626).

This is the phase where the instruction departs most strikingly from the prior practice. Instead of “stopping” and exploring or communicating with the “figures” that might appear, the student is urged

to keep “rising upward”, no matter what happens. This seems to contradict Crowley’s previous warnings against projecting “too deep” or “too long”, and the apparent dangers of fatigue.

6. At last there must come a moment when his whole being is swallowed up in fatigue, overwhelmed by its own inertia. Let him sink (when no longer can he strive, though his tongue be bitten through with the effort and the blood gush from his nostrils) into the blackness of unconsciousness; and then, on coming to himself, let him write down soberly and accurately a record of all that hath occurred, yea a record of all that hath occurred (Ibid: 626).

This end result seems most peculiar. The student is expected to “soar” until fatigue reduces him or her to unconsciousness, and that appears to be the end of the practice. In contrast to other parts of the text, this practice is not explained or justified in any way by connecting it to a set of skills it is thought to improve or any goal-event it is considered to be able to produce, or any desirable effect it is thought to cause within the confines of an “astral” reality or that of everyday life. This is a reminder that there might be other practices that my informants deem to be in some way related or equal to astral projection that have unknown or different forms of valuation, and that these must be explored more fully.

Going through the instructions of *Liber O* have left me with a wide array of questions and areas of interest that could aid me in identifying avenues of investigation for this study. I have also identified the contours of a framing pattern, a way of describing and explaining practices like astral projection and exercises considered to be related to it in some way. In this pattern, practices considered to be more “basic” are explained as if they are training sets of skills that allow the student or practitioner to move on to more “advanced” practices. These in turn relate to other characteristics or higher levels of skill that are considered to be relevant to other practices. They do so either by training skills that will make future practices possible or easier to complete “properly”, or by being attributed to having a causal effect within the confines of another practice.

With these thoughts in mind, we move on to how Crowley presented astral projection in other texts, thereby seeing if this pattern would be a recurring theme or confined to the student-teacher framework of *Liber O*, and adding these readings together to create a more complete picture.

2.6 The Body of Light and its adventures

“Develop the Body of Light until it is just as real to you as your other body, teach it to travel to any desired symbol, and enable it to perform all necessary rites and invocations. In short, educate it.” (Crowley, 2012: 243).

“Manifesting the Body of Light” can, from the instructions in *Liber O* as presented and scrutinized above, as well as in the short text *Of “Clairvoyance,” and of the Body of Light, its Powers and its Development. Also Concerning Divination* (Ibid: 241), be understood as visualization and concentration exercises that gradually train one to imagine an identical body outside of her own, which the aspiring magician is then to “transmit her consciousness into” and familiarize herself with. The former text underscores the difficulty of the transition, which is described in further detail in the latter;

To avoid muddling the two, you begin by imagining a shape resembling yourself standing in front of you. Do not say “Oh, it's only imagination!” The time to test that is later on, when you have secured a fairly clear mental image of such a body. Try to imagine how your own body would look if you were standing in its place; try to transfer your consciousness to the Body of Light. Your own body has its eyes shut. Use the eyes of the Body of Light to describe the objects in the room behind you. Don't say, “It's only an effort of subconscious memory” – the time to test that is later on (Ibid: 243).

From this point on, the initiation of astral travel is done by letting this “Body of Light” rise in the air, which is described to result in walking in fantastical landscapes and meeting extraordinary entities. These entities must be tested by magical signs and words, and both them and the surroundings are to be studied and compared to the correspondences in *Liber 777*. Rituals invoking specific symbols are also described to determine what destination on the planes the magician will travel to. An invocation to Mercury, as an example, should according to Crowley result in a voyage across landscapes with corresponding colors, symbols, entities and concepts, but the results must be tested and the ability trained.

This training is explained to be necessary for the magician to travel where he or she wills. Crowley considers there are many planes beyond the astral, such as a “spiritual plane” that necessitates a disciplined and strong Body of Light for the voyage to be successful. This plane is said to be reachable through the practice of “Rising on the Planes”, as described in the final part of *Liber O* quoted earlier in this text (Ibid: 246).

In summary, the practice of astral projection, as described by the Thelemic corpus of literature, cannot be fully understood as simply an out of body experience with no strings attached. There are many interconnected practices and events, and the projection itself is seen as a tool and workspace with multitudes of opportunities and ends, rather than a goal or something necessarily valuable in itself. The process of interpretation of astral travel is of great interest, as the magicians attribute differing qualities to their various voyages, some considered to be of import within the framework of Thelema, others are “distractions” or even detrimental to their goals (Ibid: 505).

With the object of study covered, we move on to the theoretical framework I intend to utilize in my effort to understand how Thelemites come to identify particular events or experiences as astral projection and how they connect these practices to the overlying framework of Thelema. In this following chapter I intend to introduce the reader to the theoretical and methodological considerations of Ann Taves and the subject of attribution theory.

Chapter 3: Concepts, building blocks, ascriptions and attributions.

3.1.1 Brief overview

In *Religious Experience Reconsidered*, Ann Taves (2009) suggests that we adopt the view that religions and other complex cultural concepts are composed of smaller atoms, where the primary one is the ascription of specialness. A thing, experience or practice can be considered to be special, and categorized as belonging to the emic subset of sacred or religious things. These ascriptions can be identified through behavior or the use of emic terms such as “sacred”, “mystical” or “ultimate” (Ibid: 162-163). Simple ascriptions can combine into larger formations such as composite ascriptions, as in when a goal is seen as special, and a path of practices deemed efficacious at approaching that goal is tied to it. Staying with the metaphor of atoms, these composite ascriptions are the molecules of complex cultural concepts such as religions and spiritualities, constituted by the smaller “simple ascriptions” (Ibid: 46-47). These can form further interrelations, change, or be dropped from the overlying concept altogether. She further suggests that we move away from utilizing stipulated definitions of religion, but rather use these as a basis from which we can tease basic features, processes and phenomena that people draw upon when they generate phenomena they come to consider religious, mystical or otherwise special. This way of looking at religion, she argues, allows us to do a wide array

of studies, comparisons and analysis, in which some part might be studied by the scientific discipline best equipped for the task, while the formation and mutability of the overlying concepts might be studied by historians and ethnographers (Taves, 2013: 143).

3.1.2 Definitions

The field which we study has, understandably enough, been preoccupied for much of its brief life with the question of what properly defines religion. What people have seen to be religious has changed over the centuries, and definitions that stipulate what religion is have often failed to account for this mutability, as well as been strongly anchored in the time and place of their conception (Taves, 2009: 23-26). Taves attempts to step beyond these limitations by employing an ascriptive model of religiosity, hoping to allow us to see what people on the ground consider religious, mystical, ultimate, or special. These terms are all seen as signifiers of ascriptions of specialness, as when a person designates something as a “religious experience”, he or she has set that experience apart from other experiences and ascribed it a special quality (Taves, 2009: 9).

This basic ascription is, according to Taves, at the heart of religion and other complex cultural concepts. Atoms such as these ascriptions are the building blocks that, in various and mutable constellations, form the cultural entities we know as, among other things, religions (Ibid: 46). The change to an ascriptive model of religiosity is an attempt to address three primary issues that Taves has with utilizing stipulated definitions of religion.

She argues that many fail to make a distinction between the adjectival and the nominative, as in realizing that things deemed religious, and religions or spiritualities are different things. A practice deemed religious is different from, say, Christianity. Without this differentialization we are unable to ask questions such as when, how and why things are ascribed religious properties, and similarly study how these things deemed religious become part of a religion or even transform into a new one (Ibid: 24).

She further argues that scholars tend to favor definitions that are useful or equal to their chosen field of study, thus running the risk of excluding phenomena that are seen as religious or religion-like on the ground, or even by other scholars (Ibid: 24-25). Egil Asprem (2014) discusses the same point by way of examining the utilization of various forms of comparison within research programmes concerning esotericism, and how these vantage points lead to definitions of esotericism that tend to be either historicist or typological. As he points out, the definition of the term will typically vary wildly

between champions of both approaches, and this confusion is ultimately both unnecessary and harmful to their field of study (Ibid: 19). He proposes to move past this issue by focusing less on the various contested definitions, and more on the fruits that researchers are able to harvest from their use of the term within their specific research programmes, which can in turn illuminate the definition debate (Ibid: 28-29). This underscores the need for an academic conception of esotericism that reflects the inherent mutability of this work, and allows a score of practical applications that can explore the fringes of what would typically be considered as encompassed by the term, a point that I would argue translates well into the discussion of religion.

By conflating their definition of religion with that of their subjects, Taves argues that scholars may fail to point out the contested nature of what is seen as religious or religion, as well as the scores of differing views that escape our sight. Furthermore, by equating the first and second order terms, our theoretical terms and the Western folk-concepts that are their namesakes, or simply by using them interchangeably, we further complicate any attempt at interdisciplinary efforts (Taves, 2009: 25-26).

Other scholars have utilized the words “religion” or “mysticism” as an etic or second order term loaded with theoretical assumptions. By moving away from second order terms such as religion, and whatever we might find that fits our chosen definitions, we expand our search and avoid passing judgment on whichever emic terms and concepts our informants utilize beyond the indication that they mark something off as belonging to a specific subset of things set apart. If we consider, for instance, religious experience to be the “core” of religion and our definition of the term, we pass judgment on religious activities and beliefs that do not revolve around that concept as a less pure expression of religion. Taves suggests that we abandon this form of essentialism in favor of ascriptions of specialness. Moving from Durkheim as a starting point, she notes that he differentiates between “sacred things” and “religions”, and argues that

a religion is not necessarily contained within a single idea and does not derive from a single principle that may vary with the circumstances it deals with, while remaining basically the same everywhere. Instead, it is a whole formed of separate and relative distinct parts (Durkheim in Taves, 2009: 161).

Taves agrees that specific religions are separate from the beliefs and practices that constitute them and wants to avoid Durkheim’s problematic use of the term “sacred” in his conception of “sacred things as things set apart and forbidden,” as the term “sacred” has a variety of meanings in different

contexts, both among academics and on the ground. She suggests that we consider “sacred” an emic term that refers to “set apart and forbidden”, which can be attributed to anything. A few more modifications must be kept in mind; apartness must be seen as a scale, and not a binary relationship between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Some things are seen as special, and some things are considered to be so special that they are protected by taboos and are forbidden. Something set apart is also done so relative to things within its own class. This marks it as special through the process she calls “singularization”, which can be both positive and negative (Ibid: 27).

Opening for comparison between things deemed religious and similar things that are not, echoes William James, who argued against the *sui generis* approach of seeing religious experience as things that are religious in themselves, and not by virtue of being deemed so. “(...) And the moment we renounce the absurd notion that a thing is exploded away as soon as it is classed with others, or its origin is shown (...)” (James, 1985: 24). Furthermore, James saw little reason to distinguish entirely between religion and such categories as magic or primal religion as opposed to religion proper, which is in similar agreement with Taves (Ibid: 31).

According to Taves, these ascriptions of specialness are among the building blocks that, in various and interchanging constellations, form complex cultural concepts such as religions and spiritualities (Taves, 2009: 162-163). These constellations change with time, reforming their constituent elements, leaving some behind and adopting others. For the sake of this study, “astral projection” is considered to be a complex cultural concept, as is Thelema.

The Tavesian study of religion is an interdisciplinary effort in which scholars of religion explore and break down the elements constituting the cultural phenomena they study, so that they transmute into more manageable bits that can be operationalized by scientists, and their formation and development be scrutinized by historians and ethnographers.

This approach moves beyond the pursuit of things that are supposedly essentially religious in themselves, such as the various “cores” of religion that have been proposed by other luminaries. In my opinion, this widening of the net is more than warranted, since essentialist approaches have either disqualified some aspects of what people on the ground consider religious or religion-like, such as magic or even Buddhism, or have by their own interpretation of what is essentially religious implied that certain religions are a more “pure” expression of the phenomenon than others, seemingly often due to their existence in the same cultural sphere as the conception of the theory itself.

The search for building-blocks does not reduce religion to less than it is, since it is an open approach that is more than interested in adding new processes to the tally, subjecting the proposed blocks to critique, and maintaining that these concepts should be reverse-engineered as well as broken down (Taves, in press: 1).

3.1.3 Special paths

People mark things as special through their behavior, including linguistic behavior (i.e. talking about the special things), and designate them as special through emic markers such as “ultimate”, “the best”, “mystical” or countless others. Taves makes the observation that the various kinds of things people tend to see as special are located in two logically distinct camps; the anomalous and the ideal.

She defines anomalies as “things that people consider special because they are strange, unusual or in some way violate people's expectations” (Taves, 2009: 38).

Ideal things, on the other hand, stand out because they “seem ideal, perfect or complete. They may stand out in this way in a relative sense or, if they are thought to approach an ultimate horizon or limit, they may signal an ideal in an absolute sense” (Ibid: 36).

She suggests that absolutes belong in the furthest degree available in the incremental scale of things set apart, in that they are seen as outside of the order of normalcy to such a degree that they are “forbidden” or protected with taboos. Taves proposes two further categories of things we tend to mark as special: *scarce* things, as proposed by Walter Burkert, and *our* things, that is, things that are seen as special due to their relationship with ourselves (Taves, 2010: 179).

Seeing something as special is a simple ascription, and such ascriptions can be combined into composite ascriptions, such as a path. A path, being a term borrowed largely from Bushwell and Gimello's Marga-theory, is a mix of ascriptions and attributions that interrelate. As a schematic, a path will consist of a goal and a way to reach that goal (Taves, 2009: 47). For example, a religious path might propose Buddhahood to be a goal, and specify a list of practices and beliefs that are deemed efficacious at reaching that destination by the followers of that particular group. Paths are a way in which things are set apart relative to one another, and as such form a way through which a cultural formation might be structured from the atoms that compose it into a greater whole. Choosing to follow a path implies to set it, its practices and its goals apart from other things through a process of choice and enactment of value (Taves, 2013: 153).

3.1.4 Proposed building blocks

In *Reverse Engineering Complex Cultural Concepts: Identifying Building Blocks of 'Religion,'* Taves proposes that a set of three basic processes are drawn upon when people perceive and categorize something as religion-like, and that these can be studied by scholars and scientists on multiple levels, from the neurological to the sociological (Taves, in press: 18).

She identifies them as the following: perceiving salience, assessing significance, and imagining hypothetical, counterfactual content (Ibid: 1), and suggest that as these are the building blocks people draw from when generating phenomena they consider to be religious or religion-like, their mutability may account for the instability of religion as a complex cultural concept.

Basing her reasoning on networks identified by neuroimaging studies, she proposes two building blocks. The perception of salience is picked out due to the activity of the salience network that is tasked with finding the most attention-grabbing internal or external stimuli based on a variety of evolutionary or learning-based processes. Movement, faces, one's own offspring and novelty generates salience through evolutionary processes, while one is open to learn to place more or less salience in specific things, and strong emotions are salient in themselves as well as being able to provide salience to the inputs they might be attached to.

When something has gained our attention, we begin a process of assessing significance. What is it? What response, if any, does it necessitate? This is the territory of the executive-control network, which assesses value, and according to Taves, assigns things into categories. This assessment of significance is the second proposed building block. She supposes that these processes are active in and between groups and individuals on various levels. (Ibid: 12-13)

The third building block she proposes are the processes of imagination, by which we generate novelties, or stimuli that violate our ordinary expectations, by blending elements from different ontological categories or cultural schematics. Imagination is also the building block involved in acts or processes involving pretense, by which we enter non-ordinary worlds governed by social or pretend rules, as when children of all ages engage in play, which is intimately related to social interaction (Ibid: 15-18).

3.1.5 Handling religious experience

First, in order to have a meaningful discussion, we must clarify just what we mean by the term “experience”. Taves makes the point that we can use that term to point at four distinguishable meanings; specific experiences of something, experience as a cumulative abstraction, types of experience and experience as a rough synonym for consciousness. What we want to focus on are “experiences of something” and experience as consciousness. She goes on to point out the difference between transitive and intransitive consciousness, that is consciousness of something and consciousness as a state of being. An experience, or at least the meaning of the term as we employ it, is an experience of something, and as such it belongs to the category of transitive consciousness. Even an experience of nothing, or of pure consciousness is, logically speaking, a state of transitive consciousness in which “nothing” or “pure consciousness” is the perceived object of the experience (Taves, 2009: 57-59).

We cannot access the experience of others directly, but we can assume that representations of experience and experience are similar without having to equate them. Taves adopts this position, reasoning that since we can speak of prelinguistic experience in children, and nonlinguistic experience in nonhuman animals, we can view the capacity for experience and the ability to represent our own experiences or those of others through evolutionary and developmental perspectives, where the ability to represent experience is layered on top of the other. She reasons that this layering suggests some continuity between the two (Ibid: 63).

Within this framework, we can see “experience” as just another thing that, like objects, rituals or people, have been deemed to belong within a subset of special things. In other words, we are talking about experiences deemed religious rather than religious experiences. This rephrasing allows us to bypass the discussion of experiences that may or may not be religious in themselves, and focus on matters that are interesting to the study of religion as human activities rather than questions best left to those with an interest in theology. At some point, a person decides that an experience he or she had, thus marking off a specific point in time as one event, was special, or at least salient enough to be attention grabbing. From then on, an interpretive and attributional process is involved, and the conclusion may be that the experience was special, or even belonging to the subcategory of things considered religious. There are many areas to explore here. Are there experiences or components of experiences that are more likely to start these attributional processes than others? By what criteria are the experiences deemed to be religious or not, or special at all? Are these interpretations done while

the experience is underway, or retrospectively, or maybe both? If so, are there marked differences between the interpretational processes?

A religious tradition will contain several ways to legitimize or identify something as a religious experience, generally or as a specific one, through accounts of religious experiences within the tradition or through manuals that are believed to prepare one for an experience or produce one, through oral traditions or other sources.

Taves does not go into detail or strictly define what she means by complex cultural concepts nor the functions or shapes that their various components might fulfill or form. I assume that this is simply because her theoretical and methodological framework is, as of yet, not finished. This provides a host of challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, it demands some interpretative effort from our end, on the other, it allows us to utilize the term in an open fashion. You could see astral projection as a whole as a complex cultural concept, or astral projection within the Thelemic tradition as the same, or both, which fits the bill, as they are obviously interrelated at some point historically, and presumably interact with one another on various levels. This underscores the methodological value of the above toolset, and its applicability within this particular study.

Taves' building blocks and ascriptions, both simple and composite, were chosen as the primary theoretical framework for this assignment for a few reasons. First, because her theory of religion claims to be inclusive of things that skirt the edges of what we usually consider religion, which, if correct, should allow me to study Thelema, magick and astral projection who all skirt the edges of what can be encompassed by many, more exclusive conceptualizations of religion.

Secondly, the claim that this framework allows for a certain amount of interdisciplinary study is very attractive for me as a researcher as well as the study of astral projection, as the latter has been claimed to manifest in a lot of different forms that various fields could study with similarly varied methods – culturally it manifests in very diverse groups, from ascetic Hindu practitioners to various new age self acclaimed “astral research centers”, as well as within the marketplace of the cultic milieu. Historically the term and much of the practices involved must have originated somewhere and moved about, influencing, being drawn into, and abandoned, by various religious and cultural constellations. The practice and experience of projection is described differently by various people who are influenced by different writings and expectations, and ultimately have a different understanding of what the term signifies, which could conceal a multitude of markedly diverse practices and functions. Unearthing and disaggregating these would require a framework that allow researchers from different fields and/or

studying different populations to speak the same language and provide insight that can add to each other rather than providing a Babel of voices brought forth by markedly different definitions, and the complex cultural concepts and building blocks seem to address this issue.

Third, the act of making a simple ascription of specialness provides a link between everyday human activities and more complex cultural phenomena that I find believable and simple enough to provide both an analytic tool to further our understanding of more complex entities, and flexible enough to allow for a wide field of study. To underscore the point of how this provides a bridge between the everyday and the more complex, I would like to write a bit about special things. A close friend of mine has a girlfriend that lives on the opposite side of the globe. When last they met, she ran off and bought him a teddy bear before he had to leave. This bear has become special to him, symbolizing his far away loved one, and he has marked it off as special to such a degree that he has trouble sleeping without it, which is a form of taboo. To him, this object has become special due to the circumstances in which it was given to him, and who did so. It provides a symbolic link between him and the idea of his girlfriend, a link that he can sense by sight, touch and smell, and interact with by hugging it, tossing it to the floor and so on. If he were to keep it in the future, it could be a way to interact with this person again, even if they eventually move out of each other's lives entirely, he could still hold and hug the idea of her in this expression. The bear could even transform into an expression of the idea of being loved and loving someone, rather than pointing at one person in particular. With that we've moved from a gift being given significance by the relationship between giver and receiver, to becoming an expression with which one person can interact with an ultimate idea. This is very similar to religious symbols and icons, and the interaction with them, ritual or otherwise.

A friend of mine died a few years back, and when visiting his grave, I found it natural to "share" a drink of his staple liquor by having a sip and pouring a little before the gravestone. We were old drinking buddies, so with the grave reminding me of him, I find the smell, taste and even the look of the bottle to conjure more memories of the times we had together and make them more vivid. It is a way to interact with my memories, and ultimately, my idea of him and our friendship. This is a composite ascription; the particular drink is marked off as special by association to the person whose memory I would like to evoke, and the act of drinking it at that particular special place is seen as an "appropriate" act. Again, we are very close to religious symbols and rituals, and we can even see how some cults of honoring the ancestors could spring from or utilize similar activities and ascriptions. From the ancient Greek cult of heroes, we even have examples of ancestors like Asklepios being likely

to have been elevated from and between the seemingly diverse categories of ancestor, hero and deity (Hjortsø, 2005: 224).

This bridge is very important to factor in if we are to construct a realistic and full picture of religion and religious activities, as they are ultimately human activities, and should have sibling phenomena that do not necessarily manifest within the confines of a cultural space marked off as explicitly “religious”. This is partly why we are “widening the net”, and are looking for special rather than religious things that fit a certain definition. We want to find these bridges that skirt the edges of the land of the religious, see what they are and connect to, and allow them to shed new light on what religion is.

3.2 Attribution theory and analysis

Attribution theories are analytical tools as well as theories of the explanatory cognitive processes active when we try to make sense of behavior and events. They originate from the field of social psychology, and have been suggested that we include in our toolbox within the academic study of religion by both Ann Taves (2009: 89) and Wayne Proudfoot (1985: 98). More specifically, they both claim that these new toys of ours will be able to shed light on certain issues within the study of religious experiences. My aim in writing this section is to provide a basic introduction to attribution theory, as well as provide an indication on how I intend to utilize it through the course of this study. This is entirely in keeping with how I understand the many aims of the building block approach to religion, which can serve as a way to bridge the gap between the humanistic and the experimental sciences by making use of findings within one field to inform another.

The attribution theorist I have chosen is Bertram F. Malle. He has been picked out specifically because I find myself in agreement with Taves in that I find that his approach is particularly well suited to application within the study of religion. This is due to his inclusion of theory of mind into attribution theory, which allows for a study of intentionality and agency in more detail, which can be used to see how people attribute agency to entities or forces they perceive as active within the narrative of their experiences. Theory of mind is the complex conceptual framework that is partly innate, partly learned within all human beings, that makes us capable of seeing agency and intentionality in the world around us. This allows us to explain complex events by virtue of immediately thinking about what the man, animal or other agent intends by his or her actions. In contrast, many other attribution theorists

see human behaviour events much like any other event, as a point within a mechanistic causal chain (Malle, 2004: 30). The study of the attribution of agency and intentionality strikes me as a fruitful pursuit within the study of religion, as many events people have described as religious involve agency that is viewed as somehow special or set apart from the world of everyday life, and many theories on magic, animism and the formation of religious thought rely on man's capacity for seeing intentionality within the world around him or herself.

According to Malle, unintended and intended behavior events, as attributed by the explainer, call for different kinds of explanations (Ibid: 60) that follow different patterns and tendencies. This distinction is interesting to note, since the absence of intentionality is just as salient within reported religious experiences as that of unusual intentionality in the description of the event. He notes that actors and observers both are more likely to explain that which they find most accessible, and as such actors focus on unobservable behavior in their explanation while observers focus on observable behavior. This stands to reason, as your facial microexpressions are not necessarily as easily available to you as your thoughts and feelings, or the appearance of someone you are observing.

He goes on to state that unintentional behavior is the object of more explanatory focus by actors because they find it most salient and difficult to understand, assuming that they know what their own intentions are. Unintended and intended behavior are of equal interest to observers, but they will spend most of their efforts on explaining intended behavior because they find it the most relevant due to its social implications (Ibid: 76). I am not sure that I agree with what he concludes here, at least when applied to our field of inquiry. Experiences considered religious or mystical often attribute intentionality to things that usually don't operate as agencies – such as the cosmos, shadows, the sun or the ocean, or remove the capability for intentional action, such as in sleep paralysis. In many ways, religious, mystical or otherwise special experiences tend to turn intentionality as we know and observe it in everyday life on its head, which can be a large contributing factor as to why they are seen as different from ordinary experience and marked as special in the first place. By virtue of being novel, I think that it stands to reason that these reversed intentionalities tend to be the focus of a large part of the explanation as given. This is in line with Malle's reasoning as I understand it, if not his concluding predictions. Behavior that is strange, contrary to the usual and difficult to understand is also difficult to assess the relevance of. Not knowing the approximate relevance of something, would, I suspect, make it a high priority of our awareness and explanatory efforts, essentially giving it priority for the same reasons as the observing party's prioritizes intentional behavior.

Malle also has a clear understanding of the twin reasons why people seek to explain behavior in the first place; to find meaning and to manage social interactions (Ibid: 27). The latter is strongly indicated in studies showing that people in conversation focus more on explaining what their opposite would be the most interested in. By this I mean that an actor might spend considerable time explaining observable and intentional behavior to an observer, the opposite of what they focus on the most when trying to make sense of behavior themselves (Ibid: 78). Keeping both of the reasons for explaining behavior in mind is especially important in this study since we intend to work on other people's narratives and descriptions of their particular experiences. As descriptions imply explanations, attribution theory as a theoretical framework for analysis of the attributed causalities, implied explanations and social implications in the narratives we are presented could prove to be an invaluable tool, as there are many implied beliefs hidden beyond the veil of language. The management of social interaction through explanation also cautions us to make a distinction between explanations that are private and those that are communicated to others, as they would be framed in a way that is, consciously or not, adapted to control the relationship between speaker or writer and intended audience. An audience that could just as readily be a congregation, close friends, or scholars of religion.

Attribution theory was initially conceived as a means of describing how people go from receiving sensory input to making sense of the world around them. The inherent variance in the form of this input was thought to be interpreted by the sensory apparatus, which attributed it to causes and objects in the external world. From this point on, steps were made to integrate this model with the process of explaining social behavior (Ibid: 8).

Attribution theory has already served to inform some investigations into religious experience, such as serving as the methodological basis for the construction and analysis of interviews with people who have had experiences they see as religious or special (Brett et al, 2007), and handling the evaluation and reevaluation of such experiences (Kohls & Walach, 2006: 3).

An attribution theory of religion has also been developed originally in 1985 by psychologists Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick. This theory has, however not kept up to date with findings in the field of psychology generally, nor with Malle's aforementioned interactionist revisions of appraisal and inclusion of theory of mind (Taves, 2009: 91). Attribution theory of religion has also largely been neglected by scholars of religion. Combined, the neglect from both involved scientific fields call for a needed revision of the whole approach.

Taves suggests that elements from Malle's coding scheme extend and compliment the analytical approach based on Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick's four major factors. These four factors are: event characteristics, event context, attributor characteristics and attributor context (Taves, 2009: 95). They theorized that these factors interacted in a way that determined the availability of a meaning system, and predicted further that the attributor utilizes the most available meaning system, and only turns to less available options if the first explanation is deemed unsatisfactory (Ibid: 94).

Malle's coding scheme of unintended and intended behaviour events accompanied by complementary cause and reason explanations adds to this framework by adding agency, intentionality and the interactive nature of cultural meanings into the mix in a way that is comprehensive and concise (Ibid: 100).

Chapter 4: Methods

4.1 Depth and interactivity

Taves and Asprem were kind enough to point me in a direction they thought would be interesting or of use to their own research. When choosing my methods I tried to keep this in mind and pick the ones I found most suited to investigating the subject in question. Another criteria was that it had be able to tie in a sensible way to the theoretical framework I had been provided. With this in mind, I realized that the key features I wanted from my methods were depth and interactivity. By depth I mean being able to access a large amount of data from each individual informant concerning beliefs, valuation, meaning-making and experiences. No other studies have been done on astral projection within a Thelemic population, so to provide as much utility as possible, I would need to access and investigate a wide range of beliefs and subjects, trying to cover the theme of astral projection from as many angles as possible, and be open to unexpected turns. By interactivity, I mean the ability to interact with the informant. I want to be able to ask him or her questions when I would like a particular subject to be expanded upon or if avenues of inquiry that I had not considered before were to present themselves.

Crowley's role as prophet and primary contributor to the literary corpus of Thelema puts his writings in a position of note. By looking into his conception of astral projection and the various practices he lists as related to or encompassed by the concept I hoped to gain some preliminary insights that could inform the later stages of this study. My primary focus for this effort was the text *Liber O vel manus et sagittae sub figura VI* (Crowley, 2012: 613-626), which provides a guide of sorts to

“students” seeking to learn astral projection and practices that Crowley deemed related to the concept in some way. Reading Crowley’s writings relies on hermeneutics, the interpretation of texts conceptualized as a scientific method. The meanings of texts are discerned through interpretation, which is done in light of certain contexts (Gilhus, 2014: 275). In this instance, *Liber O* was read with other of Crowley’s texts in mind, all of them read in the context of astral projection as a practice or set of practices that could bear some relation to Thelema as a cultural concept. In *Liber O*, Crowley does not refer to any practice specifically as astral projection; in fact, he does not utilize the term at all. In the text *Of Clairvoyance, and of the Body of Light* (Crowley, 2012: 244), the nomenclature concerning astral projection emerges. Crowley writes of astral planes and projection, and repeats the instructions from *Liber O*. My interpretation of these texts seen in the context of their common themes and corpus of literature, leads me to believe that *Liber O* is one of the text Crowley saw as an instruction in the practice of astral projection. This interpretation was later echoed by informants who referred to *Liber O* when asked how they would practice astral projection.

A qualitative study is, unlike a quantitative one, not designed to provide causal relationships supported by quantities of data. The qualitative study functions as a way to gather in-depth, nuanced information concerning the lived life, subjective experiences and beliefs of individual human beings (Flick, 2011: 15-16). Ascriptions imply valuation, so logically speaking, if we are to investigate ascriptions, then what we need to access is the valuation processes and experiences of our informants, both of which qualitative studies seem well suited to. So, which particular qualitative method to employ? Qualitative studies are associated with a large array of diverse empirical materials, such as case studies, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artifacts, cultural texts and productions, as well as observational, historical, and visual texts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013: 7). Again, my choice was informed by the two criteria of interactivity and depth, as well as an understanding that what I wanted access to the realms of valuation, beliefs, meaning-making and representations of subjective experience.

Qualitative interviews come in many shapes and forms. They range from highly structured, problem-centered interviews where the points of interest are clearly defined in advance, to the free form, less structured variants that attempts to minimize any influence from the researcher, like the ethnographic interview (Flick, 2011: 162, 169). Structured interviews have advantages in that the answers provided might be more easily comparable, and that they can address themes and subjects that the researcher finds particularly interesting to his study without spending much time and effort on

unrelated matters. Less structured interviews can provide a lot of data that has been influenced by the researcher's framing to a lesser extent. It also invites the interviewees to bring anything they find somehow relevant to the discussion, including things that the researcher might not have considered.

In an attempt to have my cake and eat it too, I have opted for a third option that attempts to bring together the best qualities of both extremes; the semi-structured interview.

A semi-structured interview is neither an open conversation nor a closed questionnaire. It revolves around an interview guide that highlights certain subjects or themes, and that might include suggested questions or follow up questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 47). By focusing on the Lebenswelt of the informant a semi-structured interview can be utilized to access the experiences, opinions and beliefs the interviewee has regarding a wide range of subjects and topics (Ibid: 48-49). Beliefs and opinions will be laden with ascriptions and attributions, my primary targets, and through influencing the themes and subjects discussed directly, I can guide the informant to describe what I consider to be points of interest for this study. The semi-structured, qualitative interview provides both the depth I want in being able to uncover what the informant ascribes or attributes as connective points between Thelema and astral projection, and the interactivity I need to guide his or her descriptive efforts to address points that I consider interesting or fruitful for the study.

I decided to do these interviews in a one-on-one setting, avoiding group interviews and remote interviewing. Group interviews would, I judged, open my questions to debate, where one view might take the spotlight away from the true complexity and variety of views in my small population. One particularly vocal or senior Thelemite might take the spotlight, while some might be content to watch or not share their own views on the subject, skewing the results of the study due to social factors (King & Horrocks, 2010: 62). According to Bertram Malle's theory of attribution, explanation take on a social dimension where it aims to regulate the explainer's relationship to the ones to whom he or she is explaining him or herself (Malle, 2004: 27). The Thelemic community in Norway is a comparatively small one, so if grouping them together they might be keener to manage social relations with people that could be quite close to themselves, and thus have an impact on their daily lives. Remote interviewing has similar drawbacks. Technical issues are always a factor that are, in my humble experience, best avoided by including less technical factors altogether. A textual interview through e-mail or similar devices could be less likely to gain access to the individual beliefs and experiences of the interviewees, as it would give them time to check their answers with sources they deemed

authoritative, be that a literary source or another person, prompting them to adjust their beliefs accordingly. Time is also a factor.

When I did my preparatory studies before starting on the thesis proper, I had the good fortune to try a few interviewing methods. E-mail interviews tended to arrive late, or be postponed until the very latest acceptable date of collection, a tendency I did not wish to be repeated when working on a deadline. Remote video- or voice-interviews could be subject to a host of technical difficulties and issues. First of all, it would restrict my population to those able and willing to undergo that kind of interviewing, thus narrowing my informants down to Thelemites with certain technical aptitudes that are still associated with younger rather than older generations. Secondly, the sound quality could become a problem. With an in-person interview, I am able to mitigate this by utilizing high quality recording equipment, but I have little influence on which microphones my potential informants would have available and be comfortable utilizing, not to mention their bandwidth or cell phone coverage.

4.2 Gathering data

I established contact via e-mail with various lodges of the Ordo Templi Orientis here in Norway, which is a Thelemic organization, explaining what I intended to do, and asking them to forward or circulate the informational document I attached to my mail among their members. Later I was contacted by five interested individuals, and started scheduling the interview appointments.

The interviews themselves were recorded on a device with no network access, and then transcribed roughly. This first draft was sent to the informant, who was then asked if any of the data provided needed to be further anonymized. None of the participants deemed more anonymization necessary, so the transcripts were checked for spelling-mistakes and written into the form now accessible in the appendix. The form of the transcriptions were chosen due to simplicity and expediency. In the interest of providing a suitable level of anonymity for my informants, I have taken certain steps. First and most obviously they have all been referred to as informants 1, 2 and so on. Secondly, as I am well aware that the Thelemic community in Norway is a comparatively small one, I have deemed it necessary to exclude information about which particular lodge they were recruited from, their age, gender and other specifics that can be utilized in identifying them. Information concerning religious beliefs is classified as sensitive personal information by NSD, the data collection official for all Norwegian universities, and I consider that fact to warrant this level of caution.

The interview guide contained the following questions, translated into English from appendix III:

What is astral projection?

How do you astrally project?

Do you have to prepare in any way?

Can anyone do it?

Is it possible to do so without knowing what it is?

Have you astrally projected?

How did you proceed to do so?

What was the experience like? (How did it feel? What did your body feel like? Can you compare the experience to something else? If so, what are the similarities and differences?)

Can you tell me of a few times you astrally projected?

How did you reach the conclusion that these experiences were astral projection?

What did or do you expect astral projection to be like?

How did you get these expectations?

Why did or do you want to astrally project? Are there more reasons?

What can you do when you astrally project? Why do these things?

Are some projection experiences more valuable to you than others?

How do you evaluate that?

How do you evaluate whether the experience was in accordance with your «True Will» or not?

The interview guide starts by providing a general open question concerning the whole theme. By doing so, I hoped to influence the informant as little as possible early on, and get him or her talking on the subject. The following questions were then asked if the informant had not addressed them, or at least not fully, so far in his or her explanation. Follow up questions were devised to serve a similar purpose, or to make the informant approach the subject from a slightly different angle, broadening the scope of the provided description. Questions were restructured, omitted or new ones constructed and included as I saw fit during the interview situation to aid the flow of the conversation and in an effort to uncover interesting data, as befits a semi-structured interview.

I decided to include the final question due to a passage I found interesting when studying Crowley's writings on astral projection in preparation for this study.

The true, the final test, of the Truth of one's visions is their Value. The most glorious experience on the Astral Plane, let it dazzle and thrill as it may, is not necessarily in accordance with the True Will of the Seer; if not, though it be never so true objectively, it is not true for him, for it is not useful for him (Crowley, 2012: 505).

Crowley is describing an interpretative process that specifically warns against equating the novelty and salience of the event in question with its value as related to the “True Will” of those undergoing the event. Taves theorizes that things are deemed salient or attention-grabbing in one process, and then its significance is assessed by the executive control network (Taves, in press: 12-13). In other words, something that is attention grabbing is assessed in an interpretive process that provides ascriptions of specialness or which category it might belong to. Crowley’s warning seems to outline a learned interpretative process where the ascriptions to be are stripped of their novelty and then deemed to connect with the “True Will” or not according to a process of valuation. What are these learned criteria? Are specific marks of novelty considered to be negative in value within this schematic? Which marks of specialness, if any, are considered to be beyond this line of criticism? Were Crowley’s considerations taken into account by my informants at all? A thorough investigation of the attributive and ascriptive processes of Thelemic astral projection could not let these questions go unanswered.

With this in mind, I had to determine how to access this information. Astral projection is, after all, an obscure subject, Thelemic astral projection even more so. Assuming that they would know what I was referring to could have unfortunate consequences. Specifying a specific interpretative process might be guiding and influencing my informants to an unfortunate degree, so I decided to mitigate this influence by fixing the question firmly into the final stage of the interview. The notion of connecting the emic concept of the “True Will” to the practice of astral projection also suggests a way in which the complex cultural concepts of Thelema and astral projection can connect with each other through composite ascriptive formations, which also provides ample reasoning why it should be investigated specifically.

4.3 Analysis

When analyzing the data, I decided to group the various answers into translated quotations relating to specific categories. I deemed this necessary due to the associative nature of the answers provided by the informants. This is to be expected from a semi-structured interview process, which

excels at gathering vast quantities of related data, at a cost paid by the precision and conciseness of the provided answers. One person might add data relating to the identification of the event to a narrative, and another might stop her own narrative to briefly explain what she considers to be the characteristics of the astral plane. This chaotic nature warranted a restructuring, both in sympathy to my readers, and to make the data more available both to myself through the process of analysis, and to other researchers such as Taves and Aspren.

I chose the categories specifically due to their relation to the goals of this study and the theoretical framework as described in the previous chapter, with a particular focus on composite formations and path-schematics, and the analytical tools provided by Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick's four major factors and Malle's behavior events. This process took on a dialectical dimension as the categories had to represent the data properly. When going through the practices the informants deemed efficacious at producing the event, for instance, I noticed that they differentiated between practices they described as exercise, where they trained skills or characteristics they thought they would need later, when attempting to consciously and voluntarily initiate the event, and the practices they deemed efficacious at that later phase. With this in mind I created two separate categories, as these are two different composite ascriptions. Answers concerning relating the experience to the "True Will" took on the shape of a process of valuation, and as such I grouped those answers together with more general answers concerning the theme of valuation. These categories stem from my reading of the material and relating them to the goals of the study and the theoretical framework that informs it.

From that point on I analyzed the data in relation to the four major factors as well as intentional and unintentional behavior events, informed by Taves' theories on ascriptions and attributions. The behavior events and the four factors were chosen due to their complimentary nature, as both show promise in examining significant parts of the explanatory process from which ascriptions and attributions can be unearthed, but do so in different ways. Where Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick's framework falls short in failing to account for agency, intentionality and the interactive nature of cultural meanings, Malle's schematic picks up the slack, culminating in a far more complete picture (Taves, 2009: 100).

Chapter 5: Presentation and analysis of data

For the sake of making the collected data manageable enough to provide a fruitful discussion in a later chapter, and allow readers to survey the results in an orderly fashion, I have decided to group the expressed beliefs, views and narrative data in the categories listed below. This is necessary due to the nature of a semi-structured, oral interview, which is quite different from a questionnaire in terms of both amount of data collected, and the conciseness of the answers provided. One might answer a question concerning beliefs with a narrative that addresses that question, but also numerous others, making it necessary for the researcher to do more interpretation when categorizing the responses. The categories themselves were chosen due to their relation to the goals of this study and what I have come to consider fruitful areas of exploration that can prove to be the starting points of interesting discussions. This data is collected in the form of translated quotations that refer back to the full interviews as printed in the appendix, and they are then presented categorically in appendix 2. I judged this necessary to avoid descriptive reductionism and to provide a full account of the data and how I have utilized it step by step. These categories are then analyzed in light of the theories of Ann Taves and attribution theory, with a focus on the creation of simple and composite ascriptions, and how they are seen to relate to the complex cultural concepts of astral projection and Thelema.

1. Practices deemed efficacious at producing the event

This is of interest because these beliefs provide direct ties to simpler processes that are thought to be trained and exercised because of their importance in the main practice, such as visualisation or stillness of the body. From this we can generate a more complex and vivid image of what astral projection is in the minds of the practitioners as well as gather indications of which mental and bodily processes are believed to be involved during the various practices. Two subcategories emerged from the material, regarding different kinds of practice. A) practices believed to be exercising the muscles and skills deemed necessary for astral projection, and B), practices deemed useful or necessary at producing the event.

2. Goals and purpose of the practice

A goal might tie the practice into a larger path-schematic, which can confer ascriptions of specialness with or without attached markers of religiosity. This also allows for a peek at how the cultural concepts Thelema and astral projection interact with one another.

If applicable, we can split this one further into A) goals and purpose of the practice at present time, and B) what the informant presented as the goals and purpose of the practice, as she saw it when initially attracted to astral projection.

3. Content of the event

By content I mean the structured narrative as expressed by the informant, as well as their understanding of what characterized the event and which courses of action were open for them during the event.

Examining the narratives and beliefs held and expressed by our informants will add to our understanding of what astral projection is thought to be within the context of Thelema, which will aid any comparative effort as well as provide the foundation we need to understand how they interpret and add ascriptions to these narratives. From this data we can also attempt to reconstruct the rules and parameters surrounding the non-ordinary reality our Thelemic population designate as the “astral plane“, or that is entered into when attempting astral projection. Contrasting these findings with the expectations they had or have for astral projection might prove fruitful in excavating underlying processes such as Luhrmann’s “Interpretative drift“ or representational methods aimed at authenticating the experience.

4. Identification of the event as astral projection

Understanding how the event becomes identified as a specific, special thing that belongs within a specific, special system is necessarily the same as understanding how things come to be included within cultural formations such as religions. If the criteria prove to be mutable, then we have identified a way new phenomena might be added to that cultural formation. Here it is important to make the distinction between what the informant understands to be an attempt and a success, and by which criteria the event is judged to belong to either category.

5. Processes of valuation

How one comes to ascribe a certain kind of specialness to one instance of astral projection, and another or none to the next instance of the same practice, provides yet another look into the ascription process and thus how one thing, in this case a practice or event, is attributed significance or not, and how this valuation is connected to the framework of Thelema.

5.1 Practices deemed efficacious

A: Training

All of the informants agreed that astral projection is something that can be achieved to some degree by most people, if they submit themselves to preliminary training of some form. While most listed the practices of Asana, Pranayama and Dharana, known colloquially as “yoga”, as recommended by the “manual” Liber O, there were also several other suggestions and ways of framing the listed practices that struck me as interesting.

It's important to master asana, pranayama (...) and dharana. And other meditation techniques. Those techniques are, asana is sitting still for prolonged periods, managing to remove all external noise, and so on. Breathing techniques, calming down the body, not thinking about everyday problems, and so on, and so on. All those things help... Actually do astral projection, without being disturbed. (Informant 1, Appendix: 3)

Here informant 1 provides reason explanations for engaging in the recommended practices, where she first breaks down what she sees as the essential function of the specific practice, as with the practice of asana, which is explained as “sitting still for prolonged periods, managing to remove all external noise”. Informant 2 similarly explains specific methods by listing the skills they are thought to develop and train: “methods like memorizing correspondences, doing yoga, that is quieting the mind, control one’s thoughts, control one’s actions, and ideas enough to be able to create a point which pierces through to the astral world” (Informant 2, Appendix: 16).

Some informants, such as informant 3, listed skills specifically without necessarily linking them directly to a practice, like sitting in a position without getting distracted by physical ticks or thoughts, focus and presence, and the ability to imagine moving a part of your body while “feeling” that you do so (Appendix: 20-21). Informant 4 placed an emphasis on capacity to visualize, concentration, and imaginative skill, and recommended a specific set of visualization exercises of gradually increasing complexity to that effect (Appendix: 30). Informant 5 agrees that you need focus, concentration and the capacity to imagine and visualize (Appendix: 39).

The listing of “skills deemed efficacious” is of interest because it provides new ways to create and structure simple and composite formations. If a skill is deemed to provide a way to astrally project if trained and nurtured, then new practices that are considered to be increasing those skills and flexing those muscles can be included into the overlying structures. This mechanism can be conceptualized in the form of a set of path-schematics. Path 1 has the intended goal of producing astral projection, and the way to that goal is considered to be improving the skills listed above. Path 2 has the intended goal of increasing these abilities, and the path to doing so will be practices deemed efficacious at just that, which can be the “traditional” set of yogic practices and visualization exercises, or new and inventive ones.

Alternatively, or perhaps simultaneously, this framing pattern could reflect how the informants wished, consciously or unconsciously, to present themselves and their practices. They were communicating with me in person during the interview process, and according to Malle’s attribution theory, explanations in social situations take on an interactive aspect (Malle, 2006: 27). The informant is explaining with me in mind, trying to manage his or her relation to me as a person through the explanatory process. I do not, however, consider this a sufficient explanation as to why the informants have focused on “skills deemed efficacious” in their explanations. When addressing the issue whether or not they consider it possible to astrally project without attempting to do so, or if astral projection is something that most people are able to, they have answered positively with few if any reservations. The reservations similarly focused on the availability of skills or characteristics, which I consider an indication that this view is ingrained in their belief system rather than solely being a representational strategy.

Learning a system of symbolic or “qabalistic correspondences” is considered to be important to do astral projection “properly”. Informant 1 utilizes the system from Crowley’s *Liber 777* and reasons that the system is a way to make sense of and extract information and meaning from the astral projection experience. She also lists a set of rituals (the pentagram and hexagram rituals) and another set of practices, called “The Vibration of God-Names”, which she considers to be particularly helpful visualization training when aiming to astral project (Appendix: 3-4).

Informants 2 and 5 echo the importance of “memorizing correspondences” (Appendix: 16 and 39), which will be prominently featured later when we consider how they authenticate the experience.

B: Initializing.

When attempting to astrally project, the informants similarly named or listed a set of visualization exercises that were deemed an effective way to start the event, if practiced with enough skill and persistence. Again, the instructions in Crowley's *Liber O* were repeated, but not exclusively. Informant 2 explains that if she were to attempt astral projection today, she would look up *Liber O* and go through its instructions step by step. She repeats the pattern we discovered in the previous part, explaining the intended function of the practices by way of listing skills or characteristics that they are seen to improve or activate: "then I'd sit down, tried to keep the body still, that is Asana, concentrated, via Dharana" (Appendix: 16)

Informant 1 attempts to astral project by lying down, practicing asana, pranayama and dharana, performs the pentagram and hexagram rituals, then undergoes a visualization exercise. She imagines herself standing in front of her, dressed in a black "magician's robe" and adorned with "magical equipment, the staff, the sword, and the rest...", spends some time doing this visualization until she can feel that the figure is "real" or "present", and then "transfers her mind" to that visualized figure. She frames this transfer as intentional, and as such focuses on the reason and utility of doing so rather than a cause-explanation considering how this is possible, and describes the shift as "teleporting", and suddenly standing there, looking through the eyes of the visualized figure, looking down on her physical body that is still lying on the floor before her (Appendix: 4-5). From thereon she explains that she "has" to keep her physical body within her field of view, but is otherwise free to act. Then she "rises" upward.

When I stand over there, the whole idea is for me to rise further. That I'm not just looking at my body, but rising, rising, seeing my house, rising, surveying my city, rising, seeing my country, rising, look at the continents, the earth, rising and rising and rising. Until I kind of see... Am everywhere. That the figure surveys the solar system, the universe. Until I come to a place where I cannot see the universe anymore. Come so far that... It is not possible to get so far that you can't see the universe, but I kind of get to what I'd call the astral plane, when I no longer can see any of what I've understood earlier as the real world. I get to a kind of... My own dreamworld, in a way. When I get there, everything is black (Appendix: 5).

Informant 3 repeats some of the motifs listed above, explaining the intended function of asana as sitting steadily without being "bothered by bodily sensations", which will allow you to focus on "standing up" or "getting out of your body", which she describes as "floating off". The informant

explains that this can be initiated by “moving your body without physically moving your body”, one of the skills the recommended training in the previous section. She has found the “Body of Light” to be a little difficult to control, where some part of it might get stuck while another part floats upward (Appendix: 21-22).

Informants 4 and 5 describe different ways of initiating what could be considered different kinds or applications of astral projection. Informant 4 describes three separate options. She briefly mentions that you can “astral project into the real, physical world around you.” “Try to, consciously really, and not through any special techniques, dissociate yourself, and get a visual or, for that matter, emotional impression of that which is not visible around us” (Appendix: 28).

Then she focuses on two ways to enter into “another physical reality”. The first is initiated through visualizing a symbol on a door or portal, dissociating yourself, and entering through the door. She explains that this is intended to get you to a world that can “communicate” the underlying ideas and concepts that are connected to the chosen symbol. The second way, which she describes in length, is another visualization exercise in which you visualize a tarot card, gradually making the picture clearer in your mind and becoming animated. Then you can “try to travel out of yourself” either by standing up and moving out of your body and into the card, or through letting “the information of the card overwhelm you”. This method is, similar to the previous one, intended to allow for the exploration of the underlying ideas of the chosen symbol. She explains that she believes the information presented to be based on what you already know of the “symbolic language” that you have decided to visit (Appendix: 29).

Informant 5 describes two ways she has utilized when attempting to astral project, both of which she ties to different concepts of astral projection and as belonging to different traditions. The first, which she believes to originate from the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, she has practiced while lying in bed and imagining a “Body of Light” “or something that looked like your body” rising up from the position she was in. It would continue to rise upwards until she got to “the planes”. The second, which she considers to be “the Thelemic variant”, is initiated by sitting in an asana posture, while imagining that you “project your own body to stand in front of you” dressed in a robe, and then “try to project yourself into this astral body”. This could then be used to explore your surroundings or to rise upwards “until you reach the higher planes” (Appendix: 39).

I find it interesting to note that, as we shall explore more fully when we consider the narratives provided, she considered a spontaneous projection experience that happened while sleeping to be

caused by “something I had attempted over a long period of time” (Appendix: 40). This means that she considers the practices deemed efficacious at initiating the event to be the cause of an event that happened later, while sleeping. This indicates and exemplifies how inextricably linked the “practices deemed efficacious” are to the identification and authentication of the experience as “astral projection”, as we shall explore more fully later, cementing their bond in a composite ascription in the form of a path-schema.

5.2 Goals and purpose of the practice

A. Present time

All of our informants listed a set of goals and reasons for attempting or practicing astral projection, or wanting to do so, some of which were linked to goals that were specified as belonging within the structure of Thelema.

Informant 1 tells us that the practice gives her “a very good feeling” and “perception of her inner self”. Then she explains that she astral projects to get meaning out of the experience (Appendix: 3), to “address issues I don’t think are issues” and knowledge of what goes on in her “her brain, her head, or her astral plane” (Appendix: 12).

Informant 2 links astral projection to the wider cultural concept of Thelema by explaining “In Thelema it is... As far as I understand it, it is a link, a plane you are supposed to go through to experience various things.” These experiences are then specified as being a link towards “the attainments one strives for” (Appendix: 16), which she exemplifies as “The Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel” and “Crossing the Abyss”.

The informant also reflects that there is a certain “pioneer spirit” and excitement in exploring what the astral plane is (Appendix: 18). Informant 3 explicitly states that she sees astral projection as a “tool for self-discovery”, and seeking to practice it because of a wish to have “real spiritual experiences” and to “conquer thyself” (Appendix: 25-26).

Informant 4 considers the practices stimulating for the mind and the imagination, and reflects that she is always left with “something to ponder on” and the feeling that something happened that “mattered to you” (Appendix: 35-36). This point is repeated by informant 5, who explains that her experiences have triggered thought processes that led her to read up on the provided symbolism in search of meaning. She, similarly to informant 2, also ties the practice of astral projection to the goal of achieving the “Knowledge and Conversation” experience, as well as “becoming a better magician”

which she sees as a step on the path to finding one's True Will. She sees astral projection as a way to "explore your own magical universe", which can "make you more sure of what you really are and what your Will is". Similar to the previous informant, she considers astral projection a way to develop imagination and concentration, which she considers to be "really important characteristics to have, if you wish to develop yourself spiritually". She also tells us that she thinks that astral projection is fun (Appendix: 44-45).

We can summarize these goals roughly as belonging to several categories. Self-discovery features prominently, since many of our informants explain that they consider the astral plane to provide either a reflection of themselves, or to be able to communicate self-knowledge in some way or form. Informants 3 and 5 tied the goal of self-discovery directly to their understanding of the concept of Thelema, by way of considering self-discovery to be a way towards understanding the "True Will". Informants 2, 3 and 5 attributed similarly astral projection to be an effective or necessary method on the path to one of the greatly valued events of Thelema, like the "Knowledge and Conversation" experience or the "Crossing of the Abyss". Informant 5 also considered doing astral projection to be a path towards fulfilling the goal of becoming a better magician, which she then considered to be a way towards finding one's True Will.

These attributions can construct a host of interrelating composite formations that provide interconnections between the cultural concepts of astral projection and Thelema. They present astral projection as a "practice deemed efficacious" at reaching a set of goals, who are then placed within the concept of Thelema as they understand it, or relating towards other goals within Thelema in the same fashion.

Many of the other reasons seem to indicate the nature of an astral projection experience as they see it. Some focus on the novelty or salience of the experience, one of the proposed building blocks which Taves considers to be instrumental in how something is ascribed a level of specialness or set apart from the ordinary.

B. Past, when initially attracted to astral projection

Some of the reasoning provided was similar to what we found in the previous section. Informant 1 considered astral projection to be "fun" and "interesting" to such an extent that she initially practiced it "a lot" (Appendix: 8). We can see this as a process where the novelty and specialness of the experience eventually wore off somewhat with increased practice and exposure to the same novelty. She presents

her past reasons for wanting to try astral projection as influenced by novel tales of what was possible when projecting, like “meeting” on the astral plane or to “travel with someone”, which she considered herself to be attracted to due to an interest in “history, religion, magic, psychic powers”. She explains that she practiced it for two and a half years before “getting it right”, and contrasts her earlier motivations with her current ones, which she sees as getting to “know myself” (Appendix: 11-12). Informant 4 wanted to “explore the symbolism”, and explains that she always had very visual dreams as well as a wish to “erase some of the inner and outer experience of myself and reality on a philosophical level” (Appendix: 35). Informant 5 believed in the existence of an immortal soul, and had a strong wish to experience it (Appendix: 44).

The commonality they share, varying as they are, is that these reasons are contrasted against their current reasoning, which is as a rule more tied towards meaning-making and towards the goals they attribute to Thelema. Their past reasons, as they currently present them, also make assumptions of the nature of astral projection that they do not repeat when explaining what they consider it to be currently, as with the capacity to experience the immortal soul, or exploring psychic powers. This could be an indication that a process like Tanya Luhrmann’s “interpretative drift” is in effect, gradually changing their attributions and interpretations as they become more involved in and knowledgeable of an activity (Luhrmann, 1989: 312). Alternatively, this could represent a way of framing their narratives in a way that conforms to the expressed goal of self-development and improving themselves as magicians. By presenting themselves as currently more knowledgeable and in tune with what they consider to be “Thelemic” or “real” astral projection, and indicating that their previous assumptions have been either proven false or dismissed in light of newly acquired knowledge and experience, they construct a narrative of growth and development that legitimizes their focus on astral projection as a path to something, be it personal development or mastery of the practice.

5.3 Content of the event

From the data and narratives provided by the informants, I have attempted a rudimentary analysis of their representation of their experiences informed by attribution theory. First I will present what I consider an encompassing analysis of the similarities presented. This is primarily done to provide a brief, summarized way of presenting what my informants mean when using the term “astral projection” within their cultural context. From that point on I will challenge this benchmark by

presenting the diverging aspects of their narratives and the characteristics they attribute to astral projection.

5.3.1. Similarities

Event characteristics: A state of mind compared to dreaming, lucid dreaming, daydreaming and meditation in which the physical body was experienced as being “distanced” or “detached”, while the conscious self appeared to be active, and the event felt “real”, “tactile” or “physical” and laden with significant symbolism in a way that differentiated it from the aforementioned states. The subject was able to move and explore the semi-tactile reality that presented itself while in this state without moving the physical body.

Event context: The context of each of the informants were that they attempted or had attempted to consciously and voluntarily initiate the event through practices deemed efficacious at doing so, typically including a visualization exercise, meditation, breathing techniques and rituals. All of the informants were also engaged in practices deemed similarly efficacious at “training” them to be able to initiate the event.

Attributor dispositions: The informants had dedicated time and effort to the preparatory practices, consciously intending to produce an astral projection event, as understood or conveyed by the tradition they felt that they belonged to at the time. The tradition, surrounding literature and discourse has primed them with expectations for what the event would be like, what actions might be available to them or desirable when undergoing the event, and the expectation that the event would be more similar the descriptions provided with training and practice.

Attributor context: Sitting or lying down alone at home, with the intent to do the initiatory practices, or participating in a group practice intended to produce similar events, or sleeping while undergoing a prolonged period of practice intended to produce the event.

Intentional behavior event 1A: Started doing the preparatory practices as described in *Liber O* or other sources deemed authoritative, with the intent to attempt astral projection at a future time.

Reason explanation: Astral projection has been described as novel, or as being a way to experience novel things, as well as a way to experience things that are seen to be of import within Thelema, or as a way to train yourself to be able to experience things that are seen to be of import within Thelema.

Intentional behavior event 1B: Attempted to initiate astral projection through the initiatory practices as described in *Liber O*, or other sources deemed authoritative, or inventive sources deemed efficacious at initiating the event or similar events. **Reason explanation:** As above.

Unintentional behavior event 1: Experienced a state of mind that felt detached or dissociated from the physical body, while still experiencing freedom of movement as if in a state of lucid dreaming. **Cause explanation:** The practices undergone previously were deemed successful and thus as being the cause for the event based on the event fulfilling a set of learned criteria.

5.3.2 Differences and depth

Event characteristics: Informant 1 describes a state of mind where the “black space” she considers to be the astral plane gradually resolves into landscapes and figures. She describes feeling the touch of the dry plains, feeling the moistness of the air. She describes having freedom of movement, but not being able to approach the background landscapes, since she felt that they were just “there in the background”. She describes being able to sense the presences of the figures, seeing what clothes they wore and some unusual characteristics, such as one figure having no facial features. Reasoning that they would manifest when she initiated contact, she wanted to communicate with the figure, which was able to communicate back, boasting how it knew all of her inmost secrets and desires, threatening to divulge these secrets. She attempts to “block out” figures by not giving them attention several times, before managing to remove some. She considered this difficult because the boasting figure distracted her. When she had removed all but the boasting figure, it went silent, which she reasons to be caused by it now having no one to divulge these secrets to, which then gave her the power to leave the event. She did so by “travelling back” to her body, laying down on top of it, and opening her eyes. She considers “ending” the event to be impossible without “travelling back”, and describes an experience where she was interrupted while astral projecting, which she explains resulted in “being dragged back” “unpleasantly fast” (Appendix: 8-9).

Informant 3 describes astral projection as being similar to lucid dreaming, undergone while awake and conscious. She describes the visualization as not necessarily seeing things as clearly as in the physical here and now, but “knowing that it is there”. The informant sees her physical body as being “silent” to a certain degree, and attributes the level of detachment to skill and training. She lists a few experiences she has had while astral projecting, described as “swooping around in outer space”, and other instances where she considered herself a victim of “reverse gravity” and other unusual and

uncontrolled movements (Appendix: 22-23). She goes on to state that she believes to have met “entities” or “figures”, in the form of a Buddha-like character and “weird creatures” that were “diffuse and unclear”, and clinged to her, and believes that with practice, these encounters will become more clear and allow direct communication (Appendix: 23-24). She believes the astral plane to be a place where you can imagine and “create” anything, but simultaneously encounter things that you did not create consciously, “that are emerging from your own, inner universe”. She believes the astral plane to adhere to rules and limits, and describes an experience in which she encountered a door or portal she tried to move through, “but it just stopped”, which she expressed as salient because it was different from “losing control”, which had happened before. She believes doors like these to different parts of the astral plane to “open” when you accumulate the “keys”, “strength and understanding” to do so. She states that events like these, that she believes to be the expression of rules governing the astral plane, “makes you start to think”, and sparked an explanatory process that has left her open to the idea of the astral plane being not “just a psychologized phenomena or psychological phenomena”(Appendix: 25-26). The idea that the astral plane is ruled by a set of different but absolute rules is also expressed by Informant 2, who considers this to be a persuasive indication that the astral plane might be “actually real” and differentiated from dreaming, lucid dreaming and similar states (Appendix: 17).

Informant 4 describes the practice as sensing what is “subtly present in the world around you”, or to “go fully into another kind of pictorial reality to explore your own inner worlds” (Appendix: 28). She describes it as “a kind of living, waking dream” where the conscious I is more present than in an ordinary state of dreaming, and where you “actively enter into a symbolic system” (Appendix: 29-31) and take on an observational role. She explains that she moves in a “non-physical way”, not walking, but floating around, and experiencing small, uncontrolled movements like “almost keeling over”, but never losing control (Appendix: 33-34), and being able to move about in a three-dimensional reality, revealing parts of the tarot card she visualized that would not otherwise be visible (Appendix: 33). While not “feeling” the ground under her feet, she “knows what the ground feels like” (Appendix: 35). She describes being able to “feel” that the shape of the area was a “cup or a container”, and that the visualized figures “communicated” ideas to her “non-verbally” (Appendix: 32), she presents a cause explanation for this, in that she believes these figures to trigger thought processes in her that she experiences as “communication”. She also describes not being able to move to another “scene” than the one visualized during one session of astral projection (Appendix: 35). The informant goes on to describe another “brief and intense” instance of what she deems to be astral projection, in which she

had practiced a “chant” associated with “Enochian magic”, which resulted in a spontaneous out of body experience, where she was unable to move, and suddenly found herself in a scene with a red background and a bright light emanating from a symbol. She tells us that she has attempted to “visit” this symbol using astral projection, and describes the experience as “less clear and orderly”, for which she provides another cause explanation, in that “you don’t have the same associating apparatus”, as contrasted to the symbolic system she utilizes otherwise (Appendix: 32-33).

Informant 5 describes seeing astral projection as two different things, and considers herself to have experienced both. She describes these as having differing characteristics. The first she considers to be an out of body experience, where she was “physically outside” of her own body. She describes it as similar to lucid dreaming and “hyperrealistic dreams”, but differentiates it as being “very different” and more memorable (Appendix: 40). She described the second variant, which she considers to be “more Thelemic” (Appendix: 38) and has more experience with, as a state where the physical body feels “very faint”, similar to dreams, lucid dreams and meditation. She goes on to describe that it felt more like dreams and imagination at first, with more sensory input like tastes, smells and feelings becoming more available and “real” with practice (Appendix: 40-41). She describes this “Thelemic” astral projection experience as arriving at a place that has certain characteristics; an outdoor temple with a waterfall. She describes doing the pentagram and hexagram rituals, which she considers to make the experience more immersive and “powerful”. When immersed in this way, she then considers herself free to move and explore, describing finding an “Egyptian plane”, with desert dunes, creatures and “Godforms”, which she could converse with (Appendix: 42).

The event characteristics, while sharing some similarities and points of comparison, take on different shapes and forms in the explanations given by the informants. Informants 3 and 4 describe the sensory input during the event as similar to thought or “knowing”, while informants 1 and 5 speak of “feeling the sand beneath your feet” and specific senses, presenting them as similar to the senses available in waking, everyday life. Informant 1, 3 and 5 speak of the event as if they visited a physical place that took shape and features on its own, while informant 4 describes visualizing a scene and then moving around in that specific scene. Some speak of encountering figures or creatures as unintended behavior events, without providing a cause explanation outside of their conceptualization of the astral plane. Informant 3 described meeting creatures that were “unfocused” and unable to communicate, and immediately provided a cause explanation, attributing their diffuse and less than talkative attitude to “lack of training” on her part. Similarly, informant 5 described more “senses” becoming available and

the experience becoming more “real” with practice. This suggests that the characteristics of the event are seen as salient through a learned process, where those that “stick out” are the ones that do not conform to a set of expectations. Meeting a creature on the astral plane was not deemed to require explanation, as it was a part of their set of expectations. Not being able to communicate with that creature, or that creature being “diffuse” as in the narrative of informant 4, or “featureless” as described by informant 1, was considered novel and needing explanation. The event itself did not require an explanation, as they had provided a cause explanation in the form of the practices deemed efficacious at producing the event. Novel sub-events, such as the ones mentioned above or informant 3 “stopping completely” when attempting to move through a door, required explanations, which, drawing on things they had heard or read about astral projection, often made assumptions as to the characteristics of the overlying event and the nature of the astral plane.

Event context: Informants 1 and 5 (narrative B) describe their visualization exercises in similar ways. They lie or sit down, imagine a body similar to their own, attempt to “shift their consciousness” to that imagined form, and then rise upwards until they reach what they consider to be the astral plane. The account of informant 3 is similar, in that she sits down, and then imagines her body “moving without physically moving”, and when “detached” from her physical body, moves into the “astral plane”. The first narrative provided by informant 4 provides another variation on this theme. She lies down, visualizes a door or a scene from a tarot card, and “dissociates herself from her body”, and enters this non-ordinary reality. Her second account departs from this theme, in that she first explains that it was “in part, involuntary”, before correcting her statement, reasoning that the event was not involuntary because she was engaged in a practice of “chanting” associated with “Enochian magic”, which resulted in a spontaneous out of body experience she considered to be astral projection. Similarly, narrative A provided by informant 5 describes a spontaneous out of body experience that she attributes to having practiced the methods deemed efficacious at producing astral projection without success regularly for what she considered to be a long time.

We are presented with a pattern of explanation and attribution that is very similar to ones we have observed before. First, that there is a set of expectations or a norm that is adhered to. Sitting or lying down to visualize yourself entering a non-ordinary reality seems to be the expected practice and context of the event. Deviations from this norm, as with the spontaneous out of body experiences, are considered novel and demand explanation, this is then provided by an attribution of efficacy. Informant 4 provided the cause explanation that the Enochian chanting had induced the event, thus establishing it

as a “practice deemed efficacious” and a composite ascription as part of a path-schema. Informant 5 reasoned that the practice of the methods deemed efficacious at producing the event had resulted in a spontaneous one at a later and unexpected time, thus affirming their efficacy and their ascriptive status.

Attributor dispositions: The dispositions of the informants vary in the sense that they have different expectations for what the event might consist of or which sub-events that it might provide, as well as different reasons as to why they consciously seek to produce it. Informant 5 provides two narratives that she connects to two points in time where she saw herself as “belonging” to different traditions with different concepts of astral projection, and herself having different reasons for doing so. She ties narrative A to an idea of astral projection being an “almost physical” out of body experience where she can move around in ordinary reality, wishing to do so to experience the “soul” as distinct from the physical body and not having to adhere to the same strictures. Narrative B she sees as “more Thelemic”, possibly encompassing visiting non-ordinary realities and meeting non-ordinary creatures, and being an efficacious way to “improve as a magician” and getting closer to knowing your “True Will”.

Informant 4 states that she is skeptical about the “stories” other people tell her of what they are capable of doing and seeing while astral projecting. As she says,

Others talk about much more direct astral travels where you go around in completely concrete landscapes and dragons appear or gnomes come or elemental creatures are coming and all else the occult language has to communicate through. But... I'm honest, I am unable to do so (Appendix: 35).

By making such a statement she engages in a meta-discussion of which sub-events are available when astral projecting, and placing herself and her understanding of what might be available, to her at least, in opposition to what she understands to be the expectations others might have, and have communicated to her.

Informant 5 makes a similar statement when explaining the function and importance of “testing” entities that she meets on the astral plane. She explains that people she considers to be authorities on Thelema and astral projection warns of malicious creatures trying to “fool” or “enamor” you with novel or apparently meaningful experiences, and that their deceit can be uncovered by “testing” them against a set of “qabalistic correspondences”. She goes on to reason that “If you use the methods and principles that are given within Thelemic practices, then I also think that you should take

the warnings given there seriously” (Appendix: 46). This statement also addresses a discussion concerning what events might be possible within the encompassing event of astral projection, and is framed in a way that seems to expect an audience that might entertain conflicting notions.

Informants 1 and 5 both tell us that they have heard or read stories of people who “met” while astral projecting. Neither of the informants claim to have experienced this, but both express their own, differing views on whether or not this is a possibility. Informant 1 describes being open to the possibility at an earlier point, and having adopted a more skeptical attitude with time and practice (Appendix: 11-12), while informant 5 believes that it is possible (Appendix: 43). This indicates that the informants have been exposed to a range of claims as to which sub-events might be possible while astral projecting, and that these claims have informed and influenced their own expectations. Expectations that might influence how they explain and interpret the experiences they have while astral projecting. Informant 4 reflects on how her own attitude and expectations might have influenced her experiences with astral projection, reasoning that her skeptical attitude might have excluded her from certain experiences or sub-events (Appendix: 35).

Attributor context: As explained above, the context of the attributors have primarily been centered on sitting or lying down alone at home, intending to go through a set of visualization exercises, in an effort to produce the event in question. There are, however, exceptions of note. Informant 4 describes an event where she participated in a “chant” or “ritual” of “Enochian magic”. By the explanation “song that is spoken in the room where I was”, I assume that there were other participants present, singing or speaking that song. In her account, she first explained that the event was “involuntary”, before rectifying this by suggesting that the chant could produce events similar to astral projection (Appendix: 32-33). Informant 5 describes an out of body experience that she identifies as astral projection that occurred while she was sleeping in her bed (Appendix: 40).

5.4 Identification of the event

The informants reflected on how they came to identify their experiences as not only a special event, but also a particular one, namely astral projection. Informant 1 relates that she identified the event by virtue of its characteristics, namely that it was “the first time I’d actually gotten to a plane that, or, where I was away from the universe, where I got to a place where I knew nothing. Where I had to relearn things, in a way, almost. That I kind of was on a new level”. She goes on to contrast this to other experiences where she attempted astral projection in the past, but concluded that this was

something “anyone can imagine that they are doing”, since it did not include “actual sensory impressions” (Appendix: 11). From this we can see that she relates to a set of expectations. When an event was produced that she interpreted as meeting these expectations, she had what she needed to identify the event. These expectations are echoed by informant 2, who assumes that astral projection “should be impossible to mistake for something else” and that it will be difficult to differentiate from “thought-activity” and “fantasies” in the beginning, and will gradually become more “clear-cut” with practice (Appendix: 17). Her expectations and the identification process related by informant 1 both echo the “training” motif we have observed in various forms earlier. They express the assumption that, with training and regular practice, astral projection will take on a form that is easier to identify and conforming to their set of expectations to a greater degree.

Informant 1 describes speaking of her experience to a “mentor” character, who supported her attribution and identification of the event, with the reservation that he could only say so based on the fact that what she told him sounded like astral projection (Appendix: 11). This strikes me as interesting, since the informant could have several reasons for seeking to affirm her identification from an external source. She could do so because she was not sure about her identification of the event, even though she had affirmed that the event had the expected set of characteristics. This suggests that the characteristics that she had attributed to astral projection were in question and that she wanted them affirmed by a source she deemed authoritative, like the “mentor” figure. Another possibility is that she was uncertain as to which degree the criteria had been met. Alternatively, this interactive explanation could be, consciously intended or not, serving the function of “proving” that she had succeeded at this goal to other people within her and her mentor’s community. The sheer variety of the event characteristics and available sub-events provided by the informants lead me to suspect that the characteristics deemed authoritative and correct were in question, and deemed to need validation by the informant.

Informant 3 defined the difference between fantasy and astral projection as that you are conscious and that you “feel it physically” (Appendix: 24). Informant 4 defines astral projection as when “you dissociate yourself from the physical body to experience an imagined or subtle reality” (Appendix: 28). She then goes on to address what she sees as discrepancies between her view and what she considers to be a view held by “many” others. As she says in the interview,

O: Many probably disagree that this is astral projection, because there are a few strict criteria of what it really is, but I'm at peace with this being an approved form of astral projection.

** Laughs* I've had many interesting experiences through this mode of work.*

I: What kind of criteria are you speaking of?

*O: That you are supposed to be 100% out of your own body, that you move in that world as yourself, that you meet creatures which you gestalt movements towards, remove monsters within there with the banishing pentagram ritual, at all, that it is an absolute reality. Maybe I'm just bad at astral projection. * Both laugh**

I: From where did you get those criteria?

O: Both from oral traditions and from writings concerning astral projection. It is an essential part and a very thoroughly depicted part in this kind of occult work that I believe many people wish it to be very real, right? But because I don't believe in it as an objective reality that me and you can go into and experience in the very same way, I permit myself a great degree of subjective opinionising and approach to the work (Appendix: 29-30).

The informant lists a set of criteria based on the available sub-events and characteristics of the experience with which she disagrees. This exemplifies the discursive and mutable nature of astral projection as a complex cultural concept. The set of expectations by which events come to be identified as “real” astral projection or “just imagination” are primarily discussed by way of available sub-events and characteristics. Sub-events such as meeting and “banishing” a creature through a magical ritual, or meeting another person while astral projecting, or characteristics like the degree of realism inherent in the sensory input provided by the experience. She lists the criteria she is opposed to, and considers them to be provided by textual and oral “traditions”.

I consider this to indicate that there is a wider discourse of astral projection, its characteristics and available sub-events in the cultic milieu (Campbell, 1972: 122) and the sources that different parts of this milieu draws upon and interprets. Novel sub-events are deemed to be special because they break with expectations, making them more memorable and likely to be communicated. The example of meeting another person while astral projecting seems to indicate this, in that the sheer novelty of the claim were in part responsible for making informants 1 and 5 interested in the subject of astral projection altogether, according to their expressed views.

Informant 4 goes on to explain why she steps away from the “doctrine or orthodoxy concerning astral projection” saying,

I have worked with those methods, I have used those techniques, and this is how those experiences have unfolded for me. So if this is right or wrong, I'm still left with something I feel satisfy some of the criteria about going outside yourself and experience a subtle reality, and that those things I take with me are, yet again, valuable to me (Appendix: 38).

This statement takes the form of a reason explanation, where she relates that her experiences have conformed to some of the expected characteristics, and that she deems these sufficient reasons to identify the events in question as astral projection. Furthermore, she refers to the “methods” and “techniques” she has used, suggesting that they were “authentic” or “correct”, and thus contributing to the authenticity of her attribution and identification. This exemplifies how a “method deemed efficacious” at producing an event can participate in the identification of the event as the one it was deemed efficacious at producing, and subsequently be used to authenticate that identification. In other words, things tied together in a path-schema and composite formation can be utilized to authenticate each other. They can do so both from the bottom up level, as with the above example of a practice authenticating and identifying a goal, and top down, as with new practices being deemed effective ways at increasing “skills deemed efficacious” schematized as goals, as we explored in the “practices deemed efficacious” section of this analysis.

When reflecting on how she came to identify her experiences as astral projection specifically, informant 5 similarly authenticates her identification in part by relying on the attribution of efficacy to the practices she utilized when attempting to produce the event (Appendix: 40). Much like the others, she goes on to list a set of event characteristics and sub-events that she considers herself to have experienced, like “exploring planes and other surroundings” and having “entered into an altered state of consciousness”. She also describes a method that she has not utilized yet, but consider useful when authenticating an experience. The informant describes this as “testing” what the creatures she may meet say “up against my knowledge of qabalistic correspondences”. By analyzing the content of her communication with the astral entities, she believes that she may see if “there’s truth to this” (Appendix: 40). Her statements suggest that the system of “qabalistic correspondences”, of which many of the informants used Crowley’s *Liber 777* as a source, or the “symbolic language” that informant 4 described seeing in the tarot card she visited, is being utilized to authenticate experiences. It serves this function as well as making sense of and finding meaning in their experiences, as we will explore more fully in the following section.

5.5 Valuation

The value of their experiences were deemed to relate to the level that certain sets of goals and criteria were considered to be fulfilled. The information provided by the informants suggest that this is usually a matter of degrees rather than the binary states of “good” and “bad”, and that valuation is an ongoing process while the event is underway, as well as in retrospect.

Informant 1 notes a few criteria and goals that she judges to be factors in determining the value of an astral projection experience. She lists having a “conversation” with one of the “figures” to be a valuable sub-event, that is in turn judged based upon if it provided “answers” and “clarity”. The informant clarifies these goals by explaining that she places the most value on information that she “feel has a connection to things in my real life that I can use in a positive way”. She notes that as long as she “feels in control”, the experience “usually turns out to be good”. Reflecting on the matter of retrospective evaluations of the experience, she notes that when the event is in progress she primarily judges how she should act, leaving the evaluation of the worth and value of the event to later. It is in this later process that she deems whether or not the experience is in accordance with her “True will”. She explains that when doing so, she is primarily looking for an “impact”. That the experience has “given her something” that she can “grow on” or “develop something” from (Appendix: 13-14).

Informant 2 similarly judges the value of the experience to be based around the goal of self-improvement and “becoming a more complete human being”. She contrasts this with an example she deems to be absurd and without value, since she would be unable to “see” or “recognize” any meaning in it. When reflecting on how an experience could be deemed to be in accordance with her “True Will” or not, she considers that it should either convince her that what she had declared to be her True Will or her “course” to be wrong or show her a new way to achieve it; alternatively it could “put in place pieces that are missing in my puzzle, purely intellectually or emotionally” (Appendix: 19).

Informant 3 explains the search for value and meaning in astral projection as similar to her understanding of “cold reading” when looking at tarot cards. She relates that she “sees herself” in the “symbolic language” provided, which triggers thoughts and feelings, and causes her to “see her life” through it, which she believes to trigger “understanding”. She provides a reason explanation for this interpretative pattern, where she relates that “in Thelema”, you astral project into “your inner universe”, reasoning that since you are within yourself, everything can be interpreted to relate to yourself and thus the meaning-making effort can relate to the goal of achieving a greater level of self-understanding (Appendix: 25). While noting that she considers some experiences more successful than

others, she explains that, ultimately, they are all of equal worth, since they are a “step in a direction” or “building blocks in something greater” (Appendix: 26). She considers the “True Will” to be “your nature”, and experiences to be in accordance with her “True Will” if she “met it as herself”, as opposed to “put on a mask and pretend something different” (Appendix: 27). Informant 4 explains that the narratives she chose to share with us were picked because they felt meaningful. She explains that in the event she related in narrative A, she felt that the experience communicated the notion of “this being the beginning and the end”. She explains that she considers this experience to be meaningful because she felt that she was present in “to the degree that symbols can communicate it, the beginning and end of your life” (Appendix: 37). She goes on to describe the criteria by which she judges the value of her experiences as “clarity”, reasoning that she “feels” that the clearer the experience appears visually, the greater the sense that she “communicates with something that originates from deeper within myself”. She explains this attitude by reasoning that you “form memories in completely different ways” when being in “a place that stimulates your senses”.

A second criteria is that the experience “communicates something that matters” (Appendix: 37). When asked how she judges whether or not her experiences with astral projection are in accordance to her “True Will”, she explains that she consider them all to be so, due to the following line of reasoning;

the work in Thelema is an investigation of the self, an investigation of the self and a journey into yourself, right? And to the extent that I believe that the astral plane is something you travel into yourself and not out into a subtle reality that is here independently of me, then astral projection is not a question of True Will or not, but a question of the travel towards a self. Self-understanding and self-investigation. The Will is... It depends on how abstractly you define the Thelemic Will, right? There is a Will beyond that too, which isn't moved by those specific experiences, but to the extent that the Great Work is about peeling of layers of yourself and getting to the core of what you are, then all those small drops and all those strange, weird aha-experiences or strange things that are said or sensations that you get or symbols that you receive are tools on the journey there (Appendix: 38).

In this statement she connects “strange, weird aha-experiences,” “strange things that are said,” “sensations that you get,” and “symbols that you receive” during astral projection experiences as paths towards “self-understanding” or “self-investigation,” which she then explicitly connects to her conceptualization of Thelema.

Informant 5 describes considering one of her experiences as separable from less meaningful ones because of its memorability (Appendix 40). She describes a retrospective valuation process where

“things were triggered” that she later read up on and evaluated. The informant considers the value of astral projection to be tied to its efficiency in training oneself to become “a better magician”, “knowing yourself and your True Will” and to someday be able to experience “the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel” (Appendix: 42).

She lists some sub-events she considers potentially meaningful, such as “having received a word, sign, or a sentence” from “creatures on the astral plane”. Retrospectively she will put it to writing, and then analyze it in light of the “revised hermetic qabalah” of Crowley’s *Liber 777*, “to maybe find out some more of what this really means”. She considers this type of analysis fruitful in that it has “started and triggered processes that have made me reflect a little and thought a little and found out things that you maybe wouldn’t consider before”.

The informant also lists “a lasting impression” that “changes you” as a criteria by which the value of an experience can be gauged. When asked how she deems if the experience was in accordance with her “True Will”, she described the two processes as above, but in more detail. First, she repeated the belief that this evaluation has to be done retrospectively, by writing down “what happened”, “how it felt”, “which entities you met, how you tested them, what was said, what was done” and then “maybe, over time” get a sense of whether or not “it is something that get you towards your True Will”, or if it had a lasting impression. Then she adds to this by noting that “testing” entities against knowledge of “qabalistic correspondences” is important while undergoing the event as well, and that she believes that “intuition” and “gut feeling” will help in evaluating the experience and it’s relevancy to the “True Will”. Finally, she adds that “testing entities” is important because sources she considers to be authoritative warn against entities that try to “fool you” or “lead you astray”. She believes that this might result in people being “enamored” by experiences that might seem novel or meaningful, but are “just a game” (Appendix: 45-46).

Chapter 6: Conclusion and discussion

6.1 “How do Thelemites come to identify an event as astral projection?”

The informants who participated in this study came to identify their experiences as “astral projection”, or attempt to validate their identification, through appealing to connected practices as well as expectations. When speaking of their expectations for what an “astral projection” event could constitute or what form it could take, they expressed these in the form of sub-events they considered to be available during the “astral projection” event, and event characteristics.

6.1.1 Practices deemed efficacious

Practices deemed efficacious at reaching a goal create a composite ascription in the form of a path-schema (Taves, 2009: 47. Taves, 2013: 153), in which a special goal is connected to certain practices, which then imply a shared form of specialness or emic category. This link has been featured prominently in the narratives and explanations given by the informants who participated in this study, and has manifested in different ways. Informants listed sets of practices deemed efficacious at producing “astral projection” or similar events, and frame them as if there are practices that serve as preparatory training, and practices that are attributed efficacy at initiating the event when properly prepared.

From a bottom-up level, this path schema was utilized to identify and validate the experience as “authentic” astral projection or astral projection at all, reasoning that as the informant had utilized the “right” methods, he or she should have had the “right” results. This strategy appeals to the apparent legitimacy of the connected set of practices to identify and legitimize the event the informant considered to be associated to the practices, and as such, moves the discourse to the topic about which practices are seen as valid and authoritative.

This focus on authoritative practices could explain why so many of the informants echoed or referred to the specific sets of practices discussed in Crowley’s *Liber O*. His status as prophet and principal contributor to the corpus of Thelemic literature seems to lend him a special status and authority that is widely considered to apply to the practices recommended and detailed in his writings. This bottom-up identification and validation can be seen as a conservative feature within the framework of Thelemic astral projection, in that it provides incentive for choosing “authoritative” sets of practices since their legitimacy was considered to provide legitimacy and validity to the “events” they considered them to have produced.

Cause explanations (Taves, 2009: 100) for the “astral projection” event itself were connected to the “practices deemed efficacious”. As far as the informants were concerned, the event was caused by the practices they had attributed efficacy to, and so their explanations took the form of reason explanations, detailing why they wanted to project and their reasons for utilizing the practices.

6.1.2 Skills deemed efficacious

When explaining and framing the “practices deemed efficacious”, the informants referred to sets of skills or characteristics, like “concentration”, “imaginative skill”, “keeping the body calm” and “visualization”. Practices were connected to these sets of skills in another path-schematic, where, for instance, the practice of “dharana” was explained as “concentration” or as a practice that was deemed efficacious at increasing the practitioner’s level of concentration. These skills and characteristics were then attributed efficacy at producing “astral projection” or similar events.

In this manner, the informants have constructed a twin set of path-schematics that are connected in a larger composite ascription. Practices are considered to increase skills that can then lead to astral projection or similar events and practices. Following this path-schematic, new and novel practices can be added to the overarching structure by being attributed efficacy at training these “skills deemed efficacious”, or the informants can utilize the same connection to legitimize and argue the validity of their chosen practices. This “top-down” connectivity provides space that can be utilized to add to or reinterpret the “astral projection”-related practices in new and imaginative ways, thus providing the complex cultural concept a level of flexibility, and a vantage point from which it can be reinterpreted by an appeal to functionality rather than authority.

The notion of “skills deemed efficacious” could also be viewed outside of an attributional perspective. Practices like meditation or skills like “imagination” could be considered as prone to produce salient events or experiences (Taves, 2009: 83). These unusual events or experiences are then subject to efforts whereby the subject attempts to explain and identify the event, what it means and how to relate to it. Having access to a framework like the “magical” or “mystical” practices prevalent in Thelemic literature can provide a way to make sense of these unusual experiences, where the subject could describe it as “related” or equal to astral projection. Moreover, the basic mechanisms that the various practices make use of can potentially have similar effects on experiences and events across traditions and cultural formations. The connection between the “skills deemed efficacious” presented in this study and proneness to “astral projection”-like events could be investigated further in future studies in an effort to see if there is a significant link between the skill and characteristics on the one hand, and proneness to or success in “astral projection”-like events on the other.

Deeming sets of adopted practices as efficacious at increasing certain skills or characteristics is also a way to present those skills as desirable. The skills are presented as ways to reach goals that are considered to be important, and in framing themselves as people who do these practices the informants

present themselves as “imaginative” people capable of “concentrating” to a greater extent than people who aren’t utilizing similar exercises. In this way, explanations centering around “skills deemed efficacious” can serve to position the explainer within and regulate his or her social context (Malle, 2004: 27).

6.1.3 Expectations and discourse

The informants expressed and placed themselves within the framework of astral projection by referring to sets of expectations for what constituted “real” astral projection. This is highly interesting, as it implies that there are variants of the practice that they consider to be less or more legitimate than others, and that the informants are aware of being part of a wider discourse on the subject. Some referred to astral projection “in Thelema” or “Thelemic astral projection” specifically, thus contrasting their conception of that category to what they considered to be “less Thelemic” variants of the larger concept. Some operated explicitly with several conceptions of astral projection simultaneously, as with informant 5, who utilized “Thelemic” practices to produce “Thelemic astral projection”, but had also experimented with practices she considered to be “Golden Dawn”-related, which she saw as connected to another “astral projection” with different features and for which she had different expectations. Informant 4 explicitly positioned herself and her conception of astral projection against an idea of a “traditional conception” of astral projection, that she considered to be communicated in various occult texts, oral traditions and discourse. She appropriated some features from this “traditional” conception, and distanced herself from others, arguing that some features were not present in her own experiences and that she was “skeptical” of other accounts that incorporated these features. These features were communicated and argued in two distinct forms, those of *event characteristics* and *available sub-events*.

6.1.4 Event characteristics

The characteristics of the event (Taves, 2009: 95) were discussed by way of positioning some features within or outside of a conception of “astral projection”. Some, like informant 5, who were operating with multiple conceptions of astral projection, differentiated these concepts by virtue of the practices the informant connected to them, and the characteristics or features she ascribed to them. Her “Golden Dawn”-projection was considered to project into a world similar to or equal to the physical world of ordinary life, where the informant considered herself to be able to project to physical places

and see the everyday workings of other people. She contrasted this with “Thelemic” astral projection, which she saw as travelling through “planes” populated by symbolic imagery and entities (Appendix: 39).

One characteristic or feature was brought up quite often by all five of the informants, namely the “sensory realism” of the event. By “sensory realism”, I mean how “real” the sensory imagery that the informants described during these events was considered to be. Some described “hearing”, “seeing”, “feeling”, “smelling” and the likes, and put great import on this characteristic as they contrasted this level of sensory realism to “dreaming,” “lucid dreaming” and “daydreaming”. By doing so they set up this characteristic as a set of expectations as well as an important criterion by which the “success” or “validity” of the astral projection practice was judged. The level or form of experiential sensory realism required to identify an event as “astral projection” or “real” astral projection is a matter of contention and discourse.

Some, like informants 3 and 4, described the focus on naturalistic sensory realism as potentially misleading to the level of being detrimental to the initial training in astral projection-related practices. They described the “sensory imagery” during such an event as “you don’t feel the ground, but you know what the ground feels like”, or “being aware that it is there” (Appendix: 35, 22). The latter was explained as being similar to how we do not sense everything that is present in a room we are situated in physically on a continual basis, but we still have an awareness of what the room looks like and which objects or people are in it. Others, like informants 1 and 5, described “feeling the ground beneath your feet”, “sensing smells” and so on with a strong emphasis on how strongly these “sensory inputs” matched those of everyday life (Appendix: 8, 40).

Other characteristics that were discussed and featured focused on the visualized “body” or “body of light” that the informant saw him or herself as occupying and controlling throughout the practice or event. Some described this as a body in a physical sense, describing “walking”, “gesturing”, “talking” and what clothes they wore. Others described the same in the sense of “floating” or being a “disembodied observer”. The characteristics were also framed in the way of producing “rules” or “laws” of the astral plane, contending that certain characteristics were inherent qualities and attributes ascribed and attributed to the “astral plane” or the mental state associated with “astral projection”-related practices. These “laws” could be connected to the practices deemed efficacious at producing or ending the events, as with the view expressed by informant 1, that she “had” to go through the visualization exercise she utilized to produce the event in reverse to be able to end it (Appendix: 10).

Other “laws” were attributed to the events, such as the causal efficacy of “magical” practices at producing certain results within the confines of such an event, like utilizing “banishing rituals” to “remove figures or entities” or using symbols and ritual to “travel to” what the informants named distinct “parts of the astral plane”.

Sets of these event characteristics were adopted by the informants and included within their sets of expectations for “astral projection”-related activities, and utilized when identifying and legitimizing their experiences as “astral projection”. This process must be understood as a discourse, where the informants were aware of or constructed views that contrasted with their own, and placed themselves within this discourse by referring to which proposed characteristics they agreed or disagreed with.

Their own experiences were put into a framework of paths and goals, where events that were deemed to be lacking when compared to certain characteristics were explained as being caused by lack of practice or “training”. This is interesting since it places the “unsuccessful” events or practices within a larger set of events and practices that are “deemed efficacious” at producing the intended event. Training and “failure” is seen as a part of this path-schematic, and as such belong to related composite ascriptions and the implied subcategory of “astral projection-related” practices. Several informants expressed the view that they expected the event or practice to meet few of their own criteria at first, but later, with practice, to become gradually more “tactile” and conform more fully to their expected set of event characteristics.

6.1.5 Available sub-events

The discourse on what constitutes “astral projection”, “Thelemic astral projection” and how to identify such an event continued in another shape, that of available sub-events. By this term, I mean to designate the novel behavior events that the informant deemed to be accessible, inaccessible, possible or impossible while undergoing “astral projection” or an event or practice that he or she considered to be similar or related. The sub-events that featured most prominently throughout the discourse as presented by our informants, were in some way related to agency.

Informants 1 and 5 describe how they had “heard stories” of two people that “met” each other while astral projecting (Appendix: 11-12, 43). Met with such a novel claim, they explained their positions on whether or not they considered such an event to be possible, and provided reasons as to why they chose the positions that they did. Some constructed narratives in which they situated their position as one that changed with practice and increased knowledge of the subject, forging a narrative

of growth. Other sub-events were presented and discussed, such as the possibility of “meeting” “entities or “creatures” while astral projecting. What was most widely discussed and subject to the most disagreement was the perceived agency in these “entities”. While some see them as “symbols” that communicate associated meanings, others describe them as entities that the informants are able to converse with, “travel with”, and that are able to have their own agendas and interests that may align with those of the informant or not. Informants that attributed agency to these “entities” stressed the need to “test” the entity and the information it provided, as it may be “false”, “misleading” or even detrimental to the practitioner.

Informants drew on the sub-events they considered to be available to them within the framework of “Thelemic astral projection” when identifying or defending the validity of their identification of the events. Novel sub-events were communicated as a way to make assertions or contribute to the wider discourse on the nature of astral projection and its related event characteristics. Informant 3 described meeting a “door” or “portal”, which she was unable to go through. In her words, she “just stopped” involuntarily, which she considers to be novel and needing a cause explanation. She mentions having heard claims that “parts” of the “astral plane” are inaccessible before the practitioner has accumulated the necessary “keys”, “understanding” and “power”, and suggests that this incident and ones she considers to be related “makes you think” (Appendix: 25-26). She goes on to describe that her own opinion on whether or not the “astral plane” is a completely psychological phenomenon has been influenced by this. This is one of the ways by which the discourse on “astral projection” is being conducted. What Malle would describe as “unintended behavior events” (2004: 239. Taves, 2009: 101) are represented and communicated as available sub-events, which are interpreted as providing indications as to the event characteristics of a conception of astral projection. These are shared and passed on in a wider milieu where individual practitioners make up their minds and position themselves in relation to what they consider plausible or authoritative or not, which informs their set of expectations and the criteria by which they identify and authenticate events as “astral projection”. Intended behavior events are similarly shared within this wider discourse, where one practitioner or source might claim to have “banished entities,” which the listener or recipient of this communication then has to relate to in a similar fashion.

6.1.6 “Qabalistic” authentication

Communication with “entities” is considered to merit “testing” by comparing their claims and appearance, as well as their responses to questions formulated by the informant with “testing” specifically in mind, against the “qabalistic correspondences” of Crowley’s *Liber 777*. This process has been described as ongoing while the event is underway and in retrospect, based on the informant’s written accounts of the experience. Informant 5 understands this practice to be important as writers she deems authoritative on “astral projection and Thelema” have warned her against “entities” that try to “fool you” or “lead you astray”. She reasons that not “authenticating” events and experiences in this fashion can lead to people being “enamored” by experiences that might seem novel or meaningful, but are “just a game” (Appendix: 46). This is also a point of contention, where other informants attribute little or no agency to the “entities” they meet, or do not speak of “entities” at all, and as such explain that they have little need of “testing” them in this manner.

6.2 “How do they connect it to Thelema?”

Some of the informants that participated in this study described conceptions of “astral projection” or related practices as being “Thelemic” or “more Thelemic” than others. When doing so they described event characteristics and available sub-events that they considered to belong to a “Thelemic” emic category based on what they had heard or read from sources they considered to be authoritative on the matter. They also connected their practices and experiences to their conception of Thelema through what they expressed in the form of goals that they considered to be significant in relation to Thelema as a cultural concept.

6.2.1 Path to a goal

The informants largely connected their practices to the complex cultural concept of Thelema by way of framing goals that they considered the practices as efficacious at reaching. These goals were then considered to relate to other goals they considered to be connected to Thelema. These later goals took the form of concepts such as “self-understanding”, “becoming a better magician” or relating to specific goal-events such as “The Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel”. In this way, the informants constructed composite ascriptions in which “astral projection” was attributed efficacy at reaching certain goals, similar to how they had presented practices they considered to be efficacious at reaching the goal of producing “astral projection”. They assessed the extent to which a

goal had been reached by a specific event by processes of valuation, where the result was grouped within different categories.

An event could, for instance, be deemed to be “practice”, and as such relate to the goal of “becoming a better magician” or the goal of producing an event they identified as “astral projection”. Alternatively, the event could be deemed to provide information that had influenced how they understood themselves or information that they deemed relevant to their “ordinary” lives, which was then connected to the goal of “self-understanding” or “self-discovery”, which they saw as connected to Thelema. Some experiences were simply described as being “meaningful”, as if they were considered to be inherently meaningful in themselves, or again, by relation to the wide-arching goal of self-discovery, such as the notion of “standing in (...) the beginning and the end of your life” that informant 4 considered to be communicated by one of the listed events. These networks of composite ascriptions interrelate concepts from the level of individual practices to other practices, goals and concepts within a wider framework. Few goals, if any, were described as having value in themselves, but rather referred further on towards other goals, ultimately culminating in the goal of “knowing your True Will”. This tendency is exemplified in informant 5 wishing to practice astral projection, to “become a better magician”, which she sees as necessary to achieve the goal-event of “The Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel”, which is again explained as a way to get to “know” or “in touch with (...) your True Will” (Appendix: 42).

6.2.2 Event characteristics or available sub-events as goal-related

Available sub-events were considered able to connect with goals. “Meeting” and “conversing” with an “entity” has been described as a potentially useful opportunity, which can lead the informant to greater “self-understanding” or to improve as a magician through training. Some sub-events were considered to be voluntarily initiated as well, such as the possibility of utilizing rituals of “ceremonial magick” while undergoing the event, thus combining otherwise distinct practices. Voluntary behavior events are generally explained through reason explanations, where the informant did X because of Y, and Y usually takes the form of a goal to be attained. Informant 5 described utilizing “the pentagram and hexagram rituals” while astral projecting, which she then reasoned that she did because it made the experience or event “stronger”, which she considered to be a factor in determining the actions or sub-events available to her throughout the experience. With the event “strengthened”, she felt free to “wander off” and “explore” (Appendix: 42).

The informants describe seeing sub-events as in some way related to a goal, which then can connect to a chain of goals where at some point in this link, a goal appears that the informants consider to be related to Thelema, thus establishing the connection between practice and cultural system of beliefs. During the interviews, informants expressed seeing the nature and characteristics of the event they described as “astral projection” generally to be related to such a system of goals. They did so by framing their concept of astral projection as a “journey into your self” or along similar lines, and reasoned that “all that you see are co-created by you”. Following that line of reasoning, all experiences concerning “astral projection” are ultimately considered to be in some way related to the goals of “self-discovery” or “self-understanding”. Within such a framework, Taves’ idea of specialness as a gradient scale rather than a binary state becomes indispensable. Since all “astral projection” events become by definition meaningful by their relation to said goals, the process of valuation, when having identified the event as “astral projection”, becomes one of asking to what extent the goals have been reached in this particular instance, and the apparent specialness of those goals.

6.2.3 How special, how mystical, how valuable?

Practices and events identified as “astral projection” are set apart as special in many ways. By relating instances and practices of “astral projection” to other events and exercises that they deem to belong within an emic subcategory of “magical” or “mystical” things, the informants have set “astral projection” apart as something with a relation or belonging to those subcategories. As we have seen, specific instances were deemed to be “successful”, “training” or contain sub-events of import, which in addition to creating differing composite formations, implied differences in value and categorization. Some made a point out of seeing all such practices and events as of equal value, as they were all “a building block in something greater”, a necessary step along the way to the goals of “becoming a better magician” or “knowing yourself”. Others noted that they valued their experiences differently, focusing on how easy the “meaning” of the event was to grasp, and how this “meaning” could be applied to their daily lives or the goals of increased “self-understanding”. Unintended behavior events in the form of sub-events featured prominently in their narratives and became a way in which the informants expressed how far they had “progressed” in their practices. An event in which a novel sub-event occurred, such as “meeting an entity” was treated as and set apart as special to a greater extent than events where no such thing occurred. Some of these sub-events were also considered to be categorically loaded, in that “meeting an entity” was associated with “magical things”, and had a

repertoire of practices considered to be “magical” associated with such an event, like utilizing “banishing rituals” or “testing” the “entity” against “qabalistic correspondences”.

6.3 Networks of ascriptions and attributions

Taves’ theoretical concepts of simple and composite ascriptions have provided a look into how complex cultural concepts such as “Thelema”, “astral projection” and “Thelemic astral projection” interrelate and how they are structured by individual believers. Through skills and practices deemed efficacious, to other sets of practices and further towards goals that are considered to be of significance or in some way related to Thelema, the data provided by this study has showed specific interrelations and links that when considered as a whole provide some of the shapes and features of an overarching cultural concept based around practices and beliefs. Through the notion of the perceived availability of sub-events, we have seen one of the ways through which the discourse on what constitutes “astral projection” continues among believers, practitioners and those interested in the subject.

Through sharing stories, reading up on diverse literature and relating to specific “traditions”, the informants are taking part in a wider discourse. “Sub-events” are shared and related throughout various parts of the cultic milieu (Campbell, 1972: 122) and occultural sphere (Partridge, 2004: 62) because they are considered to be novel or salient. Salience can be generated by many factors, such as by breaking expectations or relating to ideal things or things that have a personal connection to the individual listening to the story or reading the book. When facing such a novel claim, the informants described making up their minds whether this sub-event was plausible or authoritative or not, and through that decision they decided if they considered it to be available to them during their own practices. Through this discourse, expectations and guidelines for “astral projection” are being negotiated and synthesized in a living process that does not rely exclusively on authoritative textual sources from within their own tradition.

This process seems to involve all three of Taves’ proposed building blocks (Taves, in press: 12-18). First, the claim is made or communicated that someone has experienced or heard of “meeting entities” during an astral projection event. This is considered to be salient as it breaks with expectations of what is possible when in a state of mind that has been compared to “dreaming”, “lucid dreaming” and “meditation” (Taves, 2009: 38). Then the significance of the claim must be assessed. What does it mean to me? The informants judge the claim to be plausible or not depending on how authoritative they consider the source to be, and to what extent the claim breaks with sources they deem authoritative or

what they otherwise consider possible within the context of astral projection. If they consider the event plausible, then they also consider it to be accessible to themselves during their own practices, which influences their expectations. If not, they have delimited their expectations similarly. Either way, they are participating in a communal and discursive form of “worldmaking”. The “rules” of what constitutes astral projection or what actions or events are available to them during such an event is being discussed and evaluated through sharing these “stories”. Taves’ third proposed building block is “pretense”. I consider this to be an unfortunate name, as it implies a sense of falsehood. What she means by the term is a specified form of imaginative process by which we create social norms, spheres and worlds that we can enter into during play or other social contexts. While the informants described mostly solitary experiences, they positioned themselves in relation to the claims of others, the “stories” they had heard and the books they had read on the subject, contesting some claims and accepting others. Some even had vivid images of other “positions” on the subject they considered themselves strongly opposed to. All of these factors lead me to conclude that astral projection is a social phenomenon, in which a wide array of people, traditions, literary works, ideas, stories and claims come together to generate a living, breathing discourse that the practitioners draw upon when they generate and identify “astral projection” events and relate them to Thelema.

6.4 Conclusion

This study has aimed to answer the question of how Thelemites identify an experience as astral projection, and how do they connect it to Thelema. It has aimed at answering this through a series of qualitative interviews, applying Taves’ theory of ascriptions and including insight from Malle’s attribution theory.

In working with these interviews, I have attempted to “map” what Thelemites mean when they speak of “astral projection”, and how they connect this concept to other practices and beliefs. Through Taves’ concept of ascriptions of specialness, and how these can form composite ascriptions in which they interrelate and interconnect, I have attempted to see how Thelemites connect diverse events, practices and beliefs in such formations. The notion of a “path”, in which a “practice deemed efficacious” is connected to a special “goal,” has been of particular importance to this search, as Crowley’s writings on the subject of astral projection seemed to frame astral projection-related practices in a similar way. Malle’s conception of “behavior events” have been important as it frames

experiences as “events” that explainers attempt to make sense of, and contributes insight as to how this process occurs and which form it is likely to take.

As shown in the analysis, the informants see diverse practices as efficacious at training skills they deem necessary or helpful at engaging with astral projection, and consider some practices effective ways to initiate the event voluntarily and consciously. These composite ascriptions form wide networks that allow for flexibility in the sense that new practices can be included if they are considered to increase the “skills” or “characteristics” they consider to be similarly instrumental in producing astral projection. They also produce stability in the sense that appeals to authoritative practices were utilized in identifying an event as astral projection and legitimizing that identification. These composite ascriptions were referred to when the informants tried to identify what caused the astral projection-like events they considered themselves to have experienced. Unusual experiences that conformed to some of their expectations for an astral projection event by way of event characteristics or available sub-events were identified as such and seen to have been caused by the “practices deemed efficacious”.

Behavior events were widely discussed by the informants, and they positioned themselves and their conceptualization of astral projection within a wider discourse through discussing these events. Through retelling “stories” they heard or read from various sources, they described behavior events that they considered to be novel, explained how they assessed the significance of the event, and concluded that it was either plausible or implausible, and thus, accessible or inaccessible to themselves when they were engaged in practices they related to astral projection. Through this discourse they also evaluated what the characteristics of astral projection were and what their expectations for related events and practices should be. This discursive process engaged the informants in co-creating the parameters for astral projection by drawing on a wide array of sources, which influenced expected characteristics they drew from when identifying their own experiences as “astral projection” or related to their conception of it.

When connecting their practices to Thelema, the informants formed composite formations in the form of path-schematics similar to the “paths deemed efficacious” by which they connected various practices and skills to the goal of producing astral projection. In this instance, astral projection and related practices were framed as ways through which certain goals could be met, such as “becoming a better magician,” “self-understanding” and “self-discovery”, which the informants connected to goals they understood to be “Thelemic”. They also connected their practices and conceptions of astral

projection to Thelema through specific practices, events or characteristics they associated with “Thelemic” sources, as opposed to other sources who were described as “less Thelemic” by contrast.

6.5 Moving forward

The results of this study opens up many questions for further research on astral projection and related topics. Informants were keen to deem a source of practices, available sub-events or event characteristics “authoritative” or not. In doing so, they referred to “experts,” “mentors,” oral and literary “traditions”, claims, and discussions they had with other practitioners, Thelemites and interested parties. Looking into the specifics on how this sense of authority and non-authority is transmitted, interpreted and negotiated could shed some more light on how astral projection as a complex cultural concept is constituted and partly explain how its properties is contested and in flux. The wider discourse on astral projection as carried out through sharing novel sub-events and event characteristics should be investigated. By examining the scope of the sources that are drawn from we can get a better sense of which components are mixed and matched when practitioners conceptualize astral projection and form expectations for what an astral projection-like event should be like. The notion of “skills deemed efficacious” should also be investigated further. Are some skills more likely to be considered instrumental in achieving or experiencing astral projection-like events? If so, how strongly do they correlate with proneness to identifying events as or practicing astral projection? Are some populations more likely to stress the importance of a certain skillset rather than another? Astral projection should also be investigated more specifically as a wider discourse, as the informants drew from a wide array of sources when explaining their positions, positioning themselves as agreeing with or in opposition to various notions concerning available sub-events and event characteristics. The “skills deemed efficacious” could also be investigated within a wider conception of astral projection, to investigate if the skills people draw upon within various traditions and cultural formations relating to astral projection are considered to be similar, or if they draw from the similar basic processes.

This study provides a basis for which these further questions can be asked and potentially answered within the context of Thelemic astral projection

Appendix: Interview transcripts

Transkripsjon av intervju 1, gjort 17/01 2015 – side 01.

Transkripsjon av intervju 2, gjort 28/01 2015 – side 16.

Transkripsjon av intervju 3, gjort 31/01 2015 – side 20.

Transkripsjon av intervju 4, gjort 18/02 2015 – side 28.

Transkripsjon av intervju 5, gjort 11/03 2015 – side 38.

Transkripsjon av intervju 1, gjort 17/01 2015

I = Intervjuer

O = Intervjuobjekt.

* = Markerer hendelser.

I: Så, da... begynner vi egentlig ganske rett på. Hva er astralprojeksjon?

O: Hva det er for noe?

I: Mhm.

O: Eh, nå er jeg ikke så veldig flink på å forklare sånne... begrep, egentlig. Det er jo... å prosjekteres inn i astralplanet? *ler* Dette ble veldig teknisk.

I: Kan du greie ut litt mer om det, eller?

O: Altså. For meg så er jo astralprojektering liksom å komme inn i en "state of mind" da, en egen state of mind. Om det er det det eksplisitt betyr... For jeg har aldri søkt opp ordet astralprojektering sånn eksplisitt. Aldri. Så jeg vet egentlig ikke hva det betyr, selv om jeg har drevet med det. Så det er litt rart, men det er nå et godt spørsmål. Har jeg aldri tenkt over, hva det egentlig betyr.

I: Hva er astralprojeksjon sånn som du forstår det da?

O: Sånn som jeg forstår det?

I: Mhm.

O: Eh, altså nå har jeg jo fulgt.... hørt på det folk har sagt til meg, nå skal jeg sikkert ikke nevne navn eller noe sånt, men det fjerner du sikkert uansett. Eh, og deres sine tanker om det, de nevnte jo at jeg burde prøve det ut, astralprojektering, følg Liber O til Crowley. Så jeg begynte jo der egentlig, så jeg har liksom fulgt den oppskriften og gjort alt som står i den oppskriften ganske nøye. Det er jo dem opplevelsene og ting som jeg har opplevd utifra det som har vært interessante da, og ikke selve oppskriften da, selv om jeg kan si hva jeg har gjort og sånt. Men astralprojektering for meg er å komme i en så dyp konsentrasjon at jeg... Ikke er tilstede, men samtidig er i en state of mind, kan du si da. At jeg låser opp deler av hjernen min som ellers ikke er tilgjengelig, som ikke gir mening, som jeg kan kommunisere med. Ikke at jeg kommuniserer med et hellig vesen, eller at jeg snakker med en gud helt eksplisitt, men at jeg tar tak i den del av hjernen som jeg... i en vanlig... vanlig... tilstand aldri ville kommet over, da. Og om det da er gjennom... Som det står skrevet, at du kommer i samtale med vesener du møter, du kommer over et landskap, alt det der, det er jo egentlig kun for å... For å ha et grunnlag... For å snakke med deg selv da, nærmest. Jeg ser egentlig på det som at hele astral... greiene at du har en samtale med deg selv. Men samtidig så kommer du inn på det med astralplan og hele pakken. At du kan

snakke med folk på astralplanet. Og der er det egentlig veldig sånn motstridende med det jeg egentlig... tror og vet og skjønner og sånt. * Ler*

Det kan godt hende at jeg har snakket med folk på astralplanet. Jeg har aldri avtalt om å møtes på astralplanet. Om det i det hele tatt er noe som fungerer eller i det hele tatt er en ting som er virkelig det vet jeg ikke. Jeg har aldri hatt den greia med at jeg har snakket med noen at "la oss møtes på astralplanet".

Det er jo... For meg så virker det litt søkt, egentlig. Eh. Veldig nærme bullshit, sånn sett. Men, det kan godt hende, jeg har aldri prøvd, så jeg skal ikke si noe mer på det, sånn sett. Men av det jeg har gjort av prosjektering, astralprosjektering utifra den oppskriften og tankene rundt og det jeg har fått snakket med av mine... det er jo forsåvidt mine mentorer, da. Og. Også snakket med, gjennom A.A. Har jeg fått høre en del tanker rundt det, men veldig mye mer teknisk, veldig sånn spesifikt. Og alt av opplevelser og hva det gir meg det er veldig individuelt, og hva er mine tanker rundt det hele og hvordan skal jeg beskrive... hele konseptet rundt astralprosjektering da...

O: Mhm.

I: Nå falt jeg litt av tråden egentlig, nå begynte jeg bare å snakke. Hva var spørsmålet igjen?

* begge ler*

O: Spørsmålet var "hva er astralprojeksjon?". Men dette her er et semistrukturert intervju, som det kalles, så tanken er at jeg skal stille åpne nok spørsmål til at du kan.... Gi litt av deg selv, da, og tenke litt mens du snakker og sånt.

I: Ja, det var jo det jeg, kom i sånn strain of thought nå som bare.... Ja, altså, selvfølgelig, det finnes jo sikkert gode svar på hva astralprojeksjon er, og det er veldig interessant at du spør om akkurat hva det betyr, for det vet jeg faktisk ikke. Jeg vet ikke hva eksplisitt, hva det betyr. Det har jeg aldri tenkt over, bare at det er en ting. Men at du projiserer liksom din... inn i astralplanet ligger litt ordet sånn sett da, men det kan godt hende at det har en betydning... Det er jo gjennom mange øvelser, gjennom meditasjon, gjennom rensesritualer... Alle dem har jo sine funksjoner, da. I bunn og grunn er det jo funksjoner som har med... hodet ditt, da. Å gjøre. Du kan si så mye at det renser rommet... Du tar og gjør pentagram, heksagramritualet, at du renser rommet, at du bannlyser. Sånne ting. Jeg tror ikke at det finnes ting du må rense mot da, liksom. At det er spirits som driver og vaser rundt i rommet og ødelegger for deg hvis du ikke gjør... de riktige ritualene, da. Jeg synes det var veldig spennende å tenke sånn før. At det var kanskje, kanskje det er det? Det kan hende at det er sånn, for den saks skyld Jeg kan ikke si noe nei på det. Jeg har ikke noe bevis på det, men da kommer vi til gudsbevis og sånt og det er jo en helt annen samtale. Men det virker jo på de samme tingene. Teknikker som hjelper deg med å utføre sånne ting som astralprosjektering. Nå kom jeg ikke på noe bedre ord på akkurat det jeg prøvde å forklare her da... Og det er jo gjennom forskjellige korrespondanser og, også videre også videre. Det er jo innlærte ting. Du kunne brukte hva som helst annet, for eksempel, bare du har et system å sette det i. Nå bruker jo jeg den Liber O og egyptiske guder og 777 og det systemet da. Det hermetiske... ja, sephiroth-greiene, også videre. Det er jo mitt system da, og folk bruker sikkert andre system til de nøyaktig samme greiene...

I: Hva bruker du systemet til, mener du?

O: Hva jeg mener at jeg bruker systemet til? Det er egentlig å sette navn på ting. Sette begrep på ting. Det.. Jeg regner med. Det er jo... satt sammen på en måte som gir mening da, kan du si. Sånn som at den fargen korresponderer med den guden, det er jo gjennom bilder, at du kan... Sånn som jeg har forstått det da, når jeg kommer i den dype konsentrasjonen og sånt så er det den innlærte korrespondansen som ligger... bak i hodet, da. Det er et ord på det, men jeg kommer

ikke på det.

I: Tenker du på "ubevisst"?

O: Ja, det også går jo forsåvidt, det er jo et annet ord på ubevisst jeg ville komme frem til.

I: Okay, beklager.

O: Ja ubevisst da. * ler* Bak i hodet da. Så det blir ikke bare et kaos da. At det er faktisk et system som du setter det i... At du er i et rom der lukter, farger og at det der er lagt til rette. Det hjelper jo også å trigge de ubevisste... tankene da, eller systemet. Så det er jo. Altså. For eksempel. La oss si at jeg er i astralverdenen og jeg møter på en skikkelse. Og den skikkelsen har en gudeform, for eksempel. Jeg legger da de gudeformene, de har jeg lagt til, tillagt det systemet, den har de og de fargene og da kan jeg tilegne meg litt... Jeg kan få den informasjonen som jeg trenger av den guden, jeg kan ha en samtale med den guden, eller skikkelsen eller whatnot. Og jeg tillegger den farger, lukt, menneskelige egenskaper, gudelige egenskaper, kun fordi jeg har satt og pugget og terpet på det systemet som finnes. Og uten akkurat, uten å ha gjort det så ville det... ikke gitt meg noe, tror jeg. Eller, jeg kunne forsåvidt gjort det, men det ville ha vært... et virvarr av randomness. Og det er ikke det jeg er ute etter når jeg driver på med det. Det er jo faktisk... å få noe mening utav det da. At jeg kan komme i kontakt med de latente tingene som ligger i hjernen min. Som... gir meg noe, da. Jeg vet ikke hva... Det gir meg ikke noe sånt helt eksplisitt. Jeg finner liksom ikke meningen med livet, eller svar på om jeg burde ta den jobben eller ikke, men det gir meg, altså, en veldig god følelse. Føler meg i kontakt med meg selv, føler meg... bevisst, egentlig. At jeg. Etter å ha gjort det føler jeg meg bare generelt veldig bra, sliten, bra. Det gir meg noe på den måten da. Det er det astralprosjektering er. Det gir meg ikke noe bevisst, noe spesifikt, men en generelt god oppfattelse av... mitt indre jeg da, kan du si da.

I: Hvordan er det man astralprojiserer?

O: Nå har jeg jo tidligere sagt at jeg bruker Liber O oppskriften, da. Det er en ganske... spesifikk oppskrift da på hvordan man skal gjøre det. Nå, jeg bruker nå ikke alle tingene som står i den, punktlig da. Men. Altså. Det er visse ting som er veldig... Det er ikke noe som er påkrevd. Jeg har selv hatt seminar om Liber O der jeg har forklart dem gjennom enkelthvert step, av dem jeg snakket til. Og, de valgte så å prøve astralprosjektering gjennom å følge, ikke alle tingene i. Ja de fulgte det som var i oppskriften, men de hadde ikke kanskje de forkunnskapene som... Burde være tilstede, da. Så de sa at dem ikke fikk så mye ut av det, at det var vanskelig å komme i state of mind'en da. Man kan tenke seg at man er i det state of mind'en, men det skal veldig mye til for å faktisk å komme til den state of mind'en, den dype konsentrasjonen. Så er det jo viktig å mestre asana, prana, praja, pranaja.... Jeg klarer aldri å uttale det * begge ler* Men, du kan det jo sikkert, så du kan skrive det når du skriver opp dette! * begge ler* Også dharana er det vel. Også andre meditasjonsteknikker. De teknikkene er jo, asana det er å sitte stille i lengre perioder, å klare å fjerne alt utvendig støy, da, også videre. Pusteteknikker, å roe ned kroppen, å ikke tenke på hverdagslige problemer, også videre, også videre. Alle de tingene der hjelper med å... faktiskgjøre astralprosjektering, da, uten å bli forstyrret. Også er det viktig å ha et sted der det er... man kan føle seg komfortabel i. Det står jo at man skal helst ha et stille sted, et sted som ikke har noen form for... for, ja støy, eller andre ting, men det viktigste er at man har et sted som man er komfortabel med. Om det er andre personer i et annet rom som kanskje lager noe... men hvis man.... det spiller ingen rolle for min del, om det, jeg føler meg helt 100% komfortabel så spiller det fuck all. Teknikkene burde, altså, pentagramritualene, heksagramritualene burde... ha en forståelse på hvertfall hvordan det gjøres. Om man har... Altså, jeg husker ikke heksagramritualene utenat, for eksempel, eller det mindre husker jeg utenat, men det store, for

eksempel... Ikke det at det er så veldig nødvendig da, men jeg husker det aldri utenat, så å ha notater og sånt går fint så lenge det ikke forstyrrer så alt for mye. Du burde ihvertfall ha gjort dem på forhånd, lært dem, skjønt prinsippene bak dem. Også er det jo det med å... føle seg vel med seg selv. Ta en dusj, for eksempel. Føle seg ren. Føler man seg skitten så er det... en distraksjon det og. Også er det jo det å ha innøvd systemet som ligger til grunnlag for... det jeg sa tidligere. Innlært, helst egentlig memorisert de fleste. Ihvertfall lest det meste, hatt det i baktankene, brukt det. Gjort ritualene, for eksempel. Bare for å terpe det inn, fått det inn på en eller annen måte. Trenger ikke å huske på alt, men ihvertfall ha noen korrespondanser så man har et lite grunnlag for å bruke. Vibrering av gudenavn, alt det der.

Veldig grei... Å... Ta den skikkelsen, til en gud, og... Føle at man er guden, eller skikkelsen, eller skapningen, og faktisk... bruke hele kroppen da på å føle at man er noe annet... Det ble kanskje litt, dumt... Er det viktig... Skulle du til å si noe?

I: Hva... Rent praktisk... Hva er det man skal med de ritualene, og å være sånne guder og sånt når man astralprojiserer?

O: Det med... Det med å være guder, for eksempel, for meg så hjalp det veldig når man astralprojiserer, så skal man jo helst sitte i sånn... gudeposisjon altså, og man tenker seg at man... står der, ikledd... magisk tøy, og de rette våpnene og alt mulig, også videre også videre. Foran seg, bak seg, over seg eller whatnot, om de er rundt deg, at den skikkelsen prosjekterer liksom noe annet som er der, også tenke seg at man er den skikkelsen istedetfor seg selv. Akkurat det med å vibrere gudenavn... Å tenke seg at man er noe annet mens man er seg sjøl... Vil jeg tror at hjelper på, akkurat det da, det er ihvertfall sånn jeg har oppfattet det da.

I: At... øvelsen hjelper... gjør det enklere å astralprojisere?

O: Ehm, ja. Eller... Det har jo sin funksjon det og, men for meg så har det hjulpet bare med å gjøre øvelsen for at jeg i det hele tatt skal astralprojisere selv. Om du skjønner. Om det er det som det i hele tatt er meningen og sånt, det.... Det er ikke nødvendigvis det, men nå tenker jeg helt individuelt for meg selv...

I: Jaja! Hehe, det er jo det jeg spør om også.

O: Ja, så om jeg har en helt merkelig oppfatning på det i forhold til andre så får det bare være.... Og det vet jeg jo at jeg har, så det er ikke noen hemmelighet akkurat.

* Begge ler*

I: Du har snakket en del om forberedelser til astralprojeksjon. Men når du skal... sette deg ned og gjøre det, kan du fortelle meg litt om...

O: Hvordan jeg gjør det?

I: Ja.

O: Når jeg gjør det, altså, sånn, det er greit nok at jeg gjør forberedelsene og alt sånt. Jeg sitter på rommet mitt, eventuelt så ligger jeg. Jeg har funnet ut at jeg kan gjøre mest mulig av øvelsene mest behagelig når jeg ligger, da. Jeg har jo sånne kroniske kneskadegreier som gjør at jeg begynner å tenke på at det gjør vondt, også videre. Som har gjort det litt vanskeligere å... sitte da. Må gjerne sitte på en stol, men jeg har funnet ut at det å ligge på bakken... funker da. Og... Jeg bruker asana, pranayama, dharana, går gjennom dem steps'ene, og har gjort pentagram- og heksagramritualet på forhånd. Har rensset meg selv da, kan du si. Gjennom teknikkene, gjennom å... Bare føle at jeg er vel med meg selv da. Jeg kan ikke ha en dårlig dag hvis jeg skal gjøre det føler jeg. Da får jeg ikke så mye utav det. Det skal helst være at nå... kunne jeg tenkt meg å gjøre det. Ligger der, og ser for meg meg selv står foran meg, ikledd svart, den svarte magikerroben. Magisk utstyr, staven, sverdet, og de tilhørende... Og om det ikke er på personen så ligger det

ihvertfall rundt skikkelsen. Bruker som regel ganske lang tid bare for å tenke at det personen er tilstede. At selve presencen til skikkelsen faktisk er ekte, da. Og når jeg føler meg vel med at det faktisk er en skikkelse som er til stede. At jeg kan kjenne tilstedeværelsen, at jeg kan lukte lukten, at jeg kan på en måte føle at det er noe der. At jeg kan se den... Så... Jeg vet ikke helt hvordan jeg skal forklare det, men... jeg overfører bare... sinnet mitt til den tingen, at jeg ser på meg selv ligge på bakken. Den prosessen kan være litt vanskelig, sånn sett. Hele konseptet rundt det er litt merkelig, syns jeg da, men jeg føler ihvertfall at jeg ser på meg selv. At jeg ikke lenger ser på skikkelsen, men at skikkelsen som er da jeg ser på meg, som ikke er meg. Og vice versa.

I: Hvordan er det du gjør det?

O: Det er vanskelig å forklare...

I: Du kan prøve?

O: Jeg kan prøve, jeg har aldri gjort det før, men... Jeg tar som regel et dypt pust, som regel, før jeg skal, overføre da, kan du si. Puster veldig... tungt ut. Føler liksom at øynene, de... du kan si at de er over alt... Det høres litt ut som at jeg er i full rus fra ett eller annet rusmiddel... Men akkurat den overføringen, det er så rart og så... Ekkelt, egentlig. At det er vanskelig for meg, jeg blir kvalm, som regel. Føler liksom at jeg har vært på en berg- og dalbane-tur, liksom. Og at... nærmest teleporterer meg selv plutselig så står jeg, men samtidig så ligger jeg. Jeg teleporterer meg ikke altså, det var bare en dårlig uttrykk, egentlig. * begge ler*

I: Janei, jeg setter pris på at du sammenligner med metaforer, jeg gjør det.

O: Ja det blir veldig mye metaforer, for det er ikke noe jeg gjør fysisk, liksom. Hadde jeg gjort det så hadde jeg nok vært veldig kjent, tror jeg. * begge ler*

Den nye Jesus, liksom. Men... Nei... Det er liksom en overføring, da. Det... En slags åndelig overføring av sinnet til...

I: Men når du står der da, og føler at du er i denne skikkelsen du har sett for deg, og står der og ser tilbake igjen på kroppen din... Hva er det du gjør da?

O: Jeg ser som regel ikke bare på kroppen min, jeg ser som regel på omgivelser. Men jeg klarer ikke å snu meg rundt. Det er aldri noe som jeg har... Jeg klarer ikke å snu meg fra kroppen min, kan du si, må alltid ha kroppen i syne, den liggende kroppen, hvis ikke så forsvinner det helt. Den må være tilstede i synsfeltet, jeg kan på en måte ikke snu meg vekk. Den må alltid være tilstede, den må være et slags fokus da, samtidig som jeg ser på omgivelsene. Det er som regel de samme omgivelsene som jeg har vært i tidligere, det er ikke noe som forandrer seg. Og... Når jeg da står over der så er hele konseptet med at jeg skal reise meg enda lengre, da, kan du si. At jeg ikke bare ser på kroppen min, men reiser meg, stiger, ser utover huset mitt, stiger, ser over byen min, stiger, ser over landet mitt, stiger, ser over kontinentene, jorden, og stiger og stiger og stiger. Helt til jeg liksom ser... Er overalt da. At skikkelsen liksom skuer over solsystemet, universet. Helt til jeg da kommer til et sted jeg ikke kan se universet lenger, kan du si. Kommet så langt at ikke... Det går jo ikke an da å komme så langt at man ikke kan se universet, men jeg kommer liksom til det jeg vil da kalle astralplanet, når jeg ikke kan se noe av det jeg har oppfattet tidligere som den virkelige verden, kan du si. Jeg kommer til en slags... min drømmeverden da, kan du si. Når jeg er der da, så er alt svart. Alt er svart når jeg først kommer dit. Det er tomt, det er helt stille, jeg kan ikke høre meg selv puste engang. Det er helt, helt stille, som et slags vakuum, da. Det tar litt tid før det danner seg objekter, skikkelser og... etterhvert lyder. Lydene kommer mye senere. Det er helt stille, helt møkkstille. Jeg kan kun høre tankene mine da, hvis jeg tenker det, men det er ingen eksterne lyder som jeg kan høre, det tar litt tid. Etterhvert kan jeg høre lyder. Om det er en bekk, en elv som renner, rare lyder som susing, vind, stemmer,

snakking, som er veldig sånn... det høres ut som det er mange som mumler samtidig, bare sånn rot, egentlig. Og... lukt, men lukten bruker å være veldig monoton, kan du si. Det er lukt, men det er vanskelig å sette egentlig ord på hva det er. Så egentlig kunne det vært hva som helst. Lukten er det vanskeligste. Men akkurat de synssansene og høresansene er veldig sterke. Det er på en måte som om jeg drømmer samtidig som jeg er våken, kan du si. At jeg dagdrømmer på en helt ny level, liksom. Og etterhvert så begynner de skikkelsene og stemmene å faktisk... bli noe konkret, da. Og av og til så blir ikke de det jeg ønsker at de skal bli, da. Kan du si. At det ikke er alltid jeg har helt full kontroll på det. Men ihvertfall noen av skikkelsene og objektene og landskapene kjenner jeg igjen da. Og det er disse skikkelsene, objektene og landskapene jeg går mot, da. Fordi det er de jeg kjenner igjen, det er de jeg vil frem til. De andre stenger jeg ute, kan du si, de vil jeg ikke ha noe med å gjøre.

I: Er det noen grunn til det?

O: Jeg har prøvd å nå tak i dem, men det blir bare ekkelt, det blir som et mareritt da plutselig. Det blir liksom sånn ekkel, du vet ikke helt hva det er som skjer, skjønner ikke helt... Det blir bare... Det gir meg ihvertfall absolutt ingenting. Det står jo skrevet at du kan bli gal og crazy og alt mulig sånt. Det er godt mulig det hvis du driver og dagdrømmer mareritt hele tiden. For meg så gjør det bare at det ikke har noen virkning da at det gir ikke noe...

I: Det blir bare en ubehagelig opplevelse?

O: Det blir bare ubehag. Masse former som skifter og lyder som ikke gir sense og sånn, hadde jeg fått de stemmene ellers i mitt virkelige liv så hadde jeg følt at jeg var gal liksom. Herregud, jeg hører stemmer og... Det hadde vært... På det planet liksom.

I: Høres slitsomt ut.

O: Slitsom galskap, egentlig. Slitsom galskap det vil jeg vanligvis ikke ha så mye med å gjøre, så jeg stenger det ute og går fra dem da. Sånn som jeg gjør det så bare går jeg vekk fra det, jeg møter de andre, kan du si.

I: Når du er på dette astralplanet, hvordan er det kroppen din kjennes da?

O: Kroppen min kjennes varm, først og fremst. Absolutt.

I: Så du kjenner fremdeles kroppen som ligger der, da?

O: Det er godt mulig at det er den kroppen som kjennes varm, ja, men det kjennes ikke ut som... Jeg kan ta på meg selv, for eksempel... Det hørtes jo litt... galt ut da. * Begge ler*

I: Jeg skjønner hva du mener. * Begge ler*

O: Det er ingen følelse, kan du si da, men jeg har følelsen av å være varm. At jeg ikke er en kald skikkelse som går rundt, men at jeg er faktisk... levende, da, kan du si. Samtidig som at jeg ikke har den følelsen av å ta på kroppen min, at jeg kan lukte kroppen min, at jeg har hår på kroppen, liksom. Jeg har liksom blokkert helt det ute, kommet til den sinnstilstanden at jeg ikke kjenner at det klør, at jeg har vondt i magen, sånne ting.

I: Litt som en drøm da, på en måte?

O: Det vil jeg si egentlig, litt som en drøm, bare at jeg har litt mer kontroll over drømmen.

I: Jeg skjønner... Men, om det kommer en høy lyd, for eksempel, eller om plassen du ligger i og astralprojiserer tar fyr, for eksempel, legger du merke til det da?

O: Jeg tror det ville tatt litt tid, for å være ærlig. Det har jeg egentlig ikke tenkt noe særlig på. Det er litt skummelt å tenke på, egentlig.

I: Det var ikke meningen å....

O: Neida. Det har jeg ikke tenkt på.... Men jeg har opplevd at det kom en person inn i rommet, for eksempel. Det var nesten som om personen måtte vekke meg da kan du si. Det var

ubehagelig. Det var som å bli vekt fra en drøm som ikke var ferdig da kan du si. Det var som å bli vekt fra den beste... eller den beste men den dypeste drømmen du kan tenke deg. Og før den var ferdig, så blir du vekt... Den følelsen var det. Han trodde at jeg hadde besvimt da, for han skjønnte ikke at jeg ikke svarte... Hvorfor ligger du på gulvet, liksom? Så, han ristet liksom på meg, og når jeg kom til meg selv liksom... Hva i helvete er det som skjer? Det var bare ubehagelig liksom.

I: Det skjønner jeg... Det høres sånn ut. Tror du at alle kan få til astralprojeksjon?

O: Det vil jeg tro ja. Med riktige... forberedelser er jo key da. For å faktisk få noe godt utav det. Jeg tror de fleste har muligheten til å gjøre det.

I: Tror du det går an å gjøre det på andre måter enn den...

O: Definitivt. Og... min måte er jo... selvfølgelig den følger jo det Crowley går ut ifra, jeg syns den fungerer bra jeg. Jeg gjør jo ikke alle tingene, jeg tenner ikke røkelse og ligger på løveskinn og sånn * begge ler*

Men det vil jeg tro, jeg tror ikke dette er noe eksklusivt til Thelema og sånt, det ville jo bare vært søkt å tenke. Man tar jo tak i sitt... sitt astralplan da kan du si, sin latente ubevissthet. Når man drømmer så er man jo i ubevisstheten sin da, men på et helt annet... Man glemmer jo gjerne det man har drømt, også videre også videre, men det som skjer i den tilstanden der glemmer jeg ikke. Kan du si. For eksempel. Men ja, definitivt. Jeg har ikke undersøkt og lest så mye om astralprojeksjon og den slags i andre systemer, i andre religioner og livssyn og sånt, men det er noe jeg gjerne kunne tenkt meg å sjekke ut siden jeg kanskje kan prøve andre ting og sånt. For ja, det må finnes andre måter å gjøre det på, det går ikke an at det bare er èn ting.

I: Tror du også at det går an å gjøre det uten å vite hva det er for noe, eller uten at det er intensjonelt?

O: Det vil jeg også tro at skal gå an, men da skal det en del tilfeldigheter... Jeg vet ikke, kanskje det faktisk kreves en del disiplin og en del kunnskaper om hva man skal gjøre, men det er godt mulig, jeg vet ikke. Det skal jeg ikke si noe på hverken for eller imot. At man bare kan hives inn i astralplanet, kanskje? Eller om det kreves noe, det vet jeg ikke.

I: Du snakket om at det var som en veldig intens dagdrøm, å astralprojisere, eller som en av de dypeste drømmene du har hatt.

O: Mhm, for å legge litt ord på det.

I: Kan du si noe mer om hva som er likt og hva som er ulikt mellom astralprojeksjon og de tilstandene du bruker til å sammenligne, slik vi får litt mer klarhet?

O: Ja litt mer klarhet, ja. Det er liksom det nærmeste jeg klarer å sammenligne det med. For når jeg først fikk det til skikkelig så klarte jeg ikke helt å sette ord på det, kan du si. Men, for eksempel det med den dype drømmen og alt mulig sånt det er liksom den tilstanden jeg kommer i, og det med å bli revet ut av den det har visse likheter da. Men det med å være i en intens dagdrøm... Det er på en måte... Når man dagdrømmer for eksempel så er jo man herre over sine dagdrømmer. Man tenker seg at man er en ridder fra middelalderen som er... seirende i alle slag, og det er så kult og sånt, fordi man ikke gidder å ta til seg det som skjer i virkeligheten, så man sitter og dagdrømmer, tenker seg at man gjerne er noe annet enn man faktisk er. Og når jeg er på det planet så er jo jeg faktisk noe jeg ikke er, kan du si, men samtidig så er det ikke som at jeg har full kontroll over alle tingene.

Det er ikke sånn at nå skal jeg være den skikkelsen der, at nå skal den skapningen komme, eller nå skal det landskapet der utforme seg, det har jeg ikke kontroll over. Så det er ikke en dagdrøm per ce da, men for min del så er det litt som en middelvei mellom en drøm man ikke har kontroll

over, man kan ikke bestemme noe, det er ubehageligheter, det er behageligheter, det er randomness. Samtidig som en dagdrøm der man faktisk kan tenke seg at man kan gjøre de tingene man skal. I det planet for eksempel så velger jeg å gå fremover, jeg går fremover. I en dagdrøm ville jeg gjort det samme, men i en drøm ville jeg ikke kunne tenkt: nå skal jeg gå fremover, nå skal jeg snakke med den personen, nå tar jeg tak i det objektet. Så det er liksom det jeg har kommet frem til da, at det er en slags ny type drøm, ikke en dagdrøm, ikke en sovedrøm, men en kanalisert drømmetilstand da hvor man har kontroll samtidig som man ikke har kontroll. Men man må bare... velge ut det man vil gjøre i den drømmen. Det er liksom som om en virkelig person hadde blitt transportert inn i en drøm. En ekte sovedrøm, liksom.

I: Kunne du fortalt meg om en gang eller to du astralprojiserte?

O: Tja, sist gang var vel september i fjor tror jeg det var? Det er ikke noe jeg gjør så utrolig ofte da. Det var en periode jeg gjorde det veldig mye. Eller, veldig mye, en gang hver andre uke da kan du si. Fordi det var så spennende, det var så gøy, det var så kjekt, det var så behagelig, det var gøy, det var ubehagelig, det var noe jeg måtte finne utav, det var interessant.

I: Nytt og spennende?

O: Det var nytt og spennende! Dette her måtte testes ut, ikke sant? Så... Ble kanskje litt avhengig da. * Begge ler*

Og... Hadde det vært tilrettelagt til det kunne jeg sikkert gjort det hver dag, ikke sant? Det er jo kanskje ikke så bra da, så... Men... September var vel sist gang, kan fortelle om den da, for såvidt. Flere av de andre går litt opp i opp og jeg må nesten skrive det ned det som skjer for å ha litt kontroll på det. Så det ikke blandes: Å faen det var den ja, og det var den ja. Bare for å ha litt kontroll på det. Men den husker jeg godt.

Jeg begynte med å gjøre alle forberedelsene. Det var litt på ettermiddagen så det var ingen som gikk på gangen ute, det var tilrettelagt for det da. Jeg lå i stua, lå ikke på rommet fordi det var kaldt, lå på stua fordi det var varmere. Prøvde faktisk da først å sitte da. Jeg har gjort det flere ganger også men det var ikke det jeg kom frem til at var mest behagelig da, så det ble å ligge istedenfor. Så for meg skikkelsen, gjorde alt vi snakket om tidligere. Akkurat den prosessen blir mye det samme hver gang, det blir ikke så mye forskjellig egentlig, den er veldig... consistent, blir det vel på engelsk. Den får jeg liksom ikke noe utav da, den, eller... det er en veldig rar og ekkel opplevelse, men det er ikke noe jeg får... kan ta noe mening utav egentlig sånn sett, annet enn at det er en god øvelse. Gikk over kroppen min, gikk over huset, også videre også videre. Helt til jeg kom til det planet da. Den gangen så var det... tok det litt tid å komme fordi det var en stund siden jeg hadde gjort det sist, at det var litt vanskelig for meg å komme helt opp til det planet da kan du si. Det tok en stund vil jeg tro, jeg har ikke akkurat så godt tidsbegrep på hva ting skjer og sånt når jeg først gjør det, men det føltes som en evighet da. At, faen, kanskje det ikke går så bra i dag. Og... Men jeg kom meg til slutt til planet, kom til det intet som det ble, og det manifesterte seg ting. Men veldig få ting denne gangen. Det er aldri sånn at enten blir det masse, det kan være masse ting, det kan være små ting, det kan være store ting, det kan være få ting. Det var få ting denne gangen. Det var noen skikkelser ute i horisonten som jeg kunne skimte såvidt, det var noen lyder, det var, følte liksom at det var tilstedeværelser da. Var liksom på en slags slette, men det var ikke en slette, det var ikke gress der, det var på en måte veldig tørt. Det var ikke en ørken, ikke en... Veldig vanskelig å i det hele tatt påpeke hva egentlig det var. Det føltes fuktig da. Veldig merkelig, det var tørt og fuktig, tørt på bakken, fuktig i lufta. Jeg tenkte liksom jeg skulle gå mot skikkelsene fordi de var egentlig de eneste tingene, det var landskap i bakgrunnen men følte liksom ikke at jeg kunne gå mot det, det var liksom bare i

bakgrunnen. Gikk mot skikkelsen, det var rundt, var vel fire skikkelser. Den ene skikkelsen var... ikke upresis, det var veldig rart, vanskelig å oppfatte da hva det var. Det var en person men samtidig var det ikke en person. Veldig høy, følte ubehagelig. Så, jeg blokkerte på en måte ut den personen, men den var der, var liksom helt tilstede, men ute av scenarioet da, men den var der tilstede men jeg klarte liksom å holde den ute av synsvinkelen da, ute av sanseområdet, kan du si. Men samtidig så var den der, hvis jeg snudde meg så var den der.

Det var tre skikkelser igjen som er, som tok en etter en. De stod liksom ikke å snakket da, de stod liksom en etter en på sine områder da kan du si. Og gikk mot den skikkelsen som var en ganske middels høy person som hadde på seg fine klær, formal clothing da kan du si, og det var ingen gudeperson. Det er ikke alle de gangene jeg klarer å sette ting i system da kan du si, det var fine klær, sånn asiat, ikke asiatisk, men sånn østlige klær, formelle klær da. Og prøvde å ta kontakt med den skikkelsen da, blå silker og hadde på seg sånne sandalaktige sko husker jeg, var turban, litt mørk i hud, samtidig hadde han ikke ansiktstrekk da. Så var litt ubehagelig, men valgte likevel å ta kontakt. Jeg følte liksom en tilstedeværelse av en slags menneskelig... kontakt da, så jeg tenkte at jeg kanskje skulle ta kontakt, kanskje de ansiktstrekkene og sånt kom til å manifestere seg når jeg har fått litt kontakt. Tenkte at jeg ville ha en samtale med den skikkelsen, og samtalen vil jeg egentlig... Mye av det er privat, så jeg tenker at jeg forteller mer hvordan det gikk da. For mye av dem går på personlige ting, ofte veldig spesifikke ting, det kan være veldig rare ting, ting som, si... Ting som jeg tilogmed ikke vil være fortrolig med med noen, liksom, sånne ting. Den personen var veldig personlig, snakket til meg som om han kjente meg personlig, veldig personlig. Som om han visste alle mine hemmeligheter, som om han visste alle mine indre ønsker og desires da, kan du si. På en veldig ekkel måte, som om at han kjente til alt jeg har lyst til, alle ting jeg kunne tenkt meg å gjøre, på en veldig sånn... haha, jeg kan alt, og hvis ikke du er med meg så kommer jeg til å fortelle det videre til alle andre, at jeg har liksom makt over deg da. I: Er det vanlig at de skapningene du, på en måte treffer på, har tilgang til sånn personlig informasjon om deg, eller?

O: Til en viss grad, men det er de jeg prøver å blokkere ut, de som prøver å bruke det mot meg da, i kaninører. Men den personen, jeg følte at jeg hadde lyst til å gå mot den personen, det har hendt før at jeg har kommet til ubehageligheter jeg bare ville bort fra, men det var ikke så lett å komme bort fra den personen for den hadde den makten den hadde, det ble plutselig veldig ubehagelig. De andre skikkelsene var liksom ikke i synsfeltet lengre, de to som jeg også hadde tenkt til å opprette kontakt med da. Men den ubehagelige skikkelsen som jeg hadde blokkert var der tilstede fortsatt, så det ble plutselig en veldig ubehagelig person, og jeg var veldig redd for at han skulle fortelle de tingene til den skikkelsen som stod lengre borte som jeg da hadde blokkert vekk tidligere. Og det utviklet seg til sånn marerittaktig greiene. Det var ikke en bra astralprosjektering dette her, det må jeg bare presisere da. Begynte å fortelle meg om alle disse inner desires og alt sånt, og de stemmer, det er ikke det, det er derfor jeg bare velger å ha den... dumt å... fortelle og sånn ting. Men ting som... erotiske ting, ting som jeg ville gjort, men samtidig jeg aldri ville gjort, kan du si. Ting som jeg har tenkt at, faen, tenk om jeg gjorde det, tenk om... liksom ikke desires heller, ikke sånn ting som jeg virkelig har lyst til å gjøre, men ting som jeg har tenkt over, ting som: hvordan er det å drepe en person, hvordan er det å hoppe fra en bro, sånne ting. De desires'ene på en måte. De som bare sånn kom på et sekund i virkeligheten, men som bare har gått vekk fra...

I: Innfall, på en måte?

O: Innfall, på en måte. Masse sånne innfall, samtidig så var det ting der som jeg virkelig hadde

hatt lyst til å gjøre, men som jeg aldri har gjort... Det var liksom det det dreiet seg om. Jeg ville liksom spørre hvem er du, hvem er du som, hvorfor har du tilgang til alt dette? Hva er... Hvem er du? Og den hadde fortsatt det ansiktet da, som var veldig vanskelig å gjenkjenne, det var ikke noen ansiktstrekk, bare veldig monotont, som en blanding av alle menneskers ansikt. Veldig. Jeg klarte ikke å beskrive det. Tidligere så gjorde jeg, det er jo gjerne en blanding av ting jeg har sett og oppfattet, og gudepersoner og det kan være, dem har jo trekk fra folk jeg har møtt og, også videre også videre, også videre, men det var bare helt sånn ekkelt rart. Klærne, alt det der, det er jo ting jeg har... det var jo kanskje eneste korrespondansene jeg hadde tilstede der og da. Men jeg klarte ikke å tillegge det noe mening, jeg klarte ikke å tillegge den samtalen noen mening annet enn nå har jeg kommet til en del jeg ikke er fortrolig med, og jeg vil ikke ha den samtalen mer, men samtidig vil jeg ikke gå vekk for da er jeg redd for at den vil fortelle det videre kan du si. En veldig ekkel følelse av at jeg vil vekk men jeg kan ikke. Og det har skjedd før at jeg har kommet i den situasjonen da, at jeg klarte å blokkere det vekk på en grei måte sånn sett, men det var så personlig at det var ekkelt da. Jeg vet ikke helt hva sammenhengen, jeg har kommet frem til flere sammenhenger om hvorfor jeg hadde den opplevelsen, den ekle opplevelsen som jeg hadde. Ting i det virkelige livet som hendte på den tiden også videre, som har gjort at dette her er ting som kommer opp når jeg graver såpass dypt, og kanskje jeg gravde litt for dypt, men jeg har ikke helt kontroll på hvor dypt jeg graver, kan du si. Det er ikke sånn at jeg har et kart som jeg kan gå etter, men at jeg heller kommer til et punkt der jeg kan føle ting, og heller da velge bort de tingene som jeg vil. Men av og til så kan det være at jeg tar kontakt, men at det faktisk er lurert liksom, at dette var ubehagelig istedet, dette var ikke bra, eller at noe er ubehagelig men det faktisk kan være bra på en viss måte da.

I: Hva var det som skjedde videre?

O: Jeg stod jo der, og det var den, det var ikke en samtale nærmest, det var egentlig bare en sånn oppramsing av den skikkelsen, stod der og fortalte og fortalte og fortalte, jeg prøvde å ta å komme frem men kom ingen vei, prøvde å komme vekk littegrann men skikkelsen fulgte etter, sånne ting. Følte at ikke jeg kunne komme meg vekk fra stedet da. Og jeg ville ikke mer da kan du si. Hadde ikke lyst til mer. Dette var ikke gøy. Måten jeg på en måte kom meg vekk på da var egentlig å gjøre alt jeg kunne for å eliminere den andre skikkelsen fra stedet, for hvis jeg eliminerte den andre skikkelsen så var han alene og kunne ikke fortelle dette videre til andre. Det var på en måte den elimineringsprosessen der da jeg kom frem til at det føler jeg meg komfortabel til å gjøre. Måten jeg på en måte fjernet den andre skikkelsen det var egentlig å tenke seg at han ikke var der, samtidig som at jeg gikk rundt og den fulgte etter meg så snudde jeg meg. Var den der fortsatt? Ja den var der fortsatt. Jeg prøver igjen. Også videre. Det var på en måte en sånn der dans rundt om kring på den sletten. Med ubehageligheter som fulgte etter meg i den skikkelsen samtidig som den monotone rare tingen var der. Det tok ganske lang tid før jeg i det hele tatt klarte å bestemme meg for at den er ikke der, den finnes ikke, jeg klarer å fjerne den fra min verden. Men det var veldig vanskelig når jeg ble så distraheret av den, andre, med oppramsing og de stemmene som kom med alt av dritt. Når jeg da fikk til å fjerne den personen da som var til stede, den andre personen, som gjorde at det var ubehagelig, mest ubehagelig egentlig, så ble den personen som stod og snakket helt... Jeg kunne bare gå derfra, kunne bare forlate det, kunne bare reise ned igjen til kroppen min. Og på en måte omkranse kroppen min. Når avslutter så er jeg nede igjen og føler bare at jeg legger meg oppå kroppen, lukker øynene og bare avslutter det. Det er på en måte en sånn knips, ferdig, nå er jeg safe and sound, er jeg her igjen, nå kan jeg avslutte det. Jeg kunne ikke avsluttet det midt oppe i himmelriket, det går ikke.

Jeg har prøvd bare for å se hvordan, hva det innebærer avslutningen før jeg er komfortabel med det, men det går ikke, jeg må føle at jeg er tilbake før jeg får gjort det.

I: Den gangen du ble avbrutt og vekt, på en måte da, dro du hele veien tilbake igjen da før...

O: Jeg måtte jo reise tilbake igjen, men det gikk så fort. Det gikk så ubehagelig fort å komme tilbake igjen. Det var på en måte som at bare bang, jeg ble liksom dratt tilbake igjen da kan du si. Gikk ikke ned av fri vilje nærmest, men ble bare dratt tilbake, la meg ned også bare poff, ferdig. Frysninger bak i hodet og... hva i helvete? Skvatt som faen, ikke sant. Jeg føler liksom at jeg bare, det er ikke jeg som, men jeg blir bare dratt da. Om det er en bra mekanisme å ha eller ikke vet jeg ikke da, men det er bare ubehagelig. Jeg har aldri følt at jeg har satt igjen da kan du si, det har da vært bad da vil jeg tro, men jeg tror ikke det går an.

I: Hvordan kom du frem til at disse opplevelsene var astralprosjeksjon?

O: At faktisk det er astralprosjeksjon? At det er på et eget plan og hele pakka mener du?

I: At du... Du sa at du gikk jo frem og på en måte lærte deg det her, men når var det du fant ut at nå astralprojiserer jeg?

O: Det vil jeg tro var første gang jeg faktisk kom til et plan som, eller, der jeg var borte fra universet, der jeg kom til et sted hvor jeg ante ingenting. Hvor jeg måtte lære meg ting på nytt, på en måte, nærmest. At jeg på en måte var på et nytt level da kan du si. Da følte jeg at jeg gjorde det. Jeg hadde prøvd veldig mange ganger før det, men kom frem til at dette her var bare teit, dette her var bare dumt, herregud dette her er noe alle kan tenke seg at de gjør. Det var når jeg kom til den... Til faktisk fikk sanseintrykk som ikke ellers ville hatt kan du si da, i så dyp konsentrasjon, da følte jeg at jeg astralprojiserte.

I: Hva var det du baserte det på? Er det noen som har fortalt deg eller...

O: Jeg har hatt samtaler med en av mine mentorer om det. Han fortalte seg om... at når man kom til det planet da, man vet når man har kommet til et nytt plan da, jeg husker ikke helt hvilke ord han brukte, men utifra de tingene jeg fortalte han så sa han at det virker som at du har... han sa aldri at dette er konkret, du har gjort det, det får jeg aldri svar på, det er ingen oppskrift da, utifra det jeg har forstått, at sånn er det, sånn er det, sånn er det. Nei, det er det ikke. Men min individuelle opplevelse, utifra det han hørte, var at jeg har astralprosjektet. Det var den bekreftelsen jeg fikk, og det vil jeg tro at var en ganske grei beskrivelse.

I: Jaja, absolutt. Hva var det du forventet at astralprosjeksjon skulle være?

O: Jeg forventet at jeg kunne drive å snakke med andre som astralprosjekterte og sånt. Når jeg først begynte da var jeg veldig sånn... ny internett, liksom. * Begge ler*

Ja, for å bruke en skikkelig metafor, det var som et slags plan over vårt, som en slags felles consciousness da. Seriously, jeg tenkte bare dette gir meg fantastiske muligheter til å gjøre ting. Jeg var også redd for hva om ting går galt, kan jeg bli gal? Kan jeg bli så negativt påvirket av dette her at... Jeg føler ikke at jeg blir, selv om jeg har dårlige opplevelser så føler jeg bare at jeg lærer av det.

Det går sikkert bra, men uansett. Jeg trodde liksom, at når jeg begynte, at ting kanskje finnes da, at jeg kommer til et gudeplan og besøker Horus også videre. At... Hello, skal vi ha samtaler og sånt? Men... Nei, det var noe helt annet når jeg først kom dit enn det jeg hadde forventet. Jeg driver fortsatt og prøver å finne ut av hva i helvete det er jeg driver med.

I: Vet du hvordan du fikk disse forventningene?

O: Forventningene er ting jeg har hørt da, for eksempel, for eksempel det med at folk kan ta kontakt på astralplanet, som vi var litt innom i begynnelsen. Og det er noe jeg ikke fortsatt noe jeg ikke har prøvd, jeg har ikke prøvd å på en måte reise sammen med noen eller ta kontakt med

noen på astralplanet, det kan godt hende det fungerer og sånne ting, det er fortsatt noe jeg ikke har prøvd. At jeg bare sender melding til noen jeg kjenner at hey, vi møtes på astralplanet, gutta.

* Begge ler*

Men, nei, jeg vet ikke, jeg har aldri prøvd det, så godt mulig. Jeg har fortsatt ikke eliminert den da, hvis du tenker det sånn. Den muligheten, men ja, det var ting jeg hørte fra folk, gjennom OTO og alt sånt, at ja, vi snakkes på astralplanet. Jeg hørte historier av en jeg kjenner i OTO som snakket om at det var to kjente medlemmer, eller noe sånt, jeg husker ikke helt historien, som møttes på astralplanet da liksom og liksom bestemt seg for en ting, eller hadde ordnet noe gjennom det. Det hørtes veldig søkt ut der og da, men faen, jeg har aldri prøvd det, så kanskje det finnes, kanskje det går an. Nå tenker jeg det at det er litt sånn... Veldig mye mer skeptisk de siste årene enn det jeg gjorde når vi begynte da. Kan du si. I tillegg så er det sånne ting, jeg har jo vokst opp med, vært mye interessert i historie, religion, magi, alle sånne ting da, faktisk kanskje det er noe, sånn, psychic, psykiske power da, som ligger latent i alle mennesker, som er sånn the overmind liksom, som kan få tilgang til da. Men... tenkte sånn veldig sånn sci-fi greier da, det er jo ting som har påvirket meg på den tiden. At... Kanskje gudene faktisk er virkelige, kanskje det og det og det og det. Det er jo ting som har påvirket meg til å faktisk ha den kanskje. Ikke at det at det var mulig at dette tror jeg på. Jeg har aldri vært så religiøs av meg, alltid vært sånn at ja kanskje det er mulig. Men jeg var veldig overbevist om at faen det er så mange som har fortalt meg om det her at dette måtte testes ut.

I: Hvorfor var det du ønsket å astralprojisere?

O: Nå var vi jo litt inne på det allerede da, men... Det var egentlig mest utifra nysgjerrighet, og ønsket om å komme til et nytt plan da, eller ny level of consciousness, som tidligere, som i begynnelsen når jeg prøvde det ut tok det meg faktisk ganske lang tid før jeg faktisk fikk det til og da innså jeg faktisk at dette ikke var som jeg trodde det var. Jeg begynte jo og prøvde å gjøre dette allerede når jeg fikk vite om det da, men det funket ikke noe særlig, jeg kom meg aldri noe spesiell vei, det tok en del år før jeg faktisk fikk det til skikkelig. Eller, en del år, det tok meg to og et halvt år før jeg fikk det til litt da. Jeg har forandret meg mye på den tiden. Men ja, det var mest utifra nysgjerrighet og at jeg kunne få noe ut av det. Var det vel.

I: Hva da?

O: Nei det var jeg ikke helt sikker på egentlig. Men om det var... Det kunne, i begynnelsen var det ikke helt rent for å prøve å kjenne meg selv og sånne ting, eller ta tak i ting som jeg ellers ikke ville ta tak i og sånt. Men jeg kom inn på den banen etterhvert, at...

I: Så du har andre grunner til å gjøre det nå da enn du hadde i starten?

O: Ja, det har jeg. Når jeg først fikk det til fikk det helt annen mening enn når jeg faktisk fikk vite om det, kan du si.

I: Hvilke grunner er det du har for å gjøre det nå i dag da?

O: Etter sist gang har jeg ikke gjort det siden, og... Etter en dårlig opplevelse tar det som oftest litt tid før jeg får lyst til å gjøre det igjen da, kan du si. Men jeg gjør det egentlig for å ta kontakt, for å ta tak i problemer som jeg ikke tenker er et problem, eller som... Få en litt sånn dypere kunnskap da om ting som foregår i hjernen min, som foregår i hodet mitt, som foregår i astralplanet mitt da kan du si. Og det gir meg en god følelse, det gir meg en bra følelse når jeg får det til.

I: Hva er det man kan gjøre når man astralprojiserer?

O: Nå har jeg fortalt om hva jeg kan gjøre da.

I: Ja, du har fortalt en del, jeg lurer på, er det noe mer du kan gjøre, eller som man har hørt at man kan gjøre, eller?

O: Ja nå, vi har nå hørt dette med å ta kontakt for eksempel, kommunisere. Jeg føler egentlig at, altså jeg kan være med på å forme tingen, stedet rundt meg da, sånn bokstavelig talt, ikke selve landskapet eller skapningene. Det er ikke noe jeg har kommet inn på før nå sånn sett da. Men at jeg kan få ting til å på en måte manifestere rundt meg eller på meg da. Om det er et klesplagg eller om det er en trekvist i hånden, liksom. Sånne ting. Jeg har full kontroll over alt som skjer i min lille sfære.

I: Men kan du... Spise, for eksempel?

O: Jeg føler aldri... Jeg føler ikke sult, så jeg har aldri liksom helt prøvd ut smak og den slags da. Egentlig veldig godt tips, sånn sett.

* Mobiltelefonen til O ringer*

I: Vil du ta en kort pause?

O: Ja gjerne, bare en kort samtale.

I: Ok, da tar vi en kort pause.

* Intervjuet fortsatte 5 minutter senere*

O: Ting vi kan gjøre ja. Jeg har jo nevnt at jeg har full kontroll over min sfære da, og du nevnte det med å spise. Det har jeg faktisk ikke prøvd, jeg har ikke prøvd å spise.

I: Er det andre kroppslige ting du kan gjøre? Er det på en måte... Føler du ting også, eller?

O: Jeg kan føle ting, jeg føler ikke kroppen min kan du si, men jeg kan kjenne på ting.

I: Så hvis du tar på et bord for eksempel, så kjenner du...

O: Da er bordet håndfast, men skikkelsen min har ikke følelser kan du si, altså touch, altså ta på følelser.

I: Men ellers kan du gjøre stort sett det som en vanlig kropp kan gjøre da, på en måte?

O: Ja, og mer i den sfæren da, kan du si. Og det med å få ting til å, få frem ting da som jeg har lyst til å ha for eksempel. Ting som jeg har lyst til å bruke i den verdenen kan du si da.

I: Er det, det høres kanskje litt rart ut men, er det noen grunner til å gjøre ting på astralplanet?

O: Altså mine personlige grunner eller sånn generelt?

I: Nå er det deg jeg spør da.

O: Jeg har jo... Jeg har jo ikke bare gått og snakket med skapninger på astralplanet, jeg har prøvd å utforske eller gjøre ting for eksempel der. Og ja, det har vært veldig merkelig og rart. Ridd hest har jeg blant annet gjort. * Begge ler*

Ikke sant? Så lenge det liksom er rundt min ting så kan jeg gjøre det meste, men jeg kan ikke få et hus til å komme frem liksom, jeg kan ikke skape et hus bare ut i min verden, det får jeg ikke til.

I: Skapte du den hesten da, når du skulle ri den?

O: Altså, jeg skapte den plutselig med at jeg satt oppå den, at jeg var på den, at den var på en måte en del av min kropp da kan du si. Så det er liksom ikke at, det var liksom at jeg var en del av de tingene jeg fikk frem da, at det var en del av mitt plagg, mitt klesplagg da. Litt sånn, som at jeg hadde på meg hesten. Som en del av min... mine... min... karakteristisk...stikker? Ja, en del av mine karakter... karakter...

I: Trekk?

O: Trekk, ja! * ler*

I: Er noen projeksjonsopplevelser mer verdt for deg enn andre?

O: Ja det er de. Det er gjerne da jeg får en god samtale ut av skikkelser som jeg føler at jeg kan

ha en samtale med der jeg kan spørre om ting, få svar om ting, det føler jeg er en veldig god opplevelse siden jeg kan få på en måte litt svar, litt klarhet da i situasjonen. Men for eksempel den opplevelsen jeg snakket om tidligere det er en dårlig opplevelse, det er en dårlig astralprojeksjon.

I: Det er sånn du vurderer det da, utifra hva du får av nyttig informasjon?

O: Ja, altså det kan være at det jeg føler at det er noe ubehagelig en gang for eksempel, men ikke at det tar helt kontroll over det hele, da blir det bare ubehageligheter. Selvfølgelig, jeg lærer jo av de ubehagelighetene også, men det gir meg såpass dårlig følelse at jeg ikke har lyst til å gjøre det mer liksom. Det kan være en veldig bra gang der jeg har en god samtale også har jeg en litt mindre, kanskje en litt dum samtale, men at jeg klarer å escape den der samtalen etterhvert når jeg ikke vil mer, når jeg vil, og det kan være veldig bra. Faktisk en av de bedre har vært der jeg har fått en bit av begge verdener da, kan du si. At jeg har oppklart, snakket om dårlige ting så vel som gode ting, om du skjønner.

I: Ja, jeg tror jeg henger med.

O: Så lenge jeg føler at jeg har kontroll, en viss kontroll, da blir det som regel bra.

I: Er det noen av dem som... Vi snakker om verdi her da, er det noen som har vært langt mer verdifulle enn andre?

O: Gjerne sånn om jeg har opplevd noe i det virkelige livet mitt, og de tingene blir på en måte da tatt opp, det blir aldri spesifikt tatt opp at det er den og den situasjonen, men ting som har med det å gjøre da, kan du si. Samtale er veldig sånn diffuse da, det er aldri sånn at du var der og der og gjorde den og den tingen, og det var dumt, og nå skal vi snakke om det. Kjør debatt.

* Begge ler*

Men det er liksom de tingene som jeg føler har en connection med ting i det virkelige livet mitt som jeg kan bruke på en positiv måte, de har mest verdi.

I: Hvordan vurderer du hvorvidt opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje eller ikke?

O: Kan du si det igjen? Det var et vanskelig spørsmål.

I: Hvordan er det du vurderer hvorvidt opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje eller om den ikke var det?

O: Ja, den, for eksempel den dårlige opplevelsen tidligere, den følte jeg ikke var i henhold til min Sanne Vilje, for eksempel. Det var bare, det var så far off at det, jeg vet ikke.

I: Så det er litt samme kriteriene da, at det har litt med kontroll...

O: Litt samme kriteriene, men samtidig så, selv om jeg har kontroll så betyr ikke det at det er i henhold til, hvis du skjønner. Dette er ofte en vurderingsprosess som jeg kan så på i ettertid også.

I: Det er ikke noe du vurderer mens du er der?

O: Det er gjerne noe jeg har som en vurderingsprosess mens jeg er der, altså jeg vurderer hva jeg burde gjøre, hva som føles rett og hva som... i henhold til situasjonen da, altså sånn situasjonsbestemt. Det hender at jeg tar feil, det hender at jeg tar riktig også videre. Det begynner allerede der, men det er først i etterkant jeg kan vurdere det, være kritisk, også videre.

I: Hvilke kriterier er det du bruker da, når du vurderer det?

O: Det bruker jo som regel å ta litt tid før jeg i det hele tatt vurderer om det har gitt meg noe eller ikke, men hvis det er noe som jeg kan på en måte fått utslag da, på en eller annen måte, om det har vært en ting jeg har tenkt på eller om... noe som har skjedd bra på grunn av, også videre, bare det har gitt meg ett eller annet, det er liksom kriteriet da. Det er ikke så høye kriterier, men så lenge det har gitt meg noe i riktig retning, så er det bra, altså det da, det er de kriteriene. Men om det ikke har gitt meg noe spesifikt, og de tingene som ikke har gitt meg noe spesifikt ikke har gitt

utslag. For eksempel, det er en dårlig opplevelse som kan ha med for eksempel... en ting som har gitt meg hjelp på astralplanet men da har gitt utslag negativt, kan fortsatt hjelpe meg til min Sanne Vilje, om du skjønner. Men hvis det bare ikke har... Dette er jo ikke noe som jeg gjør for å vurdere alle situasjoner i livet mitt da, det er ikke det, men hvis det har hatt noen innvirkning så vil jeg si at det har hatt bra utslag på min Sanne Vilje, at det faktisk har gitt utslag, men hvis det ikke har gitt meg noe what so ever, om det føltes bra der og da, men at det var det... At jeg ikke har vokst på det, på en måte, at jeg ikke har klart å utvikle noe på det. At det bare har vært en sånn dud liksom, det er enkle og greie kriterier. Men det er litt sånn vanskelig å si helt nøyaktig hva jeg legger i det, for det er så random hva ting... Men det er helst at det skal gi meg noe, ihvertfall litt liksom, om det er negativt eller positivt det spiller ingen rolle.

I: Hvordan er det du har lært de kriteriene, hvor har du dem fra?

O: Dette er noe jeg har kommet opp med selv. Jeg har det med at negative ting kan ha positivt utslag, hvis du tenker sånn da, at negative opplevelser det kan du lære av, sant. Det er jo noe jeg har fått både gjennom foreldre og andre, OTO og sånt, at det ikke bare er de positive tingene som er bra å ha med seg liksom. Det er vel det eneste jeg har fått med med andre da. Men selve kriteriene og sånt det tror jeg faktisk at alt det der jeg bare har kommet opp selv ved å tenke på det.

I: Nå lurer jeg også på, når du står på en måte utenfor kroppen din her i starten av en projeksjonsopplevelse, ser du på den kroppen som den ekte da, eller mener du at det er ditt ekte deg som står her utenfor kroppen som ligger der på bakken?

O: Jeg føler liksom at jeg har skiftet plass, på en måte, at den nyprosjekterte kroppen er den som har har prosjektert kroppen som ligger, om du skjønner. Det ble litt vanskelig. At skikkelsen som da står, det er meg, det er virkelig meg. Den som ligger der er ikke meg, men noe jeg ser som jeg har skapt, at de har på en måte skiftet plass på en måte. Det er det jeg føler det da. Har bare skiftet rolle da, eller plass og rolle. Veldig merkelige greier. Men samtidig så kjenner jeg igjen trekk, altså i kroppen, selvfølgelig, på trekke som er på den nye kroppen, så det er på en måte en slags tvilling, men samtidig så er det ikke meg.

I: Samtidig så da du, for eksempel når vi snakket om hvordan du reagerer når leiligheten tar fyr mens du projiserer, for eksempel. Tenker du da at du kan på en måte leve videre hvis kroppen din brenner opp?

O: Jeg tror at de kroppene er ganske avhengige av hverandre, egentlig. Uten den ene så blir det ikke den andre, kan du si.

I: Begge veier?

O: Begge veier.

I: Da vil jeg bare takke for at du stilte opp og svarte på mine mange, sikkert dumme spørsmål.

O: Ingen problem. Sikkert veldig mange dumme svar og!

* Begge ler*

I: Er det noe mer du vil legge til her, noe vi ikke har fått dekt om temaet astralprojeksjon?

O: Ikke som jeg kommer på.

I: Da takker jeg igjen så mye, så avslutter vi intervjuet.

Transkripsjon av intervju 2, gjort 28/01 2015

I: Ja, da begynner vi egentlig ganske rett på. Hva er astralprojeksjon?

O: I Thelema så er det... Sånn jeg forstår det så er det et ledd, altså et plan man skal igjennom for å erfare diverse ting. Som ikke er tilstede i den vanlige bevisstheten, altså hverdagsbevisstheten da.

Som ikke nødvendigvis er en del av den objektive virkeligheten, men ikke nødvendigvis ikke er det heller. * Ler*

Så det er et ledd mellom hva man definerer som seg selv nå, og det som blir... Oppnåelsene man streber etter, da. Hvor man kan oppleve... Vesener, sfærer, sephiroter... Ting som kan eller kan ikke fins, som det står i boka. * Ler*

Det er egentlig sånn jeg ser på det og. Ja.

I: Hvordan er det man astralprojiserer?

O: Jeg vet ikke helt. * Ler*

Det er forskjellige teknikker man skal lære seg da ihvertfall. Hvor man trener sinnet sitt til å ha mer og mer kontroll på sin indre... sine impulser da, til at man kan gjøre om kroppen til en slags portal til den nye verdenen da, eller bruke kroppen til å komme inn til et nytt plan der man erfarer astralverdenen, da. De beskriver metoder som å pugge korrespondanser, gjøre yoga, altså stilne sinnet, få kontroll på tankevirksomhet, få kontroll på handlingene sine, og ideene sine nok til å kunne lage en spiss som trenger gjennom til astralverdenen da. Ved å etterhvert visualisere seg selv gjennom et nytt sett med øyne som fins på det planet, og derfra formulere hele sitt legeme via... Ved ren vilje da, på en måte. Så, skal man etterhvert da trene seg opp til å reise lengre og lengre i det legemet og i den bevissthetstilstanden. Det er... Uten at jeg har klart å gjennomføre det da, så, jeg vet at det er sånn det er i teorien at det fungerer.

I: Tror du at alle kan få det til?

O: Eh, nei. Det tror jeg ikke. Altså, du må ha... Det krever en del dedikasjon. Altså du, jeg vet ikke, hva som skjer med folk når de havner i en eller annen ulykke hvor de skader hodet eller... Kanskje de har det i seg, men hvis du tenker på vanlige mennesker fra dag til dag, så troe jeg... Det virker som en ferdighet som må trenes opp da, og jeg tror ikke alle har det i seg å, selv om de er interessert i å få det til da, så nei.

I: Tror du at det går an å gjøre det uten å vite hva det er for noe?

O: Ja det tror jeg. Det tror jeg. Jeg tror ikke astralverdenen har noe sånn skille på hvem som er verdig eller ikke til å få det til på en måte. * Ler. * Den bare lar... Altså den som får det til får det jo til. Om noen har et ekstra talent for det, eller noen havner inn i det ved andre måter, altså psykedelia, eller narkotiske stoffer eller andre måter å alternere bevissthetstilstanden nok på da til at det plutselig er mulig, så ja.

I: Hvis du skulle forsøke å astralprojisere i dag, hvordan ville du gått frem for å gjøre det?

O: Jeg ville lest instruksjonene i et manuskript som heter Liber O vel manus Saggitae, og fulgt alle instruksjonene der. Så i praksis ville jeg da gått gjennom.... Altså jeg ville satt meg ned i meditasjonen, og om jeg skulle fått det til sånn som det skal... Altså hvis jeg skulle prøvd på hele operasjonen nå i dag så ville jeg satt meg ned, prøvd å holdt kroppen stille, altså Asana, konsentrert meg, via Dharana, og... Nei bare altså, fulgt instruksjonene i Liber O da, jeg har ikke hele greia i hodet nå, så altså lest det og prøvd det de sa til det gikk. * Ler*

I: Hvordan er det du forventer at astralprojeksjon skal være?

O: Hmm... Jeg forventer at det skal være umulig å ta feil av da. At... Jeg vil vite at det er forskjell på det her og å sitte og dagdrømme. Og at... Det derfor må være en ganske sånn total oppslukende opplevelse, på samme måte at du vet at du har sovet når du har sovet og våken når du er våken, så må du vite at du er på astralplanet når du er på astralplanet. Så, så... Men jeg forventer også å være, jeg forventer ikke at det skal være som en drøm, som i at man ikke vet at man er på astralplanet, men at jeg er fullt klar over at jeg er her, at jeg vet hvorfor jeg er her og... At jeg vet at jeg skal tilbake, og... Som en reise da, eller, eller, at man ser en film, så vet man at man ser en film selv om man er helt oppe i opplevelsen da. Tror jeg. Hvis det er presist nok?

I: Absolutt. Har du noen flere formeninger om hvordan opplevelsen kommer til å være, eller?

O: Ja, altså, jeg vet egentlig ikke helt altså. Det blir et... Det er vanskelig å se for seg hva man skal se før man har vært et sted, så det er litt sånn vanskelig å svare på. Jeg er spent på hvor klart og tydelig ting kommer til å oppleves i forhold til den her verdenen, hvor ting er virkelig da, i helt sånn generell forstand liksom, altså. Det er det alle tenker på når de tenker på virkeligheten, så er det her. Det er det vi alle forholder oss til. * Ler*

Lurer på hvor stor forskjell det er fra det til astralplanet. Det er jeg spent på. Siden altså, jeg tror... Jeg tror ihvertfall i starten at det kommer til å være en blanding av tankevirksomhet og fantasier, og vanskelig å skille hva som er hva i starten, forventer jeg, men etterhvert så håper jeg på at det er ganske tydelig. Hva er hele fenomenet, hva slags verden er det, hvilken virkelighet er det? Er det rent subjektivt, eller er det virkelig annet plan, det er liksom umulig å si. * Ler*

Altså, hva... Ikke sånn heller, altså jeg vet at det er en mulighet å se ting annerledes, altså vi er lagd... Vi er på en måte, men... Måten det beskrives på, så virker det som at det er... Et sted som liksom ikke bare skal være... Det er vanskelig å snakke om, men... Jeg vet liksom ikke helt før jeg har vært der.

I: Du snakker litt om forventningene dine, blant annet med at du har en slags forventning om å skjønne at det er astralprojeksjon når det skjer.

O: Ja.

I: Vet du hvor du har disse forventningene fra?

O: Jeg tror at det meste er i.... Jeg tror at det er noe mer i det... Altså de som har eksperimentert med andre bevissthetstilstander og sånt de snakker om et sted som er annerledes, hvor det likevel er et sett med definitive regler, altså man kan ikke gjøre... Man er ikke helt ubegrenset heller.

Altså, det er en måte å operere på som, altså det høres ut som at de forteller om et sted som faktisk fins, et fenomen som faktisk er reelt, som de klarer å sette navnet på at det her er det og ikke noe annet, dette er astralplanet, og ikke en drømmetilstand og ikke en våkentilstand, dette her er astralplantilstanden. Jeg har liksom ingen, hvis... Og hvis jeg ender opp der og finner ut at det er en drømmetilstand, så vil jeg jo vite at alle der har tatt feil. * Ler*

Men det virker ikke som om de har tatt feil, det virker som om de har oppdaget et sted som har et veldig klart skille da fra noe annet. Så det er der forventningene kommer fra.

I: Jeg skjønner. Hva slags andre bevissthetstilstander er det du tenker... Er det du drar sammenligning med nå, i sammenheng med astralprojeksjon?

O: Drømmetilstand og våkentilstand har jeg jo snakket om nå.

I: Jeg bare lurte på om det var noe spesifikt du tenkte på, når du sa at det er folk som har besøkt andre bevissthetstilstander, som alle snakker om et sted som...

O: Ja, visjoner gjennom psykedelia og sånt hvor der det er folk som reiser... Men også magikere da, altså Thelemitter og sånt som beskriver stedet ganske konkret... Eller, ikke beskriver stedet

men beskriver en rekke oppgaver man skal gjøre der og... Har et veldig, nært forhold til stedet. *
Ler*

I: Flott, jeg ville bare ha litt klarhet i det. Jeg lurer på hvorfor du ønsker å astralprojisere.

O: Ja, altså det er et. Jeg føler at det er et ganske sånt spennende felt i menneskebevisstheten.

Altså, menneskets utforskning av universet, egentlig. Jeg føler at det er et, et tema som... Er vel, lett å misforstå, det er lite erfaring, det er lite felles enighet om at det fins i det hele tatt egentlig.

Det er litt pionerånd i å gå inn dit og utforske hva det er for noe. Og også hva det kan, hva det betyr for helheten av hva det er å være et menneske da. Hva det vil si. Uten at jeg, jeg vet ikke når eller om jeg kommer til å finne noe ord på det. Selv om det er jo en jakt etter beskrivelse også i det da. Så det er, altså det er, jeg føler at det er... Hva som former det subjektive universet vårt også, jeg tror det liksom er påvirkninger på det planet, hvis det viser seg å være som det er beskrevet, som vi lever med enten vi vil eller ikke, og det å se på nye aspekter ved oss selv og en del av psyken som kanskje eller kanskje ikke er en del av virkeligheten, men likevel har en påvirkning. Det er interessant å finne ut av hvordan man skal forholde seg til det og bruke det på en konstruktiv måte for å oppnå... En stor forståelse for det, og bedre legge veien videre for andre gjennom det kanskje. Og først og fremst å gjøre veien klar for seg selv da, med reisen innover da. Thelema dreier seg jo mye om reisen innover hvor man skal oppnå de to krisene med Kunnskapen og Samtalen med den Hellige Skytsengelen og Kryssingen av Avgrunnen, hvor der er altså... Altså det første instinktet til å følge den stien, reisen innover, kommer fra en erkjennelse om at vi vet veldig lite om hva vi gjør her på kloden, og, ihvertfall, hva jeg gjør her, og.... Vanlige... Altså... Det er sikkert andre måter å tenke rundt det på, men når man først har valgt seg det sporet og gjort det valget å tenke Thelemisk, så ser jeg ikke noe nødvendighet i å søke etter andre måter å tenke på før man har gjort seg de erfaringene det legger opp til. Grunnen til at man velger et sånt system er at... Det er begrensninger i andre sånne systemer som Thelema ikke legger for deg på samme måte, altså... Man lever, hva vil det si? Det er egentlig et ganske tomt begrep, for man dør jo også. Og hvis vi... Hva er det som skiller oss fra en plante? Nå kan vi ikke vite noe om det indre livet til en plante, men vi kan vite noe om det indre livet til oss selv. Det at vi bare skal akseptere at vi ikke vet en dritt, det tror jeg ikke noe på. Altså. At vi skal akseptere at vi vet det alle er enige i, og vi ikke kan vite noe for oss selv som... Altså, vi må akseptere at vi er uenige med alle til syvende og sist og innse at man står alene. * Ler*

Det er ingen som har den helhetlige kunnskapen man kan finne gjennom et studie av seg selv og det universet man finner der, men da trenger man å formulere et bedre språk for å uttrykke seg selv og å reise i seg selv og for å navigere hele feltet, for det funker ikke å gjøre alle de instrumentelle tingene. En jobb er for å tjene penger, å hjelpe noen å leve er for å hjelpe noen andre å leve, å dø er å forsvinne... Altså, alt det er her litt sånn... Begrepene starter og slutter på en måte, men de har ikke noen evne til å formidle prosessen som fortsetter etter at begrepene slutter å ha en betydning. Så hvis... Det blir som et narkotisk stoff har en start, en tripp, og en slutt på trippen, men så fortsetter man jo etter det, og det er... En evig prosess, så man forlater jo alle begreper uansett hvilke begreper man tar tak i, så det er liksom ingenting å holde fast i. De teknikkene som er i astralplanet og sånt er liksom et nødvendig felt da for å oppnå den Kunnskapen og Samtalen med Skytsengelen, hvor man finner mer ut hva det er man sikter opp mot med hele det her, i Thelemisk filosofi. Og hvor man Krysser Avgrunnen hvor man utsletter alle disse begrepene man har. Alle konsepter, alt som er lagd når kanskje sin ende. Jeg vet ikke, for jeg har ikke noe erfaring med det. Så vil man se alt for det det er, og så har man likevel overlevd det, og fortsetter her på jorden i en nå og forhåpentligvis bedre form, da. Så. Det. *

Ler*

I: Ja, du har nå vært litt inne på det, men jeg spør nå likevel. Hva er det man kan gjøre når man astralprojiserer?

O: Tja. Jeg vet ikke jeg. Neste? * Ler*

I: Ærlig svar, det. Om du skulle prøvd å astralprojisert i kveld, og hadde ment at du hadde fått det til, hvordan ville du vurdert hvor mye den astralprojeksjonen ville vært verdt? Fins det noen projeksjonsopplevelser som er mer verdt enn andre?

O: Ja, det tror jeg. Altså, hvis jeg... Det vil være avhengig av hvordan det hjelper meg til å holde en stø kurs da, altså komme... Altså, eller. Om det vil lære meg noe om virkeligheten som gir mening. Så... Hvis jeg astralprojiserer og skaper en kropp, som da, altså... Jeg vet ikke jeg, sitter fast i en rosa elefant, og vi sitter og spiser gomp, og jeg kommer tilbake igjen så vil jeg ikke se noe mening i det. * Begge ler*

Altså... Meningen vil nok gi seg selv, det må være noe jeg kjenner igjen. Om jeg oppdager noe som er en svakhet som jeg kan bli bedre på, så vil det være meningsfylt. Fordi hele reisen handler om å bli et mer komplett menneske. Har ikke noe graderingssystem for hva som vil være viktigst, men det er liksom den vage forventningen jeg på en måte starter med da.

I: Litt abstrakt nå. Hvordan vil du vurdere hvorvidt opplevelsen var i samsvar med din Sanne Vilje, eller ikke?

O: Hm. Jeg ville nå sett på om det var hjelpsomt eller destruktivt for det, det, det jeg har erklært er min Sanne Vilje, som jeg er overbevist om er min Sanne Vilje i øyeblikket da. Og enten så overbeviser den opplevelsen meg om at det jeg hadde erklært på forhånd er feil, eller, ved å vise at det er en mer verdifull, at det var en annen vei jeg burde ta. Men det er helt umulig å si hva det skulle vært, siden jeg var overbevist om det var noe annet som var min Vilje fra før, for da ville jeg jo antatt at det var min Vilje det jeg kom til å se. Så det er nødt til å være veldig overbevisende, hvis det skal ende kurs for det jeg gjør nå. Eller det må være noe jeg antar er min kurs, som jeg har funnet ut at jeg må gjøre, men ikke vet hvordan jeg skal gjøre det, og det kan vise meg en måte å gjøre det på. Eller det kan... Sette på plass biter som mangler i puslespillet jeg har, rent intellektuelt da, eller følelsmessig. Ja, det er det... Jeg tror.

I: Hvorfor bruker du disse kriteriene, og hvordan har du lært dem?

O: Jo, jeg prøver å få et så komplett bilde som mulig av hvilke krefter som definerer meg som menneske, som vesen. I Thelema så har vi flere modeller å tenke på sånne ting, fordi det er umulig å inkludere alt, da ville du på en måte ha oppnådd den totale forståelsen av deg selv, så da ville det ikke være mer igjen av reisen. * Ler*

Så, men... Ved å studere Livets Tre og Kabbalah, for eksempel er en metode jeg bruker, hvor stiene er... Altså det er lagt opp i Sefiraer, som skal prøve å uttrykke så mange ideer som mulig, ettersom hvor mange ideer du klarer å attributere til de, som skal korrespondere på en eller annen måte. Så har man for eksempel intellektet og følelsene, som er delt inn i to, hver sine sfærer. Men, altså, det blir en litt forenkling av det systemet, og kanskje litt feil å si det sånn og. Fordi at, du har jo jorda som er Malkuth, Yesod er følelseslivet mer bundet opp i, men igjen så er intellektet i Hod, så er følelser igjen på Venus sin side, om jeg har forstått det riktig. Og astralplanet finnes da egentlig, på veien opp mot Yesod fra Malkuth, slik jeg tror det er nå da. Så, det er en modell å jobbe med da, som jeg kan prøve å bruke for å formulere de kategoriene som jeg nødvendigvis mangler. Aspekter som jeg ikke ser, som jeg ikke klarer å pakke inn i uttrykket mitt. * Ler*

Men så er det også måter å tenke på det som er helt løsrevet fra det og, hvor man bare bruker...

Rett og slett erfaringene sine da. Men alt blir brukt for å oppnå en større helhet og prøve å inkludere mest mulig så man ikke overser aspekter ved seg selv som fins og som er reelle og... For det er en rent intellektuell øvelse da, i, hva... Hva jeg prøver å uttrykke, prøver å få til. Ja. Så...

I: Hvor er det du har lært disse fortolkningsmetodene fra? Er det en spesiell bok, person, eller i samtale med andre, eller har du kommet frem til dem selv, eller?

O: Det er egentlig alt det der, for jeg får ikke noen klar... Det er jo, altså, jeg har lært mye av den kabbalistiske tankegangen fra den dere 777-boka og diverse skrifter fra Crowley. Men så er det også, har jeg innsett på en måte, at det er veldig vanskelig å uttrykke seg på den måten fordi man trår så feil by default da. Siden det er så, det er en kompleks... Det går ikke egentlig an å intellektualisere sitt eget vesen, for da går mister man per definisjon følelsesaspekter og andre aspekter ved ting som bare er... Sånn ting er. * Ler*

Og som er veldig vanskelig å forholde seg til. Og... Og som jeg har blitt instruert av en person i O.T.O. At med en gang man har noen vanskeligheter i livet nytter det ikke å tenke sånn, da er det veldig viktig å legge vekk metafysikk og tenke pragmatisk. Fordi det er en øvelse man gjør på en måte fordi det ikke fungerer, så jobber man med det hele tiden for å prøve å løse det, nesten. Det er utviklende, men det kan også bli for stort, kan også overutvikle intellektet kanskje. Må passe på at det ikke forringer andre aspekter ved tilværelsen da. Men det er derfor man gjør det. Det er der jeg har lært det fra de bøkene da, forskjellige personer og... Innvielser. Rett og slett.

I: Da lurer jeg bare på om det er noe rundt astralprojeksjon som du føler at vi ikke har dekt nå?

O: Hmm. Tja. Nei, jeg kommer ikke på noe.

I: Den er grei, da takker jeg så mye for intervjuet.

Transkripsjon av intervju 3, gjort 31/01 2015

I: Da starter vi egentlig med å gå rett på sak. Hva er astralprojeksjon?

O: Hva det er?

I: Mhm.

O: Det er to forklaringer på det, på en måte, tenker jeg. Den ene er det at... Du, på en mer materialistisk og sekulær... Nei, ikke sekulær, men det mer materialistiske perspektivet er at man bruker sine indre sanser, følelsesvesen og bygger opp en visualisering, en tilstedeværelse som man projiserer inn i et indre rom som man fyller med mening og sensasjoner og... Det andre er den metafysiske, der det oppfattes som man løsriver seg fra det fysiske, eller separerer seg fra det fysiske da. Så det kommer an på hvordan man ser på det, jeg personlig har ikke gjort meg opp noen mening om det. Jeg... De opplevelsene jeg har hatt med det, jeg tar det for den erfaringen det er da. Enten om det er noe som bare skjer i meg eller noe reelt åndelig som skjer da, det har jeg ikke sementert, kan du si.

I: Hvordan er det man astralprojiserer?

O: Hvordan man gjør det?

I: Mhm.

O: Sånn jeg har tilnærmet meg det så er det det å, altså, man lukker øynene. * Ler*

Som er litt given, også er det det at... Jeg husker tidlig, når jeg var ung, så var det sånn at jeg lå i sofaen og bare slappet av eller noe sånt noe, også var det sånn at jeg bevegde meg uten å bevege meg. Altså at jeg kunne løfte på armen... Jeg så for meg det og kjente det og gjorde det, men armen, den fysiske armen bare lå der. Så for meg så astralprojeksjon det er å gjøre noe, sanse

noe, oppfatte noe, uten at du gjør det med kroppen din. Altså at det føles veldig reelt, men det er ikke noe som foregår på det fysiske nivået da. Ja. Det er vel det sånn helt elementært, også er det det med reiser, oppleve andre verdener eller ja, sinnstilstander og... Ja. Det er vel det jeg tenker er astralprojeksjon da.

I: Hvis du skulle forsøke å astralprojisere nå, hvordan er det du ville gått frem?

O: Jeg ville vel bare prøve å sette meg i en komfortabel posisjon, som ikke er en posisjon hvor jeg ville sovnet. Sånn som Asana da, som onkel Crowley lærer oss. * Begge ler*

Der hvor du sitter stødig og ikke blir plaget av kroppslige sensasjoner, og kan da fokusere og konsentrere deg på å reise deg opp eller komme deg ut, altså, i gåsetegn da. Komme deg ut av kroppen din da. Men... Det er jo en, enten det er åndelig eller ikke, så er det et prinsipp om separasjon da. At du bygger opp et såkalt Lyslegeme og reiser i det. Så, i den posisjonen da så prøver liksom å reise meg opp uten å reise meg opp, og kjenne at det faktisk skjer. Ikke at du bare tenker det, for det er det som er skillet. Du kan sitte der og fantasere, men det skal liksom faktisk skje da, samme hva det er. Og det er det som er liksom hvordan jeg ville gjort det. Litt textbook kanskje, men det er ihvertfall sånn jeg har lært i forhold til den Thelemiske tradisjon, som jeg er tilhenger av da. Det er ikke noe, jeg føler at i den Thelemiske tradisjonen så er det liksom mindre quote unquote fjas. Det er liksom ikke så mye bagasje rundt det, du gjør noe, det skjer noe og du opplever noe.

I: Må man forberede seg på noe vis, om man skal forsøke å astralprojisere?

O: Det krever øving. Så, og det der med posisjonene, å sitte i en posisjon, det med å ikke bli plaget av fysiske ticks, holdt jeg på å si, og det med å ikke bli plaget av distre tanker, hva skal jeg ha til middag, jeg er sulten, jeg er stresset på grunn av jobben, ett eller annet sånt noe, ikke sant? Det krever øving, det er ikke bare noe du kan sette deg ned også skjer det, så funker det. Det krever fokus og tilstedeværelse, uten det så... Jeg er absolutt ikke noen ekspert, det er ikke noe jeg har gjort mye, men ja, det krever nå forberedelse gjennom øving, ikke noe sånt... Det kan jo være greit å sette deg inn i en tilstand gjennom ritual, men det er ikke noe absolutt krav. Det vil nå hjelpe kanskje med å sette deg i stemningen eller i modus.

I: Tror du alle kan få det til?

O: Ja, med mindre du lider av noen psykiske eller kanskje tilogmed fysiske ting som er så distraherende og så plagsomt at du ikke klarer å få den roen da, eller klarer å fokusere. Kanskje du bare trenger mer trening eller gjentagelse for å få det til, jeg tenker liksom hvis du har et ille tilfelle av ADD eller ADHD eller noe sånt, så kan det være litt... Jeg vet ikke jeg, jeg har jo aldri hatt det.

* Ler*

Eller, så... Ja jeg tror at alle i prinsippet kan få det til da, men du må da ville det og gå inn for det, holdt jeg på å si. Ja.

I: Tror du at det går an å gjøre astralprojeksjon uten å vite hva det er for noe?

O: Ja. Det tror jeg. Fordi det er jo folk som beskriver det, sånne ut av kroppen opplevelser, så jeg tror det kan skje spontant. Litt sånn i samvær med sånn der lucid dreaming. Ja, at man... Spontant ut av kroppen da, jeg tror det kan skje.

I: Har du astralprojisert?

O: Ja.

I: Hvordan gikk du frem for å oppnå det?

O: Det er vel sånn som jeg beskrev det i hvordan man gjør det. Det med å sette seg ned, finne roen, tre ut av kroppen...

I: Hvordan er det du trer ut av kroppen da?

O: Jeg har bare gjort det litt sånn at, jeg har bare svevd av gårde. * Begge ler*

Det er litt vanskelig å kontrollere den der lyskroppen da, det er... Noen sier at du skal først gå liksom fra beina og opp, og det vanskeligste er å separere hodet fra hodet. * Ler* Du henger igjen i skallen din mens du flyter opp etter beina. Men ja, jeg har gjort det, men ikke kommet så veldig langt. Det å tre ut av kroppen det... Det er liksom bare å begynne som jeg sa å bevege på kroppsdelene uten å bevege på de, å begynne å kjenne at den der kroppen våkner, også begynne å komme deg vekk da, holdt jeg på å si...

I: Hvordan er det det føles når du gjør det? Er det noen spesielle følelser knyttet til det?

O: Ja, det er liksom... Du er veldig mye mer tilstede, fordi du fokuserer jo for å føle og bevege på, så må du fokusere veldig på det, det skjer ikke noe automatisk sånn i fysisk forstand. Og du blir jo på... Du blir en del, veldig integrert. Eller jeg opplever ihvertfall at jeg blir veldig mye mer integrert i det som skjer rundt meg i den der astralverdenen da, fordi... Altså, jeg heller vel litt mer mot at du lager det sjøl da, at det skjer inni deg, og du er på en måte i en veldig stor grad en del av det som skjer der. Så det er en slags oppløsning. Du er separert fra det, men fordi du oppfatter deg selv og ditt lyslegeme som deg, og det andre er liksom det andre, men du er veldig interwoven med det da. Så det er en slags oppløsende greie... Ja, det er vel sensasjonen av det, som sagt, jeg har ikke kommet så veldig langt.

I: Hva er det du kan sanse når du er der? Ser du ting? Kan du kjenne på ting, lukte ting?

O: Ja, min erfaring er at du ikke ser det, men du vet det bare er der. Jeg har hørt folk si, at de som gjør det veldig mye og veldig ofte, har fortalt at det er så klart og tydelig som her og nå i den fysiske verden. For meg så er det... Du kan ta det... Du får den fysiske reaksjonen når du interagerer med ting og tang der selv om du sitter helt stille, du gjør ikke noe. Så er... Noe av trikket er det med at tidlig, når jeg gjorde det, så var det sånn at jeg prøvde hele tiden å se ting sånn krystallklart, jeg måtte se det. Men... Etterhvert så blir det sånn at, selv om jeg... Selv om rommet er her, så ser jeg ikke alt, jeg ser ikke på alt hele tiden. Så den visualiseringen er mer at ting bare er her da, du må liksom bare føle at det er her. Ja, nå bevegde jeg meg kanskje litt vekk fra spørsmålet?

I: Neida, det er bra det her.

O: Så visualiseringen krever på en måte alt, at du, du vet at det er der. At du føler rommet, at du vet at du er det, at du kan ta på ting og kjenne det, og det samme med smak og lukt. Jeg har ikke akkurat smakt så mye på astralstoff. * Begge ler*

Ja, jeg kan jo gå inn dit en gang og slippe en fjert og se om jeg kan lukte den. * Begge ler*

I: Husk å rapportere tilbake igjen hit da. * Begge ler*

O: Ja! * Ler*

I: Kan du kjenne den fysiske kroppen din, som sitter eller ligger der, mens du astralprojiserer?

O: Ja og nei. Det kommer an på hvor langt du har kommet, tenker jeg. Jeg har ikke kommet så veldig langt, så om jeg gjør det så blir jeg plaget av det. Men jeg har opplevd det med at, når du sitter i Asana, og du har øvd inn den, så blir det til slutt slik at du kjenner, når du kommer til det punktet at kroppen bare blir helt stille. Den bare sitter der, på en måte. Så både ja og nei, hvis det kommer en rykning eller ett eller annet og du ikke har gjort det så mye så vil det kjennes, men hvis fokuset blir tatt vekk fra den så er du ikke bevisst på kroppen på samme måte. Så ja og nei. * Ler*

I: Så om det er en høy lyd i rommet der du sitter, for eksempel. Reagerer du på den da?

O: I mitt tilfelle så tror jeg ja. Og jeg vil tro det at hvis... Hvis jeg blir dreven på det, så vil jeg

også tro at hvis noen kommer inn og bare wrararara, begynner å snakke og prate og sånn, så tror jeg det at du blir dratt ut av det. Men jeg vet ikke, det er vel folk som kan gå så langt inn i det at de må selv gå ut av det for at de skal våkne da, men det har ikke jeg erfart.

Det kan bli sånn transetilstand da.

I: Kan du sammenligne astralprojeksjonsopplevelsen med noe annet?

O: Det blir vel drømming da, hvis det skal sammenlignes med noe. Det er det... Men forskjellen blir det at... Vel, for det første så er man i kontroll, og i drømmeverdenen så er det litt sånn at det er veldig... Målet med astralprojeksjon er jo å være helt tilstede i den verdenen som, ja, som her. At ja, men i drøm så føler du mere at det er som en film, på en måte. Men noen ganger er det at jeg føler meg veldig fysisk tilstede i drømmen... Så ja, det er vel det jeg kan sammenligne med da. Kan jo kanskje tenkes at astralprojisering er som lucid dreaming, bare igangsatt i våken tilstand.

I: Du har sagt litt om hva som er ulikhetene mellom drømming, bevisst drømming og astralprojeksjon. Kan du si litt om hva likhetene er?

O: Ja. Likheten er det at du er i en ikke-fysisk verden, og likheten med bevisst drømming og astralprojeksjon er at du er i kontroll. Og jeg har hørt det at... Jeg har ikke opplevd noe særlig lucid dreaming, men de som har fortalt om opplevelsene sine er jo det at det er veldig mystiske opplevelser, gjennom det. Mens... Det samme kan jo skje i drømming og, at man kan få sanne åndelige opplevelser gjennom det. Drømming... Det er jo en forskjell igjen da, drømming kan være sånn banalt og... Veldig.. Ja. Men det er vel det da, den mystiske opplevelsen, den følelsen av å komme i kontakt med det andre. Det er jo det man prøver med gjennom astralprojeksjon, å komme i kontakt med den andre verdenen, komme i kontakt med noe som overskrider eller transcenderer den fysiske verdenen, enten det er psykologisk eller om det er reelt åndelig. Og det er jo lucid dreaming og den der old hag greia. Jeg vet ikke om det er bevisst drømming... Nei, det er jo ikke det. Der hvor man føler seg fanget og har fornemmelsen om at det er noe i rommet og du blir bevisst, men du er liksom i drømme...

I: Tenker du på søvnparalyse?

O: Søvnparalyse! Det er jo også knyttet til mystiske og åndelige opplevelser med demoner og sånt... Jeg føler at det er en slags connection der, at man når litt samme sted, men det er forskjellige inngangsporter, på en måte.

I: Kan du fortelle meg om et par ganger du astralprojiserte?

O: Ja. Skal vi se... Det er så lenge siden... * Ler*

Ja, jeg har jo som sagt ikke så veldig mye sånn direkte erfaring. Noe, nok til å snakke litt om det da. Men de gangene jeg har gjort det så har det vært sånn at jeg har... Bare kommet meg på en måte ut av kroppen. Og det som har skjedd da er at jeg har fyket sånn ukontrollerbart bare rundt i verdensommet. Sånn offer for omstendigheter og gravitasjon, eller omvendt gravitasjon. * Ler*

Det jeg har møtt på da det har vært sånn... Jeg møtte på en slags Buddha-figur, som bare satt der.

* Ler* Og ja, det var vel egentlig det... Jo! Jeg skjærte den i to med et sverd. * Begge ler*

Det er så lenge siden at jeg husker ikke helt sånn hvorfor, men ja.

Og en annen gang... Det var sånn, det var liksom, det var ikke... Jeg hadde ikke klart å forme hele legemet da, så det var litt sånn, det var en sånn tilstand av vektløshet, og... Mer sånn at det var meg, armene mine og bevisstheten min, så var vel kanskje ikke sånn 100 prosent tilstede.

I: Kan du si litt mer om hva du mener med "å forme hele legemet"?

O: Ja, det er det at du føler at du fysisk er tilstede da, at du kjenner en hver sensasjon som om du... Det kan hende at det, jeg vet ikke, jeg har ikke klart å gjøre det selv, så det er ikke sikkert at

det er sånn det funker heller. Jeg, jeg mener også... Jeg har reist meg opp, sittende i en stol så har jeg reist meg opp, så har jeg gått bortover gulvet. Da føler jeg sånn der at jeg gjør det, jeg kjenner at kroppen min blir dratt i forskjellige retninger, det er veldig vanskelig å kontrollere, jeg faller gjennom gulvet, jeg fyker opp gjennom taket. Såne type ting da. Da kjenner jeg liksom hele legemet, altså jeg kjenner liksom, beina er der, ryggen og torso er der, armene er der, og hodet og alt liksom. Men når jeg fyker ut i verdensrommet så blir det mer en sånn metafysisk, sveve rundt som en bevissthet type greie da. Jeg har ikke kommet så langt som å tre inn i... Altså, i forhold til det Thelemiske så er det med å reise inn mot solen, da skal du gjennom alle de der verdenene, den første er gnomenes jord, ikke sant? Og jeg har ikke kommet så langt med å begynne på det, å lage et tempel og alt sånt som man snakker om. Men, ja...

I: Hvordan var det du kom frem til at disse opplevelsene var astralprojeksjon?

O: Det var det at jeg var bevisst, og det var ikke bare sånn... For at... Skillet mellom, bare sånn fantasi, og astralprojeksjon, er det at du føler det fysisk da. Og at du... Ja, det er vel det. Men...

I: Hvordan er det du forventet at astralprojeksjon skulle være?

O: Jeg har hatt lite forventninger til det. Jeg har liksom tenkt at jeg vet ingenting om det, også har jeg tenkt at... Kanskje forhåpninger da? Håpet om at jeg skal komme til en sånn der magisk verden og masse greier og sånn, men det har ikke skjedd enda. * Begge ler*

Ja ok, du kan kalle det en forventning, men altså. At man skal oppleve noe veldig reelt da, istedetfor å bare sitte og... Ja, altså, det er en måte å beskrive ting på, som en person forklarte meg, at det er forskjell på å få en visjon og astralprojisere fordi du kan oppleve mye gjennom visjon, men da er det som å se på noe på en TV, men astralprojisering er det at du er der hvor det skjer. Og, ja... Så... What was the question again? * Begge ler*

I: Forventningene dine.

O: Ja! Forventningene er det at når du blir dreven da, blir det interaksjon, direkte interaksjon med vesener på det planet da, hva enn det er. At du hører og snakker med de og, ja... Det lille erfaringene jeg har hatt så... Det lille jeg har møtt på har vært veldig sånn diffust og uklart og ikke noe særlig, ikke noe interaksjon. Bare såne rare ting som prøver å klamre seg fast til meg som jeg... Jeg vet ikke. Det var èn, men det blir ikke astralprojeksjon da... Nei, det blir ikke astralprojeksjon.

I: Har forventningene dine endret seg?

O: Ja! Fordi at jeg tenker... Jeg tenker at dette her er et verktøy for å utforske seg selv, og den der perfeksjonistiske tanken da, med at du skal liksom... Alt skal være så perfekt visualisert, alt skal liksom være som i den virkelige verden, bare weird shit, liksom. * Begge ler*

Og... Jeg tror det at noen har sikkert øvd så mye at de får det til veldig bra, men hvis du... Jeg har kanskje personlig latt forventninger om the awe and awesomeness når jeg blir fortalt såne ting, at jeg har tenkt at jeg ikke klarer det, derfor driver jeg ikke så mye med det, men det er bare...

Altså, man gjør det, og opplever noe, og får noe ut av det og ikke sant, og jobber med det og alt, og får noe ut av det. Nå fikk jeg lyst til å begynne på med det igjen... * Begge ler*

Men ja, forventningene er sånn at det gir et driv også da, forventningene er kanskje det som bidrar til å skape... At du bruker forventningene og det du blir fortalt til å skape den astrale reisen, og ja... Jeg vet ikke, det er noen som sier at det er noe reelt, ikke sant? At du reiser dit og opplever det som faktisk er der, at du ikke skaper det sjøl. Ja, jeg veit ikke helt jeg. * Ler*

Hvis det er noe der så tror jeg ikke at det er pre-made for deg, liksom. Da tror jeg heller at sånn... Det er noe der, men du fargelegger det. Du gir påfuglen fjærene. Fuglen er der, men den har ikke... Blomstret til det. Ja.

I: Disse forventningene om at det skulle oppleves så virkelig med en gang og at det skal være noe der og slikt, hvordan har du fått disse forventningene?

O: Andre som har fortalt det. Andre som har drevet med magi og denslags ganske lenge, også liksom... Sitter og forteller om det og skal lære bort ting og tang og... Ja, litt sånn. Men... Og jeg tror nå på at de, jeg tror ikke at de sitter og lyver, jeg tror bare at hver og en... Det blir en veldig subjektiv opplevelse og prosess og du bygger din egen metode til syvende og sist da. Vi har jo ikke noe sånn... Det er vanskelig å sammenligne når det bare er en person som forteller sin erfaring av det. Det er vel store likheter, men samtidig så, ja. Vi er jo veldig forskjellige og triggerer på forskjellig måte og sånn. Ja.

I: Hvorfor er det du ønsket eller ønsker å astralprojisere?

O: Erfaring og utvikling. Jeg har jo, selv om jeg kanskje ikke har vært så enormt aktiv med magi og alt sånt så er jeg ut på en magisk reise i meg selv, i, ja, livet mitt. Med utvikling og åpenbaringer og... Som ikke jeg kan stoppe, på en måte. * Ler* Det blir litt umulig når man først har startet på det. What has been seen cannot be unseen, typ. Jeg har lyst til å astralprojisere og har vært interessert i det på grunn av det å faktisk ha reelle åndelige opplevelser, enten det er psykologisk eller reelt. Å møte den andre, eller de andre. Jeg har vært veldig fascinert, i ung alder var jeg veldig fascinert av mystiske, åndelige, UFOer, hadde veldig lyst til å møte romvesener og alt sånt liksom. Så ideen om å kunne gå ut av meg selv, inn i en annen verden og ha meningsfull interaksjon med sære vesener, og guder og ånder og demoner og whatever. Det... It's pretty awesome. * Begge ler*

Samme hva det egentlig er...

I: God sales-pitch, det.

O: Ja! * ler*

I: Du sier at litt av målet er det med å få selvforståelse, og litt med å ha mystiske eller åndelige opplevelser, som du kalte det, og det litt mer eventyrlystne, om jeg har forstått deg rett?

O: Ja.

I: Hvordan eller hva slags kunnskap om deg selv kan du få gjennom å astralprojisere?

O: Det ligger vel i ordet projisere. Altså, jeg tenker at, ja, altså, okay. Splittet mellom det metafysiske perspektivet og det fysiske eller materialistiske, og... I Thelema, altså, du reiser i ditt indre univers. Det er ikke noe sånt at man sier at det er noe... Ja, på begge nivåer så er det sånn det at du er i deg da, går innover i ditt uendelige univers, og du møter da aspekter av deg selv, og du forhandler med de, du kontrollerer med de, og ja... Ikke sant? Det blir litt det at... Jeg føler at mine forklaringer blir litt sånn banale... Men uansett, det blir litt som å bruke tarotkort. Du leser symbolikken også reflekterer du i det, og det triggerer forståelse da, ikke sant? Det trigger tanker og følelser og sånt også ser du på ditt eget liv gjennom det, cold reading. Det blir litt det samme når du drar inn i astralverdenen, også opplever du disse rare tingene, også bruker du et symbolspråk for å tolke det, men det blir mye mer intenst, mye mer levende, for du er der i symbolikken, ikke sant? Så det er sånn jeg tenker på det som er verktøy da til selvforståelse og åpenbaring og utvikling da.

I: Du har vært litt inne på dette; hva er det man kan gjøre når man astralprojiserer? Du har jo nevnt bygge tempel, interagere med skapninger og objekter du møter på på forskjellige måter og...

O: Hva er det det gjør, liksom?

I: Hva er det man kan gjøre når man astralprojiserer?

O: Okay. Jeg vil si at man kan gjøre hva som helst. Det er liksom the land of opportunity. Du kan

se for deg og skape ting, men samtidig så møter du på ting som du ikke har skapt da, som kommer ut av ditt indre univers, som du på en måte da ubevisst fargelegger, ikke sant, og tar imot på en måte og har et forhold til. Det med å bygge tempel det er noe du kan, du kan jo dekorere det som du vil og, ja... Det har jo ikke jeg gjort, men altså du, former jo verden og du kan fly rundt hvor enn du vil og reise i tid og rom så fort og enkelt du måtte ønske, hvis du på en måte har fått nøklene da. Det er også en interessant ting, det er jo begrensninger ikke bare i form av det at du må øve deg opp til å komme deg ut av kroppen din og visualisere og... Folk sier det at, og det har jeg faktisk opplevd, det glemte jeg. Det med altså, du, det er forskjellige verdener, ikke sant? Som er assosiert litt forskjellig, med jord, ild og blabla, masse andre ting. Og det med at du skal reise til de verdener er liksom portaler og denslags der du skal reise gjennom et symbol for å komme til... Det her med, ja... Sigiler, eller noe sånt, for å komme seg til gnomenes verden da. Og jeg prøvde det en gang, husker jeg, men det stoppet. Jeg kom til en sånn gateway, men det bare stoppet. Jeg kom meg ikke inn der. Det var merkelig, for du kan miste kontroll og bli kastet hit og dit, men det her var noe annerledes. Det var sånn at du bare stoppet opp. Jeg bare kom meg ikke inn gjennom den jævla døra der, liksom. Og det er noe med at du, som jeg forstår da, som jeg mener å forstå, at du må opparbeide styrke og forståelse for å tre gjennom de forskjellige verdenene. Det er noe begrensninger, og det at du møter på ting som du ikke har bevisst skapt, gått inn for å forme, gjør jo det at man kan begynne å tenke litt, og som sagt, jeg har ikke falt helt på at dette er kun noe sånt psykologisert fenomen eller psykologisk fenomen, men jeg, liker å stå og hoppe mellom stolene. Ja...

I: Sånn som dette med å besøke andre verdener der og bygge et tempel og slikt, hvorfor gjøre disse tingene?

O: Det er vel for... Det med å bygge tempel er jo for å gjøre ritualer på astralplanet, og gjennom det styrke seg på astralplanet, for man sier jo ihvertfall i Thelemisk forstand, ritualer er en ytre manifestasjon. Man gjør det ytre for å få en indre effekt, veldig enkelt og generalisert da, men det med å gjøre ritualer på astralplanet er jo bare en mer intim greie sånn åndelig sett. Eller, ja, magisk sett da. Ja. Akkurat det så har jeg ikke så veldig mye erfaring med, jeg har ikke erfaring med det, for å si det sånn. Jeg tror jeg prøvde å gjøre Liber Samekh en gang, nei beklager, jeg gjorde, jeg prøvde å gjøre det Lille Pentagramritualet astralt, jeg tror det var det. Og jeg klarte å go through the motions, men da var det liksom bare meg i mørke som gjorde bevegelsene og sånn, og jeg følte det litt sånn i fysisk forstand, men det var ganske half assed av meg. * Ler* Men det med å reise til de forskjellige verdenene, det er på en måte en initiativisk reise, som man går gjennom grader i en orden eller noe sånt noe, eller får tilgang til det etterhvert som man har bygd seg opp forståelsen eller makten eller... Ja, så det er en vekst. Grunnen til at man gjør det er jo for å... Conquer thyself, holdt jeg på å si.

I: Er noen projeksjonsopplevelser mer verdt for deg enn andre?

O: Ja, altså i den forstand at noen er mer suksessfylt og gir meg faktisk noe kunnskap, imens noen så har jeg bare flakset rundt i et sort rom. * Ler*

Så, ja. Det blir jo det. Men hvis jeg skal si, hvis vi sier det sånn at hver gang jeg er ute og reiser og opplever noe og sånn så er jo alle like verdifulle. Egentlig så er jo alle like mye verdt fordi de er et steg i en retning da, alle er byggeklosser i noe større. Ja.

I: Tidligere så snakket du litt om det med kunnskap om deg selv og med åndelige opplevelser. Skiller du mellom astralprojeksjonsopplevelser hvor du får kunnskap om deg selv, eller der hvor du flakser rundt som du sa, og opplevelser som du ser på som åndelige?

O: Ja, jeg skiller mellom... Skillet går vel mellom det at du... Hvis du får en åpenbaring som er

litt mer sånn grand, da. At du møter på et eller annet som forteller deg noe som gjelder litt mer enn bare deg, der du får en forståelse om mekanismer i astralverdenen da eller noe sånt noe. Du får forståelse for den verdenen, det vil være en sånn... Nei, alt leder jo på en måte tilbake til deg selv da. Forståelse om eksistensen er jo forståelse om seg selv. Forstår man mer om seg selv så forstår man seg mer på verden da. Da snakker jeg om en sånn brutal ærlighetsgreie, ikke sånn der self-delusions, så ja. Nei, det er vel ikke noe skille, til syvende og sist, så er det egentlig ikke noe skille det der... Nei.

I: Hvordan vurderer du hvorvidt opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje, eller ikke?

O: Hva sa du nå?

I: Hvordan vurderer du hvorvidt projeksjonsopplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje, eller ikke?

O: Okay... Det føler jeg nester er litt sånn trick question, for opplevelser... Du kan jo ikke, i den virkelige verden så kan du ikke... Gjøre sånn at alt som skjer deg skal være i samhold med din Vilje, altså ting skjer i histen og pisten og... Ja, du kan velge deg ut en bane og følge din Sanne Vilje, og at det er det du hovedsaklig konsentrerer deg om, men du kan ikke unngå å komme i kontakt med andre ting. Og din Sanne Vilje er jo også en sånn slags, det er vesenet ditt, tenker jeg da. Og vesenet ditt gjør det vesenet ditt gjør, og opplever og vokser og sånn. Det samme vil gjelde der da. Om det er i tråd med din Sanne Vilje, er om du møter det som ditt samme vesen eller ikke. Hvis du lar det overstyre det, så vil jeg si nei, men det er fordi at det som skjer det skjer, men hvordan møter du det? Møter du det som at du er ditt vesen, eller putter du på en maske og later som noe annet og gjør noe som egentlig... Ja...

I: Hvorfor bruker du disse kriteriene, eller hvor er det du har dem fra?

O: Det er jo det her, altså... Skal vi se... Det er jo... Det er jo det at Thelema, sånn jeg forstår meg på det her med Vilje og sånn, det med å søke sin Sanne Vilje er å bli bevisst på sitt vesen, så godt som mulig. Og at vi ikke lever i et vakuum, det er bevegelse og dynamikk hele tiden. Og, dermed så kan man ikke, man kan kontrollere seg selv, men man kan ikke kontrollere omverdenen, og man har ingen annen rett enn å gjøre din Vilje. Det er vel der det kommer fra, det er vel grunnsteinen i Thelema.

I: Da lurer jeg til slutt på om du har noe å tilføye til dette med astralprojeksjon, om det er noe du mener at vi ikke har fått dekt?

O: Jeg kan jo si littegranne om, fordi at jeg gjorde en sammenligning mellom bevisst drømming, og eller, søvnparalyse og astralprojeksjon. Og jeg har hatt søvnparalyse et par tre ganger, jeg lå i sengen, og det var i en periode hvor jeg gjorde Liber Samekh daglig. Jeg fikk, det var en som sa det at hvis du gjør det så åpner du opp en "gate", så da begynner det å skje rare ting, og det gjorde det. Det var ett eller annet som trykket dynen ned over meg og "gropet" meg. * Ler* Og jeg fikk... Det var et par tre ganger hvor jeg ble besøkt av noe, da. Og det, det kan jeg oppf... Kan nesten oppfatte det som en omvendt astralprojeksjon, at det liksom er noe som kommer ut av den astralverdenen og berører deg på et vis, og da blir du på en måte tvunget til det. Kroppen din stilner helt, også begynner det å skje ting. Det skjer på en måte automatisk, sånn som en spontan ut av kroppen opplevelse, ikke sant? Kroppen slutter å være fokus for bevisstheten din, dermed så fyker bevisstheten din et annet sted, eller at den fokuserer på ett eller annet som mottar ett eller annet... Ja, begreper og sånn... Ja, det var vel det da, jeg kunne slenge til på slutten en tanke om at det kunne være en sånn reversering av den prosessen da, det er ikke du som drar ut til den verdenen, men den verdenen som kommer til deg da, på en måte. Ja.

I: Da takker jeg så mye for at du stilte opp.

O: Bare hyggelig!

Transkripsjon av intervju 4, gjort 18/02 2015.

I: Hva er astralprojeksjon?

O: Det er en måte å bruke sitt eget vesen til å prøve å ense eller sanse det subtile tilstedeværende i verden rundt deg, eller det kan være å gå fullt inn i en annen slags billedlig virkelighet for å utforske dine egne indre verdener. Min holdning er litt sånn todelt... En todelt holdning til astralprojisering.

I: Lener du mer mot den ene forklaringsmodellen enn den andre?

O: Nei, egentlig ikke. Så lenge du disassosierer deg selv fra den fysiske kroppen din for å oppleve en tiltenkt eller subtil virkelighet, som vi ville kalt det i okkultismen, så er det du gjør astralprojisering.

I: Hvordan er det man astralprojiserer?

O: Du kan gjøre det sånn her. * Lukker øynene, ler*

To måter; enten så kan du astralprojisere i den egentlige, synlige verdenen rundt deg. Prøve å, egentlig bevisst, og ikke gjennom noe spesielle teknikker, disassosiere deg selv, og få et visuelt eller, for den saks skyld, emosjonelt inntrykk av det som ikke vises rundt oss. Eller du kan gå helt inn i en annen visuell virkelighet. Du kan bruke sigiler til det, eller, det vanlige er å bruke et eller annet symbol eller et fokuspunkt og gå gjennom det mentalt, og oppleve den verdenen du vil se på den andre siden av det.

I: Så du ser for deg et symbol, også sier du at du går gjennom det. Kan du beskrive det litt nærmere?

O: Du kan både hjelpe deg selv med et fysisk symbol, som inneholder ideer du er kjent med, eller du kan gjøre det helt mentalt. Den sikkert mest klassiske måten å gjøre det på, som jeg og sikkert de fleste andre har prøvd å gjøre det på er å se for seg da, en slags dør eller portal, som er festet med det symbolet. Og enda en gang, disassosiere seg selv, så du kan gå gjennom det, og når du lykkes med å gå gjennom det så er tanken at du skal kunne ta inn informasjon som ligger til grunn for det symbolet. Eksempelvis da... Kan vi ta på pause litt?

I: Jada.

* Pause i 2 minutter*

O: Eksempelvis: i veldig mange former for esoterisme, og i Thelema også så blir jo gjerne det hebraiske alfabetet, korrespondanser knyttet til det, som plasseres på Livets Tre, brukt som grunnlag for et komplekst symbolspråk. Så, et eksempel fra mine egne eksperimenter. Hvis jeg vil utforske egenskapene og verdiene som ligger til grunnlag for Yodh, bokstaven Yodh, som jeg var veldig interessert i i en periode av forskjellige grunner, så har vi to verktøy. Jeg har jobbet med en liten grimoire som Crowley utviklet, som heter Liber 231, som er utelukkende lagd for nettopp denne typen arbeid.

* Pause i 2 minutter pga telefonanrop*

Jeg ville utforske Yodh, to måter å gjøre det på. I denne lille grimoiren som heter Liber 231, som bare består av... av type sigiler da. Så finner du det korresponderende, den riktige plasseringen til det, du bruker det sigilet. Yodh sin ser mer eller mindre ut som et slags arabisk ånden i lampen som det kommer et kors ut av. Du ser det veldig tydelig for deg i sinnet ditt, bruker en, baserer det på en form for portal, fokuserer eller mediterer på det symbolet, lar det bli sterkere, lar det

lyse opp, lyse opp til du... Prøve å bevisst reise gjennom det. Tanken er at du skal komme inn i en visuell indre virkelighet da. Som du skal kunne bevege deg rundt i, der du skal kunne møte vesen, der du skal... Kunne ta inn ting som ligger til grunn til det som den bokstaven har av verdier da. Jeg er litt...

* Ler* Litt sånn skeptisk egentlig, ikke sant? Jeg tror ikke at de symbolene eller de bokstavene har kraft i seg selv, de har jo kraft fordi du har studert det og fordi at du vet hva som ligger til grunn for det. Så det er jo min skepsis som ligger til grunn for hva vi kaller for astralprojeksjon, at det vil alltid være en del av deg selv og ditt eget kunnskapsnivå og intellekt som vil informere det du opplever. Selvfølgelig.

En annen måte som jeg lærte veldig tidlig når jeg var interessert i det her, og som er en litt fiffig og mye mer... For meg ihvertfall, effektiv måte å gjøre det på, er å bruke tarotkort. Spesielt Crowley sin tarot, men også flere andre er også fylt med elementer av dette symbolspråket som jeg snakket om, ikke sant? Så du har et mye mer komplekst bilde å fokusere på allerede mens du er i deg selv og fokuserer... Ja, det gir deg mye mer å stimulere fantasien din med da, ikke sant? Så igjen, hvis vi skal jobbe med Yodh. Yodh korresponderer med tarotkortet som heter Eremitten. Det er en grønn, svirrete type bakgrunn. Det står en slags gammel person med ryggen litt mot, med røde klær på. Det står en liten, en liten sånn trehodet hund eller ulv nede i ene hjørnet. Det er små sædceller som spinner rundt dette vesenet. Så du har alt dette her å holde deg opptatt med. Jeg synes det er en mye enklere måte å meditere på, og forberede seg på å gjøre den her typen arbeid. Når du føler at du har bildet klart nok i hodet ditt, så kan du prøve på å reise ut av deg selv da. Sant? Enten det betyr at du faktisk klarer å reise deg og gå ut av kroppen din, eller om det er at du lar informasjonen til det kortet overvelde deg da. Jeg tror det... Det jeg kaller mine egne erfaringer med astralprojeksjon ligger midt i mellom, jeg har aldri hevdet at du faktisk reiser 100% inn i en annen form for virkelighet og opplever den som absolutt. Det vil være en forbindelse mellom deg selv som sitter der og det du bare lar hodet ditt svømme ut i, ikke sant? Så du lar kortet begynne å bli levende, bakgrunnen begynner å bevege seg, ikke sant? Personen animeres og levendegjøres, hele kortet blir levende og du får lov til å... Gå inn i det. Og det er veldig, det synes jeg alltid har vært en interessant måte å jobbe på, fordi at du vil få se flere ting enn det som er i kortet, ikke sant? Det vil komme mer informasjon fordi at du kan gå forbi den rammen på den døren, den rammen som er på kortet, ikke sant? Og oppleve det som en tredimensjonal verden. Sånn er astralprojeksjon.

I: Er det noen... Må man forberede seg på noe vis?

O: Mange må det. For det er jo, som jeg har sagt allerede, det forutsetter jo en betydelig grad av konsentrasjon og fantasievne da, eller visualiseringsevne. For å være helt i stand til å gjøre det, for at det ikke bare skal bli en intellektuell øvelse eller noe du sitter og tenker deg til, det må være et visuelt element, ikke sant? På en god dag kan jeg oppleve det som en slags levende, våken drøm da, ikke sant? Du er i det. Andre ganger så enser du mer og du vil få ideer om ting som... Mange er sikkert uenig i at det her er astralprojeksjon, fordi at det fins en del strenge kriterier for hva det egentlig er, men jeg har slått meg til ro med at dette her er en godkjent form for astralprojeksjon.

* Ler* Jeg har fått mye interessante opplevelser ut av den måten å jobbe på.

I: Hva slags kriterier er det du snakket om nå?

O: At du skal være 100% ut av din egen kropp, at du beveger deg i den verdenen der som deg selv, at du møter vesener som du gestalter bevegelser ovenfor, tar bort monstere inni der med bannlysende pentagramritualet, i det hele tatt, at det er en absolutt virkelighet, da. Kan hende at

jeg bare er dårlig til astralprojeksjon. * Begge ler*

I: Hvor har du de kriteriene fra?

O: Det er både fra muntlige tradisjoner og fra ting som er skrevet om astralprojeksjon. Det er jo en så essensiell del og en så gjennombeskrevet del i den her typen okkult arbeid at jeg tror veldig mange ønsker at det skal være veldig virkelig da, ikke sant? Men fordi jeg ikke tror på det som en objektiv virkelighet som jeg og du sammen kan gå inn i og oppleve på en og samme måte, så tillater jeg meg en stor grad av subjektiv synsing og tilnærming i arbeidet.

I: Tror du at alle kan få til astralprojeksjon?

O: Innenfor rimelighetens grenser. Som jeg sa i sted, det er jo en måte... Ihvertfall, den måten å jobbe på som jeg sa... Som jeg beskriver nå, er jo en utdypning av noe du allerede studerer, ikke sant? Du veit hva en del av disse elementene betyr, du vet egenskapene til det du vil inn i. Det du er ute etter er å få mer informasjon fra deg selv, ting som du ikke sikkert sitter og tenker aktivt og rasjonelt på, som er assosiasjoner som du selv knytter til det symbolet. Og...

I: Og det tenker du at de fleste kan få til?

O: Jeg har både jobbet og pratet med mange som mener, som syns å ha veldig store problemer med å se for seg noen ting som helst, ikke sant? Hos Crowley, som er mitt utgangspunkt i den treningen jeg har gjort, starter jo han og veldig basalt, med øvelser i å stille ned kroppen så du kommer inn i en slags transetilstand. Han presenterer jo innledningsvis en masse øvelser som skal trene deg opp til å bli bedre til å se for deg faktiske farger og levende ting bak dine egne lukkede øyne, ikke sant? Som vi slutter å gjøre når vi slutter å være barn, ofte. * Ler*

Det er en egenskap som må trenes opp igjen, ikke sant? Det er jo ikke... Det er jo noe som... Jeg tror alle sammen er i stand til å gjøre det i den grad alle er i stand til å drømme en drøm som de husker som noe visuelt og mer eller mindre noe virkelig, ikke sant? Ikke at det er samme sinnstilstanden som man går inn i, men du vet at hodet ditt er i stand til å produsere bilder som du kan ta inn visuelt, men som ikke er der. Øvelsene som blir lagt til grunn for forberedelsen til sånt arbeid starter med, kan starte med helt grunnleggende symboler, ikke sant? En grunnform i en sterk farge mot en svart bakgrunn, prøv å fokusere på det over gitt antall tid, få det til å bli tydelig, vær i stand til å skifte mellom en rød trekant og en gul firkant. Det er kanskje ikke så veldig spennende, men du blir litt sånn oppildnet over at det blir relativt tydelig og, ikke sant? Og du kan gjøre den her formen for meditasjon, eller egentlig bare mentale øvelser, bare mer og mer komplekst. I den øvelsen jeg snakker om så går det progressivt mot mer og mer komplekse bilder for det indre øyet ditt, ikke sant? Fra grunnformen til å ha to, til å ha et pendulum, til å ha to pendulum, til å ha andre ting som beveger seg på to forskjellige måter, og øvelsen avslutter med å se for seg et menneske i så stor detalj som mulig. Noen tar det ganske fort, og noen bruker veldig lang tid. Det er sikkert og en viss grad av ærlighet ovenfor seg selv, hva man syns er suksess og ikke. Som jeg sa, som jeg sa i stad, at alt som jeg selv klassifiserer som astralprojisering er heller ikke 100% visuelle og taktile virkeligheter jeg går inn i. Det kan være et sted mellom, men du vet hva som er her, du har en veldig klar ide om den verdenen du halvt dagdrømmer deg inn i, ikke sant?

I: Du sammenligner en del med dagdrøm og drømmetilstander, og snakker litt om hva som er likt.

O: Mhm.

I: Kan du si litt om hva som er ulikt også?

O: Det er jo det elementet av bevissthet, da. I en ren drømmetilstand så... Så... Med få unntak da, så er ihvertfall i min opplevelse at jeg/et spiller en mye mindre rolle, selv om man kanskje våkner

og husker det veldig som at man selv var der, så opplever jeg, gjennom min egen slags selvanalyse av mine egne drømmer, at selvfølelsen, at jeg-følelsen, er ganske svak, ofte, i drøm. Jeg tror at man ser ting, at ting skjer på en måte med deg, men du er ofte ikke helt der i... Kanskje andre drømmer annerledes? * Ler* Jeg har jo selvfølgelig hatt mareritt og andre ting der jeg virk... Der jeg føler at, eller ikke bare mareritt da, men drømmer der du har følelser, der du på en måte absolutt er til stede. Men som en generell tommelfingerregel så syns jeg at graden av tilstedeværelse er en vesensforskjell, ikke sant? Noen vil sikkert si at jeg snakker om... Om Lucid Dreaming når jeg sier det her, forskjellen er at du aktivt går inn i et symbolsystem som du legger til grunn for det arbeidet du gjør, i motsetning til Lucid Dreaming hvor du, ofte ihvertfall, går mye friere inn i en slags drømmetilstand. Det var litt vagt, men det makes sense?

I: Ja, jeg setter pris på det. Tror du at det går an å gjøre astralprojeksjon uten å vite hva det er for noe?

O: Det er veldig mange rapporter på det, men jeg tror det ligner mer på... Jeg tror ikke drømmeparalyse, og jeg tror ikke ut av kroppen-opplevelser som du våkner fra eller som du opplever i søvne er det samme, fordi at i en astralprojeksjon så bruker du... Det er en... Det er et moment der du føler at du disassosieres fra deg selv, som... Uten å egentlig å gå bort fra deg selv, som er ofte tilfelle i søvnparalyse og andre sårne ut av kroppen-opplevelser, du... Det er fremdeles deg som går inn i, i de fantasiene og i den her visuelle ekstradimensjonelle virkeligheten, ikke sant? Ja? * Ler*

I: Kunne du fortalt meg om et par ganger du astralprojiserte?

O: Jeg kan fortsette på den jeg sa i stad da, for den er en jeg liker veldig godt og som fortsatt gjør inntrykk på meg. Spesielt det å jobbe med kortet "Eremitten", og bruke det som en dør å astralprojisere gjennom.

I: Når du forteller videre på den, kunne du sagt noe mer om rent fysisk hva du gjør, og hva du gjør i begynnelsen? Setter du deg ned, legger du deg?

O: Jeg setter meg ned på en måte som jeg er avslappet i, uten... Det er veldig fint, jeg syns det er veldig fint å bare ligge da. Det er veldig mange som syns det er veldig fint å sitte oppreist på en stol, og er veldig opptatt av rett rygg og alt det der, men hele hensikten er at kroppen ikke skal falle til side eller at du skal trekkes ut av det fysisk, ikke sant? Jeg har både gjort det her sittende og liggende, men jeg syns jeg får sluppet meg selv friere inn i det i, når jeg ligger da. Så jeg ligger, du puster og i det hele tatt finner andre måter som stilner ned systemet ditt, så du er rolig. Prøver å ense eller føle at du setter deg opp. Jeg syns det er en rask måte å stimulere denne disassosieringen fra kroppen, fordi du ligger der, men du føler og enser bak lukkede øyne at du er vertikal. Du prøver så godt du kan å mane frem det bildet du har bestemt deg for å bruke, i dette tilfellet det her Eremitten-kortet. Det har en veldig tydelig ramme, og det er en scene som foregår innenfor der. Du prøver å få fargene til å bli så klare så mulig, du prøver å få alle detaljene på plass så klart som mulig. Så klart, når du... Holder bildet tydelig nok for sinnet ditt, så kan du prøve å... Så prøver jeg da, å flyte mot det, slik at du kommer nærmere og nærmere. Ikke at kortet kommer nærmere og nærmere deg, men at du kommer nærmere og nærmere det som foregår. Det er litt vanskelig å forklare, for du kommer ikke nærmere og nærmere figuren, for eksempel, men kortet... Omsvøper deg mer og mer. Og halveis gjennom vilje og halveis gjennom at det skjer av seg selv, så lar du de elementene bli levende. Det kortet her er veldig fint å bruke fordi det har den her veldig kaotiske bakgrunnen, ikke sant? Så du har fremdeles den her stillestående, røde figuren i front. Den er relativt lett å få den her til å oppleves som en bakgrunn som er i bevegelse. Det ser allerede ut som at bakgrunnen er i bevegelse på kortet, ikke sant? Det

som er litt vanskeligere å forklare er at du er innenfor disse rammene som du så på. Det som skjer da er at du kan flyte lengre inn, du kan se til siden, du kan se opp, du kan se ned, du kan til en viss grad ense hva slags tekstur eller følelse det er i det kortet, eller i... I materien da. Og... Og lar deg til en viss grad bare se, og til en viss grad fortsette å bevege deg aktivt da. Du kan prøve å gå rundt den figuren, så du kan prøve å se det ansiktet som er halveis vendt fra deg, du kan prøve å se forbi den her svømmende, merkelige bakgrunnen. En... En litt sånn sterk og rar opplevelse for min del, det var egentlig ikke visuelt på den måten, men det var den fornemmelsen av at... Fornemmelsen av at hele den bakgrunnen var innsiden av en slags kopp, eller en slags beholder ikke sant, men den var ikke en omkrets... Og... Litt vanskelig å forklare det og, skjønner du. Men... Du ser ned i den materien og enser det som er under, som ikke lenger er bare den bakgrunnen, du ser andre ting der, du kan se andre ting over deg, du kan ha en forståelse for koppen som er bak der. Og igjen, mye av det her blir jo selvfølgelig informert av det du vet om symbolspråket, fordi disse kortet er omgitt av de andre kortene sine symboler, så det blir mer en slags pathworking ut av det. Men...

I: Kan jeg bare stille deg et par spørsmål før du fortsetter videre? Når du er i den her virkeligheten, da snakker du om at du kunne kjenne tekstur, at du kunne se ting. Kan du også bruke andre sanser? Kan du høre?

O: Du kan lett ha hørsels... En slags, en form for hørselshallusinasjoner ihvertfall... Noen mener å ha det veldig tydelig, jeg mener ikke å ha det like tydelig. Men du kan ha en forståelse for hva som blir kommunisert ikke-verbalt, du er i absolutt kommunikasjon med ting du møter, ikke sant? * Ler* Den lille trehodede hunden kan formidle ting til deg, ikke sant? Den gamle mannen, når du får vendt den om, vil og kunne formidle ideer, men jeg har aldri hatt en samtale, sånn at vi sitter og snakker. Du vil få ideer og nye tanker som blir trigget, men som oppleves som blir trigget av tingene du ser som kommuniserer til deg, ikke sant?

En veldig tidlig, og tildels ufrivillig... Ikke ufrivillig, for det var i en slags rituell situasjon det og, for mange år siden så var et av de første arbeidene jeg deltok i med det som heter Enokiansk magi, som er mange forskjellige ting. Men i det her typen arbeid så er det, veldig kort, en type chant da, ikke sant? En sang som blir sagt i det rommet som jeg var i, og du går mer og mer inn i en slags transetilstand. Du blir rolig i kroppen, og... Uten å egentlig prøve på det da, uten å egentlig reise inn i noe da, så opplevde jeg, veldig plutselig, å stå i luft, hvis du skjønner? Over en rød bakgrunn, veldig rød himmel, uten å klare å gå fremover, uten å klare å gå bakover, med en sol eller et lys som er veldig hvitt. Alt det her er bak lukkede øyne, så det er ikke at det gjør vondt å se på det, men du får ikke helt til å se på det, og du... Prøver likevel å fokusere på det her hvite punktet som ble mer og mer, lyse ut fra et veldig enkelt symbol, da. Som jeg husker, og som jeg på en måte tok med meg tilbake. Det var en veldig kort og en veldig intens opplevelse, som kanskje var en av de første egentlige tingene som jeg følte egentlig var astralprojisering. Fordi at det var så visuelt, fordi at den verdenen var... Taktil, på den måten da. Og fordi at du tar med deg noe tilbake, selvfølgelig. Du er ikke bare og svømmer i en slags fantasiverden, du opplever ofte ting når du gjør det her som virker som, eller som oppleves som at det er viktig for deg da, ikke sant? Ting som du tar med deg som du husker etterpå som forandrer kanskje perspektivet ditt på... Enten det er de her kortene igjen, som jeg jobbet med, eller i det her tilfellet at det er et symbol, som du ikke helt vet hva betyr, men som du enser at er ditt, at det her kom fra deg selv, men at du møter det i en slags okkult virkelighet utenfor deg selv. Og det var veldig sånn skjellsettende fordi at det følte veldig viktig da, ikke sant? Kanskje jeg ville at det skulle være litt viktig. Men du får et symbol du ikke har sett andre steder. Selvfølgelig sånn

veldig generisk i forhold til sigiler og andre svartebøker du har sett, men det var ingen av dem. Og det er ingen av dem... Jeg kan ikke huske å ha sett det på nytt når jeg har sett gjennom andre symboler... Og det har jeg tatt med meg videre da, prøvd å på en måte tilegne en egen betydning. Og det og har jeg prøvd å bruke som et eget symbol for den her dørteknikken, ikke sant? For å reise tilbake inn i det symbolet for å få ting som er helt mitt eget, og... Jeg vet ikke jeg. Jeg syns... Igjen, fordi at jeg kanskje i utgangspunktet er litt sånn her...

Jeg ser verdien i den her slags objektive formen for astralprosjektering, at man jobber sammen med andre rundt et felles symbolspråk, at man i større eller mindre grad skal være i stand til å komme inn i tilstander og hente ut informasjon som er assosiert med symbolene man går inn i. De er fremdeles subjektive opplevelser, ikke sant? Så... Syns det er kanskje, ofte like interessant å gå inn i ting som er mitt eget. Det som ofte skjer da er at det er mer uoversiktlig, fordi du ikke har det samme assosiasjonsapparatet. Det blir vanskeligere å på en måte ha den samme... Fullendte... Nei, det var en dårlig setning, men du skjønner hva jeg mener.

I: Hva er det du tenker på? Å navigere etter det samme kjente symbolsystemet på samme måte, eller?

O: Ikke sant? Og det blir mer kaotisk da, du har ikke de samme knaggene å...

Fortolkningsprosessen blir mer kompleks fordi at... Du har ikk elenger en forståelse av at hvis du går inn i Eremitten da, så er det en forbindelse der til Binah på Livets Tre, ikke sant? Så det ligger til grunn at du skal få symbolikk som kobler de to sammen på en eller annen måte. Det ligger i bakhodet ditt at du vet litt hva som skal være bak der. Så sånn sett så er jo kanskje de helt subjektive formene for astralprojeksjon litt mer vag og da, men ofte litt mer sånn opprivende og givende, fordi at... * Ler*

I: Kan du fortsette med den her... Fortellingen din om når du astralprojiserte til Eremitten?

O: Til Eremitten? Når Eremitten ble tredimensjonal da, så får du til å... Den beveger seg ikke selv på samme måten, den blir ikke animert, egentlig, det kan jo ha med kortet å gjøre, at den er assosierende, men den står veldig forsteinet på en måte. Men den er rund, ikke sant, så du kan flyte inn på siden av det og... Nå visste jeg jo det på forhånd og, men det hodet er jo et ibishode, ikke sant? Det er jo Thoth. Og du... Det er litt sånn underlig å forklare alltid med ord og, men du får se inn i øynene da, til den figuren, ikke sant? Som, uten å egentlig peke, peker i en egen retning i det landskapet bak der. Når jeg så opp til venstre der så... Så var det en slags, jeg vet ikke helt hva jeg skal kalle det heller, men en slags sånn Åsgårdsrei, ikke sant? Langt unna da, men veldig klart for seg en slags... Horde. * Ler* I den her grønne, svingende bakgrunnen, som hele tiden var i bevegelse, og som jeg kunne stå og se på, men som aldri kom nærmere. Og jeg kunne og flyte innover i det bildet uten å komme nærmere dem. Det har jeg gjort noen ganger, men jeg har aldri kommet nærmere dem. Og hvis jeg gjør det nå så er det lett å komme inn i samme plassen, ikke sant? I... En annen ting med det kortet er at du står jo... Beskriver det veldig som å flyte rundt, ikke sant? For du står jo ikke på... Det er en stor avgrunn, ikke en avgrunn som vi ser på Livets Tre der, men du står i... Ingenting, da. Og...

I: Når du er i denne tilstanden, kan du fremdeles kjenne kroppen din som ligger der?

O: Egentlig ikke, men... Du føler deg på en måte ikke låst i det heller. Det kjennes veldig naturlig å gjøre en slags tilbaketrekning gjennom alt det her for å komme tilbake til deg, men du har hele tiden en veldig klar forståelse og fornemmelse av at du kan åpne øynene og være ute av det, men det føles veldig unaturlig å gjøre det og.

I: Når du svever rundt slik, kan du da, slik som du gjør nå, se armene og beina dine?

O: Jeg gjør ikke det. Kanskje det er meningen at jeg skal det? * Ler*

I: Jeg er ikke så interessert i hva som er meningen, som hva som er dine opplevelser.

O: Det er jo meningen å... Nå snakker jeg om meningen med ting igjen da, men i tradisjonen da, så er det meningen å skulle gjøre, for eksempel, vise symboler og gester eller tegn som skal gjøre deg trygg eller ødelegge det som er farlig, eller sånne ting, men... Jeg har aldri følt at jeg har kommet til et sted hvor, for det første, det har vært nødvendig, fordi at det har vært en... Veldig sånn observerende tilstand, ikke sant? Det er ikke noe som kommer og tar tak i deg, eller som at du føler kan ta tak i deg, egentlig. Det skremmende, for eksempel... Den svarte, slags horden, er jo visuelt sett sånn skremmende, men det er ingenting skremmende med det heller, ikke sant? Du står jo og ser på det. Det samme med den, den her Enokiske reisen og. Det er ingenting...

Ingenting egentlig intenst med det lyset som er så skarpt at du ikke får til å se på det, eller noe skremmende sånn sett. Det var litt sånn foruroligende, ikke skremmende, men litt ubehagelig.

Føler på en måte at du flyter og halvt tipper fremover, for det er og en ting at du... Du er ikke og labber rundt, på en måte. Du beveger deg... Siden du beveger deg i sinnet ditt så beveger du deg på en ikke-fysisk måte, ikke sant? Du kan føle at du tipper eller sklir litt ut til siden, men jeg har aldri opplevd at det går ut av kontroll heller. Du kan prøve å se på noe og føle at blikket ditt eller opplevelsen av deg selv trekkes sidelengs, eller at det trekkes sånn uten at det er du som beveger deg, men du roter deg aldri bort, ikke sant? * Ler* Eller du er aldri redd for at du skal miste kontrollen over hvor du skal bevege deg eller hva som skal skje. Hvis det gir mening?

I: Ja, jeg tror det. Hva var det som skjedde videre?

O: Den bakgrunnen, eller den... Det rommet du står i er jo veldig dominert av det her svingende, grønne bakgrunnen og... De her slags sædcellene som også er med i dette bildet, ikke sant?

Veldig sånn fuktig fornemmelse, som er og litt rar å forklare, fordi du egentlig ikke tar på noen ting eller føler at du blir fuktig, men litt sånn... Det har vært litt som å stå i verdensrommet og følt at det har vært klamt. * Begge ler*

Når du ser ned, så ser du inn under de her formene, at det er nye spiraler som går ned. Min assosiasjon til det, og kanskje den mest sånn visuelle opplevelsen jeg har hatt i den tilstanden er å føle at du ser ned på... Ned på... Ned på Djevel-kortet da, i taroten, ikke sant? Som sitter under der, ikke som et sted du kan reise ned til, du på en måte står over det. Og det ser heller ikke tydelig, men tydelig nok rent assosiativt til å kunne vite at du står over da. Veldig sånn trippete forklaring nå da, men... * Ler* Ja. Spørsmål?

I: Ja, jeg vil gjerne høre om det var noe mer som skjedde, eller du gjorde, og hvordan avslutningen var.

O: Litt sånn vanskelig å sette ord på. Og litt sånn klisje kanskje, som kom like mye av meg selv som noe viktig og bortenforjordlig, men fornemmelsen av og forståelsen av det som det ibishodet kommuniserer er at, at det er den plassen som var begynnelsen og slutten på alt. Og det er kanskje derfor jeg har vært veldig opptatt av den plassen og, dette her er ikke noe doktrinelt eller noe sånt, men det var en opplevelse og har vært en opplevelse som har vært viktig for meg. Og... Det er kanskje rart, det er jo... Det er kanskje rart å snakke om en, om det jeg kaller for en astralreise der du ikke egentlig reiser så mye som bare å komme inn i et sted der du er og... For du reiser jo, men den der Eremitt-figuren er jo der hele tiden, selv om du føler at, som jeg sa at du går lengre innover i ting, og den lille hunden forrest i kortet oppleves som å være bak deg, så forflyttes enkelte deler av det bildet sammen med deg når du går innover i bildet, ikke sant? Så du står hele tiden sammen med den figuren da, skjønner du?

I: Ja.

O: Og som jeg egentlig ikke kommuniserte så mye mer enn akkurat det... Så det er kanskje litt

kjedelig astralprojeksjon å fortelle om, men en veldig sånn, av forskjellige eksperimenter en som var veldig viktig for meg. Mange andre slags eksperimenter der du prøver å bevege deg rundt i et landskap og prøver å, mye mer sånn fairytale-verden, som for eksempel om du reiser inn i Narren i tradisjonell tarot eller noe sånt. Ikke Crowley sin Narr, for den er bittelitt spesiell...

I: Hvordan... Når den projeksjonsopplevelsen tok slutt, hvordan var det det skjedde?

O: Akkurat den reisen følte veldig naturlig på en måte som, veldig som et innpust og et utpust, ikke så kort, men sånn at du drar inn dit, men blir tatt ut halvt bevisst og halvt... En slags tilbaketrekning, da. Ikke sånn at du backtracker gjennom alle tingene du har sett og at du kommer ut gjennom den samme portalen, og er tilbake i kroppen din, ihvertfall ikke for meg. Men likevel en slags fornemmelse av at det er det som skjer da, at du trekkes ut, og jeg fortsetter å ligge der, og det er mørkt, for at jeg har øynene lukket, og jeg liker det best å gjøre det i mørket, og jeg vet at jeg kan stå opp og det er ferdig. Nå er det andre som snakker om langt mer direkte astralreiser der du går rundt i helt konkrete landskaper og det oppstår drager eller at det kommer gnomer eller at det kommer elementalvesener og alt det ellers som det okkulte språket har å kommunisere med da. Men... Jeg er nå ærlig jeg, jeg får ikke til sånt. * Ler* Får ikke til sånne reiser, mine er aldri sånne fairytale-reiser. Ikke sant? Samme med... Veldig samme fornemmelsen da, de to jeg fortalte om nå, at det er en veldig sånn flytende tilstand, ikke sant? Og jeg er veldig mye mer i et rom, enn å bevege meg fra et kapittel og inn i et nytt, det har jeg heller ikke, det får jeg heller ikke til å gjøre i en og samme astralprojeksjon. Jeg får ikke til å gå inn i den sinnstilstanden og gå inn i andre ting enn det spesifikke som jeg har prøvd å gå inn i der. Jeg er ofte skeptisk til de astralhistoriene som blir fortalt og da, så...

I: Hvordan var det du forventet at astralprojeksjon skulle være?

O: En del av meg kanskje ønsket at det skulle være det som jeg nettopp sa at blir beskrevet da. Som en virkelighet nummer 2 som er, til en viss grad, like mye oppbygd som den her virkeligheten, og at du kan... Og at du kan bevege deg mye dypere inn i det, at du kan på en måte gå, litt mer sånn film-scenario aktig. Men jeg tror jo, allerede på, før jeg hadde gjort de tingene der så var jeg jo skeptisk til omfanget av den muligheten da. Så det... Kanskje jeg begrenset meg selv gjennom min egen skepsis til det? Jeg hadde kanskje trodd at sanseopplevelsene skulle være mye mer gjenkjennelig som det jeg ellers sanser da, men det er en mye mer ikke-materiell tilstand, selv om du forstår og enser på mange måter at du er i en taktil virkelighet, som for densaks skyld kunne luktet noe, men... Du tar ikke på bakken og kjenner hvordan bakken er, men du vet hvordan bakken føles, skjønner du? Ja...

I: Hvorfor var det du ønsket å astralprojisere?

O: Både på grunn av de løftene det har om å utforske symbolikken... Jeg kom jo inn i det der fra, kanskje et mer filosofisk enn esoterisk tilnærming. Jeg satte pris på det språket som det esoteriske tilyr for å snakke om vårt eget vesen i sin helhet da. Med en dybde som tradisjonell filosofi, og for den saks skyld, religioner ikke snakker så mye om. Jeg har alltid vært, jeg har alltid drømt mye, alltid hatt sånne visuelle... Visuelle drømmetilværelser, og begynte å bli interessert i det der, som sikkert de aller fleste andre, i siste halvdel av tenårene, og var rent filosofisk på det punktet veldig interessert i å viske ut litt den her indre og den ytre opplevelsen av meg selv og virkeligheten.

I: Er det andre grunner til at du eventuelt ønsker å fortsette å astralprojisere i dag?

O: De her opplevelsene er jo... For det første så går jo det tilbake med... Om ikke en konkret, så ihvertfall en... Du har alltid noe tilbake som du går og funderer litt på, ikke sant? Som du grubler litt på. Du kommer alltid tilbake med følelsen av at det skjedde noe der som betydde noe for deg.

Og det er jo stimulerende for hjernen og sinnet og fantasien i seg selv å meditere seg inn i, eller la seg flyte inn i de tilstandene da. Det blir jo... Det er jo lettere og lette å... Å gå tilbake i det og, ikke at det blir, det blir ikke som en liten... Dupp. * Begge ler* Men, tvert imot, du er jo ikke uthvilt etter det heller, for du er jo høyst aktiv mentalt, nesten mer enn... Du er mer sliten enn uthvilt, jeg vet ikke. Det er beroligende og det er interessant for meg selv, først og fremst, i... I enkelte andre tradisjoner så er jo som sagt tanken at man skal være i stand til å lære seg... At man skal være i stand til å formidle ting til hverandre gjennom de reisene her. Jeg har ikke vært så opptatt av det, kanskje. Det var et veldig vagt svar. * Begge ler*

I: Det går bra. Du har snakket litt om ting man kan gjøre når man astralprojiserer. Blant annet om at man kan bruke ritualer og gester for å fjerne ting som virker truende, og at man kan reise til forskjellige symbolverdener og kommunisere og sanse ting.

O: Mhm.

I: Er det noe mer vi har utelatt fra den her listen da?

O: Nei, jeg tror ikke det. Ikke egentlig.

I: Hvorfor gjøre disse tingene når man astralprojiserer? Er det noen begrunnelse bak hvorfor man skal, for eksempel, gjøre ritualer når man er på astralplanet, eller hvilke symboler man skal besøke?

O: Det kommer jo helt an på hvilken tradisjon du bekjenner deg til. I mer tradisjonell, okkult forstand, og for den saks skyld hos Crowley og, som ikke betyr at det eksisterer andre vesen, men hans tese er ihvertfall at det ikke er noen grunn til å betvile definitivt at det er flere former for intelligens. Det han ligger til grunn for astralplanet er at det er en form for intelligens som ligner på vår egen, men som ikke består av hjerne og materie og... Som ikke forutsetter det vi går rundt i her. Hvis du legger det til grunn så er det lett å tro at det både er snile og slemme folk på den andre siden, og at du er omgitt av disse vesenene til enhver tid, og at når du går ut på astralplanet så går du inn på deres territorie, og... Som magiker så vil enkelte vesen prøve å hindre deg fra å få se eller oppleve eller forstå det du er ute etter å forstå, kanskje de vil ødelegge sjelen din, ikke sant? Og du kan bruke rituelle gester og du kan bruke hellige ord i de her tilstandene til å overvinne dem da. Jeg har... Har et ganske avmålt forhold til den formen for okkult virkelighet. * Ler* Ikke at jeg nødvendigvis betviler at det fins andre former for intelligens, men... Jeg har slått meg til ro med at min opplevelse av astralplanet ikke har vært overveldende i form av de opplevelsene. Jeg har aldri følt... Det har alltid vært en... Slags naturlig flyt i de tingene, i de sinnstilstandene, ikke sant? Jeg har aldri følt at jeg sitter fast, eller at det har vært noe som er truende, og jeg har alltid følt at jeg kan gå ut av dem igjen.

I: Så du tenker at de her ritualene er ment å være verktøy for å komme seg ut av situasjoner der du sitter fast eller som er truende, eller...?

O: Det er det som er tanken bak. At du kan gå videre. Kanskje det er derfor jeg ikke alltid kan gå videre, ikke sant, men jeg har aldri... Nei, jeg vet ikke. * Ler*

I: Du nevnte litt tidligere det her også, med at enkelte projeksjonsopplevelser beskrev du som at de var veldig mye verdt for deg. Da lurer jeg litt på hvordan du vurderer hvordan en projeksjonsopplevelse, hvor mye den er verdt i forhold til en annen. Hvilke kriterier du legger til grunn for det.

O: Det er jo hvis du... Hvis du kommer inn i en... Inn i en tilstand som fester seg veldig da, ikke sant? Som det store, hvite lyset som avslører et symbol på den ene siden. Som... Som Eremitten som står, og på en måte sklir innover og innover i den her... Kan du sette på pause litt?

* Opptaket blir satt på pause i 4 minutter pga telefonanrop*

O: Opplevelsen med Eremitten og grunnen til at jeg snakker om den er ikke fordi den høres ut som en typisk astralprojisering, men fordi at det var... Et sted og en opplevelse og en tilstand som... Og en plass da som føltes veldig spesiell for meg og som satt i meg mye mer enn en del andre sånne forsøk på det samme, selv om det ikke skjer så mye, selv om det er litt vagt hva som skjer i det øvre venstre plassen, selv om vi har interessante symbolske ting å trekke ut av, at det er det Djevel-kortet som holder opp den spinnende virkeligheten som vi står i, så er opplevelsen av å gå innover og innover og innover i det samme, spinnende og litt sånn klamme * Ler* omgivelsen med den personen som også går sammen med deg, og som egentlig bare kommuniserer at det her er begynnelsen og slutten. Ikke at det er så veldig dypt, men det... Det er en sånn klassisk opplevelse også, ikke sant? Men du føler på en måte at du var der da, at du stod i det som, ihvertfall på... I den grad symboler kan formidle det er begynnelsen og slutten på livet ditt, da.

I: Jeg kan skjønne at det kan kjennes verdifullt, men er det noen flere kriterier du går etter, eller? Kan du være litt mer klar på hva slags kriterier som er med på å verdibestemme projeksjonsopplevelsen?

O: Hmm. * Ler* Det er jo tydeligheten av det du er i stand til å se for deg i forhold til hva du, på en måte, fornemmer rent tankemessig. Jeg har ihvertfall den, jeg får ihvertfall den følelsen av at jeg kommuniserer med noe som kommer fra dypere i meg selv hvis det fremstår tydelig da, og ikke som en, som en... Fornemmelse, hvis du skjønner?

I: Ja.

O: Det er jo de opplevelsene som du, du danner deg minner på en helt annen måte og når du har vært et sted som stimulerer sanseintrykkene dine, ikke sant? Så... Egentlig det som er min verdivurdering da.

I: Så klarheten, og hva du får ut av symbolspråket som blir presentert da?

O: Ja. Klarheten og følelsen av at det blir kommunisert noe som... Har noe å si da. Det har kanskje ikke så mye å si at Eremitten sier at det er det her som er begynnelsen og slutten, men... Jeg har heller aldri fått kunnskap i en astralprojeksjon som jeg ikke besitter fra før, ikke sant? Jeg har aldri gått inn i noe sånt og møtt et vesen som forteller meg at nå skal du høre at det er sånn her og sånn her og sånn her. Det er alltid summen av opplevelsen sin helhet som kommuniseres, føler jeg da. Og jeg er klar over at det er en litt annen måte å definere astralprojisering enn det mange andre gjør, men det er sånn jeg jobber.

I: Et annet, litt abstrakt spørsmål her, hvordan er det du vurderer hvorvidt opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje.

O: Det tror jeg aldri du kan vite med 100% sikkerhet. For jeg har heller aldri møtt vesen som prøver å fortelle meg ting igjen som jeg har nødt til å teste, ikke sant? Jeg har aldri vært i de tilstandene og skulle få vite noe om meg selv og... Som jeg må vurdere i forhold til sannhetsverdi eller sannhets... Sannhetsverdi, er ikke det et ord? Sannhetstyngde? * Ler*

I: Ja.

O: Så kanskje jeg bare blir lurt? * Begge ler* Men det er jo et puslespill. Det er små drypp i de her forskjellige reisene og det som... Jeg er jo av den oppfatningen av at det som oppleves der er jo deg selv som kommuniserer gjennom et språk som du prøver å bruke, ikke sant?

I: Har du noen vurderingskriterier på samme måte som at du vurderer hvorvidt opplevelsen var verdifull for deg? Har du noen kriterier da på hvorvidt denne opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje eller om den ikke var det?

O: Mener du om det er løgn som blir, om jeg lurte meg selv eller?

I: Nei jeg tenker på det Thelemiske begrepet, om din Sanne Vilje, om når du gjør denne spesifikke astralprojeksjonen, om du vurderer om dette var i tråd med din Sanne Vilje.

O: Alt det arbeidet er i henhold til min Sanne Vilje, for arbeidet i Thelema er jo en selvransakelse, en selvgransking og en reise innover i seg selv, ikke sant? Og i den grad jeg tror at astralplanet er noe du reiser innover i deg selv og ikke ut i en subtil virkelighet som er her uavhengig av meg, så er ikke astralprojeksjon et spørsmål om Sann Vilje eller ikke, men et spørsmål om reisen mot en stadig selv... Selvforståelse og selvransakelse. Viljen er jo... Det spørser hvor abstrakt du definerer den Thelemiske Viljen ikke sant? Det ligger en Vilje bortenfor det og som ikke berøres av akkurat de opplevelsene, men i den grad det Store Arbeidet handler om å skrelle av seg selv og komme til essensen av seg så er alle de her små dryppene og alle de her små, underlige aha-opplevelsene eller rare tingene som blir sagt eller fornemmelsene du får eller symbolene du mottar verktøy på reisen dit da.

I: Da lurer jeg bare på om du har noe å tilføye, om det er noe rundt dette med astralprojeksjon i Thelema som du føler at vi ikke har fått dekt?

O: Bare at det, bare at, som jeg har sagt flere ganger. * Ler* At det jeg har snakket om nå bryter mye med, det du kan kalle doktrinelt eller ortodoksien i forhold til astralprojisering, og jeg er godt kjent med parameterene for hva som er, astralprojisering i forhold til det vi snakket om å møte vesener og ta dem bort med hjelp av rituelle grep, og reise stadig innover i en og samme verden. Grunnen til at jeg går bort fra det og snakker om helt andre opplevelser er bare at mine opplevelser ikke har vært sånn. Så... Så jeg har jobbet med de metodene, jeg har brukt de teknikkene, og det er sånn der de opplevelsene har utfoldet seg for meg. Så om det er rett eller galt så sitter jeg uansett igjen med noe som jeg føler at tilfredsstill litt kriteriene med å gå utenfor seg selv og oppleve en subtil virkelighet, og at de tingene jeg tar med er, enda en gang da, verdifulle for meg selv.

I: Da takker jeg så mye for at du ville bidra.

Transkripsjon av intervju 5, gjort 11/03 2015.

I: Da begynner vi ganske rett på sak, egentlig.

O: Mhm.

I: Hva er astralprojeksjon?

O: Astralprojeksjon er vel ett av de begrepene man kan se på på flere ulike måter. Et begrep som egentlig har ulike betydninger avhengig av hvilken tradisjon man kommer fra og hvordan man ser på det. Slik jeg har sett på det så har jeg egentlig sett på det fra to ulike vinkler. I begynnelsen, eller for en del år siden så tenkte jeg at astralprojeksjon var rett og slett helt konkrete ut av kroppen-opplevelser, der man forlot sin egen fysiske kropp og fikk mulighet til å reise rundt på astralplanet eller i rommet, rett og slett, nesten fysisk, på en måte. * Ler* Mens i ettertid, fra et mer Thelemisk perspektiv, har jeg sett på det mer som den praksisen med Rising on the Planes, eller ved hjelp av Lyslegemet klare å, kunne klare å utforske ulike plan med forskjellige entiteter, eller forskjellige, ulike... Ulike skapninger og som har ulike kabbalistiske kjennetegn. Så sånn sett så tror jeg at det er et av begrepene man kan se på på ulike måter. Jeg tror også at lucid dreaming kan kobles opp astralprojeksjon på en viss måte. Men fra et Thelemisk ståsted så ser jeg nok på astralprojeksjon som, ja, denne praksisen med Rising on the Planes da, å utforske astralplanet i et lyslegeme.

I: Hvordan er det man astralprojiserer?

O: Det finnes forskjellige metoder. De som jeg har forsøkt meg på har egentlig vært, har vært avhengig av hvilken tradisjon jeg føler at jeg har tilhørt i de ulike periodene. Helt i begynnelsen, jeg begynte å teste det ut sånn, slutten av ungdomsskolen, begynnelsen av videregående. Da brukte jeg egentlig en veldig enkel metode som jeg tror har et utgangspunkt i Golden Dawn egentlig, det var vel der jeg snublet over det ihvertfall. Hvor man skulle se for seg, hvis man lå på sengen at man så for seg lyslegemet, eller noe som lignet på kroppen sin, bare steg opp, fra, fra den posisjonen som man var i. Som lignet på seg selv, og hvor man da skulle stige og stige og stige helt til man kom opp til, kom opp til planene. Den Thelemiske varianten er vel egentlig ganske lik, at du skal forsøke å, kanskje gjerne i en asana, for eksempel, se for deg at du projiserer din egen kropp til å stå fremfor deg, gjerne ikledd robe og med de lignende fysiske egenskapene som din egen kropp har, og deretter forsøke å projisere deg selv inn i dette astrallegemet. Kanskje begynne å så kikke litt rundt også merke at man har fått bevisstheten inn i dette astrallegemet. Og deretter bruke dette til, enten å kunne utforske litt av omgivelsene rundt seg, men helst også fortsette å stige oppover til man kommer til de høyere planene. Tror jeg... Det er de teknikkene jeg har forsøkt på ihvertfall.

I: Tror du alle kan få det til?

O: Jeg håper det! * Begge ler* Ja, jeg tror det. Jeg tror det helt klart, men man er sikkert nødt til å prøve ganske grundig før man klarer å mestre det ihvertfall. Crowley skriver vel at det skal ikke mer enn 2-3 ganger til før man er en ekspert på det, men personlig tror jeg at han overdriver kraftig der. Jeg tror det skal mye til å komme til det punktet. Men så er det også, hvorvidt man kan få det til avhenger sikkert også av hvordan man ser på det og hva man egentlig tror det er. Dersom man faktisk skal kunne klare å mestre det, å klare å se de ulike planene sånn som de er, å treffe entiteter og teste de ut, og faktisk klare å få riktige resultater, så vil jeg tro at det er noe som krever veldig mye trening, hvor man trenger å kunne de ulike kabbalistiske korrespondansene, for eksempel. Og man trenger å kunne gudeformene, man trenger å kunne dharana, man trenger sikkert et veldig grundig fokus, mye konsentrasjon. Det å mestre astralplanet er noe som, jeg tror det er en Neofytt-oppgave i A.A., og da skal man jo helst ha kommet et lite stykke, og jeg tror nok at det sier at det er noe ikke alle kan få til. Men dersom man ser på astralprojeksjon som mer det å kunne visualisere og forestille seg, å bruke fantasien til å utforske planet, så tror jeg helt klart det er noe alle kan klare. Den mere, holdt på å si konkrete, astralprojeksjonen, som jeg holdt på med i begynnelsen, det var noe som jeg prøvde på veldig kraftig når jeg var sånn 15-16, da gjorde jeg det mye, og jeg fikk det til egentlig bare én gang såvidt jeg husker, hvor jeg faktisk følte at jeg hadde en helt konkret opplevelse av å være utenfor min egen kropp. Men det har jeg bare klart én gang, og det var noe som krevde fryktelig mye trening, og jeg fikk egentlig ikke så mye utav det. * Ler* Så jeg tror det kommer egentlig an på hva man ser etter.

I: Tror du at det går an å gjøre astralprojeksjon uten å vite hva det er for noe?

O: Ja, det tror jeg helt klart. Jeg tror nok at det også har en sammenheng med hvordan man ser på astralprojeksjon, men jeg tror at det er nok helt klart koblet opp mot, for eksempel sånne nær døden ut av kroppen-opplevelser, det tror jeg nok har en sammenheng. Så sånn sett, ja, jeg tror det. Og type ut av kroppen-opplevelser har blitt beskrevet i veldig mange ulike religioner og tradisjoner opp gjennom tidene, og jeg tror nok at mange av de som beskriver fenomenet ikke har noen særlig dyp bakgrunnsforståelse av hva det egentlig er før de opplever det. Selv om de kanskje blir veldig av å finne ut av hva det er etterpå, så... * Ler*

Ja, jeg tror det. Men for å gjøre det helt kontrollert så tror jeg at man er nødt til å fokusere mye

på det, da er det nok lurt å ha litt kunnskap, og klare å finne en teknikk som fungerer for en selv. Det tror jeg.

I: Du sa at du hadde astralprojisert tidligere?

O: Jeg tror det! * Ler*

Det er igjen dette som er noe av problemet da, å vite hva som egentlig er fantasi og hva som forekommer, det er kjempevanskelig. * Ler*

Hvorvidt det var en... Ja, det var en sånn type astralprojeksjon hvor jeg følte at jeg fysisk var utenfor min egen kropp. Da var det i en periode som jeg hadde prøvd på det hver kveld i en veldig lang tidsperiode, og... Opplevelsen var nå egentlig noe som skjedde, bare ble trigget på natten mens jeg sov, hvor jeg plutselig erfarte at jeg var utenfor min egen kropp. Grunnen til at jeg antar at det var en form for astralprojeksjon var fordi den var veldig annerledes enn alle andre former for både hyperrealistiske drømmer og lucid dreaming som jeg har hatt tidligere, og også at det har hatt en... Det har brent seg såpass godt fast at jeg tror at det kan skilles fra en del andre opplevelser som egentlig ikke var noe betydningsfulle. Men jeg kan aldri vite, så... * Ler* Men det er den erfaringen som jeg har hatt da som kommer nærmest, ihvertfall en sånn type astralprojeksjon som i definisjonen ute av sin egen kropp opplevelse. Det tror jeg.

I: Så det skjedde ganske spontant da, midt på natten?

O: Ja.

I: Gikk du frem for å oppnå det på noe vis?

O: Nei, jeg tror det bare var trigget av at jeg hadde forsøkt over en så lang periode så konkret. Så akkurat der og da var det ikke noe som trigget det, men det ble nok en slags spontan reaksjon da på noe som jeg hadde forsøkt å oppnå over en lang tidsperiode, det tror jeg.

I: Har du astralprojisert flere ganger, eller?

O: Ja, hvis man tar det i definisjonen av dette med Rising on the Planes, så er det noe som jeg har forsøkt på en del ganger. Og da igjen, det syns jeg er enda vanskeligere å vite hva som er astralprojisering og hva som er i form av fantasi. Men der har jeg ihvertfall hatt en del meditasjonspraksiser der jeg har forsøkt å følge instruksene til Crowley; å forsøke å se for seg at man står utenfor sin egen kropp, projisere lyslegemet sitt inn i denne lyskroppen da, å stige på planene og deretter forsøke å utforske de ulike planene. Det har jeg gjort flere ganger, men, igjen da, jeg syns det er vanskelig å vite helt konkret hva som jeg faktisk har fått til, og hva jeg ikke har gjort. * Ler* Men igjen, så er jo dette med at fantasien er kanskje et av de viktigste verktøyene for å få til dette her. Det er jo noe som er viktig å tenke på. Men jeg har ikke gjort de tydelige, de grundige, systematiske eksperimentene som jeg burde ha gjort. I forhold til det å... Selv om man treffer på skapninger, så har jeg aldri egentlig helt gått inn for å teste dem, for eksempel. Se hvor mye de kan teste ut det de sier opp mot min kunnskap om kabbalistiske korrespondanser, for eksempel. Men jeg tror at dersom at jeg hadde gått grundig inn for å gjøre, gjøre eksperimenter med dette daglig i en god periode, notert det ned i en magisk dagbok, og faktisk gått inn for å analysere det, så tror jeg at det er først da jeg kan vite om det er noe særlig hold i det eller ikke. Men jeg prøver. Og jeg har hatt det jeg mener er effekter med det, men hvorvidt det er noe som er veldig tydelig eller korrekt, eller meningsfull form for astralprojeksjon er jeg usikker på.

I: Når du har hatt et av de her eksperimentene, kan du fortelle meg litt om hvordan det opplevdes?

O: På en måte så føles det som om man er litt i det grenselandet mellom meditasjon og drøm, egentlig. På mange måter så føles det veldig som en lucid dream, hvor man... Det jeg syns er

interessant er at jo mer man jobber med det jo mer og mer virkelig blir det. I den forstand at, i begynnelsen så var det kanskje mer tanker og mer fantasi som var litt, ja, litt drømmende. Men etterhvert så begynner man å kunne, i sterkere grad å kunne se detaljer, se farger, kjenne lukter, oppleve smaker. Det taktile i særlig grad, å faktisk kunne fysisk kjenne at man går på sanden, eller kjenner varmen av noe, rett og slett i mye større grad å kunne kjenne sansene. Så det syns jeg i stor grad er noe som som har utviklet seg, men i utgangspunktet har vel egentlig følt at... Man starter vel med et slags mål, kanskje at man ønsker å utforske ett av de ulike planene, ofte så har jeg vel havnet på et nær slags egyptisk plan, eller det keltiske planet på en måte. Men jeg har da... Så da blir det egentlig litt sånn som å være i en veldig klar drøm da som er knyttet opp til det som man går inn for å utforske. Så jeg tror det skillet mellom å være helt våken, meditasjon og lucid dream er egentlig det som jeg føler kan kjennetegne den opplevelsen der. I: Hvordan... Hva gjør og hvordan kjennes den fysiske kroppen din når du holder på med den praksisen?

O: Den kjennes ikke noe særlig godt. Den er såpass fraværende som den er når man kommer inn i en dyp meditasjon, føler jeg. Så det er noe man egentlig tenker veldig lite på, men den er... Jeg kan ikke si at den er ikke-eksisterende, men det er ikke noe man tenker over ihvertfall. Man kommer nok inn i en form for transetilstand som gjør at den fysiske kroppen egentlig ikke er av noen betydning. Men selvfølgelig, så dersom man sitter i en fryktelig posisjon eller det er ett eller annet som forstyrrer en eller noe sånt så merker man det jo, og da blir man ufokusert, kanskje man tilogmed snapper helt ut av denne formen for astralprojeksjon. Så det har jo noe å si, det har det.

I: Du har også sammenlignet opplevelsen litt med drømmetilstand, meditasjon og lucid dreaming, og snakket litt om hva som er likt.

O: Mhm.

I: Kan du si litt om hva som er ulikt?

O: Vel, i forhold til... I forhold til meditasjon så er det vel det at det at man er, ihvertfall når jeg jobber med meditasjon, så prøver jeg å ha det veldig, gjerne fokusert på en ting. Da ser jeg på meditasjon som noe som er kun rent fokus. Fokuser på pusten, fokuser på å visualisere et objekt. At det er, veldig veldig konsentrert, om en enkelt ting. Mens i lucid dreaming så er det ikke det fokuset, da har man mer den muligheten til å kunne utforske, til å kunne oppleve, til å kunne bevege seg rundt. Så sånn sett så vil jeg tro at det er to ganske fundamentalt ulike tilstander på en måte, selv om de kanskje starter ganske likt.

I lucid dreaming så har man vel, jeg vet ikke, der føler jeg meg, jeg føler kanskje at de to er, de er veldig like. På mange måter. Men lucid dreaming syns jeg ofte varer i en lengre tidsperiode, egentlig. Det er sjelden jeg har klart å holde på en astralprojeksjon over lang tid, det er stor sett noe man gjør en, jeg vet ikke, kanskje ikke så innmari mer enn 20, et kvarter, 20-25 minutter egentlig av gangen føler jeg ihvertfall når man kommer til de planene. For det er litt slitsomt, på en måte.

* Ler* Man er nødt til å kunne fokusere på en måte som er ganske, som er ganske krevende. Så sånn sett så vil jeg si at det fokuset som man trenger er veldig ulikt i de tre variantene da, i meditasjon, lucid dreaming og astralprojeksjon, selv om jeg syns at opplevelsen av astralprojeksjon og lucid dreaming er veldig lik. Ihvertfall i min erfaring, da.

I: Kunne du fortalt meg om en gang eller to du astralprojiserte? Nå har du fortalt meg om den her første gangen, den ut av kroppen-opplevelsen din, men kunne du fortalt meg om en annen en?

Også tatt det litt fra starten, hva du gjorde og...

O: Mhm. Jeg må innrømme at det en stund siden jeg har hatt disse helt, siden jeg har jobbet mye med det. Jeg gjør det mest i perioder som jeg føler at jeg er, ikke har så innmari mye annet å tenke på egentlig, det er mest da jeg klarer å sette meg ned med det. * Ler*

Så jeg vet ikke om jeg klarer å gjengi det så veldig detaljert. Jeg har skrevet det ned flere ganger... Så jeg kan ta det så godt jeg klarer fra hukommelsen ihvertfall. Den ene gangen var, en gang som, dette er vel egentlig to slags praksiser som jeg har gjort gjentatte ganger. Den ene var egentlig litt inspirert av en form for ledet informasjon som jeg leste en gang, som jeg har gjort, gjort mye. Jeg kan egentlig si at det som jeg har pleid å gjøre da, egentlig hatt et slags mønster på det som jeg har gjort de siste gangene, hvor det rett og slett har vært. Hvor jeg har pleid å sitte i asana, hovedsaklig i dragen, foran et alter, gjerne med stearinlys, litt røkelse... Startes med litt, ja, pranayama, prøve å komme litt grundig inn i det, prøve å se for seg, etter å ha kommet grundig inn i en slags meditativ tilstand, at jeg selv sitter ved siden av meg i samme asana. Gjerne med robe. Deretter forsøke å projisere min egen bevissthet inn i denne lyskroppen ved siden av meg. Stige opp på planene. Kommer til slutt til en slags... Astralplan som jeg på en måte har blitt, har blitt litt kjent med da.

* Ler* Pleier å gå tilbake til som rett og slett er et slags utendørs tempel. Hvor jeg har et alter med stele'en, med fire søyler rundt meg. Stort sett alltid utendørs, gjerne med, holdt på å si, fossefall eller noe sånt noe rundt meg, jeg vet ikke hvorfor, men det pleier å være der. * Ler * Og deretter gjøre de vanlige ritualene som en ofte gjør, pentagram- og heksagramritualene. Gjøre det da i dette lyslegemet, og prøve å se det for seg så tydelig som mulig, mens man samtidig er veldig var på å kjenne både, bruke alle sansene, luktene, smakssans, det taktile, kjenne vinden, kjenne hvordan temperaturen er, høre alle lydene. I det man gjør ritualene for å gjøre det så sterkt som mulig, og så kraftig som mulig. Etter at man da er ferdig med disse ritualene, pentagram- og heksagramritualer. Da er man på en måte kommet såpass kraftig inn i det at man kan foreksempel gå og utforske litt de andre områdene som er rundt. Da har det ofte vært... Gjerne har det vært, ofte, type et egyptisk plan, har jeg hatt erfaring at kommer tilbake igjen... Hvor det er typiske sand og ørken og pyramider... Og... Gjerne type gudeformer, ofte også dyreskikkelser, egentlig. Som man treffer på og som man snakker med. Ofte syns jeg det egentlig er vanskelig å så heltklare å få noe grep på hva det er som foregår da. Gjerne litt pussige samtaler, pussige ord, så det er vel egentlig ikke så ofte jeg har fått noe helt konkret ut av det. Men det har vært noen ganger som har følt at det har vært ting som har trigget ett eller annet ihvertfall, som har gått inn og lest meg opp på i ettertid, som jeg har sett har hatt en viss form for betydning. Men jeg klarer ikke å gi noe veldig konkret eksempel akkurat nå, noe som kanskje også er et tegn på at jeg enda ikke har hatt noen av de opplevelsene som har vært av de mest viktige, skikkelig store åndelige opplevelser. * Ler *

Men... Jeg har følt det har vært nyttig likevel altså. Og særlig dette med å kunne klare å gjøre en del av ritualene sine i lyslegemet er jo også noe som har blitt sett på som en viktig form for trening da egentlig. Både i forhold til konsentrasjon også at det er noe som, som er en mulighet til å kunne bli en dyktigere magiker, som gjør også at man kan komme skrittet nærmere til dette med Kunnskapen og Samtalen, for eksempel, og finne sin Sanne Vilje. Så jeg tror det er en veldig viktig praksis selv om jeg enda ikke har fått de største resultatene.

I: Hvordan var det du kom frem til at de her opplevelsene var astralprojeksjon?

O: Igjen så er det veldig vanskelig å vite. Jeg tror det er veldig... Ofte veldig svakt skille mellom hva som er meditasjoner og drømmer og... Egentlige astralprojeksjoner. Så jeg kan egentlig ikke vite det, det jeg vet er at jeg har brukt teknikkene. Det jeg vet er at jeg har kommet inn i en

endret bevissthetstilstand. Det jeg vet er at jeg har hatt mulighet til å utforske plan og andre omgivelser som sannsynligvis da er en egen del av mitt magiske univers, men uten å helt klart kunne gi noe svar på at dette er noe som andre vil definere som astralprojeksjon. Jeg kan ihvertfall si at for meg har det føltes slik, og jeg har følt at det har hatt en verdi i seg selv, og jeg vil tro at dersom man fortsetter med de teknikkene så vil det ihvertfall kunne bli en mulighet til å bli en god astralprojeksjon som faktisk har en god betydning i forhold til å kunne utforske sitt eget magiske univers, se de ulike planene, teste, møte entiteter som kan gi deg faktiske interessante møter da, og nyttige, ha en form for nyttig kommunikasjon. Og jeg tror at det rett og slett er noe som vil bli kraftigere og kraftigere jo mer man gjør det. Men jeg føler ihvertfall at det, basert på min egen definisjon og min egen opplevelse av mitt eget univers, så er det ihvertfall noe som jeg kan karakterisere som astralprojeksjon, ihvertfall begynnende astralprojeksjon.

I: Hvordan var det du forventet at astralprojeksjon skulle være?

O: Ahh. I begynnelsen; helt annerledes. Jeg ville ha forventet at det var en helt konkret opplevelse av å være utenfor sin egen kropp, faktisk kunne utforske verden slik verden... Jeg så først for meg at det var mest en form for å kunne utforske denne verden, altså den fysiske verden, at jeg kunne astralprojisere og nærmest kunne, holdt på å si, fly over til noen andres hus og se hva de drev med der og da, hva de snakket om, og hva de gjorde. Og hvis noen andre venner av meg som bodde andre steder i verden gjorde det samme så kunne vi møtes på, jeg kunne fly til deg og vi kunne møtes der og faktisk hatt akkurat samme opplevelsen begge to og...

Jeg tror fortsatt at... Det kan hende at det er mulig. Jeg leser jo om folk som gjør det, møtes på astralplanet og har helt samme opplevelsene, men det har jeg aldri opplevd. Og selv om jeg tror at det fungerer så tror jeg kanskje at det ikke er den mest matnyttige måten å bruke det på.

Så jeg så for meg at det var veldig, at det føltes veldig konkret, rett og slett. At, når jeg startet med det så tenkte jeg at, nå kommer jeg til å få så masse muligheter til å utforske verden og oppleve nye steder, og se ting som ingen andre ser, og snike meg rundt. * Ler*

Men det ble aldri slik. Sånn sett så er det egentlig interessant, man snakker om det på så utrolig ulike måter også. At noen snakker om astralprojeksjon som helt klare ut av kroppen-opplevelser som gjør at man kan utforske den fysiske verden rett og slett, mens andre har det som en helt annen, ser på det på en helt annen måte, som å utforske astralplanene. Som da egentlig er to helt forskjellige ting, men som man snakker om med helt samme begrep. * Ler* Ja, det er pussig at man egentlig ikke har mer ulike begrep for det, og at man snakker om akkurat samme i de ulike... Alle snakker om dette med Silver Cord for eksempel i forhold til det som binder fast sjelen til kroppen, og når den knekker så... Ja, da kommer man ikke tilbake til kroppen sin igjen. Også noe som jeg tror har gått igjen i flere tradisjoner og religioner opp igjennom... Hvor man fortsatt sannsynligvis snakker om helt forskjellige ting, men med samme begrepsapparat og metaforer, så det er veldig interessant sånn sett.

I: Vet du hvordan du fikk de forventningen?

O: Ja, ungdomsskolen. Slutten av... Eller, barneskolen, ungdomsskolen, så leste jeg fryktelig mye rart egentlig. Jeg elsket disse type verdens største mysterier, alle disse, disse bøkene som snakket om hvor fantastisk det var med disse ut av kroppen-opplevelsene, hvor man kunne... Utforske helt andre verdener, og også sin egen verden, treffe Gud og, plutselig var man ikke redd for døden lengre... Alle disse historiene da, sterke beretningene, som jeg leste om som jeg tror var det som gav meg de tankene i utgangspunktet. Så har det endret seg etterhvert som jeg har egentlig lest mer og mer, eller, rettet meg inn på det mer esoteriske og de mer vestlige

tradisjonene knyttet opp mot det som har gjort at jeg har fått et annet syn på hva astralprojeksjon egentlig er og hva det kan knyttes opp mot da. Og også at det har en ganske mye mer, en helt annen funksjon enn bare det å kunne oppleve at det er gøy å kunne fly rundt i en lyskropp. * Ler*

I: Hvorfor var det du ønsket å astralprojisere?

O: I begynnelsen når jeg startet med det så var det faktisk å kunne erfare at det fantes noe mer enn bare den fysiske verden. Vi var noe mer enn bare en kropp og et hode og... Vi hadde faktisk en... Da var det den tanken om at vi hadde en sjel som var udødelig og som ikke hadde de samme begrensningene som en hadde i den fysiske kroppen. Og jeg ønsket å oppleve det. Jeg trodde alltid at det var sånn, at sjelen ikke var koblet opp mot de fysiske begrensningene som kroppen vår var, men jeg hadde et veldig sterkt ønske om å faktisk erfare det. Så det var nok det, et veldig driv og nysgjerrighet på å finne ut at, ja, det finnes faktisk noe mer og jeg har mulighet til å kunne benytte meg av det. Tror det var sånn det startet.

I: Har du andre grunner til å ønske å astralprojisere nå?

O: Nå er det mer at jeg ønsker å faktisk kunne få kontroll over mitt eget magiske univers. Jeg ønsker å kunne, kunne utforske planet, jeg ønsker å kunne utvikle meg selv som magiker, og jeg ønsker å kunne få den kontrollen da. Jeg ser på det som et veldig viktig ledd da, i å kunne komme nærmere å finne sin Vilje, så nå er det nok helt andre grunner ja. Selv om, selvfølgelig, det er klart. Hvis man også kan koble det litt opp mot lucid dreaming, jeg tror at lucid dreaming og astralprojeksjon er ganske tett forbundet med hverandre. Så har jeg også en såpass... Det er også en lucid dream igjen, som jeg egentlig gjør ganske mye i perioder, hvor jeg egentlig føler at jeg har hatt en god del erfaring med. Men da er det såpass enkelt at det er gøy. * Ler*

Også man har plutselig, istedetfor å sove bort en såpass stor del av livet sitt, så kan man faktisk bruke det til noe fornuftig, og da er det greit å kunne være litt lucid når man drømmer også.

I: Du har snakket litt om hva man kan gjøre når man astralprojiserer. Da nevnte du ritualer for å forsterke opplevelsen, også snakket du om at man kunne snakke med entiteter man møtte på, sanse ting, både taktilt og lukte og se og... Er det noe mer man kan gjøre?

O: Mhm. Jeg tror jo at det er mulig å... Kommunisere med andre mennesker også, på astralplanet, det tror jeg. Jeg tror nok helt klart at det finnes muligheter til at hvis to personer bestemmer seg til å treffes på astralplanet, for eksempel, så er det muligheter for det. Og det tror jeg nok kan være en ganske fin opplevelse. Men det tror jeg... Jeg har aldri fått det til. Jeg har prøvd noen ganger. * Ler*

Men det har aldri helt fungert. Men det tror jeg er en mulighet man kan gjøre. Men eller så tror jeg nok at... De tingene som jeg har nevnt er kanskje de jeg ser på som mest viktige, det å kunne... Det å kunne utforske hele sitt eget magiske univers på en måte, ved å utforske de ulike planene og entitetene som er der, og hele tiden øke sine egne ferdigheter i forhold til dette; klare å kunne være lengre og lengre på planene, klare å kunne se ting mer og mer detaljert, oppleve det mer og mer detaljert. Ja, gjøre, det er jo mange ritualer som egentlig bør gjøres astralt etterhvert som man klarer å bli flinkere på det. Jeg tror det er de viktigste tingene, egentlig.

I: Er det noen andre begrunnelser for å gjøre disse tingene annet enn at de gir deg trening i å gjøre opplevelsen klarere, og få mer kontroll over det å astralprojisere, sånn som du sa nå?

O: Ja, altså det er jo det at jeg tror... Den viktigste grunnen er at man er nødt til å klare å utforske sitt eget magiske univers for å bli sikrere på hva man egentlig er og hva som er sin Vilje, det tror jeg at helt klart er det viktigste. Også er det også en innmari praktisk grunn da, altså hvis man for eksempel har et sett med ritualer man ønsker å gjøre hver dag, så er det en del ganger hvor det er

fryktelig upraktisk å plutselig sette opp et alter og begynne å gjøre diverse banishing ritualer. Det fungerer ikke alltid så bra. Men har man faktisk en god trening i det så kan man gjøre alle disse ritualene, mens man sitter på flyet eller... Holdt på å si, sammen med masse folk som en egentlig... Hvis man bare klarer å trekke seg litt unna, for eksempel og, så har man den muligheten å kunne gode, effektfulle ritualer uten å måtte gjøre det fysisk og tiltrekke deg masse oppmerksomhet. Det tror jeg er en helt sånn praktisk nyttig ting man kan gjøre med det, det tror jeg. Også tror jeg også at det er... En måte man kan både utvikle fantasi og konsentrasjon, som jeg tror er veldig viktige egenskaper å ha, dersom man ønsker å utvikle seg åndelig da. Også er det gøy. * Begge ler*

I: Er noen projeksjonsopplevelser mer verdt for deg enn andre?

O: Det er de hvor man føler at man... Som trigger ett eller annet som man... Kan utforske videre. Som man føler at har en viss betydning. Det har vært noen ganger hvor man... Har fått et ord eller et tegn eller en setning, eller noe slikt, av former for skapninger som man treffer på astralplanet, som har gjort at etter at jeg har skrevet det ned har kunnet sett på det og har kanskje slått opp i 777 for eksempel, for å kanskje finne ut av litt mer hva kan dette her egentlig bety, også har det satt i gang og trigget noen prosesser som har gjort at jeg har både reflektert litt og tenkt litt og funnet ut av ting som en kanskje ikke ville tenkt på tidligere. Det tror jeg kan være en ganske verdifullt egentlig.

Andre ganger så er det rett som en veldig meditativ opplevelse, hvis man er fryktelig sliten og stresset og kanskje syns at ting er litt vanskelig i perioder, så er det mulighet for å kunne komme seg til et helt nytt sted, koble av, slappe av, føle at man på en måte henter seg litt inn igjen da, og det tror jeg også kan være ganske mye verdt.

I: Har du noen kriterier for hvordan du vurderer hvorvidt den ene projeksjonsopplevelsen var mer verdt for deg enn den andre?

O: Jeg mener, tror at det kriteriet som man kan sette på sånne type ting er hvorvidt det gir en varig åndelig opplevelse, på en måte. Ting som endrer deg, ting som du ikke egentlig glemmer, og ting som du etter flere år kan føle var noe som preget deg. Det tror jeg er noe man kan karakterisere som en åndelig opplevelse med en viss verdi. Så jeg tror at det er det at det forandrer deg, jeg tror at det er det som er det viktigste kriteriet sånn jeg ser det.

I: Hvordan vurderer du hvorvidt opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje eller ikke?

O: Tja, det var et godt spørsmål. * Ler*

Jeg tror det i hovedsak det er noe man er nødt til å finne ut av over tid. Her tror jeg at det er kjempeviktig å faktisk notere til enhver tid etter man har hatt en slik opplevelse, hva som skjedde, hvordan det følte, hvilke entiteter man traff på, hvordan man testet de, hva som ble sagt, hva som ble gjort, og kanskje over tid klare å vurdere hvorvidt det er noe som gjør at man kommer nærmere sin Sanne Vilje eller ikke. Enten det, eller at det gir en, som jeg nevnte i stad, en slags varig, åndelig opplevelse. Jeg tror man føler det, jeg tror egentlig mye handler om, om intuisjon. Selv om, jeg selvfølgelig antar at det er veldig viktig å teste disse entitetene grundig underveis og, prøve å så bruke en del av de kunnskapene som man har knyttet opp mot kabbalistiske korrespondanser, for eksempel, og det man har lest for å teste ut hvorvidt det faktisk er noe som det er noe substans i eller ikke. Men jeg har fortsatt litt tro på det her med gut feel jeg altså, den intuisjonen og den følelsen man får tror jeg er veldig viktig.

I: Hvorfor er det viktig å teste disse entitetene man møter på, og teste korrespondanser opp mot 777, som du sier?

O: Jeg tror det er, jeg tror nok det er mange som heller er ute etter å lure deg og villedde deg og få

deg vekk fra den stien du er på da, det tror jeg, og det blir man jo ganske kraftig advart mot også. Crowley skriver om dette flere steder, at det å kunne teste er faktisk noe av det viktigste man gjør, for hvis ikke kan man gjøre mer skade enn positive effekter altså. Så det tror jeg helt klart. Jeg tror nok at det er noe som for mange kan ende opp med at man blir gjerne veldig betatt av noen ting kanskje. Kanskje man føler at man får masse opplevelser som er kjempestore og kjempeviktige, men så er det egentlig bare et spill. Så sånn sett så tror jeg at det er veldig viktig å ha litt kontroll på det. Om man først bruker de metodene og de prinsippene som er fastslått innenfor Thelemiske praksiser, så tror jeg også at man må ta på alvor de advarslene som det gir. Skal man se på, skal man tro på de positive effektene det er ment å gi så må man også tro på de farene som er forbundet med det, slik det er beskrevet av de som er eksperter på det og har vært foregangspersoner innen Thelema og astralprojeksjon.

I: Da lurer jeg på om det er noe du føler at vi ikke har fått dekt innenfor temaet astralprojeksjon og Thelema.

O: Jeg har vel snakket om det meste som jeg har... Nei, egentlig ikke. Jeg føler vel heller at jeg har nesten gjentatt meg selv noen ganger. * Ler*

Nei, jeg tror ikke det er så veldig mye mer å tilføye.

I: Da takker jeg så mye for at du stilte opp.

Appendix II: Categorized quotations

1. Practices deemed efficacious.

A. Training.

Informant 1: *“I’ve followed... Listened to what people have told me”...they mentioned that I should try it out, astral projection, follow Crowley’s Liber O”* (Appendix: 1)

“It is through a lot of exercises, through meditation, through cleansing rituals... All of those have their functions. Bottom line they are functions that have to do with... your head. You can say as much as it cleanses the room... You do the pentagram, hexagram ritual, cleansing the room, banishing. Things like that. I don’t think there exist things you have to cleanse against though. That there are spirits that mess around in the room and hinder you if you don’t do... the right rituals. I thought it was exciting to think like that before. That maybe, maybe that was it. It could be like that, for that matter. I can’t deny it. I have no evidence either way, but then we get into proving the existence of god(s) and that’s a completely different discussion. But they work at the same things. Techniques that help you perform things like astral projection. I couldn’t think of any better words for what I was trying to explain here... And it’s through different correspondences as well, and so on and so on. They are learned things. You could use anything else, for instance, if you just have a system to put it in. I’m using that Liber O and Egyptian gods and 777 and that system, though. The hermetic... Yeah, sephirot-stuff, and so on. That’s my system, and people probably use other systems for the exact same things...

I: *What do you use the system to, do you mean?*

O: *What I mean I use the system to? That’s really putting names on things. Putting a concept on things. That’s what... I calculate with. It is... put together in a way that makes sense, you can say. Like that color corresponds with that god, it’s through pictures that you can... As far as I’ve*

understood it, when I get into that deep concentration and stuff then it's the learned correspondence that lies... in the back of your mind. There's a word for it, but I can't remember it...

I: Do you mean "unconscious"?

O: Yeah, that works too, I suppose, but it was another word for unconscious I wanted.

I: Okay, sorry.

*O: Yeah, unconscious. *Laughs* In the back the head. So it won't just be a chaos. That there's actually a system that you put it in... That you are in a room where smells, colors and that is facilitated. It helps to trigger the unconscious... thoughts, or system. So that's. That is. For instance. Say that I am in the astral world and I meet a figure. And that figure has a godform, for instance. I then put those godforms, those I've put, put into that system, it has those and those colors and then I can gain some... I can gain the information I require from that god, I can converse with that god, or figure or whatnot. And I ascribe it colors, smell, human properties, divine properties, only because I have memorized and trained on that system which exists. And without, without having done that then it would... wouldn't have given me anything, I think. Or, I could that, but it would be... a chaos of randomness. And that's not what I'm after when I'm doing that. It's actually to... get some meaning out of it. That I know I can get in touch with the latent things lying in my brain. That... give me something. I don't know what... It doesn't give me something explicitly. I can't find the meaning of life, or answers to whether or not I should take that job, but it gives me, that is, a very good feeling. I feel in contact with myself, feel... conscious, really. That I. After doing it for a while just feel generally very good, tired, good. It gives me something in that way. That's what astral projection is. It doesn't give me something consciously, something specific, but a generally good perception of... my inner self, in a way."*
(Appendix: 2-3)

"It's important to master asana, pranayama" ... "and dharana. And other meditation techniques. Those techniques are, asana is sitting still for prolonged periods, managing to remove all external noise, and so on. Breathing techniques, calming down the body, not thinking about everyday problems, and so on, and so on. All those things help... Actually do astral projection, without being disturbed. And it's important to have a place where... you can feel comfortable. It is written that you preferably need a quiet place, a place with no forms of... Yeah, noise or other things, but the most important bit is to have a place you are comfortable with. If there is other people in another room that maybe make some... but if you... it does not matter to me, if it, if I feel 100% comfortable then it matters fuck all. The techniques should, that is, the pentagram rituals, the hexagram rituals, should... have an understanding of at least how they are done, If you have... I do not remember the hexagram ritual by heart, well, I remember the lesser by heart, but the greater... Not that it is very necessary, but I never remember it by heart, so notes and the likes are fine as long as it does not disturb too much. You should at least have done them beforehand, learned them, understood the principles behind them. And it is important to... feel well with yourself. Take a shower, for instance. Feel clean. If you feel dirty, that is another distraction. And then it's to have learned the system that lies at the foundation of... what I said earlier. Learned, preferably memorized most of them. At least read most of it, had it in your thoughts, used it. Done the rituals, for instance. Just to drill it in, get it in one way or the other. Don't have to remember everything, but at least have a few correspondences so you have some basis use. Vibration of God-names and all that. Very ok. To... Take the shape, of a God, and...

Feel that you are that God or being, and actually... use all of your body to feel that you are something different... ” (Appendix: 3-4)

“That about being gods, for instance, that helped me a lot when astral projecting, you’re supposed to sit in... a god position, and imagine that you stand there, dressed... dressed in magic garments, and with the right weapons and everything, and so on and so on. Before you, behind you or whatnot, if they are around you, that the figure kind of projects something else that is there, and imagine that you are that figure instead of yourself. Precisely that about vibrating god-names... To imagine that you are something else while you are yourself... I’d think it helps, just that, that’s at least my impression.” (Appendix: 3) (concerning the practice “Vibration of God-names; “...to me it has helped just doing the practice so that I’d be able to astral project at all.”(Appendix: 4)

Informant 2: “There are different techniques you are supposed to learn at least. Where one trains one’s mind to achieve greater control over one’s inner... one’s impulses, until one can transform the body into a kind of portal to the new world, or utilize the body to get into a new plane where one experiences the astral world. They describe methods like memorizing correspondences, doing yoga, that is quieting the mind, control one’s thoughts, control one’s actions, and ideas enough to be able to create a point which pierces through to the astral world. By, after a while, visualizing one’s self through a new set of eyes that exist on that plane, and from there formulate one’s whole body through... Through pure will, in a way. Then, one shall gradually train to be able to travel further and further in that body and that state of consciousness. That’s... Without having been able to do such a thing to completion, so, I know that that’s theoretically how it works.” (Appendix: 16)

*Informant 3: “The way I’ve approach it, it is to, that is, you close your eyes. * Laughs* Which is kind of a given, and then it is to... I remember early, when I was young, then I could lie down in the couch and relax or something, and then it was like I was moving without moving. That is, I could lift my arm... I imagined it, and felt it, and did it, but the arm, the physical arm just lay there. Imagined, so astral projection is to do something, feel something, sense something, perceive something, without doing so with your body. So it feels very real, but it isn’t something which happens on the physical level.” (Appendix: 20-21)*

“It demands practice. So, and that about the positions, sitting in a position, that about not being bothered by physical ticks, I was about to say, and that about not being bothered by distracted thoughts, what should I eat for dinner, I’m hungry, I’m stressed out because of work, something like that, right? It demands practice, it’s not something you can sit down and then it happens, it works. It demands focus and presence, with out that... I’m absolutely no expert, it’s not something I’ve done much, but yeah, it demands preparation through training, nothing like... It could be allright to put yourself in a condition through ritual, but that’s not an absolute necessity. Maybe it will help put you in the right mood or modus.” (Appendix: 21)

Informant 4: “Many have to. Because, like I said earlier, it demands an extensive degree of concentration and imaginative skill, or the capacity to visualize. To be completely able to do it,

so that it doesn't just become an intellectual exercise or something you imagine, it has to be a visual element, right?" (Appendix: 29)

*"I have worked and talked with a lot of people who think, who appear to struggle with imagining anything at all, right? With Crowley, which is my starting point I the training that I have done, he also starts very basically, med exercises in stilling the body so that you get into a trance-like state. He presents, as an introduction, a lot of exercises that are supposed to train you into becoming better at imagining actual colors and living things behind your own closes eyes, right? Which we usually stop doing when we stop being children. *Laughs**
It is a property that has to be retrained, right? It's not... It is something which... I think everyone are capable to do it to the extent that everyone are capable of dreaming a dream which they remember as something visual and more or less something real, right? Not that it is the same state of mind one enters, but you know that your head is capable of producing images that you can take in visually, but who aren't there. The exercises that underlie the preparation for that kind of work start with, can start with basic symbols, right? A basic form in a strong color against a black background, try to focus on it over specified amounts of time, make it appear clearly, be capable of shifting between a red triangle and a yellow square. It might not be very exciting, but you get a little enflamed over it becoming that clear too, right? And you can do this form of meditation, or really just mental exercises, just more and more complex. In the exercise I talk about it progresses towards more and more complex images before your inner eye, right? From the basic form to two, to having a pendulum, to having two pendulums, to having other things that move in different ways, and the exercise ends by imagining a human being in as great detail as possible. Some take to it quite rapidly, and some spend a lot of time. It is probably a certain degree of honesty toward oneself, what one thinks is a success or not." (Appendix: 30)

Informant 5: *"I really think so, but you probably have to try very thoroughly before you are able to master it, at least. Crowley I think writes that you don't need more than 2-3 times before you are an expert at it, but personally I think he exaggerates a lot there. I think it takes a lot to get to that point. But then again, if you can do it is probably dependent on how you look at it and what you really think it is. If you are actually going to be able to master it, to be able to look at the different planes as they are, to meet entities and test them, and actually get the right results, then I'd believe that is something that demands a lot of training, where you need to know the different kabbalistic correspondences, for instance. And you need to know the godforms, you need to know dharana, you probably need a very thorough focus, a lot of concentration. Mastering the astral plane is something which, I think it is a Neophyte-task in the A. 'A. ', and by then you are supposed to have gotten somewhere, and I think that means that it is something not everyone can achieve. But if you see astral projection more as being able to visualize, imagine, to use the imagination to explore the plane, then I think it is something that everyone can do. The more, almost concrete, form of astral projection, that I was doing in the beginning, it was something I tried very hard at when I was about 15-16, I did it a lot then, and I really only got it to work once as far as I remember, where I actually felt that I had a completely concrete experience of being outside of my own body. But I've only managed that once, and that demanded a lot of training, and I really didn't get much out of it. *Laughs*" (Appendix: 39)*

B. Initializing.

Informant 1: *“I’ve followed... Listened to what people have told me”...they mentioned that I should try it out, astral projection, follow Crowley’s Liber O.”* (Appendix: 1)

“When I’m doing it, well enough I do the preparations and all that. I’m sitting in my room, or I lie down. I’ve found that I can do most of the exercises most comfortably when lying down. I’ve got chronic knee injuries that make me start thinking about how it hurts, and so on. That makes it a bit more difficult to sit. Could sit in a chair, but I’ve found that lying on the ground... Works. And... I use asana, pranayama, dharana, go through the steps, did the pentagram- and hexagram rituals beforehand. Cleansed myself. Through the techniques, through... Just feeling that I am well with myself. I feel that I can’t have a bad day if I’m going to do it. Then I wouldn’t get as much out of it. Preferably I’d know that now... I’d like to do it. Lie there, imagine myself standing in front of me, dressed in black, the black magician’s robe. Magical equipment, the staff, the sword and the rest... And if they aren’t on the person then they lie around the figure. Usually spend quite some time just to feel that the figure is actually present. That the presence of the figure is actually real. And when I feel comfortable with the notion that there actually is a figure present. That I can feel the presence, smell the smell, that I can in a way feel that there is something there. That I can see it... Then... I don’t really know how to explain this, but... I just transfer... my mind to that thing, that I see myself lying on the ground. That process can be a bit difficult. The whole concept is a bit strange, I think, but I feel that I am looking at myself. That I no longer look at the figure, but that the figure, who is now me, is looking down at me, who is not me. And vice versa.” (Appendix: 4-5)

“I usually take a deep breath, as a rule, before I’m going to, transfer. Breathe out very... heavily. Feel kind of that the eyes, they... they are everywhere. It kind of sounds like I’m fully inebriated by some kind of substance... But that transfer, it feels so weird and... Disgusting, really. That it is difficult for me, I feel nauseous, usually. Feel kind of like I’ve been on a rollercoaster. And that... almost teleport myself, suddenly I’m standing there, but at the same time lying down. I don’t teleport, that’s just a bad expression.” (Appendix: 5)

“I usually don’t just look at my body, I usually look at the surroundings. But I can’t turn around. That’s something that I’ve never... I can’t turn away from my body, always have to keep it in sight, the body that lies there, if not it just disappears completely.” (Appendix: 5) (The last “it” is, judging from the context, referring to what the informant understands to be the astral projection event, not the body.)

“It has to be present in my field of view, I can, in a way, not turn away from it. It always has to be present, it has to be a kind of focus, while I watch the surroundings. They are usually the same surroundings as those I have been in earlier; nothing changes. And... When I stand over there, the whole idea is for me to rise further. That I’m not just looking at my body, but rising, rising, seeing my house, rising, surveying my city, rising, seeing my country, rising, look at the continents, the earth, rising and rising and rising. Until I kind of see... Am everywhere. That the figure surveys the solar system, the universe. Until I come to a place where I cannot see the universe anymore. Come so far that... It is not possible to get so far that you can’t see the universe, but I kind of get to what I’d call the astral plane, when I no longer can see any of what I’ve understood earlier as the real world. I get to a kind of... My own dreamworld, in a way.

When I get there, everything is black.” (Appendix: 5)

Informant 2: *“I’d read the instructions in Liber O vel manus Saggitae, and would follow all the instructions there. So in practice I’d go through... That is, I would sit down in meditation, and if I were to achieve it the way it is supposed to... That is, if I were to try the entire operation now today, then I’d sit down, tried to keep the body still, that is Asana, concentrated, via Dharana, and... No, just followed the instructions in Liber O, I don’t remember the whole thing by heart now, so I’d read it and tried what they said until it worked. *Laughs*” (Appendix: 16)*

Informant 3: *“I would just try to sit in a comfortable position, which is not a position in which I’d fall asleep. Like Asana, like uncle Crowley teaches us. *Laughs*
Where you sit steadily and don’t get bothered by bodily sensations, and can then focus and concentrate on standing up or get out, that is, in accent marks. Get out of your body. But... That is a, if it is spiritual or not, it is a principle of separation. That you build a so-called Body of Light and travel in it. So, In that position, I kind of try to stand up without standing up, and feel that it is actually happening. Not that you are just thinking that you are, because that is the dividing line. You can sit there and imagine things, but it is supposed to kind of happen, whatever it is. And that’s kind of how I’d do it. A little textbook maybe, but that’s at least how I have learned it in comparison to the Thelemic tradition, of which I am a follower. It is not something, I feel that in the Thelemic tradition it’s kind of less quote unquote silliness. There’s kind of not as much baggage surrounding it, you do something, something happens and you experience something.” (Appendix: 21.)*

“That about sitting down, find the calm, step out of the body...

I: How do you step out of the body?

*O: I’ve just done it a bit like, I’ve just floated off. *Both laugh**

*It’s a bit difficult to control the Body of Light though, it is... Some people say that you are supposed to first go from the legs and upward, and the most difficult part is separating the head from the head. *Laughs* You are kind of stuck in your skull while you float upwards from your legs. But yeah, I’ve done it, but not gotten very far. That about going out of your body, it... It’s kind of just to start, as I said, to move body parts without moving them, starting to feel that that body is waking up, and then start to get away, I was about to say...” (Appendix: 22)*

Informant 4: *“Two ways; you can either astral project into the real, physical world around you. Try to, consciously really, and not through any special techniques, dissociate yourself, and get a visual or, for that matter, emotional impression of that which is not visible around us. Or you can go completely into another visual reality. You can use sigils, or, the usual is to use another symbol or focal point and go through it mentally, and experience the world you will see at the other side of it.” (Appendix: 28)*

“You can both help yourself with a physical symbol, which contains ideas you are familiar with, or you can do it completely mentally. The probably most classical way to do it, which I and probably most others have tried, is to visualize some form of door or portal, on which the symbol is attached. And, yet again, dissociate yourself, so you can walk through it, and when you

succeed in doing so, the idea is that you are supposed to be able to take in information that underlie that symbol.” (Appendix: 28)

“I wanted to explore Yodh, two ways to do this. In the little grimoire called Liber 231, which just consists of... Sigils. Then you find the corresponding, correct placement of it, you use the sigil. Yodh’s looks more or less like a kind of Arabic genie in the lamp which a cross comes out of. You picture it very clearly in your mind, use a, base it on a kind of portal, focus or meditate on that symbol, let it get stronger, let it light up, light up until you... Try to consciously travel through it. The thought is that you are supposed to get into a visual inner reality. That you are supposed to be able to move around in, where you should be able to meet creatures, where you should... Be able to take in things that underlie what values that letter has. I am a bit...

**Laughs* A little skeptical really, right? I don’t think that those symbols or letters have power in themselves, they have power because you studied it and because you know what underlies it. So that’s my skepticism that underlie what we call astral projection, that it will always be a part of yourself and your own level of knowledge and intellect that will inform what you experience. Of course.”(Appendix: 28-29)*

“Another way that I learned very early when I was interested in this, and which is a neat and a lot more... To me at least, effective way to do this, is to use tarot cards. Especially Crowley’s tarot, but several others are also filled with elements of this symbolic language I talked about, right? So you have a much more complex picture to focus on while still being within yourself and focus... Yeah, it gives you a lot more with which you can stimulate your imagination, right? So again, if we are to work with Yodh. Yodh corresponds with the tarot card named The Hermit. It is a green, swirly type of background. An old person stands with its back turned a little towards us, dressed in red clothes. There is a small, a small kind of three-headed dog or wolf stands in one corner. There are small sperm cells spinning around this creature. So you have all of this to keep you busy. I think it’s a much simpler way to meditate and prepare yourself to do this kind of work. When you feel that you have the picture clear enough in your head, then you can try to travel out of yourself. Right? Either if it means that you actually manage to stand up and walk out of your body, or if it is that the information of that card overwhelm you. I think it... What I call my own experiences with astral projection lie in the middle, I’ve never claimed that you actually travel 100% into another form of reality and experience it as absolute. It will be a connection between yourself sitting there and that which you just let your head swim out into, right? So you let the card become alive, the background starts to move, right? The person is animated and vitalized, the whole card becomes alive and you are allowed to... Go into it. And it is very, I think it has always been an interesting way in which to work, because you will get to see more things than what is in the card, right? There will come more information because you can walk past the doorframe, the frame on the card, right? And experience it as a three dimensional world. That’s what astral projection is like.” (Appendix: 29)

Informant 5: *“There are different methods. Those I have attempted have really been, have been dependent on which tradition I have felt that I belonged to during the different periods. At the beginning, I started testing it at about, the end of lower secondary school, the beginning of upper secondary school. Then I used a very simple method that I think originates from the Golden Dawn, I think it was there I stumbled upon it. You were to imagine, if you were just lying on the*

bed, that you imagined the Body of Light, or something that looked like your body, just rising up, from, from the position that you were in. That looked like yourself, and where you were supposed to rise and rise and rise until you got up to, got up to the planes. The Thelemic variant is really pretty similar; that you are supposed to, maybe preferably in an Asana, for instance, imagine that you project your own body to stand in front of you, preferably dressed in a robe and with the similar physical characteristics as your own body, and then try to project yourself into this astral body. And then use this to, either to explore some of the surroundings around you, but preferably to keep rising upwards until you reach the higher planes. I think... Those are the techniques I have utilized at least.” (Appendix: 39)

“I: Did you try to produce it, in any way?

O: No, I think it was just triggered by the fact that I had tried over a long period of time so concretely. So just then and there it wasn’t anything that triggered it, but it was probably some kind of spontaneous reaction on something I had attempted over a long period of time, I believe.” (Appendix: 40)

2. Goals and purpose of the practice.

A. Present time.

Informant 1: And that’s not what I’m after when I’m doing that. It’s actually to... get some meaning out of it. That I know I can get in touch with the latent things lying in my brain. That... give me something. I don’t know what... It doesn’t give me something explicitly. I can’t find the meaning of life, or answers to whether or not I should take that job, but it gives me, that is, a very good feeling. I feel in contact with myself, feel... conscious, really. That I. After doing it for a while just feel generally very good, tired, good. It gives me something in that way. That’s what astral projection is. It doesn’t give me something consciously, something specific, but a generally good perception of... my inner self, in a way.” (Appendix: 3)

“But I do it really to get in contact with, to address issues I don’t think are issues, or... To get a little deeper knowledge about things that happen in my brain, happen in my head, or happen in my astral plane, in a way. And it gives me a good feeling, I feel good when I manage to do it. “ (Appendix: 12)

*Informant 2: “In Thelema it is... As far as I understand it, it is a link, a plane you are supposed to go through to experience various things. That aren’t present in the ordinary consciousness, that is everyday consciousness. That isn’t necessarily a part of objective reality, but not necessarily the opposite either. *Laughs**

*So it’s a link between what one defines as one’s self now, and what will become... The attainments one strives for. Where one can experience... Creatures, spheres, sephirot... Things that may or may not exist, as the book says. *Laughs*” (Appendix: 16)*

“I feel that it is a pretty exciting field of human consciousness. That it, mankind’s exploration of the universe, really. I feel that it is a subject which... Is easy to misunderstand, there’s little experience, there’s little unified agreement that it exists at all, really. It is a kind of pioneer spirit in going in there and exploring what it is. And what it can, what it can mean for the totality of being a human. What it means.” (Appendix: 18)

“And first and foremost to prepare the road ahead for oneself, with the inwards journey. Thelema is much about the journey inwards where one is to attain the two crises with the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, and Crossing the Abyss, where we... That is, the first instinct to follow that path, the inwards journey, comes from an admission of how little we know about what we are doing here on this globe, and, at least, what I am doing here, and... Usual... That is... There are probably other ways to consider the subject, but when you have chosen that track and chose to think Thelemicly, then I don't see any necessity in seeking other ways to think before you have done the experiences that it implies.” (Appendix: 18)

“The techniques that are in the astral plane and the likes are kind of a necessary field to achieve the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, where one discovers more about what it is one aims towards with all of this, in Thelemic philosophy. And where one Crosses the Abyss, where one annihilates the concepts one has.” (Appendix: 18)

Informant 3: *“I'm thinking that this is a tool for self-exploration, and that perfectionist thought, that you should kind of... Everything is supposed to be perfectly visualized, everything is supposed to be like in the real world, just weird shit, you know? *Both laugh*” (Appendix: 24)*

*“Experience and development. I have, even though I might not have been enormously active with magick and all that, I am on a magical journey in myself, in, yeah, my life. By development and revelations and... Which I can't stop, in a way. *Laughs* It becomes a bit impossible when you've started it. What has been seen cannot be unseen. I want to astral project and have been interested in it because of being able to actually have real spiritual experiences, no matter if it is psychological or real. To meet the others, the other. I've been very fascinated, at a young age I was very fascinated by mystical, spiritual, UFOs, I really wanted to meet aliens and all that, kind of. So the idea of going out of my self, into another world and engage in meaningful interaction with weird creatures, and gods and spirits and daemons and whatever. It... It's pretty awesome. * Both laugh* No matter what it really is...” (Appendix: 25)*

“That about building a temple is to do rituals on the astral plane, and through that strengthen yourself on the astral plane, because you say that at least in a Thelemic sense, rituals are an external manifestation. One does the outer to get an inner effect, in a very simple and generic sense, but that about doing rituals on the astral plane is just a more intimate thing, spiritually. Or, yeah, magically.” (Appendix: 26)

“That about travelling to the different worlds, it is in a way an initiatory journey, like one goes through in the grades of an order or something like that, or gets access to after a while when one has built the understanding or power or... Yeah, so it's a growth. The reason one does it is to... Conquer thyself, I was about to say.” (Appendix: 26)

Informant 4: *“You are always left with something that you ponder on, right? That you ponder a little on. You are always left with the feeling that something happened there that meant something to you. And that meditating into, or letting yourself float into those conditions, in itself is stimulating for the brain and the mind and the imagination. It gets... It is easier and easier to...*

*To go back into it too, not that it is, it's not like a quick... Nap. * Both laugh*
But, on the contrary, you aren't rested afterwards either, because you are very active mentally, almost more than... You are more tired than rested, I don't know. It is calming and it is interesting to me, first and foremost, in... In some other traditions the thought is, as I've said, that you are supposed to be able to learn... That you are supposed to be able to transmit things to each other through these journeys. I haven't been as preoccupied by that, maybe.” (Appendix: 35-36)*

*Informant 5: “Often a little strange conversations, strange words, so it is not often that I have gotten something concrete out of it. But there have been some times that have felt that there were things that triggered something at least, that have committed and read up on later on, that I have seen had some form of meaning. But I can't give a very concrete example just now, something which might also be a sign that I have yet to have some of the most important experiences, really big spiritual experiences. * Laughs*. But... I have felt that it has been useful anyway. And especially this about managing to do part of your rituals in the Body of Light is also something which has been seen as an important form of training, really. Both for concentration and that it is something which, which is a possibility to become an even more skilled magician, which also makes it possible to take a step further to this with the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, for instance, and find one's True Will. So I think it is a very important practice even if I am yet to have the greatest results.” (Appendix: 42)*

“Now it is more that I wish to actually get control of my own magical universe. I wish to be able to, to explore the plane, I wish to develop myself as a magician, and I wish to get that control. I see it as a very important link, in being able to get closer to find your Will, so now there's probably other reasons yeah.” (Appendix: 44)

*“The most important reason is that you have to be able to explore your own magical universe to be more sure of what you really are and what your Will is, I think that is clearly the most important. And then there's a really practical reason, that is, if you for instance have a set of rituals that you wish to do every day, then there's some times very impractical to suddenly set up an altar and start doing various banishing rituals. It doesn't always work too well. But if you really have good training in it then you can do all these rituals, while sitting on an airplane or... Together with a lot of people that you really... If you just retreat a little, for instance, then you have the opportunity to do good, effective rituals without having to do them physically and drawing a lot of attention. And I think that it is... A way you can develop both imagination and concentration, which I think are really important characteristics to have, if you wish to develop yourself spiritually. And it's fun. * Both laugh*” (Appendix: 44-45)*

B. Past, when initially attracted to astral projection.

Informant 1: “It was a period I did it a lot. Or, a lot, once every other week. Because it was exciting, it was fun, it was so much fun, it was so comfortable, it was fun, it was uncomfortable, it was something I had to figure out, it was interesting.” (Appendix: 8)

“My expectations were things I had heard, for instance that about people being able to contact each other on the astral plane, as we talked about a bit in the beginning. And that is something I

*still haven't tried, I haven't tried to kind of travel with someone or contact someone on the astral plane. Maybe it works, it's still something I haven't tried. That I just send a message to someone I know that hey, let's meet up on the astral plane, guys. * both laugh* But no, I don't know, I've never tried, so it's possible. I've still not eliminated it, the possibility. But yeah, it was things I heard from people, through the O.T.O. and all that, that yeah, we'll talk on the astral plane. I heard stories from someone I know in the O.T.O. that talked about two well known members, or something, I don't remember the whole story, who met on the astral plane and kind of decided on something, or had dealt with something through that. It sounded very farfetched at the time, but damn, I've never tried, so maybe it exists, maybe it's possible. Now I'm thinking that it's a bit... A lot more skeptical the past years than what I was when we started. Additionally, there's things, I've grown up with, been very interested in history, religion, magic, all of those kinds of things, actually maybe there is something psychic, psychic powers, latent in all human beings, which is like kind of the over-mind, that everyone can gain access to. But... Thought very science fiction-esque, that's also things that have influenced me at that time. That... Maybe the gods are real, maybe this and that and this. Those are things that have influenced me to actually have that maybe. Not that it was possible and I believe this now. I've never been very religious, always been kind of yeah, maybe this is possible. But I was very convinced that damn, there's been so many who have told me about this that I have to check it out." (Appendix: 11-12)*

"It was mostly out of curiosity, and the wish to get to another plane, or a new level of consciousness, as earlier, as in the beginning when I tried it out it took me quite a long time before I actually got it done properly and that's when I realized that it wasn't what I thought it was. I started and tried to do this already when I first heard about it, but it didn't work too well, I never got anywhere, it took me a few years to manage to do it right. Or, a few years, it took me two and a half years before I managed to do it a little. I've changed a lot on that time. But yeah, it was mostly out of curiosity and that I could get something out of it.

I: Get what out of it?

O: I wasn't really sure about it. But if it was... It could, in the beginning it wasn't purely to try to know myself and those things, or deal with things I otherwise wouldn't deal with and things like that. But I got into that path after a while." (Appendix: 12)

Informant 4: "Both because of the promises it gives about exploring the symbolism... I got into this from, maybe a more philosophical than an esoteric approach. I valued the language that the esoteric offers for us to speak of our own nature as a whole. With a depth that traditional philosophy, and for that sake, religions don't talk so much about. I have always been, I have always dreamed much, always had those visual... Visual dream conditions, and started to get interested in that, like probably most others, in the latter half of my teens, and was at that point very interested in erasing some of that inner and outer experience of myself and reality on a philosophical level." (Appendix: 35)

Informant 5: "In the beginning when I started doing it, it was to actually be able to experience that there was something more than just the physical world. We were something more than just a body and a head and... We had actually a... Then it was the thought that we had a soul that was immortal and that didn't have the same limitations as one had in the physical body. And I wanted to experience that. I always thought that it was like that, that the soul wasn't connected to the

physical limitations that out body was, but I had a strong wish to actually experience it. So that was probably it, a strong drive and curiosity to find out that, yeah, there was something more and I have the possibility to make use of it. I think that was how it started.” (Appendix: 44)

3. Content of the event.

Informant 1: *“To a certain degree, but that’s the ones I try to block out, those who try to use it against me. But that person, I felt that I wanted to walk towards that person, it has happened before that I’ve gotten to unpleasantries I just wanted away from, but it wasn’t so easy to get away from this person because of the power it had, suddenly it turned very unpleasant. The other figures were kind of not in my field of view any more, the two I had also wanted to get in touch with. But the uncomfortable that I had blocked was still present, so it turned suddenly into a very uncomfortable person, and I was very afraid that he’d tell those things to the figure standing further away that I had blocked away earlier. And it turned into kind of nightmare stuff. It wasn’t a good astral projection, this, I just have to pinpoint that.” (Appendix: 9)*

“I couldn’t end it in the middle of the heavenly realm, that doesn’t work. I have tried just to see how, what it entails to end it before I’m comfortable with doing so, but it just doesn’t work, I have to feel that I am back before I can do so.

I: That time you were interrupted and woken, in a way, did you go the whole way back before...

O: I had to travel back again, but it went so fast. It was unpleasantly fast to get back. It was kind of just, boom, I was kind of dragged back again in a way. Almost involuntarily, just got dragged back, lay down and poof, done. Chills in the back of my head and... what the hell? Startled the hell out of me, you know? I feel kind of that I just, it isn’t me who, I just get dragged. If it’s a good mechanism to have or not, I don’t know, but it is just unpleasant. I have never felt that I have sat behind, in a way, that would have been bad, I’d think, but I don’t think that’s possible.” (Appendix: 10-11)

Narrative: *“I started by doing all the preparations. It was a bit into the afternoon so no one were walking through the hallway outside, it was prepared for it. I was lying down in the living room.” ... “Imagined the figure, did all the things we talked about earlier. (See 1B, Initializing) That particular process is mostly the same every time, it doesn’t turn out too different, really. I can’t kind of get that much out of it, that, or... it is a very strange and unpleasant experience, but it’s not something I get... can take any meaning out of, really, other than it being a good exercise. Went over my body, went over my house, and so on and so on. Until I got to that plane. That time it was... it took me some time to get there because it was some time since the previous time I did it, so it was a bit difficult for me to get all the way up to that plane, in a way. It took a while, I’d believe, I don’t have a very good sense of time on what happens and such when I first do it, but it felt like an eternity. That, damn, maybe it won’t go too well today. And... But I got there at last, got to that nothing that it became, and a lot of things manifested. But very few things this time. It’s never like it either will be a lot, or it could be a lot of things, it could be small things, it could be large things, it could be few things. It was few things this time. There were a few figures out by the horizon that I could make out faintly, there were a few sounds, there were, felt kind of that there were presences. I was kind of on a plain, but it wasn’t a plain, there wasn’t any grass, it was kind of, very dry. It wasn’t a desert, not a... Very difficult to point out what it was at all. It felt moist. Very strange, it was dry and moist, dry on the ground, moist in the*

air. I thought that I should walk towards the figures since they were really the only things, there were landscapes in the background, but I felt kind of like I couldn't walk towards it, that it was kind of just there in the background. Went towards the figure, there were about four of them. One figure was... not imprecise, it was very strange, hard to perceive what it was. It was a person but at the same time not a person. Very tall, felt uncomfortable. So, I blocked that person out, in a way, but it was there, kind of completely present, but out of the scenario, out of my sensory field, in a way. But at the same time it was there, if I turned around, it was still there. Three figures were left, who took one by one. They stood there, kind of not talking, they stood there one by one on their own areas, in a way. And went towards the figure that was a kind of medium height person dressed in fine clothes, formal clothing, in a way, and it wasn't a godperson. I can't put things into system every time, they were clothes, kind of Asian, not Asiatic, but eastern clothes, formal clothes. And tried to contact the figure, blue silks and wore sandal-like shoes, I remember. Was a turban, darkly skin, and he didn't have facial features. So it was a bit uncomfortable, but I still chose to initiate contact. I felt kind of the presence of a human-like... contact, in a way, so I thought that maybe I should initiate contact, maybe the facial features and such would manifest when I got in touch. Thought that I wanted a conversation with that figure, and the conversation I'd really... A lot of it is private, so I'm thinking I'd rather tell more about how it went. For a lot of it tends to personal matters, often very specific matters, it could be strange things, things like, say... Things I wouldn't even feel comfortable sharing with anyone, that kind of stuff. The person was very personal, talked to me as if he knew me personally, very personally. As if he knew all my secrets, as if he knew all my inner wishes and desires, in a way. In a very nasty way, as if he knew all that I want, all the things I'd like to do, in a very... Haha, I know everything, and if you aren't with me then I'll pass it on to everyone else, that I kind of have power over you." (Appendix: 8-9)

"I stood there, and there it was, it was close to not being a conversation, it was just that figure reciting things, stood there and kept telling and telling and telling, I tried to get further but didn't get anywhere, tried to get a bit away, but the figure followed suit, things like that. Didn't want any more. This wasn't fun. The way I kind of got away was really doing everything I could to eliminate the other figure from the area, because if I eliminated the other figure then he was alone and couldn't tell anyone else. It was in a way the process of elimination where I concluded that this was what I felt most comfortable with doing. The way I kind of removed the other figure was really to imagine that he wasn't there, while I walked around and it followed me, and I turned around. Was it still there? Yes it was. I'll try again. And so on. It was kind of a dance around the plain. With unpleasantness following me in that figure while the monotonous strange thing was there. It took quite some time before I could decide that it wasn't there, it doesn't exist, I can manage to remove it from my world. But it was very difficult when it kept distracting me, that other one, with recitations and those voices who came with all kinds of crap. When I then managed to remove that person who was present, the other person, who made it uncomfortable, the most uncomfortable, really, then the person who stood there talking just... I could just walk away, could just leave it, could travel back to my body. And in a way surround my body. When I finish it then I'm back down again and just feel that I lie down on top of my body, close my eyes, and just finish it. It's kind of just snap, done, now I'm safe and sound, I'm here again, now I can just end it." (Appendix: 10)

Informant 2: *“I think that the most is in... I think that there is something more to it... That is, those who have experimented with other states of consciousness and the likes, they talk about a place that is different, which is nevertheless subject to a set of definitive rules, that is you can't... You aren't completely without limits either. That is, there is a way to operate that, it sounds like they are speaking of a place that actually exists, a phenomena that is actually real, that they are able to put a name on that this is this and not something else, this is the astral plane, not a dream condition, not a waking condition, this is the astral plane condition.”* (Appendix: 17)

Informant 3: *“You are kind of much more present, because you focus to feel and move, so you have to focus a lot on it, nothing happens automatically in a physical sense. And you get... You become a part, very integrated. Or at least I experience that I become much more integrated in what happens around me in that astral world, since... That is, I'm a bit partial to that you create it yourself, that it happens within you, and you are in a way a very big part of what happens there. So it's a kind of dissolution. You are separated from it, but because you perceive yourself and your Body of Light as yourself, and the other is kind of the other, but you are very interwoven with it.”* (Appendix: 22)

“Yeah, my experience is that you don't see it, but you just know that it's there. I've heard people say, those who do it a lot and often, have told that it is as clear and apparent as here and now in the physical world. For me, it's... You can take it... You get the physical reaction when you interact with things there even if you sit completely still, you aren't doing anything. So... Some of the trick is that, early, when I did it, it was like I always tried to see things crystal clear, I had to see it. But... After a while it got like, even if I... Even if the room is here, I don't see everything, I don't look at everything all the time. So that visualization is more that things are just here, you have to kind of feel that it's here.” (Appendix: 22)

“I: Can you feel your physical body, sitting there or lying there, while astral projecting?”

*O: Yes and no. It depends on how far you've gotten, I'd think. I haven't gotten very far, so if I do so then it bothers me. But I have experienced that, when you sit in Asana, and you have practiced it in, then you end up with just feeling, when you get to that point, that the body goes completely silent. It just sits there, in a way. So both yes and no, if something twitches or something and you haven't done it that much then you'll feel it, but if the focus is removed from it then you aren't conscious of your body in the same way. So yes and no. *Laughs**” (Appendix: 22)

“It would be dreaming, if we should compare it to something. It is... But the difference is that... Well, you are in control, and in the world of dreams can be very... The goal of astral projection is to be completely present in the world like, yeah, like here. That yeah, but in a dream you feel more like you are in a movie, in a way. But sometimes I can feel that I am very physically present in the dream... So yeah, I guess that's what I can compare it to. It is imaginable that astral projection is like lucid dreaming, just initialized while awake.” (Appendix: 23)

“The similarity is that you are in a non-physical world, and the similarity between lucid dreaming and astral projection is that you are in control. And I've heard that... I haven't experienced much lucid dreaming, but those who told me of their experiences are saying that

they are very mystical, through it. While... The same can happen in dreams too, that you can have spiritual experiences through it. Dreaming... It's a difference though, dreaming can be banal and... Very... Yeah. But that's it though, the mystical experience, the feeling of coming into contact with the other. That's what you try through astral projection, getting in touch with the other world, getting in touch with something that exceeds or transcends the physical world, either if it's psychological or actually spiritual.” (Appendix: 23)

*“Yeah, like I said I haven't got that much direct experience. Some, enough to talk a bit about it. But the times I've done it it's been like I've... Just gotten kind of out of the body. And what happened is that I've been swooping around uncontrollably in outer space. Kind of victim of circumstances and gravity, or reverse gravity. *Laughs* What I've met has been kind of... I met a kind of Buddha-figure, who just sat there. *Laughs* And yeah, that's about it.... Yeah! I cut it in half with a sword. *Both laugh**

It's so long ago that I don't remember why, but yeah. And another time... It was kind of, it wasn't... I hadn't been able to form the entire body, so it was a bit like, it was a condition of weightlessness, and... More like that it was me, my arms and my consciousness, so wasn't maybe 100% present.

I: Can you say some more about what you mean by “form the entire body”?

O: Yeah, it is feeling that you are physically present, that you feel every sensation like you... It might be, I don't know, I haven't been able to do it myself, so it's not sure that that's how it works either. I, I mean also... I've stood up, sitting in a chair I've stood up, and I've walked across the floor. Then I feel that I'm doing it, I feel that my body gets dragged in different directions, it is very hard to control, I fall through the floor, I swoop up through the roof. That kind of stuff. Then I feel that kind of my whole body, that is, I feel kind of, the legs are there, the back, the torso is there, the arms are there, and the head and everything, in a way. But when I swoop out into outer space then it gets more metaphysical, floating around like a consciousness type of thing. I haven't gotten as far as to step into... That is, according to the Thelemic then it's about travelling into the sun, then you are going through all those worlds, the first is the earth of the gnomes, right? And I haven't gotten so far as to start doing that, building a temple and all that one speak of.” (Appendix: 23-24)

“My expectations are that when you become trained, then there will be interaction, direct interaction with creatures on that plane, whatever it is. That you hear and speak with them and, yeah... The few experiences I've had... The few things I've met have been very diffuse and unclear and nothing much, no interaction. Just weird things that try to cling onto me which I... I don't know.” (Appendix: 24)

“I'd say that you can do anything. It is kind of the land of opportunity. You can imagine and create things, but at the same time you meet things that you did not create, that are emerging from your own inner universe, that you kind of unconsciously color, right, and receive in a way and relate to. That about building a temple, that's something you can do, you can decorate it as you wish and, yeah... I haven't done so, but you, form the world and can fly around wherever you wish and travel in time and space as fast and easily as you may wish, if you in some way have received the keys. That's also an interesting thing, there are limits not just in the form that you have to train to get out of your body and visualize and... People say that, and I've actually

experienced that, I forgot. That about, you, there are different worlds, right? That are associated a little differently, with earth, fire and blah blah blah, lots of other things. And that about you're supposed to travel to those worlds are kind of portals and such where you shall travel through a symbol to get to... That about, yeah... Sigils, or something, to get to the world of the gnomes. And I tried that once, I recall, but it stopped. I got to a gateway, but it just stopped. I couldn't get in. It was strange, because you can lose control and get thrown here and there, but this was something different. It just stopped you. I just couldn't get through that damn door. And that is something related to that you, as far as I understand, that you have to build strength and understanding to step through the different worlds. There are some limitations, and that you meet things that you have not consciously created, made an effort to form, it makes you start to think, and as I've said, I haven't concluded completely that this is just a psychologized phenomena or psychological phenomena, but I, like to stand and jump between the chairs.” (Appendix: 25-26)

*“I can say a bit about, because I made a comparison between lucid dreaming, and, or, sleep paralysis and astral projection. And I've had sleep paralysis two or three times, I lay in my bed, and it was a time where I was doing Liber Samekh daily. I had, there was someone who said that if you did so then you opened a gate, and strange things start happening, and it did. Something or other pushed the duvet down over me and groped me. *Laughs**

And I got... It was two or three times where I was visited by something. And it, that I can... Can almost perceive it as a reverse astral projection, that it kind of is something coming out of the astral world and touches you in a way, and then you get kind of forced to it. Your body stills completely, and things start happening. And it happens kind of automatically, like a spontaneous out of body experience, right? The body stops being a focus for your consciousness, and so the consciousness goes somewhere else, or that it focuses on something that receives something... Yeah, concepts and stuff... Yeah, that's it, I could add at the end a thought that it could be a reversion of that process, it isn't you going out to that world, but that world coming to you, in a way.” (Appendix: 27)

Informant 4: *“It is a way to utilize your own being in an attempt to notice or sense what is subtly present in the world around you, or it could be to go fully into another kind of pictorial reality to explore your own inner worlds. My attitude is a bit divided... A divided attitude towards astral projection.” (Appendix: 28)*

“Example: in many forms of esotericism, and in Thelema, the Hebraic alphabet, correspondences attached to it, placed on the Tree of Life, is used to underlie a complex symbolic language. So, an excerpt from my own experiments. If I want to explore the properties and values that underlie Yodh, the letter Yodh, which I was very interested in for a time for various reasons, we have to tools. I've worked with a grimoire that Crowley developed, which is called Liber 231, which is made exclusively for this kind of work.” (Appendix: 28)

“I wanted to explore Yodh, two ways to do this. In the little grimoire called Liber 231, which just consists of... Sigils. Then you find the corresponding, correct placement of it, you use the sigil. Yodh's looks more or less like a kind of Arabic genie in the lamp which a cross comes out of. You picture it very clearly in your mind, use a, base it on a kind of portal, focus or meditate on that symbol, let it get stronger, let it light up, light up until you... Try to consciously travel through it.

The thought is that you are supposed to get into a visual inner reality. That you are supposed to be able to move around in, where you should be able to meet creatures, where you should... Be able to take in things that underlie what values that letter has. I am a bit...

**Laughs* A little skeptical really, right? I don't think that those symbols or letters have power in themselves, they have power because you studied it and because you know what underlies it. So that's my skepticism that underlie what we call astral projection, that it will always be a part of yourself and your own level of knowledge and intellect that will inform what you experience. Of course." (Appendix: 28-29)*

"On a good day I can experience it as a kind of living, waking dream, right? You are inside of it. Other times you notice things more and you will have ideas of things that..." (Appendix: 29)

"As I said, as I said earlier, that everything that I classify as astral projection isn't 100% visual and tactile realities I enter. It can be a place between, but you know what is here, you have a very clear idea of the world you half daydream your way into, right?"

I: You do some comparisons to daydreaming and states of dreaming, and talk a bit of what is similar.

O: Mhm.

I: Can you say something about what is dissimilar as well?

*O: It's the element of consciousness. In a pure state of dreaming then... Then... With few exceptions, at least my own experience is that the I plays a much smaller role, even if you might wake up and remember vividly as if you were there, I experience, through my own kind of self analysis of my own dreams, that the feeling of self, the I-feeling, is pretty weak, often, in dreams. I think that one sees things, that things kind of happen to you, you aren't really there in... Maybe others dream differently? *Laughs* I have of course had nightmares and other things where I... Where I feel that, or not just nightmares, but dreams where you have feelings, where you are absolutely present, in a way. But as a general rule of thumb I think that the degree to which you are present is an essential difference, right? Some will probably say that I'm talking about... About lucid dreaming when I say this, the difference is that you actively enter into a symbolic system which you put as a foundation for the work you do, as opposed to lucid dreaming, where you, at least often, go a lot more freely into a kind of dream condition." (Appendix: 30-31)*

"I: Can I ask you a few questions before you continue? When you are in this reality, you talk about feeling textures, that you could see things. Can you also use other senses? Can you hear?"

*O: You can easily have hearing...A kind, a form of auditory hallucinations, at least... Some believe to have them very clearly, I don't believe I have them as clearly. But you can have an understanding of what is being communicated non-verbally, you are in absolute communication with things you meet, right? *Laughs* The small three-headed dog can transmit things to you, right? The old man, when you get to turn it around, will also be able to transmit ideas, but I've never had a conversation, like we sit there talking. You will get ideas and thoughts that are triggered, but are experienced as triggered by the things you see that are communicating to you, right?" (Appendix: 32)*

"I: When you are in this condition, can you still feel your body lying there?"

O: Not really, but... You feel in a way not locked in it either. It feels very natural to kind of

retrace your steps through all of this to get back to yourself, but you have always a very clear understanding and sensation that you can open your eyes and be out of it, but it feels very unnatural to do so.

I: When you float around like this, can you, as you do now, see your arms and legs?

*O: I do not. Maybe I'm supposed to? *Laughs**

I: I'm not as interested in what one is supposed to as in what you have experienced.

*O: You are supposed to... Now I'm talking about being supposed to again, but traditionally, you are supposed to, for instance, show symbols and gestures or signs that are supposed to make you safe or destroy what is dangerous, or things like that, but... I have never felt that I have gotten to a place where, firstly, it has been necessary, because it has been a... Very observational condition, right? There is nothing is coming to grab hold of you, or that you feel can really grab hold of you. The scary, for instance... The black, kind of horde, is visually frightening, but there is nothing really frightening about it, right? You stand there watching it. The same about that, the Enochian journey. There's nothing... Nothing really intense about the light that is so bright that you can't look at it, or anything frightening in that way. It was a little unsettling, not frightening, but a little uncomfortable. Feel in a way that you float and halfway keel over forwards, because that's also a thing that you... You aren't strolling around, in a way. You move... Since you move in your mind then you are moving in a non-physical way, right? You can feel that you keel over or slide a bit to one side, but I have never experienced that it goes out of control either. You can try to look at something and feel that your gaze or the experience of yourself is drawn sideways, or that it is drawn like that without you doing so, but you never get lost, right? *Laughs* Or, you are never afraid that you'll lose control over where to go and what's going to happen. If that makes sense?" (Appendix: 33-34)*

"A part of me maybe wished that it would be what I just said is described. Like a reality number 2 that is, to a certain degree, as thoroughly constituted as this reality, and that you can... Move a lot deeper into it, that you can kind of walk, a bit more like a movie scenario. But I think, already on, before I had done those things I were skeptical about the scope of that possibility. So... Maybe I limited myself through my own skepticism towards it? I might have believed that the sensory experiences were a lot more recognizable as what I sense otherwise, but it is a much more non-material condition, even if you understand and notice that you are in a tactile reality, that might as well have smelled something, but... You don't touch the ground and feel what the ground is like, but you know what the ground feels like, you understand? Yeah..." (Appendix: 35)

Narrative A: "I sit down in a way that I am relaxed, without... It is very nice, I think that it is very nice just to lie down. There are very many who think that it is very nice to be seated upright in a chair, and are very concerned with a straight back and all that, but the whole purpose is that the body should not fall to the side and that you shall be drawn out of it physically, right? I've done this seated and lying down, but I think that I am able to let loose into it more freely when I lie down. So I'm lying down, you breathe and at all find other ways that will quiet down your system, you that you are calm. Try to notice or feel that you are getting up, I think that it is a quick way to stimulate this disassociation from the body, because you are lying there, but you feel and notice behind closed eyes that you are vertical. You then try summoning the card you have decided to use as good as you can, in this instance The Hermit-card. It has a very noticeable

frame, and a scene is happening within it. You try to make the colors appear as clearly as possible, you try to make the detail appear in place as clearly as possible. Of course, when you... Hold the picture clear enough before your mind, then you can try to... Then I try to float against it, so that you get closer and closer. Not that the card gets closer and closer towards you, but that you are getting closer and closer to what is happening. It is a bit difficult to explain, because you aren't getting any closer to the figure, for instance, but the card... Immerses you more and more. And half through will and half through it just happening by itself, you let those elements come alive. This card is very good to use because it has this very chaotic background, right? And you still have this immobile, red figure in the front. It is relatively easy to get this background to be experienced as a background in motion. It already looks like the background is in motion on the card, right? What's a bit more difficult to explain is that you are inside the frames you were watching. What happens is that you can float further in, you can see to the side, you can see up, you can see down, you can to a certain extent notice what texture or feeling there is in the card, or in... In the matter. And. And let you to a certain extent just see, and to a certain extent keep moving actively. You can try to walk around that figure, so you can try to see the face that is halfway turned away from you, you can try to see past this swimming, strange background. A... A kind of strong and strange experience on my part, it wasn't really visual in that way, but it was the sensation of... the sensation that the whole background was the inside of a kind of cup, a container, right, but it wasn't a circumference... And... A little difficult to explain that too, you understand. But... You look down into the matter and notice what is below, which is no longer just that background, you see other things there, you can see other things above you, you can have an understanding for the cup that is behind there. And again, much of this is of course informed by what you know of the symbolic language, because this card is surrounded by the symbols of the other cards, so it becomes more like a pathworking." (Appendix: 31-32)

*"When the Hermit becomes three-dimensional, then you can... It doesn't move on its own in the same way, it doesn't become animated, really, It could be because of the card, that it is associative, but it stands very petrified in a way. But it is round, right, so you can float in to the side of it and... I knew so beforehand, but the head is the head of an ibis, right? It is Thoth. And you... It is kind of strange to explain with words, but you get to see into the eyes of the figure, right? Which, without really pointing, points in a direction into the landscape beyond there. When I look up to the left then... There were a kind of, I don't really know what to call it, but a kind of Wild Hunt, right? Far away, but very clear for a kind of... Horde. *Laughs* In this green, swinging background, that always was in movement, and that I could stand there and watch, but that never got any closer. And I could float into the picture without getting any closer to them. I have done so a few times, but I have never gotten any closer to them. And if I do so now then it is easy to get to the same place, right? In... Another thing is that about that card, you stand... Describe it a lot like floating around, right? Because you aren't standing on... It is a big abyss, not an abyss like on the Tree of Life, but you stand in... Nothing. And..." (Appendix: 33)*

*"The background, or the... The room you stand in is very dominated by the swinging, green background and... The kind of sperm cells that are also in the picture, right? Very moist sensation, which is kind of hard to explain, because you aren't touching anything or feel that you are becoming moist, but kind of... It has been a little like standing in outer space and feeling that it is clammy. *Both laugh**

*When you look down, you see under these forms, that there are new spirals going down. My association to that, and maybe the most visual experience I have had in that condition is to feel that you are looking down at... Down at... Down at the Devil-card, in the tarot, right? Which sits under here, not as a place you can travel to, you are in a way standing above it. And it isn't clearly visible, but clear enough to purely by association know that you are standing above it. Very trippy explanation, but... *Laughs* Yeah, questions?*

I: Yeah, I'd like to hear what happened next, or what else you did, and how it ended.

O: A bit difficult to put into words. And a little cliché perhaps, that came just as much from me as something important and alien, but the sense of and understanding of what the ibis head communicates is that, that it is this place that is the beginning and the end of everything. And that might be why I have been very concerned with that place, this isn't part of a doctrine or anything like that, but it was an experience and has been an experience that has been important to me. And... It might be strange, it is... It might be strange to talk about a, what I call an astral journey where you don't really travel that much as you just get into a place where you are and... Because you travel, but that Hermit-figure is there all the time, even if you feel like, as I said you go further into things, and the small dog in front of the picture is experienced as being behind you, some parts of the picture are transported with you as you move into the picture, right? So you are always standing with that figure, you understand?

I: Yeah.

O: And as I really didn't communicate much more than that specifically... So it might be a bit dull astral projection to tell about, but a very, of different experiments one that was important to me. Many other kinds of experiments where you try to move around in a landscape and try to, much more like a fairytale world, like, for instance, if you travel into The Fool in traditional tarot or something like that. Not Crowley's Fool, that one is a bit special...

I: How... When the projection experience came to an end, how did that happen?

O: That specific journey felt very natural in a way that, much like an inhalation and an exhalation, not that short, but in the way that you go in there, but get half consciously and half... A kind of retreat. Not that you backtrack through all the things you have seen and that you get through the same portal, and back into your body, at least not for me. But still a kind of sense that this is what happens, that you are drawn out, and I keep lying there, and it is dark, because I have my eyes closed, and I prefer to do so in the dark, and I know I can stand up and it is done. Others talk about much more direct astral travels where you go around in completely concrete landscapes and dragons appear or gnomes come or elemental creatures are coming and all else the occult language has to communicate through. But... I'm honest, I am unable to do so.

**Laughs* Same with... Much the same sensation, the two I told you about now, that it is a very floating condition, right? And I am much more in a room than moving from one chapter into another one, I haven't done that either; I am unable to do so in the same astral projection. I can't go into that state of mind and go into other things than the specific one I've tried to go into there. I'm often skeptical about the astral stories that are being told too, so..."*

(Appendix: 34-35)

Narrative B: "A very early and, in part, involuntary... Not involuntary, because it was in a kind of ritual situation that too, many years ago, one of the first workings I participated in with what is called Enochian magic, which is a lot of things. But in this type of work it was, in short, a kind of chant, right? A song that is spoken in the room where I was, and you go more and more into a

kind of trance state. Your body becomes calm, and... Without really trying, without really travelling into something, I experienced, very suddenly, to stand in air, if you understand? Over a red background, very red sky, without managing to walk forwards, without managing to walk backwards, with a sun or a light that was very white. All of this is behind closed eyes, so it isn't that it hurts to look at it, but you can't really manage to look at it, and you... Still try to focus on this white point which became more and more, lighting up from a very simple symbol. Which I remember, and which I kind of brought back. It was a very short and very intense experience, which might be one of the first real things I felt really was astral projection. Because it was so visual, because that world was... Tactile, in that way. And because you bring something back, of course. You aren't just swimming around in a kind of fantasy world, you often experience things when you do this that seem, or that are experienced as if it is important for you, right? Things that you bring back with you that you remember afterwards and might change your perspective on... Either if it is these cards again, which I work with, or in this case a symbol, which you don't really know what means, but that you sense is yours, that it came from you, but that you meet it in a kind of occult reality outside of yourself. And it was very momentous because it felt very important, right? Maybe I wanted it to be a little important. But you get a symbol you haven't seen anywhere else. Of course very generic as compared to sigils and other grimoires you have seen, but it was none of them. And it is none of them... I can't remember to have seen it again when I have looked through other symbols... And I have brought it with me, tried to in a way give it its own meaning. And I've tried to use it as a specific symbol for the door-technique, right? To travel into that symbol to get things that are completely my own, and... I don't know. I think... Again, because I might initially be a little... I see the value in this objective form of astral projection, that you work with others through a common symbolic language, that you are more or less supposed to be able to get into conditions and gather information that is associated with the symbols one enters into. They are still subjective experiences, right? So... Think it might be, often just as interesting to go fully into things that are my own. What happens is that things are less clear and orderly, since you don't have the same associating apparatus. It becomes more difficult to have the same... Complete... No, that was a poor sentence, but you know what I mean." (Appendix: 32-33)

*Informant 5: "Astral projection is one of those terms you can look at in various different ways. A term which really has different meanings dependent on which tradition you come from and how you look at it. That said, I've really looked at it from two different angles. In the beginning, or some years ago I thought that astral projection was concrete out of body experiences, where you left your physical body and got the opportunity to travel around the astral plane or in the room, almost physically, in a way. *Laughs**

But in retrospect, from a more Thelemic perspective, I've looked at it more as the practice of Rising on the Planes, or through help from the Body of Light be able to, to explore different planes with different entities, or different... Different creatures too that have different kabbalistic characteristics. So seen like that I'd think it is one of those terms that can be seen in different ways. I also think that lucid dreaming can be connected to astral projection in a certain way. But from a Thelemic perspective I see astral projection as, yeah, this practice concerning Rising on the Planes, to explore the astral plane in a Body of light." (Appendix: 38)

"I: Do you believe that it is possible to do astral projection without knowing what it is?"

*O: Yes, absolutely. I also believe that there is a connection with how you look at astral projection, but I believe that it is clearly connected to, for instance near death out of body experiences, I think that has a connection. So seen like that, yeah, I believe so. And out of body experiences have been described in a great many different religions and traditions through the ages, and I believe that many of those who describe the phenomena lack any deep underlying understanding of what it really is before they experience it. Even if they maybe get really to finding out what it is afterwards. * Laughs **

Yeah, I believe so. But to do it completely controlled I think you have to focus a lot on it, and then I think it would be smart to have some knowledge, and managing to find a technique that works for yourself." (Appendix: 39-40)

"In a way it felt like you are kind of in between meditation and dream, really. In many ways it feels a lot like a lucid dream, where one... What I think is interesting is that the more one works with it the more real it becomes. In the sense that, in the beginning there were maybe more thoughts and more imagination that were a little, yeah, a little dreamy. But after a while you start to be able to, to a stronger degree be able to see details, see colors, sense smells, experience tastes. The tactile to a special degree, to actually be able to physically feel that you are walking on the sand, or feeling the warmth from something, overall feeling the senses to a greater degree. So I think that's something that to a great degree has developed, but originally I've really felt that... You start with a kind of goal, maybe you want to explore one of the different planes, often I've gotten to a near Egyptian plane, or the Celtic plane in a way. But then I've... So then it gets really a little like being in a very clear dream that is tied up to that one commits to explore. So I think that the separation between being completely awake, meditation and lucid dreaming is what I really feel can characterize that experience." (Appendix: 40-41)

"I: How... What does and how does your physical body feel like during this practice?"

O: It feels very faint. It is absent to the degree that it is during deep meditation, I feel. So it is not something you really think about, but it is... I can't say that it is non-existent, but that it is not something one considers, at least. You probably get into a form of trance state that makes the physical body irrelevant, really. But of course, if you sit in a horrible position or there is something that disturbs you or something like that, then you notice it, and you get unfocused, maybe you even snap completely out of this form for astral projection. So it is relevant." (Appendix: 41)

"I: You have also compared the experience to dream states, meditation and lucid dreaming, and mentioned a few things concerning what is similar.

O: Mhm.

I: Can you say a few words about what is dissimilar as well?

O: Well, compared to... Compared to meditation, it's probably that you are, at least when I work with meditation, I try to be very, preferably focused on one thing. Then I look at meditation as something that is exclusively pure focus. Focus on the breath, focus on visualizing an object. That it is, very very concentrated, on just one thing. While in lucid dreaming there isn't that focus, then you have the opportunity to explore, to experience, to move around. So seen like that I'd think that they are two very fundamentally different conditions in a way, even though they

might start very similarly.

In lucid dreaming you don't have, well, I don't know, there I feel, I feel maybe that the two are, they are very similar. In many ways. But lucid dreaming I think lasts often for a longer period of time, really. It is rare that I've been able to hold on to an astral projection over a long duration, it is usually something one does, I don't know, maybe not much more than 20, 15, 20-25 minutes really at the time, I feel when one gets to those planes. Because it is a little tiring, in a way.

** Laughs* You have to be able to focus in a way that is pretty, that is pretty demanding. So that way I'd say that the focus you need is very different in the three variants, in meditation, lucid dreaming and astral projection, even though I think that the experience of astral projection and lucid dreaming is very similar. At least in my experience.” (Appendix: 41-42)*

*“Ahh, in the beginning, completely differently. I would have expected that it was a purely concrete experience of being outside of your own body, actually being able to explore the world as the world... I first envisioned that it was mostly a form of being able to explore this world, that is the physical world, that I could astral project and almost be able to fly over to someone else's house and see what they were doing then and there, what they talked about, what they did. And if any other friends of mine who lived other parts in the world did the same then we'd be able to meet on, I could fly to them and we could meet there and have the exact same experience and... I still think that... It might be possible. I read about people who do so, meet on the astral plane and have the same exact experiences, but I have never experienced that. And even if I believe that it works that does not mean that it is the most useful way to use astral projection. So I envisioned that it was very, that it felt very concrete, really. That, when I started it I thought that, now I'll get a lot of opportunities to explore the world and experience new places, and see things that no one else sees, and sneak around. * Laughs**

*But it wasn't to be. Anyway it is really quite interesting, you talk about it in so very different ways as well. That someone talks about astral projection as clear out of body experiences that allow one to explore the physical world, while others see it completely differently, as exploring the astral planes. Which are really two different things, but that one speak of using the same term. * Laughs* Yeah, it is strange that we really don't have more differentiated terms for it, and that we talk of the same in different... Everyone is talking about this with the Silver Chord, for instance, as what binds the soul to the body, and when it breaks then... Yeah, then you don't get back into your body again. Also something I think has repeated itself in different traditions and religions through... Where we still probably speak of completely different things, but with the same conceptual apparatus and metaphors, so it is very interesting, seen like that.” (Appendix: 43)*

“Yeah, at lower secondary school. The end of... Or, primary school, lower secondary school, I read a lot of strange things. I loved these, type, the world's greatest mysteries, all these, these books talking about how fantastic it was with out of body experiences, where you could... Explore completely different worlds, and your own world as well, meet God and, suddenly you weren't afraid of death any more... All these stories, strong tales, that I read about which I think gave me those thoughts at the beginning. Then it has changed as I have really read more and more, or, moved towards the more esoteric and the more western traditions tied up towards it that have given me a different view on what astral projection really is and what it can be tied up

against. And also that it has a much more, a completely different function than just being able to experience that it is fun to fly around in a Body of Light. *Laughs*” (Appendix: 43-44)

“I think it is, I think that probably there are many that would rather fool you and lead you astray and get you away from the path that you are on, I think so, and you get pretty strongly warned against it as well. Crowley writes of this on several places, that to be able to test is really one of the most important things that you do, because if not then you can do more harm than positive effects. So I clearly believe so. I believe that it is something that for many can end up with you being probably very enamored by some things, perhaps. Maybe you feel that you get a lot of experiences that are really big and really important, but then it’s all just a game. Seen that way I think it is really important to have some control of it. If you use the methods and principles that are given within Thelemic practices, then I also think that you should take the warnings given there seriously. If you are to look at, if you are to believe the positive effects that they are intended to give, then you also have to believe in the dangers that are connected with it, as it is described by those who are experts on it and have been pioneers within Thelema and astral projection.” (Appendix: 46)

Narrative A: “I: You said that you had astral projected before?

O: I think so! *Laughs*

This is again some of the problem, knowing what is really imagination and what happens, it is tremendously difficult. *Laughs*

Whether it was a... Yeah, it was a kind of astral projection where I felt that I was physically outside of my own body. That was in a period where I had tried it every night in a very long period of time, and... The experience was really something that happened, just got triggered at night while I was sleeping, where I suddenly experienced that I was outside of my own body. The reason I assume that it was a form of astral projection was because it was very different from all other forms of hyperrealistic dreams and lucid dreaming that I have had earlier, and also that had a... It has been branded into my memory to such a degree that I think it can be separated from some other experiences that really weren’t meaningful. But I can never know, so...

Laughs But that is the experience I have had that is closest, at least a type of astral projection as defined as an out of body experience. I believe so.

I: So it happened spontaneously, at the middle of the night?

O: Yes.

I: Did you try to produce it, in any way?

O: No, I think it was just triggered by the fact that I had tried over a long period of time so concretely. So just then and there it wasn’t anything that triggered it, but it was probably some kind of spontaneous reaction on something I had attempted over a long period of time, I believe.” (Appendix: 40)

Narrative B: “The one time was, a time that, this is really to kinds of practices that I have done repeatedly. One was really a little inspired by a form of guided meditation that I read once, that I have done, done a lot. I can really say that what I have usually done, really had a kind of pattern for it that I have done the last few times, where it has been. Where I have usually sat in Asana, usually the Dragon, before an altar, preferably with candlelight, a little incense... Started with a little, yeah, Pranayama, try to get thoroughly into it, tried to imagine, after getting thoroughly

*into a kind of meditative state, that I sit next to myself in the same Asana. Preferably with a robe. Then attempt to project my own consciousness into this Body of Light next to me. Rise up on the planes. Arrive at last at a kind of... Astral plane that I kind of have, have gotten a bit familiar with. *Laughs* Usually go back to a kind of outdoors temple. Where I have an altar with the Stèle, with four columns around me. Usually always outdoors, preferably with, I almost said, a waterfall or something like that around me, I don't know why, but it is usually there. *Laughs* And then do the usual rituals that one often does, the pentagram- and hexagram-rituals. Do this too in the Body of Light, and try to imagine it as clearly as possible, while one simultaneously is very alert of feeling both, use all the senses, smells, sense of taste, the tactile, feeling the wind, feeling the temperature, hearing all the sounds. As one does the rituals to make it as strong as possible, and as powerful as possible. After you finish with these rituals, pentagram- and hexagram-rituals. Then you have kind of gotten so powerfully into it that you can, for instance, explore the surrounding areas. Then it has often been... It has often been, type an Egyptian plane, I have experienced reemerging... Where there is typically sand and desert and pyramids... And... Often type Godforms, also often animal creatures, really. That you meet and can converse with. Often I think that it is really difficult to really get a grasp of what is going on. Often a little strange conversations, strange words, so it is not often that I have gotten something concrete out of it. But there have been some times that have felt that there were things that triggered something at least, that have committed and read up on later on, that I have seen had some form of meaning. But I can't give a very concrete example just now, something which might also be a sign that I have yet to have some of the most important experiences, really big spiritual experiences. *Laughs*. But... I have felt that it has been useful anyway. And especially this about managing to do part of your rituals in the Body of Light is also something which has been seen as an important form of training, really. Both for concentration and that it is something which, which is a possibility to become an even more skilled magician, which also makes it possible to take a step further to this with the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, for instance, and find one's True Will. So I think it is a very important practice even if I am yet to have the greatest results.” (Appendix: 42)*

4. Identification of the event.

Informant 1: “I'd think that was the first time I'd actually gotten to a plane that, or, where I was away from the universe, where I got to a place where I knew nothing. Where I had to relearn things, in a way, almost. That I kind of was on a new level. That's when I felt that I did it. I had tried a lot of times before that, but came to the conclusion that this was just stupid, this was just dumb, god, this is something anyone can imagine that they are doing. It was when I got to that... To actual sensory impressions that I wouldn't have otherwise, in that deep concentration, that I felt I astral projected.” (Appendix: 11).

“I've had conversations with one of my mentors about it. He told me about... that when you get to that plane, you know when you've gotten to a new plane, I don't remember his exact words, but based on the things I told him he told me that it seems like you've... he never said that this is concrete, that you've done it, I'll never get an answer to that, there's no recipe, as far as I've understood it, that this is it. No, it's not. But my individual experience, based on what he heard, was that I had astral projected.” (Appendix: 11)

Informant 2: *“I expect that it should be impossible to mistake for something else. That... I want to know that there is a difference between this and sitting around daydreaming. And that... It because of that has to be a completely immersive experience, the same way that you know that you have been sleeping when you have slept and been awake when you have been awake, the same way you have to know that you’ve been on the astral plane when you’ve been on the astral plane. So, so... But I also expect to be, I don’t expect it to be like a dream, as in that you don’t know that you are on the astral plane, but that I am fully conscious that I am here, that I know why I am here and... That I know that I am going back, and... Like a journey, or, that you are watching a movie, then you know that you are watching a movie even when in the middle of the experience. I think.”* (Appendix: 17)

“I think that at least in the beginning, that it is going to be a mixture of thought-activity and fantasies, and difficult to differentiate between those in the beginning, I expect, but after a while I hope that it becomes pretty clear cut.” (Appendix: 17)

Informant 3: *“It was that I was conscious, and it didn’t just feel like... To... The separation between, just fantasy and astral projection, is that you feel it physically. And that you... Yeah, that’s it, I guess.”* (Appendix: 24)

Informant 4: *“As long as you dissociate yourself from the physical body to experience an imagined or subtle reality, as we’d call it in occultism, as long as that’s what you are doing, you are doing astral projection.”* (Appendix: 28)

“Many probably disagree that this is astral projection, because there are a few strict criteria of what it really is, but I’m at peace with this being an approved form of astral projection.

** Laughs* I’ve had many interesting experiences through this mode of work.*

I: What kind of criteria are you speaking of?

*O: That you are supposed to be 100% out of your own body, that you move in that world as yourself, that you meet creatures which you gestalt movements towards, remove monsters within there with the banishing pentagram ritual, at all, that it is an absolute reality. Maybe I’m just bad at astral projection. * Both laugh**

I: From where did you get those criteria?

O: Both from oral traditions and from writings concerning astral projection. It is an essential part and a very thoroughly depicted part in this kind of occult work that I believe many people wish it to be very real, right? But because I don’t believe in it as an objective reality that me and you can go into and experience in the very same way, I permit myself a great degree of subjective opinionising and approach to the work.” (Appendix: 29-30)

“It was a very short and very intense experience, which might be one of the first real things I felt really was astral projection. Because it was so visual, because that world was... Tactile, in that way. And because you bring something back, of course. You aren’t just swimming around in a kind of fantasy world, you often experience things when you do this that seem, or that are experienced as if it is important for you, right? Things that you bring back with you that you remember afterwards and might change your perspective on... Either if it is these cards again,

which I work with, or in this case a symbol, which you don't really know what means, but that you sense is yours, that it came from you, but that you meet it in a kind of occult reality outside of yourself. And it was very momentous because it felt very important, right? Maybe I wanted it to be a little important. But you get a symbol you haven't seen anywhere else. Of course very generic as compared to sigils and other grimoires you have seen, but it was none of them. And it is none of them... I can't remember to have seen it again when I have looked through other symbols... And I have brought it with me, tried to in a way give it its own meaning. And I've tried to use it as a specific symbol for the door-technique, right? To travel into that symbol to get things that are completely my own, and... I don't know. I think... Again, because I might initially be a little... I see the value in this objective form of astral projection, that you work with others through a common symbolic language, that you are more or less supposed to be able to get into conditions and gather information that is associated with the symbols one enters into. They are still subjective experiences, right? So... Think it might be, often just as interesting to go fully into things that are my own. What happens is that things are less clear and orderly, since you don't have the same associating apparatus. It becomes more difficult to have the same... Complete... No, that was a poor sentence, but you know what I mean." (Appendix: 32-33)

"That what I have talked about now breaks with a lot of, you could call it doctrine or orthodoxy concerning astral projection, and I am very familiar with the parameters of what astral projection is, as related to what we talked about meeting creatures and removing them with ritual gestures and travelling further and further into one and the same world. The reason I step away from this and talk about completely different experiences is just that my experiences haven't been like that. So... So I have worked with those methods, I have used those techniques, and this is how those experiences have unfolded for me. So if this is right or wrong, I'm still left with something a feel satisfy some of the criteria about going outside yourself and experience a subtle reality, and that those things I take with me are, yet again, valuable to me." (Appendix: 38)

Informant 5: *"I: You said that you had astral projected before?*

*O: I think so! *Laughs**

*This is again some of the problem, knowing what is really imagination and what happens, it is tremendously difficult. *Laughs**

Whether it was a... Yeah, it was a kind of astral projection where I felt that I was physically outside of my own body. That was in a period where I had tried it every night in a very long period of time, and... The experience was really something that happened, just got triggered at night while I was sleeping, where I suddenly experienced that I was outside of my own body. The reason I assume that it was a form of astral projection was because it was very different from all other forms of hyperrealistic dreams and lucid dreaming that I have had earlier, and also that had a... It has been branded into my memory to such a degree that I think it can be separated from some other experiences that really weren't meaningful. But I can never know, so...

**Laughs*" (Appendix: 40)*

"I: Did you try to produce it, in any way?

O: No, I think it was just triggered by the fact that I had tried over a long period of time so concretely. So just then and there it wasn't anything that triggered it, but it was probably some

kind of spontaneous reaction on something I had attempted over a long period of time, I believe.” (Appendix: 40)

*“Yes, if you take it by the definition of this with Rising on the Planes, then it is something I have attempted some times. And again, I think that then it is even more difficult to know what is astral projection and what is a form of fantasy. But there I have had some meditation practices where I have attempted to follow Crowley’s instructions; to attempt to imagine that you are outside of your own body, project the body of light into this body, to rise on the planes and then explore the planes. I have done that several times, but again, I think it is difficult to know concretely what I have managed to do, and what I haven’t done. *Laughs* But again, this with the imagination might be one of the most important tools to manage to do this. That’s an important thought. But I haven’t done the clear, the thorough, systematic experiments that I should have done. Compared to... Even if you meet creatures, I haven’t really gone out of my way to test them, for instance. See how much they can test what they say up against my knowledge of qabalistic correspondences, for instance. But I believe that if I had committed to thoroughly do, experiment with this daily for a good period of time, noted it in my magical diary, and actually committed to analyze it, I think that only then would I know if there’s truth to this. But I try. And I think I have had what I consider to be effects with it, but whether or not it is something that is very clear or correct, or a meaningful form of astral projection, I’m not that sure.” (Appendix: 40)*

“Again it is very difficult to know. I think that it is very... Often a very weak dividing line between what is meditations and dreams and... Real astral projections. So I can’t really know it, what I do know is that I have used the techniques. What I do know is that I have entered into a changed state of consciousness. What I do know is that I have had the opportunity to explore planes and other surroundings that are likely part of my own magical universe, but without being completely able to answer if this is something others would define as astral projection. I can at least say that for me it has felt like it had a value in itself, and I would believe that if you keep at it with these techniques then it will be likely prospect that it will become a good astral projection that actually have meaning as related to exploring one’s own magical universe, see the different planes, test, meet entities that can give you actually interesting encounters, and useful, have a form of useful communication. And I think that it is simply something that will become more and more powerful the more you do it. But I feel at least that, based on my own definition and my own experience of my own universe, then it is at least something I can characterize as astral projection, at least emerging astral projection.” (Appendix: 42-43)

5. Valuation.

Informant 1: *“And that’s not what I’m after when I’m doing that. It’s actually to... get some meaning out of it. That I know I can get in touch with the latent things lying in my brain. That... give me something. I don’t know what... It doesn’t give me something explicitly. I can’t find the meaning of life, or answers to whether or not I should take that job, but it gives me, that is, a very good feeling. I feel in contact with myself, feel... conscious, really. That I. After doing it for a while just feel generally very good, tired, good. It gives me something in that way. That’s what astral projection is. It doesn’t give me something consciously, something specific, but a generally good perception of... my inner self, in a way.” (Appendix: 3)*

“It’s usually when I get a good conversation out of figures that I feel I can have a conversation with, where I can ask about things, get some answers, I feel that’s a very good experience since I can, in a way, get a few answers, some clarity in the situation.” (Appendix: 13-14)

“Yeah, that is, it could happen that I feel that there’s something uncomfortable once, but that it doesn’t take control of the whole, then it would just be unpleasantness. Of course, I learn from unpleasantness as well, but it gives me such a bad feeling that I don’t want to do it anymore, you know. It could be a very good instance where I have a good conversation, and then a lesser, perhaps a little dumb conversation, but I manage to escape that conversation when I after a while don’t want anymore, when I choose so, and that can be very good. Actually, one of the better ones have been where I’ve had a bit of both worlds, in a way. That I’ve clarified, talked about bad things as well as good things, if you get me.

I: Yeah, I think I understand.

O: As long as I feel I am in control, some semblance of control, then it usually turns out to be good. “ (Appendix: 14)

*“Usually if I’ve experienced something in my real life, and those things get kind of brought up, it’s never specifically brought up that it is concerning this or that situation, but things that are related to them, in a way. The conversations are very diffuse, it’s never like you were there and did this, and that was dumb, and now we’re going to talk about it. Start the debate. * Both laugh**

But it’s kind of the things I feel have a connection to things in my real life that I can use in a positive way, those are the things I value the most.” (Appendix: 14)

“Some of the same criteria, but at the same time, even if I’m in control then that doesn’t mean that it’s according to (my true will), if you get me. This is usually an assessment process that I can do in retrospect as well.

I: It is not something you judge while you are there?

O: It is usually something I have as an assessment process while I’m there, that is I judge what I should do, what feels right and what... According to the situation, that is, situational. Sometimes I’m wrong, sometimes I’m right and so on. It starts there, but it is in retrospect that I can assess it, be critical, and so on.” (Appendix: 14)

“It usually takes some time before I assess whether or not it gave me something at all, but if it is something that impacted me in some way, if it has been something I’ve been thinking about or... something that has lead to something good happening, and so on, if it just gave me something, that’s the criterion. They aren’t lofty criteria, but as long as it gave me something in the right direction, then it’s good, that’s it, that’s the criteria. But if it didn’t give me anything specific, and those things who didn’t give me anything specific didn’t have any impact. For instance, it’s a bad experience that can be about... for instance, something that helped me on the astral plane, but then has impacted me negatively, can still help me to my True Will, if you understand. But if it just hasn’t... This isn’t something I do to assess all situations in my life, that’s not the case, but if it had any impact then I’d say it had a good impact on my True Will, that it actually impacted, but if it didn’t give me anything what so ever, if it felt good then and there, but that was it... That I haven’t grown on it, in a way, that I haven’t been able to develop something from it. That it has

just been a dud, that's simple and easy criteria. But it's a bit difficult to put to words exactly what I mean by that, because it's so random what kind of things... But it's preferably that it should give me something, at least a little, if it's negative or positive does not matter." (Appendix: 14-15)

Informant 2: *"It will depend on how it helps me keep a steady course, that is to come... That is, or... If it will teach me something about reality that makes sense. So... If I astral project and create a body, which then, that is... I don't know, gets stuck in a pink elephant, and we sit around eating candy, and I return, then I won't see any meaning in it. * Both laugh**
That is... The meaning will probably give itself, it has to be something I can recognize. If I discover something which is a weakness I can improve on, then it will be meaningful. Because the whole journey is about becoming a more complete human being. I don't have a grading system for what will be the most important, but that's the kind of vague expectation I'm kind of starting out with." (Appendix: 19)

"I'd consider if it was helpful or destructive for that, that, that I have declared to be my True Will, which I am convinced is my True Will at the moment. And either the experience convinces me that what I had declared beforehand to be wrong, or, by showing that it was a more valuable, another road I should take. But that is completely impossible to state what that should have been, because I was convinced that something else was my Will before, because then I'd assume that it was my Will I would see. So it has to be very convincing, if it should change the course of what I am doing now. Or it has to be something I assume is my course, which I have found at that I must do, but don't really know how, and it could show me a way to do it. Or it could... Put in place pieces that are missing in my puzzle, purely intellectually, or emotionally." (Appendix: 19)

Informant 3: *"In Thelema, that is, you travel in your inner universe. It's not like you say that there is something... Yeah, on both levels it is like you are in yourself, going inwards into your limitless universe, and you meet aspects of yourself, and you negotiate with them, and yeah... Right? It's a bit that... I feel that my explanations are a bit banal... But anyway, it's a bit like using tarot cards. You read the symbolism and reflect on it, and that triggers understanding, right? It triggers thoughts and feelings and such and then you see your own life through it, cold reading. It's a bit of the same when you go into the astral world, and experience these weird things, and use a symbolic language to interpret it, but it gets a lot more intense, a lot more alive, because you are there in the symbolism, right? So that's how I'm thinking it's a tool for self-understanding and revelation and development."* (Appendix: 25)

*"Yeah, in the sense that some are more successful and actually provide me with knowledge, while some I've just been flapping around in a black room. * Laughs**
So yeah, they are. But if I'd say, if we say that every time I'm out travelling and experience something and such then they are all just as valuable. Really, they are all of equal worth since they are a step in a direction, they are all building blocks in something bigger. Yeah." (Appendix: 26)

"Yeah, I separate between... The separation I guess is between that you... If you have a revelation that is a bit more grand. That you meet something or other that tell you something that

is applicable to more than just you, where you get an understanding of mechanisms in the astral world or something like that. You get an understanding for that world, it will be a... No, everything leads back to yourself. Understanding of existence is understanding of one's self. If you understand more about yourself, then you understand more about the world. Then I'm talking about brutal honesty, not self-delusions, so yeah. No, I guess there is no separation, at the end of the day, there is no separation... No." (Appendix: 26-27)

"You can't, in the real world you can't... Make it so that everything that happens to you shall be in accordance with your Will, that is things that happen happenstance... Yeah, you can pick an orbit and follow your True Will, and that it is what you mainly focus on, but you can't avoid getting into contact with other things. And your True Will is also a kind of, it is your nature, I'm thinking. And your nature does what your nature does, and experiences and grows and such. The same will apply there. If it is in accordance with your True will, is if you meet it as your true nature or not. If you let it override it, then I'd say no, but that's because at what happens happens, but how do you meet it? Do you meet it as if you are your own nature, or do you put on a mask and pretend something different and does something that really... Yeah..." (Appendix: 27)

Informant 4: *"The experience with the Hermit and the reason I talk about it is not because it sounds like a typical astral projection, but because it was... A place and an experience and a condition which... And a place that felt very special to me and that sat in me a lot more than some other attempts at the same, even though there isn't a lot that is happening, even though it is a bit vague what happens in the top left spot, even though we have interesting symbolic things to extract, that it is the Devil card that keeps aloft the spinning reality we stand in, the experience of going inwards and inwards and inwards into the same, spinning, and a little moist *Laughs* surroundings with that person that also walks with you, and who really just communicates that this is the beginning and the end. Not that that's very deep, but it... It is a kind of classic experience, too right? But you feel in a way that you were there then, that you stood in that which, at least on... To the degree that symbols can communicate it, the beginning and end of your life."* (Appendix: 37)

"It is the clarity of what you are capable of visualizing in comparison to what you, in a way, sense purely by thought. I at least have the, I get the feeling that I communicate with something that originates from deeper within myself if it appears clearly, and not like a, like a... A sense of something, if you know what I mean?"

I: Yeah.

O: It is those experiences that you, you form memories in a completely different way too when you have been a place that stimulates your senses, right? So... That's really my valuation.

I: So, the clarity, and what you extract from the symbolic language that is presented?

O: Yeah. The clarity and the feeling that something is communicated that... Matters. It might not matter much that the Hermit says that this is the beginning and the end, but... I haven't gotten any knowledge in an astral projection that I did not already have, right? I have never gone into this and met a creature that tells me that, listen up, this is how this and that works. I feel that it is always the sum of the experience as a totality that is communicated. And I know that it is a bit different way of defining astral projection than what many others do, but that's how I work."

(Appendix: 37)

“All of this work is according to my True Will, because the work in Thelema is an investigation of the self, an investigation of the self and a journey into yourself, right? And to the extent that I believe that the astral plane is something you travel into yourself and not out into a subtle reality that is here independently of me, then astral projection is not a question of True Will or not, but a question of the travel towards a self. Self-understanding and self-investigation. The Will is... It depends on how abstractly you define the Thelemic Will, right? There is a Will beyond that too, which isn't moved by those specific experiences, but to the extent that the Great Work is about peeling of layers of yourself and getting to the core of what you are, then all those small drops and all those strange, weird aha-experiences or strange things that are said or sensations that you get or symbols that you receive are tools on the journey there.” (Appendix: 38)

Informant 5: *“It has been branded into my memory to such a degree that I think it can be separated from some other experiences that really weren't meaningful. But I can never know, so... *Laughs*”* (Appendix: 40)

*“Often a little strange conversations, strange words, so it is not often that I have gotten something concrete out of it. But there have been some times that have felt that there were things that triggered something at least, that have committed and read up on later on, that I have seen had some form of meaning. But I can't give a very concrete example just now, something which might also be a sign that I have yet to have some of the most important experiences, really big spiritual experiences. *Laughs*. But... I have felt that it has been useful anyway. And especially this about managing to do part of your rituals in the Body of Light is also something which has been seen as an important form of training, really. Both for concentration and that it is something which, which is a possibility to become an even more skilled magician, which also makes it possible to take a step further to this with the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, for instance, and find one's True Will. So I think it is a very important practice even if I am yet to have the greatest results.”* (Appendix: 42)

“It is those where you feel that you... That trigger something or other that you... Can explore further. That one feels has a certain meaning. It has been a few times where one... Have received a word, or a sign, or a sentence, or something like that, by forms of creatures that you meet on the astral plane, that have made it so that after I have written it down have been able to look at it, and maybe look it up in 777 for instance, to maybe find out some more of what can this really mean, and that has started and triggered processes that have made me reflect a little and thought a little and found out things that you maybe wouldn't consider before. I think that can be pretty valuable, really. Other times it is a quite meditative experience, if you are awfully tired and stressed and maybe think things are a little difficult certain times, then there's a possibility to get to another place, disconnect, relax, feel that you kind of restitute a little, and I think that can also be quite valuable.” (Appendix: 45)

“I mean, I believe that the criteria you can put on those types of things are whether they give you a lasting spiritual experience, in a way. Things that change you, things that you don't really forget, and things that you ears after can feel were something that gave an impression on you. I

think you can characterize that as a spiritual experience with a certain value. So I think it is that it changes you, I think that is the most important criterion as I see it.” (Appendix: 45)

“I think that it is mostly something you have to figure out over time. Here I think it is really important to actually note down at all times after having an experience like that, what happened, how did it feel, which entities you met, how you tested them, what was said, what was done, and maybe over time manage to judge whether it is something that get you towards your True Will or not. Either that, or that it gives a, as I mentioned earlier, a kind of lasting, spiritual experience. I think you feel it, I think that really much of it is about, about intuition. Even if, I of course assume that it is very important to test these entities thoroughly underway as well, then try to use some of the knowledge you have connected to kabbalistic correspondences, for instance, and what you have read to test whether or it really is something there is some substance in or not. But I still have some faith in this with gut feeling, really, the intuition and the feeling you get, I think it is really important. (Appendix: 45)

“I think it is, I think that probably there are many that would rather fool you and lead you astray and get you away from the path that you are on, I think so, and you get pretty strongly warned against it as well. Crowley writes of this on several places, that to be able to test is really one of the most important things that you do, because if not then you can do more harm than positive effects. So I clearly believe so. I believe that it is something that for many can end up with you being probably very enamored by some things, perhaps. Maybe you feel that you get a lot of experiences that are really big and really important, but then it’s all just a game. Seen that way I think it is really important to have some control of it. If you use the methods and principles that are given within Thelemic practices, then I also think that you should take the warnings given there seriously. If you are to look at, if you are to believe the positive effects that they are intended to give, then you also have to believe in the dangers that are connected with it, as it is described by those who are experts on it and have been pioneers within Thelema and astral projection.” (Appendix: 45-46)

Appendix III: Interview guide

Hva er astralprojeksjon?

Hvordan astralprojiserer man?

Må man forberede seg på noe vis?

Kan alle få det til?

Går det an å gjøre det uten å vite hva det er?

Har du astralprojisert?

Hvordan gikk du frem for å oppnå det?

Hvordan opplevdes det? (Hvordan følte det? Hvordan følte kroppen din? Kan du sammenligne opplevelsen med noe annet? Hva er i så fall likhetene og ulikhetene?)

Kan du fortelle meg om et par ganger du astralprojiserte?

Hvordan kom du frem til at disse opplevelsene var astralprojeksjon?

Hva forventet/forventer du at astralprojeksjon skal/skulle være?

Hvordan fikk du disse forventningene?

Hvorfor ønsket du/ønsker du å astralprojisere? Er det flere grunner?

Hva kan man gjøre når man astralprojiserer? Hvorfor gjøre disse tingene?

Er noen projeksjonsopplevelser mer verdt for deg enn andre? Hvordan vurderer du det?

Hvordan vurderer du hvorvidt opplevelsen var i henhold til din Sanne Vilje eller ikke?

Appendix IV: Informational note

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

”Astralprojeksjon i Thelema”

Bakgrunn og formål

Formålet med denne studien er å få en økt forståelse av hvilke bestanddeler astralprojeksjon, slik det praktiseres av Thelemitter, består av, og hvordan Thelema og astralprojeksjon interagerer med hverandre. Dette er et masterstudie hos institutt for filosofi og religionsvitenskap på NTNU.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Datainnhenting foregår gjennom enkeltintervjuer som vil bli tatt opp og transkribert. Spørsmål vil omhandle astralprojeksjon og Thelema, og hvert enkelt intervjuobjekt sin oppfatning av og erfaring med disse. Videre informasjonsinnhenting utover intervjuene vil bestå av bruk av Thelemiske tekster.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Alle informanter vil bli anonymisert, og grenen av Ordo Templi Orientis som samarbeider med oss vil ikke bli identifisert. Intervjuets lydfil vil kun masterstudenten ha tilgang til, og dette vil krypteres. Videre vil det bli transkribert til anonymisert form, som også vil krypteres. Ved prosjektslutt vil lydfiler og all eventuell korrespondanse bli slettet.

Deltagerene vil bli gitt anonyme alias, men intervjuene vil basere seg på informantenes oppfatninger og erfaringer, så personer som kjenner godt til disse vil kunne være i stand til å identifisere deltagerene til tross for anonymiseringen.

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 30. Juni 2015. Da vil lydopptak være slettet og data anonymisert.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Dersom du har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med studenten, Adrian Johansen Rinde, 92225484, adrianjrinde@gmail.com, eller veileder Gabriel Levy ved NTNU.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

Appendix V: Receipt from NSD

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS

NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagres gate 29
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
Fax: +47-55 58 96 50
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Gabriel Levy

Institutt for arkeologi og religionsvitenskap NTNU

7491 TRONDHEIM

Vår dato: 23.10.2014

Vår ref: 40302 / 3 / SSA

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 15.10.2014. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>40302</i>	<i>Astralprojeksjon i Thelema</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Gabriel Levy</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Adrian Johansen Rinde</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt

personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.06.2015, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Sondre S. Arnesen

Kontaktperson: Sondre S. Arnesen tlf: 55 58 33 48

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Kopi: Adrian Johansen Rinde adrianjrinde@gmail.com



Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 40302

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet.

Det behandles sensitive personopplysninger om religiøs oppfatning.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger NTNU sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet. Dersom personopplysninger skal sendes elektronisk eller lagres på privat pc/mobile enheter, bør opplysningene krypteres tilstrekkelig.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 30.06.2015. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:

- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger somf.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette lydopptak

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Appendix VII: Summary in Norwegian

Denne oppgaven har tatt sikte på å undersøke attribusjoner og askripsjoner i thelemisk astralprojeksjon. Nærmere bestemt har den forsøkt å oppklare hvordan thelemitter identifiserer egne erfaringer spesifikt som astralprojeksjon, og hvordan de knytter dette opp til thelema. Jeg har forsøkt å si noe om dette temaet gjennom å gjennomføre og analysere en rekke semistrukturerte kvalitative intervjuer.

Første kapittel tar sikte på å beskrive motivasjonen samt den innledende beslutningsprosessen for dette arbeidet, samt å knytte arbeidet opp mot tidligere forskning og litteratur på feltet og assosierte felt. Det andre kapittelet forklarer begrepene astralprojeksjon og thelema nærmere, og forsøker å beskrive begge som kulturelle formasjoner og konsepter. Hovedvekten i denne delen av oppgaven har blitt lagt på utvalgte tekster fra Aleister Crowleys forfatterskap, da hans rolle som thelemisk profet og hovedbidragsyter til denne tradisjonens litterære elementer setter ham i en særdeles betydningsfull posisjon.

Tredje kapittel beskriver de teoretiske og metodologiske rammeverkene som blir benyttet i denne oppgaven. Først beskrives Ann Taves' askripsjons- og attribusjonsmodell for å studere religion og andre «spesielle ting», etterfulgt av en kort innføring i innsikter fra attribusjonsteorien til sosialpsykologen Bertram Malle. Fjerde kapittel forklarer metodene jeg har benyttet meg av gjennom denne oppgaven.

I det femte kapittelet blir materialet, i form av transkriberte intervjuer, analysert i lys av bidragene til Taves og Malle, før resultatene blir diskutert og en konklusjon nådd i kapittel seks.

Jeg har blant annet forsøkt å vise hvordan informantene har knyttet praksiser, øvelser, ferdigheter og mål sammen i «sammensatte askripsjoner», og hvordan disse formasjonene benyttes til å identifisere hendelser, samt å legitimere denne identifikasjonen. Jeg har også forsøkt å vise hvordan informantene knyttet hendelser og øvelser videre opp mot mål, som de så på som videre knyttet opp mot mål som var «thelemiske». I tillegg har jeg forsøkt å si litt om

hvordan astralprojeksjon som hendelse eller opplevelse får rammeverket og definisjonen sin diskutert gjennom at informantene tar tak i og deler ulike «under-hendelser» de ser på som overraskende, kuriøse eller utfordrende. Til sist sier jeg litt om hvordan jeg ser for meg at forskningen kunne bygd videre på denne studien.