

A letter-interview with John Balance (Coil)

1) you once told me that peter and you are influenced by the work of spare, levi and crowley, also the kabbalah and other things like this. can you please tell more about this?

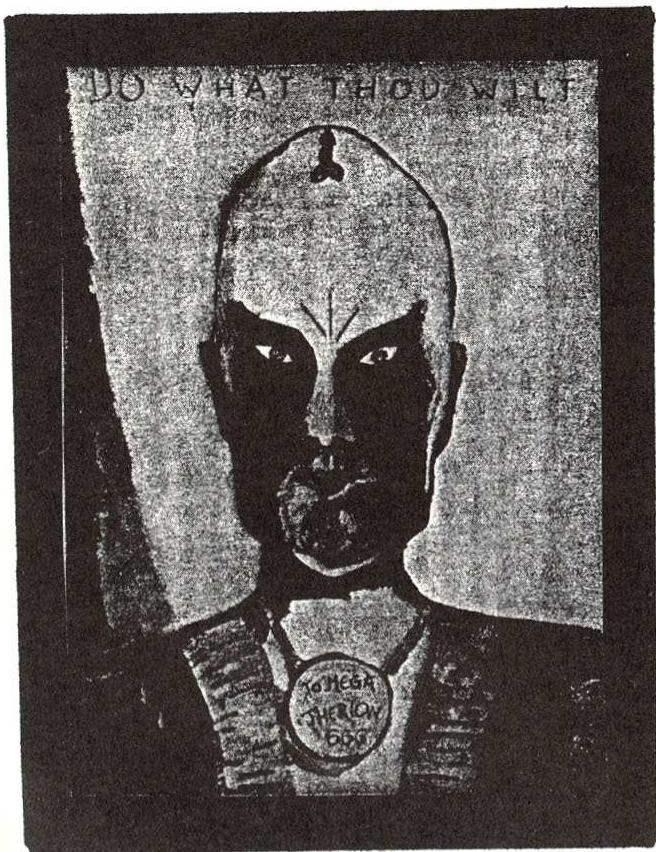
Yes, we are very much influenced by these people and the theories and ideas that they presented - and have come to represent. Many, many - complex areas present themselves. A few pointers, as to why, perhaps, we feel affiliated in some way to certain aspects of these personalities. But we must say it is fundamentally the tradition, and the body of Knowledge that these people reveal that is the most important part of it all.

Crowley - the concept of the true Will - finding and following the higher self - the discovery of ones 'guardian angel' - perhaps a separate entity - more likely a personalisation - manifestation of what could be described as an 'over-self'. Certainly possessing higher knowledge - fundamental and profound Knowledge. Crowley is important, because he lived his dreams - his whole life was a quest for perfection - for experience and answers! Everything in his life had a profound, spiritual meaning. He found a reason, a purpose for every thought and action. A supreme justification for continued and eversearching, ever experiencing existence. What more would you ask for! Regardless of whether one believes in the message of Thelema, of the age of Crowley-anity - one can respect the completeness and fullness of Crowley's life. He at least tried to put into concrete forms his innermost wishes, his beliefs - what he called his 'true will'.

I personally believe that the age of Horus - of Thelema, will occur. But that in between will be chaos - change and turmoil. A state of confusional transistion. A violent & bloody Bird. The descriptions afforded by the Book of The Law are not peaceful and idyllic - but ridden - hard and ruthless. One can go into ancient theories about the cycles of the ages etc. But it is true that both the Age of Kali and the last age - the final cycle of the Axtec System are calculated about now. So no wonder, the signs are beginning to manifest themselves. I think that we should (Coil), and us as individuals attempt to relate to all this - and you can't help but be wholly involved - one should attempt to generate chaos and confusion - Help bring down the old order in order to speed on the advent of the New. The longer the old thrashes painfully about - the worse it will be for everyone now!

Open the Bloodgate! LET IT COME DOWN!

The Kabbalah is a huge body of work and the more you study it - the more you realise this fact. You absorb it - and use it - incorporate it into every aspect of life. You suddenly notice that apparently random events and circumstances, justifications of objects and happening, suddenly make complete sense - become part of an organised chaos. (see end!) You realise that people long ago Knew that an underlying



system of correspondances and parallels, existed. To study it, provides insight and a certain power. Each symbol is a potent and potentially dangerous - if misused / misapplied - source of personal power. It can enrich and it can possibly unBalance. Each power used must have a purpose - an earth - like an immense psychic lightening bolt. With No purpose - no Earth - there is a danger of damage. The Force must have a form. The energy must flow to somewhere. To risk sounding very 'hippy' you realise subtle and profound correspondances between the personal - microcosmic - universe - oneself - and the Universe - the macrocosmic - everything Else. The Norse western tradition of Runes is very similiar . It too is a map - a lattice of pathways and correspondances, which have personal and universal importances. we usually can't help but

incorporate what we have observed into our music - into the lyrics. In numerous ways, Embedded fragments - clues etc.

Spare - Austin Osman Spare represents to me a man who travelled in psychic regions which have rarely been so systematically and brilliantly traversed, and subsequently documented. I like him because he is in an ancient Briton tradition of magick, which can be traced back to the druids and further. But his artistic abilities set him apart in this respect. I like his drawings regardless of their content. But i find the content overwhelmingly important. He systemised and personalised the psychic process. Preferring to do that as opposed to having probably social Fame and wealth at the likely expense of his occult studies. Crowley refered to him as a 'black brother' - which meant he had become a victim to the temptations and sideeffects of his occult studies. The surface manifestations etc. But regardless of that, he is an important figure. Certain Surrealists have attempted to explore similiar inner-astral regions - but as far as I know - none were so precise - so scientific or illuminating and inspirational as Spare was. Ralph Chubs a lesser, but still quite interesting character that we have come across. We personally find him interesting - of human interest - not necessarily so profound as certain contemporaries. He lived on the edge of the New Forest in England, and founded a cult of GANYMEDE, of youthworship. NOT Paedophila - But perhaps the spiritual equivalent of that! He did limited edition booklets of poems & woodcuts. He was closely in touch with the spirit of Blake. Chubb was a brilliant, pioneering eccêntric - typically English - A valuable rarity.

2) 'how to destroy angels' and a lot of the 'scatology' songs seem to be parts of rituals. how much did magick influence your work in the past, and will influence it in the future?

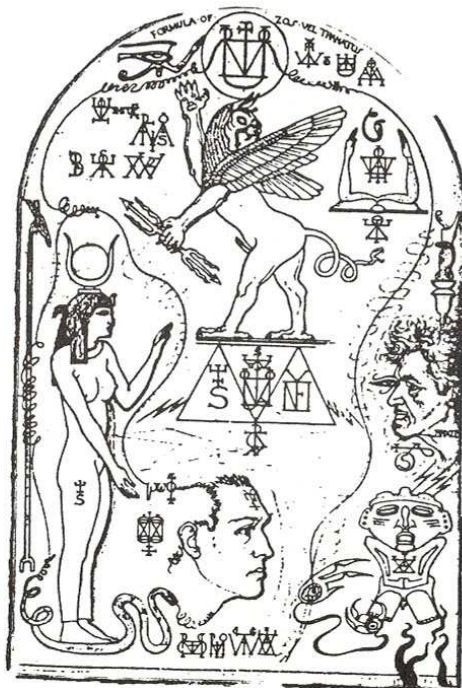
How To Destroy Angels - was ritual - ised. Every aspect of that piece of music was produced according to pre determined and mathematically & Kabbalastically determined guidelines. Then we recorded it - and the element of chance tempered by our preconditioned states of mind - came into play. It was based around MARS. There are male aspects - metals -

specially iron and steel - 5 huge gongs - 5 small gongs. 5 being the number of MARS. We produced special BULLROARERS - intuitively used instruments, exclusively used in tribal male initiation rites - all over the world esp. Australia, New Guinea and w/ South Americans Indians culture. The bullroarer is a long flat piece of magically marked and incised wood, whirled round the head on a long rope. This spins very fast and makes an intense, penetrating whirring sound. We made our own and personalised them. We recorded at an appropriate time & for 17 minutes. Another martian number. The colour of the cover is in accordance also. These are the details and so on. - But one can illustrate the complex workings that go on to achieve a stated, specific aim. It must be correct. Not necessarily to any lairs laid down etc - but it must be right for the group - for the individual. Any ritual can be constructed in any way. The belief and the sanctity that you can bring to those beliefs - whatever they are is what triggers whatever psychic process - and makes the ordinary act transcend the barrier of its ordinariness into something else entirely something magickal. Just as the X-ian (Christian) host is presumed - is changed into the body of CHRIST in the x-ian communion. It probably doesn't physically change - but for them - the believers in the congregation it does become the Body of Xst - and to wine the blood etc. Tales Of Cannibal Apocalypse!

On 'Scatology' for instance - I see Solar Lodge as some sort of incantation - A spell - If you interpret certain phrases as you possibly can - as deep and meaningful statements (This is not the way I wrote it particularly) - It's a evocation of a certain magickal energy - one that we have defined and described - that we have tapped into. opened up a gate of energy!

3) what's the 'back sun' standing for?

The Black Sun can be seen as the Alchemical SOL NIGER - the 2nd any Chaotic state - the stage before the PUTRIFACTO Stage. It can be represent many things - depending on ones interpretation. The Black Sun is the sun at night - in its most magickal and mysterious aspect. As it travels through the underworld - through the psychic regions - hades - whatever. In Japanese mythology it is represented as a Horse and Rider, into the depths. Like Orpheus. The Aztecs would sacrifice humans to ensure the return of the sun the next day. The Sol Niger in the underworld - the realm of the death - the place of



decay - PURTIFACTO the necessary breakdown of matter - a natural part of the inevitable, and illusive transistion of base material into Gold. The Alchemists quest represented as a physical change.

= The Sun In Eclipse =

One can go as deep - or a short a way into it, as one wishes. All this information was given to us - after we had done the song. The Black Sun was merely a symbol of chaos to me. The blind spot left on the eye after you have stared into the sun for too long - Obsessive Behaviour - Black Sun = Soleil Noir = Shadow Sun.

We recently did a co-performance with Kristine Ambrosia, Eric Lore, Monte Cazzazza and Fakir Mustapha in Calif. we did our 1/2 here in London. To quote from Kristines Transcript : KAGE HOSHI - Shadow Star Ritual - Extract from K. Ambrosia's notes.

This quest to the underworld began w/ a large rotating pyramid upon which Kristine was suspended upside down for 10 minutes while a drum was beat, and horns were blown. As she slowly fell into a trancestate, Monte Cazzazza, Eric Lore and Fakir Mustapha circled her. After she was brought down, they were suspended in her place, hanging upside down, chanting until the end of the performance. After the phase she was led over to a folding screen, which she painted while still in trance, using a small amount of blood, with indra Ink and aniline dyes. Despite the apperent simplicity of the piece, the atmosphere in the room was almost unbearable in intensity.

In judging the sucess of such works, the usual crition was their magickal sucess first, and then only their ase-
thetic and ritual sucess. In this case, we felt the esthetic and magickal to have linked as closely as we have mightier have dreamed possible."
." (end!)

So the Black Sun has profound meaning for others - all in a long established - and now re-worked magickal current. A detailed and complete transcript of both parties interpretations and results will be eventually published in Another Room magazine - USA, before the end of the year (1985).

4) how important is all this for your daily life?

Intrinsic and completely! See above. See below! See COIL releases - and interviews elsewhere.

5) did the christian religion also influence you in your thinking and work?

Yes. There are a few interesting areas left. Specially the assimilation - and christianisation of ancient - pagan beliefs. ie. Building churches on ancient sites of worship - in an attempt to supress the currents of power already there. To pervert the established ancient orders. I am very interested in areas of crossover. ie Voodoo Santorini and idol worship in Latin American. How christian saints can represented ancient spirits - nature spirits - ancestral totems etc. How the true! X-ian saints have become fetished - and idolised - The lives of the saints are psychoanylists nightmares. Representation of truely bizzare desires





and stifled Beliefs! Christ, himself as an old god - belonging to, and representing the OSIRIS type myth. The fisherking - the corn god, the willing and necessary sacrificial item. There is a long, long tradition in greek and roman, and even earlier mythologies. The Holy Crail - Parsival myth being the accepted culmination of all this. The archetype.

These aspects are interesting - along with some brilliant cathedrals and architectural structures. In Mexico we saw beautiful wax effigies - absolutely goresoaked - Blood Drenched images of Jesus etc. They were really brilliant! To reject the organised religion doesn't necessarily mean a rejection of the Spiritual. In fact, one begins to reject it because it no longer seems spiritual enough. The power is dying. It is in a degenerate stage - in the beginning of an inevitable putrefaction in fact. The New Values apply and need applying. Rigourously! The Age of Horus . The Conquering Child. and so on. The Age of Thelema? That is an addition which is debatable.

So succinctly, yes Xianity did affect us of course. It affects us at school - on television - in the courts of Law - in morality and accepted codes of behaviour. - In the very conditioning of our personal-ity. This next fact is unfortunate. The aspect of all pervading - Insidious guilt. We are taught to identify w/ christ! The Victim. The Sacrifice. And in doing so - we are taught humility - servility - to be dominated. One has to ask is the human race naturally subservient? - always - genetically willing to accept leadership? - to give up to negate responsibility? Perhaps it is! But the God system we have now - reflects and strongly perpetuates these trends. And with the personal development and growth is "naturally" seen to be at odds with the whole universe - as it travells around the Body of Christ! Everything is automatically a sin. As we said on the LP - are quoted "The Word of Sin is Restriction."

People are indoctrinated to be led, to serve, to be similar to everyone else - conformity and subordination are positive virtues. So there is virtual stasis. Stagnation. With any reaction against this being evil, being subversive - and to our way of thinking - Being essential to a survival of the true - whole spirit! and a sense of belonging to oneself - rather than a decaying ancient, insidious state of mind!

6) you once wrote me: "we do feel, to a certain extend that we have a mission". can you explain this?

Our mission, is to, in any small way possible - to make each action count. To set a liberating example. Not to preach it. - but to act - and explain - and justify each action. We always justify that precise statement with a reminder, that Chaos and systematic disorientation of the senses is our desired goal. Because only after the shake-up can new order - realistic personalised order, can be obtained Like waking up from a 2000 year old Coma! It is bound to be a little uncomfortable - disorientating - and painful!

7) is Coil planning to realise other projects than music?

Other Coil projects apart from music!?

a fanzine/research from UK is planning to compile a lot of our printed interviews and writing. I think this is a little premature maybe - but it will be next year (1986) so maybe there will be enough by then. A flexi disc is planned to be released as part of the package - along w/ a few other items. Badges and so on!

We will be producing a Live At Bar Maldoror video cassette when we can arrange to assimilate, and organise all our various ideas about this.

We desperately needs funds for things like this. If we can't afford to do something well - we generally don't bother to do it. We don't like to compromise w/ a potentially good idea because lack of money.

Apart from these (-and an extended specially written European version of the compilation of writings etc. which is also in the future) - there is no immediate revelations to divulge. We don't like to give long lists of things we want to attempt. Needless to say - these are numerous - we have ambitions - ideas overflowing. Creative Boys!

I'd perhaps like to expand FORCE AND FORM with other peoples releases. But I really haven't come across anything that I would want to release - that I would want to endorse or sponsor in any way. I have a dislike for records, generally - it's a rather disheartening situation to be in. Its our fault we choose to release music as a vehicle for our ideas and interests. Yet - increasly I find them redundant and less potent as I imagine they once were. Revolutions or even simple changes rarely comes in 7" or 12" picture disc form. Then again - one can always try. It's a dissemination of what we consider value information. The reason why I sit here til 3am in the morning writing all this because i hope that someone may find something written of value. A trigger to the imagination. One has to hope." --

As we said when we were in PTV, and will repeat now, we can only ever assume to be a stepping stone - a catalyst - part of an awakening process. Its not that we have illusive Knowledge to import. - But we may be able to illustrate that the first step to self-control - regaining yrself - is the realisation that there is something wrong with the present situation. - And to isolate and illustrate specific dangers. All manifestations of the all pervasive cancer of CONTROL - to put in "post industrial" terms (cynical tone noted!)

c John Balance. London.



additional note !!

(Catastrophe Theory) of Réne Thom

The Catastrophe Theories as presented by the french Brologist /Physician Rene Thom have some bearing on this point. Our next Lp has been deeply influenced by what I've read regarding this subject. It propuses that events previously assumed to be totally uncontrolled and random have infact got a basic calculable patte -rn to them. And that many shapes and patterns in nature are controlled by these 'minor catastrophic' events. The way in which and where a wave breaks on a beach for example, the shape of Fjords, leafs, the folds of the human stomach etc are predetermined by these stress / cata- strophic events. Also it has implications in thought prosses - social organisations - evolution and so on. Unfortunately his books are out of print - But I believe his previously discredited ideas are now being examined closely - and safe coming into scientific circulation again.