

God LOVES ME

Accidents in Time and Thought



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GOD LOVES ME

Accidents in Time and Thought

INTRODUCTION

The following four essays are collections of associations between two seemingly loosely tied ideas - stream of consciousness and synchronicities or so called meaningful coincidences. Reading this, you will encounter bridges between these ideas by finding synonymity between thoughts and happenings, different conceptualizations of time, surrealist automatism and honesty, the calligraphic exercises of Henri Michaux, differencing blind chance from meaningful coincidence and the photographic superimpositions of Boris Mikhailov where the poetry of personal experience overlaps with collective political transitions. I hope that with different tastes of impermanence and fragmentation conversing with wholeness and change, which came to haunt all the following texts, I would light an exciting view upon the broad field of the authorless praxis and its precious role in softening the assumed boundaries between what could be experienced as subjective and objective reality. The second task of this thesis would be underline the tone of the authorless practice which favors a behind the scenes state of mind as a driving force and the physical work as a sort of collateral damage of the alterations in the state of mind that produced it. Unfortunately for any reader on a dopamine scavenger hunt, it may not give many conclusions but I hope it would open up an overwhelming array of questions that continue suntanning in the stream and leaving greasy stains in its waters.

AS A MATTER OF THOUGHT

What do I define as a stream of consciousness? What is an accident in thought? The accident in relation to time? Death of the author, origins, examples & free thoughts

When I was about 13-14 years old I would take the bus at least twice a day from my soviet breadcrumb of a neighborhood to the far away center of Sofia where any social activity might have been happening. This old bus became a place where day by day I could meditate and trace the changes occurring in my volatile pubescent mind-body dynamic. All that, while observing the very real run-down characters that occupied the public transport. One day, doing that exact thing, I got sucked into a live projection of my mind that allowed me to spy on the formation of a new realm of thought. The distant ramble in my head, primarily consisting of words, suddenly transfigured into an image; a colorful substantial glow, so solid it gracefully moved by its own demise and responded to my will, molding into different images floating in darkness. With time I grew ginormous mind muscles, I became a bodybuilding champion of animating this unceasing stream of images to move. I could carry feelings, play games, allow them their own will. These images became a mediator between myself who gets crushed by the waves of experience and the quieter presence who observes.

I am still mesmerized by such occurrences of direct phenomenological experience. As I'm slowly exiting an area of life where the formation of an inner center of self is a primary concern of my psyche, I am becoming more extroverted toward a stream of thoughts, images and exploring variations in my position within them. That naturally questions the thought and process behind my artistic practice relating to authorship. My experience has moved away from seeing ideas as springing from an internal water geyser to seeing them in billions of waves, swirling through the course of a lifetime, many events crossing at intersections, missing each

other, never meeting, collective twirls of mass madness, trends, simultaneous discoveries and advancements, eternally recurring stories, feelings, staggering similarities, maneuvering strikes of fortune and smacks of bad luck. Once the identification between thought and self loosens up, a lot more is allowed to happen. The ideas that emerge behind closed eyes could have been picked up from a overheard conversation, a news article, a reemerging scene of a film seen some time ago or parts of an unseen stream of information circulating between butterflies, people suffering cardiac arrests and others somewhere else bathing in flourishing oases. What I see as flawlessly creative because something mystically springs out of nothingness now interlocks fingers with seeing it as a recording. A contribution in the making of a collective archive of endless information that gets seen, sensed, filtered, played with, translated and transformed into serpentine versions of themselves in objects, images, music by an intelligence that still seems to have its own way with things. Maybe this is part of the friction between ideas that easily perish after they serve the era they are born in and ideas which effortlessly resonate outside of time. Divination methods like the I Ching put into practicality the wisdom acting in accordance with the times by being sensible to the ever incoming “ups and downs of life, you know” and not being too skeptical of “all good things come in threes” types of thinking. By consulting different methods of deciphering the unraveling of situations in time, I have embraced getting slapped around by the big mystical hand of fortune and being pressed by the mysterious thumb of unconscious suggestions.

If the stream of consciousness is an endless void in which all beings and non-beings appear and disappear with only memory to retain a grasp on “what has been”, thoughts are like the furniture, decoration and the dust of that space. There are other things in this space that are not as tangible as its objects – the smell, atmosphere, light, shadow, sound, ghosts (the body, senses, moods, emotions, accidents, ideas, unconsciousness). I have no belongings in this intermediary

room where everything gets molded from wet sand only to be tumbled by the next wave. I only have my awareness of what's passing. Yet thoughts, in their worst form, can infernally possess the senses of the observer and make him delusionally believe not only that the material substance in space defines the existence of the room, but that all the objects of the room are his own creation and unquestionable possession.

So, first things first: what would I be referring to with stream of consciousness? The way I currently see it, it's receiving subjective information not as something that can be seen as a separate fragment extrapolated from the whole but as a continuous chain of associative phenomena that alters itself in association to its preceding contents. In the beginning of my meditation practice, as my awareness was still fractured by the light of the world of open eyes, I caught thoughts popping up simultaneously from all sides like fireworks. I would be glued to the thought and I would separate myself from it like separating gum from a leather shoe, throwing it back to the dark sky of blood-vessel eyelids where it came from and carrying on with the next one. Slowly, I could tune into a continuous chain of thoughts flowing uninterruptedly. I concluded that the continuous stream was the same thing as the scattered firework I encountered in the beginning, but it was the quality of neurotic attention toward thoughts that made them appear scattered.

I started wondering if it isn't the quality of attention that defines the whole game? Is the motion, the river of consciousness, separate from thought, from the water? Are all of these encounters created by the artist-thinker or are they merely received by the only thing we really possess – an awareness, a never-sleeping light house, a big eyeball on a brass plate? Are we creating our experiences and the objects of our thoughts or are we vessels for recording them? Is it the same stream both with eyes open and closed? If it were the same, are there accidents in the flow of thought as there are car crashes in the outside world? Then would traumas and other invasive disruptions be the equivalent of ghosts playing

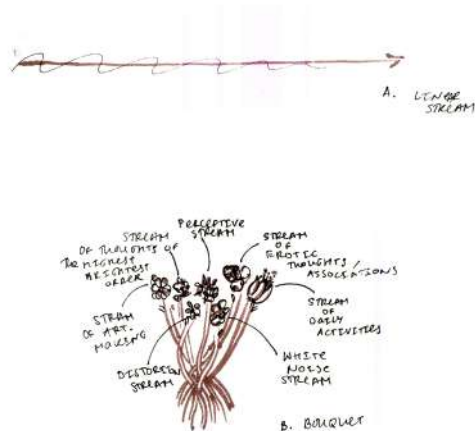
A STREAM
CONSCIOUSNESS
GETTING
STRUCK
BY THOUGHT



*A stream of consciousness
getting struck by thought*

their nasty little flutes in that rivers' peace?

I am in no way firm that there is only one such stream at a time as I have had experiences of thoughts as a bouquet of wires each perpetuated by its own current. I am also in big doubt that the shape of a stream is the only incarnation in which thoughts exist. None the less, most of my encounters where I have explicitly focused my attention and have slowed its time down at a pace at which I could contemplate, have been in the form of continuous currents. Unfortunately for the novelty of this thesis, tracing it back historically, this is no new idea.



The term “stream of consciousness” was first coined by William James in 1890 who was generally recognized as the first psychologist in America. In his work *The Principles of Psychology*¹, he thought that if each of our experiences were separate from its successors we would live in a chaos of random dissociated experiences. He proposed that instead,

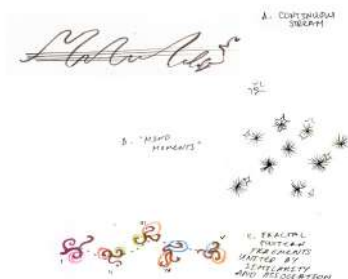
1 William James, *Principles of Psychology* (Dover Publications, revised edition, 1950)

our experience is a stream in which our thoughts and beliefs, sensory experiences and feelings create a complex and interwoven web of experiences making up our conscious lives. According to him our present experience is the “nucleus”. It’s always most obvious, but the last few experiences leave a “fringe” as a leading edge to our incoming experiences are already getting traced into our awareness. He had an idea that consciousness can go on in a line that looks intelligently directed, but that does not require the creative abilities of an independent entity that could be called a “thinker” and we are part of a process of cognition that can largely go on without the I-self. We mistakenly see ourselves as the guiding force of that process, when in fact much of it – if not all of it – is a completely automated process being led by our desire to experience the satisfactory belief that our thoughts are leading us somewhere.

Another strike for the novelty of this chapter is that in *Principles of Psychology*, James also discussed the importance of attention in shaping the stream of consciousness. He believed that the mind was constantly bombarded with stimuli from the external world and that attention was the key to filtering this information and allowing certain experiences to become part of the stream of consciousness. He argued that attention could be directed deliberately, or it could be the result of our unconscious biases and tendencies. Finally, the Jamesian stream of consciousness was not always a straightforward or linear process. He believed that the mind was capable of parallel processing, meaning that multiple streams of thought could occur simultaneously, and that our experiences could be fragmented and disjointed, with one thought or experience blending into another without a clear boundary.

Contrary to William James’ stance that information flows in a linear and conjoined way, in 1976 there was an experiment conducted by neuroscientist Francisco Varela the New York University Brain Research Laboratories. He was trying to

connect the neuroscientific view of perceptual frames² with mind moments which an idea coming from the Buddhist philosophical tradition of the Abhidharma. This idea agrees that the mental stream does indeed change like a river while consciousness is made of discontinuous moments which are the smallest units, like atoms. He began from the phenomena of apparent simultaneity which implies that if two lights appear with an interval of less than 100 milliseconds they would be perceived as simultaneous; if the interval is slightly increased, you'll see just one light and if the interval is further increased, you'll see the lights as sequential. In his experiment Francisco Varela successfully developed this further by working with the brain's EEG alpha rhythm phases and using them as a trigger for the flashing of lights with the same time interval within them. When the lights were presented at the peak of the alpha wave, they were almost always seen as successive but when they were presented at the negative peak they were seen as simultaneous. Therefore, he came scientifically closer to dismantling the notion that thoughts have a stream-



2 “The idea according to which stimuli are grouped together and experienced as one event when they fall within a period of approximately 100 milliseconds. In particular, two events with the same time interval between them can be perceived as simultaneous on one occasion and as sequential on another occasion, depending on their temporal relationship to perceptual framing: if they fall within the same perceptual frame, they’re experienced as simultaneous, but if they fall in different perceptual frames, they’re experienced as sequential. In short, what you perceive as one event happening “now” depends not just on the objective time of things but on how you perceptually frame them.” (“Is Consciousness a Stream?”, Evan Thompson, 2015)





like motion but that the “mind moment” of the Abhidharma Buddhists is nearer to the current scientific truth.

This reminds me of a paragraph written by Shunryu Suzuki. In the chapter in *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*³, dedicated to not leaving any traces of oneself in whatever we proceed to do, he quotes Dogen-Zenji, “Ashes do not come back to firewood.”...” “Ashes are ashes; they do not belong to charcoal. They have their own past and future. They are an independent existence because they are a flashing into the vast phenomenal world.” He continues to explain how if you don't burn yourself completely in whatever you are presently doing, a trace of you will lurk behind like a shadow. A point of view which integrates both William James' vision and Francisco Varela's scientific experiment is one from Alan Watts which he shares in his lecture *The Taoist Way*⁴. Here, the idea of a stream of successive continuities is a genuine appearance within an unenlightened mind possibly holding mind moments in its depths,

..Now, the Zen master Joshu was once asked, “What is the mind of a child?” And he said, “A ball in a mountain stream.” “What do you mean by ‘a ball in the mountain stream’?” He said, “Thought after thought after thought, with no block.” So, he was using, of course, the mind of the child as the innocent mind; the mind of a person who's enlightened. One thought follows another without hesitation. The thought arises, it doesn't wait to arise—as when you clap your hands, the sound issues without hesitation. When you strike a flint, the spark comes out. It doesn't wait to come out. And that means that there's no block. So “thought, thought, thought”—niàn, niàn, niàn—describes what we call in our world the stream of consciousness. Blocking consists in letting the stream become connected, chained together, in such a way that

3 “Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind”, Shunryu Suzuki, pg. 63

4 Alan Watts, *The Taoist Way*, approx. 52:41

when the present thought arises, it seems to be dragging its past, or resisting its future, saying “I don’t want to go.” When then, the dragging, of these thoughts drops, you’ve broken the chain of karma.

He continues this thought with comparing it to music and how we hear melody only because the sequence is traced in our memory, how we are trained musically to anticipate certain consequences of harmony and how we feel we understand the music if we get the consequences we expect. There is an unceasing spring of thought after thought after thought, unprovoked and inexorable but when a thought starts dragging on past thoughts and anticipating the future ones, it has been far-flung from the child’s mind, the unblocked. The connecting “fringe” that William James was talking about is now what we know as karma and something to strive to be freed from.

It is in the orchestration of psychedelic trips that I find the playing field where the stream of consciousness can be questioned as a succession of thoughts that keeps a memory trace of itself. The importance of set and setting are always underlined, and it is a well-known practice for people to look at certain imagery, while preparing in advance, that would often set the tone for the next few hours. Intentionally engaging with certain content even for a short while affects the nature of magnified states of mind. The fundamental state-of-things-in-the-present-moment-as-they-are gets brought about to the surface so close you can see all its pores and peach hairs. Once a trip of any sort, psychedelic or not, starts unfolding, so do the state of current affairs and the associations that were recently made begin re-appearing, enlarging and creating patterns in the present experience. I can look back at the large amount of occasions it has happened that a weekend trip revealed suppressed aspects of my relationship to myself and others. Maybe the prelude objects of attention before any trip and their intermissions during its happening point toward another variation of a fractal unfolding event or thought through a perpetual loop

while all new pieces of information blink itself into existence and initiate unceasing changes the stream.

The play with ideas of how thought passes seems suspiciously parallel to the historically changing hypotheses whether time flows or is fragmented, whether it's linear or warped. Aristotle's quote "One might raise a puzzle, however, as to whether if soul did not exist, time would exist or not..."⁵ was redefined by Thomas Aquinas who explained that the mind recognizes two distinct kinds of now – one before and one after a point in the middle, and if that before and after can be numbered, then time is occurring. It's not time itself but the human mind which divides time through the constructs past, present, and future⁶. Again, a trip or travel of any kind would be a great example. There are also more short-lived occurrences such as performances, rituals and chance encounters that sharpen our senses weaved by the fiber of daily life.

This daily life is the murk out of whose steady trembling events are crystalized. Time is the white noise out of which our experiences unfold. Time is the noise out of which our lives unfold. Time itself might be the soil of our experiences as consciousness would be for our thoughts. When there is a sense of not enough time there is a sense of not enough self. Making the leap and connecting consciousness and time I wonder how far away from each other are the calendar and the making of art that have an approach of extrapolating perceptions from consciousness to make them physical and therefore having to record them. I have noticed that once the idea of experience is condensed in a durational time-space continuum its nature sharpens. If time is forgotten as a conceptual opponent but the durational awareness becomes internalized as the reality of death of the self that experiences it. Getting out of bed or polishing your shoes with a sponge

5 Aristotle (2016). "Physics", p.123, Aristotle

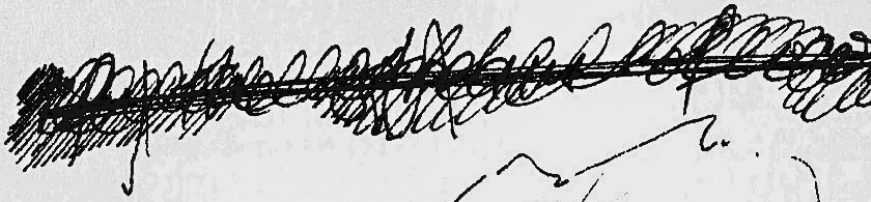
6 Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica vol. 1, (<https://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.html>, Public Domain), pg. 15

are moments of archetypical emptiness, ripe with potential and possibility. Extraordinary experiences are fruits of that non-being but ripen and fall off the tree for the birds to eat and rotate roles in that game.

I find the ideas of John Cage about sound and silence synonymous to this juxtaposition/sameness of ordinary life and extraordinary experience. “There is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time. There is always something to see, something to hear. In fact, try as we may to make a silence, we cannot.”⁷ There is not a point where a sound ends and another one begins, “it just gets higher and lower, quieter and louder, longer and shorter.” Events that interrupt the seeming monotony of white noise are not separate from the silence that they float in but are the car honk in the middle of the afternoon, a sound pretending to be a “bucket, president or in love with another sound” as Cage would put it. In that sense, the extraordinary event and anything that appears like the sudden sound of a falling vacuum cleaner, gives a shape to the white noise and makes it seem like something appeared out of nothingness. The sound of the vacuum cleaner might be parallel to being overtaken by an idea or a brilliant clear thought. The problem here is that being taken by an idea usually happens just when you need it or after searching for it while a falling vacuum is completely uncalled for.

So where is that car crash in the mind? I see no difference in the stream flowing behind open and closed eyes. The internal flow of consciousness is the subjective experience of an objective reality and the reality of the world outside of the subjective body is an unstable flame in the wind, experiencing itself through millions of gilded splinters.

7 John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, (University Press of New England, first print 1961), pg. 8





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THE FIREBOLT THAT FAVORS MOVEMENT

Emergences, resurgences, energy transference in calligraphy (Language vs image), freedom of creative energy; chance, stream of consciousness, automatism, author non-author

Acting upon through the stream-like shape of consciousness is what attracted the surrealists and what typically goes by automatism; to catch the wave of an idea or a thought and to ride its path usually to the point of its unrecognizability. Earlier I mentioned my first experiences of meditation as catching soap balloon thoughts and letting them float away into the glowing darkness of my closed eyelids, unsticking myself from that deceiving but persistent feeling of self, leaking into all passing things. Great conversations with friends and therapists are often a total inclusivity in bouncing off the emerging ideas and memories – the great sense of something bigger when I had managed to tell my therapist I thought the pimple on her nose was shocking and horrendous and that I am deeply sorry for that mentioning but she must know. Synced in that flow, the mind becomes sharp and ready to cut through the incoming waves and separate the wheat from the pebbles.

There are subtleties to this delicate dance as it's not a complete lack of filtration we are talking about here but it does not thrive on discrimination between variables. As all thoughts and bodily sensations come flying in, the ordinary, faceless, *butoh*⁸-like aspect of the self acknowledges them. This is level one. Then the part which lives with the nudging to bend, analyze, inquire about, soften, harden, transform, or so to say the part which has an artistic practice of some fluid

⁸ *butoh* (n.) - a style of Japanese modern dance featuring dancers covered in white body paint

sort, starts picking and choosing an array of harmonies within this vast field of thoughts ranging from eternally dumb to shiny crystal jewels. There is of course the noise of trivial thought and anxieties which usually goes for scrap and sometimes the dumb goes well with the jewel. Harmony arranges itself beside judgement.

It becomes a session of the state of a current sensitivity having its portrait taken. Sometimes it's a portrait of something truly grotesque but I learned to accept that. Whatever work comes out of this straight lined mind-body back and forth is by definition honest and unpretending no matter its appeal to me or what it reflects about my current state. I believe Marcel Duchamp called this 'irony' or 'a playful way of accepting something'. My definition of deception is when this straightforward line is forcefully curved for the sake of grasping toward a personal goal or agenda. Honesty is the straightforward motion of the mind-body-exterior world relationship and adopting the duty to guard it. Within such a behind the scenes handling of ideas, creative actions such as writing, drawing and painting can come closer to the photographic medium as they become an automatic documentation of the ephemeral. I am interested in this process that lacks hierarchical establishment in ideas where the anxiety of not having cleaned the dishes is finally allowed to have a conversation with morbid thoughts and enlightened states. A conversation untouched by the categorizations of judgement.

When I read *The Myth of Sisyphus* by Albert Camus I recognized this lack of hierarchy in his musing on the universe of whoever devotes himself to the absurd which appears to him as a flat field of ideas where all are privileged and where transcendency is eliminated. He references Edmund Husserl multiple times throughout the book, "... Husserl and the phenomenologists, by their very extravagances, reinstate the world in its diversity and deny the transcendent power of the reason. The spiritual universe becomes incalculably enriched through them. The rose petal,

the milestone, or the human hand are as important as love, desire, or the laws of gravity.”⁹ The straight line of honesty could be a synonym for the surrealist automatism as a process of making work. The way I understand it, it’s a practice of integration of all incoming information and studying how to bend it under a sort of alchemical pressure that would coagulate thoughts and ideas into a physical form. Automatism is simply not possible in a deceiving state that bends the line for the sake of a goal. While recording a stream of consciousness through writing is a part of the automatic process, for the surrealists it expanded to being a technique of freeing psychic energy and loosening the boundary between subjective reality and objective experience.

The theory of psychodynamics, which draws knowledge from neurology and is the psychological analogy to the first (conservation of energy) and second law (heat/energy interconversions) of thermodynamics, is a field of study of the transitory nature of our behavior and the interconnected dynamic flow between the conscious, unconscious, psyche and environment.¹⁰ Later, in *The Ego and the Id* Freud took over the idea by suggesting that the mind has a fixed amount of libido (psychic energy) and that if one of the main complexes within the mind requires too much of that energy, for reasons such as efforts in repression of content, the whole dynamic web of placement and displacement becomes dysfunctional. In eastern belief, it’s considered that if an energy point or meridian in the body is blocked by thought or injury the movement of vital energy in the body recedes or compensates through altering its direction which then changes the whole system. If a tree gets the unfortunate luck of being born under a the shade of another or next to a street lamp post it will feel its surrounding, crook, bend and change its structure to adapt. There are all these sorts of games with

9 Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, tran. Justin O’Brien (Penguin Books, first publ. 1942), pg. 21

10 *Lectures on Physiology (1874)* by physiologist Ernst von Brücke

energy and life force going on constantly doing their duty of upkeeping the balance of their surrounding ecosystem, chemicals, fluids within the body, the transitions between the day and the night.

Henri Michaux is a perfect example for this honesty as his work occurs in direct dialogue between his mind states and his drawings. He was a post-war Belgian-born French poet, painter, writer and experimental filmmaker and is best known for his surrealist work produced under the influence of mescaline and hashish. As a medicine university student, he abandoned his studies and joined the merchant marine. While he lived in Paris and traveled through extensively through Asia and South America, he wrote travelogues and was met with ideas that resonated with him throughout the rest of his life. There is very limited translation, as often happens with language, between the events in his mind and his external projection of them. That is probably where his anxiety with language and sudden change of course toward “non-linguistic” visual work came about.

“In painting, it is far easier to discover the primitive, the primal. One must deal with far less intermediaries – which are not truly intermediaries at all since they don’t come out of an organized, codified, hierarchical language.”¹¹

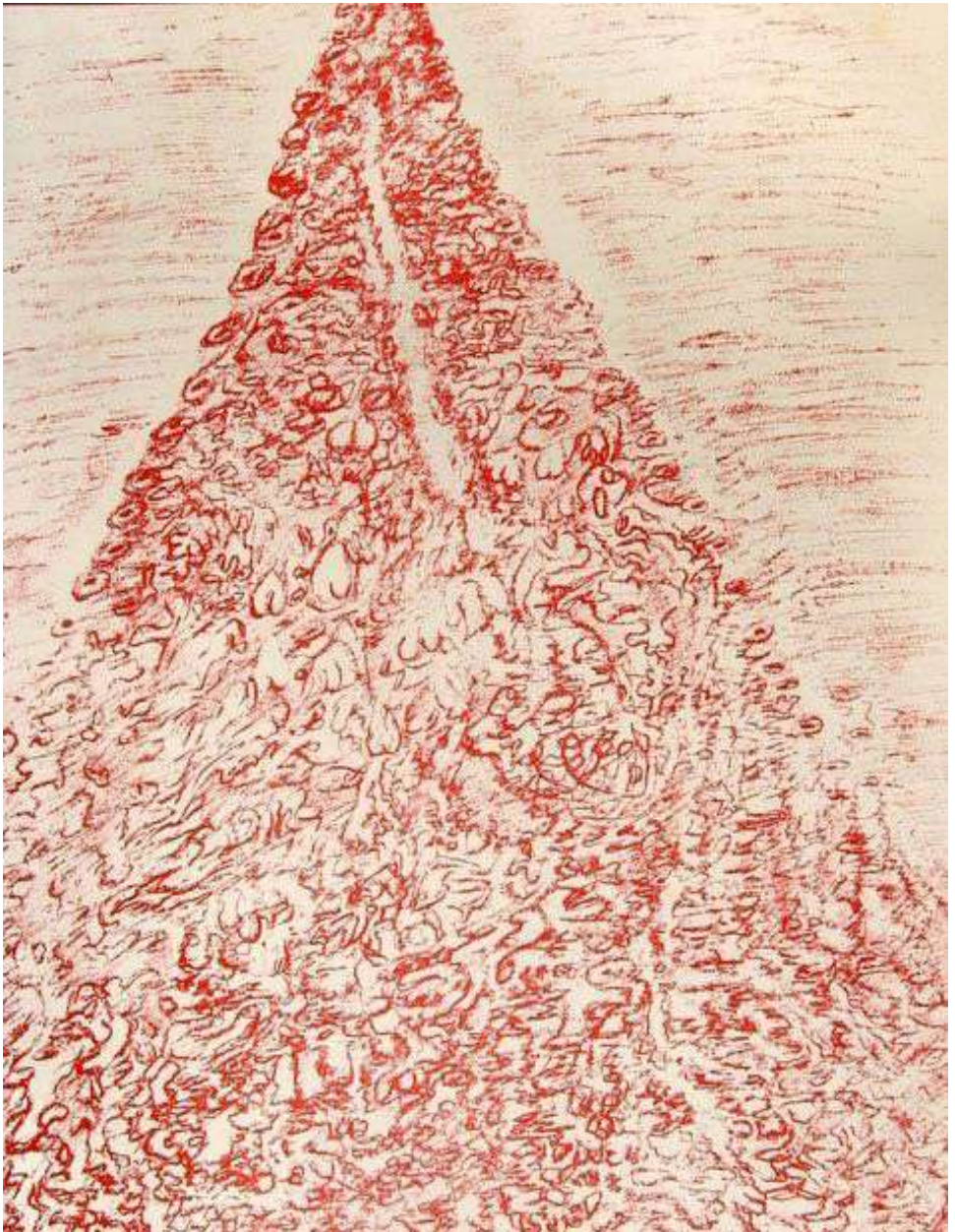
¹¹ Henri Michaux, *Emergences Resurgences*, tran. by Richard Sieburth (Skira, first publ. 1971)



*Henri Michaux, Sans Titre,
ink on paper, date unknown*



*Henri Michaux, Sans Titre, ink on paper, circa 1956,
Claude Berri Collection*



Henri Michaux, Sans Titre, zincograph, 1958

While he spends days at the hospital, waiting to see if his friend who has had a bad accident is going to live or die, he passionately records the troubling conflicts and dreadful feelings of despair that the event stirs up within by “scarring” paper and energetically gesturing with watercolor paint. The episodic flashes of unhappy figures and distressed glimpses are the fragments that get drilled into that soft spot of impression after a day at the hospital only to get out through inked strokes on wetted paper. They bounce back into the viewers’ head unmediated by the obscurity of representation but attempting to directly imprint on the observer in the same way they imprinted the maker as if the piece of paper wasn’t there to translate.

Fragments of the stream of consciousness appearing to make unmediated physical marks is a practice in alteration in the tone, the melody of the stream. That is, if they are really flowing someplace. Through the years I noticed I have multiple handwriting styles which get brought out unconsciously depending on slight frames of thinking that I tend to fall into – mainly divided into cursive for poetic thought, messy cursive italic for emotional outbursts and more stern roman styles for occasions when rationing reality is necessary, for example taking a note of a matter of fact I want to remember (insert pictures of different handwritings). I then realized if I switched between them on purpose the tone of my thoughts changes.

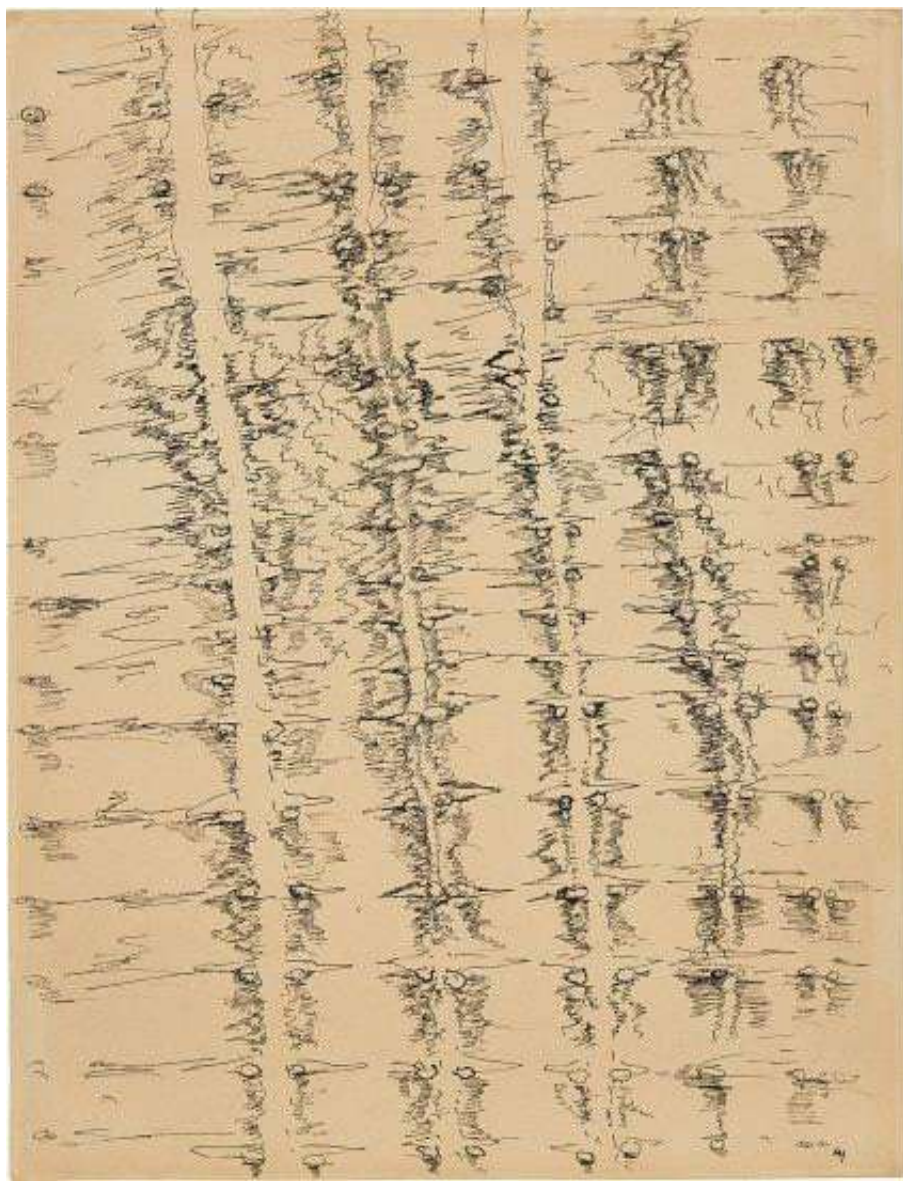
“The dark pseudopodia suddenly surging from blots bloated with ink command me to see things clearly right away, to decide then and there. Fighting off these blobs, I enter the fray. Soon reified, all my rages and tantrums become combatants, silhouettes of soldiers rushing off to some escalade or assault, or else runaways, troops in retreat, a full-scale rout.” (Henri Michaux, *Emergences Resurgences*, pg. 40 / pg. 34)



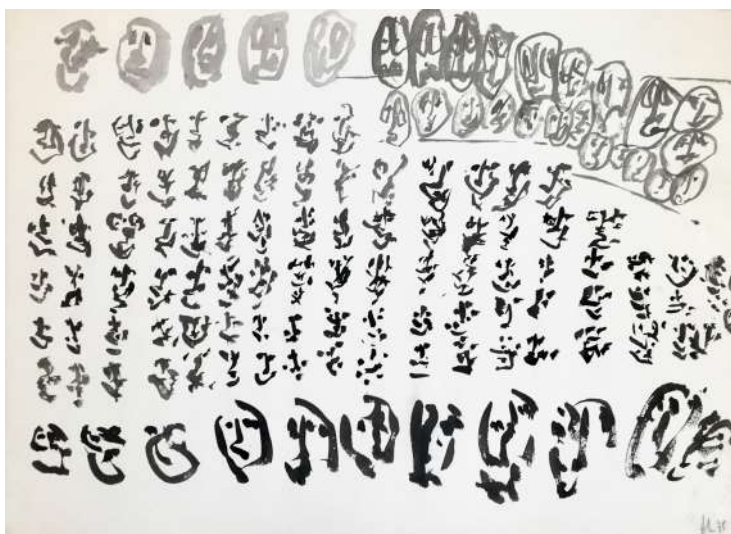
*Henri Michaux, Sans Titre,
indian ink on paper, date unknown*



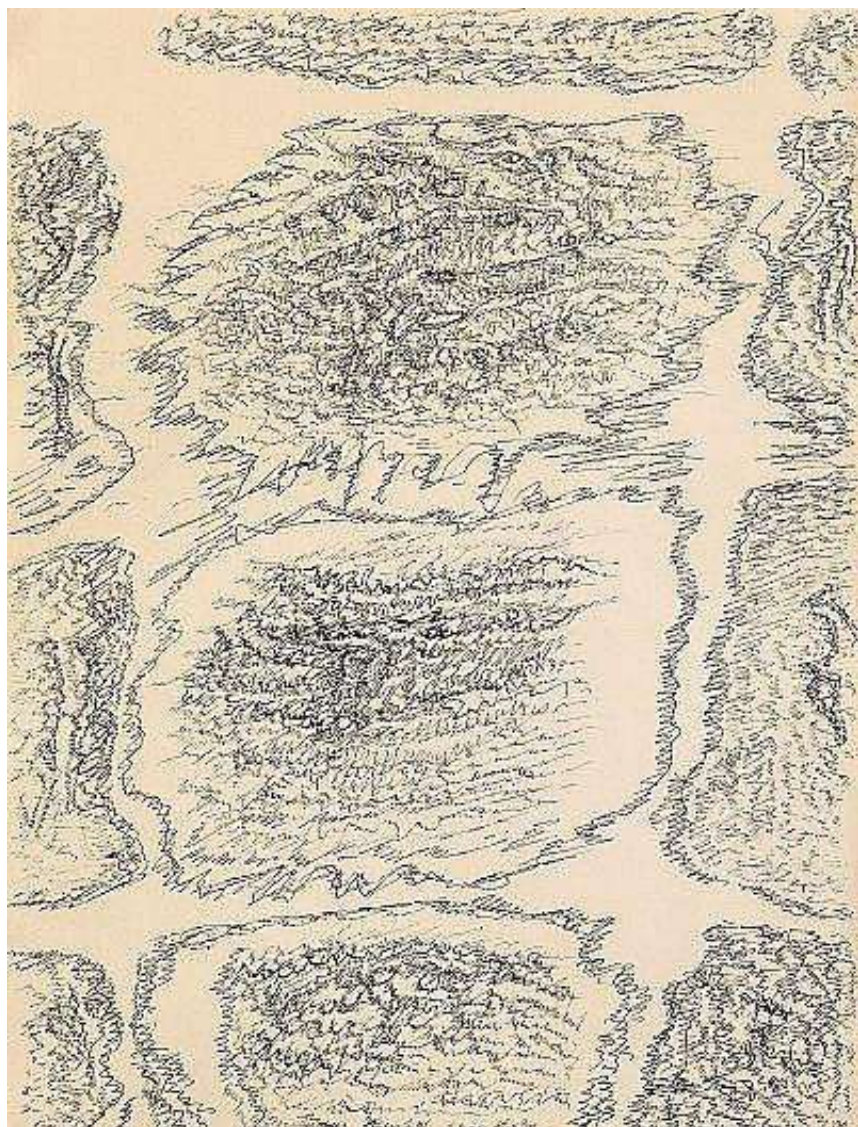
*Henri Michaux, Mescaline Drawing,
ink on paper, 1960*



*Henri Michaux, Sans titre,
ink on paper, circa 1955-1959*



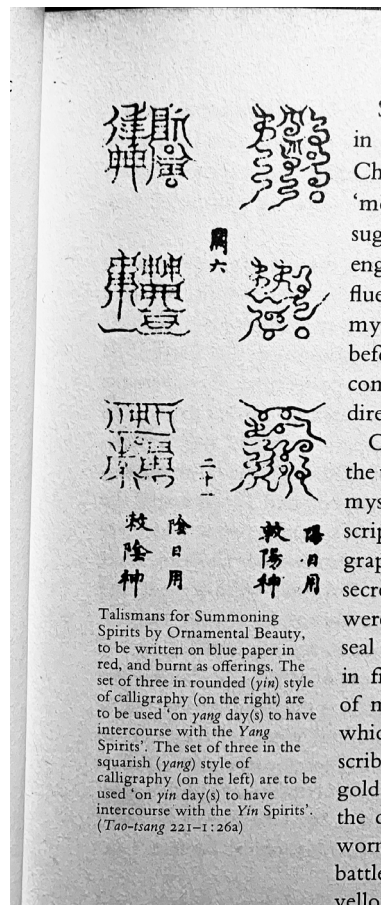
*Henri Michaux, Untitled,
indian ink on paper 1975*



*Henri Michaux, Mescaline drawing,
ink on paper, date unknown*

In a small bookshop in Japan I found a book for 500 yen called *Tao Magic: The Secret Language of Diagrams & Calligraphy* by Laszlo Legeza. It's a fascinating book I found by means of some synchronicity and in it I find a parallel between Henri Michaux's sings and the Taoist calligraphic talismans. Both of them carry an interdependence between the spirit world and the material world – Michaux uses the gibberish of language to mold “headless, bottom headed, bludgeon-headed, cookie-cutter-headed, man splayed, rushing off who knows where, for who knows what reason, whipped along by who knows what”¹² while the Taoists needed to find unorthodox calligraphic expression of the Chinese language in order to create magic talismans, diagrams and spells.

For example, the clerical script (Li Shu) had stern rules of writing out the characters which did not allow circular forms and the edges were squared so they resorted to “free” calligraphic exercises. Similar to the Taoist calligraphers who find a way around the Chinese calligraphic tradition in order to create a bridge between the spirit world and whoever asks their talismans' help, Henry Michaux splinters the rigid optical and systematized structure of language in order to allow a process where psychic energy flows free and unmediated between himself and images. The merge and negation between image and language, the real and the elusive, rub on a soft spot right on the edge of abstraction that converses with the unconscious or with a world beyond.

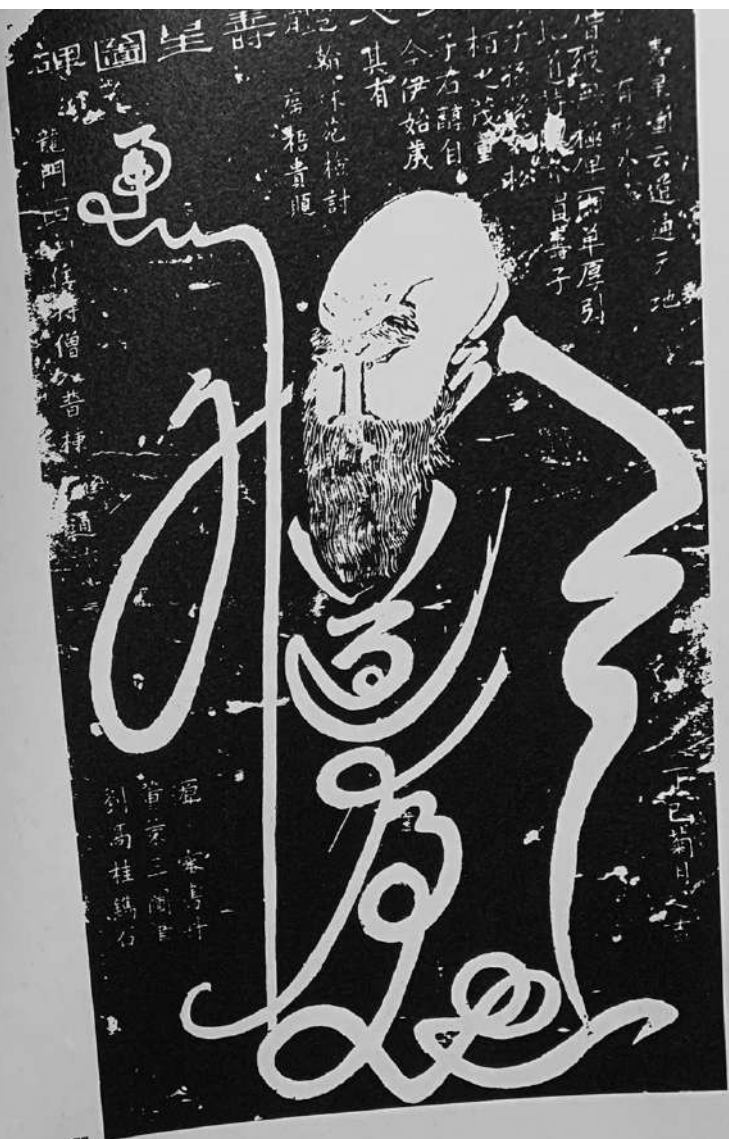


Talismans for Summoning Spirits by Ornamental Beauty, to be written on blue paper in red, and burnt as offerings. The set of three in rounded (*yin*) style of calligraphy (on the right) are to be used 'on yang day(s) to have intercourse with the Yang Spirits'. The set of three in the squarish (*yang*) style of calligraphy (on the left) are to be used 'on yin day(s) to have intercourse with the Yin Spirits'. (*Tao-tsang* 221-1: 264)



75





壽星圖碑

龍門石
僧
昔
通

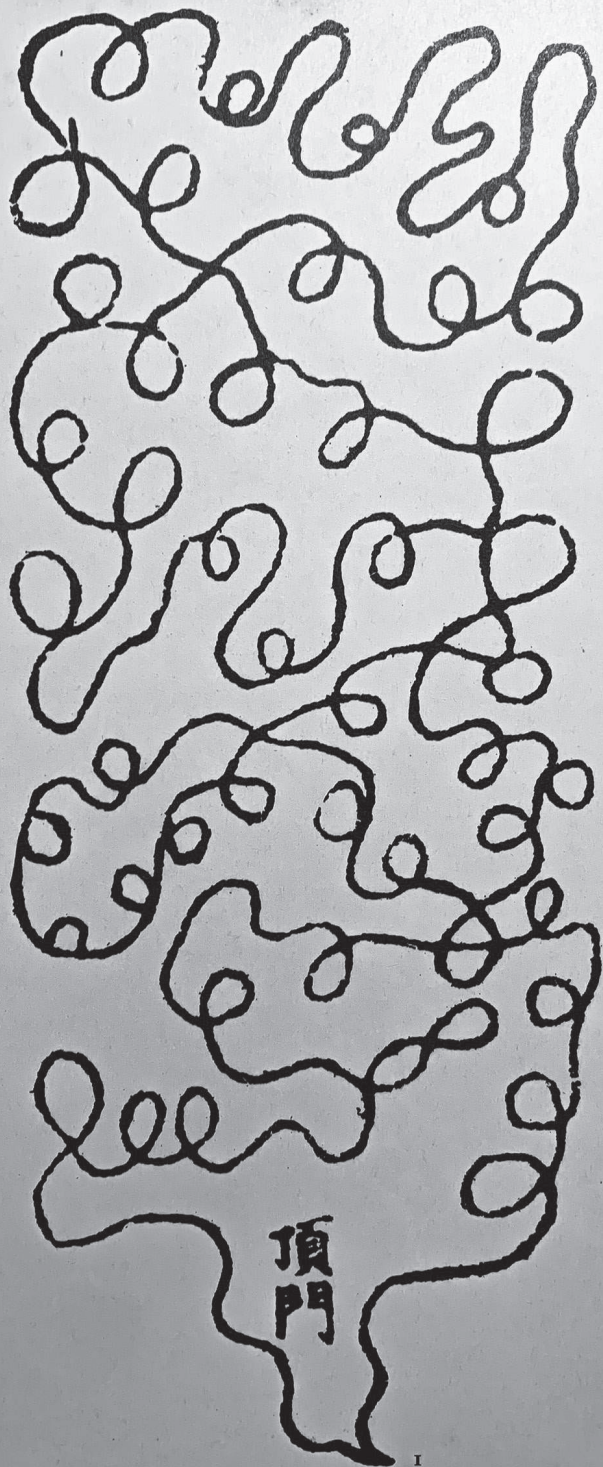
其有
今伊始
子右請自
相也成
子孫
皆破
此道
員壽子

曹
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通
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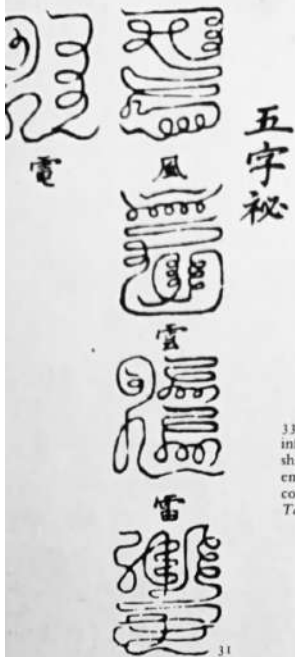
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陰陽慶會元炁之祖

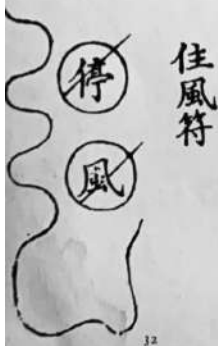


頂門



五字秘

33 Talisman of the Jade Lady to repel yang influences. The talisman depicts the back (i.e. shadowed side) of a standing woman, thus doubly emphasizing the presence of yin essence in the composition. (Brushed calligraphic technique, *Tao-tsang* 217-21: 5b)



住風符

Five characters for occult use: 風, 雲, 雷, 雨, 電 (wind, clouds, thunder, rain, and lightning (reading from top right)). From an undated Taoist work on incantation. (*Tao-tsang* 1152-40: 18b)

Talisman to stop wind. (*Tao-tsang* 1152-41: 30b)

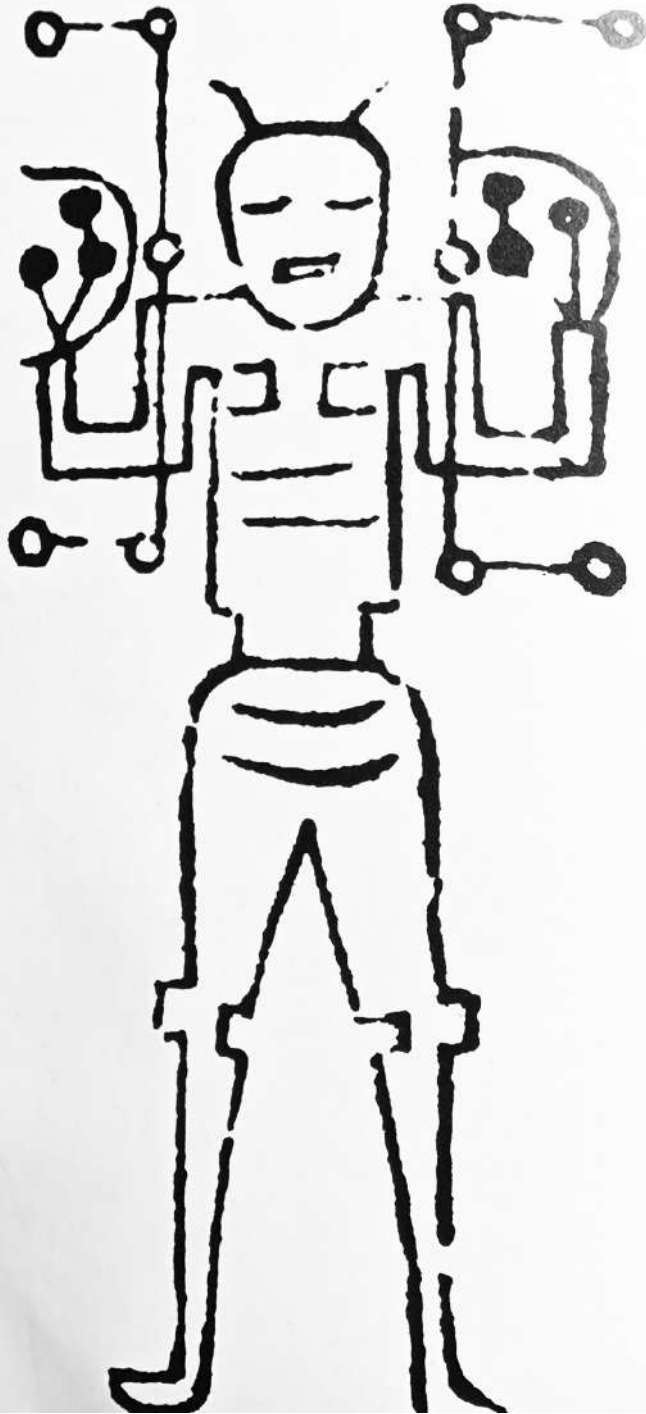
行逸六合不轉停

元亨利貞
合于真

王女符

天地交泰
鬼以神

三六四格
位玉司



人甲符

田

天地人神
立汝之精



行遠天下
收捉鬼神



諸將符

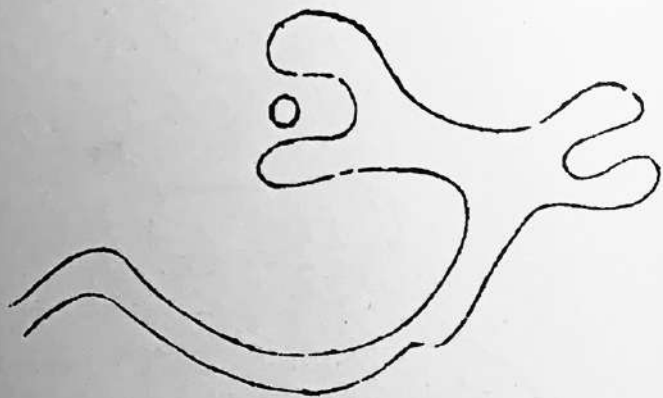


二十八宿
助明護身

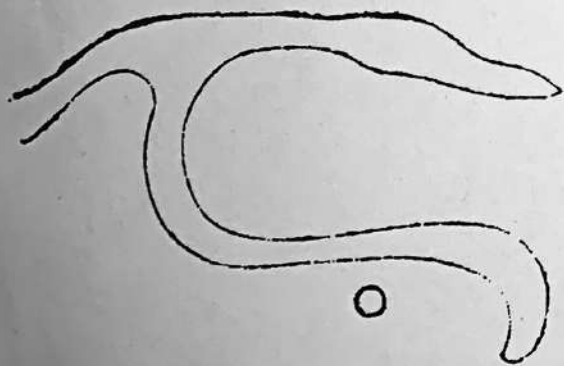


上天下地無所不經
急收押入鬼神心
神君

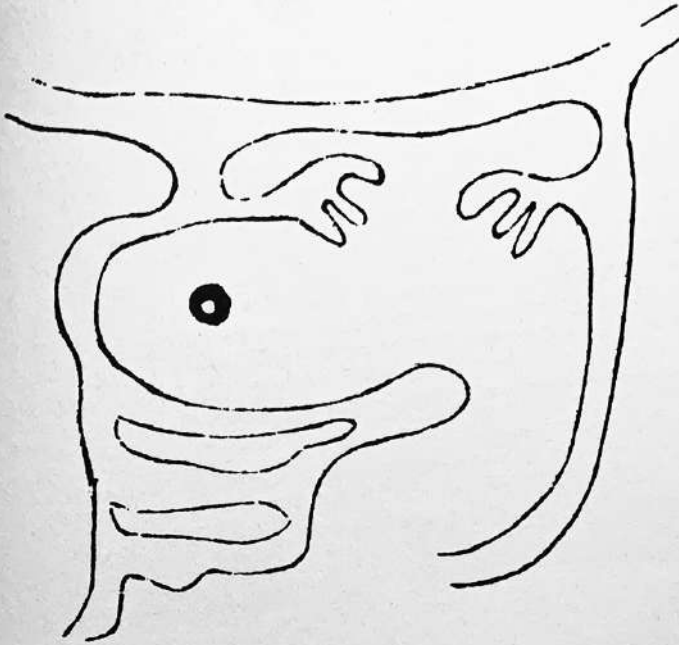
順風船格



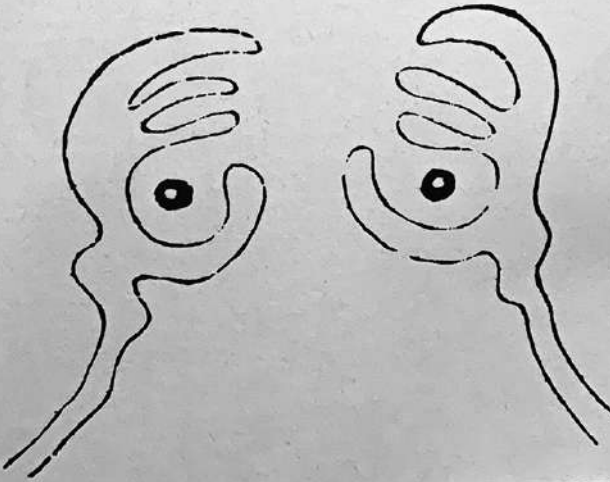
彎弓抱穴格



仙掌撫琴格



左右仙掌格



In *On Divination and Synchronicity* consisting of four lectures by Marie Louise von Franz, she digs into the topic by means of psychoanalysis, anthropology, mathematics and personal experience, looking into how different ancient cultures relate to time and how they used dreams among many other methods to foresee the future and what purposes fortunetelling holds. She mentions the usage of chaotic schemes like light refractions in a crystal ball, the schemes traced by throwing coffee roots, tea leaves and yarrow as a means to foreseeing the future. The Rorschach test also finds its way into these techniques of looking into what has not yet come, although it's purpose is oracular toward hidden aspects of the present moment or the immediate temper of its reader, "There is a village in the Swiss canton of Uri where church and cemetery are on the other side of a little river, so for a funeral they have to carry the coffin over the bridge to the church and cemetery. A dry mud path leads towards the bridge; in good weather it has cracks, and all the village people still look at those cracks nowadays as they follow the coffin, and by them can tell who will be the next, by looking at that chaotic pattern of cracks in the dry mud."¹³ . She continues to recall the Dutch palmist named Spier who made her put soot on her hand and asked her to make an imprint which he used to read her past and present. In a conversation over coffee he disclosed to her that the chaotic imprint of the hand serves as a way to access what he already knows but doesn't know he knows. The cracks, intersecting lines, curves and zigzags of the palm bring to consciousness his unconscious knowledge.

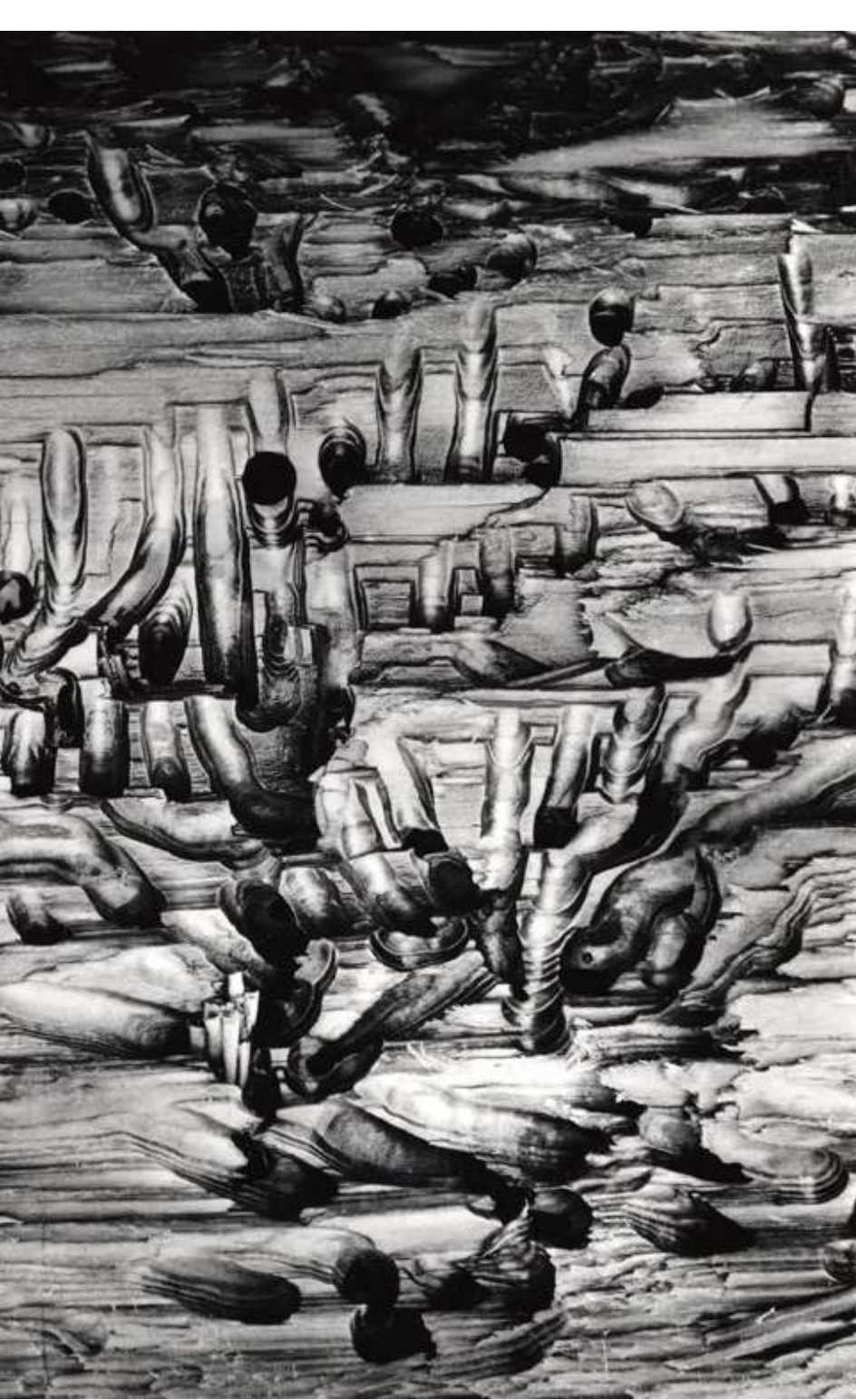
13 Marie-Louise von Franz, *On Divination and Synchronicity: The Psychology of Meaningful Chance* (Inner City Books, 1980, typed out by Ms. Una Thomas at the Carl Jung Institute in Zurich), pg. 38

The form of abstraction which thrives on the chaos of forms and textures has the space to unfold into something else and then deconstruct itself into chaos again, it is always active and never a still image. In its unfolding it reflects something about right now and it can unfold endlessly in different times with different tastes in a thousand different things. Like sitting by the sea at dusk in the bluest hour where all the textures of caves, clouds, waves soften and start dancing relieved by the sharpness of light. Hurrying before darkness conceals them back again, mirages of sailboats appear and disappear in the distance, the breaking of the waves on the nearby shore starts sounding like the footsteps on an unwanted stranger. These are the things I like to fill my house with.



*Brett Weston,
Mud Crack Abstraction,
c.a. 1950*







*Brett Weston,
Glenn Canyon, 1975*



Edward Weston, Kelp, 1930



Edward Weston, Flaming Cypress, Point Lobos, 1929