

Interview with Mogg Morgan

Mogg Morgan is a highly respected occult publisher (Mandrake Press, Oxford) and author of *The English Mahatma*, *Sexual Magick* and the recently released *Tankhem* (see review in this issue).

ASHÉ: What are the roots of your interest in tantra/Hinduism?

MOGG MORGAN: Roots? I'm ethnic Welsh but have always been drawn to the subcontinent—perhaps because of my father's war photos from his service there during partition—he was in the Kyber Pass for a while – see his web site [include link]. Otherwise I came across Hinduism from works of Blavatsky and a brief membership of the TS [Theosophical Society]—they have excellent libraries full of fascinating Hindu classics.

A: In some respects, I have always thought of Theosophical Society as an interesting artifact, an antiquity of the late 19th century. Do you think that they still have some relevance or resonance in our modern, or post-modern era?

MM: For a good laugh ring the TS in London when you know the answerphone is on. You'll hear a very quivery voice – he – l o oooooo – this is the t – he o – sop – ica – l s – oci ety – ‘ says it all really. The TS does still, have some nice people in it but it is a bit of a relic. It suffers from the fate of many earlier societies and orders—as they become established they find it impossible to change and let new blood flow. In my opinion the TS could do with a proper shrine or temple at their very well appointed buildings. It lacks cult.

A: When were you first exposed to tantra?

MM: umm - stumbled into it maybe - probably from reading Crowley and then the articles Dadaji sent to Sothis in the mid seventies when he was first making contact with western occultists

A: Sothis the ground-breaking British occult journal?



MM: That's right—edited by a gang of four Typhonians in the 1970s.

A: Are there natural affinities between tantra and western magick?

MM: I've said that already—tantrism has many points of contact with Egyptian magick and many similarities—its fairly certain now that many hermetic/Egyptian ideas were moved to India—especially after the closure of all pagan temples under the Christian emperors—this story is told in various sources—see Zvelebil's novel *Hipalos*—my pamphlet "Isis in India." I've just finished a book called *Tankhem* which also explores these themes—I'm distributing it as a beta version in pdf format for a few months to get some feedback before going to paper—so if someone wants one let me know—should be about \$8 - 200pp. [See review later in this issue]

A: What was Dadaji's connection to Crowley/thelema?

MM: Said some of this above. Also in the 1970s Dadaji entered into an extended contact with western occultists around the typhonian mag Sothis and submitted several crucial articles for publication - principally *Londinium Temple Strain* whicj includes the dragon seat meditation.

A: In the west, tantra has become synonymous with "sex"... how does the actual teachings/practice of tantra differ from this common mis-preception?

MM: I guess that whole sex therapy stuff is a valid modern application of things tantrik—but the tradition itself is probably broader and includes more stuff we would call ritual magick and hermeticism. It would be like saying Egyptian magick/religion was only about sex.

A: One meaning of the word Tantra is a secret book or teaching, is it not? Does the west have a tradition of secret writings? Would the medieval grimoire fall into this category? I have colleagues who view *The Book of the Law* in very much this way, calling it the Tantra of the New Aeon.

MM: Most of the sensible magi have given up on the idea of secrets – just some knowledge will do – the difficulty of the quest is more than enough to put off the



unworthy. Besides it seems a bit pretentious to talk of secrets when some of the best are to be found buried in academic books.

Maybe we could renovate the idea of prophesy instead – as in the magical tradition, the tradition of channeled teaching such as Liber AL is very much alive. Tantra are often books, perhaps inappropriately heard – as in the fisherman or fisher Matsyendranath who overhears a ‘secret’ pillow talk of Shiva and Shakti. This motif is very like the myth of the oxyrinchus fish consuming the phallus of Osiris.

A: What is the goal of tantrik practice? And is there a western analogy? For example, some have drawn parallels between Eastern practical/applied spiritual practice and the alchemists’ quest for the allusive Philosopher’s Stone.

MM: The goal is same as in western magick—immortality and liberation. Alchemy is very strong in India—some alchemists I know say it’s a very pure tradition because it is still based largely on plant alchemy rather than heavy metal. Some groups such as the Tamil Siddhas discovered many interesting drugs as a byproduct of their spiritual experiments and this has help generate an interest alternative medical system. The way of the drug or herb is listed as one of the valid means of knowledge as far back as the Yoga Sutras.

A: What is the Nath tradition of tantra? And how does it fit in with other eastern tantrik traditions?

MM: The Nath trad is a very old one founded about 1500 years ago in india by Matsyendranath the fisherman—like all cults it has divided into a number of sects over that time—sometimes said to be 12 major ones—of which the Dadaji lineage is one sub-sect.

A: Is there a particular name for Dadaji’s sub-sect?

MM: Not sure – perhaps the Adinaths but I’m not sure if that is unique to Dadaji. There are various mystery schools or subsects such as AMOOKOS, INA etc.

A: What has become of this particular lineage since Dadaji’s passing?



MM: It's become an undercurrent within the western occult fraternity. Small but sufficiently interesting to attract those types who want to incorporate it and enforce brand loyalty. When I joined I'd hoped it would be a more Rosicrucian order and it would be a sanctuary from the ego tripping that goes on in other magical orders and that has been the death of real magick—in my opinion. But unfortunately AMOOKOS has not been immune from that kind of tendency and I guess its only a matter of time before I get kicked out—again :)

A: Who was Dadaji?

MM: An Englishman who was advised by Aleister Crowley (The English Mahatma, See Review in Ashé #1) to get out of UK and seek enlightenment in the east. He met Crowley in the 1930s during one of the court battles when Crowley was feeling very cynical. After the WW2 he got there and stayed as a wandering sadhu/holy man—eventually receiving his initiation etc.

A: And he remained in India for the rest of his life?

MM: Yes—he did make one attempt to return to die but he was refused an exit visa and after a lone journey home that almost killed him he never made another attempt to leave.

A: How did you first make contact with his teaching?

MM: via sothis magazine in mid 70s

A: What is AMOOKOS?

MM: Arcane and Magical Order of the Knights of Shamballa—a east/west mystery school chartered by Dadaji.

A: Is this now a house-holder sect?

MM: Yes in the main although there are some who are authorized to lead a sadhu's life – but haven't met any myself.

A: Is there a place or possibility for a true sadhu renunciate tradition in the West?



MM: In my opinion not at the moment—and in India the institution has been in deep crisis for years—it's the effects of development and materialism—too corrupting. Maybe Osho got close—although he made the fatal mistake of leaving India and buying a piece of land that had little or no water.



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