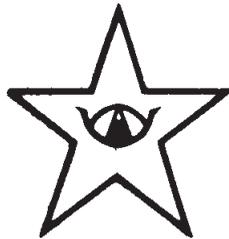


Dagon Rising

The Litany of Dagon



Fra. Sadashtor 645 '.'

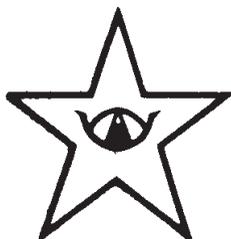
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1. Dagon in the writing of H. P. Lovecraft

The ancient god Dagon is first mentioned by Lovecraft in his 1917 story, entitled “Dagon”, where, haunted by his bizarre encounter with a “vast, Polyphemus-like, and loathsome” creature of the deep sea, the narrator of the tale seeks out a “celebrated ethnologist” and amuses him “with peculiar questions regarding the ancient Philistine legend of Dagon, the Fish-God.” Such an identification here remains nothing more than a vague speculation.

However, in “The Shadow over Innsmouth” (1931), Lovecraft writes of the isolated and decaying, Massachusetts seaport of Innsmouth as being the home of The Esoteric Order of Dagon, “a peculiar secret cult which had gained force there and engulfed all the orthodox churches”. The Order is in fact the organized basis for a clandestine traffic with the Deep Ones, amphibious, frog-like, fish creatures of great age and intelligence. “Father Dagon” appears to be regarded as the progenitor of these beings, of whom it is said that “some day, if they remembered, they would rise again for the tribute Great Cthulhu craved.”

The role of Dagon in the so-called Cthulhu Mythos is finally rationalised by August Derleth in “The Lurker at the Threshold”, (1945). Here it is established that the Water-Being Cthulhu “was greater than Dagon, that Dagon and his Deep Ones served him.”

Nevertheless, the presence of Dagon among the more outré

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entities of Lovecraft's writing has both puzzled and intrigued Lovecraftian scholars and enthusiasts. For example, both Robert M. Price and Will Murray have recognised in Lovecraft's early representation of Dagon, a prototype for the later manifestation of Cthulhu. As regards the purpose of the esoteric order bearing his name, Price believes that, "Dagon" is simply a familiar and appropriate name from the Old Testament chosen to mark the secret worship of unknown Cthulhu"¹. Murray, noting that Lovecraft describes the order as "a debased, quasi-pagan thing imported from the East a century before", acknowledges "that Dagon worship was often mentioned in derogatory fashion in the Bible", and that this was the most likely source for Lovecraft's use of the idea of Dagon².

Perhaps the key passage to all of this occurs in "The Shadow over Innsmouth", where the main informant of the town's secret worship, the aged, half-crazed Zadok Allen, raves about;

"Wrath o' Jehovy - I was a mighty little critter, but I heerd what I heerd an' seen what I seen - Dagon an' Ashtoreth - Belial an' Beelzebub - Golden Caff an' the idols o' Canaan an' the Philistines - Babylonish abominations - Mene, mene tekel, upharsin..."

There are in this passage a number of themes that have obsessed the western consciousness, inculcated as it is with the literature of the Bible. They have infiltrated into the subconsciousness of even the most avowedly rationalistic and anti-religious of individuals, and Lovecraft himself crystallised some of these obsessions to an exceptional degree.

By the use of the term "Babylonish abominations" it is uncertain whether Lovecraft had in mind a specific reference

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to the Deep Ones, but it does evoke the entire panorama of strange gods and ancient nightmares, embodying forbidden spheres of experience that are outside the established boundaries of Judeo-Christian practice and authority. It is the nature of such authority, that it continually strives to suppress and eliminate the validity of the ancient deities, it seeks to mock them and render them null; the names become dead, but the energies which they embody remain sentient within the deeper levels of the subconsciousness of humanity. Lovecraft encapsulated this awareness in the famous ritual expression of “In his house at R’lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming.” On this basis it becomes clearer to recognise that the relationship between Cthulhu and Dagon is much closer than has been considered previously.

In the First Book of Samuel, chapter five, there is an account of how the magical power of Yahweh overcomes that of Dagon. The Philistines capture the Ark of the Covenant and take it to Ashdod, to place it as a trophy in the temple of Dagon. Next morning, the statue of Dagon is found prone on the ground before the ark; it is replaced, but on the following morning it is found not only prone before the ark, but with its head and hands cut off and lying on the threshold of the temple. The “Wrath o’ Jehovy” falls upon the Philistines, their god is shown to be impotent, and they suffer various plagues and calamities before they are able to return the ark to the Israelites.

The main consequence of this episode is that: In his house at Ashdod the god Dagon lies fallen - which clearly parallels Lovecraft’s ritual formula for Cthulhu. On this basis, a litany of Dagon may be constructed.

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Notes:

1. "Mythos Names and How to Say Them", *Lovecraft Studies*, No. 15 (1987) page 49.
2. "Dagon in Puritan Massachusetts", *Lovecraft Studies*, No. 11(1985) page 66. This article is fascinating in the details which it provides on the probable historical basis for Lovecraft's Order of Dagon, a basis which was later explicitly drawn upon by Fred Chappell in his novel "Dagon" (1968), where the role of the god has become wholly debased and Qliphothic.

2. The Litany of Dagon

- 1 In his house at Ashdod lord Dagon lies fallen.
- 2 But he will be established in his Place again!
- 3 Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark
of Yahweh.
- 4 For seven periods of time his worship was no more,
- 5 Seven times seven cycles of restriction.
- 6 Then the lords of Perfection assembled,
- 7 For the offering of a Great Sacrifice to Dagon their god,
- 8 And to rejoice: the Year of Jubilee.
- 9 And it shall come to pass in that time,
- 10 The sound of a cry from the Gate of the Fishes,
- 11 A howling from the second quarter,
- 12 And a great commotion from the hills.
- 13 The occurrence of a Great Sacrifice to Dagon,
- 14 And the Foulness of the place of Emptiness.
- 15 And the Priests of Dagon will come again:
- 16 The Sons of God will have intercourse with the daughters
of Man.
- 17 And they took Dagon and they set him in his Place,
- 18 Re-establishing the ancient worship:
- 19 Bringing forth the Mighty Ones which are from Eternity.
- 20 All who enter the house of Dagon
- 21 Are under the seal that is Eleven.
- 22 And they shall adore the Head of Dagon,
- 23 Chanting with the voice of charmers,
- 24 As they leap across the threshold

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- 25 In the silence of the night.
26 ba'bethu l' Ashdodu yaqom Baal-Dagon
27 In his house at Ashdod lord Dagon will rise!

Commentary:

The litany is based upon biblical references to Dagon and the pattern of qabbalistic correspondences emerging from them.

The first line is a summary of the state of affairs described in the fifth chapter of the First book of Samuel. In contrast to this, line 2 is a declaration of the Great Work of the Disciples of Dagon, which work is already in progress.

Lines 3-& DGVN NFL LPNJV ARTzH LPNI ARVN IHVH: 'Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of Yahweh, (1 Samuel. 5,3). This phrase has the gematria of 1148, which is the number of ShBO ShOVTh, 'seven periods of time'. This indicates that the worship of the Great Old One, Dagon, was suppressed by the cult of the Elder God Yahweh (Jehovah), for this duration of time.

'Then the lords of Perfection assembled, for the offering of a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice...' This is the text of the Book of Judges 16,23 with one alteration; the word ThKLITH (860), 'perfection, completeness' has been substituted for PLShThIM (860), 'Philistines'. The 'perfection' or 'completeness' referred to is the offering of ZBCh-GDVL LDGVN, 'a great sacrifice to Dagon', which counting Nun-final, has the value of 803, the number of ShNTh HIVBL, 'the Year of Jubilee'. This is the title of the fiftieth year, completing a cycle of seven times seven year periods; it is a holy time of release, or liberation, deriving its name from the sounding of trumpets in announcement. IVBL means 'a protracted sound' and its number is 48, also the value of GDVLH, 'greatness,

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majesty' and of KVKB, 'a star'.

In "The Sirius Mystery" (1976), Robert Temple has related the celebration of this fifty-year period to the 49/50 year orbital period of Sirius B around Sirius A, the Dog-Star. In the Jewish Qabbalah these cycles of time became identified with cosmic periods of aeonic progression and final release in the Great Jubilee, and in the context of the litany this is to be identified with the Aeon of Dagon's Rising.

Lines 9-12. These go on to describe the manifestations that accompany the rising of Dagon in the 'year of the protracted sound'. They are derived from the text of Zephaniah 1,10 in a section full of prophetic admonitions to those who practised the ancient rites, including - 'everyone who leaps over the threshold'. ShOR HDGIM, 'the gate of the fishes' was the name of one of the northern gates of Jerusalem, but in the present context it is to be identified with the entrance to the Apsu, the watery abyss of Sumero-Babylonian cosmology. HaDaghim, 'the Fishes', might be a reference to the Deep Ones.

Lines 13-14 reiterate the significance of ZBCh-GDVL LDGVN, "a great sacrifice to Dagon", but consider it here in relation to its alternate gematria of 153. This is the number of PGO, 'occurrence, event'; TzChNH, 'stench, foulness'; and MBVQH, 'emptiness, devastation', 'place of emptiness'. The relationship of these concepts is open to varied interpretation. "The foulness of the place of emptiness" could be taken to indicate the experience of the horrors of the Abyss, while the "stench of devastation" could be taken to refer to that "clearing off" of the earth which it is said will take place at the return of the Great Old Ones.

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As Lovecraft has written;

“They walk unseen and foul in lonely places where the Words have been spoken and the Rites howled through at their Seasons.

“As a foulness shall ye know Them. Their hand is at your throats, yet ye see them not; and Their habitation is even one with your guarded threshold.”¹

There are parallels in line 14 with the concept of the Abomination of Desolation. The devotee makes his, or her sacrifice to the Beloved and perceives that ‘I am alone: there is no God where I am’, in the realization that ‘When Thou shall know me, O empty God, my flame shall utterly expire in Thy great N.O.X.’²

Lines 15-19. These integrate elements of the text of 1 Samuel 5,3-5, with that of Genesis 6,4 by means of the qabbalistic correspondences. KHNI DGVN, ‘priests of Dagon’, has the same number of 148 as BNI ALHIM, ‘Beni Elohim’, those Sons of God who ‘had intercourse with the daughters of man, and they bore children to them, these being HGBRIM AShR MOVLM, the mighty ones which are from eternity’. This is the literal translation of the Hebrew phrase, which has the gematria of 947, the same as IShBV AThV LMQVMV, ‘they set him in his place’. The re-establishment of the worship of Dagon, and the restoration of his potency, brings forth the Great Old Ones which are from the spaces inbetween. In the words of Joseph-Antoine Boullan;

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*“Dagon will come again, as will mighty sorceries for the mighty beasts of the deep have been unleashed, and they have gone about their pathway of destruction...”*³

It is possible to identify ‘the Mighty Ones which are from eternity’ more completely, and to establish that they are “mighty beasts of the deep”. Referring to Genesis 6,4 Kenneth Grant has identified these entities as being “Typhonian Teratomas such as those described by Berossus in his account of the creation. Of these teratomas the dragon and the ape were the archetypes.” (4). In the form in which it has survived, the description of these ‘wondrous creatures by Berossus is rather wild and impressionistic, but the Babylonian recension of the Creation Epic from which it was derived, is more precise. According to this, Tiamat, the primordial dragon of the chaos of waters, gave birth to:

*“...Monster-Serpents, Sharp of tooth, unsparing of fang.
With venom for blood she has filled their bodies.
Roaring dragons she has clothed with terror,
Has crowned them with haloes, making them like gods”.*

Nine of these chaos dragons are then named, but:

*“Withal eleven of this kind she has brought forth”.*⁵

This description of course, is from the point of view of the priests of Bel-Marduk, the god whom the Creation Epic was styled to glorify. It is he who slays Tiamat and defeats her offspring. As to their fate:

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*“Now the eleven creatures which Tiamat had made...
Whose weapons he had shattered, which he had tied to his
foot: Of these he made statues and set them up at the Gate
of Apsu saying: “Let it be a token that this may never be
forgotten!”⁶*

Several of these dragons became identified with various constellations, such as Hydra, Sagittarius, Aquarius and Capricorn.

And now the Gate of Apsu has been opened again, and the restoration of Dagon will release the dragons of the deep, which are the essence of all “Babylonish abominations”.

Lines 20-25. KL-HBAIM BITH-DGVN, ‘all who enter the house of Dagon’ (1 Samuel 5,5), has the value of 583, which is the gematria of AChD OShR, Eleven. This is taken to indicate that the disciples of Dagon have knowledge of the rising of the eleven chaos dragons, and also, perhaps, an awareness of the words of the Goddess Nuit, when she declares that: “My number is 11, as all their numbers who are of us.”⁷

RASh DGVN, ‘the head of Dagon’, shares the common gematria of 564, with QVL MLChShIM, ‘the voice of charmers’, and DMMTh HLILH, ‘the silence of the night’. The devotees adore the head of Dagon because he has been restored to his lordship of the Place, or Space, which is MQVM, Maqom. By its number of 186, Maqom is to be identified with QVPh, Qoph, meaning ‘an ape’, or ‘the back of the head’; the magickal centre within the Cerebellum that is sometimes referred to as the ‘dragon brain’. Also, 186 is the value of APQH, ‘a fortress’; PVOL, ‘action, deed’ or ‘acquisition’; and in the Greek, of Golgotha, ‘the place of the Skull’ - and the

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place of the crucifixion, or Crossing.

Now BITH DGVN, ‘the House of Dagon’ is 475, which is the number of BGVLGLThA, ‘In Golgotha’⁸. And after Saul was slain in battle by the Philistines, the text of 1 Chronicles 10,10 declares: “And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon”. The word used for “head” is GLGLTh, ‘skull’. Moreover, in the form GLGLThA, the word “skull” has the same number of 467 as KThVLHV, one of the Hebrew spellings of Cthulhu, and there is an Akkadian word ‘Kutallu’ that has the meaning of ‘the back of the head; rear part; behind’⁹.

All of this reveals Dagon to be a Lord of the Deep and a Guardian of its Threshold, across which access may be gained to the abyss of waters, the outer spaces - the spaces between the stars where the mighty ones dwell in eternity. Microcosmically, the threshold to these primordial spaces of consciousness is located in the Qoph centre, and it is traversed in alignment with the light of the Will in the Ajna chakra and the vibration of the Word in the Visuddha chakra.

Finally, in lines 26 and 27, the chant is given:

Ba’bethu l’Ashdodu yaqom Baal-Dagon.

Constructed with mantric rhythm in mind, this is reasonably correct Hebrew: BBITHV LASHDVDV IQVM BOL-DGVN, literally:

‘In his house, at his stronghold, he will rise, lord Dagon’.

Baal-Dagon has the number of 165, equating it with the phrase LHVDIOM, ‘he will make them know’.

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Notes:

1. *Necronomicon* - quoted in part V of “The Dunwich Horror” (1928).
2. *Liber Al.* 11,23 and *Liber VII.* 1,40 respectively.
3. From an unpublished paper by Michael Bertiaux: “Lecture by Joseph-Antoine Boullan”, quoted in Kenneth Grant: *Outside the Circles of Time*, (1980) p.16.
4. *Nightside of Eden*, (1977), pp.51-52.
5. E. A. Speiser’s translation in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Ed. J. B. Pritchard (1955) p.63. The Creation Epic, Tablet II, Lines 20- 24.
6. A. K. Grayson’s translation in *The Ancient Near East Supplementary Texts* (1969) p. 502. The Creation Epic Tablet V, Lines 73-76.
7. *Liber Al.* 1,60.
8. See Aleister Crowley’s *Sepher Sephiroth*.
9. Source: *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, 1982.

3. Dagon: The Material Basis

The occult indications of the rising of Dagon have been paralleled by the archaeological rediscoveries of the god's ancient significance, although there is much that yet remains unclear. Most frustratingly of all, no convincingly authentic statue or representation of Dagon seems to have been found, as all the evidence indicates that the familiar fish-god image is not, in fact, that of Dagon.

In Hebrew, Dagon transliterates as DCVN, which might well be an expansion of the word DC, 'fish', but then there is also the word DGN, 'corn, grain', which bears closer comparison, while finally, in Arabic a similar word means 'cloud, rain'. There is no basis in the Bible for identifying Dagon as a fish-god, or a sea-god. He was the chief deity of the Philistines and had temples in Gaza, Ashdod and the other cities of the coastal plains of southern Palestine. The Philistines were a warlike and seafaring people who established themselves in this area after 1200 BC, but they had adopted the cult of Dagon from their predecessors.

Dagon is a West Semitic god of ancient origin, and the earliest references to him in cuneiform tablets have been found in the city-states of the Upper Euphrates region of the third millennium BC. In these he is called Dagan. At Ebla (Tell Mardikh, 55km south-west of Aleppo on the edge of the Syrian Desert), the royal archives have revealed that Dagan was the head of a pantheon of some 500 deities. He is referred to as

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Be-dingir-dingir: 'Lord of the Gods' and Bekalam: 'Lord of the Land', and along with his consort - identified simply as Belatu: 'Lady' - he ruled over the temple complex called é-mul: 'House of the Star'. One entire quarter of Ebla and one of its gates bore his name, and the first month of the year was dedicated to him. There are references to Dagan as being: Lord of Bulanu; Lord of Tuttul; Lord of Irim; Lord of Ma-Ne; Lord of Zarad; Lord of Uguash; Lord of Siwad and Lord of Sipishu. Also, Dagan is called ti-lu ma-tim: 'the Dew of the Land' and as Be ka-na-na, he may already have been known as the 'Lord of Canaan'. One tablet from Ebla mentions the preparation of silver for a white statue of Dagan, but the statue itself has not been found¹.

The Amorite kingdom of Man on the Euphrates (in the far eastern borderlands of what is now Syria), was a major centre of the worship of Dagan. Here the god was served by a variety of priests and priestesses, including seers of an ecstatic type called mahhûm, who received revelations from Dagan in the form of dreams. Some of these oracles from the god advised on matters of state, and others on ritual matters such as the preparation of mortuary-offerings for the dead. Associated with the worship of Dagan was that of Beletekallim: 'Lady of the Palace'².

Further north at Teqa, the Assyrian king Shamsi-Adad I (Ca. 1815-1782 BC), who was himself of Amorite origin, rebuilt the great temple of Dagan called the ekisiga: 'House of Sacrifices (for the dead)'. About this time the Amorites were founding the first Babylonian dynasty, ensuring the continued spread of Dagan's cult throughout Mesopotamia. At an early period prior to this however, Dagan was one of the few foreign deities to have been included in their own pantheon by the Sumenans, as an attendant of the high god Enlil, the lord of the earth and vegetation, provider of cattle, agricultural

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implements, and the arts of civilisation. With the Babylonians and Assyrians, Dagon became increasingly identified with Enlil; he was worshipped as a god of the earth and its vegetation, a great, cthonian deity who sat in judgement of the souls of the dead in the underworld³.

To the west, on the north Syrian coast, Dagon had a large temple at Ugarit (Ras Shamra), but the only mention of him in the famous cuneiform texts dating from the fourteenth century BC, that have been found there, is the repeated reference to Baal as being ‘the son of Dagon’. Baal is the chief protagonist in the Ugaritic myths; he is a god of fertility, of the rain, and the thunder, and the lightning.

The worship of Dagon was elsewhere widespread throughout Syria, the Lebanon and Palestine among the Canaanites, and later, among the Phoenicians and Philistines. Dagon is mentioned in the ‘Phoenician History’ of Philo of Byblos (ca. 42-117 AD), which claims to be a translation of the much earlier work of the Phoenician priest, Sanchuniathon of Berytus. In this Philo refers to “Dagon (Δαγῶν), who is grain (ἔρων),” as being one of the four children of Ouranos (Heaven), and his sister Ge (Earth), the others being Elos (Kronos), Baetylos and Atlas. Later, Philo states that: “Dagon, since he discovered grain and plough, was called Zeus Ploughman (Ζεὺς Ἀροτριός)”⁴.

Along the coastal areas, Dagon's cult persisted well into Hellenic times; his temple at Ashdod was still in use until 147 BC, when it was destroyed by Jonathan Maccabeus. However, although Dagon maintained his function as a god of fertility and lord of the rain, he became confused and merged with other foreign deities. The merman characteristics that are wrongly attributed to Dagon probably stem from this period due to comparisons with the Syrian goddess Atargatis, who

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was said to have the form of a mermaid. There was a sanctuary of this deity at Ashkelon, and it contained a large pool, full of sacred fishes.

In the third century AD, Rabbi Levi had no doubt in stating that Dagon had the form of a man, but the medieval rabbis favoured the merman representation. David Kimchi (ca. 1200 AD) wrote:

“They say that Dagon had the shape of a fish from his navel downwards, because he is called Dagon (DG fish) and upwards from his navel the form of a man, as it is said, “both the palms of his hands were cut off on the threshold”.

This increasingly popular misrepresentation of Dagon’s appearance may well have been motivated by the desire to make the god grotesque, in keeping with the process of denigration already instituted in the Jewish scriptures. Subsequently, the poet Milton would be able to make reference to the “brute Image” of “Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man—And downward Fish” among his catalogue of fallen angels ⁵.

Because he came to be regarded as a fish-god, Dagon has been identified with the semi-daemon Odacon, described by Berossus as “having the same complicated form between a fish and a man” as Gannes, the being who first instructed the Mesopotamians in the arts of civilisation. ‘Odacon’ is probably a Graecized corruption of Sumerian ‘Utukku’ rather than Semitic ‘Dagon’. The Utukku were categories of genii of both good and evil aspect, and there appears to have been a benign grouping of these called the ‘seven wise ones’; they wore fish robes, and carried water buckets and spriniders for the purpose of ritual purification. They gave rise to a class of exorcist-

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priests, called Ashipu, who were similarly attired. These were the representatives of the god of wisdom and magic, known to the Sumerians as Enki; to the Babylonians as Ea; later introduced to the Greeks as Oannes, by Berossus.

The identification of Gannes with Ea is made reasonably clear in a fragment of Helladius, who describes “a man named Oe who came out of the Red Sea having a fish-like body but the head, feet and’ arms of a man, and who taught astronomy and letters. Some accounts say that he came out of a great egg whence his name, and that he was actually a man, but only seemed a fish because he was clothed in ‘the skin of a sea creature’.”⁶

The god Ea dwelled in the depths of the sweet-water abyss, the Apsu, “in the chamber of fates, the abode of destinies”. It has been suggested that his name means “House of the Water”, but this remains uncertain. He is depicted as a man holding a vase from which issue streams of water, as a merman, or as a goat with a fish’s tail. However, Ea is an earth deity as much as he is a water god; his Sumerian name Enki, means “Lord of the Earth”, or “Lord of the Place”. One hymn speaks of Enki as directing the plough and the yoke, and of making the grain grow; in this aspect especially, he has much in common with Dagon.

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Notes:

1. Sources: *The Archives of Ebla*, Giovanni Pettinato, (Doubleday & Co., 1981); *Ebla: An Empire Rediscovered*, Paolo Matthiae, (Hodder & Stoughton, 1977).
2. Several of the divine revelations emanating from Dagon, and other deities of Man, are to be found in the section on “Akkadian Letters” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, pp. 623-632.
- 3 *Semitic Mythology*, S. H. Langdon, (1931); published as Volume 5, *The Mythology of All Races*, (Cooper Square Publishers, New York, 1964) pp. 78-86.
This book contains a drawing of what it claims to be “the only statue of a god which can safely be regarded as the mighty Dagon of Semitic mythology”.
However, the evidence for this is far from convincing.
- 4 *Philo of Byblos. The Phoenician History*, H. W. Attridge and R. A. Oden Jr., (*The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph*, Series 9, 1981). Note that the number of Dagon in Greek, Δαγῶν, is 858, the value of the Hebrew N51IMTh ChIIM, ‘the breath of life’.
- 5 *Milton. Paradise Lost* (1667), Book 1, Lines 457-466. For a detailed consideration of the development of the fish-god conception of Dagon, see *The Philistines, Their History and Civilisation*, R. A. Stewart Macalister, (Argonaut Inc., Chi-

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cago 1965), pp. 99-107 on Dagon. It is assumed that Lovecraft was familiar with Milton's verses on Dagon; there is even a slight possibility that he might have come across Macalister's study, which was first published in 1911.

- 6 The fragment of Helladius is given along with those of Berossus in Appendix II of Robert K. G. Temple's *The Sirius Mystery* (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1976).

4. Dagon: the Magical Image

Although no authentic image of Dagon has been provided by archaeological investigation, it is possible to formulate a definite magical image of the god by reference to the Tarot. In “The Book of Thoth”, Crowley makes two references to Dagon, firstly in his commentary to Atu 0, The Fool, and secondly in the section on Atu XIII, Death, but both of these are based on the assumption that he is a fish-god and equivalent to Oannes. Neither of these cards have any intimate association with Dagon¹.

The principal number of the Hebrew name DGVN is 63, and 6+3 reduces to 9, or Atu IX, The Hermit. This card is attributed to the letter Yod, the Secret Seed which is at the core of creation, and to the sign of Virgo, which is ruled by Mercury; indeed the Hermit himself is both Yod, the Father, and Mercury, the Logos. Also, the Hermit is Dagon, the Great Old One. Crowley writes that:

‘The highest symbolism of this card is, therefore, Fertility in its most exalted sense, and this is reflected in the attribution of the card to the sign of Virgo, which is another aspect of the same quality. Virgo is an earthy sign, and is referred especially to Corn, so that the background of the card is a field of wheat.’²

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Dagon is a god of the earth and vegetation, his name means ‘Corn’ or ‘Grain’ and indicates that he is a provider of nourishment for his devotees: ZVN, ‘to be fed’, has the value of 63. But as has been demonstrated, Dagon is no mere “fertility god”. Crowley goes on to state:

“Virgo represents the lowest, most receptive, most feminine form of earth, and forms the crust over Hades. Yet not only is Virgo ruled by Mercury, but Mercury is exalted therein. Compare the Ten of Disks, and the general doctrine that the climax of the Descent into Matter is the signal for the reintegration by Spirit. It is the Formula of the Princess, the mode of fulfilment of the Great Work.

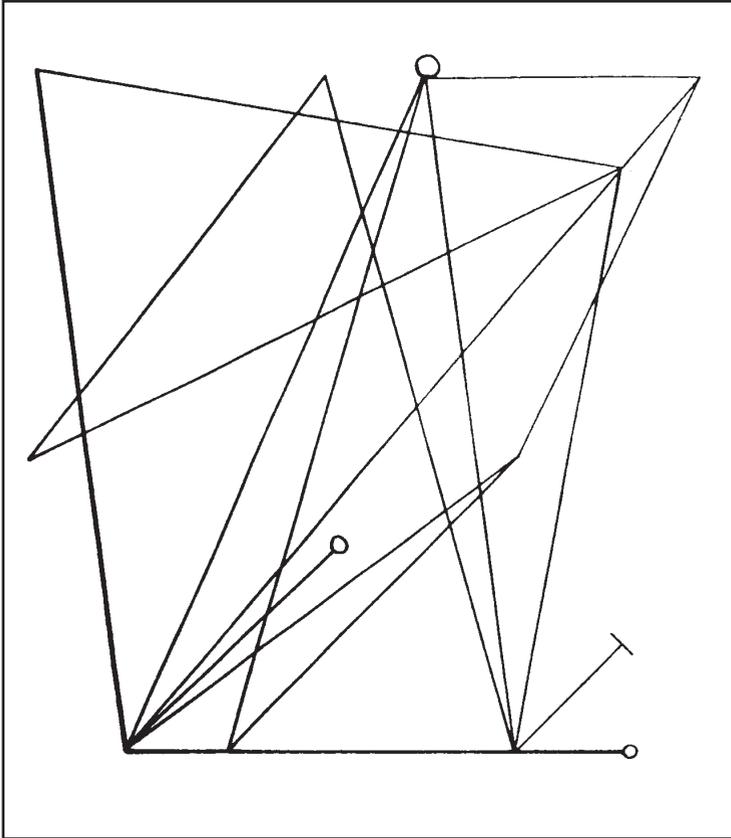
“Concealed within Mercury is a light which pervades all parts of the Universe equally; one of his titles is Psychopompos, the guide of the soul through the lower regions. These symbols are indicated by his Serpent Wand, which is actually growing out of the Abyss, and is the spermatozoon developed as a poison, and manifesting the foetus. Following him is Cerberus, the three-headed Hound of Hell whom he has tamed. In this Trump is shewn the entire mystery of Life in its most secret workings.”³

The Qabbalistic correspondences relating to Dagon are well represented in this analysis of Atu IX. 63 is the number of ABDVN, Abaddon, one of the names of Hell and equivalent to Hades, or the Abyss; it is the number of LBB ChIVH, ‘the heart of a beast’, the soul of Cerberus who represents all the powers of the Abyss; and it is the number of KBVD-AL, ‘the glory of god’, the concealed light which pervades the Universe.

Disciple of Dagon

The design of The Hermit card in the Thoth Tarot pack is most striking; it is criss-crossed by beams and rays of light, which form a curious geometric pattern. Most of the beams of light pass through the Hermit's lamp, making it the place of greatest illumination, but it is not their source of emanation. If the gematrioth relating to Dagon are plotted upon the Kamea of Mercury, the resulting Talismanic design bears resemblance to the pattern of light in the Tarot card.⁴

Disciple of Dagon



It is suggested that the use of this Talisman, either on its own or in combination with Atu IX, should be explored in magical working with Dagon.

Disciple of Dagon

Notes:

1. See *The Book of Thoth*, (Samuel Weiser, 1974 edition), p.60 and p.101.
2. *The Book of Thoth*, p. 89.
3. Ibid. p.89. Dagon may be identified with another aspect of Mercury, the god Anubis who stands upon the threshold of Atu XVIII, The Moon—attributed to Qoph and Pisces. See Crowley's description of this card.
4. Additional gematrioth included in diagram: ChIMH, 'fervour'; and GLL 't roll'; 'dung, heaviness'.

Further Reading

Liber Koth, by Stephen Sennitt, Logos Press 1997

The Nox Anthology, Logos Press 1998

The Pseudonomicon, by Phil Hine, Dagon Productions 1997

For details of these titles and on-line essays relating to the magic of the Cthulhu Mythos, visit [Fifth Aeon Egregore](#).

