



Liber Coelum Stellarum Fixarum A discourse on the fifteen stars

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The fixed stars are what today most of us would just refer to as stars. The term arises from the classical classification of celestial bodies into two categories of 'star' viz. the wandering stars (e.g. the planets) and the fixed stars. Ptolemy was one of the earliest astrologers to comprehensively catalogue the fixed stars and their influences around the 2nd century. The tradition was developed greatly by Moorish astrologers working from Ptolemy, and with whom the study of the fixed stars is mostly associated - Agrippa even calls the fixed stars the 'Behenian stars', Behenian being a synonym for Arabian.¹

The fixed stars are commonly assigned 'planetary equivalents', for example a star which confers beauty such as Mirach may be the planetary equivalent of Venus. The most common way to deduce a stars nature was by observation. Agrippa and Barrett give the following rules for finding a equivalents:

'Now the natures of the fixed stars are discovered by heir colours, as they agree with certain planets, and are ascribed to them. Now the colours of the planets are these: of Saturn, blue and leaden, and shining with this; of Jupiter, citrine near to a paleness, and clear wit this; of Mars, red and fiery; of the Sun, yellow, and when it riseth red, afterward glittering; of Venus, white and shining, white with the morning and reddish in the evening; of Mercury, glittering; of the Moon, fair.'²

The elements combusting and the temperature of a star affect the colour of the light which stars emit. The make-up of stars can be analysed by a spectrometer and classified into spectral classes.³ George Noonan gives us an interesting variation on the traditional method of working out the planetary natures of stars and astrologically interprets the spectral classes giving us the following table to finding out the nature of a star:

Spectral Class	Planetary Equivalent
M	Saturn
K	Mars
G	Sun
F	Mercury

Spectral Class	Planetary Equivalent
A	Venus
B	Jupiter
O	Moon

The disadvantage of the latter system is that it does not take into account the possibility of stars having dual natures. Agrippa writes that "some are of the nature of one planet, and some of two: hence as often as any planet is joined with any of the fixed stars of its own nature, the signification of that star is made more powerful, and the nature of the planet augmented".⁴

¹ Three Books of Occult Philosophy. Book II. Cap. xlvi.

² Three Books of Occult Philosophy. Book II. Cap. xxxi.

³ There are many astronomy programs which will give you spectral classes for most of the visible stars. I recommend StarScape by Skyline Software.

⁴ Loc. cit.

Most medieval and renaissance texts discuss only fifteen of the fixed stars - the most common text discussing the stars is the *Liber Hermetis*, which has been dated back to around the 13th century.⁵ The *Liber Hermetis* details the natures, stones, herbs and characters of the stars. Agrippa adds a series of images, possibly derived from the *Picatrix*, which have a talismanic quality and may possibly have been ultimately derived from Egyptian astrological sources. Quite why the fifteen stars which we shall discuss were chosen is a mystery to me. They are not all of the first magnitude nor are they evenly distributed through the zodiac. The exact construction of the seals for each star is also obscure. I hypothesise that the sigils are representations of the stars surrounding the fixed star in question, thus mirroring the heavens and attracting their influence. Below is a list of the fifteen stars and their attributes. I have used their modern names for easy reference and provided some of the more common medieval and alternative names in brackets following them. The degree on the wheel of the zodiac is also provided.⁶ The sigils of the stars are in a table at the end of this essay.

1. Aldebaran

9 Gemini

Aldebaran is located in the constellation of Taurus and is frequently alluded to as the 'Eye of the bull'. The name is thought to have derived from Al Dabaranu (the forecaster) and is said to either bring about good fortune and riches or disaster depending on the planet which is conjunct with it. The nature of Aldebaran is of Venus and Mars and it's stones are the carbuncle and the ruby. The carbuncle is fitting to with the Venereal aspect and was credited during medieval times with increasing popularity and wealth, protecting from illness and attracting success.⁷ The ruby was also believed to possess similar traits and is traditionally a Martial stone. The associated plants are the milk thistle and woodruff - although John Gower in *Confessione Amantis* lists 'anabulla'.⁸ The image of the star, which 'giveth riches and honour', is 'after the likeness of God, or of a flying man'.

2. Pleiades

1 Gemini

The Pleiades is not actually a single star, but a group of seven stars, sometimes called the Seven Sisters - the name of the asterism may have derived from Pleione (Πλειονη), the mother of the Seven Sisters in Greek mythology.⁹ In Mesopotamian mythology these 'Seven unnamed gods' were called the Sibittu. They are also mentioned in Amos 5:8, Job 9:9 and Job 38:31. Ptolemy and Agrippa describe their nature as Lunary and Martial, and Ptolemy connects the star with ruin and death. The stones of the Pleiades are crystal and diodochus (a stone resembling the beryl), and the plants diaxylon, frankincense and fennel. The image is of 'a little virgin, or the figure of a lamp; it's reported to increase the light of the eyes, to assemble spirits, to raise winds, to reveal secret and hidden things.'

3. Caput Algol

26 Taurus

Caput Algol, or the Head of the Demon,¹⁰ is commonly regarded as one of the most evil stars in the sky and traditionally 'afflicted the face and head to the point of decapitation or strangulation'. It is the beta of Perseus, astrologically placing it in the sign Taurus. Its nature is of Jupiter and Saturn. Algol's stone is the diamond, and the plants are black hellebore and mugwort. According to Agrippa, 'they made an image whose figure was the head of a man with a bloody neck; they report that it bestoweth good success to petitions, and maketh him who carrieth it bold and magnanimous, and preserveth the members of the body sound: also it helpeth against witchcraft, and reflecteth evil endeavours and wicked incantations upon our adversaries.' Interestingly William Thomas & Kate Pavitt wrote

⁵ 13C Mss. Bod. Oxford, Ash. 341. 14C Mss. BM London, Har. 7652. 16C Mss. BM London, Add. 10775. In his edition of Agrippa, Tyson mentions a mss. called Book of Enoch, which may possibly be the same work (p. 411).

⁶ These positions should be up-to-date. Tyson explains 'the zodiacal longitude of the fixed stars ... are eight or nine degrees behind their present positions due to the procession of the equinoxes.'

⁷ The Book of Talismans, Amulets & Zodiacal Gems. p. 232-3.

⁸ Quoted in The Mysteries and Secrets of Magic. p. 190.

⁹ "He (Orion) met them (the Sisters) with their mother Pleione in Boiotia and straightaway pursued Pleione with amorous intent. She and her daughters fled, and the flight was stopped, or immortalised, by the pursuer and pursued alike being turned into constellations." - A Handbook of Greek Mythology, p. 116.

¹⁰ From the Arabian Al-Ghul - also called by the Hebrews Rosh ha Satan (Satan's Head) or Lilith.

mention the diamond as having the power to repel sorcery, poison and nightmares as well as making a man strong.¹¹

4. Capella (Hircus, The Goat Star, Alayodi) 21 Gemini
The word Capella means 'little female goat' and it is the alpha of Auriga. The star's name is a reference to the myth in which Amalthea reared Jupiter on goat's milk. Ptolemy says that this star's nature is of Mercury and Mars, while Agrippa gives it the nature of Jupiter and Saturn. The star's stone is the sapphire and its plants hoarhound, mint, mugwort and mandrake. Capella's image is 'a man willing to make himself merry with musical instruments; it maketh him who carrieth it acceptable, honoured and exalted before kings and princes; and helpeth the pain of the teeth.'

5. Sirius (Canis Major, Greater Dog Star) 14 Cancer
In spite of its medieval name Canis Major, Sirius is actually the alpha of the constellation Canis Major. The stars rising at summer solstice marked the start of the Egyptian year and was called Sihor (the Nile Star) and was linked with Isis. Ptolemy gives it's nature as Venereal and links it to honour, wealth, passion and guardianship. Its stone is the beryl. Apuleius connects Isis with ensuring the welfare of sailors¹² - one of the beryl's supposed virtues is that it is lucky for mariners and travellers. Its plants savine, mugwort and dragonwort. The image is of 'an hound and a little virgin; it bestoweth honour and god will, the favour of men, and aerial spirits, and give the power to pacify and reconcile kings, princes, and other men.'

6. Procyon (Canis Minor, The Lesser Dog Star) 25 Cancer
This star is the alpha of Canis Minor - its name derived from the Greek προκυων (before the dog), denoting its rising before Sirius. Ptolemy says that its nature is of Mercury and Mars, causing violence and 'elevation ending in disaster', while other, apparently more ancient, texts connect it to wealth and fame.¹³ The star's stone is achates, its plants marigold, pennyroyal. The image is 'of a cock, or of three little maids: it confereth the favour of the gods, of spirits, and men: it giveth power against witchcrafts, and preserveth health.'

7. Regulus (Cor Leonis, Heart of the Lion) 29 Leo
Regulus is the alpha of Leo - its name meaning 'little king' since it has been considered the 'king of the heavens' in many astrological traditions. To the Babylonians it was called Sharru (king), the Indians Magha (the mighty) and the Persians Miyan (the centre) - along with Aldebaran, Antares and Formalhaut it was one of the Persian 'Royal Stars' which are evenly spaced throughout the heavens.¹⁴ It is of the nature of Jupiter and Mars. Ptolemy associates it with violence and destruction and paradoxically honours, glory and riches.¹⁵ The stone associated with the star is the garnet and the properties of the associated image would appear to match the professed virtues of such as stone. Its plants sallendine, mugwort and mastic. On the nature of the image Agrippa writes: 'they made the image of a lion or cat, or the figure of an honourable person sitting in a chair; it rendereth a man temperate, appeaseth wrath, and giveth favour.'

8. Algorab (Ala Corvii, The Crow's Wing) 20 Libra
The name Algorab is derived from the Arabic Al Ghirab (the crow), hence the common medieval name for the star Ala Corvii (the crow's wing). It is the delta of Corvus and Ptolemy credits it as being destructive, which is mirrored in its nature, being of Saturn and Mars. Its stone is the black onyx and its plants are the head of burdock, quadragnus, henbane and comfrey.¹⁶ The star is also credited with being associated with the tongue of a frog. The image of Algorab is 'the image of a raven, or snake, or of a black man clothed in black; this maketh a man choleric, bold, courageous, full of thoughts, a backbiter, and causeth naughty dreams; also it giveth the power of driving away evil spirits, and of gathering them together; it is profitable against the malice of men, devils and winds.'

¹¹ The Book of Talismans, Amulets & Zodiacal Gems. p. 141-2

¹² See The Golden Ass, Book xi.

¹³ Arkana Dictionary of Astrology, p. 404-5.

¹⁴ 'Hermes' list of fifteen stars includes all the Royal Stars save for Formalhaut.

¹⁵ The former may fall under the influence of Mars, the latter under Jupiter.

¹⁶ Of quadragnus Tyson writes - "Perhaps the lent-lily, or yellow daffodil" (Agrippa, p. 99)

9. Spica (The Spike)

23 Libra

Spica is the alpha of Virgo and is one of the most important of the fixed stars, symbolically speaking. One of the names given to this star by the Egyptians was Repa, which means 'Lord' and several Grecian temples were oriented toward the star. Being in the arms of the Virgin, Christian astrologers associated it with Christ. The star is said to bring about the protection of the innocent, goodness, nobility and to be good for ecclesiastical matters. Agrippa says the star is of the nature of Venus and Mercury, whereas Ptolemy lists it as Venereal and Martial. Under Spica is the emerald,¹⁷ and amongst plants sage, clover, periwinkle, mugwort and mandrake. The associated image is 'of 'an horse or wolf, or of a man laden with merchandise; it conferreth riches, and maketh one overcome contentions; it taketh away scarcity and mischief.'

10. Arcturus (Alchameth)

24 Libra

The alpha of Bootes the name of this star is derived from the Greek αρκτουρος (Bear-guard). The name Alchameth may be derived from the Arabic for 'night-watcher', denoting the fact that the star revolves around the pole, and thus - in the northern hemisphere - never sets. The star is said to be highly beneficial when rising in a chart. It has the nature of Mars and Jupiter, it's stone being jasper and it's plant waybread. The image is of 'an horse or wolf, or the figure of a man dancing; it is good against fevers, it astringeth and retaineth the blood.'

11. Polaris (Cauda Ursae, Tail of the Bear, Alkaid)

28 Gemini

The Pole Star, and alpha of Ursa Minor was also known to the Greeks as ψοινικε, which means purple-red, and it is thus classified as being of the nature of Venus conjunct with Saturn by Ptolemy, or Venus and Luna by Agrippa. It's stone is the lodestone because of it's magnetic nature - because of it's value in navigation Polaris has also been called the Loadstar. It's plants are mugwort, the flowers of periwinkle and chicory 'whose leaves, and flowers turn towards the north.'¹⁸ The image is of 'a pensive man, or of a bull, or the figure of a calf; it availeth against incantations, and maketh him who carrieth it secure in his travels.'

12. Alphecca (Elphia)

12 Scorpio

The name of this star is derived from the Arabic Al Na'ir al Fakkah, meaning 'the bright one in the dish' because the star is the alpha of Corona Borealis, which was known as Al Fakkah (the dish) because of it's shape. To Ptolemy, it's nature is of Mercury and Mars, although Agrippa lists Venus and Mars. The stone of Alphecca is topaz and the plants are rosemary, trifoil and ivy. The stars image is of 'a hen, or of a man crowned and advanced; it bestoweth the good will and love of men, and giveth chastity.'

13. Antares (Cor Scorpil, Heart of the Scorpion)

9 Sagittarius

This star is believed to be extremely powerful, it's name is derived from 'anti-Ares' (Αρειος - the Greek deity of war analogous with Mars), denoting it's rivalry with the planet Mars in martial affairs. It's nature is of Mars conjunct with Jupiter and is the alpha of Scorpio. Its stones are sardonyx and amethyst, while its plants are the long aristolochia and saffron. Agrippa writes that the image of Antares is 'a man armed, with a coat of mail, or the figure of a scorpion; it giveth understanding and memory, it maketh a good colour, and aideth against evil spirits, and driveth them away, and bindeth them.'

14. Wega (Vulture Cadens, Falling Vulture)

15 Capricorn

Wega is the alpha of the constellation of Lyra. The medieval nomenclature 'Falling Vulture' possibly derives from the stars Egyptian name of Maat, translated as 'vulture star', and it's Arabian name Al Waki, meaning 'falling'. The star was used as a pole star by many ancient cultures.¹⁹ It's nature is of Venus and Mercury. The stone of Wega is chrysolite, its plants chicory and fumitory. Agrippas image is of 'a vulture or hen, or of a traveler; it maketh a man magnanimous and proud, it giveth power over devils and beasts.'

¹⁷ Traditionally a stone of Venus.

¹⁸ Three Books of Occult Philosophy. Book I. Cap. xxxii.

¹⁹ Along with the Egyptian 'Maat', it was known as 'Tir-anna' (life of heaven) to the Akkadians and 'Dayan-same' to the Assyrians.

15. Deneb Algedi (Cauda Capricorni, Tail of Capricorn)

23 Aquarius

The delta of Capricorn, the name of this star is derived from the Arabic Al Dhanab al Jady - 'the Tail of the Goat'. Ptolemy lists this star as being of the nature of Jupiter and Saturn, although Agrippa lists Saturn and Mercury. The plants of Deneb Algedi are marjoram, mugwort, nip and mandrake, while it's stone is the chalcedony. The prescribed image is that of 'an hart, or goat, or of an angry man; it bestoweth prosperity, and increaseth wrath.'

Since ancient times the powers of the fixed stars have been invoked by gods, priests and magicians. In his dissertation *Astrology and Judaism in Late Antiquity*, Lester Ness quotes an intriguing invocation from a collection of neo-Assyrian writings called the Shurpu texts. Along with the names of planets and planetary deities it includes the words 'may the Bow-star, the Pleiades, Sirius, Mars Narudu release, may Hendursanga, the star Sibzianna release.'²⁰ While the Sword of Moses makes an interesting reference to using the powers of the stars to blind an enemy by leaving a written incantation beneath them in a wicker-basket.

According to most astrological traditions the fixed stars are said to 'cast no rays', which implies that they operate through conjunction with other bodies, in this case the planets. We have already quoted Agrippa writing 'as often as any planet is joined with any of the fixed stars of its own nature, the signification of that star is made more powerful, and the nature of the planet augmented.'²¹ This statement would seem to imply that that the fixed stars do have some kind of influence, but that the influence of the star and that of the planet is greatly enhanced when they are in conjunction. It is my opinion therefore that workings relating to the fixed stars can be carried out when they are not conjunct with planets of their own nature, although a conjunction is most beneficial.

When carrying out an operation involving the fixed stars I believe that it is important to actually have come into mental contact with the star in question by observation and contemplation upon it. I have also found from experience that contemplation and meditation upon the form of the stars is a potent magical exercise, linking the magician to the celestial energies of the star and enabling him to attract the influences of that star.²² Having formed a mental bond between yourself and the star the magician may begin his work. Any work with the fixed stars should be done when the star is at it's highest point overhead, this also applies to planetary work, as Abraham the Jew writes: 'Know then that each Planet hath only an hour during the which it is very powerful, being over you and above your head, that is to say when it is in the Meridian.'²³ If this is not possible, or as an alternative, go by the time when the degree of the star is at it's zenith on an astrological chart.

The talismanic images listed above were originally intended to be engraved on the stone associated with the star. In some cases the magical gem may have then been set in a ring of a sympathetic metal, along with a cutting of the associated herb, placed under the gem.²⁴ It would seem that the images associated with the stars derive from numerous sources, some of which will probably remain forever obscure. The most obvious sources relate to the nature of the constellation in which the star sits, for example Regulus (the Heart of the Lion) has the lion amongst it's images, and the same goes for Antares (Heart of the Scorpion), Deneb Algedi (Tail of Capricorn), Wega (Falling Vulture) and so on. In the case of Algol we have the grisly image of a decapitated head, no doubt derived from it's alleged influence over trauma to the face, while the 'little virgin' representing the Pleiades is possibly a nod to the daughters of Pleione. The same reasoning can be applied to the influences of the stars, most obviously the image of Polaris 'maketh him who carrieth it secure in his travels', while Regulus the 'little king' has the image of 'an honourable person sitting in a chair' aids the carrier in gaining favour, presumably from those of noble standing.

²⁰ Ness notes that Sibzianna is Orion.

²¹ Loc. cit.

²² The word 'form' applies to both the visible star itself and it's images.

²³ The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage, Book II. Cap. vi.

²⁴ For examples of this see Three Books of Occult Philosophy. Book I. Cap. xlvi and C.J.S. Thompson, The Mysteries and Secrets of Magic, Cap. xx.

The astral images listed by Agrippa can also be put to use mentally. Giordano Bruno used most of the celestial images given by Agrippa in his system of *Ars Memoriae*.²⁵ Discussing the theory behind Bruno's use of the images, Frances Yates writes: 'We have to see all these astral images in the context of Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia*. In Agrippa's text-book of magic, such image-lists occur in the second book, the one on celestial magic which is concerned with operating on the middle world of the stars - middle as compared with the lower elemental world dealt with in the first book, and the super-celestial world to which the third book is devoted. One of the chief ways of operating (according to this kind of magical thought) with the celestial world is through the magic or talismanic images of the stars. Bruno is transferring such operations within, applying them to memory by using the celestial images as memory images, as it were harnessing the inner world of the imagination to the stars, or reproducing the celestial world within.'²⁶

The images, and indeed the sigils, can obviously also be used to assist in meditation upon the star in question - they can be seen as links to the stars, through which the magician can not only learn about the it's nature, but interact with the star as well. There should be nothing stopping the inventive or thoughtful magician from creating his own additional images according to his tradition in order to harness the power of the stars, for example the Christian magician may associate the image of the infant Christ with the star Spica. Study of the lore and observation of other stars should also be carried out in order to find their influences, images and sigils. It is true on many levels that the history of man is indeed 'written in the stars.'

Those influenced by modern systems such as that of the Golden Dawn may find it useful to assign a card from the Major Arcana or Hebrew letter to the star. The easiest way to do this would be through the use of Wirth's table of correspondences between constellations and tarot cards, by finding out which constellation the star belongs to and consulting the table. Although some of his associations are more than a little suspect I will nevertheless reproduce his table at the end of this paper. The more discerning magician may like to consult the Celestial Alphabet to find out which celestial letter the star is part of. If the magician decided to do this with the aid of the mappings provided by Jocopo Gaffarelli then he may run into many difficulties, not least because the forms of several celestial letters are the same and they are only distinguished by their orientation.²⁷ It would be easier, and probably to greater effect, for the magician to observe the star for himself and draw his own conclusions about which celestial character the star is a part of.

Now let us discuss the angels and spirits ruling the fixed stars. The *Key of Solomon* declares that all of the celestial spheres, from the lunary to the Primum Mobile have spirits ruling over them, thus: 'There are different kinds of Spirits, according to the things over which they preside, some of them govern the Empyrean Heaven, others the Primum Mobile, others the First and Second Crystalline, others the Starry Heaven; there are also Spirits of the Heaven of Saturn, which I call Saturnites.'²⁸ Yet I have been so far unable to find any classical list of the spirits of the fixed stars. The only list I am so far aware of occurs in *The Practice of Magical Evocation* by Franz Bardon. Bardon lists forty-five 'Genii of the Sun Sphere', a sensible attribution both because the stars are distant suns and because 'initiates regard the Sun-sphere as the so-called Light Sphere'.²⁹ The names of the spirits which he lists are in fact the names of certain fixed stars put through a simple letter-substitution cipher.³⁰ It is my opinion that Bardon's seals, like the other fixed star seals, have been drawn by tracing lines around the area which the fixed star in question occupies. The names of many of Bardon's genii, once deciphered, correspond to the names of several of the fifteen stars which we have been discussing. I have yet to find if he has catalogued the natures of the spirits of the Pleiades, Caput Algol, Capella, Spica, Alphecca, Polaris, Algorab (perhaps the spirit Emtzel) or Antares. Below I present Bardon's outline of the spirits of the other stars we have mentioned.

²⁵ Interestingly he seems to have used all of Agrippa's images save for those of the fixed stars!

²⁶ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p. 211-212

²⁷ For Gaffarelli's mappings of the Celestial Alphabet to the stars, Tyson's edition of Agrippa, Book II, Cap. li, footnote 2, or Alexander Roob, *The Hermetic Museum: Alchemy and Mysticism*, p. 602.

²⁸ *The Greater Key of Solomon*, Book I, Introduction

²⁹ Franz Bardon, *The Practice of Magical Evocation*, Part II, Cap.vii

³⁰ See the essay Mr. Emil Stejnar's Discovery on Paul Allen's Franz Bardon page at: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6243/stejnar.html>

Emvetas (Aldebaran) 5-12 Gemini
All creatures equipped with a thinking mind and therefore also with full consciousness, regardless of rank, are under the influence of the ninth genius of the Sun sphere.

Lubuyil (Sirius) 7-14 Cancer
The range of power of the thirteenth original genius covers the control of the principle of and the element of water in all its phases of cause and effect in the whole hierarchy, i.e. on all planets and in all spheres of the cosmic hierarchy.

Wybitzis (Procyon) 23-30 Cancer
The fifteenth original genius controls the principle of feeling in all spirits and human beings living in all the spheres and on all the planets of our cosmic hierarchy.

Banamol (Regulus) 25 Leo-2 Virgo
The materialisation of the Divine Original Light within the creation of all planets and in all spheres of our cosmic hierarchy, down to the most inferior expression of vitality, belongs to the range of power of the nineteenth genius.

Ebytziril (Arcturus) 21-28 Libra
The law of gravitation or attraction, i.e. the laws of weight and gravitation, on all planets and in all spheres, are controlled by the twenty-sixth genius of the Sun.

Gane (Wega) 11-18 Capricorn
The control of the evolution of men and animals in our universe, in all spheres and on all planets, in all ranges of power is in the hands of the thirty-sixth original genius.

Vasat (Deneb Algedi) 7-14 Pisces
Vasat is an original initiator into the water principle and its magnetic fluid in all grades of density and effectiveness on man and spirit, on all planets and in all spheres of our universe. Everything created in which the water principle is active is controlled by Vasat, the forty-third genius of the Sun sphere.

As you can probably see, the influences of the genii of the fixed stars flows down through the planetary spheres to the sublunary world, making them formidable powers and to all intents and purposes the mediators between the Divine and the rest of the universe. This is reflected in Hermetic and Dionysiac traditions in which the sphere of the fixed stars is associated with the Cherubim. Biblically two Cherubim support the throne of God, as well as being represented atop the Ark of the Covenant.³¹ In the vision of Ezekiel the Cherubim are described as having the features of the tetramorphic animals. The tetramorph is a fourfold scheme of correspondences which are probably derived from the symbolism of the four fixed signs of the zodiac.³² The magical role of the angels of the fixed stars may be seen as primarily biased toward spiritual, intellectual, or 'transcendental' affairs. Their position in the hierarchy of the spheres affords them excellent knowledge and influence of the spheres below. Of course, those working with different magical traditions may like to interpret the fixed stars as they were probably originally interpreted - as the reflections and repositories of the power of the gods.

As far as communication with the intelligences of the fixed stars is concerned the magician should use a medium such as a crystal ball. My current method is based upon the instructions for angelic conjuration given by Barrett in his book *The Magus*.³³ I shall now give brief synopsis of the system which I use at this moment.

³¹ For the Cherubim in the Bible, see: Ex 25:17-20,22 26:1,31, Nu 7:89, 1Sa 4:4, Isa 37:16, Ps 80:1 99:1, Eze 10:1-20

³² Eze 1:10-25 41:18, 19

³³ Francis Barrett, *The Magus*, Book II. Part ii.

The magician should have observed, meditated upon and studied the lore of the star in question and performed any rites of fasting or purgation which he wishes.³⁴ With the star in question overhead the magician should begin the ritual in his usual manner, for example donning the robe, consecrating or banishing the space, anointing himself with holy oil, lighting the candles and incense according to his tradition, and so on. A lamén is consecrated to the angel in question. Barrett writes: 'Now the Lamén which is used to invoke any Good Spirit must be made after the following manner: either in metal conformable or in new wax mixed with convenient spices and colours; or it may be made with pure white paper with convenient colours, and the outward form of it may be either square, circular, or triangular, or of the like sort, according to the rule of the numbers; in which there must be written the Divine Names, as well general as special. And in the centre of the Lamén draw a hexagram or character of six corners; in the middle thereof write the Name and Character of the Star, or of the Spirit his Governor, to whom the Good Spirit that is to be called is subject. And about this Character let there be placed so many Characters of Five corners, or pentagrams, as the Spirits we would call together at once. But if we should call only one, nevertheless there must be made four pentagrams, wherein the name of the Spirit or Spirits with their characters are to be written. Now this Lamén ought to be composed when the Moon is in her increase...'³⁵

Since we do not have the names of the spirits of the fixed stars Barrett writes we should use the name and character of the star. The colours can either be yellow, as Bardon would recommend, the planetary colours associated with the star, or if the star is conjunct with a planet of its nature wholly of the planet's colour. The shape of the lamén should be, in my opinion, a circle - representative of this outer sphere of fixed stars and also of the zodiac which the fixed stars form. The lamén should be decorated with appropriate divine names, which the magician may derive from Qabbalistic sources, planetary names or from mythology.

Having made and consecrated the lamén in an appropriate manner it should be placed beneath the crystal, covered over with silk or cloth of a dark colour as preference dictates. With the star preferably in sight the magician should begin the appropriate adorations and conjurations written or selected and memorised beforehand. Having come into contact with the spiritual entity we may then proceed to ask it for its name, seal, influences &c.

I shall conclude this brief survey of the fixed stars at this point. I hope that I have given enough pertinent information about the fixed stars and their role in magic to provide inspiration and avenues of further research for the interested magician.

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³⁴ Such lengthy fasts as prescribed by the grimoires are, in my opinion, unnecessary for a good magician. I believe a period of twelve hours to be satisfactory, but one should obviously experiment.

³⁵ Loc. cit.

Table of the sigils of the fixed stars

Star Name	Hermetis (13c.)	Clm 826 (15c.) ³⁶	Agrippa (16c.)
1. Aldebaran			
2. Pleiades			
3. Caput Algol			
4. Capella			
5. Sirius			
6. Procyon			
7. Regulus			
8. Algorab			
9. Spica			
10. Arcturus			
11. Polaris			
12. Alphecca			
13. Antares			
14. Wega			
15. Deneb Algedi			

³⁶ Derived from the plate 'Astronomical manuscript made for King Wenceslas IV. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 826, f. lr. Prague, c. 1400' in Michael Camille's essay 'Visual Art in Two Manuscripts of the Ars Norotia' in *Conjuring Spirits* (ed. Claire Fanger).

Oswald Wirth's Astrological Tarot

Card	Zodiacal Sign	Constellation
1. Magician	Taurus	Orion
2. High Priestess		Casiopeia
3. Empress	Virgo	
4. Emperor		Hercules, Corona Borealis
5. Heirophant	Aries	
6. Lovers	Sagittarius	Aquila, Antinous
7. Chariot		Great Bear
8. Justice	Libra	
9. Hermit		Bootis
10. Wheel of Fortune	Capricorn	
11. Strength	Leo	
12. Hanged Man		Perseus
13. Death		Draco
14. Temperance	Aquarius	
15. The Devil		Auriga
16. Tower	Scorpio	Ophiuchus
17. The Star	Pisces	Andromeda
18. The Moon	Cancer	Canis Major and Minor
19. The Sun	Gemini	
20. Judgement		Cygnus
21. The World	Entire planisphere and Polar Star	
0. The Fool		Cepheus, Little Bear

The Celestial Alphabet³⁷

										
Kaph	Yod	Teth	Cheth	Zayin	Vau	He	Daleth	Gimel	Beth	Aleph
										
Tau	Shin	Resh	Qoph	Tzaddi	Pe	Ayin	Samekh	Nun	Mem	Lamed

Phoenician Celestial Alphabet³⁸

										
Kaph	Yod	Teth	Cheth	Zayin	Vau	He	Daleth	Gimel	Beth	Aleph
										
Tau	Shin	Resh	Qoph	Tzaddi	Pe	Ayin	Samekh	Nun	Mem	Lamed

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³⁷ This version of the alphabet was derived from Gaffarelli's printed in Alexander Roob's *The Hermetic Museum* and differs from Agrippa's in several ways.

³⁸ This is the first draft of an alphabet of my own invention based on the Old Hebrew, or Phoenician alphabet (in turn probably derived from Egyptian Hieroglyphics).