

Witchfest 2013

Amulets and symbols in visualisation and astral magic.

Amuletic symbolism has since ancient times, and continues, to play a large part in spiritual traditions. We experience the use of such things mostly in a physical sense, now my preference is for non-physical and as such over the years I have explored how I can still make use of them in my practice.

Amulets 101

First let us analyse what an amulet is. The general requirement of an amulet is to provide a means to **repell or attract**. The means to bring this about is via the use of correspondences so that some control or influence can be exerted over the objective. Such correspondences consist of:

- A symbol associated with the object or a spiritual force that can be asked to use their influence.
- Physical material symbolism.
- Colour symbolism (perhaps colour is the primary drive, the material chosen could have been chosen for its colour as that was at hand).
- Inscriptions on, and/or incantations employed in their use.

If you have heard of contagious and sympathetic magical technique then these are the methods that are often used here.

Pretty basic stuff really, with the essence in the symbolism involved there to **encapsulate the intent of some objective**. In this session I will use the word amulet to encompass both **amulets and talismans** too, although they differ, amulets are for protective use and talismans for any other empowerment purposes, just saves my breath.

So how can such significant physical aspects be made to work in a visualised form? There are some challenges we must overcome, and the **approach depends on your intended use** for the amulet. If you want it for urgent use, then you would want to have something that contains as few fiddly bits as possible and doesn't require a deep meditative state to put into place. On the other hand, if the requirement is an amulet for long term objectives and does not need to be cast suddenly, and you

can devote the half hour or so to a deep meditative state, then more complex symbols can be built up and used.

Practicality should always be the deciding factor. And so lets look at an example of this.

Amulet Deconstruction

If I needed to create an physical **amulet to protect me from snakes**,for example, there are a number of options that I can use to construct such a device.

- I could find a statue of a snake deity and carry that, that's quite easy, I would be asking the deity that has an influence over such animals to grant me protection.
- I could also make use of physical symbolism such as a curly bit of sting, or stick that would represent the snake, perhaps paint it green or black. Find a forked stick to represent the forked tongue. Or snake bones. Here a number of sympathetic and contagious magical uses are employed.
- Other material aspects, I prefer wood, clay or wax, as I tend to have these materials handy and so can easily pick them up and use it.
- With all of those options I could reinforce such symbolism with an incantation to ward it off.

If I was was in need of a quick form of protection for visualisation, I feel I would perhaps go with a forked tongue symbol, to me that is simple, a Y shape is easy to call to mind, perhaps include some colour symbolism, material symbolism could have an effect but colour and shape I feel is a most effective in this instance. I could couple that with a quick incantation or spell of repulsion to reinforce the symbolism.

Should I feel that for longer term protection is required then I might make use of meditation including the image of a snake deity and all that is connected with it.

Amulet conversion

Your path you may have some symbolism in regards to amulets that you can use with visualisation, although unfortunately not all amulets are easy to convert. I work primarily with an Egyptian scorpion deity called Selket, and so much of my amulet use comes from the ancient Egyptians, who were perhaps the most prolific amulet makers for both the living and the dead. A number of of their amulets have been both easy and near impossible to use in such a way.

I have two examples here I want to use to explain, the first is the **ankh**, a really easy one for

visualisation, much like the pentagram, it has a simple easy to visual shape due to being a written symbol, a hieroglyph, material and/or colour is not so important in use (although it wouldn't hurt to add some), its symbolism of life and vitality provides its strength without any additional correspondences. The same can not be said about the **scarab** amulet. This is a strong physical amulet too, possibly the most common in ancient Egypt times and so perhaps stronger than the ankh, but it is a difficult shape with many fiddly bits to visualise.

Those are two extremes that I've found, but in reality if you are stuck for adaptation your amulets they don't have to be existing ones, even though they of course have a deep association psychologically and magically for their purpose, as an amulet you both create physically and mentally I feel are more potent as their existence are a constant reminder of your intent and its influence.

The association you make with a symbol of some kind and your **intent much like divination**, these function along the same lines. Symbolic forms that relate to something you understand. And if you **doodle you may notice that certain shapes** will regularly come up. There is quite possibly some physiological aspect to that, but I have made use of this for creating my **own runes**, that is a little beyond the scope of this talk but if there is time at the end I will go into that if anyone is interested or you can ask me after.

Both physical and mental symbolism have a significant use, so can we get rid of the physical ones all together? Sometimes no, as memory can be poor, and a physical thing in a pocket or around the neck is a **good constant reminder of your intent**. But what if carrying something is not convenient in some way?

Mental amulet forms.

As I previously mentioned, about simple vs complex forms your own preference depending on your strengths are important, personally I prefer ease, speed and simplify. My preference is two colour two dimensional line amulets, essentially consisting of characters or sigils from a number of alphabets to even abstract shapes (like the forked snake tongue for example).

Although ancient Egyptian practices influence my path, I have long since lost my basic knowledge of hieroglyphs and so I tend not to use them, apart from a few easier to remember ones, instead I to use **runes or better still my own symbols or sigils**, now sigils in the established occultic sense I've found come from GD Rosy Cross. Here the letters are chosen and lines drawn between them to encode the name using a variety of methods. The resulting shape is then used. My use of the word

sigil is less structured, and essentially is a doodle (**think automatic writing**) that I would come up with while meditating on a particular concept that I want to encode within it and is the method I used for my own rune forms.

Other forms of sigils can be quite simple in your native language (of choice) encoding the intent as a sentence and using it to form an acronym which you visualise. Or you could **compile to a number correspondence**.

However the choice is made the fact that you have a very **simple shape you can create in your mind quickly and easily can be used as part of any routine work** to renew the intent that a psychical item would have.

An example of embodies this very simply is one amulet/talisman is my use of the runic Rad symbol, the one that looks like a capital R. I learnt it as a rune for journeys and travel. For many years I have cast a huge flaming one (I learnt it had a correspondence to elemental fire) ahead of my while in the car. Runes in general I have found so useful for this as compound runes are both extremely easy to visualise and contain a large amount of symbolism. But that is my personal opinion.

So we have constructed our symbol what do to use it?

How to cast

So many options here. If in physical then many options to aid in the use. Can wave a hand of trace the lines in many ways with tools etc. walking them can be useful too. Make a huge one and good for group work. Perhaps with following a line on the floor I love using labyrinths for this.

Obviously the title of this talk and my preference is through sole creation within the mind. Doing such things with **eyes open is possible**. Skrying and many other forms of divination aids in this practice so get that and all is good. Also handy for working with in public and not drawing attention to yourself.

Here, keeping it simple if working with eyes open is a good start, adding imagery with the colour of the physical correspondence for the outline. Size is good. Adding extra touches e.g. the flaming rad rune. Verbal component even is said in your head, or uttered quieterly can add to the casting. Anyway to express the symbol quickly.

One such example of eyes open protective amulet that I make use of for both **static and while moving** is from a papyrus referred to as the Narrative of Isis, where Isis makes use of several scorpions for both protection and offensive use because at the time she is a little upset with a group of people for some reason she goes on a bit of a rampage of vengeance. As my goddess is symbolised by a scorpion and these scorpions that Isis use are supposed to belong to my goddess I tend to make use of these scorpions myself. My options on what these scorpions are I went into right now as I've covered that at the evocation talk last year and the one on thought forms the year before, and no doubt at other talks too. I just happen to like the little chaps as we serve the same goddess.

Anyway the casting that that Isis does and what I do when moving is to place the seven entities around ones self in very reminiscent of a section in the the **lesser banishing ritual of the pentagram**, and I so I call for two of the scorpions before me, two either side and three behind me, sometimes I will also as Isis did command them to "Let your faces be turned towards the ground that you may show me the way".

How to reinforce the intent

That's OK as far as wanting sudden protection, but what about amulets that are for self empowerment for example? As physical amulets are there for constant reinforcement of the intent, something we obviously lack with the visualised form then we need ways to reinforce **on a frequent basis**. Now I'm really forgetful, or just easily distracted with the attention span of a gnat. So I like to use things that require me to involve **the recasting as part of my routine**.

Regular reinforcement is important re-wish fulfilment vs spell craft. I use tasks that make casting the chosen symbol routine, one such example is that my **mobile phone unlock uses a bind rune** for reinforcing the intent.

Because physical amulets present a presence that is a constant reminder, the lack of non-physical amulets require means to easily reinforce the intent.

Useful book: Dictionary of occult, hermetic, alchemical sigils, Fred gettings, routledge, 1981