

A TECHNIQUE FOR
CLAIRSCIENCE:

PRACTICAL PROTO-TOPOLOGY
OF THE DIVINATORY MIND

Or, an occult examination
of the use of a board game
to enhance or develop mental divination
which is without tools or equipment.

By:
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Preliminary Discourse

This is more or less a tutorial for occultists. I have tried to use an Active, Existential and Phenomenological approach.

Active in the sense that I believe that any occult work necessarily implies actual activity. I am annoyed at tutorials which constitute mainly of “meditate” and “concentrate” activities without going any deeper. Doing it.

By Existential I refer to the fact that the elaboration of the technique will try to remain within the experiential scope of the individual. While I certainly accept that divination may very well be a transcendental, spiritual or magic(k)al phenomenon, the activity of doing the divination is not.

Phenomenological because I’m also irked at the inclusion of all sorts of spiritual-energy-New-Age hogwash within some occult texts. I will not clutter this essay with useless energy theories, spirit guides, Holy Guardian Angels, astral planes, shielding, auras, or any other psionic / new-age paraphernalia. I will concentrate on the subject matter unadulterated by any cosmological view. Divination by itself, as it has presented itself to me.

The ultimate use of any occult text is the transmission of usable information. This text is “occult” in the sense that what will be helpful to the reader is not the exact mimicry of my technique, but the understanding of how to use in a pragmatic way the logic and philosophy behind my technique, in other words: comprehending its functional structure. Naturally, this may imply the application and experimentation, at least to some extent, of my technique.

I have no claim to divination mastery, but as many other occultists, I have experimented and explored divination over the years in different contexts, through different paradigms and with different tools. This particular technique was “discovered” by accident during LARP games. What is now here is the result of many years of intermittent and playful exploration of both this technique, and others similar to it.

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Conception

My goal is to look at the divinatory experience as is. While I do acknowledge the powerful symbolisms in various Tarot packs or the undeniable enlightenment that the use of a pendulum can give, the focus of this technique is on divination without tools (clairscience). The following aphorisms are postulates, the background philosophy of this technique; it’s where I’m coming from. It is not necessary to partake in these

postulates in order to use the techniques described below, but these nonetheless constitute the list of ingredients from which the techniques were developed. Perhaps will future occultists play with these ingredients to give different tasting recipes – and develop related techniques.

1. Divination is the acquisition of information which does not occur from the biological senses.

In other words, you are getting information that you didn't see, you didn't hear, which nobody told you.

2. The information is not factually accessed, nor is this information created or imagined by the diviner.

You did not figure out or deduce this information with logical / cognitive problem-solving skills and techniques. You didn't make it up either.

3. Divinatory information is transcendent, irrational, abstract, and therefore intangible. It is the human mind which gives the information its anthropomorphic form. The information may be expressed with the imageries of emotion, audition, vision, intuition, et cetera, but the divinatory information is not any of these.

If the information doesn't come from a human being's senses or from his mind, then we should not try to define it according to human terms (an anthropomorphic fallacy).

Although due to the fact that we are, after all, human beings, any non-human or supra-human information, such as in this case the divinatory information, will necessarily be reinterpreted according to human terms so that we can have tangible access to it. For example, in the case of spiritism (or goetic summoning), our ears do not hear voices, nor do our eyes see spirits, rather our brain processes the immaterial and spiritual information into auditory and / or visual information which translates as "voices" or as "spirits" so that we have a grasp on the situation.

3. It is essentially unknown from whence this information originates. Diverse authors have given diverse hypotheses, but none of these hypotheses of divination are relevant to our ability to divine.

Simply put: YOU are the diviner. You have ears to hear, but it is not the ear that hears, it is YOU that hears when you listen.

I do not feel it is useful discuss the vast array of theories and philosophies on the subject. It does not matter whether it is your spirit guide whispering to you, if it is your sub/unconscious accessing higher planes, or whatever. What matters is how it is humanely done. The absolute truth is irrelevant in a relative and subjective situation. Knowing how a car is built doesn't make you a better driver.

Let us therefore concentrate on our ability to divine. The object of this article is the tweaking of our listening; tweaking our divination skill via the use of a board game, and then making it practical: generalizing it to real life situations.

How will this article propose this? **If it is postulated that divinatory information can be perceived, then divinatory skill improvement is a matter of eliminating the focus on the non-divinatory information from our perceptual schema so as to create a greater awareness of our perception of divinatory information.** Since real life is way too big of a playground, a simpler situation is proposed, that of a board game, as a more limited environment in which to observe and refine the skill of perceiving divinatory information.

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Initiation

How does one chose a suitable game? There are many variables that influence and create biases. I've explored some of these factors through my personal experience and listed those I consider more important below, but there is no saying that this list is exhaustive or complete.

Premier piece of advice, avoid games that rely only on random chance. If you want to learn how to predict dice rolls, then find a die and practice with that. Real life situations are never truly random. There is always a mix of mechanistic causality and living spontaneity (or human creativity, or 'freedom') which interact and form our world as we know it. Randomness is, to me, a completely different scheme of reality. Hence, I have not been able to use the skills described here for lottery number prediction (nor have I been able to use the little 'random number divination skills' in real life situations.) Personally, I've chosen Nine Man Morris and Hnefatafl as my favourite strategy games. Checkers is also a good example for a game.

By the way, did you chose a fun game? Honestly, are you experiencing genuine amusement when playing your game? If so, wonderful. It's much easier to learn when you're playing than when you're working or under stress. Pleasure is motivating and, most importantly, it keeps the mind awake and aware for longer periods of time. Indeed, playing board games can get pretty boring at times. Let's try to minimize that as best we can.

Are good at playing the game? The game shouldn't be too simple. If you can always easily deduce which move to make with very little mental effort, then trying to distinguish between your deductive rational thinking from the divinatory information would be almost impossible: the rational solution would be coming up quickly and spontaneously, leaving little room inside your cognitive attention scope for the divined solution.

By extension, the following question is: are you a bad player? The over-complexity of a game is a bias to your learning divination (or other things). You need to understand what you're doing. For instance, if I am playing a game and some weird and wonderful intuition tells me to move this game piece from 'here' to 'there', but have no understanding of how that movement helped me advance in the game, or if my understanding of that move is wrong, then there is no way of verifying the validity of the intuition that prompted me to move the piece in the first place.

So ideally, you should pick a game in which you have a thorough basic understanding, in which you aren't unbeatable at, and where the game isn't so complicated that you couldn't understand the whole scope of each movement made. For myself, I find Tic-Tac-Toe too simple, and Chess too complicated; but then again, it's all subjective. You need to find games that are right for you.

It's also a good idea to vary your games once in a while. For one, it's more fun that way and secondly it varies your deductive and logical thinking processes along with it. In other words, a given game won't become too simple too quickly.

Next, who do you play with? One may wonder about the validity of a computer opponent. I prefer avoiding them and the reason for this is twofold: first, a computer game uses a pre-programmed algorithm; it always uses the exact same method to win. One would have to obtain a fairly large number of different computer games which use different computing engines to play the game, otherwise the human brain will not get better in divination but will only progressively conform its method of play to the algorithm. In other words, you'll just end up being conditioned to the game by figuring out which moves to make in order to win every time. You'll conform to the game. Second, the objective of this technique being to generalize the playing of a game to real-life situations, computers tend to be a shallow model for real-life, whereas our aim is much broader than virtual reality.

Thus I feel that a human being is the best choice for an opponent. Human beings have "free choice" (at least to a certain degree) and the way the game is played varies greatly depending on a plethora of ever-changing psychological and sociological contexts (mood/emotion, environment, atmosphere, drowsiness/wakefulness, the events of the day, the fact that human beings learn and change a little bit for every day of their lives, *et cetera*.) In other words, human beings display a very variable "game algorithm" where the style of play can often change during a game, and also from game to game. Nonetheless, there are constants within people too (obviously) so it's a good idea to vary game partners to avoid getting used to playing with the same person. Needless to say, a different person is a whole new ball game.

Your opponent should be of equal or better skill than you. Nonetheless, if you find that most people are of much better skill than you, double-check to see if you aren't playing a game which is too complex for you.

It is quite probable that I have missed out on other variables which affect and bias the techniques. Each person's experience is unique, and it's important to keep a critical point of view on our experience.

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Execution

The practice techniques is the most difficult subject to elaborate on. The vocabulary used: rational, irrational, logic, emotion, *et cetera* are interpreted and experienced very differently from person to person. So for this section, Andrew Chumbley's words are to be taken seriously, "MISTAKE NOT THIS BOOK FOR THE WORDS UPON ITS PAGES."

The goal of the techniques is this: to differentiate the divinatory information, as defined in the first section, from all of the other things going on in your mind. Once an information is identified, it must be verified. The outcome of the game will let you verify if the information you identified was divinatory information or not.

Technique number one:

Avoid logic to the best of your ability. Simply put, this means no sequencing. "If I move this piece here, then my opponent can move this piece to block me, and then I can capture his piece this way..." it doesn't matter which piece you're moving, or what moving that piece will do. Don't analyse anything while you're playing the game, you'll have plenty of time to do that afterwards. This is not math, not geometry, nor any other type of cognitive-deductive task.

A good way to do this is to avoid looking at a particular section of the board. Try to keep a bird's-eye view of the board game, or even better: an artist's perspective on the whole plate. Looking at the whole board instead of just an aspect of it has proven to be very helpful for me in avoiding logical processing. Logic needs precision focus, it doesn't work as well in an unfocussed broad view.

Technique Number Two:

Use emotional reasoning. If you have any experience with the Tarot, then you may know what I'm talking about, the adaptation from cartomancy to this technique could be a small one.

A big part of this technique is emotional introspection. "How do I feel?" Which emotion tells you which piece to move, and where does this emotion comes from? (In which "emotional costume" does your divinatory information dress itself up?) Be aware of how you feel, and most of all, be aware of what your feelings urge you to do.

Then: which emotion yields which result? Which emotion is the "winner" emotion (i.e. which emotion moves you towards your goal)? The idea is to isolate the feelings which manifest divinatory quality.

Technique Number Three:

Use dichotomy to analyse your intuitions and impulses. First you give yourself a more or less vague goal. I usually use "winning the game" as my goal. Then you ask yourself a question, "if I move this piece here, will it make me win the game, or not?" Naturally, there will be parts of your brain saying "yes," and there will be other parts of your brain saying "no." Then comes the test through trial and error. Once again I plea: do not verify these "answers" using rational thinking, because in doing so you would be creating quite a confusing situation.

This technique seeks to create a huge logic-temporal gap. There is a whole series of steps that will go on from the time you move such piece and the end of the game. Logically, moving once piece here or there doesn't prove anything for the outcome of the game. But that's not what you're trying to do. You're trying to learn how to predict. Hence, which piece will you move to get you one step further to the goal ?

Technique Number Four:

Irrational "aesthetic" representations can be helpful. Especially when the feeling of beauty comes to you when you win the game (this is often expressed as, "that was a beautiful move!" or "Wow! What a great finish!" Aesthetics ("this will be a pretty move"), without the logic can give you a lot of information.

Another way of using "aesthetics" is through personifications. Make up a story about the pieces and their relationships. Love-and-hate relationships of soap opera style, fairy tales, anything can be used in this, as long as it's fun. This sub-technique can be amusing, yet confusing in that logic can subtly surface, but can then be locked up within the context of the story. This sub-technique is also difficult to use because it really takes you out of the game. You have to figure out a story that keeps you focussed on the game AND lets you identify / verify some of your plot (divinatory information) against other bits of your plot (imagination). It is nonetheless amazing how well imagination and divination can go hand-in-hand sometimes.

Technique number five:

PLAY the game. Try to adopt a casual mood and attitude. Remember the times when you were talking on the phone with nothing to say and you were just babbling on and on without thinking about what you were saying and just let the words fly to and fro, without bothering to care if what you're saying makes logical sense: the conversation kept on going fluently regardless of the "logic" you hadn't put into it. Sometimes you were talking without noticing what you were saying, and other times you were aware of

what was being said despite your obvious non-participation. It is this latter attitude which is important: a detached observation. You're playing, just watch yourself play and enjoy. And if you notice something of interest, take note of it.

More Techniques:

Can you think of any? I've written down the five I've most commonly used, but there is certainly potential for the development of other techniques. Don't hesitate in trying different perspectives.

The Meta-Technique

The meta-technique is what you're supposed to be achieving while using the above techniques. The goal of these previous five is to help you identify and isolate the divinatory information within the scope of your awareness. The information will appear perhaps as an emotion, abstract cognition, or something weirder. The difficult part is that we're looking for a particular type of perception amongst a whole bunch of other mental activities which are all too darn impossible to translate into words.

It is an extremely subjective and introspective operation, where you need to learn three things:

First, be aware of what's going on in your mind.

Second, centre your attention on different "feelings" or "impulses" in your mind.

Third, memorize these "feelings" or "bits of information" so that you are able to recognize them when they come again.

Then it's only a matter of guess and check to see which of these are relevant to your predicting needs. Of course, all of this has to be done while you're NOT thinking logically. Goodbye, scientific method.

Putting to work these techniques all at once within the meta-technique may create an altered state of consciousness (ASC). The practical use of the ASC in this case is to expand your "normal" state of consciousness to help you discover new aspects of yourself: how to access divinatory information and an understanding of yourself that you can bring back down with you into your "normal state" and make it accessible for future reference.

Another reason for the ASC is to put yourself in a different situation where you clearly see something in particular, in this case the divinatory information, and when you come back down to "normality", it is now easier for you to find and identify it. Another way of explaining this method is that the ASC brought about by the aforementioned techniques is a colour filter, enabling you to see things differently, therefore being able to focus on details which were too subtle to notice before.

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Transposition

Many occult texts I have read exert their readers to practice. I tell you: don't practice playing. Stop playing. This is not golf where you need to practice your swing. I am speaking of something that needs to be learned and understood. One doesn't get better by practicing; they get better by increasing the complexity, subtlety, and conceptual differentiation of the microcosm. In other words: Know Thyself.

The game is an example, nothing more. Please don't waste the precious time of your life on a board game. The ultimate utility of the game is for you to learn from a simpler and smaller situation, and then move on to bigger and better things. It is a controlled and closed event from which you can afterwards generalize what you've learned and then make use of it in other contexts. To limit yourself to the game will only make you better in playing the game. You need to use what you've learned from playing the game in daily life situations. This is rarely a simple task. All one can do at first is to look outwards and ask yourself introspective questions, and in the beginning it does feel more like groping in the dark than reaching out for divinatory information.

The overall generalization of this divinatory technique into real life, as I've experienced it, happens in two ways: spontaneously and voluntarily.

The spontaneous divination is stunning, in a very amusing way. One can't help but smile when someone looks wide-eyed at you, asking with sheer disbelief, "how could you possibly know that?" The only thing you can answer to them and to yourself is that you don't know how you knew it ... you just knew. Perhaps was it a lucky guess? These situations don't usually happen very often, and it could indeed very well be naught but coincidence, although the reason I included divinatory spontaneity here is that, in my life, it seems that the more often I was using my divinatory skill voluntarily, the more I tried, the more often these spontaneous situations popped up when I wasn't trying. I therefore include spontaneous divination as a corollary hypothesis, since I have not had the chance to verify the statistical correlation (nor do I actually think this to be possible.) Logically, I'd argue that if you voluntarily use your divinatory skill often, it creates a habit which may occasionally spawn a reflex of looking through your "third eye" for information, hence the side-effect of spontaneously knowing things without having made the mental effort to divine for it.

The voluntary generalization is more difficult. Although it is a generalization: you are doing the exact same thing that you are doing during the game, only this time the complexity of the situation has greatly increased. There is the possibility of adapting the game techniques described in the previous section, but I think it's too much effort for too little result. The techniques were there in order to help learn where to find, in

our mind, the mental spot from whence divinatory information comes from. Now that it has been found, it must be put to good use! It should not be necessary to have to go back to all of that mental paraphernalia, the ASC and all, to use the divinatory skill. Real life situations can sometimes be hectic. Answers are needed here and now. In other words, the goal is not to create an elaborate mental ritual that needs to be repeated in order to access divinatory information. The goal is to create a familiar reflex, to incorporate divinatory information in the perceptual scheme along with all of the other senses. Remember the previous paragraph on spontaneity ? That's what we're aiming for, only this time, to access it on demand.

Doing this is simple, but tedious: **ask yourself divinatory questions about events in your life, and try to answer them using what you've learned from the board game divinatory meta-technique.** (See Appendix.) There are a lot of implications to this. Have you well remembered the mental process to access the part of your mind which receives the divinatory information? Were you deluding yourself into believing that you were divining while in actuality you were just becoming a better player? In the end the important question is just how well you came to know yourself.

Eventually, the question-asking will become automatic. If you associate the question-asking process with something that is not divinatory perception, there is no way of telling if it's for the better or not. It has happened to me, and has proven to be extremely frustrating. That's why it's important to stay as malleable as best as one can so as to avoid developing an erroneous reflex. Nonetheless, if you've correctly associated the question-asking process with the divinatory perception, you will eventually be able to use this divinatory information as a method of observation, as worthy as eyesight, hearing, *et cetera*, and include it with your cognitive reasoning processes. You will have integrated new irrational thought patterns, new means of acquiring information that you could not acquire otherwise. Your reasoning will become richer and deeper than with logic alone. You'll become more insightful.

Even if we assume that one can always get better over time, one should never expect to become all-knowing. Just as your eyes see the whole page of text but only focus on a few words at a time, so will your divinatory perception be humanely limited. Just as your eyes may miss out on a detail because they're looking in the wrong spot, so may you have erroneous divinatory inquiries. Divination does not negate subjectivity, but merely expands it.

FIN

Appendix 1: What the Shrink told me.

I've come to know a very gifted psychologist. She works at a private clinic which specializes in short-term therapy for the working environment. Different companies then sign a contract with that clinic for them to provide counselling services to the employees. Her specific job is done over the internet. The troubled employees are given the psychologist's email address and then ask for help. Hence the therapy is done over email.

When asked to describe her work, she answered something like this:

When I receive messages, it's really important for me, as a psychologist, to understand how my clients are feeling. Naturally, not all clients express how they feel in their emails, and those who try to do so are usually very clumsy about doing it. But if I want to do my job right, I have to be able to understand how they feel.

Over the years, I've come to realize that my principal tool, as a psychologist, is myself. I am my work tool. I have learnt to use how I feel when I read an email to understand what the client is feeling. My own feelings tell me a lot about how the other person is feeling, and I can then use these feelings in my counselling to help my clients.

This, in my opinion, is one of the best examples of divination I've ever come across. Not only does this woman not admit to doing divination, but ironically, she enthusiastically advocates that psychologists develop and use this "sensibility" in order to correctly do their work. "There are things about psychology and counselling that cannot be learnt in school," she says, "you have to learn to listen you yourself, and to work on yourself to develop a genuine sensitivity to what other people are feeling. The more you are experienced, the more you can pick up on the feelings of others, no matter how far deep the person has tried to bury them."

Need I say more ?

Appendix 2: Areas of Inquiry (In no particular order – still needs revision.)

- 1) Cooking. Put your frozen pizza in the oven and forget about it; wait for your "mental alarm clock" to go off when it's just right.
- 2) Telephones. Are you good at guessing for whom the phone is ringing? Can you go one step further and guess who's calling?
- 3) Public transportation. I live in a city where the busses are never on time, so I like trying to guess whether I'll miss the bus or not.
- 4) Any ideas?