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Spring Equinox

THE CIRCLE OF THE HORIZON IS THE EARTH AND SKY'S EMBRACE

SKY'S EMBRACE

A Publication of Horizon Lodge, OTO



*The bud beneath the winter's ice,
 Earth-fire beneath the snow;
 The unborn Spring's supreme device,
 The virginal soft glow.*

*Beneath the snow the sacred Fire,
 Beneath the bud the Fruit;
 The all-unquenchable desire
 Hid in the holy Root.*

...

*The Fire returns; the Sun's reborn!
 Oh, joyance to the world!
 Joyance! within the coming corn
 The secret Spark lies curled!*

...

*Dawn! It is thine and mine and his!
 Rejoice! Come forth! Be wise!
 These be the olden Mysteries
 Whereby shall Earth arise.*

Victor B. Neuburg, "Birth-Song"

Published in *The Occult Review*, July 1925

Sky's Embrace is a publication of Horizon Lodge, the Seattle body of Ordo Templi Orientis.

The O.T.O is a hierarchical, fraternal membership organization. Our mission is to effect and promote the doctrines and practices of the philosophical and religious system known as Thelema, with particular emphasis on cultivating the ideals of individual liberty, self-discipline, self-knowledge, and universal brotherhood. To this end, we conduct sacramental and initiatory rites, offer guidance and instruction to our members and organize social and educational events.

To get more information and to see our calendar of events, visit <http://seattle-oto.org>.

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From Your Librarian

MARK DALTON

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Recent months have seen the restoration of Horizon Lodge's library to full display and functionality in our new Temple location! In fact, the entire entry area is looking great, thanks to Sister Cate's design eye and posted wall art. Members (Minerval and up) are welcome to check out books for reasonable lengths of time (days or weeks, please, not months or years!), and remember to sign the books out in the check-out folder, and note again when they are returned. A limited number of rare and valuable books are for use within the Temple only, or by special arrangement with the Body Master, and these will be in the cabinet dedicated to that purpose.

Recent additions to our ever-growing library which may be of interest to members include the following:

Lords of the Left Hand Path by Stephen Flowers, Ph.D.
Wormwood Star: The Magickal Life of Marjorie Cameron by Spencer Kansa
Aleister Crowley: The Beast in Berlin by Tobias Churtin
Primitive Magic: The Power of Shamans and Sorcerers by Ernesto DeMartin
The Templars and Assassins by James Wasserman
My Life with the Spirits by Lon Milo Duquette
The Key to Solomon's Key by Lon Milo Duquette
Angels, Demons & Gods of the New Millennium by Lon Milo Duquette
Sexuality, Magic and Perversion by Francis King
The Book of Ceremonial Magic by Arthur Edward Waite
Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief by Lawrence Wright

These and hundreds of other volumes, periodicals and videos, covering many aspects of Magick and Occultism, are in our library. Please take some time to browse this collection next time you are in the Temple!

Love is the law, love under will.



The Horizon Lodge Library

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From the Editor

I am excited about this (belated) Spring Equinox issue of *Sky's Embrace*. Joyance! (I propose this as unofficial Word of the Equinox.)

Study of the symbolism of the Gnostic Mass always reveals hidden depths of meaning. Horizon Lodge Body master Michael Kolson's fascinating essay on the alchemical symbolism of the pillars will be an eye opener. We are also pleased to offer a typescript of his 2015 address on his vision for the Lodge.

The Act of Truth is a species of magick described by Crowley in *Magick Without Tears*. Haley Stats, in an essay based on a presentation she recently gave at the Lodge, traces the antecedents of this practice in traditional Hindu and Buddhist sources.

Twenty year ago, Hymenaeus Beta XI°, Caliph of the O.T.O. and Sovereign Patriarch of the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, addressed the O.T.O. Women's Conference. We are grateful for permission to reprint the transcript of this talk, whose importance has not diminished with the years.

These heady draughts are ornamented by fiction from Dr Glen Powell, poetry by Teresa Dalton, and a reprint of a short essay by Freemasonic scholar and historian John Yarker, an important figure in the history of the O.T.O.

We would like to thank Horizon Lodge Librarian Mark Dalton for reminding us of the invaluable resource that is the Lodge library. New books and other items are constantly being added. And our thanks goes to Davin Maki for providing photographs of the library and the temple.

On the Alchemical Symbolism of the Pillars of the Gnostic Mass

MICHAEL KOLSON

This short essay is an elaboration upon a small point in my previous essay on the symbolism of The Gnostic Mass temple (*Sky's Embrace*, Volume 5, Issue 3, Winter 2013), namely an exploration into the symbolism of the Pillars of the Temple and making a case for their particular orientation.

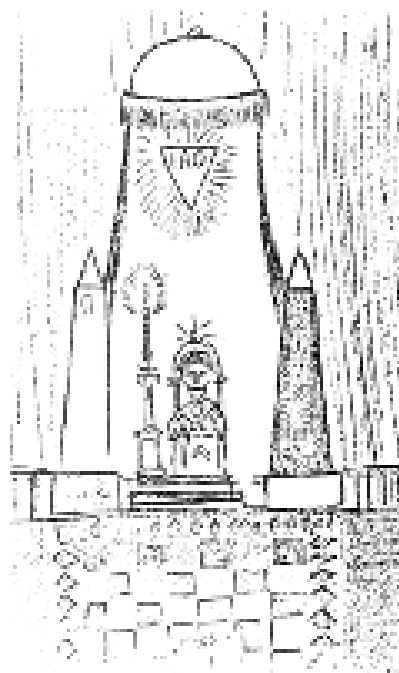
In the text of Liber XV: The Gnostic Mass we read, "On each side of it [the Shrine or High Altar] should be a pillar or Obelisk, with counterchanges in black and white". Note that the word "counterchanges" is what is used in the current version of the Gnostic Mass that was based on various typescripts and other archival materials accessed by Frater Hymenaeus Beta when preparing the text for publication in *Magick: Book Four Parts I-IV*. However in the three editions published in Crowley's day he used the word "countercharges" instead, a point which I will discuss further on¹.

Crowley's Illustrations

Crowley rarely discusses the pillars or their symbolism in his writings but we do have two illustrations that he made that show the pillars and their orientations. The first is from a painting he did of the Heirophant. The second is from a drawing of an OTO temple.

It is customary for a hermetic temple to have a white (or silver) pillar on the right (south) side of the altar in the east and a black pillar on the left (north). Yet we can see in both of these illustrations that Crowley has placed the black pillar on the right side, so that if the temple is oriented to the east the black pillar would be on the south side and the white pillar would be in the north. Further to both of these illustrations are photographs of the Mass temple at Agape Lodge in California (ca. 1938). In those pictures we can again see clearly that the black pillar is to the south and the white pillar is to the north. In a letter to W.B. Crow dated October 11th, 1944 e.v., Crowley indicates that he has copies of the pictures and is recommending them to Crow as examples for how to arrange a Gnostic Mass temple. Since this is clearly consistent in

Crowley's use, the argument does not really need to be where the pillars are oriented as much as why they are oriented the way they are.



1) See The International Magazine Excerpts, *The Equinox*, Volume III: 1, *Magick in Theory and Practice*, and even the version of the Gnostic Mass in *The Equinox* Volume III: 10. Compare to the Gnostic Mass in *Magick: Liber ABA Book 4* pts. I-IV editions of 1994 and 2nd revised edition of 1997.

Symbolism

In the Gnostic Mass temple design, and amongst the dress of some of the officers, there are a number of examples of the interchange of black and white. We see it in the black

Child	Color	Element	Furniture	Pillar
Positive	Black	Sulphur	Black Altar	South (Black)
Negative	White	Salt	Font	North (White)

and white squares of the dais, and also in the black and white colors that the children wear. In Section I of Liber XV, “Of the Furnishings of the Temple,” we have a specifically called-for black altar. Following this symbolism through to the font, it stands to reason that the font would be of a white color though this is not called for in the rubric of the Mass. I will make the case that this would follow symbolically as well.

As noted above, the children are said to be in white and black. The text then says that they carry “a pitcher of water and a cellar of salt, the other a censer of fire and a casket of perfume.” If you apply these to the order of the children as mentioned then you get the “white” child carrying water and salt and the “black” child carrying censer and incense. When the Priestess enters the temple and ascends the Dais to place the Paten before the Grail she is said to have “the negative child on her left, the positive child on her right”. In the case of the above it would indicate that the “negative” child is the one clothed in white, and the “positive” child is the one clothed in black. This follows from the instructions given just before, which state that “the child enters with ewer and salt. The VIRGIN enters with sword and the Paten. The child enters with the censer and perfume. They face the DEACON, deploying into line...”

So breaking down these instructions, we have the “white” child entering the temple moving to the North side, the Priestess being in the center, and the “black” child being in the South side. We are then told that the “negative” child is on the Priestess’s left side with the “positive” child on the right. If the temple is set up with the pillars in the proposed location you then get Child in white, with salt and ewer standing in front of the white pillar and then the Child in black with censer and incense standing in front of the black pillar. Further you have the two children dressed in colors that match the furniture to which they are associated. Namely the child dressed in black is associated with the black altar and the child dressed in white therefore becomes associated with the font, thus giving the reason that the font should be white in color.

The implements carried by the Children give further evidence for the color attributions. The “negative” child dressed in white clearly relates to the salt carried by the child. The “positive” child dressed in black then relates to sulphur, and specifically in this case one would presume it is black sulphur, or *sulphur nigrum*. It is said within alchemical literature that the black sulphur “tends to red”; that is, as it is heated over time the black sulphur will turn into red sulphur. This could indicate the black is a gloss or a cover for red, in which case you have the alchemical red and white represented within the Children and the Pillars. Further on black sulphur, the alchemist Johann Glauber says of it, “Verily sulphur is the true black devil of hell who can be conquered by no element save by salt alone”².

The table at the top of the page provides a summary.

Symbolism Contained in the Thoth Tarot

Further symbolic resonances can be seen in the Thoth Tarot. A close look at Atus VI, The Lovers and XIV, Art, will shed some valuable light on this subject. Crowley states that these two cards are part of the formula of *Solve et Coagula*. The Lovers card with its relationship to the Sword represents “solve” or division. The Art card represents “coagula” or the marriage. Within his description of The Lovers is an explanation of the white and black symbolism contained in the Mass temple and Children; he writes after quoting a passage from *The Vision and the Voice* where a vision of The Lovers was presented to him, “It is very significant that almost every sentence in this passage seems to reverse the meaning of the previous one. This is because reaction is always equal and opposite to action”³. This shows that the black and white of the Pillars, Children and Dais relate to this formula of action-reaction, or analysis-synthesis.

Interestingly Crowley then says that two of the figures on the card relate to the Black King and White Queen from *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*. Carl Jung in his book *Mysterium Coniunctionis* points

2) Quoted in Jung’s *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, pg. 185, in which he also give a quaternary illustration of Sulphur and Salt in opposition, with Mercurius Lapis and Mercurius Serpent as the other points of the cross.

3) Crowley, *The Book of Thoth*, p. 81.

out that this Black King is specifically a symbol for black sulphur⁴. Crowley also equates the Black King with the alchemical Red Lion, as the White Queen is associated with the White Eagle. It is to be noted that in this card the Great Work is not yet complete. Crowley indicates that the Work begun in the Lovers card is completed in the Art card. Here we see the completion of the counterchange. We now also have the Red Eagle on the right side of the card corresponding to sulphur, the black pillar, etc. and on the left side we have the white lion corresponding to the white pillar and salt. These two cards obviously have much to do with the symbolism of the Gnostic Mass and

meditation on them and their symbolism will bear much fruit.

Summary

To summarize, we know the orientation of the Pillars as Crowley intended them from the two illustrations he left us and the photographs of the Gnostic Mass temple from Agape Lodge in California. By following the alchemical symbolism of the interchange between black and white, salt and sulphur, we can come to a possible reason for this orientation within the Mass and other rituals written by Crowley.

4) Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, p. 38.



The Horizon Lodge temple space. © 2016 Davin Maki Creative Commons with attribution.

Even A Woman

DR GLEN POWELL

The moon was full and his breathing was shallow. She lay beside him and waited for the end, unravelling as his existence ended. Now the labyrinth was hers and hers alone – no beast waiting around every corner and nothing at the dead center. Her whole being paused as a groan came from the sweating mess next to her. Would he pull through? Would the beast in him drag itself back to the center of its maze and lick its wounds? She thought about the pillow – again – but waited for the papery breathing to resume. But then it didn't – and the world grew still.

Tides and time and the waxing and waning of a life came to her in visions beyond control or need. All her energies had been dissipated in controlling him in his final spasmodic efforts to live and her cold ironlike grip on her own will that he no longer be. Wine stains and bruises marked her determination to escape as much as they underscored his taunts and beatings. But no more and she could survive anything but him.

“In this period, a poisonous plant known by the name of Aconite, made its appearance, and so deadly a poison that mythology attached to its origin the frightful story that it sprang from the spittle of the hell hound Cerberus.”

“A Monograph On Aconite” (1860). Translated from the German of Dr Reil by H.B.Millard, M.D.

“She (Hecate) being skilled in the composition of deadly poisons, was the first to discover the plant called Aconite, and was accustomed to make trial of the efficacy of every poison, by mixing it with the food set before strangers.”

Metamorphoses, Ovid

Ending was quiet and the clock ticked. Years lifted as clarity intervened. Killing him was the easy part and an end in itself but extricating herself from the hall of mirrors he had created was something else. She had had to become Medea to his Theseus. What once the hero had slain he yet became and she in turn became a beast with a burden. He had lain mortally poisoned with the knowledge of her as his end and that was justice enough in itself.

“Stronger than lover's love is lover's hate. Incurable, in each, the wounds they make.”

“Medea”, Euripides

Every year that had passed had pushed her to this and in passing had changed her piece by piece until a new woman emerged in an act of metamorphosis. Was she still herself in all of this change? Could the person she had been so long ago remain amongst the reconstruction? Quite impossible to tell but she had become more purpose than person and now her goal had been achieved. The clock ticked on regardless.

“The result of the experiment easily furnished an opportunity of doing so, as the poor man died a few hours after, affected with all those sufferings, torments, and symptoms which Avicenna tells us arise from drinking Aconite.”

“A Monograph On Aconite”

A cloud came over the moon and the room wind began to blow stronger. What would become of her now that in gaining freedom she had lost her liberty? Could she throw herself on a King's mercy and plead her life in exchange for a mere beast? These things were for the future but now the night was dark.

“For in other ways a woman is full of fear, defenseless, dreads the sight of cold steel; but, when once she is wronged in the matter of love, no other soul can hold so many thoughts of blood.”

“Medea”

She turned her face to the moon and put her hand on his still breast. So many tears shed upon this lifeless meat and now...and now...

*Even a man who is pure in heart
And says his prayers by night
May become a Wolf when the Wolfbane blooms
And the autumn moon is bright.¹*

1) *The Wolf Man* (1941), directed by George Waggner

The Act of Truth

HALEY STATS

Based on a lecture given at Horizon Lodge on 22 July, 2015.

Towards the end of Aleister Crowley's life, he wrote a book comprised of a series of correspondence with students called *Magick Without Tears*. The intention of the book, as explained by Karl Germer in the book's foreword, was to explain magick to "those who have only just begun the study of Magick and its subsidiary sciences, or are merely curious about it, or interested in it with the intent of study" (p. ix). One such letter focuses on the Act of Truth, which Crowley defines as "...the assumption that something which seems very wrong is actually all right, that an eager wish is an accomplished fact, a reasonable anxiety, entirely unfounded – and to act accordingly" (p. 153). Later in the chapter he says "Obviously, all the usual conditions of a Magical Operation apply in this as in all cases; your aim must conform with your True Will" (p. 154). Crowley mentions a conversation with the letter's addressee, so that it's clear that this is only half of what was conveyed to the student about the practice. This correspondence only focuses on Crowley's practical application of the practice, and does not delve into its rich history. The Act of Truth is found scattered throughout Buddhist and Hindu literature, reaching as far back as the Rig Veda. Crowley was obviously aware of its origins, as he mentions it throughout his own works as a Buddhist and Hindu practice. In this essay, I will focus on the origin of the Act of Truth in Hindu and Buddhist literature and compare Crowley's usage of the Act of Truth.

The Act of Truth in Buddhist and Hindu Sources

The Act of Truth is an invocation of Truth, performed by proclaiming something that is known to be true, and by the virtue of that Truth declaring that the object of the Act of Truth be done. Generally, the Truth that is proclaimed is adherence to an Oath or exhibiting certain virtues, whether it is the speaker that is the subject or not; however any truth will work, as shown in the example from the Rig Veda below. The Act of Truth must be the last resort. If there is any other way to obtain the goal of the Act, it will fail. In Eugene Weston Burlingame's essay "The Act of Truth (Saccakiriya): A Hindu Spell and Its Employment as a Psychic Motif in Hindu Fiction"¹ he

defines it "as formal declaration of fact, accompanied by a command or resolution or prayer that the purpose of the agent shall be accomplished" (p. 429).

The Sanskrit name for the Act of Truth is *satyakriya*, or in Pali, *saccakiriya*. Other terms used for the Act of Truth in Sanskrit are *satyavāya*, *satyavacana*, *satyopavācana* and *satyavākya*, all of which can be translated as "Truth Command". In earlier Hindu texts such as the Rig Veda, it is known as *satya* or *ṛta*, which translates to simply "Truth" (Brown, p. 429). Although these two words translate to "Truth," they do represent two different conceptions of Truth. *Ṛta* refers to the cosmic order, whereas *satya*, refers to an individual's truth. In other Hindu Texts, such as *The Mahabharata*, the phrase *tena satyena* ("by this truth") is used to indicate an Act of Truth (Brown, p. 264). In Norman Brown's essay "Duty as Truth in Ancient India", he describes the person that would be able to perform an Act of Truth (pp. 261–2):

...whether deity or man, who does his duty perfectly, that is, fulfills his obligations under the *Ṛta*... Such a being may be said to be *satyá* (adjective) "true" or to have *satyám* (neuter noun) "Truth." He is *ánuvrata* "true to duty" and is *ṛtāvan* ("observing or conserving the *Ṛta*") or *satyádharmān* "having Truth as his principle."... When a person fulfills his duty perfectly, he gains this power; for he has observed the *Ṛta*, has met his obligation under it. He is one with the Sat; he is *satya*, that is, true in a complete sense and can "control" the Sat, for he and the Sat are one.

The first occurrence of the Act of Truth in Western literature may have been when T. W. Rhys Davids translated *The Jataka: Or the Buddhist Birth Stories* and the *Milindapañha*, or *The Questions of King Milinda* in 1890. The *Jataka Tales* are a collection of stories about the previous incarnations of Siddhartha Guatama, who was destined to become the Buddha; most of them seem to have been written around 4 BCE (Warder, p. 286). *The Questions of King Milinda* is a Buddhist text depicting the conversation of the Indo-Greek King Menander (or Milinda in Pali) and Nagasena, a Buddhist sage, taking place 500 years after the death of the Buddha. Nagasena is the incarnation of the god Mahasena, sent specifically to answer the Greek king's questions, as no other teacher's answers have been able to satisfy him. Crowley added *The Questions of King Milinda* as part of the Curriculum

1) Norman Brown says in his essay "Duty as Truth in Ancient India" that Burlingame's essay, printed in 1917 in *Royal Asiatic*

Society of Great Britain and Ireland, was the first academic work on the Act of Truth.

of the A.A.² in Section 1: Books for Serious Study, as a resource for “technical points of Buddhist dogma” (*Book 4*, p. 452). He also cites Rhys Davids’s work in his essay “Science and Buddhism” published in *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*.

From the *Jataka*, there is the story of the Holy Quail. The Master and his disciples are caught in a jungle fire in Magadha. While the disciples desperately try to construct a counter fire, The Master stays put. He then tells a story of when he was incarnated as a quail chick in a previous life and a jungle fire had threatened that same spot. As a quail chick, he did not have the means to escape the fire, as he had not learned how to fly or walk yet, and his parents had abandoned him. The quail then realizes that his only hope is an Act of Truth. The truth the quail uses for his Act of Truth is the attainment of the previous Buddhas. “To me, too, the Truth is one, there seems to be but one eternal and true Faith. It behoves me, therefore — meditating on the Buddhas of the past and on the attributes that they have gained, and relying on the one true faith there is in me — to perform an Act of Truth; and thus to drive back the fire, and procure safety both for myself, and for the other birds.” The quail’s Act of Truth is recited as a poem (*Jataka Tales*, pp. 305-6):

*There’s power in virtue in the world —
In truth, and purity, and love!
In that truth’s name I’ll now perform
A mystic Act of Truth sublime.
Then thinking on the power of the Faith,
And on the Conquerors in ages past,
Relying on the power of the Truth,
I then performed the Miracle!
Wings I have that will not fly,
Feet I have that will not walk;
My parents, too, are fled away!
O All-embracing Fire — go back!*

When the he spoke this, the fire stopped 16 rods (88 yards) from the quail.

*For me and for my Act of Truth
The great and burning fire went out,
Leaving a space of sixteen rods,
As fire, with water mixed, goes out.*

2) The A.A. is Aleister Crowley’s teaching order. Students of the Order are “to acquire a general intellectual knowledge of all systems of attainment, as declared in the prescribed books” (*Book 4*, p. 488).

From this Act of Truth, the quail was saved, and forest fire had not touched that spot for this *kalpa* (aeon).

In *The Questions of King Milinda*, when the conversation turns to the topic of the Act of Truth, Nagasena tells the story of King Asoka and Bindumati (p. 183). The King asked of his officers to make the Ganges flow backwards. The officers had said it was impossible, but a courtesan called Bindumati came forth and said: “Here am I, harlot, in this city o Pataliputta, by the sale of my body do I gain my livelihood, I follow the meanest of vocations. Let the king behold the power an Act of Truth performed even by such as I.” The Ganges then flowed the other direction, and when the King asked how a person of her stature could perform this Act of Truth, she replied, “Whosoever, O king, gives me gold — be he a noble or a brahman or a tradesman or a servant — I regard them all alike. When I see he is a noble I make no distinction in his favour. If I know him to be a slave I despise him not. Free alike from fawning and from dislike do I do service to him who has bought me. This, your Majesty, is the basis of the Act of Truth by the force of which I turned the Ganges back.”

The Act of Truth is known primarily as a Buddhist practice, but Rhys Davids points out in his notes in *The Questions of King Milinda* that “the exact time at which [the Act of Truth] was introduced into Buddhism is as yet unknown. It has not been found in the Pitakas themselves, and is probably an incorporation of an older, pre-Buddhistic, belief” (p. 185). He then references The Book of Kings II i 10: “‘If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty!’ And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and fifty.” Rhys Davids was not suggesting that the origin of the Buddhist Act of Truth is from Jewish literature, but it does follow the formula. However Burlingame refers to the Act of Truth as a Hindu practice. The examples given are mainly from Buddhist texts, however he does give some examples from Hindu Religious and folklore. Brown writes that the first known written example of the Act of Truth is found in the Rig Veda. He cites Chapter 10 Hymn 34, “The Gambler’s Lament” (Brown, p. 256):

12. He who is the general of your great troop, who has become the head of your host, to him I stretch out ten [fingers]. No wealth do I conceal. This is a Truth [Act] (*rtam*) which I declare.

13. [The Truth Act is successful. The gambler has established his complete addiction to gambling. He has lost property, home and wife. He has nothing left but

his empty fingers. He is now released and regains all he had lost — his land, his cows, and his wife. The god Savitr addresses him:] “Play not with dice! Cultivate your field! Be content with your possessions, esteeming them plenty. There, O gambler, are your cows, there your wife!” Thus does the noble god Savitr here instruct me.

14. [Envoi: The gambler addresses the dice:] “Make me now your friend! and so (khalu) be merciful! No more work your fearful spell upon me! Let your wrath and grudge be appeased! Let another fall in the range of the brown ones!”

The Act of Truth in Thelemic Texts

The practice of the Act of Truth is found in several Thelemic texts. In “The Temple of Solomon the King,” J. F. C. Fuller describes the Act of Truth as “the Power begot by Concentration, and nothing else” (*Equinox* Vol I No 4, p. 129)³. Also in his description, he compares it to the task of the Master of the Temple (8=3) “to interpret every phenomenon as a particular dealing of God, with the Soul.”

Crowley may have aware that the Act of Truth originated as a Hindu practice, as he refers to the Act of Truth as such in the play “Ali Sloper; Or, The Forty Liars” from *Konx Om Pax*. “The Hindus have a game called the Act of Truth” (p. 47). However the character Bowley who brings up the Act of Truth describes the example found in the Buddhist text, *The Questions of King Milinda*.

In a postscript to the Act of Truth chapter of *Magick Without Tears*, Crowley alludes to having made experiments. During this time of his life, there was not much recorded in his diaries and I was unable to find any mention of an Act of Truth. However one example of Crowley using the Act of Truth can be found in his diary, published in *The Magical Diaries of Aleister Crowley*, on September 27th, 1923. An Act of Truth is included before Norman Mudd was to go on Magical Retirement in order to get over the “condition of being ‘in love’ with [Leah Hirsig]” (p. 190). Mudd went on the Magical Retirement, and Crowley writes in his diary later in the day, “O.P.V. (Mudd) shows signs of improvement; I am much less anxious as to the issue than I was when I wrote the Act of Truth for him” (p. 193). Crowley seemed confident that this would

3) Fuller also cites the examples of the Act of Truth from *The Questions of King Milinda* and *The Jataka* explained earlier in this essay.

work. However, one year after this Act of Truth was written, Crowley left Leah for Dorothy Olsen. Soon after, Leah and Mudd became romantically engaged.

Conclusion

Crowley regarded the Act of Truth as a very powerful practice, and one that could not be avoided. “The Act of Truth – especially in view of the long obstinate resistance – is so powerful that any act tending to cancel it would necessarily fail & also create so critical a conflict that the moral insanity would be complete & irremediable” (*The Magical Diaries of Aleister Crowley*, p. 193). Virtue is a truth that could be used for the practice; one can use anything one knows to be true. “In connection with the Power of Truth are sometimes mentioned Powers of Righteousness, such as the power of goodness and the power of merit; and, as well, the superhuman might of spirits, deities, and Buddhas. Such mention does not mean, however, that the Act of Truth in any way depends for its efficacy upon the co-operation of these other forces, powerful though they are. Truth, in and by itself all-powerful and irresistible, is essentially distinct from them, and operates independently of them” (Burlingame, p. 431-432).

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Address to Horizon Lodge

MICHAEL KOLSON, BODY MASTER
DELIVERED OCTOBER 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Peace, Tolerance, Truth. Salutations on All Points of the Triangle.

I want to talk about two things today, one of which is to state clearly something that I have discussed informally with a number of you since I took over as Master of Horizon Lodge; the other is something that came after reflection on our growth, our membership, and was also partly inspired by something that Dan Gunther said in his talks almost two weeks ago.

The first item is related to my Vision for the Lodge. This is tantamount to a vision statement in that it is a clear delineation of what the Lodge's focus will be while I remain in the chair as Master. These are three clear focal points which all activities of the Lodge must fit within:

1) The first is of course a focus on our primary work as an Order. That is, Initiations and the Mass.

2) The second is Promulgation. We will focus on outreach into the community by hosting large events and keeping our doors open to the public in all cases that it does not need to be shut. We will also engage in events that take us into to community at large.

3) Education: We will provide events and opportunities that will lead to the edification of our membership and our communities. We will do this by bringing in noted speakers and also hosting our local membership to offer talks on topics which they are expert or passionate about. Our journal *Sky's Embrace* is a continuation of this focus as well.

Now I want to address another point, and on this one, I would also like us to create a dialog around the topic.

I have been in the Order for some many years and have noticed an interesting phenomenon: most local bodies cap out somewhere around 30-40 members. Also, most bodies have an ebb and flow of membership. We are currently sitting at an impressive 35 dues current members, with the possibility of going higher in the near future. I think our membership is engaged and highly active and capable. But we are fooling ourselves if we become complacent. We can loose all that we have gained and find

ourselves in the same boat as so many before us.

We need to stop and think for a moment that as we implement the Vision for the Lodge and continue to grow our numbers, what will this look like? If we have 50 members, 60 members, 100 members? Are we each and every one of us going to be friends? Is this going to be a "family" model, which works in a much smaller group?

Are we going to get along with every member of the Lodge? Sometimes? all the time? most of the time? Can that even be expected?

The O.T.O. lays the groundwork for a Thelemic society and teaches us through our successive initiations in the Man of Earth and Lovers Triads what that looks like and how to interact with one another. But there are also clear references to social interaction in the writings of the Prophet. Let's discuss some of these. The first and foremost to me is the Thelemic Golden Rule, which is "Mind your own business!" To quote from *Liber Aleph*, Chapter 96:

I will have thee know...the right art of Conduct with them who I shall give thee for Initiation. And the Rule thereof is One Rule: Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. See thou constantly to it that this is not to be broken; especially in the section thereof (I dare say so) which readeth Mind Thine Own Business. This is of Application equally to all, and the most dangerous Man (or Woman, as hath occurred, or I err) is the Busy-body.

From *The Book of Lies* he elaborates on this theme, from the chapter Bull Baiting (52):

O generation of gossipers! Who shall deliver you from the Wrath that is fallen upon you?

O Babblers, Prattlers, Talkers, Loquacious Ones, Tatlers, Chewers of the Red Rag that inflameth Apis the Redeemer to fury, learn first what is Work! And THE GREAT WORK is not so far beyond.

We have work to perform; indeed we have The Great Work to perform. We need to make sure that we are not creating ourselves in our own images. We will always be a small organization and a small Lodge while those that come through our doors look like us, and talk like us, and act like us. We need to be open to people that are not like us. But to do that we need to let people be who they are and follow their Will and we need not to interfere. We need to not gossip about one another and we need to not interfere with one another.

This brings me to the point that so inspired me in Dan's second talk. He rightly indicated that as Thelemites we often talk about Will, but we rarely talk about Love—which is after all “the law”! During his talk, a part of a verse from The Book of the Law rang clear in my head; it was from verse 24, Chapter 2: “love one another with burning hearts”.

I would ask that when we conduct our business with one another that we keep this in mind, make it a mantra, embody it. In all cases, in how we act with one another are we loving one another “with burning hearts”? We don't have to like one another we do need to Love one another. Crowley's comment on this verse is clear, he says, “We are all inevitably allies, even identical in our variety; to ‘love one another with burning hearts’ is one of *our essential qualities*” (emphasis added).

What we have does not come free and what we have can be lost. We are lucky to be in a place where the Lodge does not exist on the back of anyone particular member but exists because of the totality of the work of all involved. Everyone also needs to be free to contribute in the ways that they can. Some people will make it to every meeting and seemingly be involved in every aspect of the work we do. Others we will see occasionally but they support the Lodge through their dues payments etc. Both approaches are fine. There is no one way.

Now with a group as large as ours and with our sights set on continued growth, conflict will inevitably become something that happens. People will upset one another. How we deal with this is critically important in how, and if, we will continue to grow.

I would like to ask that we keep in mind the mantra to “love one another with burning hearts” at all times but especially when it comes to conflict. We need to give each other the benefit of the doubt. Most importantly we need to talk to one another. If I do something that offends you, please tell me! If you cannot, ask another for help with relaying the message, if the conflict is with another member than I am here to help, that is one of the jobs of the Lodge Master. What we have is not free. We only keep this through hard work.

In addition to conflict let us be aware to not take offense when not needed. These are two-way streets and though we should talk to one another when we have been offended, we should also try not to take offense when not needed.

Members may have noticed that I am aggressive in my approach to conflict. I will go out of my way to talk to people and clear up miscommunications even if small ones. We need to embrace having tough conversations with one another, not shy away from them. We also can clear up a lot of misgivings by simply apologizing when we have done something that offends.

With all that being said, let's go back to the vision of a Lodge of 100 people. Will everyone get along, will everyone want to hang out? The answer is a clear no. You will develop the group of people and friends that you want to spend time with. That is ok. That is necessary. But we still need to keep in mind that “love” is one of our essential qualities.

We need to put the Work first and foremost; this is what unites us, this is the work that we are called to do. We will all have individual approaches to this and individual things to offer. That is the beauty of our work and we need to make sure that we mind our business along the way.

On an aside, and what should be clear from talking about conflict, minding ones business does not equate to turning a blind eye when someone breaks Order policy, or acts in ways that are disharmonious or harmful to other members. The health and well being of the Lodge and its membership is clearly a part of all of our business.

Last thing I would like to address: Horizon Lodge, will not, while I am master “legislate to style” as I like to say it. We will not create cookie cutter ritualists or ways of performing Mass and Initiations. While abiding by the scripts and the directions from Grand Lodge we will be free to implement any stylistic variation that a team would like to work with. Keep in mind that not all ritual styles are your preferred style. That's ok. We will not set policy locally around how to perform our rituals. We should also be mindful that critiquing someone's style and approach might be hurtful. We need to be mindful of our words. We need to “love one another with burning hearts”. We also need to encourage new members to become involved with the Mass, Initiations, Seasonal Rituals, etc. Sometimes we will make mistakes—we all do it—and though we should always try to put our best forward, we need to be accepting of one another and the work we contribute. We will also not show preference to a particular Mass team or Initiation team based on stylistic preference.

By bringing up many of these things I am not saying that I see them, some of the time or all of the time. I bring

them up so we can be mindful of our approach. So that we watch the things that can tear us down as a Lodge and a group of aspirants to this Great Work. The next time that someone frustrates you, makes you angry, or does a ritual in a way you dislike, before spreading gossip, etc., let us remember that it is part of our Work, and part of the Great Work, and that we need to have that “burning heart” that is one of our essential qualities.

On one last note: I started this address with three watch-words of the Order, or one may even say mottos: Peace, Tolerance, Truth. As we deal with one another let us also be sure that we keep these three foundational values in our hearts and our minds.

Love is the law, love under will.

Werewolf on a Saturday Night

TERESA DALTON

*As the full moon rises, he feels the strong pull,
Like the motion of waves, carrying the
Body towards the shore,
Like the draw of sex,
Like the rush of an orgasm.
This is his nature, the fulfillment
Of his being, his own rebirth.
The tears on his fur are tears of joy,
He trembles with the thrill
Of his own strength.*

*She is waiting, the lacings of her bodice drawn tight,
And her breathing quickening,
Her bosom rising toward the ivory column of her throat.
She waits.
Not her father's commands nor her brother's pleadings
Will keep her from this meeting,
This destiny.*

*She invents an errand, makes an excuse.
At the proper hour,
She slips out into the darkness
And walks to the deserted corner.
She waits beneath a street lamp, hands clasped behind her,
Swaying gently to the unheard music,
She is beautiful, and as graceful
As the capital letter "S."
Plucking at her own skirts,
She trembles with fear, not of the passing traffic,
But of what is to come, or what if it doesn't.*

*He creeps up the side street, clinging to shadows
That gather around houses, hedges, and parked cars.
Moving furtively, he gazes at her, standing there
In the halo of the street lamp.
Stunned by her beauty, he gnaws nervously
At his razor sharp claws, and gnashes his glistening fangs.
He sidles toward her, eyeing her over a hunched shoulder,
Pulling at his clothes to make a better appearance.
When she turns unexpectedly and looks him full in the face,
He ducks his head, whines piteously, and
Scuttles backwards into the gloom.*

The Actual History of Freemasonry

JOHN YARKER

Yarker was an outspoken and controversial historian of Freemasonry. His life and the role he played in the history of the O.T.O. are described in Richard Kaczynski's Forgotten Templars (2012). Here we reprint a rare Yarker article from The Theosophic Messenger, Vol. XIII, No. 5. February 1912.

In England the only Masonic historians who are held in repute are those who prove to you that Modern Freemasonry has no history beyond 1717, and in a certain sense they are correct.

In America every idle statement, generally interesting in itself, which connects Modern Freemasonry as an offshoot of the *mysteries* of antiquity, is accepted without the slightest attempt at proof, but in fact, so far as Modern Masonry is concerned, there is not the slightest foundation for any such assumption.

Yet it can be proved by any Mason of learning who will go the right way about it that Masonry has a primeval origin with the mysteries, and that can only be done by tracing *backward*, not forward.

Modern Freemasonry originates in the operative Guilds of Free Masonry. Of this there are two systems of work in England in the ancient jurisdiction of York, north of Trent. London holds *aloof*, offers no assistance.

One of these systems originated with the Worshipful Society of Free Masons, St. Pauls, London; the other springs from a charter of the Counts Palatine, Bishops of Durham, issued in 1639, which combined various trades and is known as the Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Wallers, Slaters, Paviers, Plasterers, and Bricklayers. It has, however, minute-books dating back to 1607, and the Arms, of five quarterings, exist to-day in the Guild Hall, Durham. This is a very numerous body, but the work only differs from the first named in minor points. Anyone who knows this work, and has any pretensions to learning, can see almost at a glance, whence springs Modern Freemasonry, and out of what arose the Guild Marony of the Anglo-Saxons. To trace the connection of Modern Freemasonry with the operative Guild one must go back to ancient York Masonry, which you have fairly correct in America; the English Ritual, which dates from 1813, is of no use, and probably this is the reason why the "Know Nothing" historians have all their

own way in asserting they have no history.

Then in operative Guild Masonry arose two systems,—that of the old operative Gothic builders which died out, gradually, with the Reformation in 1838, but left various bodies which developed into two degrees, and had gradually from 1648 to 1700 become social and political clubs of speculative Freemasons. Master Masons generally withdrew from the lodges to enter the companies and incorporations.

The other system maintained, and yet maintains, its building character in seven degrees, and was the classical style of the old Comieini brought into this country by Inigo Jones, who Anderson tells us brought over Italians to teach the English. It is this system therefore to which we must look if we wish to trace back our origin, in the mysteries.

The readers must take my word for it, and accept it or reject it as best pleases them, for I value no one's opinion; but this I do assert, that anyone who knows this system as I know it, and has a fair amount of learning, can trace its ritual back for say a couple of thousands years to the Romans. The Anglo-Saxon Guilds only became such when their kings became Lawgivers; they were previously Roman Colleges and Grecian Eranos.

The Guild believes that a certain *drama* records an actual fact; how is it then that we can trace back all its details to the prehistoric Cyclopean builders? I have developed the heads of this in my *Arcane Schools*, but it seems to be looked on with suspicion because their great historians tell them that our Freemasonry has no history, and they have been unable to weave a connected narrative. How then comes it that unlettered Masons can tell us what we are?

Operative Guild Freemasonry had Anderson as chaplain in 1710, and they consider him an unprincipled blackleg. Anderson did not play a creditable part, but he was not as bad as represented. He established a Grand Lodge of two degrees, Apprentice and Fellowcraft, and the Duke of Wharton, in 1722, added the ceremony of installing a Master. What Anderson really did was what Scotland had been doing fifteen years before; at Houghfort, Bro. Hoppringle was Master of a lodge and the minutes prove that it had two degrees in 1702 and the presiding officer was the Master Mason. Sir John Pringle, at the same date, had the same sort of lodge precisely, and so had the time-immemorial lodge at Melrose.

Women's Conference Address

HYMENAËUS BETA XI°

Author's Note: This talk was delivered to the Women's Conference hosted by what was then IAO Camp (now IAO-Abraxas Oasis) in Bloomington, Indiana, in 1996 E.V. It was written the night before the conference and is given here pretty much as delivered. I had been deeply involved in editing Crowley's commentaries to Liber AL and Liber 418 at the time, and these are the source for most of the remarks on Thelemic theogony. For a change, I have not footnoted these; other remarks are of course my opinion. – HB

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

I want to thank Anita Kraft for inviting me to this conference. I don't get out much, and it's wonderful to see the women of the Order getting together to explore the issues that concern them particularly.

Let me first say that there are some things that I am not comfortable discussing, particularly relating to direct interpretation of *The Book of the Law*, and there are of course subjects relating to upper degree practices that will have me speaking in riddles very quickly. The joke is that if you're told it's beyond your grade, it really means "I don't know." In all honesty, this is sometimes—although not always—true; it would be more accurate for me to say "I don't know for sure." The O.T.O. is in my view an experimental research organization that has a tremendous heritage of traditional written and oral teaching, considerable anecdotal data as to what works and doesn't, but little or no dogma. It is an important part of the work of the Order to be able to keep in mind the questions, the hypotheses that might or might not be answers, look hard at the actual experimental data, and not jump to conclusions, or fall back on old dogmatisms. In this sense keeping an open mind is a key to initiation—open about everything, including the social dimension which is a big part of our peculiar laboratory.

Crowley once wrote that perhaps the greatest wisdom of age is to listen to the voice of youth. He'd just turned 40, as I have. He was always keen to learn the latest developments in anything, including how his younger colleagues were getting on in their work. Grady McMurtry knew this—it accounts for his remarkable transformation from a Washington ex-military bureaucrat into a West Coast

counterculturalist. Had he not undergone that he would have never reached the next generation.

We have been very cautious about rebuilding the degree infrastructure of O.T.O. in the last ten years. We have also been cautious conferring the upper degrees, because we wished to ascertain how they affected different people over time. To get back to my point about not necessarily knowing everything, we wanted to ascertain whether we truly knew what we were doing, and we found that we do and we don't. We have a firm grasp of the traditional system as transmitted to us, and our research is probably more complete than at almost any time in O.T.O. history. We have worked the entire system now from Minerval to X°—as many of you know we now have a Supreme and Holy King for the USA, separate from my office. But there are a whole host of questions that Crowley and his successors did not address directly. Many have to do with women and the particular powers and aptitudes that you possess. These were questions that Crowley, as a man, could not introspect, as Ezra Pound once put it.

The Book of the Law 1:33 says: "the work of the wand and the work of the sword; these he shall learn and teach." He considered the wand to refer to union, and the sword to division or analysis, later speculating that the sword was really the dagger, i.e., an elemental weapon like the wand, and both traditionally active or masculine. He notes in one of his commentaries to *The Book of the Law*:

"Why am not I to learn and teach the work of the Cup and of the Disk? Is it because they are the feminine weapons? Shall the Scarlet Woman attend to these? The Book does not say so; the passives are ignored. I feel the omission as a lack of balance, the only case of the kind in the Book."

Crowley did address these in both A.:A.: and O.T.O. doctrine and ritual. In *The Holy Books* and *The Vision and the Voice* there are passages touching on these. The Gnostic Mass makes active use of the Cup and Disk, and of course their correlates are fundamental to O.T.O. sexual mysticism. Some of his best writing on these subjects is predictably in *The Book of Thoth*, the cups and disks being two of the four suits.

But Aleister Crowley was not a woman, though he explored the feminine side of his nature thoroughly, and considered it a key to his attainment. And let's face it, Cups and Disks were not Crowley's strong suits. He was not a notable success in sustaining longterm love affairs, and spent most of his life strapped for cash and unable to

fully materialize his ideas.

So what of the work of the Cup and Disk? At the time Crowley wondered aloud whether the Scarlet Woman would attend to this, but he was within a year or so of leaving Leah Hirsig, and none of her successors have left any tangible teachings.

I think that Crowley did what he could and left the rest to us. I think that intellectually and spiritually he realized his life's will of transmitting the Word of the Aeon, and that the initiatic current he set in motion works with us today. But I do think that the women of Thelema have much to transmit themselves concerning the two traditionally passive weapons, that they are connected to a source. I don't think that this will come through the media appropriate to the other weapons, such as writing and talking. I think it will come through inculcating a culture of love and understanding and responsible action in the here and now, all resting on a solid and durable foundation.

I would now like to explore the theological feminine in our cosmogony and pantheon. Nuit and Hadit are of course the primal dyad, incommensurables, and the approach to each is strictly individual. Therion left rituals for that purpose. Ra Hoor Khuit is both universal and personal. In Thelemic cosmogony there is no pleroma as in Gnosticism, no objectified ultimate source to which we return. This place, Kether in the Tree of Life, is occupied by Ra Hoor Khuit, who is at once the Lord of the Aeon and universal, for a time, and our own silent selves, our Jechidah in Qabalistic terms, our Guardian Angels. He is etymologically male in Egyptian mythology, and even equated with the spiritual Phallus. Bear in mind that this conception, being Kether, is beyond the Abyss, and the supernals must be viewed as a whole. He is not so obviously masculine as Hadit or Horbehudet, who was (if Budge is reliable) the deity of the Sons of Horus who entered Egypt and introduced the patriarchal sky-god culture in predynastic times. He is the Crowned and Conquering Child and rather more bisexual or androgyne, though no less male and female for all that.

The Aeon of Horus follows the patriarchal Aeon of Osiris, which follows the matriarchal Aeon of Isis. The Aeon of Horus, that of the Child, does not in my view have any implicit sex bias.

Incidentally, the A·:·A·: doctrine of the succession of the Aeons corresponds very well with the social evolution postulated by anthropologists such as the late, great

Marija Gimbutas of UCLA. Modern civilization, as Crowley pointed out, is incredibly childlike, and getting more so.

In her works *The Language of the Goddess* and *The Civilization of the Goddess*, she posits a very long matriarchal period characterized by the absence of weapons and fortifications in the archaeological record. About 2,500 to 3,500 years ago—different from Crowley's 2,000 to 2,500 years but close enough—she found that an influx of warlike and nomadic Indoeuropean tribes who characteristically worshipped a sky-god moved in and took over. She has her opponents, Colin Renfrew particularly, but her views have caught on in academic circles. This doctrine of the Aeons has parallels in the psychological literature, particularly in the work of the post-Jungian analyst Erich Neumann; I recommend especially his *Origins and History of Consciousness*, and of course his classic work *The Great Mother*.

To return to Ra Hoor Khuit and the spiritual Phallus, do bear in mind that Crowley read his Freud and Jung very thoroughly. He didn't use Capital P Phallus without assuming that his readers knew what he meant. Unfortunately few today do. He was referring to the psychoanalytic stage of full genital organization, which is the third of a series.

The first stage is infantile, undifferentiated, and of course generally chaste. The second stage is narcissistic, usually corresponding to adolescence, and masturbatory. In the third, the phallic as they chose to call it, the individual psychology is so organized as to integrate the psyche with the genital consciousness and its associated instincts, and is then prepared to enter the world, to have intercourse. Crowley liked to liken the sex-instinct to God; this is what he was getting at. Incidentally, these three psychological stages of genital organization correspond exactly to the Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Degrees of O.T.O. So, to sum up, the Phallus in the spiritual sense is transgender, in my opinion, and thus in ritual such as the Star Ruby, bearing in mind that Kether is in Malkuth, you need have no reservations using the formula with confidence.

I have mentioned how in our theogony we have Nuit and Hadit conjoined giving Ra Hoor Khuit as Kether, and that there is no remote pleroma to which we will return if we are good boys and girls and perfect ourselves. It is useful to bear in mind the Gnostic Creed of the EGC for what follows, and those of you who have read in Gnosticism might wish to compare the various revealed theogonies

describing the hypostases of the Absolute in the aeons.

Chaos is in Chokmah. It is beyond me to say anything more than that this is the All-Father, celebrated in the Creed of the Mass as the sole viceregent of the Sun upon the Earth. It is he whose eld is awakened by the Virgin Daughter in the Tetragrammaton formula. Yet Chaos has a spelling (κωυς) that equals 156, like Babalon, and embodies the Formula of the Feminine Trinity.

Babalon is in Binah, and the Secret Name of Nuit. She is the Mother of Tiphareth, just as her nearly eponymous equivalent in Gnosticism Barbelo is sometimes the mother of the Demiurge, and gave rise to manifest creation by his birth. Barbelo is treated very badly indeed by some Gnostics, who blame the existence of the world on her, and send her crawling back to Daddy seeking forgiveness. Babalon is another matter entirely and best studied in *The Vision and the Voice*. Much nonsense is written about her by authors other than Crowley, so be careful what you believe. Her Consort is the Beast on which she rides. She wields the Cup of Understanding, and dissolves the Blood of the Saints therein. She is the great Whore, and holds Choronzon and the Abyss at bay until the Great Day when Malkuth shall be brought to Binah. She is also in a sense that Virgin Daughter who awakens the eld of the All-Father Chaos and is set upon the throne of the Mother. I believe that women have a particular, natural and intuitive understanding of her nature. I also believe that the Gnostic Mass invokes her, particularly after the invocation of the Serpent and the Lion.

Thus, in the Gnostic Mass, we celebrate Chaos and Babalon, and that inborn spark in all of us that is Ra Hoor Khuit in reality. Crowley taught that we are not to worship Nuit and Hadit publicly, but alone. We are to worship Chaos and Babalon together. That Ra Hoor Khuit is the essential self of each of us only underscores the mystery of incarnation.

The Gnostic Mass was written by a man, and is a celebration of the sexual polarities and their cosmic and natural interplay from that standpoint. The male has the largely active role, and the goddess, speaking initially the words of Nuit, is veiled on the altar. The Saints are paternal, but this is intentional. It is a list of the small handful of men and man-gods who, in the opinion of the author of the Mass, understood the divinity of woman.

I've heard the Mass criticized as sexist, and frankly think that stupid. Who, when the Mass was first introduced into

North America during World War I, was worshipping the goddess? Especially in the context of a religious ceremony of Western origin? Who understood the divinity of the feminine at all?

Someday, perhaps not soon, but who knows, a woman adept in the O.T.O. Sovereign Sanctuary will manifest the genius to compose a Mass in which the female takes the more active role, and the male the more passive (as with *śiva* and *śakti* in Hinduism)—in which the Deacon, speaking for the Priestess, can claim communion with the women in history that have perceived the divinity of man.

The problem is that men have written much of the history, but that is easily solved. We shall have to make some, and research the rest. But I have no doubt that someday such a Mass will be produced, and approved by the Father—or perhaps by then it will be the Mother—of the Church. I can see how it might be done, but such a Rite should be produced by a woman.

Let's talk about sex. Women can discuss sex in ways men cannot—I've been honored to be privy to many discussions as a sort of honorary woman, like this meeting I suppose, and the difference is striking. Our approaches to it are radically different. You have, I feel, always had a more direct and immediate understanding of sexual mysteries than men. I think this has to do with our respective psychological and magical polarity with respect to microcosm and macrocosm boundary issues. We usually think of sex as something we do "out there" in the macrocosm, whereas for women it is something that literally occurs inside of you, inside your ego boundaries, within your microcosm, coming in from without. These distinctions are important, as sex is fundamentally eucharistic. In fact, with food, air, water, and sunlight, sex has to be the one form of energy taken in from the outside that is most eucharistic, and from which much of the symbolism of the eucharistic mystery evolved. It is this sacramental quality that makes sex not just emblematic of the Great Work itself, but a vehicle for its attainment.

I have learned most of what I know of magick not from books and old papers—though I love those—but from women I have loved. My first great initiatrix did not consciously try to teach anything, and was in fact entirely unconscious of what she had to transmit. She just knew what to do—I say "knew" in the special feminine sense of that attribute of Binah called Intelligence—not the mimicry and language of the Ruach.

If you will allow a characteristically male mechanical analogy, your bodies, your *yonis*—I will admit to a touch of *yni* envy—are the particle accelerators and cloud chambers for the study of the origins of life and consciousness, the laboratory and temple of discovery. Look there for answers to your questions, not in books or secret documents. The so-called secrets lie there hiding in plain sight for those who have stripped away the psychological veils that prevent a clear observation of and participation in the sexual process, and a deep understanding of its sacredness.

I believe that Our Lady is bringing us to a new relationship to her sister the Earth, and that this new ecological awareness is vital to our survival on Earth. I have also been struck by how the symbol of modern paganism or “earth religion” is Nuit’s symbol, the star. We are not in for a return to the earth-mother-goddess paganism of the past, but for something much more interesting. Despite this earth-consciousness alluded to, Our Lady is space, and the religious ontology and theogony of Thelema is perhaps the only one yet produced that would provide sustenance and spiritual orientation to people living in space, as someday we will.

We are in the Aeon of the Child, and the sexes are rapidly becoming evenly matched—not, I hope, for a fight, but rather (as the poet Bialy has it) through all complexity, to make new love.

What of women in the O.T.O.? We are enjoined to educate ourselves in the arts of life and love, and show this mastery in all we say and do. We are an ongoing experiment in new ways of living, but the individual will is not to be second-guessed or gainsaid. No one way of life is “more Thelemic”—an adjective I detest due to constant misuse—than any other way. The key is the free function and happiness of the individuals concerned.

Women have proven themselves to be extremely adept at the social organization of the O.T.O., and function today, as they did in Crowley’s time, at the highest levels of the Order.

So let us love one another with burning hearts. In the words of Harry Smith: the experiments must go on.

Love is the law, love under will.

Babble On

Words from the Editor

De Voluntate

“θελημα ... a word purely bibl. and eccl. [yet found in Aristot. de plant. 1, 1 p. 815b, 21] ... will ... what one wishes or has determined shall be done ... thing willed ... commands, precepts ... will, choice ... pleasure ... inclination, desire ...” *Thayers Greek Lexicon*

Nephesh

Inanimate things move because they are impacted; they are pushed. Animate things move of their volition¹; they go.

1) Plants occupy a curious middle zone. Ironically, the only known work from antiquity other than the Bible in which the word θελημα occurs is Περὶ φυτῶν (On Plants), traditionally ascribed to Aristotle. “I assert, then, that plants have neither sensation nor desire; for desire can only proceed from sensation, and the end proposed by our volition [θελήματος] changes in accordance with sensation” (E. S. Forster, translation).

Volition is born of need: if the body needs water, the soul (*nephesh*) feels thirst and the will to drink arises. Volitions can also be created or modified by stimuli that trigger instincts or arouse memories. A dog will follow the instinct to eat whenever the chance arises even if it is not hungry, because the chance may not arise when it is. Your recollection of a tasty food may create the volition, not merely to eat, but to eat that particular food. In this way, volition goes beyond mere biological need and takes on the characteristics of personality.

Thus, it is possible to manipulate volition artificially, the worst sort of black magic. For example, constant exposure to advertising may create in a human the belief that it is thirsty “for” a particular manufactured beverage, resulting in the volition to purchase this product. The first step in discovering the True Will is learning to see through such vulgar deceptions.

There can be competing volitions. When you first wake up, there may be a desire to sleep and a desire to urinate. As the need to sleep subsides and the need to urinate

increases, so the will to sleep grows weaker and the will to urinate strengthens and eventually gets you out of bed. But when the two are about equally strong, you feel a struggle.²

From the perspective of Darwinian Natural Selection, animals can be expected to have volitions that increase the likelihood that they will reproduce. But Natural Selection operates at the level of the gene pool rather than the individual, so many species have evolved the instinct for empathy, i.e., behavior that increases the likelihood that your neighbor will reproduce. The sight or sound of another animal in distress will create the volition to ease the other's pain, even at a cost to the benefactor.

Therefore, both self-interest and other-interest exist in an animal as sources of volition. Often, they are at cross-odds. If two animals are competing for a mate, the one whose other-interest overcomes self-interest will lose the chance to pass on genes. This conflict between interests is variously described as selfishness vs. compassion, sin vs. virtue, the lower self vs. the higher self, etc. But both are merely functions of the animal soul.

Ruach

In the human animal, other-interest is fostered by social pressure and religion. From birth, our volition is regulated by what the rabbis call the Bad Impulse (*yetzer hara*) and what Freud called the id – that is, self-interest. As we grow up, we learn the expectations of others, and develop a conscience, the so-called Good Impulse (*yetzer tov*) or superego. The conscious self or ego must decide at each moment of waking life which volition is to be master.

The soul quits her shining world and accepts the miracle of incarnation. From the pool of forgetfulness, the ego steps onto the path of bodily experience³, vulnerable within its carapace of psychological defenses, beset on either side by the urges of body (*yetzer hara*) and society (*yetzer tov*), its only Light the obscurity of moonshine, its

2) Marvin Minsky elaborates on this notion at length in his thought-provoking book *The Society of Mind* (1985).

3) *Sekhel mugsham*, the 29th path of wisdom.



Life bound up in drops of blood, its Love now whelmed by wolves of lust and hounds of guilt, its Liberty hostage: at each moment, it must choose to stand still or to move forward or backward or right or left. Its Destiny is to pass beyond the fortress walls to the distant mountains beyond. What is its Will?

Neshamah

Our social and religious education idealizes other-interest, condemns self-interest, and trains us to prefer those volitions which are compassionate. Of course it would, because the self-interest of a society is the other-interest of the individual.

Compassion, we are taught, comes from God and selfishness from the Devil. But as we have seen, *both selfishness and compassion are in fact merely competing forces within the animal soul*, strategies that the human species uses to persist, each appropriate in its place. Neither impulse comes from above; neither is the True Will.

So long as the mind (*ruach*) knows only the mortal soul (*nephesh*), it will be trapped in this tug-of-war of the will, mistaking the material for the spiritual, and wage a war of no consequence. True religion, esoteric or gnostic religion, seeks to remind us of our spiritual truth, and to direct the mind to the immortal soul (*neshamah*) from which we have been cut off, and which is ordinarily hidden. Compassion is the lamb that fools the very elect⁴, so long as we mistake it for the promptings of the immortal soul beyond the cloud of unknowing, the speech in the silence which we must learn to hear for our volitions to become the True Will.

Illustration: from the tarot deck of Jean Dodal of Lyon, a classic "Tarot of Marseilles", dating from 1701-1715. (Public domain.)

4) Matthew 24:24.



6 Quinquies (A.)