

Sky's Embrace

Volume 2
Issue 5
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Sol in Taurus

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Do What Thou Wilt... Ask Me How!

With Your Host, Frater ShT

Dear Frater ShT,

I've attended mass a few times and met a lot of good people at Horizon who really seem to have a lot of good things going for them by being a member of O.T.O. I'm interested in joining your organization. I saw the Q&A outside the door to your temple space and it was helpful, but I'd like to learn more about initiation and what I have to gain from the experience.

Sincerely,

Want to Be a Member

Dear Want to Be a Member,

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

Thank you for your letter regarding initiation in Ordo Templi Orientis. You have already looked through the Initiation/Minerval FAQ guide offered at Horizon Oasis and now have the same curiosity that most potential members experience about the purpose of our initiatory ceremonies. Initiation means many different things to many people, each pursuing initiation into different organizations for various reasons. No one in the O.T.O., or anyone else for that matter, can tell you why you should or shouldn't get initiated or when you should be ready or not.

Before I begin my answer in full, let me say that the opinions being presented here are entirely my own based on personal research and do not necessarily represent the views of Horizon Oasis O.T.O. or United

States Grand Lodge. This being said, let me share with you some of my thoughts on the matter.

Your first step in the path of initiation would be taking the Minerval Degree. As it states on the USGL website:

"The Minerval Degree (0°) is an introductory Initiate degree in which the aspirant is considered an 'honored guest' of O.T.O. rather than a full member. The Minerval degree is designed to allow the aspirant to decide whether or not to pursue full membership, and to allow potential sponsors the opportunity to decide whether to support the aspirant's application for full membership."¹

The Minerval Degree is in many ways a wading pool where you will be introduced to the process of dramatic ritual initiation and will give you the chance to "feel things out" for yourself among a larger pool of initiates and experienced members of our Order. Anything else that I say on this subject would be repetitious so I'll leave off with saying that many people who undergo Minerval continue on to a lifetime "career" in the Order filled with fun, fraternal friendship and shared experience; while others choose not to initiate further and likewise live very enjoyable, productive lives.

To tackle the issue head-on, *initiation*, from the Latin word, *initiatu*s, pp. of *initiare* "originate, initiate,"² is the fundamental process in an individual's life where the transition from one state of being or consciousness is formally or informally

1 <http://oto-usa.org/init.html>. Retrieved 04/12/2009

2 http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=initiation&search_mode=none. Retrieved 04/12/2009

accepted, giving the individual or initiate a particular set of knowledge as defined by their social group or environment. In pre-modern societies initiation was oftentimes the marker of acceptance or entrance into a group or society (vis. childhood to adulthood) where the initiate would be reborn into a new role in their society. Even today in various religious or spiritual communities, initiation is often imparted during a ritual process in which certain signs, gestures, words and actions convey the roles to which the initiate is expected to conform. In the secular world initiations oftentimes occur marking various stages of social development, such as a child's first day of school, obtaining a driving license or permit, graduation, enlistment or enrollment in college, military, etc.

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

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http://www.livejournal.com/community/horizon_oasis/

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In Western Esotericism, the model of initiation typically corresponds to a set of ideas of natural human life: Birth, Life, Death; sometimes even speculation on a supposed afterlife. The earliest organized examples of initiation in Western agricultural society stem from the ecstatic rites of the Eleusinian Mysteries about which little knowledge exists other than the celebration of the Demeter/Persephone Mythos, the presence of a systematic graded hierarchy and, according to Martin Nilsson, their intention to "elevate man above the human sphere into the divine and to assure his redemption by making him a god and so conferring immortality upon him."³ Later mystery cults such as Orphism and Mithraism would form the basic model from which modern day magical or esoteric fraternities (e.g. Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, O.T.O., traditional Wicca) would operate. Such fraternities or societies would thusly provide a social source from which individual development could take place. During the course of ritual, semiotic mediation would take place with which the individual would formulate or be given a developmental analysis corresponding to the group's ideology.

The actual process of initiation is experienced separately from the ritual itself, the ritual creating a symbolic scaffold that the initiate would be able to use in integrating the semiotic content into their individual learning and developmental process. In this sense, initiation occurs following the ritual process and lasts until either the initiate goes through another initiatory processes (as in the graded systems of modern fraternal organizations) or reaches a point of satiety where no further learning takes place and they continually process or redefine the experience for themselves. The benefit of the graded initiation system is that each successive initiation allows the individual to reprocess previous knowledge and integrate it into successive learning experiences. In this case, the process of initiation becomes a cyclical integrative process leading into constant developmental analysis.

Initiation need not necessarily be a group process. In the twentieth century, Aleister Crowley in many ways pioneered what would become known as

3 Nilsson, Martin A. *Greek Popular Religion* (1950). P. 71

self-initiation. Prior to this, there are examples of possible self-initiation rituals as recorded in the *Greek Magical Papyri*, especially in PGM I. 42-195, PGM IV. 475-829 and questionably; PGM V. 96-172 (popularly known as the *Rite of the Headless One*⁴, later modified into *Liber Samekh*). Both of these, as well as the revelation received in *Liber 418*⁵ are described by Crowley as suitable for operations pertaining to knowledge and conversation with one's Holy Guardian Angel. This latter process, also a self-initiation, dates back to at least the 15th Century⁶ with the popularized *Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*. Specifically, these rituals address the need of the individual in achieving a sort of heightened self-awareness in connection with their social consciousness. Using Freudian terms, they create a dialogue between the conscious ego and the largely unconscious super-ego; later

integrating the Id or non-integrated portions of the conscious mind.

While contemporary society seems largely indifferent or uninterested in ritualized initiation in the above sense, these methods can be easily applied in different therapeutic systems such as psychoanalysis and different forms of gestalt therapy. The individual need not subscribe to a particular belief system, which in our contemporary society could be perceived as a bigger obstacle for many considering the changes in the religious and spiritual landscape of the western world and a more global society. Instead, it is at the imperative of the individual that they undertake some form of initiatory process as a way to create a meaningful dialogue with themselves and their relationship with their society in a mindful and constructive manner.

4 Betz, Hans Dieter. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*. (1992).

5 See *Liber VIII*

6 Dehn, Georg. *The Book of Abramelin*.

Love is the Law, Love under Will.

Fraternally,

Frater ShT

Horizon Oasis Regular Monthly Events for May 2009

All these events open to the public and held at the Horizon Oasis Temple, 1423 10th Ave, Seattle WA 98122 (except as noted!)

Gnostic Mass

May 9th @ 6PM

May 16th @ 8PM (White Robe)

May 24th @ 6PM

Horizon performs Liber XV, The Gnostic Mass, on the 2nd & 3rd Saturday and 4th Sunday of each month. All are welcome.

Saturday Social

2nd Sat. - May 9th (After Mass)

Drinks, fellowship and cake.

Stick around after mass and have some fun!

Horizon Orientation

4th Sun. - May 24th (After Mass)

Orientation is an opportunity for newcomers to be introduced to the basics of the O.T.O. and Thelema.

Horizon Monthly Class

4th Tuesday - May 26th @ 7PM

Topic TBA - Check Sea-OTO Yahoo group for details.

Novice Night

2nd Thursday - May 14th @ 7PM

Novice Night is a monthly date where Novices (actual and potential) in the E.G.C. can gather to share, practice, and receive information through discussions and workshops.

Enochian Magic Class

2nd Tuesday - May 12th @ 7PM

A focus on detailed knowledge about the history, symbolism and practice of the Enochian magic system.

Kundalini Yoga

Every Monday @ 6:30PM

Local instructor Ai offers this class in our space each week, teaching the esoteric yet practical discipline of Kundalini Yoga.

RPG Night

1st & 3rd Thurs. - May 7 & 21 @ 6PM

Join Horizoners for a night of gaming.

Offsite Events

Daughters of Lillith

3rd Friday - May 15th @ 7PM

A monthly women-only gathering hosted by Horizon. All are welcome. E-mail matertiamat@gmail.com for directions and more info.

Magic in Theory and Practice

1st Sunday - May 3rd @ 5PM

Br. Kolson hosts a study of *Magick in Theory and Practice*, Aleister Crowley's "treatise on magic and mysticism for beginners." Contact mkolson@attglobal.net for details.

Garden of Pomegranates

3rd Saturday - May 16th @ 12PM

Each month Brs. Diego & Ken offer a discussion of *Garden of Pomegranates* by Israel Regardie, an essential text of western esoteric qabalah. Contact ken_r_barton63@hotmail.com to RSVP.

Horizon Oasis Calendar

May 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Liber XV The Gnostic Mass 6PM Horizon Orientation 7:30PM	27 Kundalini Yoga 6:30PM	28 Horizon Monthly Class 7PM	29 Temple Reserved 6PM	30 HAFLA! with Kendra 7PM	1	2
3 Offsite Study Group 5PM Magic in Theory & Practice	4 Kundalini Yoga 6:30PM	5	6 Temple Reserved 6PM	7 RPG Night 6PM	8	9 Liber XV The Gnostic Mass 6PM Saturday Social (after Mass)
10	11 Kundalini Yoga 6:30PM	12 Enochian Magic Class 7PM	13	14 Novitiate Night 7PM	15 Offsite: Daughters of Lillith 7PM	16 Offsite Study Group 12PM Garden of Pomegranates Liber XV The Gnostic Mass 8PM (White Robe)
17 *** at 3PM Members and guests only	18 Kundalini Yoga 6:30PM	19 Offsite Officers Meeting 7PM <i>Horizon officers and invited guests only</i>	20 Anahata Chapter of Rose Croix 7PM <i>V° & above only</i>	21 RPG Night 6PM	22	23 3° Initiations Order Members 3° and above only ALL DAY
24 Liber XV The Gnostic Mass 6PM Horizon Orientation (after Mass)	25 Kundalini Yoga 6:30PM	26 Horizon Monthly Class 7PM	27 Anahata Chapter of Rose Croix 7PM <i>V° & above only</i>	28	29	30
31						