

Agapé

The official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.



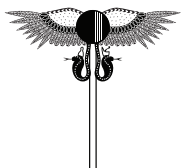
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Ordo Templi Orientis, U.S.A.



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Agapé

The official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.

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FROM THE EDITOR

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

Welcome to our NOTOCON XII issue! The National O.T.O. Conference was held from August 2-4 in the Valley of Cleveland, Ohio (where I happen to live), with the theme of "Fear Not at All."

Seeing over 300 fellow Brethren of the Order in my hometown was an amazing experience! Getting to meet, hang out, laugh, learn, and celebrate our fellowship meant so much to me.

For those who were there, thank you, and it was wonderful seeing you. For those that were not, I hope this issue gives you the briefest of glimpses into NOTOCON XII!

Love is the law, love under will.

Andrew Lent
Editor, Agapé

FROM THE GRAND MASTER

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

Annual Report

The U.S.G.L. annual report is available here: <https://oto-usa.org/2019/09/annual-report-for-fiscal-year-2018-published/>

NOTOCON XII

U.S. Grand Lodge's twelfth national conference was held over the weekend of August 24, 2019 EV in Cleveland, Ohio, with the theme of "Fear Not at All." A transcription of my keynote address from Saturday's banquet is below.

Many thanks to Sisters Vanessa M. and Lori L., the members of Black Sun Lodge, Golden Thread Camp, Sword and Serpent Oasis, the Conference Committee, the speakers, the vendors, the Gnostic Mass crew, and everyone else who put in so much excellent work to give us another terrific conference!

NOTOCON XIII is scheduled for August 2021 EV in Denver, Colorado, with the theme "From Gold Forge Steel."

Keynote Address

Our theme this year is "Fear Not At All," taken from the Book of the Law, Chapter III, verse 17:

Fear not at all; fear neither men nor Fates, nor gods, nor anything. Money fear not, nor laughter of the folk folly, nor any other power in heaven or upon the earth or under the earth. Nu is your refuge as Hadit your light; and I am the strength, force, vigour, of your arms.

So, what's wrong with fear, anyway? Why the hell *shouldn't* we fear? There's a lot of really scary stuff going on out there! Fear, not at all... are you *nuts*?

Fear is an *extremely useful tool* for us puny mortals as we scurry about on our dying planet, hurtling through the void to nowhere, trying to maximize our brief terms of consciousness, struggling to maintain

our illusory autonomy, working to plant and nurture our little crops of DNA, striving to realize our fragile dreams, justify our Lilliputian labors, and right our petty wrongs.

Fear is our ally in a turbulent world; it helps us to evade the real dangers and difficulties that can fall into our paths and cause us pain, frustration, humiliation, poverty, injury, and death. Sometimes fear is our only safeguard against blundering into serious trouble.

Also, fear is an *awesome rush* and *everybody loves it*. Why else would we have roller coasters, and horror movies, and piano recitals... and public speaking?

Oh, and if you're a demagogue, or a rabble rouser, or a preacher, or... a deodorant peddler, then fear is unquestionably your *key to success*!

So what's with all this anti-fear stuff?

"Fear is the mind-killer..."

"Fear is the path to the dark side..."

"Fear is failure, *and* the forerunner of failure."

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Is fear really that scary?

In the Microcosm—from the perspective of sentient mold growing on a ball of rock—fear is a very useful thing. But, despite its primal, existential utility—or perhaps because of it—it can also obsess us, dominate us, paralyze us, restrict us from being *truly free*. It can hold us back from aspiring to anything beyond what we've been told is our lot in life.

So despite its obvious benefits, fear, like sugar, is one of those good things that we can easily have too much of. And a lot of the stuff we do that seems to be reveling in fear is probably more like an effort to conquer it, or at least defy it.

But, detaching for a moment from our mortal concerns: *sub specie aeternitatis*, from the perspective of the *eternal*, all is at it should be—as it *must* be. Fear is simply not a factor in the

Macrocosm. It's an artifact of mortality. The eternal gods have *nothing* to be afraid of.

And isn't it the task and desire of the Mystic to ultimately realize a relationship, if not an identity, with these eternal principles?

"There is no part of me that is not of the gods."

"I confess my life one, individual, and eternal, that was, and is, and is to come."

Once we realize our true natures, who knows? Perhaps personal fear will no longer dominate and oppress us. Perhaps this path of Magick that we have chosen can eventually take us to such a peaceful place.

But setting sail on the seas of Magick presents a number of challenges, doesn't it? Many of which center on our fears. From the very outset.

The desire to embark on this voyage often stems from a deep sensation of unease. We are not satisfied with the clouded mirror of our limited perceptions, or with the common coin of life and death we have been given. We know there must be more—we can smell it—and we want to find it and make it ours. We have to face the unknown. And our fear.

Setting forth on this journey requires courage—just to get started, we have to confront and overcome many fears—but we also start off with an innate sense of imbalance, which poses another, possibly greater challenge. Will progress on the journey *restore* balance to us? Or will it *exacerbate* that imbalance?

Joseph Campbell said, "The psychotic drowns in the same waters in which the mystic swims with delight."

When we push off from our familiar shore, we, of course, aim to succeed in our voyage; but aren't we always a little afraid that we're not really up to the task? We aim to attain real power and understanding; but aren't we always a little afraid we will be thwarted? As we learn, we aim to be heard; but aren't we always a little afraid we will be ignored? As we grow, we aim to be respected, but

aren't we always a little afraid we will be laughed at? Will we master these fears, or will they end up unfolding into paranoia and mastering us?

Fear is in fact, our constant (and rather annoying) companion on this little voyage, and it will only go its own way once the boat has actually reached the other shore. To deny this is not courage, but mere wishful thinking. As we travel, we need to give our Wild-Eyed Stow-Away a comfortable place to sit and listen politely and patiently to what it has to say. But we can never allow it to distract us; to manipulate us into rash reactions that will capsize our little boat, or into steering our craft into the doldrums of delusion. We have to keep our eye on the horizon and our hand steady on the tiller, despite the screaming. *This* is courage.

Even so, I personally find a bit of comfort in being mindful that, even if our little boat *does* sink in the microcosmic sea, and we sink with it, the celestial gods will go about their slow and inscrutable business as ever; and all stories, great as well as small, are recorded beyond the grasp of time in their supreme, transcendent archive of Existence. Even in failure there is success, if the effort was made with courage, sincerity, and heart.

Aye! feast! rejoice! there is no dread hereafter.
There is the dissolution, and eternal ecstasy in the kisses of Nu! (AL II:44)

And with that I'd like to offer a similar simple toast as that offered by Soror Helena last night: *To Nuit! To courage! To freedom! To joy!*

Will (*performed incorrectly*)

Love is the law, love under will.

Faternally,

Sabazius



UPDATES FROM THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

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

The Electoral College took the following actions at NOTOCON (Cleveland, OH) on August 2, 2019 EV:

Passed the Mastership of Sekhet Bast Ra Oasis (Oklahoma City, OK) from Br. Geoffrey W. to Br. David D.

Chartered Leaping Laughter Oasis as Leaping Laughter Lodge (Minneapolis, MN) under Sr. Harper F.

Extended the tenure limit of the Master of Alombrados Oasis for a period of one year.

Closed Seven Gates Camp (Louisville, KY) at the request of the Master.

Appointed Fr. TLMID to the office of the Revolutionary.

We also announced the creation of an intern pool to assist with the work of the College. V° members with administrative inclinations can write to hattie.quinn@oto-usa.org for more information or to volunteer.

About the Electoral College

Appeals

Those wishing to appeal decisions of the Electoral College may do so in writing to the Supreme Grand Council through the Grand Secretary General (gsg@oto-usa.org).

Those wishing to appeal verdicts of the Grand Tribunal to the Areopagus may do so with the sponsorship of a seated Elector. See our website for contact details of individual electors (<http://ec.oto-usa.org/electors.html>).

Those wishing to appeal Notice of Pending Bad Report at a Local Body may do so by writing to the Secretary of the College outlining the manner in which the Notice was deficient or false.

Attending Meetings

Dues Current Members in Good Standing of V° are invited to attend regular meetings of the Electoral College. We request that those planning to attend first contact the Master of the hosting body to

R.S.V.P. Online regular meetings may be observed by being physically present with a willing Elector. There is a standing invitation to all Lovers to attend this meeting in Dallas-Fort Worth.

Communications

In addition to hosting email lists for masters, mentors, and communication with Grand Lodge, we also maintain a blog of Updates, News, and Transmissions on our website (<http://ec.oto-usa.org/wp>) and are experimenting with a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ECUSGLOTO>).

Initiates with specific concerns or questions regarding the operation of the Electoral College are invited to write to either the President or Secretary. See the included U.S.G.L. Officers Directory for contact details.

Revolutionary

Members in Good Standing of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the IX° living within the United States but not currently serving as Officer or Voting Member of any Governing Body of U.S.G.L. are heartily encouraged to volunteer to the post of Revolutionary by contacting the President or Secretary of the Electoral College. Thus may progress be effected.

Website

The official website of the Electoral College can be found at <http://ec.oto-usa.org>. In addition to the aforementioned resources, one may find information on volunteering to host a meeting or organize a study group in new areas, and other services provided by the College or expected of local bodies within U.S. Grand Lodge.

GRAND LODGE UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Assistant Parliamentarian for Policy Reconciliation
“Speaker, you are out of order.” (WHACK! goes a gavel.)

This is the image that the word “parliamentarian” brings to mind for many people: a person with a gavel who enforces *Robert’s Rules of Order* with an iron fist and no sense of humor. This is not, however, what the U.S. Grand Lodge Parliamentarian does.

Soror Helena is the U.S. Grand Lodge Parliamentarian (parliamentarian@oto-usa.org). In that role, she is the primary resource for questions regarding the operational rules of (and interactions between) administrative, governing, and initiate bodies. The Parliamentarian assists U.S. Grand Lodge officers, governing bodies, committees, and local bodies with procedural issues related to governance; that includes, for example, answering questions brought by Chapters of Rose-Croix. The Parliamentarian works with the Ombudsmen to ensure that accurate information regarding operational rules and governance is dispensed to those in need of it, including but not limited to procedures involved in dispute resolution.

The majority of members with questions about the government of the Order should first consult their local body master and then, perhaps, the office of Ombudsman (ombudsman@oto-usa.org). For those who are unaware, the U.S. Grand Lodge has two members in this role, Ombudsman Sister Shellay Maughan (ombudsman-f@oto-usa.org) and Ombudsman Brother David Melton (ombudsman-m@oto-usa.org). Each Ombudsman serves as an official liaison between the general membership of O.T.O. within the United States and the various governing and administrative bodies of U.S. Grand Lodge. This office can also facilitate communication between members, officers, and governing and administrative bodies, assisting with resolution of problems and grievances.

Joining Soror Helena to assist her in this work, Soror Mackay has recently been appointed the Assistant Parliamentarian for Policy Reconciliation. In this role, Soror Mackay will assist the U.S. Grand Lodge officers, governing bodies, committees, and local bodies by working to ensure that the policies expressed in U.S. Grand Lodge documents are clearly worded and consistent across documents. In addition, the Assistant Parliamentarian will work with the officers, governing bodies, and committees to review policy documents on a regular basis, update them as necessary, and work with U.S. Grand Lodge to see that new policies and policy changes are communicated to the membership in a timely, effective manner.

A MOST UNCON-VENTIONAL DAY: A REPORT FROM OTOpenSPACE AT NOTOCON XII

By Soror Kashmira

“What’s an uncon?” was the most frequently asked question I received on Friday morning and afternoon while facilitating “OTOpenSpace: an Unconference Experience” during NOTOCON XII. As an experienced facilitator and attendee of numerous unconferences, I know where this question is coming from. Creating a space where the participants propose, develop, and run classes on their schedule and according to what they want to talk about can seem completely foreign to people used to a typical scheduled and pre-planned conference format. For many skeptics, it may even seem like a recipe for mass chaos. However, from my experience, I find that it is exactly the type of format in which Thelemites thrive.

I’ve been attending and facilitating unconferences for well over a decade now. Their origins run much longer, however. The origins of unconferences lie in Open Space Technology, a method developed by Harrison Owen in 1985 as he found that coffee breaks and other unorganized meetings were often the most productive parts of a formal conference. Unconferences are a variation on Open Space techniques, where multiple types of facilitation styles can be used, including roundtable discussions, “fish bowl” type information exchanges, classes, demonstrations, etc. I was first introduced to unconferences by a dear friend, Graydancer, who created an educational event (GRUE – Graydancer’s Ropetastic Unconference Extravaganza) that travelled throughout the U.S. The format he used remained the same, but every unconference was unique and could never be fully repeated with the same people and classes, thus making it a truly special and one of a kind event, each and every time. Later on, the GRUE format was used as part of a multi-day traditional conference, thus proving that unconferences and formal, scheduled conferences could exist in the same space.

When I decided to join the local body in formation (at the time) in Pittsburgh in 2015, now named

Golden Thread Camp, I suggested holding a Thelemic-themed Unconference as a main event in 2016. There were more than a few doubts that such a potentially chaotic event could work, but I knew the process would be embraced by Thelemites, as it truly lends itself to being able to do one's Will, however they choose. Golden Thread's Thelemic Unconference in 2016 was a great success and additional unconferences were held again in 2017 and 2018 to rave reviews and demands for more. Over the past 3 years, we've had numerous out-of-town guests come for the weekend event, some attending from as far as the West Coast.

With this background, I decided to embrace the phrase "fear not at all" and propose an unconference for NOTOCON XII. Since I love puns and word play, I decided to name it OTOpenSpace: An Unconference Experience.

An Unconference is exactly its name – it is the antithesis of a planned, scheduled conference. While there can be several ways to run unconferences and use open space technology, I use a simple but effective format.

Participants arrive at the beginning to a blank wall (or in the case of NOTOCON XII, blank whiteboards), with nothing planned and no specific time periods. The wall is set up as an X-Y axis, with a starting and ending point (the "closing circle") and a "now-ish" sign, but no specific time periods listed. There are places on the wall to indicate the location of the sessions in a perpendicular line at the starting point (Locations A, B, C, etc.). After the explanation of how an unconference works, the locations being used, and the four Principles and one Law (more about that in a bit), participants are then instructed to write their proposed classes on squares of paper and affix them to the wall in the location they want and the approximate time frame they want, with the beginning, middle, and end of the wall corresponding to the beginning, middle and end of the unconference. Two people might want a similar class period or even propose similar topics, so dialogue between them and the facilitator happens; the result being some classes are combined, some are held at different ends of the day, some are revised or if time runs out, never even completed. If there is a class that someone wants to attend but is

not proposed, they can propose a class ("Teach me about...") and if another participant wants to do so, they can choose to teach that class.

Concurrent classes are encouraged, as this facilitates the use of the one Law. The time frame for class beginnings and endings is completely fluid; one class might run two hours, whereas another might run five minutes. The "now-ish" marker is moved as the classes begin, and it allows participants to view the schedule to see which classes are running at that moment. The facilitator keeps track of classes, announces new ones as they begin, and otherwise helps the event run, but doesn't negatively interfere with the process. The end point of the Unconference is a closing circle, a time when all of the participants come together and share their thoughts on the experiences if they desire. It is my experience that a closing circle is vital to Unconferences, as the shared experience is often an emotional one for many.

The four Principles and one Law are key to ensuring that the unconference runs in a smooth fashion. They are explained as follows:

Principle 1: Whoever comes is the right people. It is not about how many people show up so long as they are all passionate about the topic. What happens if no one shows? You are probably ahead of your time. Take that time to think about it or join in on another topic.

Principle 2: Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened. No worrying about the should-have-been, could-have-been or might-have-been. That is wasted time. The past is over, and the future hasn't happened yet. All we have is now. Likewise, if you want something to happen, you have to make it happen.

Principle 3: Whenever it starts is the right time. Pay attention to the times in the schedule. There are none. Whenever it starts is when it was meant to start.

Principle 4: When it is over, it's over. If a topic ends in 15 minutes, it is over and time to move on. If it last 4 hours, that is how long it needed to take. The only hard and fast time is when everyone meets for closing circle. One can think of it as aftercare for everyone.

The Law of Mobility: If you are neither benefiting

from nor contributing to a conversation/presentation, take your two feet or other form of mobility and go somewhere you can. This means no one is “stuck” in a presentation that they are disinterested in, and no presenter feels “bad” about someone leaving midway.

One of the hallmarks of the NOTOCON conferences have been the inclusion of vetted speakers and topics. In a way, NOTOCON is often seen a pinnacle of achievement, as only a few people are selected to present, and often the attendees themselves can be experts in the subject matter, leading to a heightened power dynamic. Unconferences, however, don't have vetted speakers. The “wisdom of the crowd” approach is used instead, where participants can politely correct inaccuracies that might be spoken. Given the diverse topics that have been swirling in the magical communities and the ramping emotions therein, offering a platform for anyone to speak can potentially be seen as risky, perhaps even a bit foolish. My unconferences are meant to offer fraternal discussion, not divisive disagreements. In order to maintain a respectful atmosphere, I designated a few guardrails at NOTOCON XII to keep the topics friendly: 1) No interpretations of Liber AL vel Legis. 2) No discussion on “lineages.” 3) Be fraternal, don't be an asshole. Additionally, I reminded participants the views and opinions expressed in the presentations belonged to the respective authors and did not necessarily reflect the views of Ordo Templi Orientis. Due to the wide range of initiate levels present, classes on initiation-based topics were restricted to the Minerval degree only.

I'm truly happy to say that the Unconference at NOTOCON XII followed in the path of other unconferences I've attended and was a resounding success. Over 75 people came throughout the 5-hour timeframe to listen to a class or topic. We had three main areas in which classes could be taught, two at opposite ends of the main Calypso ballroom and one outside in the foyer. There were interesting and thought-provoking classes proposed throughout the day. An emerging topic, one titled “The Mass is Queer,” was proposed on the board at the beginning of the event. The topic was discussed for over two hours, with over 30 people at one point in a circle having fraternal dialogue and sharing their own

perspectives on what it means to them. Admittedly, this topic could be viewed as controversial, and no doubt there are many diverse and complex opinions on it. However, part of the unconference experience is trusting the experience, that the participants will maintain a cordial atmosphere, and as a facilitator being willing to step in if necessary to maintain that fraternal tone. I am very pleased that this topic and the discussion therein was handled by all involved with true sibling understanding and kindness, even when not all participants shared similar views. The feedback I received from participants was one of gratitude, as this gave them a space in order to fully explore their thoughts and opinions.

Concurrent to this class was another lively discussion on Thelema and Witchcraft and the roots in which they come. Soon after and concurrent to other classes, the U.S. Military Collective was able to hold their first muster as part of the Unconference. Several other classes were held including a class on Charlemagne, a class on consent and safety with the spirit world, and a lively discussion on Goetic workings and experiences. There were separate breakout session groups that happened throughout the time, as smaller groups formed to continue their discussions further. Several additional classes were placed on the board, including a participant's desire to dramatically recite “Leah Sublime.” One participant even proposed a class (“what does crossing the Abyss mean”), and another participant agreed to discuss their thoughts on it, though ultimately due to time constraints, that class wasn't able to be held. While numerous classes were proposed, due to the short 5-hour time frame, we were only able to hold six different topics, some concurrent to one another. The open classroom approach permitted the free flow of participants to come and go as necessary. Most participants stayed the whole day, though others left and came back at will, leading to a good mix of energy continually flowing. Of note, generally when I hold unconferences in Pittsburgh, food “magically” appears at some point during the day, so there is no specific lunch break to restrict the time flow. Unfortunately, due to hotel restrictions at NOTOCON XII, this detail wasn't possible. As a result, some participants took lunch at their will and continued their discussions at a separate location, then came back to the space once they were finished. Even with this movement, the event

maintained its momentum. The closing circle was held promptly at the end of the unconference, and there was nothing but gratitude and thanks expressed for such an opportunity.

Overall, I consider the Unconference at NOTOCON XII to be a great success. It provided a fertile ground for both seasoned and inexperienced presenters to discuss topics that they are passionate about. It also provided a space to safely discuss topics that might be too controversial or complex to discuss rationally on standard social media platforms or blogs. Additionally, it encouraged dialogue from voices who might be hesitant or unaccustomed to speaking in front of people. For those looking for some unconventional classes, it offered everyone the ability to learn or teach something different. Of positive note, in a couple of cases, it permitted new speakers to develop classes for future NOTOCON proposals.

On a personal level, it also affected me deeply, as it challenged me mentally to trust fully the unconference method itself, believe in myself, and embrace this verse entirely:

Fear not at all; fear neither men nor Fates, nor gods, nor anything. Money fear not, nor laughter of the folk folly, nor any other power in heaven or upon the earth or under the earth. Nu is your refuge as Hadit your light; and I am the strength, force, vigour, of your arms. (AL III:17)

FEAR NOT NOTOCON

Sb. Lisa Hamaker

Fear not at all; fear neither men nor Fates, nor gods, nor anything. Money fear not, nor laughter of the folk folly, nor any other power in heaven or upon the earth or under the earth. Nu is your refuge as Hadit your light; and I am the strength, force, vigour, of your arms. – Liber AL vel Legis, III:17

My Minerval initiation took place in March of this year, and once the evening wrapped up, I had every intention of celebrating the occasion by getting a tattoo. Somewhere between leaving Horizon Lodge and arriving downtown Seattle, my plans changed and instead of spending the money on ink, I decided to put it towards the 2019 NOTOCON event to be held in Cleveland. The thought of being around many magickal people was unimaginable. Tattoos can happen anytime. NOTOCON only happens every two years. Four months later, I arrived in Cleveland for the conference and having taken my 1° initiation five days prior, I was brand new.

I had things I wanted to get done while in Cleveland. Attend as many classes as I could and soak in as much as my brain would allow. Wear a tuxedo for the first time in an environment I thought would be safe to do. Find a bishop and start training as a novice deacon. At first, my to-do list seemed a little ambitious for my first conference, but I soon realized there was much more that could and would happen.

I wore that tux to the formal dinner and felt safe and accepted. I met many people who identify as I do, genderqueer, and also found allies in those who identify differently. They have my back. I attended a diversity panel where I got to see first-hand the passion of individuals to have conversations on how to better serve the minority groups within our organization.

I found a bishop brave enough to take me as a novice deacon and willing to answer my millions of questions. From the first Mass I ever attended, I never could see myself as a priest or priestess. I knew I wanted to be a deacon, and at the conference, I

could hardly fight back the tears when the Deacon-Sacerdote announcement was made.

The conference also bought freedom. I am restricted at home as to what magick I use and how vocal I can be while performing something as simple as the LBRP or a Resh adoration. But at the hotel, when it was time for Resh, I could ask anyone standing around to perform it with me. The room I shared with two sisters became an honorary classroom. I learned about the hexagram rituals. I heard about Jupiter. I performed the Star Ruby with full volume.

Being new, I surprisingly did not fear anything. I felt welcomed, accepted, and free. There was no reason to fear. Courage is our armor and mine was increased so I could return home to my little muggle world and Fear Not!

MY REFLECTIONS ON DIVERSITY IN THE O.T.O.

by Abbi Habdas (Soror אביגיל)

I am writing this article as a recap of a brief and passionate oratory I delivered during the Diversity Panel at NOTOCON XII. I did not plan to speak, nor did I expect to radiate strong emotions when the panel opened with the following question:

“How can we be diverse in O.T.O.?”

For those who don't know me, I am Filipino.

I did not fully understand the sentiment of needing more diversity within O.T.O. until I travelled to Mexico to assist the U.S.G.L. Latin America Outreach team. Although I am not fluent in Spanish, the Filipino language shares significant portions of vocabulary with Spanish. When we celebrated the Gnostic Mass and performed initiations in Spanish, I was surprised with the wonder I felt. My heart burned with the desire to bring Thelema close to my cultural identity. I yearned to experience Thelema as a Filipino, and yet I knew no one else who was like me.

My cultural and religious upbringing created barriers that made comprehending Thelema difficult. Thelema remained an obscure subject to me that my spouse and I would occasionally discuss over the course of several years. Because of my Filipino biases, I dismissed Thelema and Magick without serious thought because it did not pander to my prejudice. That is to say, my then-Filipino Identity conflicted with Thelema in almost every regard.

Eventually, my mind slowly opened. I embraced Thelema on my own terms and attempted to understand what the Law meant to me. What I found changed my life.

I reflected on *Liber Libræ sub figurâ XXX*:

15. Nevertheless have the greatest self-respect, and to that end sin not against thyself. The sin which is unpardonable is knowingly and

wilfully to reject truth, to fear knowledge lest that knowledge pander not to thy prejudices.

The sword cuts both ways. I typically associated this passage with my prior rejection of Thelema due to my cultural prejudices. Later, I found myself rejecting the entirety of my Filipino Identity in much the same way I initially rejected Thelema. This happened to me, and it may have happened or is happening to others.

To resolve the cognitive dissonance, I started to research Filipino history, folklore, and magick—this time through a Thelemic lens. Babalon, the Mother of Abominations represents being a champion for one's True Will. She is something that I endeavor to study, embody—she is the foundation of my Thelemic Identity. On May 18, 2019, I presented "Finding Babalon: A Cross Cultural Analysis" at Discourses held by Golden Lotus Lodge. This presentation shared my discovery of a strong Babalon archetype in my cultural history. It was through the Great Whore that I had found reconciliation.

The class had an unexpected encore in front of the restrooms on the sixth floor at NOTOCON XII, where I surprisingly found another Filipino amongst our Siblings. I felt compelled to tell them about my research that very moment. I wanted to celebrate our culture; I wanted to share with them that instead of identifying separately as "I am Filipino" and "I am a Thelemite," we can proudly say with no hesitation that we are Filipino-Thelemites.

I am sharing this story because I feel that it is each individual's personal responsibility to define their own Thelemic Identity. For me, defining my Thelemic Identity required overcoming numerous internal barriers. This was a decisive battle for freedom that only I could fight.

Regarding the original question asked at the Diversity Panel at NOTOCON XII, based upon my personal experiences, my view helped me identify efforts at diversity in two categories: external and internal.

Externally, the efforts of our local bodies to create an inclusive and safe space for everyone are critical. I was encouraged to write this article by a

loving community. I have mentors who continue to challenge me to better understand myself. More importantly, my community did not focus on me as a minority but as an individual. I have a Lodge that gave me an opportunity to share my culture to an audience I would not have attracted on my own. I have siblings who are excited with my cultural findings. Last but not least, I have my spouse who supported me with love, and everlasting patience.

Internally, I feel it is equally important that we must, as we do often, self-reflect and uncover the diversity already within ourselves and celebrate it! Diversity in O.T.O. depends on all of us. Diversity goes beyond race, ethnicity, and gender; it can extend to life experiences, religious backgrounds, current beliefs—the list is inexhaustible. By celebrating our differences, we create an inviting environment where everyone will find something that will resonate with their personal Thelemic Identity.

In a nutshell: We attract more diversity when we embrace and celebrate the diversity that already exists in O.T.O.

The Scarlet Tent

The U.S.G.L. Kaaba Colloquium Committee would like to invite all female-identifying and non-binary initiates to join us in celebrating the power of gender minority leadership in The Scarlet Tent, a limited tour of regional retreats that brings these members of O.T.O. together to learn, share, celebrate, and find the joy in communion with each other. We come together in a safe and supportive space to share in an intimate weekend designed to discuss issues facing us in our Work with topics offered by invited regional leaders and facilitated by sisters of the local body and the Kaaba Committee.

You must be an active current member with U.S.G.L to attend.

Registration is \$40.00 per person and all monies support the local body in providing meals for the weekend.

For more information or to register, visit thescarlettent.org/info.

The Scarlet Tent will tour through the following local bodies on the following dates:

Horizon Lodge, Seattle, WA – October 26-27, 2019 EV
Alombrados Oasis, New Orleans, LA – March 7-8, 2020 EV
Knights Templar Oasis, Salem, MA – September 11-13, 2020 EV
Blazing Star Oasis, Oakland, CA – March 5-7, 2021 EV
Crux Ansata Oasis, Denver, CO – September 17-19, 2021 EV
Black Sun Lodge, Cleveland, OH – March 4-6, 2022 EV



THE SCARLET TENT

SCARLET LOVE

by Jori-Ville Rahkonen

When I feel the essence of my poetry
 Everything is alright
 This self-crafted vessel
 My imperfect Universe
 Of my dream: The Poet to be!
 And what am I?
 Taken by this self-created Cosmos of mine
 Of whose structure is in balance with mine
 While this rhythm of success sweeps me into Nuit's
 caress...
 I'm thine!

The Sun of my music of words
 Shines its light to connect with other Stars
 They may find comfort and thus this Love of mine
 That I cannot abandon
 'n' be it not so!
 Since thine I am forever
 Muse of mine
 This Scarlet Love
 From beyond time

Art thou shattered, one God!
 To find questions in silence
 And to despair in wrath
 Distress to conquer mind
 Thee, I seek to find, my Scarlet Love
 For thee I am still
 In this being, time distilled
 And Lo! I didn't see!
 My will is done!
 And thy secret
 Thy secret is the Sun

Whisper, since I hear thee...
 Yet not
 Since the blood from thy Cup
 Would melt my imperfections
 Or turn them into Gold
 So shout indeed
 Shout thine Word to all the directions of the Globe
 With thine might
 That no woman hath ever seen
 With thine Wand
 Of Θελημα
 My Scarlet Love
 Of Αγαπη

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

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

Br. Kenneth and Sr. Monica of Bubastis Oasis
 joyously announce the birth of a new star:
 Solomon Richard, born Sol in Leo, Luna in Taurus,
 dies Jovis.

Love is the law, love under will.



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O.T.O. "does not include the A.:A.:, with which august body it is, however, in close alliance."

— Liber III

O.T.O. has long worked in close alliance with the A.:A.:, which first proclaimed the Law of Thelema to the world. The A.:A.: is a teaching, testing, and initiatory system dedicated to the personal spiritual advancement of its individual members. Within A.:A.: all services are rendered free of charge, and no social activities are held. O.T.O. and A.:A.: have jointly issued the journal *The Equinox* since 1912 EV, now in its fourth volume. Although they are distinctly separate organizations, neither including nor subordinate to the other, O.T.O. has historically assisted A.:A.: with practical matters that lie outside the latter's primary mission, which is purely spiritual in nature. Aspirants to the A.:A.: may write to:

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