

AGAPÉ

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of the U. S. Grand Lodge of
Ordo Templi Orientis

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November 1, 2006 EV



From the Grand Master

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

The U.S.G.L. website now features a reorganized and reformatted online library, which may be found at:

lib.oto-usa.org

The new library features a collection of A.∴A.∴ and O.T.O. Libri organized by number as well as by class. There is also a collection of essays and poetry by Frater Baphomet X°. Many thanks to Brother Craig Dickson for creating and maintaining this resource.

The U.S.G.L. Library's lending-by-mail program is now open on a trial basis to members in good standing of Sixth Degree and above, who may write to librarian@oto-usa.org for a catalog and information on lending policies. Lending

for local bodies and members of other degrees will be phased in over the coming months.

Certified Initiator Training will be offered in Portland, Oregon on Saturday January 6, 2007 EV. For complete information, see:

[sekhemaat.com/wiki/index.php/
Certified_Initiator_Training_2007_ev](http://sekhemaat.com/wiki/index.php/Certified_Initiator_Training_2007_ev)

The next Pastoral Counseling Workshop has been tentatively scheduled for July 2007 EV in Chicago. Stand by for further details.

Registration is now open for NOTOCON VI, "Beauty and Strength," which will be held in Salem Massachusetts. See the article elsewhere in this issue for further details.

Love is the law, love under will.

Sabazius

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From the Electoral College

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

The Electoral College at its Summer Meeting, July 22, 2006 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

Local Body Closure

None.

Change of Master

Fr. Svperabo (Chris Freckleton) has been confirmed as Master of Horus Oasis (Salt Lake City, UT) effective July 22, 2006 EV.

Change of Body Status

LVX Oasis (Los Angeles, CA) has been re-chartered as LVX Lodge with Sr. Cindy Weinstein as Master effective July 22, 2006 EV.

New Charters

Sr. Anita Kraft has been granted charter as Master of Theorte Ekstasis Camp (Louisville, KY) effective July 22, 2006 EV.

Continued on next page ↗



Mysteria Mystica Maxima ✠ *Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica*

AGAPÉ

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The College wishes to express its appreciation to the past and present Masters of each of the above bodies. We wish each of them the best in their new offices and endeavors.

Ninth Degree Revolutionary

A worthy Thrice Holy, Thrice Illuminated and Thrice Illustrious Brother (who wishes to remain anonymous) has been appointed Revolutionary of the Grand Lodge of the United States, Ordo Templi Orientis, pursuant to section 4.13 paragraphs A, B, and C of the U.S.G.L. bylaws, effective July 22, 2006 EV.

The Electoral College possesses one most singular power. Every eleven years, or in the case of a vacancy occurring, they choose two persons from the Ninth Degree, who are charged with the duty of Revolution.

It is the business of these persons constantly to criticise and oppose the acts of the Supreme and Most Holy King, whether or no they personally approve of them. Should he exhibit weakness, bodily, mental, or moral, they are empowered to appeal to the O.H.O. to depose him; but they, alone of all the members of the Order, are not eligible to the Succession.

—Liber CXCIV

We now have one such Brother, chosen to serve with the duty of Revolution; however, one vacancy remains to be filled. Members in good standing of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the IX° in the United States (who are not serving as an officer or voting member of any Governing or Administrative Body under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Grand Lodge) wishing to volunteer to stand for election to the office of Revolutionary by the Electoral College are encouraged to write the President of the E.C. —see p. 2 for contact information.

Other Business

The College has chosen to publish a summary of the A.R.F. data on the EC website on an annual basis.

We have formally requested permission from the S.H.K. that the Electoral College be allowed to create an E-list, for the purpose of discussion of administrative matters and to facilitate fruitful and respectful communication between the leadership of the local bodies and the Electoral College, provided that the following conditions are met:

- That the list be under E.C. control and moderation, as deemed appropriate by the S.H.K. and the President of the E.C.
- That each member of the list meet one of the following criteria:
 - The executive team
 - Secretary of the Grand Tribunal and Ombudsman
 - Seated electors
 - Current body masters, treasurers, secretaries and deputies.
 - Heads of active Camps in Formation.
- That participation is voluntary and a privilege, and that it is understood that members may be removed or moved to read-only status at the discretion of the E.C. moderators.
- Questions concerning Electoral College policies will be addressed solely by the E.C. President or his/her designated representative.

Hosting E.C. Meetings

Local bodies that are interested in hosting the Spring and Autumn meetings of the Electoral College (as well as Summer meetings in even numbered years) are encouraged to write the President of the E.C. —see p. 2 for contact information.

Upcoming E.C. Meetings

Winter meeting scheduled for Saturday, January 13, 2007 EV via online medium.

Spring 2007 EV Meeting tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 14 with Policy & Procedures Meeting Sunday, April 15, hosted by Sekhet Bast Ra Oasis (Oklahoma City, OK).

Summer 2007 EV Meeting scheduled for Friday, August 10, 2007 EV prior to NOTOCON at Knights Templar Oasis (Salem, MA).

Attending E.C. Meetings

Dues current members in good standing of V° and above are welcome to attend and observe the in-person Electoral College Meetings. We request that those planning to attend contact the Master of the hosting body so that adequate arrangements can be made.

Communication with the E.C.

I would like to invite any initiates with suggestions about how we can do our job better, or who have specific concerns or questions regarding the operation of the Electoral College, to write to either the President or Secretary of the E.C. For contact information, please see p. 2.

It is my goal as President of the Electoral College to take effective measures bringing about better communication between the E.C. and the membership of all local bodies. Any input provided to this end is warmly welcomed. I believe that communication is of benefit to the entire Order in our mutual goals and aspiration toward enlightenment in all forms.

All postal mail correspondence with the Electoral College Secretary should be sent to the address listed on p. 2.

Website

The official E.C. website can be found at:

ec.oto-usa.org

Forms

Bodymasters seeking up-to-date forms for the *Annual Report*, *Change of Mastership Application*, *Application for Oasis Status*, *Application for Lodge Status*, or closure forms will find them (exclusively) at:

ec.oto-usa.org/ecservices.htm

Bodymasters not already in possession of the username and password (distributed on August 18, 2004 EV) will be granted them upon request (see E.C. contact information on p. 2).

All other previous versions of these forms are now obsolete and should not be used.

Love is the law, love under will.

In the Bonds of the Order,
Frater Dvgl's Jms Blk
President, Electoral College
O.T.O. U.S.A.

From the Secretary of the Grand Tribunal

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

Of the Trinity of Principles, “Peace-Tolerance-Truth,” the word “Tolerance” appears to me the most misused and misunderstood.

This declaration of “Tolerance” precedes the writings of Aleister Crowley and is usually found within the preambles of O.T.O. certificates (“Toleranz” on the 33rd degree certificate of Eugene John Wieland for example), in correspondence by members of the Order, and within official pronouncements like *Liber LII*. More recently, the Trinity of Principles has been included in the U.S.G.L. Values Statement as follows:

“We value hospitality in our community and promote peace, tolerance, truth, and respect to the Order within our temples and precincts.”

oto-usa.org/planning.html

According to Masonic scholar Albert Mackey (*An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, 1919 EV), the grand characteristic of Freemasonry is Toleration “in religion and politics.” However, addressing the former, Mackey notes that Masons shall be of “that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves.” (*Constitutions*, 1723, p. 50) This statement could be viewed as possibly applicable to a religious Order with a specific Holy text that holds a number of principles in common. Regarding “religion,” it should hardly be surprising that within a religious Order—particularly one where individual gnosis (“to know”) is stressed (if not necessitated)—there’s a fairly strong possibility that a member will encounter opinions of all shades and hues.

For example, I’ve both read and encountered a host of claims to ‘attainment’ by Order members (as we know, the degrees of O.T.O. are not necessarily markers of ‘attainment’). The reasons for *why* these claims are made may be manifold, but the underlying one should be obvious; the claimants want people to *believe* (give validation to) their claim.

Encountering such claims, we, as individuals, have the ability to judge for ourselves whether they have merit or not. Using a real world example, if one were to visit a physician’s office for an annual physical and discover the doctor did not know what a stethoscope was, hopefully one’s “B.S. detector” would be going *ring-a-ding-ding*.

Determinations that result from observation and reasoning are equally applicable to spiritual claims. Assertions that this is not the case only aid and abet superstition.

*We place no reliance On virgin or pigeon;
Our Method is Science, Our Aim is Religion.*

While this is not the motto of the O.T.O., it is in line with the Order’s emphasis on Scientific Religion. In other words, if we determine that there isn’t sufficient evidence to support a claim, then we are completely within our rights to disagree.

No doubt, in an ideal world this would be easily discernible under the “light of common sense.” Additionally, one’s criticism need not be overly brash or worse yet, vindictive, and may best be kept to oneself. Nonetheless, such judgements don’t constitute *intolerance*.

More broadly speaking, there’s no impetus that I *accept* wholecloth whatever opinion happens to be made in my presence. Far from it. Toleration doesn’t amount to a recipe for throwing away one’s critical faculties and acquiescing in nonsense. I’m under no obligation to take anything based on “faith.” Nor does the simple act of questioning misleading claims amount to a lack of tolerance. While an individual may have the right to espouse any and all manner of stupid opinions, I am under no obligation to agree.

Put more succinctly, tolerance does not mean *acceptance*.

Relatedly, one of the things too often brought to my attention is the prevalence of Order bashing, or leadership bashing (so called) in one form or another on public Internet forums such as LiveJournal. Too often this bellicose behavior is excused with a defense that members of the Order should and will *de facto* tolerate any and all such communication. While the Order does enjoy a healthy environment of freedom in discourse, an appeal to *tolerance* in badmouthing the Order hardly applies. This should be obvious. Indeed, publicly slandering the Order may very well have any number of adverse consequences including but not limited to a complaint filed with the Grand Tribunal. Again, the “light of common sense” appears to be eclipsed when using *tolerance* as a justification for uncurbed writing, and perhaps it is incumbent to review a few basic points concerning the Order:

1. The O.T.O. is a hierarchical religious Order that has a strong emphasis on military-style discipline in the upper degrees. Openly complaining about the Order instead of individually addressing whatever issues you have via the Path of Mediation may result in consequences you won’t like.
2. Membership in the Order involves discipline—particularly in the form of Oaths one takes to the Order. As a member, you may be held accountable to your word in instances where there is a clear breach of the commitments you have made.

Pretensions to equality that don’t exist in a pathetic attempt to negate the hierarchical structure of the Order will be addressed—particularly when baseless accusations and demands on the Order are made. In other words, *tolerance* is attended to by the Order within the context of the Order and all that is included with that; isolating *tolerance* at the exclusion of Oaths one has taken isn’t going to fly.

According to Skeat’s *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, the word “tolerance” is connected to the Anglo Saxon *ðolian*, “to endure.” Communication—particularly of those things that we don’t necessarily want to confront—may cause one to “suffer.” However, a noisome screed with little to no acknowledgement of the hierarchical structure within which tolerance is enjoyed has its limits.

“I can do nothing but wait, binding chosen knights with an oath—the oath of the Knights of the Royal Mystery . . . that God is one; that to love God and man is enough. . . . Peace, Tolerance, Truth.” —*The Scorpion* by Aleister Crowley

Love is the law, love under will.

In the Bonds of the Order,
Dathan Biberstein

The Revival of Tolerance

Frater Ash

Have respect also to the Will of thy Fellow, not hindering him in his way save as he may overly jostle thee in thine. For by the Practice of this Tolerance thou shalt come sooner to the Understanding of this Equality of all Things in Our Lady Nuit, and so the high Attainment of universal Love. —Liber Aleph, Chapter Eo, “De Virtute Tolerantiae,” p. 146.

Toleration has got a bad reputation in the last few years. There are nasty whispers that it means coddling the weak, indulging the undisciplined, dismissing responsibility, and denying accountability. Unfortunately, there certainly are initiates who lack discipline, who have a hard time accepting responsibility for their own actions, and who find it difficult to bring bad behavior to account (and make no mistake, this is seen regardless of where one looks on the political spectrum). Those problems are distinct, however, and have far more to do with cultural habits, emotional immaturity, and a lack of certain skills than they have to do with a mythical ideology that celebrates mediocrity or ignores abuse. These problems, more importantly, have nothing to do with *tolerance*, which is, in fact, a cornerstone of our ancient fraternity.

Aleister Crowley himself recognized the importance of tolerance within O.T.O. In “Concerning the Law of Thelema,” he mentions this virtue several times:

It is to be noted that wherever teamwork is necessary social tolerance is an essential.
...

Tolerance also is taught in the higher grades; so that no man can be even an Inspector of the Order unless he be equally well disposed to all classes of opinion. . . . With this provision, it is easy to see that intolerance and snobbery are impossible; for the example set by members of the universally respected higher grades is against this. I may add that members are bound together by participation in certain mysteries, which lead to a synthetic climax in which a single secret is communicated whose nature is such as to set at rest for ever all division on those fertile causes of quarrel, sex and religion. . . .

A fortiori, then, it must be possible to train men to independence, to tolerance, to nobility of character, and to good manners, and this is done in the O.T.O. by certain very efficacious methods. . . .

Tolerance is not only a fundamental principle of O.T.O. specifically, it is equally true of Thelema in general. Crowley himself summed it up perfectly:

Every Star has its own Nature, which is “Right” for it. We are not to be missionaries, with ideal standards of dress and morals, and such hard ideas. We are to do what we Will, and leave others to do what they Will. We are infinitely tolerant, save of intolerance. —New Commentary, II:57

Tolerance is an absolute requirement within any Thelemic society because we recognize that every person has their own unique Will and path to it. By joining our Holy Order, certain Oaths are taken

explained clearly in *Magick Without Tears*, “We insist from the beginning on the individual character of the work,” and, “I certainly have no intention of holding you down to a narrow path of work or any path.” Tolerance is all about embodying this statement, which implies a letting go of needing others to Work as you do.

Tolerance isn’t about accepting bad behavior; it is about celebrating our sovereign individuality. Tolerance doesn’t mean we avoid conflict at all costs, it means we fight when necessary with respect and good faith. Tolerance certainly doesn’t mean abandoning our principles, for they are outlined within our ceremonies of initiation, and to them we are all obligated and oath-bound. They compose the firm pole that supports our inclusive tent wherein all good brothers and sisters may dwell in Joy and Freedom.

Tolerance is an absolute requirement within any Thelemic society because we recognize that every person has their own unique Will and path to it.

under Will, and all members should rightfully expect their fellows to maintain fidelity and good faith. At the same time, within the boundaries of our fraternal oaths and principles, the Order provides a sanctuary wherein initiates may explore, experiment, and celebrate in their own Great Work. For some, this Work will look like traditional A.'.A.'. teachings—for others, the methodology of their Great Work might look quite different. Our duty is not to judge self-righteously the Way a sibling travels to her own Will—it is to help her along!—providing support, feedback, and inspiration. As Crowley

Tolerance requires Strength and Courage, and is the key to Love—after all, “intolerance is evidence of impotence” (*Confessions*, ch. 69). Said another way, the need to impose rigid standards and narrow definitions on others is a symptom of fear and uncertainty, and works against our common aspirations of Liberty and Universal Brotherhood. Therefore, it is time to rehabilitate this lofty word, to give it its rightful respect and return it to a place of honor, a true virtue to which we should all aspire. With that, let this epistle end with our traditional salutation: *Peace, Tolerance, Truth.*

Agapé Volume 8, Number 4 submission deadline:

☉ in ☿ • ☽ in ♀ • dies Lunæ • Anno IV:xiv

Monday, January 1, 2007 EV

Please send your local body reports and governing body reports to:

agape@oto-usa.org

We will also accept other kinds of work, including essays, art, and photography.

Submission guidelines are available at www.oto-usa.org/agape.html. For more information contact agape@oto-usa.org.

NOTOCON Update

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

We have reached the proposal deadline and have selected tentative speakers. The list has been approved by the National Conference Committee Chair and the Supreme and Holy King. All speakers have been notified of their approval. We received a record number of proposals and had a very difficult time narrowing the list down. Everything was so exciting or interesting to us and we ultimately tried to find something for everyone. Thank you all for submitting your proposals!

Vending applications are now being taken and first priority will go to Order members. There is limited space however, so if you are considering vending apply now at:

vending@notocon.org

Registration is now open. The hotels are already taking reservations and the contact info can be found on the website under "Accommodations."

If you are in need of a roommate, send your requirements for a roommate and whether you have already reserved a room to:

roommate@notocon.org

Arrangements have been made to host the Electoral College

meeting the Friday of NOTOCON. There will be a charge for non-E.C. attendees and lunch will be provided. There is a Man of Earth Triad event running opposite this meeting, giving all early attendees a Friday activity, "Discussions on Finer Points of Minerval Symbolism," with a variety of speakers. You will be asked to sign up for either event at the time of registration if you plan to attend.

The next big push for the Local Committee is in the area of food and gifts. Menus are being finalized, food sampled, and entertainment sought on one hand and donations are being accepted on the other. If you would like to donate to the appreciation gifts, please contact our Gift Basket Organizer at:

gifts@notocon.org

Volunteers are as always encouraged to contact me at:

onsite@notocon.org

If you wish to volunteer to a specific coordinator, you can find their info on the contacts page.

For General Information contact info@notocon.org.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,
Soror Z
NOTOCON On-Site Chair

Liber AL vel Legis: The Book of the Law The U.S. Grand Lodge Presentation Edition



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

The O.T.O. U.S. Grand Lodge Presentation Edition of *Liber AL vel Legis: The Book of the Law* are still available. This edition is exclusively for O.T.O. members and has been designed with the O.T.O. initiations in mind. It measures 4 1/4" wide, 5 9/16" long. It has a red faux leather cover with gold foil stamps on the front and spine, a front presentation page, and space in the back for noting one's advancement in the M.:M.:M.: and E.G.C. Each copy is only \$5.00 plus shipping.

To obtain copies of the presentation edition, individuals and local bodies may contact Magus Books at:

800-99-MAGUS
(800-996-2487)

or visit:

www.magusbooks.com/main/otobotl.htm

To order, you must be an active member of the O.T.O. Membership subject to verification.

Love is the law, love under will.

Recruitment

Liber CI makes it clear that a fundamental duty of every initiate is to help recruit new members into the ranks of the Order.

Duties, Third

7. *They shall be diligent in circulating all tracts, manifestos, and all other communications which the Order may from time to time give out for the instruction or emancipation of the profane.*

This clause gives the first method of recruitment—passing out literature. There are two given purposes for such writings: for *instruction* and for *emancipation* (i.e. acceptance of the Law). These suggest that such writings would be designed to influence people to accept the Law and, by association, to join the Order (two actions tied together throughout *CI*). While we can debate the relative merits of passing out tracts to strangers, the underlying theme is clear: the Order should develop written materials designed to instruct and influence non-members.

It is arguable that this clause is no longer relevant with the Internet. After all, more people read these tracts online every month than likely did in Crowley's entire lifetime. There is a major issue to consider, however, and that is the impact of personal contact. Reading *Liber CI* (or some similar document) online becomes an abstract activity, which hides the fact that it is addressing an actual group of people who are trying to manifest these principles in real life. By handing a tract to someone, it is showing that people are involved and care enough to do this work. This is not a call for Scientology-style flyer-handing on

influence to join. The member should even make new friends with this purpose in mind! (Interesting that neither clause mentions family).

U.S. Grand Lodge has issued a recent statement saying that members are not currently expected to go to these lengths, saying, "While we do encourage members to do their part in recruiting new members, we do not expect or encourage them to aggressively proselytize among their friends, employers, and any wealthy or powerful acquaintances they may have." It is important, however, that we not overlook two underlying lessons of these clauses.

First, *CI* essentially gives permission to recruit—members may labor to grow membership in O.T.O., to "widen its scope." Second, Crowley wanted people in positions of civil authority to join, so that the principles of the Order might spread into the secular arena. The language makes it plain that Crowley wanted the Order to be highly influential, to the point of being a vehicle for bringing the civil State into the Law. Is this vision overly ambitious? Perhaps, perhaps not. Either way, there is yet another implicit lesson here: Crowley wanted there to be an interconnection between O.T.O., the community, and the State. Said another way, *CI does not envision an O.T.O. disconnected or hidden from society, but rather the Order should be deeply integrated with it so that we may better promulgate the Law.*

There is a grand vision here. On the one hand, there is an Order of great height filled with influential people, laboring to

Crowley wanted there to be an interconnection between O.T.O., the community, and the State.

the street. Rather, it is a call to recognize that *there is power in personal contact that the Internet cannot compete with*. This clause requires members to make exactly that kind of contact.

Duties, Tenth

40. *Every Brother is expected to use all his influence with persons in a superior station of life (so called) to induce them to joint the Order. Royal personages, ministers of State, high officials in the Diplomatic, Naval, Military, and Civil Services are particularly to be sought after, for it is intended ultimately that the temporal power of the State be brought into the Law, and led into freedom and prosperity by the application of its principles.*

Duties, Eleventh

42. *Every Brother is expected to do all in his power to induce his personal friends to accept the Law and join the Order. He should therefore endeavor to make new friends outside the Order, for the purpose of widening its scope.*

Initiates are expected both to recruit new members and to influence people to accept the Law. In fact, the member is expected to go to quite extraordinary lengths, using all available influence to induce friends and people in positions of civil

induce civil government to adopt the Law and the principles of O.T.O. On the other is an Order that has great breadth, with members reaching out to friends to join, thereby spreading the Law horizontally through society.

Duties, Seventh

28. *Members of the Order are to regard those without its pale as possessing no rights of any kind, since they have not accepted the Law, and are therefore, as it were, troglodytes, survivals of a past civilisation, and to be treated accordingly. Kindness should be shown towards them, as towards any other animal, and every effort should be made to bring them into Freedom.*

This is a tricky article that has been the source of much trouble and misunderstanding. A *troglodyte* is literally a "cave-dweller," although Crowley was here using it in its more modern sense of one who is a member of an extinct race. U.S.G.L.'s statement addresses this clause by saying, "O.T.O. does not now encourage its members to treat those outside the Order as inferiors who

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possess no rights.” Grand Master General Sabazius X° also gave an address at the first NOTOCON, saying that this clause conflicts with both *Liber Oz* and *AL* (I:3, “Every man and every woman is a star”), and called on all members to show “friendship towards all men and women who value Liberty.”

Let’s go ahead, though, and take this clause at face value for the moment. First, a definition: “without its pale” is a way of saying “beyond its borders.” But what is the border of O.T.O.? A straightforward reading would be simply those who are not initiated members. However, a close examination reveals that it is defined by the acceptance of the Law of Thelema, not simple membership. After all, would Crowley believe that members of A. .A. . are troglodytes if they are not also members of O.T.O.?

Okay, let’s go from there—anyone who hasn’t accepted the Law is a troglodyte, as it were, with no rights of any kind, and Order members are to “treat them accordingly.” What treatment are they accorded? Crowley tells us: *kindness, combined with an effort to bring them into the Law*. So, even if we go so far as to accept the idea that all people who have not accepted the Law (including our mothers, spouses, children, and good friends) are equitable with animals, we are nevertheless to treat them “kindly.”

Etymologically, “kind” comes from O.E. *gecynde* “natural, native, innate,” originally “with the feeling of relatives for each other,” which developed into “with natural feelings,” to “well-disposed, benign, compassionate.” As Crowley was a fan of etymology, we may take his example and interpret his injunction to mean treating troglodytes as if they were *related kin* (if perhaps a bit backwards, Æonically-speaking), with actions that are at least *benign* (i.e. gentle, not harmful) and at most *well-disposed* (i.e. having a positive, sympathetic, friendly attitude). When possible, members should also labor to *inspire them to accept the Law* generally and join the Order specifically (again, two things that *CI* lumps together).

So, although U.S.G.L. has dismissed this clause, the general lesson is a positive one: folks who have not accepted the Law, despite their so-called lack of rights (*Liber Oz*, anyone?), should nevertheless be well-treated as if family, with the aim of leading them to accept the Law and perhaps even to join the Order. In other words, every non-Thelemite we meet is not an opportunity to be smug, derogatory, or rude, but is rather a chance to bring yet one more person into Freedom. This is far more likely to happen by exemplifying the noble and honorable traits outlined in *Liber CI*.

When siblings are in financial need, members are expected to help out. They should do this either by offering financial assistance or by finding them paid employment, if lacking.

Money & Property

Duties, Second

3. All Brethren shall be exceedingly punctual in the payment of Lodge Dues. This is to take precedence of all other calls upon the purse.

Duties, Sixth

22. All Brethren are bound by their fealty to offer their service in their particular trade, business, or profession, to the Grand Lodge. For example, a stationer will supply Grand Lodge with paper, vellum, and the like; a bookseller offer any books to the Library of Grand Lodge which the Librarian may desire to possess; a lawyer will execute any legal business for Grand Lodge, and a railway or steamship owner or director see to it that the Great Officers travel in comfort wherever they may wish to go.

These two clauses are together because they are the only mention of mandatory exchange from member to Order. The first clause is rather straightforward, which is based upon the Masonic model, where members paid all dues to the local Lodge, a portion of which went to the Grand Lodge. What is interesting is that it calls for dues to take the very highest priority, above all other “calls upon the purse.” Does this mean dues should be paid before rent, utilities, taxes, medical care, and food? Although a literal reading says yes, a more subtle reading gives another answer. A *purse* is also a bag for carrying available money. Considering the audience Crowley was intending

to reach, it is reasonable that this duty refers to paying dues before trips to the French Riviera or throwing extravagant balls. Of course, as with most things, this is a relative issue—the general principle here is that *dues should come before unnecessary or frivolous purchases*.

The second clause is a requirement to give of one’s professional services to the Order. U.S.G.L. has issued a statement saying, “Members who are professionals, tradesmen, or businessmen are not expected to donate their products or services to the Order, though such donations are gratefully received.” In these economic times this is a wise correction, since mandatory donation of such services and materials could very well mean the end of a small business, and the object of this clause is certainly not to squeeze its members. It is rather a reflection of Crowley’s attraction to the European feudal system, saying that members owe “fealty” to Grand Lodge, one definition of which is “the fidelity owed by a vassal to his feudal lord,” i.e., “Great Officers.” U.S.G.L. is simply making it clear that O.T.O. members are not vassals to any lords, and therefore do not *owe* them professional service or materials (although they are encouraged to do so whenever possible).

There are several underlying principles here, however, of useful import. The first is embodied in the word, “fealty,” which also means fidelity, faithfulness, or allegiance. This word insinuates

that every initiate is expected to be a steady and loyal member of their Grand Lodge. Moreover, members should strive to see that Grand Lodge is well-equipped to function smoothly and efficiently. Finally, Grand Lodge officers are due respect, and while they may not be feudal lords, they do require assistance from all Order members in the execution of their duties.

Duties, Third

8. They may offer suitable books and pictures to the Libraries of the Profess-Houses of the Order.

Duties, Fourth

9. Every Brother who may possess mines, land, or houses more than he can himself constantly occupy, should donate part of such mines or land, or one or more of such houses to the Order.

10. Property thus given will be administered if he desire it in his own interest, thus effecting a saving, since large estates are more economically handled than small. But the Order will use such property as may happen to lie idle for the moment in such ways as it may seem good, lending an unlet house (for example) to some Brother who is in need, or allowing an unused hall to be occupied by a Lodge.

11. (Yet in view of the great objects of the Order, endowment is welcome.)

Duties, Eighth

33. Every Brother is expected to bear witness in his last will and testament to the great benefit that he hath received from the Order by bestowing upon it part or the whole of his goods, as he may deem fit.

Crowley expected a lot of generosity from O.T.O. members, including donating and even willing all kinds of property, such as books, artwork, land, halls, houses, money, and even mines (an “endowment” is a type of donation that results in regular income). Oddly, he suggests that the Order act as a kind of property management company, explaining that it is more economical for O.T.O. to manage many properties than for an individual to manage only one or a small few. We also see a hint of Crowley’s socialist side, saying that property donated to the Order will be used where needed (i.e. a voluntary redistribution of wealth).

In large part, these clauses reflect the audience Crowley was hoping to reach, i.e., people who own mines and have spare houses sitting empty. At the same time, #10 above shows he was aware that not every member would always be flush. We will see later on that Crowley intended the Order to offer a limited form of welfare for members going through tough times. However, we will now see the first ethical principle of fraternity addressed in *CI*: generosity between members.

Duties, Second

2. The private purse of every Brother should always be at the disposal of any Brother who may be in need. But in such a case it is a great mischief if the one ask, and the other consent; for if the former be really in need, his pride is wounded by his asking; and if not, the door is opened to beggars and imposters, and all manner of arrant knaves and rogues such as are no true Brethren. But the Brother who is possessed of this world’s goods should make it his business to watch the necessity of all those Brethren with whom he may be personally acquainted, anticipating their wants in so wise and kindly and delicate a manner that it shall appear as if it were the payment of a debt. And what help is given shall be given with discretion, so that the relief may be permanent rather than temporary.

Privileges, Sixth

60. Members of the Order may expect Brethren to busy themselves in finding remunerative occupation for them, where they lack it, or, if possible, to employ them personally.

These two clauses are unambiguous: when siblings are in financial need, members are expected to help out. They should do this either by offering financial assistance or by finding them paid employment, if lacking. In short, members should be generous with each other when need arises.

Crowley here offers some advice on the proper attitude. First, he suggests that one should not help a sibling who openly asks for it, assuming that “true Brethren” would never ask, being prevented by wounded pride. If a member helps one who actually asks for aid, then the door becomes open for beggars, imposters, arrant knaves, and rogues. Rather, *siblings should keep a close eye on each other*, anticipating need and stepping in with assistance before a request is even possible. Further, aid should be provided with almost a sense of obligation, as if paying a debt. Finally, the giving of aid should be done with a kindly and delicate disposition, and with discretion.

The general principle here is twofold: *generosity* and *watching over each other*. The implicit frame is one of “we’re all in this together” and that *O.T.O. is a family*. While members are not responsible for the well-being of others, they are nevertheless duty-bound to keep an eye out for each other and to help out when it is warranted. Assistance in times of need is to be given as if it were the payment of a debt, which suggests an attitude of kindly obligation. Such an outlook is the backbone of a noble society, which is a big part of Crowley’s vision.

There is another way of reading “it is a great mischief if the one ask, and the other consent; for if the former be really in need, his pride is wounded by his asking; and if not, the door is opened to...such as are no true Brethren.” This line is saying that one who falsely asks for assistance is not a “true Brother.” A more general principle embedded within this line states that true Brethren do not ask for that which is not their due, but rather are only motivated by what they can provide. True Brethren do not take advantage of others, do not swindle, cheat, mislead, or otherwise seek undue benefits. *A True Brother does not ask what he can get but what he can give.*

Next issue: Part 3, “Profess Houses & Other Benefits” and “Mothers & Children”

SK 931—An Introduction

I'd like to introduce you to our brother.* This brother won't be in attendance at our Gnostic Mass. He won't be taking initiation. He won't be participating in the rites of Sol Invictus Oasis, at least not for a good long while. Let me introduce you to Brother Damien Echols SK 931. I wish that I could do so in person, but he's in prison right now, on death row in an Arkansas field. He's been there for thirteen years.

Some of you may have heard of him already. There have been books, like Mara Leveritt's *Devil's Knot*, and two H.B.O. documentaries, *Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills*, and *Paradise Lost 2: Revelations*. There are websites, the most well known being wm3.org, which includes case information, document and evidence archives, and updates. For those who have not heard, "West Memphis 3" is the media-given name for Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin, and Jessie Misskelley, three teenagers that were convicted in 1993 EV for the horrific "satanic ritualistic homicide" of three eight-year-old boys in West Memphis, Arkansas. Though there was no conclusive evidence of their involvement, motive, murder weapon, ritual paraphernalia, or connection to any of the victims, all three were convicted based on Misskelley's confession, extracted after police held the mentally-challenged 17 year-old, with a documented I.Q. of just 72, for at least seven hours without parental or legal counsel. Less than an hour of the interrogation was actually recorded.¹

I won't spend much time going over the case. There's plenty of information out there for those of you wishing to look. Suffice it to say, three little boys never got to grow up, and three young men were convicted. Echols was sentenced to die by lethal injection, while Baldwin and Misskelley were each sentenced to life in prison. The evidence? There was

* To clarify: I don't refer to Damien as "brother" in the sense typically used by O.T.O. initiates, given his very un-free state. His incarceration for a triple homicide would, I imagine, preclude the use of the term "brother" for many of my fellow initiates. Rather, I use the term to denote his alliance with our philosophy and practices, not necessarily affiliation with O.T.O. *per se*.

literally none presented against 16 year-old Baldwin, save his association with Echols and hearsay. The only evidence against Misskelley was his obviously coerced confession which, even after hours of rehearsal time, still included many facts that were known at the time to be false.

Eighteen-year-old Echols wore black, listened to heavy metal, and read horror novels. He had proclaimed himself Wiccan in a staunchly fundamentalist Christian town. He had changed his name to Damien, which police linked with *The Omen* despite Echols's assertion that he had chosen the name after Father Damien deVeuster, the Catholic priest that nursed lepers on the island of Molokai. In court, the prosecution presented as evidence of his involvement black t-shirts, artwork by Eliphas Levi and Pusshead (which had been taken from a skater magazine), and a book about witchcraft he'd purchased from the library. Most tellingly, they also presented as proof of his involvement the fact that he had written Aleister Crowley's name while awaiting his trial.

In light of the lack of real physical evidence—the few fragments the prosecution did have were highly inconclusive and circumstantial—they decided to play the satanic cult angle. The prosecution's "occult expert" was Dr. Dale Griffis, who received his Ph.D. from Columbia Pacific University, a non-accredited, mail-order school that was forced to close in 2000 EV by the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary & Vocational Education.² After extensive questioning by the defense, Griffis begrudgingly admitted on the stand that he hadn't taken a single class to earn his degree.³ Yet despite this, the judge allowed him to testify as an expert in the field after having *denied* Pulitzer Prize-winning, Stanford-educated sociologist Dr. Richard Ofshe's qualifications as an expert on false confessions.⁴ In fact, Dr. Ofshe was mocked on the stand because he came from California.

Griffis supported the prosecution's claim that Echols was the ringleader of a local cult of teenage devil-worshippers, taking as literal Crowley's infamous chapter from *Magick in Theory and Practice*, "On the Bloody Sacrifice." The only truthful statement Griffis made in court about Crowley was that he was from England.

Nothing he said about the O.T.O. was true; he referred to the Order as the "Ordo Temporus Originus" in his pre-trial testimony, claimed that Crowley founded the infamous Solar Lodge and S.O.T.O.,⁵ despite the fact that Crowley died long before the founding of either, and essentially stated for the court that the O.T.O. is a murderous, child abusing, satanic cult:

PRICE: Okay, now is 8 a factor because that is a witches' number? What's the significance of 8?

GRIFFIS: Okay, in Crowley's, in Crowley's work, he discusses that, uh, sex before 8 or you lose the magical power.

PRICE: Sex before 8, or lose magical power. Okay, so that if the victims were all 8 years old, then that wouldn't be sex before 8, correct?

GRIFFIS: I said s—8? I'm sorry. Not—nine. Eight or before.

PRICE: Eight or before. Excuse me. Now, but is there a particular cult that, um, supports that viewpoint? You said in Crowley's work.

GRIFFIS: Occult group? Yes.

PRICE: And what occult group is that?

GRIFFIS: He has done a lot of writing which is synonymous with a group called O.T.O., or Ordo Temporus Originus.⁶

He also claimed that the manner in which the victims were bound—wrists-to-ankles behind the back so the genitals were displayed for abuse—could be found in Crowley's work:

PRICE: All right, but what, you said it's a factor the manner in which the victims were tied, where does this, where's the research on this?

GRIFFIS: Well, you would, you would look in such books as "Ceremonial Magic" by Crowley, and, uh, then from working, uh, in, with that and looking at the way the people were displayed, ah, you know, there, to me, appeared to be no other reason for that type of position.⁷

And the jury believed him. The Arkansas Supreme Court upheld their convictions based in part on this man's testimony.⁸ Regardless whether one is convinced of their innocence, the fact that such unmitigated slander should be allowed

as testimony in a court of law, much less without any reasonable challenge from the defense on this point, should horrify anyone.

I began my correspondence with Damien Echols after I spent the last several months of 2005 EV saturating myself in the details of his case. As an undergraduate in criminal justice at the University of Arkansas, my investigations class focused extensively on this heavily publicized case. After learning what a proper investigation looked like, I was appalled at the absolute lack of professionalism from the police and legal players involved. The evidence, and lack thereof, clearly suggest that the convicted men had nothing to do with the crime. If there were any real evidence, I wouldn't have bothered. I wouldn't have continued to study the case, or to keep abreast of updates in the legal proceedings, or given a damn about the well-being of the convicted. I would have gone on to work with the Prison Ministry without a second thought to any of them. Demented as my sense of humor may be at times, I don't like child-killers any more than the next person.

After completing the semester's studies, I read Damien's autobiography, written from death row, called *Almost Home: My Life Story Vol. 1*. I caught a surreptitious Crowley quote in one chapter. I noticed a preponderance of references to magic and mysticism in others. And when I began my correspondence with him, guess what I discovered?

I discovered a brother.

Why is this important to Sol Invictus Oasis? It's important because this case, and the injustice, bigotry, and prejudice it represents, was the reason our body was founded in the first place. Soror Kalyx saw the horrors firsthand as the case progressed. If there had been an O.T.O. body in Arkansas to stand up against what was happening in 1993 EV, would it have made a difference? No one can say. But what we can say is this: We are here now. We are here because a teenage boy was sentenced to die because he had written Crowley's name on the same page as that of his newborn son.

That teenage boy has become a man on death row. He has become a Buddhist monk. He has married a lovely and well-respected architect. He has become an accomplished writer, artist, and now musician, penning lyrics for Pearl Jam and Michale Graves. And he has become a friend of our Oasis. His involvement with Sol Invictus Oasis has brought full-circle the reason we came into being in the first place.

Because of the nature of the crime for which he stands convicted, he has traditionally been very private about his spiritual beliefs. Knowing that the state of Arkansas would be combing over every detail in his book and letters for evidence of his involvement in a satanic cult, he chose to allow himself "outed" as a Thelemite within our community at great personal risk. He chose to become registered with the O.T.O. Prison Ministry. He's even donated to our Oasis a portion of his personal library—books sent to him from supporters across the world—as that is the only practical way he has to contribute. And he has, in this short time, become very dear to us. As for the Sol Invicti, our interest in the case has evolved from simply wanting to see justice done to something much more personal. We don't want to see the state of Arkansas murder our friend, and our

brother. I don't want to see anyone have to give Last Rites in an execution chamber when there is no real evidence that Damien did anything more than be a "freak" with an unfortunate first name in a frighteningly fundamentalist Southern town in the grip of "satanic panic."

So, why is this important for the rest of us? I think that perhaps some magicians may not realize just how difficult it can be for those of us living in the Bible Belt and places like it, those of us living with the kinds of church-going folk that protest at gay soldiers' funerals, refuse to believe in the most basic tenets of science, and literally run Witches out of town in some upgraded version of the torch-and-pitchfork routine. When people fail to stand up and defend what it is we do as magicians, when people fail to combat through Light, Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, and Power the ignorance and falsehood that is arrayed against us, we leave open the possibility of things like this happening anew. We can't say that things like this couldn't happen in America today. They can. They *did*. They do, every day. Damien was just fortunate enough to have his caught on H.B.O. cameras.

Throughout much of the nation, the satanic panic of the 1980's and '90's EV has all but vanished. Even Geraldo Rivera issued an apology for his part in contributing to the hysteria, just months after his last show about devil-worshippers featured the West Memphis Three.⁹ Yet even today, a smattering of rural police departments continue to hold "special training" classes that circulate the kinds of ridiculous materials that would make Bob Larson or Jack Chick proud.

Undoubtedly, defending our Work has the potential to cause serious problems in one's professional or personal life. My own sister has disowned me for being unapologetic in my identity as a Thelemite. Sadly, even among the general Pagan populace, we're often seen as outsiders, as *evil*, for being involved with that scary Crowley guy. Yet, if we're not willing to stand up and defend ourselves, who will?

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