

# AGAPÉ

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## FROM THE GRAND MASTER

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

### NOTOCON VII

The biennial National Conference of U.S.G.L. took place on August 7th, 8th, and 9th, under the theme of “Unity Utmost Showed.” I’d like to thank Sister Melissa H. and her team for volunteering to take on this massive project, and for doing a spectacular job of it. I’d also like to congratulate Sister Melissa on her new role as chair of the Conference Committee, and thank Sister Kim K. for her superb service in that role over the past several years.

The Proceedings Book for NOTOCON VI is now available. Paperback copies are available from Amazon.com, ABE, and other retailers; hardcovers must be ordered directly from O.T.O. (via the BookSurge website).

### *Thelema NOW!* Podcast

Our Public Relations Committee has initiated a monthly podcast called *Thelema NOW!* The mission of the *Thelema NOW!* podcast is to provide listeners with interesting, informative, thought-provoking interviews featuring individuals involved in myriad realms of mysticism, spirituality and magical theory and practice: authors, sorcerers, academics, enter-

tainers. To date, *Thelema NOW!* has broadcast 21 interviews, which can all be downloaded here: [oto-usa.org/podcast.html](http://oto-usa.org/podcast.html).

### *Rites of Eleusis* Anniversary

This year, 2010 EV, is the 100th anniversary of the performance of Aleister Crowley’s *Rites of Eleusis* at Caxton Hall in London by Crowley, Leila Waddell and Victor Neuburg. U.S.G.L. will honor these classic planetary dramas with a call to all U.S. local bodies to offer up their best productions for inclusion in a collector’s anniversary DVD. All submissions will be entered into the U.S.G.L. library, and a panel of qualified judges will select one performance of each of the seven Rites, hopefully from seven different local bodies, for inclusion in the compilation. This anniversary set is meant to show the diversity with which these Rites may be produced so that generations of Thelemites will have examples from which to observe and produce their own future productions. The DVD will be offered for sale to local bodies and the general public, and local bodies whose productions are chosen will receive a free set. Please submit your entries to Soror Lutea ([lutea@goldenlotus-oto.org](mailto:lutea@goldenlotus-oto.org)).

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We are the Poets! [...] and to us the rites of Eleusis should open the doors of heaven, and we shall enter in and see God face to face...

—Aleister Crowley, *Eleusis*  
(*Collected Works*, Vol. 3)

### Committee Reports

All of our ad-hoc committees are making progress, but I’d like to note particularly the recent work of six of them:

*Continued on next page ~*

**The Education Committee**, under the leadership of Sister Kayla B., is in various stages of development of twelve class modules (many of which are in the final approval stages), has developed a list of experienced and knowledgeable guest lecturers willing to travel around the country to offer classes, and has assembled a graphics library which can be used as a resource for development of local course materials. Contact Sister Kayla at [education@oto-usa.org](mailto:education@oto-usa.org) for more information.

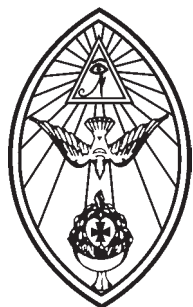
**The Profess House Committee**, which is being coordinated by Sister Kerry K., has gathered members with experience in finance, property management, hotel and hospitality, and fundraising, and has made contact with members involved in real

estate development. It has assembled a collection of archival documents and correspondence pertinent to Profess House development and operation, has prepared a list of property tax policies pertaining to religious organizations in various states, and has begun to examine criteria for Profess Houses and operational models, and to develop potential funding strategies.

This past spring, the committee submitted a summary of Crowley's writings on Profess Houses to the Areopagus, which was well received.

**The Mediation Committee**, under Brother Travis M., has completed a six-module series on mediation of disputes between members. Contact Brother Travis at [ombudsman@oto-usa.org](mailto:ombudsman@oto-usa.org)

MYSTERIA  
MYSTICA  
MAXIMA



ECCLESIA  
GNOSTICA  
CATHOLICA

## AGAPÉ

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[usa.org](http://usa.org) for more information.

**The Initiation Training Committee**, led by Sister Kim K., has continued to coordinate and document initiator training events, and has completed our second Advanced Initiator Training Event ([ait.oto-usa.org](http://ait.oto-usa.org)) which was held in Salem, Massachusetts this past spring.

**The Kaaba Colloquium Committee** ([kaaba.oto-usa.org](http://kaaba.oto-usa.org)), an activity of the U.S. Electoral College with Sister Eliza M. as Chair, has proceeded to the next level of Kaaba Colloquium Thelemic Leadership Training Seminars in the form of Kaaba III, which provides two parallel tracks for beginning and veteran leaders and for developing and established bodies. Kaaba III debuted in Los Angeles this past March, and was most recently presented in Seattle, Washington on May 15th-16th.

**The Public Relations Committee**, which is being spearheaded by Brother Howard W., has begun an effort towards expanding positive media exposure for our Order and our Work, including the placement of articles about us and our work in various mainstream publications; and initiating the *Thelema Now!* Podcast (see above). The P.R. committee, in concert with Tahuti Chapter of O.T.O., was also involved in the arrangements for the Musicka Mystica Maxima festival. The M.M.M. festival took place on September 21st and 22nd at the Santos Party House in Manhattan, featured a variety of well-known musicians who have been influenced by Thelema and Magick, and received extensive and positive press cover-

age. The performers were:

- Genesis Breyer P-Orridge with Thee Majesty
- John Zorn & Bill Laswell Nautical Almanac
- Larkin Grimm
- Arrington de Dionyso
- Amber Asylum
- Spires that in the Sunset Rise
- Daniel Higgs
- 4th Sign of the Apocalypse

Although it isn't operated by a committee, the next one of the Psychology Guild's **Pastoral Counseling Workshops** ([www.animasolis.com/guild/Pastoral\\_Counseling.html](http://www.animasolis.com/guild/Pastoral_Counseling.html)) will be held in Dallas, Texas this fall.

### E.G.C. Policy Revision

The line in section III.B.5.b. (vi) of the current version of the *E.G.C. Manual* that reads "Optionally, one of the following ingredients may be added" has been amended to read "Either of the following" i.e., one of the two ingredients mentioned must be used in the Cakes. The revised wording will be included when an updated version of the Manual is issued, but the revised wording and policy is now in effect.

*Love is the law, love under will.*

Fraternally,  
Sabazius

## FROM THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

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

### Changes in EC Officers

The office of Electoral College Secretary has passed to the very capable hands of Sister Deborah Woody as of October of 2009 EV. Accordingly, the mailing address has changed though the email address for the Electoral College Secretary remains the same. See page 2 for contact information.

The office of Electoral College President will officially pass to Brother Dann Buchanan April 17th, 2010, once the Spring Meeting is called to order. After serving in this position for eight years, I will be pleased to continue my duties on the E.C. as a voting Elector for the remaining two years of my eleven year-obligation. I am confident that Brother Dann will serve in the office of Electoral College President with excellence.

### New Electors

On behalf of the Electoral College, I would like to welcome Sister Amy Wuelfing and Brother Steven Bianchi who were both officially seated as Electors on October 17th, 2009 EV.

The College wishes to express its congratulations and appreciation to Brothers Michael Kolson and Paul Hume who each celebrated their Valedictory Meeting and the completion of their eleven-year terms of office on the Electoral College in service to our Order.

Initiates of the V° in good standing who are interested in service on the Electoral College may write the President of the E.C. for information on the duties of an Elector and the method for volunteering for this eleven-year commitment. See page 2 for contact information.

### Ninth Degree Revolutionary

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 page 2 for contact information.

*Continued on next page ~*

## Sanction for Appeal

Brothers or Sisters of our Order who wish to pursue appeal of a verdict of the Grand Tribunal may write to individual members of the Electoral College to request sanction be given to take their case to the Areopagus of the Eighth Degree (per *Liber CXCIV*, section 16) via email links found at <http://ec.oto-usa.org/ECelectors.html>.

## Hosting E.C. Meetings

The College wishes to thank the members, families, officers, and the Master of Pyramid Lodge for their hospitality in hosting our Fall Meeting. Local bodies that are interested in hosting meetings of the Electoral College are encouraged to write the President of the E.C. See page 2 for contact information.

## Upcoming E.C. Meetings

- Summer 2010 EV Meeting scheduled for Saturday, July 17th, 2010 EV, hosted by Star Sapphire Lodge (Los Angeles, California).
- Fall 2010 EV Meeting scheduled for Saturday, October 16th, 2010 EV, hosted by Dove & Serpent Oasis (Atlanta, Georgia).
- Winter 2010 EV Meeting scheduled for January 8th 2011 EV via online electronic medium.
- Spring 2011 EV meeting scheduled for Saturday, April 16th, 2011 EV, hosted by Leaping Laughter Lodge (Minneapolis, Minnesota).

The deadline for submission of items to be considered (for the Winter 2009 EV meeting) is December 15th, 2009 EV. Please mail submissions to the Secretary of the Electoral College. See page 2 for contact information.

## 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.

## Website

The official E.C. website can be found at: [ec.oto-usa.org](http://ec.oto-usa.org).

## Forms

Bodymasters seeking up-to-date forms for Change of Mastership, Application for Oasis status, Application for Lodge status, or for Closure of their local body, as well as qualified initiates seeking an Application for Charter, will find them available exclusively from the document control officer at [doc\\_control@oto-usa.org](mailto:doc_control@oto-usa.org).

## Communication with the E.C.

I would like to invite any initiates with 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 page 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 page 2.

*Love is the law, love under will.*

In the Bonds of the Order,  
Fratr Dvgs Jms Blk  
President, Electoral College  
O.T.O. U.S.A.

The Electoral College at its **Spring Meeting**, April 18th, 2009 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

### Local Body Closures

None.\*

### Change of Body Status

Alombrados Camp (New Orleans, Louisiana) has been re-chartered as Alombrados Oasis with Brother Joshua Sharp as Master effective April 18th, 2009 EV.

### Change of Body Masters

Brother David R. Jones has been confirmed as Master of Coph Nia Oasis (Eugene, Oregon), effective April 18th, 2009 EV.

Mastership of 93 Oasis (Los Angeles, California) has passed from Soror Mayet to Soror Sa-Ra effective April 18th, 2009 EV.

Soror Allella has been confirmed as Master of Lapis Lazuli Camp (Phoenix, Arizona) effective April 28th, 2009 EV.

### New Local Body Charters

\*LVX Lodge and Blue Horizon Oasis have merged as Star Sapphire Lodge at the request of their respective Masters (Brother James Kline and Sister Suzanne F.K. Torchia) chartered in the Valley of Los Angeles, California, under the Mastership of Sister Suzanne F.K. Torchia effective April 18th, 2009 EV.

Mitra-Varuna Camp has been chartered in the val-

ley of Bloomington, Indiana with Frater Julianus as Master effective April 18th, 2009 EV.

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The Electoral College at its **Summer Meeting**, August 7th, 2009 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

**Local Body Closures**

93 Oasis was closed, effectively merging its talent and resources with Golden Lotus Oasis, effective August 7th, 2009 e.v.

**Change of Body Status**

None.

**Change of Body Masters**

Brother Geoffrey Liebinger has been confirmed as Master of Sekhet-Maat Lodge (Portland, Oregon), effective August 7th, 2009 EV.

**New Local Body Charters**

Secret Centre Camp has been chartered in the valley of Orlando, Florida with Brother William as Master, effective August 7th, 2009 EV.

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The Electoral College at its **Fall Meeting**, October 17th, 2009 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

**Local Body Closures**

None.

**Change of Body Status**

Seven Spirits Camp (Tucson, Arizona) has been re-chartered as Seven Spirits Oasis with Frater AzaDio as Master, effective October 17th, 2009 EV.

**Change of Body Masters**

Mastership of Sekhet Bast Ra Oasis (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) has been transferred from Sister Molly Ware to Sister Tina Buchanan, effective October 17th, 2009 EV.

Mastership of Black Sun Oasis (Akron, Ohio) has been transferred from Brother Steven Bianchi to Frater Hermes Agape effective October 17th, 2009 EV.

**New Local Body Charters**

None.

The Electoral College at its **Winter Meeting**, January 9th, 2010 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

**Local Body Closures**

None.

**Change of Body Status**

None.

**Change of Body Masters**

Mastership of Abrahadabra Oasis (Portland, Maine) has been transferred from Frater Eparisteros to Soror Zephyria, effective January 9th, 2010 EV.

Mastership of Dove & Serpent Oasis (Atlanta, Georgia) has been transferred from Frater Noxenla to Frater Volo Adamo, effective January 9th, 2010 EV.

**New Local Body Charters**

None.

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The Electoral College at its **Spring Meeting**, held on April 17th, 2010 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

**Local Body Closures**

None.

**Change of Body Status**

None.

**Change of Body Masters**

Mastership of Bubastis Oasis (Dallas, Texas) has been transferred from Brother Dave Blakeley to Brother Shawn Richburg effective April 17th, 2010 EV.

Mastership of Horus Oasis (Salt Lake City, Utah) has been transferred from Brother Andy McGuire to Sister Beverly Stuart effective April 17th, 2010 EV.

Mastership of Ad Astra Oasis (Denver, Colorado) has been transferred from Frater Solemnus to Frater K.Z. effective April 17th, 2010 EV.

Mastership of Pyramid Lodge (Buffalo, New York) has been transferred from Brother Keith Bergeron to Brother August Lascola effective April 17th, 2010 EV.

Mastership of Lapis Lazuli Camp (Phoenix, Arizona)

*Continued on next page ~*



na) has been transferred from Soror Alelle to Brother David Garrett effective April 17th, 2010 EV.

#### New Local Body Charters

Mithras Camp was chartered in the valley of Windham, Connecticut with Frater Pantha as Master effective April 17th, 2010 EV

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

## NOTOCON Update

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

Blue Equinox Oasis in Detroit, Michigan is proud to welcome our brethren to the Motor City for NOTOCON VIII, **August 5th–7th, 2011 EV**. Detroit has changed a lot since Aleister Crowley visited here, but we believe that he would be pleased with the diversity of thought and the spirit which remains in this three hundred year old city. We take it as auspicious that NOTOCON VIII will take place 93 years from the first efforts to establish O.T.O. in Detroit.

The theme we have chosen is “**Manifest Thy Glory**” and hope it will resonate throughout the presentations and events. As magicians and Thelemites, our purpose is to manifest ourselves according to our Wills in this plane and beyond. Our theme suggests that success as a Man and a Magician is not a fantasy but our reality. The entire phrase from which this imperative comes invokes our ancestors in liberation and compels us to manifest Thelema for future generations.

To that end, we plan to schedule Thelemic ritual presentations for Friday while our executive committees are meeting. So many times I am asked “What does a stealthy tiger look like?” or “How do I pronounce that?” I have personally seen many amazing performances in the past 22 years and encourage any Local Body that has a great ritualist in their midst to submit a brief proposal to share their insight, a bit of history and a performance of their best ritual. We are open to rituals both great and small. We will of course be accepting proposals for standard presentations as well and will announce the details for all submissions shortly.

We are also planning a tour of the largest Masonic Temple in the world. Lodge #1 and #2 are housed in a mag-

nificent building of over one thousand rooms, including the Scottish Rite Temple and the Doric Temple, among others: truly “temples of gold and ivory and marble.” [See <http://www.themasonic.com/history.html>] Details will be forthcoming concerning cost and possible limited attendance.

We have secured a great hotel rate of \$99 per night. However, the hotel **cannot** accept reservations more than a year out from the event, so please stay tuned. If you try to call before then, you will be told that the days are sold out. With the low rate, we ask that you reserve your room with the hotel itself if possible, so that we can get a good room count and meet our minimums. In any event, we will be asking for you to indicate how you booked your room on the upcoming registration form. We will have a reservation code so that you will receive this excellent rate.

We hope to have the website up on or around June 1st, 2010 EV. Until then, please send any questions or comments to:

[info@notocon.org](mailto:info@notocon.org).

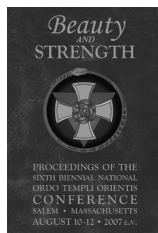
Thank you for all of the support and good wishes. We hope that our brethren both near and far will be able to attend. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to accommodate any special needs. Until then, remember:

We put the **OTO** in the **MOTOR CITY**!

*Love is the law, love under will.*

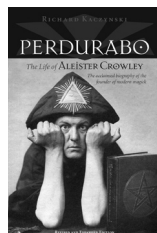
Soror Shivani  
Master, Blue Equinox Oasis

## PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENTS



*Beauty & Strength:  
Proceedings of the Sixth Biennial  
National Ordo Templi Orientis  
Conference (Salem, Massachu-  
setts, August 10-12, 2007 EV)*

**AVAILABLE NOW!**



*Perdurabo:  
The Life of Aleister Crowley  
(Revised and Expanded  
Second Edition)  
by Richard Kaczynski*

**AVAILABLE IN AUGUST!**

## BAUDELAIRE'S METAPHYSICAL JOURNEY OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE CORRESPONDENCES TO THE COSMOS

by Bryan D. Adams

Charles Baudelaire was born in Paris in 1821 and died in 1867. A “dandy” of the nineteenth century Parisian *société*, he often shocked readers with his unapologetic description of death and decay and, along with other poets such as Verlaine and Rimbaud, quickly entrenched himself in the *décadent* movement of the time. To these poets, metaphysical experience could be brought about either through writing, reading, or both. Rimbaud's poem *Le Bateau ivre* [*The Drunken Ship*] is such an attempt to describe a metaphysical voyage using the ship as a metaphor. These poets lived largely and, as *bons vivants*, experimented with alcohol and other substances to tear down the wall between the mundane and the sublime. Baudelaire presents his version of a metaphysical voyage in his work *Correspondances*, a poem taken from his tome *Les Fleurs du mal* [*Flowers of Evil*]. The key to unlock this metaphysical voyage is very aptly illustrated by literary critic Jacques-Henry Bornecque (my translation from the French):

In our being, we are much like theoretical owners, however dispossessed and pathetic, of a palace where we must live confined in a few narrow and encumbered rooms—in need of the key to other rooms, from which we can only sometimes perceive the glimmer of light and of divine music behind the locked doors of our subconscious.<sup>1</sup>

Before considering how Baudelaire presents his theory of departure, the poem is presented first in the original French, then in English translation (mine).

### *Correspondances*

*La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers  
Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;  
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles  
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.*

*Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent  
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,  
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,  
Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.*

*Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,  
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,  
—Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,*

*Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,  
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encense  
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.*

### *Correspondences*

Nature is a temple where living pillars  
Let escape sometimes confused words;  
Man traverses it through forests of symbols  
That observe him with familiar glances.

Like long echoes that intermingle from afar  
In a dark and profound unity,  
Vast like the night and like the light,  
The perfumes, the colors and the sounds respond.

There are perfumes fresh like the skin of infants  
Sweet (or soft) like oboes, green like prairies,  
—And others corrupted, rich and triumphant

Having the expanse of infinite things,  
Like ambergris, musk, balsam and incense,  
Which sing the ecstasies of the mind and senses.

In the nineteenth century, the notion of “pantheism” becomes much more interesting for the poet since he<sup>2</sup> attempts to understand the rapport between his own microscopic existence and the macrocosmic universe. This quest takes a spiritual tone because the poet is interrogating not only his psyche but also all of nature that he sees before himself. From this quest is born the lyrical tone that is so rooted in Romantic literature. As a result, the poet interrogates himself about the possibility of absolute truth that might become known through a secret code during a shared moment between self and the divine cosmos, manifested in concrete nature. This interrogation is organized according to a hypothetical system of subtle relationships between everything that exists on a concrete level, as well as subtler levels in Baudelaire's *Correspondances*.

For our poet, all that exists on the terrestrial plane has an equivalent in the *au-delà* (the words “heaven” or “ether” do not adequately capture the meaning of this word. I'll therefore use the French). One is reminded immediately of Plato's IDEA theory, but Baudelaire's notion goes much further. It concerns not simply the equivalent of an object in the *au-delà*, but also of *correspondences* that can be evoked (by way of concrete objects) and of relationships that exist analogically between, for example, smell and taste. This phenomenon of the intermingling of the senses known as *synesthesia* plays an important part for Baudelaire. Furthermore, in his poem we can also see analogies between what is visible and what is invisible.

As Magicians employ an object, a perfume, or even a verbal vibration in order to evoke a harmonic accord on the

*Continued on next page ~*

spiritual level (or in the *au-delà*), Baudelaire performs the same task through his writing. In this manner, the poet serves as a “decipherer” and even as a “priest” for those who dare to examine these correspondences in the world and the universe. Let us now consider Baudelaire’s poem *Correspondances* in order to see in what manner the poet puts this theory into practice.

In the first quatrain, the poet quite simply presents his theory in thesis form; in the second, we see a progression of this thesis through the macrocosm; and in the two tercets, one can see an illustration of correspondences throughout the microcosm. In this manner, the poet serves as a sort of “tour guide” to the reader by taking him on a round trip.

In the first sentence, “Nature is a temple where living pillars / Let escape sometimes confused words,” the reader is struck by the vivid metaphor that both “nature” and “temple” are not simply unified but are the same. One can immediately reference the two pillars of King Solomon’s Temple (Jachin and Boaz). According to *Masonry Defined*, Jachin,

Hence called by Dudley and some other writers, who reject the points, *ichin*. It is the name of the right-hand pillar that stood at the porch of King Solomon’s Temple. It is derived from two Hebrew words, *jah*, ‘God,’ and *iachin*, ‘will establish’. It signifies ‘he that strengthens,’ or ‘will establish’. The other pillar was called Boaz, ‘in strength’—the two words signifying ‘in strength shall this my house be established.’<sup>3</sup>

By referencing the pillars in this manner, the poet evokes the pantheistic nature of the universe and suggests that by exiting from the two living pillars (the mother’s legs) at birth, each human being is already initiated into the mystery of “Nature.” Everything is, therefore, sacred, and the pillars are living. The alliteration that we hear in the original French “t, d, v, p” in the phrase “*La nature est un temple où de vivants piliers / Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles*,” brings a drum to mind—a sacred ritualistic image. Additionally, it can be suggested that the heart is now beating and the voyage has begun. Thanks to the words “temple,” “pillars,” “confused words,” one gets the impression that Baudelaire might be suggesting the image of the oracles of Delphi that offer words of wisdom if one is ready and able to decipher them. Life is, in and of itself, a mystery which seeks to understand itself throughout its course. By undergoing this first initiation, the process of discovery is inevitable. In the third line, we see: “Man traverses it through forests of symbols.” This refers to horizontal movement and highlights two things: horizontal correspondences as well as the cycle of the human life. Man is limited by horizontal movement and human life is, in general, of a linear nature. Man is obviously bound to a time-space *continuum*, but by heeding the poet’s message, one can learn to transcend linear restrictions for a fleeting moment. Furthermore, the poet suggests that, most of the time, man passes through life ignorant of these occult correspondences that surround him and are found everywhere—both in

the outside world as well as inside his *psyche*. In other words, man has “forgotten” and become ignorant of the divine correspondences in the cosmos. He fails to see himself as divine because this information has been lost to him. According to James J. Hurtak:

After the first ‘fall,’ the religious sense descended to the level of the ‘divided’ consciousness; now, after the second, it has fallen even further, into the depths of the unconscious; it has been ‘forgotten.’ It is now our privilege to discover the potential dimensions of human existence and face the great challenge of the ‘ascension of consciousness’ through the Man-God-Spirit transformation.<sup>4</sup>

The forests of symbols suggest the inexhaustible number of possibilities for Man in his process of self-exploration. These symbols are also the tools by which one can begin to “remember” one’s nature and reunite with the forgotten divine. In other words, there are many paths that must be trod and each is correct in its appointed hour. We are therefore, each of us, psychonauts in the quest of understanding our true selves through the process of identifying our Will. It is interesting to see that the notion of symbology reminds one of Jung’s theory of the unconscious. Jung was attempting to highlight major archetypal moments in the human psyche; and although Baudelaire precedes our philosopher, archetypal constructs were already intuited. Nevertheless, according to Jung, everything that exists in front of us also exists in a sort of collective human memory. The systems of the Eastern Magicians call this notion the *Akasha*. According to Donald Michael Kraig, the definition of the word *Akasha* comes from Sanskrit and means: “The records of all that has occurred, is occurring, and will occur in the universe.”<sup>5</sup> Baudelaire’s “forests of symbols” suggest the possibility of aligning oneself with shared information that exists in the *au-delà*. Attaining the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel is another way of describing this same process.

In the last verse of this strophe, we see “That observe him with familiar glances.” The living pillars are personified because they see Man and we intuit an often benevolent complicity in the universe for everything that surrounds us. It is possible that Baudelaire suggests the archangels that one might evoke—beings that witness our works in the magical space. Finally, the unification of these two pillars (Man and Woman) has resulted in the birth of a human being who is being initiated into life. The “familiar” glances suggest complicity and a shared responsibility between the two pillars and the individual who has now passed through them and entered into life. Furthermore, the act of reading is a shared experience and the poet is at work with the reader—a notion that forges yet another correspondence concerning complicity.

In the second quatrain, we see that the echoes become mixed and muddled due to Man’s poor perception in the phrase: “Like long echoes that intermingle from afar / In a dark and profound unity.” It is now necessary to have an



intermediary (our poet) to interpret these echoes for us. The word “unity” underlines the fact that these correspondences do not reside in a world of disorder but in equilibrium that exists both in the concrete world as well as in the entire universe. This universe is “Vast like the night and like the light”. To a Thelemite, this phrase brings the goddess Nuit immediately to mind. Nuit is the vast, starry night sky who invites us to lie in Her bosom for a moment to share Her love. Interestingly, the word *nuit* in French is the word for “night.” Since the universe is both vast like the night as well as the light, we see a suggestion of the dualistic principle. Hadit is the secret centre of light as Nuit is the vast night sky. This space becomes neutral and possesses both bright and dark qualities. To use another metaphor, we see this concept suggested by the temple dais of alternating black and white cubes. We also see the romantic notion of a duality that is highlighted in the title of the work from which this poem was taken, *The Flowers of Evil*. A flower is neither positive nor negative; it is Man’s interpretation thereof that gives meaning. Nuit reminds us of this duality when She proclaims that She is divided for the sake of union. This dual principle allows us to see how the magician makes his vibrations echo back to him from the *au-delà* due to harmonics. In other words, that which is affected in one world (the microcosm) is mirrored in the other (the macrocosm), and *vice-versa*. The same notion applies in the last verse of this strophe: “The perfumes, the colors and the sounds respond.” This verse also evokes Baudelaire’s definition of *synesthesia*. Finally, such elements (perfumes, colors and sound) are used in ritual as a trigger by which to attune the psyche to the divine.

In the first tercet, we encounter the phrase: “There are perfumes fresh like the skin of infants.” Baudelaire suggests once again the pantheistic, living nature of everything. We might also suggest the development of divine man by evoking the image of the babe. This child, known in the Ancient Egyptian world as Heru-Pa-Khrat, represents the developing human in the New Aeon. Therefore, the joining of the dark “Nuit” and the light “Hadit” creates the “infant” as explained by Lon Milo Duquette:

As Nuit’s expansion and Hadit’s contraction are both infinite, so too must be their points of contact. This infinite contact creates the basis of possible vibration (their Child Horus); the field of operation in which the universe can manifest.<sup>6</sup>

Here we see that the perfumes are also “Sweet (or soft) like oboes, green like prairies.” In this phrase we find the sensations of hearing, sight and touch. Each sensation corresponds to another, exactly like the relationship between all things in the universe. In the last verse, we see how perfumes can also be “corrupted, rich and triumphant.” The magical number of three comes to mind. The divine trinity of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit becomes a metaphor for a single living being who seeks to find his Will in the forests of symbols of the universe. The unusual adjectives used to describe

perfumes “corrupted, rich, triumphant” are being used such that the reader also makes a subliminal correspondence to people, gods, or leaders, according to his personal experience. May we go so far as to suggest descriptions of the *sephiroth*?

The first verse of the last tercet shows the possibility of correspondences that can be triggered by perfumes: “Having the expanse of infinite things.” Baudelaire suggests two levels of existence: *vaporization* and *concentration*. Alchemically speaking, “concentration” is where Man spends most of his existence. This is, therefore, his cell. “Vaporization” represents his passage into the *au-delà*. Baudelaire suggests this when he evokes the image of incense rising into the *au-delà*. In this manner, one understands better “the expansion of infinite things” to which Baudelaire refers. Furthermore, the correspondences are infinite: everything responds to everything else and everything bounces into everything else. One might consider the movement of an atom where each particle has a distinct relationship with another, with another, with another *ad infinitum*. The enumeration of ambergris, musk, balsam and incense suggests several possibilities. The first image evokes the Church (which uses incense in its rituals) as well as the tools of the alchemist. Alchemy allows man to transform his life with the use of such elements. We also see a suggestion of vertical movement. Earlier, we saw that Man was stuck to horizontal movement in his voyage of life. Now, however, we find an alternative: the incense transports prayers toward the heavens. Instead of being glued to the earth, Baudelaire suggests that the reader (who is now being initiated into priesthood) may find a correspondence (or a “trigger”) to lift him upwards. This echoes the very moment during the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram when the Magician announces that the pentagrams flame about him and the six-rayed star shines within the columns. Although Baudelaire would not have been familiar with this ritual, the archetype of connection between the microcosm and the macrocosm is deeply rooted in human consciousness. Obviously, this magical moment can occur under the guise of many rituals and Baudelaire is illustrating a mystical experience through his writing.

In this poem, we have seen how Baudelaire sees correspondences in all of nature. All symbols, therefore, exist in a world that has now become sacred. This pantheistic view shows how the poet serves as an intermediary and explains these sacred analogies if the reader is ready to be initiated and understand them. In addition, Baudelaire presents his poem in the present tense in order to underline the eternal quality of sacred nature and we see, therefore, that this experience is voluntary. This experience is triggered by objects and symbols at Man’s disposal. We can see how Baudelaire foreshadows the writing of Marcel Proust, but for the latter, the sublime experience becomes involuntary and sporadic.

#### Notes:

- 1 Jacques-Henry Bornecque, « Rêves et Réalités du Symbolisme. » *Revue des Sciences Humaines* 5-23 (Jan –Mars 1955) : 17.

*Continued on next page ~*

- 2 For the sake of convenience, the word “he” will be used to represent any individual.
- 3 Mackey, Johnston, *Masonry Defined : A Liberal Masonic Education* (Kingsport, Tennessee : National Masonic Press, 1939) 300.
- 4 James J. Hurtak, *Gnosticism : Mystery of Mysteries* (Los Gatos, California : The Academy For Future Science, 1988) 96.
- 5 Donald Michael Kraig, *Modern Magick : Eleven Lessons in the High Magickal Arts* (St. Paul, Minnesota : Llewellyn Publications, 1996) 523.
- 6 Lon Milo DuQuette, *The Magick of Thelema : A Handbook of the Rituals of Aleister Crowley* (York Beach, Maine : Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993) 81.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Occult America: The Secret History of How Mysticism Shaped Our Nation

by Mitch Horowitz (Bantam, 2009. \$27)

Reviewed by Paradoxos Alpha

The newly-issued volume *Occult America* by Mitch Horowitz is engaging, entertaining, and educational. It is not, however—despite the assertion of its subtitle—“the secret history of how mysticism shaped our nation.” For one thing, it is not a single history; it is a bricolage of tangentially-related sketches and investigations regarding a topic that Horowitz never manages to subject to any theoretical treatment, nor to encompass with a larger narrative. (An earlier attempt covering nearly the same domain that did succeed in this regard is Catherine Albanese’s *A Republic of Mind and Spirit*.) The closest he comes to answering his own initial question “What is the occult?” is to propose that it comprehends all those techniques and teachings that purport to put people in communication with an “unseen world.” But surely many of the most common and non-“occult” of spiritual traditions do so as well.

Although the book starts with the eighteenth century and ends with the 1970s, the contents don’t progress in a strictly chronological fashion. In one chapter, for example, Horowitz spends the first half discussing the Theosophical Society, and then goes back to describe the advent of Spiritualism in the second half. He jumps forward from there to give the full century-plus history of the Ouija Board, before returning to the early origins of New Thought in the 1830s. This lack of organization in the book is somewhat surprising, since the author’s own background is as an editor, and he is currently editor-in-chief at Penguin’s Tarcher imprint for metaphysical books. He contributed to the publication of the “reader’s edition” of Manly P. Hall’s *Secret Teachings of All Ages* and the trade paper issuance of *The Tarot* by Paul Foster Case, and when it comes to these figures, and to other trivia of American

occult bibliography, Horowitz delivers fascinating and highly credible detail I have never encountered elsewhere.

In a treatment that appears to be attempting a comprehensive sketch, however, the initiatory orders of occultism are markedly absent. Horowitz derides them as being characteristic of the European occult scene, and writes as if they have had only sporadic relevance to America. The one to which he gives the most attention is the Golden Dawn, in his account of Paul Foster Case. But an otherwise-uninformed reader of Horowitz would likely get the impression that in Case’s day the U.S. only had a few fledgling Golden Dawn (really Alpha et Omega) groups, with the bulk of the Order still in England, when in fact the American membership may well have outnumbered the British at that time, just as O.T.O. (never mentioned by Horowitz) had its most populous organizing in America then—and ever since. Even A.M.O.R.C., whose mail-order initiatory arrangement demonstrates so well the themes of popularization and commodification that seem to interest Horowitz, barely rates a few glancing mentions. This is a book purportedly about the deep traditions of American occultism, in which Paschal Beverly Randolph is given only passing notice, in reference to the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor—itself only briefly mentioned as background for the astrological writer C.C. Zain.

His disdain for initiatory orders and the objects of their secrecy puts into question Horowitz’s offer of a “secret history.” Still, one of the high points of the volume is the chapter on “Politics and the Occult,” with sometimes surprising facts regarding the role of mystics on both the Right and Left in mid-twentieth-century U.S. politics. Although he is willing to acknowledge the connection of the occult to political ideologies he finds distasteful, Horowitz seems to be whitewashing other key features of American occultism. He does not introduce his readers to figures like sex-guru Oom the Omnipotent or professed antichrist Jack Parsons, nor does he discuss the historical intersection of occultism and drug culture.

Horowitz concludes the book with a claim that the late twentieth-century New Age synthesized the occult currents of America and successfully deposited them in mainstream religion and popular culture. The thesis that the New Age Movement was heir to occultism and esotericism has been amply demonstrated in Wouter Hanegraaff’s magisterial *New Age Religion and Western Culture*, but Horowitz glosses over the more recent fact that the piecemeal adoption of “New Age” ideas and techniques by other groups and personalities has only helped to make superfluous an ostensible movement which was always a shaky sort of coalition.

While *Occult America* is clearly intended for a popular audience, I think the book’s greatest value will be for those who already grasp the larger historical framework of American metaphysical religion that it doesn’t really clarify. Its wealth of intriguing detail kept me thoroughly interested, and its neglect of the initiatory culture of American esotericism actually makes it a valuable complement to the reading usually undertaken by those of us who have an established interest in that field.

## LOCAL BODY REPORT

## Subtlety or Force Encampment

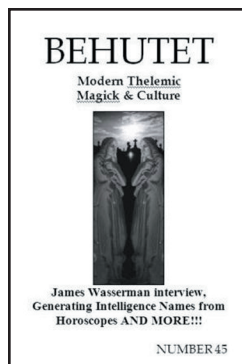
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Our fledgling Encampment out here in the deserts of New Mexico is growing gorgeous and deadly roses for the bouquet of Babalon. With our fair share of initiations, weekly Gnostic Masses, bi-weekly initiation classes, monthly desert excursions, weekly kempo classes and goetia exercises, and intensive public seminars, we're keeping busy conquering the peaks. We've been pretty damn stalwart in celebrating the Feast Days for the Saints of E.G.C., toasting their good names and feeding them libations of prayer and wine. If I've got anything to be proud of, it's the commitment, quality, and potency practiced by 100% of local membership.

Our publication, *Doomsayer's Digest*, has kept us busy. We've sold tons of *Doom* nationally and internationally, but much more on the local level to uncommon crowds. We believe that successfully proliferating the hermetic sciences must occur both vertically (within extant audiences) and horizontally (into new reader bases) and have taken hundreds of hours distributing *Doom* on campuses, in shops, and at art shows.

Now that our Gnostic Mass temple and Man of Earth temple are nipped, we're concentrating our efforts on acquiring property in the desert to build a Temple dedicated to the Glory of Ra Hoor Khuit. We're thinking "Hammam al-Bennu."

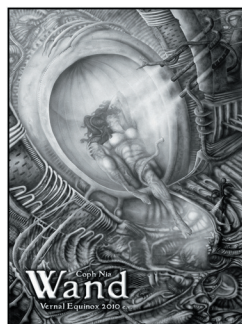
## LOCAL BODY PUBLICATIONS

**Behutet**

Thelesis Lodge  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

"Behutet" is an epithet for the Egyptian winged sun-disk. The magazine focuses on magickal techniques, occult history and Thelemic culture in a modern setting. We strive to make the magazine as original as possible and as such we tend to avoid reprints of commonly available material and commentaries on same. As a practical technical journal we also tend to steer clear of poetry, with the noted exception of poetic Invocations and/or channeled writings. If you are an artist, original artwork is always a welcomed addition to the magazine! Please speak with editors to discuss deadlines and guidelines.

Current and back issues (in most cases) are \$2.50 post-paid per copy. Email us at [info@thelesis.org](mailto:info@thelesis.org).

**The Coph-Nia Wand**

Coph-Nia Oasis  
Eugene, Oregon

*The Coph Nia Wand* is one of the preeminent publications of the Thelemic community. *The Wand* is issued six times a year and contains a range of content. We continue the *Equinox* tradition of uncensored review and poetry as well as more traditional and technical content. Each issue contains rare or often overlooked Crowley, as well as archival material by

some of the pioneers of Thelema such as Hymenaeus Alpha and Ebony Reese.

Our current issue contains: a cover by Breck Outland titled *Venus of Nekropolis*, David R. Jones on the symbolism of the O.T.O. Lamen, *What Happened to Aleister Crowley's Ashes* by Grady McMurtry, The Gnostic Mass from *Jurgen* by James Branch Cabell Novel with an introduction by Keith418, *In Operibus Sigillo Dei Aemeth—Part Seven Part VII: The "Seven" Thrones part I.* by David R. Jones, *Scotland Travelog* and *The Devil Rides Out* video review by Maria V. Montgomery, *Ratna Bija Poetry* by Sor. Amala, Aethyr scrying by Frater DD and more.

*The Wand* is \$6 an issue and \$35 annually U.S. mailing and a bit more internationally. All purchase information and free pdfs of sold out back issues may be found at [www.cophnia-oto.org/Wand.htm](http://www.cophnia-oto.org/Wand.htm).

## AGAPÉ

VOLUME XI, NUMBER 2 SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

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