

AGAPÉ

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



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From the Grand Master

All Brethren shall be exceedingly punctual in the payment of Lodge Dues. This is to take precedence of all other calls upon the purse.
—Liber 101 (Duties—Second House)

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

The dues collected from members by U.S. Grand Lodge are based on the schedule of fees and “annual subscriptions” published on page 246 of *The Equinox*, Vol. III, No. 1, adjusted by I.H.Q. to bring them roughly into the present day. These dues are minimal; and are intended only to cover the operating expenses of Grand Lodge and I.H.Q. They were never intended to cover the expenses incurred by local bodies in developing the Order regionally and locally. In fact, they have intentionally been kept low in order to accommodate the payment of local dues. Local bodies require the active financial support of their members—especially if they are going to be able to move out of members’ personal homes into dedicated temple spaces and remain there. Doing so will:

- ⊗ help to ensure the privacy of officers and members;
- ⊗ create a clear separation between O.T.O. events and private events;
- ⊗ help to attract new members;
- ⊗ give local bodies greater flexibility with respect to event scheduling;
- ⊗ help the Order to progress toward its long-term goal of establishing Profess Houses; and, perhaps most importantly,
- ⊗ help local bodies establish an identity independent of their current leadership and allow them to maintain continuity through the inevitable transitions of their officers.

For years, we have *permitted* local bodies to develop their own reasonable schedules of local dues as appropriate (subject to the approval of the G.T.G.) to cover their operating expenses and development needs. At this time, we are strongly encouraging *all* active oases and lodges¹ to do so (making proper fraternal allowances, of course, for cases of genuine financial hardship). We are also, at this time, strongly encouraging every member of the Order within the U.S., regardless of degree, to become a local dues-paying member of an oasis or lodge, preferably one in their general vicinity (members may also, of course, contribute to the development of camps). Doing so is an important fraternal duty of all O.T.O. members, as indicated by the above quote, and is also a practical necessity for

developing our lodges into institutions we can be truly proud of. Fund-raising events can be useful for providing supplemental income for special projects—but they cannot be relied upon to pay the rent. For many years, our oases and lodges have primarily relied on the efforts and financial support of relatively small groups of core supporters—the result being the placement of an unduly high financial burden on a relatively small number of members. If all—or even a substantial proportion—of the members within the valley of each oasis or lodge were to contribute their share, the financial burden would be spread much more evenly and fairly.

Love is the law, love under will.

Sabazius

1. Camps are currently not required to have bank accounts or legal entity status. They are, of course, encouraged to advance towards achieving the stability required for establishing Oasis status.

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From the U.S.G.L. Education Committee

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

The Education Committee is intended to develop instructional standards and guidance materials in order to provide a more uniform, high-quality level of local body class work. We have been gathering course materials from various local bodies, in order to evaluate where we are in order to start to move forward on curriculum development. We still need your help.

Please send any course material or outlines to:

education@oto-usa.org

or

USGL Education Committee
PO Box 26744
Las Vegas, NV 89126

Love is the law, love under will.



Mysteria Mystica Maxima ☩ *Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica*

AGAPÉ

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From the Grand Tribunal

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

I'd like to thank Brother James Nobles for providing me with the opportunity to serve in the capacity of Assistant Secretary of the Grand Tribunal for the last three years. While serving in this capacity, I was responsible for filing paperwork and organizing e-mail; the composition, delivery and reception of a substantial amount of correspondence; overseeing the occasional Court of Inquiry; taking minutes of our annual meetings; and now and then serving as a "sounding board" for an idea or two. Early on, Brother James made it clear to me that I would be the person best suited to follow him when the time came for him to step down. I usually downplayed any such suggestion as it was quite plain to me that the G.T. was doing very well in his term. To put this into perspective, prior to Brother James' tenure, there were no established G.T. Bylaws, Standing Rules (which outline the procedure for handling complaints), complaint tracking forms, etc. One could even conceivably conclude that there wasn't much of a G.T. at all prior to Brother James' involvement. In any event, I am honored that Brother James has recommended me

to the office of Secretary of the G.T. He will continue to advise me in my transition, but will be shifting his focus to new and more challenging responsibilities within the Order. I wish him the best in these endeavors.

I would also like to thank the Ombudsman, Frater Hrumachis, for his assistance in a few matters which, as a result of his efforts, did not escalate to direct G.T. involvement. This is very encouraging for a relatively new U.S.G.L. Office.

Finally, it is my duty to notify the membership at large of the following: [names redacted for internet distribution] are no longer members of Ordo Templi Orientis.

Love is the law, love under will.

In the Bonds of the Order,
✠ Dathan Biberstein, Secretary
U.S. Grand Tribunal

From the Quartermaster

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

I am pleased to announce the unveiling of the new *Ordo Templi Orientis Quartermaster* website. I am very excited to provide this service. The website is structured to support the protection of degree sensitive material. Each local body will be issued two logins—one for the body master and one for an appointed representative who is III^o or above. In addition, logins will be issued to chartered initiators. To obtain a login, you may contact me directly via email, or use the form on the website to request your login information. The web site is located at:

qm.oto-usa.org

The website includes the convenience of paying for your order via PayPal. You may also send funds with your order via postal service to:

Quartermaster O.T.O. U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1532
Wheat Ridge, CO 80034-1532

I receive many requests for pricing and availability and it is difficult to keep track of these correspondences accurately. Therefore, your order will not be processed until I receive funds accompanied by your original order. This may be accomplished two ways:

- 1) a check with your original order via postal service, or
- 2) your order placed with funds secured via Paypal on the website.

I am happy to say that we have many items readily available; however, some items have a lead time of 30 days, and in some circumstances even more time is necessary. If you have questions about how long particular items may take, please contact me right away, so that we can accommodate your needs.

When your local body has initiations planned, please, get in touch with the quartermaster office to secure your order as soon as you possibly can. Any body planning an initiation knows, at the very least, thirty days in advance whether or not supplies are needed. Most of us, including myself, work full time. If you place your order a few days before your initiation date, it will not allow sufficient time to ship your order.

When I originally accepted the quartermaster position, I put out a call for talented members of O.T.O. to contribute by working with me to provide our brothers and sisters with the best possible regalia and initiation equipment. Our Supreme and Holy King requested that we give our members the first opportunity to contribute their skills for the benefit of the O.T.O. To reiterate that request: if you can contribute to the efforts of the quartermaster office, please contact me at:

quartermaster@oto-usa.org

Love is the law, love under will.

In the Bonds of the Order,
Frater VVN
U.S.G.L. Quartermaster

From the Electoral College

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

The Electoral College wishes to thank the members, officers, and the Master of Dove and Serpent Oasis for their warm hospitality in hosting our last meeting in Atlanta, GA.

The following actions concerning local Bodies were taken by the Electoral College at its Spring meeting, April 16, 2005 EV:

Closure

Ophis Nikator Camp (Norfolk, VA) closed at the request of the Master, effective April 16th, 2005 EV.

Suspension

The Charter of Soul of the Desert Oasis (Santa Fe, NM) was suspended without prejudice, pending submission of closure form, effective April 16th, 2005 EV.

Change of Master

None.

Change of Body Status

Xanadu Camp (Reading, PA) has been chartered Xanadu Oasis, with Daryl Lee Emplit as Master, effective April 16th, 2005 EV.

Congratulations to the Brethren of Xanadu Oasis on their advancement.

New Charters

None.

Hosting E.C. Meetings

Local bodies that are interested in hosting the Spring and Autumn meetings of the Electoral College are encouraged to write the President of the E.C.—see p. 2 for contact information.

Upcoming E.C. Meetings

The Autumn, 2005 EV meeting will take place Saturday, October 22nd, at Horizon Oasis (Seattle, WA).

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:

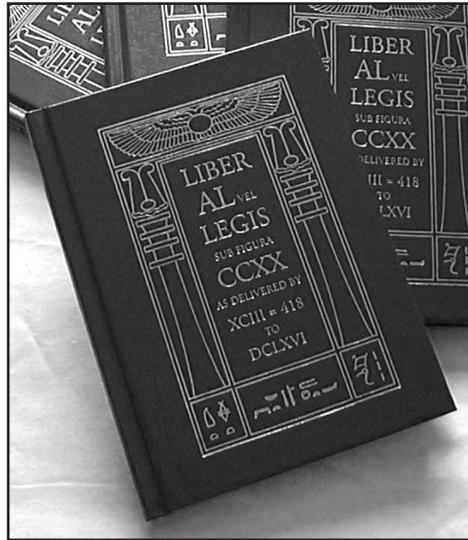
ec.oto-usa.org/ECservices.htm

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 Dvgls Jms Blk



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.

Agapé Volume 7, Number 3 submission deadline:

**⊙ in Ω • ☽ in ☿ • Dies Saturnii • Anno IV:xiii
Saturday, October 1, 2005 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.

State Mandated Reporter Requirements and E.G.C. Clergy

An unfortunate reality of society is the existence and pervasiveness of child abuse. From a Thelemic standpoint, the essence of such crimes is the egregious violation of the right of children to grow up and thrive in environments that are free of physical, mental and sexual harm.¹ The seriousness of the problem of child abuse therefore cannot be overestimated within the context of the “general welfare of the race.”

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information estimated in 2003 *EV* that nationwide the rate of victimization equals 12.4 children per 1000.² The federal government has enacted definitions and requirements pertaining to child abuse, which operate as the foundation for the various state laws concerning the reporting of incidents of such abuse. Specifically, the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), (42 U.S.C.A. §5106g), as amended by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 *EV*, defines child abuse and neglect as, at minimum:

- ⊗ Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- ⊗ An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.

In an effort to address the problem of the growing population of abused children and the documented concern that only a small percentage of abuse incidents are actually reported,³ all states (and the District of Columbia and U.S. territories) have enacted laws

which require specified categories of individuals to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the authorities as designated within each state’s reporting statutes. Individuals falling within such categories required to report abuse are called “mandated reporters.”

Generally, mandated reporters are granted immunity from civil and criminal liability for compliance with child abuse reporting laws, while failure to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect by such mandated reporters are treated as misdemeanors which are punishable by fines and/or imprisonment (which can include \$1,000 in fines and penalties, or up to a year in jail).

Approximately twenty-five of the fifty states have designated “clergy” among the classes of mandated reporters, while eighteen other states place the mandated reporter obligation on all of its citizens. Our Order currently has camps, oases and/or lodges in twenty-three states, of which all but four (New York, Ohio, Virginia and Washington) either impose the obligation of mandated reporting on clergy as a separate classification or as part of the general requirement applicable to all residents. Accordingly, it is incumbent on the “clergy” of the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica (E.G.C.), the ecclesiastical branch of Ordo Templi Orientis, to be aware of these requirements, because of the civil and criminal penalties which can attach if such clergy becomes reasonably and objectively aware of an instance of child abuse (discussed below), and fails to make a timely report to the appropriate civil authorities.

Who is “clergy” in E.G.C.?

Since local laws pertaining to mandated reporters allow each recognized religious organization to identify for itself what constitutes its clergy, those individuals having the responsibility of serving as official representatives of E.G.C. within O.T.O., i.e., ordained priests and priestesses and all bishops and auxiliary bishops within E.G.C., should consider themselves clergy of the E.G.C. for purposes of being mandated reporters within those states which deem clergy as a separate classification of mandated reporter.⁴

Many states recognize a “clergy-penitent” communication privilege, which would otherwise operate as an exception to the mandated reporting requirements applicable to clergy. However, within E.G.C. and O.T.O. such a privilege is not relevant, because the nature of the functions of E.G.C. clergy are largely ceremonial, and do not encompass an “article of faith” or a doctrine which compels any sort of Thelemic “penance” by way of a person “confessing” to a Priest or Priestess of the E.G.C. (unlike in the Roman Catholic Church with respect to a member of that church and the sacrament of confession, for example).

Therefore, if a member of E.G.C. clergy were to become aware of, or reasonably suspects, the existence of child abuse (even if that information was volunteered by a Thelemite, O.T.O. initiate, E.G.C. lay member or any other person), that Priest, Priestess or Bishop would be in a more tenable position with the authorities by complying with the mandated reporting requirements of his or her state, rather than failing to report by way of appeal to a privilege arising from a “penitential communication” which does not exist within E.G.C. practice or Thelemic theology.

1. See Crowley, *Duty*, section C.1.

2. *Child Maltreatment 2003*, publication of Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

3. See *e.g.*, Hearing on Child Abuse Reporting before the Assembly Commission on Criminal Justice (1977-1978 Reg. Sess.) Nov. 21, 1978.

4. Currently: AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, IL, LA, MA, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, ND, NH, NM, NV, OR, PA, SC, VT, WI, WV.

What is “child abuse” for purposes of the mandated reporting laws?

Pursuant to CAPTA, each state is responsible for defining child abuse for purposes of local reporting requirements. While each state’s definition tends to vary somewhat, all such definitions generally recognize four principal categories of child abuse, namely *neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse* and *emotional abuse*.

Neglect is failure to provide for a child’s basic needs. Neglect may be:

- ⊗ Physical (e.g., failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or lack of appropriate supervision);
- ⊗ Medical (e.g., failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment);
- ⊗ Educational (e.g., failure to educate a child or attend to special education needs); or
- ⊗ Emotional (e.g., inattention to a child’s emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs).

Circumstances such as poverty may factor into whether neglect objectively exists, but it is not ordinarily the role of clergy as a mandated reporter to ascertain and evaluate whether such economic or social circumstances might be a “mitigating factor” with regard to child abuse in deciding to report.

Physical Abuse is physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, slapping or hitting, (with a hand,

stick, strap, or other object), burning, or otherwise harming a child. Such injury is considered abuse regardless of whether the caretaker or other perpetrator intended to hurt the child.

Sexual Abuse includes activities by a parent, caretaker or other perpetrator such as fondling a child’s genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure,⁵ and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.

Emotional Abuse is a pattern of behavior that impairs a child’s emotional development or sense of self-worth. This may include constant criticism, threats, or rejection, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance. Emotional abuse is almost always present when other forms are identified.

Signs of such abuse may range from such as physical signs of injury, broken bones in infants, etc., to unexplained withdrawal or “shrinking away” from adults or extremely precocious sexual knowledge or behavior. The crux of the issue is whether there is direct observation or “reasonable suspicion” of child abuse. Reasonable suspicion is often fact-determinative, but given the general immunity from liability for compliance with reporting laws by clergy (and the burden of proof to establish a malicious intent to file a patently fraudulent report on the part of a mandated reporter), it would appear that erring on the side of caution and prudence favoring the safety and welfare of a child is merited.

How does clergy comply?

E.G.C. clergy, as defined, should be cognizant of child abuse wherever and whenever it occurs, although the mandated reporter laws do not require a member of the clergy to act as an investigator or police officer in obtaining information about child abuse.

However, if, for example, a Priest or Priestess of E.G.C. were to directly witness an act of child abuse at an O.T.O.-related function (whether or not it was official), or if a reliable source reported child abuse to a member of E.G.C. clergy, then the E.G.C. clergy in question would be legally bound to report that incident to the proper authorities. In addition, E.G.C. clergy should report the incident to their supervising Bishop.

Since the mandated reporter laws impose the liability of reporting on the individual clergy member (or on each individual in those states where all persons are deemed mandated reporters) and not on the religious organization of which they are affiliated as a whole, each member of E.G.C. clergy previously identified should familiarize themselves with the applicable laws of the state within which they are located. Such resources are readily available online, and can be accessed at:

nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/general/legal/statutes/search/index.cfm

Some states provide for online training and certification of mandated reporters relative to their obligations under the law and how to identify signs of child abuse.

For example, in California, the California Institute on Human Services at Sonoma State University offers online training modules focused on child abuse mandated reporting at:

www.sonoma.edu/cihs/mr/docs/trainclergy.html

This discussion is provided not as legal opinion or advice but as an overview only. Compliance with laws in the various jurisdictions is the responsibility of the individual in question.

Frater Adinath Orobouros, an attorney licensed to practice in California, is a member of Blue Horizon Oasis and a lay member of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica.

5. One issue which arises within the context of our Order is the central ritual of the E.G.C., namely, the *Gnostic Mass* as set forth in *Liber XV*, which provides for the priestess to have “divested herself completely of her robe” at a certain point during the *Ceremony Of the Opening of the Veil*. While the case law concerning ritual nudity and local prohibitions against indecent exposure is at yet unclear, it does appear that prohibitions against such exposure examine whether the action in question occurs 1) in a public or semi-public setting and 2) involves a “lewd intent,” neither of which are elements of a celebration of *Liber XV*. Nevertheless, until the courts categorically rule that discrete ritual nudity in a private religious setting cannot be restricted by local anti-nudity ordinances, it remains unsettled whether a performance of the *Gnostic Mass* in the presence of children could implicate liability to the priestess or the Order, meaning that common sense and discretion should be employed if a performance of the *Gnostic Mass* includes minor children in attendance.

The Path of Mediation, Part 2

Establishing and Modeling a Critical Path toward efficient Mediation and Dispute Resolution within Our Holy Order

Step Two: Responsibility Toward our Brothers and Sisters

In the next step upon the Path of Mediation, after clearly analyzing “our part” in the matter (see *The Path of Mediation, Part 1 in Agape*, Vol. 7, No. 1), we bring our issues directly to the attention of the brother or sister with whom we are having a problem. Having first fulfilled the three-part process of self-examination, analysis and responsibility, we can now approach our brother or sister rationally, non-reactively and with discretion.

A rational, non-reactive, and discrete approach does not require that we repress our emotions surrounding the issue. In fact, it is important to convey our feelings in a direct, forthright and effective manner. The key is to express our feelings about our issue, with precision, accuracy, “tact and friendliness;” in a way that will get through to the other person; and in a manner which they will listen to, hear, and understand the core issue we are having with them and how it is making us feel. This approach is called “emotional literacy”—the ability to express our thoughts and feelings on a matter of conflict, in such a way that the other person can understand what we are expressing, without having to take a defensive posture. Emotional literacy is about *acting passionately and thinking rationally, while being Thyself*, to paraphrase *Liber Librae*. If we bury our emotions around an issue, it will only fester, and likely come out later in the form of deep resentments. We need, however, to handle our initial interactions with our brothers and sisters extremely tactfully.

Reactive Consciousness

Most individuals have a tendency, when faced with challenge or conflict, to either go into a defensive mode (by rationalizing, defending or denying), or to take a self-righteous offensive stance (by attempting to prove that we are right, the other person is wrong, and that the other person should be punished or shamed). This tendency is one of the most important things to recognize at this stage in this process. Neither of these positions—defensive or offensive—gets us what we really want; in fact, these stances tend to only escalate tensions and create further division. These “states of being” are commonly called, “reactive states of consciousness.” They are very often deeply rooted in our subconscious mind, originating from the way we were raised, the decisions we have made as adults, and our worldview that these experiences have formed over time.

One of the best ways of dealing with our reactive consciousness is to put up “gatekeepers.” Read *Liber Jugorum* to learn the method of controlling thoughts, words and actions. It’s a means to prevent us from just robotically blurting or acting out the first thought that rises into consciousness when an emotionally charged issue comes up. When bringing our concerns to our brothers and sisters, it is important to take some time, perhaps create a bit of distance, and generally remember to breathe when issues of real conflict arise. (*Remember that Pranayama folks!*)

Avoiding these reactive states of consciousness is part of taking self-responsibility, as was described in the first part of this series. In this step, however, it is our goal to communicate responsibly and directly with our brothers and sisters.

Putting our Cards on the Table

Our best approach to communicate, in any situation of this kind, is to have a face to face, private, sit-down conversation with the brother or sister involved, and to calmly put all our cards on the table with them. This kind of approach involves rationally and clearly discussing the issue we have with them, or just having a conversation about the root of the conflict, while incorporating “emotional literacy” into the process. E-mail & LiveJournal are generally not the best venues for this kind of interaction. These mediums, more often than not, have a way of filtering out the kind of fraternal exchange and subtle nuances of spoken language that we use when we are communicating face to face. I have seen more conflicts escalate in e-mail, and through other web-based modes of communication, than I care to mention. It is important, when using these mediums, to be extremely prudent about hitting that “send” button. One advantage to e-mail, perhaps, is that it allows us to get our thoughts and ideas clearly worked out and articulated over time. There are also situations which call for maintaining a record of our communications. For the purposes of *Step Two*, however, nothing works better than a face to face, casual meeting on mutual ground, where the two parties involved can interact in the spirit of fraternity, with the mutual goal of voicing their concerns in a mature, honest and straight-forward manner. I sincerely believe that most problems and conflicts can be resolved easily at the personal level, if we take the time and make the effort to approach our brothers and sisters in this manner.

Deep Listening

“Deep Listening” is the essential component of relating responsibly to our brothers and sisters. This is an active process, in which each person shares their thoughts and feelings openly while the other just listens attentively, and actively; not commenting, making excuses, or defending their actions. The listener simply listens, intently and openly, to what is being said. Again, developing a non-reactive way of being facilitates this process.

In most circumstances when another is speaking, we have an active monologue or commentary going on in our minds. We usually want to interrupt to clarify our side of the issue. That is not how this process works. There will be time for sharing later. Once the first person has said everything they need to, the other can respond, while the first actively listens in the same manner. The point is for each person to express themselves completely and fully, so that each may put *all* their cards on the table, neither withholding nor being interrupted. This again requires emotional literacy, self-accountability, and taking responsibility for our concerns.

“Deep Listening” can also be utilized in group conferences or mediation sessions facilitated by a local body master. These sessions can include the sponsors of the concerned parties, and/or members of the Committee of Four. Future installments in this series will address facilitated mediation sessions in more depth.

The First & Second Level

Steps one and two represent what I refer to as the “First Level” of mediation. This is the “personal” level. Relating and attempting resolution on the personal level is the most direct and effective way of dealing with problems and conflicts that arise between members; handling issues directly, one-on-one, mutually and equitably as brothers and sisters. It involves addressing and taking responsibility for our own thoughts, feelings and actions while cultivating mutual respect and honesty. When mediation and resolution cannot be effected at the *personal* level, we move on to *Step Three: the Local Body Master*, which takes us to the “Second Level,” which I refer to as the “local” level of mediation. Read more about this in the next issue of *Agapé*.

Frater Hrumachis

Next issue:

The Local Level: Steps Three, Four and Five.

Level One: the "Personal" Level

STEP 1. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

See Agapé Vol. 7, No. 1

Self Evaluation

1. What are the real core issues?
2. Define issue with "I" or "my" based statements.
3. Distinguish the "facts" and the "feelings" from "story."
4. Journal all of this out.

Self Analysis

1. Why is this an issue for me?
2. What is the lesson in this conflict for me?
3. What might I be disowning or projecting?

Self Responsibility

1. How am I a cause in the matter?
2. What role or responsibility do I take in this conflict?
3. How can I take ownership of my part in the matter?

STEP 2. RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Reactive Consciousness

1. Avoid defensive or offensive stances.
2. Learn to control thought. Avoid blurting out.
3. Remember to breathe!

Put All Your Cards on the Table

1. Cultivate "emotional literacy."
2. Consider the venue carefully.
3. Make time for face-to-face communications.

Deep Listening

1. Listen attentively without interrupting.
2. Work on stilling internal dialog.
3. Take turns to express issues honestly and fully.
4. Can be effectively utilized in conference.

Level Two: the "Local" Level

STEP 3. LOCAL BODY MASTER

STEP 4. SPONSOR ASSISTANCE

STEP 5. "NOTICE" & "BAD REPORT"

Level Three: the "Regional" Level

STEP 6. ROSE+CROIX CHAPTER

STEP 7. COMMITTEE OF FOUR

Level Four: the "National" Level

STEP 8. ELECTORAL COLLEGE

STEP 9. GRAND TRIBUNAL

STEP 10. APPEAL

Level Five: the "International" Level

STEP 11. AREOPAGUS

The Triple Inequality

by Craig Berry (T Ce Acatl)

A key aspect of my magical work is the establishment of what I call the *triple inequality*, which is:

Crowley ≠ Thelema ≠ O.T.O.

That is, none of these three things are the same.¹

This may seem self-evident; after all, the first is a particular person, the second a philosophy or religion and its body of works and practice, and the third an initiatory fraternal organization. On its face, the proposition that any pair of these could be “equal” is absurd. It is just as clear, however, that the three are tightly linked.

Aleister Crowley founded Thelema and reoriented the O.T.O. toward Thelema. What’s more, the O.T.O. has, as members, some large fraction of the world’s Thelemites. It’s impossible to say how large a fraction that might be, since the definition of “Thelemite” is imprecise, and there is no way to know how many Thelemites are unaffiliated with any organization. However, I would guess that at least 10% of the world’s self-identified Thelemites are members of O.T.O., and would be willing to believe a figure as high as 50%.

Further, Crowley is identified as the *Logos* of the Aeon of Thelema; a sacred document of Thelema sets his writings as the sole permitted source of authoritative commentary on that Law.² Much of *The Book of the Law* appears to be intended as instruction to Crowley personally (though this is of course a matter of opinion).

Matters become still more complex when one recognizes that, while the O.T.O. existed before Crowley became its leader, he very firmly put his stamp on it. Nearly all of our founding documents were written by him, as was the *Gnostic Mass* and much of the material in our initiations. The most important change he made was transforming the O.T.O. into an engine for the promulgation of the Law of Thelema. While its earlier purposes remained intact, they became intertwined with this new one to the extent that the distinctions are easy to miss.

In the above knot of influences arises the damaging confusion which the triple inequality attempts to resolve. People routinely and without apparent reservation make statements like the following:

1. “The Law is for all, so it’s not right to put barriers on degree advancement.”
2. “The O.T.O. should have a more stringent teaching curriculum; after all, Crowley insisted that his students study a great deal.”
3. “Crowley slept with all his female followers, so Thelemic women should give themselves freely.”³

Put so baldly (and in the context of this essay), these probably seem laughable. They are, however, taken from personal experience—dismayingly frequent personal experience. The triple inequality serves as a means to look more critically at such statements, as follows:

“The Law is for all, so it’s not right to put barriers on degree advancement.”

Obviously, this conflates Thelema with the O.T.O.; the implicit position is that one cannot be a Thelemite without being a member of (and advancing in) O.T.O. Needless to say, this is entirely wrong. O.T.O. is a particular fraternal order which embraces Thelema, but it is not *itself*

Thelema. One can be a perfect Thelemite without joining or advancing in the Order; two of the best Thelemites I’ve known chose to remain in the Minerval degree indefinitely, just for example. Perhaps more importantly, identifying Thelema with O.T.O. limits the scope of both. Thelema happens inside each individual, though its results then reflect outward. Expecting Thelema to manifest *as* the O.T.O. is like expecting love to manifest as a potion. It makes a nice fairy tale, but it is not how things work. O.T.O. is a vehicle or context which might work to further you along your own path (while your work contributes to the Order’s own ends), but it is not Thelema. Still more importantly, O.T.O. includes many elements which have nothing whatsoever to do with Thelema *per se*; the entire pre-Crowley collection of initiatory secrets and instructions is still there, the heart and pillar of the O.T.O. Focusing only on the Thelemic aspects of O.T.O., one can easily miss a great deal of its power and beauty.

“The O.T.O. should have a more stringent teaching curriculum; after all, Crowley insisted that his students study a great deal.”

This confuses Crowley’s own methods with those of O.T.O. Crowley utilized a number of educational strategies with his students at different phases of his career, some more successful, some less. But he and Reuss did not choose to enshrine these in the blueprint for O.T.O. Instead, our founding documents are largely silent on the topic of teaching and vague even when they do broach it. Thus, we are left to work out this problem on our own, as modern stewards of the O.T.O. Our decisions about how best to proceed need not be unduly influenced by how Crowley treated his students—or governed other orders, for that matter.

“Crowley slept with all his female followers, so Thelemic women should give themselves freely.”

This is perhaps the most pernicious, though it is usually encountered in less obviously manipulative forms. I think of this sort of error as the “*Tommy syndrome*,” after *The Who’s* rock opera. The basic idea can be expressed as the following false syllogism:

1. Crowley did X.
2. Crowley became a Magus.
3. Therefore, if I do X, I will become a Magus.

Just as *Tommy* has the sadly comic image of blindfolded acolytes playing pinball and waiting for enlightenment to arrive, Thelema has those who get hooked on heroin, sleep with anything that moves, abandon their families, sponge off their friends, and wait to become Magi. This is the most dangerous misunderstanding of the three, as it involves failures of discrimination and balance. As a Thelemite, it is essential to pay attention to what Crowley has to tell us, but it is equally essential to view his advice in the context of one’s own life and situation. Most especially, it is critical to take a scientific and ruthlessly detached attitude toward evaluating the results of one’s work. If you are playing pinball or shooting up heroin and your world is falling apart around your ears, it might be time to try another path; what worked for Tommy or Crowley might be poisonous to you. “The Method of Science, the Aim of Religion” isn’t just a catchy slogan—it is the secret to avoiding the most terrible of magical disasters. Science is not the key to infinite wisdom; it is the guard against infinite folly.

I hope this essay has provided some insight into what I mean by the “triple inequality,” and why I consider it to be so crucial. Perhaps I will live long enough to see all three sides of this triangle of error weakened; though I doubt very much they will be destroyed, so long as Crowley is remembered, Thelema practiced, and the O.T.O. extant.

1. Notational pedants will object that my formulation of this expression would allow Crowley and the O.T.O. to be equal; I chose visual simplicity over adding “≠ Crowley” at the end.

2. *The Comment in Liber AL vel Legis: The Book of the Law*.

3. Crowley didn’t actually do this, but that is a separate topic for another essay.

Local Body Reports

Knights Templar Oasis ☉ Salem, Massachusetts

Liber OZ Festival September 10-11, 2005 EV Salem, MA

Knights Templar Oasis (K.T.O.) invites any and all O.T.O. initiates and their chaperoned guests to join us for our 6th annual celebration of the *Rights of Man*.

OZ Festival is an overnight camping trip for Thelemic adults to celebrate and explore their Freedom and Will in an accepting environment. With great company and a fantastic feast, you cannot go wrong.

Previous years have included group rituals, a pig roast, the *Rite of Luna*, the *Gnostic Mass* under the stars, ritual tattooing, and more. Each year we have picked a new God or Goddess to coordinate our activities around, as follows:

2000	Pan & Lilith
2001	Dionysus
2002	The All Goddess
2003	Mithras
2004	Nuit

This year we have chosen Lucifer, the Light Bringer. Rain or shine, He shall be exalted! Minerval initiations will be held by K.T.O. the night before. Please contact us if you desire to attend the initiation, so that we can send you more information.

Come join us in our festivities and flaunt your freedom. For more information or **to volunteer**, contact:

oz-fest@kto.org

Local hospitality and transportation can be arranged by contacting our Feast and Hospitality Coordinator at:

seneschal@kto.org

Register: by August 15th\$60 per person
by September 2nd\$70 per person

Mention this article and receive \$5 off your admission price. All registration must be done, and payments made, by September 2nd; there is no onsite registration. No children or pets, please.

RPSTOVAL Camp ☉ Ashland, Oregon

"What is that on your Glove?"

"The six rayed star," I replied.

This kind of exchange was common at my Classical Fencing Tournament last winter. When asked how I achieved my victories, I replied, "a bit of *mushin*, bit of *dhyana* and some personal power." A myriad of careful questions followed the curious looks that people gave me.

My local body, RPSTOVAL Camp, has lately undertaken the study and practice of yoga. Our bimonthly meetings, along with my own daily disciplines, led me to the cultivation of, and striving for, "single pointedness," an appropriate subject of meditation for a swordsman. Always working to apply occult practices to what I "do" in the realm of *Malkuth*, I utilized *raja yoga* in my long day's series of fencing bouts. Meditating upon the flame of a candle is not so different from meditating on the tip of a foil and *épée* blade.

Pranayama practice led me to a practical understanding of the "wisdom of breath," referred to in *Liber Israfael*. This was essential to the mind-body regulation of my cardiovascular and muscular systems, which I applied through the entire tournament.

Relating fencing to our yoga studies and practices, and examining the evidence of my experience, I have developed the following maxims:

- ☉ The potency of one hour of silence before dueling is never to be underestimated.
- ☉ A fencer afraid to lose almost always loses.
- ☉ A fencer with a love for the win tends to win often.
- ☉ A fencer who focuses on scoring hit after hit, in a timeless spiral of moment to moment realities, tends to win ceaselessly.
- ☉ Once dualities are abolished and the lust of result is vanquished by virtue of prior meditation, time and space on the fencing *piste* (the strip where duels occur) feels morphed and of no consequence. The focus ceases to be enmeshed in the concerns or mechanics of causality.
- ☉ Consciousness without typical thought comes and goes like the tide.
- ☉ Good technique in fencing is also attained by paring away fear of failure and that which is superfluous.

Mysticism and the path of the warrior have walked hand in hand for centuries. It is therefore no surprise that the martial arts have often attracted those who delve into the various schools of esoteric philosophy. Whether victory or defeat for this duelist, one thing is for certain: my application of Thelemic practices to fencing will continue. I hope to discover more depths in applying illuminism to the art of the blade, and inspire others to join me in this work.

Fay ce que voudras,
Brother Wolfgang Agota

Brother Wolfgang is a member of Sword & Mask Salle de Arm in Ashland, Oregon. He recently won the gold medal at the Russ Heggen Memorial Foil Tournament in Salem, Oregon, and currently studies under classical/modern fencing Maestro John McDougall.

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