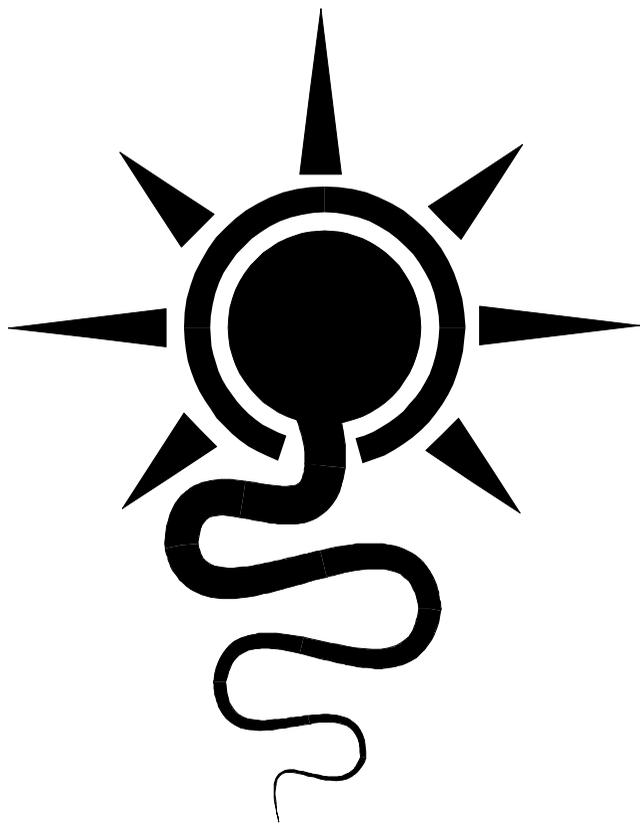


Volume 1, Number 1. March-May 1998e.v.

Serpent Flame



**Quarterly Journal of
Serpente et Astrum Camp
Ordo Templi Orientis, Australia**

Serpente et Astrum Camp
Ordo Templi Orientis
Toongabbie, Australia



Anno IVvi
Sol in Taurus, Luna in Cancer
Dies Veneris

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Camp Master's Rave

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



It is strange to be sitting on the other side of the desk. For the past three years I have typeset and sub-edited the O.T.O. Australia newsletter *Layah*. I designed and typeset *The Waratah* Volume One, Number One as well as maintaining the O.T.O. Australia's web site. There was also a short stint as Oceania Lodge Secretary in there. All of this was under the editorship and tutelage of FSR Frater Numa. Now it is my turn to sit in the big chair... and it's not as easy as he made it look!

Serpente et Astrum Camp was officially chartered on 28th February 1998e.v. This was done with extreme patience as I chopped and changed names and even chose one that had been used previously. I finally settled on two names for the Camp, but during my procrastination one had been taken by *another* new Camp. Serpente et Astrum was it, and I am very glad it was. All the other names lacked a balance and Serpente et Astrum (Latin: Serpent and the Star) embodied a Masculine/Feminine energy that is essential for the conception and growth of *any* new entity, including an O.T.O. Local Body. My beautiful wife Soror HANH was duly appointed Camp Treasurer and quickly hid the money tin.

So what does all this mean? Is there a need for another local body in Sydney? I think so.

Only five or so short years ago, when I was feverishly buying up every magick and occult book I could

find, there was nothing west of Balmain. I would travel into town from Toongabbie maybe once per week to do the rounds of the bookshops and music shops in the City and Newtown. It was on one of these book expeditions that I stumbled across a weird magazine called *Beastly* that lead me straight to Oceania Oasis of the Ordo Templi Orientis.

The Sydney metropolitan area is expanding rapidly as we approach the new millennium and Parramatta has long been recognised as a second central business district. Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown are now home to large entertainment complexes and shopping centres. New Age and Occult bookshops are popping up everywhere. It's no longer quite as necessary to travel into Inner City Sydney, and as distances increase, its not quite so simple or convenient.

Serpente et Astrum had an initial aim of acting as a bridge between the western suburbs of Sydney and the already established and thriving inner city O.T.O. community that has been nurtured by Oceania Lodge. A close link between the two Local Bodies will be essential for many years to come, and Oceania has been a family to me for so long I'll never really be able to leave it. Currently Serpente has no initiating officer and Oceania's assistance will be of vital importance to Serpente's growth. Serpente members have already participated in Oceania Lodge's performance of Crowley's Rite of Sol from "*The Rites of Eleusis*", and members of both bodies have started an Internet discussion group

in ICQ that is currently examining Liber XV in detail. Some of the transcript of the first Mass Discussion Group can be found elsewhere in this issue.

So what is an O.T.O. Camp all about, and more specifically, what is Serpente et Astrum Camp all about?

The *International Camp, Oasis & Lodge Master's Handbook* says: "Camps can be as simple as study groups and as complex as Oases". And in a recent letter to all Local Body Masters, O.T.O. Australia Secretary Frater Raven stated that "Camps are able to have a broad focus of personal interests and distinctive flavour". But before this 'distinctive flavour' can be shown a firm understanding of the foundation documents O.T.O. is important to understanding the structure of the Order. Liber LI, Liber CI and Liber CXCIV can all be found in *Equinox* III:10 or on the O.T.O. Australia web site (<http://www.otoaustralia.org.au>).

These documents should be read by ALL members, not just Local Body Masters and their Officers. It will help you understand what to expect from your Officers, and what those Officers will expect from you.

"All Camps are encouraged to provide classes and/or publish instructional material, and to offer the Gnostic Mass on a regular basis."

-"*International Camp, Oasis & Lodge Master's Handbook*"

Classes can and will be offered in some form by Serpente on various topics as time goes on. An Internet Discussion Group has already

started and is currently delving into the complexities and mysteries of Liber XV-*The Gnostic Mass*. More personal and face-to-face discussions will also be offered. I personally find that these group forums work a lot better to increase understanding than class or lecture situations, which are often too constrained to a single perspective. Strange and amazing theories can emerge when an idea is bounced between a few heads. If you would like to be part of these discussion groups please contact me at kephra@synflux.com.au

Publishing will be an important aspect of Serpente et Astrum. Two important essays by Crowley *The Soldier and the Hunchback* & *Energised Enthusiasm* have been reprinted from *The Equinox* and are available in A5 booklet form. Future projects include a limited edition pocket-size *Liber AL vel Legis* with facsimile manuscript. A Serpente web site will be operational soon with lots of original articles, artwork and poetry.

The Gnostic Mass will be performed by the Sydney Ministry of the E.G.C. under the aegis of Bishop Tau Anarchos through Oceania Lodge whenever possible. All Serpente et Astrum members are welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in these events. It is envisioned that Serpente et Astrum will at some stage be able to perform it's own Gnostic Mass on a regular basis.

As Thelmites there are other things I feel are important to a Camp and the community that forms around it.

"...all must be done well and with business way." III:41.

All must be done well! Pretty simple there. The 'business way', I think, alludes to professionalism and presentation, which is especially important for the Officers of the Camp. If we keep this line from *Liber AL* in our minds all the time when performing our duties as Officers or when dealing with the public in regards to O.T.O. and Camp matters, how can Serpente et Astrum not flourish?

But on a lighter note;

"There are rituals of the elements and feasts of the times." II:36

Serpente et Astrum will observe all these feasts with 'joy and beauty'!

Various events will be organised by our members often, including ritual workings, feasts, and a damn good time! Members of other Local Bodies are welcome to attend these events whenever possible. Advance notice will always be given.

Well, that's a little of what Serpente et Astrum is all about. I hope the rest of this issue gives a bit more of an insight into the direction that we are heading and the sort of things we hope to achieve.

Love is the law, love under will.

Frater ASHR
Camp Master

Gnostic Mass Internet Chats

On Monday, March 23rd 1998e.v. at 9-30pm the first Serpente et Astrum organised Internet Discussion Group was held on ICQ. The initial aim for this group is to examine *Liber XV The Gnostic Mass* in all its many facets and aspects. This is anticipated to take quite a while. The topic for the first week was to look at the role of the Congregation in the Mass.

Present online were Frater ASHR, Soror HANH and Frater SHAIB of Serpente et Astrum Camp along with Frater I.V.V. from Oceania Lodge.

The discussion began with a line by line examination of the Creed and a general breakdown in light of Tetragrammaton. Other ideas and questions popped up throughout the main discussion, with sidelines on BAPHOMET as Vau in YHVH and its relationship with Tiphareth. It all ended up with some observations, summations and trepidations on the Congregation as an actual Officer of

the Mass, identifiable in many ways with Heh final of YHVH.

The discussion ended at exactly 11.21pm, a duration of 111 minutes. All in all there were 672 (672=YHVH ALYHM, Divine Name in Assiah of Binah) entries. Six BLANK entries within the text, probably caused by accidental double entering during the chat, were removed. This left exactly 666 individual chat entries containing text. Some extracts appear below. Line numbers from the original transcript are given.

If you would like to participate in these discussions please email Frater ASHR at kephra@synflux.com.au.

EXTRACT 1.

199. <Fr.ASHR> One secret and ineffable lord is the point of the YOD or Kether?

200. <Fr.I.V.V.> Ok

201. <Fr.ASHR> The body of the YOD is Chokmah

202. <Fr.SHAIB> ineffable is also beyond SPEECH.. Silence..

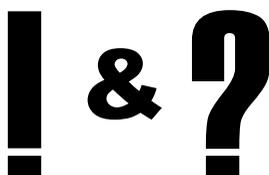
203. <Fr.I.V.V.> Maybe we look at the caps
 204. <Fr.I.V.V.> LORD CHAOS BABALON BAPHOMET THELEMA
 205. <Sr.HANH> If we first look at the paragraph and then look at each phrase, we may establish some context
 206. <Fr.I.V.V.>Heru Ra Ha
 207. <Fr.ShAIB>YHVH - Chaos, Babalon Baphomet, Church..
 208. <Fr.AShR>yes
 209. <Fr.AShR>church = congregation?
 210. <Fr.I.V.V.>Baphomet as the Vau is interesting.....?
 211. <Fr.ShAIB>i would think so..
 212. <Fr.I.V.V.>I can't see it.....
 213. <Fr.AShR>Baphomet is Lion/Serpent Lion is definitely Solar.
 214. <Fr.ShAIB>the union of the father and mother in the Son..
 215. <Fr.I.V.V.>Ok
 216. <Fr.I.V.V.>Yep..nod nod
 217. <Fr.AShR>The snake is also a symbol of renewal/regeneration because it sheds its skin
 218. <Fr.AShR>some reptiles are parthenogenic too...self reproducing/no partner needed
 219. <Fr.I.V.V.>The identification with the lion serpent and the sun...nod v. strong
 220. <Fr.ShAIB> glad we're not :)
 221. <Fr.AShR> spoils the fun!
 222. <Fr.I.V.V.> The glyph of leo is the lion serpent
 223. <Fr.ShAIB> ok so we have dealt with ineffable lord as well as we can mayhap?
 224. <Sr.HANH>church = congregation, the church being the body of the church, the people in it,
 225. <Sr.HANH> partaking of it, but not actually 'performing'
 226. <Fr.I.V.V.>I think we should look at the creed in the context of the mass as a whole
 227. <Fr.I.V.V.> Nod
 228. <Fr.AShR> we do perform in the creed/saints/anthem/communion though
 229. <Fr.I.V.V.> Mmhhhh..dont know about that
 230. <Fr.ShAIB> the whole of the mystery of the mass and of Thelema is in the creed i feel..

231. <Fr.AShR>As Heh Final in a way? bought to the throne of the mother through the Deacon (Vau/Prince also)

EXTRACT 2.

470. <Fr.AShR>Would we agree that the congregation is Heh Final bought to Communion with the Mother Through the Priest?
 471. <Fr.I.V.V.> Its a good analogy
 472. <Fr.ShAIB>i can see that as agreeable!
 473. <Fr.I.V.V.> I cant see the YHVH def in the creed
 474. <Fr.AShR> Okay, so are we more than spectators...are we officers in a way?
 475. <Fr.I.V.V.> Baphomet = Vau still a mystery
 476. <Fr.AShR>Mystery of Mystery!
 477. <Fr.I.V.V.>Well i guess the church is like a body
 478. <Fr.ShAIB>Chaos, Babalon, Baphomet, Church..
 479. <Fr.ShAIB> Y H V H
 480. <Fr.I.V.V.> If the catholic church is the body of christ...what is EGC?
 481. <Fr.AShR>As a single entity a collection of Stars or Atoms/Hadits?
 482. <Fr.AShR> Body of the Universe?
 483. <Fr.I.V.V.> Yeah was thinking that

If you would like to join in these discussions please email Frater AShR at kephra@synflux.com.au.



**The Soldier
and the
Hunchback**

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From Serpente et Astrum
(see directory for address)

The System of the O.T.O.

BAPHOMET XI^o

[The following letter first appeared in *Magick Without Tears*, ed. Karl Germer (Hampton, NJ) Thelema Publishing Co., 1954. It offers a clear and extremely concise view of the O.T.O. Degree System. Often these shorter pieces are overlooked as being too simplified to give a full understanding of the Degrees but the opposite is probably closer to the truth. Crowley cut close to the bone in these pieces, foregoing his usual verbosity to get to the heart of the matter. The mnemonics numbered 1 to 6 are excellent starting points for Degree related meditation. Ed.]

Cara Soror,

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

You inform me that the Earnest Inquirer of your ambit has been asking you to explain the difference between the A.:A.: and the O.T.O.; and that although your own mind is perfectly clear about it, you find it impossible to induce a similar lucidity in his. You would add that he is not (as one would at first suppose) a moron. And will I please do what I can about it?

Well, here's the essential difference *ab ovo usque ad mala*, the A.:A.: concerns the individual, his development, his initiation, his passage from 'Student' to 'Ipsissimus'; he has no contact of any kind with any other person except the Neophyte who introduced him, and any Student or Students whom he may, after becoming a Neophyte, introduce.

The details of this 'Pilgrims Progress' are very fully set forth in *One Star in Sight**; and I should indeed be stupid and presumptuous

to try to do better than that. But it is true that with regard to the O.T.O. there is no similar manual of instruction. In the *Manifesto*, and other Official Pronunciamenti, there are, it is true, what ought to be adequate data; but I quite understand that they are not as ordered or as classified as one would wish; there is certainly room for a simple elementary account of the origins of the Order, of its principles, of its methods, of its design, of the Virtue of its successive Grades. This I will now try to supply, at least in a brief outline.

Let us begin at the beginning. What is Dramatic Ritual? It is a celebration of the Adventures of the God whom it is intended to invoke. (*The Bacchae* of Euripides is a perfect example of this.) Now, in the O.T.O., the object of these ceremonies being the Initiation of the Candidate, it is he whose Path in Eternity is displayed in dramatic form.

What is the Path?

1. The Ego is attracted to the Solar System.
2. The Child experiences Birth.
3. The Man experiences Life.
4. He experiences Death.
5. He experiences the World beyond Death.
6. This entire cycle of Point-Events is withdrawn into Annihilation.

In the O.T.O. these successive stages are represented as follows:

1. 0° (Minerval)
2. I° (Initiation)
3. II° (Consecration)
4. IV° (Devotion)
5. V° (Perfection, or Exaltation)
6. P.I. (Perfect Initiate)

Of these Events or Stations upon the Path all but three (II°) are single critical experiences. We, however, are concerned mostly with the very varied experiences of Life.

All subsequent Degrees of the O.T.O. are accordingly elaborations of the II°, since in a single ceremony it is hardly possible to sketch, even in the briefest outline, the Teaching of the Initiates with regard to Life. The Rituals V°-IX° are then instructions to the Candidate on how he should conduct himself; and they confer upon him, gradually the Magical Secrets which make him a Master of Life.

To return for a moment to that question of Secrecy; there is no rule to prevent you from quoting against me such of my brighter remarks as "Mystery is the enemy of Truth"; but for one thing, I am,

and always have been, a leader of the Extreme Left in the Council-Chamber of the City of the Pyramids, so that if I acquiesce at all in the system of the O.T.O. so far as 'secret if secrets' of the IX° is concerned, it is really on a point of personal honour. My pledge given to the late Frater Superior and O.H.O., Dr. Theodor Reuss. For all that, in this particular instance it is beyond question a point of common prudence, both because the abuse of the Secret is, at least on the surface, so easy and so tempting, and because, if it became a matter of general knowledge the Order itself might be in danger of calumny and persecution; for the secret is even easier to misinterpret than to profane.

Legé! Judicial! Tace!

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally,
666

* *Commentaries on the Holy Books*, The Equinox IV: 1, (York Beach, ME) Samuel Weiser, Inc. 1996.

Serpente Publishing

To start off our publishing program Serpente et Astrum have produced two of Crowley's harder to find but much referenced essays.

The Soldier and the Hunchback: ! & ? has been reprinted from Aleister Crowley's Quarterly Journal, *The Equinox* Vol I:1. (London, spring 1909). It gives a serious (and sometimes not so serious) look at the methods of the Skeptical mind and how they can best be employed by the initiate.

Crowley says in *Magick, Book 4* (Samuel Weiser, 1994) that it should be consulted in connection with "the method of logical contradiction which ends in reason transcending itself".

Energised Enthusiasm was first published in the *The Equinox* Vol I:9 (London, spring 1913). In *Magick, Book 4*, Crowley states that in this essay is "a concise account of one of the classical methods of arousing *Kundalini*. This essay should be studied with

care and determination.”

Both essays are available from Serpente et Astrum Camp in A5 softcover format on recycled paper for \$8-00AUD (which includes postage).

Serpent Flame is also available for non-members on subscription (4 issues annually) for \$12-00AUD.

Please send cheque or money order in Australian Dollars to:

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Events

MARCH

- Fri 20th - Feast for the Supreme Ritual.
- Mon 23rd-ICQ Liber XV discussion.
- Sat 28th - Camp Meeting

APRIL

- Wed 8th - Feast for the First Day of the Writing of Liber AL.
- Thur 9th - Feast for the Second Day of the Writing of Liber AL.
- Fri 10th - Feast for the Third Day of the Writing of Liber AL.
- Fri 10th - Oceania Lodge presents *The Rite of Sol*, Newtown.
- Sat 25th - Camp Meeting

MAY

- Sat 30th - Camp Meeting.

June

- Sat 27th - Camp Meeting.

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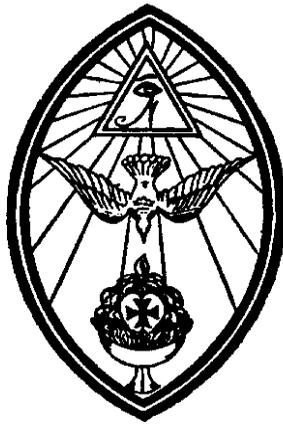
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