



The Septenary, Crowley, and The Origins of The Order of Nine Angles

Crowley and The Sinister Way

Aleister Crowley is regarded, by the ONA, as a rather conventional, if somewhat eccentric, example of what it has been convenient to call The Right Hand Path; that is, the ONA regards him as unconnected with any genuine Left Hand Path or any genuine Sinister Way. This is evident in many things, including (1) his reliance upon Old Aeon “Orders” and organizations, with their grand titles, their sycophancy, their “secret teachings revealed only to qualified initiates”, and especially their presumption of awarding titles and magickal grades to others; (2) that he never did any dark and sinister deeds - works of genuine evil - and neither did he and does he inspire any such works and deeds, or even the presencing of Chaos or genuine heresy; and (3) the pseudo-mystical ramblings of his (and his followers) which pass for “esoteric teachings”.

Crowley has been criticized by the ONA for several reasons. For instance:

1) First, because a study of both his life and his writings make it clear that he never progressed beyond the stage of Adeptship, if indeed he ever achieved Adeptship itself, which is unlikely. To state what one ONA person wrote: “What did Crowley actually do, apart from pose and indulge himself?” His life reveals only such posing, and a personal *Initiate-type* indulgence as well as a basic low-level sinister manipulation of people, appropriate to and often associated with the early stages of a genuine seeker of Occult knowledge with such posing, such Initiate-like indulgence, and such basic manipulation evident in his Abbey of Thelema.

Where, for instance, is the understanding of a genuine Adept: that of manufacturing, and using, *new* archetypes and archetypal forms (See Footnote 1 below); where that understanding of Aeonic Magick and indeed of Aeons? All Crowley did - in line with the majority of Occultists of his time, and evident in his *Liber AL vel Legis* - is use and propagate the dead archetypal forms of a dead Aeon: that is, and in his case, of those things associated with the former Sumerian Aeon and its associated civilization, the Egyptian.

His *Liber AL vel Legis* - just like Aquino’s *Book of Coming Forth By Night* - is a good example of a text produced by an *Initiate* of the Esoteric Arts. That is, it is a work which is quite representative of someone following the early stages of an esoteric Path. To quote an ONA MS, such works are:

“In both style and content, reminiscent of a working done by an... Initiate following the seven-fold way - i.e. a working with one of the pathways that link the spheres of the Tree of Wyrd when various ‘entities’ are invoked. [An example of one such working has been published, in 1974 en - *The Message of the One of Thoth*]. Such workings are generally understood to be learning experiences - when the... novice is exploring, via archetypal symbolism and archetypal forms, their own psyche. Most magickians, of whatever path or tradition, produce such ‘communications’ in their learning years. Those who are insightful, learn from these - and then

the novice moves on: the workings are seen as merely explorations of the unconscious. Those who are not insightful, dwell upon such workings - they fail to objectify them, they fail to integrate them via a conscious understanding of what they really are: merely workings with various archetypal symbols. [A classic case is John Dee.] Those who fail to integrate them, usually see such workings as 'pronouncements' by some supra-personal being or entity: that is, they are seen as actual and important revelations of some 'deity'. Accordingly, a lot of time is spent 'understanding' what the often cryptic 'communication(s)' means, and in writing "commentaries" upon them."

That Crowley spent much of his life writing about and propagating his *Liber AL vel Legis* - and considered it as a work of immense Occult importance - clearly reveals the true level of his own esoteric understanding.

2) Second, because he propagated the corrupt and bastard system of The Golden Dawn, firmly based as that system was on the qabalah, which qabalah and which corruption of it as used by the Golden Dawn and by Crowley, is the antithesis of the genuine Western tradition, which genuine tradition is septenary based. Indeed, The Golden Dawn system re-presents and re-inforces, the "Magian" distortion of the Western tradition.

This reliance upon the distortion of the genuine Western esoteric tradition is evident, for example, in his system of "magickal correspondences" deriving from The Golden Dawn, and his use of, and reliance upon, such works as *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage* and his writing about such things as the "conversion of one's holy guardian angel..."

3) Third, because he lacked an Initiated understanding of Aeons, Aeonic Magick and indeed of Magick itself. His lack of understanding of Aeons is evident in his declaration of a new "equinox of the gods" - after writing his *Liber AL vel Legis*; evident in the mystical and mythical mish-mash contained in that work, as well as in his many other pseudo-mystical ramblings, where, to give just two examples, from many in his verbose book *Magick in Theory and Practice*, he - the self-proclaimed "magus" - (a) mentions his "word" Thelema as the word of a "new aeon", and compares it with what he regards as previous such "magickal" words, such as those of Buddha and Muhammad; and (b) declares, in the Old Aeon speak used by those of the Right Hand Path, that "the essential characteristic of the Grade is that its possessor utters a Creative Magical Word, which transforms the planet on which he lives by the installation of new officers to preside over its initiation..." And so on, and so on. [Of course, he could have been "having a laugh" here, as elsewhere, but this is - from the evidence of his other works and his own life - to be imbuing him with an esoteric understanding he so evidently did not possess.]

According to the Sinister tradition of the ONA, an Aeon lasts from between one and half thousand years to sometimes nearly two thousand years, and is:

"A particular presencing of certain acausal energies on this planet, Earth, which energies affect a multitude of individuals over a certain period of causal time. One such affect is via the psyche of individuals. This particular presencing which is an Aeon is via a particular nexion, which is an Aeonic *civilization*, which Aeonic civilization is brought-into-being in a certain geographical area and usually associated with a particular *mythos*." *A Brief Order of Nine Angles Glossary*

4) Fourth, his much-vaunted but verbose book *Magick in Theory and Practice* is replete with Right Hand Path type pseudo-mystical ramblings, such as "astral planes", the "body of Light", magical "circles" and talismans, and with Old Aeon qabalistic notions such as "spirits" and Old Aeon stereotypes such as ceremonial "lodges" and "magickal Orders" working with rules and rigid hierarchies. In that work, all Crowley did was insert his own "law of Thelema" into an already existing pseudo-mystical mish-mash.

Thus, the conclusion is that while Crowley may be of interest to some “Right Hand Path” individuals still working within the distorted Golden Dawn tradition, he is of no use, and of no interest whatsoever, to anyone interested in or working within a genuine Left Hand Path and Sinister tradition, and indeed he is of no interest or practical importance to anyone who wants to forge ahead on their own along the Way of genuine esoteric Arts. Instead, he is a rather good example of the traps, and pitfalls, that await for the unwary, and those who, through lack of direct practical experience (extending to decades) of both the Light and the Dark, prefer pseudo-mystical ramblings and the comfort of Old Aeon stereotypes to the harsh and dangerous reality of genuine practical Occultism. For at worst he was just an Initiate floundering about, trapped by egotism and delusions of grandeur, while, at best, he was a charlatan who enjoyed, as a good Initiate should, sometimes playing games and enjoying japes: someone who never confronted, let alone alchemically synthesized in themselves or presented, for others, the Darkness beyond and within, and thus someone who did not (to be kind) progress beyond Adeptship, or (to be realistic) did not progress beyond the stage signified by External Adept.

Crowley, The Septenary, and The Origins of the ONA

It has been suggested by several individuals interested in The Order of Nine Angles, and in the life and works of Anton Long, that Anton Long was “influenced” by both the system of the Golden Dawn and by Crowley, since - as described in *Diablerie: Revelations of a Satanist* - Anton Long briefly had some contact with a small ceremonial Golden Dawn based group, in London, when, as a young man, he was beginning his study of The Dark Arts. Thus, the assumption is that the ONA itself - and such things as its Seven Fold Way and the Septenary System - are, in part at least, either derived from or influenced by either the work of Crowley or by The Golden Dawn.

However, as described in a still esoteric autobiographical MS, written by him and entitled *Quod Fornicatio sit naturalis hominis*, this contact was brief, with him, he admits with the arrogance of youth, dismissing both the teachings of the Golden Dawn, and the works of Crowley, as “wishy-washy arty-farty mumbo-jumbo” after a study of, among many other works, Regardie’s *The Golden Dawn*, Crowley’s *Magick in Theory and Practice*, his *Liber AL vel Legis* and other writings, loaned to him by someone in that ceremonial group, and after witnessing “several boring, pompous, and very un-magickal, ceremonial rituals”.

The claim that several aspects of the ONA system were derived from or influenced by either the work of Crowley or The Golden Dawn is addressed, by Anton Long, in the still esoteric autobiographical MS, written by him, dated 118 Year of Feyen, and entitled *Emanations of a Mage* where he states:

“As for the Septenary System itself, this - as I inherited it - was, in essence, an aural tradition, with only a few short handwritten MSS containing some correspondences and giving a brief description, and an illustration of, the Tree of Wyrd, and it did not take me long, during my time with my Lady Master and her daughter, to realize that, if anything, the Golden Dawn system was a distorted and very corrupt, version of this genuine, and hitherto secret, Western septenary tradition. At that time, following my own Initiation in the Dark Tradition of this, my Lady Master, the true origins of this system of hebdomadry were not known, although there was an aural tradition mentioning the works of people such as Robert Fludd which were said to contain some allusions to this seven-fold order, and it was only some time later, after I had undertaken much research lasting some years, that I considered I had found the original and probably long-forgotten source.

This source was - and for me, at that time (the early to middle 1970's e.n.) surprisingly - the works of various Arabic alchemists and writers, who had not only posited a system of seven fundamental stages or elements - *al-ajsad al-sabaah* - but who had also constructed a system of *nine* emanations of "The One" which included these seven elements plus two others which were quite distinct by virtue of having different aspects, or types of, or sources of, *time* itself, as described in the alchemical manuscript *Al-Kitab al-Aflak*.

What I found especially interesting - or, to be more accurate, what at that time astonished me - was that here was a system of nine emanations which mirrored, or which seemed to me to mirror, what I had termed, some years previously, as the Nine Angles, consisting as those Nine Angles did of the seven emanations (or nexions or spheres or Gates) of the Tree of Wyrð plus the two emanations/nexions which re-present the ToW as itself a nexion (a means to progress toward the acausal), with The Abyss - an actual connexion between the individual and the acausal - being the other one of the those two other emanations/nexions.

My actual reason for first using the term Nine Angles, some time before this discovery in Arabic texts, to describe the traditional "order" I had inherited from my Lady Master, was essentially to do with my other research - since my late teenage years - into tensorial mathematical representations of Space-Time, for I had already, due to my own Occult researches, concluded that in order to rationally understand magick, one must posit a bifurcation of Time itself, something I rudimentarily described in the first section of early editions of my *Emanations of Urania* MS, coining the term Cliology to describe this rational apprehension. After my initiation - and after about two weeks of learning and study with my Lady Master and her daughter - I sensed a similarity between this research of mine, and their aural traditions regarding the Septenary System and the Tree of Wyrð (described by a double tetrahedron), and it seemed to me then that I might be able to find some mathematical connection between the seven plus two emanations of the Septenary (described in one short traditional MS *by a double tetrahedron*, each of which had nine mathematical angles), and the Tensor which had nine non-zero symmetric components and which formed one part of an equation I had used to connect normal (causal) Space-Time with that new type of non-causal Space which I then had tentatively called the acausal.

Hence the descriptive name I choose for the tradition I had been Initiated into and which traditions I had inherited: the Order of Nine Angles, signifying as that name did not only the basic, and inherited tradition of seven plus two emanations (the Septenary), but also my own theory regarding causal and acausal Space and Time."

On the question of magickal Grades - as described in works such as *Naos* - Anton Long, in the same MS, writes:

"The aural traditions I had inherited included several other aspects: first, a basic, and quite rudimentary, system of Grades related to the stages, or the spheres, of the basic Tree of Wyrð; second, a series of tests, or ordeals, for prospective Initiates, and for some of the early Grades; third, some basic and quite rudimentary guidelines for choosing involuntary offers...

It should be understood that these were all aural traditions - nothing was written down. Indeed, beyond the few short handwritten MSS mentioned previously, the only complete manuscripts were a handwritten early copy of *The Black Book of Satan* - which in its English version derived from less than fifty years ago - and one other work... Even the traditional esoteric chants were all aural, and had to be transcribed, just as the traditional Ceremony of Recording, as practised by the few secluded rural sinister covens of tradition, was never written down, having been memorized by the Lady Master whose duty was to conduct the ceremony, along with, of course, various traditions regarding Baphomet as the Dark Earth Mother Goddess to whom sacrifices were

made...

Thus, the traditional task associated with what I came to term the Grade of Internal Adept was for the person (male or female) to live alone for at least three months in a wilderness type area, during which they had to fend for themselves, building their own shelter and hunting for, and gathering, all their own food. As for the Grades themselves, they were traditional, having - in a looser way and according to aural tradition - pre-dated the Tree of Wyrd and the Septenary itself, which was regarded as a medieval accretion on something much older, with there originally being no titles, or names (such as Adept or even Initiate), associated with the various stages of someone progressing along The Path, or Journey, of Wyrd, which stages themselves were never classified numerically (one to seven) but were rather seen and understood in relation to what later became known as a “knowing of wyrd” and which originally was just “wyrd-full”, with this knowing, this progression itself, relating to certain astronomical cycles, such as the seventeen and nineteen years between certain lunar, stellar, and solar events, connected as those events themselves were with various esoteric traditions and myths, elsewhere described...

The Septenary had given some form to such aural and such early traditions, and I myself gave the tradition some more form, thus making many aspects more conscious, and updating such things as the Grade Ritual associated with Internal Adept, since it was no longer really feasible, in a country such as the British Isles, for individuals to find an isolated area, full of game, where they might live alone by hunting, and gathering, their own food. Furthermore, I desired to make the whole tradition not only accessible - and magick itself more rational and thus easier to understand via notions such a nexion, causal and acausal - but also a means to transform not just a few individuals over several decades, but a much larger number of people, world-wide, thus creating that new elite which might form the basis for a new type of more evolved human being.”



Order of Nine Angles
119 Year of Fayen

Footnotes:

(1) An archetype is a particular causal presencing of a certain acausal energy and is thus akin to a type of acausal living being in the causal (and thus “in the psyche”): it is born (or can be created, by magickal means), it lives, and then it “dies” (ceases to be present, presenced) in the causal (i.e. its energy in the causal ceases).
