



Roots and Organization of the Order of Nine Angles

1. A Most Unusual Order

The Order of Nine Angles (ONA, O9A) is a controversial occult group for a variety of reasons. For it has been claimed that they "represent a dangerous and extreme form of Satanism" {1} having, as a reading of the voluminous ONA corpus {2} reveals,

"a distinct praxis, advocating as it does not only practical physical ordeals and what it terms Insight Roles, but also practical adversarial acts such as culling (human sacrifice), criminality, political extremism, and even terrorism." {3}

In addition, the ONA is unlike most, if not all, contemporary Occult orders or organizations in that it has no centralized organization, no person claiming to be its leader, no formal membership, and - as the ONA - holds no public activities, meetings, or events, issues no public statements, and detests the use of titles. Instead, it is a particular type of secret society; a collection of covert localized groups (small clandestine cells) and anonymous individuals who identify with or who support its aims, methods, and goals; who apply its praxis to their own lives, and who often establish their own local ONA nexion and recruit people to join it. According the Order of Nine Angles themselves, they have always been based on the principle of

"self-replicating self-contained units; that is, based on the seeding, development and propagation of certain causal forms, and thence on the establishment of independent groups and independent individuals who would be freely provided with all the texts and materials necessary to either: (1) if they chose, to follow the Seven Fold Way on their own without any direct personal [centralized] guidance; or (2) to develop their own system based upon or inspired by the ONA, its causal forms, praxis, and mythos. These groups and individuals then would or could be the genesis of other seedlings." {4}

It would be thus be more appropriate to talk and write not about the ONA as if it were an ordinary occult organization akin to the Church of Satan, or the Temple of Set - which it is not - but rather about the particular occult philosophy that is being propagated and has been propagated under the name 'the order of nine angles' and which occult philosophy influences or inspires - and has influenced or inspired - those

who describe themselves as ONA and who therefore personally apply its praxis, who establish their own ONA nexion, or who develop their own praxis or occult system "based upon or inspired by the ONA, its causal forms, praxis, and mythos".

This occult philosophy is 'the sinister tradition', the 'O9A way', or more accurately the modern esoteric philosophy of the pseudonymous Anton Long as described in the 2013 e-text by Richard Stirling entitled *The Radical Sinister Philosophy of Anton Long*, which details its ethics, epistemology, ontology, and praxis, and which ethics, epistemology, ontology, and praxis, mark it as a distinctive esoteric philosophy within the Western occult tradition.

An esoteric philosophy which includes, but is not limited to, (i) the self-initiatory Seven Fold Way of individual occult training with its ordeals, practical insight roles {5}, sorcery, grade rituals, esoteric chant, star game, and dark gods mythos {6}; (ii) the code (the praxis) of kindred-honour and the amoral utilization of mundanes; (iii) an adversarial, practical, individualistic, non-hierarchical, and subversive, form of Satanism and of the Left Hand Path {7}; (iv) the way of the Rounwytha {8}.

To develop such a "dangerous and extreme" esoteric philosophy, and to then propagate it, world-wide, by means of independent 'self-replicating' clandestine cells and covert operatives, is surely unique in the annals of modern occultism. Little wonder, then, that the O9A has attracted criticism.

Early and Later Writings

It is convenient to divide the writings of Anton Long - his esoteric philosophy - into two parts, before and after around c. 2000. Some of the later writings extensively elaborate on some of the topics mentioned in the early writings, with many of these later writings apparently dealing with altogether new topics.

Certainly, the majority of these later writings, especially those dating from 2009 onwards, have a different tone, with the rhetoric and propaganda - and the 'satanic diatribes' - of the earlier writings replaced by sometimes lengthy, staid, metaphysical musings.

However, as I described in my 2012 essay *Developing The Mythos, The Order of Nine Angles In Perspective*,

"...throughout its more than thirty years of public notoriety, the ONA has been consistent in its mythos, with their more recent texts (of c. 2009-2012) often or mostly just elaborating on this mythos or with the mythos merely being re-expressed using some newly developed terminology, such as the terms dark empathy and acausal-knowing."

That is, most definitely before 2000, and probably in the early 1980s, the philosophy was complete, if only - in respect of some of the more advanced aspects - as yet untried, untested, by Anton Long himself.

For what these later writings seem to show is a writing from personal experience; with the early writings, for instance, just mentioning - or more often than not dealing only in a cursory manner with - topics such as the Abyss, *pathei-mathos*, and the cultivation of dark empathy. In effect, therefore, the later writings are those of a wiser man who, following his own journey along the Seven Fold Way, ventured into and beyond the Abyss to reach the penultimate stage of that Way.

2. Roots and Influences

A detailed study of all the works authored by Anton Long, from the 1970s to 2011 - from the novels in the Deofel Quartet to the *Black Book of Satan*, to *Naos*, the two volume *Satanic Letters of Stephen Brown*, the three volumes of *Hostia*, and later writings such as *Pathei-Mathos* and *The Initiatory Occult Quest* - reveal some of the roots of, or those who may have influenced, his esoteric philosophy and its development, and which roots and influences, despite silly claims made by some over the last two decades, are not from the likes of Crowley, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, LaVey or the Temple of Set, but rather from much older, and separate, occult traditions. Occult traditions that owe much to (a) ancient Greek hermetic writings (in the original Greek), (b) Arabic alchemical and Sufi texts (themselves often influenced by the writings of the Greek philosophers and possibly Hellenic hermeticism), (c) ancient Persian and Indic philosophy, and (c) an ancient pagan tradition indigenous to the British Isles.

The Nine Angles

The very name chosen by Anton Long, in the 1970s, to propagate his esoteric philosophy - the Order of Nine Angles - is interesting and indicative.

In a paper about the Order of Nine Angles read at an international conference about Satanism in 2009 {9} - a revised version of which was published in the 2012 book *The Devil's Party* {10} - Senholt repeated the claim, prevalent in the previous two decades and repeated ad nauseam on the internet, that "the concept of the nine angles appears for the first time in published sources by the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set [...] and this appears to be the probable source of inspiration to the ONA."

However, Senholt, it seems, made no effort to study or even reference ancient Arabic alchemical and Sufi texts - many of which have not been translated into English or any modern language, and some of which MSS were acknowledged by Anton Long as a source {11}.

Senholt was also not familiar with references to 'nine angles' (or 'nine emanations', depending on the translation) in other ancient texts, including those mentioned by Professor Connell Monette of Al Akhawayn University, Morocco:

"A further possibility suggested by ONA texts is that it refers to nine

emanations of the divine, as recorded in medieval Sufi texts. It is equally likely that the Order has borrowed from classical Indian tradition that arranges the solar system into nine planets, and the world itself *has nine corners*; or perhaps from the Sanskrit *srivatsa*, a special mark with nine angles that indicates the supernatural or the heroic.

On the nine angled *srivatsa*, Gonda states that: 'This [mystical] figure has nine angles: the number nine often occurs in connection with auspicious objects, powers and ceremonies related to material welfare'. See Gonda, J. 'Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View', *Numen*, Vol. 4, Fasc. 1 (Jan., 1957): 24-58.

The Indian belief that the world has nine corners is attested even in medieval European sources, e.g. Father Emanuel de Veiga (1549-1605), writing from Chandagiri in 1599 who states 'Alii dicebant terram novem constare angulis, quibus celo innititur.' (Others said that the Earth had *nine angles*, by which it was lifted up to Heaven), see Charpentier, J. 'Treatise on Hindu Cosmography from the Seventeenth Century', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1924): 317-342.

It is clear despite claims that the term 'nine angles' was introduced in the twentieth century, the term is centuries older, especially in esoteric or cosmological discourse. See Pingree, D. *The Latin Version of the Ghayat al-Hakim*, Studies of the Warburg Institute, University of London (1986); Ritter, H. ed. *Ghāyat Al-Hakīm Wa-Ahaqq Al-Natījatayn Bi-Altāqdīm* (Leipzig : B.G. Teubner, 1933); al Buni, *Shams al-Ma'arif* (Birmingham: Antioch Gate, 2007).

Indeed, the founder of the ONA has stated in several documents (and interviews) that *Naos* was influenced by a private collection of unpublished Arabic manuscript folios, which may share a common ancestry with the *Picatrix* and *Shams*." {12}

In addition, Senholt, and others, failed and fail to appreciate the relation between the term 'nine angles' and the ONA's Star Game, which esoteric game is an abstract representation - developed in the 1970s and using alchemical terminology for the pieces - of both 'the nine angles' and of the ONA's septenary system.

The Septenary System

Senholt, along with many others before and since, have dismissed the ONA's septenary system as merely "a replacement for the Kabbalah [...] a non-Semitic version of the Kabbalistic Sepherot" {13}, apparently unaware that a septenary system is mentioned in the early and important hermetic text (c. 2nd/3rd century CE) written in Greek, and which text is more popularly known in English translations and as the *Pymander* dialogue of the *Hermetica* attributed to Hermes Trismegistus.

According to this hermetic text - which pre-dates the Kabbalah by almost a thousand

years - there is "a cosmic framework [a system] of seven" of which man is a part {14}, a septenary system which, as the ONA noted in some of their early MSS, the Elizabethan mathematician Robert Fludd made mention of in some of his writings, and which some medieval alchemical texts also make reference to.

As with the term nine angles - and what the ONA mean by angles {15} - the septenary system therefore not only harks back to times well before the emergence of the modern Western occult movement, but also to ancient sources that are Hellenic, Arabic, Persian, and Indic.

The Rounwytha

As Goodrick-Clark noted, "compared to the eclectic nature of American Satanism, many ideas and rituals of the ONA recall a native tradition of wicca and paganism" {16}. Something especially true of what the ONA - that is, Anton Long - describe as the Camlad Rounwytha tradition, hailing from the Shropshire and Herefordshire areas of England, and the marcher areas of Wales, and which tradition is quite unique in Western occultism, bearing little if any resemblance to the modern manufactured 'wicca' propagated by the likes of Gerald Gardner, and which pagan tradition cannot be found in books, ancient or modern.

For, in the Rounwytha tradition {17},

- i) There are no named deities or divinities or 'spirits'. No 'gods', no 'goddess'. No demons.
- ii) There are no spells or conjurations or spoken charms or curses; no 'secret scripts' and no 'secret teachings'; indeed no teachings at all.
- iii) There are no 'secret book(s)' or manuscripts; indeed, there are no writings.
- iv) There are no ritual or Occult or 'wiccan' or 'satanist' elements at all.
- v) There is no calendar, as calendars are usually understood, and thus no set dates/times for festivities or commemorations.
- vi) There are no oaths made, no pledges written or said.
- vii) There is no organization, no dogma, no codification of beliefs, no leader(s), no hierarchy, and no stages or grades of 'attainment'.

Instead, the Rounwytha way is the way of "a particular and a natural sensitivity: to human beings, to Nature (and especially the land, the weather), to living-beings (especially animals) and to the heaven/Cosmos. A wordless, conceptless, feeling of connexions, and of the natural balance that we mortals, being unwise, have such a tendency to upset."

This is most certainly not the modern wicca of 'harming none', for it is also the ancient pagan way of

"knowing the nature of the rotten: human, animal, land. Of the need,

sometimes, to cleanse, perchance to cull. As when there was the knowing that a certain individual doing a certain deed was bad, rotten - and not because they had offended some named and powerful god or goddess, and not because such a deed contravened some law or decree said to be divinely inspired or laid down by some sovereign or by someone who claimed authority from some god or gods or 'government', but because such a deed signed that person as rotten, and who thus, like a rotten piece of meat eaten, might or most probably would cause sickness, or spread disease, among us, among the land. Hence why their removal - by exile or by cull - would end (cure) the sickness, restore the balance their rotten deeds and they themselves had caused to be upset, restoring thus the natural flow, and gifts, of Life: of health, fecundity, happiness, good fortune." {17}

In effect, the conceptless empathic and often reclusive way of the Rounwytha is what the initiate following the Seven Fold Way finds beyond The Abyss at the very end of their life-long occult quest (the sixth sphere of the seven forming the Tree of Wyrð), for it is that essence that has, for over a thousand years, been described as Lapis Philosophicus; and what Anton Long has termed the sinisterly-numinous, which is "the living unity beyond the abstract, the lifeless, division and dialectic of contrasting/abstractive/ideated opposites. A division most obvious in the false dichotomy of good and evil." {18}

3. Conclusion

From its inception the O9A have (that is, Anton Long from the 1970s has) claimed five things.

(1) That their septenary system, manifest in their Seven Fold Way, is 'the genuine Western occult tradition' pre-dating the Kabbalah and that they have simply "made public various aspects of it and extended it in some particular ways". One particular extension is the Star Game; another, Insight Roles.

(2) That their sinister tradition or philosophy exists to be lived, being (a) the way of practical, exeatic, experience and learning from such experience; (b) the way of ordeals (such as the rite of internal adept) and (c) the way of developing skill in their Dark Arts {19}. This way is difficult, individualistic, and takes time.

(3) That their pantheon of 'dark gods' are part of a garbled, aural, tradition - a mythos - and like the entity termed Satan may or may not be 'real', and may or may not be archetypes; and that it is for each individual to discover for themselves, via practical experience of sorcery, the truth of the matter.

(4) That the primary aim of their way - that is, of the O9A philosophy of Anton Long - is to aid the development of Adepts and thus hasten the development of a new type of human being and thence fulfil the potential that human beings possess; and that this aim will take a century or (more likely) far longer to achieve.

(5) That, importantly, their O9A way, as it now exists, is not sacrosanct or dogmatic and (a) should be added to, evolved, and refined, as a result of the esoteric pathemathos of those who have lived it, and (b) can and should be adapted and developed and changed, in whole or in part, by others who are or who have been inspired by or influenced by it.

In conclusion, therefore, the esoteric philosophy of Anton Long as manifest in the Order of Nine Angles could be usefully summed up as one man's codification, amalgamation, and development, of (a) several disparate traditions, of diverse origins and periods, and of (b) his own pathemathos from his exeat life, into a practical and flexible and modern, and unique and subversive and individualistic, esoteric system.

These disparate traditions, of diverse origins and periods, include the ancient Corpus Hermeticum; Arabic, Sufi, Persian, Indic, and medieval Western alchemical, texts; and an aural English-Celtic pagan tradition.

R. Parker
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{1} Per Faxneld: *Post-Satanism, Left Hand Paths, and Beyond* in Per Faxneld & Jesper Petersen (eds) *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, Oxford University Press (2012), p.207

See also Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*, New York University Press, 2002, p. 218.

{2} An extensive bibliography is provided in Richard Stirling, *The Radical Sinister Philosophy of Anton Long*. e-text 2013

{3} Stirling, op.cit

{4} *Playing The Sinister Game*. ONA e-text, dated 122 yfayen (updated Jan 2012 CE)

{5} "Through the practice of 'insight roles', the order advocates continuous transgression of established norms, roles, and comfort zones in the development of the initiate [...] This extreme application of ideas further amplifies the ambiguity of satanic and Left Hand Path practices of antinomianism, making it almost impossible to penetrate the layers of subversion, play and counter-dichotomy inherent in the sinister dialectics." Per Faxneld and Jesper Petersen, *At the Devil's Crossroads in The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*. Oxford University Press, 2012, p.15.

{6} The Seven Fold Way is described in detail in the two freely available ONA pdf compilations (i) *The Requisite ONA - A Practical Guide to the Sinister Sorcery of the Order of Nine Angles* (of 981 pages, and which includes a facsimile copy of the 1989 Naos MS) and (ii) *Enantiodynamia - The Sinister Abyssal Nexion*.

{7} This subversive individualistic Satanism is evident in (i) the ONA's 1984 text *The Black Book of Satan*, where there is a self-initiation, ceremonial rituals, and with the individual expected to form their own independent Satanic group, under the banner of the ONA, and recruit members for it; and in (ii) classic ONA texts, from the 1980s, published in Left Hand Path zines such as *Nox*.

It is also evident - perhaps more so - in 'the drecc' or niner; the lone operative expected to do practical heretical and criminal (or even terrorist) deeds in pursuit of going beyond and transgressing "the limits imposed and prescribed by mundanes, and by the systems which reflect or which manifest the ethos of mundanes - for example, governments, and the laws of what has been termed society." *Glossary of ONA Terms* (v. 3.07)

The ONA define the Left Hand Path as,

The amoral and individualistic Way of Sinister Sorcery. In the LHP there are no rules: there is nothing that is not permitted; nothing that is forbidden or restricted. That is, the LHP means the individual takes sole responsibility for their actions and their quest, and does not abide by the ethics of mundanes. In addition, the LHP is where the individual learns from the practical deeds and practical challenges that are an integral to it. *Glossary of ONA Terms* (v. 3.07)

{8} The way of the Rounwytha is outlined in the following ONA texts, all authored by Anton Long. (i) *The Rounwytha Way in History and Modern Context*; (ii) *Alchemical Seasons and The Fluxions of Time*; (iii) *Denotatum - The Esoteric Problem With Names*.

{9} Senholt, Jacob C: *Political Esotericism & the convergence of Radical Islam, Satanism and National Socialism in the Order of the Nine Angles*. Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Conference: Satanism in the Modern World, November 2009

{10} Senholt, Jacob. *Secret Identities in The Sinister Tradition*, in Per Faxneld & Jesper Petersen (eds), *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*. Oxford University Press, 2012

{11} Anton Long. *Presencings Of A Hideous Nexion*. e-text. Dated 122 yfayen.

In a MS dated 107yf and entitled *Quod Fornicatio sit Naturalis Hominis*, Anton Long mentions that the title given to one Arabic MS, of only a few folios, that he used as a source, Al-Kitab al-Aflak, was obviously a much later addition, being in a different

hand, and that those folios were probably once part of a larger MS.

{12} *Mysticism in the 21st Century*, chapter 5. e-text. 2012

{13} Senholt, op. cit., p.253

{14} Some may find it interesting that Myatt, as he writes in a note to the extracts he has recently published, is currently [2013] translating these hermetic texts from their original Greek, with his translations and commentary scheduled for publication in 2015.

For references to a septenary system in ancient Iranian texts, see Reitzenstein and Schaeder *Studien zum antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland*, (Studien der Bibliothek Warburg), Teubner, Leipzig, 1926.

{15} Esoterically, the ONA use the term *angles* to refer to what is represented by the elements of the Star Game - the nine aspects of the three basic alchemical substances whose changing and permutations (over seven boards/spheres, or via seven archetypal and thus septenary forms) in causal time represents a particular presencing of acausal energy. The nine angles (or dimensions) therefore are a nexion - a map - that is the presencing of the acausal evident in our psyche and consciousness, and thus a link between us, Nature, and 'the heavens' (the cosmos) beyond.

{16} Goodrick-Clarke, op.cit. p.218

{17} *The Rounwytha Way in History and Modern Context*

{18} *The Adeptus Way and The Sinisterly-Numinous*. Version 2.03. 123 yfayen

{19} The Dark Arts listed and taught by the ONA include sorcery or magick (external, internal, aeonic), acausal empathy (aka dark-empathy) developed by rites such as that of internal adept, and the acausal-thinking developed by the Star Game.

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