

THE LANTERN VOL. 11 NO. 1 TRANSLATIONS

The Centennial of Our Order

If you are reading this issue of The Lantern, you are probably studying the B.O.T.A. lessons or considering doing so. Most of us have been seekers for years before coming to Builders of the Adytum. Many have tread other paths and participated in a variety of spiritual activities. Why, then, do we choose this path of study that is time-consuming and challenging, intellectually and spiritually. It is no small commitment we make when we join this Order and begin these weekly lessons.

We call B.O.T.A. an Esoteric Order. This reminds us of Key 4, The Emperor, our self-conscious mind, and an allusion to Order. There is Order in the universe. The Tree of Life is a glyph that is both balanced and dynamic, in perfect Order. We can see it as a blueprint for the cosmos and for our own development. In the Tarot Tableau, we recognize a carefully constructed Order of the Tarot. One key logically follows the other. The Cube of Space is another tool with great precision and Order.

In B.O.T.A. our courses and lessons are sequenced carefully, with concepts and practices that build one upon the other. We are not given more than we can handle at any stage, but if one perseveres, the remarkable Order is evident. There is order in Pronaos participation, for those members fortunate to live where this is available. Even the administrative structure of our association is ordered and hierarchical. We are ever striving to improve our service to the One Light.

Our Centennial year has come at (what we hope is) the end of the pandemic lockdown cycle. During these last three years, we have brought our Order into the Age of Technology with our online forums, meditations, and meetings, and this new digital publication of The Lantern.

Is there, then, room to create, to grow and to initiate new structures into our B.O.T.A. order?

This issue of The Lantern will reflect on the history of Builders of the Adytum and on our beloved Order. We are fortunate to have photos and documents that are available to us.

As we close this year of our Centennial and begin a new one, let us keep in mind that we are indeed beginning a new cycle. We honor those teachers who have laid the foundation of our coursework and established rules and norms for our groupwork. We give thanks to the Lord of the Universe and to the Inner School for ongoing guidance. It is now time to look ahead. Are we ready to made a renewed commitment to our personal studies? Can we assume responsibility for the next phase of development? How can we sufficiently give back to our Order that has nurtured us spiritually and socially? Has the time come to participate more actively in a study group or Pronaos?

It is our hope that we ask ourselves these questions, individually and collectively, as we enter into a new year and a new cycle. May the next 100 years be fruitful for Builders of the Adytum and for our members and may we ever seek to bring about an era of Peace, Harmony, and Blessings to all humanity and our beloved planet earth.

Affiliation and Evolutionary Work

by a Soror from Colombia

" KNOW THYSELF"



Evolutionary work, that is, the transformation of personality, begins with the unavoidable need to recognize ourselves as spiritual beings incorporated in a body, a time, a form and a place which corresponds to the needs of each soul and manifests itself through our personality. It has its authentic expression in that True Self or Higher Self.

While that personality is constituted by a physical body full of emotions, with contradictory thoughts with complex desires and changing actions which limit the evolutionary process, our true I, which is part of the WHOLE of Divinity and Eternity, seeks to lead us towards the TRUTH: The Unity with the SELF in each incarnation.

The letter "Yod" of Key 9, "The Hermit", corresponds to the experience of union with the Supreme Self, the True Self, and in that sense, the conscious, voluntary, and personal decision of beginning the quest for truth, will take us step by step to that Unity with God.

Our Order shows us in each of its teachings that the reason for its existence is to show us that the end of the Path is Unity, and that for us to reach that, it is necessary to transform our personality.

THE DOORWAY TO THE TRUTH: "THE OPEN DOOR"

Our leaflet "The Open Door" is an invitation to enter the Path which can lead us to unity. The 2 columns of opposite colors shown in it and in The High Priestess Key, represent the support of Solomon's temple: our Inner Temple. They are the representation of the pairs of opposites.

That duality that coexists in every thinking being impels us to ask: Who am I? What is my origin? Why am I here? These are questions that we ask and that propel us to seek explanations through different means.

But one day we begin to get amazing revelations, and that happens when we are in front of "The Open Door" of an Organization that offers us the opportunity to get into the mysteries, and get answers through its perfectly organized, structured and conceived courses. These courses conduct us step by step into the intricate labyrinth of our existential transition and lead us towards the search for the knowledge of our true nature.

The work is intense and cannot be postponed, and the dedication is full-time because it is a question of threading the Path of Return from our immature state, advancing step by step, in search of the explanations to the questions we have asked ourselves.

We begin by "opening the door" by affiliating to B.O.T.A., determined to walk a path that begins by trying to decipher the first existential question: What do you want? The answer involves

hidden thoughts, emotions, and desires that force us to make the decision to move forward on the True Path; but from the moment of that acceptance, we assume a commitment to ourselves to seek and find the TRUTH.

THE AFFILIATION

Because of this and for this, we join the Order obtaining the privilege of linking ourselves with the Inner School and of receiving the instruments that step by step lead us to that transformation process: the lessons, the Study Groups, the Pronaoi.

Affiliation implies to come into close connection or to unite on terms of fellowship. Indeed, this word derives from the Latin "*filius*", son, which gives the idea of adoption.

This free decision, without pressure, driven by the deepest and most intense desire to change, to affiliate or join something, means for us apprentices, our clear intention of transformation, which entails accepting ourselves as part of the Orden in unity. When a member of our community was asked to explain: Who is the order? The answer could not be more precise: The Order is us!"

In that answer the simplest truth was revealed, but at the same time the most categorical one: We all are the Order.

Consequently, its present and future is in our hands. We are responsible for the advancement or decline of the Order. We are responsible for its earthly existence, with all the small material implications. And the material implies maintaining an active organization, functionally operational efficient and effective, that allows for a structured way to disseminate the wisdom it is entrusted with.

The reference to the Higher Self is recurring throughout the B.O.T.A. Tableau; but Key 21, THE WORLD, shows us like none other the emotional hope to be one with the SELF. It shows us the promised result in order to motivate our transformation. And that transformation is intimately linked to our belonging to and affiliation with the Order.

The Book of Tokens tells us:

"What thou seekest,
truly that thou art.
The Treasure you journeyed afar to find
is the Jewel of Eternity,
in thy heart of hearts."

OUR GREATER HOUSE

With our small contribution to the operation and maintenance costs of the Order, we reinforce our desire to belong to it, to give it life and continuity, as when we gladly accept the maintenance costs of our house, and we do so with joy every time we add a small piece of furniture, an ornament, and feel fulfilled when we see it clean, tidy, and belonging to us. In our home we strengthen our commitment to keep it pleasant for our happiness.

In the home of our Order, where our Higher Self also dwells, with our contributions we strengthen our commitment on the physical plane: The Kingdom where we move here and now. (Malkuth).

So, this is not a business transaction, in which in exchange for “classified information”, we make a certain payment. With that contribution we are not buying “the transformation of our personality”. We are making possible the existence of our Order, as the “Greater House”. But it will be us who, with our will to change, and with the disciplined and permanent study, will be able to keep the open door of that our inner home, in order to encounter our true SELF.

In Key 7 “The Chariot “, the letter Cheth means fence, protection, defense, shelter, refuge, security, safeguarding, and the mode of consciousness is “The Intelligence of the House of Influence”, which is “the consciousness of the power of the Abode of Influence”. In a sense, our “Greater house”, the Order, gives us shelter, security and hope. It also suggests for us “Victory” in the horizon of our process of personal transformation.

During our studies, we are presented with the Tarot Keys as pillars that support and clarify our inner relationships.

Likewise, they indicate to us the importance of turning our aspiration to belong, into a reality that materializes with the decision to keep always active and uninterrupted the principle of affiliation, together with our training, which we carry out through study and meditation on the Keys.

AFFILIATION: START OF THE PATH OF RETURN

Our journey on The Path of Return is inseparable from successive, concatenated and generally predictable steps, which we have decided to go through as a result of the work we have done in search for answers to the questions mentioned above: (Who am I?... etc.) and that we now have the possibility to address more clearly.

This decision to belong leads us to keep always the “solvency” in the world of forms, as an expression of the deep desire of our Higher SELF.

It is very important to recognize the immense meaning of our external relationship with the Order, which must be consistent with our soul’s intense desire to keep us united on the higher planes.

Therefore, there is no valid excuse for dismissing the importance of keeping always active our affiliation, as this external expression is inseparable from our deep spiritual desire to advance on the Path of Return, maintaining perfect harmony between longings and actions.

The work of recognizing that, despite the multiplicity of external forms, we are part of EVERYTHING, allows us to reach the certainty that the only way to free ourselves from these apparent limitations is by fulfilling with discipline, continuity and fraternity, the commitment to maintain our affiliation with the ORDER ever active, always keeping in mind the relationship of “Cause / Effect”.

Maintaining the physical link with the Inner School, through the clear expression of the will to belong, is the easiest way to keep turned on the Light of the lamp of "The Hermit" on our path.

The Intelligence of Will attributed to the letter Yod clearly summarizes what has been exposed regarding the personal decision to belong, maintaining voluntary and freely our "solvency" with the ORDER.

Our Building

"Our building, although one hundred thousand people had very near seen and beheld the same, shall for ever remain untouched, undestroyed, and hidden to the wicked world."

--from the *Fama Fraternitatis*

Let it be ours to affirm that it is a real building, though unseen, more marvelous than any of this world's other wonders. Let it be ours to declare that the way to it stands open today as in the past, and that none shall fail to find it who seek diligently in the right direction.

--Paul Foster Case on the description of the Domus Sancti Spiritus,
The True and Invisible Rosicrucian Order.

Our Work

by a frater from the USA

(from an address given on the day of B.O.T.A.'s 100th anniversary)

On this bright morning, we observe not only the present equinox, but we also cast our thoughts back to another that occurred exactly one hundred years ago today, and the extraordinary event that took place upon that day of harmony and balance, upon the threshold of increasing light.

Mention of this momentous undertaking appeared in an article titled, "The Meaning of B.O.T.A.," in the Autumnal Equinox, 1936 edition of Wheel of Life.

The article began with these words: "These initials stand for Builders of the Adytum, the name of an organization founded in New York City at the Vernal Equinox, 1922."

The article went on to say: "All five original Founders of the B.O.T.A. were members of the Golden Dawn. Four of them were Chiefs of G.D. Temples in New York and Philadelphia..." This particular branch of the Golden Dawn was known as the Rosicrucian (or Hermetic) Order of the Alpha et Omega, which, at the time of Paul's admission, was still directed by one of the three original founders of the British extension of the Order.

Our Founders



Paul Foster Case, former Praemonstrator of Thoth Hermes Temple, No. 9 in New York City



Lili Geise, former
Praemonstratrix of Ptah Temple,
No. 10 in Philadelphia



Elma Dame, former
Imperatrix of Ptah Temple,
No. 10 in Philadelphia



Howard Underhill, former
Cancellarius of Thoth Hermes Temple,
No. 9 in New York City

In August, 1922, the Builders of the Adytum was initially described as:

“A society devoted to the practical investigation of the principles of cosmic law, and to the study of the literatures, rites and symbols whereby knowledge of these principles has been transmitted through the ages.”

As admirable and valuable as these aims are, clearly something more is needed for the establishment of a living, breathing, fully-functional Mystery School.

To address this need, let us step back a bit further, to 1921.

But, before we do so, it seems appropriate at this point to consider two esoteric aphorisms. There is an old adage in occultism: “When the pupil is ready, the Master will appear.” However, this is only half of the saying. The rarely-spoken second portion is: “But seek him not; seek only to be ready.”

It has also been said that if you want to meet the Masters, put yourself in their way by doing their work.

Sometime in 1921 – probably in the first few days of June, but possibly earlier – when Paul Foster Case was serving as the editor of AZOTH magazine, he received an unexpected phone call one evening.

Paul immediately recognized the voice on the line, although he had never heard it aloud before. This very same voice had silently assisted Paul in his Tarot and Qabalistic studies for roughly half of his life. However, until this moment, Paul had thought of it as his “auditory hallucination.”

The shock of hearing this voice outside the confines of his own mind was tremendous. The caller invited Paul to meet him at a room in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel on the following evening.

The moment the hotel room door opened and Paul beheld the man who had invited him in, he unconsciously started to go down on his knees, until he was bid not to.

The light in the man's eyes – the beauty of his countenance, frame, dress, and bearing – radiated grace and illumination. The man's presence filled Paul with a deep sense of reverence.

Here was a living Master, of that Paul had no doubts, then or later.

Over a period of three weeks, Paul Foster Case received instruction and training from the Master. The information was so dense, rich, and clear that Paul would continue to discover fresh insights from this material for many years to come.

The mere presence of the Master heightened and attuned Paul's consciousness, raising his vibration and strengthening the already existing link between them.

The Master also prepared Paul for the establishment of a new vehicle for the Inner School. The old structure of the Golden Dawn, at least in the United States, was compromised with dissension, infighting, and other qualities that diminished its capacity to serve in the eventual establishment of the Universal Brotherhood of Man.

For the purpose of building a more perfect channel and instrument for safe and effective spiritual training, Paul Foster Case was instructed on what aspects of the Ageless Wisdom were ready for wider availability and what elements should be pruned. He was also advised that harmony was of the utmost importance.

Throughout the ages, the great Teachers have always affirmed, as Michael Whitty so eloquently wrote, "the unity of Life, behind all appearances of diversity."

Michael James Whitty – Mentor to Paul Case



We share a universal kinship with every expression of the Life Power.

In this spirit, Paul Foster Case wrote the following in a letter to B.O.T.A. students several years later:

"Every true occult Order, such as B.O.T.A., has as its major objective the promotion of the welfare of humanity... The great Masters of Wisdom, from whom flow the inspiration and spiritual impetus of this work, refuse to have anything to do with any Order which fails to recognize the primary importance of this great objective, for they devote all of their energy and influence to that end. Our conception of the meaning of the term "welfare of humanity" is embodied in the following seven point program:"

“1: Universal Peace. 2: Universal Political Freedom. 3: Universal Religious Freedom. 4: Universal Education. 5: Universal Health. 6: Universal Prosperity. 7: Universal Spiritual Unfoldment.”

And how are these objectives to be achieved?

Simply put, our training involves an ongoing purification and refinement of all our vehicles – our thinking, feeling, automatic response patterns, and our physical bodies. This transmutation is both subtle and profound. The illumination it brings brightens not only our own lives, but every expression of the Life Power.

To add more light to this, let us return to “The Meaning of B.O.T.A.”

“The *adytum* of a temple is the Holy of Holies, or shrine of the god. In the human body, the adytum is a brain center, rudimentary in most persons, which may be brought into full function by the right sort of practice. This practice “builds the adytum” because it perfects the structure of the brain center just mentioned. When that center functions properly, one gains direct, *conscious* awareness of the indwelling presence of God. Builders of the Adytum, then, aspire to the attainment of God-consciousness. They seek to become *knowers of God*, and partakers of the power such knowledge confers. All the work of B.O.T.A. is directed to this end.”

“The B.O.T.A. acknowledges its debt to the Golden Dawn and to the other channels of the Western Tradition. It makes no claim to exclusive possession of the secrets of the Ageless Wisdom. It does declare itself as a society having a special work to perform, a work beginning with the building of the *Adytum* in the brain of the individual aspirant to illumination and finding its completion in a society of truly enlightened men and women, who, because they are channels of God-consciousness, will be the Adytum in the Temple of the New World Order.”

This, then, is our work: to apply our studies to the transmutation of our personalities and to realize our true identity with the only Power that ever was or ever will be, so as to be of ever greater service to All.

As I contemplate our centennial, I wonder what Paul Foster Case, Ann Davies, and so many others who came before us would think of this day. I wish that they could see the beauty their labors have unfolded in the hearts and minds of thousands.

I imagine that they are here with us now, sitting unseen in silence with gentle yet slightly trembling smiles upon their lips and maybe tears of joy wetting the corners of their eyes. Then, I envision them standing up in unison, each with a lantern raised high in one hand, streaming forth a golden radiance, and, as one, softly saying, “Shine on, beloved Builders; shine on.”

Together

Blessed the day that brought you
To the Temple we share Within
Holy the Spirit that shaped you,
Formed us as kith and kin.
Treasured the Life that bore us
To partake of the Limitless Light;
Yes, wondrous the Peace that awaits us
As we float through the velvety night.
Guided out of that night,
Would you climb to beckoning heights-
would you taste the utter delight of your
Soul?

Come then... my sister... my brother,
With songs of praise all the Way,
To the heaven of THAT which unites us,
Guides... protects... and awakes us,
To the LOVE that can never forsake us!

See? Now... united together,
We are ever... forever... together,
ONE with the other...
and GOD.

Poem by Reverend Ann Davies
