



The Numinous, Empathy, And The O9A

Regarding The Term Numinous

Since the promotional blurb for a book by Christopher Pankhurst - *Numinous Machines*, published in December 2017 by the 'right-wing' San Francisco based Counter Currents organization - repeats the common but mistaken belief that "Rudolf Otto coined the term numinous to refer to the primal experience of the holy," it seems appropriate to explain what the Order of Nine Angles (O9A, ONA) mean by the term given that the term occurs in O9A expressions such as 'the sinister-numinous' and 'the sinister-numinous aesthetic'.

Regarding this mistaken belief about the origin of the term, as a certain "Anton Long" pointed out in his text *Alchemical Seasons and The Fluxions of Time* published in 123 yfayen (2011)

"despite the now common belief that the use of the word 'numinous' is fairly recent, deriving from the writings of Rudolf Otto, its first occurrence in English - so far discovered - is in a religious tract published in London in 1647 ce, entitled *The simple cobbler of Aggawam in America. Willing to help mend his native country*. The author, Nathaniel Ward - a scholar at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, an English clergyman, and a Puritan supporter - emigrated to Massachusetts in 1634 ce."

The meaning of the term numinous in that 1647 book, and in later books such as *The Quest of the Sangraal* by Robert Stephen Hawker published in 1864 (where it is spelt numynous), is "of or relating to a god or a divinity, revealing or indicating the presence of a divinity; divine, spiritual," derived as it is from the classical Latin 'numen', which Latin word implied a deity, a divinity, a reverence for what is divine.

In respect of the O9A, the expression "the sinister-numinous tradition" refers to the traditional Occult praxis The Seven Fold Way, which is an Occult praxis first publicly described in the 1989 *Naos MS* and usefully summarized in the 2017 text *The Seven Fold Way Of The Order Of Nine Angles: A Modern Practical Guide*, which later text explains that

"The Seven Fold Way is a representation of the septenary system and as the term implies consists of seven spheres each one named according to ancient Greco-Roman tradition as Moon, Mercury,

Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

In O9A tradition, the septenary system is a nexus - a nexion - between the realm of the causal (the realm of mortals, of this physical world and the physical Cosmos beyond) and between the realms of the acausal, and which acausal realms include 'the supernatural' and the possible acausal (immortal) existence which await beyond our mortal death as a result of the individual having discovered Lapis Philosophicus.

Each sphere represents a stage of the Occult quest, by an individual, for Lapis Philosophicus, which quest begins with the sphere of the moon and ends with the sphere of Saturn. Every stage is associated with various tasks - some physical, some Occult, some practical - and also with a particular Occult grade, and which grades are achieved by the individual as a result of their efforts and experiences, never given nor awarded by someone else."

In the Seven Fold Way the first three stages - Neophyte, Initiate and External Adept - are associated, in *Naos*, with "the sinister" (the masculous) aspects of the human psyche as evident in that there is a practical exploration of traditional Satanism, as presenced both in the O9A *Black Book of Satan* and in the evokation/invokation of The Dark Gods.

The next stage, that of Internal Adept with its three to six month living alone in a wilderness area, marks the transition to "the numinous" (the muliebral) aspects of the human psyche and which stage is where the faculty of empathy is cultivated, for as Anton Long wrote in a 1970s typewritten MS that

"[developing such] empathy is the only aim of the grade ritual of internal adept and, indeed, of initiation itself." {1}

As he noted in his later text *The Place of Empathy in the Esoteric Tradition of the Order of Nine Angles*,

"In the ONA, the cultivation of the faculty of empathy is an essential part of the training of the initiate as it is considered to be one of the many esoteric skills which Adepts must possess, and - indeed - as one of the esoteric skills which distinguishes an Adept from a non-adept. Thus, when consciously cultivated and developed by esoteric means, empathy is a Dark Art; and the skill, the faculty, so used by an Adept is and has been variously described by the terms esoteric-empathy, dark-empathy, sinister-empathy, and sinisterly-numinous empathy." {2}

Toward the end of the stage of Internal Adept the O9A individual undertakes the Rite Of The Abyss which involves living alone for a lunar month in a dark cave or cavern during which there is, or should be, an experiencing of The Unity beyond both the sinister and numinous aspects, and which successful experiencing marks the achievement of the grade of Master of Temple /

Mistress of Earth.

This, the fifth stage of the Seven Fold Way, is where the Adept goes beyond denotata (terms, naming, causal abstractions, forms, ideas) to an apprehension of the formless wordless Acausal. For, esoterically apprehended, via *pathei-mathos* both Occult and exoteric, both 'the sinister' and 'the numinous' are themselves causal, human, abstractions.

As described in the 2015 O9A text *Ontology, Satanism, And The Sinisterly-Numinous Occult Tradition*,

"In stark contrast to the unbalanced, masculous, egoistic ipseity manifest by both modern satanism and by the modern, Western, Left Hand Path, the O9A - despite outer appearances and despite its intentionally confusing mythos - continues the classical (Greco-Roman) tradition of esoteric paganism, manifest as that tradition is:

- (i) in a personal, and years-long, *anados* (a quest for immortality) involving *myesis* and various practical esoteric arts, rites, mysteries, and techniques;
- (ii) in an understanding (intuitive or otherwise) of the need to acquire or cultivate (by various means) a certain inner equilibrium as a prelude to apprehending our physis, the physis of other living beings, and the physis of Being itself, so that we are "not foiled in acquiring knowledge germane to our essence", and
- (iii) in an exeatia (pagan) living balanced by an awareness (intuitive or otherwise) of supra-personal affective forces (howsoever described or denoted) beyond the power of egoistic mortals to control.

Furthermore, the O9A not only continues that classical tradition but has also substantially evolved it, as for instance by (i) providing, in the Seven Fold Way, a very practical *anados* that anyone can follow, and by (ii) correcting the thousands of years old imbalance between the masculous and the muliebral, an imbalance (a bias toward the masculous) that was internal (personal, esoteric, in the psyche) and external (in societies, in manufactured abstractions, in ideologies and ideations), and which imbalance not only meant that only a few individuals, per century, evolved toward wisdom, but also that external forms and structures followed an inexorable pattern of temporal rise, decline, and fall, and which unnecessary cyclicity has stifled our evolutionary potential as conscious beings.

That the masculous individuals who profess to be modern satanists, and/or followers of the Left Hand Path, do not apprehend this is evidence enough of their ignorancy. With them, and their ilk, we will remain an ouroboros species confined to this planet, while the Sinisterly-Numinous Occult Tradition, and similar presencings of equilibrium - of causal-acausal balance - offer us a nexion to life among the star-systems of our Galaxy." {3}

A Metaphysical Understanding

In order to fully appreciate and understand what the term *numinous* does and does not mean - esoterically and exoterically - it is necessary to understand its metaphysical and thus its philosophical context.

In the Numinous Metaphysics chapter of his 2017 monograph *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, David Myatt iconoclastically wrote that in his view "the numinous is primarily a manifestation of the muliebral and can be apprehended through a personal, an interior, balance between masculous and muliebral." {4}

He then asks the important and relevant question as how can the "numinous balance between masculous and muliebral be metaphysically expressed, given that the culture of pathei-mathos has moved us, or can move us, beyond anthropomorphic deities, whether male or female; beyond myths and legends; beyond reliance on texts regarded as sacred and/or as divinely inspired; and even beyond the need for denotatum and religion."

If one accepts Myatt's understanding of the numinous as "primarily a manifestation of the muliebral" then it follows that all extant representations of the numinous, from Christianity, to Islam, to Judaism, to Buddhism, to most contemporary pagan revivals, as well as ancient Greco-Roman paganism, do not or did not adequately presence the numinous.

For such a muliebral presencing would, according to Myatt, be manifest in "a predominance of female deities; or in a dominant female deity; in legends and myths which celebrate muliebral virtues, such as empathy."

Hence a modern and metaphysical presencing of the numinous would be "beyond the need for denotatum," {5} whether the denotatum be a named anthropomorphic divinity or named divinities, or whether such denotatum involves texts, since it is manifest "in a personal weltanschauung and not in a religion; has no hierarchy; no creed, no article or articles of faith; and no texts whether written or aural."

Thus the numinous is not and cannot be - as Rudolf Otto argued in his *Das Heilige* - manifest in the Old and New Testaments of Christianity (*Das Heilige*, chapters X, XI); nor is it manifest in the writings and sermons of preachers such as Martin Luther (*Das Heilige*, chapters XII); nor in anything - ancient or modern - which involves 'worship' (*Das Heilige*, chapter XIII ff). Nor even in some philosophical theory and thence described by a term such as *a priori* (*Das Heilige*, chapter XVII).

Which would seem to lead us back to Myatt's understanding of empathy as a *human faculty* which cannot exist beyond the personal horizon of the individual, with the knowing gleaned by such a faculty limited to the immediacy-of-the-moment {6}. As a human faculty, it does not involve denotata, and is personal and individual {7}. For empathy "reveals or can reveal the nature (the physis) - sans abstractions/ideations/words - of Being, of beings, and of Time." {8}

Understood and appreciated as a human faculty, empathy can according to esoteric philosophy be presented and developed by certain Occult means. Which presenting and which development forms part of the practical O9A Seven Fold Way.

In the esoteric context of the O9A 'sinister-numinous way', Anton Long in his *The Enigmatic Truth* (Last Words From A Modern Alchemist) mentions an earlier text of his in which he wrote

"Our real work, both as individuals and as an Order - our Magnum Opus - is genuinely esoteric and Occult, and thus concerned with lapis philosophicus and not with some purely causal self-indulgence, or some ephemeral outer change in some causal form or forms, or with using such forms to try and effect some external change. For it is this esoteric, this Occult, work which will, affectively and effectively, introduce and maintain the Aeonian changes we desire and plan for - in its own species of acausal Time." {9}

There is thus a pleasing symmetry here between Myatt's metaphysics - as manifest in his recent pagan monographs *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua* and *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos* {10} - and the esotericism and praxis of the essentially pagan O9A {11} and which symmetry might explain why some O9A folk consider that Myatt as Rounwytha and Mage is now living the "final apprehension" of The Unity beyond the abstractions of both sinister and numinous having discovered, after fifty years on a Faustian quest, Lapis Philosophicus.

Three Wyrd Sisters
July 2019 ev

This text incorporates parts of our two earlier texts *A Note On The Muliebral Numinous* (2018) and *A Note Regarding The Term Numinous* (2017).

Notes

The URL's given below were valid as of July 2019 ev.

{1} The rare MS, which concerned the O9A 'rite of nine angles', was published in the 1980s in the LHP *Nox* zine, and was later included in Sennitt's book *The Infernal Texts: Nox & Liber Koth* (Falcon Publications, 1997).

{2} The text is included in the compilation *Pathei-Mathos, Empathy, And The Order Of Nine Angles*, available at <https://omega9alpha.wordpress.com/empathy-and-the-supernatural/>

{3} <https://wyrdsister.wordpress.com/2018/02/03/ontology-satanism->

and-the-o9a/

{4} Since Myatt goes to explain what he means by both masculous and muliebral it is worth quoting the passage from *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua* in context:

"If the numinous is a presencing, and an apprehension by us, of the divine, of the sacred, then is divinity, is the sacred, the sole domain of, a presencing of, the masculous - or such that the masculous dominates - or is it the domain of the muliebral; or the domain of such a balance between masculous and muliebral as the culture of pathei-mathos seems to indicate it is and should be. My own pathei-mathos certainly indicates that the numinous is primarily a manifestation of the muliebral and can be apprehended through a personal, an interior, balance between masculous and muliebral.

A masculous presencing is and has been manifest in a predominance of male deities; or in a dominant male deity; and/or in legends and myths which celebrate masculous values, such as competitiveness, a certain harshness, a desire to organize/control, a perceived conflict between some-thing, some abstraction, denoted 'good' and some-thing, some abstraction, denoted as 'evil', and a following of or an adherence to abstractions in general (such as a perceived divine law or some interpretation of religiosity) over and above personal love. Considered exoterically - not interiorly, not esoterically - a masculous presencing is manifest in a religion, with the attendant organized worship and devotion, with there existing a hierarchy, a creed or an article or articles of faith, and usually some texts, whether written or aural, regarded as sacred and/or as divinely inspired and which invariably require interpretation.

A muliebral presencing is or would be manifest in a predominance of female deities; or in a dominant female deity; in legends and myths which celebrate muliebral virtues, such as empathy, sensitivity, gentleness, compassion; and in the perception that personal love should triumph over and above adherence to abstractions. Considered exoterically - not interiorly, not esoterically - a muliebral presencing is manifest in a personal, varied, worship and devotion; in a personal weltanschauung and not in a religion; has no hierarchy; no creed, no article or articles of faith; and no texts whether written or aural.

Historically, it seems that revealed religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism primarily manifest a presencing of the masculous [...]

Historically, while the paganus apprehension of Greco-Roman culture was also primarily masculous it did presence aspects of the muliebral, manifest for example in female deities such as Athena, Artemis, and Gaia, and thus was somewhat more balanced, more

harmonious in terms of re-presenting our human physis, than Christianity."

{5} In a footnote in *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, Myatt explains that he uses "the term denotatum - from the Latin, denotare - in accord with its general meaning which is to denote or to describe by an expression or a word; to name some-thing; to refer that which is so named or so denoted. Thus understood, and used as an Anglicized term, denotatum is applicable to both singular and plural instances and thus obviates the need to employ the Latin plural denotata."

{6} *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos*. 2013. Part I. Wisdom, Pathei-Mathos, and Humility.

{7} Op.cit. Part III. Some Personal Musings On Empathy.

{8} Op.cit. Appendix II.

{9} <https://omega9alpha.wordpress.com/the-enigmatic-truth/>

{10} David Myatt, *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, 2017, ISBN 978-1982010935. David Myatt, *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos*, 2017, ISBN 978-1979599023.

{11} The evolved, modern, paganism of the O9A is described in the text *The Pagan O9A*, available at <https://omega9alpha.wordpress.com/pagan-o9a/>

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