

Preprint manuscript of: Per Faxneld, "Order of the Nine Angles", *Dictionary of Contemporary Esotericism* (ed. E. Asprem), Leiden: Brill.

Archived at CONTERN Repository for Self-Archiving (CRESARCH) <https://contern.org/cresarch/cresarch-repository/> June 5, 2024.

Order of the Nine Angles

Most major Satanic organizations tend to have a zero-tolerance attitude towards criminality, and the →Church of Satan has even made a point of regularly cooperating with police and authorities. An exception to this rule, on the extreme outer fringes of the →Satanic milieu, is the Order of the Nine Angles (ONA). It claims to have grown out of a British Satanic/Wiccan group in the 1960s (with roots supposedly stretching back to pre-modern pagan times), but did not emerge into prominence until the early 1980s. Describing its system as "traditional Satanism", the ONA completely rejects LaVeyan Satanism and propagates a theistic "sinister" variety emphasizing physical training, brutal direct action, and self-initiation. An important part of the latter is taking on so-called "insight roles", i.e. participating "undercover" in violent anti-"System" groups of some kind for a period of time. Human sacrifice (which may take the form of a political assassination) is among the recommended initiatory tasks.

Spreading its enormous amount of complicated esoteric texts through pamphlets and journals, and subsequently via the Internet, the ONA has always been highly eclectic, combining elements from e.g. Norse paganism, Lovecraft, and Oswald Spengler. Most of the early material was probably written by →David Myatt (1950–), but several others have subsequently contributed. Today, the ONA continues to grow organically, with numerous offshoots and splinter groups taking the ONA ethos in unexpected directions.

There have probably never been more than a few handfuls of active members in the ONA, but through cultivating connections with Neo-Nazis (with Myatt being involved with the infamous Combat 18 group and mentoring a man bombing gay clubs) and Islamists (an essay by Myatt advocating suicide bombings appearing on an official Hamas website), they exerted an unexpectedly great and dangerous indirect impact outside of esoteric circles. This forms part of the ONA's ongoing "aeonic" effort to topple the present political and social

system. Recently, they have been the subject of controversy after an ONA-affiliated soldier in the U.S. Army was sentenced to 45 years in prison for leaking highly sensitive information about his unit to an undercover FBI agent he believed was a member of al-Qaeda. In the esoteric milieu, they have (in later times mostly through their presence on the internet) influenced a variety of individuals and groups on the extreme fringes of the →Left-Hand Path.

Per FAXNELD

Bibliography

- Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed & Chace-Donahue, Emelie. 2023. "The Order of Nine Angles: Cosmology, Practice & Movement". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 1-21.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. 2001. *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*. New York: New York University Press.
- Koch, Ariel. 2022. "The ONA Network and the Transnationalization of Neo-Nazi-Satanism". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 1–28.
- Senholt, Jacob C. 2012. "Secret Identities in the Sinister Tradition: Political Esotericism and the Convergence of Radical Islam, Satanism, and National Socialism in the Order of Nine Angles", in: Per Faxneld & Jesper Aa. Petersen (eds.), *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Shah, Shannon, Cooper, Jane, & Newcombe, Suzanne. 2023. "Occult Beliefs and the Far Right: The Case of the Order of Nine Angles". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 1–21.
- Sieg, George. 2013. "Angular Momentum: From Traditional to Progressive Satanism in the Order of Nine Angles". *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 4:2, 251-282.