

The Western Esoteric Tradition and our Inner Temple Traditions Inner Convocation program

Exploring and describing the relationship between tradition, original creation, and the nature of copyright. By R J Stewart, 2013.

Traditional or Modern?

In the current vibrant revival of alternative spiritual practices, the word “tradition” is used frequently, often with vague definition. Thus “traditions”, especially in revival paganism and witchcraft, are strongly asserted but are typically based on specific books or documents. There is, of course, an overall pagan and witchcraft Tradition, possibly thousands of years old, with many branches and variant sources, including enduring oral tradition. The major Book Religions have several variant Traditions within them such as Protestant and Catholic, Coptic Armenian, Shiite and Sunni, Orthodox and Hasidic, and so forth. They also have esoteric traditions such as Kabbalah, that may underpin the exoteric religion as special practices. Within broad scenarios of tradition, many focussed original schools, books, teachings, have been created by known teachers. At the point of creation, such original works are new. Over generations they may, or may not, become incorporated into either tradition or religion or both.

The Inner Temple Traditions Inner Convocation ® program, books, texts, and recordings, by Anastacia Nutt, our certified teachers, or myself, are firmly within the Western Esoteric Tradition, sometimes called the Hermetic Tradition.

This vibrant enduring stream of spiritual and sacromagical tradition reaches unbroken, with many tributaries, back through the centuries; it contains “hidden” aspects behind religion, magical arts, and folkloric practices. It is primarily from the geographic and cultural regions around the Mediterranean and Northern and Western Europe. Its geographic and historical breadth is substantial, at the deepest foundation of many civilizations through the ages.

Awareness of this vast tradition was diminished and propagandized by authoritarian politicized Christianity, leading to the erroneous idea, widespread today, that spiritual wisdom may be found only in the East. Yet the Western Esoteric Tradition has continued unbroken, often underground, re-emerging with new vitality in the 20th century. The Inner Temple Traditions Inner Convocation network is part of that rebirth.

Entering the Western Esoteric Tradition

I received my initial understanding of the Western Esoteric Tradition from my teachers mentors and initiators, including William and Roberta Gray, Ronald Heaver and Polly Wood, and others that influenced and inspired me. I have sought to clarify and develop aspects for contemporary use over the last thirty-five years of writing and teaching.

ITIC material is often an original presentation of specific aspects of the Western Esoteric Tradition, ranging from Ancestral to Hermetic.

We make no claim to “own” the confluence of spiritual or sacromagical traditions that comprise the overall Western Esoteric Tradition; no one may make such a claim. But we do claim to own our original work within the tradition, just as any writer, artist, or creator working within any tradition would claim.

New work within a tradition

Copyright is a standard practice today for the world in which we live, whereby writers and creators affirm their ownership and assert copyright of their own work. There are many original methods in the books recordings and classes of the Inner Temple Traditions program. People are drawn to our classes and workshops by this originality.

How may students or readers differentiate between Traditional and Original, public domain and copyright? Issues over piracy, copyright, royalty payments, have been rife in entertainment and publishing conglomerate law-suits in recent years, especially over music distribution, and to a lesser extent, though still major in scope, over the continuing piracy of books and on-line content.

In our Inner Temples work the original concept of copyright is upheld, for copyright law was first established to protect writers and creative artists (not to enrich publishers or distributors). If someone works for many years to create a book or body of music or art, he or she is protected by both national and international copyright laws from others using that work or any part of it fraudulently or without permission, or claiming to own it. This protection also applies to unwitting or accidental use, whereby someone uses text or artwork or music inappropriately without knowing that they are infringing copyright. Fraudulent misuse is often justified by claiming “no knowledge of...” or “we do this for free”.

A simple analogy of how copyright works at a basic level might be thus; if you plant a garden, tend to its growth , no one may come along and claim that they own it and planted it, without providing detailed proof. No one may decide to sell it as they please, or dig parts out of it without permission. Nor can you say that you own all gardens and all garden design, though you do indeed own the one that you created, working within Nature. Writing a book, a song, or a class program, is no different, except that the physical form is portable and, nowadays, may be digitized. Thus it is easier to steal someone’s original creative work, verbally, physically or digitally, than it is to steal their garden.

All specialized arts, sciences, crafts and skills are developed within an overall tradition or field, while new forms and methods are distinguished from the overall field by their individual creators.

Traditional foundations, original constructs and expositions.

The foundation of the Western tradition is a conceptual model based on the Four Elements or Roots of Air, Fire, Water and Earth. These are elements of relative form, movement, and energy, not limited to manifest physical elements. Thus the Elemental Model can be used to describe a fourfold cycle of any relative condition, situation, entity, or consciousness. Presentations or variants of the Elemental Model are widespread in publication.

The earliest source for the Four Elements is probably fragments of text by the ancient Sicilian philosopher Empedocles, one of the founders of Mediterranean classical Greek metaphysics and philosophy. Spiritual traditions worldwide employ similar closely related fourfold models of consciousness and energy, describing that which is there, present, and accessible to the deeper awareness, usually through meditation, visualization, or ceremony.

Each tradition or religion has its own defining methods within this overall conceptual model. Such definition is no different, in practice, to scientific organizations having their own methods within an overall scientific model of "reality". No organization or individual scientist claims to own the scientific world view, but they do own their writing, publications, and newly developed methods.

Inner Temple Traditions Inner Convocation ® methods, and associated books and recordings, are often new and unique methods, developed within the overall field of the Western Esoteric Tradition. They are not public domain or anonymous. In keeping with the tradition, the Fourfold pattern is often used as a template, but we create original material within that template, which is inspired, carefully researched and designed, and created and written to bring appropriate changes of consciousness.

As a writer, published between 1976, with my first book *Where is St George? Pagan Imagery in English Folksong*, and the present, I have always been clear that the content of my published books or associated recordings is intended for free individual or group use. Such free use is the whole reason for creating such books and recordings: they are offered for people to read, try the methods, and to benefit thereby through practice. The basic Inner Temple meditations have been given to students at workshops since 1988, and have been freely available on my websites for years, as have other visionary workings, information, and practical methods.

Beyond this use I do not give permission for people to teach or run commercial (paid or advertised promotional) classes with either the published books and recordings or the class material taught in workshops, unless they are certified trained Inner Temple Traditions teachers.

This as much for protection and assurance of new students as for maintaining integrity in the work itself. I would emphasize again; this is standard practice for all copyright work. All creative copyright holders nowadays try to balance availability and

communication against abuses ranging from direct piracy to nuisance claims, or intentional similarities that seek to trade on the creativity or reputation of the original creator.

Trademark

In 2005 I formalized both my work and the overall content of the ITIC programs, due to concerns over piracy and copyright infringement. All my books and recordings and associated class material have always been copyright, but I took the further step of registering Inner Temple Traditions Inner Convocation as a formal trademark worldwide. Anyone claiming to create teach or be involved in the Inner Temples work, past or present, or anything else based on our books, classes, etc. would have to demonstrate that they were trained by myself in our teacher training program (not by attending workshops only), or from 2006 by Anastacia and myself, and then given formal permission. In this way we protect new students, and ensure a continuity to the work itself. The Inner Temples or Gate Opening Sigil and the Double Rose Glyph, found on our books and websites are trademarks for our publications and courses.

Fortunately, Inner Temple Traditions is not part of a large commercial market, and is clearly identified not only by publications but by the many students who have participated from the 1980's to the present day. We only teach in groups, and do not offer individual private tuition or "secret" initiation. Thus there are always groups of people sharing the experiences and teachings, and no closed or secretive systemization. Groups are encouraged to meet up as friends during the months between formal workshops, and practice the Inner Temple methods together. This method of organic networking has been active since 1988.

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