

The Scroll of Set

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[1] *Xem* is Dead

- by Ronald L. Barrett III°

On the weekend of March 5-6, XXIX, Priestess Lance and the R'lyeh Lodge held a two-day symposium on *Runa* in San Francisco. During the first day of presentations, I included within my own an invitation for the attending Initiates to view a crime scene in the back room. On that warm Saturday afternoon I led these fine folk into the room four at a time, where together we witnessed the ruins of a truly heinous deed.

In that room the *Xem* animal, in his semblance as a stuffed, synthetic lagomorph of popular origin, hung suspended by a noose from the ceiling. Eleven coils of military climbing rope had twisted his little neck like a candy wrapper. The autopsy would later show that the cervical spine had snapped just below his skull, forcing the odontoid process into the medulla of his bunny brain. The poor creature was no longer of this world - not that he ever was to begin with.

As I had told the witnesses (who were in on it too), this was a mystery, but not one of the "who dunnit" variety. I did it. But the question still remains: What did I do?

I hanged a stuffed animal.

Just ask them: *Xem* is D-E-A-D-dead. But it was bound to happen sooner or later. Nietzsche's Zarathustra once gave the same pronunciation to a wholly different kingdom of animal. It was a false myth of dubious origin that had been obsolete for some time, if not all time. This myth, however, was none of these things. In fact, just prior to its demise, there had been a recent resurgence of *Xem* in the Temple. I myself heard a great deal about *Xem*: the Keys of *Xem*, *Xem* Set, *Xem* Quest, *Xem* Pylon, Eggs and *XemXem*, *Xem*, *Xem*.

So what was the motive behind this destruction ritual? Why did I "Xill" *Xem*?

Well, I must confess that it was all in jest [except the killing part]. And while my impractical joke was not serious, it continues to be important. The understanding of any Form is important, especially when it has been brought into Æonic life by one of our own. The quest for understanding, however, is a long and difficult one. It can take many years of logical study to lay the foundation for a single moment of direct experience. Having found a way out of the cave, however, one then

becomes truly alone. You may lead other Initiates to the Grail, but you cannot make them drink.

On the seeking end of the journey, it is difficult for an Initiate such as myself to find even a clean glass to drink from, much less one that will hold water. In the markets of ancient Rome the fraudulent dealers of poorly-made crockery would seal their cracks with wax so that they would appear to hold water on initial inspection, only to leak a few days after purchase. The problem was such that vendors would advertise their wares as *sine sere* ("without wax"). But this only begged the question of their underlying sincerity.

Today we face an even harsher marketplace in this New Age™ global village™ with its information superhighway™. Here everything is accessible. There are millions of beverages to choose from, and in as many containers. It would not surprise me if my Grail lay somewhere on the Internet (alt.truth), but the noise-to-signal ratio is so high that it would be like listening for bird songs during an outdoor rock concert. The challenge is therefore one of discernment. So perhaps the best advice on the streets of Rome would hold even more water today: Let the buyer beware.

But wait - there's more!

What if I told you about a way of knowing that was not only an effective tool of discernment, but a **really** good start on your quest for truth? How much would you pay then? Logic™ is a great crack detector. And if you use your credit card now, I'll throw in two fallacies of relevance free of charge: (1) Argument *ad verecundiam* (appeal to inappropriate authority) and (2) Argument *ad hominem* in both its abusive and circumstantial forms. Both of these fallacies illogically attribute truth or falsehood upon a given argument based upon the characteristics or credentials of its presenter or lack thereof.

This does not mean that we cannot make rational inferences about the probability of truth for an argument because it is presented by a person whom we have some reason to trust. Indeed, if a herd of Nobel Laureate scientists ran screaming from a nuclear reactor, I would not hesitate to join them. Likewise, if a group of Magistri Templi yelled "*Xem*" in a crowded movie house. But in both of these cases, I would expect to hear further evidence or reasons within the arguments themselves before I came to any conclusions, even pending ones. By logic the arguments must ultimately speak for themselves, independently of their presenters. So I might rationally find my truth in a beer commercial as I could upon a mountain top.

There exists, however, a special kind of logical argument where these fallacies cannot apply. If Ronald K. Barrett (the other guy) uttered *Xem* in a crowded movie house, then by a certain premise his "argument" would be logically valid. This premise, however, would first have to be proved true not by

himself, but by his Initiating audience: by us. Furthermore this proof would have to be accomplished by a way of knowing which builds upon logic and moves a step beyond it. This is the *næsis* of rational intuition described by Plato, Aquino, Flowers, *et al.* It is the understanding that comes from the direct apprehension of the underlying Forms themselves by means of an initiatory process unique to each individual.

One man's curse is another man's quest. And while this curse of unrecognition may have been "solved" by others, it might not be for me. Assuming that I give a shit in the first place [and for me this is a very sacred substance], I must find some way to rebuild this Golem from the ground up and from the inside out. How, then, should I approach this Form on its own terms?

As a special bonus I will now offer a key, and let the buyer beware. Most of us have heard the phrase "form follows function; function follows form". It is a popular mantra that has been repeated in many different cultures, and exemplified by works such as those produced by the artisans of ancient Egypt and the Bauhaus of pre-war Germany. Somewhere betwixt and between the realms of logic and rational intuition, it is possible for the Initiate to grasp the underlying validity of this principle on a highly personal level. For myself I would express this understanding by saying that "the Forms themselves - like the symbols, words, thoughts, deeds [and sometimes Magi] by which they are propagated - necessarily **do** what they **are**". The observed relationships of intimate reciprocity between their structures and functions are therefore based upon an intersection of kind which is bound to show up in the substances, shapes, causes, and outcomes of their Coming Into Being. With such a steaming pile of words, there is bound to be a premise in this dung heap somewhere.

Continuing with the autopsy, I will now apply the aforementioned principle to this unfortunate cadaver. I dissect and retract the Coming Into Being of Becoming Toward Being, to reveal a stone which evolves through punctuated states of *solvet et coagulum* whereby the final outcome of its target acquisition is the destruction of one for the sake of the next - never to be repeated. The jackal eats the scarab beetle, and by digestion he transforms it. As below, so above.

Through some understanding of what *Xem* is, I have the same knowledge of what *Xem* does. I know this not because Ronald Barrett is Ronald Barrett, but because **I am** Ronald Barrett. I recognize that as a human being **I am** an alchemical being, and because of this there is an intersection of kind between this Form and my self. *Xem* is an alchemical entity; and if I am going to integrate it

into my Becoming on these terms which are common to us, then my approach should be one of alchemy, not taxidermy.

When Wotan broke the unbreakable Notung in twain with his mighty spear, Siegfried made his father's sword anew. Others had tried to wield its broken pieces together without success. But it was he alone who summoned the courage and strength to shave it down into the tiniest slivers, and melt these down by the hottest furnace. He repoured this metal into a one-time mold of his own making, banged on his product with a hammer, and ground it to its sharpest edge. So with *Xem* the stuffed animal must be rendered into dust for the sake of the Golem which shall Come Into Being through that art which is ours to command.

Reyn til Runa

[2] 4th Annual Midwest Conclave Overview

- by James Severson III°

All those who traveled through light, shadow, and darkness were welcomed to this gathering of brilliant souls. As is the case with most Setian gatherings, individuals arriving in groups or alone served to set the tone for this experience of dynamic interaction.

As many previous event hosts have felt, the "host" syndrome had its effect! A sense of responsibility for facilitating a fertile environment from which all would partake was paramount before and during the event. It provided me with a deep sense of satisfaction in witnessing such dynamic interchange: satisfaction that such potential exists there for all who would take advantage of it.

What can one say about such an event? I could simply list what happened, or talk about the structure of each working, but doesn't each individual have a personal perspective of these? Let me just say that this gathering was truly magical. When Setians come together to "share", something happens. It seems to start from a desire to bring the dynamism of individual work into a group collective and get "responses". The language and structure which the Temple of Set provides for us can be such a medium. I witnessed and was inspired by all I saw going on around me.

Can we say that our reasons for coming to such an event are truly selfish ones? In one sense, yes. We desire knowledge and potential answers to our questions. We want that interaction with those whom we admire and respect - also those whom we've never met before. From these relationships we enrich ourselves and gain new insight and direction as to our own work.

Within the Temple we speak of gatherings such as this to be “*Xeper*-enhancing” opportunities. Why? Maybe because we genuinely have the chance to “be ourselves”. And in doing so we discover more of what we can or want to be.

[3] Overheard at the Conclave
(A Temple of Set Tradition)

“Who threw that *Bible* out the window?”

“Okay, okay, I’m responsible for the cardboard and cheese whiz pizza!”

“Excuse me, Adept, but you seem to be trailing stars.”

“Let me beam my business card to you.”

“Did you know the water’s off?”

“Are you guys some kind of rock group?”

“Yes, Virginia, there is a Count Dracula.”

“Fifty thousand years ago we started making tools. Now we make hula hoops and polyester.”

“It’s like giving permission to gravity.”

“It’s the open-mouthed fish and seal reaction to initiation.” [as another member of the Priesthood demonstrates what a seal is]

“I can’t believe you got that whole thing in your mouth!”

“You need to use latex gloves.”

Setian #1: “Those aren’t bats, they’re birds.”

Lady Lilith: “No, they’re not, they’re bats.” Setian #1: “Wow! Look at all those bats.”

Bystander: “Why are all you folks wearing black?” Setian: “We’re all wearing black until there’s world peace.”

“I broke my beak!”

“I feel like I’m the Kevorkian Master.”

“Even now, as we speak, our kitchen table is experiencing *Xeper*.”

Setian #1: “Don’t use first names.” Setian #2: “Okay, sugar.”

[4] The D.C. Trek

- by James Lewis VI°

(reprinted from *Trail of the Serpent* #XI-5, May 1994)

Washington, D.C. hosted more than politicians for Walpurgis. Priest William Van Patten did a great deal of work and organized an East Coast gathering. Initiates came from New York, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Georgia to meet in nearby Falls Church.

The hotel was easily accessed from expressways and the Washington airport. [The subway, gentle reader, is very much like the one in Boston: clean, economical, neat, and easy to find one’s way about in.] I am sure Priest Van Patten chose that particular hotel for its proximity to so many shopping areas;

your Grand Master (Order of Leviathan) vanished the first day in a quest to assist the economy of the area.

In came Priest Van Patten, accompanied by Adept Thompson, Setian Stephanie Silver, Adept Walter Gallo, Adept John Renaud, and Adept Eardley Scott. We were joined later by Adept Bruce Ware en route to his family after a period of school.

What did we do? We did what Setians do when together. We talked, ate, walked, socialized, discussed current Temple and world affairs, and practiced Magic. Washington being only a short drive away, we did a great deal of sightseeing, with visits to bookstores, the Smithsonian, a drive by the White House, a jaunt through Chinatown, and many other fast-paced but enjoyable sights and places.

Meeting together in one of the hotel’s rooms, we enjoyed a formal meeting with a forum and discussed the interaction of Set with our wills, lives, the Temple, and our beings. Each present had something to add to the pool of knowledge, and I sat back, reflecting that the Temple’s future was in good hands with such outlooks. Pylons were discussed with the Sentinels present, elucidating on their work to date. I encouraged them to share this with others via newsletters, etc.

Our ritual was written by Master of the Order of Leviathan William Van Patten, and was impressive and moving. It saw the ceremonial Recognition of Stephanie Silver to the degree of Adept II°, a move well-deserved in light of her obviously Adept status.

The Washington meeting was akin to all Temple of Set gatherings in that its total experience far exceeded the sum of its individual parts. The very great and moving thing about getting together with one’s own kind is that we speak the language with others who also speak it. To communicate, to understand nuances, to see the small jokes: These were superb examples of magical blood kinship.

My thanks to each of you who traveled so far to attend, and all our thanks to Priest Van Patten for organizing a memorable event.

[5] So You Want to Found a Pylon?

- by Don Webb IV°

You’ve got three or more members lined up, and you’re either a III°+ or have found such an individual to sponsor you. What’s the next step? Here are some suggestions and observations on Pylon life.

Like Magus Flowers I have found that the two greatest benefits to my initiation have been working with people near to my own level of development, and the exposure to the coherent body of thought that is the *Crystal Tablet*. Creating the space for the first is both hard work and very rewarding, and I

applaud anyone who makes the effort.

The word "pylon" refers to the massive fortified gateways of the temples of Egypt. You might wish to find a good photo of the Temple of Amon-Ra at Luxor or Rameses II's Abu-Simbel, and let your right brain feast on it awhile. You'll notice that the gateway presents a passage to the outside world, a narrow gateway within, and serves as a secure wall to the persons within. This is a good metaphor for what a Pylon should be.

Pylons can [perhaps should] have an effect on the objective universe in a specifically Setian sense. If there is trouble against occultists - bad press or whatever - one letter might not do much good, but a campaign of four letters from different places might. Various public projects can in fact be influenced by a very small number of people with coordinated goals.

In addition to such obvious LBM action, the Pylon itself should be conceived in such a way that its egregore is conceived of as having a constant influence on the geographical region. In this way the Pylon presents a message to the objective universe.

A second good idea is for the Pylon to report its activities to the other Pylons, perhaps with a newsletter. This can be used to set up such endeavors as simultaneous workings and other magical feats that give lie to the laws of time and space.

The gateway to Pylons is narrow; it is easily guarded by one man or woman. The role of the Sentinel is a guardianship role. Mainly this means that the Sentinel should set up a safe place for Pylon activities to occur. It may also mean the unpleasant task of removing disruptive elements from the Pylon. If the Pylon is to have any kind of outer face [for example if you wanted to run ads for members in the local newspaper], the Sentinel should have a post office box.

The Sentinel may establish whatever dress code or regulations he or she desires within the Pylon, in order that it might meet without attracting undue notice. In this function the Sentinel must know the local community and be a master of LBM. For example if you live in the student ghetto of a large town, Satanic drag might be O.K., even ultra-cool, for members to wear. If you meet in the heart of a white bread suburb, the yuppie look is probably better. The toughest thing for the Sentinel is that dress codes and so forth should be brought about by diplomacy and tact rather than rule-making if possible.

The Pylon serves as a secure wall to persons within. If the Sentinel has done this job, then the seriousness of the Initiates is all that matters. If they pursue their initiation, they will seize upon the Pylon for their needs. They can write rituals, lead

discussion groups, make road trips to museums, set up regional conclaves, etc. The Sentinel should not have a greater or lesser role in this than the others, and should use the office merely to be sure that no one person takes up all of the time. The interaction of people - particularly people just ahead and just behind one another in initiation - produces some of the greatest material for the Initiate to work with. The needs of the Pylon's members determine its activities, but I caution that if all you are doing is one thing - say just discussion or just ritual magic - then you're not enjoying the range of possibilities open to you as Initiates.

In the creation of an egregore - a group spirit to aid the Pylon and further its goals - I am drawn to the words of the Magus Plato. The creation of gods is the legacy of the Children of Set, who know that gods are not things to be worshiped outside of ourselves, but useful concentrations of forces within ourselves.

In the Seventh Platonic letter it says that gods have three characteristics: they have a Name (*Onoma*), a Definition (*Logos*), and an Image (*Eidolon*). These should be harmonious, working with each other and expressing the three-fold goal above. They should appeal to the group as a whole, but it is especially important that they appeal to the Sentinel.

I will analyze the Bull of Ombos Pylon for these standards. I had the honor of being its Sentinel for three years. The Name is one of Set's titles, referring to an Egyptian story, the "Tale of the Two Brothers". In this story Set, under the name of Bata, is slain again and again by his enemies - but returns to life by changing form. It is a name that refers to persistence thorough magic and will. The Definition of Bata is Set in his form as Bull, usually shown as carrying his mummified brother Osiris around. Thus the Pylon moves and enlivens the dead world around it, shakes things up, and gives them direction.

The Image of the bull is not only something on the Pylon's altar, but also the image of the University of Texas mascot. So we see buildings with the Bull, sculptures of the Bull, people wearing our sign on their cars and T-shirts, and in the tradition of ancient Egyptian temples. The Pylon members know that a sacred bull is kept alive for them, and honored in White Magical rituals (pep rallies) by an unknowing populace.

It has been my experience that the members of the Bull of Ombos Pylon and its graduates have Become themselves movers and shakers wherever they work or play, so what has served as model for the egregore, or group spirit, has also served in a mysterious way as a model for the individual's *Xeper*.

There are three dangers Pylons seem to have to overcome at some time.

The first is when Initiates start acting like people, which is always a danger to our individual initiations and to the organization. People become egoistic and power-mad, taking credit for other people's work, or stifling their processes. Or people become lazy and let other people do all the work for them. The cure for this danger is self-questioning.

The second danger is for people to become isolated in a Pylon. If you have a good Pylon, some people spend all their time there and don't correspond or interact with the rest of the Temple. This is like going to the world's best buffet and only trying the salad bar. It's up to every individual to take a gander at that dessert bar, but it doesn't hurt if the Sentinel asks from time to time what the members' activities are.

The third danger comes from people who don't resolve their differences at the source. Now in a Left-Hand Path group, there will be strong differences of opinion. Sometimes there will be friction as well. If people don't try to work out the differences at the source [between the individual initiates involved], but instead try to involve higher-degreed folk elsewhere, what were small, salvageable situations often become insoluble problems. It's fine to get help or advice from other more experienced Initiates, but better still to learn to use your wisdom and patience directly.

[6] **The Hymn of Dead Names**

An affectionate tip of the hat to H.P. Lovecraft
- by Michael H. Kelly II°

I seek the heart of inner space,
The Void where unknown Angles meet,
Where stands the throne of Azathoth;
I seek the Dæmon-Sultan's seat.
I gaze up into the starry night,
Where the Old Ones dwell beyond my sight.
I hunger for their power and might.
Oh call me, Cthulhu!

Dimensions unfold, spilling forth,
Yog-Sothoth is the Gate, the Key.
He knows the Old Ones' every thought,
And through Yog-Sothoth I shall see.
Away with Man's restricted trance;
The Angle Web awaits my dance
Into the Void, by will enhanced.
Oh call me, Cthulhu!

Nyarlathep, the monstrous god,
Ever-changing lord of madness,
Whilst mortals cringe in sickly fear.
The strong change ever in shifting gladness.
The only stable function is
Eternal Setamorphosis;
Xeper is the means to this.
Oh call me, Cthulhu!

The winter world of frozen Leng
Is formed of ice and driven snow.
A freezing wind roars vengefully,
The howling of the Wendigo.
Hastur screams across the waste,
God of shrieking, freezing haste.
In icy ruin his Seal is traced.
Oh call me, Cthulhu!

The Black Goat lurks In tangled lands,
The gnarled landscape of primal woods.
A thousand Young hunt in the deeps,
A dark and ever watchful brood.
Shub Niggurath, who ever sees
The Dark Young breed with fecund ease
Beneath the blackly brooding trees.
Oh call me, Cthulhu!

In dreams the Old One speaks to me.
Not dead, he can eternal lie;
As strange æons pass slowly by,
I know that even death may die.
The pounding of the restless sea
Brings strange tidings hauntingly.
Sunken R'lyeh sings to me.
Oh call me, Cthulhu!

[7] **"The Evil Miracle"**

- by Don Webb IV°

The story I read at the Salem Conclave, "The Evil Miracle", will be in the August issue of *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, available after July 1, 1994.

[8] **In Praise of Eclecticism**

dedicated to: Sir H. Cornelius Agrippa of
Nettesheim
- by Patrick Skelton II°

To quest, experience, and acquire knowledge from what we may experience are essential components on the path to *Xeper*. As individual intelligences who function between two universes, we dare to reach out into the mysterious darkness of potential and draw into our selves so many pieces of wisdom from an infinity of sources and inspirations. This wisdom resulting from experience

feeds the Black Flame within, that most unique Fire that illuminates our individual quests through the fields of the unknown.

“Eclectic” is a word that describes an individual who reaches out and explores the many sources of knowledge, “leaving no stone unturned”, and realizing potential in all he may experience. Eclecticism is cumulative in nature, and the eclectic will constantly find himself surrounded by an ocean of possibility upon which he may quest.

Many practicing magicians today will find their heritage in the ancient Hermetic traditions, which may be traced back approximately two thousand years. One of the nine principles of the Hermeticists is that of eclecticism. These ancient philosophers and magicians, who were mostly solitary practitioners of the Art, were inspired by the various religions and philosophies of their time. Due to their virtue of eclecticism [and by the virtue of diversity], vast amounts of knowledge that might have otherwise been lost have survived to the present day. The result of this eclectic current is a system of traditions that has endured for nearly two millennia, perhaps longer.

There was communication among the ancient Hermeticists, mostly in the form of the written word. They shared ideas that were extrapolated from many cultures, religions, and schools of thought, while retaining their own individualism. These ancient eclectics formed a source of wisdom from which future isolate intelligences can continue to draw.

As self-initiating magicians, Setians may find Set as an example of true isolate Intelligence. Set can be seen as both an indwelling and external source of inspiration, the source of our Gift.

The self-initiating magician on the path to *Xeper* requires some sort of stimulus in order to actually **experience** the process of Becoming. The Setian becomes vacuous in nature (eclectic), not only consuming knowledge, but adapting and utilizing this knowledge within his own being. What one may find worthless or absurd can be discarded and forgotten. Yet another Intelligence may find these discarded remnants to be a gem of inspiration. This is the nature of eclecticism: the welcoming of experience, acquiring knowledge, and gaining insight into all facets of mind and wisdom of other individuals.

Within the Temple of Set there is a powerful confluence of ideas among its Initiates. This flow and exchange of ideas inspires *Xeper*, fortifying Set's Temple and the future of the Æon. This essence of eclecticism shared by the Elect opens doorways to potential that are virtually unseen by those plagued by sterile doctrines and biases. Being aspirants to Set-consciousness not only necessitates the practice of eclecticism as individuals, but to

allow other isolate intelligences to remain unique in their individual perspectives.

During the exchange of thought-forms and experiences from Setian to Setian, some confluence is inevitable, as is the debate of principles established by individual Setians. Eclecticism demonstrates the welcome of ideas/principles that are contrary to our own. And where the eclectic essence is present, ridicule and intrusion are absent, allowing space for productive sharing of ideas.

Setians by nature are most curious individuals. We accumulate knowledge and are inspired by sources both Right- and Left-Hand Path, adapting material to our own unique creations within our selves. We experience our own unique Remanifestation as a result of *Xeper* and that which inspires us on the path to *Xeper*. The Temple of Set is a perfect example of diversity, which is a result of self-initiation and the sharing of knowledge among Initiates. In the essence of eclecticism: *Xeper* and Remanifest!

[9] The Word of Sin

- by Michael Kelly I°

“The Word of Sin is Restriction.” An important statement from Aleister Crowley's *Book of the Law*. But what implications does this statement [and indeed this Word, which may perhaps be considered an “unofficial” Æon-enhancing Word of a negative nature pertinent to the Æon of Horus] have for the contemporary Setian?

Restriction implies limitations; it implies boundaries. It says: “this far and no further”. Restriction implies a lack of free movement, a confinement.

Restriction is termed “the Word of Sin” [my capitals]. In popular parlance a sin is a wrongdoing. Hence to be restricted is wrong. Since *Thelema* basically means “will”, Restriction implies that one is not free to carry out one's will.

Restriction was therefore contrary to the philosophical tenets of the Æon of Horus and thus sinful. But what restrictions are sinful? These must be those restrictions which are imposed both by society and by the mundane personality in its interaction with that society. It is the artificial programming and conditioning that holds the self in thrall to the cosmic inertia, enforcing the lowest common denominator as a role model. *Thelema*, the true will, seeks to break free of these shackles of Restriction.

The Word Indulgence positively glories in smashing Restriction to pieces. In the Age of Satan the philosophy is one of selfishness. Not content to mindlessly conform to the expectations and norms (Restrictions) of the rat race, the individual is

encouraged instead to exercise all of his own personal desires and predilections in a bid to discover the nature and being of his own self, devoid of artificial dogmas and pieties. For all who have experienced and Understood Indulgence, Restriction should be left behind.

Xeper, Becoming, implies an initiatory state of self-realization and self-evolution. This conscious, willed evolution positively necessitates a condition of self-awareness which has transcended all artificial constraints and which actively progresses and expands in a series of carefully willed Remanifestations. At first glance, therefore, this Word Restriction seems to be something of a quaint relic from the Æon of Horus, which we Setians should have effectively outgrown [or at least be well on the way to outgrowing]. And indeed this is probably the case when we consider the earlier, negative connotations of the Word. But perhaps its more positive functions are Coming Into Being now for the first time?

Since I ÆS the value of limitation and concentration, of focus and self-definition, has been recognized and cultivated by Black Magicians. Is this not a Restriction, but a Restriction of a different and more positive nature? Having abandoned and overcome those Restrictions that are imposed from without, which are indoctrinated and programmed into us, I feel that we must ultimately Remanifest a new set of Restriction which we define for our selves. We are finite beings; we have boundaries; and it is essential that those boundaries be precisely defined and shaped and ordered according to will.

Yes, our personal boundaries frequently enlarge themselves and change, but this should never be haphazard or random; it must be as the result of conscious and controlled Remanifestation. Hence the willed definition and detached observance of these self-created and self-maintained Restrictions is, I believe, an important aspect of successful Black Magic.

Such Restrictions are a necessary process in initiation. After Indulging and shaking ourselves free of pre-conditioned responses, we define for ourselves what we are. This necessarily creates a new Restriction, in that we have also defined what we are not. The qualitative and essential difference is that this new Restriction is one that we have established for ourselves, by an act of will. It will *Xeper* as we *Xeper*. It will Remanifest as we Remanifest. As we perceive the boundary of *Runa* anew, so our self-definition will automatically adjust to accommodate the new vision. Why? Because it is no longer an external barrier to further progress; it is a self-defined image which now enables that very progress. Thus the Word is rehabilitated, as an essential and positive tool for the successful Black

Magician.

Without self-definition, we sink into vagueness and woolly-mindedness. This has never been the Setian way. We do not advocate anarchy or chaos; we do not simply destroy the old. After shattering those obsolete mental structures which confine us, we construct new ones which serve us better. From the ruin of the old world, we shape a new world, according to our vision. When we destroy with one hand, we remold with the other. This is plain common sense. Without giving shape and form to our lives and aspirations, we are nothing.

As for Restriction being “the Word of Sin?”, I think that deserves a wry chuckle and a reminder of Nietzschean values of what constitutes good and evil, and what lies beyond such concepts.

[10] **The Rape of Egypt**

- by Marie Buckner II°

A program which aired recently on PBS documented the ongoing desecration of paintings, stelæ, and architecture in Egypt's Valley of the Kings by Egyptologists on various archæological expeditions spanning the past two centuries, and by such modern cultural encroachments as the diverting of the waters of the Nile and the construction of city water systems. In this way temples such as those at Luxor are rapidly being eroded by water, and deep structural cracks are widening from hasty and careless excavation techniques.

During the heyday of the 19th century expeditions, for example in Seti I's tomb, attempts to chisel away and extract samples of hieroglyphs decimated large wall paintings. Impressions made over paintings leached vibrancy from pigments, and tombs were defaced with scrawled notation and other graffiti. These short-sighted plunderings heedlessly destroy forever the integrity of the monuments and the legacies preserved for so many thousands of years. And the desecration and apathy toward erosion and disintegration continue unabashedly.

The attitude of Egyptologists in general is that preservation necessarily entails a twofold process: (1) the compilation of textural data, and (2) the transportation of artifacts and fragments from excavation sites to various museums around the world for “posterity's sake”. These self-important archæologists seem oblivious to the fact that the holistic integrity of Egypt's magnificent secrets and haunting beauty is being destroyed forever, crumbling around them even as they dig and extract what they deem important for their own ends. Their fatalistic attitude determines that their only responsibility is to preserve ancient Egypt in books and museums. They are, as a group, skilled at

dodging the basic principles of violation at work here. One Egyptologist, for example, when asked how the situation might be rectified suggested that visitors park their cars down the hill from a pyramid and walk to it.

I find the destruction that continues in Egypt unconscionable. Is the preservation of the priceless treasures worth investigation by Setians? For those who might be interested in investigating the subject, *Valley of the Kings* and its companion book *The Rape of Tutankhamen* are available through mail order by calling 1-800-345-1352.

[11] **Vampyric Alchemy**

- by Kurt Kalivoda II°

Vampyric Alchemy is a system of self-initiation working along the Æonic formula of *Xepera Xeper Xeperu* ("I have Come Into Being and created that which Comes Into Being."). This is a working combining both ritual/ ceremonial magic and contemplation of the mystic.

The purpose of this working was to heal my body. When I was a child, I was diagnosed with chronic asthma. I was immediately put on Tetracycline, Tedrall, and Prednisone (a steroid). I was not expected to live to my first birthday. I became a research case at Illinois Research in Chicago for the first six years of my life. I don't know what, if anything, was found. I was never informed. As I grew, the asthma attacks lessened during my teenage years, but returned with a vengeance later. I spent more time on life support and having a Priest giving me last rites than I care to remember, none of which I ever requested.

During that time I had studied different books on religion, Eastern philosophies, and magic. Simultaneously I had unknowingly reawakened a creature from my past that was almost a hero to me: the vampyre! I wasn't interested in its blood-drinking. I was entranced by its majesty. In the movies I would watch from my hospital bed, I would watch Bela Lugosi or Christopher Lee walk onto the screen like a god. Even in my earliest memories of childhood, there was something about this majestic being that I could relate to, and found comfort in seeing myself in that role.

With my studies of magic I soon found that I could evoke some of those traits in myself, one of these being longevity. The Order of the Vampyre works with the essence, the immortal self, the beast, the noble self, the seductress, the black sorcerer.

The aspect that I have focused on for this particular working is the vampyre who prolongs its life unnaturally not by drinking blood, but rather experiencing life and living it in the truest sense of the word. The blood is in essence the life.

For most of my life I have lived in a hospital, without having a chance to experience all that growing up has to offer. And so I have constructed this working which will actively work on the physical (sub-atomic, atomic, and cellular), the mental, and the spiritual (essence). It is this desire to live as long as one possibly can, and to grow intellectually and in essence.

As I studied many books on healing, I came across some that were good and many that were pretty bad. I did come across a book by Deepak Chopra, M.D. called *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind: The Quantum Alternative to Growing Old*. In this book I was exposed to the quantum field.

While there is a large amount of white-light fluff in the book, I also found that within the quantum realm there is the dark path of the Black Magician. I was very surprised to find what I feel is a truly Setian approach to the idea of self. In the quantum field, which I will refer to from now on as the Q, the immortal [essence] expresses itself through physical matter; and through visualization and asserting the will, one can affect matter (the body on a sub-atomic level). I will go into further detail in the next section on the Q. This will be the first element of the alchemy known as alchemical salt.

The next element will be alchemical mercury. For this section I wanted to find a system that was active and not relying totally on visualization: something in which you could actually manipulate the life force while using the Q.

I decided on the very ancient art of *T'ai Chi Ch'uan*. I am focusing mostly on the *Chi* itself. This is the unseen force behind martial arts. *Chi* not only uses visualization, but also incorporates breathing techniques and physical movements in what you would call an active meditation as opposed to transcendental meditation, which is passive.

After one learns the forms, you begin to move the *Chi* to different parts of the body. It is this exercise that will need to be learned in order to benefit the practitioner of vampyric alchemy. By combining the visualization of the Q and using the active assertion of the force of *Chi*, the Black Magician has a very powerful tool to cause change in the objective universe.

I have seen and even felt *Chi* extended outside the body to heal. I am sure that you could see other uses for this technique, but I want to focus on the healing of the body for now. If you have ever worked with the *chakras*, you have also been learning how to move the *Chi* up and down the spine.

Finally we come to the last element, the alchemical sulphur. The highest aspect of this alchemy is the development of the Setian/vampyre primal essence, that part that will live beyond the

grave after the body dies. The two other elements I have talked about are for the most part Right-hand Path systems. When we approach them from a Setian perspective, they become reminders that ultimately we are immortal beings wrapped in a physical body, and not the other way around.

This concludes the introduction to the vampyric alchemy. I will follow with a brief history of alchemy. But as there are so many books on the subject available, I don't feel the need to go into a lengthy discussion on the subject. I will then take each of the elements individually and show how I apply them. Feel free to use them or not as you will.

The Art of Alchemy

In alchemy it was proposed that if one could adhere to the discipline of science and sorcery, the student would soon be able to gain control over the elements, turn lead into gold, and find the mythological Philosopher's Stone that would bring immortality. Unfortunately for those greedy students who only sought monetary gain, the study most likely proved frustrating and pointless.

Today the modern alchemist has learned what those centuries ago missed. This is a spiritual discipline. Scientists have been searching for ways to change lead into gold for the longest time, with the most modern of machines, only to come up with a poor imitation of what they were searching for.

I will show how I have come to understand alchemy from a vampyric point of view.

The alchemist takes a thing that is dead, impure, worthless, and powerless, and transforms it into a live thing, invaluable and thaumaturgic. It is initiation of the self. We have as our first matter man/woman, a perishable, sleeping, and unaware parasite, crawling upon the Earth for a life span and returning to the dirt from whence it sprang. The process of alchemy/initiation is to remove the impurities and find the true self, an immortal intelligence to whom matter is no more than the means of manifestation. He possesses infinite wisdom and infinite power of himself.

In myth the vampire was a creature that was once dead, but was able to return from the grave a powerful, immortal being. I see this also as an alchemical process. The vampire would continue its unnatural life by feeding on the blood of its victims.

Let's analyze this from a Setian perspective, within the Order of the Vampyre. The blood is in essence the life. I have come to see this as the experience of living and learning on all levels possible, growing stronger from each experience. Experience in this case is also the life. With each experience we exercise the Gift of Set and feed our essence while ridding ourselves of the aspects that we have found unnecessary. The blood is the

transformative substance that turns the profane individual (lead) into the immortal vampyre (gold).

The Q

The quantum field is where the invisible (conscious) meets the visible (matter); it is another form of the magical link.

As Setians we know that by causing change on the subjective level, we also cause change on the objective level. At least that is what we attempt to do with our magic. We can change our perception of a situation to fit our needs, and I have found that we can take this to a deeper level on the physical plane.

Our bodies are aging beyond our control. Why? Because this is what has been expected and accepted as the norm. We constantly hear people going on that "growing old is the worst thing that could ever happen to them" and how they will fight tooth-and-nail to stop it. But if we look at other cultures, we see something very different. Those who have moved on in years are looked on with respect. They have gained experience and are venerated for that reason. Indeed it is the only in our country that the elderly are treated with such disrespect that growing old is looked on with fear and dread, while in other societies it's a pleasure.

Science is showing more and more the link between emotions and the diseases of the body. Our cells are affected by our emotions and our thoughts. For example, studies have shown that people who have a clinical depression have a better chance of falling prey to physical illness than most. After retirement, within the first few years, heart attack and cancer rates soar, and early death overtakes men that were otherwise healthy before they retired.

This early retirement-death syndrome depends on the **perception** that one's useful days are over. This is only a perception, but for someone who holds it firmly, it is enough to create disease and death. Medical journals are filled with cases of how stress kills. Why is it that something that is purely emotional (thought or feeling) can cause a change in something physical?

The mind influences every cell in the body. Human aging is fluid and changeable; it can speed up, slow down, stop for a time, and even reverse itself. Aging and illness are more dependent on the individual than most people realize.

The biochemistry of the body is a product of awareness. Beliefs, thoughts, and emotions create chemical reactions that uphold life in every cell. An aging cell is the result of awareness that has forgotten how to remain new.

In order to stay alive, our bodies must remain dynamic, they must continually rid themselves of toxins, dead cells, and other forms of waste. If they couldn't, your body would die. In Dr. Chopra's

book he states: "The skin replaces itself once a month, the stomach lining every five days, the liver every six weeks, and the skeleton every three months. To the naked eye these organs look the same from moment to moment, but they are always in flux. By the end of the year, 98% of the atoms in your body will have been exchanged for new ones." As I had mentioned before, we are immortal selves interacting in this world through physical matter.

The cells of our bodies are filled with energy. I believe we can control that energy by the use of asserting the will, and by taking awareness to an even higher level.

As Setians we pride ourselves on the fact that we are not just a mass of matter living out our lives, simply to die when our bodies get worn out. We are aware of our unique state of being, and we understand the potential of that state of being. But have we come to understand how much influence we have on our own bodies?

Most people live their lives, taking it for granted that their cells will continue to divide. Their organs will function, and their brains will stay alert. These automatic processes play a huge part in aging. As we age, our ability to coordinate these functions declines, and a lifetime of unconscious living leads to numerous deteriorations, while a lifetime of conscious attention to bodily functions - instead of taking it for granted that they will continue - will change how you age. This is how I view the sacrament of blood: By participating in every aspect of living, we move to an even higher level of awareness.

In *T'ai Chi Ch'uan* there is a saying: "Energy follows thought." I have seen this in practice. When this principle is used to influence the body on a cellular level, we can, through daily/nightly ritual, send the message to all parts of the body to continue in their work. As we reach 60 or 70, we will have disciplined ourselves to the point whereby will keeps our bodies vital and dynamic.

[12] **H.P. Lovecraft & the Left-Hand Path**

- by Dennis Stevens I°

If H.P. Lovecraft (1890-1937), the New England horror writer, had been told of the uses to which many occultists have put his "Cthulhu Mythos", he would surely have recoiled in dismay. This is one of the great ironies of the current interest in Lovecraft among the thaumaturgically inclined.

In a letter dated July 29, 1936 Lovecraft wrote: "As for seriously written books on dark, occult, and supernatural themes, in all truth they don't amount to much."¹ In many of his letters Lovecraft continually stressed his belief that consciousness is

a wholly material phenomenon. Given such views on HPL's part, why is there such a fascination about Lovecraft by people to whose views he was diametrically opposed?

One reason for this apparent paradox is that Lovecraft did not really understand occultism. For Lovecraft there was no such thing as progress or discovery; the greatest achievements of humanity lay in the past. The best he hoped for out of life was to create a powerful æsthetic effect through his writing. Existence contained little possibility for improvement.

Occultism in its highest forms is entirely concerned with **possibilities** - of achievement, of happiness, of power. For occultists who tread the Left-Hand Path in particular, life is to be lived and its problems and pitfalls squarely faced. The Left-Hand Path devotee believes in individual ability to transcend temporal circumstances and realize personal divinity.

Another characteristic of the LHP is the use of dark, Gothic imagery, hence its association with Satanism. The reasons behind the use of such symbols are many. One has been that such symbols pertain to the deepest levels of the subconscious, which the sorcerer must reach in order to realize divinity.

While Lovecraft's ancestors had a long and proud lineage in New England, the family had fallen on hard times by the time of his birth. He clung to his heritage as his last source of pride. This factor becomes even more interesting in light of the fact that HPL's father died in a mental asylum.² Lovecraft then lived most of his life with his two aunts, except for a brief period during his two-year marriage.

Such a background must have given him an ambiguous attitude towards time and history. While proud of the achievements of his ancestors, and a staunch conservative, the existence of madness and death in his own personal background was also obvious. Forces of the past coming to envelope and destroy the present is a recurring theme in the Cthulhu Mythos.

Yet the threat is not really the "past" in a literal sense, but what the past **represents**. In Lovecraft's case the past was those aspects of himself which he had projected and demonized outward, and which came back to destroy his carefully-constructed and desperately defended self-image. He was not, he seems to have told himself over and over, the product of death and madness. He was a product of the Age of Enlightenment and Reason. All apparently irrational and emotional elements of life were to be abhorred.

His professed belief in authoritarianism may be seen as an expression of a desire to subdue the

emotional and intuitive sides of his own personality, which he feared might destroy him.³ Virtually all of his stories revolve around a rather repressed central character who encounters strange, otherworldly creatures. Like Lovecraft these characters' entire self-image is one based on a view of reality in which Cthulhu and his noisome minions could not exist. Many of the main characters contemplate or commit suicide when confronted with an unthinkable reality. To defeat the monsters is useless; by their mere existence they do the greatest damage.

Lovecraft's lack of sexual experience, and ambivalence towards sex, is evident in several stories. In *The Dunwich Horror* Wilbur Whateley, the half-human sorcerer, appears relatively normal, at least enough to pass for human. After his death his monstrous nature is apparent **below the waist**, with long tentacles that terminate in mouths extending from his waist. The creatures who cast *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* are born human, but become wet, slimy creatures after puberty.⁴ The sexual symbolism and the implicit horror of sexuality are obvious in these examples, and have been cited in many studies of Lovecraft.⁵

Lovecraft's harshly materialistic view, as well as his sexual hang-ups, repressed his own darker side. Naturally, repressing one's demons only makes them come back stronger. For Lovecraft they came back in the form of his dreams. In fact many of his stories are verbatim, or nearly verbatim, transcriptions of his dreams.

Whether or not one believes in Jung's "collective unconscious", it can be said [or at least persuasively argued] that Lovecraft's visions strike a primal chord that resonates on the same deep psychic levels in the reader that was the source of Lovecraft's writings. In fact this would explain the popularity of Lovecraft so long after his death: Anyone who has read him knows that HPL had severe limitations as a writer which he himself freely admitted.

There is not a great deal of evidence to show Lovecraft himself was really aware of the psychological content of his stories. He had about as much self-knowledge as most people, and was quite candid about his strengths and weaknesses as a writer. His later stories, however, do show signs of him coming to terms with his monsters. In fact, when the main character of *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* discovers that he himself is destined to become one of the creatures he encounters, he is first horrified but eventually comes to accept it. Instead of being destroyed by this radically altered reality, he incorporates his insight into a wider view of reality. In earlier stories the monsters are simply ravenous creatures that devour anyone in their path. In the last few stories the monsters turn out to be

rational creatures that are behaving quite intelligently from their own point of view.

It is an interesting question as to whether Lovecraft tapped into something inherent in all human minds, saw into some "other universe", or was simply reacting to social conditions similar to today. America in the 1920s and 1930s was a country in a state of great change. Waves of immigrants from outside the traditional northern and western European areas, from which most upper class Americans were descended, were changing America's demographic map. The rise of world empires brought many different cultures together; the great cities of the world saw a vast influx of peoples from every corner of the globe.

The comparative study of religion and philosophy brought out the rich variety of the world's religious traditions. Texts that had been the privilege of the priestly classes of different cultures were now available to anyone who wanted to read. The *Vedas* sat next to the *Holy Bible*, right beside a copy of the *Koran*. Thanks to the rise of personal literacy, more people than ever could read such texts if they were so inclined to do so.

The horrors of the Great War also made alternative views much more attractive, given what Western "civilized" men were obviously capable of doing to one another. Lovecraft was, after all, a contemporary of Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and the "lost generation". In short it had many parallels to the post-World War II West. The "Holocaust" and the "Bomb" had also shattered many people's faith in progress and civilization. The spiritual supermarket is just filled with choices now as then. Like a Lovecraft character we see a chaotic future in which our entire understanding of values, of order, and of ourselves is radically called into question.

But whereas Lovecraft shrank in horror from his reality, and only hesitantly, at the end of his life, started to deal positively with his personal situation, the initiated occultist must grapple directly with the modern existential dilemma of the self [and, by extension, the selves of others]. The word "occult" means "hidden"; the self, beyond our superficial self-images, is also hidden. The occultist then tries to understand these aspects of the self, for that is the only way to control them. This understanding and control of oneself constitute the prime goal of the Left-Hand Path.

The value of Cthulhu magic is its ability to bring the practitioner in touch with the deepest levels of the psyche. It may be wondered then whether this is a wise choice! After all, every character in Lovecraft's own stories who comes in close contact with the Great Old Ones or their minions comes to an unpleasant end. But as any LHP adept knows,

one person's demon is another's deity.

Because he was not an adept, and refused to deal with this part of himself on its own level, Lovecraft could not have done anything other than shrink back in horror from what he had seen. It was the side of himself he could not face, and it came roaring back up at him. The adept seeks always to face that side of himself which others spend a lifetime trying to ignore. It is by the systematic and relentless exploration of the most hidden side of one's self that one attains true mastery of that self.

Let me give an example from my own work: I have used Cthulhuvian symbols to explore the experience of death and rebirth. Using guided meditation, I projected myself into R'lyeh, Cthulhu's watery lair. I saw myself transform into a Deep One, the batrachian race which clearly links us back to our earliest origins as well as the most primeval levels of consciousness. Then I decayed away entirely, leaving nothing but a spot of slime on the floor. Thence I re-evolved (re-created myself), by an act of will, into my regular human form.

Reading about such an experience may make it seem ridiculous in the reader's eyes. But to me it was a profound experience which left me shaking on the floor, exhausted.

The question of whether there "really is" a R'lyeh can generate much discussion, some of which may be useful. But, as always, it is the **usefulness** of the experience to one's personal pursuit of power and knowledge which is the key to interpretation. Another person may attempt the same ritual and get very different results. It is simply a matter of explorers who reach an unknown land via different approaches and naturally encounter different phenomena.

Notes

1. Lovecraft, H.P., *Selected Letters V*. Sauk City, WI: Arkham House, 1976, page 286.
2. Levy, Maurice, *Lovecraft: A Study In The Fantastic* (S.T. Joshi trans.). Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1988, page M8.
3. Lovecraft, *Selected Letters V*, page 389.
4. Lovecraft, H.P., *Classic Tales of Horror and Suspense*. New York: Del Rey, 1980.
5. Levy, *op. cit.*, page S8.

[13] Listen to This

- by Tony Pizzini II°

The February *Scroll's Black Pyramid* section had quite an effect on me. Ipsissimus Aquino's article "Ghosts from the Negative Green" had me running to books I have not looked at in some time, playing with electronic musical equipment [in an other-than-musical way], and generally wondering

that if American Minimalism hadn't replaced, more or less, European Serialism, would serious music be that much closer to the conscious control of the flow of moments (micro-moments of time, dynamics, tone-color, etc.)?

In the spirit [hopefully] of "Ghosts", I present the following, all taken from the book *The Healing Forces of Music: History, Theory, and Practice* by Randall McClellan, Ph.D and published by Amity House, New York.

Experiments conducted by Itzak Bentov and associates have identified five resonating areas of the human body:

(1) The heart-aorta system produces a standing wave oscillation of seven cycles per second (cps) in the skeleton, which is caused by the ejection of blood from the heart into the aorta. This wave causes a minute corresponding movement in the body.

(2) Responding to this movement, the skull causes an up-and-down movement of the brain and produces reverberating acoustical plane waves of 1,000 cps through the brain.

(3) These waves activate standing waves in the third ventricle (12,000 cps) and the lateral ventricle (4,000 cps) of the brain.

(4) The sensory cortex of the brain is stimulated by standing waves in the cerebral cortex. These frequencies are in the audio range.

(5) A pulsating magnetic field is produced in each hemisphere of the brain.

Bentov also characterizes the fundamental frequencies of the brain at 4,000 cps, the circumference of the skull at 2,250 cps, the whole body length at 375 cps, trunk and head at 750 cps, and heart sounds at 2,000 cps.

Other sounds found within the body result from the actions of the various systems and include: (1) the sound of circulation of the blood through the veins and arteries, (2) the sounds of our nervous system (3) the sounds of our breathing (4) the sounds of our digestive system (5) the sound produced by the action of the heart, and (6) sounds that result from any movement of our bones.

These sounds are in the audible range and can be heard by inserting earplugs into the ears.

And from the same book, but from perhaps a different area of the spectrum:

In *Rhythms of Vision* author Lawrence Blair reported the experience of Professor Gavraud, a French engineer, who became interested in

the effect of sub-audio frequencies on the human body. Having discovered that the whistle with a pea in it - used by French police - produced sub-audio frequencies, he built a six-foot-long version of it powered by compressed air. According to Blair, the technician who first tested it was killed instantly, his internal organs having been ruptured by the sound. In the book *Supernature* biologist-author Lyall Watson confirmed the accuracy of this incident and cites other examples of the destructive potential of vibration.

More recently, at a public lecture, Dr. Guy Manners, who knew Gavraud, supplied further details of Gavraud's work: "Everything he developed proved in testing to be destructive." According to Manners, many of his assistants died when a "short blast of sound ruptured the liver". Among the experimental instruments he built was one that could split concrete ten feet thick by creating the frequency of its molecular structure. When Gavraud died of natural causes, all blueprints for the instruments were banned, his laboratory was disbanded, and all photographs were confiscated by the French government. Dr. Manners exhibited one of the few remaining photographs of Gavraud's machines." [I was so tempted to add to that last line: "Audience members suffered only minor nosebleeds accompanied by leg cramps."]

When Manners sought approval from British authorities to use his cymatics applicator for therapeutic purposes, he was asked if it had any destructive potential. His response took the form of a question: "Has there ever been a device invented by man that could **not** be turned to destructive purposes?"

I hope this short article stimulates some other creative thought in this area, just as Ipsissimus Aquino's article has done for me!

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Manners, Peter Guy, public lecture, Amherst, Massachusetts, April 5, 1983.

McClellan, Randall Ph.D., *The Healing Force of Music*. Warwick, New York: Amity House, 1988.

[14] Important Transcripts Available

- by Rebecca Lance III°, D.Tr.

In the early spring of this year, the R'lyeh Lodge, Order of the Trapezoid, hosted a weekend-long workshop on *Runa*. Presenters included Priestess Rebecca Lance, Priest Barrett, Magister Don Webb, Magistra Pat Hardy, and Adept Walter Radtke (who damn near killed us by provoking massive attacks of hysterical laughter).

The transcript for this workshop is now being made available to all interested Setians. This is a 70-page document, spiral-bound; and I am making it available at the cost of production and shipping.

To procure your copy of this transcript please send \$7 to me. Please make checks out to "Rebecca Lance".

For all who have asked: Yes, there are still copies of the "Nine Angles" Transcript available, also at \$7.

[15] Recognitions

Helen Hedges-Phillips and Quintin Hedges-Phillips to Adept II° by Priestess Jennifer Rush-Hunter, March 2, 1994.

Sean O'Connor to Adept II° by Priest James Severson, St. Louis Midwestern Conclave.

David Furcean to Adept II° by Magister Robert Moffatt, St. Louis Midwestern Conclave.

Beth Wise to Adept II° by Magister William Butch, St. Louis Midwestern Conclave.

Sterling Scarborough to Adept II° by Magister Don Webb, April 30, 1994.

Jessica Smith to Adept II° by Priests James Severson & Paul McAtee, May 12, 1994.

Stephanie Silver to Adept II° by Priest William Van Patten, April 30, 1994.

[16] Ancient Egyptian Road

American researchers have discovered the world's oldest paved road, a 4,600-year-old highway that linked a basalt quarry in a desolate region of the Egyptian desert to waterways that carried basalt blocks to monument sites along the Nile.

The 8-mile-long road is at least 500 years older than any previously discovered road, and is the only paved road discovered in ancient Egypt.

[17] Life on Olympus

- by Don Webb IV°

Many people whose life goal is personal power content themselves with a petty tyranny. They order around their family, their fellow workers - anyone who falls under their sway. Now there is a species of power to be gained in this: a rather lonely, and not very relaxing power. But Those Who Know have a different approach.

Mankind was wise enough to cut its lot with the gods in Greek times. That's why we created the myth of Prometheus. We don't depend on the gods, but we try to transcend the reality of the day-to-day world by acting as gods within the limits of the world.

Now if you choose to become a god, one of the first things you'll need to create is a **community** of gods - of other seekers who likewise devote themselves to an absolutely personal view of self-transformation. Without a community of gods, you won't have anything to compare yourself against. It's easy to feel godlike if you only surround yourself with an angelic choir that tells you how good you are. The words "absolutely personal" can't be stressed too highly. You wouldn't want a group where everyone turned into, say, Hermes.

You need to create [or find] Olympus. But do not expect Olympus to be a trouble-free mirror of your own thinking. Accept that as you become more and more your true self, and those around you become theirs, there will be friction. In fact as people develop they will become more and more uniquely themselves. Look at any set of myths.

You might be really pissed off when Joe is acting too belligerent, but you wouldn't say of Aries: "I like the guy, but he's too warlike!" Tolerance can be the recognition of the emerging divine in others, and if practiced as such can be a strong signal to the hidden parts of your **own** psyche that you're ready to have the divine emerge in **you**. Real gods don't need petty tyranny to exercise power in the world; they can change the world by transforming **themselves**.

[18] Invisible Ink

- by Don Webb IV°

If you like books on haunted houses, folklore on ghosts, supernatural fiction (new and used), and/or videos and cassette on same, write "Invisible Ink" and ask for their catalog. Invisible Ink, 1811 Stonewood Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45432-4002.

[19] New Manuscript Available

- by Michael H. Kelly II°

I have spent some months working with the 30 Æthyrs of the Enochian system of magic, and have gathered together my written records, adding a few pertinent essays. Write to me via the ICR. I will then provide you with a direct mailing address, and the manuscript can be acquired with a contribution of \$10 towards the printing and postage costs (cash only, please, by registered post) or alternatively by providing copies of Pylon newsletters by way of exchange.

[20] Attention All Artists!

- by Heather Snow II°

Aside from fleeing the chaos of the big city for a quieter, more laid-back lifestyle, Adept Heather Snow and Daniel Ayres have relocated to Madrid, New Mexico to assist in running an arts and crafts shop in a 100-year-old renovated Victorian boarding house, complete with resident ghost.

The town lies midway between Albuquerque and Santa Fe on the touristy "turquoise trail", and is already busy with people roaming about, looking to spend their money.

The shop, along with the rented-out spaces for a head store, knick-knack shop, authentic Indian jewelry shop, and gourmet coffee and sandwich store, is open; and Adept Snow is seeking those Setians who wish to profit from the genius of their creation. Despite the area the "Southwestern æsthetic" isn't necessary, as shoppers travel here to find the unordinary; so anything goes.

Those interested in more information about selling their artwork, please write me.

[21] The Curse of a Satanic Priest

- by Larry Evans III°

Ever so casually I approach the mailbox, open it, and discover an envelope addressed to me from a Setian. Cheers! I always enjoy your mailings.

After reading the letter, I decide to put it aside for a few days and work on my newsletter. "Now I'm on a roll," I think to myself. I'll even add that new material to the *Book of Warlock* too.

Another day passes, and the routine visit to the mailbox occurs again. Yes! Today is a good day, with two letters. I think I'll answer yesterday's letter and save these for tomorrow. In today's mail there is some Order business to attend to soon. Shall I do it now or tend to yesterday's letters? Another day passes.

Let's take a look at today's mail. Well! Nothing here. This is good; I have so many mundane things to take care of, and now would be a good time.

The weekend goes by, and the workday passes. Again to the post office. Look, here is a letter from someone I've not heard from in a long time. I'll read it. Okay, I'll let this one sit while I contemplate my answers. Uh, oh. Did I forget some letters from a few days ago? [I dig through a stack of 35-40 envelopes acquired over the past month or so.]

Bad day at work. I think I'll skip the mail today and watch a video. Even I need relaxation sometime!

Now it is nearing mid-week, and I haven't checked the mail for two days. I'm wondering what's there. Wow! Six envelopes and only one has to do with the mundane. The first letter is from a new Initiate of the Temple; the second is from a well-thought-of Adept wanting to quarrel about something I wrote; the third is a submission for a future research project; the fourth is a newsletter from the Grumpy Grump Pylon [I really like the Grumpy Grump Pylon]; finally the fifth letter is from an Ipsissimus. I'll not go over that one here.

Okay, where to begin? Where would **you** begin? Is a letter from an Ipsissimus more important than one from a Setian just getting started? Does the Adept need to be dealt with now, or should I wait 'til I re-read the paper? What influence will your reply to the Grumpy-Grump Pylon have? Finally, what do you say to an Ipsissimus?

These are the kinds of things a Priest of Set deals with all the time. Probably the above examples reflect the day-to-day reality of many Priests.

The thing that I **really** want to know is: Were the first two letters from paragraph #3 ever answered? And were those letters yours?

When you think you have the answer to that question, please let me know, and tell me the reasoning for the position you take! Good luck!

[22] Pain is a Virtue

- by David A. Cohen II°

It has been said that life is to be lived for pleasure and the avoidance of pain, but what should you do once a non-pleasurable experience has been encountered?

In some circumstances these things are best left to banishment in a magical sense. Then there are those situations which **need** to be understood; they call for the alchemist in our non-nature. Examination must take place on an array of levels: subjective, objective, intuitional, instinctual, intellectual, emotional, and sensory. Many points [of perspective] have to be calculated before one can find the area of a circle (*cyclee*). In lieu one has to enter chaos before one can master it. Everyone has

his limits, even the masochist who reaches a point of content or "discontent".

In some senses, not all, internalization with and examination of pain can actually add to your vital existence and to your *Xeper*.

Example: One wouldn't mull over a broken limb in lieu of quick and assured medical attention/recovery; but for a quick and assured attention/recovery over, say, a "broken heart", one might do some "mulling" as a prelude to banishment (emancipation through Understanding).

Again considerations must be made as to all aspects. A good tempering of severity in judgment can peel away the scabs of human foible. However one cannot relinquish the aggrandizement of the will's directive or the animal self in its constancy. Saturnian energy is a good example of this, and one would do good to learn from the "GOTOS" [see *Fire and Ice* by S. Edred Flowers, Llewellyn, 1990].

It has been said that what does not kill you can only make you stronger. "It will probably be painful, disturbing, frightening; but it will increase your power a thousandfold if you survive."¹ So if that little gremlin is nagging inside of you to be fed after midnight, don't be afraid. You might just have to open up a whole new can of worms. Sometimes we find teachers where we thought none existed. Take a lesson from Pandora's Box; you might just open up to a whole new Remanifestation.

Notes

1. Anton S. LaVey, in Barton, Blanche, *The Church of Satan*, 1990.

[23] The Mystical Life

- by J. David Furcean II°

Living the real life of eternity
In the midst of time;
Infinite being-ness of twilight and love,
Expressing as this heart of mine.

[24] Requiem

- by Jennifer Rush-Hunter III°

Foreword: A fellow Setian here in Australia, while very ill in hospital, thought that his time might be near. He asked that I write something for him which could be read at his bedside when the time had come. "I wish to depart as a Setian," he said.

I wrote the following [When needed, this can be performed as a "Rite of Passage"]:

The ages pass by, and your life expands,
enhanced by the glory of self. You wander
through the vast desert of Set, searching for

life within death. Many paths have you journeyed. Look back upon those journeys, and feel satisfied with what you have achieved. Dear brother Setian, it is time for change. Open wide your thoughts and being as you are set free to embark upon this new experience. As Khepri you have always been what you are become. Rise up into the southern skies, and look back upon us as you depart, and remember we will be with you as you are with us, always. Set guide your way.

Xepera! Xeper! Xeperu!

[25] A Thought on the Nietzschean Quote "Joy Says Stay, Woe Says Go."

[Try and relate it to your ideas of *Xeper*.]

- by Matthew M. Mitchem I°

What is the pursuit of most of humanity? The answer to this question is usually happiness. There are three basic types of happiness in the eyes of man: wealth, fame, and personal pleasure, with varying degrees of these pursuits. None of these pursuits are attainable. Greed takes over in the lives of those who pursue wealth, and they can never have enough money. Vanity has a tendency to take over in those who pursue fame; they constantly need their ego fed. Laziness becomes the driving force in one who seeks pleasure, leading to nothing but a search for gratification of the senses. Religious men give up the pursuits of this world in favor of a less-concrete union with a god.

Religious men preach to men, telling them that their pursuits aren't worth the time, and that they should dedicate their lives to an unseen deity in the name of salvation. Salvation from what? Life. The pursuit of my gratification is more gratifying than the pursuit of none. Favoring the *ego* over the *id* is as constipating as its own converse. To deny desire altogether, as the religious men would have us do in selling our lives to the slavery of an unseen deity, will result in a denial of this life in favor of another. Desire is not the problem in man's equation, but rather the application of that desire.

"Joy says stay" no desire. By all means men need to lust - most definitely lust, for the word "love" has too many associations with delectation. The pursuits of happiness, whether that be for this world or another, are incapable of being attained; they always seek more of themselves. The search for acceptance by divinity is pathetic; such a search being worthwhile only when one seeks to become divinity. Nay, to have more, ye must become more!

"Woe says go" is thus easily explained. When one is in an unpleasant state, one seeks to get out of it. The attitude toward this should be not to emerge from the agony into a state of bliss, but rather to lust

for woe to conquer. Constantly strive to overcome obstacles set before you, so that you may grow. Why grow? To evolve.

Woe is something that indicates pain, something in the way of our goals of happiness. Pursuits such as fame, wealth, and pleasure are things that keep humanity where it is; they do not further our present position, but keep it in a constant "now". Now should be dynamic. Things evolve as a result of obstacles overcome, but man perceives these obstacles as woeful. They cause him stress and give him all sorts of mental and emotional strain. Man should embrace this strain, overcome it, and in turn become more than human. "Woe says go."

The things that hold us back are the things that make life easy and simple. But is a simple life worth living? Without friction there is no fire. Man needs obstacles to overcome to become more than human. When our pursuits in life are merely trying to find an equilibrium, to be still, then we are in a state of stagnation. When life is full of action, of distress, and constantly-changing dynamics, we get stronger, faster, more intelligent; we evolve; we go. "Joy says stay, woe says go."

[26] The ABCs of Black Magic

- by William D. Pridgen II°

As Setians we employ many tools in our excursions into the unknown. In this essay I am going to discuss a tool that has enabled me to quantify the process of GBM at the psychological level. This tool, called cognitive restructuring, is a technique used by Albert Ellis and other cognitive therapists in which the client is made aware of a connection between unrealistic thoughts and the maladaptive behavior these evoke. Clients are helped to develop more rational ways of looking at their behavior.

The first foe to be overcome by the aspiring Black Magician is the three-headed hydra known as conventional religion, politics, and the mass media. Once the aspirant realizes he is being exploited, he must attempt a reevaluation of his previous values. Once societal mores have been abandoned, the aspirant is forced to make a conscious determination of morality according to his own standards. This results in the clarity of vision typical of the Setian I°.

Having seen the hydra in its true form, he is not only liberated from its exploitive machinations, but is also able to employ it toward his own enlightened ends. This constitutes the mastery of LBM and the first characteristics Recognized as the Adept II° Comes Into Being. Having been liberated, he is free to plumb the depths of his very self through Indulgence. He cannot be compelled to act, for he has identified his true will and is aware of what is

supportive to his continued *Xeper*.

In order to illustrate how cognitive restructuring can be employed as a spiritual technology in GBM, I will cite several examples from my own personal *Xeper*.

Like many of you I was raised in a Judæo/Christian family. From the time of my first few years of life until approximately 1985 CE, I had accepted and adhered to the stimuli that bombarded my psychosomatic complex on a daily basis.

In that year I made a significant breakthrough that changed my entire life. I bought and read a copy of the *Satanic Bible*. Not only did I buy and read the book, I also understood it on more than just a superficial level. I had long been a doubting Thomas, and the discovery of this book made me realize that there were others who had doubted. Yes, they too had doubted, but they also came to positive conclusions transcending doubt. They, like Nietzsche before them, had come to a positive alternative to nihilism that inevitably results from a reevaluation of all values. They were Satanists, and by adopting their philosophy I counted myself among their ranks.

Becoming a Satanist purified my psyche, resulting in a new world-view that altered my perception and hence my behavior. I was not the loathsome, sinful wretch that Christianity had defined my self-image as being. I took command and validated my own existence apart from any higher power. I embarked upon the path of non-union known as the *via sinistra*.

In order to quantify the mechanics of this process, we need to examine it in a bit more detail. The following threefold pattern constitutes what I call the "ABC's of Black Magic", adapted from the work of Albert Ellis.

A = Activating event.

B = Belief systems, which are either rational or irrational.

C = Consequences that ensue.

Examining the previous example in the light of this dialectic clarifies many points concerning the mechanics involved. The activating event was my reading of the *Satanic Bible*. Because I understood the contents of the book, I was able to consciously replace my previous belief system, which was irrational, being *pistis*-based, with a rational belief system, which was *gnosis*-based. The ensuing consequence was that I rejected the authority of that belief system to validate my existence. I made a conscious choice to liberate myself and adopt the self-esteem typified by the archetype known as the Prince of Darkness. Enlightened forethought came to me, and wondrous vision. My entire perception of

reality had been changed. This is obviously a gradual process. It can't be done overnight, but the time and effort expended are well worth the rewards.

The next step is to incorporate this process into a working context for both operative and illustrative GBM. It should be obvious that it covers both categories simultaneously. The only difference is one of the C-factor. The basic premise is that if you change yourself, you change the world - or at least your perception of the world, which results in an objective change in the way you behave relative to the stimuli of that world.

Whereas you were previously compelled by the stimuli to react due to your irrational belief system, you can now indulge in positive active relative to the stimuli. The stimuli are now evaluated within the context of the rational, *gnosis*-based belief system.

From a psychological perspective, the decision of whether or not a belief system is true to any absolute sense is of secondary concern. The primary concern is that it promote the physical and psychological well-being of the person who adopts it. Self-destructive belief systems are thus evaluated as irrational according to this standard. That this is the primary characteristic of all Right-Hand Path systems is all too apparent for those who have eyes to see.

Satanism and eventually *Thelema* led me to the palace of the Prince of Darkness. I no longer consider myself just a Satanist. While I am still working from that basic premise, the avenues of exploration opened up to me by adopting the belief system embodied in the word *Xeper* have multiplied my being indefinitely. Satanism was just a phase, a purification as it were. Having been programmed with Judæo/Christian engrams, the only suitable deprogramming would manifest itself in the form of the Goat of Mendes. Hence my continued veneration of this aspect of myself in the form of the Ba-neb-Tett Pylon.

Through my work with ONG I have applied the ABC's of Black Magic by adopting the cosmology and psychology of my Teutonic ancestors. Because the basic premise of this belief system is self-enhancing, I can utilize it in a completely holistic manner that isn't possible with some of the Mediterranean systems. The difference is that I can employ both the theoretical and practical aspects of this system, whereas from a Black Magical perspective only the practical aspects of some of the Mediterranean systems can be successfully implemented. The exception is the belief system espoused by the Priesthood of Set in ancient Egypt, which Magus Flowers suggested was suppressed because it offered self-deification to people rather than the Pharaoh (Flowers, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, p. 72).

Through my Quest as a Knight of the Trapezoid, the application of this technique will result in even more empowering visions of consequence, as I inquire into the mysteries encompassed by the Word *Runa*. Thus endowed with infinite variation, a multiverse of variety at my disposal to explore as long as I will to *Xeper* and Remanifest. The ultimate consequence lies in my choice to respond to the sense of the hidden. I glory in "that state of manyhood, bound and loathing". For it is that variety which constitutes the spice of life accepted by those who are bold enough to adopt the rational belief systems typical of the Left-Hand Path.

[27] Storm

- by Ann Ross II°

I stand alone on a hilltop. The sky turns black, and the leaves of Autumn around me fly. My soul rides the wind. The dark clouds swirl by in the form of a dragon. The rain falls like a misty veil, and all that's familiar has disappeared, swallowed by an amorphous being. And I am alone on a hilltop, an island surrounded by mist.

I hear the roar of the dragon. It echoes across the sky, rolling back and forth. In the darkness I see runes painted by the lightning, and around me the dragon dances, twirling and roaring, racing higher and higher, 'til suddenly it is gone. And I am alone on a hilltop, under the light of the Moon .

[28] The Scarab

- by Jared Davison II°

The debut issue of *The Scarab* is now available to Temple of Set affiliates for a donation of \$2 (Canada and U.S.) and \$3 (Europe). The editor is also willing to accept trades with Pylon or other publications.

This journal is 28 pages in length, and explores a wide variety of topics pertinent to the Temple and Aeon of Set. Within its pages you may find articles concerning Brain Evolution, Music as Magic, LBM Sensitivity, The Nature of Change, and more. Along with ritual texts, art and poetry, this marks the beginning of many issues to come.

Submissions for the second issue are most welcome, be they articles, poetry, or art. Those who submit material will receive a free copy. Please address all correspondence to me.

[29] The Chakras (Centers of Chaos)

- by Carmel Severson III°

This article originally began as a simple book review on *Understanding The Chakras* by Peter Rendel. As chaos would have it, it turned out to be something of a monster. Instead of keeping these beastly questions to myself, I thought I would loose them on the rest of you. If you're into slaying beasts, you may have further thoughts or answers to these questions. I would be interested in hearing them, via the ICR.

Wow! I could initiate a whole forum based on questions that arose from this little book. The most prominent thing that came to light was how different the LHP approach to self-realization and actualization is, and how incomplete some RHP methods can be.

I had to stop a few times while reading and take notes as I continued through the book, and question myself as to whether I was being overly picky. Too critical maybe?

After completing the book, the big question was: How could anyone really use this information to fully understand and achieve any sort of physical and mental balance? The information and understanding derived from this text was incomplete, written from a confined perspective. Though it did shed some "light", it did not delve deeply enough; it did not extend itself beyond a preconceived frame of reference. It also lacked scope. There was no pushing of the envelope. I felt that the author simply related what he had been taught. This led to the importance of the "Setian Approach": exploring a sect, putting it into practice, and extending it beyond its present form. By sharing your own discoveries and application, you help in advancing the Temple of Set's hall of knowledge as well as your own.

I am aware of some Initiates who are working with the Chakra systems. It will be interesting in the future to see how differently they approach them, and what new theories and practices come of their further explorations. Included below are the statements which I questioned, and questions which arose from these.

(1) Any experience, in order to have significance, must have two poles. [What would the Order of Shuti make of this; must there always be opposition to acquire experience? Is opposition just a further extension of the one thing, or does it identify an element that is separate?]

(2) The sum total of universal energy does not diminish or increase. Universal energy undergoes a process of transmutation, continuously changing from one state or vibration to another. As one

element comes into being, another withdraws. [According to Setian philosophy, our humanity is a non-natural state of being. Yet we operate within and outside the natural order of the universe. If this is indeed the case, what of the above theory, and do we upset the balance?]

(3) Disease is due to the forces of the spine becoming unbalanced. [This is an interesting viewpoint. Can we really rule out disease being psychosomatic?]

(4) The retention of fluid is important to health; expulsion causes loss of energy. [One example given of this form of energy loss is experienced by the male during sex. Tantric schools teach ways to retain certain fluids and therefore maintain and increase energy levels.]

(5) According to Vedantic teaching, consciousness is eternal and changeless. [“Eternal” I conceive as being possible, but “changeless”? No way. What do they think happens during sleep, daydreams, death or reincarnation? Doesn’t self-evolution/development require changes in consciousness?]

(6) Those refusing to accept that there are two ways of thought are unwise. [I suspect, however, that there would be a refusal to recognize or encourage a more radical and scrutinizing approach to this system, particularly if a LHP method was to be investigated or employed.]

(7) Death in some Eastern systems is seen as attaining a higher state of consciousness. [Is it higher or just different?]

(8) It is the job of an adept to work for the sole evolution of humanity. [But what of his own? Or does the writer mean that by reaching this for ourselves, we are then able to direct the course of human existence? This is not what the book seemed to convey. It reminds me of the many schools of thought that proclaim salvation of the soul and advancement to higher states can only be achieved through self-sacrifice.]

(9) The author talks about the more advanced Yogis spending their lives trying to leave their bodies and exist in higher or non-material planes, only to then reincarnate back into human form after death. [I find this to be something of a contradiction. Why spend your life trying to function outside of the material universe, only to return to that very same plane of existence?]

(10) True concentration is only possible when we achieve dispassion and detachment from our emotions. Pure thought is achieved when it is not influenced by more than one emotion or idea. [What would members of the Order of Leviathan say to this?]

(11) Detachment versus Involvement in experience. Throughout this book, I came across a

leaning toward detaching oneself from the material. The material path is a returning to the “lower” and primitive aspects of the self. Removing the self from its influence is the path to spiritual enlightenment and contact with the “higher” self. Self-discovery is via unselfish pursuit and surrendering of the lower self to one’s higher nature. [I wonder whether this quest for a higher self is not an escape. What about making manifestation into the material world a reality, a total embracing of where you are now; complete existence within this experience of body, mind and spirit and using our opportunity to *Xeper* in this world, taking what we become and continuing the process into the next, seems to me a much better option.]

(12) Question #2 suggests that energy within the universe does not alter; it ebbs and flows with things entering and exiting manifestation. This brings up the question of how tabs are kept on what is occurring. Is there a force residing over the universe and controlling all this, or is it an automatic process?

(13) The book mentions the dangers of traveling the downward spiral into matter and succumbing to the desires of the lower self. [I consider the continual associations of “high” being spiritual and “low” being degrading, potentially more dangerous. Understanding the necessity of both is very important. You cannot achieve balance and awareness if you are going to ignore and deny aspects of yourself.]

In closing, all the ideas presented in this book are useful tools to inspire thought and exploration. Yes, there were some gems buried within its pages. However I would be reluctant to use it as any sort of complete guide to understanding the chakras. To take on any school of thought, to assume its designs, technique, and philosophy without question and further exploration, would be limiting. Continue to desire, create, expand and surpass the boundaries that confine!

[30] **Be Not Presumptuous**

- by James Knowles II° (The Black Tiger)

Imagine this: You do something that **really** upsets me, but you don’t realize it. I think that what you did was intentional and that you know full well why I’m angry. You continue trying to be my pal, but now I’m being dreadful toward you, and you don’t know why. Next thing you know, we’re no longer speaking. Now without resorting to the scapegoat syndrome, who’s really at fault here?

I recently observed the scenario just described - I wasn’t involved, just an observer. The incident which started the whole thing amounted to nothing, really, but after about two weeks the mutual no-

speaking stage was reached. This is when I called the person who first felt offended. Let's call him "A". Let's call the other person "B".

I asked A why he was so angry at B, and he gladly blew steam and explained everything from his point of view. Of course I already knew what had occurred. After about thirty minutes of listening to his ranting, I said, "Maybe B doesn't realize what he did to bother you so much, because that wasn't his intention."

"Well," bellowed A. "The ignorant bastard ought to know!"

"Is that so," I asked. "If he knew, then he wouldn't be an ignorant bastard, would he?"

Something else that needs to be clarified is that A considers himself a genius and one of the most exceptional characters ever to grace this tiny blue planet. This position that A takes about himself is the reason I was so irritated at how he treated B. A truly higher intelligence would not have been so presumptuous [to the point of becoming a horse's posterior!].

You see, with higher intelligence - a Higher State of Being - comes responsibility: the responsibility to view everything as it exists within a particular context - as it exists within reality.

As a Setian **you** are claiming to be a higher intelligence; but don't let this turn you into a maniacal egotist. Instead, recognize objective reality and deal with it in a manner which reflects That Which You Proclaim To Be. *Id* monsters serve only one purpose: Self-destruction.

This reminds me of something I once read: "Those who strive to appear wise among the foolish, most often appear foolish among the wise."

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The Black Pyramid

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°
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[31] "That Word"

A lot of tortured verbiage has been written about *Xem* over the years. To me it always was a very simple, clear, and brilliant concept: the creation of an artificial "focus" for *Xeper* by each individual, much after the fashion of Nietzsche's "horizon-building", in order to give personal *Xeper* some cohesion, some direction.

Consider *Xeper* as a sort of light-bulb, with the individual as the bulb and *Xeper* as the emitted light. The individual is thus "expanding/evolving = Becoming" in a total sense - well-rounded, one

might say! Its drawback is that it is non-focused, that it is diffuse. It is accordingly difficult for the individual to comprehend the development of his state of being, because too much is happening too subtly. The result can be bewilderment, frustration: the feeling that something wonderful is going on with oneself but not being able to encapsulate or define the entire experience. *Xeper* is thus "plagued by the vague"!

Xem as originally Uttered by Magus Ronald K. Barrett acted as a kind of lens to focus *Xeper*: to take the "radiant light" and turn it into "cohesive light", like a laser, directed towards a personal goal which the Setian constructed "at his personal horizon". As *Xeper* is constantly expanding, so the Setian's "personal horizon" constantly recedes; hence *Xem* must constantly be "re-targeted".

As there is a problem with *Xeper* in being difficult for the individual to apprehend in himself, so there is also a problem with *Xem*. It is that the moment one creates a horizon which is necessarily limited in its "breadth", if not in its "distance from the observer", one sees only a part of the whole. As one fashions the laser-beam of *Xem* to approach that horizon, one utilizes only a part of one's entire *Xeper* accordingly.

Consider this analogy: With *Xeper* one is standing out under the night sky, seeing an ocean of stars. With *Xem* one looks through a telescope. What one sees through the telescope is clearer, sharper, bigger; and the mind can make more sense of it. Over a period of time an astronomer can look at lots of individual stars, galaxies, etc. through his telescope, all of which is a scientific experience. But it would be meaningless without his original experience and apprehension of the entire night sky. Similarly, without focused, telescopic research, his original sensation of the sky would remain vague.

So that's the way *Xem* began in the Temple of Set. I thought it was a downright dandy V° concept, and RKB had a dandy time with it. So did lots of other Setians.

The problem with *Xem* came about, in my humble opinion, simply because some Setians got so excited about their respective *Xem*-focus that they insisted on other Setians aligning to the **same** focus. I would go so far as to say that this also affected RKB himself, and that his holding of the High Priesthood made it a little too tempting to just "order people to align themselves to his *Xem*". Yes, a Magus is supposed to undertake his Task through reason, logic, and philosophical brilliance. And I would say that RKB worked at this extensively and impressively. But after a few years I think he got a bit tired of it particularly with some Setians who seemed to want him to "go over it just one more time" and finally yielded to the temptation to use

his Temple office to say, “Just **do** it and shut up or get out!”

Some did it and shut up; others got out with the result that the Temple was down to about 30 members by the time of the Set-IV Conclave crisis. RKB was matter-of-fact about this; anyone who wasn't “right with *Xem*”, so to speak, ought not to be hanging around as a drag on the rest of the Temple.

Exacerbating the situation was the tendency for others to follow RKB's example in “how to enforce a V° Word”. Magister Lynn Norton made a great show of “Uttering the Word *Per-t*” which was later exposed as an intentional fraud by him and was even more high-handed than RKB in demanding that Setians march to its tune or else. At the Set-IV Conclave, for example, he refused to discuss *Per-t* openly, saying that he would talk only to the Masters of the Temple about it and that other Setians would have to sit at their feet to be fed such elements of it as might be suitable for them.

As High Priest RKB devised a standardized written examination for the II°. At first it was voluntary that III°s take it too; later RKB made it mandatory for them as well.

As with *Xem* itself, the test started out as a good idea with the best intentions, then “got its knickers in a twist”, as our British cousins might say. RKB developed it to remedy a problem he perceived in the II°-Recognition process: that it was too “fuzzy”. People were being Recognized to the II° on the grounds of “vague feelings” by a III° which neither the III° nor the II° could quite put into words. RKB felt that every II° should demonstrate competence in certain standardized magical knowledge-bases, hence the II° test which required the reading of certain magical books drawn from the Temple reading list and RKB's own library.

At first the test was to be used more on an open-ended basis, as a kind of general diagnostic tool. This was necessary given the highly-subjective, highly-personalized nature of Black Magic. This approach was still too “out of focus” for the Magus of *Xem*, however, so the II° was officially re-defined as “mastery of **White** Magic” and the answers to the test strictly standardized. [Black Magic simultaneously became the assignment of III°s.] III°s were now also required to take the II° test, and each test would be graded by RKB exclusively.

The result, as with *Xem*, was a forced alignment of each Setian to RKB's personal magical skill standards and priorities. It was, in a word, a disaster. After Set-IV one of my first actions as High Priest was to scrap the entire concept, return the tests to their takers, and return the Temple to its previous policy of 100% individualized Recognitions. And of

course White Magic went back out the window to the Right-Hand Path where it belongs. [Setians are still expected to know **about** it - indeed **more** about it than the RHP droolers who stumble around tangled up in it! - but as a **phenomenon** to be assessed from an objective, outside perspective, not as something to be personally practiced.]

Finally there were the Orders that developed during the RKB High Priesthood. They were drastically different from the Orders in the Temple of Set today. Each was headed by a Master IV°, but the I°/II°/III° members were all considered to be “apprentices” to that Master. Also each Order kept strictly to itself. Other Setians could not know what it was doing or participate in it at all. RKB's own Order, the Order of Anubis, became in effect the “secret elite” of the Temple. Anubians routinely knew about RKB's thoughts and plans for the Temple as a whole long before anyone else even the Council of Nine. The result was a Temple fragmented into uncooperative and suspicious cliques.

Again right after Set-IV I shook this rug out quite a bit. Since then Orders may work internally on matters of special interest to them, but the **products** of their wisdom are expected to be easily accessible to the **entire** Temple via open newsletter subscriptions, open Conclave presentations & meetings, etc. Order members are not expected to be “apprentices to the Grand Master”, but are rather free agents with a common field of interests and specialties. No one Order is a “privileged” one, and certainly no Order has higher or earlier access to Temple policy information than the Council of Nine or the Priesthood of Set generally.

Well! All of this seems so clear in hindsight, doesn't it? It was **not** so apparent when the Temple of Set was first experimenting with *Xem*, nor with the II° test, nor with RKB's Order system. I myself thought each was a good idea in its original form, and so did most other Setians. As things gradually got screwed up over a period of time, it was confusing to be caught somewhere between the initial, positive impressions and the developing negative realities.

As I look back on the period of stress and crisis which came to a boil at the Set-IV Conclave, I can point my finger at a number of individuals who by then were clearly conspiring to usurp the Temple for their selfish aggrandizement. I was disgusted at such profaning of a sacred trust then, and remain so today.

However and I respect the prerogative of others to disagree with me on this point I do **not** consider RKB a “traitor” of this type. I think that his is the classic case of the Curse of a Magus overcoming his Task made more tempting by the powers of the

High Priesthood of Set which were at his fingertips. [The Temple learned from this too, and after Set-IV we rewrote major sections of the By-Laws to prevent such concentrations of authority in the hands of any one official.]

The Task of a Magus is to Utter [define, explain, demonstrate] his Word. The Curse of a Magus is that such a Word, being outside the philosophical “universe” of existing initiates, will be alien to them, hence [at least initially] unintelligible and incredible.

You see why Magi get heartburn easily particularly when they themselves must first grapple with the “blinding flash” of the Word in question, as Anton LaVey referred to it. As a Magus who has been through this “blinding flash”, Task, and Curse myself, I am often wryly reminded of a comment by the musician Miles Davis: “I’ll play it for you first and tell you what it is later.”

In a sense Anton screwed up the Church of Satan when he took his Word to a personal and selfish extreme, and the same could be said of RKB. We can condemn the unfortunate result; I think, however, that we would be arrogant indeed to condemn the Magus in question for daring to set out upon such an uncharted and hazardous journey.

Ultimately the Temple of Set is better for the RKB era, per the aphorism: “That which does not kill me makes me stronger.” And I continue to consider *Xem* an authentic V° Word within the Æon of Set. As with **any** V° Word, it has extraordinary and unsuspected power. If you use it wisely, it can do great things for you. If you fiddle around with it carelessly, it can do not-so-great things to you.

[32] Conclaves

I’ve been meaning to say this for some time and keep forgetting: Let’s retire the term “mini-conclave” or “mini-clave” and just refer to **all** beyond-single-Pylon/Order meetings as “conclaves”. The main one each year will be called the “international conclave”, and others can be designated as “national”, “regional”, or whatever. We might as well get used to a Temple climate in which all sorts of combinations of Setians are meeting now and then!

Who can organize a conclave? Any Master of the Temple at personal discretion. If you are a Priest or Priestess III°, you can also set one up, but I would ask that you do so with the sponsorship of [read: informal coordination with & approval by] a Master just to add an “experience” factor. Most of the Masters are multi-conclave veterans and have the axe-scars, dragon’s-breath burns, and vampyre hickeys to prove it.

When mapping out conclaves at all levels, we are going to run into the question of “overlapping attractiveness” which will be all the more relevant when we have a major conclave on the schedule which is expensive and far away from the Temple’s “population center”. Too many smaller conclaves too close to it may drain personal resources, hence attendance.

Right now I don’t see an easy solution to this. Setians ought to be free to meet with one another, including in conclaves, when and where they want to. However, as the “big one” is normally held in October, I would like to ask that each year no other conclaves be scheduled July 1 through November 30 of each year the idea being to encourage International Conclave attendance by not vaporizing vacation budgets and work-time-off immediately before/afterhand.

Priesthood/Sentinel sponsorship of I°s for conclave attendance should apply at **all** levels of conclaves, from the regional to the international. Remember that this is for the privacy and personal safety of all attendees, and also so that the lots of advance work and expenditures by the organizers are not wrecked by adverse publicity, hecklers, pickets, or would-be party-crashers.

The I°-sponsorship requirement is based on the premise that the Temple of Set is fairly easy for anyone to join, often on the strength of just a good letter of application, so it is possible that we might have an occasional person walking around with a white medallion and ulterior motives. Conclave sponsorship by a Pylon Sentinel or a member of the Priesthood means that a senior Initiate has had enough direct contact with the I° in question to have a favorable opinion about that individual’s sincerity. Obviously this is not a foolproof system, but it is simply a “basic prudence & common sense” one.