

The Scroll of Set

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[1] First Principles and the Order of Horus

- by James Graeb IV°, Grand Master

“All humans by nature desire to understand.” With these words Aristotle begins his book on the *Metaphysics*. This quote came to mind as I started to write this article, because these words lead us directly to its heart: what is it that we seek to understand when we enter into the study and practice of magic, and upon what First Principles do we base the design of a magical order so as to maximize the initiation of its members.

Such an understanding of First Principles seems particularly important as the Order of Horus starts its next phase of growth within the Temple of Set, and as it also begins to invite inquires from persons in the larger magical community who may or may not have any background in Setian notions of initiation. Thus it seems prudent to exercise that specifically Setian faculty of foresight and, through use of that faculty, consciously plan how we wish to see the Order of Horus continue to unfold.

As a Left-Hand Path organization, the Order of Horus is based on the notion of individual *Xeper* with the goal of psyche-centric immortality. The Order of Horus is specifically the “royal” order: the Order within the Temple of Set which focuses particularly upon its members attaining those aspects of royalty that we find manifested by the Setian pharaohs of old and, hopefully, by the leaders we are creating for the future.

This “royal” flavor has to do with Horus as an aspect of the divine kingship, which role Horus shares with his brother Set. Although it is a topic for another article, the coronation ritual for an Egyptian pharaoh [see Van Genep] involves the pharaoh receiving the dual aspects of Horus and Set. As currently understood within the Order of Horus, these dual aspects entail action or command (the outward-facing Horus aspect) and the reflective consciousness upon which action is based (the inward-facing Setian aspect).

Royalty also entails a study of “firsts”. After all it is the king or queen who “comes first” and leads. Essential to any person who aspires to such a position is the proper training in what First Principles are, how one finds them manifest in the external universe, and how one draws from them into one’s own consciousness, wherein they form

the basis for future manifestation or command.

This study of First Principles is therefore something central to the task of the Order of Horus. It is by finding, internalizing, and then manifesting such First Principles that god-kings and goddess-queens function in their roles as leaders or royal persons.

The study of First Principles is something that occurs on at least two different levels - the individual and the larger external. These two levels are not really different, since it is the nature of First Principles (by definition) to be identical in both the subjective and the objective universes.

This is a very important point. First Principles are what make the world knowable to us. They allow us to organize our thoughts in a systematic manner so that we come to understand both the external world and ourselves. So we can see that to attain to “Understanding” one needs to first be able to ascertain the First Principles that are “out there” in the world around us, and to organize and contemplate these First Principles so that we come to not only know the external world, but to understand it, and thus come to understand ourselves.

There are four upward ways of extracting First Principles from the external universe and four downward ways of manifesting them from the subjective universe. The four upward ways of extracting First Principles are:

1. Noetic (direct) apprehension,
2. Induction (empirical observation and experiment),
3. Deduction (logical reasoning and dialogue - the dialectic), and
4. Mathematics (the pure essences and their interaction).

The four downward paths can be conceived of as the four elements, all of which perform an aspect of manifestation (or a movement from the subjective to the objective). While much can be written of the downward paths, suffice it to say that they are the various ways in which things manifest - the various thoughts, actions, commands or happenings that entail an embodiment.

The reason that I have dealt with this in such detail is that one way of conceiving of “Understanding” is to say that to understand means that an individual understands the First Principles from which things arise, and therefore understands why they must necessarily be the way they are. Such an individual can also look at something in the external world and extract the First Principle(s) that underlie it (i.e. its essence), and thus one immediately understands why the thing is, and must be, the way it is.

For example, a straight line (in Euclidian space) has as its essence, or First Principle, that it is the

shortest distance between two points. That is what it "means" to be a straight line. If a person doesn't understand that essence or First Principle, we tend to say that the person doesn't understand what a straight line is, even if by chance he draws one. Hence we can all tell when someone understands something, when we determine that he has apprehended its essence and sees why it must be the way it is.

Now that we have had a glimpse of what First Principles are, we can turn to our article topic and see what are the First Principles of magic. That is not something as simple as defining a straight line (in Euclidian space), and it is something for which this author does not have a snappy answer. However, having looked at First Principles and how we find them, we can start to ascertain how to go about finding the First Principles of magic and learning how to manifest them.

The First Principles in which I am immediately interested for the Order of Horus are those upon which the Order is based. As a first approximation we can say that the Order of Horus is a magical school of initiation whereby First Principles of magic and initiation are discovered and worked. Hence this article turns out to be an invitation to others to join in this search for First Principles.

This is terribly important to me as the Grand Master of the Order of Horus, as it is imperative that the Order of Horus formulate itself, consciously and deliberately, upon the very First Principles of magic and initiation. As was stated in prior articles, to the extent that the Order of Horus is a remanifestation, along LHP lines, of the A.'.A.'. system, then we need to ascertain the First Principles underlying the A.'.A.'. system. Similarly, if we are looking to the First Principles of how a pharaoh transformed himself into a divine being, we need to discover what those First Principles are.

Among our membership we have a wide variety of interests in various topics, and I couldn't wish for anything better. By studying various topics, from the A.'.A.'. to zoology, from goddesses to Germanic runes, we can look to various fields of manifestation to extract First Principles upon which the Order of Horus is centered: those upon which self-transformation into a divine being can take place. In the early stages of the development of the Order of Horus, it is particularly important that we find the First Principles underlying our work.

If I as Grand Master were to say that we should formulate the Order of Horus with four elemental grades, three Adepts grades, and the Magister Templi, Magus, and Ipsissimus grades that the Order of Horus shares with the Temple of Set degrees [these designations are not identical between the Order and the Temple for a number of

reasons], then we need to understand the First Principles underlying each of these grades. Only then can we intelligently reformulate the meaning as a LHP organization of these grades. Only then will we understand the essence of these grades, such that we are thereafter able to Remanifest those grades along LHP lines.

By way of a first approximation, it is important to master the four elemental grades, so that as magicians we have command over the fourfold means of magical manifestation. We must also master the three Adepts grades, so that as magicians we have self-mastery over the central aspects of consciousness, will and self, which rule over the streams of manifestation. Likewise we must at all times continue to seek the Understanding, Wisdom, and Perfection that are the attributes of the divine self as reflected in the three highest grades.

Thus it is our task to ask ourselves - as we will ask our all of future members - what are the First Principles underlying our particular fields of interest and expertise. By asking this question we ask each other to understand the First Principles that have attracted us. By such understanding we come to a place where the Order of Horus can convey to others an understanding of these various First Principles. We can develop each other as future masters of understanding, since we ask each other to apprehend and manifest the First Principles that are nearest and dearest to each of us.

This focus on First Principles and mastery seems appropriate to a magical order that is based on royal principles. Wouldn't we be false to each other if we were to ask any less of a group of people who seek to transform themselves into divine beings - leaders of the magical movements of the next millennium? I invite you all to join me in this quest for First Principles and Understanding, whereby we can set forth a magical order whose mind dwells in the highest realms, and whose base extends to all the various facets of the manifest universe.

[2] **New MetaMind Element Open for Business!**

- by Robertt Neilly IV^o

About thirteen months ago it became clear that the timing and a host of other magical ingredients had formed a recipe for the Remanifestation of the MetaMind Element. It would see the light of night again in the form of another Temple-wide working in May 1997. Following the compilation and release of the results, the new Element would open its gate for general membership. The working took place, and the results appeared in the first issue of *InterSections* (the newsletter of the Element), which was mailed to all participants in January 1998.

The charter for the new MetaMind Element was released to founding members of the Element just prior to the May working. I will make a condensed version of this document - along with the first issue of *InterSections* - available to any Setian joining the Element. The charter outlines the history of the Element, the "Rules of Claw" (to borrow a phrase from a fellow noble and good friend) such as they are, and points toward what the future may hold for members.

Now to make it official: The MetaMind Element - an Element of the Order of the Vampyre, Temple of Set - is now open for membership to any interested Setian of any Degree, in good standing in the Temple of Set. With the exception of the founding members (who need only notify me if they do not wish to participate in the Element), should you wish to become a member of the MetaMind Element, please drop me a short line or e-mail note outlining your "metamental" interests and your request for membership.

In the meantime I will be putting together a current membership roster, a condensed charter, and various other components of the Element. I would be delighted to accept help in most of these ventures, and would ask only that you read the charter after becoming a member before making a decision about volunteering.

Xeper, Remanifest!

[3] Immersion Ritual

- by Bryan Hardee I°

Monday, January 19, 1998

Part 1 of 2

Morning Ritual

1. Projection of sphere.
2. Projection of personal symbols.
3. Open Gates.
4. Enter the Rift
5. Spontaneous invocation of self.
6. Progressive reading of the *Word of Set*.
7. Projection of impulse in accordance with the *Word of Set*.

Evening Meditation

8. Meditate on the given parts of the *Word*. 9. Reflect on how the impulse Remanifested within reality.

Comment on Part 1 of 2

Morning Ritual

1. This sphere is visualized as the magical universe. "I create this sphere in the name of Nuit, who is the outer and the infinite, and in the name of

Set, who is the inner, the finite. By this gesture I utilize the isolated principle of intelligence, seeking always to Become and Come Into Being. *Xeper Xepera Xeperu!*"

2. Personal symbols are projected mentally onto a canvas of flesh into those spaces that lie "in-between".

3. I visualize the Pentagram of Set in the distance before me. It is the gateway of communication and manifestation, and is made of liquid transparency. Behind the gate is a swirling mass, reddish in color. "I open gateways to *Xeper* to be magnified within motion, to be magnified within matter, and to be magnified within all creation."

4. With the physical motion of rendering the veil, I say, "Thus do I thrust open the gates of Heaven and Hell." This is done in an attempt to enter a space, known as the Rift, that is not governed by duality. While entering the Rift I visualize cleaving thy mother (symbolic of being born anew). "Within the Red Waters, the sea of infinite potential, I invoke self."

5. The invocation is spontaneous and may utilize one or any combination of motion, breath, sound.

6. Each Part of the *Word of Set* is read successively: The first day the First Part. The second day the First and Second Parts. The third day the First, Second, and Third Parts, etc.

7. From the internal digestion of the *Word of Set*, an impulse is created and focused outward to Remanifest within the objective universe. This manifestation will serve as a template or grid for the day's work and observation.

Comment on Part 1 of 2

Evening Meditation

8. Provides a period of reflection, internalizing those "happenings" which resonated with me.

9. May provide insight on how these "happenings" can be Remanifested and applied within the subjective/objective universes.

The first part of the ritual will help to accentuate the second part, to begin on the 8th of February, and will consist of the following:

Part 2 of 2

Final Ritual

1. Projection of sphere.
2. Projection of personal symbols.
3. Open gates.
4. Enter the Rift.
5. Final reading of all the Parts in successive order.
6. Spontaneous invocation of Set.

7. Reading aloud the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*.

8. Total Immersion within the current of Set.

9. Remanifesting this current without.

Part 2 of 2 is only an outline and may change as I continue to experience and am moved by the various Parts of the *Word of Set*.

You might be asking what do I hope to accomplish by this seemingly long and drawn out process?

It is my intent that by continuing the Immersion within the current of Set, I will become and create a conduit for this current. I believe that by this act I will help myself to understand the process through experience and application, providing new opportunity for Coming Into Being.

Xeper and Remanifest!

[4] Notes from *Neheh*

- by Don Webb V°, High Priest of Set

Concerning the Year

This is the 33rd year of the Emerald Dawn, a time of great freedom for those who take great responsibility.

I declare this to be the Year of Cthulhu Rising, this being the 70th anniversary of the publication of Lovecraft's famous novella *The Call of Cthulhu* in *Weird Tales*, February 1928, which will see the Æon of Set (so well established in the Pacific Rim by the strivings of Priestess Rush-Hunter and her heroic crew) take deep roots preparing for the next millennium.

This would be a good year for serious research into the mythology and archæology of the Pacific, a good year for shaking off some Eurocentric thinking, a great year to be surprised by the Orders most connected with Cthulhu (Leviathan and Trapezoid), a nifty year to play with Nessie and other lake monsters, a wonderful year to explore the place of dreams in initiation and magic, and a cool year to have some fun creating fiction in the Setian Mythos project and to join in the examinations of the subconscious and art in the Order of Uart.

Above all it will be a year to frequently engage in that important Black Magical meditation of just how **big** and **busy** the world is, and how if one keeps aware of one's purpose that awareness this makes the bigness and busyness of the world into a constant source of advantage.

This will be a year of sending Dreams.

As I have written elsewhere, I was once given a great magical formula for dealing with the world by Magus S. Edred Flowers: "Awaken, See, Act."

The first part of the formula, "Awaken", assumes two things: first that I have fallen asleep

and need to refocus my mind/body/soul, and second that since the subjective universe has no location in time and space, any moment and any place can be a launching pad both to and from it.

"See" assumes that I don't really know what is going on, and that surface appearances are misleading (i.e. the smiling man from the insurance company isn't really interested in my well-being).

The third term, "Act", means that I must, in my quest for sovereignty, do something. The Left-Hand Path is active, not contemplative.

Where do dreams come up in this most useful of formulæ? Dreams involve seeing without being awake. They are things taken in that the mind can witness but not yet process.

Sending dreams, which as magical texts show is one of the oldest of Setian arts, means **metacommunication**.

Metacommunication includes any sending of a message which is more than what it seems. Examples include this essay, art, initiatory dialogue, illustrative magic, and Lesser Black Magic.

Because of the word "lesser" there is far too little attention paid to this most powerful of art forms. I am asking my Setian colleagues to spend a year thinking about, talking about, writing about, and practicing LBM. Like Cthulhu, the High Priest of the Old Ones, I expect you to become wondrously effective at sending dreams.

Concerning Lesser Black Magic

We practice LBM for four reasons: First, to achieve goals unattainable through normal channels of communication. Second, to enchant our lives. Third, to learn to lessen the effect of LBM upon ourselves. Fourth, to produce internal friction and awareness of purpose. Let's look at each of these and then at the dangers of LBM.

To achieve goals unattainable through normal channels of communication: As magicians we strive to change the world around us to allow for more freedom and more opportunity. We are always trying to increase the likelihood and effectiveness of our *Xeper*. The way of the world does not support freedom and opportunity. The way of the world is to insist upon its rules.

To enchant our lives: We practice LBM for fun. We may practice it by telling a ghost story around a campfire or a tall tale to a fellow airline passenger. Or we might tell a sick friend that the tea we are giving him has magical powers that will make him feel better. Or we might even give that special someone a fortune cookie whose fortune happens to read "Will you marry me?"

To lessen the effects of LBM on ourselves: The world sends a constant barrage of signals our way. A very small percentage is challenged by our

consciousness; the rest just pours in. How many of you have tried to clear your mind and found a Pepsi-Cola advertisement still running there? We will always be amateurs at “vulgar” LBM compared to Madison Avenue, but we will be armed amateurs.

To produce internal friction and awareness of purpose: The single greatest weakness of the Black Magician is egotism. Usually it is in the form of a semiautonomous part of the psyche which justifies all past actions. In LBM situations wherein you have to learn not to talk all the time, not to let everyone know your every little thought, and to spend more time listening than broadcasting, you must also learn to concentrate on your more important purpose(s).

The person who knows he must rent the house for \$X can screen out the chatter of the real estate agent - and by acting rather than reacting get this result, as well as acquire training of the will. LBM creates the same temporal displacement of consciousness that enabled our ancestors' ancestors to receive the Gift of Set as hunter/gatherers.

The danger in LBM is that it is seductive. It can allow us to get out of a hard situation where we might learn something into an easy situation where we will not. It can allow us to cheapen a relationship based on truth into one based on manipulation. It can begin to tarnish the way we look at our fellow humans.

Because of this a strong ethical background is needed. That is why you received the stand-alone essay on Setian ethics. Please read it, discuss it and write about it this entire year.

All seductive behaviors are seductive because they represent regression to an earlier state. The natural mind confronted with stress reverts. The Setian mind accepts this natural falling-backward as a time for regrouping and waiting for a solution.

Setians choose to put themselves in difficult situations so that they may learn. Frequently what they learn is only a rational plan of action. This is good because it teaches reason, which is always the best tool for acquiring power in the world.

But sometimes the situation may lead to a moment of *Xeper*, of subjective realization of a win/win/win solution, which is the test of *Xeper*: a solution for the present, the future, and eternity. But such experiences are rare, even when we put ourselves into situations so demanding that we must summon up such reserves within ourselves.

LBM involves putting aside one existing set of rules for another of your own creation. It is therefore the slaying of Osiris, who personifies rule systems. LBM is of four varieties: **expansive**, **constrictive**, **penetrating**, and **encasing**. Let's look at each of these four flavors:

Expansive LBM (or werewolf mode) involves breaking the rules by flaunting them outrageously. An example would be someone who discovers that he can go to any party he wants in Yuletide by dressing up like Santa Claus. He can kiss anyone he wants, scarf up any food he wishes, get to talk with anyone. Expansive LBM is flashy and dangerous because as soon as you come across a person who's awake, he isn't going to let you get away with it. Most rock musicians are in permanent expansive LBM workings.

Constrictive LBM (or vampyre mode) involves drawing another into your set of rules. An obvious form might be being very seductive to a waitperson in a busy restaurant to get better service. It involves enticing others to play with you. It requires a great deal of knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses, cunning patience, and magnetism. Constrictive LBM is dangerous because you run the risk of others becoming too taken with you, and hurting themselves or yourself. Most movie starlets are in permanent constrictive LBM workings.

Penetrating LBM (or wizard mode) is having [or pretending to have] secret knowledge of the rules beyond the rules. For example it could mean parking your car in a “No Parking” area when you know that rule isn't enforced between six and ten in the evening. Or it could mean getting a bumper-sticker that reads “Authorized Vehicle” and parking under a sign that says, “Authorized Vehicles Only”. This mode requires curiosity, open ears, and not talking about everything you know. Penetrating LBM is dangerous because it can lead you to spending all your time learning trivial facts rather than life lessons. Most spies are in permanent penetrating LBM workings.

Encasing LBM (or bumpkin mode) is adding a rule or two to an existing set. For example assume you are a grocer with too many cans of red kidney beans. So you put up a sign “Red Kidney Beans - Limit One Can Per Customer” - and your customers, fearing the red kidney bean shortage, will clean you out. Encasing LBM is dangerous because it is so easy to work, it can lull you to sleep and a belief that the rule is “real”. Most mid-level managers are in permanent encasing LBM workings.

How many times have one of these workings been used on you?

Concerning the Material Question

We are living in an age of greater economic stratification, so it behooves the magician to see to his or her wealth acquisition. The acquisition of wealth is not a goal in itself, and should never take a front seat to initiation, but should be viewed as one of the easiest keys to freedom and opportunity.

Being aware of the magnificence of existence is always more valuable to the Black Magician than mere pragmatic materialism, but pragmatic materialism, like reason, is a tool which the Black Magician never puts away.

The acquisition of wealth need not be money, but it should be the same sort of power. For example if you work for an airline which gives you free tickets, that is the power of gold.

The Black Magician never neglects the world of matter, whether building up money or taking care of one's body. Matter is the best tool we've got. Some of you may see some similarity in my interest in matter and that of the late Howard Stanton Levey. Levey wanted people to make money and send it to him. I say make money and keep it. If you are unclear on the difference between the ideas, send me a dollar by mail.

Concerning Schools and Jars

The Temple of Set is a school, not a jar. It is not a limited group to which and from which all attention must be paid. One of the limiting fetters of minority groups is a tendency to view only members of the group as real. The magician uses and learns from all of mankind.

If you want to start a group to study dreams [or whatever], you don't have to limit it to Setians. Go start one in your town. I wouldn't advise you walking in with your medallion on, nor for that matter with the words "DEVIL WORSHIPPER" tattooed on your forehead.

Do your work, learn what you want to learn [and learn something about human psychology, leadership, and magic in the process], then share your results with your Setian colleagues. Your job is to transform the world around you into a maximal learning environment, not wait for the next *Scroll*.

The Temple is not a conduit to power or even to connection with your self-created nature. The Temple merely gives you a chance to learn methodologies you must use to gain such things. Your magical life began long before you entered the Temple and must extend far beyond it. Don't let the tool become a totem nor the school a jar!

Uncle Setnakt's Picks and Pans

One of the problems with most models of group and individual change is that they fail to take into account two factors:

First, they treat mankind's needs as a simple, non-evolving factor in the human economy. They talk vaguely about meeting needs, and then go on to something else. Along the Left-Hand Path we assume not only need as the basic human condition, but the evolution of need as the path to human refinement that balances man's natural and

unnatural natures.

For example you find a man on the desert. His first need is water; that being satisfied, food; that being satisfied sleep; then sex; then love; then justice; then a coherent philosophy of action.

We, the guardians of the oasis, seeing this, know objectively that the man has experienced *Xeper* by the change of need, by the sign of the Black Flame, which Michael Aquino so elegantly rendered as "the glory of desire". We also know [from those moments when we fall off the Path] that we usually regress to a lower state of need in stress situations.

Second, most such theories would tell us that change is easy. Change is not easy. Group change is hard; individual change is hard.

If there were only some theory which didn't overlook these ideas, and furthermore which integrated them with secrets of LBM like *Feng Shui* - and with balancing words to keep from being frustrated at the slow, grinding patterns of change! If there were only some theory which not only had all of these things in a pretty package but also had a proven track record at solving world problems like improving money-flow in a corporation, dealing with racism on a football team, and having really effective advertising!

Well, there is. It is called "Spiral Dynamics". Adept Alex Burns introduced me to the book, which provides a integrated theory of human change that draws from Maslow, Csikszentmihalyi, Donald, Harth, Penrose, and above all Clare W. Graves. Graves' theory of biopsychosocial systems was and is a big tool for the rational side of the futurist movement. The book's authors, Don Edward Beck and Christopher C. Cowan, have used such techniques to revitalize communities, businesses, and sports programs.

The book deals with packages of value systems that manifest human needs on both group and individual levels. It explains the change process between levels, the dynamic between individual and group needs, and the fact that you need to make different appeals to people living in different types of reality [or, as we say in the Temple, in different æons]. It is thus a book of practical LBM, a good description of historical and psychological forces in the "postmodern" world, and a guide to transforming those forces both within yourself and in your environment.

This book will definitely go on the Temple of Set reading list next year as TOS-1; I am unsure whether it will be in Category 16, 19, 21, or 23. This is the book to read if you want to be Hari Seldon (RL #21F). This is a great introduction to the science of memetics, or the sending of dreams.

Those Australians are already ahead of us. In fact they always seem a day ahead, in that they

already have “Spiral Dynamics” workshops. [Gee, I hope there’ll be one at the International Conclave this year.] But at least the authors of the book are Texan, working, oddly enough, on land my family once owned. But that’s another story.

Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership and Change - by Don Edward Beck and Christopher C. Cowan. Cambridge, Mass. and Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1996. ISBN 155786-940-5. Library of Congress Number BF778.B34. [Hint: Do some web searches on “Spiral Dynamics”.]

Another note: The bibliography is of a great value. When reading the book, which uses color metaphors to explain idea clustering and value systems, keep in mind that the Church of Satan was “red”, the Temple of Set is “yellow”, and Setians strive to be “coral”.

Uncle Setnakt says this to his Cylth: “Master this book and you will live in a Coral Castle in Y’ha-nthlei amidst wonder and glory forever.”

In the meantime be looking for notes from your own future. *Xeper*.

[5] Concerning Death

- by Don Webb V°, High Priest of Set

Lady Azra Medea had written to me [and a few other folk] about the death of a good friend and mentor. I responded with a few remarks, that might be useful to others in a similar situation. The bulk of that letter follows:

As I would guess only my good friend Lady Lilith knows, XXXII has been my Blood Year, with many deaths in my family.

Death is truly mysterious.

The non-mysterious event is the one about which we will feel the same each time. Death will open new things for us. Some of them are what we share with the others of our kind. We cry, we mourn just like those around us. It makes us truly human.

Other things that death unleashes are the matrix of darkness. Here we feel the things that are totally forbidden by our culture [even though we know that everyone else feels them]. We can be really mad at someone for leaving us, or we can feel a really big relief that he finally died. We can at least admit these feelings, and that alone gives us energy that our benighted fellows lack.

But then comes that which is ours alone. First there is the question of what really happened, and the knowledge that this question cannot be answered. This marks the beginning of the Left-Hand Path.

Secondly we know in some non-rational sense

that we must in part be responsible for the loved one now. Exactly what this means we cannot say, but we know it to be true. His *ba* dwells in us now. We will do many things for the sake of our understanding of it.

Thirdly we know the important fact that we too will die, and that knowledge gained only at the moment of the mourning of another’s passing makes us both need to do more and to simultaneously realize that all of life’s activities are equal (i.e. we may die tomorrow doing laundry). This is the great and magical estranging from our lives that gives us the “space” in which to *Xeper*.

Fourthly we know that the loved one’s death is just a beginning of our sorting of our feelings toward him. Such feelings grow and change and keep changing, and they give us a rare spiritual touchstone against which we will measure ourselves. Such a gift is with all the worlds.

Fifthly we know that we have an obligation to ourselves that goes far, far beyond the events of the next year, or our current social games that otherwise seem so important. We know that uttering the greatest of all spells is before us - the spell that can only be uttered on one’s deathbed: “I wouldn’t have done anything differently!”

That spell is said by one who is as the Prince of Darkness, regardless of religion. It and it alone is all that matters as a magical act.

Sixthly we know when we see death that we have to concentrate our experience of life so that we can give the gift that speaks volumes, even when we are silent. We must prepare the items that we leave behind. This simple action is the magical deed that everyone does. We illustrate the action by enchanting a sword or a mirror, but the real moment is that watch, that figurine, that whatever which, left to the living, will also speak to them. This is a part of the magical art available to all. By being available to all, it proves the Gift of Set has been given to those we love the most, even if they never fully understood or appreciated our ideas.

These facets show like starlight, and become greater with time, as we grow in heart to look calmly at the depths of all the worlds.

To love our friends because they give us the gift of their dying is the love that is the hardest to gain, because it means granting them the greatest freedom we can grant. Granting them this opens a door in our heart for them, and truly lets our own becoming reflect their best in the world. From that all new possibilities actually open for them and for ourselves as well.

This Bond between the living and the dead has no rules that can be taught, but is learned everyday by the wise, who fear neither tears nor darkness nor the future.

To your friend, I send my wishes for her future state - not from a false love for this person I never met nor likely will meet, but from the certain knowledge of her magic which is reflected in such as you, Lady Azra.

[6] **The Artisans of Xnum**

- by William D. Pridgen III°

The Artisans of *Xnum* are a Phyle within the Order of Setne Khamuast. A Phyle is a semi-autonomous initiatory forum which facilitates *Xeper* in an attempt to cultivate and maintain a quality body of Initiates. Like its counterpart in other Orders, part of the Phyle's function is to provide interface between the Order, the Temple, and the World of Horrors. This means that Adepti who are not Initiates of the Order may employ the Phyle as a tool for personal *Xeper*. It is for this reason that I am presenting it to the entire Temple through the medium of the *Scroll of Set*.

In its present form the Artisans of *Xnum* is modeled after two highly influential concepts in today's Temple:

(1) An ancient Egyptian system of social organization known as the *za* or "working crew", in this case "the Artisans".

This point should be qualified by stating that the purpose of this particular "working crew" is initiatory rather than social. This doesn't mean there isn't a social element involved, but this element is peripheral to the core focus, which is initiatory.

The hieroglyph for protection in ancient Egypt was *sa*. In the case of the Soa Gild this signifies protection from distraction. This principle is carried over into the more concentrated atmosphere of the Phyle, as an intense deliberation and focus on the work are necessary. Wilkinson writes concerning *sa*:

In other instances, the *sa* sign is found in amuletic compositions employing other hieroglyphs, and particularly the *ankh*, *djed*, and *w3s* signs. In the example in illustration 3, the *sa* is joined with the *ankh* and *neb* signs to form the expression "All life and protection".

- *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 197).

In *Essent into Essence: The Key and its Facets*, Magus Robinson discusses the significance of the combined *ankh*, *djed*, and *w3s* as a symbolic key to Essent. The type of process-oriented work discussed in that paper will be a major focus in this Phyle (the Greek word for *sa*), some facets more explicitly so than others.

The most readily apparent of these is the facet of love, or in this specific case the love of wisdom.

Other facets that are directly involved include self-examination/re-examination, and energy, specifically the energy/inspiration arising from wonder at the marvel of one's own unique existence and that of the Universe itself.

The medieval gild concept, from which the Phyle has its structure, is threefold, consisting of Apprentices, Artisans and Masters.

The raw material with which the Phyle works is the Black Flame, and the focus of this work is a curriculum based on the following:

(1) Pythagorean, Platonic, and Neo-Platonic Philosophy.

(2) The Hellenistic cult of Agathodaimon.

(3) Græco-Egyptian magic as found in and/or modeled after the Greek magical papyri.

(4) The quest for *Xem*.

Pythagoras is said to have been the first to call himself a philosopher, a word which heretofore had not been an appellation, but a description.

- Iamblichus,
The Life of Pythagoras

A philosophy consists of a constellation of ideas, made more or less coherent, depending upon the initiatory state of the philosopher (i.e. depending upon the extent to which he apprehends and exercises *logos*). As the Word of Magus Pythagoras, *philosophia* has as its meaning the "love of wisdom" as opposed to the "possession" of it. This is an intrinsically Left-Hand Path perspective which is essential to the work of the Phyle. In an article for *D'jelmet Setne*, the newsletter of the Order of Setne Khamuast, I wrote:

After the rise of Christianity, much of what was pursued under the name of "philosophy" would have been called either "sophistry" or "dogma" by the Pythagoreans, Socratics, and Platonists. This is because "philosophy" had lost its initiatory focus, having become merely a way for medieval theologians to attempt to "prove" Christianity. Even after the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, "philosophy" consisted chiefly of a debate between rationalists and empiricists. The Artisans of Xnum, as a Remanifestation of the Hellenistic cult of *agathodaimon*, will restore to "philosophy" this initiatory focus.

From the *Dialogues* we have the tradition of the Platonic *agathon* and the Socratic *daimon*. These were eventually combined into a single concept, that of the *agathodaimon*, in the Hellenistic era. The *agathon* is the guiding principle, the motive

principle, knowledge of which is the foundation of all ethical behavior. The *daimon* is the informing principle, or the source of one's knowledge of the ethical. There is a dynamic tension between these two Principles, the *telos* of which is *Runa!*

In the Magical Papyri *Xnum* appears in two types of spells: one used to attract a lover and the other to acquire an assistant *daimon*. It is a core mystery of the Phyle that these are the operative and illustrative workings of the same magical principle.

It has already been mentioned that love is one of the facets of the key to "Essent into Essence". As lovers of wisdom, the Artisans of *Xnum* will employ dialectic as a methodology toward increasing clarity and refinement of the initiatory process. Plato stated that dialectic was the "coping stone of the sciences". As a dialectical process, philosophy is guided by the *agathon* and informed by a *daimon*. These principles provide the Initiate with a map and the knowledge of how to use the map, though this may not be initially apparent.

In the beginning the essential elements of the self are in disarray, and there are many non-essential elements present. During this phase the self is diluted/contaminated, lacking power, clarity, and refinement. Many dabblers and dilettantes crown the Left-Hand Path with anarchy and chaos arising from a rebellion against external authority. The Left-Hand Path is about becoming ordered in and of oneself. It is about replacing externally-imposed order with self-order. Through this process-oriented work of philosophy, the Initiate becomes concentrated, pure, powerful, clear, refined, and self-ordered.

In his comment to the *Book of the Law* #I-9, Ipsissimus Crowley wrote:

We are not to regard ourselves as base beings, without whose sphere is Light or "God". Our minds and bodies are veils of the Light within. The uninitiate is a "dark star", and the Great Work for him is to make his veils transparent by "purifying" them. This "purification" is really "simplification"; it is not that the veil is dirty, but that the complexity of its folds make it opaque. The Great Work therefore consists principally in the solution of complexes.

The solution to a complex is generally experienced as a moment of clarity. In Essent we have an invaluable tool to aid us in increasing the moment of clarity to encompass both past and future states within the eternal now. Philosophy involves the use of the deathing process for the aim of the embodiment of essence, or Essent, as well as for an exploration of the possibility of unembodied

essence, or Remanifestation.

One complex which must be confronted and dealt with along the initiatory path is that of the nature and scope of knowledge, or **epistemology**. The key to self knowledge, and consequently the knowledge of Set, is to be found in the pentagram itself. In other words, Setian epistemology is encoded within the pentagram of Set. The Setian who applies himself to the study of the traditions and working formulæ that are the focus of Philosophy will find hints of this scattered throughout the globe.

For example, we know that some of the Greek philosophers were initiates of the Egyptian Priesthoods. We know that the inverse pentagram was the symbol of the Pythagorean Brotherhood. The significance of this becomes increasingly clear when you begin to study, for example, Plato's *Republic*, wherein Plato describes his divided line of knowledge, which "just happens" to be divided according to the ϕ ratio.

It is this same knowledge which enabled Magus Flowers to develop a methodology of seeking the mysteries toward a Remanifestation of the Runic Tradition.

The pentagram of Set is likewise the key to Setian cosmology. Students of Plato's *Timæus* are familiar with his description of the demiurge and the coming into being of the cosmos. The ϕ ratio is again intrinsic to this process. This is relevant to the Phyle in that *Xnum* is also a demiurge or creator deity. *Xnum* is the ideal, the perfect role-model for the Initiate, whose function is to transform the self that is yet to be into the self that is-to-be.

Reflect, for example, upon the power of the idea as discussed in Magus Webb's *The Seven Faces of Darkness*. The significance of this is that great men are those who become ordered in and of themselves and then Remanifest this self-order in the world. This working of Greater Black Magic has a civilizing effect, or the effect of bringing civilization into being. This is the dawn of the Promethean flame, the Black Flame that is the Gift of Set.

My vision for the Phyle, and the impact I would like to see it have within the Temple of Set, is to promote the idea of the necessity for building a solid foundation. This is Plato's "pyramid of thought" in theory and practice.

Having said that, I would also like to share the vision of some of the Phyle's current Initiates by allowing them to speak for themselves.

Adept Matthew Mitchem:

In my wanderings through the realms of the Temple of Set, I have traveled from my home in the north to the lands of the south. My

journeys have led me to glance at the mysterious sands of Egypt. Indeed I have found the æsthetic of Egypt to be most foreign and strange. My interest has turned to the Artisans of *Xnum*.

My present work is with the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and other Greek philosophers of antiquity. I include Plotinus as a Greek philosopher in the understanding of academia. He wrote in Greek, his thought is grounded explicitly in the work of Plato and Aristotle, and like a Greek his thought is very abstract. I have begun the process of raising dialectic in my self, and through me it will burst forth into the World of Horrors. In an effort to find Initiates of like mind, I have begun a dialogue with Priest Pridgen.

My immediate interest in the Artisans of *Xnum* is with the concepts of *agathodaimon* and *eudaimonia*. If all works well, I will begin a new experimental curriculum in magic and philosophy, leading to a *dialectica mysteria* for exposition in all schools of my initiatory journey. It is among the Artisans of *Xnum* that I have made my study home in the South.

Adept Shawna Thompson:

My dedication to what I understand as my *agathodaimon*, my *daimonic* self, and my desire to more fully understand and utilize this principle toward *Xeper*, is in fact the driving force behind my interest and affiliation. As a Black Magician and artist, I have far-reaching goals. It is here that I will mold the clay on the potter's wheel, breathing life into my creations which shall resonate and inspire Setians for generations to come. It is through balance achieved by the utilization of passion and precision that the Artisans of *Xnum* work within this dynamic state of becoming.

Adept Monty Hinson:

Having Initiated my own quest for *Xem* over three years ago, I see it only fitting that I now take part in the work of the Artisans of *Xnum*. To be accurate I should state that my quest actually began back in XXV, when I took the oath of the Order of the Trapezoid. To the extent that swearing fealty to the *fylgja* and taking an oath of dedication to the indwelling *agathodaimon* are similar, all Knights of the Trapezoid have likewise embarked upon this quest.

Again it is a case of the quest for the Grail and the quest for *Xem* being similar, the

difference being one of cultural - or in this case Order - æsthetics.

Since I have done a great deal of my initiatory work within an Oadian context since becoming a Knight of the Trapezoid, it is in true Oadian fashion that I feel it only appropriate to now step beyond the exclusive realm of the Northern Mysteries and step through the Gate of the South. In this way the polar opposites of a given initiatory spectrum will be explored - the spectrum in this case being perhaps the most important of all, that of the phenomenon of the essential self. The Grail quest is the way of the North. The quest for *Xem* is the way of the South. Perhaps somewhere in the middle is the apex of true individual divinity to be truly grasped and known in all its glory.

I can think of at least two other Knights of the Trapezoid, namely Sir Setnakt and myself, whose quests have also led them to the Gate of the South and into the Order of Setne Khamuast.

Initiates of the Phyle are in a position similar to the Greeks of Hellenistic Egypt, in that there is a blending of the familiar with the exotic. Our language and culture are saturated with Classical Greek influences, and these are therefore immanently familiar to us. We are also in the position, as were the Greeks of Hellenistic Egypt, of trying to understand an exotic culture like ancient Egypt. I bring this up for two reasons:

First, we are in the position of being "wolves of the spirit" insofar as Classical Greek philosophy and culture are concerned, and there is therefore an element of tradition to the Phyle. However, as were the Greek philosophers of Periclean Athens, we are also apostate relative to our contemporary social matrix.

Second, we are not so much interested in reconstructing ancient Egyptian religion/culture as we are in seeking out, discovering, internalizing, and enacting its working formulæ for the purpose of individuation (as opposed to integration). The Greek theurgists championed the concept of individualism and employed the barbarous names of evocation during the decline and decadence of an Osirian-dominated Egypt. As Set is the patron of foreigners, so too is he the patron of the Artisans of *Xnum*.

If you are a II°+ Setian, with a deep and abiding affinity for the principles outlined in this essay, then I hereby encourage you to contact me. I will generally set up a correspondence for the purpose of mutual evaluation. This is the minimal level of involvement, that which is enumerated above as the Apprentice. At this phase you will apprentice yourself to your self, the "indwelling *agathodaimon*" as Adept Hinson phrased it.

If after some time your quest leads you elsewhere, then the purpose of the Phyle as a tool for individuation through personal *Xeper* is fulfilled. If your quest leads you deeper into the mysteries of the Phyle, i.e. if your affinity is to work predominantly within the Southern Mysteries, perhaps within the Order of Setne Khamuast, then the purpose of the Phyle is also fulfilled. Each to his own, and according to the dictates of the guiding/informing principle of the *agathodaimon*.

Beyond these immediate concerns: If you are inspired by what you have read, and decide to incorporate/employ some of these principles without contacting me or affiliating with the Phyle, that's perfectly fine too.

I intend for the Artisans of *Xnum* to have a Temple-wide impact by their thoughts, words, and deeds. It is because of this that there will be no newsletter, and the majority of our work shall be published in the *Scroll of Set*. Work of an extremely specialized or experimental nature may be published in the *D'jelmet Setne*. This is a clever strategy, as it relieves me of the administrative office of editor, allowing more time to focus on initiation, and for the Phyle to have a positive influence throughout the entire Temple as opposed to a select body of Initiates.

Ir Shti Shta-tu!

[7] Concerning Phyles

- by Don Webb V^o

Grand Master, Order of Setne Khamuast

The Temple of Set is not a neo-Egyptian religion, but many of us use certain symbols from Egyptian thought to direct our attention to parts of ourselves where the attention may be transformed and returned to us.

This is a very easy thing for a Right-Hand Path religion. You get your symbol you hang everywhere, and somehow, by sheer submission to an image, you are supposed to be better.

For a Left-Hand Path thinker symbols must be consciously activated: The rational mind must be used to its fullest extent - magically experienced - and then left behind as the magician seeks to take the essence of perception that he has learned and apply it to the materials of his life.

The use of **play** as a guide to life is a unique Setian idea. We in the Order of Setne Khamuast, the first magical librarian, seek to provide opportunities for such play, by allowing one of our members to lead a group devoted to self-work that uses parts of the initiatory tradition of the South.

In the mundane world you check out a book and read it. In the initiatory world, however, you help write a book of living experience. This fulfills the

Temple's purpose of maximizing the change in the objective universe of a Setian's play, the Order's purpose of building a more scholarly approach to the past, the leader's desire for others to help keep him stay awake, and the individual's desire for personal work.

These Elements are headed by Order members. When the member is in the Outer Court of the Order [as in this case], the Element is overseen by the Grand Master. These work crews should not have it easy. There's a lot of rubble from both the occult culture and personal baggage to be cleared away before one can get at the treasures. Let us hope that they inspire us with their labors!

[8] On the Passing of Priest Anton S. Haddad

- by Don Webb V^o, High Priest of Set

My most somber greetings.

Anton S. Haddad, Priest of Set, Knight of the Order of the Trapezoid, Vampire, was found dead in his apartment recently, apparently of a heart attack.

Priest Haddad had joined the Temple of Set on August 16, XXXVIII. He is six months older than I am.

I remember his oath-taking of the Order of the Trapezoid in the oasis of Las Vegas in the Year XXX, Sir William Butch's proud words of sponsorship, and Sir Ronald Barrett and Lady Rebecca Lance challenging him for just such a change as he has now had.

He was the Sentinel of the Nephren-Ka Pylon, which drew its name from the *The Haunter of the Dark* by H. P. Lovecraft and *The Fane of the Black Pharaoh* by Robert Bloch. His latest magical job was to create a Setian martial arts style.

I am sure that all of you have read his articles in the *Scroll*, and that many of you have interacted with him - enjoying as I did his dry sense of humor, his dedication, his tales of the East, and above all that most delicious quality in a child of Set - his imaginative take on the future.

Now he is of the future, of the Great Darkness from which all things come, while we are left with our various tasks of bringing the Majesty of Set to this overburdened planet.

For those who know him, I know you will honor his passing in your own ways. I swear to you by my Word that as you think of him, he shall think of you.

For those of you who did not know him, it is the time as always to think on our own passing, and to ask ourselves whether if we died today, would we have done enough?

Your support of the Nephren-Ka Pylon in their loss would be appreciated. It doesn't take long to drop a note to one of its members.

The apes of Thoth have pulled aside the last section of the tapestry of time, and we gasp in the flickering torchlight at what we see. Let us use this shock of loss, as all we use all other impulses that come to the world, to further the Majesty of Set.

Xeper.

[9] Una Invitación Informal

- by James Johnson III°

Me gustaría invitar a todos los miembros de habla hispana para que se comuniquen conmigo. Estoy muy interesado en la cultura hispana y estoy aprendiendo el idioma en el colegio. Yo disfrutaría mucho el comunicarme en este idioma y a la vez aplicarlo a mi propia iniciativa.

Si desea comunicarse conmigo, escríbame a la siguiente dirección: Mr. James Johnson, Temple of Set, Post Office Box 470307, San Francisco, CA 94147, U.S.A.

Espero con gratitud su correspondencia. Gracias.

¡*Xeper* y Remanifest!

[10] Regarding Remanifestations

- by Aaron Besson III°

The purpose of this article is to notify my fellow Setians of the changes that have occurred with and within the Nephilim Pylon. In order to effectively do this, so that the full reason and motivation for these changes can be fully seen and the potentiality be that much stronger, some background must be given.

I founded the Nephilim Pylon in the year XXX to provide an initiatory forum for Setians in the San Francisco Bay Area. The drive and enthusiasm of those involved in the Pylon resulted in the coming into being of a sacred ground out of which many great works were borne. Of this I could not be more proud.

The initial success of the Nephilim Pylon led to expansions within its structure. Some have resulted in successful evolutions within the Pylon, some less so. The latter are not to be seen as faults, as no wrong-doing had been done, but rather as actions bringing needed lessons. It is through the constant evaluation of the Pylon as it stands that significant changes will be implemented in order for the primary principle of the Pylon, *Xeper*, to continue.

The major changes revolve around the *egregore* of the Pylon itself. The Nephilim were chosen as the *egregore* because they were a Left-Hand Path power focus with which I resonated and with which very little had been done, leaving this concept a

fertile ground with much potential as an initiatory *egregore* within the Æon of Set.

The Nephilim have proven to be a viable *egregore* for the Pylon over the past couple of years. But in evaluating the needs and drives of the Pylon's members in relation to the qualification of the Nephilim as a lens to aid in initiation, this *egregore* ultimately became too limited.

Therefore the Nephilim Pylon has now Remanifested as the Midian Pylon. The inspiration of this *egregore* comes from horror writer Clive Barker's book *Cabal* and the *Nightbreed* movie that was inspired by it.

Midian was a haven for the Nightbreed. This community of beings, some more non-human in appearance than others, gathered together to seek refuge from persecution by a frightened and cruelly-ignorant humankind.

These Nightbreed, otherwise called the Tribes of the Moon, existed in the desolate peripheries of civilization, far away from the cities of Man. The quality of antinomianism was strong in the Nightbreed: You were not judged worthy of joining them in Midian on the basis of how "different" you were, but rather of the qualitative, intrinsic isolation that resided within you - that non-natural spark within your essence that mankind has all but forgotten.

As those eclectic Beings of Darkness came together as a whole in Midian, so does the Midian Pylon stand open for those Nightbreed upon the Left-Hand Path.

Topics of exploration in the Pylon will be limited to those at the forefront of its members' *Xeper*, from workings based on the "Good and Evil" Category of the *Crystal Tablet* reading list one month to the utilization of *The King in Yellow* in GBM the next. In short, if it is a field of interest in the process of your *Xeper*, it is welcome.

Interest and potential still reside in the Nephilim as a viable focus for initiation. As such they will continue to be explored in the form of the Nephilim Element, also facilitated by myself.

The point of exploration will differ from previous perspectives of the Nephilim [My gratitude to Magus Webb for his inspiration towards this idea.] Most references to the Nephilim are from the *Holy Bible*. As this book is of dubious origin and content, it stands to reason that its information and perspective regarding the Nephilim are just as sketchy. Thus we will seek purer realms of exploration and discovery.

The Nephilim Element will approach the Nephilim as metaphors and archetypes not yet fully perceived in the history of mankind. These wanderers of the Left-Hand Path have improperly been defined by the Right-Hand Path alone. We will

explore and qualify them in a pure LHP resonance, and will experiment and refine Nephilimic Black Magic.

This Element is opened to all Setians who resonate with the Nephilim as a viable initiatory focus. Anyone interested in further information may contact me. *Xeper* and *Essent* into *Essence*.

[11] **Recognitions**

Kevin Fordham was Recognized as an Adept II° on January 29, 1998 by Magister Michael Kelly.

Connell Monette was Recognized as an Adept II° on January 24, 1998 by Priest James Severson.

Manuel Weihrauch was Recognized as an Adept II° on December 29, 1997 by Magister David d'Merlin.

K. Lionell Burgess II was Recognized as an Adept II° on December 20, 1997 by Priestess Zeena Schreck.

[12] **Setian Karma**

- by David Ondrejko II°

“*Karma*” is a word much used (and abused) by the Western world, particularly the so-called “New Age” movement. In this article I will examine the pseudo-Christian fallacies of most of the RHP and expose them as the nonsense that they are. This will pave the way for development of a uniquely Setian conception of *karma* as a valid magical principle.

The concept of *karma*, as defined by most RHP practitioners, is very simple: If you do something evil, something evil will happen to you; if you do something good, something good will happen to you. Therefore it is in your best interests to do good.

Followers of Wicca, along with some others, propose what is called the “Threefold Law”, which states that *karma* works even more efficiently and will cause you three times as much harm as you cause, or bring you three times as much good as you bring to another. Obviously you should do as much good as you can to maximize your returns!

This is a very nice and internally consistent philosophy. Its main problem, at least to anyone looking at the concept rationally, is that it does not work. People do good things all the time and are not rewarded for them. In many circles the idea of doing something good so that you will be rewarded is looked down on as being a form of selfishness. Conversely people do bad things all the time and get away with them. [Many Americans would put O.J. Simpson in this category.]

Adherents of *karma* are also usually believers in reincarnation. Without going into the pros and cons

of that belief here [which would take another article or two], I will merely point out that such a belief takes the doctrine of *karma* beyond being a rational postulate and moves it into the realm of religious belief. You cannot prove that *karma* works, since if a person commits many crimes and still lives a long and healthy life, you can simply excuse this on the grounds that he will get the bad effects of *karma* in some future lifetime.

Belief in *karma* can also lead to a satisfaction with the *status quo*, as it did in the Indian caste system. In India it was believed that a person was born into one of four different castes, ranging from the *sudras* (peasants and laborers) to the *brahmin* (wealthy priests) as a result of their accumulated *karma*. There was also a fifth “casteless” group known as the *untouchables*; they had the dirty jobs (garbage man, gravedigger, etc.), and no person of any other caste was allowed even to touch them.

Such a caste system based on accident of birth is opposed to the Setian concept of judging each person by his own merit. The belief that by doing a good job at the duties of your caste you would be rewarded by being born in a higher caste is intrinsically no different from the Christian doctrine that promises a post-mortem reward for being a good little slave to YHVH. Members of the caste society did not attempt to better themselves except within very rigidly-defined limits.

There are also some RHP practitioners who will often refuse to help someone else, claiming that “they need to work out their *karma*”. They believe that the other person is having a bad time of it because he somehow deserves a bad time for something which he did, in either this life or a past one. If someone helps him, then the universe will just keep throwing bad experiences at him until he has been punished enough for his wrong-doing.

The belief in *karma* seems to imply at least a semi-intelligent universe with its own set of moral codes. New-Agers are rarely very specific on the idea of what is “good” or “evil” beyond their general adherence, whether spoken or not, to the Wiccan Rede (“An it harm none, do what thou wilt.”).

The idea of “harm” is fluid and varies from person to person. Some limit it to physical harm; others expand it to include emotional and psychological harm. The one commonality is that they all think that their own moral code applies to everyone else, particularly nasty, evil Black Magicians, and often aren’t above telling you about it in no uncertain terms. In that they are not much different from the different groups of Christians who accuse each other of various sins and of falling short of the glory of God but will always gang up on the occult community at any given opportunity.

Setians tend to believe in an individualized ethical code - that each person is able to decide for himself what is good and what is evil. This is not a blanket "if it seems good, do it" idea, of course; rational thought, careful contemplation, and magical understanding of the situation and possible consequences all contribute to the Setian's ethical code.

So is there a place for karma in the Setian worldview? Yes, I think so, but not as described above.

Karma, in its most basic sense, describes nothing more than cause and effect. Take a certain action; get a certain reaction. As Black Magicians, Setians must always be aware of the potential reactions to every act that they take, whether overtly magical or not.

Ipsissimus Crowley was of the opinion that it was impossible to drop a pin without disturbing or changing the entire universe. Karma, in a Left-Hand Path sense, is the reaction that a magician gets from the universe by exercising his will upon it. Any magical act that you take, any act of will, no matter how small or insignificant it might seem, is a non-natural act and disturbs the fabric of the universe. It is a well-known saying that nature abhors a vacuum; I would expand on that and say that nature abhors any place that it is not, whether that place be a vacuum or a Black Magician.

Karma, to a Setian, is how the universe reacts. It is not as simplistic and morally-driven as the "evil for evil and good for good" formula of the RHP magician. I think it is important to recognize that while Setians may be apart from the universe, much of the magic that a Setian performs is going to be magic which will affect that universe in some way. If dropping a pin will have the widespread effect attributed to it by Crowley, then how much more widespread will be the actions of the Black Magician!

Karma can also describe how the magician reacts to magic. As Magister Kelly, Grand Master of the Order of Leviathan, puts it: "Do not work magic unless you yourself are willing to be changed thereby!" A magical act affects not only the universe but also the magician.

On a mundane level, doing an act once does not make it a part of you; it is doing it repetitively over time. The more that you do something, the more you become the kind of person who does that sort of thing. The more you love, the more you become a loving person. The more you lie, the more you become a liar. In the practice of magic, if you frequently cast spells of destruction, you will begin to become inherently more destructive.

A Setian causes himself to change in pre-planned ways through willed evolution. We do not

change randomly, simply for the sake of becoming, but in definite ways with a specific goal in mind. Every act that a Setian commits has the potential to lead either toward or away from that goal. Like dropping a pin, even the most insignificant act can have far-reaching effects on the magician's universe.

Some Buddhist sects teach that the Buddha said nothing about the actual doctrine of reincarnation from lifetime to lifetime. His claim was one more acceptable to the Western mind, that of cause and effect (the basic meaning of karma). We are reborn, they would say, every minute, every instant. The idea of karma is simply a recognition that the actions that a person takes change the future; no one lives in a vacuum. The actions that you take today, for instance, will change both who you will become tomorrow and the universe in which you will become.

Karma, properly understood, can be a useful concept for the Setian in pursuit of *Xeper*. Freed from the Western New-Age confusion, it is revealed as the simple truth that every action has consequences, both inside and outside the Black Magician, and that these consequences must be kept in mind and planned for.

[13] The Council of Nine and the Temple of Set: A Chairman's Perspective

- by Robert Menschel IV^o

The Council of Nine is small, often secretive, poorly known, and poorly understood. Part of the confusion concerning the Council and its place in the Temple stems from the Council's silence, and part stems from its uniqueness. This article attempts to clarify some of the Council's attributes.

The mundane aspects of the Council of Nine are easy to describe and understand. We'll start with those, and then work to the more magical aspects of the Council.

The Council of Nine is the corporate board of directors of the Temple of Set, Inc., incorporated under the laws of the State of California of the U.S.A. As such, it has the responsibilities and authorities assigned to it by those laws. Primary among them is the task of ensuring the corporation takes no illegal actions. As with any corporation, the board of directors is also responsible for representing the owners of the corporation, in our case the Priesthood of Set.

Unlike most membership corporations, our board of directors is not elected by the membership. Instead each director is appointed by the Chairman for a nine-year term (one seat on the board expires each year). In this way the Chairman speaks for the

entire membership, selecting the board of directors that will best serve the membership and the Temple.

Mundane boards of directors actually do very little. All of the real work of running and managing the corporation is done by the corporation's officers. The board's function is oversight. Similarly all the real work of guiding and maintaining the Temple of Set is done by its main three officers: the High Priest, Executive Director, and Treasurer. The board's function is oversight, and the board of directors does not involve itself in these activities, at least as long as everything is well.

This flavor of oversight has proven beneficial to the Temple, and it's one I've worked to maintain and strengthen. Put simply, the Council of Nine does not do anything - the body known as the Council of Nine takes no actions. Instead all actions are taken by individuals. Those Initiates responsible for oversight (our Councillors) then exercise that oversight, confirming or denying/refuting the decisions that individuals made.

The Council of Nine is assigned a few tasks by our By-Laws: confirmation of Recognitions at the IV^o+ level, confirmation of the appointment of officers and Councillors, confirmation of III^o+ expulsions, etc. However the Council of Nine does not perform these tasks by normal meeting, committee, or voting processes.

One of the strangest aspects of the Council was designed into it because of California law: a board of directors which meets by mail (instead of in person) must only take action unanimously - all nine directors must voice their agreement to any decision. That is impractical for us, since (a) occasionally one Councillor is unreachable for one reason or another, and (b) strong individuals often have strongly different views. Therefore no action mentioned in our bylaws is taken by the Council of Nine as a group, nor by vote of the Council. Instead, an officer (commonly the High Priest or the Chairman of the Council) takes an action by fiat, and that fiat is either confirmed or denied by a specified number of individual Councillors. No meeting is required.

Let me repeat and reword this point: The Council doesn't do anything, and Councillors do not initiate anything. Individual Councillors review various decisions, confirming or reversing them. That is the limit of Council activity.

This doesn't mean that Councillors do little or nothing within the Temple of Set - Priests and Masters who are on the Council are often among the most active members of the Temple. But they are active as Initiates in their own right, not because they are Councillors.

For example, Magister Robert Menschel, Grand Master of the Order of Shuti, initiates many actions,

and encourages changes and *Xeper* throughout the Temple. Robert Menschel IV^o as Councillor only watches and listens; he measures the activities of the Temple and its Initiates, and takes no action unless he sees a serious problem that needs a serious response.

I'll admit that for many it can be difficult sometimes to see where Magister Menschel stops and Councillor Menschel begins, but I can give you some guidance in that area:

What is he doing? Councillor Menschel watches quietly, weighing the potentials and dangers of a situation. He may occasionally offer a word of caution, but otherwise takes no action unless the dangers reach an unacceptable threshold. His goal is to allow change and opportunity whenever and wherever these do not unacceptably endanger the Temple and its Initiates.

Magister Menschel is involved in the Order of Shuti, in pylon activity, and at Conclave. Magister Menschel edits the *Ruby Tablet of Set*. Magister Menschel administers various mailing lists (Magistry, Council, Pylon Sentinels, etc.). Magister Menschel participates in the Neheh Group, Priesthood discussions, etc.

Magister Menschel initiates and actively participates in change, in *Xeper*, in Initiation. He is involved in the Temple's activities as well as his own. Councillor Menschel initiates nothing, but simply watches, considers, and weighs, sometimes responding to things which need attention.

The same goes for the rest of the Council of Nine. Masters Butch, Hardy, Kelly, Winkhart, Whitaker, *et al.*, are all active forces for change and activity in the Temple of Set. They are so because they are Masters of the Temple of Set, and they were so before being Masters because of the way they expressed their Priesthood within the Temple of Set.

They were chosen for the Council of Nine partly because of this activity; they are Councillors because they demonstrated Mastery within the Temple [and not the other way around - they do not bring about change nor demonstrate activity because they are Councillors]. As Councillors they watch, weigh, and consider, and except for confirming/refuting officers' decisions, they take no action unless needed to protect the Temple from danger.

Why do I stress this? Recently I've heard members of the Priesthood complaining that the Council of Nine wasn't doing something or another which needed to be done, or complaining that certain changes weren't happening because the members of the Council of Nine did not choose to take a desired action.

They're partly right: The Council of Nine wasn't doing that something or another, and the members of the Council didn't choose to take such action; they're chosen to not take actions like that. Don't look to the Council of Nine to take actions or to bring about changes within the Temple of Set; that's not their job. That's the job of the Priesthood of Set, and it's the task of each member of the Priesthood to bring forth the change and activity that they see is needed.

[14] Preliminary Thoughts on How Reality Works

- by Dennis Stevens I°

For decades people have been tantalized by the exotic world of quantum physics. This area of study has explained hitherto mysterious phenomena while leading to even greater paradoxes than the ones it has explained. One of the thought experiments which illustrates this is the famous "Schrödinger's cat" scenario from the mind of physicist Erwin Schrödinger:

Imagine a cat is in a box, which at some point in time will be filled with poisonous gas. Pick any point in time - is the cat alive or dead? Well, both and neither - without actually opening the box and looking, one can only give probabilities of the cat's status. When actually observed, then the probability is resolved into one state or the other. The very act of observing changes the outcome.

This might seem like an entertaining thought with no practical applications. But actually physicists have found this describes the actual state of the subatomic particles which constitute reality as we know it.

Take a group of particles - such as the one that makes up this sheet of paper. Can you calculate exactly the location and activity of every particle? Anything that exists, as existence is usually understood, has a location in space and time, like the sheet of paper which is in your hands right now. So you should be able to locate every particle in space and time. But again those particles only have a probability of where they actually exist, until the act of observing "causes" them to take a particular location in space-time, a phenomenon known as State Vector Collapse (SVC). (Penrose and Hameroff, p. 1)

What determines how the particles collapse into one particular state and not another? If the atoms of this piece of paper could suddenly become something else, why don't they? How could reality itself seem so solid and predictable if they really are

not? Even more tantalizing: Can human beings have some conscious control over this process?

An article by Stuart Hameroff of University of Arizona Departments of Anesthesiology and Psychology and Roger Penrose, a Mathematician at Oxford, titled "Conscious Events as Orchestrated Space-Time Selections" proposes that structures within the brain can directly effect the SVC.

The argument is rather technical to repeat in its entirety, but essentially structures called microtubulins (MTs) are able to hold the State Vector in a state of flux until it collapses.

Relativity theory shows that any object which has mass generates a gravity field around it which distorts time and space. For objects smaller than a planet, the effect is too small for us to notice. But even on the cellular level, the effect is still there. The gravity field around a few cells in our brain would be incredibly small, but to effect the motion of subatomic particles, very little gravity is needed.

At certain points, all the microtubulins could be "in synch" and effect the position of matter on the quantum level. There would a constant cycle of flux (or superposition) and collapse occurring continuously, each collapse corresponding to a moment of consciousness; this gives rise to our sensation of continuous consciousness of the world around us, as well as the appearance of predictable reality.

Penrose and Hameroff do not propose any mode by which human beings can directly affect this process. However could it be that we unconsciously affect this process?

Have you ever noticed someone who has a very negative and self-defeating attitude often has bad things happen to him? You may have experienced this yourself; conversely you may have enjoyed a state of self-confidence and find that good things seem to happen to you when you need them? Of course some incidents are simply a matter of our minds filtering out what does not fit our expectations, but looking at the reported incidents of synchronicity, or "meaningful coincidence" hint at other possibilities.

But if physical reality is so responsive to our thoughts, why would anything bad happen to anyone? Why don't we all just wish for a million dollars and then receive it? A clue to the answer may lie in the realm of memetics. (Brodie, pg. 14)

Memetics is a field of study which proposes that ideas propagate in our minds like viruses do in our bodies. A meme can be an idea, a symbol, or an attitude. It can be anything that changes a person's behavior such that the idea or meme is spread to other people. One can see this in advertising slogans or political propaganda.

Like a physical virus that injects its own genetic material into another cell, a meme enters a person's mind with the intention of replicating itself. No one "feels" a meme infecting him and taking him over; one simply finds a particular idea or attitude beguiling or somehow difficult to forget, like a TV jingle that won't get out of your head (which in fact is a meme). But once the idea is in your head, you whistle the jingle, or mention the idea to others who find that now they cannot forget it. They repeat the idea to others, and so pass it on like the flu in winter.

Let us turn to the relationship between brain states and mental states. Brain states are the physiological states of our brain: neurotransmitters, synapses, and so on. Mental states are our subjective sensations of emotions and cognition. That brain states affect mental states is clear; a number of mental illnesses have been linked to deficiencies in the brains' biochemistry.

But if our brains affect our subjective experience, why cannot the reverse happen and our mental states affect our brain states? Would that not in turn affect the microtubulins that affect quantum gravity? If we allow such possibilities, then we must wonder how such a discovery could be exploited. Clearly it would require more than simply wishing something to happen.

Students of occultism may possess a clue. 20th century occultists such as Aleister Crowley have long realized that ceremonial magic is a process of presenting carefully constructed symbols, sounds, and sights to the mind. Ceremonial magicians assume that there is some mechanism by which these symbols act upon the mind in some "hidden", i.e. occult manner which causes the magician's desires to come into being.

Generally the idea is to define one's goal, then fill the ritual chamber with items that symbolize one's ultimate goal. A sorcerer looking to conjure up some money would decorate the room with symbols of money and prosperity. This author's guess is that many more people try this than succeed at it. One hears about rituals conducted with meticulous attention, which fail utterly. On the other hand, there are stories of curses and oaths made quickly in moments of singular emotional intensity which have spectacular results.

I should state categorically that Penrose and Hameroff in their article cited here do not claim that human beings are unknowingly orchestrating the entire universe. However the quantum state before collapse is nonlocal, that is not bound by space and time. Therefore is it not possible to affect events which are physically and temporally separated from oneself if they have not yet collapsed?

Hameroff and Penrose cite certain studies of people who have meditated regularly for years who report sensations of reality "flickering" in front of them, and their theoretical model predicts that as brain activity slows, the rate at which flux and collapse occurs also slows.

I propose that there is some technique, of a very specific nature, which allows for human beings to consciously control quantum effects. However occultists and parapsychologists have been led astray by the search for some medium by which this control could occur.

Occultists have spoken of "magical energy", "prana", or some such other nebulous concept. Astral bodies and disembodied spirits have also been considered culprits in magical acts. Yet attempts to isolate magical energy or bottle up a spirit have all been in vain.

I suggest the following reason for this failure: magical energy and spirits do not exist. Nor does prana or astral bodies. Correspondingly I deny the reality of a soul which floats away from the body like smoke after death.

If there is no soul, what does exist? Consciousness. Consciousness is not just the product of neurons and synapses, nor just of the actions of subatomic particles. It is the relationship between them. What we must look for is the relationship between things that continue to affect each other.

Remember one of the other great maxims of quantum physics: that two particles, once they collide, continue to affect each other instantaneously, no matter how separated they are. Those two particles are no different from any other particle of their type; their behavior is a function of their relationship to each other.

This insight is hardly original. We can find similar ideas echoing down the centuries. For example, the Pythagoreans saw a universe governed by harmonic relations expressed by numbers. This was thought to be demonstrated in a number of ways, in particular the relationship between musical chords and notes. Note that this does not specify a particular medium. What is difficult to grasp is that we are not concerned with the precise medium by which these vibrations travel or affect physical reality. The key is the relationship between things, not things in and of themselves.

How can we map these relationships? I mentioned before how the magicians of days gone by used a constellation of symbols to project their wills. The ancients thought that the use of these symbols represented a "sympathetic harmony" among the elements of the universe. Such ideas are discredited among orthodox scientists, but the study of memetics shows how some ideas propagate

themselves in our minds while others are discarded. The study of those ideas which resonate with us may indicate how to construct our own constellation of symbols to achieve specific goals. Perhaps such resonance also affects those parts of our brain which have quantum effects and can shape reality at a distance.

These ideas are, as I indicated in the title, preliminary. I regret not having secrets of the universe to impart to the reader, but discovering them promises to take a great deal of time. In fact, writing this article at all is an act of unmitigated gall as I am taking on a number of fields in which I have no formal training at all!

I have forged ahead in the hopes that those more qualified than myself may take up these questions. But do not think that I am dropping the subject entirely! I would hope that any abilities that these ideas may generate do not remain in the hands of a few self-styled experts, but empower any individual with the will and intelligence to make use of them. To use another old adage, the wizard's task is to know, to will and to dare.

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[15] South Solstice Message I (XXII)

- by Stephen E. Flowers V°

It has long been my contention, even before my Recognition to the V°, that a Magus Recognized by the Temple of Set owes an oath of loyalty to the Temple. The essence of this oath is rooted in the responsibility one bears as a part of the Task and Curse which is taken on in such a process.

A Magus of the Temple of Set should remain as a presence in the Temple in order to continue the Utterance within the Recognizing agency. At the same time the essence of the Work of a Magus is directed not toward the Recognizing agency but to the world.

There is therefore an inherent tension between the cutting edge of the Task of a Magus and his obligation to the Recognizing authority. With respect to this tension I have resolved to issue annual messages to be published in the Temple from the perspective of *Runa*. This is the way I have resolved to discharge my continuing obligation to the Temple.

Maze

The most arduous path is that of moderation. In Middle High German, the language of *Parzival* and the *Nibelungenlied*, there is a word for this: *maze* [pron. "MAH-ssuh"].

Maze - right measure in all things - is a chivalric virtue and must emit from a free and sovereign self. This sovereign self is the hidden focus of life for the Elect.

Maze requires the utmost discipline to enact. A discipline of asceticism or libertinism is relatively easy to enact because both are outer-directed. They take their cues from things outside the potentially sovereign self. Neither requires attention. Once the secret of penetrating to the subjective chamber of the self - where the doer sits enthroned - has been realized, a new life begins.

A method for achieving this is the work of *Runa*. One begins not to view "divinity" as an object, but to enact it as a subject of action - as the doer.

Early tests of this development toward sovereignty require rebellion against normatives: antinomianism.

The transformations which take place as a result of this rebellion can be made permanent by successfully making the transition into the next level of development, which is tested by a more subtle instrument.

The power that is required to complete this test and make previous benefits permanent is verified through the practice of *maze*. The most difficult path is that of *maze*. It is easy to say "no" to everything, or to say "yes" to everything - but most difficult to be able to alternately say "no" to some things and "yes" to others based on the judgment of a sovereign self for which all things are possible.

The strength of the Left-Hand Path is in its focus on self. Without this initial focus the goal of penetrating to the throne chamber of the self is not likely to be attained.

Yet the weakness of the Left-Hand Path is its cultivation of an over-abundance of self-interest. What was intended as a tool can become an object of blind worship. The symbol of Darkness ceases to be a matrix for the action of the self and becomes a fetish to be venerated for its own sake. The transition between antinomianism as a tool and *maze* as a sign of the sovereignty of the self fails.

Runa (*arcanum*) holds the key to a paradoxical mystery. The formula *reyn til Runa* (seek in the direction of the mysteries) is not a formula of universal revelation, but of universal direction which leads to individual revelations. The key fact underlying this formula is that the Mystery (*Runa*) is eternal and impenetrable. No symbol or sign can be conjured to consciousness to provide the key. No

self-deception or false-knowledge reveals it. We can only move toward it asymptotically.

This kind of development requires its own *maze* - the discipline to refrain from indulgence in *hubris* or despair as the subject moves eternally in the direction of *Runa*. Success on the path can only be observed indirectly, as a reflected power- as when a sovereign self practices *maze*.

Reyn til Runa

Runa-Raven

Runa-Raven has a variety of titles of Left-Hand Path interest: Don Webb's Seven Faces of Darkness (\$16.00), Dr. Flowers' Lords of the Left-Hand Path (\$36.00) and a number of other titles such as Runarmal I: The Runa-Talks (\$18.00). New titles are appearing regularly. Include \$1.50 for first book, and 50c for each additional book. Send orders to Runa-Raven, P.O. Box 557, Smithville, Texas 78957.

Announcement Concerning the Black School

The Black School, formerly run by Stephen Flowers, is hereby disbanded. Those interested in the curriculum of the School should write to Dr. Flowers at P.O. Box 7622, Austin, Texas 78713.

[16] Orion Awaits

- by Nigel Kay II°

Through those thrice-forgotten eyes I see the gates of now-distant breath of yesteryears, sealed with an ancient vow. A wretched swine amongst the pearls lies in death before the gates. In dying throes it reaches forth to be sealed in endless fate. But through those burning eyes I see a key to eternal change: chaos born, in void complete, where destiny forged its name, in dormant sleep yet seeing all. A shadow within steps forth. Orion awaits, its bastard child to rise up in the north.

[17] Midnight in a Grey Garden

- by Aaron Besson III°

Standing amidst these moments I cultivated by my own hand, I've come to see the bone of the matter that resides in each. I've grown many a dark epiphany in this grey garden that has reflected over the æons what I hold near and dear; for any that rot on the vine do so because they are unnecessary, and those I tend to do without. As I sow, so do I reap, lest a hand other than mine does it for me.

She comes and lays a pallid hand on my shoulder while I'm busy tending the fruits of my labor, cutting through this immersion that is the closest thing for love of the labor I know.

"Ready?" she asks.

I see the tilled, serious earth raised by my own intentions and ponder the seeds below them. If I accept the seduction of her word before they break the heavy womb in which they now become, they would forever remain a potential unclaimed, a deed undone, a quest with no step forward taken; and in this it would be as though they never were at all.

"Not yet," I whisper. The hand is gone, but the touch remains, and I return to my garden.

In nurturing the sprouts that now aspire to the dark sky above, I see what is my self in their climbing. I almost leave them to the winds of promise, but recall that promise has destroyed more than it ever made strong, so I remain in silent yet watchful vigil.

Her hand touches my shoulder again.

"Ready?" she asks.

The temptation wells up like a cold tempest within me, but then I think of how many times she must have said this before, this patient whore who loves all the same. I shrug off the hand although the touch still remains, and repeat the words that deny me to her and her to me: "Not yet."

And in my desire to see these fruits become as I, paradoxically I find that I must let them grow as they guide themselves. To do otherwise would not be creation, merely reproduction, and I've grown many a dark mirror already. I let go of them to aid them as they need and to watch them as they will.

Her hand touches my shoulder again.

"Ready," she says.

It is not a question this time.

I look upon what has grown by my hand and what I will never get to touch. I start to storm.

But then I think beyond these fruits of this garden and ponder the gardens yet sown. The storm resides, more silent than a heartbeat.

"Ready," I say, being surer in this utterance than ever a moment before.

So now I stand in this grey garden at midnight, so similar in ways forgotten yet different in ways I shall one day remember, and I look at the single black seed that rests in my hand and consider where to plant it.

Dedicated to myself and to Priest Anton Haddad

[18] On a Magical Diary in Xeper

- by Vesa Iitti III°

I recently asked four Setians I° if they kept a magical diary, and I found that only one of them did keep such. I thought that there probably are many new Setians who are not familiar with the tool of a magical diary. Because I think that a magical diary is a powerful tool for a magician, I decided to write about the reasons why I think it is highly useful for

a magician to keep a magical diary in pursuing *Xeper*.

Why are diaries usually kept? Most people do not keep a diary at all. Sally Sunshine keeps a diary because it is a good place to release suppressed emotions, confess dreams and fears, and because it is exciting to have her own secret record at times.

However Sally doesn't have any specific reason for keeping a diary. For her it is one hobby among others. She makes records to her pink book irregularly; sometimes it may be months between her notes. She seldom if ever reads her old diaries. If she happens to review them, it is not unheard of that she destroys them in disgust or shame. She has noted that the same subjects emerge again and again in a similar, predictable manner, and that she is most likely to write in her pink book when she is depressed.

Sally Sunshine is a typical uninitiated keeper of a diary. Like a common calendar her diary is something that just hangs around as time passes by, year after year, and nothing essentially changes in her life or her state of being.

Why are diaries kept by Black Magicians? Sofia Darkthrone has found that a magical diary can open strange and beautiful new worlds to her life, to her own being. She has found that in order to make time one of her servants, she has to create it for herself, to give it her own meaning, to charge it with her own magic, with her own goals. Sofia knows what Magus Crowley meant by saying that "without it (a magical record) you are in the position of a navigator with neither chart nor log".

Sofia is an exemplary Black Magician who keeps a diary. Like a common calendar, a diary is a tool that she uses in her becoming; in growing; in knowledge, power, and understanding, year after year. If you have kept a magical diary in pursuing your *Xeper*, you probably have made similar notes as Sofia.

A magical diary helps you to use time in your *Xeper*. A magical diary is a powerful tool in making time one of the magician's servants. By stating for yourself your goals, as well as the means and time-limits in attaining those goals, you charge time with your magic. As magicians we use time and space; we work through them.

By keeping a magical diary you keep a real book of victory of your individual will in the great war against the blind and chaotic forces of naturalization [supposing there to be such a victory]. By stating in a written form goals that are meaningful to you in your initiation, you have something concrete for yourself about your promises to work your will in the universe.

A magical diary and your oaths in it for yourself remind you of your highest priorities, and your

honor in pursuing your quest.

Your magical diary can tell you if you have worked in the direction you need to work in order to *Xeper*. Accordingly a magical diary is a very potent tool in preventing day-dreaming about your Initiatory progress, and it also helps in creating a strong magical memory - memory of your self as the highest governing factor in your life.

In keeping a magical diary, be sure to review it regularly. Around a new year or your birthday would be an ideal time to devote few days for careful reflection on your record from the previous year. You might be surprised how you thought about and experienced things one year earlier.

Reading a magical diary can offer you a powerful way to view your path of your becoming. It can offer you moments when you can truly say the Æonic formula *Xepera Xeper Xeperu*: "I have Come Into Being, and by the process of my Coming Into Being, the process of Coming Into being is Established." When you can truly say that formula, you will strengthen the path of your becoming by reviewing it from your current state of being.

By reading your magical diary again, you can see why and how things have turned out to be what they are. Knowing your past is vital in order to create willed change in the future.

As you review your magical diary, you will find how many sides of your being have Remanifested. You will learn them from their very beginnings, from their first manifestations all the way to their recent culminations.

All these things can help you to grasp the essential lessons of those processes, and they can inspire you to even greater efforts in order to *Xeper*.

As you review your diary, you can re-experience the intense moments of great insights, breakthroughs, and also some setbacks. As you review such processes you can get insights on how to use or prevent those patterns in future. What were the supportive conditions for your *Xeper*? What were not? By reviewing your magical diary, you will feel both pride from your achievements and humility from your limitations in a way that will inspire you to realistic and meaningful future Remanifestations.

A magical diary can reveal patterns that speak of your true will. It helps you to find the patterns of your life and of your true will. What kind of patterns you have? What are desirable, what not? Have they evolved? If not, how might you improve them? Have you have tried to keep up with some desired change for months or years without notable changes? If so, how might you get some desirable changes? Have you dreamed about something for months without actually doing anything about it? Have you had ideas about some new challenges but not yet tried them?

As you review your diary, you can find your true will. You will find out what you need to do, what is your vision of where to go, what to become. It helps you to learn about the dreams you desire to attain, and it also helps you to find the chief feature(s) that stand in your way to *Xeper*. Both are essential to know and work with.

A magical diary helps you to give order to your consciousness according to your will. It is your personal TS-1 reading list material. It can help you to know yourself.

This book is written by you, and you have written in it about your *Xeper*. The words in this book are yours. They have been created from your own efforts, thoughts, and experiences. We know that no one else can do our initiation for us, and similarly we know that words created by others are not words created by us. Words created by others are valuable in many ways. We can learn much from them, but ultimately we have to create our own paths as magicians from our very own point of creation: "The word of another is an affront to the self."

Our quests must come from within ourselves. We must name our subjective universes by our own genuine perceptions and efforts in our *Xeper*.

A magical diary helps you to give shape to your thoughts. It brings order to your consciousness. It helps you to lead your own life to more accurately reflect your will.

When you truly try to articulate what you think about things, what you dream about, how you have Come Into Being, and so forth, you push your limits of perception to more and more subtle realms. Remember that Set is the god of borderlands and of extension of existence.

By keeping a diary you learn to find and more effectively use the link between your self and words. When you succeed in bringing your deepest thoughts and feelings from the borderland of your mind, when you have sacrificed real efforts for your self, you have become a little bit more of an autonomous being. Words that you have succeeded in inscribing from your self can lead to the most powerful and transforming actions.

You can keep a magical diary in many ways. You can write to a fat, black, leatherbound diary with a special pen dedicated only to your diary; or you can write your diary with a computer. Choose a medium that gives you a feeling of magic, of importance of keeping a magical diary.

Your magical diary can be a strong weapon for a magician in his work. As it is with almost every practice, so it is with this one too. A regular practice makes you better in using the tool. Three to four times a week is a good pattern with which to begin.

The magician's perspective in keeping a magical diary is to find out what are his strong sides, what

are his weak sides, and how to work with them in order to gain more knowledge, power, and understanding - how to further one's *Xeper*.

You must consider perspective in keeping a diary. Don't write about all little things you've seen and heard, thought, or done during the day unless they are relevant to your initiation.

A magical diary can and should include records of normal daily things. It doesn't have to be restricted to recording of workings or dreams. As your magic is not meant to be an alternative, escapist universe, so you should be able to see a reflection of your magic in your life in general.

Keep a magical diary about conclaves, local meetings, travels, everyday life. In keeping a magical diary, write about all aspects of your life, but keep a magician's rationale for keeping a diary in mind.

May your Neheh be filled with thoughts and deeds of *Xeper*!

[19] The Glass Bead Game

- by Patty Hardy IV°

A few years ago I began a general survey of African magical traditions, with an eye to discovery of Left-Hand Path ideas "upstream" on the Nile.

One of the first things I looked at was descriptions of divination practices, such as *Ifa* divination and *dilogun* (cowrie divination). While surviving traditions on both sides of the Atlantic reserve the full lore for their initiates, both outsiders and initiates have written up some material for the public. I especially enjoyed Bascom's *Sixteen Cowries*, which came into being when an elderly Nigerian, surrounded by scornful young monotheists and seeing no hope of teaching mouth-to-ear, chose to recite divination verses for the tape recorder of a foreigner.

During of a trip to South Carolina's Sea Islands, where I searched for bits of ancestral magic, I visited Setians in the Charleston area. We discussed cycles of Remanifestation as represented by the ram's spiral horn (which partakes of the secret of ϕ) and discussed problems in comparing traditional and "mathemagical" approaches to divination. Dialogue is the purpose of an LHP academy.

I realized that Remanifestations of the original impulse or flash of the Black Flame might only vaguely resemble forms left by earlier manifestations despite hints of essential continuity.

I decided to look beyond the specific practices. I considered the qualities cultivated by the practices and the formation of categories used by the *psyche*. Such cognitive categories are a function of nature, experience, and need. Those mental qualities and categories are faces of the "prism" that transmits

and splits the Black Light. As I pursued this, I noticed that the structure of both divination and games of strategy mirrored these categories.

This discovery came about indirectly. The course of my inquiry is best explained using a model of initiation introduced last year to the Order of the Trapezoid. Briefly: That model defines “dimensions” to describe an activity pursued for initiatory growth: cultural depth, acquisition context, and dialectic.

“Cultural depth” refers to how long a system has been “out there”. It covers three broad realms: “traditional” (the system comes with a school to maintain it), “neo-traditional” (the school is in formation; founder(s) are still around), and “operant” (the magician is creating the system).

Acquisition context has implications for how deeply the ideas become embedded in the magician’s mind-brain complex. Here the realms are “ontogenic” (it’s embedded in your culture and your childhood), “ethnographic” (you sought out instructors), or “phenomenal” (your point of contact is through books, stories, or symbols).

Finally “dialectic” refers to the play of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis that the magician undertakes and experiences in the work. Those interested can find the “Constellation of the Trapezoid” paper in *Runes* #XV-1, March 1997.

This model allowed me to frame my problem concisely. I did not want to end up disputing with *babalawos* over the legitimacy of teaching women *Ifa* divination, or offer a chicken for initiation into the mysteries of the cowrie shells. No ethnographic-traditional work for this Black Magician! Amazing how a label clarifies these problems ...

Well, that is not quite true. I’d gone as far as calling on my ancestors to give me a sign regarding divination with four cowries, as suggested by Awo Fa’lokun Fatunmbi in his book *Awo*. The subsequent chain of events put me, by “coincidence”, at the *Egungun* (Ancestor-Spirit) festival in Oyotunji Village, a Yoruba center in South Carolina. Still I knew I was looking in the wrong place, that the RHP keepers of these mysteries would not be happy to have me trotting about like a wild buffalo bellowing about philosophy while others were sacrificing to the *orisha*.

I could not take that path; I would have to take another. Hadn’t the same chain of events had put me in Charleston and revealed things about Remanifestation and time geometry? These were matters neo-traditional and even operant, conveyed in an ethnographic context: the Temple itself. If there were some secret of African magic pertinent to my initiation, it would communicate itself in a form appropriate to the first century of the Æon of Set.

I decided to turn my back on things deemed holy and look at another activity with mathematical facets: “count and capture” games. *Mancala* is the simplest version. People have played these games in Africa for at least four thousand years, and today it is played in the Middle East, parts of Asia, and in the West Indies. I myself knew no one who played it. So like any self-respecting mad scientist, I taught myself *oware*, a West African variation, playing against a computer. It was amazing how a childhood of playing chess initially disrupted my ability to play *oware*. After being thrashed several times by the software at its dumbest setting, I saw what was happening - and then I began winning games.

[The Constellation of the Trapezoid model in its present form doesn’t address the initiatory implications of hooking into an ancient tradition through computer gaming. That’s a nit. Print had big impact on the way humans think and learn; computer simulations and multimedia will cause changes of their own.]

Eventually I flew to London, where I viewed the Museum of Mankind’s exhibit of 100+ *mancala* game boards from the British Museum. There I played a game of *oware* with my mate. Nearby was a carved image of one of the most famous players of the game. Shyaam aMbul aNgoong was a Central African king who introduced a version of the game to his people to discourage gambling and reward forethought. Months earlier I had seen a picture of that statue in a book on math and culture, and penned an imaginary conversation with this king. For me that put it over the top. It was a unique reward. That is characteristic of the LHP; your epiphany will not be my epiphany.

The museum guard, who had played the game from childhood and spoke with a West Indian accent, thought we were both terrible duffers.

Returning to the categories of thought: the *odu* of *Ifa* and *dilogun*, and the trigrams of the *I Ching* - both created by counting “random” events - seem to be quantitative entities that gain qualities by dint of naming a phase in a process. The runes, which are “randomly” cast, seem to be qualitative entities. Any quantitative aspect, such as exists in the ordering of the *Futhark*, is subtle.

This difference seems to be reflected in certain games of strategy. *Go* and chess are games played for “terrain” (the board’s grid), but the pieces of *Go* are uniform while the pieces of chess differ in form and function. *Oware*, *bao*, *omweso* and other *mancala*-type games of Africa are count-and-capture games having uniform pieces whose travel and captures are both numerically defined.

[The Tarot refuses to fit neatly into this formulation. I can think of no “strategy” card games purely dependent on skill; all use shuffling to

randomize the deck.]

Why should there be any link between a divination technique based on the toss of sticks, staves, coins or shells and a game of strategy having no random element?

One can tune a guitar in many ways, and for any given method end up with an instrument that easily plays one set of melodies while others are tricky. The games taught to young children, the languages they acquire, and even the sights disclosed to their eyes shape the structure of the nervous system. Knowledge gained in this way is ontogenic.

Magicians reject determinism in the design of their subjective universes. Still this unconscious architectural influence of ontogenic knowledge shouldn't be underestimated in oneself or in others.

Because of this the elements or possibilities chosen for discernment of the future are apt to resemble the elements used to think and plan everyday life. Strategy games are a toy version of everyday life, used to entertain and in many cases to train the mind. The strategists of ancient China and the warrior class of Japan favored *Go*. Hindu nobility viewed excellence at chess as the sign of a subtle leader. In Uganda traditional rites of ordination called for a new king to play a game of *omweso*. Elders watching his play judged his potential for statesmanship.

When I heard of a Setian learning to play *Hnefatafl*, a Viking strategy game, I mentioned these things and asked if *Hnefatafl* had a similar function. He promptly cited the *Rigsthula* confirming that it was a royal accomplishment and part of the education of a noble's child.

The intent of this article is not to send Setian parents down to the local game shop or wave a flag for ethnic magic. Rather awaken when a problem frustrates you, and put on your initiatory thinking-cap. ("Awake!") Search for the unconscious mental fetters that narrow your view of your options, just as I searched out how the strategies of chess affected learning to play *oware*. ("See!") Act on the options you discover to extend your initiation. ("Act!") The sign of magical success on the LHP is the unique reward.

Learn too the tactic of discovering things through indirect means - in this case, through a seemingly profane tradition rather than an esoteric one. Astronomers, the other folks who know when the sky becomes an entrance rather than a barrier, use techniques like this all the time - "averted vision", "occultation", and such. Your hobby or profession probably has similar tricks, where a little thought will disclose initiatory applications. One of my fellow Setians calls this "abduction" - stealing a good idea from one context and putting it to work in another.

Finally, use the Temple to set forth your ideas and hear what other Setians say. That's why you pay the dues every year, right?

[20] From the Well of Pythia

The Psychology of a Setian's Possible Entertainment

- by Tony Pizzini II°

The Music of Upper and Lower Egypt (Rykodisc, 1988). The title might lead one to believe that this is a recording of every piece of Egyptian music there is. Such is not the case. Closer to the mark might have been "Some Music of ..." 45 minutes worth (still adds up to 9) of folk music recorded by Mickey Hart, during the Grateful Dead's Egyptian tour in the fall of 1978. Hart has shown an extraordinary interest over the years in the musics and instruments of many cultures through his books and field recordings such as this. He presently heads up a project at the Smithsonian Institution cataloguing, restoring, and in some cases releasing on CD/cassette historic recordings made of the music of indigenous peoples. This recording was made on Mosquito Island, Aswan; later, when re-released on CD, two more recordings made in Alexandria were added. The pieces here are very rhythmic and contain vocals, percussion, and reed instruments. Marriage, birth, death, cultivation, harvest, etc. are the general subject matter. Note: This is not "ancient ritual music" with terrifying, thunderous invocations to Set or Anubis, nor any sistrums shaken in the service of Ast. However it is exotic and short enough not to fall asleep to.

John Foxx, *Metamatic* (Virgin/Metal Beat, 1980). For those Setians who enjoy Techno, this slightly hard-to-acquire CD/record (John is re-releasing it and others on his own label even as we seek) will come as a pleasant surprise as well as a history lesson. After leaving the band Ultravoxs, swinger/keyboard player Foxx recorded this first album at a time he says he was reading "entirely too much J. G. Ballard". It is claimed that this is the first British electronic pop recording (this is the guy Gary Numan lifted his sound from) and from what I can tell it's probably true. Before Depeche Mode, Heaven 17, Psychic TV's "Jack the Tab", this album, composed of stark, spare, eerie synth lines (reminiscent at times of a theremin) and metallic Kraftwerk-like drums, was combined with Foxx's hyper-detached, oddly-inflected (but very English) vocals and intelligent, obtuse lyrics that lend a nearly cinematic quality. He never made another one like this, moving off in a more commercial direction afterward. At the present time, he designs weirdly beautiful book covers for Bullfinch's (as in *Mythology*) as well as Salman Rushdie (*The Moor's*

Last Sigh). He has released CDs in the last few years, but in the US at least, they are difficult to come by.

Heart, "The Night" (on the CD *Brigade*, Capitol, 1990). Heart's only Vampyre song. Rocks hard, has dark lyrics, and has a track buried in the mix near the song's end that is either a sampled backward vocal or is simply a heavily-treated instrument (you tell me). And to top it off, instead of Heart's regular publisher "Strange Euphoria", this one's handled by "The Nine". No, I didn't make any of this up.

Yothu Yindi, *Birrkuta* (Wild Honey), (Mushroom, 1996). Their name means "Mother and Child"; the band is made up of *Yolngu* (Aboriginal) musicians from Northeast Arnhem Land, in Australia's Northern Territory, specifically the coastal communities of Gove Peninsula. This is their newest recording, and I found it almost impossible to track down (their second, *Tribal Voice*, is widely available). Not just another rock band with a didgeridoo, this is something very different. Mandawuy Yunupingu, the group's main singer/songwriter is also a school teacher, and is very involved in cultural education. The songs on Yothu Yindi recordings generally alternate between short traditional music of the *Gumatj* and *Rirratjingu* clans performed on didg and sticks (sometimes with vocals) and original songs. These are sung in English for the most part and carry a political message (obviously their viewpoint). The music is a bit more intricate than found in most rock and is very danceable. I spoke with Douglas Pearce (Death in June) recently, and he says they just "ripped off Talking Heads' sound"! Not very flattering, but it gives you an idea of what they sound like. Their CD booklets, besides presenting song lyrics, go some distance toward enlightening the listener about *Yolngu* life. On *Birrkuta* there is a wonderful description of the gathering of wild honey at a certain time every year and its philosophy which is centered around the god *Barama* (who sounds slightly Set-like). They have a fascinating website that takes a while to load, but is filled with interesting material: www.yothuyindi.com

Morphine Angel, *Lovenest & Murderfest* (Delinquent, 1997). Brooding, aggressive, Gothic Darkness (with hints of punk). I understand their name is a reference to the Greek Morpheus, god of dreams; the second half of this CD, *Live in Athens*, certainly conjures a cavernous, nightmarish landscape. This is the band's second release, their first being "Project Isa," which I have not heard. Priest Paul McAtee is bass player, although he also contributes some vocals, guitars, keyboard and drum programming. Priest Tim McGranahan also contributes a hellish sound collage (One Way

Elevator) as an intro to *The Pit*. And if that's not enough, Thomas Thorn of The Electric Hellfire Club puts in an appearance on O.G.G.! The band covers 45 Grave's *Partytime* and does a fine job there as well. The sound of this band lies somewhere between *Sisters/Wake* and *Killing Joke/Ministry*.

Faust (Film, directed by Jan Svankmajer, Czechoslovakia, 1994). This is the strangest thing I've seen in a long time. It's a modern retelling of the Faust legend. It is in English, features Czech actor Petr Cepek, and is part live action with stop-motion and part claymation! After being given a map on the streets of Prague, a man is led to an abandoned theatre where he finds and reads aloud from a copy of Goethe's *Faust*. This is when the fun starts. He unwittingly summons a devil in the form of a huge marionette, who leads him into becoming one of Goethe's characters (Dr. Faustus). The marionettes (Satan, god, a jester, *et al.*) go from stage to wilderness in the blink of an edit, and there are wonderful Black Magic rituals performed by the puppets/human, as well as a fully equipped alchemical workshop. Some of the strangeness could be compared to Terry Gilliam's films, except that this is shorter (80 minutes) and such things as the giant wood Satan-head tumbling down a forest path every time it is invoked (followed by God, from whose mouth tiny beings emerge) or a burning hay-wagon rolling through an attic are of a completely different order of strangeness. (Kino Video, 333 West 39th St., New York, NY 10018). This film is for rent in some areas; otherwise it sells for big money. Contact me care of the Executive Director if a copy for personal use is desired, and all roads lead nowhere.

[21] On Set

- by Vesa Iitti III°

Following is my answer to Adept Peter Andersson, who asked my view on Set to be used in his thesis on LHP in the university of Uppsala, Sweden.

For me Set is the Principle of Isolate Intelligence, who gave mankind the Gift of self-consciousness in prehistoric times in order to strengthen his own being, and in order to give mankind the possibility to self-conscious, individual existence.

Self-consciousness is a feature that separates human beings from the natural universe. Because of this feature we are able to take into consideration in our actions past, present, and future, to develop ideas about "good" and "evil", to give meaning and purpose to things, to affect the universe according to

our own will, and to experience existence as self-conscious individuals.

Whereas the natural universe is predictable, human beings have the possibility to act unpredictably, to be free beings. Set is the metamodel for such individual existence.

My relationship to Set is that of mutual respect in enhancing and exalting his Gift of self-consciousness. I do not pray nor worship Set. Set does not tell me what is "good" and "evil"; it is my own responsibility to reason ethical and other questions and to act according to that reasoning. I take full responsibility for my actions.

When I communicate with Set, I do not lose my individuality, but become strengthened by him in my self-consciousness and initiatory (self developing) work. As a Priest of Set I seek to enhance the possibility for individual, self-conscious, autonomous potential of mankind to actualize within the Temple of Set, and without it as well as appropriate. This does not include any kind of converting; by its very nature a need for individual self-betterment must come from within an individual himself. No one can do such a work for others, only for oneself.

The reality of Set is not based on mere knowledge or on mere intuition. It is based on both, but it is essentially, via rationally-based intuition, my own conscious efforts to understand my own self, via my own conscious efforts to Come Into Being as a more perfect, more autonomous individual, that I have experienced the Principle, that it has become necessary for my own Initiation (self development process) and self-understanding.

Set will not be known to those who try to approach him with blind faith or with strict scientific method. The possibility to come to know Set will arise only through exercise of one's own will, rationally based honest inquiry on one's own self and on Set as the metamodel for self-conscious, autonomous, individual being.

One of our senior Initiates wrote a good summary about the nature of Set:

- I. Set is the Principle of Isolate Intelligence.
- II. It is dynamic (evolving).
- III. Its purpose is self-maintenance, expansion, and perpetuation. This is its only good - otherwise it is beyond good and evil.
- IV. It is not omnipotent; it must work for the changes it causes.
- V. It is not omniscient; it must work to see objectively.
- VI. Its Gift of self is perfect (complete).
- VII. It can inform or "teach" those possessed of its quality.

VIII. To give more (if possible) would be to take.

IX. The presence of the Gift in us (flesh) is necessary to the evolution of the Principle of Isolate Intelligence.

Great is the Might of Set, greater still he through us.

Xeper.

[22] A Noble of Set has Fallen

- by David Ondrejko II°

Priest Anton S. Haddad, *Xepera En-Set*, Sentinel of the Nephren-Ka Pylon of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has passed from his earthbound existence. He was a well-respected member of the local occult community, often giving lectures and seminars at one of the area's occult bookstores. A *sibok* in Shaolin Kung Fu, he taught classes regularly in both Kung Fu and Tai Chi, and was working on a specifically Setian form of martial arts, incorporating the use of runes. He was well-loved by all of the members of the Nephren-Ka Pylon, and also by the many Setians worldwide who had a chance to meet this remarkable man. His presence on this plane will be greatly missed.

Hail Set! Hail *Xepera En-Set*! Hail Priest Haddad!

[23] A Song of the Seeker

- by Duncan McPherson I°

"Never tomorrow, never today," the dybbuk sings to the lonely soul. Clouds collect the winter's toll, and hearts are bled and marked and weighed.

The lie of truth that plugs the mind and binds the spirit and kills our time preserves us like the dead in lime and knows not how to grasp nor find.

The self that climbs beyond the brood and seeks to sing of heights unsung will dare to risk that self unstrung, the fall from grace to maggot's food.

If selfhood is the goal of kings, then one must strive to be undone, and chance that they might come to shun the self that knowledge dares to bring.

The bliss that many advocate, that many seek through death to live, has nothing blissful yet to give, except a null entropic state.

But those who relish their creation, pain and ecstasy and thought, cannot allow their minds be bought by those made mad by salvation.

Never a moment exists forever. The goal sings true to the seeker's ear. Nothing exists that we should fear. A way persists beyond the never.

In reason, in willed experiment, through raw experience we find a path eternal for our minds beyond the world of cerement.

[24] Concerning Setian Ethics

- by Don Webb V°, High Priest of Set

The Temple of Set seeks to facilitate experiences that allow the seeker to achieve a sense of sovereignty.

Any group that stresses that sort of self development will have its ethics and practices scrutinized by the profane world, and will be subject to rumor and innuendo from the profane world.

This is understandable on two counts. The non-Elect man will resent that which he cannot have, and the practice of magic in the service of self-development is perhaps the most rarely-possessed of human virtues. Additionally in a world that is continually increasing its images of empowerment, but restricting true access to power, a great social and political backlash against those seeking self-empowerment is inevitable.

This essay touches on the nature of Setian ethics, and is dedicated to those who retain enough flexibility of mind to understand it.

Setian ethics are necessarily relativist, as one would expect in a school that prizes individuality as one of the supreme virtues. Nevertheless there are common themes of Setian ethical practice.

Like all human beings Setians are engaged in the basic quest for self-defense and happiness, and to ensure by political means those rights the society they live in grants to its members as a prerequisite to the practice of modern civilization. Beyond this Setians engage in certain ethical and political behavior for the enhancement of their Becoming.

The first of these, the practice of antinomianism, is a method to avoid blind obedience to incoming signals.

The models of initiation in the Right-Hand Path and the Left-Hand Path are different. The model in the Right-Hand Path is the reception of outside signals from another human source to relieve the anxiety of freedom. "Sir, I am ready for my orders, Sir!" They can march off at once.

Often these orders are not phrased as commands; they can be inherent, such as choosing a symbol system that encodes dependency.

The Left-Hand Path practitioner engages in symbolically distancing himself from those signals that, while pretending to represent the cosmic good, are merely expressions of sentimental attachments to cultural norms. The Left-Hand Path may even begin with such seemingly childish behaviors as the Black Mass, Black Seder, or making fun of Elvis.

This opposition leads to learning not to blindly obey signals coming in from the outside.

Some signals are good - red lights are pretty high on my list - and some signals are bad. What

the LHP person has to do is understand what is really going on.

Because of this aspect of our practice, the Left-Hand Path draws a great deal of hatred from such individuals who are incapable of understanding good and evil on a philosophical basis, but merely on the symbolic basis ("I knew he was a good man, Pa; he was wearing a white hat.")

This leads to the specter that the Setian faces daily of angry villagers with torches ready to storm his castle. This image, which has occasionally become a fact in the lives of some of our members, is one that that can provide a great sense of exhilaration and wakefulness to the Setian practitioner.

It is easy to understand that in such an environment a Setian would keep his nose clean out of enlightened self-interest.

But Setian ethics are not merely the negative avoidance of that which is illegal, but a guideline for creating certain initiatory and social states.

Setian ethics flow from a crucial blend of self-love and strong dissatisfaction at one's current level of being. This mixture, which creates a desire for Becoming, must express itself in a carefully chosen relationship to the social matrix and in self-created environments of philosophical discourse, primarily with other Setians but also with the world at large and tapping into the vast legacy of mankind's philosophical systems.

Setians are very much creatures of the world engaging with their fellow man in the process of discovery as well as trying to earn an honest dollar. Setians on the whole prefer the city and its bustle for the opportunities it brings us for knowledge of mankind; in this we are like the figure of Socrates in the *Phaedrus*, using the healing influences of the country only as needed palliatives to body and soul. The "survivalist" aesthetic is not ours.

Setians of all levels of initiation actively seek chances to improve their world. We see as lacking in other philosophies the notion that one should wait until one "has it all figured out". Setians learn by doing, acting intentionally in an awakened state.

The quest for political understanding and action based on expanding self-awareness is the fundamental mode of the Setian's interaction with society, just as the mode of philosophical inquiry is his primary mode of examining the contents of his mind.

The habit of philosophical doubt not only does not justify lack of commitment in fundamental matters of social action, it requires such action in order to increase the alertness, self- and other-knowledge, and power and security of the Setian. Action in the human realm is shared with our fellow humans by the media of dialectic and reason.

The Left-Hand Path is a training ground for sovereignty. The sense of sovereignty is a rare sense in the world, and, as Socrates could tell you with hemlocked breath, not without a certain amount of criticism. An understanding both of these principles and of one's self-determined ethical guidelines should increase as one develops.

The Setian strives to increase four areas in his life: **freedom, access to knowledge, scope and nature of opportunity, and beauty of environment.** Let us examine each of these briefly:

Freedom is the state where the Setian is faced by choices that will determine future states of being. Freedom does not mean choices between two types of soda; it means difficult choices that shape the self as much as a chisel shapes marble.

Access to knowledge is the ability to find both living teachers and those treasuries of data wherein the products of the human mind are kept. An essential aspect of Setian philosophy involves taking inventory of what is available in the self and the environment for self creation. The use of existing material, rather than having to create each form of knowledge by the self, is essential.

Scope and nature of opportunity is the Setian quest for power and creativity. Setians pride themselves on new ideas and practices that they bring to the world. This is a form of the Setian ideal of self deification. This form of enlivened self-interest has as its goal the transformation of the business of life from a grueling job to a species of play.

Beauty of environment is not simply sought by the Setian for hedonistic/aesthetic reasons. For magical reasons the Setian surrounds himself with objects, sounds, and works of art that remind him of what he is seeking to become. This practice of beautifying the world as a form of aesthetic talisman aids Setians in their quest to become more awake and conscious of that into which they are trying to shape themselves.

Each of these endeavors becomes ethical in that the Setian must strive for others around him to achieve these things as well. This behavior is not done out of "altruism", which Setians understand as a "sacred lie" told to members of conventional religions in order to ensure their social conformity [and monetary support] in the lack of being able to make true ethical decisions based on self-gained wisdom.

These cooperative strivings are done for a twofold reason:

1. Magically if one is to work with a Principle on earth, one must identify with what that Principle would find pleasing. Setians, who do not worship Set in the sense of a conventional religion, show their sympathy with Set by loving what Set loves.

2. Practically each of these fields works only in opening the door for the many, not just the self.

Freedom can only be had if others are free. Working toward "total power" over others is as chaining as allowing others to have power over you. Dictators and tyrants aren't free people, merely busy ones.

Access to knowledge requires defending free-speech issues, raising money for local libraries, creating stipends for elderly philosophers and scholars, and thousands of other tasks from which civilization arises.

Scope and nature of opportunity is dependent on the creative and free actions of as many people as possible. Only in a society where such positive social chaos can be permuted and encouraged do new opportunities arise.

Beauty of environment requires community action as soon as the scale of aesthetics includes preserving old buildings or commissioning a statue - or, for those wishing to take on larger concerns, the preservation of certain rare and beautiful species of animals and plants.

Having examined the arenas of action in which the typical Setian will pursue world-change as a precursor and tool for self-knowledge and self power, we should look at the ethical relation of Setian to Setian.

In order to foster discourse, the Setian is expected to approach such inquiries with civility, tolerance, and the active signs of a magical curiosity toward the unknown. There are few ties of allegiance beyond this.

If Setians achieve a demonstrable level of magical and philosophical competence, it has been seen that they turn their skills toward the school's aid in voluntary manners unique to their own genius. This is a personal expression of *Therapeia* or reciprocal service, much as someone might shine his magical mirror [or other physical tool].

This great virtue is not demanded from on high, and exists as another means for the Setian to make sacred his experience, and integrate his hard-won philosophical gleanings into the matrix of his life. The randomness and genius of such virtue are part of Set's working to give the Temple any number of avenues to expand in at a given time.

One lifelong secret of the sense of sovereignty is the sense of dignity of self. Dignity of self arises in finding an area of your unique creation and rediscovering yourself in hard work in that area.

Becoming as godlike as one can on this world is not easy, and the royal art of magic - despite what you may have read in occult literature - is the most difficult thing for humans to do well.

Having discussed individual and group ethical actions that flow from the Setian philosophy, the

question arises whether the Temple of Set has any political agenda.

The answer is no. Other than maintaining its existence in the many countries where it now flourishes, the Temple is apolitical. If the Temple were to endorse a particular party or political philosophy, it would be removing freedom of choice from those who use it as a school. If the Temple itself desired temporal power, it would merely be a target to those forces of resentment mentioned above.

We will in our quiet and rather demanding way continue to train philosopher-kings in a manner that leads them to the ethical basis needed for true self rule. That such beings will become movers and shakers in the world is inevitable, and that most who try to master the training will not is likewise as inevitable.

We not only keep our nose cleaner than any number of conventional religions, we can say with assurance - but not with intent - that we make the world better by passing through it.