

# Red Rûna



Stephen Edred Flowers

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Shorter Works Vol. IV  
(1987 – 2001)

Stephen Edred Flowers

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## Introduction

Many of the contributions to this volume were originally written for publications within the Temple of Set. There was generally no rhyme or reason as to the subject matter, they mostly represent things which might have caught my fancy as I was doing research on other projects. Each of the contributions has in many ways been edited for a more general readership, corrections have been made, and in many cases the article has been expanded and substantially revised.

The article entitled “Offshoots and Parallels of the Lords of the Left-Hand Path” was originally written as the eleventh and final chapter of the book *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*. (Rûna-Raven, 1997). This chapter was not used in the final version of the book because it seemed that there was a “disparity of magnitude” between the groups and philosophies discussed in the other ten chapters and the ones analyzed in this final chapter. However, there are some interesting ideas contained in this material, which will be found of interest. The text has been somewhat revised and updated since that which first appeared in 1993.

The impetus which lies behind the perhaps controversial document entitled “Contra Templum” is the continuing trend of my work being discussed in the context of Setian history and philosophy, when it often has little to do with that philosophy. The “sensationalistic factor” of connecting the object of their study to “Devil-Worship” is often too great a temptation to pass up. I realized that if I were not to make a positive statement to the contrary, scholars who were only looking at biographical details might not be to blame for their misapplications of emphasis. It is from this Need that the document arose.

Edred  
March 21, 2001  
Woodharrow

## Another Theory on the Origin of “Baphomet”

The name or formula "Baphomet" has played a significant role in the history of black magic in this century. It was the magical name or motto adopted by Aleister Crowley in the O.T.O., and was the name given to the sigil used by the Church of Satan.

The explanation of its name and form has been wrapped in controversy and speculation for centuries. This article will probably not put an end to it, but it may extend it into a more magical realm. We will mainly be concerned with the original meaning of the name, which was apparently first used in connection with the Knights Templar in the Middle Ages and not with the larger principle for which the name may stand.

Some matters connected with this question are discussed in a *Cloven Hoof* article (#III-11, November 1971) by then-Priest Michael Aquino. This article is printed with additional commentary in his monumental tome *The Church of Satan* (Appendix 28).

The principal source of my information for this article is Karl Frick, *Die Erleuchteten* (The Illuminati), which is a detailed history of “Gnostic-theosophical and alchemistic-Rosicrucian secret societies to the end of the 18th century.”

As is fairly well known, the name “Baphomet” comes into history as the name of an “idol” supposedly used by the Knights Templar in secret cult practices. These practices, which were largely reported by Templars while under torture, may be reviewed in any number of books.

Generally the Templars were said to have conducted blasphemous sexual rites in which the symbols of the Church were mocked, inverted, and desecrated-pretty

usual clerical projections of the time (early 14th century). At one point in the proceedings during which a knight was initiated into the secrets of the Order, an idol was supposed to be removed from a shrine and placed on the altar. This object was variously described as a double-headed bust (with a death's head on one side and that of an old man with a long white beard on the other), or as an androgynous being. The various descriptions always seem to have a common characteristic of being dualistic symbols, or better said, symbols of the integration of a bipolar model. This, of course, would fit with the Manichaeic/Gnostic form of heresy, which was probably practiced by the Templars.

In addition to his idol, or sometimes in place of it, the initiate is shown a stone tablet which was taken from inside the altar. On one side of the tablet there was apparently some type of figure. Because this particular feature does not fit with the usual "idol fixation" of the Inquisitors, it has, in my opinion, a higher probability of reflecting some genuine aspect of Templar ritual.

In any case, the object was also consistently referred to as a "talking head." This is interesting when viewed from within the context of Templar iconography. Their patron saint was John the Baptist, whose severed head was perhaps supposed to inform them of secret knowledge. This corresponds to the heathen myth of the head of Mimir, which informed the god Godan/Odhinn.

But what could this stone tablet have shown or contained? There has been a magical square consistently connected with the Templars:

S	A	T	A	N
A	D	A	M	A
T	A	D	A	T
A	M	A	D	A
N	A	T	A	S

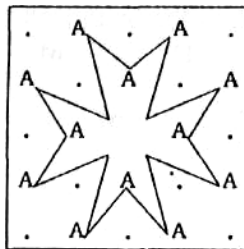


The interpretation of this square, as it relates to the Templars, had remained a mystery until a solution was provided in a little-known 1931 contribution by Count von Hardenberg entitled “Rosenkranz und Bafomet”. By the way this same magical square also appears in chapter 3 of *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*.

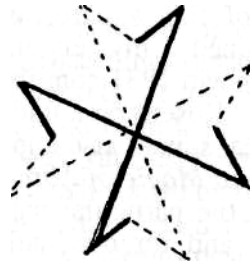
Hardenberg noted the particular pattern formed by the “A”s in the square and removed all the other letters, leaving also the apparently centrally located “B”:

.	A	.	A	.
A	.	A	.	A
.	A	B	A	.
A	.	A	.	A
.	A	.	A	.

These two letters will be recognized by the Cabalist as the primal letters of creation B-A. But additionally, and more formally, Hardenberg noticed the “A”s gave a pattern familiar to all Templars: the “Maltese Cross.”



This was the form of cross used by the Order. What is stranger it that this figure is called “the talking head” (*das redende Haupt*) in the language of heraldry. This symbol has also been interpreted as a pair of counter-directed swastikas—a symbol known in heraldry as the *fyrfos* or “fire whisk”.



Here are already several magical connections: the primal creative fire to the “fyrfos” (under the name “talking head”), and these to the general exoteric sign of the Order: its cross.

In this context Hardenberg gives a solution to the name “Baphomet” as a Latin phrase *B A fomitem habemus*: “from the letters B and A we have the igniter of fire” (from Latin *fomes*: “touchwood, tinder” used to ignite fires).

This could have been quite naturally referred to with the short forms “*BA fomes*” or “*BA fomit*” (= Baphomet). This ties directly into the *fyrfos* symbol.

But what about the other letters of the quadrate?

S	.	T	.	N
.	D	.	M	.
T	.	(B)	.	T
.	M	.	D	.
N	.	T	.	S

Curiously enough (!) these are the initials of the official name of the Order: “Solomnis templum novum dominorum Militiae Templorum”.

This solution to the origin of the formula “Baphomet” may only be another piece in the overall riddle of the Templars, but it does seem to ring true in many respects. It is abstract enough to have thrown the Inquisitors off the track, but there are enough corroborative aspects to make it more than mere mystical conjecture. To us it has the added advantage of placing the Templars more firmly than ever in the camp of the Black Magicians of history.

Linguistically it could be noted that the pronunciation often heard [bafomay], taking into account modern French rules of pronunciation, are not valid for Old French, the common language of the Templars of France. [Bafomet] was the old pronunciation. It should also not go unnoted that in Old French, foreign, especially Arabic, words which began with the [m]-sound, were often heard and written with initial “B”s— so that the name “Baphomet” may be nothing more or other than the Old French rendering of Mafomet (= Mahomet, Mohammed). This interpretation is duly noted by Idries Shah in his book *The Sufis*. On page 254 of that book he also offers the idea that “Bafomet”:

...could well be a corruption of the Arabic *abufimat* (pronounced in Moorish Spanish something like *bufihimat*). The word means “father of understanding.” In Arabic, “father” is taken to mean “source, chief seat of,” and so on. In Sufi terminology, *ras el-fahmat* (head of knowledge) means the mentation of man after undergoing refinement— the transmuted consciousness.

## Egypt and Reincarnation

In reading popularized “new age” works, it seems to be one of those facts-taken-for-granted that the ancient Egyptians believed in reincarnation and had a doctrine similar or identical to the Indian doctrine of *karma*. In the history of ideas the most probable reason for this assumption is that India and its apparently-exotic religious teachings and the mysteries of Egypt came into western European consciousness at approximately the same time, i.e. in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Actually Egyptian ideas have remained extremely obscure when compared to the knowledge gained about the breadth and depth of Hindu and Buddhist religion and philosophy. Of course, the main reason for this is that the Indian systems, with their ultimate ideological roots in the now-over-four-thousand-year-old tradition of the *Rig Veda*, still constitute living and continuing systems of thought and belief, while the Egyptian systems died out almost two thousand years ago.

The Rosetta Stone only began to be deciphered in 1822, and it would take close to a hundred years of work by many scholars even to begin to understand the Egyptian ideas contained in the Egyptian texts written in hieroglyphic and demotic scripts. The nineteenth century British Egyptologist, E. A. Wallis Budge, for example, generally considered the ancient Egyptians to be something just this side of savages. His conclusions on the philosophical content of their spiritual achievements reflect this prejudice. This attitude was common among his British contemporaries.

In the time between the “discovery” of mysterious Egypt by post-medieval Europe and the development of scholarly and “attitudinal” sophistication which allow for a clearer vision of what the ancient Egyptians actually thought and believed, the public hunger for knowledge of the secrets of the Nile was fed on a variety of Indian, Judeo/Christian,

and Hellenic intellectual material. This, and a number of factors indigenous to the Egyptian intellectual world, e.g. the virulent suppression of the cult of Set and the rejection of that god by the Egyptians during and after the XXVth Dynasty, have made the recovery of true Egyptian philosophy more difficult than it might at first appear.

Although we are not in any way interested in any sort of “neo-Egyptian religion.” Such a reconstruction would be an exercise in pure imagination, as the organic culture which created these ideas is dead. Nevertheless many investigators do have various levels of interest in seeking to understand the truth and essence of the Principle of Isolate Intelligence as manifested in the historical Egyptian cultural context. To that end, and with the employment of the most refined lenses provided for by the Gift of that Principle, we should explore the most sophisticated and refined ideas in current Egyptology.

The most current expression of academic Egyptology on an encyclopedic scale is the recently-completed *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* in eight volumes published by Harrassowitz in Germany. This work contains the most reliable, unprejudiced current “last word” on practically any subject having to do with Egypt.

It might be interesting to see what the *Lexikon* has to say about the topic of reincarnation. In the German language article on “reincarnation,” or the transmigration of souls, we read:

*Seelenwanderung* (metempsychosis): Herodotus maintains that the Egyptians believed in a transmigration of souls (II,123), other ancient writers followed him in this.(1) Egyptian sources do not confirm Herodotus’ statement, the whole conception of the Egyptian realm beyond (*Jenseits*) [see, *Leben und Tod* (Life and Death article in the *Lexikon*] actually contradicts the idea of a transmigration of souls. Herodotus’ report could be based on the conception that the dead man [or his “soul”] could appear in animals, e.g. snakes, crocodiles, falcons. This belief cannot, however, be characterized as metempsychosis.

This article, together with other circumstantial evidence, points to the facts more clearly. Because the Greeks, like all their Indo-European cousins (the Celts, Germanics, and Indians), all had some esoteric lore concerning metempsychosis, their historians and ethnographers would typically project this belief onto other peoples wherever they thought such ideas might fit. Then, as is so typical even today, one authority (in this case Herodotus) was taken as the truth and copied as an authority *ad infinitum* throughout the centuries. This “evidence” could then later be combined with what is known of Hellenic and Indian belief on this subject to create an apparently-plausible Egyptian doctrine of “reincarnation.”

One of the most essential factors to keep in mind when looking at these doctrines and the beliefs of moderns about them is that exotic cultures, such as those represented by India and Egypt, are *received* in a certain way by western thinkers and believers. They are easily confused, or things which are believed about one “savage nation” are happily ascribed to all the others. This results in similar things being believed about India and Egypt—to nations which have little in common. The roots of Indian culture are the same as those of the European cultures, whereas the Egyptian culture has roots in Africa and the Middle East.

The time has long since come to wipe the slate clean on this and many Egyptological puzzles and to unlock them in the light of the latest scholarship and the light of reason—to rediscover the realities they might represent.

---

(1) E.g. Plutarch, *De Iside*, chapters 31 and 72, Diodorus I,98. Further literature provided in John Gwyn Griffith's *Plutarch's De Iside* (Cardiff, 1970), 545, note 7. Literature: Siegfried Morenz, “Ägyptische Ewigkeit des Individuums und indische Seelenwanderung” (The Egyptian Eternity of the Individual and Indian Metempsychosis) in *Asiatica, Festschrift für Friedrich Weller* (Leipzig: 1954), pp. 414-427 = *Religion und Geschichte* (Ed. Elke Blumenthal and Siegfried Hermann) (Cologne/ Vienna, 1975), pp. 214-230; John A. Wilson, *Herodotus in Egypt* (Leiden, 1970), p. 8ff.

## Natural *versus* Non-Natural Religion

We live in an age heavily influenced by the ideals of Romanticism. In this age, to say that something is “natural” is to equate it with something “good, right, and moral”— so saith the Gospel According to the Cereal Box (a contemporary American icon). For the most part this emphasis on the natural has been a positive development, and has been used as the chief battering ram against the edifices of monotheistic totalitarianism. But this can be considered only a provisional weapon in the fight to return to a more spiritual heritage. It seems that “Mother Nature” can be fairly easily substituted for “god the Father”— so easily, in fact, that we might suspect that “Mother Nature” is none other than “God the Father” in drag. Just as in our “Oprahized” and “Hillaryized” culture, “Big Brother” has been transformed into “Big Sista.”

Before we go on, two important concepts must be defined and their synonyms explained. *Natural* indicates that which is the product of regularly-occurring organic or mechanical processes in the objective universe. It might be worth pointing out that the word *natur-al* is derived from the past participle of the Latin verb *nasci*, “to be born.” This ultimately goes back to the Proto-Indo-European root *\*gen-*, “to give birth, beget.” The suffixed zero-grade of this root results in Old Latin *gnâsci* —> *nâsci*. In Germanic this root gives rise to words such as “kin” and “king.” This stem is also used in Latin-derived words such as “nation” (people sharing common ancestors) and “natal” (having to do with birth), “native” and “innate” (being inborn). All of these have to do with organic or physical relationships.

Many systems of thought have had no trouble distinguishing between the natural and non-natural. The ancient Greeks knew well the difference between *physis* (nature) and *psyche* (spirit). Modern German academic faculties have no problem drawing the distinction between the

natural Sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) and the Intellectual Sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) which we call the “Humanities.”

The Right-Hand Path essentially teaches that these two categories are illusions, and that in reality the two are identical. Its solution is to subordinate the “illusion” of self-awareness, of the psyche, to the “reality” of God, Nature, or whatever other objective model.

The Left-Hand Path solution is simpler. It teaches that the two categories we are capable of perceiving as being distinct from one another are in fact just that—distinct. The distinction is the result of the existence of the principle of isolate intelligence within the Universe, and the presence of the Gift of that Intelligence within individual members of the human species. The Left-Hand Path solution is then to cultivate and nurture this intelligence as a separate and unique quality, that it may Become. Becoming leads to individually-determined freedom.

In the history of religion and philosophy, we have seen many examples of how natural and non-natural systems can harmoniously interact with one another. In Japan, for example, we see how the native ancestral religion of Shinto has been supplemented by the introduction of the sometimes non-natural (and certainly non-native) Buddhism. The typical Japanese is today both Shinto and Buddhist. Each system fulfills a special function in the religious life, and provides a special set of religious options to the modern Japanese. Shinto puts a person in touch with the collective, eternal life-force and vitality coursing through the nation, while Buddhism provides a method of individual enlightenment— which may emerge on either the Right-hand or the Left-Hand Path.

The same thing can be seen in the philosophy of Plato. He did not think that all people should be trained in the fashion of his Philosopher-Kings. The traditions of the belief in the gods and goddesses of the Hellenic civilization were to be cultivated and continued; but beyond this there was to be a system of philosophical inquiry and enlightenment of the Self based on direct knowledge of the objective Forms (*noesis*) This *noesis*, however, is a non-natural step for humans to take.



Both natural and non-natural religions or philosophical systems can and do coexist in single cultures or societies. Each *can* support the other. This can achieve the Platonic ideal of a whole and evolving society.

Such coexistence is not possible in a truly Christian world. Christianity reduces the non-natural to a natural or organic/mechanical model (whether Christians appreciate this or not), and falsely elevates that model to the level of "super-nature." There is really nothing "super-natural" about Yahweh; he is, as the Gnostics well knew, merely a personification of the natural/organic laws of the objective universe.

Natural religious systems are most effective for organizing and maintaining natural structures in society, in the objective universe, and within those segments of the subjective universe of the believer which still may be dependent on organic models. On the other hand, non-natural systems are most effective for the understanding and conscious development of the Self, which in turn may have an effect on the subjective and objective universes themselves.

These are the most effective uses of the two systems. But those on the left-hand path must always return to the agent of any usage—to the *user*—for their ultimate perspective.

When others hear something of this “non-natural” rhetoric employed here, they sometimes think that the wanton destruction of nature is somehow being advocated. Nothing could be further from the truth. Just because I am capable of going beyond nature does not imply that I find it useless or in any way hateful. One can only truly love what one is separated from. Only one aware of his separation from nature can be a true lover of nature, and all that is implied in that word.

Just because a person is capable of thought does not mean that he or she will cease such natural activities as feeling, eating, or having sex. The individual, however, may turn these activities into thought-provoking experiences. In transforming natural functions into spiritual experiences, humans exercise their non-natural prerogative to go beyond the bounds of organic existence. In going beyond the bounds of nature, the human does not

come merely to understand divinity, but rather to exercise it. That is the aim of non-natural religion.

## Offshoots and Parallels of the Lords of the Left-Hand Path

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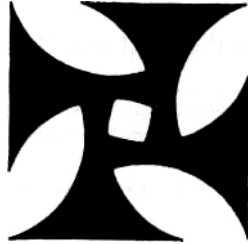
This article was previously privately published in an earlier form as the eleventh chapter in the limited edition of the *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*. Its contents have been substantially revised and expanded for this contribution.

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In the past three decades there have been dozens of individuals and small sects which have in one way or another either identified themselves as being “Satanic” or of the left-hand path— or which have been believed to be “Satanic” by sometimes superficial and ill-willed investigators. The study of the “Lords of the Left-Hand Path” would not be complete without saying some things about these individuals and groups. These individuals and groups perhaps do not often constitute *Lords* of the Left-Hand Path, but they may sometimes be at least ambassadors or secretaries of the path.

Many of these groups base their ideas on those widely publicized by Anton Szandor LaVey (= Howard Stanton Levey) from the late 1960s to the late 1990s. Levey was a shameless self-promoter and founder of a business called “The Church of Satan.” Lawrence Wright, in one of the only objective studies of the so-called “Black Pope” ever written, characterized him in the final analysis as “a bookish piano player.” There is no evidence that LaVey was ever a lion-tamer, carny-man, police photographer, oboist in the (non-existent) “San Francisco Ballet Orchestra,” etc. It appears that he was himself his own artistic creation.

THE PROCESS  
—Church of the Final Judgement—  
or  
Sheep in Wolves Clothing?



**Christ said: Love thine enemy.  
Christ's enemy was Satan and Satan's enemy was Christ.  
Through Love, enmity is destroyed.  
Through Love, saint and sinner destroy  
the enmity between them.  
Through Love, Christ and Satan have destroyed Their enmity  
and come together for the End;  
Christ to Judge and Satan to execute the Judgement.**

Robert DeGrimston(1)

One group which has been subjected to widespread indictment by journalistic investigators of “Satanic crime” is The Process, Church of the Final Judgement.(2) This is an easy indictment to make, as the group is no longer in existence to defend itself. A review of some of this nonsense can be found in R. N. Taylor's anecdotal contribution in the book *Apocalypse Culture* (Feral House, 1990, pp. 159-171). However, from our point of view we are only interested in the possibility of philosophically left-hand path aspects within this “Satanic” cult.

Unlike other would-be left-hand path groups which have sprung up in the wake of the Church of Satan or the Temple of Set, The Process has completely other roots. It is for this reason that it makes an especially valuable

study. The most exhaustive study to date on The Process is *Satan's Power: A Deviant Psychotherapy Cult* by William Bainbridge (University of California Press, 1978). The only flaw in this particular study, at least from our historical perspective, is that Bainbridge has changed all the key names (personal and institutional) to emphasize the “structural aspect” of the study, and to protect individual's privacy.

The Process only had a roughly thirteen year life span (1963-1976). In this short time it went through three name changes, and even more philosophical and theological systems, and one major schism (in 1974). It was founded by Robert DeGrimston More and his soon to be wife Mary Anne, who met while taking auditing courses at the Scientology Institute in London. They founded their own school called “Compulsions Analysis” in 1963, and by the next year they had changed the name to The Process. From 1963 to 1966 they recruited a fair number of followers in London.

By the summer of 1966 a core group of around 30 “Processeans” headed for the Yucatan in Mexico where they attempted to establish a Utopian community they called Xtul.<sup>(3)</sup> Xtul (which was supposed to mean something like terminus— a place “marking the end of a journey” in Mayan)<sup>(4)</sup> was devastated only a few weeks later by hurricane Inez. By 1967 the Processeans had left the place. Later that year they resurfaced in New Orleans, where the organization was finally transformed into a church.

The mature phase of The Process only lasted from 1967 to 1974. In these six years the church proselytized in a variety of North American cities. In the beginning they were highly visible often dressed in flamboyant purple capes wearing a combination of a Christian cross and a Sabbatic goat badge. They were also unique in that they were often accompanied by attack-trained German shepherd dogs.<sup>(5)</sup> The flamboyance was a part of the times perhaps. After all it was also the high tide of the Church of Satan.

Michael Aquino analyzed The Process in a 1972 *Cloven Hoof* article, and dismissed them as basically “Jesus Freaks” taking advantage of the Devil's glamour— “Sheep

in Wolves' Clothing." The reasons for his assessment will be obvious. ("Sheep in Wolves' Clothing— Introducing the Process." *Cloven Hoof* IV:5 [1972], pp. 15-16.)

Although The Process tried to establish itself all around the world, it had its greatest successes in Chicago, Toronto, and Boston.

In 1974 internal, and possibly simply interpersonal, tensions led to the expulsion of Robert DeGrimston from the church which he had founded. The organization was reformed under the name "Foundation Church of the Millennium"... and soon thereafter it dwindled away. The Process, as a philosophy or theology, was almost entirely a system created by DeGrimston, The Teacher. So if there is a Lord of the Left-Hand Path hiding among the Processeans, it would have to be DeGrimston himself.

### The System of DeGrimston

Bainbridge identifies two distinct phases of DeGrimston's system.<sup>(6)</sup> In the first of these there were Three Great Gods of the Universe: Jehovah, Lucifer, and Satan.

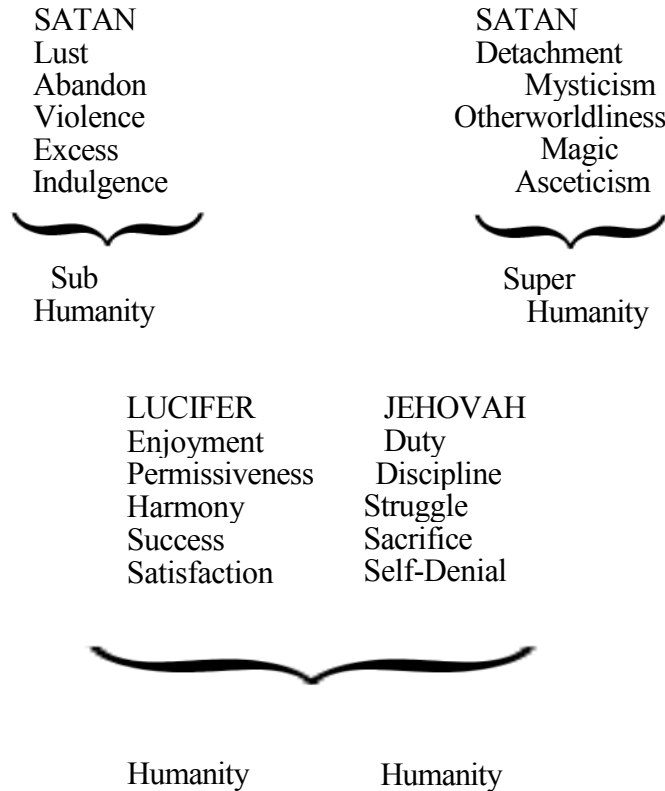
Satan had a double role in DeGrimston's theology: He was the ruler of both the Soul and Body of Man. Lucifer and Jehovah ruled two conflicting sides of the human Mind.

According to DeGrimston, the reason humanity had fallen so deeply into evil and deceit was because of the by now systemic way in which humans always blamed others—other people, other circumstances—for their problems instead of facing the internal reasons. In this, and other Processean uses of the concept of blame, I am reminded of the antinomian *Malamatiya* sect of Sufism, which practiceo "the Way of Blame"— and which apparently also influenced Gurdjieff.

This blaming had gone on so long, and humanity had sunk so low, that by now the world had been transformed into Hell, and Humanity into the Devil Himself.<sup>(7)</sup> Now Satan was free of his role as the one to be blamed and was free to reunite with God.

But by 1970 the second phase of the development of his system was in place. In this phase DeGrimston began to introduce a fourth “Great God”— Christ—as a balancing and unifying element in the over all system. Christ became the human model for the unification of the Three Great Gods.

THE THREE GREAT  
GODS OF THE  
UNIVERSE®



Perhaps the best previously published summary of theological and eschatological system of DeGrimston’s Process is provided by Bainbridge:

The [Process] was a Satanic cult, but Satan had a very special meaning for [Processeans] that no outsider could easily grasp. The complicated [Process] theology identified four Gods: Lucifer, Jehovah, Christ, and Satan. Lucifer, male God of the air, represents sensuousness, liberality, and intellect. Jehovah, female God of the earth, represents austerity, authoritarianism, and emotion. The cult believed that cosmic forces were working for

the Union as if in marriage of Lucifer and Jehovah. Christ, male God of the waters, gave himself in love for the unification of all beings and the resolution of conflict. Satan, female God of fire, reserved herself in hatred to achieve the separation of all beings and the propagation of conflict. The cult claimed that it was the terrestrial manifestation of the coming Unity of Christ and Satan, a force moving to achieve the end of the world in service of Satanic destruction so that a Christian Golden Age might dawn.

(Bainbridge [1978], pp. 4-5)

It is obvious that The Process was not a Satanic cult in any left-hand path sense. It was simply a cult which accepted Satan/Lucifer as a part of its comprehensive system, and because of this acceptance has, of course, been labeled “Satanic” by other more orthodox sects.

From a left-hand path perspective it is obvious that DeGrimston understood what the left-hand path was. His descriptions of the character and functions of both Lucifer and Satan even make the inherent dichotomy of the left-hand path quite clear. However, his understanding of Jehovah and Christ make it equally certain that he knew what the right-hand path was— and in the final analysis he opted for identification with the power of Christ to *Unify* as the end goal of the Process.

What makes The Process so radical in its approach is that instead of seeking to unite the soul of the individual with the eternal essence of God (the usual goal in the right-hand path), this theology stresses the (re-)unification of the Gods, the parts of the whole God, before any human unification with Them/Him can be undertaken. DeGrimston describes God undergoing the process of re-unification as a kind of “right-hand path exercise in heaven.”

Ultimately, The Process must be understood as an radically innovative right-hand path theology dressed in the black cloak of Satanic/Luciferian imagery— for what were apparently cultural, social, or even-“marketing” reasons. The Devil was simply “selling well” in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was the time spanning between *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *The Exorcist* (1974), after all.



## Satanic Sects of the 1970s

— Pandemonium —

In the zenith of public interest in, and tolerance for, Satanism there grew up a number of loosely related sects mostly located in the north-central U.S. These sects are marked to two important similarities: They all spring from LaVeyan roots and they developed highly eclectic doctrines bringing them in some cases closer to the mainstream of the contemporary “occult culture” but in other cases such eclecticism moved them even more to the fringe than LaVey was. The saga of the personalities involved are recorded in some detail in Michael Aquino’s monumental work *The Church of Satan*.

Some of these were so short lived, and often not much more than a would-be Satanic leader and a typewriter anyway, that I will spend little time on them.

Some of these, such as the Ordo Templi Satanas, the Order of Abaddon, Church of the Satanic Brotherhood, Shrine of the Little Mother and the Temple of the Dark Lord were closely allied with one another and with the most substantial of the spin-off groups, the Order of the Black Ram. There was even an attempt to form a Satanic Intercommunications Network (S.I.N.) Their motto was “Strength in cooperation, freedom in diversity” coined by Rev. Apollonius of the O:T:S:.

There was also a second “Church of Satan” formed by an occult shop owner in Allentown, Pennsylvania who dubbed himself “Rev. Yaj Nomolos.” The philosophy of this second “Church of Satan” seemed to revolve around androgyny and the devolution of humanity “back to” that pre-Adamite state in which there was presumably no physical distinction between the sexes. In any event, little was heard of this group from the late 1970s to the 1980s.

The main disagreement members of these groups had with the Church of Satan probably really revolved around the Church’s supposed “standards” with regard to “elevations” to higher degrees. It seems the “young Turk” Satanist doesn’t want to be evaluated by “higher-ups”—he wants to start building his own Satanic Empire right away.

The Order of the Black Ram  
— "Thou Art God" —



This organization sprang up out of members of the Babylon Grotto of the Church of Satan. It existed from 1973 to about 1976. During much of that time it published a newsletter called *Liber Venificia*, later combined with the *Grimorium Verum* of the Ordo Templi Satanas, both of which contain interesting insight into the ideologies of these groups.

Chief philosophical or ideological influences on the founders of the O.B.R. are Anton LaVey and Robert Heinlein— with important cross-currents provided by Friedrich Nietzsche and Adolf Hitler. Jane Roberts and the “Seth material” find a happy home among the members of the O.B.R., as do the writings of Carlos Castañeda— things for which LaVey would probably have had little tolerance.

The O.B.R. system is a synthesis of the ideas of Anton LaVey and the science-fiction writer Robert Heinlein (especially as expressed in his novel *Stranger in a Strange Land*).

The O.B.R. took the natural and organic component of LaVey's philosophy very much to heart. They wanted to create a neo-tribal form of “Aryan” Satanism. In this regard they made, or continued to maintain, close ties with racist, National Socialist groups in the U.S. as well as with certain branches of the then-fledgling Odinist movement.

In the pages of *Liber Venificia* there occasionally appeared articles of a truly taboo nature: ones that promoted the idea of the Aryans as the “Satanic Race”— a race with its roots in the stars, which created Atlantis, which founded the great civilizations of Man and which is not without its enemies in the present world. One such

article was entitled “Into the Age of Fire: The Renaissance of Life” by Seth-Typhon.(9)

Perhaps it would be useful to let one of these bi-polar Satanists speak directly on the matter of Satanic philosophy:

Some Notes On The Development of Satanic Philosophy  
by Mgstr. Typhon

I say, with some justification, I think, that the Order of the Black Ram has played a major philosophical role within the Satanic movement. Certainly, we have adapted and enlarged upon concepts of *The Satanic Bible*—progressively, I feel— in ways that Dr. LaVey may or may not have anticipated.

For example, who would expect a group dedicated to the “temple of the flesh” to be expounding concepts espoused by Don Juan, or Robert Heinlein, or Jane Roberts’ “Seth”? how can we possibly draw a correlation between Satanism and high esotericism?

This question is becoming more and more frequent, and is often intended as a criticism by those who think they’ve found an inconsistency in our teachings, a “chink in the armor” as it were. Anyone with a true grasp of what Satanism really entails, however, knows better.

What, after all, is Satanism if not the deification of man himself? It is not for nothing that we have seized the standard of rebel and accuser “... for I stand forth to challenge the wisdom of the world; to interrogate the laws of man and of ‘God!’”[From LaVey’s “Book of Satan”](10)

If we are to truly be the gods and goddesses of our own creation, then we must first understand Man, the nature of Godhood, and the nature of the Universe! And only a fool thinks he can explain all this in “25 words or less.” For most, the search takes many lifetimes. But though we do not possess cut-and-dried answers to hand out— for each person's answers may

well be different—it is NOT our intention merely to sit in a cave until we Grok the Fullness of All That Is.

To a Satanist, this would be the ultimate waste; for we are creatures of action and power! But we strive for the Answers, so far as we are able to perceive them. BECAUSE THEY WILL BETTER FACILITATE OUR ACTIONS AND OUR LIVES, HERE AND NOW!

Ignorance is only the strength of the masses— not the elite. Those of us who seek to influence the cosmic and material flow of events must know the mechanics of such manipulation! The elite Satanist has declared himself apart from the masses of stupid sheep, and realizes that THESE are the “Dark Ages”! And therefore, we give one solemn commandment to ourselves, and above all else proclaim the first mission ... “TO KNOW!”

#### The Ordo Templi Satanas

— Apostasia —

The O:T:S: was even shorter lived than the O.B.R. It was founded by a erstwhile Adept of the Church of Satan who used the magical name Apollonius. He published his ideas under the title of the *Grimorium Verum* or True Grimoire both on his own and under the banner of the O.B.R.’s *Liber Venificia*. While the O.B.R. duality stemmed from the intersection of body and spirit, the carnal and the intellectual, the dualism of the O:T:S: was of a more purely abstract kind.

Harkening back to the philosophical language and models of the ancient Hermetics, the Neoplatonists and Gnostics Apollonius calls his philosophy Apostasia, the Latin form of the Greek “apostasy”— a “standing away,” or separation. He first establishes the existence of the One, in psychological terms the subject, which knows itself. But it can turn its thought to something Other, and thereby create an object to be known distinct from itself. The left-hand path approach to this model is that the state of separation is to be continued and deepened— through the practice of the Will to Power (cf. Friedrich Nietzsche).

...I as this Self-created Self must continue to view my Self as separate (the whole, not a part or collection) from the Other. The primary categories in the cosmos are “I” the One, the Self, the Self-created Self) and the “other” (the Other, my World, the World) and their union is for me quite literally unthinkable I must view the World [Other] in terms of my power over and against that of the World...

I realize that I have taken for my Self much of the authority, prerogatives, and functions which mankind has traditionally ascribed to God or Gods. I am not hesitant to commit this ultimate act of apostasy and to declare I am a god...

[Satan] and I share so much in common with our finite divinity that his name has become as my own.<sup>(11)</sup>

The O:T:S: faded into obscurity around the middle of 1976. Apollonius’ brief foray into left-hand path philosophy possessed some sound ideas, but the times were perhaps not quite right for, and his forum was not attuned to, his embryonic message.

I have called these sects “bi-polar” with good reason. As the article by Typhon printed verbatim above indicates, the philosophical duality, or bi-polarity, of their thought was obvious even to them. The virtually “Epicurean” Anton LaVey was in reality not far from the “junk-yard philosopher” he had been made out to be among many critical observers, while Michael Aquino possesses the finely tuned philosophical mind of a true Platonist. Both of these men fashioned internally coherent systems which were developed from entirely different roots. But members of the eclectic sects were wont to mix elements from these essentially two different streams of philosophical and magical tradition— somehow trying to make them fit together. It is clear that they achieved no grand synthesis. All of these Satanists were searching for some hidden common bond that held them all together. This common bond eluded them in the time of their short working span. We might applaud their adventuresome efforts, while regretting their lack of perseverance.

## The Satanic Sects of the 1980s

After an initial development of Satanic sects in the mid-1960s to mid-1970s, such groups seemed to proliferate once more in the mid- to late 1980s. As the pendulum was swinging toward what appeared to be a more conservative position among the general population, some Outsiders were increasingly drawn to the Dark Side as an act of Satanic rebellion.

During the mid- to late-1980s, perhaps in anticipation of the 300th anniversary of the Salem witchcraft trials, the legal and therapeutic authorities in the U.S.A. began to revive a “witch-hunt” mentality. Television programs began to be produced about the dangers of Satanism in the country as local law-enforcement officials held “seminars” on how to detect “satanic crimes.” Ultimately, perhaps, this was nothing more than a recreational activity for bored individuals in need of some excitement in their lives, and who also had some “extra” taxpayers’ money to spend. These efforts caused a great deal of harm to innocent people, and were ultimately de-bunked by an authority no less than the F.B.I., which concluded that there was simply “no such thing” as a “Satanic crime wave” sweeping the country. It is a proof of so-called “post-modernism” that the most technologically advanced society in the world could, even if briefly, be in some serious sense swept back to a medieval mind-set.

In the wake of these would-be persecutions the whole topic of “Satanism” got a momentary shot in the arm. “Devil worship” was once more, miraculously, revived as a legitimate form of spiritual protest somehow recognized by the “authorities.” The unintended effect of this seems to have been the boosting of the whole idea of the left-hand path in the following decade which would see an unprecedented rise in the popularity of the imagery and aesthetics of the left-hand path.

The groups that arose in the 1980s were proto-typical of the countless ones that would rise up in the 1990s. But most of the earlier groups have either already faded from the scene or have made little lasting impact on left-hand path philosophy.

Paul Douglas Valentine's  
Worldwide Church of Satanic Liberation

This was perhaps the most clear-cut example of an imitation of Anton LaVey's Church of Satan to come along in the 1980s. Valentine, who was a resident of New Haven, Connecticut, is a former English teacher whose main claim to brief fame came in the mid- to late-1980s when the "Satanic scare" was in full swing. He appeared on a variety of talk shows belligerently telling the hosts and audiences what they wanted to hear.

Valentine is a textbook example of what LaVey would call a "Phase One Satanist."

His ideology appears to be virtually identical to what he understands of LaVey's Satanism. Those who inquired about his organization in the late 1980s received a synopsis of his philosophy entitled "Rules of Engagement." There are, of course, nine of them:

1. There is nothing more important than the Self.
2. What you do for others should be in direct proportion to what they do for YOU.
3. Altruism is a myth. Those who do for others "without recompense" are fulfilling a personal need. Therefore, they respond to the SELF.
4. Prayer is worthless; Satan is not one to answer prayer not to listen to it with patience. Seldom are you given anything beyond the First Gift.
5. Strict observance of the Laws of Nature is mandatory for successful, workable Magic.
6. When a person deserves to be called Enemy be merciless and heed not the lamentations.
7. There are no witches, only cowards afraid of what they claim to embrace. Such deluded individuals are insignificant and powerless.
8. Just as not everyone possesses psychic ability, neither are all born magicians. Few receive the First Gift and it cannot be obtained through prayer or study.
9. There are always those who are fit for no more than subservience. Find them and use them for all they are worth and then discard them! For in recognizing the reality of Master and slave you are maintaining Balance.

Valentine seems to incorporate some small parts of Setian philosophy in the emphasis placed on what he calls the “First Gift,” i.e. the Gift of Set, the gift of self-consciousness. Additionally, he is obviously taking in many of LaVey's social doctrines not overtly expressed in his earlier published works and available only in the post-1975 issues of the *Cloven Hoof*.

There is little evidence to show that Valentine's Church of Satanic Liberation was ever anything but a local northeastern coast phenomenon among young and naive followers. During the 1990s little more was heard of Valentine or his organization.



The Werewolf Order  
— Unleashing the Beast in Man —

One entity which broke some new ground in the theory and practice of the left-hand path is the Werewolf Order (WO) now headed by Nikolas Schreck and Zeena.<sup>(12)</sup> The WO does not characterize itself as a church or organization in the usual sense. External manifestations of it include the musical/performance art group called “Radio Werewolf” in which Schreck, Zeena and her son Stanton, among others, perform. They have released several recordings, including one entitled *Songs for the End of the World*.

The Werewolf Order was founded in the “Working Year” of 1984 by Nikolas Schreck. At various times he has forged working relationships with the performance artist and notorious “prankster” Boyd Rice as well as with Anton LaVey and even Charles Manson. Schreck appears as an editor of a volume on Manson published by Amok Press.<sup>(13)</sup>



In the summer of 1988 Radio Werewolf organized “youth rallies” designed to inaugurate a counter-force to the 1967 “Summer of Love”— 1988 was to be the “Summer of Hate.”

In that year the material distributed by Radio Werewolf was bombastic and ferocious in its tenor, as shown in the 1987 text of the “Radio Werewolf Indoctrination.” Radio Werewolf Indoctrination (1987)

At the end of the last decade, Schreck packed up his operations and moved with Zeena to Vienna, Austria, where they have begun to establish their reputation in the lively subculture which thrives in central Europe.

Subsequent to this geographical move, Zeena broke with her father over the perceived (non-)direction he had been taking the Church of Satan in the preceding years.

The invigorated Werewolf Order began to develop an even more comprehensive vision of its magical work which continued to mutate. A later text describing the work of the WO indicates that the Order is not seeking followers: “If you are tuned in to our frequency and let Nature take its course, you are already connected to us.”

The WO ideology seems to indicate that the Werewolves are indeed another type of humanity living in the midst of “sheep,” who naturally fear and loathe the superior Werewolf race. These Werewolves have always been the original trailblazers in all the so-called Black Arts— which could include architectural, scientific, musical, ecological, cinematic, or governmental efforts.

The WO rejects the usual modes of “organizing” an order in favor of the canine pack-principle: an alpha-male and an alpha-female with their pack arranged around them in an implicit hierarchy of dominance and submission. Each pack, or WO-Den is totally independent. What holds the WO-Dens together is their employment of the recordings, videos and publications of the Werewolf Order. The synchronized use of these means constitute transmissions on the Nightmare Network. These transmissions are designed to deprogram those receiving them.

The WO is extremely interested in matters of ecology. Since the Werewolves are themselves are seen as an endangered species, they have the responsibility to aid

others so endangered. As the Order sees it: “There is only one true ecological problem: human overpopulation.”

The leaders of the WO have taken the idea of the carnal ego, and the mandate of the Seventh Satanic Statement—“Satan represents man as just another animal, sometimes better, more often worse than those that walk on all-fours, who, because of his “divine spiritual and intellectual development,” has become the most vicious animal of all”—to its logical conclusion. In this statement they have not only found the savagery of the Beast in Man, but also what they see as the wisdom of the undefiled Beast in Man. Magically the WO also seems to have grasped the reality that the next generation of the masses (especially in North America) will not be reachable through books—or perhaps even the spoken word—but rather only through images and sounds which stimulate them at a much more base level.

As for the future, the WO envisions a Ragnarök, a total transformation (or destruction) of the world, brought about chiefly through forthcoming technological advances. In this future, which will not come “in our life times,” the Werewolves will have learned how to survive and thrive. “While the world of humanity sinks into despair and bitter misanthropy, the few initiates in the lycanthropic mysteries will have reached a state of enlightened ecstasy.”<sup>(14)</sup>

In more recent years Nikolas and Zeena Schreck have allied themselves with the Temple of Set. It is unclear as to how this association may or may not affect the existence or doctrines of the Werewolf Order, or how this association has, or has not, changed their fundamental idea concerning the essentially “Beastial nature of Man.”

## Notes

(1) This text was repeated throughout Process literature, e.g. on p. 20 of the *On Fear* issue of the Process journal [1971].

(2) Writers such as Maury Terry (1987) and Ed Sanders (1971) broadly and wildly implicate The Process in the case of Charles Manson and the "Son of Sam" (David Berkowitz). Even slightly more objective investigators see little merit in their work, for example Lyons (1988), 91-94.

(3) Xtul is pronounced [shtool] and is apparently really the Yiddish word *shtul*, cf. German *Stuhl*, "chair." In here were other Yiddish slang terms obscured by the spelling "x" for "sh" used by The Process, e.g. xtumm [shtoom]: "to kill" (really from Yiddish/German *stumm*, "dumb, silent," or xpiel [shpeel], "the flow of words from a therapist or patient in a Process session" (cf. Yiddish *shpiel*, "play or sales pitch"). See Bainbridge (1978), p. 61.

(4) This was not its actual meaning, see Bainbridge (1978), p. 61,

(5) Bainbridge (1978), p. 74-75, et passim.

(6) Bainbridge (1978), pp. 174-185.

(7) DeGrimston (1968).

(8) *On Fear*, p. 10.

(9) Seth Typhon LV 1:2 [1974], pp. 8-10.

(10) This section of LaVey's book was plagiarized from a book originally published in 1896 entitled *Might is Right*, which appeared under the pseudonym "Ragnar Redbeard." this particular quote is lifted from the "Introductory," page 5 of the Loompanics edition.

(11) "Apostasia" in the *Grimorium Verum*, LV 1:11, pp. 21-22.

(12) Zeena née LaVey

(13) Schreck, Nikolas, ed. *The Manson File*. New York: Amok, 1988. Amok Press has since changed its name to Feral House.

(14) Translated from the Werewolf Order information letter, 1992.

## Vox Runica Corvorum

True to the character of the Work of the V°, I have set apart an instrument of working within the objective universe. This instrument is a 30-acre estate called “Woodharrow,” and it shall serve as a platform from which further workings upon the objective universe will be cast. By virtue of its very essence, the process of setting apart and building the physical site of Woodharrow and making it manifest had to remain somewhat secret or concealed, for it is a tangible expression of the eternally unmanifest. Yet now the time has come to make known something of what has become manifest from the eternally unmanifest matrix, which is *Rûna*.

It is my understanding that some have had questions about my mysterious activities “out in the woods” and it is my hope that these words will inform those inquisitive minds.

The eternal substance of the Work of the Erulian, or that of the V° in general, is the Utterance of a Word. Such a Word is actually the encapsulated seed-form of an all-encompassing philosophy. Into the seed-form the whole can be compressed, and from it the whole can be derived. Its “Utterance” is the actual work itself— the active projection of that Word *outward* into the objective universe, where it is to have tangible, real, permanent effects. The Word is furthermore a real embodiment of the highest essence of the Magus, or Erulian, who Utters it. In fact the manifestation of Woodharrow is just one of the tangible magical results of the Utterance which is *Rûna*. It is an “echo,” or part of the “feed-back loop,” between the Utterance and the objective universe.

Magically this is how Woodharrow came into being. It is necessary to such work, in that there is a mandate to act directly upon the universe with such an Utterance. Such direct actions are by necessity independent of all things which are not completely contained within it.

For this reason Woodharrow—or as it is often informally called, “Rûna-Raven Ranch”—is not, and cannot be, a Setian establishment. It is by definition an establishment of *Rûna*. Part of the testing of a Word—and it continues to be tested until its Erulian makes the transition to the next level of work—is its impact on the objective universe. Such impact cannot be gauged if it remains cozily ensconced within the folds of the institution which first facilitated and Recognized its reality.

A Word, like a person, once it comes into Being, must go out into what is by definition a resistant world to make its own way. Its space becomes its own as it is propelled to victory or defeat in the struggle which is the eternal work. Therefore, all things which happen within the boundaries of Woodharrow are by definition under the banner of the Word *Rûna*.

Another factor, which cannot be ignored in an explanation of the character of Woodharrow, is that of the Rûnakona, or what would be called in the southern tradition a “Scarlet Woman.” Not long after my Recognition to the V° in the Temple of Set she was physically delivered to me in the form of a woman named Crystal Dawn. Such women, in real life, are often indispensable in the work of a Magus. On a magical level she is the external manifestation of the Word as the Magus himself is the internal manifestation. On a practical level Crystal Dawn made Woodharrow possible; her treasure and her work cleared away every obstacle.

There were many (apparent) obstacles: crazy real estate agents, uncooperative state park officials, incompetent dwarves at every turn. But Woodharrow was eventually carved out of completely undeveloped woodland some thirty miles from Austin, Texas. It is nestled next to a state park, and is situated in the middle of hundreds of acres of pines, oaks, and cedars. The site is located in the Lost Pines region near Bastrop. This little town is one of the oldest in Texas, and was one of the flash points in the Texican Rebellion against Mexico.

Curiously, shortly after we finished the “landtaking,” ravens and crows descended on the land and have remained with us ever since. The task of establishing ourselves on the land was completed in the last week of

the Working Year 1993, as was the laying of the foundation of the Hall. The now-completed and dedicated Hall building is a free-standing, 600-square foot structure with a beamed ceiling inspired by the ancient Germanic halls.

It was built as a structure totally dedicated to ritual workings, seminars, and workshops, sponsored by the Rune-Gild. These seminars and workshops are the main outer form of magical working of *Rûna* upon the objective universe.

The chief aims and function of this space called Woodharrow is the extension of the Utterance of the Word *Rûna* into the objective universe. It is in itself the principal manifestation of this Utterance so far— and a platform for the greater continuance of this work, which is the result of the passionate and precise quest guided by the watchword: *Reyn til Rûna*.

\* \* \*

Since writing the text of this article in 1994, many developments have taken place. One of the most important is the establishment of the Rune-Realm in the area surrounding Woodharrow. Gilders from around the country have begun to gather in the vicinity of Woodharrow that a community of Runers can be developed, as of old. Woodharrow and the Hall at Woodharrow are the focal point of this Gathering.

Also perhaps a note about the meaning of the name “Woodharrow” is in order. The “wood-” only apparently has something to do with trees, actually it is derived from the Old English *wôd*, “inspiration,” which makes up the first part of the name of the god Woden. The second element of the name, “harrow,” is derived from the Old English word for a temple or altar, *hearg*. The meaning of Woodharrow is then “the altar, or temple, of inspiration.”

## Contra Templum

### Preamble

For seventeen years today I have been an Initiate of the Temple of Set. I was Recognized as a Setian on February 7, 1984. By the summer of 1989 I had been recognized as a Magus. The tools for Initiation provided generally and personally by Dr. Michael A. Aquino must be counted as one of the two or three most profound influences in my life personally. This paper is, as I see it, yet another testimony to his influence in my development. Despite the provocative title of this paper, it is not meant as a condemnation of the Temple of Set in the sense that it is a negative assessment of how the Temple operates or what the Temple philosophy is. Rather it is an exercise in self-actualization and analysis. As will be seen, it is a major tenet of the Temple of Set, as a left-hand path philosophy, that *individuals* must articulate their own philosophies, independent of the influences and controls of the objective universe. It would, in a sense, be a “bad” Setian, and an especially bad Magus, who merely mimicked the sayings of Michael Aquino or Don Webb. This document is intended as a clear articulation of the differences between my personal philosophy—as expressed in the teachings of the Rune-Gild—and the tenets of the Temple of Set. With this paper nagging questions concerning any supposed doctrinal similarities between the Temple of Set and the Rune-Gild should be further clarified.

### Doctrina Templi Set

The major tenets and history of the Temple of Set have been exhaustively outlined in my book *Lords of the Left-Hand Patfz*(Rûna-Raven, 1997). This book has often been recommended to outsiders as a source book on the Temple teachings by Michael Aquino. Therefore, I assume its presentation meets with no substantial objections from the Temple’s first and third High Priest. As it seems to be a fundamental doctrine of the Temple of Set that it has no established *teaching* or *tradition*, this analysis will necessarily be made up of my own analyses of the thoughts of Michael Aquino, as I learned of them over the

years. It should also be noted that without having had Michael Aquino as one of my Teachers, and without having had the benefit of Traditional contact with him the philosophy as articulated in this article would have been impossible in its present form.

Setian thought begins with certain logical suppositions and proceeds from them to more magical conclusions based on experience. Michael Aquino says that other religions have perhaps been “aesthetically and/or emotionally attractive” to many in the past, but that “does not make any one of them true— merely popular.” It appears to be one of Aquino’s essential operating principles that the Setian solution to fundamental problems of cosmology, theology, anthropology and magic is the only correct one— “after having considered and dismissed the alternatives as untrue in whole or in part.” The Setian cosmology is posited as the best possible answer to fundamental philosophical questions given the data available— it remains, however, open to evolution should any fallacy be identified or further data become known.

The first assumption in Setian cosmology is that there exists a Universe, defined as “the totality of existence, both known and unknown by humanity.” Within this internally consistent framework exists the objective universe, which is defined as “the vast expanses of space and the masses of animate and inanimate matter and energy occupying it.” This latter concept is what humans perceive as “the (natural) universe,” and its laws are the “laws of nature.” Beyond this there exists the subjective universe—the psyche distinguished from the objective universe—which is “both apprehensive (reaching beyond the limits of the objective universe) and creative (enabling one to generate meaning, to initial existence).” These are the three assumptions needed to act as building blocks for the Setian theory of the Universe.

In this cosmology there is an inherent “dualism” between nature and “non-nature.” This echoes the ancient Greek distinction between *physis* (nature) and *psyche* (intellect). This is not the hostile dualism of the Gnostics, but is rather more based on the fundamental existentialist distinction between self and not-self.



### Setian Theology

In Setian theology nothing is posited which is not necessary but everything responsible for the phenomenon in question is accounted for. Theology is seen to coalesce with cosmology in the Setian system in that to apprehend in any accurate way the true character of the god Set, or any other supposed “god” one ultimately must be able to apprehend the impersonal first forms—or Principles—upon which all such constructs are dependent. It should be noted that the Temple of Set is not a neo-Egyptian religion attempting to revive the worship of the historical deity called Set. In Setian philosophy Set is Intelligence, defined—made finite—and given shape, by the objective universe which it created itself to provide that shape and definition. The image of the principle, first form, of intelligence surrounded by a sea of darkness is the underlying esoteric rationale behind the title “Prince of Darkness”

Set is envisioned as the first form of the Self—the *principle of isolate intelligence*—which seems to be the simplest and most direct apprehension of the entity in Setian doctrine. Set in this sense, is ontologically real. If we know we exist because we think, i.e. are self-aware, then there must necessarily be a first form of intelligence from which each of our individual “intelligences” is derived. Set is thought to be the general principle, the individual psyche of a given human being is a specific manifestation.

A passage in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* states that “other gods” have been created by humanity, or more precisely by the *principle of isolate intelligence* incarnate in humanity. Aquino comments: on this by saying: “[O]ther gods, whether Egyptian or foreign, are derivative of Set or of the human mind.” This has the net effect of elevating humans to the level of continuing co-creators with Set— which is consistent with the ancient view of humanity, revived in the western Renaissance. Clearly the principle of isolate intelligence is here seen to be universal and pre-existing the natural, or objective universe.

### Setian Anthropology

Setian philosophy is psychecentric. It focuses the attention of the subject (actor) of any act of Will back upon the subject or one doing the action. The structure of this subject is called, among other names, the psyche, intellect, soul, and so on. Aquino prefers not to split hairs on the analysis of this structure. Here it is sufficient to realize the distinction between the part of man belonging to the objective universe that is subject to its consistent mechanical and organic laws, and that part belonging to a subjective universe not necessarily con-strained by Universal laws. This realization comes first. Then it can be exercised in the form of acts of Will— or magic.

The aim of Setian philosophy is perhaps best summed up in the idea of the *left-hand path*. The left-hand path is the path of separation— of non-union. The first model necessary for this formulation is that of a separate entity which is distinguished from all that surrounds it. Without this man is without awareness— even of his “animalness.” The individual human being is the subject of initiation, or Becoming, and there is a clear implication that all individual psyches are essentially if not *equal*, at least the *same in kind*— ideally as entities separated from the matrix of the objective universe.

Setian Initiation reaches a critical stage with Recognition to the Fifth Degree— that of the Magus. A Magus is defined by his Utterance of a Word. This Word must encode a meaning which sets it, and its Utterer, at odds with the prevailing norms of the surrounding universe at the time the Word is Uttered. Within the context of Setian philosophy, this would mean, categorically, that the Utterance of a Word, if it is genuine, should by definition establish a course at odds with the prevailing norms of Setian philosophy. Therefore, it must be seen as mandatory that the teaching of Rûna, as institutionalized in the Rune-Gild, *must* have points contrary to the prevailing Setian normatives in order to be seen as legitimate.

The great power of the Temple of Set philosophy in our present world lies in the fact that its universal validity — i.e. the fact that it is independent of any organic tradition — stems from the anomic state of a world without any clearly articulated and dominant cultural patterns.

### The Teaching of the Rune-Gild

The Gild was founded at the very end of 1979, and had developed most of its major tenets and even its basic structure and forms of work before 1984. However, it must also be said that the Gild remained, and to some extent remains today, a flexible, unfixed system eternally open to whatever mysteries might be revealed along the way. It has not been derived from any other recently formed doctrinally bound system, and so it remains unfinished in some regards. Immediate derivation from a previously existing modern system would have made it more seamless in appearance, but would have fixed within it certain inflexible qualities, which would hinder its radical development as the knowledge-base of the Gild expands.

Underlying this flux is, however, a complete and eternal Tradition founded on the Word Rûna. One of the main tasks of the Gild is to discover and actualize this Tradition inherited from our ancestors. The Gild is a school of thought and development clearly bound to a particular mythology within a specific cultural context. This Tradition is objectively real and historically verifiable—and increasing objective knowledge about the Tradition leads directly to increased power for the system as a tool for the development of individual and cultural integrity.

The Gild has an objective Traditional curriculum of training and early self-development. It is based on the lore and symbology of the Runes: the same object of contemplation and operative behavior employed by this God Odin *in illo tempore*. The complex and multivalent mythology surrounding the God, and the other Gods and Goddesses of the Germanic pantheon also provide paradigmatic material for guiding the development of the individual.

As a Traditional School, the Gild is dependent on personal contact between those of greater knowledge (and essence) and those of lesser knowledge (and essence). It also means that it is dependent on another and a greater sort of contact: a “genetic” or “organic link” with the Gild of old. It is our firm conviction that the Rune-Gild of today is a School destined to recreate the power and prestige of the Gild of old. The Gild is specifically meant

for those who have been touched in some extraordinary way by the stream of the Runes as sent forth from the Gild-Father, Odin. We do not think that the Runes are just another system of esoteric knowledge to be selected on some free-will basis from among a number of other equal systems. It is the system for those who have been elected—*chosen*—to pursue them. The Runes are what we pursue because they are organically part of us and cannot therefore be denied without denying who we really are. This is perhaps a Romantic idea, but this is in keeping with the Northern heritage of Rûna, “oriented” as it is toward the Pole.

#### God-Lore

The God-Lore, or theology, of the Gild is focused entirely on the Germanic Gods, and most specifically on the God Odin. It is from the complex mythology surrounding this God that the Gild derives its ideas for individual development and group solidarity. This specific objective mythological tradition is the framework for the common bond of symbolic communication used in the Rune-Gild. This includes the system of the Runic Futhark.

The God Odin does not pre-exist the Universe, nor even early levels of its evolution. The mythic lore of the Germanic peoples clearly indicate that the Universe evolved out of a chaotic state into a semblance of organized being and that this organic evolution had reached a fairly high level of coherence before the divine quality developed in the form of the Divine Triad of Odin-Vili-Vé. This Divine Triad then set about *reorganizing* the Universe in a form more in harmony with its own level of Consciousness—this is the world in which we live today.

Odin underwent a series of ordeals, trials and tests to win ever greater and more complex kinds of knowledge. His supreme ordeal is that of hanging on Yggdrasill—the World-Tree (=the matrix of the Universe). From this ordeal is suddenly revealed to him—in a flash of inspiration—the essence of the Mystery of the Universe: Rûna. He then afterward sets out to categorize these in keeping with his previously developed powers of analytical thought— and the Runestaves of twenty-four characters are shaped.

### The Lore of Man

The psychology, or anthropology, of the Gild is based on the Traditional soul-lore of the ancestors of the Germanic peoples, which is structurally linked to that of the greater Indo-European system. The human being is an organically pre-existing creature which evolved naturally, but which was endowed with consciousness by higher forms of evolutionary being: the Æsir. This is clearly laid out in the mythology of the Germanic peoples, e.g. in the “Völuspá” of the *Elder Edda*.

The impulse to Seek the Runes begins in an irrational moment of inspiration. The teachings of the Gild then begin with objective and factual tradition and move from these objective data into ever increasingly subjective realms. The mythology and literature of our ancestors is studied, the runic tradition—as carved in stone, bone and metal—is absorbed. From these objective studies a subjective activation is achieved through various forms of disciplined and systematic exercises. This is the Rune-Work contained in the *Nine Doors of Midgard*. From this subjective synthesis objective observations are made as the insight gained from Rune-Work is tested against the lore and then against the warp and weave of the fabric of the world itself.

The Gild is based entirely on a Germanic and Indo-European foundation. The archetypal paradigm of the Gild is the Germanic God Wotan/Odin. The degree to which this God is a Universal God is not thought to be relevant beyond the level of intellectual curiosity. For the Gild the presence of Wotan/Odin is a matter of an intimate organic interweaving of the individual and the God. Our relationship to the God is not a matter of our own choice, but a recognition of an objective and organic fact.

Socially and culturally we aim for the re-establishment of the group-solidarity enjoyed by the Gilders of old. Our interpersonal relationships are conceived of as being reflections of ancient interrelationships which have been mysteriously reawakened. The ideal Gild structure would be one which would exist in a larger host culture which is ultimately (neo-)tribal in nature.

The Gild is therefore a bound form: bound in the genetic code of the descendents of the Odians of old, and to the symbolic culture to which that ancient culture gave rise. It is bound by blood and tongue to its own traditional forms. These forms are energized and activated in the world and in the individual psyche by deeds of *resonant action*. Resonant action is action which closely imitates the principles enacted in the “past”— which we view as a mythologized or idealized pattern of behavior. When this action is in close and intense resonance with the actually timeless archetype then transformations take place in this world and in the lives of individuals in this world who have performed these resonant actions. Another way of looking at this is to view significant moments of awakening of consciousness as moments illustrative of the Nietzschean doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

Gild-Work has a subjective component. The God Odin is inescapably a God of the Psyche, his name is derived from a word for a component of the soul: *od*, “inspiration.” The reality of this is clearly something which one apprehends subjectively. It is therefore incumbent upon individuals who work with this idea to aim their efforts toward objective manifestations which make use of the subjective (inner) realizations. The *quality* of the manifestations will depend on the depth of the subjective experience. But subjective experience without an objective product is empty and unfinished.

The Gild represents an act of rebellion against the modern world. It is an organizational statement against the anomie and cultural malaise of the so-called Western World. As such it has set before itself the heroic task of not only undertaking to transform the individual, but to employ that individual change as a fulcrum in the effort to move the world.

The Rune-Gild belongs to an organically coherent cultural system. Its method of working is outlined in the article “How to Be a Heathen” in *Blue Rûna*. The essence of that method is the movement of the soul through the stages of irrational inspiration (*od*), to objective work in a particular symbol system (Runes and Odian myth), to a stage of subjective realization and integration of the meaning of the myth in the individual soul. All this takes

place entirely within the context of the Tradition—  
inherited in the blood, tongue and deeds of our folk.

### Contra Templum

The implications of the differences between the basic philosophies of the Rune-Gild and the Temple of Set lead to the conclusion that there must be certain points at which the Gild must stand in contra distinction to the Temple. These actually are quite numerous, but in this paper I will concentrate on just a couple of essential ones.

The Temple's intentional lack of an objective teaching, a particular mythology or set of symbols with which all Initiates must be familiar, stands in stark contrast to the Gild's teaching based on the Germanic Tradition. The function of the Gild's focus on the *particular* objective tradition, as opposed to the Temple's focus on a *universalistic* or *general* set of ideas, goes beyond mere abstract differences. The practical function of this difference is reflected in the emphasis on objective product as a sign of inner development in the Gild's pattern of individual development. The Temple's intentional lack of an objective teaching leads to a personalizing of the process of recognition. The Gild's focus on the objective product as a by-product of inner and/or intellectual development ensures that the process will be as free of political considerations as possible.

Being named a Fellow or a Master in the RG is a matter of Work within an objective tradition— Germanic mythology and the Runic system of Work. All members of the RG are obligated to work within this system. If they can not or will not, then their work is elsewhere, not in the RG. This leads to a sense of lasting solidarity among Gilders who share a common tradition— they cannot in good conscience decide they want to “study” the Tarot, or Kabbalah, or whatever, and think they are still doing Rune-Work. A Master of the Gild is able to lay a Master-Piece—an objective result of his or her Work on the table— and it will make a *thud* for all to hear.

A second point of significant difference lies in the idea that in the mythology of the Gild the individual exists within a culturally defined matrix. It is only in the context

of this matrix that the individual derives any significance at all. The Gild's aim is focused on the development of the individual and of the culture surrounding the individual—first the Gild itself, then the larger, organically conditioned, host culture.

The Temple's system emphasizes the process of *separation* of the individual psyche from the surrounding elements of the objective universe. This act of progressive separation becomes an end in and of itself. The Gild, while seeing the utility of the formula, emphasizes the necessity of including the psyche into the host matrix of the individual (his or her *culture*) in order to ensure its strength and viability, and, if necessary, its transformation in times of Need.

The most reliable and truest formula of *Becoming* was that used by our forefathers in their time-tested *rites of transformation*. These rites were of three types, which functioned together to form the over all process of personal transformation:

- 1) rites of separation,
- 2) rites of transformation, and
- 3) rites of reinclusion

All three are necessary for true transformation, or *Becoming* to take place. The Temple of Set emphasizes the idea of *separation*, however, the *form* into which the transition is to be made in the second phase is left unarticulated— as it cannot be honestly articulated in a purely subjective system. This leaves Initiates to struggle toward (it is hoped) the *best* of what they already are. As far as formulas for the reinclusion of the Self into the matrix of the mundane universe— this is seen as a virtual anathema to the development of the principle of isolate intelligence within the Initiate. In fact, of course, it is the reinclusion which proves the (relative) permanence of the Initiatory process. But the question remains: Reinclusion *into what?* Without a discussion of a larger, non-Initiated culture in which the Initiate has social, political, and moral duties, the very idea of *reinclusion* might seem a heretical or frightening prospect. Yet without such a concept of a defined host “culture” (physical and non-physical) in which the Initiate has his home, the complete process of *Becoming* must remain unfinished and imperfect.



Over the years I have observed how organizations, like individuals, bear a genetic code—akin to a DNA molecule—which they carry with them all the days of their lives. No matter what they do, they cannot completely overcome or put their origins behind them.

During the course of the 1990s it was progressively revealed how the Church of Satan had been a “sham” organization from the beginning. It was never a “church,” nor did its leader necessarily believe most of what he said or wrote. The founder of the C/S, Howard Levey (aka Anton LaVey) was often able to get others to do his work for him. To facilitate this he used “recognition.” This is a typical ploy used by people of his kind. They will fly into a rage when things don't go their way, and then reward with recognition those who do their bidding, or with whom they wish to cultivate a relationship for whatever personal reasons. In other words, the system of recognition in the Church of Satan was always a matter of political largesse dispensed by the founder of that particular *sole-proprietorship*. It was the “coin” of the realm.

The Temple of Set attempts to overcome these shortcomings. It was the identification of parts of these shortcomings that led to the foundation of the Temple in the first place. However, the apple never falls far from the tree. Despite all attempts to avoid “political recognition” as practiced in the Church of Satan, the Temple of Set does *necessarily* succumb to this practice. The reason is perhaps not the same, but rather is rooted in the Temple's necessary lack of objective tradition and hence lack of objective teachings. This can be pointed to as something of an essential strength of the Temple— but it is only as strong as the chain of individuals who are its Initiates, and they are only as strong as their proverbial weakest link.

This lack of an objective tradition is essential to the Temple. Otherwise it would more or less be a neo-Egyptian religion— which would be just one more thankless exercise of the human imagination as there is no current organic continuation of that culture. The lack of an objective tradition and concrete set of teachings leads to the institution of advancement in the organization dependent upon personal relationships. Again the effectiveness of this system is only as good as the weakest link

in the chain. The lack of a concrete teachings also leads to an atomization of the members. Nothing *objective* holds them together in the School over time.

I would trace most of these features to the genetic link with the Church of Satan, which can not be abandoned or changed at this juncture any more than an individual can change his or her genetic make-up. Recognition of the genetic link and its character is perhaps the first step in possibly genetically engineering a solution to the congenital problems, however. It is worth pointing out that historically the Rune-Gild is not a part of this genetic link because it was founded independently and prior to my entry into the Temple of Set in 1984.

#### Conclusion

This exercise has been a necessary one for me to articulate some of my own Traditional ideas and to distinguish them from the philosophy of the Temple of Set. These differences are perhaps rooted in the Word *Rûna*— which was fully articulated within the school provided by the Temple of Set. A Word, is a seed-principle of a unique nature which has a revolutionizing effect on the world around it— which is categorically to some degree or another at odds with the meaning of the Word. In this sense, the contents of this document have been implicit in my philosophy from the beginning. Fundamentally, this is a manifesto issuing from the inherent and philosophically necessary *distinction* between *Xeper* and *Rûna*.

In general, as presented here, the differences in these philosophies have been two in number: First, the Gild has an objective Traditional and culturally and mythologically bound set of teachings based on the Runes and the Myth of Odin. This requires that those seeking to become Fellows and Masters of the Gild be steeped in this lore and to develop themselves in a way that is bound to the Tradition. As they transform themselves in accordance with these teachings they will be able to create objective *products* which reflect their new levels of being and it is primarily from these products that they will be Named to higher levels in the Gild. Second, the Gild recognizes the necessity of the idea of re-inclusion of the psyche into a

cultural and symbolic matrix in order for the process of the transformation of that psyche to reach its ultimate level of completion. The true individual cannot exist in an atomized state divorced from the history and mythology which gave rise to that individual. The individual only has meaning and can only be potent in the context of such a cultural matrix.

This document sets forth some major and fundamental differences between the Gild and the Temple's approach to Initiation. It does not extol the *validity* of one over the other. Both systems are equally valid and have much in common. These commonalities are not in the scope of this article to discuss. The present work merely advocates the author's position. Therefore both angles of approach are legitimate. Moreover, it should be noted that the level of philosophical sophistication found in the works of Michael Aquino is far beyond what is generally found in other so-called "initiatory" literature. If the reader is convinced that the path for perfecting the self lies along the road of pure separation, or non-union, then there is no better school in the world than the Temple of Set. If, however, one sees the path as oscillating between separation and re-inclusion, between a subjective and an objective approach to the universe in an organic Tradition-bound system, then the Rune-Gild forms the most legitimate school in this corner of the world.

This Mystery is encoded in the Seal of Rûna, which is printed on the front and back covers of this book. For those who know the Secret of how to view the Seal, the entirety of this paper is summarized non-verbally.

*In Verbis Veritas*

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February 7, 2001

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