

The Scroll of Set

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[1] How to Host a Workshop

- by Eric Kauschen III°

Recently I have had the pleasure of hosting (or helping to host) a number of Setian events and workshops. In doing so I have gained some insight that I'd like to share. This may be of help to others in the planning of a Setian event, be it a Pylon meeting, workshop, etc.

If you haven't put together a workshop before, I would highly recommend it. It is a way to pull people together for a day of Setian activities that can have the intensity of a Conclave squeezed into a single day.

Think the event through well ahead of time. How many people can your house or apartment comfortably hold? If you have a studio apartment, sending invitations to the entire ICR may yield disastrous results if you get a large response. If you have a location that can hold 20 or more people [and you're in an area where it is conceivable that 20 or more Setians will attend], you might want to consider an announcement in the *Scroll of Set* or via Setian-I. Remember, though, you'll need to have everything planned at least two months in advance if you plan to go this route. For smaller gatherings, send out invitations.

In the invitation, give people a glimpse of what is to come. Anyone who has picked up a magazine can see the power inherent in advertising. Give a background on why you are putting this workshop together, and let the people know what they can expect. If you have any sort of graphic ability, adding pictures to coincide with the words will help get people excited and make them want to attend.

Ask people directly to give presentations.

Once you have decided upon a topic, you'll need to plan for people who will be giving presentations relating to it. I've found that asking people directly if they would give a presentation is the best way to schedule speakers. When I've asked for speakers, I've found that one or two may express an interest in giving a presentation, but asking a person directly gets you a definitive answer right away.

How much time you are going to allot to speakers and how long they will talk is also important. Four to six presentations each given one half hour seems to be about right for most workshops. This forces speakers to be concise in their presentations, and it keeps the individuals

attending from becoming fidgety.

Develop a good schedule of events for the workshop. Draw up a timeline for the day's events. Make sure there is some "slack time" in the schedule, so that if one of the presenter's cars breaks down, you won't be left fumbling to fill time.

Beginning with a half hour of informal discussion, greeting old friends and acquaintances, etc., gives people time to take care of personal business that they may want to cover "since they're going to be there anyway". It also helps to move the workshop along once it gets started.

Do not underestimate the power of break time. A five- to ten-minute break between presentations gives people time to stretch their legs, get a drink, use the bathroom, etc., before the next presentation begins. This also gives people a few moments to digest what they've just heard before receiving the next onslaught of knowledge.

Be a gracious host. Look around your house or apartment. Do you have adequate seating for everyone who will attend? Consider vacuuming the rugs and scrubbing the floors. Wash the dishes in the sink. Make sure you have a supply of drinks and munchies on hand, or make it clear that people should bring their own. Have clean glasses and plates (or use plastic and paper). You should want people to be proud to be invited to your home whether it's a studio apartment or a palatial estate.

Don't be afraid to set ground rules, but try and accommodate all and make them feel welcome. If you prefer that all remove their shoes when they enter, tell them as you greet them at the door. If you are going to have attendees who smoke, provide an outside area [with an ashtray] for them to go and smoke during breaks.

Remember Murphy's Law. A workshop should be a fun and exhilarating event for all, including you who are planning it! If you remember Murphy's Law and plan for unforeseen circumstances, you'll find that you'll enjoy it much more and worry a lot less.

[2] Recognitions

On August 5, 1998 Devon Wing was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest Walter Gallo.

On August 14, 1998 Gary Cruzar was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest Eric Kauschen.

On August 16, 1998 Larry Collett was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest Timothy Crowe.

On September 5, 1998 Amy Burgess was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest Arnold Watson.

[3] A Hegemony of Ambiance

- by Tony Pizzini II^o

A thing known as “postmodernism” may be happening. Or it may not be. Or both. Or, if - as some critics believe - that it isn’t, then that is satisfactory proof that it has absolutely taken over popular culture.

Out of the mid-1970s rode “postmodernism”. As a term it had been made use of in the 1950s and 1960s.

In 1970 a book entitled *La Condition Postmoderne* by Jean-Francois Lyotard was published. It was written at the request of the Conseil des Universités of the Quebec government as a “report on knowledge”. It had a profound influence on cultural theorists of the time, although it was not intended for such an audience. Fredric Jameson, another writer in this area, believes that the book is a “crossroads” in which different debates in different areas such as politics, economics, and aesthetics intersect.

As interest in this new thing grew and theorists studied it, it reproduced, at least in the form of ideas, and turned up in universities and other areas as well. Those included philosophy, architecture, film and film studies, literature, art, TV, photography, and pop culture.

Names associated with “postmodernism”, both its theory and criticism include Jean Baudrillard, Charles Newman, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jurgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Fredric Jameson, Ihab Hassan, Dick Hebdige, and Rosalind Krause.

So what exactly is “postmodernism”? The easy answer is that it is a movement in art and literature opposed to the method and ends of “modernism”. This movement began in the late 1800s and is still going strong today (and which some critics simply believe encompasses “postmodernism”). In art: Impressionism to Abstract Expression; in music: Debussy to Stockhausen; in literature: James Joyce to Tom Robbins.

“Modernism” was an attempt, as Henri Bergson put it, to create representations that would not “falsely spatialise the purely temporal flow of consciousness”. Steven Connor has said that modernity and modernism are “characterised by a sense of the urgent, painful gap between experience and consciousness and the desire to replenish rational consciousness with the intensities of experience”.

“Postmodernism” steps in with the attitude that to make use of these methods, one must turn them inside out; they have gone as far as they will take us in their present forms.

This self-consciousness, where one is at the moment, while making use of the forms of the past, and necessarily being detached from any “safely-detached observation posts”, carries with it, according to some writers, a particular glamor that has an apparent impotence.

Charles Newman is of the opinion that the point of resistance for much of “postmodernist” culture is not “modernist” art, but rather the fact that universities and other cultural institutions took on the task of popularising and managing “modernism” and so drained it of its political charge or value.

So “postmodernism” emerges out of “modernism” and “postmodernity” out of “modernity”.

Again from Steven Connor: “‘Postmodernism’ is never purely the distanced diagnosis of the relationship between ‘modernism’ and its successor, but is rather the narrative process which is articulated in order to produce the diagnosis.”

“Postmodernism” carries with it a number of terms that can, using the techniques they represent, be useful in other areas, such as assessing information of nearly any type.

First up is “image”. If I say “Lauren Bacall”, “Temple of Set”, or “Northern Ireland”, in each of these instances an image comes to mind that summarizes the particular person or thing, generally not concentrating on detail.

This image, to conform to “postmodernism”, needs to be “de-centered”. That is, it must have no central area that is critical to its success as an independent representation but rather, a communal effort where all efforts carry a certain importance, but which is ultimately sacrificed for the whole. Of course there are exceptions: A “postmodern” rock star is a contradiction in terms.

There are naturally-occurring de-centered areas, and in the last half-dozen years these have become central to the concerns of “post-modernity” (the more cultural/political ends of the theory).

These areas partake of the opposition between “centrality” and “marginality”. Anything occurring at the “margins” of a dominant society is “subcultural” and, because of its “de-centered” status, is now the focus of this projection of a “universe of differences”.

Rainforest peoples, who may be thought of here as “marginal”, have been brought recently into the foreground through various media. The same is true for Native Americans, African-Americans, Chicano culture; all groups that suffer at the hands of the dominant culture.

While one can listen to a CD of Baka Pygmies singing their forest worksongs surrounded by the ambiance of the rainforest, one is still not hearing

the thing itself, but rather a reproduction of it.

I think the term “virtual”, as in “virtual reality”, comes to mind here. It is a phrase coined by writer William Gibson in his first novel *Neuromancer*.

Even farther removed and closer to a sense of anonymity and simulated authorship is when a modern dance recording of the “House” (and its endless subgenres) variety electronically “samples” recorded fragments of this same Baka tribe. The music, intended for dance clubs, takes the de-centered approach in that there will be a number of remixes, each the product of a (many times) non-musician’s take on the arrangement. This makes use of not only the ethnic marginality but also of fragmented reproduction. Listen to any Deep Forest or Banco de Gaia CD.

The whole approach is to move away from “ownership” (sound Marxist yet?) to a handed-down, anonymous quality.

As another example, rock music is “postmodern” because it is rebellious, marginal, and has continued to question its own ends and means. To hear this, listen to The Residents or The Butthole Surfers. But some movements within Rock represent specifically “postmodern” moments. From a touch-tone phone, push 1 for The Clash or 2 for The Sex Pistols.

Some musical groups work within certain areas of “postmodernism”, the best example being Talking Heads. Dick Hebdige has said of David Byrne’s lyrics and videos that they establish a “non-narrative space - a space of subliminal narrative suggestions, neither realist nor modernist”.

This fascination with the peripheral and fragmentary can be found in rap music, lo-fi recordings, and the “virtual collating” of older rock done by groups like Kula Shaker and Oasis. Steven Connor has said that “postmodernism” is a “disruptive cultural practice based upon an aesthetic of excess, discontinuity, bricolage, and pastiche, and that it depends upon the idea that what these things challenge is a set of dominant cultural norms which are committed to the suppression of diversity”.

Here are some of the terms and their opposites, taken from a table in Ihab Hassan’s *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*: “Modernism” - “postmodernism”; design - chance; hierarchy - anarchy; form - antiform; creation/totalisation - decreation/deconstruction; prescience - absence; centering - dispersal; paradigm - syntagm; selection - combination; transcendence - immanence; determinacy - indeterminacy; genital - phallic; polymorphous - androgynous.

As an artist I find a certain beauty in this play of resistance and power.

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[4] Time

- by Ralph Williams I°

This perennial dogma, supported and sustained by the bankers of mediocrity, selling a comfortable niche in a faceless society at the low, low price of any creativity and originality you may have.

Cruising ever forward in their media-fueled vehicles of indoctrination, these merchants of a faceless god spread their blighted dreams of a uniform culture at the speed of light, inculcating all takers into their sterile world-view, devoid of any true aesthetic, through the basilisk stare of the cathode rag.

All opposition is struck out at with their delineated sting of a supposed ostracism, another impotent attempt sprung out of flaccid minds to justify the distorted and repressed guilt and insignificance projected outward onto any perceived as not like them.

This, fellows, is the enemy: these plague-bearers of terrestrial hypochondria.

We, the iconoclastic insurrectionists, will cleanse this land. From deep within underground bunkers linguistic smart bombs are prepared, and the new regime, the Iron Youth, is trained in ideological terrorism.

Hear us, men of flaccid minds!

You shall be used in a role you were bred for.

You bear the mark of a slave, imprisoned by your own unconscious reflections of self-loathing, held in dominion by your bloated sense of self-worth. All this was branded long ago into a child’s receptive mind, now reinforced daily through a self-imposed communion with the image gods, using every media-tainted tool at your disposal.

The time has come to step down and abdicate your waning command of the earth pontates of hypocrisy. Your unnatural rule has produced a natural successor: the alien elite.

[5] Announcing the Re-Setaue Pylon

- by William D. Pridgen III°

Re-Setaue is the mysterious, hidden realm ruled by Set beyond the Constellation of the Thigh.

The central focus of the Re-Setaue Pylon is the mystery of expansion of consciousness which arises from cooperative individualism. The Re-Setaue Pylon is thus consecrated by and sacred to the Prince of Darkness himself.

Through our GBM workings we intend to comprehend, apprehend, and realize the principle of isolate intelligence.

By “comprehension” is meant an intellectual understanding of isolate intelligence. By “apprehension” is meant an intuitive, experience of isolate intelligence. By “realization” is meant the practical application of this knowledge towards the transformation (*Xeper*) of one’s life.

Through this alXemical transformation of the self into the self, i.e. *Xeper*, defeat is relegated to the realm of appearances (that which has not come into being), and victory is the only reality.

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

[6] Tangled Webb

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°

In February 1997, after delivering a lecture at the Los Angeles-based Scholomance Pylon in conjunction with the release of his book *Seven Faces of Darkness*, Magus Don Webb disappeared for a brief time, alluding only vaguely to it in his “Notes from *Neheh*” column in the April 1997 *Scroll of Set*.

Drawing upon a variety of sources - from the impeccable to the highly-questionable - I have at last assembled a fragmented account of those “missing days”, entitled *Grail Mission*. This document is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.xeper.org/maquino/index.html>.

While not essential to an understanding of *Grail Mission*, Setians who have not read *Secret of the Lost Ark* may find it helpful to review this as well. It is also available at the same Internet website.

[7] Review: *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire*

by Gerald M. Edelman. Basic Books, 1992

- reviewed by Patty A. Hardy IV°

The foremost of the mysteries that drive Setian philosophy and metaphysics is the mystery of the mind. Every Setian gets the *Crystal Tablet*, which summarizes a few key principles and observations regarding this primary mystery. Many Setians are content with the premises outlined there as working hypotheses, and go on to pursue other mysteries. But now and then some new theory about the mind comes along that merits examination.

Gerald Edelman is a Nobel Laureate and a neurobiologist. His aim in writing this book was to

describe for laymen what he calls “the beginning of a neuroscientific revolution”. In the course of this revolution, Edelman believes that we will come to understand better what consciousness is and how minds came into being in the course of evolution.

What some of us find audacious is the idea that meaning could be constructed entirely through selection and variation processes, the basis of Darwinian evolution. To explain consciousness, Edelman presents a “theory of neural group selection” (TNGS) that involves variation and selection not only on genetic (evolutionary) but developmental and experiential scales.

Edelman holds that form - morphology and the topology of biological systems in space and time - is the key to mind and the explanation for how it became manifest at a certain stage of biological evolution.

Edelman further holds that minds must be embodied, and that they require a particular morphology of matter. Nonhuman minds may exist, and may not be biological, but they must have a comparable order of complexity of form.

Neither consciousness nor self-consciousness are algorithmic or “programmable”. The genetic code does not specify a “wiring diagram” for the neurons; rather it specifies constraints on the selection processes during developmental stages. That gives you the characteristic neuroanatomy of the species, but not the topology of neuronal groups.

The functional and physical connections that set up the groups are a product of “topobiological competition during growth plus synaptic chemical changes due to experience”. It’s not neat. Some groups seem to be one-time imprints, and in other cases it appears that neurons can “sprout” in dynamic response to new stimuli or injury.

The result is a veritable noisy jungle of interwoven maps: partly genetic, partly developmental, partly experiential, some dedicated to particular senses or motor activities, others spanning these sensory & motor maps plus specialized structures for memory, sequencing, and homeostatic regulation. Moreover the precise form and function of this jungle is unique to the individual.

Edelman traces out how increasingly complex types of behavior, and finally conceptualization, can be explained in terms of coordination and signalling among these maps.

The “highest level” global mappings are recursive and re-entrant. Once active, their function can be independent of external stimuli or internal biochemical drives. They feed off their own activity. It’s these global mappings that give us spontaneity, making us more than zombies or cause-and-effect machines.

Here also is why putting a person in a sensory deprivation tank doesn't just cause sleep. And it's here the Initiate can glimpse a physical basis for some elements of Gurdjieffian thought: the little "I's" and the task of self-creation via self-knowledge and self-unification.

Edelman distinguishes (a) primary consciousness (awareness of an objective universe) and (b) secondary consciousness (self-awareness, and the active construction and manipulation of subjective universes by symbolic means). He gives descriptions of what he believes to be the minimum "configurations" of local and global neuronal maps necessary for each.

It might be interesting to compare the schemas Edelman gives for primary and higher-order consciousness against esoteric models of the mind-body complex created without neuro-anatomical data.

Right away I think I can trace Plato's "ladder" against these schemas. *Eikasia* is available to primary consciousness. *Pistis* lies between primary and secondary consciousness. *Dianoia* requires secondary consciousness plus training in discriminating syntactic forms (logic).

A hint of the physical nature of *næsis* is given when Edelman describes mathematics as "study of invariant mental objects". Recall the sign above the gate to Plato's Academy: "Let no one ignorant of geometry enter here!"

Primary consciousness develops out of the individual's relation to sensory and motor experience whose "invariants" are the result of the laws of physics.

Secondary consciousness develops out of one's relation to stable mental phenomena. To perceive the "laws" of the subjective Universe it is necessary to have a sufficiently rich "ecosystem" of such stable mental forms to observe and study, just as the physicist needs to observe many phenomena before framing physical laws. Here is the "physical" explanation of the necessity for abstract mental training recognized by all initiatory schools.

In "Is *Næsis* Mystical?" in the *Ruby Tablet*, I mention the oddly-perceptual quality of *næsis*: the *noetic* intuition is not reasoned but seems to present itself to the mind.

Testable experiments are outlined, although based on the complexity of biological nervous systems, Edelman estimates our most powerful supercomputers would barely be capable of running simulations to emulate primary consciousness.

It's interesting that when Edelman wrote this book, exploration of evolutionary processes via computer simulation and "genetic programming" (not to be confused with genetic engineering!) were just getting off the ground. We're still not there yet.

Edelman's theory has some fairly hefty philosophical implications, and the book does dwell on many of those implications. Some are no great surprise to Setians. For example, Edelman asserts that categorization is on value. That is a principle known to all who practices LBM: people have trouble accurately perceiving and thinking about things that don't fit categories important to them, and will simply not see such things or misinterpret them if they do see them.

In building a theory of consciousness, Edelman posits existence of *qualia*, properties of one's experiences not inspectable by another, pending actual experiments, because he recognizes that it's impossible to get there otherwise. The brain is the only thing remotely powerful enough to study the brain, yet whether it employs ideas or instruments to do so these are its own products. So who's watching the watchman?

Edelman opens his book by showing that Descartes failed to fully banish his malignant demon: Descartes used language to frame his inquiry. Neuroscientists are even less lucky: they know the size of the chasm that separates the philosophic premises of scientific inquiry from what they really know of the mind.

Edelman denies he is a "silly reductionist". He says that the distance from the present created by self-modeling in humans with secondary consciousness has introduced a "wild card", and that higher-order functions of brains are not just epiphenomena. What began as a small thing - perhaps a timing error in genes controlling rate of maturation of an animal's nervous system? - has produced an "emergent property" that is real and increasingly transforms the matrix of its own manifestation. In time, linkages created in subjective universes begin to change the objective universe "as if" such links were causal relations.

This is a good book for Setians pursuing the mystery of the mind.

Dennett (*Darwin's Dangerous Idea*) compares advocates of Platonism and other mind-body dualisms to those who believe in floating skyhooks: people just didn't understand they were looking at a hook attached to a really big crane, built by smaller cranes, in turn built by still smaller cranes.

Edelman tries diligently to exorcise the ghost of Platonic essentialism. Yet his arguments do leave a door open to other possibilities. At some point the product of all those cranes might indeed be something beyond more of the same - like a helicopter with a skyhook.

Xeper.

[8] On the Use of Ritual Tools

- by Kevin Crim I°

Robes, swords, candles, gongs, etc.: All of these can provide for an emotional and thought-provoking atmosphere. I for one have always been fond of symbolism, and often surround myself with emotionally-pleasing images.

The question: Is the symbolism found in such items as swords, candles, or even spoken invocations necessary for the practice of Greater Black Magic? This is a highly-individualized question and is subject to each magician's desires and beliefs.

For myself I would have to say "no". Indeed there have been times when the use of symbolism has assisted me in Black Magical workings. However I endeavor to go beyond using any sort of external aid in order to place myself in the proper state of mind for GBM to take place. This obviously requires a lot more focus and concentration, but I am beginning to see that my efforts in this area are showing great results.

Black Magic that I can manifest within the confines of my own self at will (connecting to the Powers of Darkness using only the mind, without the use of external symbols) has for me become an extremely powerful mental exercise as well as an effective means to *Xeper*.

"More magic, less method" is my current attitude. Why shoot a bothersome fly with a shotgun when a simple fly-swatter would be more than effective in exterminating the problem? Unless of course you have a fondness for shotguns.

I like to think of such things such as robes or swords more as decorations, not requirements for Black Magic. I do understand that for some, the use of ritual tools may take on a very personal meaning, and for them the use of a sword may mean more than just decoration for the chamber.

For instance, if one has given special attributes to the sword, or feels compelled to use the sword as an extension of his own magical will, this can be seen as more a necessity than just an æsthetic chamber decoration.

However I feel that since the Black Magician desires to always be in control, rather than be controlled, an exercise in pure will is always helpful in reminding the self who is in charge. I pity the poor Wiccan who feels that she must bless everything in sight lest her god and goddess not appear.

"I feel like an outsider looking in" is a statement that I hear so many pathetic and self-destructive sheep proclaim. If only they knew at what an advantage this puts them!

As with Set, remaining separated and independent from the objective universe is what will ultimately aid in the creation of a powerful immortal being. I feel that I further this through my separation from ritual paraphernalia.

Dream magic is another form of magic that I practice in which the ritual chamber is the mind/subjective universe alone.

When I first began my journey on the LHP, I felt that I needed all of the traditional ritual tools in order to perform effective Black Magic. After I collected a massive amount of ritual implements, it soon began to seem less and less necessary to use them, except in group situations.

I now very rarely put on a robe or wave around a sword during a working of GBM. I feel that this allows me to completely focus on the magical working at hand, as well as become more aware of the presence of the Prince of Darkness.

In this, as in all things, the choice is yours. Magic is a very individualized practice. Do what works! Anything else would be foolish.

[9] Canine Wisdom

- compiled by Linda Reynolds IV°

"Whoever said you can't buy happiness forgot about puppies." - Gene Hill

"Dogs feel very strongly that they should always go with you in the car, in case the need should arise for them to bark violently at nothing right in your ear" - Dave Barry

"A dog teaches a boy fidelity, perseverance, and to turn around three times before lying down." - Robert Benchley

"Did you hear about the dyslexic agnostic insomniac who stays up all night wondering if there really is a Dog?" - Unknown

"I loathe people who keep dogs. They are cowards who haven't got the guts to bite people themselves." - August Strindberg

"Ever consider what they must think of us? I mean, here we come back from a grocery store with the most amazing haul - chicken, pork, half a cow. They must think we're the greatest hunters on earth!" - Anne Tyler

"I wonder if other dogs think poodles are members of weird religious cult." - Rita Rudner

"Don't accept your dog's admiration as conclusive evidence that you are wonderful." - Ann Landers

"In order to keep a true perspective of one's importance, everyone should have a dog that will worship him and a cat that will ignore him." - Dereke Bruce

"The average dog is a nicer person than the average person." - Andrew A. Rooney

“To his dog, every man is Napoleon; hence the constant popularity of dogs.” - Aldous Huxley

[10] Notes from *Neheh*

- by Don Webb V°, High Priest of Set

Concerning the Purpose of the Temple

The purpose of the Temple of Set is to give permission from the self to the self to seek after its own Becoming.

Let me give you a very mundane example:

Let's say that you have been trying for some years to quit smoking. The methods have been varied, from “cold turkey” to the patch to gum to acupuncture from a guy in a trailer park named Rollo, Master of the Mystic East. But to no avail.

You come across an old acquaintance who used to smoke like a chimney. He mentions that one day he just quit. Suddenly, although nothing has apparently changed in your chemistry, you toss the pack of Marlboros away and never smoke again.

A common-enough story. But look at its elements: One, a person needing to change, who has been a sincere seeker. Two, a person that has effected the desired change. Three, a hidden synthesis of the two that affects behavior.

The Temple exists to create such moments. For some seekers this occurs upon reading the *Crystal Tablet*, especially the “Subjective Approach to the Subjective Universe” part of *Black Magic*. For others it happens during a ritual, or at conclave, or even exchanging a word on one of the lists.

The self remembers the force that creates it. It briefly remembers itself and then realizes that this force may be invoked anywhere, at anytime - that the force of self-creation is not bound to the laws of the mechanistic universe.

Such awakenings cannot be planned. We can't put on the calendar “Wake up on Tuesday”. But once awakened, the self can begin to learn how to create the type of place and circumstances under which future Awakenings can occur.

Concerning the Priesthood of Set

The III° is the “merging of the consciousness, indeed the personality, with that of the Prince of Darkness himself”. (*Crystal Tablet* p. 7). How does such a statement make sense in a LHP environment?

The Left-Hand Path is the path of individuation rather than union. The follower of the *Via Sinistra* seeks to exalt his independence and power.

What are we then to make of the paradoxical state of being that the Priests of Set claim for themselves?

Let us consider what we can say about the god of isolate intelligence.

Firstly he is not the same thing as “intelligence”. He struggles with the same fight that his Children do. Indeed Gifting others with consciousness was the method by which he remains separate.

If the universe were full of mechanical beings and only one magician of great power, the universe would simply become the body of that magician in enough time.

The presence of the Gift in flesh is necessary; it isn't something Set does on a whim.

Now let us consider the nature of man.

In those rare moments of *Xeper*, every human being has a profound sense of his possibilities. He sees how each step he has taken has led to where he is, and the vast, unfilled future spreads out before him. Here, by thought and action, he can move farther from the life laid out for him by society and nature, and toward a unique state of existence.

That's simple enough. Set needs free people to introduce and further the possibilities of individuation; and we, affected by that working, seek such moments.

Here we have two sorts of personalities, both seeking the same goal of cosmic freedom. We have Set, a general in the dark army, and we have those daring enough to fight on his side, the privates. [If it helps, picture Set as George C. Scott: “All right, you worthless S.O.B.s, I want you to hit the beach tomorrow and *Xeper!*”]

Now let us consider the Priesthood III°.

Priests and Priestesses have the same “marching orders” as anyone else on the LHP, but their scope of actions is different. Not only must they use the world of matter to make an honest buck, they also come to have the need to use the world of spirit to make more Setians. They encourage others to find what works for them. They give the same orders on an individual basis that Set gives on a cosmic basis. Their consciousness, personality, and concerns are not those of a private now; they have begun to resemble captains. Their development has made them Set-like.

But this is not merely a case of linear development. As they restructure their personalities to become Set-like, they have the ability to sense and feel the great working Set is performing on the cosmos. They become participants in something larger than themselves, but without submitting to, or being subsumed in it. Their own genius and quest for freedom cause them to demonstrate the cosmic working by actions of their own choice.

This interaction with the Principle of isolate self-consciousness does not make you part of that Principle, but increases that Principle within you as you increase it in the world.

By this and other methods Set's goal of exporting *Xeper* to the Universe is obtained.

"Do What Thou Wilt shall be the whole of the Law." Great is the might of Set, greater still he through us.

Concerning the Will

Will does not come from the processes of the cosmos, but from hard actions of individuals. It can be gained and trained.

The will is an non-mechanistic attractor that works on consciousness and events. If invoked without lust for results, it is the single most powerful force that an individual can possess.

The will brings thought back to itself. Our thoughts wander everywhere. Within a minute you can think about sex, magic, money, snack foods, your neighbors, elephants, politics, and the name of that guy in your third grade class that ate paper. The will, like a magnet, keeps bringing thought back to a theme.

The will can affect the thoughts of others. People will show up in your life and tell you things. People will give you things. You will have opportunities and strange "failures" that lead to success, if your will is strong.

The will is not connected to the mechanistic universe. It isn't what you use to get a new car or a certain job. It is what you use for general principles, such as will-to-wealth. That may help you get a job, or it may help you read a certain issue of the *Wall Street Journal*, or it may make that banker in the bus listen to your problems.

But more than that, it makes you pay attention to what you hear, or have the courage to step into a new area of your life.

Once the will is strong, fear and anxiety begin to disappear.

The will is made strong by disconnecting it from results.

If you invoke the will for, say, wealth, you work on keeping the invocation strong. You don't let it get to you that you are still working as a waiter. You look for other work, just like everyone else, but you keep your invocation strong. Eventually - and you will always be surprised at how this sneaks up on you - you will obtain your goal.

If you try to focus your will on a particular event, you will know failure and sadness and give up the magical quest.

The will is not an arrow shot at a target. It is a way of being that soaks through you, into all of your thoughts, words, and deeds - and then out into the world, finding either lesser wills to dominate, or similar or equal wills with which to act in synergy.

From such synergies come the possibilities of schools of initiation.

Concerning Objectivity

The Temple of Set has taken subjectivity as its matrix. In other words, achievement and evolution are guarded by a self-defined form. We don't grade you on how much money you make, what car you drive, or what academic degrees you have. But this does not mean that we don't have objectivity as a cultural value.

We have a very clear cultural value. Whatever your desires are, if you are pursuing the path of *Xeper* rather than that of delusion, you will be able to see steady movement toward those goals in the objective universe as well as the subjective one.

If your goal is to be a better musician, you will not only work hard to produce music that is better by your own standards, but you will also be able to point to better gigs, better recording contracts, the ability to work where and with whom you choose.

A matrix of subjectivity can and must - as long as you wish to fight delusion - include objectivity. A matrix of objectivity can not include subjectivity. So we choose the bigger field, knowing that this does open us to the very real dangers of laziness and wishful thinking. It is every Setian's self-duty to remain alert and armed against these foes.

If you are undergoing *Xeper*, the size of what you can cause to happen in the world must continually increase. The exercise of this facility will bring you more opportunities for *Xeper* than simple human advancement would. [The previous sentence was a great secret of Greater Black Magic. Read it again.]

Concerning Lesser Black Magic

A useful technique of Lesser Black Magic is to cause those who could hinder you to momentarily become more powerful by receiving an image of themselves from you. This is minor god-making, and is an art related to the greater Setian art of self-deification.

On the Left-Hand Path we are aware of the human's unnatural need to be more than he is. We exalt that need; it is the Black Flame which burns to the glory of desire.

We also know that 99.9% of all humans cannot exalt that need, and therefore they suffer constantly. So most of the time they turn mean and petty. If you can make them feel they are important or powerful, they will do anything for you, because you have assuaged the pain that actually keeps the Worlds of Horrors going.

Take for example a minor bureaucrat. He is hateful to every poor sap who is caught in his office. But you come to see him and you say, "I really need some help in getting this paperwork done, and I know that you're the one that can help me. You're the one that really gets things done around here."

You have told him he has power, and he will do anything he can to prove you right.

Or you deal with the department secretary that has turned her ache of inadequacy into a fine mass of passive aggressions. You come to her and say, "I hope you can help me. You know who to ask, what to do. I hope you can teach me." You have told her that she is wise, and she will do anything she can to prove you right.

Lastly the human aching need for recognition has made all believe that no one listens to them. If you listen and remember what people say to you, you will command them. Simply saying "I was struck last Tuesday when you talked about the city's traffic problems" is a great charm.

Learning what needs cause LBM to work is also learning self-knowledge about what it is to be human. It will teach what you must have, show you how you have been tricked, and explain the pageant of human history to you in ways that books never can. Thus LBM becomes a guide to the inhabitant of Sol III, and will teach you not only where you are starting from, but where you stand all the time, no matter how great your *Xeper*. It is a guide that everyone can pursue, and it brings power as well as knowledge, marking it firmly as a LHP technique.

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

Xeper.

[11] **Spiral Maze of Thulask**

The Psychology of a Setian's Possible Entertainment
- by Tony Pizzini II°

Dark trivia from Thomas Fenske, Duke University via Phil Proctor, Firesign Theatre (2/98): "The classically-minded among us may have noted a TV ad for Microsoft's Internet Explorer e-mail program which features the cheery line "Where do you want to go today?" while a chorus sings "Confutatis maledictus, flammis acribus addictis" from Mozart's Requiem. It means "the damned and accursed are convicted to flames of Hell". *Christopher Lee Sings Devils, Rogues & Other Villains* (Wolfslair, 1996)

The well-known actor has at last his first solo recording. One reads in the liner notes that Lee has had a passion for opera and singing all his life, but that only a few films afforded him the chance to show his gift (a powerful baritone).

There are fifteen pieces here, ranging from Broadway show tunes to operatic arias. In nearly all of these, Lee plays (or rather, sings) the bad guy. There is "Mack The Knife" from Weill/Brecht's "Threepenny Opera," Mephistophele's "Serenade" from Gounod's *Faust*, "Hagen's

Watch," and "Donner's Song" from Wagner's *Ring* cycle, Stan Jones' "Ghostriders In The Sky" (with what sounds like the Hellecasters as a backup!), "Epiphany" from Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, and Moussorgsky's "Clock Scene" from *Boris Godounov*, itself referred to as "one of the most realistic depictions of madness in all opera." Got the idea yet? Full liner notes with the lyrics in English, some fascinating Lee history, and a short paragraph on each piece.

Conceived and produced by Priest Nikolas Schreck, I found the production and mix exceptional, as these two areas, in classical, as opposed to say rock, music, can be quite intimidating (transparency, presence, and the rest of it).

15 pieces: 1+5 = 6; turn 6 upside-down for 9. Cut 9 is "Le Veau d'Or" from Gounod's *Faust*. Exquisitely appropriate. I haven't heard Lee on disk since '77, when he narrated on "The King of Elfland's Daughter", a project put together by two members of Steeleye Span (an English folk-rock band). None of this is rock: cross a border!

* * * * *

Trans-missions: For those Setians with computers and a Net connect, you might want to check out Bit- and Netcasting (neither having to do with fishing). You can get a free download of RealAudio (check Yahoo). You can then easily receive these radio stations. Many are just your typical FM stirring the generic pablum, while others are quite peculiar (even odd, or strange at times). They're clearer than short-wave, but the drawbacks are not being able to listen to quasars, pulsars, Morse, etc., the strange (even odd, or at times, peculiar) otherworldly sounds found there:

Egypt (Egyptian Radio)
www.sis.gov.eg/realpg/html/adfront9.htm - Out of Cairo; Middle Eastern music, or news, with separate "buttons" for which you'd prefer to hear. Very exotic, subjectively erotic, although slightly quixotic.

Austria (Antenne Steiermark)
www.antenne.stmk.at/ - From Graz; most Rock, but you never know ...

France (Techno France) www.france.techno.fr/ - Electronica of various descriptions, including descriptions of various Electronica.

France (NRJ) www.nrj.fr/nrj-288-s.ram - In Paris; Rock, although I heard an American Pop song and it somehow made me feel cheated.

England (Watford Hospital Radio)
www.whr.watford.net/onair.htm - Still London, but a bit Northwest. Not sure what they play, but as a patient there you can phone in requests from your bed, then the damned things are actually played for everyone to hear. I imagine one might request "Stairway To Heaven" (backwards version) or

demand something a bit more rough on the poor patients, say Stockhausen, Xenakis . . . maybe some Bartok, Radio Werewolf ...

Sultanate of Oman (Radio Live) www.oman-tv.gov.om/ - Straight from Muscat's "Ministry of Information." Our night-raccoon loved it! You'll hear something one day here that you won't believe, then, by Ea, the following day, you'll find yourself believing it! I mean, is Amerika a myth?

Ross Ice Shelf, Antarctica (Anet) www.advice-net.com/anetstation.htm - With a Webcam on the Ice Shelf as it slowly breaks apart. This one's on Tasmanian Time (11 hours ahead of UTC/GMT). All kinds of cool folk music. The location is actually a joke (it's in California, but don't let yourself know I told you, just suspend disbelief, and oh yeah, "Trust No One"). But the site's got all kinds of interesting links.

There's also a broadcast from the Mining University in Poland, playing most underground stuff. I'll dig up the URL later.

* * * * *

"If then ... else" Candice Pacheco (RGB, 1995)

Ms. Pacheco is a co-founder of D'Cuckoo (whose second CD I reviewed earlier in this column's history). D'Cuckoo really ought to be allowed to show up and perform on Xena (damn, I just noticed the sub-text, so sorry, or, you're welcome); I just can't get the idea out of my head! So, if there are any Setian females who like Trance/Techno/Tribal and wonder where all the women in this genre are, well . . . this is She! The Duchess of Tweak! It's true there's a lot of junk for sale under the Electronica heading (remember, at one time this was called Disco, until Nina Hagen's UFO breached the threshold), but this ain't by any means (junk, that is). This music consists of highly eclectic modern dance music from a woman with degrees in music and electronics. The CD's title comes from self-written programming code for electronic percussion she also built. Yes, she's even an amateur inventor of all manner of sound-producing weirdness, as well as associate producer of Mickey Hart's newest "Planet Drum" project. All of this is "sampled" from real instruments and then heavily processed. Voices are everywhere, all races, all languages, mostly women, and fragments of words and sentences are incorporated without any regard as to context. The sense of melody can be Romantic, the degree of "tweak" is unheard of (that's the knob-twiddling and fader obsessiveness during final mixdown) and the rhythms mesmerizing. I can recommend one other "cutting edge" woman in dance music. Her name is Dana Owens (aka Queen Latifah). Her "Nature of a Sister" and "Order in the Court" (Tommy Boy '91 and Motown '98, resp.) are some of Rap's

finest moments. (D'Cuckoo, 2440 16th St., #304, San Francisco, CA 94103 or www.dcuckoo.com/).

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Don Webb, *Stealing My Rules* (Jasmine Sailing/Cyber-Psycho AOD, 1997).

Can't really be heard unless you read it out loud, as it's a book. Thirteen short stories that defy description. I've reviewed this man's work before and it's not easy to describe. His eclecticism and erudition crisscross often. A typical tale told by Webb (odd how the name sounds like the ToS's High Priest's) reads like Burroughs, switches to Lovecraft, back to Pynchon ... and on it goes. Most of what I've read of Webb's has an impressionistic but unsettling character. These stories will make you dream funny, too. Worth a read. It moves in mysterious ways. (Cyber-Psycho AOD, P.O. Box 581, Denver, CO 80201, concrete (sorry, paper), \$5.00, 76 pages.

[12] Order of the Black Tower

- by James Severson IV°, Grand Master
Arjuna on the Battlefield

Symbolism of the Tower

In the Egyptian system of hieroglyphics, the tower is a determinative sign denoting height or the act of rising above the common level of life and society. The tower is symbolic of ascent ("Essent").

During the Middle Ages towers and belfries held the significance of watchtowers. By the simple application of symbolism of level (whereby material height implies spiritual elevation), they also expressed the same symbolism as the ladder, linking Earth and Heaven.¹

Since the idea of elevation and ascent implicit in the tower connotes transformation and evolution, the athanor (the alchemist's furnace) was given the shape of a tower to signify inversely that the metamorphosis of matter implied a process of ascent.

Another symbol usually mentioned in this connection is the bronze tower in which Danaë, the mother of Perseus, was imprisoned.

Finally we would point out that the analogy between the tower and man. Just as the tree is closer to the human figure than the horizontal forms of animals, so too is the tower the only structural form distinguished by verticality. Windows at the topmost level, almost always large in size, correspond to the eyes and the mind of man.¹

It is possible to discover a dual tendency in the symbolism of the tower. Its upward impulse may be accomplished by a deepening movement: the greater the height, the deeper the foundations.

Nietzsche talked of descent during ascent.

Nerval in *Aurelia* refers to the symbolism of the tower: “I found myself in a tower, whose foundations were sunk deep into the earth, reaching up like a spire into the sky, that my whole existence already seemed bound to be consumed in climbing up and down.”¹

Introduction

What is the Order of the Black Tower, and what magical elements can be found therein? The symbol of the tower has been and continues to be a profound and enduring image within a large variety of magical traditions.

As a metaphor for the process of initiation in general, I have chosen this image to further symbolize the emergence of an ancient and long-overlooked initiatory tradition: the Vedic LHP. Examples are the Kaula School of Tantrism & the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

Things Vedic refer to a grouping of initiatory texts entitled the *Veda*, or simply “Knowledge” in Sanskrit. The actual written *Veda* was a product of India around approximately 1500-800 BCE, but existing as an oral tradition for quite some time previous to these dates.

Within many traditions of the East, the concept of Yoga is obviously a prevalent core aspect. It has now become important from the standpoint of definition that this term be discussed in an entirely new light.

Yoga and the Path to the Left Yoga - “union”, a yoke, a process or path or displace leading to oneness with the divine or with one’s self (from the root verb *yuj* = “to unite, join, connect”), the state of oneness with the self, a god, the practice leading to that state ...⁴

According to Shaiva Siddhanta, it is a path to liberation characterized by contemplation and internal worship. It is called the path of friendship to a god (*sakha-marga*). Its goal is gaining the form of a god (*Sarupya*) (See *Moksha*).⁴

Moksha - “liberation: spiritual freedom: release: the final goal of human life” (from the root verb *moksh* = “to liberate”).⁴

Shaiva Siddhanta says that the path of release consists in *carya*, *kriya*, *yoga*, and *jnana*. In release the soul obtains its individuality. It becomes similar to a god. Thus release is unity in duality. The soul enjoys a god’s nature, though it is not identical with any particular god.⁴

“It ain’t over ’til it’s over.” This revelation is what separates Left-Hand Path philosophy from the greedy hedonism of the world. Non-players may think that the game tokens they accumulate from a good car to a happy marriage are signs they are winning. These are merely signs they are playing

well. In chess you may capture almost all of your opponent’s pieces, but he wins if he captures your king.

Every moment of life must be connected with the permanent parts of yourself. This “yoking” of the many “I”s to your permanent self is Yoga. This is different from the Right-Hand Path Yoga, which seeks to unify with the divine.

The immutable part of oneself, the *Kutashta*, is the awareness of one’s own specialness, the whole. The word *Kutashta*, which means “permanent”, literally means “to stand to the top” (from *kuta* = “summit” and *stha* = “to stand”). This appears in the frequent Western LHP Yoga metaphor of the Black Tower.

From Magus Don Webb: “*Moksa*, or what do I do when the world sucks?”

But essentially what I am beginning to define as “Setian Black Yoga” is a process by which the laws of nature are intelligently and deliberately applied to daily life in order to realize, in full consciousness, one’s own individual isolate nature.

It is also based on the theory that man is not his body alone, and that the real spirit - or *Purusa* - actually uses the body as an instrument.

In order for this to be a LHP truism, the presence of a “watcher” or witnessing element within the mind must first be located and further enhanced.

Singularity breeds further understanding and can afford the Black Magician an ability to bind and/or separate the forces within and beyond, for the purposes of willed intent.

The Dark Transcendence

This magical concept is the primary focus of the OBT. Within the envelope of Greater Black Magic, the DT takes a unique, but not necessarily uncommon approach.

Utilizing the tools of Setian Black Yoga the DT is a four-fold process utilizing the body, the mind, the emotions, and the spirit (*psyche*).

The theory is that one’s isolate nature defines what clarity the Initiate would have in any of the above four realms: the more the clarity, the more the possibility for initiatory balance. And by “balance” I specifically mean the ability to draw upon the integrative strength each can afford the other.

To endeavor a mastery of this process, the OBT is offering the initial model of the Nine Schools of Setian Black Yoga as a starting point:

(1) *Hatha*, which is based on control of the physical body to open it to the cosmic energy by breathing and physical exercises. [LHP note: To engage the body as one of the principal tools in accessing & utilizing the isolate self.]²

(2) *Laya*, which works on the psychic centers to awaken the primordial cosmic energy of the individual (*Kundalini*). [LHP note: To better understand how these psychic centers can affect the ability of the self to manifest within/into objectivity.]²

(3) *Mantra*, which makes use of the repetition of certain words and phrases to steady the mind. [LHP note: The use of specific magical formula, which empowers the isolate self towards a greater ability to manifest within/into objectivity.]²

The above three work by operating from the outer periphery of consciousness to an inner center.

The following three proceed from the inner self outwards:

(4) *Jnana*, which seeks to effect a resonance of inner and outer by a change of thought, resulting from the attainment of a deeper understanding of both the objective and subjective (Yoga of knowledge). [LHP note: The word "union" being replaced with "resonance" and/or "to yoke", which implies more of a separate vantage-point, and reference for isolate control.]²

(5) *Bhakti*, which seeks to effect a resonance by the change of one's emotional consciousness through devotion to an ideal (or a First Principle as per Plato) (Yoga of devotion). [LHP note: Devotion to the isolate self involving but not limited to self-love, deserving compassion, compassionless love, etc.]²

(6) *Karma*, which seeks to effect a resonance by which control of one's actions initiate from within the core self (Yoga of action). [LHP note: This is a self-determined act specifically for the purposes of gaining a greater understanding of that same self. In other words, to have self-control is one of the greatest challenges a Setian confronts.]²

All of the above six are embraced in:

(7) *Raja Yoga*, one of the earliest and most scientific treatments of the subject of self-transformation. [LHP note: *Raja Yoga* is for the most part a mental and/or spiritual discipline, which requires an isolate perspective to be effective. It is here more so than anywhere else that the concept of "to yoke" has its greatest impact on the adept. Union - or more specifically understanding - with regard to the isolate self is the critical differentiation which separates this form of Yoga from its RHP cousins.]³

In the Setian/LHP system of Yoga there are also two other schools as mentioned above, which are only now being developed and extrapolated upon:

(8) *Luciferian*, which seeks to isolate the self in a context which transcends the façade of only the ego, towards a greater appreciation of the totality of the *psyche*.

(9) *Meta*, which seeks to transcend that very subjectivity which provides the initial vehicle for LHP liberation. [Facilitator's note: This is the SBT's version of the mystery of the Red Magus. Thank you, Order of Leviathan.]

Structure and Operation

As is the general guideline for the entire Temple of Set, OBT affiliation is restricted to II°+ Initiates. All interested Initiates are encouraged to first contact an affiliate of the Order before actually contacting the Grand Master. Among the reasons for this are:

(1) One of the greatest gifts an Order can give its Initiates is the opportunity for magical and/or initiatory personalization. The GM has already created a specified path for himself, thus the formation of the Order. But the active member has in most cases just begun. And his perspective can be both various as well as personally unique.

(2) Depending on one's level of knowledge and proficiency, it is also good to start from a platform of some familiarity, like that of a similar degree or interest level, before attempting anything unfamiliar.

Once contact has been established, the process of acceptance will take as long as is needed for each individual candidate.

Structures of the Order

The Peristyle: The outer courtyard of ancient temples was sometimes called a *peristyle*: a place in which the novices would congregate and study - a place of introduction, which could further specify various types of further advancement...

Those who do not have a background in general Yogic processes would begin their journey here. Even those who have a developed background, but have not yet integrated such a tool within the general concept of Setian philosophy, would also begin here.

The Inner Temple: In those same ancient temples of antiquity, the concept of entrance into the inner temple was a process of advanced education, as well as great initiatory understanding.

The *Inner Temple* of the OBT will represent a definitive personalization of the Initiate's progress within the Order, specifically based upon the concepts of LHP initiation and the Temple of Set proper.

The school of Left-Hand Path Yoga is about creating suitable companions for the Prince of Darkness. It will be hard work to create such a school in the West, but hard work is the path of the deified human as opposed to the "occult culture bum".

OBT Information Sources

The Third Eye: The OBT will report its experiments and/or magical discoveries to the Temple through a newsletter, *The Third Eye*. It will be published approximately 3-4 times a year. All the active membership will be expected to contribute to this publication on a regular basis.

This publication will be made available to all Pylon Sentinels and Masters of the Temple free of charge. All other Initiates are asked for a donation of US\$3/issue to cover the costs of printing and postage. [Yearly subscriptions are available upon request.]

The Black Tower Chronicles: At the end of each year, the Order will produce a single volume of information chronicling its endeavors. Any interested II°+ Temple Initiates, regardless of Order affiliation, are welcome to purchase any of these volumes for the cost of printing and postage. Please contact the GM for further details.

Reading List: As a part of the Second Volume of the *Black Tower Chronicles*, there will be an ever-evolving reading list developed in the same spirit of the one in the *Crystal Tablet of Set*.

References

1. *A Dictionary of Symbols* by J.E. Cirlot.
2. *Hatha Yoga: A Simplified Course* by Wallace Slater.
3. *Raja Yoga: A Simplified Course* by Wallace Slater.
4. *A Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy: Sanskrit Terms Defined In English* by John Grimes, SUNY, 1996.

[13] A Realm of Gods at Play: The Dance of Xeper and Xem

- by David Moore II°

While participating in the Saturnian Lodge Rite during the Houston Conclave, the thought struck me that "Xem is the realm of gods at play".

One of the ramifications of this was that I set aside all of my notes for a third Xem essay and will instead elaborate on a specific issue created by my interpretation of the *Book of Opening the Way*, the core text of the Xem Magus Ronald K. Barrett.

A certain undefined tension exists in the writings of RKB, a lack of clarification that makes Xem more obscure and mystical than it needs to be. In some ways Xem is described as a highly advanced and refined state of Xeper. In other ways he speaks of Xem as some sort of interactive realm of higher beings.

What RKB is doing is answering two questions: (1) How do you get to Xem? (2) What do you do once you are in Xem?

Entering into Xem is becoming Xem. This is apotheosis, the recognition of one's own divinity, eternal power and awareness fused with flesh. Xem is understood at this level as the god you are manifesting.

I would argue that this is an experience that can be achieved subjectively now, not just something mysterious that we may arrive at someday. I would also argue that this is Xeper pure and simple, Xeper that has reached the point of manifesting and knowing its own Maat, its own transcending truth.

Here a sense of abiding divinity takes its seat. The self-created and generated quintessence becomes established in the Initiate. This is what RKB and many who followed his work proclaimed as the "I am". You realize your own power and give a name to that unnamed *neter* who is yourself. That act of naming is a symbolic act, a reflection of the true act of manifesting and refining your own quintessence out of the raw material of a certain Gift.

This doesn't mean that once you have this experience you will be constantly wandering around in a godlike state. The chores and limits of biology must be given their tribute. But it does mean that the aspect of your being that is Xem can and will Remanifest. The task of the Initiate is to embrace, facilitate, and encourage that experience.

At this point in our progression through the universe, Xem can only be experienced subjectively. That is why Xem can be seen both as the god that you become and the realm in which you exist. Since both individual divinity and the realm of divinity are perceived within the internal being of the magician, it is easy to blend them together. Both perceptions are invisible to the main mass of humanity, at least most of the time.

Entering Xem is a goal that can be achieved. But this is a beginning, not an end. In Key #5 of the BOW, RKB distinguishes the two aspects of Xem as I am trying to do and states:

Willed evolution involves not only one's own Coming Into Being as Xem, but also involves and determines one's relationship and role or function with the realm of Xem. It must be remembered that Xem is dual in concept, for the Word at once defines the individual being and the realm of beings, all of whom are Becoming cooperatively.

That seems pretty much to the point. Why even write this essay? Because it seems to me that, after reading more of the post-RKB Xem material, this aspect of his work has been submerged since his downfall. This probably has not been deliberate, just a side-effect of the fact that Xeper is first and

foremost an individual process and that one must enter *Xem* as a unique being, one's own god.

Once I read the *BOW* a vision of *Xem* became clear to me. Now I find myself seeing the influence of the Word running deep and flowing in the currents of Set's Temple. It is almost as if the downfall of its Magus has allowed *Xem* to diffuse throughout the Temple, to energize the work of Initiates in strange and subtle ways that RKB might never have envisioned, might even have resisted. New Words have been Uttered that can show us the way not through the mandate of another, but through our own work, at our own rate and progression.

Xem has been seen as a distant goal. And perhaps in RKB's day it was. But much has transpired since then. The *Æon* has expanded greatly. The reUtterance of *Xeper* toys with the once-foreboding boundary of *Xem*, teases it, even crosses it. For *Xem* is "merely" *Xeper* that has reached a certain point and has thus always lain coiled within *Xeper*, sleeping, waiting for the wake-up call.

Xem can add entire new dimensions and depth to your work. Once you begin to work in *Xem*, you must determine what it is that you will do there. This is how *Xem* is an ongoing and dynamic process. And you will awaken not just to your own divinity but to the divinity of others who are becoming *Xem*. You will begin to sense, to feel this hidden matrix of higher beings, this realm of gods at play.

My essence is forged by the power of my utterance.

I speak my own truth.

I am heard in the abode of the gods.

Its gates are open to me.

I am welcome there.

[14] Rude Awakening

- by Brian Karasek II°

One is never supposed to wake sleepwalkers. One can kill them from the shock, it's said.

Gather 'round the campfire, my friends, and I'll tell you why. You have probably heard the story a thousand times. It was told the first time about a man who ruled another world and was in love with a woman who ruled this one.

It has been sung and screamed and filmed and written. Just a brief year ago, one of the players in this story ended her so-called life on screen. Star-crossed lovers, a tale as old as the stars themselves.

She and I were well acquainted. We had known each other for years, and we had run around the same maypole before.

She was devoted to her god, and I was devoted to my own. There could be no common ground for romance there. There had never been a workable solution.

I would not commit without possible physical consummation of that commitment, and she would not consummate it without a foregone commitment - a commitment she would not make to one who did not share the yoke. That's their phrase for it: "one who shares the yoke".

In anger I told her how that was the difference between our religions: Mine sets me free, and hers puts her in a cage.

But I was content to feed the flesh's hunger elsewhere while she yearned to have what I held. I was content to raise my own Hell well outside of her line of sight until she changed her mind. She thought that her love for me and mine for her would be strong enough to conquer our differences.

Love conquers all, after all. That's what all the storybooks tell us.

And so we reached an agreement which was basically all that I wanted. No compromise was given, just capitulation. And as we lay together afterward and talked, it was agreed that this was a good thing, and I agreed to let her walk in her light unmolested, as she would let me walk in my Dark untethered.

This was to be the best of all possible worlds, thought I. How could I ask for more than a beautiful woman who loved me, whom I could love, and with whom I shared a passion seldom equaled in my admittedly short history of 24 years.

Until there came the day when she told me over the phone that she "had a lot going on in her head". Gentlemen, you know the phrase. It translates into 20th century male dialect as: "You are in trouble, and you won't even see it coming."

I mention that this was over the phone. You see, this tale began on one side of the planet, while I was on her side of it. And the phone call came from her side to mine, where she told me that she was having a hard time with "things". And before I knew it, she was leaving me. I cannot say that I was surprised. This particular member of the flock has done it to me before. But for me, a roll in the hay does wonders for a person's trustworthiness, and I have found it harder to shake such people than to keep them.

But the reason I share this with you is to share her words and my lesson. She told me that her faith was failing. She actually told me that she was placing me in her esteem where she felt that Christ ought to go.

Needless to say, I had harsh words about being anywhere in which that particular myth had been, but I kept them to myself.

She needed distance, she said, to re-establish her relationship with her god. And she couldn't give it the place of importance in her life that she felt she had to with me coiled there in her heart.

And so I was dumped for Jesus.

I had some venom in me for that, and I let fly. She hurt me; the least I could do was return the favor. I told her that Jesus wasn't likely to give her another kiss, or if he were, it was about as likely that I would give her one.

Before I bit her too deeply, though, a thought struck me. This is a good thing, thought I. What is worse, to follow a mythological savior or to follow a human one? She realized that her faith was slipping on the hill I represented. She couldn't give me her worship, and she couldn't love me and not share that need in her with me.

And so I realized that I made the mistake, not her. I should have realized it.

They really are wired differently, you know. They don't work like we do.

And we shouldn't try to wake them.

We could kill them with the shock!

[15] **The Priest**

- by Linda Reynolds IV°

A whisper drifted across the Flame, its motion brushed by fiery fingers.

I heard. And yet, leaning closer, the Flame focused within my senses: alive, breathing, pulsing.

Again the whisper: an alien voice from æons past, a void beyond comprehension.

A greeting from where? Angled space.

No earthly measure of its time, its place. No mortal could Understand its message, its existence, its promise.

For it was my own voice which spoke from within eternity, from within the Flame!

[16] **Getting Yourself Ordained: A Primer to the Priesthood**

- by Bruce Ware III°

Many Setians and Adepts express curiosity about the III°. What does it mean? How is it different from their experience? And the inevitable "Question A": the nature of the Prince of Darkness. Some have even explicitly stated that they wanted to become Priests or Priestesses and would like to direct their efforts to achieving the III°.

Like the people who publish "how-to" manuals on nuclear bomb construction on the Internet, I am not afraid of information getting into the "wrong hands". If you can comprehend the core principles and apply them in a practical manner, you will probably experience the *Xeper* that leads to the III°

and achieve the Recognition desired. I say "probably" because there is still one element neither I nor any Initiate can invoke in this process: the will of Set. Perceiving that will is properly the function and prerogative of the Magistry, especially in the process of Recognizing an Adept to the III°.

What are the qualifications for the Priesthood? How does an individual demonstrate the fact of initiation to the III°? Can the Magistry decline to Recognize an Adept to the Priesthood? What is the relationship between the authorities and responsibilities of the Priesthood and initiation to the III°?

In attempting to define the core principles, one discovers that we use many terms without having a clear agreement on what these terms mean. I do not expect full agreement. Indeed, I would be surprised if there were, because we are all the products of our own experiences, including philosophical constructs, language, and so on. "The Path is many paths", as my mentor Ipsissimus Lewis often says.

By proposing these definitions here, though, I am presenting a lexicon that will be used throughout this essay. If the reader can understand and work with these definitions, we will have made a good beginning at a common vocabulary, which is a vital first step for clarity and precision.

In the mundane world, I am an air traffic controller. When I tell the pilot of a 747 to turn left to a new heading, reduce speed, and descend to a new altitude, that language is very clear and precise. And I expect a clear, precise, and immediate response. Any other result is unacceptable: there is no gray area. Air traffic controllers are trained to use precise language and to be clear in our use of words. In this essay I will attempt the same level of precision.

For convention, capitalized terms will refer specifically to the Setian meanings of the terms, while lower case will refer to the general meaning. I may add, in parentheses after the term used, the contextual definition I am describing.

- **Essence** - the core self; not specific in time or place; eternal and immutable; the monad as theorized by Democritus, Bruno, Leibniz, and others; the subject entity of Magus Robinson's "Essent into Essence".

- **State of Being** - the self- and other-perceived personality, restricted to a specific time and place; the aggregate and interdependent traits that comprise the personality; the Essence as modified by those added traits acting as appendages, shells, or masks; changeable as a result of *Xeper*.

- **Xeper** - a discontinuous (non-linear, integral, and non-incremental) process whereby one experiences a distinct alteration in State of Being. Compare and contrast with "Initiation".

- **Remanifestation** - a continuous (linear and graduated) process in which one demonstrates (“Remanifests”) the traits of a new State of Being; the process occurring as a result of *Xeper*; the observable results of (one’s own or another’s) *Xeper*.

- **Initiation** - (general:) an involuntary process whereby a person (the initiate) begins an experience, usually precipitated by some previously unknown force or stimulus; (Setian:) a self-willed and directed process whereby the Initiate voluntarily seeks out experiences for the purpose of creating conditions favorable to *Xeper*. Note that the difference between these two levels is in terms of intention. *Xeper* may result from either, but the Setian Initiate generally prefers the self-directed variety. Initiation does not necessarily imply a change in State of Being.

- **Recognition** - the art of continuous perception of the Remanifest State of Being of an Initiate by the senior Initiate(s) who are assigned that responsibility and authority by the Temple; the “designation” of the appropriate degree as a result of that perception.

- **Character** - the extent to which a mind is purposefully integrated; also, how closely a State of Being reflects its Essence and resists disintegrative influences. Compare and contrast with “morality”, which is the imposition by an outside force of “character-like” structure on an individual who is not sufficiently evolved to Remanifest character.

These seven terms are virtually the heart of what we as a Temple seek to accomplish. I stopped at seven, though I could define many more. These, however, make up the central points behind the questions raised above.

The next logical step is to define the Priesthood of Set within the context of these terms. We seek to answer the question “What is the Priesthood and what are its qualifications?”.

This actually derives into two forms - how one initiates **to** the III° and how one initiates **as** a III°. We will deal with becoming a Priest here, the “to” part.

In practical terms the Priesthood is an organizational subset of the Temple of Set, composed of individuals who have been Recognized to the III°. This answer suffices for the Temple of Set, Inc., but leaves much to be desired in the particulars of the seven terms. Let’s try this:

While an Adept pursues Initiation (or has Initiation done to him), the opportunities created for *Xeper* may cause him to experience a noetic encounter with his Essence.

This encounter is often described as a recognition of a supra-rational state; that is, one in which the “normal” rational processes of analysis and definition are limited by the absence of a

lexicon even more intricate than the one I have offered here. I may yet attempt proposing such a lexicon in the future, depending on how well-received this one is.

The encounter with Set is perceived as either an encounter with the higher inner self or with a separate entity, the Prince of Darkness.

Regardless of how it is perceived, the encounter establishes a direct link to Set, in turn precipitating a *Xeper* event. The new State of Being is Remanifested as the Initiate accepts and applies the lessons of Initiation and actualizes the power of the link. The Remanifested qualities are perceived and Recognized by the proper authority of the Magistry.

In short, Set ordains the new Priest or Priestess, and the Magistry Recognizes that ordination. The degree is the outward symbol of the new State of Being, and the rights, authority, and responsibilities of that degree are described in the By-Laws.

There are two views of the *Xeper* that marks the creation of the link to Set. We may say that Set initiates the Adept; or we may say that the Initiate apprehends that his State of Being suddenly appears to be dual - himself and Set. The universe of the Initiate now contains two distinct States of Being, one of which at this time lays an obligation on the other.

In the first case Set is the “previously unknown force” touching (“initiating”) the Adept. Until this event the Adept may have perceived Set as a concept, a conventionalized representation of some internal hidden aspect of the Adept’s own personality. Setian Initiation in this conceptualization is a series of experiences that the Adept views as awakening or actualizing the inner force. At the point of initiation to the III°, the experience is so startling that the Adept’s carefully structured world-model is thrown into disorder. Crowley, relating Eliphas Levi’s experience, spoke of the shock of being “knocked down” by a force whose existence was previously doubted.

In the second case the Adept may have perceived Set as a literal entity, the First Form or *netter* of Isolate Self-Consciousness or the Prince of Darkness. In this event, initiation is the gradual “approach” of the Adept toward the perceived *netter* of Set. In the initiation to the III°, Set’s presence changes from a distant guide/guardian/teacher to an active participant in the Adept’s State of Being.

This twin-branched path is clearly contained in the Temple’s tenets: We do not require or expect the I° or II° to accept a concept of Set as literal entity. Nor is there any requirement, prerequisite to being Recognized to the III°. However Dr. Aquino and others have stated that the Temple does have an expectation that an individual who experiences the touch of Set and becomes a Priest or Priestess of

Set, starting from whichever conceptualization one cares to start from, will recognize and accept Set as a distinct being, an entity whose existence is as real as you or me. *Cogito ergo est.*

In my experience as a new I°, I expected to work within the conceptual boundaries of what I perceived at that time as rational; that is, the first case - Set as metaphor for some occult but very individual internal ability. The *dianoia* of going through the reading list in the *Crystal Tablet* brought about a *metanoia*, a sudden and rapid alteration in this expectation. I realized that there were unexplained and seemingly non-rational events occurring in my life, that my reading and workings revealed were caused by a supra-rational entity.

My expectations changed to the second conceptual theory - Set as a distinct "other". This was a qualitative change in my perception of *Xeper* as philosophy and as a way of life. It occurred well before I was recognized to the degree of Priest, but did not involve the apprehension of Set as anything except an outside entity observing the various processes of initiation. This perception was not the "end-state", eventually being further modified by the *Xeper* that led to my ordination as a Priest of Set.

The difference between a *Xeper* to the II° and **the** *Xeper* to the III° is in a qualitative change from an independent, egocentric existence to an interdependent and what I call "ego-eccentric" existence. By "ego-eccentric" I mean that the focus is no longer on the self as a unit, but as one point of a three-pointed system.

As a representation, consider the Earth/Moon pair. Each body is one point, the third point being the common center of gravity between them. We depict the Moon as orbiting around the Earth, but this is not quite correct: both bodies orbit around the common center of gravity. Due to the vast disparity in mass, that common center is very close to the Earth's center. Consequently we can say for all practical purposes that the Moon orbits around the Earth. However, because of the movement of both bodies, the true orbits of the two are eccentric and both bodies are loci of the interaction.

By analogy, in the interaction between Set and the Initiate, we can say that the Initiate is "acted upon" by Set. This apparent action is due to the difference in power between Set and the Initiate. In truth the interactions of the two are eccentric - both entities are affected by the interaction - and the self (ego or perhaps Essence) is only one locus of that interaction. [This leads to another subject: the changes in the nature of the interaction between Set and the Elect brought about by our *Xeper*. However this will have to wait for another time.]

I stated above that Set, the other entity in the Initiation to the III°, lays an obligation upon the new Priest or Priestess. In describing this obligation, Ipsissimus Lewis has written a fine short description in *The Trail of the Serpent* article "Aspirants to the Priesthood". For those who are not members of the Order of Leviathan, this article appears in the *Gems* collection that is part of the *Ruby Tablet*. The first time I saw it was in *Gems VI*:

Priesthood has its own special demands and rewards. It is the first of the degrees in which Set himself intervenes on a personal level between the Initiate and himself. It is a degree in which the good old days of access to a full range of magical experimentation with no organizational responsibilities to detract from one's time are gone. Instead, there are obligations to be fulfilled and duties expected in order to keep the Temple and Æon in motion.

Magus Webb, in his recent article "The Functions of a Priest," writes:

The III° is charged with expanding the mind of Set - a charge we received in the Age of Satan ... The III° emulates Set, particularly in his Coming Into Being.

In 1974 Church of Satan Magister Michael Aquino wrote a "Letter of III° Nomination". I was pleased to see this has been added to the contents of the updated *Onyx Tablet*, although I originally read it as an appendix in Dr. Aquino's *Church of Satan*:

As the ordained representative of Our Lord Satan, you will become a living embodiment of the Powers of Darkness. You will retain mastery of your own will, indeed you will be strengthened in this regard. Nevertheless you will become an agency through which the Devil will achieve his ends.

This is the Priesthood. It is also the source of "strain" often spoken of by senior Initiates. Look closely: As an Adept you glory in the independence of a complete and self-sufficient personality, seek new sources of power to achieve your goals, practice magic to bend the static universe to your will.

Suddenly you are a Priest or Priestess. Congratulations. You are now an "agency", an instrument in the much grander plans of Set.

Seems like a step back, doesn't it? You are no longer the independent, making the world into your plaything; you are now the junior partner of a two-person arrangement. Your personal initiation/

Initiation is now subject to the initiation of other Setians. Your task is to precipitate the conditions necessary for *Xeper* in others, and thereby act as Set, act in Set's place.

Why would anyone voluntarily accept this burden? Why would you invest so much time and effort into expanding the influence of a Gift that causes most of our fellow humans to recoil in horror?

It has nothing to do with altruism. Why would anyone spend a lifetime learning to master the piano, or chess? Simple and honest: for the gratification that mastering a particularly complex skill bestows upon its masters. It pleases us to exercise the difficult skills and power of the III°.

If the 5 billion+ other humans on the planet get something out of it, so much the nicer. It is enough that Set and his Temple will benefit from the exercise of those powers of the III°. They (the Temple and the Prince of Darkness) must benefit - it is mandatory. Otherwise the Initiate is not behaving as a Priest or Priestess of Set. Behavior can be defined as conduct (demeanor, manner, bearing) and as function (performance, operation).

While the behavioral qualifications for the III° are simple and broad, they entail some obvious prerequisites. Many of those prerequisites come into being in the Initiation to the II°. A desire to work without overemphasizing ("lusting for") results; a willingness to open oneself to new experiences, to challenge previously held notions, to risk being wrong; acquiring a respect for other individuals and an appreciation for their ideas.

These precepts are a very few of the outward indicators of character (check my Setian definition again). Their presence may or may not indicate the Remanifestation of a III° State of Being, but their absence precludes (or should preclude) a Recognition to the III°.

Character is "nice to have" to Recognize a Setian as Adept, but not essential. This allows for a very broad range of acceptable behaviors at the II°, maintaining the variance and diversity of the II° membership.

For example, a II° need not interact with any other member of the Temple; many of our Adepts are invisible, working on their own initiation in splendid isolation. The Temple is challenged by this diversity: its strength as an organization is shown by its ability to contain without restricting.

At the III°, however, character is critical to the success of the Temple. A Priest or Priestess of Set is required to interact with other Initiates at very extensive levels. Therefore one of the critical elements of character for the III° is the ability to communicate well and express ideas clearly.

There are no solitary III°s. It is character that gives the III° Initiate the ability to succeed at the III°, which is not simply a fortuitous occurrence but is required for the success of the Temple.

Which brings us to some interesting questions: "Does the Magistry have the prerogative to decline to Recognize an Adept to the III°?" "Can an Adept be Recognized to the III° as the result of an error in human judgment?" "What recourse is available to the corporate Temple of Set to prevent such erroneous Recognitions?"

Yes, the Magistry has the prerogative to decline to Recognize someone to the III°. More to the point, though, they have an **obligation** to do so.

In the final analysis, Understanding and applying the will of Set is a function of the Temple's hierarchy. The Magistry has this duty **because** it is the Magistry. If a Recognition is "questionable", then the IV°+s have to resolve those questions.

It seems reasonable that, barring major objections, an Adept who "may have" experienced the change in state of being that marks a III° and has Remanifested such, should be Recognized to the III°. However it is incumbent on the Magistry to examine the evidence of *Xeper* to the III° and resolve any objections before that Recognition occurs. The risk of not doing so is great.

Anyone can harm the people in the Temple; that is, anyone can impede the initiation of another. However an erroneous Recognition to the III° can harm the Temple itself. After all, that degree is the nexus of the Temple's power; the Priesthood's rights, powers, and authority are as extensive as its obligations, responsibilities, and duties. Its hazards are magnified by the "newborn" qualities of the III° - inexperience, fresh vigor, maybe even a little naiveté. And this risk at the nexus of power is the secret heart of the III° - why the Temple attaches the burden of Priestly duty to the glorious new state of being.

This is what connects the Initiation to the III° with the Recognition of the Priesthood and illustrates the importance of character. The III° is a state of being where the Initiate is, even more than usual, susceptible to the power of the Black Flame. At this State of Being it is a force that will locate any fault in the personality of the Initiate, drive into it like a wedge, and tear down the entire structure of the individual's personality.

For some, watching the "body armor" we all wear open and reveal the terrible secrets we keep, even from ourselves, is unbearable. The Temple could survive the occasional initiatory "failure" of a III°. Such, however, is the quality of the power of the Black Flame, that the "falling" initiate does not simply "drop away" - there is going to be collateral

damage to the Temple when a Priest or Priestess fails.

This is the conclusion, though arrived at in a roundabout manner, of the argument: The III^o is not only a sacred calling to participate in Set's plan, a great, glorious and powerful state of being; it is also the most grueling test of human character devised by the Prince of Darkness. If we pass it, we will have demonstrated that we are fit to take our place in the Universe and assume the guardianship of the Gift of Set - truly, our Elect destiny.

[17] **The Library**

- by Simone Lohmeier I^o

When a young man asked me to show him how to learn all about the mysteries of the world and about truth, I led him into a library. This library contained all books that had ever been written about magic, philosophy, humanity, and life itself.

This library was so large that one could not even see how large it actually was. We were surrounded by hundreds of bookshelves, each again filled with hundreds of books. One could not perceive the walls themselves with one's own eyes.

At a distance one could watch busy people dealing with their affairs. Some of them were passionately looking for a certain book, even though it sometimes appeared as if they did not exactly know which book they were looking for. Others could be seen sitting in their chairs, taking notes, reading, or thinking over what they had read and how it could be applied.

Surrounded by this flood of knowledge, I looked into the greedy, gleaming eyes of the young man and said,

"In this library you will find all knowledge that mankind ever has collected. Here lie the secrets of the world and of truth. Of course you can try to read all those books, to consume their knowledge and to digest it. But that will not make you what you seek to become."

"Why?" he asked.

"I will tell you why" I replied, and took a book from the nearest shelf.

"This book is like a pair of glasses. When you read it, you can look through the eyes of the one who wrote it. You see the truth the way he saw it. But you won't see it as though you had perceived it with your own eyes."

I was impolitely interrupted by a person who must have been standing close to us, curiously eavesdropping on our conversation.

"Wait!" this older man with his reddish head called out. "I think you are wrong in this case. There are a few books that are invaluable, a must-read, so to speak, and one cannot simply say that

they are a pair of glasses. They are the eye itself, worded truth! Who does not know this must have buried his reason together with adolescence!"

I turned towards the angry man.

"You say that some books are the truth themselves. From what have you drawn this conclusion?"

"This is the knowledge of centuries," he replied. "These books have been used by students for generations, and have been found to be the truth. They are part of our tradition, our heritage, and our culture! Something having attained this status must be the truth, especially since this has been recognized over and over again!"

"Now," I started anew, "unless I am mistaken, you have been a student yourself?"

"Yes, of course," the man beside me said. My student watched us curiously the whole time.

"Then you are of course familiar with the process of learning."

"Yes, but why do you ask me that?"

"Because I want to go somewhere with all of this. Have you ever in your life made a mistake such as having skipped over a word or a page, written something wrong, or misunderstood something so that you had to ask again for the answer?"

"Yes," the man answered. "But where do you want to go with this?"

I replied, "Why are you here, in this library?"

"I am searching a book about ..."

"Ah, you are searching. So you are still learning?"

"Well, one never stops learning. Everyone learns."

"As well as the authors of those books that you consider the truth?"

"Also those." And he started to frown.

"In this case you can hardly claim that they have perceived truth itself. How can you say that any of these writers know the truth when in fact they are all still learning themselves?"

I turned my back to him, once again facing my student.

"Each book is therefore a pair of glasses, and each one speaks the language of its writer. Some will let you have a glimpse of the truth and they will speak a language similar to yours. Others will not speak your language at all, and you might perceive nothing. But there may be some that can help you. And the time may come when you recognize that your eyes have become too sharp for a pair of glasses. When you have reached this point, maybe the time has come for you to write your own book."

I pointed at a small, dusty desk near a shelf somewhat further away. There was much paper spread upon it, still blank, and many tools for writing and drawing. Also one could see many

people busily carrying huge packs of paper around, some covered with written text, some empty. In other places, one could also perceive a young scribe, noisily praising his new findings. It was astonishing how many more people searched the bookshelves rather than patiently listening to those enthusiastic self-proclaimed prophets. I was reminded of a marketplace and could not help laughing silently. I pointed to the desk again.

“When the time has come for you, you will know it. Just take care that you don’t end up lacking ink or ideas. Both would not be ideal situations. And if you ever finish writing, be prudent, and lay the book aside a while. Read it again, and if it is good, put it onto a bookshelf. Those who seek it, will stumble over it. This is the way I found my teacher a long time ago.”

The young man looked at me confusedly, but I turned my back to him and left the library.

Perhaps I will hear of him again soon.

[18] *Xeper and Immortality*

- by Gerald D. Kendall, Setian I°

From P.D. Ouspensky’s book *The Psychology of Man’s Possible Evolution*:

Our fundamental idea shall be that man as we know him is not a completed being; that nature develops him only up to a certain point and then leaves him, to develop further, by his own efforts and devices.

Evolution of man in this case will mean the development of certain inner qualities and features which usually remain undeveloped, and cannot develop by themselves. We must start with the idea that without efforts evolution is impossible; without help, it is also impossible.

Man does not know himself.

He has all sorts of wrong ideas about himself. First of all, he does not realize that he actually is a machine.

What does this mean that man is a machine?

It means that he has no independent movements, inside or outside of himself. He is a machine which is brought into motion by external influences and external impacts. All his movements, actions, words, ideas, emotions, moods, and thoughts are produced by external influences. By himself, he is just an automaton with a certain store of memories of previous experiences, and a certain amount of reserve energy.

We must understand that man can do nothing.

Man cannot move, think, or speak of his own accord. He is a marionette pulled here and there by invisible strings. If he understands this, he can learn more about himself, and possibly then things may begin to change for him. But if he cannot realize and understand his utter mechanicalness, or if he does not wish to accept it as a fact, he can learn nothing more, and things cannot change for him.

This is a concept that staggers the mind and imagination of even the most advanced human being. How many reading this now can really and honestly say they have this fixed in their brains as being an absolute?

I am currently working in the Gates of Hell Pylon with the Gate Keeper Adept Lauri Jean Crowe II° of the “Sba. Sn Set R Sbt” Gate. It has been with her help that I have come to accept these writings as true for me, and I thank her for this.

I am also very thankful for the fact that the Temple of Set has suggested that all new Initiates read this book. It is a place to begin one’s own personal *Xeper* and possible immortality. **Possible.**

[19] *Regarding the Magi*

- by Richard Gavin III°

One of the Temple’s greatest strengths is the fact that its initiatory system is dynamic, evolving. New Setians augment the Æon’s collective magical technology by adding their own unique flavor of initiation. There is, however, an inherent danger with such a flexible system. This danger manifests itself whenever Setians misconstrue their favorite historical figure(s) as being “Magi”.

Over the past year or so, a number of Setian writings have appeared in which the author(s) desperately tried to prove that their favourite novelist/artist/comedian was a Magus because he/she “uttered” a word, thereby altering the course of human history.

I have seen the title of “Magus” tossed upon a gaggle of pop-culture figures. Though I do believe that there are men and women who have undoubtedly come into being without ever setting foot inside a traditional ritual chamber, whether or not they ever attained the consciousness of a Magus is something else entirely.

The work of a Magus is unlike any other. Only a handful among humanity can truly be called the Elect. From this handful a minuscule number become Magi. Therefore to credit someone who does not possess the essential nobility and wisdom of a Magus with said title degrades a state of being that I regard as being holy in the strictest sense of the word.

To begin with, the experience of r/Recognizing what we in the Temple call the Fifth Degree is something to which only IV°+ Setians can relate. Therefore it is not my intention in writing this piece to portray myself as an expert on the realm of the Magus.

I cannot even begin to hypothesize on this state of being, but I can theorize on how the Magi of history have aided my *Xeper*.

Because my knowledge of the V° is strictly subjective and theoretical, I could never r/Recognize a Magus, and (most likely) neither could you.

The point of this article is to express some immutable laws that I feel separate true Magi from the rest of humanity.

Let's start with Words.

The newsletter you are currently reading is crammed with words. Now look up from the paper. I'm sure that the instant you lifted your eyes from the sheet, you were bombarded with the dozens of words that surround you. The difference between the thousands of words we face every day (whether verbally or visually) and a magical one is that very few words can be used as initiatory tools.

The word of the Æon of Set is *Xeper*. It means "to Become". *Xeper* is a tool because you inevitably Become by merely considering the defined meaning of the word.

If I were to come forth and "utter" any old word, the effect would not be as dynamic. Why? Because when you attempt to understand *Xeper*, you *Xeper*. Not every word is a dynamic mystery. This is a very basic scenario used to demonstrate how not all words are Words.

The Curse of the Magus is to live with his Word, to work with that Word so that others may perceive its brilliance. This may not happen in the Magus' lifetime. The fact that the Temple of Set is still savoring the repercussions of the North Solstice Working is proof that Ipsissimus Michael Aquino was a successful Magus.

Having said that, I also do not believe that the Utterance of a Word is a necessary component towards attaining the position which we call "Magus". Such a state of being can be achieved by using methods outside the realm of traditional occultism. But what is an essential quality of a Magus is that his/her Work must cause a fundamental change in the human condition.

Successful Magi provides a unique insight into what makes humanity tick. Their findings (whether in the field of magic, science, philosophy, art, or all of the above) can be utilized by others in their individual quests for truth. They make the soul or *psyche* sing, to burst with brilliance. A Magus speaks to higher man.

If a Word is Uttered, the essence of that Magus' work will be locked within that Word. As a magician it is your job to glean personal truths from such Words, for they are mysteries in and of themselves; mysteries which can enhance magical initiation.

So the next time you feel compelled to argue that your favourite rock singer has become a Magus, keep the following ideas in mind:

(1) Has this person aided mankind's eternal quest for truth?

(2) Is your attraction to this "Magus" based upon what that person has actually done or merely who that person is? Charisma does not equal magical greatness.

(3) Just because you have made use of a personal theory does not mean that anyone else will.

(4) Give credit where credit is due. You may find that the power you perceive in a new "word" may be flowing from **your** self. You may not have uttered a new Word, but you may have forged a new magical technology. Rather than sing the praises of one who doesn't deserve it, behold the genius of your own creation!

Xeper.

[20] *Sesh Ari Arit*

Sesh Ari Arit, the handbook for Pylon Sentinels by Magus Don Webb, is available for US\$3.00 North America or US\$7.00 (overseas) by contacting Priest Eric Kauschen. Versions are available free in Adobe Acrobat format, via email.

[21] **Order of the Wells of Wyrd**

- by Rebecca Lance IV°, Grand Master

An ash I know, Yggdrasil by name. With water white is the great tree wet. Thence come the dews that fall in the dales. Green by Urdh's Well does it ever grow.

Thence come the maidens mighty in wisdom, three from the dwelling down 'neath the tree. Urdh is one named, Verdhandi the next - on the wood they scored - and Skuld the third.

Laws they made there, and life allotted to the sons of men, and set their fates.

With these lines from the *Voluspa* is introduced a magical working model of the interaction between space and time:

At the axis of the Universe stands a tree, Yggdrasil by name. In its branches lie the worlds of both gods and men. From beneath its roots springs a well of silvery water - the Well of Wyrd, Urdh's Well.

Any actions from within the Worlds, any events, any “doings” or “sayings”, manifest as drops of water that fall like silvery drops of dew from the branches of Yggdrasil into the Well of Wyrd at the base of the tree.

The tree is tended by three Norns - Urdh, Verdhandi and Skuld. Urdh - what has become, Verdhandi - that which is becoming, and Skuld - that which should become.

The Norns tend the waters of the Well. They set the fates of men, and water the Tree with the waters of the Well. The cycle is clear: The past flows to the future, which in turn becomes part of a formative past.

It is important to note that in this model there is no room for a predetermined “future”. New actions, new layers in the Well are not merely stacked on top of each other as a linear archaeological record of the past. Each event, each action that occurs in the Tree drips down and mixes throughout the waters in an integrative fashion. The past - a fluid repository of all actions and events in the tree - is mutable, ever-changing. The potential future that flows from it fluxes as well.

The Initiate, as a self-contained manifestation of the Black Flame, has the opportunity to work directly with this flux and flow. Each willed moment is a magical event. The present is that infinitesimally thin interface between what-has-been and what that moment can become. The present is a transformative moment because it directs the flow of Wyrd and transforms all that has gone before, and all that will follow. Reception; transformation; re-expression.

Wells

The Well of Wyrd is just one of many mythical wells to be explored within the Order.

In Norse mythology Yggdrasil, the World Tree, has three distinct roots extending into three wells. The Well of Wyrd as a whole is actually composed of the tripartite series of these wells.

A root surrounding Ginnungagap feeds from Mimir’s Well. This is the well into which Odhinn sacrificed one of his eyes, that he might see into the worlds and obtain wisdom. It may be said to be the Well of Perception.

A root extends into Niflheim and is associated with the well Hvergelmir. Hvergelmir is known as the Roaring Kettle, or Seething Cauldron. In its bubbling, seething waters are the source of integrative synthesis.

Urdh’s Well nourishes and sustains the root which extends into Asgard, the realm of the Æsir.

In old Norse, Urdh’s Well is known as *Urdharbrunnr*. The term *brunnr* has been translated into English as “well”, but the word is

much more potent than that. *Brunnr* represents a spring or a well that is centrally located. It also represents the source of that well, the power that allows the well to fill, and the container of the well itself.

There is a difference between water that arises from a spring in a marsh and spreads out over the ground, and water that arises through a deep shaft cut in stone, or through a rift in the rocky earth. The water that is not bound or contained spreads out over the ground and rapidly becomes mud. Water that arises through a defining source, however, retains its purity and its connection to that source. *Brunnr* represents not only the waters of the well, but their source, and that aspect of containment or boundary that allows the well to retain its purity and magical charge. The only etymological descendant of *brunnr* found in English is the word “bourne”. Hence the name of the Order’s newsletter, *Bourne of Wyrd*.

Initiation Within the Order

For the Initiate to become an effective interface between what-has-been and what-should-be, he must increase powers of awareness: awareness of the worlds, awareness of limitations and boundaries, awareness of mind and body. The foundation work of the Order is largely composed with increasing these awarenesses and learning how to work with the resultant new perceptions.

The Flow of Wyrd

The cosmology described in the preceding paragraphs is intrinsically Norse, but it illustrates a concept that is universal: the flow of patterns and the movement of the patterning principle as it sculpts a new future out of’ all actions that have become.

In the Order of the Wells of Wyrd, we will call this flow - from “what has been” to “that which could become”- the Flow of Wyrd.

Work within the Order will center around apprehending the Flow. To attempt to comprehend Wyrd is to attempt to understand the very thing that allows happenings to manifest.

Most of us were raised primarily from within the comforting rational causalities of Newtonian physics. Drop the apple; it falls.

To comprehend Wyrd, however, is to attempt to perceive a paradigm of causality that transcends linear cause-and-effect. It is beyond microscopic and cosmic. It is both and neither.

For Initiates of the O.W.W. the ultimate magical goal is to learn to direct the Flow of Wyrd in a willed fashion.

Each of our initiatory paths flowers from within a matrix of’Wyrd. Apprehending and directly

working with this matrix will be the Great Work of the Order. We must learn to bring to the waters those things that will sustain our magical worlds and nourish the manifestations of our wills.

Avenues of Exploration

The avenues of exploration of the Order are multifold, and will not all be outlined here. It is expected, however, that the following three basic avenues should be explored by each Initiate:

Subjective States: To fully apprehend Wyrd, the Initiate may choose to actively explore receptive and subjective states: altered or discrete states of consciousness.

For our purposes an “altered state” will be considered to be any discrete state of consciousness that is somehow different from our “normal” waking state. This includes meditative states, hypnotic states, dream states, and trance states.

To perceive something in its entirety, it is helpful to view it from many different perspectives. By experiencing alterations in consciousness, we allow ourselves to expand our perception, and apprehension of Wyrd.

The phrase “altered states of consciousness” (ASC) has become popularized in modern culture. Perhaps a better phrase would be “altered states of perception” (ASP). This more aptly explains the purpose of the state within the Order.

Altered states are one way to explore powerful causal connections in our world and ourselves. Learning to lucid dream, one can regain control over nightmares, and discover that one’s daytime fears change in quality as a result. Learning to focus visualizations of energy while in a meditative state, one may learn to utilize healing techniques. Learning to inject intent into any number of liminal states offers the Initiate an enormous range of tools with which to work.

Body/Kinesthetic Awareness: As the body/mind framework is the most direct way to apprehend and transform the Flow of Wyrd, an awareness of body/mind states and energies is vital.

Initiates will be encouraged to develop their own inner awareness of their physical being through some discipline. Dance, martial arts, yoga: all are excellent avenues. For some Initiates frequent meditations on kinesthetic awareness may prove effective

Building an Objective Structure: Due to the morpheous and inherently individualistic quality of subjective states, the Initiate benefits enormously from having a symbolic structure or model on which to frame these experiences. This is how we give them meaning.

Visions only have a voice if they speak our language. Most Setians are quite capable of

developing their own symbolic language to interpret and work subjective states. This is vital but insufficient. We need to be able to share and communicate these states and explorations. We must seek universals. We must be able to find the common threads that hold our magical experiences together. Therefore the Initiate will be expected to become familiar with academic, cultural, or scientific studies relating to individual experience. Depending on the Initiate’s experiences, this may require research into traditional magical systems, or delving into philosophical structures as diverse as quantum physics or Chinese medicine.

The idea behind such an avenue of study is to find the universal thread that holds the magical experience together. Hopefully in so doing we will also learn a way to better communicate our experiences to each other.

An Order between Orders

It is expected that there will develop with the Order certain mutual focal points of interest between members. These focal points will be known as Wells.

Current active Wells include the Well of Dreams, which intensively studies dream and sleep states, and the Well of Healing.

Work within the Order will also be very closely connected to and supported by its sister organization, Urdh’s House - a House within the Order of the Trapezoid. Current active foci within Urdh’s House include a focus on *Seidhr*, a focus on dreams, and a focus on the Way of the Warrior.

As the work of the Order of the Wells of Wyrd will closely tie into and be supported by the work of other Orders, the O.W.W. may be seen at times as an “Order between Orders”, a well of integrating focus.

Members of the O.W.W. who belong to other Orders will be mandated to carry the work of Wyrd to members of other Orders in a way that will benefit all. For Initiates who do not belong to other Orders, the O.W.W. should become a place where they can learn to intimately integrate multifaceted aspects of life and work.

Apprehension & Transformation

These are key words of the Order. Through this work it is expected that the Initiate will learn to become a master of personal destiny, and to learn what “destiny” really is.