

The Scroll of Set

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[1] Questions of Life in Death

- by Don Webb III°

Recently an Adept wrote me about the question that we all think about, "Is there really life beyond this?" Here's what I wrote back:

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You posed that question that we all wonder about, "Does it end here?" Since like everyone else I don't **know** but have my suspicions (which are as good or bad as anyone else's), I'll propose some thoughts that may place the question in a new perspective. The idea is not for you to write me back on these questions and ideas, but that hopefully they will open new doors in the Darkness within.

I. If it does end with the death of the body, do you think you've lived with the philosophy that most enhances your life? I don't mean Setian philosophy, I mean your own personal philosophy: whatever moves you to act on those rare occasions when we rise above the simple seeking of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Since there are no certainties, we have to re-examine this question all the time [and strive to fulfill its parameters before we do anything else].

II. What if immortality is like Magus LaVey proposes - living on in the blood and sinews of others? What actions have you performed [or aspire to perform] that will make you live on as a memory in the minds of others? How would you want to be remembered? Is it "better" to be remembered by Setians? By the way, if you want a good practical guide to achieving worldly power I strongly recommend *The Art of Worldly Wisdom* by Balthasar Gracian.

III. Several soulcrafts [those of the Egyptians and the Germanic peoples come to mind] suggest the current soul/body complex is a one-time gathering of certain forces and sustenances. Some parts live on in more-or-less conscious ways - others become a relatively unconscious force. What parts of yourself - your thoughts, your beliefs, your moods, etc. - do you think partake of immortality? What parts do you sincerely hope don't? For example: If you're a real fan of chocolate, that might be a fairly hard thing to deal with in a disembodied state.

IV. Do you ever have impressions that you've existed before? If so, why don't you remember that existence clearly?

V. In the *Diabolisticon* the "Statement of Leviathan" deals with the final state of man. What do you feel is referred to by the Black and Red Flames?

VI. Assuming that there is a form of consciously-willed immortality, what are you doing to prepare for it? What force of will are you building up? I know a lot of people that claim a strong interest in personal immortality, yet can't figure what do with themselves for an afternoon. Can you imagine what you would be doing two hundred years hence? If you achieve the result of *Xeper* of Becoming an immortal, independent, potent and powerful essence, what new impulses do you think you would be bringing to the earth?

VII. Does it bother you that of Setians who have died, we don't have any definite communication? Have you ever tried to communicate with the dead? How would you do this?

VIII. I am always reminded of Gurdjieff's aphorism, "A man may be born, but in order to be born he must first die, and in order to die he must first awake." This particular threefold formula brings home the nature of initiation very well. First we must realize that we have been asleep - that most of the actions in our life have been the actions of sleepwalkers [we do things with no idea why] or of animals [we approach pleasure and avoid pain]. Then we must realize in our awakened state that we have to die to our old way of being.

It isn't enough to wake from time to time and criticize our activities or those of our society. We must die to that way of being - reconstruct ourselves - become self-created gods to be truly alive. This process isn't a onetime affair in our Initiation but a continuing one. We are always dying to an old state, for example your recent transition to the state of Adept entailed a dying to the state of the I°, or on a more mundane level college represents dying to the state of high school. Is it possible that if we practice these deaths, we may actually prepare ourSelves for Initiation's greatest challenge?

IX. The pentagram is perhaps the ultimate symbol of the individual psyche in a universe not directly connected to it. It is a symbol rather than a sign.

A sign is something that we arbitrarily agree on. For example we agree that a "yield" sign is triangular and yellow [at least in Texas], but we could just as easily agree that a blue hexagon could mean "yield".

A symbol is something that actually partakes of the thing it represents. For example a rose is a symbol of love. Its multi-layers, its sweetness, its thorns - all of these things mark it as something that actually partakes of the things it represents. Most of mankind's archetypal characters are symbols. How is this particular symbol in itself a gateway to personal immortality? What of certain other symbols such as the Seal of Runa?

You may wish to spend a good deal of time with these nine groups of questions. Perhaps you could consider each group for two nights in a row over eighteen nights. If these questions open certain doors in you, you might wish to share your understanding with an article for the *Scroll*. You might also wish to hang onto this letter and try the 18-night meditation six months from now to see if your ideas are changing. My best wishes to you as we both *Xeper* and Remanifest.

[2] **Practice Makes *Xeper***

- by James P. Meagher I°

The more you work your mind, the more it can do, for ideas release energy. You can do more and bigger work than you have done before. By practice you can know more than you know now. Under mental conditions of happiness, you can do four times the magic than you can ordinarily do. You can work almost indefinitely when the work is a pleasure. So practice, and *Xeper* will follow.

[3] **“To London ... Among its Teeming Millions” - Dracula**

- by James Lewis VI°

It was my pleasure to spend a couple of weeks in England during December XXVII, celebrating the Yule season and meeting with U.K. Setians along with doing some enjoyable sight-seeing, the last of which included everything from the Tower of London to the Thames to climbing inside a Dalek and refusing to come out, 221 Baker Street, a lion of gold, Cleopatra's Needle, and many another grand experience.

Things were not always as they initially seemed: One shop with “LOVECRAFT” emblazoned in huge letters turned out to be not an establishment dedicated to HPL, but a porn store. I will spare you the British Priesthood's amused comments when I discovered my error. Adjustments to the weather, the time, store names, and which way to look when crossing the street aside, the journey was a rich magical experience, made all the better yet by the fact that the British Priesthood is encompassed within the Order of Leviathan, thereby allowing me to meet with them on both general Setian and Order specific levels.

The Temple of Set in England is and is not the Temple of Set as we know it in America. England's heritage goes back thousands of years and is intermingled with crucial historical events and outstanding emergence of the Black Flame in many forms. Its current organizational status is that of a population lesser than America's membership, but it has the challenges and pleasures we ourselves faced

in the year X. Its Priesthood and other Initiates are reaching out to lay the groundwork for the future, much as we are in the States and globally.

One of the major differences is that with there being fewer of them to interact with one another, the work is perhaps harder in a way. We in America can effortlessly contact a nearby member of the Priesthood for advice or purely social interaction. The same willingness is present in the U.K., but there are fewer Priests and the geographical spread is wider. Given that the Priesthood manages to handle job requirements, British law and society, and considerable distances between one another, I think they are doing quite the good job indeed. In fact, after spending time talking with the British Priesthood both collectively and individually, I came away quite impressed with their knowledge, understanding, and the determination to make the Temple strong in both Britain and the world. This is as it should be, since Setians should work not in unison but in concert with euphony in mind.

The Adepti and Setians I° also have the distinct European approach to life and magic. The practice of Black Magic is that of an approach to the problems of life which is hallmarked by coming to successful grips with those problems philosophically and in action overlaid cultural relevance. This stands out in all British Setians, and was both encouraging and satisfying to observe. Add to all this the guiding hand of Magister David Austen, and you have a fully functioning Temple of Set which is destined to make history and is anything but a clone of the United States Temple.

What sort of people are British Setians? They are genial, gracious, and sincere people from various walks of life. I was particularly struck by the great courtesy and consideration innate in each - a quality which was lacking in not all but a number of Setians at Set-XIII. Was it a case of being on best behavior for a visiting Ipsissimus? Perhaps to a certain degree, but there was no pretense, and it was a pleasure to enjoy the culture and consideration.

What does one do in England in the company of European Setians? Much the same one does with Setians anywhere: dialogue, ritual, and fellowship. In the case of England that latter involves restaurants rich in the flavor of the old world and pubs rather than bars. It also involves Blackthorn Cider and subsequent treks on British Railways whilst attempting to reconcile the cider with the jolting of the train. That takes magic, folks.

Our time together as a group was Indulged in. The discussions ranged from A to Z on an informal basis, and allowed insights and thoughts to flow in both directions from European and American points of view. Our Yule ritual was designed to hold something for each participant and opened doors to

both the living and the dead. It was my promise to each Setian present that he or she would leave the rite and find change outside the altar room. For good or ill, soon or late, that change could not but come about, and its form is in the hands of the participants themselves.

I regretted that time constraints did not allow visits to the countries of our German, Finnish, and Scottish Initiates, but there is always the future, and who can say but that Europe will not one day see the Temple's Initiates disembarking at one of the major air terminals to partake of conclave there. Everyone really should go through Heathrow Airport at least once. And I used to think Atlanta's air terminal was crowded!

When looking about for a place to vacation, should you select England? Definitely. Our British members made my time there memorable, and it ranks as one of the most enjoyable vacations/holidays I have had to date in five countries. The city of London abounds in history and culture, and yet is only one part of the country. I cannot make enough positive comments on England and its inhabitants. The security of the country is reassuring, even with IRA activities here and there. I personally felt quite safe at any place in the city, and think that in the future it could serve as an ideal site for a future conclave.

Of course this was my first trip to England, and one cannot judge solely by a single journey alone. That, gentle readers, is why I am planning another arrival into Heathrow at some future time.

Xeper and Remanifest.

[4] The Stars are Right Again!

- by Timothy McGranahan III°

That is, for another Mid-West Conclave! This time we're looking forward to being able to spend a little more time together as well as carry on our work, with Chicago's own giant black trapezoid looming in the not-too-distant background. While an exact hotel site has not yet been chosen for this gathering, we're hoping to bring it within the city limits for the first time. This will depend upon the number of persons who express an interest in attending this year.

The tentative dates for the gathering are Friday, May 7th - Sunday, May 9th, with Friday being a full day of activity. As those who attended last year will attest, one full day, even a Saturday, is just not enough time for everything they want to be able to accomplish so this time it will be two.

At present I would like to find out just how many Setians have an interest in attending the Midwest Conclave this year. So if that's you, please contact me by March 1, XXVIII. More details will

appear as the situation develops. Hope to hear from you soon.

[5] On Setian Meditation, or Robbing Temples

- by Kevin Filan I°

Through meditation we gain strength of will and self-knowledge. Meditation is one of the most valuable tools in the magician's arsenal. And yet too often "meditation" is linked with fuzzy-headed thinking, tambourines, and people selling flowers at airports. This is because for too long meditation has been the exclusive province of the Right-Hand Path. They have used its power in their quest for "oneness" with the objective universe.

We of course have no such aspiration. Nonetheless we can use that which they have learned to further our own development. To that end I have cast these suggested meditation techniques, stolen from Christianity and Buddhism respectively, upon the world. I do not consider this the end of this project but rather a tentative beginning, and invite others within the Temple to help me in reclaiming meditation for the Prince of Darkness.

I. Christianity - The Confessional Meditation

For the Christian, living under the burden of the Word "Salvation", meditation was used in a confessional manner. That is, the "penitent" meditated upon his "sinfulness" and "unworthiness" and then upon God's "grace" in saving his worthless, louse-ridden hide. Consider Augustine's *Confessions*, which is basically a long litany of repentance for crimes like drinking wine and fondling dancing girls [replaced by "virtues" like turning "heretic" Gnostics over to secular authorities for torture and death, incidentally].

This rigorous and unforgiving self-analysis has its use for the Setian as well. In keeping with our Satanic tradition, though, we turn its purpose on its head. We perform a "confessional" meditation to discover our weaknesses and faults. We then, instead of grovelling before God asking "forgiveness", work to overcome these faults and weaknesses. Where a Christian would meditate on God's mercy at forgiving a scumbag like himself, we would meditate on our self shorn of these faults, then work to Remanifest this ideal from our subjective into our objective universe.

Ideally our confessional meditation will be free of guilt. We are not playing the "more wretched than thou" game of wallowing in our unworthiness like beggars rejoicing in their sores. We are trying objectively to determine where we are falling short of our ideal [and where we are meeting it; we deserve praise for our success no less than censure

for our failures]. From there we are seeking improvement, not forgiveness, and improvement through our own actions, not through the “healing blood” of a long-dead human sacrifice.

II. Buddhism - the “Not I” Meditation

Through the extinguishing of lust and craving (the condition of Nirvana) the Buddhist hopes to gain oneness with the universe and thus cease to suffer from the pain which is part of the human condition. This, to me, is rather like curing my aching feet by cutting them off. Nevertheless Buddhism is probably the most sophisticated and psychologically profound of the RHP religions, and many of its teachings are of great value to the Setian.

Buddhism recognizes that there is precious little unity within the self. They divide self into five groups of qualities or attributes, which they called *skandhas* or *khandha*. The first, *Rupa*, is the body. The second, *Vedana*, includes all feelings or sensations, pleasant or unpleasant. The third, *Sanna*, comprises all perceptions and recognitions, sensuous and mental. It is our reaction to sense stimuli. The fourth, *Sankhara*, is the processes of discrimination and comparison between the ideas brought into being.

The fifth, *Vinnana*, is the one most closely resembling our idea of the “Black Flame”. It is that conception of self-consciousness which allows us to distinguish between “I” and “you”. It grows mightier with each experience, and is not to be considered static; like all the other *Skandhas*, it is constantly changing.

In Buddhist thinking, it is one of the fetters which must be broken before the aspirant attains *Nirvana*. Since it is impermanent (that is, not in a state of stasis) it is to be considered an obstacle. We do not think of it that way. We follow the heresy of *Sakkayaditthi*, separateness. We consider stasis something not to be sought after but to be overcome, and prefer dynamism and development.

Nonetheless the separation into the *Skandhas* is, in my opinion, an interesting and valuable concept. How much of our “self” is ruled by each of these groupings? Is our reaction to that annoying co-worker an independent act, or the product of that nagging headache? Are we striving to do what is best for our unified self, or are we seeking comfortable and pleasant *Vedana* experiences?

Crowley’s “Liber Yod” [found in *Magick in Theory and Practice*] describes a meditation whereby one determines of each of the various *Skandhas*: “What is this? This is not I.” His goal, based on his early Buddhist training with Allan Bennett (Ananda Metteya Bikkhu), was to reject all these as *maya* and thus be dissolved in the cosmic

sea. This meditation, with some changes, can work well for Setians.

Consider a particular sensation: the pleasure you feel when relaxing in a comfortable chair, for instance. Then realize, “What is this pleasure? This pleasure is not ‘I’. It is but a part of the whole. Let not the part overcome the whole.” Then analyze that which analyzes. Keep doing this as long as you can. If you are persistent, you will begin to experience that whole self of which the *Skandhas* are but parts, and experience the *Vinnana skandha* - that which is most useful in helping the whole to *Xeper* and *Remanifest* to a higher state of being.

[I am indebted to Adept James Severson for his input on an early draft of this article.]

[6] Beetle Dreaming

- by Bret C. Cagle II°

Indeed can I enter the womb again? Yea, for the womb and the tomb are but one gate of Becoming! Going and coming, coming and going in an endless dance of gods in Becoming.

So sweet the silence of death, the stillness of an immortal night, and the stirring in the Dark Realm of ancient memories no longer forgotten.

As the clashing of thunder in mind, the secret fire awakens to the voice of the bright morning star, first breath of the great dragon born unto eternity. The cosmic egg shatters as the new beginning comes into being.

“I Am,” said the magical child; the ageless intelligence within myself is as the self-begotten ones ever beyond. There are no gods beyond the Elect; the many and the one I am are the lord of two horizons and the avenging storm against finality!

Ho! Warriors of the night, fear not the battle of endless strife in the recreation of your glory! Upraise the doom of your immortal desire, for beginning and ending are but space marks in the sojourn of beetles.

Flame that is Black, the gift of the gods, myself unto myself I impart. My beauty, my own self made divinity, lust again loosed in the land, and the Great Old Ones come!

Chaos, creative chaos, mindless of necessity, but faithful in true will. And the beak of Tehuti speaks words of folly in a concord of so many stars and the chant of unity in discordia.

The game of words is a duality of fate, cast in self order; no peace for the sorcerer but endless polarities and joy in opposition to passing sorrows. Indeed “better now than too late.”

Knowledge is such a fickle thing, here now then gone tomorrow; but abiding understanding is the splendor of a god no mortal could chance to see. And why? But for scarce imaginings and false

hopes of infantile fantasies, never extending beyond the hopes of another.

So is being an eternal spell of myriads of tales in the stars of the night. Pan may dance, but more so I, for Being in Becoming is this beetle's story.

To create I lunge forth and seize myself in a passionate desire of frenzied forms, quickly passing away. So many flowers in the master magician's secret garden, and portals of power never seen before.

As for the kiss of my love in the silence of an endless night; the gate of dreaming come again. Shall I pass on? Shall I fly, into yet another course of infinity? Surely I shall as I dream my desire in the womb of my self begotten eternity.

[7] **The New Year**

- by James Johnson II°

The darkness fills the barren lands of Earth, laden in winter's grip. Those who fear the unknown and the responsibility of thought, huddle in their well-lighted homes, shrinking in terror as the beasts of the land gather on the high hills to bay in joyous concert under the pregnant Moon, looming in the bejeweled drapery that is the night sky.

O ye children of the night, what sweet music is your howling to my ears! I join you on the distant plains of obsidian and celebrate the coming of a new year. I welcome this new year with open arms, for it shall be a year of wondrous works and experiences.

I will the force of change like a broad axe and split wide the old things, for their usefulness has expired. I am the force of *Xeper*, manifest in flesh. I am the ever-evolving temple unto my self, glorious to behold. I have destroyed that which is base to my purpose. I raise up my creations that they may enjoy full existence. That which brings me pleasure I indulge. That which brings me pain I learn. That which is distasteful I remove. That which is noble and Setian I exalt. I have Come into Being, and have created that which Comes into Being! *Xeper* ir *Xeper*. I cast upon the flame my desires and plans for this new cycle, some known, some unknown. Fed upon the flames of creation, I give them power that they may manifest.

[8] **The Devil's Pass**

- by William Pridgen II°

On page #143 of *Magick* (#9K), the First Beast made an attempt to reconcile the three main theories of the Universe, to wit: dualism, monism and nihilism. A study of "L'Air Epais (The Ceremony of the Stifling Air)" on page #54 of the *Satanic Rituals* (#6L) explains why such a reconciliation was impossible from the perspective of the Age of

Satan. A further study of "The Two Paths" in *Black Magic* within the *Crystal Tablet of Set* explains why such a reconciliation is still impossible from the perspective of the Æon of Set.

While dualism is cognate with diabolism, monism - which ultimately leads to nihilism - is indicative of the "we are one; we are none" siren song that is the serenade of Nuit.

I will now explain why these three theories cannot be reconciled, employing the same logic used by Ipsissimus Aquino in *Black Magic*, while tempering this logic with my own understanding of the three great keys of Hell.

In *Black Magic* Ipsissimus Aquino suggests four possible approaches to the dilemma of human existence. An understanding of these alternative approaches is crucial to an understanding of my thesis, as I intend to expand upon and restate many of their salient themes. These three theories of the Universe are in fact the product of one or more of these approaches.

The theory of dualism states that there are two independent and separate principles in man, the natural and the non-natural. This theory is the product of a non-natural approach to both the subjective and objective components of the Universe. Natural reality includes matter, antimatter and energy. Non-natural reality includes humanity's intellectual sense of self-consciousness, which separates and allows an external perspective upon that reality. These two realities are irreducible and neither can be explained wholly in terms of the other.

The Black Magician does not attempt to deceive himself into thinking that he can reduce his self-consciousness to a function of the natural order, because he neither denies its separate existence, as do materialists, nor does he fear its existence as something that cannot be reduced to a function of some higher power, as do the followers of conventional religions.

The theory of monism states that existence can be reduced to a single, all-encompassing reality. Material monists attempt to reduce their self-consciousness to a function of the matter, antimatter and energy of the objective universe, while spiritual monists attempt to reduce their self-consciousness to a function of some higher power, assuming that such a higher power exists.

Monism is a product of the natural approach to the dilemma of human existence. This approach is unsatisfactory to the Black Magician for several reasons. If the material monist were unable to conceive of himself as being separate from the natural order, he would be unable to make successive approximations through the scientific method in an attempt to explain that order. The fact

that he does conceive of himself as being separate from it is what allows him to make sure these approximations in the first place. Ironically, it is also what keeps him from ever achieving an exact correspondence to the natural order, for if he ever did achieve this end, he would negate his purpose and “with no purpose the force of the mind must fail”. Similarly, if the spiritual monist could not conceive of himself as being separate from a higher power, he would be unable to construct logical arguments in an attempt to prove the existence of that power.

During the colonial era, theologians attempted to use two mutually exclusive arguments to prove the existence of God. One of these was the argument from design, which states that the apparent order in nature necessitates the existence of a divine enforcer of that order. The other argument was based on the citation of miracles as proof of God’s existence.

At this same time the philosopher David Hume, notorious for his destruction of bad arguments, claimed that these two theologians were attempting to have their cake and eat it too. Hume’s refutation of these arguments stated that if God is the divine enforcer of the apparent order in nature, then it would be inconsistent for him to sanction violations of that order in the form of miracles. If Hume had thought to address the question of why he was able to think in categories contrary to the necessity of natural law, he might have gained a deeper insight into the [non]nature of his soul.

It is important to understand that the material monist’s pathology is the symptom of the same cause as that of the spiritual monist’s. When scientists began to favor the curved geometry of Riemann over that of Euclid, it was because they felt that it achieved an exact correspondence to the objective universe. However, while Riemannian geometry serves to describe the phenomenon of gravitation splendidly, it is completely inconsistent with electromagnetic phenomena. This has special implications for initiates of the Order of the Trapezoid, who make a conscious distinction between the curved space of the objective universe and the angular space of the psyche. While the materialist’s attempt to approach the objective universe is essentially a function of their separation from that universe, it serves to illustrate their frustration due to a subconscious realization of the fact.

The theory of nihilism states that the Universe came into being ex nihilo or “out of nothing”. For a review of the philosophical and mathematical implications of this theory see Crowley’s ontological essay “Berashith” on page #18 of *Portable Darkness*. The scientific ramifications of this theory are explained in *Worlds-Antiworlds*:

Antimatter in Cosmology by Hannes Alfvén (#22C).

It is beyond the scope of this paper to restate the themes contained in the above-mentioned works. What will be said here is that both the mystic of muscle and the mystic of mind, to borrow Ayn Rand’s terminology, seek to return to the state of nothingness (presumably a zero mass environment) from which the Universe came into being. It is the unstated goal of all material monists and the stated goal of all spiritual monists. These are the adherents of the Right-Hand Path! They are drawn to the extinction of consciousness as the moth is drawn to the flame.

The siren song of Nuit is not a call that is heeded by the Black Magician, who augments his self-consciousness through the affirmation of separation. As was stated in my “Setian Keys to a Theory of Human Knowledge”, the second great key of Hell represents the faculty of analysis. This faculty allows us to isolate objects in the World of Horrors, while the synthetic faculty, through the scientific method, allows us to make generalizations about these objects. If we shift our focus inward, introspectively isolating the self, we begin to attain the mixed knowledge known as Understanding. The classification of the objective universe, coupled with the realization of the subjective universe, engenders a unique blend of the personal with the transpersonal, without courting the negative side effect of annihilation through union. It is the step which leads to the path beyond the Devil’s Pass, the step which separates but does not divide.

[9] *Xeper and Camelot*

- by Eve Martin II°

Inspired by my trip to Great Britain, following are some thoughts regarding the relevance of the legends of King Arthur and Merlin as they relate to the Æon of Set’s ideas and terminology.

The Celts were/are extremely Willful and Proudful of Being. They had a great sense of self, and those who studied magic in ancient Albion knew a great deal more, I think, than the authors of the white-light-do-it-yourself Celtic magic manuals realize.

Merlin, for instance, was a great “black shaman”. He was a shape-shifter and, according to legend, recognized the inherent Black Flame in mankind. His task was to create a civilization during the era of Camelot that was something more than the people of the time had dreamed of. Through the Black Flame in Arthur, he brought the consciousness of the ancient Britons to a higher plateau - a *Xeper* state. Honor, valor, and truth were valued above all else. This is a Left-Hand Path

perspective, not commonly recognized by the crystal-pushers of our times.

In older stories the youth of Merlin is mentioned. He was born of a nun, or a virgin in some stories, and his father had been called a demon, a færy, or one of the old gods of Britain. In any of these instances, this would make for a very unnatural being indeed!

The "Arthurian Cycles" are the stories centered around King Arthur and his knights, and are in themselves a re-telling of even older Celtic legends. Arthur himself represents a cycle - the young boy who grows to manhood and prospers, as does the land with which he is one, eventually Remanifesting through the portals of Avalon to await a new cycle of being. His life was guided by a great and powerful magician/friend [like Set?], and he changes the lives of all his subjects through his example and inspiration. For a time Camelot was the ultimate success-story of people working to bring into being a society of men and women, working together in an ongoing process of *Xeper* and Remanifestation.

Arthur's whole downfall was his love for a woman who betrayed him for various reasons, and whom he was warned by Merlin to avoid. Arthur's personal and "human" setbacks were what destroyed him and the dream of Camelot - one example being his affair with his half-sister Morgana, a union which resulted in the birth of Mordred, Arthur's son, nephew, and mortal enemy.

The whole idea, I think, is that if Arthur had followed Merlin's (higher self's) counsel, Camelot would have continued to prosper. Instead Arthur gave into the base emotions of an average man, rather than continuing to manifest the king (unnatural or Setian-like being) that he was.

One must also remember the Graal legends associated with Arthur and his knights, for they are rich in symbolism and can serve the magician with an understanding of the search for the "self ahead of the self". The elusive Graal is always just out of reach, yet a Black Flame being allowed to burn in its purest form will, in the end, bring one to a new level of the Graal Quest, and a brand new stage and form of *Xeper*.

I've found that many of these ancient legends correspond to what we as Setians are trying to accomplish on this planet with our own "Camelot" for mankind.

I would appreciate any and all feedback concerning the above ideas, as I am always seeking to expand my understanding of my ancestral Celtic mysteries and legends. I can be reached through the Temple's I/C Roster. *Xeper*!

[10] A Friendly First Encounter

- by James Knowles II° ("The Black Tiger")

To me in a dream the bronze Dæmon came.
"Who art thou?!" I exclaimed.

"I am he for whom thou didst pray."

"Nay! Nay!" I say! "You are a devil!"

"Indeed! 'Tis true, a devil am I! Indeed! 'Tis true, too, my dreams echoed your cry!"

"This is a trick!"

"Is it? With the thorn of Christ you were pricked. Did you feel ecstasy? No! You knew pain, and your sorrow was felt by me!"

"Tell me, Dæmon, how is it you know my heart?"

"We are siblings of the dark."

"Your name please tell."

"I am Azazel, First Herald of the Host of Hell!"

"Azazel? But you are not a goat!"

"And you are not a cat, Tiger!"

"A smart-ass Dæmon! I think we shall get along well! Sit, tell me of this place called Hell."

With fiery eyes he said, "Ah, your first sip from the Graal! Never will you be dead!"

[11] To Death a Name -

Exploring the Life Immortal

- by Guile Relic I°

In the June XXVII issue of the *Scroll of Set*, in his *Black Pyramid* article on abortion, Ipsissimus Aquino quoted Professor Benjamin Libet of the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center as distinguishing:

... between "living human tissue", which does start developing at conception, and the "life of a human person". Without a functioning brain there is no human person. At conception and for a time thereafter, there is no brain at all. A minimally functioning brain does not develop until well into the second trimester of pregnancy, or later. Let's stop using the term "human life" when it refers simply to human tissue and organs.

Accordingly, there is no "killing" of an "unborn child" in an abortion of an early fetus; there is only removal of some living human tissue that still has only a potential to develop into a human person.

Thus life is seen to have two separate definitions: one referring to the physical body and the other to the psyche. The profane lump these two together quite casually and indiscriminately. It is

assumed that life is life, and therefore that “the life of a human person” is merely an extension of the “living human tissue” [or vice versa]. This act relegates the psyche to a function of the objective universe.

This very same act has an opposite and equal effect on the defining of death. In any case death refers to the fall of the physical body back into the cycle of nature from which it originated, its basic elements dispersing. However, depending upon one’s state of self-awareness, death has specific implications in addition to this basic meaning.

A. To those who view the psyche/soul as non-existent, save as a by-product of natural processes, the implication of death is that since the self is a side-effect of the natural body (an illusion created by biological function) and the body has been dispelled, it stands to reason that the psyche must follow suit. From this perspective, death is seen as the end of the individual.

B. To those who perceive the existence of the psyche/soul but believe that it is subject to the “laws of God”, divine and natural, the life of the body is the soul, and this life has been created for the express purpose of testing by God. When death occurs, it is implied that the individual “life” will be judged ... based solely on the level of that soul’s obedience to the laws of God. The soul is then sent to a Heaven or a Hell to receive the result of that judgement. Death is not the end in the view of a person who adheres to these beliefs, it is merely a graduation of the life to another level (which is nonetheless ordered by God).

C. Adherents to the Left-Hand Path have a very divergent notion of the psyche/soul and its relationship with the objective universe. As a result, we also have a powerfully deviated perspective on the concepts of life and death. We are cognizant of the psyche as existing in contrast to and completely independent of the O.U.

As demonstrated in the above examples, the profane attempt [in one way or another] to subjugate the psyche to an activity of the O.U., which in turn affects the views they have of life and death in emotional and destructive ways. The very existence of these attempts to explain away the psyche as one with the natural environment evidences precisely the reality of what they deny!

Note: The examples in #A & #B above are merely the most commonly encountered facets of the TLO (This Life Only) and LAD (Life After Death) standpoints; other facets do indeed exist.

In either of these two models, it is obvious that the life of the body and the life of the psyche are believed to be one and the same - this being a direct result of the denial of self by those who fear it. Either the life that is expressed in matter is in reality

the soul (created and empowered by God) or the soul is merely a natural process (derived from the O.U.). From the Left-Hand Path it seems that neither of these extremes are suitable. Each element must be considered a thing unto itself.

In its most basic meaning, death refers to the end of the physical body, anything beyond this definition depends entirely upon your perspective of the psyche. If the life of the body and the life of the psyche are indeed separate from one another, it necessarily follows that the term “life”, referring to the body, ends with its death - but beyond this death the life of the psyche may continue!

To denote which life is being spoken of in written/oral references, I propose that the profane term “life” be used in regard to that which motivates the body, and the term “the life” when that of the psyche is to be indicated. In addition the profane term “death” would be used in respect to the extinguishing of the human body while “the death” would refer to the end of the psyche’s being. Thus if one suffers death, it isn’t necessarily the case that he has experienced the death. One may still retain life while he has lost the life [in those who have become brain-dead but remain living]. Most common are those who are living and the living, or those who are dead and the dead!

Because the sense of self is much stronger in some than it is in others, so too is the life! Potentially everyone is indeed unlimited. But among those who are living and the living, equality extends **only** to this potential. True power is gained only through the exercising of self and the pursuit of this potential.

Hence it can be said that only those who have attained sufficient understanding of self and the power which follows from this understanding are able to survive death and go on to enjoy the life which they have created! Those who attained power in the life while still living and those who are dead but retain the life [rarer still!] may be rightly referred to as being “the undead”!

The undead are those who no longer pour all of their vital energies into the lower order of mind which is shaped by keeping oneself at a physical level. Indeed the mass of the energy which they expend is directed at the empowering of the life, which consequently makes the most efficient use of life. The physical is seen as a vehicle to be used in the ever-expanding adventure of *Xeper*. These basic notions are the keys to immortality in its truest form. Those who recognize and exercise these notions are in no way dependent on the objective universe and when death comes to the body, they will discard it like a used automobile - with fond memories, but a clean cut in the relationship!

Now before anyone gets me wrong, I'd like to explain. I do not feel that the physical world is useless, as it may sound at first. Many great opportunities lie in wait for the undead in the objective universe. Maybe one day death will be effected by science [via genetic engineering], and the physical body will enjoy an "undead" of its own! But the real point is that the life is more important than life. Even if such a radical alteration in the laws of nature would come to pass, it could only do so by use of the life - or more accurately the source of the life - the Gift of Set!

I'd like to take this opportunity to invite anyone with comments on this article to write me in care of the Temple. I would truly welcome the feedback and appreciate any new perspectives on this or related subject matter.

[12] **Arachne's Aphorisms for Wiccans**

- by David A. Cohen I°

A witch's power is directly proportional to the number of other witches who hate her. A witch's intent is inversely proportional to the number of other witches who like her.

No witch stands so tall as when she stoops to clean the litterbox.

Laying a trick in someone's house does not make you a witch. Finding one in your own house probably will.

There are two kinds of Wiccans in America: those who owe their religion to the 1960s' "counterculture" and those who don't. The second group is somewhat smaller than the first.

[13] **From Deep Dendo**

- by Don Webb III°

From deep Dendo came the Voorish Sign, emerging into a sleepwalking, bruised century; and our ancient souls sprang from spiritual penury into a strange richness of baroque mind. We danced again the ancient steps and screamed strange words at the Moon; we danced again demon-play'd tunes and watched the onyx stairs for returning adepts. We waited for the Elder Pharos to speak the Word. He came from his desert monastery with age-eaten scrolls, relics from an older sage who had fled a dying galaxy with his ghoulish horde.

The *Yellow Text* of Thanos Kon laid bare the world and dark stained the bright air.

[14] **The Noumena of Darkness**

- by Jeffrey T.M. Waldmann II°

Following is an excerpt from a letter to Priest Zimmer. In this excerpt I am attempting to establish the fundamental qualities that comprise the essence of what we recognize as the "Dark Side". Due to the enormity of the subject and the limited space of that letter and this publication, I ended my discussion at a point I consider to be a tip of the iceberg. I am in the process of preparing a follow-up to this initial discussion.

* * * * *

There is more to the Dark Side of spirituality than just the LHP approach to magic and elevated intelligence. It has a characteristic identity all its own.

For example, when we hear a "dark" piece of music such as Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain", we instantly recognize it as being such. There is a recognition of something beyond mere minor chords. We recognize this essence in artwork, mythology, and other places, even if we cannot agree on what it actually is.

I made a list of all the things that comprise traditional associations with the Dark Side. Many of those things could be accounted for by cultural or religious bias. Some could not, and were common themes in all cultures at all times. Some of the common characteristics had to be understood in a larger context.

For example, death is often associated with darkness. Picturing our hominid ancestors shivering in a cave at night waiting to be eaten by nocturnal predators, or visualizing the cover that darkness has provided for criminals and murderers, makes this understandable. The "darkness" that comes with dreamless sleep, often associated with death, makes the association plausible as well. However the Dark Side is sometimes associated with carnality, orgies, promiscuity, and generally "living it up" [and not just in Christianity, as is commonly assumed]. Death therefore cannot be seen as the exclusive territory of darkness, especially considering the number of "good" gods associated with death such as Jesus, Osiris, Odin, etc.

However the fact that sexual imagery and death imagery may be used simultaneously in "dark" scenes, such as the classic Witches' Sabbath or Black Mass, is telling. The synthesis of opposites does seem to be an element of the darkest imagery. The opposite or the opposer is a constant element of diabolical descriptions, and is well-illustrated by Crowley in his story "*Thien Tao*, or the Synagogue of Satan". We could explore this further, but let's get back to basics.

First and foremost, the Dark Side is associated with night and blackness, hence "Dark" Side. The Dark Side is also associated with monsters or demons, the agents and personifications of darkness itself.

The two most crucial elements of darkness [for our purposes] are (1) its ability to absorb light, and (2) its representation of the unknown the darkness conceals. These two properties are responsible for, or connected to almost all the associations attributed to the Dark Side, at least by analogy.

For example, absorption serves as a model for the accumulation of knowledge and power, aims of the Black Magician: "One absorbs little, and is called white and glistening; one absorbs all and is called black. Therefore, O my darling, art thou black." (Crowley, *Liber LXV*).

Of course this ties in with the darkness as the unknown. The Black Magician courageously ventures into the unknown to retrieve knowledge, etc. It is for this reason that Black Magic was equated with science at an early period in history.

Another manifestation of the absorption property is that of devouring. One of the common characteristics of dark imagery is that of something devouring something else. The most common threat of monsters is that they will eat you. The Devil reputedly devours souls, etc. All this in turn is related to fear and horror, traditionally associated with darkness, and connected again with knowledge, truth, and the unknown as these cause fear for the average person.

The Dark Side is associated with pain. Pain may cause fear. Pain is associated with solitude and severity, other characteristics of the Dark Side. There is a deeper connection as well because pain transforms with time, as do devouring, truth, power, etc.

Here is another essential element of darkness: transmutation. This is often mythologized as lycanthropy, shape-shifting, the effect darkness seems to have on ordinary things in a room for children, or the transformation that accompanies "evil", such as corruption.

In reality the corruption or decay model is not consistent with other aspects of darkness, which deal with accumulation rather than dissolution and probably represent "ugliness"; transforming into something which causes fear; or a weak person dealing with forces beyond his power to control, hence being devoured entirely himself. Devouring necessitates a predatory approach, violence, a source of fear, destruction, and things inherently related to darkness but often counterpointed with acts of creation [as lightning may create or destroy depending upon its usage].

To fully explore the phenomenon would take a book or several books, and there is a great deal I have not worked out. However a pattern starts to emerge.

Let us simplify all of this into the basic description of a monster. A monster is a personification of darkness, usually moving within darkness. Its body is usually an unnatural combination or aberration of natural elements signifying not only transmutation, but the non-natural perspective. It is predatory, and devouring in most cases, yet it can also be a source of knowledge, wisdom, power, etc.

Bear in mind the etymological meaning of "monster" relating to prophecy, omen, or oracles. It usually has some superhuman characteristics, and is almost universally a cause of fear or horror.

My interest in monsters extends into childhood, but it was reading about the legend of King Unas of ancient Egypt that gave me the idea that the monster could serve as a model for Becoming. The funeral oratory of Unas depicted him as a man who had become the greatest of all gods by slaying and eating the other other gods. He was a fierce and terrifying warlord in life, who was apparently reputed to eat the flesh of his enemies to gain their strength. This was a common practice among tribal warriors around the world in antiquity.

Why is this relevant to our discussion? It is relevant because it illustrates the important magical quality of devouring, a main attribute of darkness. When one devours, one takes something into oneself and builds it up into one's being. The Black Magician devours knowledge, power, energy, etc., and uses them to transform himself into a greater entity.

Let us examine for a moment the myth of the cosmic serpent. The dragon/serpent is usually a representative of the universe, of nature, and the threat of the elements to humanity. The serpent-slaying hero represents humanity overcoming nature, and in many myths the body of the serpent is used to create something else, like the human race, the world, or whatever.

For the same reason that the serpent represents the terror of the natural universe, it also represents wisdom, the knowledge to be found within the unknown. In fact the cosmic serpent is most accurately equated with the word *Runa*, and both are sometimes represented by a circle, the totality of the universe, equated with the unknown, the hidden. [Over 99% of the universe does fall into the category of the unknown/hidden.] The circle is a womb symbol as well, that from which all things come.

The connection of the serpent with Satanism is something which should also be kept in mind. The

serpent can be a painful mystery for the human race, reminding us that we are the spawn of nature yet always separate from it, hence the non-natural perspective. The serpent in the Garden of Eden may represent Set reaching down to us, or it may represent humanity reaching up for the knowledge of the hidden, or both.

The fact that Set does not represent the natural universe creates a sort of anomaly, but rather than a true paradox or contradiction, I believe that this is a limitation of any myth viewed through the limited understanding of conventional human minds.

The folly of the RHP is evident. We will never undo our separation from nature, nor will we ever be free of it [at least not during our corporeal life]; but this is the greatest gift and opportunity of all for those who know how to capitalize on it.

The Black Magician, in his search for knowledge, power, etc., is in effect devouring the universe. Symbolically this is devouring the serpent. Representing the infinite, however, the serpent can never be wholly devoured. The serpent, representing the unknown, the hidden, also represents darkness; hence it is itself the great devourer.

Therefore a circuit is created. The Black Magician feeds on the serpent, transforming himself with power and wisdom. He is becoming less and less "human" as it is commonly understood. The Black Magician is in effect sacrificing his humanity to the serpent, to the darkness, which feeds on this humanity.

This is not merely metaphorical. Even in magic the laws of conservation of energy, and nature abhorring a vacuum, still apply. When energy is invoked, energy from the invoker must be used to replace the energy taken. When this transaction takes place, both sources are changed, transformed, although the magician, being a far more finite being, is changed more drastically. As the Black Magician ingests the darkness he takes on more of the characteristics of the darkness. Remember: "You are what you eat."

As the darkness is awe-inspiring, devouring, and fearsome, so will the darkness-imbued *persona* appear in this fashion to the less-initiated. In effect one is becoming a monster. This is rather like combining the dragon and the knight, for only the "knight" can withstand the transmuting effect without being absorbed or destroyed himself.

One might regard the fluid in the Graal as the venomous blood of the serpent, the truth which proves too strong for the masses to stomach. I would take this to be the general Formula of all Black Magic. The next step as I see it is to establish the relationship between the darkness and the Prince of Darkness: where one begins and the other ends.



The Black Pyramid

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°

[15] ÆS Working II

The true ages of time are cast in the likeness of Nine, with all cycles obedient to its Law. All matters of terrestrial concern may be evaluated by the infallible resolution of Nine and its offspring. Action and reaction relative to humanity's tribal needs are contained within successive nine-year periods. The total of both (eighteen years) is called a Working. The beginning and end of each Working is called a Working Year, and each midway point between the Working Years displays a zenith of intensity for the Working which has been brought about.

Meaningful and portentous messages are cast forth each eighteen years, and are acted upon for the eighteen years which follow, at the end of which a new statement appears. - Anton LaVey, *The Satanic Rituals*

Anton LaVey's interest in the influence of mathematics, like that of architecture (Law of the Trapezoid), exemplified his magical philosophy at its most sophisticated and esoteric. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these obscure sciences have been among the least-appreciated and applied by many who consider themselves to be latter-day "LaVey Satanists". Only the Temple of Set has preserved and further explored these tools, particularly in the Order of the Trapezoid.

The key to both magical architecture and "mathemagic" is that their powers are not intrinsic but result from their synthesis with the intelligent psyche. By itself a trapezoid is just a trapezoid. A psyche stimulated by exposure to a trapezoid, however, undergoes change which may range from *Eikasia/Pistis*-level behavior modification to *Dianoia/Næsis*-level inspiration and vision. [Where the Law of the Trapezoid is concerned, Anton observed that it was **knowledge** of the existence of that law, as much as personal intelligence, which determined whether an individual would be enslaved or enhanced by such exposure.]

Similarly mathemagic can be used to mislead and stupefy, as in the case of pop-occult numerology, gematria, astrology, and Cabalism. Few things are so dear to my heart as the befuddled denizens of these blind alleys who grump at the Temple of Set indignantly because we decline to

join them in their mental dis-integration.

As with other elements of his philosophy, Anton LaVey was more interested in recognizing and applying principles than either inquiring after their roots or explaining their machinery to disciples. "If **you** had an ultrasonic raygun that would fit into a fountain pen, or a means of 'clouding men's minds'," he wrote me in IX/1974, "would **you** be so quick to let anyone else in on it?"

The Temple of Set, on the other hand, has always sought not just to identify valid magical principles, but to examine and explain [to its Initiates] the "machinery" by which they function.

Where numbers are concerned, there are many excellent treatises representing the science of mathematics at its [current] height, some of which are included in Category #20 of the reading list. [Here we have sought books which are at least somewhat intelligible to non-professional mathematicians.] But as we follow numbers back through the ages of history, we are drawn once again to the birth of their magical science in ancient Egypt as explained by Pythagoras. In "The First Philosopher" (*Cloven Hoof*, January VII/1972) I wrote:

Pythagoras was born on the Ægean island of Samos in 582 BCE. There are no written records of his early life, and he left no written history of his later magisterial experiences, but accounts by his pupils and contemporaries permit a piecemeal biography. In 549, when he was 33 years of age, he presented himself to the court of the last Pharaoh of the XXVI (Saite) Dynasty, Amasis. Via a petition from his own ruler, Polycrates, he requested initiation into the Priesthood of Amon-Ra at Uast (Thebes).

Although originally reluctant to admit an alien to their circles, the priests of Uast were finally won over by Pythagoras' sincerity and demonstrated endurance of the many tests they set for him. He spent the next 22 years in Egypt, returning to Greece only when Cyrus the Great of Persia sacked and burned the temples at Uast during his expedition to Egypt in 527 ...

Thomas Stanley, citing Porphyry, Iamblicus, Strabo, and other original Greek sources, wrote in his 1687 *History of Philosophy* (#12B):

The mind being purify'd [by Discipline] ought to be applied to things that are beneficial; these he procured by some contrived ways, bringing it by degrees to the contemplation of eternal incorporeal things, which are ever in the same state; beginning

orderly from the most minute, lest by the suddenness of the change it should be diverted, and withdrew itself through its great and long pravity of nutriment.

To this end, he first used the Mathematical Sciences, and those Speculations which are intermediate betwixt Corporeals and Incorporeals, (for they have a Threefold Dimension, like Bodies, but they are impassible like Incorporeals) as Degrees of Preparation to the Contemplation of the things that are; diverting, by an artificial Reason, the Eyes of the Mind from corporeal things (which never are permanent in the same manner and estate) never so little to a desire of aliment; by means whereof, introducing the contemplation of things that are, he rendered men truly happy. This use he made of the Mathematical Sciences.

These Sciences were first termed *Mathemata* by Pythagoras upon consideration that all *Mathesis* (discipline) is Reminiscence, which comes not extrinsecally to souls as the phantasies which are formed by sensible objects in the Phantasie; nor are they an advantageous adscititious knowledg, like that which is placed in Opinion; but it is excited from Phoenomena's, and perfected intrinsecally by the cogitation converted into it self.

Where the number nine is concerned, Pythagorean biographer Peter Gorman (#12G) [drawing in this area primarily from Iamblicus] summarizes:

The nine was alternately called Okeanos, the god of the great sea which girdled the Earth, because nine is the limit of the numbers, for after it comes the ten; and it was also termed Prometheus who was strong, because the nine was powerful enough to also hold back the other numbers in the decad. Being the largest number in the decad and the turning-point before the numerical series began again [ten was associated with unity as was 100 and 1,000], the nine was very important. It was a symbol of justice because its square root is three; and its factors three and three, both being equal, are a fit image of retaliation (or, as the Greeks called it, *to antipeponthos*). Pythagoras named the nine *Kouretis* because it was sacred to the three Curetes, mystical deities of Crete.

The ancient Pythagoreans also ascribed life and a telepathic form of consciousness to these numbers," added Gorman. "The psyche freed from the trammels of the three-

dimensional world telepathizes with these beings whose consciousness is presented immediately to the view of a purified mind. Thus it can come to know their properties and the individual characteristics of their beings.

There is much more that could be said on this subject [and is in Categories #12 and #20]. Here I wish only to crack the door enough to illustrate that there is more to the essence of numbers generally, and to nine in particular, than Anton LaVey's whim.

The Church of Satan was "set in motion" to the nine-principle espoused in the *Satanic Rituals*, hence the prominence of nine in everything from the Council of Nine to the Nine Satanic Statements to the dynamics of the institution itself. It attained its greatest size and extent in X/1975, at which point its essence passed to the Temple of Set and what remained of its shell began a steady dissolution and disintegration, culminating with Diane LaVey's departure in 1984 and her subsequent legal action leading to court-ordered termination of the Church and Anton LaVey's bankruptcy concluding in December 1992.

Meanwhile the Temple of Set began its own Working cycle in 1975. The mid-point brought the Wewelsburg Working and evolution of the Order of the Trapezoid and, more ominously, the beginning of an international pogrom against "Satanism" by religious extremists and scam-artists of profane society.

After the essential (1975) and structural (1984) disintegrations of the Church of Satan, Anton LaVey lost control of his 1966 Working. What remained of it was split in two divergent directions:

(1) **Esoteric or High Satanism**, abandoned abruptly by Anton after the North Solstice 1975, was continued and developed by the Temple of Set, principally as historical/traditional background to the more sophisticated and comprehensive magical philosophy of the Æon of Set.

(2) **Exoteric or Low Satanism** was preached exclusively by Anton from 1975 to 1984, and with the "negative glamorization" of "Satanism" caused by the pogroms of the 1980s was adopted by nihilistic and antisocial groups/individuals seeking to dramatize themselves with an "occult" flavor.

In the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* the Temple of Set was advised to divest itself of "Satanic" imagery entirely: "No longer will I accept the bastard title of a Hebrew fiend ... Cast aside the corruptions that the pentagram of Set may shine forth."

As much as we created an evolutionary identity for the Temple of Set, however, we didn't entirely "de-Satanize" it. In part this was due to the

founders' background in and fondness for the original C/S experience, to include the horror-movie-glamor of its ritual accouterments and atmosphere. But also it was due to the Judæo/Christian society in which the Temple existed, in which it seemed easier to explain ourselves as an evolved form of Satanism than as the mutant creature of an utterly alien antiquity [and profuture].

Had we paid more attention to the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, I have reflected, we might have passed through the "abased 80s" without being a prime target for the anti-"Satanic" fanatics. Nevertheless our continued association with Satanic imagery was responsible for many artistic and magical marvels during our 1975-1992 Working, and more than any other institution we acted to place authentic Church of Satan Satanism in an accurate historical context.

Once the 1980s' attacks on "Satanism" began, of course, any attempt by the Temple of Set to "de-Satanize" itself further was out of the question. We were the only religious institution with the social credentials, background, and authority to confront and rebut the campaign; therefore we did so. Paradoxically this forced the Temple into more of a "classically Satanic" posture, as the debate was largely carried out in the Judæo/Christian context of profane society.

That war is now won; the Tree in the North has been hewn down and destroyed with the ignominy it so richly deserved. The "Satanic crime/abuse" myth has evaporated except in a few isolated circles of crankdom, where Elvis will always reappear and cattle will continue to be mutilated by sex-crazed flying saucer crews. [Yesterday I watched a "Satanic abuse therapist" being demolished by a professor of psychiatry and other researchers on the Maury Povich talk-show; this next week I have been invited by *America's Most Wanted* to fly to Washington and be interviewed for a program it is doing on the subject.]

Accordingly the Temple of Set now faces an opportunity not unlike that of the West when the confrontational danger of the communist East suddenly collapsed. For the first time in years we are free to redefine our relationship to "Satanism". The end of our first Working and the arrival of the first year of our second Working (XXVIII/1993) suggest all the more strongly that we should recognize and seize the moment. To put it another way, we have arrived at a point of Seldon Crisis (#21F).

Let us examine some relevant factors:

(1) We no longer have to "defend the [original] Church of Satan against itself" [i.e. its post-75 exploitation]. It is now utterly dead, Anton LaVey's

desperate fictions concerning its continued existence exposed and shattered before the Superior and Bankruptcy Courts. Indeed on 10/28/91 the Superior Court **formally ordered it dissolved as a business altogether**, though I'm sure there will always be rumors that it endures Greater and More Terrible Than Ever Before in a glorious new underground "phase"!

(2) After the 18 years of our first Working, the Temple of Set has developed and extracted just about everything worthwhile from "Satanism" that this particular term encompasses. We have reached a point where it is a **limiting**, rather than an **enabling** element in our evolutionary and initiatory quest.

(3) Looking out at profane society, the collapse of communism has left the [Judæo/Christian] West searching frantically for "enemies" to use in controlling society. A 1980s attempt to place "Satanism" in this role failed because of the inevitable absurdity of the "Satanic crime" theme. In January 1992 the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime published the results of a seven-year study on such allegations, noting that the FBI "**is unable to document even one Satanic murder ... and has found little or no evidence of organized Satanic conspiracies**".

Along with this irritatingly-inconvenient fact, conventional religious extremists suddenly began to realize that the theme of religious child molestation could [and now has] been applied to **themselves**, with literally hundreds of criminal **prosecutions and convictions** of Christian officials resulting. Abuse-profiteering "therapists" have now begun to target parents of their clients, Christian religious backgrounds notwithstanding.

(4) Meanwhile the demise of even the vestiges of the old C/S has left a "Low Satanism" vacuum in which anyone can hang out a shingle as a Satanist, asserting nothing more than the coarse Ayn Randian egoism of the *Satanic Bible* as justification. Thus we see about us a widely-diverse assortment of pretenders to the name of Satanism, ranging from the merely quaintly-oddball to animal-killing teenage gangs to seriously violent political street activists.

As the oldest, largest, and most sophisticated Satanic institution, the Temple of Set finds itself in the position of being the "fastest gun in Dodge City" meaning that every newcomer wants to outdraw it. Sometimes such challengers appear out of nowhere. Sometimes they are disgruntled ex-Setians who are upset because they weren't Recognized to a degree they decided they deserved, or because the Temple's ethical guidelines struck them as too restrictive. For whatever reason, there

they are and we can count on a steady stream of them indefinitely into the future.

So if things continue as they are, the Temple of Set faces increasing confrontations both by profane society (which will see us as the most significant embodiment of the "Satanism" it has re-defined into a political scapegoat) and by a proliferation of "Satanic wannabes" either looking for our protection and endorsement or trying to outdraw us in Dodge City. We would be foolish indeed to allow ourselves to be drawn into such a no-win situation if we have the opportunity and presence of mind to prevent it.

And we do and the blueprint for that is what I propose to the Temple at this beginning of our second Working in XXVIII/1993. It consists of several interrelated components:

(1) Until now the Temple has been the primary functioning organizational entity. For the first half of the first Working there were no Orders [except that the Order of the Trapezoid was casually continued as a Priesthood-related designation]. An Order system was initially attempted during the Barrett High Priesthood, then aborted because of the repression it produced.

With the benefit of lessons learned, a new system of Orders was then developed and has been refining itself for many years since. It has now reached the point where several of the Orders have become more productive than the entire Temple of Set during its first few years of existence.

I propose to restructure the Temple's operational environment so that the Orders, not the Temple, will become the primary focus for the Initiate. Again as the analogy has been used in the past the Temple's relationship to the Orders will be increasingly like that of a university to its academic departments.

We are all familiar with the current provision that a new Setian I° has two years to qualify as an Adept II° or be disassociated. This has proven itself a very effective means of divesting ourselves of persons who have no real interest or dedication to **personal** initiation, but who just want to vampirize the Temple's stimulating atmosphere.

I now propose that each Adept have one year following II° Recognition to affiliate with one of the Temple's Orders. This would be phrased as an **expectation**, not a "do-or-be-expelled" requirement. Underlying this expectation is the principle that any adept magician will tend to specialize in areas of greatest skill and interest which is just what the Order system exists to facilitate. [To continue with the university analogy, this would be similar to selecting a major after completing general education requirements.]

As this gradually becomes the norm, the services of the Temple of Set to II°+ Initiates will shift towards being channeled to and through the Orders rather than directly to II°+ individuals. Obviously, certain basic Temple services to all Initiates will remain where most efficient and necessary.

(2) Until now Pylons the Temple's geographically-oriented rather than interest-oriented organizations have been a pretty loose and flexible concept, with any III°+ or sponsored II° able to start one of any size (in some cases just one or two individuals) if desired. While a free-form Temple atmosphere is nice, I think the Pylon concept can be made a bit more coherent & cohesive. So:

(a) The notion that a Pylon is a "II°/III°-level" activity while an Order is an "IV°-level" (i.e. higher/better) is out the window. Only an IV°+ will be able to head an Order, because of the more rigorous demands of coordinating a magical specialty field. However Pylons can be headed by IV°+s just as easily and "normally" as by II°/III°s. The difference is that a Pylon is **primarily** a device for geographically-defined interaction rather than a special interest. [Some Pylons will continue to have special emphases of their own, and that is quite all right.]

(b) Notice that I said geographically-**defined**, not "restricted". Under our new system it will continue to be possible to have Pylons, such as the Gates of Hell, that are deliberately distance/correspondence-based.

(c) Within one year after entering the Temple, a Setian I° will be expected to affiliate with at least one Pylon. The Setian's II° Recognition, when/if it takes place, will normally be performed by the Pylon Sentinel [if III°+] or recommended [if II°].

To facilitate this, I intend to restructure the *Crystal Tablet* to provide each Pylon with "statement space" similar to that presently provided to the Orders.

What about the person who wants to be a permanent lone wolf? What effect will these new Pylon [and Order] expectations have on such an individual?

Well, if someone is **that** much of a loner, he or she might just as well not be part of an organization [like the Temple of Set] to begin with. We are designed as a device for **personal involvement and interaction**; we are not a "magazine subscription".

So what these new systems do is to make the procedures for personal contact and involvement less haphazard. Until now a I° has had to flail around in a kind of no-man's-land looking for a III° to work with towards eventual II° Recognition. The Initiate might or might not bump into a Pylon or [as a II°] an Order. Occasionally Recognitions might

get confusing as two or more senior Initiates worked regularly with a given Setian or Adept. The new system proposes to disentangle that.

In order to make this system work, Orders and Pylons will be expected to admit any qualified Setian who applies unless there is an explicit reason [such as membership in another Order or a formally-evaluated inaptitude] for not doing so. "Personality conflict" will be a valid reason in exceptional cases, but would be cause for a concerned look at the parties involved.

(d) A Pylon will normally be required to have a recorded membership of at least three individuals [including the Sentinel].

(3) The *Crystal Tablet* will be redesigned to supplement and enhance this new Order/Pylon-oriented system. In addition to an expanded section on Pylons, the entire "Inner Temple" section relating to the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* and its supporting documents will be transferred to the *Ruby Tablet*. Such principles in that section as are necessary for a new Setian's qualification as an Adept of the Temple will be covered in a narrative fashion in *Black Magic*. There are three additional factors in the RTing of the CT/IT section:

(a) This "massive dose" of GBM at the beginning of a new Initiate's exposure to the Temple of Set has tended to encourage I°s to plunge immediately into GBM and wind up floundering around with "visions" and "voices". While a I° should be familiar with the **concept** of GBM, that is a field of magic best approached by a qualified Adept. The business of a I° is more sensibly to gain an intellectual education in authentic magical philosophy and to become a wise and skilled practitioner of LBM.

(b) When the Temple of Set was [re]founded in 1975CE, the founders were all veterans of the Church of Satan. The C/S-relevant material in the CT/IT was immediately and directly meaningful to us, in a way that it is not to Setians who enter the Temple today, to whom the C/S is little more than a vaguely-known piece of history from the previous generation. [Persons are joining the Temple today who weren't even **born** when the crisis of 1975 was occurring.]

(c) Finally the CT/IT material is necessarily Aquino-orbiting, as it involves GBM Workings and supplementary analytical research performed by me. As the senior Initiate at the time of the Temple's founding, I was far more crucial to the tone and pace of the Temple than I am now. Today the Temple of Set and the Æon have evolved far beyond the "orbit" of any one Initiate, myself included. It is time that the CT should reflect this.

(4) The Glinda system will continue to be developed and expanded, with more and more

documents being designed primarily for Glinda and then printed out in hardcopy as necessary for non-computer-access Setians. The advantage of Glinda, of course, is that documents can be obtained and messages posted & received immediately from all over the world. With the constantly-expanding size and complexity of the Temple and no paid/professional staff paper communications continue to logjam, particularly at the Temple office level.

(a) Glinda will eventually go to a 24 hours/day system. [Presently she is alternating a phone line with the Temple's 8AM-5PM weekdays answering machine message.]

(b) We are continuing to move towards an easy and cost-effective international access, such as FidoNet and the Internet.

(c) At present we are continuing to recommend MCI-Mail as a somewhat cost-effective electronic mail device for worldwide access. However MCI is not tied into Glinda. We will either want to explore such a tie-in or see about moving our recommended EM in the direction of a Glinda-interactive system for the sake of simplicity, avoidance of duplication, and economy.

(5) As discussed above, expect to see the Temple of Set's Temple-level literature moving away from the "Satanic" and more towards the Setian. Yes, there will be plenty of room in the Temple for the Gothic atmosphere and the High Satanic legacy of which we are fond [and which is rightly ours to preserve]. Nevertheless the Temple is going to move deliberately away from being a convenient bogeyman for Judæo/Christianity, and from being a gunfighter in Dodge City.

[16] *Kung Fu Returns*

In 1972, inspired by the big-screen success of Bruce Lee (#19D), a television series entitled *Kung Fu* commenced a 3-year run. Starring David Carradine as a Shaolin Priest exiled to wild-west America, it was a delightful blend of philosophy, martial arts ballet, and what *Outer Limits* producers used to call "the bear" (i.e. the surprise moment of every episode when an *OL* monster would appear or in *KF*'s case when some leering gang of creeps would suddenly be turned into corned beef hash by the docile "Chinaman" they'd been picking on). I reviewed *KF* for the *C/S Cloven Hoof* in 1973 (*COS* #A82).

Today Carradine has reprised the original series with a new one. Too soon to tell if it will recapture the original magic, but good luck to it. In the meantime, as in a footnote to #A82, I strongly recommend Carradine's *The Spirit of Shaolin* (Boston: Tuttle, 1991) to anyone with an interest in the history & philosophy behind the original series and Carradine's own evolution because of it. Last year I was asked by an Adept if a valid avenue for initiation via the RHP existed. I told him to forget all of the Blavatsky, GD, Rosicrucian hot air on the subject and get Carradine's book.