

THE MASTERS SERIES, VOLUME I
James Fitzsimmons IV^o

Temple of Set



HOUSE OF LIFE



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James Fitzsimmons IV^o

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Work and Its Rewards Intro

What you are reading in this collection of posts happened by accident. When I began it I was intending to do two things. The first was to take a largely unread post by Ipsissimus Webb to TS1 and to show for the first time openly to the Temple how one Setian could take these concentrated ideas and use them as a means of orienting their Initiation. Secondly I was looking for a means of sharing a number of techniques, method and resources I had collected over the past few years that I felt other Setians might benefit from learning about.

Instead I found roughly two months of my life devoted not only to these two intentions but also to a challenge I did not expect. In February of 2011 E.V. I found myself impelled to re-examine the Eternal Word of Set: Xeper. I had been working on this challenge for nearly a year when I began the present series while sharing very little of it with other Setians. What writing this series showed me was that the things I was learning from the Word were so profoundly reshaping my ideas that I could no longer write or speak about Initiation. Further details of this experience, and subsequent research can be found in my other collected series *_The Aeon and the Eternal Word_*.

This collection is by no means a comprehensive work. The various Steads of Work proposed by Ipsissimus Webb offer a broad set of areas which can be explored and refined in unique fashions. As you progress through your own Work it is my hope that this collection may open certain doorways for resources while also prompting you to share the methods and resources that you discover on your own. In that sense this is a living document designed to be explored and expanded by each reader willing to do the Work.

Xeper,
James Fitzsimmons IV°
Sept 23, 2013

Work and Its Rewards

**Initial Post by Don Webb
Elaboration by James Fitzsimmons
Contributions by Various Setians**

Document Draft Version 1.0

Work & Its Rewards

by Don Webb, VI°

November 6, 2011 E.V.

What is Work?

In Setian culture we toss the word “work” around all the time. We call Initiation “working on ourselves” in some post-Masonic nomenclature we call rituals “Workings.” We sound like our host culture of Protestant America. We like the Fourth Way crowd; they always talk about work. We even say that a I° can become II° by working really hard. That all sounds great and noble. I’m not sitting on my butt, I’m working, see? Except we become a little vague when we are asked what work is. This essay will address a few topics, such as the relationship of Xeper and work, what kinds of work can give you the most reward for effort, and lastly what those rewards should be. This essay is designed for the new First Degree, but I imagine is relevant to everybody. There is a natural order of things and an unnatural order. In the natural order small kids do not steal their older brother’s bikes. Yesterday an eight year old down the block pinched his brother’s bicycle. He peddled in a rather wobbly way past me and screamed, “I’m doing it! Now what do I do?” I had (undesirably) entered into a Third Degree and First Degree relationship with him. I had to advise him on the fly how to ride and not head out into the much busier streets nearby. I had ridden a bicycle before, and I had a better view of where he was going because of my height and position on the ground. So I began my Priestly spiel about balance and leaning into a curve.

Work Is

Work is altering the interrelationships within your mind-body-soul complex and the elements in your home, school and employment to facilitate Xeper. Work is rather like maintaining a car. If you maintain your vehicle, you can drive to your job every day, or flee a hurricane, drive to your mother’s house at Yule, or even drive off to the most amazing vacation ever. Work is not Xeper, anymore than maintaining your car is driving. Some work is pleasant, some hard. Some aspects of work will come easy for you, other types will be hard. Work proceeds better in a community where you can see its rewards, and get feedback on your methods. Work done on the self without a community becomes unbalanced. We will do what is easiest for us to do, and shy away from what is hardest.

Work may be hard, but does not tire you out. It gives you access to energy beyond your normal levels. When Setians lose sight of the first two steads of work, their actions become unharmonious and they burn out.

During the First Degree we need the feedback of others to find our blind spots, but we also need the freedom to make your own judgments about what we want to develop. For some people a really great car sound system is a prerequisite for long travel, for others it’s all about getting a GPS. Since Xeper is measured by “power to do things” it is often confused with work. For example going through a college degree is certainly work, but it is not Xeper. Many aspects of Xeper will have manifested in this endeavor, for example you may overcome your fear of public speaking, or learned to quiet your emotions the night your boyfriend dumped you before a test – but the degree, itself is a tool that your Xeper will use. Xeper is the mediator between your changeless core and the work you have wrought on those parts of yourself and the world that does change. Xeper grows each time you gain in knowledge and access to your Greater Self, Xeper likewise grows when increase your empowerment and abilities in those aspects of the Cosmos you can rationally decide to improve and

work upon. Xeper moves through a series of levels as the Essence that is uniquely you can express itself more perfectly in a world you have designed. If you focus only on the inner timeless you, you are a yogi. If you focus only on changing your lifespace you are a Satanist. Each of these paths lead to a form of freedom, but each loses half of what you might Become.

There are certain steads of work that can give you quicker access to Xeper. Some of these your Priest may advise you upon, others are too personal, but you should understand their existence. Your first piece of work after reading this article will be to see what steads of work you have some mastery in and which steads are undeveloped for you. Your second job will be to begin to use the words “work” and “Xeper” more accurately. Your third job will be to make plans to work better. The magic of the community comes into place here – other Setians are making similar plans for themselves, and thus new opportunities will come into being when you need them the most. The Aeon grows from work, and as it grows the Prince of Darkness may affect the world of becoming to reflect His Essence just as we seek to. The synchronicities between Set’s Will and our own, is the means whereby Set shares his Essence with us. We may pursue our goals with utter selfishness, but the goals themselves harmonize and work together.

We Setians benefit from this epiphenomenon and our enemies suffer from it as well. Thus social change happens at a deep level.

Setians require four attitudes to turn the day-to-day actions they practice into work:

- **Honest self reporting.** The Setian must learn to neither lie by being too self-congratulatory or too harsh with herself. She must learn to be honest to herself, her Temple and her Recognizing clergy.
- **Daring.** The Setian must move past her fears (especially the fear of what others may think). The internal fetters of convention and bad self-image bind the coming of Xeper.
- **Willingness to Trust the Greater Self.** When opportunities arise “out of the blue,” take them. Whether it’s a chance to go to a Pow-Wow, see new art in Museum, talk to the woman of your dreams in a bar, or sign up for a philosophy class – be aware that the immortal part of yourself is always reaching out to you. Don’t be afraid to lose rational control and try new things – just as you no longer fear making rationality in charge of your habits and routines
- **Willingness to make the super-effort.** We shouldn’t work hard all the time. We should play, rest, sleep, dream and spend restorative time with our family, animal companions and friends. But we must be aware that our Greater Self will occasionally present us with some really hard task. We must learn to discern these and really push ourselves.

The Steads of Work

- **Knowledge of Desire.** The Left Hand Path begins with the notion that Desire is good, and accepts it brings both pleasures and pains. The seeker uses her Desire to fuel all things, understanding that Desire is what isolates them from the universe. The Seeker also knows that his or her Desire has been obscured from them by a society that wants to control their livelihood and money. Isolating and refining Desire is the basis of the Left Hand Path. In all other steads of work, the results here are the impetus.

- **Practical Self Empowerment.** The Setian seeks real power in the real world. It does not matter if the empowerment is the work of getting a new IT certification, taking painting classes or learning to bowl better. Practical empowerment can be buying a new car, or setting up for your retirement. The Setian seeks to be ever more effective in areas where his or her Desire lays. This gives a practical base for Xeper to express itself.
- **Work on the body.** The Setian seeks to have greater health, sensual pleasure and strength in his or her body. The body is the greatest teacher of desire, patience and the need for constant striving. The body is not a “magical tool” – it is magic. The nature of the work depends on the Setian – Setian A may train for marathons, while Setian B is just watching what he eats. The body is not a hindrance for the soul; it is the Temple through which the soul receives offerings.
- **Work on the emotions.** Often humans called to Initiation have had great pain in their lives, some early trauma made them resort to magic. Setians must first seek to heal themselves of hurt, and then seek to feel more deeply, and lastly make their emotions follow them, rather than they follow their emotions. The nature of this work, which can range from finding a therapist to healing a rift in one’s family, is up the individual Setian.
- **Work on the Mind,** Firstly the Setian must learn critical thinking and logic, both to replace unexamined beliefs and to become less the plaything of others. Then he or she must become conversant with the *Crystal Tablet*. Lastly the Setian must become aware of cognition itself, perhaps by pursuing Susan Blakemore’s *Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction* or Robert Anton Wilson’s *Quantum Psychology*
- **Gaining magical skill.** Setians should learn firstly to use the rubric in the *Crystal Tablet*, then to try as many techniques as they like using both self-created and Traditional means.
- **Skill in Meta-communication.** Setians must learn how to express their Will to others through dress, public speaking, Lesser Black Magic, NeuroLingustic Programming and other skills. The Setian’s Desire will take more than one head to think through, more than one body to build.
- **Skill in Reporting.** The Setian learns how to report her triumphs and failings. Firstly to herself, most likely in the form of a diary. Secondarily to a Priest for feedback. Thirdly in her life so that she attracts the mates, jobs, friends and opportunities she Desires.
- **Conclave.** This is a basic magical task. Pulling it off is a sign that all other steads are doing well. If extreme distances keep you from going to Conclave, how can you bring the Temple to you? Can you make a gathering in your home, have Skype chats, etc. Because of the Work it takes to get to Conclave or other Gatherings, great Initiation can pass from Mouth to Ear in a manner that simply reading a book or an e-mail cannot give you.

The Rewards of Work

- **Self knowledge.** No other pursuit defines and reveals the Self-to-the-self as does discovering,

articulating and amplifying your Desire. In this action you will learn you exist, and you will be able to give meaning to all things in your life.

- **Practical power.** You will be able to have greater power and pleasure – not based on someone else’s model, but on your own. You will understand that the simple human deeds you choose can be as holy and deep as the most far-flung magical endeavors.
- **Greater health and pleasure.** You will feel good in your body. Everything that ever took your body away from you – kids teasing you, illness, drugs, rape – you will give back to yourself. When you leave shock, dullness, and disease for as much vitality as you can self-generate, you will find a great deal more magical power becomes available to you. If you are doing well by your body, you will be to accept its aging as the prompts of a friend to help you with your Xeper. In the end your body is your best Priest.
- **A happy heart.** Setians are deeply passionate beings, but slowly the average mood that comes by working on the emotions in a happy alert calmness.
- **An easier to use mind.** You will become uncluttered by faulty logic, and will learn to use your mind in ways that only lucky circumstance could have given you.
- **Greater magical power.** You will both be able to enjoy magic as an art form, but be able to get better results.
- **Tribe building.** Instead of being a follower in another’s tribe, you will build a tribe that follows you. Setians are not a tribe – too many chiefs, we are a chosen band of tribal leaders engaged in cultural and world change – and having a good time while doing it.
- **Honesty.** You will come to be able to speak without fear of authority or social ridicule. You will be able to speak or be silent about yourself among people that have earned your trust and respect as you have learned theirs. You will change in that by this level, what you speak of will simply come into being.
- **You will become a builder of Setian culture and community.** By journeying to Conclave, you will meet lifelong friends, maybe even life partners. By honestly sharing your joys and struggles you will become part of a community that is developing new and better forms of magic and philosophy, new and better ways to see the world, new and better ways to act upon the world. Thus your Desires can be fulfilled.

Work & Its Rewards

James Fitzsimmons IV°, From 2-22-12 to 4-30-12

Since Ipsissimus Webb made this contribution, I have been Working to expand upon some of these ideas and develop resources for making the content of the contribution actionable for Setians. I will be posting these as time and interest allows.

The reason this post captured my attention for the past few months is that it very cleanly gives a usable distinction between the two different type of change-processes that Setians are engaged in. Change is not a uniform thing but rather something which happens in two distinct fashions.

The first kind is that of translative change. Translative change deals with taking what you already have and making it better. It is all that is done to undo your fetters, enhance your strengths and improve your resources. This is in the terms of the original post "Work."

The second kind of change is transformative change. Things change not what is already there becoming better but by there suddenly being access to greater sophistication and complexity. In terms of the original post this is "Xeper", which Ipsissimus Webb Uttered as "I Have Come into Being." When you have experienced Xeper you have more "You" than you had previously. You have Transformed.

In the process of Clarifying our understanding of Initiation it is important to become conversant in the differences between Work and Xeper. You do not Xeper as a result of Work (translative change) but the act of engaging in Work helps to create the situations and internal environment where Xeper (transformative change) can take place.

Work is where you focus should be as a Setian. If you do make this your focus Xeper will happen.

Knowledge of Desire

Let us start with the very first Stead of Work that fittingly is rooted in Desire. Ipsissimus Webb wrote:

Knowledge of Desire. *The Left Hand Path begins with the notion that Desire The Left Hand Path begins with the notion that Desire is good, and accepts it brings both pleasures and pains. The seeker uses her Desire to fuel all things, understanding that Desire is what isolates them from the universe. The Seeker also knows that his or her Desire has been obscured from them by a society that wants to control their livelihood and money. Isolating and refining Desire is the basis of the Left Hand Path. In all other steads of work, the results here are the impetus.*

Desire is deeply rooted in the Gift of Set and is a means of Knowing your Being. In order to know your Desires fully however you must have a sense of your Inner Being. You must know clearly what your values are, what your beliefs are, what your identity is and you must be willing to subject those values, beliefs, and identity to consistent scrutiny and refinement on your own and with others similarly dedicated to the Work.

When you first begin this process you may come to a serious shock: your values, beliefs and identity are the result not of your own choosing but simply the result of happenstance. If this happens, congratulations! The first step towards becoming Self-Created (i.e. one who has experienced Xeper) is realizing that what you are has not been the product of your Will but the product of happenstance and then making the conscious decision to do something about it. Let us look at these three aspects of Knowing Desire, beginning with **Values**.

Values

As a result of Working within a School heavily influenced by no one but severally linguistically gifted scholars it has become a habit for me to look at the etymology of words in order to gain an improved understanding of their present usage.

According to the Online Etymology Dictionary the English word “Value” has this genealogy of meaning.

value (n.) c.1300, from O.Fr. value “worth, value” (13c.), noun use of fem. pp. of valoir “be worth,” from L. valere “be strong, be well, be of value” (see valiant). The meaning “social principle” is attested from 1918, supposedly borrowed from the language of painting. Value judgment (1892) is a loan-translation of Ger. Werturteil.

Values in this context means those core principles that you desire to see manifest in yourself and in the World. By taking the time to investigate what your values are, to take the simple action of writing them out by hand and then ranking them from those that are most important to you and identifying the three Key values from which your other values develop from you will be better armed to take action in life than nearly 99% of everyone you ever meet.

Here is the most basic exercise for developing your sense of your values.

- Set a timer for 15 minutes.
- On a sheet of paper write at the top the question “What are my values?”
- For the next 15 minutes write. Do not take the time to evaluate what you are writing, Simply keep listing the things that you value in life. What do you value in your profession? What do you value in your personal relationships? What do you value in your physical experience? Just keep writing until the time has run out.
- Leave the paper for a time and step away from your writing area. Have a cup of water. Do a simple chore. Get yourself into a different mind set.
- Come back to you list. Read over your entries and see if any values are repeated. Then start to notice which values are of your highest priority and which values are the result of those primary values. You can rank them by numbers if you want, with 1 being most important and 5 being least.
- Keep winnowing down your list until you have a core set of values between three and five items. If you want a particularly powerful technique identify one core value for each of the area previously mentions: Profession, Personal and Physical.
- Once you have this core list identified re-write these values on a new sheet of paper an commit them clearly to memory. If you want to bring a magical Element to this consider constructing a Working of your Own Genius where you clearly define your values to the Cosmos, informing it that this is your criteria for evaluating it and that these are the ends towards which you will be Working.

Beliefs

Let's stick with the Pedant's Path for a moment and take a look at the word "Beliefs" with my trusty friend the Online Etymology Dictionary.

*belief (n.) late 12c., bileave, replacing O.E. geleafa "belief, faith," from W.Gmc. *ga-laubon "to hold dear, esteem, trust" (cf. O.S. gilobo, M.Du. gelove, O.H.G. giloubo, Ger. Glaube), from *galaub- "dear, esteemed," from intensive prefix *ga- + *leubh- "to care, desire, like, love" (see love (v.)). The prefix was altered on analogy of the verb believe. The distinction of the final consonant from that of believe developed 15c. "The be-, which is not a natural prefix of nouns, was prefixed on the analogy of the vb. (where it is naturally an intensive) [OED] Belief used to mean "trust in God," while faith meant "loyalty to a person based on promise or duty" (a sense preserved in keep one's faith, in good (or bad) faith and in common usage of faithful, faithless, which contain no notion of divinity). But faith, as cognate of L. fides, took on the religious sense beginning in 14c. translations, and belief had by 16c. become limited to "mental acceptance of something as true," from the religious use in the sense of "things held to be true as a matter of religious doctrine" (a sense attested from early 13c.).*

Trust and Faith. Hmm...reminds me of Ipsissimus Flowers discussion of *Triuwe* in "Within You and Beyond You." (Pp. 57-58. Now would be a great time to reread it)

Rather than go into the various usages of beliefs let us use the simple definition of belief as something which an individual holds about the nature of themselves, others and nature.

Like previously mentioned much of what we believe initially comes as a result of happenstance. One of the central features of the Setian approach is to challenge these happenstance beliefs through encouraging skills in discernment (See Category 0 of the Temple of Set reading List, as well as *The Philosopher's Toolkit* by Julian Baggini and Peter S. Fosl). Developing the individual skills at evaluating beliefs is of primary importance to Setians as the ability to evaluate is key feature of the fundamental I° of Setian Initiation.

In addition to and in support of this individual Work we have the tradition of Socratic Dialog between Setians. This offers outside input on the process of discernment and can bring forth perspectives that you as an individual would not have been able to consider. It can also be a very difficult challenge, as there tends to be a good deal of emotional attachment to beliefs that can be triggered by having them subject to scrutiny. Learning how to disentangle your sense of Self from your beliefs is an important part of the process. If you are particularly interested in this approach you may find this article on creating "Socratic Cafes" a useful resource http://www.philosopher.org/SC_Tips_One.html

For the sake of Knowledge of Desire an area worth particular attention is what NLP practitioners term "Limiting Beliefs." This is where you have beliefs regarding your limits as a person, the limits of people generally or the limitations of nature. These limitations are not necessarily true but the fact that you think they are true limits what you will allow yourself to do. Anytime you find yourself saying that "You can't" chances are you are confronting a limiting belief.

So how do you discern a limiting belief and help to remove them? Often the easiest way is to find evidence that undermined them. Let's take as an example someone with the common limiting belief "I can't speak in front of audiences."

The first thing to do is to look for contradictory evidence in their own experience. "Was there ever a time when you have spoken in front of an audience?" Often there has, whether in a classroom environment or some other context. By connecting them to their own past actions the belief may begin to dissolve.

If they never have spoken in public then the questions turn to examples of people who have spoken in public. Do they know anyone who can speak in public? If so why do they believe that this person can do it yet they cannot?

Another key technique related to limiting beliefs, especially limiting beliefs about identity and capacity, is to begin reframing your "I can't" statements. Rather than saying "I can't learn languages," start saying "Up until now I couldn't learn languages." By shifting the limitation to the past you begin to open up new potentials for your present.

Exercise.

Identify something in your beliefs that you believe may be a limiting belief and start unpacking this belief. Subject it to scrutiny about your own experience or of other people's experiences. If you can find someone else to help you explore this limiting belief and provide evidence that you may not have considered about your own capacities.

In terms of Knowing Desire look at those deep desires you have had your whole life but have never pursued and identify what your beliefs are around this desire. What limitations have you seen for why these desires could not be fulfilled? Then start subjecting those beliefs to discernment and evaluation, seeing if they have any validity for your past that you no longer need or if they have simply been unnecessary limiters on your fulfillment. If you have any insights based upon this Work, and if you do it you will, share them with other Setians.

Identity

I will finish out this week with the final area I mentioned in relation to Knowledge of Desire: Identity.

identity c.1600, "sameness, oneness," from M.Fr. *identité* (14c.), from L.L. (5c.) *identitatem* (nom. *identitas*) "sameness," from *ident-*, comb. form of L. *idem* (neut.) "the same" (see *identical*); abstracted from *identidem* "over and over," from phrase *idem et idem*. [For discussion of Latin formation, see entry in OED.] Earlier form of the word in English was *idemptitie* (1560s), from M.L. *idemptitas*. Term *identity crisis* first recorded 1954. *Identity theft* attested from 1995.

To some extent your identity is based upon those beliefs about yourself which you tell yourself over and over. Yet as we discussed previously beliefs are often not based upon reality but upon happenstance. This occurs as much for your beliefs about the world as it does for yourself, with the beliefs about yourself often being the most crippling.

Identify can be seen as your "Concept of Self." It will in all likelihood be multi-dimensional, based upon how you see yourself in a number of contexts rather than simply how developed you are in one area. Still some people place a large part of their Concept of Self on only one or a few of their developmental aspects.

In exploring your sense of Identity it can be helpful to look into the field of Psychology. In particular the area of Developmental Psychology can be an important tool for seeing where you actually are and where you would like to grow and develop next. In this area the works of people like Abraham Maslow, Roberto Assagioli, Claire Graves can provide deep level insights. So can their popularizers such as Chris Cowan and Don Beck or Ken Wilber, whose *Integral Psychology* can provide a good introductory map towards a Psychology of Initiation.

In the last few months of looking at the topics related to "Work and its Rewards" I was very pleasantly impressed by the approach to Self-Identity and cultivating a sense of self-worth developed by Dr. Nathaniel Branden. Branden's approach, best captured in his work *The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem* contains numerous exercises to improve your understanding of yourself, to eliminate limiting beliefs and to develop a true sense of identity based on upon happenstance but upon a foundation of values.

Here is a good Executive Summary of Branden's "Six Pillars." For those interested in exploring his methods of actualizing these points the book will prove invaluable.

So What are the Six Pillars?

1) The Practice of Living Consciously

"Those who believe they have thought enough and learned enough are on a downward trajectory of increasing unconsciousness." It's not an uncommon trend for us to believe we have learned all there is to know. That we are the way we are and there is no more room for growth. We reach a point in our lives where we think "this is it" and just live day in and day out pondering the past and wishing for the future.

Nathaniel Branden argues (and I agree) that this is counterproductive. In order to maintain healthy self-esteem you must focus on the one thing you can control: the here and now. This

means being conscious of what is happening in the moment, being conscious of the direction you are heading and making the necessary adjustments to make sure it's the direction you want to be going.

2) The Practice of Self-Acceptance.

"To be self-accepting is to be on my own side."

This may be amongst the hardest of all the pillars. We all have aspects of us that we wish we could change. They may be aspects of our character, past mistakes, but more often than not they are physical in their manifestation. But regardless of what we might not like about ourselves, we must learn to accept them. This isn't finding enjoyment in our deficiencies. Instead, we acknowledge them and move past them so that they do not own us.

"Self-acceptance entails our willingness to experience-that is, to make real to ourselves, without denial or evasion- that we think what we think, feel what we feel, desire what we desire, have done what we done, and are what we are."

3) The Practice of Self-Responsibility

I think it is safe to assume at one time we have all blamed someone or something for a certain predicament. Usually it is our parents; they didn't love us enough, support us in our dreams, or treat us like adults. Maybe it's a boss who won't give us a promotion or a teacher who is not allowing us to pass a class. In the end it's all the same thing: we are finding security in playing out the victim in our own stories.

Throughout the *The Six Pillars*, Dr. Branden makes a point to remind us that "no one is coming to save us." We can play the victim all we want but in the end our own actions are the only thing under our control and blaming others for our problems while waiting for another to save us will lead to nothing but disappointment.

"If there is a problem, men and women who are self-responsible ask, 'what can I do about it? What avenues of action are possible to me?' ... they do not protest 'but it's not my job!' ... they are typically solutions oriented."

4) The Practice of Self-Assertiveness

"To practice self-assertiveness is to live authentically, to speak and act from my innermost convictions and feelings."

Despite disagreement, people tend to respond more to those that are confident about their opinions and beliefs. By standing by our words and actions we display a person who is self-assured and confident in who they are, something a lot of people secretly yearn for.

It's natural for us to try to modify our behavior in a way that makes us more appealing to those around us, but it must not come at the cost of being true to our selves.

5) The Practice of Living Purposefully

“To live purposefully is, among other things, to live productively, which is a necessity of making ourselves competent in life.”

Personally, if there was one pillar that someone could adopt to be more self-assured it would be this one. The majority of the world is filled of people just trying to get by in life; working nine to five jobs and maybe another part time gig on the side just to make ends meet. Their leisure time is spent playing video games, watching movies or passing time drinking with friends. And all of them have a dream in life of what they'd rather be doing but the opportunity to do so never seems to present itself.

“Living Purposefully” means not only having goals in life but living in a manner that drives you towards completing them. This can be incredibly scary for some but that only underlines its importance. If we are too afraid of failure we are lacking both self-efficacy and self-respect by not allowing ourselves to attempt to reach our full potential.

It's always important to remember, “if I don't do something, nothing is going to change.”

6) The Practice of Personal Integrity

“Integrity is the integration of ideals, convictions, standards, beliefs- and behavior. When our behavior is congruent and practices match, we have integrity.”

I'm sure we all have moments in our life where we could have labeled ourselves as hypocritical. We may not acknowledge these hypocrisies but we will always notice them as we commit them. Regardless if people know we are acting incongruent to our beliefs, there's that sinking feeling in our stomach that we are not the person we want to be. “The essence of guilt, whether major or minor, is self reproach.”

By living consciously we must also be conscious of our standards and live up to them. While it may be hard to hold integrity in a world where the amoral continually succeed (corporate deals, shady politics, etc.) it is important for the sake of self-identity to be as true to your values as possible.

Just as we must be self-assertive and vocal about who we are and our beliefs, we must also work diligently to remain congruent with who we want to be. This brings us to a tentative close on the discussion of “Knowledge of Desire.” If this is the only Stead of Work you pursue you will be light-years ahead of the vast majority of Humanity in terms of both your Being and your Doing. Yet if you take the time to integrate this Knowledge with the other Steads of Working you will go even further than your wildest dreams, at least at this moment.

(Ipsissimus Webb notes: The Egyptian notion Ren is what we call “identity” -- the model of our self that we protect and consult for our actions. The Ren is a gift from a mother to her child.)

• Practical Self Empowerment

Let us take a look at the Second Stead of Working provided by Ipsissimus Webb

Practical Self-Empowerment. *The Setian seeks real power in the real world. It does not matter if the empowerment is the work of getting a new IT certification, taking painting classes or learning to bowl better. Practical empowerment can be buying a new car, or setting up for your retirement. The Setian seeks to be ever more effective in areas where his or her Desire lays. This gives a practical base for Xeper to express itself.*

If Knowledge of Desire is largely about gaining an increasingly accurate understanding of your Being; Practical Self-Empowerment is about transforming your Doing.

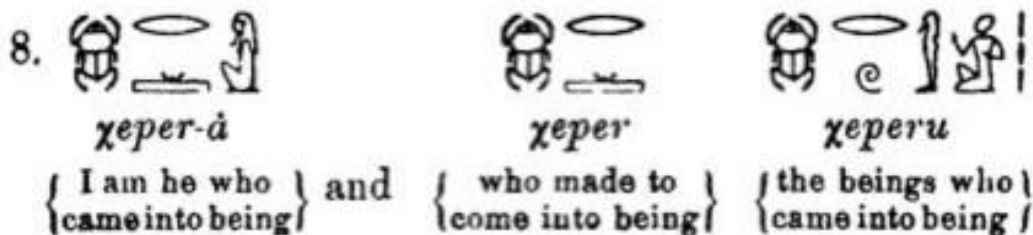
Power is about ability to act and all actions leave traces in the material realm. If your Being is not grounded in this Doing then it leaves no traces and frankly has no value. It is only in the trace of your Being's effects through Doing that you can come to be known by others and ultimately by yourself.

In my discussion of this Stead of Working I will be concentrating on only three key aspects. There are many more and I encourage you to explore these, learn about them and eventually teach what you learn within and beyond the Temple of Set. My discussion will focus upon Rites of Passage structures, the function of Self-proof and social-proof in relation to Doing, and finally the importance of the transformation from student to practitioner to teacher. These will be handled in turn over the next few days.

But first I want to turn to the Word of the Aeon itself, Xeper.

While nearly every Setian knows the basic outline of how the Word of the Aeon entered into the Awareness of the Aeon Generating Magus Ra-En-Set few have ever looked in a focused fashion upon the specifics of this and its potential implications. Ra-En-Set's own account of this can be found in his memoir *Temple of Set* and should be consulted by all Setians. In addition Setnakt, the ReUtter of the Word and Second Magus of Xeper, has provided a good deal of insight into the importance of the Word's entry into the Aeon and important aspects of its grammar. I have personally been deeply involved with attempting to more fully Understand the Word for the past year and feel it is time to articulate aspects of what I have learned from this Work.

In the chapter on Verbs and verb-forms Wallis Budge's *Egyptian Language* uses the many variations of the verb-stem "xpr" to illustrate various tenses. This lead him to use a short section from the Bremner Rhind Papyrus, which contains two spells against Apep, which use three separate conjugations of the root "xpr" to create the sentence "Xepera, Xeper, Xeperu."



Egyptian Grammar follows a “Verb-Subject-Object” or VSO structure, in contrast to English that has a “Subject-Verb-Object” structure. Xeper is the Subject, Xepera is the Verb and Xeperu is the object. In this sentence the main clause Xeper acts as a “Verbal Noun” or what is known as an “MS Active Participle.” I will save you the full exploration of the Grammar of the Word and its Formula for now but at some point you will hear about it from me.

In the sentence Budge used from the Bremner-Rhind, Xeper is in the form of a Verbal Noun, a “Doing-Being.” It is written in full in the following way:



For those conversant with Middle Egyptian typographies, this is a combination of L1 - Beetle; D21 - Mouth, Y1 - Scroll “Abstract Concept” also “Durable Media”

This is the Eternal Word of Set and the Word of the Aeon.

The importance in relation to Practical Personal Empowerment is this: One sees the traces of an individual’s development (xpr-beetle) through that individual’s acts of Speech (mouth) and through the Symbolic Media which they leave behind (Scroll). There is no Xeper without its communication, by mouth and by media. If your transformation does not lead to changes in speech, communication and action that transformation was not Xeper.

Practical Self-Empowerment is as mentioned previously about Doing and as we have seen Doing has to radiate out of our Being and our Knowledge of Desire.

Hopefully by this point you have had a chance to consider your sense of Purpose, started challenging your beliefs and are experimenting at gaining an increased sense of your identity. Before getting into the specifics of methods and considerations regarding Empowerment we need to know what it is we want and how we know when we are getting it.

Let us start at the top level, namely your goals while alive. In order to set your goals you have to deeply consider what it is you Desire out of Life. Once you have done this there is a procedure for determining if these goals are achievable and methods for tracking how well you are doing at moving towards their fulfillment.

One of the key mistakes that people make when setting goals is looking to have an Emotional State as their goal, such as “Happiness.” Emotional states, which are transient things and can be induced at anytime, make terrible goals. Rather goals should be those things that match the following criteria:

- S Specific
- M Measurable
- A Attainable
- R Relevant
- T Timely

(see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria for an expanded discussion)

In other words your goals should be something that you could take a photograph of and which would have a specific date stamped upon it. If your goal does not fit these criteria and cannot be photographed it does not for the sake of this exercise qualify as a goal and chances are has more to do with Emotional States.

Here is an exercise towards clarifying your goals, something that we will focus upon tomorrow.

First take some time to review your Values and Purpose, preferably by writing them down clearly for yourself on a piece of paper. Begin answering the following questions giving yourself five to ten minutes for each. If you feel that you’ve answered the question before the time is up keep considering the question. You may be surprised what else is lurking in your mind.

- What do you think your goals are right now?
- What were your dreams at age 10?
- What were your greatest moments of joy and fulfillment?
- What physical activities do you find most pleasurable?
- What are your sources of professional joy?
- What activities do you love in your personal life?
- What are your greatest natural talents and abilities?
- What physical attribute would you most wish to cultivate?
- What is your most important career accomplishment?
- What is the most important thing to accomplish in your personal life?

Now you are done. Set this material aside for now, but know that we will be returning to it soon.

If you have been “playing along” at home you have probably discovered a few core goals in life. It is often useful to identify three really key goals in three areas. These areas can be split up in two related ways: Physical goals, Emotional Goals and Intellectual Goals or as I prefer Physical Goals, Personal Goals and Professional Goals.

I keep a small, concise list of these goals and regularly re-evaluate them and re-write them. I will often write them out before determining what I will be doing the next day, week and month. This creates a situation where I know what I want to do in the long term and can take actions in the present moment aimed at achieving these things while also guiding and creating evidence procedures to see how I am doing at getting there.

Once you have a few key goals you need to set them as SMART outcomes as previously discussed. Rather than give you my version of this I will reiterate Wyatt Woodsmall's approach that was posted to another thread.

There are requirements that must be met when you are choosing your outcomes:

- The outcome needs to be stated in the positive (in terms of what you want)
- "Evidence Procedures." There needs to be something you can see, hear, taste, touch, or smell (sensory specific) to know whether an outcome has been achieved. This lets you know if what you are doing right now is moving you towards or away from the goal
- "Short feedback Loops" help us know in a short amount of time whether what we are doing is moving us in the right direction or not

I personally tend to work in a "wave" of four days with many of my practices. On day one I work out things just in the moment by writing out my long term goals and what it is that I need to do on that day to move closer to them. On day two I spend some time considering what I need to accomplish in the next week and by the end of the month towards achieving my goals. Then for days three and four I don't worry about it and simply set out to get done what I can. Then the process starts all over again.

Give it a try and make modifications based upon your own experience and desires.

Personal Self-Empowerment aimed at Doing in the World often partakes of two different, but related features: Rites of Passage and Social Proof. The first is a specific approach towards learning which marks you as accomplished and the second is the ways in which other people accept and alter their expectations of you in terms of your abilities.

"Rites of Passage" is a term derived from Anthropology. Every social order has within it specific social roles or "persona" which it is acceptable for an individual to be. In order to qualify for this "persona" a person has to have undergone specific training and preparation and then some form of final ordeal or test before being reintegrated into their society in this new role.

Arnold van Gannep, the pioneering Anthropological researcher on this subject, outlined a Rite of Passage as having three phases:

- Separation
- Liminality
- Reincorporation

This same pattern can be seen in the entry into any social persona, whether it is becoming an adult member of a tribe, earning a college degree or qualifying as a Marine. There is a clear new persona at the end of the process and only those who have undergone the rite of passage associated with it can truly lay claim to the title.

In terms of Personal Empowerment your world provides you with any number of potential situations that you can transform into conscious rites of passage. Looking around the Temple of Set you will

see people who have used Academic educations, Military careers, and specific skills training for exactly this end.

Setians have a tendency towards Mastery. While anything worth doing is worth doing badly (you don't need an Olympic Metal to enjoy a good swim), the process of consistent practice and the patterns of transformation, integration and plateau that come with long term practice hold many rewards for the Setian and lessons as to the essence of Xeper. In addition Setians often seek to not only qualify to practice a given persona but also to be able to act as a teacher of those skills that helped to transform them.

What separates the Setian use of these things from the conventional use is the realization that the personae that one can wear as a result are tools of the Self and not the Self's Identity. The Setian knows that their true identity extends into the Outer Darkness beyond the scope of their societies potential masks. As a result they can engage in the masks they do wear with greater gusto because they know, unlike the other mask wearers, that if they take it off they will still exist. There are other Setian uses of the Rite of Passage Structure, specifically related to the Liminality phase. I will return to this another time.

So what benefits are there to undergoing Rites of Passage rather than just trying to learn things on your own? Social Proof.

Robert B. Cialdini has made much of his career based upon the role that Social Proof has upon the Psychology of Influence. Social Proof rests on the observable phenomena that people are more willing to do something if others are doing it or to hold someone in regard if they know that others also hold that someone in regard. By being someone who has undergone Rites of Passage you display the results as Social Proof of your potential in a situation. Of course you have to actually be competent to get beyond that initial Social Proof into actual accomplishment, but having Social Proof will get you through the door.

For those interested in the subject Cialdini's *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* will prove a valuable source. You can find a summary of it on the PoN at <https://templeofset.org/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?p=107543>

A nice little look at Social Proof in action

[How to Start a Movement](#)

One last round on the topic of Self-Empowerment.

In this exercise you will be exploring two areas: Doing and Having. You will need your handy-dandy timer once again.

Set your timer for 10 minutes and think about all the things that you want to do before you are dead. Let them flow out of you onto a piece of paper and do not censor or prioritize these things as they emerge. Just let them bubble up and write them down.

Step away from the paper. Get a cup of tea, pet your animal companion, whatever to reset.

Now come back to your list. Identify which of your list of Doing you are committed to doing in 1 year, 3 years, 5 years and 20 years. Keep this list of four specific Doings with time deadlines on hand and check in on them regularly.

Now do the same pattern of 10 minutes, a reset and a prioritizing over the topic of the things that wish to have in your life. Again, avoid states and focus upon tangible things that could be photographed. Then prioritize these things across the same time span as your Doing list.

If you want a very powerful tool for giving you a sense of what you may need to do on a daily basis to insure that you can bring these things into your life check out this article by Tim Ferriss on [Ideal Lifestyle Costing](#)

If you find the article of value check out his book *The Four Hour Work Week* for more ideas, exercises and methods along this and other valuable lines.

Before moving onto the next Stead I wanted to spend a bit of time talking about the pattern of first Knowing Desire and then Seeking Empowerment. This pattern of first Working with and understanding the Inner and then using the experienced gained to tackle the Outer is a pattern you will see repeated again and again in Setian Work though it has rarely been mentioned overtly. To steal an image from my own meta-genetic past, consider the following image of the Celtic Tree of Life



In the image you see a tree whose roots are interpenetrating with its branches. About mid-point on the tree would be the line between what is underground and invisible normally and what is above ground and is visible to the world. When growing trees in reality you have to begin what is unseen by others, with the roots underground, before anything can emerge into the world. Taking leaves and trying to set them up where you think a tree should be will not yield a tree no matter how hard you try. But even the simplest root, buried, nurtured, feed and otherwise left alone will eventually spring forth.

The same with this pattern of Inner Work followed by Outer Work: in order to make something of yourself in the World you need to be firmly rooted in your own Inner Realm and in an accepting, present Knowledge of your Desires.

Back to our tree again for a moment, you can tell a lot about the health of a tree's roots by the condition of its leaves if you know how to look at them. Your Outer Work is an indicator to others to the health and well being of your Inner, unseen and unseeable, Realm. You can use the Work in both of these areas to inform and transform them. Your Inner Work will nourish and provide direction to your Outer Work while the health and well being of your Outer World will give you insights into what Inner Realm Work you still need to accomplish. Together these provide an integral feedback system.

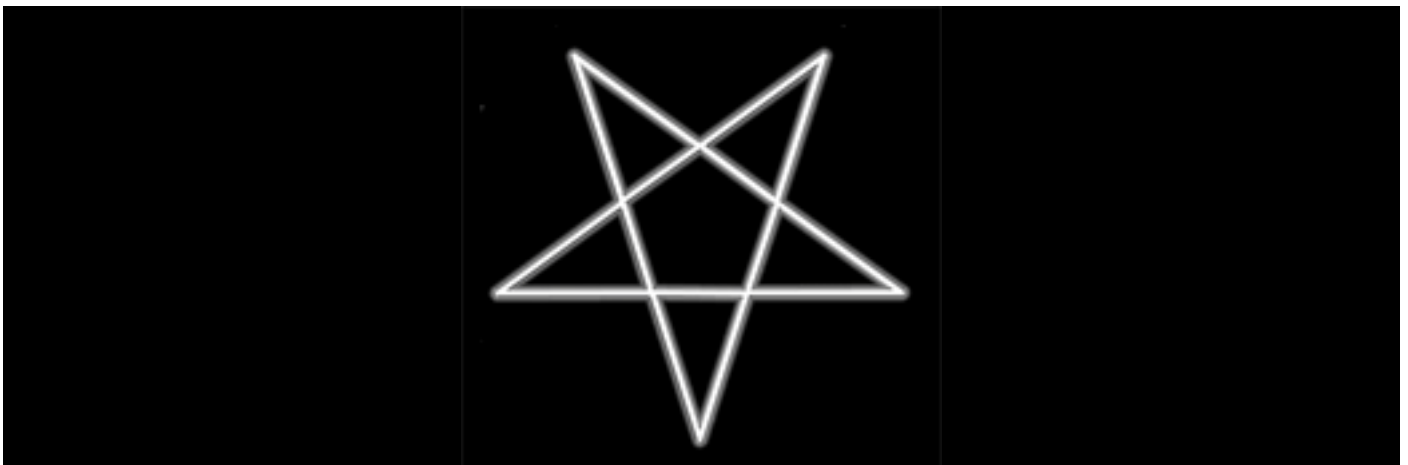
You may wish to consider things with regard to the Temple's Recognition system that uses tangible Outer Work as a means of gauging Inner Being conditions.

There is another way to look at this from the single most Setian symbol we have, the Pentagram of Set.



This symbol, which represents the Subjective, Inner Realm as the Pentagram and the Objective, Outer Realm as the Outer Ring reflects this same process of beginning with the Inner and then extending into the Outer.

The Subjective Pentagram



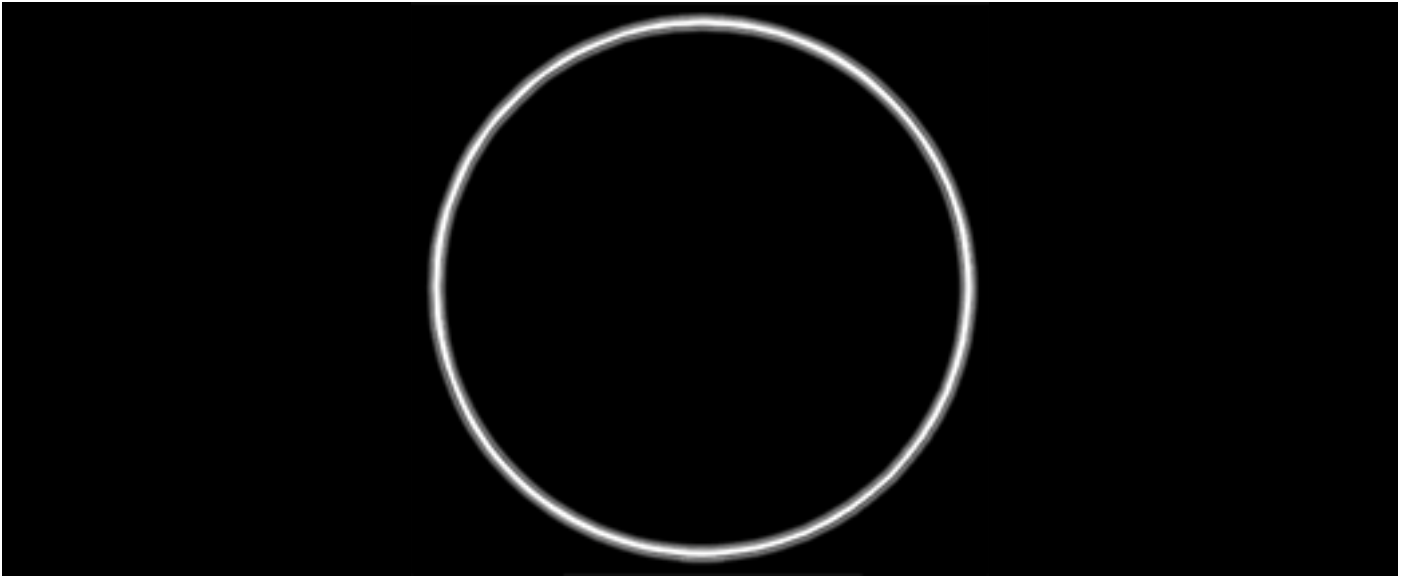
This is the image of your Subjective Universe. It is constructed through an optimal ratio, the Golden Ratio, which exists only in the Subjective in its pure sense but which finds resonances and approximated within the Outer Realm.

This is the Realm generated by your Perceptions and closely tied to your senses as well as your abilities to reflect upon your senses' input. The Outer Realm never touches this realm directly. It

cannot be found by disintegrating the Objective aspects of your being any more than the beauty of a poem can be understood by disintegrating the paper it is written upon. It is through this Realm that your understanding of the Gift of Set and this understanding is fueled by Desire.

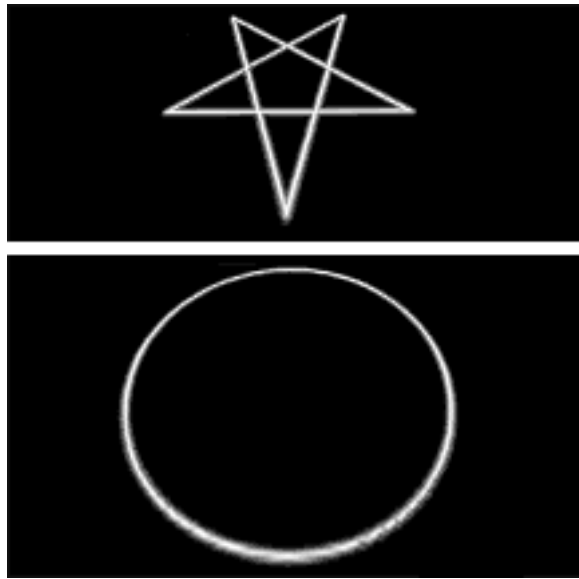
For those of you who have not done so before or have not done so in some time consider the relationship between the Ninth Angle in the Bond of the Nine Angles and Desire.

The Objective Ring

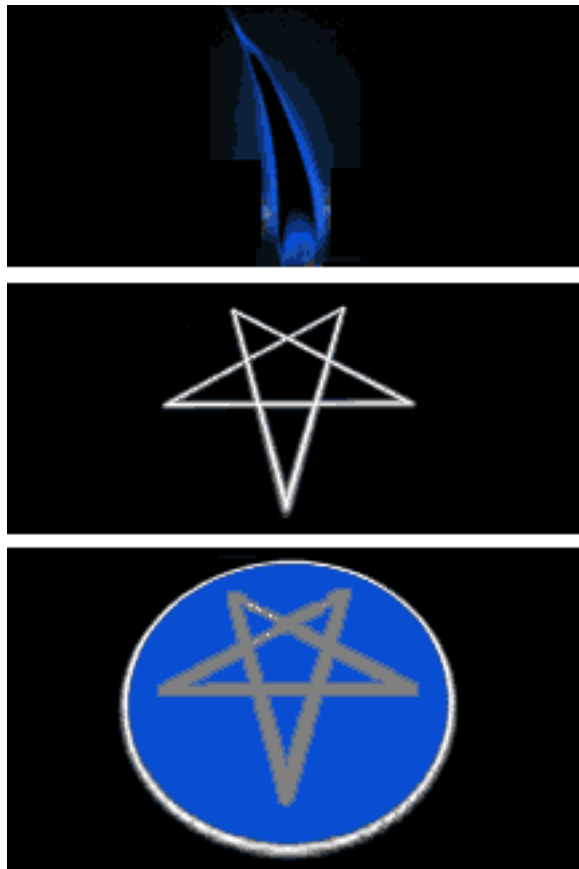


This is the image of the Objective, Outer Realm. It can be understood through measurement and displays a remarkable quality of consistency. Geometrically it is defined by *Pi* rather than *Phi* of the Golden Ratio.

Consider for a moment looking at the image of the Pentagram of Set from two different perspectives. The way we commonly see it is our perspective as standing in parallel to it, but if we tilt the perspective we can see the Subjective Pentagram and the Objective Ring as being in two different planes.



So what is that perspective from which, when you are firmly rooted in it, allows you to see that perfect alignment of the Subjective Pentagram and the Objective Ring? It is the perspective of the Gift of Set itself that is independent of and different than the Subjective Universe as well. When we are situated in this Depth of Being the Dark Fire of the Gift uses the Subjective Realm as a means of casting its shadow upon the Objective



(Note: My Color Choice is not a Degree commentary but reflective of the color used for the Flame. Some however may find the idea that the State of the Flame is reflected in the kind of “color” it

burns to be illustrative.)

So here is a map to the Setian Work: becoming rooted in your ultimate Being, transforming your Inner World into something which allows you to Know your Desires in such a way that your Being casts a shadow in the Objective Realm reflective of your Being and Desires.

Like the relationship between the Golden Ratio that defines the Pentagram geometrically and *Phi* that defines the Circle geometrically there appears to be a kind of hidden reciprocal resonance. If you Work towards improving your position in relation to the Gift of Set, increasing the accuracy of the positioning of your Inner Realm in relation to your Outer Realm you will find the capacity to effect the Outer Realm through willed transformation of the Inner in proportion to your Passion and Precision increases greatly.

And this of course is the very definition of Black Magic.

• Work of the Body

Work on the body. *The Setian seeks to have greater health, sensual pleasure and strength in his or her body. The body is the greatest teacher of desire, patience and the need for constant striving. The body is not a “magical tool” – it is magic. The nature of the work depends on the Setian – Setian A may train for marathons, while Setian B is just watching what he eats. The body is not a hindrance for the soul; it is the Temple through which the soul receives offerings.*

The Work of the Body is an area I have been fascinated with through out my Work but particularly in the last few years. I have had the opportunity in the last few years to roll back the clock from damage done from having been a smoker, acute toxic environmental exposure, an increasingly crap office life diet and the simple fact that after the early 20s if you want the body to continue to develop you have to induce sufficient exterior stress. This has taught me a lot about the body and its influence in Initiatory Work. This period has coincided with formal training in Evolutionary Anatomy, Defensive Tactics, Personal and Event Security and basic Emergency Medicine that adds a unique perspective to this topic.

I will not bore you with a lot of anatomy and physiology. There are lots of great resources out there if you are interested with Marion Diamond’s fantastic “[General Human Anatomy](#)” being one of the best classes you can ever sit in on. Aspects of this will come up as I will be spending some time on how the body moves. I will also be making starter suggestions for those interested in general presence training, grace training, the spectrum of “self-defense - combat sports - combatives - martial arts,” dance and compensatory practices like Yoga.

I will not browbeat you with specific dietary information. There are good introductory resources on basic nutrition like Andrew Weil’s [Eating Well for Optimal Health](#). For those who want a more in depth look in this area Roberta H. Anding’s [Nutrition Made Clear](#) will prove invaluable. Some basics will likely be touched upon however.

I will also avoid the politics of eating, as there are sound ethical and health reasons for and against meat consumption, non-meat animal products, grain consumption and other hot button topics. Your own values combined with your specific biological needs will have to be your guide in this area. I will suggest working to consciously become more mindful of what and how you eat and the effects that such actions have upon yourself, others and the ecology.

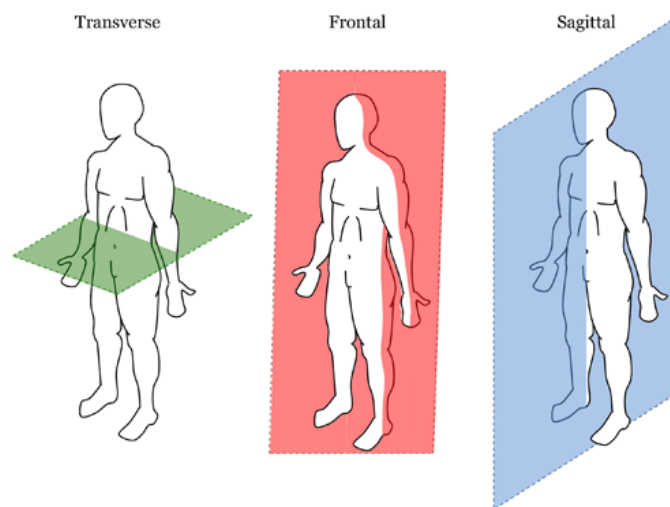
I will be covering briefly the area of Adorning the Body, which is not something that is often discussed in Setian communication beyond the dress code mentioned in the Protocol document. In the spirit of the Order of Nephtys I will be providing some starter information on turning the way you dress and present yourself from the result of happenstance and old habits into a conscious tool for self-enhancement and LBM.

As Ipsissimus Webb said to those of us at Luxor Conclave, your Body will be your greatest magical Teacher. Discovering how to treat it right and to learn from what it is communicating can be a powerful gateway towards greater understanding of Self.

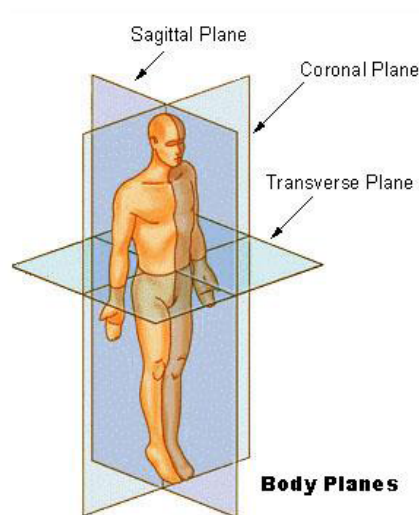
The Six Degrees of Freedom

I am going to assume that most of you know the simplest gross anatomy: you have a muscular-skeletal system, internal organs, and four peripheral limbs in most cases. What you may not know is the way that these things get organized by anatomists or how they relate to how you move in space.

Anatomists divide bodies into “planes.” If you stand up the imaginary line that divides the left side of your body from the right side is known as the Sagittal Plane. The line midway between your back and your front is known as the Coronal or Frontal Plane. The line that would divide you in half horizontally is known as the Transverse or Horizontal Plane. Here is a basic illustration of these planes independently:



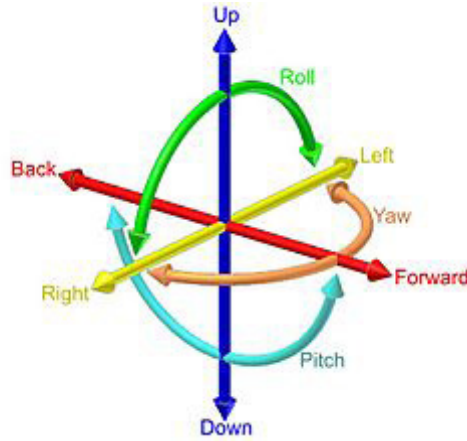
and combined:



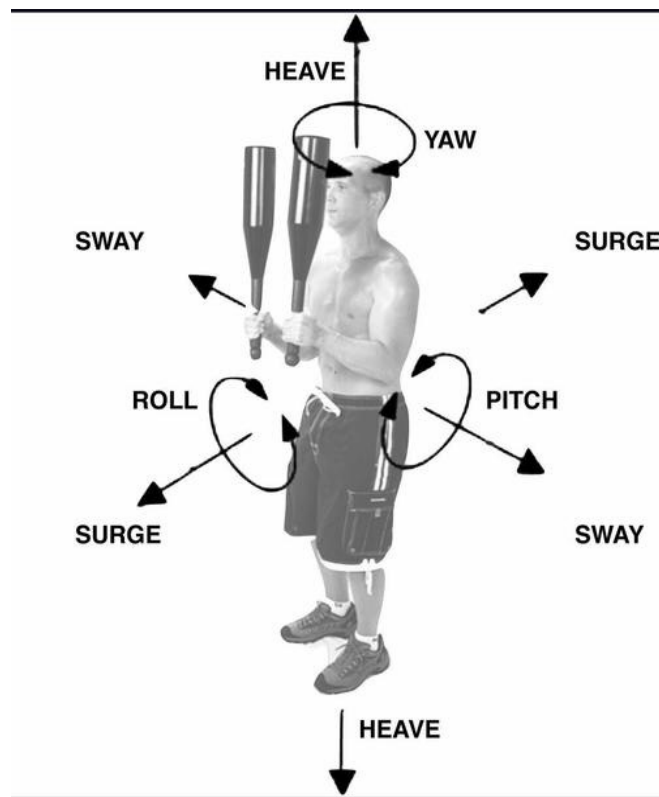
As a human being you are a three dimensional object in space. All three-dimensional objects have what are termed “Six Degrees of Freedom.” this is a reference to the fact that they can move in six potential fashions. The first three are tied to the Three Anatomical Planes: Forwards and Backwards

("Surging"), Right and Left ("Swaying"), Up and Down ("Heaving"). The other three are about moving around your center: turning along the frontal plane ("Roll"), turning along the sagittal plane ("Pitch"), and turning along the transverse plane ("Yaw")

Here is a basic illustration applicable for any 3 dimensional body:



and a human illustration specifically:

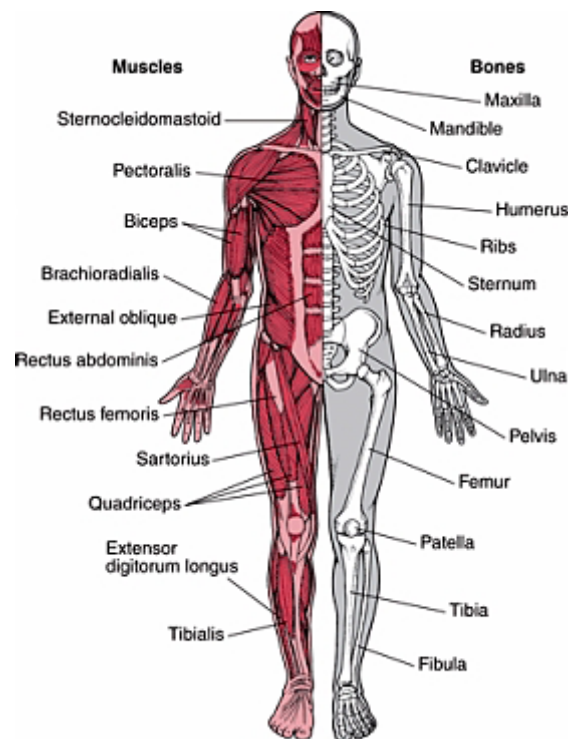


That is the absolute basics of Human Movement. Up next will be a more specific look at the muscular-skeletal system and the network of tension that interconnects it and allows it to move.

Richard Buckminster “Bucky” Fuller was a polymath genius whose ideas had a profound influence upon a number of fields. He is perhaps best known popularly for the development of the Geodesic Dome, a simple structure of immense strength based upon the way in which the forces of the dome are displaced throughout the structure. This means of distribution of forces relies upon creating a balance between tension and compression. Fuller’s term for this was a coinage of “Tensegrity” short for tensional integrity.

One of the interesting features of tensegrity structures is that if you push or pull on one section it will cause distortions throughout the entire structure. The way in which the forces are integrated causes small changes to have seemingly disproportionate effects to common perception.

Your musculoskeletal system is made up primarily of bone and muscle with attachments between the two created by tendons and ligaments. In addition the entire system is wrapped by a tissue known as “fascia” or “myofascia” which acts as a kind of containing bag around the musculoskeletal system. The system creates movement through electrical impulse from the Nervous system causing the muscles to contract, exerting force upon the bones through the tendons and ligaments.

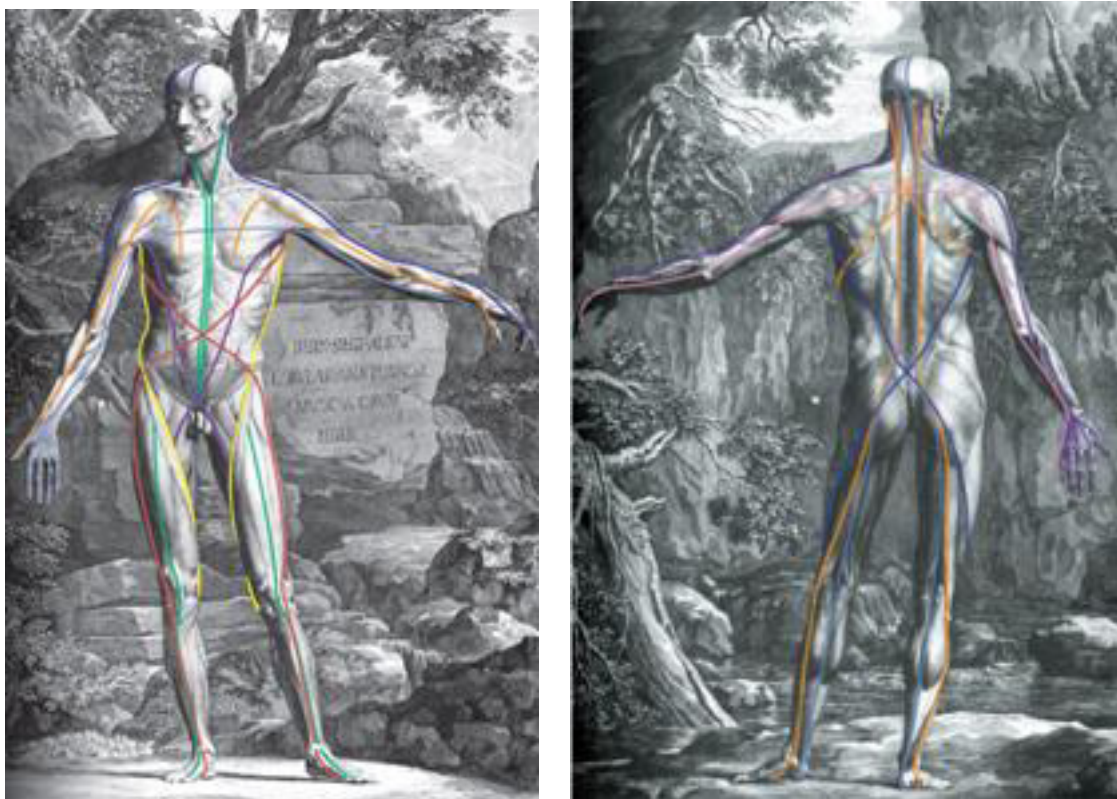


For a more detailed introductory discussion see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_musculoskeletal_system

Dr. Stephen Levin, MD, has been applying Fuller’s insight to biological systems for the past few decades, looking at the relationship of anatomical features within the musculoskeletal system in terms of distribution of forces and tensional integration. This is an approach in direct contrast to conventional gross anatomy as Dr. Levin is studying live tissue in relation rather than dead tissue. In addition much of the ways in which gross anatomy is divided and categorized comes from butchery and thus takes little account of the relationship of the various biological systems focusing instead

mainly upon location and variation.

One of the best in depth looks at the Biotensegrity relationships of the Human Body can be found in *Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists, 2e* by Thomas W. Myers. Myers is approaching the topic of Biotensegrity from the vantage point of a Body Worker looking to restore natural movement but the contents of the books can be invaluable to those practicing Dance, the Martial Arts or any other Physical Discipline.



Now if you have a complex system of tension what is the best way to disrupt its healthy function?

Add more tension to it.

One of the single biggest barriers in human movement comes from unnecessary musculoskeletal tension. As initially observed by Dr. Wilhelm Reich many of these physical tensions come as a result of emotional issues within the individual. Learning to restore your full range of movement and developing skills at being able to reduce residual tension will not only vastly increase your grace of movement but will free up a good deal of metabolic energy for other tasks.

A good overview of some very simple relaxation methods can be found at [The University of Maryland Sleep Disorder Center's website](#).

For those who feel that they have a lot of emotionally connected chronic tension that needs special attention the Neo-Reichian methods co-created by Israel Regardie and Christopher Hyatt, which Hyatt marketed as "Radical Undoing" may prove useful. The first DVD instructions for this can be found [here](#). The entire suite of "Radical Undoing Yourself" (RUDY) includes not just the Radical Undoing physical methods but also systems he referred to as "Energized Hypnosis," "Shotgun

Tantra," a form of Mindfulness Meditation he termed "Endless Meditation." The full RUDY system can be a bit much for many people but can be particularly useful during the initial Antinomian phases of Work that are about purging limiting beliefs and breaking down the structures created by Happenstance so that you can rebuilt yourself anew. For those who are looking for a less intensive but no less profound method for reducing tension, cultivating movement and improving overall grace check out the [Intu-Flow Beginner's System](#). I would recommend this as a "Gold Star" practice. If the only piece you take from the entire body of work I have been and will be writing in this thread is taking up this practice you will be in good Stead indeed.

Presence Training The ability to become Present is one of the most remarkable skills yet is one of those things few people ever bother to learn how to accomplish. In some very serious ways real Presence comes not from doing but by stopping “doing” to cultivate awareness.

For those of you who have spent time with the Grand Masters of the Order of the Vampyre you have felt the power of Presence. The way in which, even if you have never met them before, their entry into a room both brings you to greater awareness and also creates a need for contact with them comes from their tremendous skill in this area.

Presence training can take a variety of forms however here are a few basics to start you down the path towards its development. These are methods focused upon your own experience first. There are other methods which build upon this aimed at becoming aware of the people(s) you are interacting with and the wider environment. If there is interest in exploring these areas I will outline a few ideas on these as well.

1. Engage your physiology. The single biggest blockage to being Present comes from being stuck in your head or off in your imagination. Setians tend to come from somewhat day-dreamy backgrounds, where fantasies of what could be help us to cope with the here and now. One of the reasons I recommend the Intu-Flow system universally to Setians is that in doing it each day you begin to engage your physiology of a healthy, nurturing way which increases your overall awareness of your body and thus increases your Presence. The only way to really cope with the Here and Now is to be Present in it.

For some people having a “routine” which helps them become Present is helpful. A good method is becoming aware of your feet and breathing fully down the centerline of your body. If you are so inclined having an anchored phrase or gesture can help as well. Use this both during the Compression portion at the start of a Working and in your day-to-day experiences.

2. Expand your awareness to your surroundings. Once you have engaged your Physiology become aware of your surroundings. What you want to ultimately grow towards is skill at sensing what is going on in a room or open space in the same way expert fisherman can sense where the fish are by subtle movements in the water. Don’t scan the environment like a paranoid but become clear eyed, awakened and calm in the space.

3. Do Not Hide Your Feelings. One of the major errors that people make when engaging in Presence Work is creating a false pretense. If you are sad about something you will get nowhere by just slapping on a smile and hoping no one notices that foundation. Only by owning your emotions and moving from what is real for you internally can you successfully engage Presence. Note: If this is a difficult area for you consider returning to the methods outlined in the discussion of “Knowledge of Your Desires.” Clarifying your values, beliefs and goals will help you get in touch with your emotions. If they do not you may have more serious blocks in need of some exterior help. I will be covering that in a later part of this discussion.

Give these things a try and see how, if at all, people around you respond. If you find this is an area that you are strongly drawn to consider checking out the DVD series [“The Power of Presence” from the Authentic Man Program](#). The AMP DVD is focused on helping men to become more Present in their interactions with Women but the product is excellent viewing material for all for examples of how Presence affects those around you and to see people learning to overcome their stumbling

blocks in this area.

Another area of Presence training is that of learning how to engage another through Eye Contact. This is a primal mammalian form of interaction that is typically surrounded by a good deal of social taboo. As a result many people find that when they are subject to prolonged eye contact they either feel a profound connection with the person making it or a deep level of being agitated and even being deeply disturbed as a result.

One of the best books on this topic in the last few years is Michael Ellsberg's *The Power of Eye Contact*. The following exercise, which can be done with a non-Setian friend or in the context of a Pylon meeting (We've done it in BSR) can help train you to become accustomed to increasing levels of Eye Contact and will make you more aware of what long duration eye contact can induce state-wise.

1. Sit across from each other, about a foot to two feet apart, either in two chairs or on the floor. It's better if there's not a table in between you, as having anything in between you does lower the intensity of the exercise. (If you're feeling really uncomfortable, then having a table between you might help.) In terms of physical distance, you want to feel close and intimate, but not so close that you feel your space is being invaded.
2. First, look at each other straight in the eyes for just one second, and then look away. For this exercise, look at only one of your partner's eyes at a time. You can switch which eye you look at, but don't try to look at both eyes at once.
3. Now, look at each other in the eyes for five seconds, then look away. Laugh, giggle, make sarcastic jokes.
4. Now ten seconds.
5. Now thirty seconds.
6. Now one minute.
7. Now three minutes.

Here are some pointers on how you can do this exercise best:

- Keep a neutral facial expression. Often we associate direct eye contact with either aggression or seduction. Neither one will put your partner at ease. Don't worry about smiling or maintaining a pleasant expression. Just let your face relax and let your eyes do the talking.
- Keep a "soft gaze." You can actually control how harsh your gaze feels by how intensely you focus on one point. Have you ever heard someone say, "His eyes were bearing down on me?" It's not a pleasant feeling! So keep a softer, warmer focus, even as you look into one eye.
- Breathe! This is a nerve-wracking, intense thing you're playing with here, so there can be a tendency to hold your breath as if you were about to dive off a cliff. Relax, and be

sure to take deep breaths throughout. Once you get into it, the exercise can actually feel deeply relaxing and calming, like a meditation.

- This isn't a staring contest. It's OK to blink, laugh, giggle, scratch your nose. Most people find that they giggle starting out. This is totally normal. It's a nervous, unfamiliar thing we're doing, so it's natural to let off some tension by laughing. Usually, the laughter subsides within the period of a three-minute gaze.

- Notice whatever thoughts arise while you're gazing. Perhaps you're thinking "This is totally weird!" Or perhaps you're thinking "What is my friend thinking about this?" Whatever you think is fine. Just notice the thoughts, let them pass, and bring your attention back to the gaze.

- You may notice the image of your friend's face morphing, or other visual illusions with color or light. No, you haven't taken LSD. This is totally normal. I've noticed that it usually happens when I'm really concentrated and focused on the gazing. It means you are very much "in the zone" with the gazing!

One final word about Presence before moving on. You cannot “Do” Presence, but you can cultivate it. If you try to “Do” it, you end up looking like a leering creep overly fixated on whomever you are interacting with. Rather than “Doing” Presence what you are looking to do is cultivate and allow it to manifest. Your Presence is already there; you have just been getting in its way. This may seem like only a minor change at first but if you remember to check in with yourself, become aware of your surroundings and be completely honest with where you are coming from you will start to see changes in the way people respond to you and in turn the ways that you respond to the world around you.

A final note: Some of you may not be able to resonate with the idea of Presence. If that is the case try re-reading this post and every time you see the word “Presence” substitute it with “Radiance” and see if it makes any more sense.

**Note from Setian Tanya Maria re:

jfitzsimmons wrote:

Richard Buckminster “Bucky” Fuller was a polymath genius whose ideas had a profound influence upon a number of fields. He is perhaps best known popularly for the development of the Geodesic Dome, a simple structure of immense strength based upon the way in which the forces of the dome are displaced throughout the structure. This means of distribution of forces relies upon creating a balance between tension and compression. Fuller’s term for this was a coinage of “Tensegrity” short for tensional integrity.

Has anyone heard of Castaneda’s Tensegrity? It is a series of movements. I have practiced these, and I have noticed that they tend to raise and center my awareness, and give me energy.

<http://www.castaneda.com>

<Http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv9xnVzO5G4&feature=related>

**Magister Fitzsimmons: Worth a read with regard to the Elmyr de Hory of Anthropology

[The Dark Legacy of Carlos Castaneda](#)

Carlos was a student of Kung Fu instructor and Acupuncturist Howard Y. Lee. Much of the Tensegrity material was simply Carlos’ reinterpretation of Lee’s teaching. You can find a decent interview with Lee at

[The Sorcerer’s Doctor](#)

Grace Training

At the core of all Grace Training are three things: Breathing, Structure and Movement. Each of these can be studied in a number of ways, on their own or integrated together. It is the integration of these three things however, which are key to Grace Training.

Breathing

Breathing is a unique feature of being human in that it can either be a completely unconscious automatic thing or a fully conscious activity. As a result the practice of Breathing can act as a gateway between the Conscious and Unconscious and taps into the Nervous System's voluntary and involuntary response systems.

How breathing happens is relatively simply. The muscles surrounding the rib cage expand, creating a vacuum which air fills through the throat via the mouth or nose. Natural, full breathing begins at the diaphragm, a muscle roughly at the bottom of the rib cage. As the lower portion of the lungs fill breathing then shifts to the upper part of the chest.

Now I can tell a few of you are saying "Wait, that isn't how I breathe..." and you are right. Most people who do not engage in the willful practice of breathing for at least some phase of their life often breathe in other ways. One common alternate pattern is rapid upper chest breathing. Others may do the reverse of the pattern I mentioned, starting in the upper chest and then opening up the diaphragm afterwards. These other methods can work fine but tend to be less optimal than the natural pattern I mentioned.

Give the following exercise a try.

- Stand in front of a mirror either naked or minimally clothed and start breathing. Become aware of what areas of your body you are breathing with and make a note of it.
- Place a hand at the bottom of your rib cage and try to breath into that area. Do this six times and then take a brief rest. Repeat these six breaths again and then rest. Do this a total of four times.
- Place your other hand at the top of your rib cage. Breath into this area in the same "six and rest" cycle for a total of four cycles. Now integrate the two. Begin breathing first with your lower chest and then with your upper chest on the inhale and exhale stating with the upper chest and then emptying the lower. Do this for a cycle of four times.

If you have never done this kind of thing before there is a good chance you may be feeling a little light headed or even "high." That is the result of you receiving more oxygen to your bloodstream than you have been allowing yourself to have. If you keep this up you will begin to acclimate to this new level of oxygen and find a few unexpected health benefits as well.

If focused Breathwork is something you are interested in you might find the audio series *Breathing: The Master Key to Self Healing* by Andrew Weil, MD useful. He presents an excellent discussion of the paradoxical qualities of Breathing and provides some good basic breathing exercises aimed at reducing tension and stress.

Structure

An alternate term for Structure in this context is Alignment. Your body, short of serious pathological development, has a particular structure or alignment that is natural to it. Chances are however that this is not the structure or alignment that you find yourself in most of the time. The various activities that humans engage in, particularly bookish humans who spend a good real of time reading and at desks, lead to poor alignment and the diminishment of structure.

The diminishment of structure comes from habitual behavior and chronic tension. Over time your body will adjust itself to do, and only to do, what you do on a regular basis. If you sit hunched over a laptop you will eventually develop a specialized body that only really works to hunch over a laptop. Luckily this is a subject that a lot of investigation and research has been done into.

Various systems of structural integration, such as the Feldenkrais System, the Alexander Technique, Biotensegrity methods, exist and are worth your investigation. Rather than go into detail on these methods I will present a very useful basic technique common to each of these discipline, aimed at treating one of the most common misalignments, chronic forward head posture

[Posture Tutorial](#)

For a more complete discussion of this see

[Forward Head Posture](#)

Movement

Movement comes as a result of shifting your structure through the World. Movement comes as a result of your musculoskeletal system interacting with itself and the world, creating patterns of tension. Ideally your movement should be smooth however chronic tensions can cause movement to be clunky as can under-development of the muscles or past injuries.

The structural integration disciplines I mentioned previously, particularly the Feldenkrais Method, are also useful in the area of movement. The Feldenkrais method focuses at a very high level of magnification upon human movement looking to make it more efficient and reducing any impingement upon its process.

Often the first way to begin is to bring mindfulness to your current movement habits. When you have the time focus on the way that you shift from sitting to standing, and back again. Notice the ways in which your foot strikes the ground and your whole body moves when you walk. As you do this become more aware of how movement in one part of your body have effects in the other parts. Then start experimenting to see if there are other ways to do these things that require less effort and a smoother movement.

Interested in seeing how Breathing, Structure and Movement can have an effect upon your Presence?

[Let Superman Provide a Classic Example](#)

Let us take a look at three broad disciplines useful for Grace Training: Yoga, Dance and the Martial Arts.

Yoga

The origins of Yoga as a practice are lost to history. While evidence potentially suggesting Yoga like practices as far as the Indus Civilization exist it was not until the formalization of Yoga by Patanjali sometime between 100 BCE and 500 CE. Patanjali's interest was not in creating an exercise system but rather an integration a variety of existing methods for self-transformation into a unified system.

The physical exercises that most people think of when they think of "Yoga" today are a sub-branch of Yoga called *hathayoga*. It is thought that Yogi Swatmarama formalized these methods in the 1400s in his work *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. Since that time variety of *hathayoga* method have emerged. In the 20th Century many of these methods were introduced to the rest of the World with their overtly Initiatory aspects removed.

One of the key benefits of Yogic practice is that it relies upon what can be termed "compensatory movement." While most athletic activities rely upon muscular tension Yogic techniques aim to reduce tension in the muscles and force movement in directions other than those most habitually performed. This causes the muscles to restore their natural length and make future usage more effective. Certain postures are commonly practiced specifically to compensate for chronic, potentially debilitating, tension and to help rebuild and reintegrate the body to allow for natural movement.

If you choose to practice Yoga look for approaches that work Breathing, Structure and Movement together. In Yogic parlance this would mean Pranayama, Asana and Vinyassa. If you have never done Yoga before do not rely upon DVDs or videos. Rather seek out a qualified teacher to show you the basics and observe your form during the period of initial learning. Once you have those things down then "on your own" resources can be valuable.

My own experience with yoga began with a student of [Swami Bua's](#) and has included formal and informal training in Iyengar Yoga, 3HO Foundation Kundalini Yoga and Prasara Yoga. Each approach shares a similar core methods with special focus paid specific attributes. You may have to spend time taken a few different classes before finding a practice that works best for you.

If Yoga training as a form of Grace Training appeals to you consider contacting Adept Segarra about the Sixth Element.

Dance

Like so many integral forms of symbolic behavior associated with humans Dance is something that leaves little archaeological trace. As such we do not know when Humans began dancing, however it has likely been with us in some form since our emergence as *Homo sapiens* 200,000 years ago.

Dance is perhaps one of the most versatile of Grace Training methods. It can be done strictly alone or in pairs or in groups. As a solo dancer your dancing relies upon your breathing structure and movement while seeking pleasure and flow. Dancing in pairs with someone can be a profound means of creating rapport and bonding. In Group dances the rhythm and synchronized movements

can act as a means of created a shared temporary State, which creates greater Rapport and makes interpersonal exchange easier.

Dance is nearly too varied a topic to be able to give it adequate coverage. Without a lick of training you could easily just start swaying and begin the process of dance right there. If you start to do this and then start you allow your body to move you are well on your way.

There are a number of resources for learning to dance though as with Yoga it is often best to start learning structured dances with an instructor. A lot of places offer “Crash Courses” geared towards couples getting married to teach the basic “Social Dances” and once you get over the initial frustration it can be an enjoyable time.

There are also a wide variety of dance traditions tied to Initiatory schools. The Dervish methods of whirling and the movements of the Gurdjieffian systems both fall into this category. With a bit of investigation you will find contemporary and tradition dance approaches which incorporate trance elements many of which originated within Initiatory contexts.

If you are interested in pursuing Dance as an Initiatory tool consider contacting Adept Nourse about the Dance Element.

Martial Arts

For as long as there have been humans there have been conflicts between humans. Our bodies display an architecture that includes a fair bit of weaponization though we are usually unaware of it. Interestingly in an untrained condition most human physical confrontation tends to not be very deadly but rather far more symbolic, like the butting of ram’s heads. Unfortunately this untrained condition tends to coincide with a tendency towards fear responses and ineffective means of self-protection.

Martial Arts is a broad term to the point that it is nearly meaningless. Every culture in human history has had some form of Martial Art, typically tied to the Military and Police portions of the society. In tradition settings this tends to emphasis the use of weapons to increase range and effective killing capacity. Rarely were unarmed fighting skills strongly emphasized as the realities of combat needed to be the primary focus.

As commoners are pressed into conflict systems of Combatives were developed to train them quickly and effectively. These methods are still reflected in the Combatives systems used by Militaries worldwide as a part of their Basic Training. These approaches do not make experts but they do produce effective practitioners better skilled than an untrained opponent.

As a means of continuing training in a preparative fashion, subsets of Martial Arts termed “Combat Sports” evolve to sharpen skills in specific areas and to simulate real conflict circumstances with some level of safety. In many cultures these began among the Military class and eventually extended out to the other classes as a leisure activity.

Most people do not need nor do they have the interest in devoting themselves to the long-term study of these areas. For those people some fundamental training in Self-Defense integrating the realities of attacks and means for escaping them are far more important.

As a Setian choosing to learn a Martial Art requires a sense of why you want to learn and what to practice. If you are interested primarily in the Health and Movement Benefits you will have very different needs from someone interested primarily in combat efficacy. If you are interested in the cultural-historic elements of an Art you will train differently than someone focused upon strictly health benefits.

The broad classification of Martial Arts into Warfare Skills, Combatives, Combat Sports, and Self-Defense are still reflected in the various methods being trained today. Realizing that these are in fact different things helps to clarify what it is your desire from your training and what kind of Art to seek out.

If you are evaluating a School spend some time visiting it and observing their training. See if the current practitioners appear to have some sense of what they are doing and if their style of movement is something that you would want to learn. A useful essay to read when considering a Martial Art to help you evaluate the training you see at a School is [Aliveness 101 by Matt Thornton](#).

At the moment there is neither a Study Group nor Element focused upon the Martial Arts in the Temple. Our past history with such has been a bit spotty as often the attraction of the “Exotic” outweighed the emphasis upon efficacy. Hopefully this will change going forward. As this is a Hobby area for me I am more than willing to talk to Setians interested in the learning more or having some input in finding an approach that would work for them.

Coming to a close on my discussion of the Stead of the Body is something of a “Grab Bag” of ideas and exercises.

Facial Movement

Dr. Allan Miller, who wrote under the pen name “Christopher S. Hyatt”, had worked extensively with studies of the nervous system and the ways to effect it towards the individual’s benefit in terms of self-change. Something he noted early on in his training as a Psychologist was the way the body related to the pattern of enervation, as illustrated by the Sensory-Motor Homunculus



That ugly little fellow shows the areas of the body that have the most sensory nerve cells and thus the most direct connects to the brain's activity. Miller's observation was that these were the areas of the body which were most connected with the nervous system then by moving those areas consciously you could effect the nervous system.

One of the base line exercises for Miller's "Radical Undoing" methods involves making faces for three to five minutes in the morning when you first wake up. Miller's rationale was that since the face is the area with the majority of connections to the brain by moving the face through its full range of possible expressions you could help the brain "Light up" areas that it might not habitually use. As Functional MRI technology has gotten better and allowed for imaging of brain activity it seems to support Miller's hypothesis.

If you find yourself "blocked" or simply feel the need to break things up in your habit patterns consider giving this exercise a try for four to six weeks and note any results. If you look at the Homunculus again you might notice the potential use for the hands as well. The vast body of work on hand gesture in Initiatory Schools and Social Signification is too long to go into here but those interested should look into Mudhras, Sign Languages and even Gang Signs for some ideas.

The Body as Lab of Experimentation

Your body, which is the result of millions of years of evolutionary processes, has a number of adaptive qualities that you likely are not aware of. Its ability to cope with changing stress in the environment is tremendous but will only occur until certain forms of stimulation. Essentially these methods, when known, become the repository of information on Carnal LBM.

A few years ago Entrepreneur and Lifestyle Design specialist [Tim Ferriss](#) published what amounts of an encyclopedia of this type of information under the title *The Four Hour Body*. Contained within it are methods for rapid fat loss, muscle gain, tweaks for hormonal levels of testosterone and insulin, and many other methods and skills to cause rapid changes in physical adaptation. More importantly though is Ferriss' notion of treating your body as a Lab for conducting experiments into what it is capable of.

Taking an experimental approach to your body requires becoming more aware of the various qualities of your body. It may mean spending more time in consultation with Medical professionals who can give you a sense of where you are and help you track your changes. Most importantly taking such an attitude requires becoming Mindful of the Body and what you do with it. This may seem like hard work at first but in time it can become a source of joy and Flow.

Presenting the Body

How you present your body to the world has a huge impact upon how others will interact with you. This includes but is not limited to the level of Presence that you have in your body, the ways in which you move and the ways in which you adorn the body.

For many Setians who have come for one reason or another to live in their heads most of the time the idea of paying attention to issues of fashion and physical presentation can seem daunting. There seems like so much conflicting information and starting to explore this area runs right into issues of self-image, self-worth and conflict between who you are and who you may wish yourself to be.

Take a deep breath. It is going to be okay.

More on this subject will be discussed in the Meta-Communication sections but for now I wanted to make a quick comment. For now all you need to start to learn is how, once you have become Present in your Body, to get a sense of how others are seeing you. Situated in your own awareness open yourself up to trying to see yourself through the eyes of the person you are interacting with. How do you think they are seeing you and how are they reacting to you? Are there things you think you could do to change how you present yourself in order to get the response(s) that you are interested in? Start tracking these things now so you have a sense of what changes you need to make. Then start discussing this with a friend, Setian or otherwise, that you feel can be honest with you and see what their impressions of your observations are.

That closes, for now at least, the Stead of the Body for now. Up next: the Stead of the Emotions.

- **Stead of the Emotions**

Work on the emotions. *Often humans called to Initiation have had great pain in their lives, some early trauma made them resort to magic. Setians must first seek to heal themselves of hurt, then seek to feel more deeply, and lastly make their emotions follow them, rather than they follow their emotions. The nature of this work, which can range from finding a therapist to healing a rift in one's family, is up the individual Setian.*

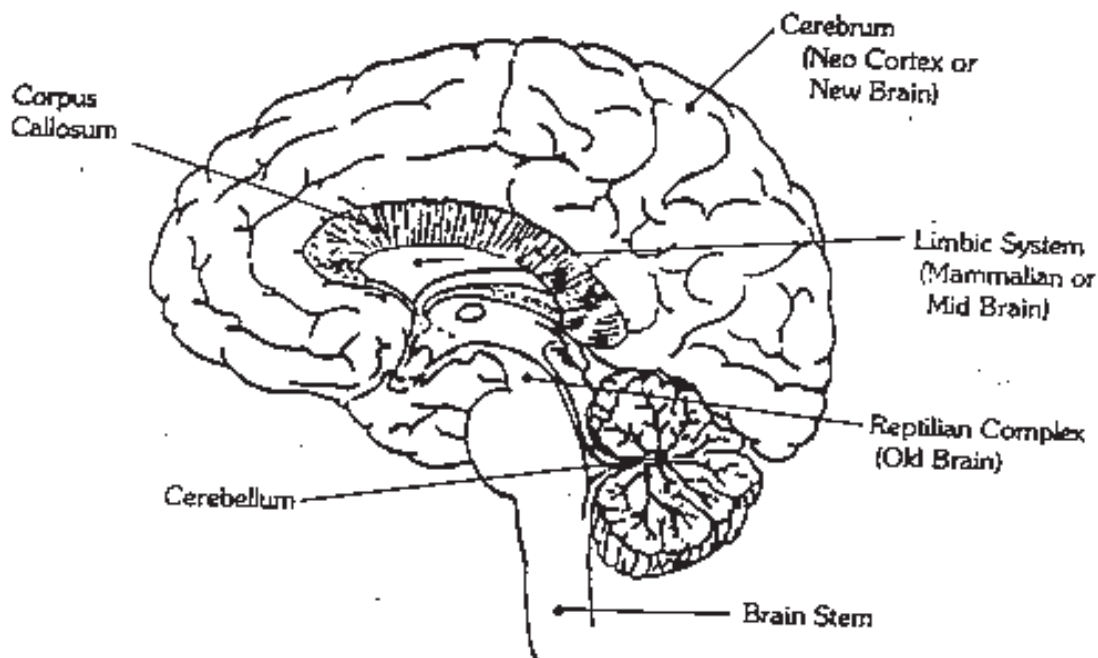
The Emotional Aspects of the Self are among the most powerful. One of the Keys to this power is that they are largely pre-personal and pre-conscious and this at as a foundational layer upon which your personality is built. By learning to engage with and in a sense “own” your emotions can transform your Presence and lead to a greater sense of integration and action.

It was through the engagement of the Emotions that the gateway to the Aeon of Set came into being as the Age of Satan. Anton LaVey grabbed upon the three fundamental emotions of Compassion, Lust and Anger, each of which was subject to taboo, manipulation and suppression by culture, and gave the would be Satanist a toolset for learning to express and accept these emotions fully and completely, first in private, then with others doing the same Work and finally in the World at large. It was only after one had passed beyond the constraints of society and personal history to love who you loved, sexually desire whom you desire and hate those you truly hate that the Operant Doorways to the Magic of the Age of Satan could be opened.

By periodically returning to pre-rational states, expressing and reintegrating the new conditions after such an expression the rational self can be transformed, improved and enriched. With the roots of the self stronger and the rational aspects of the self more fully integrated the Gateways to the Transrational can, with skill and daring, be opened.

For the sake of my discussion of Working with the Emotions I will be touching upon at times Paul McLane's so-called “Triune Brain” Model. Since its original introduction aspects of the model have been revised and critiqued but as a short hand it is still useful. Here is a good, basic rundown of this model.

The Triune Brain



Paul MacLean, the former director of the Laboratory of the Brain and Behavior at the United States National Institute of Mental Health, developed a model of the brain based on its evolutionary development. It is referred to as the “triune brain theory” because MacLean suggests that the human brain is actually three brains in one. Each of the layers or “brains” was established successively in response to evolutionary need. The three layers are the reptilian system, or R-complex, the limbic system, and the neocortex. Each layer is geared toward separate functions of the brain, but all three layers interact substantially.

The Reptilian Complex

The R-complex consists of the brain stem and the cerebellum. Its purpose is closely related to actual physical survival and maintenance of the body. The cerebellum orchestrates movement. Digestion, reproduction, circulation, breathing, and the execution of the “fight or flight” response in stress are all housed in the brain stem. Because the reptilian brain is primarily concerned with physical survival, the behaviors it governs have much in common with the survival behaviors of animals. It plays a crucial role in establishing home territory, reproduction and social dominance. The overriding characteristics of R-complex behaviors are that they are automatic, have a ritualistic quality, and are highly resistant to change.

The Limbic System

The limbic system, the second brain to evolve, houses the primary centers of emotion. It includes the amygdale, which is important in the association of events with emotion, and the hippocampus, which is active in converting information into long-term memory and in memory recall. Repeated use of specialized nerve networks in the hippocampus enhances memory storage, so this structure is involved in learning from both commonplace experiences and deliberate study. However, it is not necessary to retain every bit of information one learns. Some neuroscientists believe that the hippocampus helps select

which memories are stored, perhaps by attaching an “emotion marker” to some events so that they are likely to be recalled. The amygdale comes into play in situations that arouse feelings such as fear, pity, anger, or outrage. Damage to the amygdale can abolish an emotion-charged memory. Because the limbic system links emotions with behavior, it serves to inhibit the R-complex and its preference for ritualistic, habitual ways of responding.

The limbic system is also involved in primal activities related to food and sex, particularly having to do with our sense of smell and bonding needs, and activities related to expression and mediation of emotions and feelings, including emotions linked to attachment. These protective, loving feelings become increasingly complex as the limbic system and the neocortex link up.

The Neocortex

Also called the cerebral cortex, the neocortex constitutes five-sixths of the human brain. It is the outer portion of our brain, and is approximately the size of a newspaper page crumpled together. The neocortex makes language, including speech and writing possible. It renders logical and formal operational thinking possible and allows us to see ahead and plan for the future. The neocortex also contains two specialized regions, one dedicated to voluntary movement and one to processing sensory information.

We have mentioned that all three layers of the brain interact. The layers are connected by an extensive two-way network of nerves. On-going communication between the neocortex and the limbic system links thinking and emotions; each influences the other and both direct all voluntary action. This interplay of memory and emotion, thought and action is the foundation of a person’s individuality. The full extent of this interconnectedness is unclear. However, it is entirely incorrect to assume that in any situation one of our three “brains” is working and the others are not. What we can do, tentatively, is assume that at times one particular focus may be dominant while the rest of the brain acts in support and that education can influence which focus dominates. Caine, Renate Nummela and Geoffrey Caine. *Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain*. Nashville, TN: Incentive Publications, 1990.

From SUNY Buffalo’s [“The Brain Compatible Project”](#)

Neil Strauss is currently in the process of having his readers do Executive Summaries of 52 of the most important books on Human Development for his subscription only blog. One of the books recently completed was Carl Roger’s *On Becoming a Person*.

Introduction

On Becoming a Person by Carl R. Rogers is a classic text on humanistic and existential psychotherapy. The book is based on works by Rogers during the 1950’s and 60’s, yet the material is still highly relevant today. The book contains some interesting ideas and perspectives on personal growth and development.

A key point is Rogers’ view on what it means to become that self who one truly is, and thus a fully functioning person. Rogers discusses the process of getting in touch with one’s emotions so that one might live life based on a real self instead of a false, ideal self. The

incongruence between these two selves is a major cause of personal distress according to Rogers.

The book explains what it means to move away from facades and toward self-direction. It discusses the trust of self and how to face life's complexities. The good life is a process. Not a state of being. Rogers emphasizes flexibility and an openness to experience, instead of a rigid, defensive approach to life. His teachings are all based on an optimistic and positive view of people and the world.

The following is a summary of some core themes in the book that I believe are of most interest to the [blog readers].

To be your true self

According to Rogers, being your true or real self means being your organism – without self-deception or distortion. To be your true self involves a strong awareness of your total life experience where basic sensory and visceral experiences are strengthened and refined. The opposite, a false or ideal self, is what most people base their lives on. “What do others think I should do in this situation?” “What would my parents or my culture want me to do?” “What do I think ought to be done?” These are all examples of thinking based on a false, ideal self. To be your true self, you need to ask instead: “How do I experience this?” “What does it mean to me?”

Being your true self, you are aware of what you are actually experiencing, and not simply what you can permit yourself to experience after a thorough screening through a conceptual filter. You can listen sensitively to yourself. You can be what you are – your experience. This is what Rogers would label a fully functioning human organism.

Many people are in distress because of an incongruence between their false and their real self. Life is based on the false self, which contradicts their real life experience. People are most often unaware that this incongruence is causing their distress, maladjustment etc. Rogers based this assumption on what he learned from thousands of therapy sessions with people from all walks of life. As people get to know themselves better and learn to accept their experience, the incongruence diminishes and suffering is relieved. Accepting all of your emotions as part of the life experience is crucial in being your true self.

Rogers had an optimistic and positive view of people. He stated that when people's capacity of awareness is functioning freely and fully, people would not be evil or out of control, but organisms able to achieve a balanced, realistic, self-enhancing, prosocial behavior. According to Rogers, when people deny awareness to various aspects of their experience, then we all too often have reason to fear them and their behavior. Rogers points out that no one person fully achieves his description of a true self. It is a life-long goal to strive toward. Each individual is a separate, distinct and unique person. The following generalizations of a true self can still be drawn:

Away from facades: Instead of hiding behind a façade, as if it were yourself, you must come closer to being yourself – whatever emotions that might involve.

Away from oughts: Upbringing and the relationship with parents is most often the cause of an unhealthy, compelling image of what you “ought to be”. Abandon such false, self-concepts.

Away from meeting expectations: Our culture puts many expectations on us to subordinate our individuality to fit into the group needs – we are socialized into society. Be aware how this might conflict with your real self.

Away from pleasing others: Many people form themselves by trying to please others.

Toward self-direction: Be autonomous. Choose your own goals. Become responsible for yourself.

Toward being process: Be a process, a changing fluidity. Do not be disturbed that you are not the same from day to day, or don’t always hold the same feelings toward a person or experience. End statements and conclusions are of less importance.

Toward being complexity: Be the complexity of your own feelings. Be all of yourself in each moment – all the richness and complexity with nothing hidden from yourself, and nothing feared in yourself. This is difficult indeed, and in its absolute sense an impossible goal.

Toward openness to experience: Live in an open, friendly, close relationship to your own experience of external reality. Experiencing is a friendly resource, not a frightening enemy. This implies a superior awareness of your own impulses, desires, opinions, and subjective reactions in general.

Toward acceptance of others: Value and appreciate others’ experience for what it is without arguing or demanding that it be otherwise.

Toward trust of self: Trust and value the process within you. Creative people like Hemingway or Einstein, were told “good writers or scientists do not do it that way.” Still, they persisted and moved toward being themselves.

Getting in touch with your emotions

Becoming aware of your own emotions or feelings is a crucial prerequisite to be your true self. People sense their feelings to varying degrees. Many live their lives with this awareness mostly hidden or repressed. In Rogers’ therapy, revealing the inner life of the client was a central goal. He described seven stages in a process leading to a full awareness of one’s emotional life. Very few clients ever reached the seventh stage.

Rogers explained the process as one where a person changes from fixity to flowingness. It is a move away from a state in which feelings are unrecognized, unowned and unexpressed. It is a move toward a flow in which ever-changing feelings are experienced in the moment, knowingly and acceptingly, and may be accurately expressed.

Here are the seven stages:

There is an unwillingness to communicate self. Communication is only about externals. Feelings and personal meanings are neither recognized nor owned. Close and communicative relationships are construed as dangerous. There is no desire to change.

Expression begins to flow in regard to non-self topics. Problems are perceived as external to self. There is no sense of personal responsibility in problems. Feelings are described as unowned, or as past objects. Feelings may be exhibited, but are not recognized as such or owned. Experience is bound by the structure of the past. Differentiation of personal meanings and feelings is very limited and global. There is little recognition of contradictions.

There is a freer flow of expression about the self as an object, and self-related experience as objects. There is also expression about the self as a reflected object, existing primarily in others. There is much expression about feelings and personal meanings not now present. There is little acceptance of feelings. They are seen as something shameful, bad, abnormal, etc. Experiencing is still described as in the past or as somewhat remote from the self.

Descriptions of feelings are more intense, sometimes as objects in the present. Occasionally feelings are expressed as in the present, but the client distrusts and fears this happening. There is slightly more acceptance of feelings, and they are not as bound by structures of the past. There is also an increased differentiation of feelings, constructs and personal meanings. There is a realization of concern about contradictions and incongruences between experience and self. There are vacillating feelings of responsibility in problems.

Feelings are expressed freely as in the present. Feelings are very close to being fully experienced. They “bubble up” or “seep through” in spite of the fear and distrust which the client feels at experiencing them with fullness and immediacy. There is an increasing ownership of self-feelings, and a desire to be these – the real me. Experience is loosened, no longer remote, and frequently occurs with little postponement. Differentiation of feelings and meanings are much more exact. There is an increased quality of acceptance of self-responsibility.

Feelings can flow to their full result and are directly experienced with immediacy and richness. Feelings are accepted, and not denied, feared or struggled against. There is a quality of living subjectively in the experience, not feelings about it. A physiological loosening accompanies this – tears, sighs, muscular relaxation etc. The incongruence between experience and awareness disappears. In this stage there are no longer “problems”, external or internal. The client is living, subjectively, a phase of his problem. It is not an object.

Feelings are experienced with immediacy and richness of detail in all life situations. The changing of feelings are accepted, owned and trusted. Situations are experienced and interpreted in their newness, not as the past or structure-bound. The self is something confidently felt in process. Internal communication is clear with feelings and symbols well matched. Personal constructs are tentatively reformulated, to be validated against further experience, but even then to be held loosely. There is the experiencing of effective choice of new ways of living.

Rogers' lessons

In his therapeutic work, Rogers came to several important lessons that he summarized in his book. A few of them are these:

In my relationship with persons, I have found that it does not help, in the long run, to act as though I were something that I am not.

I find I am more effective when I can listen acceptingly to myself, and can be myself.

My total organismic sensing of a situation is more trustworthy than my intellect.

Experience is, for me, the highest authority.

People have a basically positive direction.

Life, at its best, is a flowing, changing process in which nothing is fixed.

Concluding comments

The above describes a deep inward journey of self-discovery. Though originating in a therapeutic setting, I believe these ideas can be a source of self-help and development for people outside the therapy room as well. Today, many self-help books and popular psychology is based on cognitive-behavioral theory, where a simple change in thinking patterns is the remedy for personal distress. In my opinion such techniques have limited value if we are unaware of our true self. For lasting and thorough personal change to occur, we must first and foremost learn to know ourselves. Then we have a better foundation to grow and change as people.

A detailed outline of Rogers' therapeutic methods is beyond this report, but a summarizing quote from his book gives a glimpse of the essence:

If I can create a relationship characterized on my part: by a genuineness and transparency, in which I am my real feelings;

by a warm acceptance of and prizing of the other person as a separate individual;

by a sensitive ability to see his world and himself as he sees them;

Then the other individual in the relationship:

will experience and understand aspects of himself which he previously has repressed;

will find himself becoming better integrated;

will become more like the person he would like to be;

will be more self-directing and self-confident;

will become more of a person, more unique and more self-expressive;

will be more understanding and acceptant of others;

will be able to cope with the problems of life more adequately and more comfortably.

Rogers believed this statement was true of all his relationships, professional and private.

* How are they doing this? By having one participant read a book fully and then writing an Executive Summary for the other participants extracting the most critical, actionable aspects of the book so that the others can start using the insights rather than having to read the book for themselves. 52 participants are taking part meaning that by only reading one book and sharing your insights you gain access to all the other's insights. Hmm...if only there were some group of people I knew interested in Self-Development with serious reading habits but too little time to read everything they want to get to...why we could borrow this project...or something...

One of the more interesting aspects regarding emotional states is the way in which our bodies process them as if we were experiencing some kind of emotional energy. We walk into a nightclub and immediately we have a sense of the place's "vibe." We talk to people and feel a sense of something flowing between us. We are suddenly exposed to a threat and we and feel our entire energetic self shut down.

I have my own pet theories regarding why this is rooted in the primate heritage of human beings and the absolutely vital importance for our ability to read emotional cues from other humans. I also attribute some of it to the way in which the entire body is our thinking-feeling machine and not simply our brains, thus causing objectively traceable activities to have unique subjective means of expression.

An old friend of mine, [Philip H. Farber](#), introduced me to a novel way of using this sense of emotions in the body and emotional energy through a technique that eventually became a part of his Meta-Magick system. He had been studying [Ki Society](#) style Aikido at the time and was taken by some of [Koechi Tohei's](#) ideas regarding Ki and Attention and [methods used to teach and test this phenomena](#).

Here is a brief summary based upon my own version of this. Contact Phil if you are interested in learning about his approach.

- Take a moment to sit down and take a few deep breaths. Try to become aware of your body on your chair and your feet on the floor. Let the content of your mind settle some.
- Think of a specific concept that you associate and emotional charge, say "happiness." Now feel where in your body you have a sense of this emotional charge. Focus upon the area where you feel the charge and start visualizing that you are breathing more energy into it. As you do so it begins to unfold and take a shape or a pattern of movement.
- Write out a description of the energy flow pattern. At some point in the future try to use the pattern to consciously re-experience the emotional state.

This is a relatively simple thing to do, but it can take on more complex qualities as you become

better versed in it. You can begin to associate specific sounds, movements and hand gestures to this energy flow, giving you greater access to it. These energy flow patterns can be shared with others and blended until you find a flow that resonates with both of you. This same method can be used as the basis for group-entity creation as well, something we experimented with at the end of the last NERG.

Another potential feature of this kind of work is to undo the emotional associations that you have with certain activities. Say you are someone who becomes very self-conscious before engaging in public speaking. By becoming aware of the emotional energy flow that happens as you start to become self-conscious you can begin to reverse the energy flow and will discover that your emotional state similarly reverses.

But don't believe me. Give it a try.

Working with the Emotions often runs smack into how often we have emotional responses to situations that may seem out of proportion to what is actually taking place. This can be a good thing as such responses, whether too much or too little, can tell us about the ways in which we have separated ourselves from our authentic emotional experiences.

Those aspects of ourselves that we have refused to claim as our own end up becoming what in Jungian parlance is known as "Shadow Content." This material is always ever present but we are displaced from it. As a result it waits for its opportunities to intrude upon consciousness and fore itself into our awareness, whether this is convenient or appropriate. As soon as something resonant with this content arises so to does the Shadow.

One of the more effective means of Working with Shadow content on your own is a simple process developed by participants at the Integral Institute known as the "3-2-1 Shadow Process." In the simplest terms the event which lead to too much or too little emotion is first described in third person detail, followed by second person interaction and finally by assuming the first-person perspective of the event or individual involved in the event.

For those of you with an eye towards Western Ceremonial Magic you may notice that this pattern has some similarity to the Invocation methods used in the Golden Dawn tradition. In that tradition one first described the qualities of a Divine Pattern, then speaks to that Divine Pattern and finally assumes the identity of that Divine Pattern.

Here is the basic outline of the 3-2-1 Shadow Process in print.

Practice: The 3-2-1 Shadow Process
Own Your Shadow Or Be Owned By It
Contributor: Kelly Sosan Bearer

In this practice we begin the process of re-owning our shadow. We'll FACE our shadow in 3rd-person; we'll TALK to our shadow in a 2nd-person dialogue; and we'll BE our shadow in 1st-person. Face it, Talk to it, Be it...It's that simple.

To Practice The 3-2-1 Process

1. Choose an experience in your life that you want to work with. It's often easier to begin with

a person with whom you have difficulty (e.g., lover, relative, boss). This person may irritate, disturb, annoy, or upset you. Or maybe you feel attracted to, obsessed with, infatuated with, or possessive about this person. In any case, choose someone with whom you have a strong emotional charge, whether positive or negative.

2. Face It : Now, imagine this person. Describe those qualities that most upset you, or the characteristics that you are most attracted to using 3rd-person language (he, she, it). Talk about them out loud or write it down in a journal. Take this opportunity to “let it out.” Don’t try to be skillful or say the right thing. There is no need to sugar-coat your description. The person you are describing will never see this.

3. Talk to It: Begin an imaginary dialogue with this person. Speak in 2nd person to this person (using “you” language). Talk directly to this person as if he or she were actually there in the room with you. Tell them what bothers you about them. Ask them questions such as “Why are you doing this to me?” “What do you want from me?” “What are you trying to show me?” “What do you have to teach me?” Imagine their response to these questions. Speak that imaginary response out loud. Record the conversation in your journal if you like.

4. Be It: Become this person. Take on the qualities that either annoy or fascinate you. Embody the traits you described in “Face It.” Use 1st-person language (I, me, mine). This may feel awkward, and it should. The traits you are taking on are the exact traits that you have been denying in yourself. Use statements such as “I am angry,” “I am jealous,” “I am radiant.” Fill in the blank with whatever qualities you are working with: “I am_____.”

5. To complete the process, notice these disowned qualities in yourself. Experience the part of you that is this very trait. Avoid making the process abstract or conceptual: just BE it. Now you can re-own and integrate this trait in yourself.

Practice Genealogy

The 3-2-1 process is a simple and effective tool for working with the shadow. It was developed by Ken Wilber and his associates at Integral Institute, and is a recommended practice in the Integral Life Practice Starter Kit. This practice is designed to provide a quick, easy, and effective method to work with our disowned selves. There are numerous techniques to deal with the shadow, but most require the assistance of a professional therapist. The 3-2-1 Process can be used by anyone anywhere at any time, and at no cost.

The 3-2-1 Process helps you uncover your shadow and integrate unconscious thoughts and emotions, so you can become more healthy and whole. It takes an extraordinary amount of energy to keep aspects of ourselves hidden in shadow. The energy it takes to repress or deny aspects of ourselves could potentially be employed in other ways; perhaps even a developmental transformation. When we shine a light on our shadow and work to integrate disowned aspects of ourselves, we liberate the energy we were using to hide from ourselves, and more energy is never a bad thing.

This process uses shifts in perspectives as a way of identifying and integrating shadow material. 3-2-1 refers to 3rd person, 2nd person, and 1st person perspectives. When an aspect of the self poses a threat, the self seeks to distance itself from that threat. As a result, the self concludes,

“That is not me. That is someone else.” The self exports that trait that threatens it onto someone else. We can disown both lower and higher aspects of ourselves. In either case, we project it as “You.” You are angry. You are being selfish. You are worthy. In other words, we displace it from a 1st - person “I” to a 2nd- person “You.” If the threat of this emotion or situation becomes so great that it requires a total rejection, we push it away into a 3rd- person “It.” At that point, the shadow arises as a sense of irritation, reactivity, fear, or aversion toward things, but we usually do not understand why we feel this way.

And meditation alone won’t fix this, most forms of meditation won’t even help; in fact, they may make things worse. Meditation suggests dis-identification from experience (“You are not your thoughts. etc.”). But to integrate the shadow, we need to RE-identify with disowned dimensions of our experience and ourselves. We can only truly let go of something that we have first owned. Healthy disidentification is only possible once we have re-owned, re-associated, and re-identified with the disowned parts of ourselves. For this reason, there is no substitute for shadow work.

The 3-2-1 Process can be used in various ways. For beginners, try it out once a week for roughly 30 minutes and work with the biggest issue of your week. For more advanced practitioners, begin applying the 3-2-1 Process to dreams and issues of your daily life.

You can also opt to use the “empty chair” rather than a journal. Just replace the journal with an actual chair in the exercise outlined above. Place this chair across from you, and imagine the person you have chosen to work with sitting in it. In “Face It” (3), simply describe the qualities of this person that provoke you. Talk about them in front of them. In “Talk to It” (2), dialogue with this person. When it is their turn to respond, sit in the other chair and respond as that person. Go back and forth between chairs until the dialogue is over. In “Be It” (1), sit as the other and be the person that triggers you. Embody the qualities that irritate or fascinate you and speak as this person using “I” statements: “I am _____.”

A video presentation designed to walk you through the process can be viewed [here](#)

[3-2-1 Shadow Process One Minute Module](#)

This video is an extract of a longer presentation from the [Integral Life Practice Starter Kit](#).

One of the topics often dreaded by Black Magicians is the idea of Therapy. The idea that you might need someone’s help in sorting out your problems seems like it would be anathema to those seeking to become Sovereign forces in the world. Yet has there ever been a Sovereign who did not have retainers, counsels and aides in their Work?

Therapy is not Initiation but it can be a useful part of the overall Initiatory Process. Therapy is about transforming nightmares while Initiation is about Waking Up. By engaging an aware professional you can begin to see and process aspects of your self-complex which would have gone undetected for much longer on your own. The key in this work is realizing that you are in charge as you are the one who has hired this person to help you. If the relationship seems to be more detrimental than beneficial you can always find another person to work with.

Some Setians may shun therapy as they feel any professional therapist will look at their interest

in Magic as a sign of derangement. The chances of this however are very slim. Many professional Therapists are well aware of the wide range of beliefs that exist and while they may not know too much about the Temple of Set you can certainly provide them with a copy of *Black Magic* so they have some baseline of understanding where you are coming from.

One resource that you may find useful if you choose to pursue this route is to look at the various listings for so-called “Kink Aware Therapists.” A good listing is maintained by the National Coalition For Sexual Freedom. While the “Kink aware” designation means that the therapists listed are aware of less common but non-pathological sexual activities it also tends to correlate with increased sensitivity to uncommon beliefs and practices.

[Kink Aware Professionals White Paper](#)

A small piece of advice when considering pursuing this kind of Work. Everything in your life is your responsibility, but none of it is your fault. By this I mean you have had very little control up until now about the events which have shaped you into who you presently are, but you have an absolute responsibility from this point forward regarding what you will do and not do with your life. Ipsissimus Webb very wisely suggested trying to cultivate an attitude of complete self-forgiveness for your Past while taking a stern Saturnian sense towards your Future. This is not something that will come easy but in time if you try to do this mindfully you will find that your past, even the most uncomfortable aspects of it, can be used as fuel for your transformations.

The following short piece by Brian Bayer introduces the ideas of “Social Masks” and the contrast between Owning and Collapsing into your Emotions. While the author is approaching this for a heterosexual male audience it can be adaptable to others as well:

We as men, more than almost anything else, want to learn to create authentic attraction and connection with women.

But what gets in the way of REAL connection, is what we call social masks.

Y’know, this is the happy face we put on to get through our day.

The grocery clerk says, “Hi! How are you?” And you say “Fine.”

Although, the real truth may be that your dog just died, your insides feel twisted, your heart feels caved in and you’re exhausted.

Da Da DAAAA! SOCIAL MASK! To the rescue! Here to save you from actually spilling it all out on a random grocery clerk.

What comes out instead: “Fine, thanks. Uh, I think these fish sticks are two for one.”

Whew-- Crisis averted... Thanks for saving me, Social Mask!

Sure, social masks are valuable and appropriate at certain times... but they kill the juice with women when we don’t know how to take them off.

Let's imagine that same grocery clerk situation but instead you're on a date with a woman you're super attracted to. You're really hurting inside and yet you continue to wear the social mask that insists everything is fine.

Now, here's the thing. Most guys have no idea just how sensitive and aware women are. When you hold back or resist your emotions women can sense it and the result is they feel something is "off."

When women feel something is "off" they just can't trust or open up to you in the way they really want to. And quite bluntly, that's the beginning of the end right there.

So does this mean you're supposed to just curl up into the fetal position and cry yourself to sleep in the middle of your date?

Actually, we recommend against that.

But when a man drops the social mask and "owns" his emotions he becomes astoundingly sexy to a woman.

So what does "owning your emotions" actually mean? Let's say you're on a date and you're feeling really sad about your ex-dog. If you can fully feel your sadness, without "collapsing" AND still remain fully engaged, present and connected to your woman at the same time, then you have just been nominated for sexy man of the year award.

Now, just like riding a bike, it takes a little practice. But when you get the hang of dropping the ol' social mask, feeling your emotions and still being rock solid with her, you've started on the path to being the kind of man that even the most radiant women dream of meeting.

Tomorrow will focus upon using these ideas and turning them into tools for your own emotional development.

Social Masks

Social Masks are means by which people use a sense of false presentations of their emotional states and experiences in order to maintain their place within a social matrix. These are not necessarily problematic if the person using a Social Mask understands that this is a situational persona, something taken up as an actor would take it up. If treated in this fashion Social Masks can provide a useful way to behave which can be discarded outside the situation, allowing the wearer to retain any insights gained as a result.

However much of our original integrative socialization and the beginning of our need to mask our true experiences in and around the time of puberty. In traditional cultures this is the time when one's future Social Mask (persona) is provided to you through the means of a Rite of Passage. In such contexts an entire suite of emotional states which are and are not acceptable become enforced upon you along with other behavioral restrictions to help reinforce your sense of identity with your Social Mask. In the contemporary world such simply defined and provided Social Masks rarely exist though mock versions of them exist through formations like gangs, subcultural scenes, group athletic activities, etc. Indeed anyone who spent a fair bit of their youth embedded in a subculture is likely familiar with the complex system of taboo choices of media, dress and activities which are seen as reflecting being "true" to a given scene v. being a "poser" within that scene.

The downside of Social Masks is that we often come to identify with them as if these things were who we are rather than a tool for social interaction. We become displaced from our own centers through this identification and in time can become distanced from our own inner experience. The Social Mask acts as a force constricting the Self and preventing it from its authentic expression. This experience of the negative aspects of the Social Mask is what Wilhelm Reich referred to as "Character Armor": the ways in which the body and emotions are stiffened, tightened and constructed to prevent the full and genuine feelings of the individual.

Learning to drop the Social Mask is not easy for most people. For many Setians aspects of this Work are easier than it is for most because frankly the Social Masks assigned or acquired never quite fit completely. By the same token those pieces that have stuck tend to run much deeper than one might expect, necessitating extra effort to undo and rehabilitate these aspects of the Self-complex. Reichian inspired Body Work, such as those discussed under the Stead of the Body, can be useful in this regard as can Therapeutic methods. On a less extreme level simply learning to be mindful of the Body and the Emotions, sensing what is arising within them without clinging to them or shutting them off from awareness can be the first step towards setting yourself on a freer course.

Collapsing Into Your Emotions v. Owning Your Emotions

Collapsing into your Emotions can be seen as what happens when your emotional experiences overwhelm your sense of Self, taking your awareness out of the Present Moment and dragging you into their realm. It often coincides with a strong sense of your Self being deflated in the moment and you may find yourself going over past mistakes, regrets and worries that have little or nothing to do with what is taking place in the Here and Now*. This can happen by happenstance or it can be the result of external forces looking to induce this state of emotional collapse in order to manipulate your response, either through direct coercion or through impelling you in a particular directions**. Either way your sense of Self is displaced and the Force of Mind that could be brought to bare is disabled, at least temporarily.

Owning your Emotions can be seen as bringing the Sense of Self and the Force of Mind to bare during Emotional experiences. You remain centered in your Self and Mindfully observe your Emotions as they arise. You do not try to suppress them but rather allow them to wash over you, inhabit you for a time and pass. By learning to stay with these emotions rather than flee from them or collapse into them***, and becoming capable of reporting these emotions as they arise verbally (i.e. "Right now I am feeling..." statements as it is happening) will begin the process of claiming Ownership over your Emotions.

On a practical level three of the best places to engage in this are through media, music and in your Ritual Chamber. Finding material that engages your emotions and really brings them to the surface in Media, whether the written word, TV, or film, you can learn to ride the waves of your emotions with relatively safety. If you do start to sense yourself collapsing you can very easily disengage and reclaim your sense of Mindfulness. The same can be done with Music. What you learn in these places can in turn be brought to bear in the controlled stimulus environment of your Ritual Chamber where you can safely and Mindfully unleash your Emotions in whatever way you see fit. The more you do this the more comfortable you will be at doing this. You will find that you can remain centered and fully present even in times of absolute emotional and even physical crisis, remaining in touch with your experiences fully while still maintaining the Clarity of Vision needed to take action in the World. For those so inclined they may wish to consider this as an aspect of Set's traditional role as a teacher of Archers in Battle.

*When you have these experiences, and we all do, they make good candidates for the 3-2-1 Shadow Process previously discussed.

**I will come back to this during the Stead of Meta-Communication but I want to address this now. Coercion, regardless of who is doing it, is not LBM. In our casual discussions we often make the mistake of seeing forces of Coercion as forms of LBM, but that is simply laziness or convenience on our part. Key to the definition of LBM is that there is a Conscious Operator and that their actions create a situation of impelling not compelling. If the process is not conscious or is compulsive in nature it is not LBM. The study of Coercive structures however can be a vital first step towards seeing how prevalent such structures are in life and towards becoming conscious of how to free yourself and set others on a freer course.

***For a dramatic presentation along these lines [This is a Chemical Burn](#)

One last brief note and a reprint of a wonderful article from Dr. Aquino appropriate to this Stead.

Human emotions exist on a spectrum, similar to visible light. In the same way that a “rainbow” actually has no real divisions but for convenience we label certain bands of it specific terms like “red” or “indigo” we do roughly the same thing with our emotions. Sometimes the most useful thing you can do for yourself is to unhook your emotions from the terms you have been taught to label them and come up with your own. What you previously saw as “fear” can become for you an indication of excitement at pushing into new territories.

Learning to experience your emotions in their fullness and richness across the entire spectrum can be richly rewarding. At first you may only be able to see really simple versions of these states but in time more nuanced understanding will form. You will likely find that you prefer certain emotional states to others, and you can begin to form your life in such ways that you can experience them more often and more fully.

I would be profoundly remiss after spending a week writing on Working with the Emotions is I didn't post this.

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Article Reprint:
TIME OUT FOR ECI
- by Michael A. Aquino VI*, GM.Tr.

In the Church of Satan's Cloven Hoof #V-1 (1/2 VIII) Anton LaVey introduced one of his most fascinating and least appreciated theories: Erotic Crystallization Inertia or ECI. ECI offers the hypothesis that one is rejuvenated, at least psychologically and perhaps physiologically, by exposing himself to external stimuli (primarily visual, but other-sensual as well) remindful of the most youthful and pleasurable period(s) of his life.

Younger generations of people, Anton goes on to say, do not thrive in communities dominated by the values and standards of an earlier day. They move out of small, isolated, conservative towns into big cities; and there they enter a crucible of new values which will eventually crystallize into a preferred set of standards for them - and which they will invoke as still-younger generations arise to upraise even newer values. Some members of one generation try to adopt the life-styles and values of another; generally this produces unhappiness and frustration. The would-be time traveler, says Anton, winds up pretending to take pleasure from stimuli which are not as pleasing or familiar to him as “his own”. And, though he may ape the dress and behavior of the younger or older subculture, it will be evident that he is out-of-place. He will be tolerated as a curiosity [at best] or a fool [at worst].

Complicating the situation, Anton goes on to say, is the tremendous pressure in contemporary society to conform to the “latest style” in everything. “Man is the only animal,” he states, “who has been carefully taught to be discontented.” One runs the risk of social disfavor if he

or she doesn't wear current fashions, talk about subjects currently in vogue, and in general conduct his or her life in the up-and-coming way. This kind of social pressure is not new, but it has certainly become aggravated [because of the more desperate climate of competition in the 1980s] to an acknowledged "cult": the Yuppie. [For those of you who are not "with it" (condescending sniff!), that means "young urban professional".]

There is a growing body of literature both describing and satirizing Yuppies, so I won't bother to do either here. Yuppies are one generation behind the Hippie/Vietnam generation, and one ahead of the New Wave/Punk generation. They can move in and out of either without too much fuss; but the greater the generation-gap, the greater the discord. [Here in San Francisco - the classic hodge-podge of generation-ostentation - it is always amusing to see an aging hippie gazing disapprovingly at some young punk-rocker walking by with sharply-spiked pink & orange hair.] Gold neck-chains and Adidas warm-up suits are "going" (like Baskin-Robbins ice cream flavors), and boom-boxes (aka ghetto blasters) and military surplus clothing (preferably from Africa or Latin America) are "coming". This crazed state of affairs was satirized this year by Stephen Spielberg, whose Gremlins entertained themselves by break-dancing while wearing Jane Fonda leg warmers.

The pressure to "keep up" continues in traditional areas such as clothes and cars, but it has also invaded new turf. There are some amusing instances of completely irrational manias: Cabbage-Patch dolls and camouflage fashions come to mind. Gun freaks used to favor Thompson submachine guns, then AK-47s; now you've got to have an UZI. [Since it's awkward to order real UZIs, you can now get a watergun version to hook up to your garden hose for rapid-fire drenching of dogs, postpersons, parents, etc.]

Most pervasive of all, of course, is the lemming-like stampede towards computers. Today, if you don't at least own a computer - whether or not you know how to do anything with it - you are in danger of being "left behind". No one is quite sure what this means, but it must be awful, kind of like one of the Eloi selected to go underground to the Morlocks. Consequently those who can afford them - and many of those who can't - are rushing out to buy some kind of computer ... any computer. There is even an emerging profession of consultants who teach people what to do with the computers they've already bought but don't know how to use. Moreover having last year's computer has become a worse sin than driving last year's car. "What, you don't have a color CRT? You have only 64K RAM?" [A slight shudder usually accompanies such questions. It is far worse to have last year's computer, evidently, than to have Herpes.]

Somewhere between lemming-change and a refusal to change lies Aristotle's Golden Mean. Jogging is good for you, after all, and personal computers can be extremely helpful - formatting Runes, for example. There are now - and have been since Magister Grumboski booted our data-processing program in X - a number of computers augmenting the Temple of Set's magicians in a variety of administrative and magical contexts. Sony Walkmen provide earthshaking sound for rituals without bothering one's neighbors, and hand-calculators have made slide-rules a medieval curiosity. When telephones aren't just running themselves via answering machines, they're easier to "dial" (by pushbutton). Old black-and-white movies are now being colored by computers (which recognize a particular item, such as an actress' dress, and follow it through all the film-frames, coloring it pink wherever it shows up). The trick is to partake of the real benefits of technological evolution while avoiding its sucker-oriented by-products.

The magician who wishes to experiment with ECI will find that technology augments, rather than inhibits his inability to do so. The atmosphere conducive to any preferred generational age can be produced more easily and convincingly than ever before - provided that one is psychologically comfortable with all the technology "under the surface". Two critical questions arise:

-- (1) Does ECI in fact rejuvenate one, either psychologically or physically? Or does it rather inhibit one's zest for life by brutally dramatizing the distance between the past and the present - presuming that the ECI-practitioner must at least periodically "surface" from his artificial environment?

-- (2) Is ECI addictive? Upon partaking of it, does one tend to become controlled by it rather than to control it? Does it thus become a kind of "time prison", limiting one's life-experience instead of expanding it?

Windy analyses and arguments pro or con either option of either question are unnecessary. Obviously both dangers exist as the mere consequences of over-obsession with the corresponding benefits. Such is true, incidentally, of magic in general: It is as much an art as a science, and the truly successful [and happy] magicians are those who develop a sensitivity to just how far they should go with the powers at their command.

Personal ECI is a fascinating area for experimentation; equally intriguing is the effect of a contrived ECI atmosphere on others. Visitors may not be psychologically prepared for an ECI environment at all, in which case they may be very disturbed by and even fearful of it. If they do admire and appreciate it, its effect on them may be completely different from that intended by the creator. The recreation of a 1930s environment in the Indiana Jones movies is spellbinding to those later generations who either never saw or only vaguely remember Fedora hats. The generations who personally experienced that same decade, however, react more with amused nostalgia. When Christopher Reeve shot up from a Metropolis street to make his first dramatic rescue of Lois Lane (hanging from a helicopter) in Superman, it was the adults in the audience who were cheering and yelling "Go, Superman!" while their kids (who have grown up on video games instead of DC comics and the Kelloggs-inspired TV series) looked at use incredulously. Anton LaVey would occasionally play records or tapes of 1920s tunes; they might remind him of his childhood, but they made me think of The Untouchables!

Mixed ECI can also be fun. The Temple of Set frolics happily throughout a great many time/space environments, and most Setians' homes and ritual chambers reflect this. In my living room a few days ago Australian occult writer Nevill Drury watched with a certain amused disorientation as 4E the [Heathkit HERO-1] robot narrowly missed Tutankhamen's golden throne, cruised past the Le Verrier Art Deco statue and Xerox machine, and halted in front of the 8-foot Moonscape mural while I was showing Drury the ritual dagger of the SS-Leibstandarte's commanding general and Lemurian rocks from Mount Shasta - all under the watchful eyes of my Satanic griffins Haldeman and Erlichman. [Frank Heimans, the film producer with Drury, asked hopefully about filming a bit of Black Mass. I am toying with the idea of programming 4E to do it. At the least it should be a publicity "first" for Heathkit!] ECI principles are involved with the Law of the Trapezoid, which - as explained in the Crystal Tablet - identifies oblique or obtuse angles as dangerous to the uninitiated psyche.

Present an ECI stimulus in an environment dominated by such angles and you are risking severe danger to profane observers. Lilith just called my attention to the first suicide at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. A glance at it suggests why: It is composed entirely of oblique/obtuse angles, and it possesses additional LT psychological qualities by being black in color and sunken, tomb-like, into the ground. Altogether it is a virtual Lorelei-rock for profane self-destruction, and I venture to forecast that we have not seen the last suicide on its altar of despair.

ECI is time-travel magic. Before you can use it successfully, you have to understand its components: time, magic, and psychology. Most Setians have some knowledge of magical techniques from the Crystal Tablet, various texts from the reading list & elsewhere, and personal experience. In the course of this they have presumably learned a corresponding amount of psychology. [If they haven't, they are in for rough sailing on the magical sea.] The concept of time, on the other hand, is something few have studied with the precision it deserves. #20B on the reading list is, in my opinion, unparalleled. "Time", to the mundane world, is simply the regular march-past of the clock - "Oh, yeah, Einstein says it also distorts when you go real fast, right?"

The magician, however, finds that one of the most important keys to the many philosophies, civilizations, and events of history is the time-system involved. Both the successes and the failures of ancient Egypt cannot be understood without knowledge of that culture's circular time-system, while the Judaic/Christian doctrine depends wholly upon a completely unsubstantiated belief that time is linear with a fixed origin and terminus. Hegel saw time as an oscillating wave, while to Pythagoras and Plato it was static. The Black Magician refuses to limit himself to any particular time-system. Rather he will choose which one is convenient to his desires and employ it as appropriate. To the profane observer he may appear to "speed time up" or "slow it down" - but this is because that observer is tightly strapped into the strait-jacket of clock-time consciousness, while the magician travels within time - or remains still while time changes for him, as the case may be.

As with any other kind of magic, time-magic may be initially unnerving to those who are accustomed only to clock-time strait-jackets. Time is, for the profane mind, a kind of "anchor" against which everything else can be measured. When you make that anchor a variable instead of a constant, the Universe changes. That's a rather heavy trip for novice magicians. The immediate tendency is to replace time with another anchor - which is precisely what Einstein did with the speed of light, which he clung to while stunning other profane minds with his theory of time's variability [relative to his new constant, light]. His celebrated theories of relativity, reduced to their essentials, merely say that one doesn't have to measure B in terms of A; one can also measure A in terms of B. Big deal - but it certainly sold at the box office.

The successful magician must develop and ultimately master the ability to make himself the constant and everything else the variable, subject to his Will. This in no sense implies the kind of "spaced-out" disconnection from everything else characteristic of escapists. Quite the contrary: The magician is intensely aware of his entire environment in all of its dimensions, substances, and forces. He must be if he presumes to understand and to control it. Cling to various anchors as you may initially need to - or as you find convenient in various Workings - but move gradually towards a mode of existence in which time becomes your servant and

not your master. This, I might add, will enable you to conquer death, which happens to be a function of linear time. To avoid death, change to another time-system or shift the locus of your consciousness from a human body to another point of reference.

The Egyptians employed the first technique. The “punch-line” of Her-Bak (#2L) is a sage’s answer to the young priest Her-Bak’s inquiry about life and death:

“What is life? It is a form of the divine presence. It is the power, immanent in created things, to change themselves by successive destructions of form until the spirit or activating force of the original life-stream is freed. This power resides in the very nature of things. Successive destruction of forms, metamorphoses, by the divine fire with rebirth of forms new and living is an expression of consciousness. It is the spiritual aim of all human life to attain a state of consciousness that is independent of bodily circumstance.

“What I have just said concerns the living spirit bestowed on the man already quickened, like every living thing, by a rudimentary soul, which makes of such a man a creature superior to the animal- human kingdom. He who recognizes the divine meaning of life knows that knowledge has but one aim, which is to achieve the successive stages that liberate him from the perishable. For things only die in their body: the spirit, the divine Word, returns to its source and dies not. Unhappy is the ka that fails to recover its soul.”

Nazi Germany employed the second technique, via the displacement of life-consciousness from the individual human being to the state. Most Germans were able to achieve this only in a mundane sense - in a kind of ecstatic selflessness created and sustained by propaganda. But the “monk-knights” of the pre-war SS could disdain, even willingly embrace the death of the individual human body _because the consciousness had been transferred to a larger life-form - that of the Hegelian state - and individual sacrifice towards the strengthening of that life-form would actually contribute towards one’s immortality_. [Hegel’s concept of the state did not focus on the “physical” nation of people and territory, but rather on its animating character- and life-force, which Hegel called the *Volksgeist*. Hence his doctrine of the “organic state”.] In a very real way incomprehensible to the mundane mind, therefore, all of the individual-death references in the SS - such as the Totenkopf insignia and ritual pledges of “faithfulness unto death” - were in fact arrogant affirmations of immortality. To Dr. Rauschning [as recounted in *The Voice of Destruction* (#14L)] Hitler remarked:

“To the Christian doctrine of the infinite significance of the individual human soul and of personal responsibility, I oppose with icy clarity the saving doctrine of the nothingness and insignificance of the individual human being, and of his continued existence in the visible immortality of the nation. The dogma of vicarious suffering and death through a divine savior gives place to that of the representative living and acting of the new Leader- legislator, which liberates the mass of the faithful from the burden of free will.”

The usual mundane reaction to this is stupefied horror: the individual is seen as just a slave to the state. An entirely different light is cast upon it if the individual’s intellectual existence - his will, consciousness, and personality - is magically transferred to that of the *Volksgeist*. Then the human body becomes a component device whose value is measured simply by its being a support-vehicle to the seat of the intelligence. [Compare how “body- centered” individualists regard the lives and deaths of individual cells in the human body, i.e. with

indifference save as they contribute to the survival and life of the body's seat of consciousness.]

Why is it that human beings assume the Self to be "locked" to an individual human body - just as they assume the Self, locked in that body, to be "locked" to clock-time? To assume that it is thus locked is necessarily to doom it to death and extinction, as Maeterlinck observes in *Our Eternity* (#18D):

"What composes this sense of the ego which turns each of us into the center of the universe, the only point that matters in space and time? Is it formed of sensations of our body, or of thoughts independent of our body? Would our body be conscious of itself without our mind? And, on the other hand, what would our mind be without our body? We know bodies without mind, but no mind without a body. It is almost certain that an intelligence devoid of senses, devoid of organs to create and nourish it, exists; but it is impossible to imagine that ours could thus exist and yet remain similar to that which has derived all that inspires it from our sensibility.

"This ego, as we conceive it when we reflect upon the consequences of its destruction, this ego, therefore, is neither our mind nor our body, since we recognize that both are waves that roll by and are incessantly renewed. Is it an immovable point, which could not be form or substance, for these are always in evolution, nor yet life, which is the cause or effect of form and substance? In truth it is impossible for us to either apprehend or define it, or even to say where it dwells. When we try to go back to its last source, we find little more than a succession of memories, a mass of ideas, confused, for that matter, and unsettled, all connected with the same instinct, the instinct of living: a mass of habits of our sensibility and of conscious or unconscious reactions against the surrounding phenomena. When all is said, the most steadfast point of that nebula is our memory, which seems, on the other hand, to be a somewhat external, a somewhat accessory faculty and, in any case, one of the frailest faculties of our brain, one of those which disappear the most promptly at the least disturbance of our health. As an English poet has very truly said, 'That which cries aloud for eternity is the very part of me that will perish.'"

That English poet, it would seem, was ignorant of ECI or other magical techniques of time- and consciousness-travel. Too bad.

• Work on the Mind

Work on the Mind. *Firstly the Setian must learn critical thinking and logic, both to replace unexamined beliefs and to become less the plaything of others. Then he or she must become conversant with the Crystal Tablet. Lastly the Setian must become aware of cognition itself, perhaps by pursuing Susan Blackmore's *Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction* or Robert Anton Wilson's *Quantum Psychology*.*

The Force of Mind is something tied directly to the Aeon of Set. In the period before the Crisis of X then Magister Caverni Michael A. Aquino was moved by his reading of the destruction of the images of Set following the decline of the 20th Dynasty in Egypt and the growth of the Osiris cult as a social force. In a moment of playfulness he decided to create an image of Set himself and using Budge's *Egyptian Language* took a hieroglyphic phrase from a Hymn "*amma an-tu-na nai-a uru aaui*"

translated there as “Let My Great Nobles Come to Me.” During the North Solstice Working of X the newly proclaimed Magus Aquino would be told to take this image from his collection and affix it to the Document as the final act before the proclamation of Xeper as the Word of the Aeon of Set. This image has become known as the Seal of Set.

The reason I bring this up in a discussion of the Force of Mind has to do with the hieroglyphics used in the phrase around the Seal of Set. The words rendered into English as “Great Nobles” are created through “uru” for Nobles and “aiiu” for Great. As with most Egyptian words the modifier glyphs used to create the Word often hold certain keys towards understand the specifics of how the term is being used.

This form in the untitled Hymn from Budge that was Dr. Aquino’s Source. There it is rendered as



For those of you who have been following this series you might notice that the word begins with among other things the Y1 - Scroll “Abstract Concept”/“Durable Media” glyph which is central to the form of Xeper which acts as the Subject in the sentence “Xepera Xeper Xeperu.” This suggests that the type of “Greatness” being drawn by the sentence is the kind of greatness that comes through the Force of Mind. This contrasts to other forms of “aiiu” found in another key text *The Tale of Two Brothers* that also includes the “*amma an-tu-na nai-a uru aiiu*” phrase. There the form of “aiiu” has in the same place as the Y1 glyph the modifier D-36 “forearm” suggesting “giving” or potentially “use of force.”

The kind of Greatness one associated with the Nobles of Set as manifest within the Aeon of Set is their capacity to act as Ruling Forces through the Force of Mind.

So what is the Force of Mind and how do you Work with it? The full breadth of answers to this question is larger than a short series like this would allow so I will be focusing upon a few key actionable areas. In particular Cognitive Development, Rational Training and so-called “Blink” perceptions will be discussed. The cultivation of focus, attention and awareness that can be summarized as “mindfulness” will be discussed as well as the different contexts it can be cultivated within. The complexities of what happens when Mind turns its attention to Mind will be discussed. Inevitably some discussion of the present state of inferences about when this capacity first appeared in Humans will occur.

(Note by Adept Rathbun: I wanted to make a note on the Presence training recommended through the AMP program. It sounded interesting and I looked it up based on the recommendation here. Long winded scammy looking website, high price for the DVD's, but still getting the Magister's recommendation... Hey, I got a big bonus check, I'll order the whole package, what the hell... All I can say is WOW. Getting into this more open mindset, and learning to be aware to be PRESENT in your physiology, and taking ownership and recognition of you emotions moment to moment has been a life changing exercise this last week. I had NO idea just how much crap I was holding on to, not being aware of, and how it was affecting my awareness and interactions with others. The AMP program is set up like a program to be able to better talk to girls, but that's kind of a head fake, as it's making my interactions with EVERYONE better, and by taking ownership of my day to day moments and feelings, have been much more aware of myself and what's going on. It's also giving me a lot of perspective on past events and some generational, family dynamics and behaviors. I can where I've been told some of this info before, but something about the presentation, or just where I am right now helped me "get it.")

Magister Fitzsimmons responded:

How do you trick a bunch of men who are stuck in their lives learn how to become fully Present, improve their character and work towards changing their awareness? Tell them it will help them get laid. It's a trick that the Tantric Buddhists call "Skillful Means" or what William Chittick taught me under the term "Provisional Truth." Tell someone something that captures their attention based upon their primary drives, then give them a toolset that far exceeds what they thought they were getting into and transform them for the better. Not that I'd ever engage in such a thing, at all, at all. Before setting off on our Adventures in Mind I wanted to return to the Eternal Word once more.



The things that differentiate this form of Xeper from say the simple "rolling out" of a DNA script for a seed to a flower or a larva to a beetle is found in its two determinatives, a Mouth and a Scroll. Interestingly the very things that seems to be key to what differentiated humanity from the other species on the planet was precisely these same things, our complexified abilities to communicate and to create durable means for the transmission of information. Alternately these can be seen as our unique capacity to engage in Symbolic Behavior.

The entire notion of the Gift of Set is hidden in plain sight within the Word of the Aeon itself. Frankly it baffles me that it took 14 years for me to See it.

So how did we get this kind of capacity anyway? Well here is one hypothesis I have found very useful from [Dr. Susan Blackmore](#) for the New York Times. I've only extracted the sections related to the First and Second Replicator models. You can find the full article [here](#)

All around us information seems to be multiplying at an ever increasing pace. New books are published, new designs for toasters and i-gadgets appear, new music is composed or

synthesized and, perhaps above all, new content is uploaded into cyberspace. This is rather strange. We know that matter and energy cannot increase but apparently information can.

It is perhaps rather obvious to attribute this to the evolutionary algorithm or Darwinian process, as I will do, but I wish to emphasize one part of this process — copying. The reason information can increase like this is that, if the necessary raw materials are available, copying creates more information. Of course it is not new information, but if the copies vary (which they will if only by virtue of copying errors), and if not all variants survive to be copied again (which is inevitable given limited resources), then we have the complete three-step process of natural selection (Dennett, 1995). From here novel designs and truly new information emerge. None of this can happen without copying.

I want to make three arguments here.

The first is that humans are unique because they are so good at imitation. When our ancestors began to imitate they let loose a new evolutionary process based not on genes but on a second replicator, memes. Genes and memes then coevolved, transforming us into better and better meme machines.

The second is that one kind of copying can piggy-back on another: that is, one replicator (the information that is copied) can build on the products (vehicles or interactors) of another. This multilayered evolution has produced the amazing complexity of design we see all around us.

...

As I try to explain this I shall make some assertions and assumptions that some readers may find outrageous, but I am deliberately putting my case in its strongest form so that we can debate the issues people find most interesting or most troublesome.

Some may entirely reject the notion of replicators, and will therefore dismiss the whole enterprise. Others will accept that genes are replicators but reject the idea of memes. For example, Eva Jablonka and Marion J. Lamb (2005) refer to “the dreaded memes” while Peter J. Richerson and Robert Boyd (2005), who have contributed so much to the study of cultural evolution, assert that “cultural variants are not replicators.” They use the phrase “selfish memes” but still firmly reject memetics (Blackmore 2006). Similarly, in a previous “On The Human” post, William Benzon explains why he does not like the term “meme,” yet he needs some term to refer to the things that evolve and so he still uses it. As John S. Wilkins points out in response, there are several more classic objections: memes are not discrete (I would say some are not discrete), they do not form lineages (some do), memetic evolution appears to be Lamarckian (but only appears so), memes are not replicated but re-created or reproduced, or are not copied with sufficient fidelity (see discussions in Aunger 2000, Sterelny 2006, Wimsatt 2010). I have tackled all these, and more, elsewhere and concluded that the notion is still valid (Blackmore 1999, 2010a).

So I will press on, using the concept of memes as originally defined by Dawkins who invented the term; that is, memes are “that which is imitated” or whatever it is that is copied when people imitate each other. Memes include songs, stories, habits, skills, technologies, scientific theories, bogus medical treatments, financial systems, organizations — everything that makes

up human culture. I can now, briefly, tell the story of how I think we arrived where we are today.

Both memes and genes are vast competing sets of information, all selfishly getting copied whenever and however they can. First there were genes. Perhaps we should not call genes the first replicator because there may have been precursors worthy of that name and possibly RNA-like replicators before the evolution of DNA (Maynard Smith and Szathmari 1995). However, Dawkins (1976), who coined the term “replicator,” refers to genes this way and I shall do the same.

We should note here an important distinction for living things based on DNA, that the genes are the replicators while the animals and plants themselves are vehicles, interactors, or phenotypes: ephemeral creatures constructed with the aid of genetic information coded in tiny strands of DNA packaged safely inside them. Whether single-celled bacteria, great oak trees, or dogs and cats, in the gene-centered view of evolution they are all gene machines or Dawkins’s “lumbering robots.” The important point here is that the genetic information is faithfully copied down the generations, while the vehicles or interactors live and die without actually being copied. Put another way, this system copies the instructions for making a product rather than the product itself, a process that has many advantages (Blackmore 1999, 2001). This interesting distinction becomes important when we move on to higher replicators.

So what happened next? Earth might have remained a one-replicator planet but it did not. One of these gene machines, a social and bipedal ape, began to imitate. We do not know why, although shifting climate may have favored stealing skills from others rather than learning them anew (Richerson and Boyd 2005). Whatever the reason, our ancestors began to copy sounds, skills and habits from one to another. They passed on lighting fires, making stone tools, wearing clothes, decorating their bodies and all sorts of skills to do with living together as hunters and gatherers. The critical point here is, of course, that they copied these sounds, skills and habits, and this, I suggest, is what makes humans unique. No other species (as far as we know) can do this. Song birds can copy some sounds, some of the other great apes can imitate some actions, and most notably whales and dolphins can imitate, but none is capable of the widespread, generalized imitation that comes so easily to us. Imitation is not just some new minor ability. It changes everything. It enables a new kind of evolution.

This is why I have called humans “Earth’s Pandoran species.” They let loose this second replicator and began the process of memetic evolution in which memes competed to be selected by humans to be copied again. The successful memes then influenced human genes by gene-meme co-evolution (Blackmore 1999, 2001). Note that I see this process as somewhat different from gene-culture co-evolution, partly because most theorists treat culture as an adaptation (e.g. Richerson and Boyd 2005), and agree with Wilson that genes “keep culture on a leash.” (Lumsden and Wilson 1981 p 13).

Benzon, in responding to Peter Railton’s post here at The Stone, points out the limits of this metaphor and proposes the “chess board and game” instead. I prefer a simple host-parasite analogy. Once our ancestors could imitate they created lots of memes that competed to use their brains for their own propagation. This drove these hominids to become better meme machines and to carry the (potentially huge and even dangerous) burden of larger brain size and energy use, eventually becoming symbiotic. Neither memes nor genes are a dog or a dog-

owner. Neither is on a leash. They are both vast competing sets of information, all selfishly getting copied whenever and however they can.

For a more complete nuanced and citation heavy discussion of these themes see Dr. Blackmore's excellent *The Meme-Machine*.

For those more interested in a hard Paleoanthropological look at the topic of Human Uniqueness I would be more than happy to discuss it. It is one of my favorite topics and as such I can go about it for some time. Such being the case I feel that it may be outside of the purpose of this thread at this time.

During the Set Conclave in 2001 E.V. then-Magus Webb in this final live presentation to the Temple of Set as both a V° and High Priest of Set made a number of observations about the different aspects of the Self. One of his comments included the observation that the Stead of the Mind was so important to Setian Initiation that we had both an entire Degree dedicated to it (the First Degree) and that always the training of the Mind would be the touchstone upon which all other Work would be judged.

Let us look for a moment at what we provide a First Degree towards this end when they initially enter the Temple of Set. We provide fundamental guide designed to give a certain theoretical framework combined with a lot of teasing suggestions meant to be followed up and explored as the individual is so motivated ("Black Magic"), we give a map to the Self and the Cosmos with a tremendous amount of embedded activities designed to be taken out and explored while never overtly telling anyone what to do ("Within You and Beyond You"), the entries regarding the Words of the Aeon as Recognized by the Council of Nine to form the basic Aeonic parameters of our Work and then we give a massive collection of books, films and magazines which are suggested but not mandatory and for which our recommendation is not to be seen is an inherent endorsement.

This may seem like an odd thing, but let's look at it in light of yesterday's discussion of the Second Replicator and Memetics.

Much of the content of your Mind is the result of happenstance. Stray commercial jingles, half-remembered trivia, the rules for childhood games you haven't played in decades, the lyrics to old songs, are all clustered together and go off from time to time. For many people what passes off as their opinions are actually partial replications of ideas that they read from someone else which were coherent enough to stay assembled and which they will try to pass on to others. None of this comes from a place of Mindfulness and selection. If anything it has the appearance of an abandoned lot, full of weeds and stray trash whirling in the wind.

Much of the Work of the First Degree is a process of cleaning out and weeding this lot so that you can build your Kingdom.

Rather than cut ourselves off from the World entirely the Temple of Set suggest that making a space in your life removed from the influence of happenstance is a good thing. We also look to cultivate the skills necessary to begin the "weeding" process within the Mind. The Reading List provides a means of finding resources and ideas that are to be considered Mindfully. The material in its first section RL Category 0 is designed to help you learn how to evaluate ideas. Category 0 as you should know is that of Discernment.

The place where Discernment skills start is through Rational Training or the development of Close Reasoning. This often comes as a shock to our more occult oriented new members who have perhaps been shunning reason as being inherently unmagical. This idea stems from the Romantic traditions that set the Occult Revival of the 19th Century in motion and something writer Ken Wilber terms “[The pre-/trans- fallacy](#).” In this context this is the idea that everything is divided into the Mundane and the Magical and that these are the only two things that there are. The Setian approach sees the obvious limitations of this perspective and prefers to take a broader view. We quite consciously place ourselves in the Socratic tradition and claim that for trans-personal state awareness to occur that our minds must be trained.

How you train yourself in the skills of Discernment, Close Reasoning and Critical Thinking is left open to you. A key resource that many Setians have drawn from is the field of Philosophy. A useful resource in this Work is Julian Baggini and Peter S. Fosl’s *The Philosopher’s Toolkit: A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts and Methods*. For those who are more inclined towards auditory modes *Tools of Thinking: Understanding the World through Experience and Reason* by Professor James Hall, released by The Teaching Company will prove valuable.

For those who wish to get started right away here is a good introduction to the Socratic Method, a key feature of Setian practice.

[The Socratic Method Research Portal](#)

For those interested in exploring Socratic Dialog, both within and beyond the Temple of Set, this article will come in handy.

[Tips for starting and facilitating a Socrates Café!](#)

After working on another piece that was eaten by XaTuring's minions and then helping someone learn how to do a proper shoulder roll I think it might be helpful at this point to look at some of the ways that the Mind takes in information.

NLP Communication Model

The diagram below is a representation of the NLP communication model as presented in the book Time Line Therapy by Tad James and Wyatt Woodsmall.



The NLP communication model is another of the building blocks that forms the foundation of all NLP techniques. Learn this one thoroughly and you're well on your way to a solid appreciation of NLP.

This model is a way of explaining how we take information from the outside world into our neurology and how that in turn affects our behaviours.

The process begins with an external event which enters our nervous system through the five senses that make up our sensory input channels:

Visual - what we see

Auditory - sound, the words we hear and how those words are said to us etc.

Kinesthetic - internal and external feelings, pressure, texture etc.

Olfactory - the sense of smell

Gustatory - the sense of taste

These sensory input channels are often referred to in NLP by their initial letters - V, A, K, O and G respectively.

The NLP communication model includes the notion that our five senses take in up to 2,000,000 (two million) bits of information per second. The notion further states that our conscious mind can only process $7+/-2^*$ chunks of information per second which equates to approximately 134 bits per second. It doesn't take a math degree to see that our fantastic senses make available far more information than the conscious mind can usefully cope with - so what happens to the rest?

The incoming information passes automatically through a number of filters to reduce the

information down to the $7+ / 2^*$ chunks or (roughly) 134 bits that our conscious mind can cope with. The filters do this by:

Deletion - to attempt to actively pay attention to everything entering through our sensory input channels would not be useful. Thus we omit certain parts of our current experience by selectively paying attention to certain other parts of it i.e. we focus on what seems most important at any one particular moment in time and allow the rest to pass us by.

A common example of why deletion is necessary is that of the use of mobile telephones whilst driving - statistics prove that so much information is deleted when we try to do these two tasks simultaneously that we end up doing both badly and sometimes with very serious consequences.

Distortion - occurs when we make shifts in our experience of sensory data by making misrepresentations of reality. Distortion is a key component of imagination and a useful tool in motivating ourselves toward our goals. When we plan we use distortion to construct appealing imaginary futures.

As another example ask yourself a simple question - would you recognise your best friend if they changed their clothes or styled their hair in a different way? Without the ability to distort reality the answer would be no. Every time your friend changed a single aspect of their appearance, hair length, hair colour, clothing type, clothing colour etc., you would have to learn that entire configuration and add it to the 'map' which you label 'my best friend'.

Each time you saw your friend the only way you could be sure it was them would be to mentally examine every 'version' of them in the map until you found one that matched the person standing in front of you. Add in the fact that they look different depending on their facial expression, physical posture, state of health etc., etc. and the number of combinations you would have to learn just to recognise your friend would be huge! If you have more than one friend then you really have your work cut out for you!

Thus we rely on distortion to allow us to identify a particular thing or person over a wide range of variance.

The example in the Presuppositions section for feeling less stressed during a job interview by picturing the interviewer in the nude is also a good example of distortion.

Generalisation - is the process by which we draw global conclusions based on one, two or more experiences.

A useful example of a generalisation is that of a door. We learn that a door is usually a conduit between two locations - an exit from one location and simultaneously an entry into another location. We also learn that most doors are fixed along one side about an axis of rotation and that if we pull or push on the opposite side of the door it will open in one direction and close in the other. This is a superbly efficient form of learning as once we've learned how one door works we have the necessary information to deal with doors of any colour, size, shape or composition in any location so long as they conform to that basic type and we can commit this information to memory for future use.

At its best generalization is an efficient means of learning information which can be applied globally. At it's worst it is the way we take a single event and turn it into a lifetime of experience i.e. most phobias arise as a result of a one-time learning.

*7+/-2 (seven plus or minus two) represents the number of chunks of information that the conscious mind can usefully attend to at any point in time. To clarify, in optimum conditions i.e. calm, relaxed, quiet, focused, an average person could attend to up to 9 chunks of information at any one time. Under less than ideal conditions i.e. noisy, stressed and distracted by other things, an average person may only be able to attend to 5 chunks of information at any one time. Most of the time the average person can attend to 7 chunks of information at any one time.

Chunk size is variable and usually relates to the complexity of each chunk. Further explanations relating to chunking can be found elsewhere on this website.

From <http://microdot.net/nlp/learning-strategy/communication-model.shtml>

A critique of some of this material will return tomorrow with a focus upon the limitations of perception and a rarely trained aspect known as rapid cognition.

Rather than wait until tomorrow I thought I would pass along a few resources related to the limitations of perception and an Executive Summary of Malcolm Gladwell's book *Blink* that brings together a variety of research on Rapid Cognition.

Daniel Simons and Christopher Chabris are Psychologists deeply interested in the limitations of perception. The two have co-authored a book *The Invisible Gorilla: And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us* that I am still in the process of integrating but which I find appealing. The two have been making videos and presentations on their work for some time.

The first is fairly quick

[Daniel Simons talks about his "Invisible Gorilla" experiment and Visual Cognition](#) (duration 4:46)

While the second is longer and more robust an exploration of the topic

[Christopher Chabris talks to Google about the Visual Perception experiments he has worked on with Daniel Simons and others](#) (duration 1:08:55)

As for Rapid Cognition here is a 8 page Summary of the core ideas in Mr. Gladwell's book

[*Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*](#)

During the Conclave in 2000 in San Francisco then-Magus Don Webb made an off the cuff observation that has always stuck with me. He mentioned that the “Setian Act” was about taking mindless processes, raising them into awareness to grant them a level of mindfulness and then to release them back into the Self-Complex or the World.

This pattern resonates strongly with a simple but common pattern for learning. It can be summarized as:

Unconscious incompetence: You’re doing something wrong, and you don’t even know you’re doing it wrong.

Conscious incompetence: You’re doing something wrong and you’re aware that you’re doing it wrong, but you haven’t yet fixed the problem.

Conscious competence: You’ve learned the right way to do it, and you’re doing it correctly with focused attention

Unconscious competence: You no longer have to think about something or work on learning it - you automatically do it correctly.

Whenever you are learning a new skill, in any area of the Self-Complex, keep this pattern of increased awareness, error correction and allowing the skill to pass outside of awareness in mind.

An important skill to cultivate in order to activate this process is that of Mindfulness, a combination of Focus and Concentration whether directed internally or externally. Skills at Mindfulness can be cultivated in a number of ways, such as Meditation, the conscious movement skills mentioned in previous Steads or through learning to closely observe your environment. Ideally all of the different modalities of Mindfulness can be cultivated but realistically you should pick on area to focus on and Work from there.

Scott Sonnon, a Martial Arts and Fitness Coach, provides a good outline of the relationship between Focus and Concentration and the associated states of Mindfulness in his article [How Simply Can You Meditate](#)

In my book, the Three-Dimensional Performance Pyramid, I outlined “awareness” as the bisection of concentration (which can be internal or external) and focus (which can be narrow or broad).



By intersecting concentration and focus, you create four different types of awareness, each corresponding to a respective quadrant:

*External concentration, broad focus = **attention**: You use this type of awareness when you drive a car on a busy highway (when not on “auto-pilot” and not “road raging”); or when you’re pulling into the parking lot of your gym looking for a place to park.*

*Internal concentration, broad focus = **orientation**: You use this type of awareness when you are thinking about all of the items you need for your trip you’re about to depart on; or when you’re creating a new exercise program to surpass your personal transformation goals.*

*External concentration, narrow focus = **intention**: You use this type of awareness when you’re trying to grab a glass which is about to tip over and spill out water onto your laptop; or when you’re going over to the weight once you’ve selected the weight that you wish to pick-up and use.*

*Internal concentration, narrow focus = **meditation**: You use this type of awareness when you’re trying to adjust your seated posture because of back-pain; or when you’re performing a repetition of your favorite exercise, concentrating on exhaling during the effort phase of the movement.*

Because of its universal availability and simplicity I often teach, as I practice, a very simple form of Meditation as the beginning of Mindfulness training. This often forms the first part of Work for those involved in the MMM Study Group but it easily used by any Setian. The only equipment needed, aside from your Self-Complex, is a simple timing device. I use the most important class of magical tools in all of my Work, a digital cooking timer, but feel free to explore your options.

To begin set your timer for 3 to 5 minutes. Take a comfortable upright posture, seated or standing, and allow your back to align itself. You should not feel any undue tension in the body, but some is inevitable. * Once you feel comfortable start your timer and close your eyes. As you inhale mentally say to yourself “Here.” As your exhale mentally say to yourself “Now.” When you find your thought wander to anything other than this focus upon the breath, catch yourself and mentally

say “Avoiding” and return to your breath and the “Here”/“Now” pattern. Do this until the timer chimes or otherwise indicates that the time has passed.

Anything beyond this is purely up to you. You can use a set of beads to mark the number of times you have to return your attention to your breath. You can expand your awareness during your breath to more fully feel your body as the chest and lungs begin to relax and take on more natural rhythm. You may find that visualization such as a cycling of Energies up and down the midline of the body, or between the Body and the Environment are useful. As long as these things do not become new distractions in their own right they will help expand your overall sense of Mindfulness that in turn can be used in all other areas of your life as well.

* See the Stead of the Body for some ideas on how to undo this.

Learning *The Crystal Tablet of Set* Part I: The Standing Documents

One key aspect of Work within the Stead of the Mind for every Setian is learning to become familiar with and conversant in the ideas contained in *The Crystal Tablet of Set*. This is an ongoing process rather than a one-time thing. The more your return to *The Crystal Tablet* the more you will find within to set your Work on a new course.

The day that I received my copy of *The Crystal Tablet* marked the beginning of my journey as a Setian, with signs, portends and a profound internal sense that everything afterwards would be profoundly different. I am sure that if you asked other Setians their own experience would have some similar moments. The reasons for this are many, but most importantly it is due to the nature of the text itself.

The Crystal Tablet of Set, which is edited by the Temple of Set's Executive Director, is made up of a few key parts. The first section is termed "Standing Documents" to indicate that these pieces form the foundation and can only be changed by the Editor with approval from the Council of Nine. This is the bedrock of the Temple of Set's Teaching though they should be treated as the starting point for your Work rather than the Final Word.

Black Magic

The first part of the Standing Documents is Dr. Aquino's Essay collection "Black Magic." There are many ways to tackle learning the contents of this text but I will highlight a few based on my experience as past Soa-Gild Director and as the first Setian to the best of my knowledge to have held open public discussions of the Work's contents with non-Setians.

The first time through read the work in its entirety, keeping notes on your responses to the text. Mark down any strong positive or negative reactions to the text and underline or highlight any key passages. After you have finished reading it consider writing up your impressions on one or two typed pages collecting your thoughts and personal observations. Consider posting this to the Soa-Gild's Open Forum as a means of opening up your impressions to others.

Once you have done your first read take some time away from the text. Then return to it, this time in a more systematic fashion. Read the text chapter by chapter, making further notes for yourself. You may find it useful to write out the books mentioned by their RL number for further review if a chapter topic really captures your attention. Do not take what you read as final, but rather see it as an encouragement to begin your own independent research.

Talking about the contents of "Black Magic" with other Setians is advisable. Personally I prefer having at a minimum two people to discuss ideas with. You see this three-person structure in the Temple in a few different ways (I°-II°-III° Soa-Gild contacts; the minimum number of members for a Pylon or Element, etc.). The reason for this is to get a variety of impressions without there being too much consensus as to what it all "really means" and allows people at in different places in their development come together on equal footing. With the release of "Black Magic" by Dr. Aquino to the general public you might also consider having a non-Setian friend read it and provide their impressions. I know for my own Work having non-Setians informed about Setian ideas to talk to and explore with has been indispensable.

V° Words

Much like “Black Magic” these files should be read through once for initial impressions followed by a more systematic return to them later. You will likely find that you understand some aspects of each Word rather quickly while other aspects will seem nearly incomprehensible. In terms of your initial forces, start with Xeper. It is the beginning and ending of Setian Initiation and understanding this Word is the Key to it All. Once you feel you have some understanding of Xeper begin to expand outward.

My personal recommendation is to start with those Words whose Utterer has subsequently entered the Topaz Plane of the Ipsissimi. These Words have stabilized within the Aeon and have helped to condition Setian Initiation for some duration. Then, move towards those Words which presently have an active V° Utterer within the Temple of Set. These Words are not finalized and need the special scrutiny which only I° can provide as their test within the Aeon. Finally focus upon those Words which do not have active V° associated with them, keeping in mind that not matter how valid some aspects of these Word may be something within their Utterer removed them from the Temple of Set.

Realize that much like learning a conventional vocabulary, your initial understanding of these Words will likely not be as nuanced as those Setians who have been Working with these Words for longer. Your Work is to engage in a process of making the Word significant to you while testing your understanding by communicating with fluent users and to slowly over time improve the quality of your usage. At times this may be frustrating, but keep Working with these ideas and you will over time find more subtle shades of meaning and application.

Learning The Crystal Tablet of Set

Part II: The Varying Documents - Initiatory Guidance

In contrast to the Standing Documents of *The Crystal Tablet of Set* the Varying Documents can be added to by the Editor as well as any IV°+ Initiate.

One of the most important texts contained in this section is the text on Protocol by Robert Menschel IV°. Although some aspects of it are dated, as it was written before the wide scale use of electronic means of interaction by Setians, the core ideas of this document are bedrock to your capacity to interact with other Setians in an effective manner. This is an important document to periodically return to in order to gain a better understanding of how Protocol within the Temple can be used as an Initiatory tool rather than as a complicator of communication. Certain aspects of this document will come up again during the discussion of Meta-Communication.

For the sake of this discussion I will be focusing upon “Within You and Beyond You” by Don Webb V°. This focus is not to minimize the value of the other pieces contained in this section but to keep a focus upon the overall themes I have been writing on.

“Within You and Beyond You” Several years ago while I was Director of the Soa-Gild someone involved expressed their frustrations with the Gild’s focus upon *The Crystal Tablet of Set*. They said they’d read the material multiple times and done everything recommend and was getting bored going over returning to this same text more than one. This baffled me as it suggested to me a poverty of imagination on their part. As an experiment I decided to sit down with Ipsissimus Webb’s High Priest Contribution to the CT, “Within You and Beyond You” to see how many activities and exercises I could extract directly from the text itself. I still have the resultant document that I opened while composing this section. It is roughly 14 pages long and contains nothing but actionable projects, large and small, which would take a lifetime of Work to accomplish.

Many of the exercises are implied rather than overtly stated. This is a common feature to Ipsissimus Webb’s writing for the Temple. Huge amounts of actionable information will be enfolded into a great economy of words. The challenge for the Setian is to read these things and decide to extract from them their own methods. As you engage with the methods you notice you will be transformed and in turn will start to see other, previously invisible activities emerge from the Text. This is as it should be.

As you read WYABY the first time my standard suggestion of doing so while taking notes applies. Keep track of the things that you have strong emotional responses to, positive and negative. If you read something that jumps out at you saying that you really should do this, start implementing it immediately. Never the less once you have gone through the text once consider going back to it in a more systematic fashion. You may also find that as you become interested in specific topics generally it is worth checking this text to see what ideas and activities you may find that will help guide your exploration.

As the text is best understood by Doing rather than discussion WYABY works as an excellent resource for developing Pylon Projects, or for those not involved in a Pylon, to create shared project with other Setians you regularly interact with. Picking a chapter to read together and then having each participant extract one activity can guide multiple months of Work and experimentation. Once this is underway the sharing of these methods and their results with the Temple, through forums

like TS1 and the Scroll, will help your group contribute to the overall Work of the Temple and may inspire others to do the same.

One section significant to return to periodically is the chapter on the Degree System. Do not do what most people do when reading this system, which is picking the Degree you aspire to and trying to do what is there. That's a fool's game and leads nowhere. Rather, focus upon the section related specifically to your present Degree and see what areas and actions contained there jump out at you. Maybe there are aspects you have not been focusing upon fully, or an aspect of your present Work will suddenly seem to resonate with the Work of this Degree. Fully inhabiting your present Degree and diving into it with great focus and attention is the key to all growth within and beyond that Degree.

Never lose sight of this and it will take you far beyond your expectations.

As I come to a close for this discussion of the Stead of the Mind I want to return to something already mentioned.

As then-Magus Webb said in his address to the International Conclave in Las Vegas in 2001, the Temple of Set the Work of the Stead of the Mind is one of the central aspects to the First Degree as an Initiatory experience. As with all aspects of the First Degree this Work will remain fundamental to all other Setian Work. Returning to the Stead of the Mind again and again, seeking ever-greater firmness, composure and sophistication in this aspect of the Self-Complex will remain with you throughout all of your Work. This is both for the rewards that this Work brings in its own context and the training it gives you in attempting to take on the other Steads.

The Mind is a fragile thing, capable of rapid changes. Its ability to alter its present functions is tremendous, leading to its capacity for translative changes far outside of the other aspects of the Self such as the emotions and the body. In fact with very little effort one can translate the content of the Mind very quickly from one field or aesthetic to another. This can also be a serious trap.

As the content changes we can sometimes fall victim to the illusion that we have changed when what we have really changed are simply the decorations of our Minds and not its structure. It is often easier to see this in others than in ourselves. You meet a fundamentalist “Satanist” who is perpetually disturbing little old ladies and anyone else who crosses their path about how their beliefs are bullshit and they should adopt his own only to discover that he had, previous to his “Satanic Awakening” been raised in a Fundamentalist Christian home where his parents perpetually disturbed old ladies and everyone else who crossed their path about how their beliefs were bullshit and they should adopt their own.

This may seem comedic, and it is, when it isn’t *you*. But how much of your present Mind is simply similar decorations in contrast to real changes to its structure?

Much like the other features of the body, the human Brain response to stress in a predictable fashion. Disrupt its operations by making it do new things and its initial response is to make a chemical change. This will be short lasting but will give the impression that something is different, at least temporarily. Keep putting the brain under stress and it will begin to adapt, forming new connections and making previous one more or less robust to respond to the stress. Over-tax the brain and it will strain, disabling part of its operations. The consistent application of stress to the Brain is one part of the Work of the Stead of the Mind, and part of why this Work needs to be done regularly. The neurological feature that it rests upon is something called [Neuroplasticity](#) that was first popularized by Jeffery M. Schwartz and Sharon Begley in the book *The Mind and the Brain*. Schwartz is a Psychologist who specializes in treating Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and it was in his attempt to find new ways of treating that condition that he became interested in this capacity of the Brain.

I have had an interest in Compulsion for a good number of years, beginning during my experiences with the Process Collective in the mid-1990s. When I discovered Anton LaVey’s Work on Indulgence I was taken by his contrasting it with Compulsion. A few years ago I posted to my Setian related blog a short summation of Schwartz’s pre-Neuroplasticity informed method for Self-treatment of OCD under the title “Indulgence’s Opposite.”

A quick summary of the method is quoted here with the full text of the article at <http://www.hope4ocd.com/foursteps.php>

QUICK SUMMARY OF THE FOUR STEPS OF COGNITIVE BIOBEHAVIORAL SELF-TREATMENT FOR OCD

Step 1: RELABEL Recognize that the intrusive obsessive thoughts and urges are the RESULT OF OCD.

Step 2: REATTRIBUTE Realize that the intensity and intrusiveness of the thought or urge is CAUSED BY OCD; it is probably related to a biochemical imbalance in the brain.

Step 3: REFOCUS Work around the OCD thoughts by focusing your attention on something else, at least for a few minutes: DO ANOTHER BEHAVIOR.

Step 4: REVALUE Do not take the OCD thought at face value. It Is not significant in itself.

Surprisingly this post has been one of the most popular on that blog, making me realize just how many people are interested in trying to do more than just change the decorations of their mind.

People, and particularly Setians, crave real transformation even when it can be difficult and unpleasant. Learn to be both gentle and demanding of yourself as you pursue the Work of the Mind and in time you will see real transformations take place in that Stead. This will prepare you to be able to deal with the tidal qualities of your emotions and the initial habit gravity well that your body develops around its processes. You will need to bring yourself to the edge of your capacities again and again, but if you do, you will find that your Work takes you to places you never imagined because they just did not seem possible.

They were impossible for the person you were, but not for the one you are Becoming.

Gaining Magical Skill

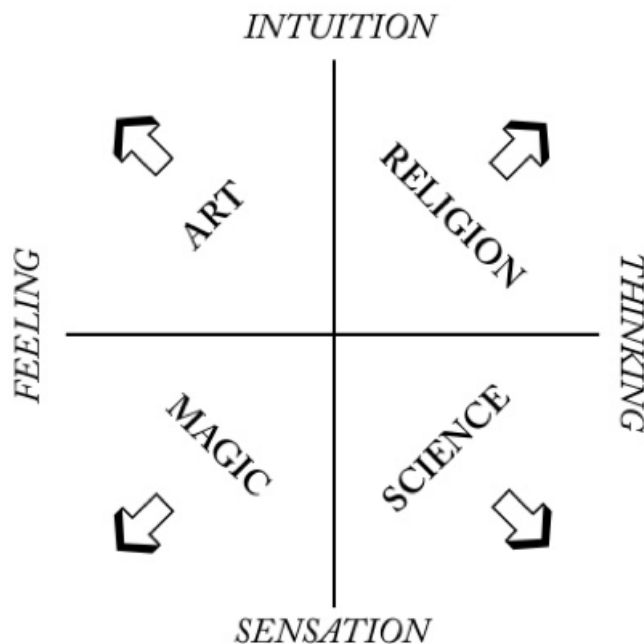
Gaining magical skill. Setians should learn firstly to use the rubric in the Crystal Tablet, then to try as many techniques as they like using both self-created and Traditional means.

Let us start our discussion on magic with some orienting ideas.

One of the Ur-figures to the Chaos Magic Movement was a fellow named Lionell Snell. He's written under a few pseudonyms with his work as "Ramsey Dukes" probably being the most interesting. One of his more important insights for me was his compass-rose to try and relate to four major domains of human understanding: Art, Religion, Science, and Magic. If you grab a pencil here is how he does it.

Start with a horizontal line on a piece of paper. At the left end of it write "Feeling" and at the right end of it write "Thinking." Now draw a vertical line through this creating an x/y axis. At the top of this vertical line write "Intuition" and at the bottom write "Sensation."

At this point you should have four quadrants. Starting with the quadrant on the upper left, bounded by "Feeling" on the X-Axis and "Intuition" on the Y-axis write "Art." On the quadrant between "Intuition" and "Thinking" write "Religion." In the quadrant between "Thinking" and "Sensation" write "Science." In the quadrant between "Sensation" and "Feeling" write "Magic."



For a lot of Setians, myself included, what originally drew us to something like the Temple of Set was a desire towards the "Feeling" end of the spectrum. We wanted to deeply feel our own experiences and to deeply feel our own insights and we wanted those things to be real and meaningful regardless of what conventional science and the religions of our youth's said was "Real" or "Right." This is a healthy thing and a strong stance against letting any one of these quadrants try and collapse all

experience into only their domains.

Overtime a second shift happens where you realize that trying to live only on the side of Art and Magic can be as limiting as only living in the realms of Science and Religion. The realization that you need to be the center which has access to all of these domains starts to become important and learning to see where the differences are and the strengths and weaknesses of each approach allows you to integrate all of these vantage points.

***Magister Pridgen Notes:

One of the Ur-figures to the Chaos Magic Movement was a fellow named Lionell Snell. He's written under a few pseudonyms with his work as "Ramsey Dukes" probably being the most interesting. One of his more important insights for me was his compass-rose to try and related four major domains of human understanding: Art, Religion, Science, and Magic. If you grab a pencil here is how he does it.

Ah yes, I have this chart in his book titled Sex Secrets of the Black Magicians Exposed, or SSOBME for short.

Start with a horizontal line on a piece of paper. At the left end of it write "Feeling" and at the right end of it write "Thinking." Now draw a vertical line through this creating an x/y axis. At the top of this vertical line writ "Intuition" and at the bottom write "Sensation."

Ironically, he had to use reasoned analysis to conceive and execute this chart.

At this point you should have four quadrants. Starting with the quadrant on the upper left, bounded by "Feeling" on the X-Axis and "Intuition" on the Y-axis write "Art." On the quadrant between "Intuition" and "Thinking" write "Religion." In the quadrant between "Thinking" and "Sensation" write "Science." In the quadrant between "Sensation" and "Feeling" write "Magic." [Image: <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/17787812/Screen%20shot%202012-03-27%20at%209.32.49%20AM.png>] For a lot of Setians, myself included, what originally drew us to something like the Temple of Set was a desire towards the "Feeling" end of the spectrum. We wanted to deeply feel our own experiences and to deeply feel our own insights and we wanted those things to be real and meaningful regardless of what conventional science and the religions of our youth's said was "Real" or "Right." This is a healthy thing and a strong stance against letting any one of these quadrants try and collapse all experience into only their domains.

Contemplating this chart, it's interesting how Magic is the opposite of Religion, and Science the opposite of Art. I am definitely biased towards the bottom two quadrants, although I understand the importance of being centered. However, to play Devil's Advocate a moment... notice that Religion is the quadrant between Intuition and Thinking. This fits perfectly with the definition of Faith as belief apart from evidence, maintained in spite of evidence to the contrary, since the quadrant between Intuition and Thinking would be devoid of content, literally, since there is nothing of physical sensation and therefore nothing to reason about beyond hypothetical conjecture and speculation. Reasoning in a vacuum.

Overtime a second shift happens where you realize that trying to live only on the side of Art and Magic can be as limiting as only living in the realms of Science and Religion. The realization that you need to be the center which has access to all of these domains starts to become important and learning to see where the differences are and the strengths and weaknesses of each approach allows you to integrate all of these vantage points.

How about living in the realms of Magic and Science? I have no problem being the center, having access to all domains, but I see little value in Intuition, since Reality tends to be (more often than not) counter-intuitive, and when I Intuit correctly this is virtually indistinguishable from statistics or guesswork. A broken clock is right twice a day. Perhaps I'm having some sort of Einstein complex where I refuse to believe that God plays dice with the Universe.

Magister Fitzsimmons response:

The whole compass will follow you wherever you go, the same way a regular compass does. Even if you got very west or very north the compass still registers in all four directions. Of course there may be some version of the North Pole effect (i.e. at the Pole everything registers as South) if you go far enough in any direction. In fact you see forms of this in those people who have experienced quadrant collapse, i.e. white coat scientists who dismiss everything outside of their domain as fanciful "Art" to be ignored.

Rather than fighting against the distinct ways that the Mind interprets and creates meaning for experience it seems more beneficial to find a way to contextualize and integrate all of it. You will probably find that you become a specialist in one of the quadrants, which can be balanced by having others around you with more affinity for other quadrants. In that context we get a fuller, more nuanced and thus more honest sense of the territory of human experience.

I wouldn't discount the role of Intuition in the Sciences. From the dogged determination of someone like Mary Leaky at Olduvai which eventually lead to the find of the first *Paranthropus boisei* fossil despite repeated failure at the FLK site or the lysergic enabled flash of insight that least to Watson and Crick understanding the double helix structure of DNA Intuitive modalities have played an important role in a variety of important breakthroughs.

Magister Pridgen response:

I'm not sure I was trying to discount the role of Intuition in the sciences. People have Intuition, myself included. My point was that Intuition unchecked is indistinguishable from guesswork, such that Intuition confirmed by Reason and Evidence is perfectly acceptable. I suppose my actual bias is in crediting Reason more than Intuition, although I realize an argument could be made that without that initial flash of inspiration or creativity there would be little driving/motivating Reason. One idea I find fascinating is that of the Northern Skald, wherein and extreme synthesis of strict rules and unbounded inspiration takes place, a Polarian fusion of Reason and Inspiration. I suppose one hound that keeps nipping at my heels is that it then becomes necessary to engage in reflective thought about all of this, or at least I personally find it necessary. Without such reflective thought none of this would ever become clear, and therefore also not very useful.

By all means, I certainly don't regret the work of Leaky, Crick, and Watson. The inspirational and insightful flashes are crucial. But again, without the follow up work these insights would likely amount to a flash in the pan. It's also important to keep things in perspective by stating that the majority of these flashes amount to little or nothing, more often than not. That doesn't mean I discourage them or wish for them to end. Again it's a matter of keeping things in perspective.

Magister Fitzsimmons Response:

I'm not sure I was trying to discount the role of Intuition in the sciences. People have Intuition, myself included. My point was that Intuition unchecked is indistinguishable from guesswork, such that Intuition confirmed by Reason and Evidence is perfectly acceptable.

Sometimes the rational approach can be more easily fooled than intuition. In the post related to Rapid Cognition I mentioned Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink*. The book opens with the story of a set of classical statues that were discovered to much fanfare. Experts had investigated them meticulously and confirmed their authenticity. Then a few other experts saw that statues and immediately declared them fakes without knowing why. Upon further investigation these second wave doubters were proven correct, as the statues were frauds.

The way this sort of Rapid Cognition or Intuition is trained is often through a process of error correction and repetition. This aspect of the process often relies upon the rational capacity to cut process down into discrete chunks and integrate them in pieces. But the skill, when in use, is done without conscious reflection or rational activity.

I suppose my actual bias is in crediting Reason more than Intuition, although I realize an argument could be made that without that initial flash of inspiration or creativity there would be little driving/motivating Reason. One idea I find fascinating is that of the Northern Skald, wherein and extreme synthesis of strict rules and unbounded inspiration takes place, a Polarian fusion of Reason and Inspiration.

I think that is a fine way to be weighted. My own center of gravity leans in that direction as well. In most circumstances I tend to "Science" things first and then explore the other aspects afterwards. I have worked intentionally in the training the other direction however after realizing how easy people who ignored this area were to fool.

In particular the way that otherwise qualified researchers were duped by characters like Uri Gellar was largely based upon these people not realizing that it was their untrained intuition leaping to wrong conclusions followed by their rational aspects filling in explanations for their having been duped. That it has primarily been Stage Magicians who opened up the doors to exposing these frauds made perfect sense to me as Stage Magic is about largely about learning how that process of duping untrained intuition and causing false rationalizations.

Similarly I heard a story attributed to "Trader Vic" about an Investor who used a very expensive way of training new Investment Managers. Regardless of someone's qualifications or background he would bring him or her on and give them \$250,000 to invest and manage. If by the end of the week they had done well with the money he'd hire them. Over time he found that the people who had the more prestigious degrees and higher IQ indicators almost always did worse than those without them. The reason, he felt, was that they were so used to only taking action after careful analysis, causing them to miss the actual moment when making investments would have been beneficial and when investments were losing were more willing to keep their money in it expecting them to turn around because they could not accept that they had come to the wrong conclusion.

I suppose one hound that keeps nipping at my heels is that it then becomes necessary to engage in reflective thought about all of this, or at least I personally find it necessary. Without such reflective thought none of this would ever become clear, and therefore also not very useful.

In some ways I think this is where Mindfulness comes into play as well. Becoming more aware of how your Mind operates and increasing the resolution of how you "See" its operations can give you the critical room to be able to really understand what is taking place. I liken the results of

such practice to an increase of frame rate in film. If our default frame rate is 4 pictures per second, developing skills at Mindfulness leads in time to 8 pictures per second, 16 pictures per second, etc. This particular capacity of Mindfulness training is one of the key reasons why practices of this nature are often found within martial arts and allied fields where being able to perceive thinner slices allows for more perceived time to respond in.

PS: Now how does all of this plug into the Spiral Dynamics Integral model?

Chances are I'll get there during the Meta-Communication section.

Magistra Hardy's response to Magister Pridgen:

How about living in the realms of Magic and Science? I have no problem being the center, having access to all domains, but I see little value in Intuition, since Reality tends to be (more often than not) counter-intuitive, and when I Intuit correctly this is virtually indistinguishable from statistics or guesswork.

Regarding Intuition and its value, it seems worth quoting my old Ruby Tablet essay, "Is Noesis Mystical?" The essay discussed a kind of direct apprehension that some people might reckon intuitive: "Noesis is not mystical, but a mode of nonverbal symbolic thought. Because it is not a verbal form of reasoning, it seems 'superrational' and perceptual in the terms of the verbal mind: the thought 'appears' to consciousness in much the same fashion that an object 'appears' to the eye. Yet the thought-form is subject to rational review and empirical use, just as the object seen with the eye is subject to other tests of existence."

The physical basis for this is similar in some respects to the genetic and developmental processing the brain applies to sensory data. When you hear a twig snap, your brain triangulates and categorizes the sound long before the sound enters the focus of attention; in many cases you'll be pivoting to face the sound before you realize you heard something. That's a legacy you owe your ancestors, who did not fall to a prowling leopard or a hidden blade before passing on their genes.

If you consciously "over-learn" and thereby assimilate a mental skill, you may experience the "descent" (ascent?) of the skill beyond the immediate circle of attention, and thereafter you will occasionally be surprised.

It must be understood that

- (a) This is "non-natural" only in the sense that it isn't something one inherits like the ability to see depth or identify the source of a sound.
- (b) It never occurs without practice. Wishful thinking and opinion are easy and thus vastly more common, even as fool's gold is more common than gold.
- (c) One must indeed check the result. "Past performance is no guarantee of future results."

(Continuation of 6. Stead of Magic)

On “Black Magic” Dr. Aquino defines Greater Black Magic as

Greater Black Magic (GBM) is the causing of change to occur in the subjective universe in accordance with the will. This change is the subjective universe may cause a similar and proportionate change in the objective universe.

In addition he proposes two distinct approaches to GBM:

You undertake a GBM working because you want to understand something or because you want to change something. The former type may be referred to as an **illustrative** working, while the latter is often called an **operative** working. Each takes effect by expanding and/or altering your subjective universe, which then exerts a corresponding and proportionate influence upon the objective universe - and other subjective universes - via the Magical Link phenomenon.

Along the way two key factors have been recognized as essential to GBM, namely the Passion of the Magician for the outcome and the Precision by which they can communicate their Desire. With these in mind GMB can be restated as

Greater Black Magic (GBM) is the causing of change to occur in the subjective universe in accordance with the will. This change is the subjective universe may cause a similar and proportionate change in the objective universe based upon the Passion and Precision of the Black Magician.

Passion cannot be taught. Either there are things that you are in fact Passionate about or they simple mean little to you. In this sense the idea that Black Magicians are born and not made has some validity to it. Rather than taking that at face value however it may be better to think that one cannot be born to Black Magic without first discovering your Passions.

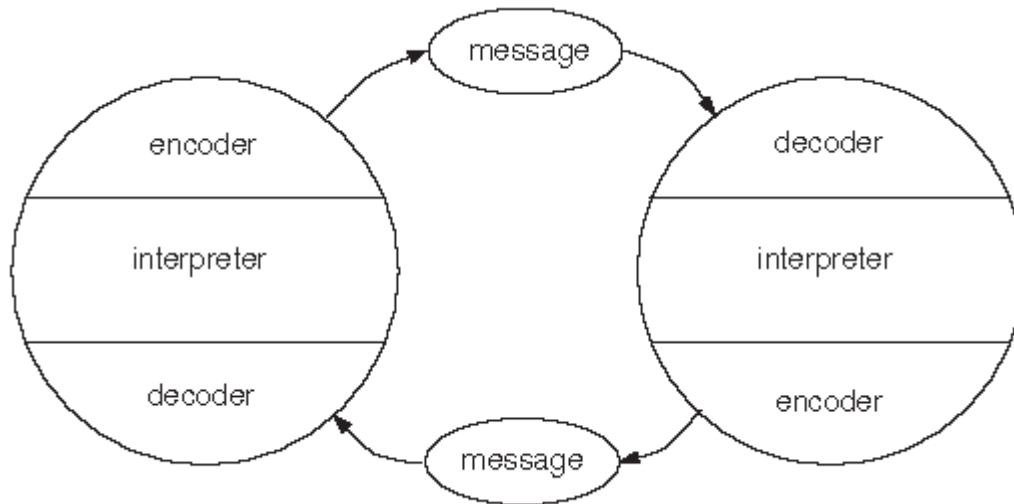
If you do not have any Passions do not bother with Black Magic.

Precision can be learned. The vast majority of magical curriculums that exist are designed to do that just, some more effectively than others. Until the Dawning of the Aeon of Set very little precision in the field of Magic was known and so much of what passed for “Occult Wisdom” until that time is often a hodgepodge of superstitions, religion masquerading as magic and one or two real gems. One of the real genius realizations of Anton LaVey was that stripped of its layers of blinds and superstitions Greater Magic was actually made up of some very simple factors:

- A clearly identified Desire
- Timing the Working to coincide to when having an effect would be optimal
- Imagery that the Magician found evocative and conducive to their expressing their Desire
- A method of concentrating and giving Direction to the Desire to be communicated
- An awareness of Achievable Reality, which he termed “The Balance Factor”

Of course LaVey, along with many later adherents to his persona, became more tied to their preferred Imagery at the expense of other aspects of the Work. Nonetheless this is still an effective framework for undertaking acts of GBM.

You'll notice that the idea of communication permeates throughout this approach. In fact nearly all magical activity relies upon a capacity to identify, encode and communicate Desire, whether to other humans or to Unknown Forces in the Cosmos to have them fulfilled. This notion of "Magic as Communication" was something that the Ancient World was aware of as well. Thoth, neter of magic, was also the neter of written words for example. In more recent times modeling magical acts on communicative acts has lead to Ipsissimus Flowers "Semiotic Theory of Magic" as well as the resonant but independently developed "Cognitive Theory of Magic" from Jesper Sørensen. Here is a very basic model for communication from the 1950s developed by Wilbur L. Schramm:



Let's take the circle on the left to be our hypothetical Magician. In the course of living our Magician discovers a Desire that they want to have come into being. The Desire is congruent with the Magician's values and its fulfillment will enable long-term goals to more readily come into being. The Magician begins the process of creating a Working for this Desire. This may include things like filling the image-centers of their mind with images of the outcome they want. They may begin to visualize the outcome as if it has already happened. They start to alter how they hold themselves and interact with others to reflect how they think someone with this Desire fulfilled would act like. At the same time they begin to write the formal aspects of the Working out in a way that reflects the process of how they discovered the Desire and how they feel it most conducive to expressing this Desire. This is the process of **Encoding Desire**.

The Working text is set, the time of the Working is identified, and the Magician goes about the Task. Starting with their customary opening they move through the Working, feeling their Desire as Passionately as possible and worry not at all about what the results will be. Once they feel that they have successfully transmitted their Desire, they close in their customary manner. This is the sending of the **Message**.

The Magician returns to life acting as if the outcome will occur. They also begin the process of looking for signs of a response from the Cosmos. This may be obvious things, like transmitting a Desire for Money and finding a \$100 bill on a the street, or it may be more subtle things, like finding an advertisement for a vacation spot you never heard of before after doing a Working for personal Restoration. This period works best if you remain open to signals from a variety of sources and if

you take into account that the actual outcome will include unknown but significant aspects which you have not planned for. This is the process of **Decoding** the results of your Magic.

Magister Pridgen notes:

Passion cannot be taught. Either there are things that you are in fact Passionate about or they simple mean little to you. In this sense the idea that Black Magicians are born and not made has some validity to it. Rather than taking that at face value however it may be better to think that one cannot be born to Black Magic without first discovering your Passions.

This is true, but there is hope for those wondering, as the process of discovering your passions can be taught. This process is called evaluation, the rational process of figuring out what you value and pursuing goals based on those values. This is just one among a multitude of reason why I encourage Setians to study logic and epistemology. You will learn how the intellect or isolate intelligence works, you will learn to distinguish fact from fiction, you will learn how to discover and pursue values. Once you do your passion will, instead of dispersing its energy like a live wire, become a focused vessel of goal driven attainment.

If you do not have any Passions do not bother with Black Magic.

If you don't have any passions you are a walking corpse.

Precision can be learned. The vast majority of magical curriculums that exist are designed to do that just, some more effectively than others. Until the Dawning of the Aeon of Set very little precision in the field of Magic was known and so much of what passed for "Occult Wisdom" until that time is often a hodgepodge of superstitions, religion masquerading as magic and one or two real gems.

Agreed, which is why I (and others who I have learned from) always encourage Setians to seek wisdom in the most unlikely of places. You are more likely to assimilate valuable working principles from your old college textbooks than from books in the occult section of Barnes & Noble. You just have to look at those ideas from a magical perspective instead of a mundane one. Once again this ties into values. If you value something it tends to look a little less mundane and evoke more excitement/passion in you. I think this may be one of the things alluded to in *The Book of the Heb Sed* when it admonishes us to change the nature of perception.

Adept Briz notes (re: Passion)

The inclusion of Passion and Precision feels quite adequate. Since my first days working with GBM, I started to notice that the Magical Link is me: my actions, reactions, state of mind, preparation, and the like. I am not the type that finds 100 bills, I am more the type that loses them and makes them back through action and lessons learnt. I may need to work on precision, maybe, as any desire that I have expressed has brought challenges and means to get it, but never through a third party or by chance. It is sometimes tiring to wish, as then you need to work for it, at least, in my experience. So, Passion? Yes, Passion. I wish it was easier, but would that limit growth?

Priest Roblee notes (re: Passion)

Passion is like Desire. This is precisely what we work with in the OWW. Desire=WYRD. I speak not so much of the specific desires we have for certain states, objects, knowledge, or power, but rather the touch of something more mysteriously (i.e. Shta-tu or Runa) "self." Desire makes "self" a verb; knowing one's desire makes it a noun. Through precise manipulation of the "warp and weft" of Wyrld, which can be experienced as "nonverbal symbolic thought" (to quote Magistra Hardy) as much as "rationally intuited will" (to paraphrase Ipsissimus Flowers), we express/manifest the specific precipitate "decoded" (Berlo in Flowers, 1986; Schramm in Fitzsimmons, below) desires. Anyway, that's my tech.

The Black Magic Rubrics Part 1

The approach to GBM provided in “Black Magic” is a simple yet sophisticate approach to engaging in the Art. These rubrics act as a framing device for Workings, much the way that “header” and “footer” code frames HTML pages. In fact a similar pattern of “open” and “close” coding can be seen in the rubrics.

The steps suggested in “Black Magic” are:

1. Prepare the Chamber
2. Dress for the Working
3. Ring the Bell
4. Light the Black Flame
5. Invocation
6. Drink from the Grail
7. Summon the Elements
8. The Working
9. Extinguish the Flame
10. Ring the Bell
11. Closing Statement

For now I would like to concentrate on steps 3 to 11. More detailed considerations for steps 1 and 2 will be given in the Forum on Greater Black Magic that has recently been created. The most general advice I can give for your Chamber, whether permanent or temporary, do something to make it Separate from its everyday use. With regard to Working Dress, the more meaningful, intentional and special the better. Even if you are “wearing the dress of the day” insure that it is worn with some thought. Or, as Dr. Aquino said upon resuming the High Priesthood of Set in 2002 E.V. “No more formal workings in sports clothes.”

The Bell

The Bell seems like a relatively simple thing but there are ways to enhance your experience of it. First is to pick something that you feel has sufficient qualities to remind you of an act of GBM. When you have found something which feels right on an emotional and aesthetic level make the conscious decision to only use the item for magical purposes. This is not for some superstitious reason of wanting the item to be “pure” but rather to preserve its effects for only intentional use.

Your connection to the Bell’s sound can be enhanced through NLP style anchoring methods. Go to your Chamber or regular place of Working. Take a few moments to allow your mind to relax. Think about what it means to you to be engaging in Greater Black Magic, to be impressing your Will upon the Cosmic Orderings towards the Fulfillment of Desire. When you feel that you have a strong sense of this ring the bell. Then close your eyes, open your eyes and do it again, for a total of nine times. This process will begin to link the sound of your Bell to the act of Magic and will make entry into the necessary mental state for Workings easier as time goes by.

The particular Bell you use is up to you. In my personal Work I have used a Tibetan style Ghanta Bell from an early period in my I°, a small tone bar which has since been given to the Black Sun Rising Pylon as it travels easily, and a large Gong which has been used for several years in the BSR Pylon’s

annual Saturnian Lodge Rite. Each of these has meaningful connections both to how and why I acquired them and the past Workings they were used in, privately and as part of Group Workings in Pylon, at Gatherings and at Conclaves.

The Black Flame

In my time as a Setian two major items have been used with the greatest success as representatives of the Black Flame in Workings: alcohol jelly fuels like Sternos which put off a blue hues flame and Plasma devices of various kinds. Really any item that strikes you as significant to the idea of the Unnatural Fire of Set that was used to engender the Gift of Set in humanity will work.

Once you have an item the same suggestion related to anchoring for the Bell applies here. This time however light or otherwise activate the item, close your eyes and begin to think about everything that the Black Flame symbolizes to you, allowing free-associations to arise until you feel a distinct sense of what you feel the Flame is. When this feels like it is coming to a high point open your eyes and look at the Flame item. Then close your eyes and open them, looking away from the Flame and begin the process again.

The Invocation

The Invocation of Set provided in “Black Magic” is by no means mandatory, but learning to Work with it initially can be an important stepping-stone towards developing your own means of Invocation. Once learned and understood it acts an effective framework for creating Invocations for other facets and cultural aspects of the Prince of Darkness as well.

When Working with a new Setian I will often have them spend a month using the Invocation of Set twice a day, once aloud in the morning to go with a Wish for the Day and then again silently at night with a request for specific dream content. This is a pattern I learned from Ipsissimus Webb and have found from my own experiments with this, as well as from the feedback of those who have done the practice, that doing so deepens your sense of the Invocation, begins to tie it to your Desires and after roughly a month or so you will typically be able to receipt it without needing a printed copy.

I will not provide an exegesis on the symbolism of the Invocation, though Priest Sonia has done some excellent work in this regarding the past. Never the less I would suggest that you do take the time to go through the Invocation line to by and when you come across a reference or term you do not recognize do some research to see what it may mean. Once you have taken the Invocation apart like this it will have considerably more meaning to you when used.

The Grail

The Grail Work is about establishing, reinforcing and maintaining a connection with the Powers of Darkness and all that this entails. Finding an item which speaks to you of this specialized connection can be tricky, though the pursuit of an object which most resonants with you in this regard is a useful process.

Once you own the item you can do a similar anchoring for it as for your other items. In this case the mental imagery is that of the Grail itself and of the idea of forgiving a connection with the Powers of Darkness. The anchored act is that of sipping from the Grail cup itself.

The Grail part of Workings has tended to be, in my experience, the section of the rubrics most often omitted in practice. This is a shame as this part of the Working provides an opportunity to reflect deeply upon the nourishing connection being made to the Force of Darkness by engaging in GBM s well as a reminded of the need to continue to Seek the Mysteries.

The reason that this section often gets omitted is largely one of stage management in Group Workings. This however would be easily remedied by having a central flask that is used for the formal section and small cups or personal grails for each of the participants. For large Workings such as Conclave Workings small but still distinctive disposable cups are cheap and easy to acquire in most cases.

If you or your Pylon have been omitting the Grail portion of the Rubrics start reintegrating it as a conscious experiment. You might be surprised to the results.

The Black Magic Rubrics Part 2

Summon the Elements

This section of the basic Setian Rubrics usually confuses those members who come from previous occult backgrounds. Their assumption, understandably, is that this section has something to with the Theory of Elements, either four or five, which are so prevalent within the Western Esoteric Tradition. In fact this is not the case. The Temple of Set is too diverse and cosmopolitan to lock itself into a single historic model for its Workings.

The best way to think about this Section of a Working is to consider the actions of a professional painter. Having previously sketched out ideas, and perhaps even created a few smaller mock-ups, a painter setting out to create a painting will need to do a few tasks. Setting up the canvas, making sure all the brushes are in place and taking a few steps to insure that the mood is set for the kind of final work desires can be considered the “Preparing the Chamber” aspects of the act of painting.

Before the painting process begins in earnest the paints to be used are set out upon a palette. Each paint is given its own space on the pallet where it can stay pure to its own qualities. Once the act of painting begins the artist will take paint from these areas on the palette and begin to mix them, blend them and create the qualities that they need for their act of art. Once these new blends are created they are applied with focus and attention upon the canvas, causing the final work of art to come into being in a fashion that may not have been predictable based upon just its original pure paints alone.

The Summoning of the Elements section of the Setian Rubrics can be thought of as this same process of setting up your palette for your Work of Magic. Identify those core ideas that you seek to intermingle for your Working and during this section call them forth in whatever manner is more emotionally resonant and significant to you by your purest understanding. Do not worry about how they will blend together, as that is for a separate section.

Feel neither bound by tradition nor beholden to avoiding it at all costs. Traditional elemental systems, whether Western Esoteric, Indo-Aryanian, Chinese, Alchemical models, the Germanic Nine Elements, etc. can be used in this section **if you feel they are significant to you and your Working**. As a Setian you are free to use whatever you need to in order to get yourself to the proper place of Working.

The Working

For many people upon the first time they read “Black Magic” this stein of the Rubrics feels like a dirty trick. They started reading this text thinking they were going to have the ultimate spell book, a veritable Necronomicon, and instead they have been given a coherent model of the Cosmos, arguments related to various ethical systems, information about historic contexts of past Initiation, etc. Then in the last chapter they get to Greater Black Magic and as soon as they get through all these ideas about how to set up for an open a Working they get to this section and, curses upon curses it says:

“Do the Working. Now, moving on...”

Okay, there are actually a few more bits of information than this, but that is often how people feel the first time through.

There are a few reasons for this. First and foremost **no one can tell you what you need to do magically**. This is something contingent upon your Will and Desire combined with the particular Daimonic qualities that you have. In the same way that no universal diet or fitness regime can be prescribed to all no universal approach to magic can be prescribed for all.

The upside of this is that you re perfectly free to do whatever you desire as an act of Greater Black Magic.

Dr. Aquino does describe an approach towards doing GBM which is contingent upon skills at entering into Imaginal Awareness, using the traditional term for it as “Astral Projection.” This idea has been elaborated by him on more than a few occasions with a few worthwhile entries on it in his “Black Pyramid” series in *The Scroll of Set*.

In particular he mentions one of Aleister Crowley’s training modules for the A.’.A.’., *Liber O vel Manus et Sagittae sub figurâ VI*. There are a few good pieces of advice to extract from this text regardless of your feelings on Crowley.

The first, from section I, is that one should be in good health and have attained some basic skills in stilling the body, controlling the breath and being able to concentrate. If you have been engaging in the Work of the previous Steads you should be well on your way.

The second is worth quoting in full:

Quote:

In this book it is spoken of the Sephiroth and the Paths; of Spirits and Conjurations; of Gods, Spheres, Planes, and many other things which may or may not exist.

It is immaterial whether these exist or not. By doing certain things certain results will follow; students are most earnestly warned against attributing objective reality or philosophic validity to any of them

This applies to all sorts of gods, real and imagined. For a Setian discussion along these lines see Dr. Aquino’s articles of Setamorphosis in his *The Temple of Set*. Take the impressions you experience in the course of your Workings seriously but not fatally so.

Extinguish the Flame Ring the Bell

Here we have the closing follow up of the ways in which our Working opened. This needs little discussion.

Closing Statement

The traditional Setian statement of Closing has been “So it is done!” In Group Workings it is not uncommon for one individual to say it and have it repeated by all. Elaborations upon this sometimes occur as well, with the statement “Great is the Might of Set, Greater still he through Us” being

personally the most resonant.

The closing statement acts as a way to break the atmosphere of the Working and return you to conventional awareness. Often it is a good time to write down a few initial impressions from the Working followed by finding something unrelated to the Working to do. Have a conversation with someone, go for a walk, watch a film, whatever you prefer. This can help to “seal” the events of the Working in your mind and can allow its effect to take shape without your interference. One need not forget everything about the Working but treating it as a “done deal” is best.

In terms of how to approach Traditional Magical systems there has been one approach, developed by Ipsissimus Stephen Flowers, which has had a profound impact within and beyond the Temple of Set. He terms his approach the Polarian Method and it found its first serious application within his Work to reawaken the Germanic Magicoreligious systems beginning in the 1970s.

I can do no better than he did in explaining his approach and so I will simply share the following presentation of the Polarian Method.

It looks like things have been double posting for me today. That's fine as it gives me a chance to put a follow up here.

For those who looked at the post above and had a TL;DR moment (too long; didn't read) here is a very brief summation of the Polarian Method:

How to Be a Heathen:

A Methodology for the Awakening of Traditional Systems

By

Stephen E. Flowers/Edred Thorsson

The following paper was generated from a talk delivered to the Pagan Student Alliance of the University of Texas at Austin, November 22, 1991 and is dedicated to the memory of Edwin Wade, Óðinsgoði, who died on this date in 1989.

I have come to you to speak about how exactly one might go about being a heathen, or pagan, in today's world. What I will say will be of use on two fronts. First, it will provide a model for the rationally intuitive "reconstruction" or revival of heathen religions – or better said – cultural value systems. But second, it can also act as a sort of manual of "consumer guidance" for such systems. Since we are swamped with the "marketing" of such systems on a constant basis, I think the time has surely come for some discussion on how we should approach them.

The whole issue of culture is often glossed over, especially by American writers. This is because there is usually only tenuous understanding of what all is meant by this term. When we speak of culture, we may meaningfully break it down into four types of culture – all of which blended together give us a true picture of any given historical society, ancient or modern. There is: 1) ethnic culture, 2) ethical culture, 3) material culture, and 4) linguistic culture. These may be conveniently illustrated as in Figure 1.

Culture

Ethnic Ethical

Material Linguistic

Figure 1: The Culture Grid

All kinds of culture have to do with contact of some kind between real people. Humans are cultural animals. To survive we need to absorb, intellectually and consciously, tremendous amounts of cultural data. The faculty to generate culture and to absorb its contents is one of the things that separate us from the "other" animals (Which is another way of saying what makes us something other than animals).

Ethnic culture is a purely physical reality. It has to do with the reproduction of the carnal human reality – physical bodies – through sexual contact. It is, if you prefer the term, the “racial culture” of a people. In any holistic understanding of culture this must, of course, be accounted for and discussed. When we look around the world today, we see cultures like Japan which has an almost entirely homogeneous ethnic culture. This is also reflected in other aspects of their over all cultural model, which is to be expected. They constitute a true nation, in the original meaning of that word, i.e., a people sharing a common birth (from Latin *natio*, I am born). The United States of America on the other end of the spectrum, is not a true nation but rather a multi-national state.

Ethical culture is the most complex kind of culture. It touches all the other types, and is usually what most people think of when they think of culture at all. It has to do with everything that is contained in, and generated from, the minds of humans (in that given culture). It contains the categories of everything from religions to political ideologies, to literary traditions, to economic systems. Ethical culture is the collective ideology – or spiritual systems – of a society.

Material culture comprises, on the other hand, all the physical objects created by art (i.e., craft). These are the artificial projections onto the physical world of the contents of the mind – of ethical culture. Often we know of a given historical culture only by means of the artifacts (objects of material culture) left behind in the archeological record. This is, for example, the case with the “Old Europeans,” the pre-Indo-European folk of the far western part of the Eurasian land mass.

Finally, linguistic culture is the language spoken and understood by a people. This is most intimately connected with ethical culture, for especially in the case of cultures of the past it is virtually only through linguistic records that we can determine what the content of their minds – their ethical culture – was. Factors from the material culture also become extremely important here because it is usually only through tangible (i.e., material) records of the linguistic data that we can know the thoughts of the people of the past as directly as possible – through actual scrolls, papyri, inscriptions, books, etc. This is how they can speak to us most directly and most clearly over time, and we must hear them in this way to be sure of the voice of the past.

What most heathens, or pagans, seem to be interested in is the revival of ancient cultures. They like to go back in their minds and imaginations to a time when the cultural grid was a holistic one – where one could speak of (just to name one example) the Germanic culture as a whole: Germanic folk, Germanic religion, Germanic art, Germanic language were one organic whole. If a sense of this wholeness can be regained, it can again make a positive impact on the individual and the culture to which that individual belongs by healing the sense of alienation the loss of that wholeness causes.

This is a noble endeavor. But it is a difficult one to do well and reliably and with a minimum of subjective wish fulfillment. The establishment of a method of doing all this is what I hope to contribute to with this paper.

The “neo-pagan movement” is rife with subjectivism. People reconstruct the “past” in the vision of their own private needs and prejudices. Neo-paganism is often less a religious path and more a system for the validation or justification of subjective biases. Sometimes these subjectives result in effective and sometimes beautiful systems of thought and practice: take

for example the original form of Gardnerian Witchcraft. But their bases are nevertheless in the subjective needs and prejudices of the creators. What I propose is the development of an objective, rational basis for a system from which reliable and more profoundly useful systems can be developed.

A little less than two thousand years ago, when someone mentioned “pagan science” or “pagan thought” (as distinguished from “Christian”) it implied that there was a rational basis to it – not a “revealed,” irrational one. How much that has changed over the ensuing years! I would like to see the pagan birthright of rationality restored to us. So that when the word “pagan” is heard it will not necessarily call up images of whacked out misfits, but will on the contrary be synonymous with clear-headed, yet inspired thought.

One of the great pagan thinkers was a Greek named Plato. His system was almost entirely from his indigenous philosophical tradition (although for the sake of prestige he often invented myths about more exotic sources for his thought). Greek idealism, like Indian idealism, is really derived from the same Indo-European ideology. Idealism is, in this context, the supposition that there is a more real, more permanent, world beyond this one, and of which this world is a shadow or reflection. To the traditionalist this is the world of the gods and the world of laws beyond them to which they are also subject. For Plato and the Indian philosophers of the Brahmanas and Upanishads the world beyond is filled with impersonal first principles, or forms (Greek *eidos*), or archetypes, if you will.

If this world is a reflection or shadow of the ideal world, and if we can learn the laws and principles of how such reflections or shadows are made, we have the possibility of discovering the truth about the hidden world beyond our senses. The way to discover these truths is, furthermore, shown to be a process of rationally intuiting the objects of knowledge beyond the grasp of our senses. We begin with what we may know rationally, significantly improve on that knowledge, and then jump intuitively (using objective knowledge as our spring-board) into the world beyond the rational. The main problem with pagan thought as usually practiced today is that there is a good deal of jumping – but the spring-board is made of balsa wood.

Plato identified four levels, or types, of knowledge, as shown in figure 2.

Type of Knowledge	Object of Knowledge
4. Rational Intuition	Forms
3. Logic	Mathematical Objects
2. Belief	Things
1. Conjecture/Guess-Work	Shadows

Conjecture, or guess-work (Greek *eikasia*) hardly qualifies as “knowledge” at all. No one should “think” like this. Although all of us do at least occasionally – and most people do most of the time. This is the kind of thought that is based on nothing but totally subjective “evidence,” or worse yet, on the subjective evidence provided by others. Two-dimensional characters, such as Archie Bunker, provide perfect examples of such people. Such people know nothing but the shadows of real things.

Belief (Greek *pistis*) is a faith in the validity of things which have been received from authoritative sources. In a traditional society these authoritative sources are easy to identify. The priests and priestesses of the national divinities, tribal elders, etc. In our postmodern

world these authorities are more difficult to identify reliably. If nothing else, this paper should be of some use in that process. At this stage the person knows real things, but can only follow certain directions with regard to practice when dealing with things beyond the world of the senses. To this realm belong what we usually think of as “religion” – the correct performance of rituals, etc. This is the level at which the vast majority of people are comfortable. As far as a healthy society is concerned, this is also the level at which most people should be satisfied. Beyond it is a realm of spiritual toil and anguish.

There is a gulf which separates belief from logic. The tension across this gulf was quite palpable in the modern age.

Logic, or rational thought (Greek *dianoia*) is knowledge of the kind we would today call “scientific.” It is essentially based on data, which are, as often as not, rooted in mathematics. As we have come to learn in the modern world, if you “have the numbers” concerning something it is likely that you will be able to manipulate or reshape that thing. You can control it because you have quantified it. To this realm of knowledge we would today ascribe all of the arts and sciences taught and researched at our universities. Universities are temples to *Dianoia* – or thought. Today credible knowledge seems to end here. Beyond it lies only mumbo-jumbo and ufo-ria. But such was not the case in pagan times.

Rational intuition (Greek *noesis*) is the highest kind of knowledge. But one can non leap from belief into rational intuition – one must pass through *dianoia*. Long training in objective science (in whatever field) is necessary to cause the mind to function in a reliable manner. Then when it is prefocused on more “spiritual” objects the knowledge it gains will be maximally reliable – or real. We no longer have traditional schools for training in this kind of knowledge. All the schools which exist at present in cultures derived from European roots are new schools. So the question becomes one of quality, not age or legitimacy of authority.

This scale of knowledge, and this whole discussion of pagan bases of knowledge in general, has been offered to give some sort of context for the body of this presentation. The point will be that the “reconstruction” of whole cultural systems must (at least according to the best kind of pagan knowledge) be based on objective criteria and data, but additionally they must just as much be matters of actual doing – not merely ivory tower theorizing. It is only through enactment of theory that knowledge becomes real. We can only learn the most important things through action and experience.

How is it that we know how to put men on the moon, or how to build bombs that can destroy the world (proving that we are indeed gods of the planet) today – but we – as a species – in fact know nothing more about the most profound human problems of Love, Truth, Justice, etc. than did good old Plato? “Progress” can be seen clearly in technological fields because this kind of knowledge (technical knowledge) can be passed on easily in a system of belief from one person to another, from one generation to another. Each person, each generation, does not have to “reinvent the wheel.” But when it comes to those other things, those things which cannot be passed on by authority from one person to the next, every person does indeed have to reinvent his or her own wheel. But not just any wheel will do. It has to be the right wheel. This is what initiation is all about. This further points to the methods used by philosophers which really can only put the student in a place where knowledge can be gained directly from the source. The teacher cannot impart the knowledge, only create the conditions in which

knowledge can flow into the student's conscious mind.
Can a Dead Cultural System be Revived?

Before beginning our quest, we must refine our goals. To the basic question of whether a truly dead cultural system – such as the Egyptian, Sumerian, or Indus Valley – can be revived, I think the honest answer must be: “No.” That is, human creativity can (re-)create something of an artificial likeness of such a cultural system to vivify it with action and devotion. But the thing itself is not actually brought back to life. This is in part also due to the fact that in the cases mentioned above the lines of continuity of ethnic, ethical and linguistic culture have been irreparably broken.

But to a slightly different question of whether a sleeping cultural system can be awakened, the answer may be more confidently be given: “Yes.” If there is some continuity between the past and the present in all four cultural areas – but if a cultural system has nevertheless become disestablished – then it is said to be not dead but merely sleeping. Such is the case with the Germanic tradition. We form a continuously identifiably ethnic unit, we hold many of the old ethical traditions (see everything from concepts of “English Common Law” to the “Christmas” tree), we still create art based on Germanic concepts of abstraction, and we certainly still speak a language derived directly from that of our pre-historic ancestors. None of these categories is completely dead – all are just sleeping under a blanket of Christian/Middle Eastern overlay. The same could be said for the Celtic, Italic, Hellenic, Slavic, and a dozen other traditions.

In many ways what I will present in the sections that follow is the method I used in the awakening of the Germanic tradition in a score or so books I have written on the subject, and the methods used for awakening slumbering practices and beliefs in the Asatru movement as a whole. This methodology is essential for students of any such cultural system.

The Process of Awakening

The process of awakening comes in three phases. These do not follow in the linear pattern 1-2-3, however. That is, you do not start in Process I, finish it, and then move on to Process II, etc. Really we are involved on all three levels throughout our lives as long as we are dedicated to the long process of reawakening the hidden reality within. But, with all this being said, wisdom must be applied at all times to discipline one's self so that in the early part of one's quest most of one's time is spent on Process I, while relatively less time is spent on the latter two. As the years do on the balance will begin to shift, and relatively less time will be spent on the objective tasks and more time will be spent in the activation of what one has learned. It is in this latter stage that true understanding arises.

Process I is one of rational discovery or objective analysis – where the traditional record is examined in a scientific manner.

Process II is one of subjective synthesis – where the data gathered and analyzed in the first process are allowed to sink into the subjective universe, or soul, or the individual. Here it is allowed to become whole with your mind.

Process III is one of enactment – where the inner synthesis is activated, made to become effective in the objective universe.

Process I

Rational Discovery or Objective Analysis

To begin the first process we have to ask ourselves one basic question: What do we have to work with objectively? Now at this stage we must remind ourselves that we are sticking to things that are part of the objective record. What so-and-so might have “channeled” concerning the true nature of the old Germanic, Celtic, or Egyptian system is, whatever else it might be, not objective. To accept such material or ideas is simply to believe in the power of that individual to “channel” such things. You are dealing with “revelations” not traditions.

So what are the kinds of things that can tell us about the objective tradition? These are mainly written sources for reasons outlined above. Does that mean that everything that was ever written by or about a culture is to be used without discrimination? Certainly not. Discrimination is of the highest importance. The sources must be used in the following order or precedence:

1. Internal Contemporary Texts
2. External Contemporary Texts
3. Archeological Evidence
4. Internal Surviving “Texts” (e.g., folklore)
5. Secondary Texts
 1. Autochthonous
 2. Comparative

Internal contemporary texts are ones such as the Eddas or runic inscriptions which give us some sort of direct insight into the minds of heathen Germanic peoples. External contemporary texts are things such as the Roman and Greek historians’ and ethnographers’ accounts of the people indigenous to the north. Although their views may be skewed for one reason or another (and these reasons must be examined) they did have more direct sources of raw information perhaps than we can today, and so remain tremendously valuable. (For a collection of these see James Chisholm’s *Grove and Gallows* [Rûna-Raven, 2001].)

Archeological evidence is mute. It can not “talk,” that is, convey verbal information, without corroboration from textual sources. If a statue of an otherwise unknown god or goddess is dug up somewhere, and it cannot be identified with some figure in the local mythology as recorded in texts, what are we left with? All that remains to us is some pretty wild speculation based on nothing but an image. But if that same artifact is to some extent “explained” by a textual source, then it becomes a great window into the spiritual life of the people.

Again, this bears reiterating, all we can objectively know about a bygone culture must be found in an objective record – written or archeological – and all interpretations of that record must be held to judgments based on the objective record. To proceed otherwise is simply to be a believer in modern prejudices and prophets. To illustrate this with a concrete example, of the many rune books that came out in the 1980s (with one exception) only my works were based on the actual tradition of runology well-known from the runestones, rune-poems, and modern scientific runology itself. All the others freely altered or dispensed with (or more accurately, were simply ignorant of) the traditional knowledge available in any good reference book on the subject – if you couldn’t be bothered to visit a runestone. But books were written on the bases of these wild speculations, prejudices, and wishful thoughts. How to decide “which” runic system to use? In a way, I was faced with this same problem when I started my own

esoteric studies. But I realized that all foundations had to go back to some objective piece of evidence – to some runic inscription, to some Eddic or runic poem, to some saga passage, and perhaps to some comparative evidence – all else was interpretation. But as I came to see it, it had to be interpretation based on the whole of the tradition, not just one select part of it.

Another slightly different class of primary evidence is provided by folklore. By folklore I mean customs, stories and all kinds of traditions that have been handed down in a continuous fashion from early times. Examples of this kind of evidence would be folk-tales collected by the Brothers Grimm or the various country customs collected by folklorists throughout northern Europe. It is probably true that a great deal of this goes back to pre-Christian, heathen, times. The problem is we can never know exactly how much of it has been innovated or imported in the Christian era. Therefore folklore evidence must be considered as being secondary to the more archaic material. It can be used to fill in gaps in our knowledge, but on the evidence of folklore alone no reliable objective system can be created, nor can folklore evidence be used to overthrow the evidence from more archaic sources.

Finally actual secondary, scholarly, literature about the traditions must be considered. The huge body of scholarly work that has been done on the ancient Germanic religion, for example, is too rich and thought-provoking to ignore. The present-day heathen should approach this literature as a record of contemporary men and women trying to make some rational sense out of the primary evidence according to certain intellectual rules by which their science is supposed to be governed. “Inspiration,” so important to the practicing heathen, is of much less importance to the scholar. But often inspiration can be drawn from their sometimes limited conclusions. When making use of secondary scholarly literature you should try to find the most recent works possible. If the scientific aspect is being developed as it should be, the older literature will be accounted for in newer, and the older will be superseded by the more comprehensive findings of the newer as well. The only caveat here is when some ideological fashion (e.g., “political correctness,” “feminism,” etc.) comes to dominate scholarship in certain sectors. Learn to recognize and avoid such intellectual fashions. In general secondary material can be divided into two classes: one which treats a given tradition from within itself and another which tries to compare one system to another thereby illuminating further the more obscure of the two. Of course, this latter method must account for the ways in which one system or tradition might be connected to the other. It is in this area that the work of Georges Dumézil is so important.

Now that we have reviewed the types of sources to which we will attempt to gain access, the problem arises as to what exact questions will we attempt to answer with this data. The essentials of understanding any person individually, or any group of people collectively, lie in knowledge of their view of the world, of themselves, of any gods or goddesses they might have, and in understanding the practices they use to act and interact within these various contexts, e.g., what rituals, spiritual technologies they use.

In technical terms we must discover the traditional cosmology used by the folk-group in question. That is, what is their view of the order of the world. Also essential to this is the origin of the world, their cosmogony. Once you understand how people view the world, you have gone a long way toward understanding the very soul of the people.

The soul must also come under direct examination. Here we must try to reconstruct the

traditional psychology of the group. The investigator should try to determine what the folk-group thinks a human being is in essence and how the individual relates to the whole (society and world). This in turn opens the door to the sociology of the traditional group under investigation.

Usually a special category is enjoyed by the gods and goddesses of a people. The divinities are special exemplary models for human behavior and spirituality. By knowing the pattern inherent in the god-forms as well as understanding how the various god-forms relate to each other inside the system we will have a deep-level map of the ideas of the people in question.

Also essential to the whole process is an understanding of the “spiritual technologies” used by a people to communicate with their gods, to interact with them and/or with the world directly. Peoples usually have rituals and customs to affect this part of life. Such customs and behaviors are usually at the center of revivalist efforts. The problem is often that the rituals are lost or only survive in sketchy outlines. At this stage we are primarily concerned with finding out what these outlines are. The only way to restore the soul to these outlines, and to flesh them out again in a robust fashion, is to discover the soul of the people through the understanding of the cosmology, psychology, sociology and theology – and then enacting the ritual elements regularly and physically. When modern heathens make the same sounds, gestures or motions that their ancestors did in worshipping the gods or carrying out some other spiritual or magical practice, their actions physically and actually resonate with those of the past. The more this is done, the stronger the resonance becomes. This is why in the True movement, or in Ásatrú, it is so often emphasized that actually troth is a matter of doing, not believing. From action comes faith in the results of action.

Two other important ways to recover the soul of the ancestors, and ways theoretically very much akin to the rediscovery of their spiritual practices, is the learning of the archaic languages they spoke, e.g., Old Norse (Icelandic), Old English, and/or learning their methods of crafting things in the physical universe, e.g., metal-working, weaving, wood-working. At first these seem to be merely technical undertakings, but as time goes on the soul of the activity will manifest itself as the acts of today begin to resonate with the actions of the past and a sort of inter-epochal harmony begins to arise in the soul of the modern heathen.

Process II

Subjective Synthesis

Once suitable progress has been made in all phases of the first process, all the data collected in that learning process is to be constantly and thoroughly submitted to a threefold model of subjective or internal inquiry. Each piece of data is to be considered as it relates to the individual self of the subject (you), how it relates to the tradition (as you have come to understand it), and how it relates to the environment (social and natural). The question of tradition handles the problem through time (diachronically), while the question of the environment handles it as it relates to the here-and-now (synchronically). This process is actually a description of how the individual soul makes sense of the tradition.

As an example of this, let us take the traditional fact that the cosmos is made up of “nine worlds.” How does this relate to my individual self? How does this relate to tradition? How does this relate to the world around me? Now let it be said that what exact answers you come

up with are perhaps less important in the beginning than the fact that you have posed the questions to yourself and set the wheels of inquiry into motion. In time the questions will be answered – not because you read them in a book by Edred Thorsson or Georges Dumézil – but because you have come to know the answers yourself. You will have experienced the answers. Often the best efforts at objective and subjective inquiry come to an impasse. Knotty problems sometimes remain. At times, but especially when such thorny problems arise, a threefold tool of inquiry can be brought to bear. Ask these three questions:

- 1) Is it factual? (i.e., fits the findings in Process I)
- 2) Is it aesthetic? (i.e., pleasing to the sensibilities)
- 3) Is it useful? (i.e., fills a basic contemporary need)

Again, let's take a concrete example to illustrate how this is supposed to work. Let's say Uncle Einar, who resentful of his Christian upbringing, objects to having a "Yule-Tree" in the hall during Yuletide because he thinks it is a "Christian thing." You want to do the right thing, so you apply the threefold question to it: Is it factual that the tree is pagan? Yes, that can be proven from many sources. Many Christian denominations realize this and therefore try to discourage their followers from having "Christmas trees." "But just because heathens did it doesn't mean we have to do it, right?" persists Uncle Einar. This is true, O avuncular one. But the fact that the whole culture finds the tree an important and meaningful part of the Yuletide festivities (despite the attempts of the early Christians to suppress it) shows that it is generally pleasing to the sensibilities of most folks. Because of its popularity its usefulness as a symbol and as a religious practice is assured. It helps us focus on the immortality of the folk so long as its identifiable organic existence continues. Gifts given to the children, and to the ancestors, focus our attention both on the roots and to the leaves of the tree. This also points the way to the preferability of using living Yule-Trees. The roots were cut off when the crypto-heathens had to remove their Yule-Trees indoors to worship in secret ways that had formerly expressed in public and in the woods. Let us restore the roots to the Yule-Tree!

So the problem of the Yule-Tree seems to be a personal one for Uncle Einar. He is, of course, free to dispense with it in his own home, but it can certainly be proven to meet all three criteria for continuance, maintenance and redevelopment as a true custom.

Process III Enactment

Once a set of practices, beliefs, and so on, have been established through the application of Process II, it increasingly becomes the responsibility of the individual to prove the results of the second process through enactment, through actually and physically acting out the practices. This first comes on a personal level. Only through enactment in the physical world can the final judgment be made on the viability of the system you have arrived at. Things that looked good on paper, or sounded good in your head, may be unworkable in actual practice. This can only be shown through practice. On one level this is the end of the whole process, but on another level it is just the beginning.

This process of enactment itself comes in two main phases. The first involves individual enactment. Begin to enact the subjectively synthesized patterns on an individual basis – both internally and externally. Internal "action" is just as important as external action. Internal

action is tantamount to faith or belief – a firm conviction of the truth of something. A thought profoundly held and conceived is a powerful deed. Most forceful and sustainable external action is motivated by the emotional engine of the soul, which is perceived as faith or belief. The Norse term for this is *trú*. This moves the subject to act. The external actions may range from undertaking traditional handicrafts with spiritual intent, to the enactment of the religious rites rooted in ancient Germanic patterns, to the carving of runes. Again the important thing is to act, and to act in full awareness of the meaning of one's actions. The resonance built up between one's actions and the original paradigms upon which these actions are based is rooted on the trueness, or accuracy, of their forms.

Using these methods you can create your own personal religion, of course. But heathendom is in essence a folk religion, it involves a community of people. Individual development is important and essential, but if it is isolated and detached from others, it will not have permanence, and hence will not be as holy as it might have been. Therefore, the next arena of enactment is on the group level. Unless you can make what you arrived at up until now valid for a group of people, all you have done is create a highly personalized system. It is for this reason that organizations are necessary in the applications of these methods. Once the system becomes successful for a whole group of people it can be said to have gained, or regained, a transpersonal validity. This is the end-goal of all reawakened heathen systems. When group-level validity is achieved and maintained it becomes clear that the system is not the clever invention of a single individual, but rather the resonant and true reawakening of something that had been slumbering in the souls of all it touches. It can be said to ring true.

"1 comes upon us Mysteriously. Sometimes it comes and goes, and the prospective Initiate is not even aware of its presence. Election often slips through the cracks of one's attention. But for those who seize the inspiration the next phase is critical. Without losing the life-force present in the initial inspiration, one must move to the difficult First Work.

THE FIRST WORK is one of rational discovery or objective analysis — where the traditional record is examined in a scientific manner.

THE SECOND WORK is one of subjective synthesis — where the data gathered and analyzed in the first work is allowed to sink into the subjective universe or soul of the individual. Here it is allowed to become whole with your mind

THE THIRD WORK is one of enactment- where the inner synthesis is activated, made to become effective in the objective universe. Here one comes to know (*vita*)- and such "knowledge" is tantamount to action. This action will be resisted and tested by the world, but such resistance will be seen to lead to refinement and perfection of knowledge."

As a wrap up to the discussion of the practice of magic I wanted to return to something fundamental.

While the kind of hard work espoused by Ipsissimus Flowers in “How to be a Heathen” is brilliant and will transform your understanding tremendously there is nothing wrong with being someone whose magic is driven almost exclusively by their emotional sense of rightness and the significance of the imagery within their own experiences. The only place where this can become a problem is when you mistake these personal significances for being facts.

One of the movements in relation to magic that coincided with the recognition of the Aeon of Set was that of Chaos Magic. While much of the emotional fuel behind that movement has sputtered leaving it little more than a nostalgic relic of rebellion to be bought in a Mall Store, a parallel to its related social movement of Punk Rock, a good portion of the key insights are still valid.

In the same fashion that Anton LaVey had realized that the vast periods of purification and damming up of the carnal energies as precursors to Medieval Magic were not necessary as our culture gave us more than enough kinks of that nature already the early Chaos Magicians realized that our culture already provides us with mythic imagery conducive to magical ends which are just as valid as blowing the dust off of obscure gods of the past. Few of these magicians knew why this was the case, not being too deeply interesting in issues of Jung’s [Psychology of Archetypes](#) or Levi-Strauss’ [Theory of Mythemes](#), but they knew that they could plug into images from fantasy novels or sci-fi just as powerfully as they could Egyptian deities. Within the world of British Occultism this was a major sweeping change freeing much of that scene finally of the need to rely upon endlessly repacked Golden Dawn material or the increasingly untenable notions of Wicca.

Although mislabeled this lecture by Peter J. Carroll on the [Practice of Chaos Magic](#) is worth a listen. If you re interested in the moment that fulfilled much of Chaos Magic’s promise but also acted to burst its bubble and release its last vital moment you might enjoy this [presentation from Disinfo. Con.](#)

The reason I bring this movement up at this time is to remind you that you already have within you everything that you need to engage in Greater Black Magic. Use your emotional sense of rightness to guide you combined with your growing understanding of your Desires to start practicing now. There is nothing to wait for. Your simplest first steps will begin to open new gateways for you. Experiment widely with adapting magical ideas from all sources, historic and fictional, as you come to discover the unique combination of things necessary for you to unlock your own magical potential.

There is a good chance that along the way some more specialized approach will capture your interests but until that kind of Mystery opens for you be as experimentally promiscuous in your investigations as possible, guided by your sense of fun and necessity. It was this attitude towards magic which brought about the Aeon of Set and which will help you to find your footing within it.

PoN has been multi-posting the last few days. Rather than simply delete the repeat content I've been adding other content when I notice it for my own posts. The following pieces related to the practice of magic were not originally intended for this series, but seem worth some attention nonetheless.

The first questions asked by new Setians are usually (1) What is Magic? and (2) How can I do it? [Hence the Crystal Tablet.] One of the next questions is (3) Where can I do it? The stock answer is "Anywhere", and the customary launching-pad is a magical ritual chamber constructed in one's abode. Yet we are quite serious when we say "Anywhere". This planet is bursting with suitably magical environments, and a bit of amateur detective-work, coupled with just keeping your eyes and ears open, should be sufficient to alert you to more Satanic Sites than you'd ever dream were in your neighborhood. As a newly admitted I° in IV/1969, I found myself not in San Francisco Babylon, but in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. A bit of delving in local libraries informed me of the existence of the nearby "Devil's Tramping Ground", a sterile circle in the woods around which Old

Scratch was wont to pace while pondering his Great Works. Brave locals might visit it in the daytime, but none dared go near it at night. I did, of course, and it proved a superb site for a Working.

Magician's block is something like writer's block. There are many Setians who read enthusiastically about magic and magicians — and then who sit around waiting to see others "do magic for them" or just waiting for more to read. As the CT emphasizes, that's not how to become a magician. You've got to work actively with the principles yourself. At first they will be awkwardly "mechanical" — and probably painfully so. On one hand you may feel ridiculous and self-conscious, particularly if

you really screwed up what you thought would be a most serious and solemn Working. On the other hand you might get so effectively caught up in the Working that it goes 200% beyond what you planned, and you spend the next several hours pretty shaken up, wondering what on Earth [or under it] you let loose.

Once you are in the habit of watching for magical opportunities, an endless parade of same will pass before you. When Magister DeCecco moved to Las Vegas some time ago, I thought I would call his attention to the Valley of Fire, a lightningswept plain encircled by craggy peaks that would make Sauron of Mordor feel right at home. I might have saved myself the trouble, however, because DeCecco had already discovered the VoF on his own — because it is second [I should say "first"] nature for him to sense such things. And this is what I encourage you to do.

from Dr. Aquino's "Nameless Rites at Bunny Flat" from Runes Volume II, number 5, reprinted in full in his *Temple of Set*

Sorcery (also known as Results Magic, or Spell-casting) is generally understood as the use of magical techniques and perspectives to bring about a change in one's material environment. Traditionally, the use of magical techniques for direct results has been thought of as 'Low' magic, whilst the quest for spiritual growth, uniting with one's 'Higher Self' or attaining transcendence from the material world was, of course, 'High' magic. This distinction perpetuated the division of the world into matter v spirit, subjective v objective, reflecting a general philosophy (shared by science & religion) which regarded the demands of the everyday world as being inferior to abstract metaphysics.

Previous to the rise of dualistic, world-rejecting belief and philosophy, sorcerers were respected (and sometimes feared) for their power to influence events in their favour. For example, the Chinese Sorcerer Chuko Liang is said to have invoked the spirits of wind in a way that was instrumental to his master Liu Pei winning the Battle of Red Bluff (261 AD.).

For the modern magician, such a distinction is artificial and very much a sign of self-limitation. Sorcery is valuable for a number of reasons.

- 1) Firstly, that success with sorcery techniques embeds in one's mind the certainty that MAGIC WORKS in a way that intellectual argument or practice without clear purpose cannot.
- 2) Secondly, that in working with sorcery techniques, the rigorous analysis of one's own motivations and desire-complexes is itself enlightening and of great benefit to magical development.
- 3) Thirdly, that the practice of sorcery itself leads to considerations of personal ethics; if one is serious about bringing about change in the world, one must also accept responsibility for those changes. Moreover, bringing about change in the world tends to lead to personal changes. If I enchant for fame, then I must be able to change in order to make the best use of that fame.
- 4) Fourthly, practical sorcery demands identifiable results; if I choose to enchant for Wealth, I must be able to at some point be able to say how the sorcery has contributed to my wealth.
- 5) Finally, successful sorcery requires that we pay attention to the world as it is, rather than how we would like it to be. One of the great pitfalls in magical development is the tendency for people to, when the going gets tough, withdraw themselves into a safe fantasy and count themselves kings of infinite space. Sorcery, which is concerned with the everyday world, can help us keep our feet on the ground, which is very important for those who would reach for the stars.

from Phil Hine's ["An Introduction to Sorcery"](#)

The Combination Lock Principle by Anton Szandor LaVey

Magic is like a combination lock. If each tumbler falls into place, the lock will open. Seldom are any two locks the same. Their physical appearance might be identical, but the combination of numbers necessary to open each is different.

So it is with both individual magical working and those who attempt them. Goals may appear identical in nature, and magicians similar in training and outward characteristics, but there similarity stops.

No one can teach another a combination that is his own, for it would not work. Each person possesses his own inclinations, his own Gestalt, and so he must ascertain what works best for him. There is nothing intrinsically esoteric about any combination which will lead to an ultimately successful working unless one considers the keeping of the secret combination esoteric, for it is literally that. If the truth is to be known, Greater (ceremonial) magic is simply a means of formalizing acts which in and of themselves would elicit no attention were they to be carried out without ritualistic trappings. Hence a ritual chamber is necessary to make the practitioner feel like a magician, intensifying awareness of his own potential (if any exists). Once one understands his potential, reinforcement supplied by the trappings of a ritual chamber can be superfluous. It's only then when one can get down to brass tacks: the Combination.

Spatial concepts contribute three dimensions to the Combination. The fourth dimension exists in time. If the other three dimensions are placed in correct combination, then the fourth dimension, hence in each instance the spatial or physical boundaries of three dimensions must be present in suitable combination to effect said phenomena.

Every occurrence happens somewhere. It is that "somewhere," in combination with the magician serving as a catalyst, which makes the untoward occur. "Somewheres" need not be specialized enclosures in the obvious sense, but can be fields, cliffs, streets, woods and rivers, as well as structures.

Just as a rainbow is composed of harmonics of light, it is "somewhere" relative to our vantage point; though were we to enter into its apparent field, it would no longer visibly exist. The only way to see a rainbow is from afar -- yet it still exists. The fable of the rainbow, with its pot of gold waiting at its base, is the story of man's delusion and disappointment. The magician must realize that his search does not end at the base of the rainbow -- he must bypass it for the "somewhere" over the rainbow. There are no curricula for such a search. The combination needed for a controlled working might place the magician not only in diverse places, but in diverse positions and acts. He might need to read a certain book at a certain time in a certain place. Each acts to drop a tumbler in the combination lock.

How does one go about discovering these combinations? One doesn't. The discover him if he is responsive to their appearance. Sensitivity is essential. The harder one looks, the less he will find. "Seek and ye shall find" is a platitude as half-truthful as "the truth will make you free." One can seek until he drops and pass up the answers many times if he hasn't the sensitivity to recognize them when confronted by them. The "truth" can be screamed from a thousand

rooftops, and unless it is convenient to hear it will fall on deaf ears.

The most profound acts of magic just seem to “happen.” That is because the sets of circumstances which bring them about go unrecognized. Recognition is the key. How can one recognize such combinations when blind to even the most obvious motivations and actions? Or threatened by the accomplishments of another, when one’s ego must be strong and secure to become a mage?

Choosing not to recognize is good practice for letting important things pass you by. Peace of mind might be attained, but accomplishment will be missing. If one’s ultimate peace of mind rests upon the fulfillment of certain goals, the peace of mind accrued by desensitivity to the obvious is tragically fleeting. The ultimate letdown, which is bound to occur, will make one even more prone to ignorance. Then, contradictory though it may seem, ignorance will become one’s sole intellectual and emotional salvation. Parallels in the foregoing statement, as related to organized religion, should be amply evident.

reprinted in *The Devil’s Notebook*

Skill in Meta-communication. Setians must learn how to express their Will to others through dress, public speaking, Lesser Black Magic, Neuro Linguistic Programming and other skills. The Setian's Desire will take more than one head to think through, more than one body to build.

One of the distinctions that I love Ipsissimus Webb for providing here is the difference between Meta-Communication, which is value neutral, and Lesser Black Magic, which denotes a very specific kind of awareness on the part of the practitioner. This may seem like a minor thing but I will be returning to it again and again.

The term Meta-communication originates in the works of British Anthropologist George Batson. On its simplest level Meta-communication is the system in which more direct communication, both verbal and symbolic, takes place.

In order to understand this let's use two very simple English Words to represent our verbal communication: Thank You. Now let's set three different meta-communicative contexts which will change this simple message.

Situation One: A child is opening his birthday gift from his aunt who he does not like. Once opened the gift is seen to be a pair of wool socks. Seeing the disappointment on the child's face and the hopefulness on the aunt's the child's mother prods the child with "What do you say?" to which the child, looking down but turned to the aunt says, "Thank you."

Situation Two: An aged woman is struggling with her packages at a street and the wind has been trying to take the hat off of her head. A teenage run past her from behind, grabbing her hat and yells back to her "Thank you!"

Situation Three: A mother has her baby handed to her by a firefighter. Behind the fire fighter her house is in flames, being battled by three fire crews. The mother takes her baby in her arms, looks up at the firefighter and says "Thank you."

The same words, in different contexts, hold tremendously different meta-communicative values.

The actual percentage of how much total communication is made up of direct communication and how much is meta-communication cannot be determined absolutely. Each communication act will be made up of various quantities of each. However you will commonly hear statistics tossed around suggesting that up to 90% of all communication is non-verbal/meta-communicative in nature.

Meta-communication happens across a number of contexts. There is the meta-communication that we engage in within our own perceptual universe. There is the face-to-face meta-communication, which we engage in when we speak directly to people. There is the meta-communication we are subject to by all of the various aspects of our cultures, from language to design to the media.

There is functionally no way to cover all aspects of meta-communication in this thread or even in my entire lifetime. None the less I would like to set up some frameworks for understanding

the different aspects of Meta-communication to help give a functional taxonomy for understanding what you are subject to and how to potentially transform it into Lesser Black Magic. I would like to look at how pervasive the use of Meta-communication is within our experiences and how it has been an essential feature of human experience since the beginning of our unique consciousness. I would like to look at the ways in which elements of Meta-communication have become increasingly toxic forces in world cultures and what steps can be taken on a personal level to insulate yourself from some of these aspects. I will also be covering some of the ways in the last decade the study of Meta-communication has moved from Academic and Specialist studies into practical actionable if sometimes questionable practices.

Last year the MMM Study Group spent a six-month period focused upon the topic of Meta-Communication and Lesser Black Magic. One area that interested me at the time and still does is trying to create a taxonomy of Meta-Communication in order to make people more aware of its pervasiveness and its depth of importance in our experience.

I will admit I have certain conceptual biases. My background is in Anthropology and as a result I tends towards the cultural aspects of Meta-Communication over the aspects of it rooted in Physics, Chemistry and Biology. While I may explore those areas I do so as mainly a dilettante save for some biological aspects that cross with my Anthropological training.

The fundamental division I see comes from the general division of phenomena I use: Self, Culture, Nature.

Meta-communication with the Self would be those methods, both “Outer” and “Inner” which rely upon “obscure physical and behavioral laws.” Inner methods would include methods of affirmation, self-talk, the visualization/subjective aspects of Neurolinguistic Programming and Self-Hypnosis. Outer methods would include “obscure” physiological and biological responses like entrainment, the effects of breath upon consciousness, etc.

Cultural Meta-Communication would be those methods, which deal with Intersubjective and Interobjective exchanges. This can be one-on-one or involve large-scale groups.

In Douglas Rushkoff’s *Coercion: Why We Listen to What They Say* the following broad taxonomy for Cultural LBM is provided:

- “*Hand-to-Hand*” Methods of Meta-Communication designed for use in face-to-face encounters.
- *Atmospherics* The use of environmental features and symbolism to create specific states in those within them.
- *Spectacle* The creation of short duration events designed to temporarily displace the rational aspects of those involved.
- Public Relations
- *Advertising* Influencing people’s behavior overtly and covertly through image, sound and sentiment.
- *Pyramids* Power structures of social relations that can be used to displace the rational aspects of those involved usually to the benefit of a Leader or Leading Elite in the structure.

Natural Meta-Communication would be those methods that rely upon using obscure aspects of physical reality towards your conscious ends. Manipulation of light, electromagnetic and environmental effects, and the like fall into this category and often interact with the Cultural Meta-Communication of Atmospherics and Spectacle.

I have to admit I love the fact that for whatever reason I have been quad-posting in many of my recent replies to PoN. It gives me an excuse to write even more than I was originally planning. I keep chomping at the bit to get to the LBM aspects of Meta-Communication but I realize I need to lay out Meta-Communication as a field before moving towards transforming it into an act of Black Magic against Compulsion and Coercion.

The first place to start looking at Meta-Communication is on the face-to-face level. This is actually somewhat easier than dealing with the issues of Self Meta-Communication and the skills learned in this area can be really helpful when you begin to Work in that area. Besides if you have been doing the Work of the other Steads much of the Inner Realm benefits will already be blossoming. You will also notice that some of what I have written bleeds into these areas as well.

Face to Face Meta-communication includes some of the following features:

- Paralanguage: Non-linguistic aspects of speech like tone, voice quality
-
- Posture: How the body is held in space
-
- Clothing: How the body is adorned
-
- Gestures: Style and types of hand and body movements
-
- Engagement: How Present you are perceived and the ways you connect with the other person(s)
-
- Genetics: Phenotypic traits like hair color, height, left and right handedness
-
- Proxemics: Physical Space in Communication
-
- Chronemics: time in communication (both objective and perceived)
-

Movement and body position (including your own movement and your physical contact with others)

Dr. Aquino, a veritable encyclopedia on Meta-Communication, has been fond of recommending two areas of study for those interested in this field:

Stage Magic

and

Martial Arts

Why might that be?

Stage Magic, in all its many forms, relies upon utilizing defects in human perception in order to create impressions that one thing has taken place when in reality another has. This can be as minor as someone believing they randomly chose a pre-selected card from a deck to tricking viewers at home that you've vanished various historic monuments. It also teaches you ways to use skills in misdirection, manipulation and deception for the sake of entertainment.

While it is not an ideal resource [Scam School](#) is readily available, usually informative and tends to bring in a lot of outside specialist at specific methods.

The Martial Arts, particularly in the sense that Dr. Aquino has used it, refers to the skills at both practice self-defense but more importantly skills at de-escalating confrontations and avoiding them completely. In addition Martial Arts training if done correctly will change the way you perceive experiences, increasing metaphorically the "frame rate" and "resolution" of your perception.

I've been involved, sometimes reluctantly, with the Martial Arts for over 20 years and frankly my advice to those who are looking to pursue training for the first time is to find a solid Mixed Martial Arts gym rather than a deeply cultural or "esoteric" Martial Art for your initial training. Much of contemporary MMA is the result of an application of [Perato's Principle](#) to fighting, identifying the core 20% of all methods which lead to 80% of the successes in conflict.

The skills learned will allow for the easier integration of less reliable but still useful to know methods. In addition even a short duration of training in this manner, say for six months, will provide you with the skills necessary to evaluate if a cultural art is relevant to your long term goals and effective in the results they produce. It will also provide you with an environment, provided you do not burn bridges, that you can return to to test your skills learned in those cultural arts against trained non-compliant partners.

More resources on these areas will eventually find their way to the Lesser Black Magic section of the new "Black Magic" Discussion forums.

In the late 1990s an unusual thing happened. A small handful of generally frustrated men decided that rather than accept the status quo in their lives would do something about it by any means necessary. Starting first by adapting Neurolinguistic Programming Methods and then expanding outwards into fields like Evolutionary Psychology, Anthropology, Stage Magic and just about anything else they could get their hands on they took apart and pieced back together the meta-communicative aspects of heterosexual human mating behaviors. It was a very strange scene and one that I was peripherally involved with.

The best single volume account of this world of quasi-LBM specialists is Neil Strauss' *The Game: Penetrating the Secret Society of Pick Up Artists*. It is also one of the best cautionary tales about the potential dangers of over-emphasizing Meta-communicative manipulations. Since its publication the book has entered the reading list for a variety of Law Enforcement and Intelligence Agencies in addition to its place on would be Pick Up Artist's shelves.

In Neil Strauss' follow up book *Rules of the Game* he provides a good introduction to Meta-communication skills he feels are essential to anyone spaced across a 30 Day course heavy on practice and lean on filler. The book is pitched to would be Pick Up Artists but much of the advice can be applied to both genders.

The checklist he provides for the topics covered include:

- Posture
- Vocal Projection
- Vocal Tonality
- No Vocal Pausers
- Grooming
- Clothing Style
- Inner Game
- Eye Contact
- Energy Level/Positivity
- Approaching Strangers
- Using Openers
- Time Constraints
- Rooting
- Disqualifies
- Expressing a Unique Identity
- Demonstrating Value
- Non-neediness
- Storytelling
- Cold Reading Spontaneous Conversation
- Open Loops
- Seeding
- Exchanging Numbers
- Frame Control/Dominance
- Reframing

I've been toying with the idea of dismantling and re-engineering the work as a 30 Day LBM primer de-emphasizing Pick Up in favor of general communication/meta-communication skills. Those interested should contact me offlist via email.

BTW, while I've had a lot of criticism of the Pick Up Artist (PUA) scene over the years I will give credit where it is due. Even the most ham handed of that community can, in under 18 months, take someone from a complete schlub, impart them with a huge collection of usable knowledge that can positive enhance their lives and turn them into a mostly functional human being capable of interacting with others, at ease with themselves and ready to chart bigger goals and desires. They

do this not by reading and talking about ideas but by working on specific skills and immediately pushing people to act upon new knowledge.

The Temple of Set gets people who willing to commit to their own self-transformation that they seek out alliance, or at least potential alliance with the Prince of Darkness himself and yet for many in 18 months the only substantial change nearly 50% of them can see in their life is the contents of their libraries.

We can and will do better.

Quote:

There is functionally no way to cover all aspects of meta-communication in this thread or even in my entire lifetime. None the less I would like to set up some frameworks for understanding the different aspects of Meta-communication to help give a functional taxonomy for understanding what you are subject to and how to potentially transform it into Lesser Black Magic. I would like to look at how pervasive the use of Meta-communication is within our experiences and how it has been an essential feature of human experience since the beginning of our unique consciousness. I would like to look at the ways in which elements of Meta-communication have become increasingly toxic forces in world cultures and what steps can be taken on a personal level to insulate yourself from some of these aspects. I will also be covering some of the ways in the last decade the study of Meta-communication has moved from Academic and Specialist studies into practical actionable if sometimes questionable practices.

I am glad to see that someone else has sensed the need of a second look -- and a new taxonomy -- for these realms of communication and their relevance to Lesser Black Magic.

In recent correspondence with a member of the Priesthood I suggested a fuzzy threefold classification. "Satanic Witchery" and the heraldry of warriors go back to prehistory, yet remain relevant today exemplifying dress as communication. To this, literate societies added a spectrum of verbal techniques: from the rhetoric of Ancient Greece to Ericksonian hypnosis, Neurolinguistic Programming, "social engineering", and the field of propaganda studies and management science. Finally, I wrote, we perceive and respond to nonverbal symbolic messages embodied in *things*: the realm of architectural and product design, media studies, and user interface design for computer-mediated social environments and game worlds.

I would be delighted indeed to see the development of frameworks that acquaint Setians with these arts and their practical application.

Xeper.

Patty A. Hardy

Meta-communication is something that is pervasive in our experiences, and has been pervasive since human beings became humans. Please keep in mind that the study of this area is contingent upon your Work in the Stead of the Mind towards building your skills at close reasoning and discernment. Trying to investigate Meta-communication is often like the eye trying to see itself and requires using outside tools and leads to recursive areas that can act as readily as new prisons as they can open you up to new possibilities.

Human beings as we think of them, Modern Humans, have been on the planet for roughly 200,000 years in East Africa. Like the other members of genus *Homo* that were contemporary to our emergence we were large brained, bipedal hunter-foragers. We were a little less robust than our close relative the Neanderthals and had some minor adaptive differences for running in straight lines rather than in a broken field manner like they were.

Our toolkits were roughly similar to these relatives initially but within a relatively short span of time it seems our ancestors developed new adaptations of these technologies and eventually new technologies completely. Coinciding with our emergence was something just a wee bit different in our cognition which lead to “Doodling” behaviors which served no obvious function but which began to decorate tools. This doesn’t become common in the archaeological record until almost 80,000 years ago but there is little reason to think additional evidence will not be emerging pushing that date back further (keep an eye on Christopher Henshilwood’s research if this interests you).

Around 45,000 years ago this symbolic capacity blossomed, with the first highly symbolic Modern Human culture being termed the Aurignacian. This coincided with a semi-symbolic culture among the Neanderthal called the Chatelperronian. This period coincided with an overlap between Modern Human and Neanderthal populations in the Levant. This was actually the second period when this happened, the first leading to the displacement of Modern Humans back into Africa. On this second encounter the Modern Humans were the ones displacing the Neanderthal.

In all likelihood the conflict and the need for being able to determine who was friend of foe combined with a way of creating and reinforcing group identity is why the use of symbolic behavior become so prevalent. Since that time it has been endemic to humanity. Wherever we go so does this massive Meta-communicative system. The size and scope of varies mainly upon issues of group side and inter-group competition. The large the population the more Meta-communication becomes necessary to create distinct as well as shared identities. As we are adapted to intake massive amount of meta-communicative information without even realizing it often takes some kind of shock to even begin to see that it exist as something different from simply the natural order of thing.

Much of early Setian practice, or the more general practice of antinomianism*, involves learning to disconnect the meta-communicative meaning imbued into symbols. This is a kind of Inner World weeding process and can take the form of mild reframing of symbols to more courageous acts of “blasphemy.” The need to do this has long been a part of Left-Hand Path schools of Initiation, though the specifics behind why this was needed was not always known.

The late 19th Century saw massive changes in human awareness of what it meant to be human. Philosophy Paul Ricour termed the key thinkers of this period “The Masters of Suspicion” as they had raised the specter of doubt about things that had previously been taken for granted. Who were the Masters of Suspicion? They were those figures that at the end of the 19th Century had cast

profound doubts upon what had been up until then certainties about human nature.

Charles Darwin had cast profound doubts not only upon the unique place of humanity in the scheme of nature but the very need for there to be a personal God in order to explain nature's existence.

Karl Marx had undermined the notion that human society was some sort of divine ordering by demonstrating rather clearly that it was the means by which a society produced the good necessary to its survival that shaped its social organization.

Sigmund Freud undermined the sense that the self we identify with unreflectively was the only aspect of our being and that it behaved in a fashion that was fully known to us.

And finally Fredrick Nietzsche, an unemployed Philologist, had managed to undermine the entire scope of how Morals were constructed and the ways in which values are extracted from experience so as to inaugurate what became termed The Transvaluation of All Values. Even more potently he set up for the realization that no bare facts exist apart from the ways that they are interpreted.

Many useful things emerged from this period of doubt. With things being questioned new modes of research and understanding. The fields of Psychology, Anthropology, Biology, Sociology and innumerable subfields all have their origins in this period. The ways of understanding developed by each of these fields provides insights into the self as well as the Meta-communicative structures that we live within.

In times of doubt new modes of manipulation also slipped through. In learning about the primate nature of humans methods for manipulating the animal desires arose. If cultures were the products of their own means of production than these means could be manipulated to give rise to idealized societies. In learning of the unconscious aspects of the self means of trying to manipulate it were sought. Finally if all values were ultimately had no transcendent origins, and were largely the by-product of power than power could be sought to redefine morality.

Thus, with the 20th Century, a kind of Weaponization of Meta-communication took place. We presently live on the other side of this, with both the resources this weaponization created and the toxic by products of it have pushed out into our cultures.

Although it overstates some of the influence of specific thinkers and has its own political thrust the series "Century of the Self" does a good job of provided a look at how this Weaponization took place.

[The Century of the Self: Happiness Machines](#)

[The Century of the Self: The Engineering of Consent](#)

[The Century of the Self: The Policeman Inside All Our Heads](#)

[The Century of the Self: Eight People Sipping Wine in Kettering](#)

Another good resource for seeing how pervasive the more toxic elements of Meta-communication is the previously mentioned *Coercion: Why We Listen to What They Say* by Douglas Rushkoff. Of

particular significance in this text is the realization that the systems of Coercion that exist have no one driving them. Rather, once set in motion, they have taken on a life of their own, subsuming everyone into their coercive structure.

One of my favorite texts for starting to peel back the experience of culture in order to see the ways in which it is structured and how it in turn structures our own behaviors and assumptions is *Understanding Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theory* by Philip Carl Salzman. This text will give you some skills in learning to see the edges of culture and how to exist within cultural networks.

*Literally “against custom” though “nomos” often gets translated as “Law” which has different implications than the Greek.

Repeat Posting Bonus:

[Douglas Rushkoff: Program or Be Programmed](#)

The Legacy Systems that Doug mentions would be our entire social systems.

Repeat Posting Bonus:

[Rick Roderick: The Masters of Suspicion](#)

Repeat Post Bonus:

[What Makes Us Human?](#)

From The Leaky Foundation

Repeat Post Bonus:

[Susan Blackmore @ TED: Memes and Temes](#)

Repeat Post Bonus:

[Professor Christopher Henshilwood Staff Page at the Institute for Human Evolution](#)

Repeat Post Bonus:

[Mark Pesce: Bios and Logos](#)

Repeat Posting Bonus:

The first movement [of the Mind War] was the primitive neuro-science of ancient and medieval tyrants who acquired a great deal of pragmatic know-how about the effects of isolation, terror and intimidation; and of shamans and occultists who learned how neuro-chemicals can alter perceived reality-tunnels.

The second movement began with modern psychology, with Freud, Pavlov, Jung, Skinner etc., climaxing with the LSD revolution and the discovery by millions that reality-tunnels could be radically mutated – temporarily and sometimes permanently – by neuro- chemistry.

The third movement is the growingly obvious warfare between those who would program all of us, and those of us who wish to become our own Metaprogrammers.

Robert Anton Wilson, *Prometheus Rising*

Repeat Post Bonus:

Our minds, at rest - alert and open - are like a beautifully weeded garden, bare brown earth where anything might grow. And just as the weed seeds are ready to jump into all that bare brown earth, so the memes are ready to jump into our open minds. If weed seeds find a space to grow, off they go, and soon all that open space is a mass of dandelions, speedwells and rosebay willow herb.

It is the same with thoughts. Think about what kinds of thoughts are the most troublesome. I don't believe many people are plagued in meditation by the sounds in the room, or by images of scenery once observed, or images of walking or jumping, or even flying. In other words, it is not our immediate perceptions, nor the things we have learned by ourselves that are troublesome; it is the ones we pick up from other people. It is all words and stories that cause the trouble; all memes. You take a simple sound in the room and turn it into words and arguments and likes and dislikes. You fret over what you said to x, agonise about what to do about y, turn over and over those images of destruction and death from the television, and rehearse what you will say or do when z happens. Word, words, and combinations of words. And words are memes.

The reason is simple enough. If a meme can get into your head and get itself passed on it will. Memes that manage this trick do well, get passed on from person to person and keep going. Those that cannot die out. In this way the world becomes filled up with catchy memes; worrying memes and emotional memes; memes you can't resist telling others about, and memes that just have whatever it takes to get you turning them over and over in your mind. These are the survivors in the meme pool. These are the memes we all come across. These are the memes that are ready to jump into the gardens of our minds.

Meditation is the hoe. Meditation is also, of course, a meme. You would never have invented the techniques of Ch'an meditation for yourself. They have been part-invented and part-selected over thousands of years, passing down from person to person in a long evolutionary path. But all of them have this in common - they are ways of defusing the power of other memes. John's wonderfully simple instruction "Let it come; Let it be; Let it go" is a meme-weeding meme. Any other meme that pops up is met with the same response. Its power to stir up your mind is interfered with. Its features designed to get you to store it and pass it on, no longer work so well. "Let it go" gets in its way and the cycle of meme-repetition is broken.

Susan Blackmore ["Meditation as meme weeding"](#)

Having now spent some time on the general topic of Meta-communication and then upon some of the toxic aspects of it presently I want to turn specifically to how the approach to Meta-communication which we presently term Lesser Black Magic differs from either unconscious meta-communication or conscious coercion via meta-communicative techniques.

Dr. Aquino defined Black Magic in his commentary on *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*. The following general definition of Black Magic owes much to his perceptions expressed in that commentary.

Black Magic can be defined as a deliberate and conscious effort to exert the force of mind outwards upon other minds or upon the objective universe.

From this definition Lesser Black Magic is the conscious effort to exert the force of mind towards the influencing of beings, processes, or objects outside your subjective universe by the application of obscure physical or behavioral laws. In other words **Lesser Black Magic is the Mindful use of Meta-Communication towards conscious outcomes.**

In “Black Magic” Dr. Aquino make another important distinction, “LBM is an impelling (encouraging, convincing, increasing of probability) measure, not a compelling (forcing, making inevitable) one. The object if to make something happen without expending the time and energy to make it happen through direct cause-and-effect.”

This distinction is tremendously important yet often overlooked. Acts of coercion are inherently not acts of LBM. This distinction is also why are the core the discussion of LBM in “Black Magic” quickly becomes a discussion of Values and Ethics. More importantly the exploration of the topics of Values and Ethics in the context of Black Magic inherently suggest that this must be done in a mindful manner.

If you have not thought about your Values or thought about your sense of Ethics and from where they derive then these will be of no use to you as a Black Magician, and frankly your ability to qualify as a Black Magician would be suspect.

An aside before delving into Values and Ethics. The following is heavily indebted to a distinction from the Authentic SF folks combined with ideas I picked up training over the years with Bujinkan Shihan Mark Guest.

You don't really need to know that, but I like providing the inspirations for my ideas when I can.

Lesser Black Magic all too often get thought of as "tricks" for getting people to do things. It becomes tied to acts of deception or manipulation and as such gets an unsavory reputation even among Setians. I have had people question my serious interest in the subject due to their understanding of LBM being tied to this model, not understanding what I would "resort" to this kind of thing.

The "tricks and manipulation" form of LBM is actually something I am against except to the extent that it becomes training wheels for getting to the Authentic LBM of a Noble of Set (i.e. One who Rules by Force of Mind). This approach involved using deception to create impressions that you are something that you are not, i.e. Posturing, through Meta-communicative means. If done in a spirit of play and with respect to those being deceived it can be a lot of fun and will teach you about the ways that Meta-communication works. But as an end in itself it does little to enhance Xeper or your capacities as a Noble of Set, and for a skilled observer they will be able to tell immediately that the LBM role you are playing is just you trying to fake it.

Granted such Posturing is miles away from the more common problem relationship to Meta-communication that the average person has. Not knowing about meta-communication and its effects they are essentially collapsed by the weight of it. They actually think the thoughts in their heads that have appeared by random or by intentional dissemination are their own. Any sense of autonomy they have is strictly a delusion as their actions, desires and behaviors have been funneled down roads created, maintained and enforced by others.

Authentic LBM comes from a different place than either collapse or from Posturing. Rather than "trick and manipulation" Meta-communication derived from an Authentic Sense of Self emerges through other people being able to read that your acts are done with intention and knowledge from an integrated core of your Being. Your capacity to express your Will and Desires will be instantly read through Meta-communicative channels and a sense that you are whole will radiate from you in a way that others will respond to. When that authentic, integrated Self's core purpose is Xeper this becomes and even more profound an impact upon your Meta-communicative skills.

There will be times in the pursuit of Xeper that you may have to use Meta-Communication and LBM in a deceptive manner. If you are being authentic to your own Being however even this deception will be coming from a place of authenticity.

The pursuit of your own authenticity should be kept in your mind at all times while pursuing Work in the Stead of Meta-Communication and should become a gauge for you to see if you are pursuing or not pursuing Work in this area for reasons of collapse around the subject or from a place of posturing.

Adept Rathbun notes:

As I just finished watching Rango, I couldn't but think of this thread, and of how LBM and GBM

work hand in hand to create a better life. Play the hero, or whatever future person you're looking to make, and you might just find out you've made yourself into that thing. Learn the rules of being that thing and use them as you wish.

Magister Fitzsimmons notes:

I mentioned to Adepts Ian and de Bartha recently that in many ways the act of proclaiming your desires outcome through GBM is essentially a statement to the universe that "I wish to be transformed into the kind of person that has X as an aspect of their life" more than it is trying to force the universe to give X to you.

That is both more compelling, more challenging and a lot more daunting than much of what passes as "magic" among occultists.

Today sees me mostly involved in preparing for the Black Sun Rising Pylon's enactment of the Saturnian Lodge Rite. This will be the 10th use of this Rite by the Pylon to strengthen its Egregor and tie its Work to larger Aeonic processes.

As such I would like to address the subject of Values Systems in relation to the Stead of Meta-communication by offering this mini-course in Spiral Dynamics. The original file for the mini-course can be found at <http://www.spiraldynamics.org/learning/intro2SD.pdf>

For the "TL;DR" crowd the basic "take home" lesson is that people's life conditions tend to determine the center of gravity of their values and an understanding of how these interact can give you a stronger sense of how to properly engage someone in acts of communication and meta-communication.

A Mini-Course in Spiral Dynamics (r)

People think in different ways. A brother and sister, husband and wife, manager and employee, corporation and client company might have very different world views and values. People in adjoining cubicles or families living right next door to each other sometimes don't seem to be inhabiting the same neighborhood. Colleagues in an organization have wide ranging ideas about vision, mission, and purpose. Countries sharing one planet often seem to be in totally different worlds with their policies. Why?

Spiral Dynamics is a way of thinking about these complexities of human existence and bringing some order and predictability to the apparent chaos of human affairs. It provides a framework for tracking the evolution of worldviews and a scaffold on which to stand while analyzing situations and planning the most appropriate actions. It is not a set of categories or types, but a representation of the emerging flow of human thinking and value systems that ebb and flow, mix and match, in the process of living and being in this world.

Based in the original research and theory of Dr. Clare W. Graves, this point of view describes how waves of consciousness emerge and flow through individuals and groups. It describes bio-psycho-social systems along a continuum that form an expanding spiral. Some add "-spiritual" to the end of the bio-psycho-social-spiritual string. That is sometimes useful as a reminder, but a focus on the "inner subjective world" is an essential element of Graves' odd-numbered, warm color-coded levels - AN, CP, ER, and A'N', etc.; the cool-colored layers - BO, DQ, FS, B'O', etc. - focus on the "external world." (To access two elegant quotes from Dr. Graves synthesizing his perspective, click here for an Adobe Acrobat page. For a summary of the Emergent, Cyclical, Double-Helix Model of Adult BioPsychoSocial Systems Development from *The Futurist*, 1974, click here.)

What people in each world seek out in life . . . (Goals of "Successful" Living)

1 BEIGE (A-N) survival; biogenic needs satisfaction; reproduction; satisfy instinctive urges

2 PURPLE (B-O) placate spirit realm; honor ancestors; protection from harm; family bonds

- 3 RED (C-P) power/action; asserting self to dominate others; control; sensory pleasure
- 4 BLUE (D-Q) stability/order; obedience to earn reward later; meaning; purpose; certainty
- 5 ORANGE (E-R) opportunity/success; competing to achieve results; influence; autonomy
- 6 GREEN (F-S) harmony/love; joining together for mutual growth; consciousness; belonging
- 7 YELLOW (G-T) independence/self-worth; fitting a living system; knowing; good questions
- 8 TURQUOISE (H-U) global community/life force; survival of life on Earth; adapt to realities

The basic landmarks are designated by the colors in the spiral diagram -- beige, purple, red, blue, orange, green, yellow, turquoise, coral, and others to come. There are sub-systems between each pair where the thinking represented by the colors blend together. For example, many business people are in the Orange-to-Green transition seeking a return to more community and spirit in their lives. A number of politicians are in the Blue-to-Orange range trying to move from structured bureaucracy to entrepreneurism and free markets. Many activists are living in the Green-to-Yellow zone as they work to achieve positive results on a human scale through interaction, involvement, and purposeful learning and teaching. Some developing regions are still in the Purple-to-Red transition as ancient tribal ways confront well-armed dictators, while others are in the Red-to-Blue as centralized authority tries to contain factional battles. Hotspots emerge as corporate interests from the Orange zone overwhelm indigenous peoples in the Purple-Blue range with ideas of progress and development schemes that don't fit the realities at hand and which ultimately destroy the less complex cultures, languages, and knowledge. Yet rescuers from the Green zone sometimes romanticize the primitive and non-functional, thus slowing natural emergence as much as exploiters from Orange seek to transform it to their own image. Yellow thinking begins to question and analyze all of these human processes as parts of an integrated spiral, and Turquoise is looking for solutions on a global, holistic scale. The next zone, Coral, may be the implementer, but that's in the future.

The warm color family exhibits a focus on the external world and how to master it (with an internal, I-oriented locus of control). The cool colors have a focus on the inner world and how to come to peace with it (with an external, we-oriented locus of control). The Spiral winds between the individual "I" and collective "we" poles as it turns between cool group systems and warm individualistic systems. As individuals, most of us are mixtures of both. This broad swing from individualism to collectivism and back is one to watch as societies move through time.

The SD/Graves model is not a typology for categorizing people into boxes. In fact, the eight levels of existence and the transition states between them are only the visible signs of much deeper forces at work. Those energies arise from the interaction of two elements: (a) the Life Conditions the person or group encounters and (b) the brain/mind capacities available to cope with such conditions. Thus, the term biopsychosocial suggests a moving blend of the biological nature, the psychology of experience and learning, and the sociology of group interaction with the world.

So, a person or a company is both nature and nurture -- the genetic heritage and biochemistry

interacting with the learning and experiences of living. It is this interaction between mind/brain systems within and existential conditions outside that is central to Graves' work and energizes of emergence of the Spiral. Within the spiral is a double helix. In the diagram above (and below), the alphabet letters on the left represent the Life Conditions -- a perception of "what the real world is like" -- at each level. The letters on the right represent the mind capacities -- the neurobiological equipment and mindsets required to deal with such a reality. The combinations -- AN, BO, CP, DQ, ER, FS, GT, HU, IV, etc., are represented by the colors which symbolize their interaction. (These may also be presented as a series of 6 core themes which repeat after moving up a level, a part of Dr. Graves' hypothesis as yet unproven but fascinating to consider. Thus, AN through FS represents a First Tier of thinking systems. The next series, a Second Tier, is represented by the letters primed; thus A'N', B'O', C'P', etc. These suggest the base systems plus an additional set of mind/brain capacities brought online.)

The landmark Life Conditions (A, B, C, ... I, etc.)

1 BEIGE A a state of nature and biological urges/drives; physical senses dictate the state of being

2 PURPLE B threatening and full of mysterious powers and spirit beings which must be placated and appeased

3 RED C like a jungle where the tough and strong prevail, the weak serve; nature is an adversary to be conquered

4 BLUE D controlled by a Higher Power that punishes evil and eventually rewards good works and Righteous living

5 ORANGE E full of resources to develop and opportunities to make things better and bring prosperity

6 GREEN F the habitat wherein humanity can find love and purposes through affiliation and sharing

7 YELLOW G a chaotic organism where change is the norm and uncertainty an acceptable state of being

8 TURQUOISE H a delicately balanced system of interlocking forces in jeopardy at humanity's hands; chaordic.

9 CORAL I (too soon to say, but should tend to be I-oriented, controlling, consolidating if the pattern to date holds)

The landmark coping means and neurology activated by such a world (N, O, P, ...U, etc.)

BEIGE N instinctive: as natural instincts and reflexes direct; automatic existence

PURPLE O animistic: according to tradition and ritual ways of group; tribal; animistic

RED P egocentric: asserting self for dominance, conquest, and power; exploitive; egocentric

BLUE Q absolutistic: obediently as higher authority and rules direct; conforming; guilt

ORANGE E multiplistic: pragmatically to achieve results and get ahead; test options; maneuver

GREEN S relativistic: respond to human needs; affiliative; situational; consensual; fluid

YELLOW T systemic: functional; integrative; interdependent; existential; flexible; questioning; accepting

TURQUOISE U holistic: experiential; transpersonal; collective consciousness; collaborative; interconnected

Note that the letters are not locked together. They can shift and, to some extent, can be shifted. Thus, it is possible for someone to live in an E level world but only have access to Q means of dealing with life; the world will seem beyond the person's understanding at times -- the old-time government bureaucrat suddenly in a privatized agency that must prove its bottom-line effectiveness. Some things from the more complex level will not 'register' in this person's awareness and coping may be stressful, perhaps impossible. Some people can learn the more complex ways; others are less likely to. Another person might have T capacities, yet work in a situation with a performance appraisal system concentrating on D or E measures; such a person is often underutilized and frustrated by a management system that appears to lag behind the thinking and focuses on issues that seem secondary and narrow -- the IT professional working where punctuality and compliance with a dress code matters more than competence or creativity. If wise, the organization will adjust its management system to fit the person; if not, it will lose mind/brain power as the person moves elsewhere. Getting the right person into the right job with the right materials at the right time within the right systems and structures is what SD is about.

Consider the following ideas from Spiral Dynamics:

- ☐ The Spiral is a framework for how people think about things, not the things they think about. It represents containers that shape worldviews, not the contents that fill them (beliefs, values, etc.).
- ☐ There is no direct link with intelligence, gender, age, ethnicity, or other demographics except as those variables influence the world around the person.
- ☐ No level is inherently better or worse than another. They do become more expansive since each builds on all that came before.
- ☐ The theory is hierarchical in terms of conceptual space (the inclusion of progressively more factors and ways of understanding), but not in terms of intelligence in the conventional sense.
- ☐ The general trend is up the Spiral because thinking in more complex systems offers more degrees of freedom to act appropriately in a given situation by using more fully the mind/brain which is there.

- A person is not generally locked at a single level. The Gravesian systems are ways of thinking about things, not typologies for people, so several can coexist.
- Systems are rarely discrete and often run in combinations, though one often will be the dominant state.
- Individuals and organizations may appear to be largely of the warm-colored individualistic approach or the cool-colored collective world views, or a bit of both.
- Gravesian systems do not go away; they are subsumed within more complex layers and can rise to the surface if Life Conditions warrant. The Spiral is a two-way street.
- Beware of finding simplicity which is not there. The “emergent, cyclical, double-helix model of adult biopsychosocial systems development” of Dr. Clare W. Graves is more complex than many presenters suggest.
- Beware of complications which do not serve the theory. The model is elegant in itself and is sometimes wrapped in details which contribute little of substance and only add confusion.
- People may talk about more complex systems without actually operationalizing the ways of thinking and being they describe. Look for “stretch” versions of systems that talk a good game but do not live the worldview.
- People may shift their thinking to fit the conditions at hand and operate quite differently when under pressure or stress.
- There are entering and exiting phases between systems where most energy lies; the pure colors are only the theoretical peaks of waves.
- People value different things because they think in different ways. They think in different ways because the mixes of thinking systems (vMEMEs) in the biopsychosocial complexes in which they exist are different.
- Different organizations – companies and governments – occupy different positions on the Spiral and need to develop managerial/governance strategies that match their people, their visions of the future, and the jobs they perform today.
- Managers should develop a consistent and systemic approach to all the issues within the organizational loop – recruitment, selection, placement, training, internal management, and external marketing – so they all align, integrate, and synergize.
- Organizations should be constructed from both “the top down” and “the bottom up” to link the functions, intelligences, and decision structures that the more complex new problems ahead will demand.
- Successful organizations are in danger of failing if they continue to manage people in the ways that made them successful in the first place.

- Many people need to be managed quite differently today because they have moved on the Spiral even further and faster than most of their bosses, teachers, and even parents.
- Marketing efforts, strategic plans, and M&A efforts often fail because the designers look into mirrors and assume the audiences and cultures they are attempting to reach share the same values systems they do.
- The question is not “how do you motivate people?” but how do you relate what you are doing to their natural motivational flows. A person has a right to be who he or she is.
- Issues with productivity, quality, political instability, and restructuring are signs of growth and not decay which will force us to find new and innovative ways to manage people based on who they have now become.
- Since people learn in different ways from different kinds of teachers, the task of education is to match learners, instructors, learning situations, and technologies designed for fit, function, and flow.
- Dealing with the whole Spiral at once is the great challenge for Second Tier thinking (Yellow and beyond).

The leading edge of human nature is now at a point of transition between the first six Subsistence Levels and the next series of human existential states, the Being Levels. It is a time of both danger and opportunity as new ways of thinking, indeed, new sorts of human beings, emerge to prominence. Call or e-mail us for more information: The Spiral Dynamics People
Go to Home Page

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• Skill in Reporting

Skill in Reporting. The Setian learns how to report her triumphs and failings. Firstly to herself, most likely in the form of a diary. Secondarily to a Priest for feedback. Thirdly in her life so that she attracts the mates, jobs, friends and opportunities she Desires.

The Stead of Skills at Reporting requires a certain level of mindfulness that can often be overlooked. In order to truly report your experiences it must be something more than simply a list of things you have done or a stream of 140 characters long accounts of your moment-to-moment experiences. Doing this kind of accounting for your experiences can be useful for your more reflective work in this Stead but they do not substitute for it.

If you are someone who comes from a background in Scientific Illuminism chances are you have had it drilled into you that you have to keep ponderous amounts of Magical Diary entries. While that can be useful for future magicians to be able to sort through the minute details of everything you ever did this kind of record keeping can be just as mindless and unreflective as posting Tweets every 15 minutes.

If you are doing all the right things just because you are supposed to rather than because you feel enriched and empower by them just stop. This applies to any and all of my own suggestions in this thread. If you have never kept a Journal before you will find all sorts of suggestions for the practice available online. [This series of articles](#) is a good general introduction to the practice and will give you places to branch out from.

If you have done the previous suggested Work for the Stead of Knowing Desire you may find it useful to explicitly write out your Values and Goals at the top of each page of your journal before you beginning a writing session. This will help to remind you of what you care about and where you are aiming to go and will help you to organize your account of your experiences to resonate with these things. If you find that your actions are in conflict with your values as you write it may mean that you either need to reconsider your values or start the challenge of changing your behaviors to reflect your values.

One of the best beginning practices for keeping a Journal can be found in Ipsissimus Webb's *Uncle Setnakt's Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path*. Among the excellent advice he four simple questions to use as writing prompts for your Journal.

1. Something you did to further your goals.
2. Your best thought or breakthrough.
3. Something you did to disable a bad habit.
4. Something you plant to do in the immediate future to further your goals.

In my own style of Work, which follows as four-day wave of activities, I usually do this journal exercise on day one of a new cycle. This provides me with enough days between Journaling Sessions to allow me to have acted, thought and reflected upon my experiences while still acting as an anchor in my continued pursuit of my goals. You will find your own pattern of Work as you practice.

Let's look at the practice of keeping a Magical Diary.

The format you keep your Diary in will be personal. For years I tried to use notebooks only to get about 50 pages in and then abandoning it. Other times I'd use my computer to keep a running journal only to move on to other things. These days I have found that the best approach for me is to use three-ring binders where I can keep hand written as well as printed materials with relative ease and can use dividers for more specialized records like dreams, materials from Setian Gatherings and the like.

Keeping records of your Workings will provide a means of better understanding how the different aspects of your Work interconnect and to give you a sense of how your Magical capacities take shape. If you review these records you may begin to notice that there is a pattern in how the results of your Enchantments manifest which can be taken into account for future Workings.

Traditionally information like the time and date of a Working are recorded. In addition information that may be of use such as weather conditions, moon phases, Astrological conjunctions, etc. were often kept. Not all of those things may be relevant to you personally so do not feel that you need to include them. For me the patterns in Media, the current tides in Economics and Politics and other aspects of my personal life figure more strongly into my understanding of how my Magic takes shape than planetary configurations do. Find the things which impact upon your psyche and keep notes of anything you feel might be significant.

Most Setian Workings combine pre-arranged aspects along with extemporaneous pieces drawn from personal genius. Keeping a written or types copy of the Working outline in your magical diary is a useful practice. One the Working has been completed jot down any immediate impressions and then find something unrelated to do. A practice I learned from Ipsissimus Webb is to allow at least 24 hours to pass before you talk about or even write extensively on any Working. This will give time for the Daimonic aspects of the Working to find their new alignment without being disturbed.

Magical Diaries are an excellent place to keeping accounts of the Work you are conducting in all of the Steads. The notes from your isolation of your Values and Desires along with exercises like the sentence completion from Nathaniel Branden's *The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*, the results of experiments with the 3-2-1 Shadow Work, logs of physical exercises and accounts of your experiments in Lesser Black Magic are all fair game. If you do choose to keep all of these things in one place you will find that your Diary acts as a goad and a reminder for when you have fallen off of your practice cycle. Do not let that demoralize you. Simple let the period of Stasis go and return to the Work that interests you.

If you are having trouble finding reasons to write about your evolving understanding of Setian ideas using "The Setian Book of Questions" at the end of "Within You and Beyond You" can provide an effective place to start. Find a question at random from the collection and then spend some time writing a response, ideally 500 to 1000 words. If you find that the response you have is particularly striking to you consider sharing it in the "Within You and Beyond You" forum. Similarly if you find that new questions about Setian thought come to you ask them in that forum to help expand the scope of The Book of Questions.

Adept Dorman asks:

How would one evaluate whether one's actions or intent are employed with authenticity? Any thoughts on that which you'd care to share. How does one define authenticity?

Adept King notes:

To answer this question, I would (partially) define authenticity as an emotional state: (I feel) I am a living representation of my True Self. One way of determining authenticity is looking at it through the lens of time. Past: Was what I did or what happened resonating highly with my deeper sense of Self? Present: Is what I am doing actually what I really want to be doing?

Future: Are my plans in line with what I really want to be doing? Thinking about it more, you can define it more thoroughly by asking yourself: Is what I am doing the result of me wanting to live up to other people's expectations OR am I being True to my own expectations?

Any thoughts on that which you'd care to share. How does one define authenticity?

Thinking about the relationship between Set and HarWer (as we are doing in the Order of the Hawk-Faced Lord), this becomes very apparent to me: thinking of HarWer is the set of all desires that do not come from my own work of self-creation. This largely includes the programming and desires of the society and social structure around me. Authenticity then is basically a descriptor for an action done as consciously as possible, with respect to one's deeper sense of Self, and perhaps even in defiance of other limiting structures.

This is a great question and one worth looking at more deeply. My comments are by no means final answers or the only distinctions possible.

Let's start with my usual fall back, looking at the Etymology of the word we are looking to get greater clarity around.

mid-14c., "authoritative," from O.Fr. *authentique* (13c., Mod.Fr. *authentique*) "**authentic**; canonical," and directly from M.L. *authenticus*, from Gk. *authentikos* "original, genuine, principal," from *authentēs* "one acting on one's own authority," from *autos* "self" (see *auto-*) + *hentes* "doer, being," from PIE **sene-* "to accomplish, achieve." Sense of "entitled to acceptance as factual" is first recorded mid-14c. Traditionally (at least since the 18c.), **authentic** implies that the contents of the thing in question correspond to the facts and are not fictitious; genuine implies that the reputed author is the real one; though this distinction is not etymological and is not always now recognized.

Authenticity comes from being your own being, and the kind of actions that come from that center rather than from an outer place. In terms of some of the specialized language of the Temple of Set authenticity comes when one has gotten in touch with that unique *Neter* or Principle of your own Being and are taking action with that as your center. [Dr. Aquino's interview for KHPR](#) has a great discussion of this that is worth considering.

How much of your action comes from an **authentic** place (i.e. centered in your own Being) and how much is a compromise without outside factors is something of a ratio and likely to never be 100% pure. Never the less the more you can do towards understanding and identifying what is **authentic** to you and what you have simply taken into your life without reflection.

To some people it is easier to give up falsehoods rather than pursue authenticity itself. One of the classic exercises for this was used by thee Temple ov Psychick Youth as outlined in [“Thee Grey Book.”](#) [Note: I have left the “novel spelling” of the original.]

Thee Temple strives to end personal laziness and engender discipline. To focus thee Will on one’s true desires, in thee belief, gathered from experience that this maximizes and makes happen all those things that one wants in every area ov life. Explore daily your deepest desires, fantasies and motives, gradually focussing on what you would like to happen in a perfect world, a perfect situation, taking away all restrictions and practical considerations, what you’d REALLY want. Then decide to try and DO it. Thee mere visualization ov that true goal begins thee process that makes it happen. Clean out thee trappings and debris ov compromise, ov what you’ve been told is REASONABLE for a person in your circumstances. Be clear in admitting your real desires. Discard all irrelevancies. Ask yourself who you want as friends, if you need or want to work, what you want to eat. Check and re-check everything deeper and deeper, more and more precisely to get closer and ultimately integrate with your REAL Self. Once you are focussed on your self internally, thee external aspects ov your life will fall into place. They have to. Sceptics will say they simply don’t believe this Psychick process works, but it does. It is thee Key to thee Temple.

Really, how **authentic** you are being is something that you need to check in on with some regularity. Moment to moment you’ll pass in and out of states of collapse around your experiences, posturing and putting on a false front or “Social Mask” and being authentically Composed in the face of whatever is taking place. The more you work at it the easier it is to remain in Composure but you’ll always have moments where you drop out of it.

As odd as it may seem the best starting place for how **authentic** you are being is to check in with your body. What are your feet doing? What are your hands doing? If they’re fidgeting or you have to really think about what they are up to chances are you aren’t present in the moment and thus have a harder time being **authentic** in it.

This is one of the ways in which the Body is both your best Teacher and is Magic itself. Similarly training the body in ways that make it you more aware of its movement and nuance and gives you methods for relaxing the body. My default recommendation if you do not already do something along these lines is the seemingly simple [Intu-Flow Beginner’s system](#) because it is comprehensive, free and focuses upon integrating breathing, structure and movement.

Once you start getting more present in the body you can extend this same awareness to your emotions (metaphorically your “heart”) and your intellect. Looking for those situations where your Body, your Heart and your Mind are in alignment will teach you more about your **authentic** center.

There are five areas of Work that can help increase your sense of authenticity. This isn’t the only way

to go about doing this, but tends to be an effective combination for many.

- The first is the Work of the Body.
-
- The Pursuit of your own sense of Pleasure and Beauty.
-
- The Work of your Heart and Emotions.
-
- The Work of commitment to your Spirit and Self, however you understand this.
-
- The Work of Seeking the Mysteries and allowing your sense of the Unknown to guide you into unexplored territories.

Someone more graphically inclined than I could easily attach these to the triangles of the Pentagram.

Let me know if this makes any sense. If there are any further clarifications and distinctions needed just let me know. I am also always on the look out for practical exercises which can help turn this from a theoretical exercise into a lived experience so I will be adding more information here as I come across different methods.

The resonance between this Work towards Authenticity can be seen as analogous to the Work of Inner Rulership outlined by Ipsissimus Webb in *Uncle Setnakt's Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path*

The basis of the Left Hand Path is that humans are but machines, but may in potential become gods. The first aspect that a human has to change is their inner world. They have been taught -- or rather acquired -- a series of randomly assorted thoughts, notions, and behaviors, most of which either actively hinder them, or at best lull them into a sleeplike state. These stultifying forces mainly group themselves into forces that oppose the body, the mind, the emotions, and the will. Each of these must be overcome.

The forces that oppose the body are those things which shorten life, remove energy, or dull the senses. Most recreational drugs, legal or illegal, fall in this category as does most fast food. Certain cultural attitudes, such as the forces that make many young women anorexic, are likewise of such a nature. The environmental factors that may surround people (from toxic wastes, to certain types of fluorescent lighting) also can weaken. The Initiate discovers these factors by life analysis and removes them from his or her life. In their place he or she will adopt a training program to make the body do what he or she wishes. The best sort of training is one that either increases self defense, such as the martial arts; or grace, such as dance.

The forces that oppose the emotions are those habits of feeling generally created by external sources for economic reasons. We love to cry, laugh, or be scared at movies for which we will pay good money. Learning not to cry, laugh, or be scared at any media presentation is a beginning. The LHP Initiate has to overcome those phobias (e.g., fear of flying, fear of dogs, fear of flying dogs) that hinder him or her. She or he learns to invoke certain emotional states by careful self knowledge and control of symbol systems. The average human being follows his or her emotions, for the LHP initiate, emotions follow him or her.

The forces that oppose the mind are those habits of non-thinking that we have adopted, believing them to be thought. We read the newspapers, watch TV, and surf the Net, learning what to run through our minds in imitation of thought. The Initiate begins by limiting his media input, and by looking for media which challenge his existing thinking. Thus the liberal buys a conservative newspaper, the paranormal buff looks for the Skeptical Inquirer, and so forth. This deliberate challenging is a first step. The second step is thought training, learning to concentrate, learning to have certain thoughts at certain times of day, and above all increasing memory.

The forces that oppose the will are those habits of blind obedience to external symbols and signals. The LHP initiate begins his or her quest not only by rejecting sentimental attachments to cultural norms, which most non-thinking people call "good," but by actively making fun of such attachments in Symbolic ways such as a Black Mass, a Black Seder, eating beef (if raised Hindu), and so forth. This antinomian stance is no different than the stances above, but it draws the most fire from the public, because it is a reminder to the sleepers that they could awaken, and such reminders are always painful. For those of us along the LHP, we often forget how painful the light was to our eyes when we first left the cave. After the Initiate has broken with the symbol systems that teach obedience, he or she must create his or her own cosmology. It is at this point when a unified, coherent picture of the universe begins to emerge from the four areas of body, mind, emotions, and will that the Initiate has the first taste of Rulership of the Inner World.

Rulership of the Inner World means a sense of reality and purpose in what one does. We have all had those moments of power, of knowing that we are alive, and that the world is meaningful. They are rare moments and usually we attribute them to an external trigger, perhaps even a mysterious or divine source. When we discover that we can have those moments at will, then we have begun the lifelong task of Rulership of the Inner World. The magical name of this task is the Quest for Meaning.

JF Edit Note: Changed the order of paragraphs to better reflect Within You and Beyond You organization of the Self

The way the process Works is roughly like this:

Move from being a "checked out" robot into someone present to and aware of your experiences.

Become willing to affirm or "Be a Yes" to whatever aspects of yourself you discover as well as to life in general.*

Begin weeding out those elements in your Self-Complex that come from exterior sources and only retain those things that you choose to have in your Life and Yourself.

Integrate your awareness, your willingness to affirm your own Being, the choices that you choose to make for yourself and your life and see the way that these things bring you to a place of completeness.

This is not a one time thing but rather something which needs to be Worked again and a again, tracking and adjusting to who you have Become along the process and where you Desire to go.

*This willingness to “Be a Yes” is at the heart of Colin Wilson’s *The Outsider* and is one of the hallmarks of Setian Initiation.

There is something of a paradox in that the pursuit of your **authentic** expression often comes with a strong conflict with your present self-identity. The reason for this, which I have mentioned before, is that much of your self-definition is the result of happenstance combined with Meta-communicative systems aimed at social control.

This default condition is one of collapse, and this state of collapse is useful for keeping people from taking chances are doing things outside of the social control program.

Often the first place that this state of conditioned collapse is visible is when you are presented with something that could change your life and allow for greater self-expression and power towards fulfillment and you response “Oh, but that just wouldn’t be me.” This is a means of inner enforcement of the status quo and are meant to keep you in a predictable location in your social network. When you stop accepting the limitations on who you can be based upon your own assumption or what others have told you you begin to move beyond collapse towards authenticity.

To rephrase the classic quote from John Lilly, MD, in the province of the Self that which is believed true is true or becomes true within parameters to be learned by experiment and experience. If you have been accepting limitations that derive from sources other than your own experiments and experiences I strongly suggest that you may be facing a limitation with no basis in reality and whose only purpose is to keep you from finding your **authentic** self-expression.

ndorman wrote:

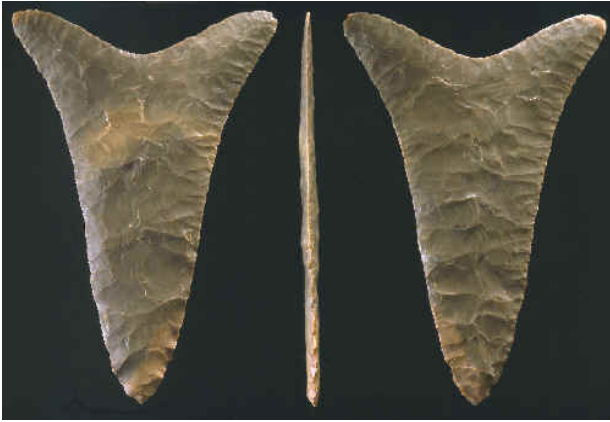
Thank you for this. In essence, this boils down to knowing oneself, and knowing how all the parts of selfhood interrelate. And it requires a degree of candid self-assessment.

Largely, yes, though sometimes having other people who can candidly help to assess you is needed. We all have our blind spots and the things about ourselves that we are most collapsed to are almost completely invisible in the same way that water is invisible to a fish.

It is only after a fish is pulled out of water that they realize it was there at all. Similarly we often need someone to pull us out of our current condition in order to be able to even see it.

This is a hugely Setian thing to do, to act as someone who pulls another out of their matrix in order for them to engage in coming into their own. This is one of the key reasons that Set is tied to the birthing dagger we commonly call the Pesh-Khent and which M.A. Roth renders as *Psš-kf* in her work on the subject.

Here is an image of a replica of one of the Pre-Dynastic, Pre-Iron “Fishtail Biface” of this primal Setian tool.



Quote:

It also brings to mind that as a magician, one must also be aware of the occasions where one is apt to self-delusion.

Not just Magicians but all humans really. Our consciousness is an uneasy truce between some truly unique and remarkable features but they derive from and for a world which no longer exists: 150 individual bands, Hunting and Foraging adaptations, lifespans maxing out around 26 years of age with high infant mortality, etc. As a result our “default setting” are woefully maladaptive in terms of perception and our capacity to really understand what is taking place from moment to moment. it is only through the training of focus, attention and Mindfulness that these default settings can be shifted towards more effective and efficient ends.

As a First Degree I found myself in an unusual situation. My primary online contact with a member of the Priesthood was with then-Priest Eric Kauschen. He was an active participant in the America Online "Ceremonial and High Magick Forum." At the time a friend of mine was a moderator of that forum and I became involved at his and Ipsissimus Webb's suggestion.

This was a rather ruckus forum at the time, made up of survivors of the McMurtry years of the O.T.O. as well as former students of Marcello Motta. In addition the younger generation of Church of Satan members who were working to try and build a "there" there despite Anton LaVey's general abandonment were in full swing. There were also the various voices channeling "wisdom" from various combustible plant matter. This led to a lot of exchanges, in various sub-forums and across a wide variety of subject matters.

At the same time my primary local contact was primarily with then-Priest Walter Gallo. At the time Priest Gallo was adamantly offline and preferred direct communication face to face or over the phone. This led to developing skills at expressing my unfolding sense of Setian Initiation verbally.

Admittedly this led to a certain amount of frustration, but ultimately led to improved skills in two important areas: writing about Initiation and speaking about Initiation. Both of these skills are worth pursuing as conscious efforts and the Temple of Set's requirement for communicating your experiences with members of the Priesthood provides a reason to do so.

One of the first mistakes people will make as Setians is erring on the side of less communication over more. They will lurk on TS1, reading the materials being posted, but they will not respond. When they are Working through the material in *The Crystal Tablet of Set* but will not mention their breakthroughs or their confusion to anyone. They will begin to experiment with the ideas and methods mentioned by other Setians but will not communicate their triumphs and failures to anyone.

The best place to start communicating within the Temple of Set is through TS1. If you see interesting discussions then take part in them. If there is nothing that captures your interest then bring up topics that do interest you. Using TS1 as a place to ask the questions that are arising in the course of your Work or to make observations about your own experiences. This kind of communication will begin to give other Setians a sense of your ideas and interests. It will also provide a means for beginning to communicate with members of the Priesthood of Set.

This manner of introduction and initial interaction is more effective than "cold contacting" members of the Priesthood in bulk. People have a certain sense of inauthenticity when they read what amounts to a form letter and are less likely to open up communication.

It is usually unwise to attempt to contact a member of the Priesthood specifically about Recognition whom you have never previously had a conversation with. You are better off simply starting communication with Priests and Priestesses who you share common interests or whose Work has caught your attention in some fashion and discussing those topics. If after some time it becomes apparent that you have a resonance between their Work and your Work then consider asking specifically about II° Recognition and their requirements and expectations.

The key to communication with the Priesthood is through the honest expression of your own

Initiatory process and the asking of challenging questions regarding Setian Theory and Practice. It is a process of exchange, transforming your capacity to understand yourself through expression and providing the kind of challenges to the Priests you are communicating with that will refine their Understanding.

One of the most significant mistakes that new Setians make in communicating with the Priesthood of Set is to try and make the conversation exclusively about II° Recognition. This derives from the mistaken belief that the I° is simply an audition Degree and that its only purpose is for II° Recognition. This robs the experience of the I° from its core Initiatory aspects and skews all exchanges with the Priesthood away from their real value.

The I° of the Temple of Set is a two year experience which should reflect the training of your Mind, the Work of becoming Ruler of your Inner World, the development of your operant Magical skills, and the development of a sense of Clarity about your Goals and Desires for yourself and your World. These pursuits, rather than II° Recognition, should be your primary concern and should make up the bulk of your exchanges not only with the Priesthood of Set but also with all other Setians.

The II° is not a goal, but rather a side-effect of pursuing this Work. The Priesthood is here to help you in this Work and can be trusted that when the time is right and the necessary transformations have taken place to act as Recognizers.

The areas of Work for the I° are often more interesting, and more fruitful for exchange as well. Reading widely is enhanced by writing about what you read and how it intersects with your Initiation. Similarly writing accounts of your experiments with techniques of LBM and GBM are also excellent things to communicate to other Setians. Forums like TS1 are an excellent place to share these reflections, provided they are around 500 to 1000 words in length. Pieces longer than that, 1000 to 4000 words, are more appropriate for publication in *The Scroll of Set*. Papers greater than that in length are certainly possible and can be shared through services like [Dropbox](#) and could be submitted for evaluation as an addition to *The Ruby Tablet of Set*.

Tied into the process of communicating your experiences is the challenge of disclosure. Disclosure can be a difficult thing to gauge in Setian exchanges, and all interactions really. Knowing what is an acceptable level of sharing of information verses what may be too revealing too soon is made more complex by the fact that we work outside the scope of conventional norms and parameters. Yet most of us have topical areas where we are still relatively conventional and which are likely to result in “Too Much Information” responses.

When posting to the General Forums of the Temple of Set err on the conservative side. While we do not censor members from using profanity or being overly explicate in their writing it can be off putting. Consider these forums to be professional environments and consider the extent of your disclosures accordingly. When dealing with potentially more sensitive levels of disclosure in personal exchanges ask those you are exchanging with about the level of disclosure they are interested in.

To give an additional perspective on the topic of Self-Disclosure here is an excerpt from Phil Hine’s *Prime Chaos*

The Importance of Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is an important element of interpersonal dynamics. Self-disclosure is generally understood as the revealing of personal secrets or some significant experience in a person’s life. Studies of groups have shown however, that there are both appropriate and inappropriate forms of self-disclosure, and it is generally considered by social psychologists that the most appropriate form of self-disclosure in groups occurs when members disclose themselves as a

reaction to what is taking place in the group in the here and now. It is not enough to simply reveal intimate details of one's past history alone, but to do so in order that other members might understand how this disclosure is relevant to one's reactions in the present. Self-disclosure is not merely the revealing of facts, but of the self at the present moment. If facts are revealed, it is in order to support the revealing of self.

Social psychologists studying self-disclosure in groups have made a distinction between 'history' and 'story.' In 'historical' disclosure, a person may relate many facts about his experiences but does so in such a way that his self remains hidden. In contrast, 'story' is an invitation for dialogue. It is not merely a recounting of facts, but a demonstration of how selective facts reveal the person as he is now through his experiences.

Such self-disclosure can only take place in an atmosphere of good interpersonal relationships within a group. As this latter can only form gradually, then it follows that self-disclosure is also a gradual process, acting in turn to strengthen relationships and the group as a whole.

Group members are often wary of people who jump into self-disclosure too quickly. It may be that too much self-disclosure, as much as too little, may be a sign of underlying disturbance. Inappropriate self-disclosure can sometimes be understood as an exhibitionistic tendency on the part of the individual. It can occur, for example, in discussions of particular magical techniques, that one person recounts a personal instance that he feels is appropriate to the discussion. Others may see this as a chance to score points by recounting their own experiences, until the discussion devolves into a mass of anecdotes where the implicit aim is for people to top each other's accounts. Thus, one person's 'story' can incite others to proclaim their 'history.'

A colleague once remarked to me that "magical groups are not therapy groups." In the present context, this relates to the fact that some people will use a magical group as a vehicle for exposing themselves psychologically: to use the group as a soundingboard for their own problems and opinions, in order to satisfy themselves, rather than contributing to the group development as a whole. Group leaders need to be aware of the dynamics of disclosure, in order to be able to judge whether or not disclosure is appropriate to the circumstances of the group. Whilst acknowledging the point that magical groups are different in character and objective to therapy groups, it should also be noted that magical groups do necessitate close interpersonal relationships and depth of feeling between group members. Magic is not merely an intellectual pursuit, and whilst it is often presented in the same factual light as the exoteric sciences, it touches us on deep, intensely personal levels. It should also be recognised that group members will not move towards self-disclosure (or for that matter, any other group stage of development) uniformly.

Just as self-disclosure is appropriate when it takes place within the context of interpersonal relationships, interpersonal relationships can only develop through mutual, appropriate, self-disclosure.

The benefits of self-disclosure are firstly personal ones. Lack of self-disclosure tends to result in limited opportunities for reality testing as this lessens opportunities to obtain valid feedback. Individuals who never disclose themselves to others lack self-awareness, in the sense of self-knowledge or insight into self. Self-disclosure is, therefore, necessary for self-knowledge in that, in communicating with others about ourselves, we also communicate with ourselves. Self-

communication is not merely the recitation of personal facts, but concerns the impact which these facts have on our lives and the ability to allow our feelings into consciousness and to own these feelings as parts of ourselves. This alone is an important point in respect to magical groups. One of the main strengths of a magical group is that it allows members to confront their own magical experiences and beliefs with those of others. This provides an unparalleled opportunity for the reality testing of one's magical world-view. All too often, magicians who work entirely alone become prey to obsessional complexes wherein they become powerful, superior beings who, despite a complete lack of social skills, are merely one ritual away from becoming all-powerful adepts.

In a group situation however, it is more likely that anyone displaying the symptoms of Magusitis (see Condensed Chaos for a further discussion of this), or emotional and behavioural obsessions which are the consequences of continually invoking a deity which boosts one particular self to the detriment of others, is going to have this pointed out to him. Through feedback from shared magical experiences, one may come to know oneself better. This feedback is also important for behavioural change. If individuals do not have (and use) opportunities to reveal to themselves how they see and do things, they are unlikely to receive feedback information that will enable them to decide whether they want to make changes in attitude, belief or behaviour. Since magical development as it is generally understood implies (and demands) behavioural change as a result of one's practice, the relevance of the above to magical groups should be obvious.

Hands down the most important people to my own process over the years on a purely personal level have been the people in my life who are not members of the Temple of Set but who know about my membership and about Setian ideas and methods. They have factored into my Work in two ways.

The first is that they have forced me to learn how to communicate my insights and experiences as a Setian outside the context of the Temple of Set. This is an important task as it can become far too easy to slip into an “in group” set of ideas, terms and signifiers as a Setian due to the uniqueness of our Work and the intensities of our shared experiences. By having people who you can talk to outside of this “in group” you have to develop skills at translating your ideas and experiences to the wider world. Having a small group of people with diverse backgrounds to check in with to insure I can still talk to “normal people” has also helped prevent spinning out into unproductive weirdness over the years.

The second tool that has been important for me has been plugging into non-Setian online communities from time to time. As mentioned earlier this began with the AOL “Ceremonial and High Magick” forum, which had an added benefit. As a participant and later a moderator in that forum I had to learn skills at discussing topics and ideas while insuring that it did not include personal attacks or promote conflicts. I have rarely, if ever, taken part in these forums as a Setian as I would rather test my ideas as my own rather than attempt to use the Temple as Social Proof of my ideas or have people respond not to me but to their ideas of the Temple. Additionally I have noticed an interesting pattern over the years: the people who make the biggest deal about them being a Setian to non-Setians are rarely a Setian for more than a year or so.

I have said it before and I will say it again: **The Temple of Set should become the least interesting thing in your Life.** If you find that the one interesting thing you have to tell people, in person or online, is that you are a Setian start Working to transform your Life and change that.

The inability to engage in reporting skill your transformations becomes the source of much of the conflict for many Setians in their personal lives. They are changing, but they do not know how to communicate this to the people in their lives, and then increasingly become alienated from the people they have cared about. On a few rare occasions this can be healthy as their private lives have been as much the result of happenstance and collapse as the rest of their life. More often however this is an unhealthy thing and a sign that the Setian is in need of making communication into a conscious skill. Even if it does become clear that your transformations means a need to make a break from your old life that break will be cleaner and more productive as a result of your improved skills at reporting.

So how do you improve your skills in this area?

One part of it is simply practice. Understand that you are going to be clunky in this area at first and do not be disheartened when things do not go perfect. You are engaged in an act of translation and sometimes you may have to ask for help along the way the same way you would in speaking a foreign language.

Take your time and focus upon how you feel and what you think rather than upon the “Why.” This will undercut the tendency to explain, and explain away, your experiences and focus instead upon what your experiences are.

When possible have the people in your life that you plan to be commenting with read Dr. Aquino's "Black Magic." This will give you some shared language for expressing your experiences and might present some interesting challenges to your assumptions about what the text means. Do not force the text on anyone however. If they are not interested, then do not push it on them.

In talking about your experiences, whether in person or in writing, try to avoid common Setian terms in favor of trying to find your own expression of an idea. If you cannot develop your own way to say things chances are you may not really understand it. This will give you a sense of what material you need to focus more upon and really make your own rather than something you simple repeat without understanding.

- **Conclave**

Conclave. This is a basic magical task. Pulling it off is a sign that all other steads are doing well. If extreme distances keep you from going to Conclave, how can you bring the Temple to you? Can you make a gathering in your home, have Skype chats, etc. Because of the Work it takes to get to Conclave or other Gatherings, great Initiation can pass from Mouth to Ear in a manner that simply reading a book or an e-mail can not give you.

Turning back to the Eternal Word and its Law, let us look at the Object of the Law, Xeperu once again.



Xeperu

Notes on glyphs: L1 - Beetle; D21 - Mouth , Z7 - Spiral phonetic “w”; A53 Mummy “Likeness, Form”; A1 - Seated Person “Companion”; Z3 “Plural”

Poetic Rendering: The Transformed Companions Developed in the likeness of “Subject”; The Way of Coming Into Being brings forth the Companions; resonant with Timothy Leary’s suggestion that once you have awoken your next task is to “Find the Others.” Inherent in this would appear to that one’s own Becoming necessitates the development of others who have become in congruence with your Becoming.

Implicate in the hieroglyphics for Xeperu is the idea that once one has undergone Xeper that a set of similarly transformed companions will emerge as a result of your Work or you will become aware of them if they have already come into being. Those who have now undergone the transformative verb Xepera share Congruent experiences which allows them to Communicate with each other in a fashion that they cannot with those not been so transformed. This is an Initiatory version of the Social Science phenomena of [The Cohort Effect](#).

In this fashion the idea of Congruence as a result of Xeper allows for an answer to one of the questions Ipsissimus Webb has struggled with in trying to use the idea of a Rite of Passage. Rather than the Separation-Liminality-Reintegration of van Gannep you find Separation-Liminality-Congruence with a para-community or Mesocosm of those who have undergone similar transformations.

Conclave is **the** opportunity to test and experience this phenomena first hand. Smaller Setian Gatherings provide a smaller scale experience of these same phenomena. Your interactions, with Orders, Elements, Pylons and private exchanges with other Setians similarly partake of these

phenomena. This experience is one of the promises inherent in Xeper itself and its experience is necessary for the fulfillment of the Eternal Word' Law. This Stead will cover considerations for attending Conclaves and Gatherings. Seed idea for organizing your own Setian Events will be provided along with accounts of my own experiments along these lines. The potentials that increasingly sophisticated social media and communication technologies will be discussed along with the traps that these contain as well. Some reflection upon the importance of meeting with people face to face with no agenda other than shared experience as a means of fighting back against the forces of Stasis and Delusion will be covered as well.

Practical Planning for Conclave

Being able to participate in Conclave is not something that just happens but should come as a result of conscious decision. It requires a certain amount of financial commitment as well as commitment of time and effort to take part. These things could be applied to other areas of your life but the decision to focus them upon the Temple of Set sets certain magical processes in motion. Here are a few of the practical considerations for getting to Conclave.

Expenses

Expenses for Conclave typically fall into the following categories: Travel, Hotel, Attire and Entertainment.

Travel expenses are largely outside of the control of any Setian. Changes in the fuel market, incentives offered by travel firms, and the relative distance of where you live to where Conclave is taking place are fixed by other forces. Never the less there are strategies for improving how much things cost you.

A large section of Tim Ferriss' *The Four Hour Work Week* focuses upon methods for cutting travel expenses. It is worth reviewing this material as a starting point. If the subject of travel as a means for honing LBM skills becomes more important to you you may find Chris Guillebeau's [*How to Become a Travel Ninja*](#) of interest. There are also a number of small communities that focus upon these topics, with varying levels of credibility and success. Search around and see what you can find.

The Temple of Set typically holds Conclave in suitable venues that allow for a variety of options in terms of cost and luxury of accommodations. Setians have often found that sharing rooms lowers costs and has the added benefit of forming and strengthening social bonds. You can also contact the Hotel ahead of time to see if there are any upgrades or complimentary services that you are eligible for which will benefit your experience.

Attire for Conclave will vary depending on what your common attire is. Conclave exists within the formal Protocols of the Temple of Set that includes an expectation for Business and Business Casual attire for meetings and presentations. In addition there is usually a Conclave Banquet that should be attended in formal attire. If you are someone who is typically a "T-shirt and Jeans" kind of person this may be new territory for you, and something of an added expense. If you feel completely lost in this area consider asking other Setians for ideas and input and maybe a little fashion consultation.

Certain locations make for slightly different attire considerations, such as the Temple's recent Conclave in Hawaii. In situations like that discuss with other Setians what would qualify as

appropriate attire and plan accordingly.

Entertainment expenses for Conclave typically boil down to meals and socializing. It is not uncommon for Setians to effectively commandeer a local bar or restaurant for the duration of Conclave as the primary after hours meeting and talking spot. It is rare in my experience for Setians to spend too much time away from the site of Conclave but it is worth investigating to see if there are any events, institutions or performances you are interested in seeing while Conclave is taking place.

Now that you have a broad sense of your potential expenses consider putting this material through a [Dreamline](#) process. This will give you some space to estimate your costs for Conclave and give you a targeted income to help cover your expenses. You may discover that it is easier to do than you expected or you may find that if you really want to make it to Conclave you will have to find some additional sources of income. Regardless turning this into a conscious process will help you gain a clearer sense of your goals and the reality of how to achieve them which can be translated to all of your other goals and desires as well.

Preparing for Conclave

So let's say you have everything in place regarding travel, packing, etc. for Conclave. How else should you be preparing?

Often Conclave's have emergent themes related to the kind of Work that Setians have been doing in the course of the year combined with aspects of the location of Conclave. It is often worth spending some time reflecting upon the key ideas and experiences that you have had in the past year and how aspects of them might be brought to your Conclave experience. In addition it can be helpful to spend some time learning about the location where Conclave is being held to get a sense of the magical forces which has previously shaped the place and which are available for your Work.

There are two different approaches towards magical practice before Conclave that are worth exploring depending on your tastes and orientation. The first is to suspect magical practice for at least a week before Conclave. This will give you some space to allow for the new approaches and methods you may experience at Conclave to take effect. The other is to consciously spend some time before Conclave magically opening yourself up to new signals and possibilities through your Conclave experience.

If you have access to a schedule for Conclave ahead of time take two things into consideration. The first is to realize that the schedule you have will likely be subject to serious, even brutal, revision when Conclave actually occurs. Never the less review the schedule for events which deeply interest you and which you want to make sure you are there for. Chances are if this is your first Conclave you will try to go to everything, but be cautious in doing this. It can be an overwhelming experience to do this and you may require some conscious decompression time between events to maintain your sense of balance.

If you have specific individuals who you are interested in having a conversation with at Conclave consider contacting them ahead of time. This will let them know you are interested and can allow for scheduling lunch or dinner meetings. It is not uncommon for senior Initiates of the Temple to have very booked Conclave schedules so getting a hold of them early is usually a good idea.

If there are Setians that you have resonated with on a personal level in the course of your Work consider getting in contact with them ahead of time as well. Having an opportunity to participate in social engagement is an important aspect of Conclave and having others to share insights, confusion and even disagreement with about various ideas presented at Conclave will prove invaluable.

Regional Gathering

As a supplement to the Temple of Set's International Conclave there are also a series of Regional Gathering throughout the year. These Regional Gatherings are not substitutes for International Conclave participation. They do however offer their own unique opportunities to meet with other Setians in a smaller grouping than Conclave.

Regional Gatherings tend to be over the course of a weekend, typically running two days. During this time outings, presentations and workshops as well as Workings are common. In addition a good bit of time is commonly given over to social interaction and more focused conversations between Setians.

All Setians in good standing are allowed to participate in Regional Gatherings. If you can attend an event in your area by all means do so. It will provide a way of knowing the Temple of Set which solitary practice and even Pylon participation alone simply cannot replicate.

The size of such Gatherings can also allow for serious focus and intensity should this be desirable. The organizers of the Regional Gathering may choose to set a specific theme for the event or choose to focus upon a particular Stead of Working. If you have ideas along these lines share them with the participants a head of time and see what might be an appropriate contribution.

As with all things it is worth having an outcome for taking part in a Regional Gathering. Do not simply attend because you feel you are expected to. Doing "the right things" for any reason other than because they enrich or challenge you will not do you any good. Know what you are doing, know why you are doing it and be open to unexpected changes that may lead to you rethinking what your outcomes really are. If you have a clear outcome you may wish to share it with other participants at the Regional Gathering during the introductions.

Focus upon personal outcomes and understanding rather than things like "I want to be Recognized as [Insert Degree]." Trust me, from experience, the people who make those kinds of statements and those things as their outcomes usually fail. Other Setians quickly get a sense that they are interested in the signifiers of a Degree rather than the growth, development and Xeper that that Degree requires.

For many people Regional Gatherings become the arena for testing out their ideas within a Setian context before sharing them with the wider Temple. As such there is often an informal and even experimental feel to the material presented. If you are attending and are on the fence about giving a presentation, running a workshop or writing a Working take the brave path and do it. The worst that happens, even if you bomb completely, is that you will get feedback that will improve your future endeavors.

So you have prepared yourself for Conclave or a Gathering, you are ready to go, what should you do? Why, you should present your ideas. I know, in nearly every list of common fears and phobias “Public Speaking” comes in right at or near the top. Considering that the other things near the top (Heights, Snakes, Spiders, etc.) usually have a real potential threat this has always seemed odd to me. Never the less for most people the idea of speaking in front of a crowd, small or large, is terrifying.

When a Setian confronts fear she pursues it rather than collapses around it. Think of giving a presentation to other Setians as a conscious opportunity to move beyond fear and into newer territories and a stronger self.

When considering what to give as a presentation look at your own Work. What has been the most important realization(s) that you have had? How have they shaped you? How might others be similarly shaped if you could share that realization?

The answers to these questions do not have to be profoundly philosophical and certainly not terribly “occulty.” Often the most interesting presentations come from simple, but personal experiences or experiments, like discovering that creating an intentional set of behaviors for yourself first thing in the morning has changed your productivity or your account of experimenting with a batch of sour dough after hearing Magistra Hardy talk about Bata in *The Tale of Two Brothers* and what you learned as a result.

Larger philosophical or specialist topics are definitely an option but keep in mind that your audience will be a diverse set of people who may or may not have a shared background with you. Assume when creating your presentation that you will be presenting to a group of smart people from a field other than your own. This will cause you to focus upon the broad implications and avoid overloading your audience with technical minutia that are not relevant.

Perhaps your biggest challenge will be that of time management. Whenever possible practice your presentation with others ahead of time to get a sense of flow and duration. Try to target for presentations running between 20 minutes to 45 minutes. Consider including the option for a questions and answers section at the end and tell the organizer how long you will really need.

Here are some useful resources for creating meaningful presentations with impact. Experiment with them within and beyond the Temple.

[Garr Reynolds: Presentation Tips](#) (Article)

[The TED Commandments](#) (Article)

[David Rose on Pitching to Venture Capitalists](#) (Video, Strongly recommended)

[How to Give a Damn Good Presentation \(plus Breakdancing\)](#)

Another option during Conclave and Gatherings is Workshops. At the moment these tend to be somewhat rare in Conclave and Gathering settings so running one well will really give you a chance to stand out. Here is a good overview for developing and running a workshop

from <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/PlanningAWorkshop.htm>

Planning a Workshop

Organizing and Running a Successful Event

Running a great workshop that everyone will remember.

Anyone who has ever planned a workshop will tell you that it's a big job. And planning a good one? Well, that takes organization, focus, and a lot of creativity.

So how do you prepare for a workshop that will be not only relevant and productive, but memorable?

Some people HATE going to workshops. Done wrong, they can be a huge waste of time and money. However, if they're planned well, they can be incredibly valuable for everyone involved. Workshops are great for brainstorming, interactive learning, building relationships, and problem solving. This is why advance planning is critical.

Before the Workshop

Follow these steps to make sure your workshop is a valuable experience for everyone:

Step 1: Define the Goals

Every workshop must have a goal. Do you need to improve your company's hiring procedures? Do you want to teach managers how to be better organizers? Do you need to do some team building with a newly formed team?

Many workshops are a waste of time because there's no clear goal kept at the center of the discussion. Without this clear goal, there's really no point in getting people together.

Step 2: Decide Who Will Attend

Knowing who will attend directly relates to your objective. For example, if your workshop's goal is to develop a detailed solution to a problem, then you probably want 10 or fewer key attendees. If your goal is centered on education, then you might be happy with a much larger group, which divides into smaller groups for discussion.

Make a list of who needs to be there. Try to be as specific as possible, but leave a few openings for last-minute additions.

Step 3: Choose the Right Location

If you have 10 attendees, then the conference room down the hall will probably be just fine. But

if you have 50 people, you may have to find an outside location that's large enough.

Think about the logistics and practical details of your workshop when you choose the location. Will everyone be able to see your visual aids? If you need a certain technology, like teleconferencing, will the location support it? Are there appropriate facilities for breakout sessions? Will everyone be able to reach the venue? Will you need to organize accommodation for people who are coming from a long way away? And what catering facilities does the venue provide?

Step 4: Create an Agenda

Now that you know your primary objective and who will attend, you can start to develop an outline of how you'll achieve the workshop's goal. Main points – Create a list of main points to discuss, and then break down each larger point into details that you want to communicate to your audience.

Visual aids – List the visual aids, if any, you'll use for each point. If you need technical support, this helps the people providing it to determine where they need to focus their efforts.

Discussions and activities – Take time to list exactly which group discussions and activities you'll have at which point in the workshop. How much time will you allow for each exercise? Make sure your activities are appropriate for the size of the group, and ensure that your venue has the resources (for example, seminar rooms) needed to run sessions.

Remember, the more detailed your plan, the more you'll ensure that your workshop will run to schedule – and be successful.

Step 5: Develop a Follow-up Plan

The only way to find out if your workshop was a success is to have an effective follow-up plan. Create a questionnaire to give to all participants at the end of the event, and give them plenty of opportunity to share their opinions on how well it went. Although this can be a bit scary, it's the only way to learn – and improve – for the next time.

It's also important to have a plan to communicate the decisions that were reached during the workshop. Will you send out a mass email to everyone with the details? Will you put it on your company's intranet? People need to know that their hard work actually resulted in a decision or action, so keep them informed about what's happening after the workshop has ended.

During the Workshop – Getting People Involved

Once you have a solid advance plan, figure out how to bring some excitement into your event. You know the topics that you want to cover, but how will you make the information fun and memorable for your team? Getting everyone involved is key to a successful workshop. If you stand up and talk for three hours, you're just giving a lecture – not facilitating a workshop. Everyone needs to participate.

Creating group exercises is different for each workshop. Keep these tips in mind:

Many people are nervous about speaking up in an unfamiliar group. If you plan group exercises, keep the size of each group small, so people are more comfortable talking and interacting.

Mix up different types of people in each group. For example, if several departments participate in your workshop, don't put members of the same department in their own group. By encouraging people to interact with other departments, they can learn to look at things from different perspectives.

Determine how you'll record the ideas from each group. Will participants shout them out while you write them down? Or will they write down their own ideas and then give them to you? This is a small, but important, detail that's often overlooked. If you have five or fewer groups, spend time allowing the entire team to evaluate the ideas from each smaller group. This is a great way to narrow down your list of ideas, and let the good ones really shine.

Remember, spend as much time as you can creating fun and interesting group exercises. These will likely keep everyone interested and participating.

Overall Workshop Tips

Here are some more ideas for running a successful workshop: If you plan the meeting, you may want to facilitate it as well. Learn how to do this effectively in

The Role of a Facilitator.

Start the meeting with a few icebreakers to get everyone relaxed and comfortable.

If your workshop's goal is to address a difficult or sensitive topic, it's especially important to get the group comfortable before starting. One way is to tell a story that's loosely related to the topic before you begin discussing the difficult issue.

Sometimes, not everyone has to stay for the entire workshop. For instance, the CEO might be too busy to attend the whole session. Identify which sections your busiest participants need to attend, and suggest in advance when they might want to arrive and leave. They'll appreciate your consideration.

Where possible, avoid holding your workshop after lunch, between 2:00 and 3:00 in the afternoon. For many people, this is their slowest, most unproductive time of day. Your group will probably be more energetic if you schedule the event in the morning or late afternoon. (If you have to run the workshop in the early afternoon, make sure there's plenty of strong coffee available!)

If your workshop's ultimate goal is to make a decision about something, the more people who attend, the less likely it is that you'll reach a decision. Here, try to keep the number of people attending to a minimum (for example, by issuing minutes after the event to people who are just interested.) It's also important to become familiar with the different strategies for team decision making. See our article on [Organizing Team Decision Making](#) to learn more.

Key Points

There's no doubt that planning a great workshop is a lot of work. But if you spend time thinking through the details, everyone will get full value from the event. The workshop's goal should be at the center of all your planning. Creative exercises will get everyone relaxed and involved, and don't forget to follow up afterward: Although it can be scary to hear what people really thought of all your hard work, it's the only way you'll improve your next event.

Let us say that you want to bring something of the Aeon of Set to the area where you live but you are at the moment the only Setian in the area. What can you do? Here are some ideas drawn from my initial experiences with the Mehen Group in NYC. If you find yourself interested in doing something like this let me know and I would be more than happy to help where I can.

In the winter of 2010 I began an experiment in organizing the presentation and discussion of Setian ideas to Setians and Non-Setians alike. This is something, which to the best of my knowledge had not been successfully done by Setians before, and so I had only modest expectations. The idea was simple: start a discussion group built around the commercially or electronically distributed texts of Setian writers related to the Temple of Set and Left Hand Path Initiation in general. Using Facebook again I created a simple Group page for the Mehen Group. The current version of this can be found <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=120615099043>

I posted a bit about the Group to my Facebook page in order to get a sense of the initial interest. There was lots of interest, lots of flakes, little real action. After a few months of virtual interactions I decided to hold our first official meeting in April of 2010. I used the Facebook interface to create a time and date, made knowledge of the venue where it would take place contingent upon an R.S.V.P. and posted it generally so that anyone could see the details. Since that initial meeting I have continued with hold monthly meetings built around short readings and discussions of the content of Ipsissimus Webb's *Uncle Setnakt's Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path*.

After a short fluorescence of participation from people involved with a number of Thelemic, Wiccan and other occult groups in NYC the group has become to coalesce into a solid regular set of participants. Some having had a chance to speak with Setians for the first time took their participation in the Mehen Group as a chance to rethink their paths have chosen to become Setians. Others are using their experience with the group to enrich and deepen their existing paths. For those who eventually fell away from the group, their leadership roles in other communities will allow them to be able to give an accurate account of their interaction with Setians as courteous, knowledgeable people who seemed to be talking over their heads but who never condescended or attempted to denigrate what they were doing.

So, looking back over the Work with the Mehen Group I am counting it largely as a Victory. It is a formula that has Worked and is Working, and as such it is one that I now wish to share. The formula is very simple:

- 1) Decide if you have the time, inclination and desire to start a project such as this. If you do find a significant name that you find resonant with the activity you are beginning and name

your group after this. Establish an online identity for the group using free services such as Facebook or other free Social Networking technologies. Avoid any site that requires payment such as Meetup. There should be no personal overhead for your Discussion Group.

2) Take personal safety steps when you begin. Consider using a plausible pseudonym as the organizer of the group. Use only public locations for engaging in your discussions and do not disclose your private contact information or residence. Cafes, quiet bars* or restaurants all provide good locations for meetings. Be courteous to the staff, tip well and very quickly you'll discover that they are on your side should someone begin causing problems or disrupting your meeting.

3) Choose a text or series of topics for each of your meetings. I chose Ipsissimus Webb's *Uncle Setnakt's...* because it is easily available, was instrumental to my own Work as a I°, and is broadly focused enough that aspects of it can be integrated by anyone regardless of their interests. You may find that more focused Works like *Mysteries of the Temple of Set* or Dr. Aquino's recently released update of *Black Magic* will be what works for you. Try keeping the reading for each meeting short enough that people can read it between meetings. The subchapters in Ipsissimus Webb's books are excellent for this or the individual chapters of Dr. Aquino's *Black Magic*. Once you have covered the basic texts recommended for non-Setians have your group choose a title from http://www.xeper.org/pub/pub_dw_reading.html to begin exploring together.

4) Pick a time and place for the meetings that will be consistent. Choose a day of the month (third Monday, second, Thursday, whatever) and stick to it each month _no matter what_. If this means you have to spend two hours alone in a Cafe somewhere because everyone else bailed on you, great. The act of doing will have an effect and will remind you of your continued purpose.

5) Post these events in places where people will be able to find them on Social Networks. The Friday before the meeting send the location details to those who have expressed an interest in attending. If they have public profile information give that a quick read so you have some sense of the people who will be attending, what they look like and what they are interested in.

6) Be willing to go first when starting your discussions but also look to draw your participants into the discussion. Watch for those flickers in people's eyes and across their faces when something seems to be perking up and let them speak. Be open to differing interpretations of the material and even direct disagreement. The best discussion groups often involve people with very different opinions who have come to respect each other.

7) Re-enforce to people that what you are doing is discussing these texts, not attempting to give authoritative interpretations. Even if you are a member of the Priesthood try to avoid speaking for the Temple in an official capacity. Lean heavily upon statement starting with "In my opinion..." or "In my experience..." The personal is Initiatory and your own experiences are the best place to draw from. People are much more willing to respect these kind of statements than attempts to dodge giving your own opinion by defaulting to "The Temple of Set says..." statements.

8) Be willing to act as a gateway of information regarding the Temple of Set for interested participants. If you notice someone has a lot of potential and seems interested in joining the Temple do not suggest that they join right away. Watch how they develop over time and see if they begin to be drawn more deeply to the Temple. When they ask you about joining, give them your honest experiences and impressions and if you think it is appropriate write something on their behalf to the Executive Director when their application is being reviewed.

9) Most important of all: Have Fun. This should be an exercise in enjoyment just as much as it is a practice in learning how to speak about Setian things to non-Setians and to hone your skills at organizing groups of humans. If you chose to start a discussion group along these lines make the project a goad for your own practice. You are setting yourself up as an example of Setian Initiation in action. Insure that people know you are not a finished project by mentioning your accomplishments followed by what your next related goals are. Look over how you present yourself in terms of appearance, manners and fashion to see where you might need to learn more or make some upgrades. Work on your skills as a public speaker and discussion moderator and ask for feedback from participants to help improve your skills. Not sure how to do these things? Feel free to contact me for some ideas.

*Running these as drinking events may lead to problems however using a bar as a meeting location can act as an effective filter for underage participants who you may not wish to be involved with your Group.

Contemporary communications technologies have been and will continue to change the way that Setians interact in relation to Initiation. One of the biggest recent changes has been the introduction of communication platforms such as Skype into the Work of Orders, Pylons, Elements and individual Setians. This was pioneered by the Temple's standard early adopter, Magister Eric Kauschen, for the Work of the Order of the Trapezoid and it has been expanding outwards slowly and effectively.

If you are a Setian in an area that does not presently have a geographic Pylon consider forming a communication group with other Setians. Ideally these groups could model the Pylons of the Temple of Set. They should have at a minimum three people, one of whom is a II°+ and the activities should be conducted with input from a member of the Priesthood acting as Sponsor. By setting aside specific times for communications and making sure you are there you can begin to experience a synergistic effect upon your Initiation which will begin within your group and eventually expand beyond it.

This format can be used for conducting discussion and for synchronized Workings. A small group of this nature that I have been experimenting with in Brooklyn has conducted several meetings and at least one Working in this way much to the benefit and continued growth of those involved.

These new communication platforms can also allow for the sharing of information in new manners. Rather than having presentations given to a local Pylon alone, these presentations can be made tele-accessible for those who are interested in hearing them live or they could be recorded and distributed to the Temple via our archives on Xeper.org's Intranet. This would allow in a very profound way a chance to test one of Ipsissimus Webb's maxims: Share what you know and your power will grow.

In addition to the obvious Working aspects of having a group like this it can also act as something

referred to as a Mastermind Group. Here is one of the better short introductions to this idea as well as how to set up such a group. Its potential relationship to Setian Pylons and Working Groups should be obvious.

From <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/how-to-start-and-run-a-mastermind-group.html>

How To Start and Run a Mastermind Group

Some people like to cooperate with others to achieve their goals, while others prefer to chase their dreams on their own. I find that involving mutually committed partners in my pursuits is intensely rewarding – especially mastermind groups. I’ve strengthened my friendships, made measurable progress towards my goals, and continue to grow thanks to the support I’ve received in my mastermind groups over the years.

In this article I’ll lay out what a mastermind group is, the benefits of having a mastermind group, and concrete strategies and actions you can take to start your own mastermind group today.

What Is A Mastermind Group?

The first place I came across the concept of a mastermind was in Napoleon Hill’s Think and Grow Rich. In it, Hill describes a mastermind group as:

The coordination of knowledge and effort of two or more people, who work toward a definite purpose, in the spirit of harmony.

In my experience, my mastermind groups have formed around multiple people striving for a common purpose – from goals as small as college admissions and improving fitness, to as large as your entire life.

What Are The Benefits of a Mastermind Group?

Mutual support. I like to form groups around a specific activity, but even with differing goals you’ll be able to lean on each other for support. Many times when my progress has slowed on a specific goal, the members of my mastermind are the only people who really understand what has been going on behind the scenes, and give me support in spite of my failed efforts.

Differing perspectives. Hearing the different views my fellow mastermind participants have allows me to see issues I wouldn’t otherwise become aware of – in my life, and in my approach to my goals. Whether I agree with their assessment or not, it always gives me a better understanding of how I can better improve my approach.

Resources. Everyone in your group will have access to a different skill set and network of people. I’ve often found that when I ask for help in my mastermind groups, these resources help me make progress in ways I never could by myself.

Accountability. My fellow group members hold me accountable to goals I set. In addition, just

knowing that I have a regularly scheduled meeting internally drives me to make progress – because I don’t want to be the only person reporting back that I haven’t made an effort to move my projects forward.

How Do I Start a Mastermind Group?

Starting a mastermind group is deceptively simple in its steps:

Pick a Topic. This may be as narrow as you like, or as broad as you like (such as your entire life). If you are new to mastermind groups, I would recommend picking one specific aspect of your life to start out with.

Perhaps fitness, your career, school, or some other broad area that you would like improvement with.

Pick your Partners. I’ll discuss this in detail below. A mastermind group is only as good as the people in it – pick your partners with care.

Agree On Ground Rules. I’ll provide some guidance below, but keep in mind the purpose of setting rules is not to stifle anyone – the purpose of the rules is to ensure everyone benefits from the mastermind group. I like to keep a loose set of rules and count on mutual respect of the individuals to keep everyone in line, but you may choose to have strict ground rules if you like.

Meet!

Who Should I Invite Into My Mastermind Group?

Two words: mutual beneficiaries. Any member in your mastermind group should not only be able to provide you with sound feedback and advice, but should be able to receive some benefit from your feedback as well.

Some qualities I look for in a participant include:

Similar Drive and Commitment. You want everyone in the group to be similarly committed. If one person is striving to compete in a bodybuilding competition, while you’re just trying to cut the sugar out of your diet, you may not be compatible for a mastermind group.

Diverse Skill Sets. For me personally, I am very analytical and approach things from a scientific, engineering perspective. I enjoy mastermind groups where some people share this perspective, but also gain valuable feedback from people who are perhaps more abstract and in touch with their emotions (as opposed to a “cold” analytical approach).

Problem Solvers. This is my personal preference, I like partners who are active problem solvers. My purpose in a mastermind group is to get feedback, solutions to my issues and move forward.

I like to limit mastermind groups to between 3 and 5 people. This keeps meeting short, in

depth and on point. You can experiment with more or less, but I recommend starting with 2 or 3 if this is your first time with a mastermind group.

How Do I Run A Mastermind Group?

Meet Regularly And Precisely. I call this the “nuts and bolts.” Keep to a regularly scheduled time, ensure all members are punctual – and end on time. I typically meet for 60 minutes once a week. You may require more or less time, but ensure that you have adequate time because you want to...

Give each member equal time. We don’t use a timer, but for larger groups that may be necessary. I keep most of my groups to only three people, and generally we are all aware that we have approximately 20 minutes per person, and try to keep it in that time frame.

Don’t Interrupt. One person at a time, and keep in mind the purpose of the meeting is to give everyone a chance – it’s not always about you. Hold all comments until the person speaking has a chance to speak. We generally do not jump in at all unless someone has a specific question.

Decide if you need an agenda. My mastermind groups typically have a conversation topic (often decided at the meeting prior), but no explicit agenda. I previously have run groups that had more explicit items on the agenda for accountability and progress reports – try it out and decide what works best for you.

Decide on whether to have a facilitator. In my groups, I start the calls, and act as a very loose facilitator – I point out who is going to go first. That’s it – everyone polices themselves. Perhaps your group will need a facilitator who is more active – keeping people on target for time, and moving you from one items on the agenda to the next.

Capture. Make sure you capture what happened at each meeting – lessons and triumphs, goals, and items you want to keep each other accountable to. I like to use Google Documents and Mindmeister. When I conduct groups online using Skype I use MP3 Skype Recorder (free) to record mp3s of my calls.

Three Question To Kick Start Your Mastermind Group

If you’re ready to start a mastermind group, you may want some very basic structure help you in the beginning. These three questions never fail to get my mastermind groups off to a great start. As your group evolves, you’ll come up with your own agenda and questions that you’d like each member to answer – but if you don’t know where to begin, this is a great place to start:

What Are You Working On? Nice and broad, and each member can answer with whatever they feel comfortable sharing.

What Did You Learn? Very often my groups are focused on similar goals, and lessons learnt by one member benefit all of us.

What Do You Need Help With? By having a specific question on the agenda, this helps take pressure of members who want to reach out to the group for help.

Your Thoughts and Strategies?

What do you think? Have you run a mastermind group before? Do you have additional tips to share, or perhaps pitfalls to avoid?

Something to consider for those of you who have been in the Temple of some time. [Professor David Logan](#), co-author of *Tribal Leadership: Leveraging Natural Groups to Build a Thriving Organization* noted when discussing Masterminds that there often exists huge missed opportunities for Mastermind type groups within organization. The one he has honed in on especially at Board of Directors, which in the case of the Temple of Set would be the Council of Nine. In terms of the Temple what other groups might benefit from integrating aspects of Mastermind-type group work and what are you willing to commit to make this happen now?

As I move into the last few days of this project I want to turn for a moment to the rewards of this Work as they indicate some additional areas worth exploring and give a sense of the purpose of Work generally. In his initial post Ipsissimus Webb notes that the Rewards of this Work are

- Self knowledge
- Practical power
- Greater health and pleasure
- A happy heart
- An easier to use mind
- Greater Magical Power
- Tribe building
- Honesty
- You will become a builder of Setian culture and community

This is a fairly comprehensive list and one that can seem a bit daunting. It is certainly more complex a set of long-term targets than simply mining your past for re-experiencable pleasures or trying to consume the corpus of another magician's works perpetually. It is also a hell of a lot more motivating to me to have targets like this rather than idolizing other peoples' outcomes and trying to emulate them.

There is also no preset route or definitive map for you, you get to these things. Experimentation and exploration for yourself is key.

Even the sprawling collection of material I have been writing these last two months are but the tip of the iceberg. They represent one person's collection of ideas on actionable things that can be done in each of the Steads outlined. It is my hope that this material can act as a touchstone for those feeling uncertain about what they can be doing as a Setian. It is also my hope that others will come forward with their of methods in areas of their specialization and as their interests allow. If anyone has any ideas for collaborations I'm all ears.

Each of the rewards mentioned by Ipsissimus Webb is worthy of time and attention in their own right, however for my closing posts to this thread I would like to focus specifically upon one area specifically: Tribe Building.

Let us begin with a little Anthropology to help define terms.

The original unit of Human social formation is something that Anthropologists term a Band. Bands are made up of 5 to 80 individuals who may or may not be related directly that act as the primary network of survival and interaction. This formation runs to before the emergence of *Homo Sapiens* and it is found not only in Genus but also in the Genus of Gorilla and Pan (Chimpanzees and Bonobos). Bands tend to be largely egalitarian and rely upon situational leadership. It is the primary social formation for the majority of surviving Hunter-Gatherer societies.

Tribes are small clusters of Bands that are interconnected in some fashion. They tend to function well in the 80 to 150 individual size but can exist up to the size of roughly 1000 individuals without too much trouble. Tribal groups tend to spend most of their time in scattered Band formations which periodically come together to engage in group binding activities such as rituals, exchanges of good, group feasting and sexual interactions. Status differences within a Tribe tend to be ever shifting based upon one's activities and authority tends to be decentralized. Those who do have status often have earned it and maintained it through their actions and the benefits they have brought to the tribe.

When group sizes begins to go beyond the ~1000 individual barrier new formations become necessary. The one that emerges at this point in human social organization is referred to as Chieftdom. With the expanded group size the need for someone to act in an executive capacity develops, usually with a small group of people who will lead in following the executive's decision. In situations where the group's subsistence strategy involves having to remain in one place for a long period of time, such as agriculture, it is not uncommon for this executive role, termed as Chief, to become based not on raw competence but upon hereditary lineage.

Should a stabilized Hereditary Chieftdom continue to expand in the same location, pushing its population into the 100,000 mark and beyond a new phenomenon of social organization emerges, called a State. State contain rigidly defined classes within their social organization and display a high level of stratification in terms of subsistence activities, cultural production and decision-making. Status, and especially leadership, is based upon a centralized authority, whether in the figure of a single office or distributed across certain centralized bodies.

Human behaviors generally work upon a pattern of emergence and inclusion: something of greater complexity emerges at a point of crisis and includes within its new complexity the previous levels of complexity that came before it. Chances are if you looked through your personal list of contacts and focused only upon the people of primary importance in your life, you'd notice that number too fits within the Band unit. If you take part in hobbyist discussions there is also a good chance that the group is roughly the size of a tribe, with a few people doing most of the talking and a larger group of people taking it in but not really feeding information back into the system.

These last four posts will deal with the ways that our Bands and Tribes influence our Work and in turn can be places where we reap its Rewards.

One of the unintended consequences of the development of rapid communication technology at the end of the 20th Century was the remanifestation of certain aspects of tribal behavior. Small networks of subject matter or activity specific “tribes” became empowered through these media to find each other, exchange ideas, methods and techniques.

As with nearly all things human this phenomena has been studied from the standpoint of marketing and commerce as much as it has human behavioralists. One of the better voices on this has been writer/presenter Seth Godin. Here is a brief introduction to his ideas on the subject.

Tribe Management

Brand management is so 1999.

Brand management was top down, internally focused, political and money based. It involved an MBA managing the brand, the ads, the shelf space, etc. The MBA argued with product development and manufacturing to get decent stuff, and with the CFO to get more cash to spend on ads.

Tribe management is a whole different way of looking at the world.

It starts with permission, the understanding that the real asset most organizations can build isn't an amorphous brand but is in fact the privilege of delivering anticipated, personal and relevant messages to people who want to get them.

It adds to that the fact that what people really want is the ability to connect to each other, not to companies. So the permission is used to build a tribe, to build people who want to hear from the company because it helps them connect, it helps them find each other, it gives them a story to tell and something to talk about.

And of course, since this is so important, product development and manufacturing and the CFO work for the tribal manager. Everything the organization does is to feed and grow and satisfy the tribe.

Instead of looking for customers for your products, you seek out products (and services) for the tribe. Jerry Garcia understood this. Do you?

Who does this work for? Try record companies and bloggers, real estate agents and recruiters, book publishers and insurance companies. It works for Andrew Weil and for Rickie Lee Jones and for Rupert at the WSJ... But it also works for a small web development firm or a venture capitalist.

People form tribes with or without us. The challenge is to work for the tribe and make it something even better.

From http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2008/07/are-you-in-the.html

A few good videos on the topic.

[Why You Need a Tribe](#)[On the Tribes We Lead](#)

One of the implicate aspects of Setian Work is to create “tribal leaders.” This is the kind of Work outlined by Ipsissimus Webb in *Uncle Setnakt’s Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path* under the heading of “Royal Power in the Outer World.” An early draft of this section is published on the Balanone.info website

Human beings have two desires that lead them to their third task, the making of other human beings better. The first is a weak and vain desire that RHP creeds strike out against, which is the desire to show off. The second is a desire that generally makes us good herd animals, the desire to help out other people. This second desire is generally derided by the more immature forms of the Left Hand Path. By understanding and accepting these desires, we can not only engage in the pleasures that come from them, but also transform ourselves into yet more Sovereign beings.

The desire to show off is genially used by forces outside of ourselves for their gain. They sell us a snazzy car, a bigger computer, or nicer clothes than our neighbors’. Good primates that we are, we fall for this trick everytime (yet more proof that man is machine). But we can use this desire to our advantage by learning to show off displays of wisdom and virtue, that will attract a certain type of individual. This is a good first step in that it takes rulership of the desire away from an external force, and places it with an internal one. But it leads to the guru game -- lots of followers that admire us, while we bask in a wisdom that is small. So if we decide that we will make ourselves wiser and more powerful so that we will have more to Teach, we can indulge in the follower game all our lives. However this leads to a second dilemma. As we get better, we also have to help others get better so that we have people to talk to, and they in turn begin to desire followers (having the same weakness and vanity that we do). Slowly we change our desire to show off into a desire for peers, and thus we create schools that perpetuate our thoughts.

The desire to help out people comes from the refinement of the emotions. Most people begin the Left Hand Path in a state of disillusionment and rebellion. They want to be boss rather than be bossed. (In fact everyone is on the LHP for two weeks when they are 17.) The emotional states here are anger and greed and jealousy. This dark side of human nature is where the Good will come from, the Shadow is the Initiator, but as self power is gained, so comes the capacity for a non-sentimental love of others. The LHP Initiate, recognizing as viruses personal strength and self knowledge, does what he or she can to help others create the states. If this emotion is not carefully watched, it can devolve into a dangerous sentimentality that causes us to make things too easy on those who come after us, but if it is carefully refined in the light of one’s own past experiences, it can become an igniting force, -- a spark that awakens the Gifted but sleeping members of mankind.

If these two desires are carefully blended, balanced, and brought to bear with the hard-won wisdom of the first two tasks, the Initiate has a great magnetic power. He or she can take the circumstances of others around them and turn them into an endless process of refinement.

He can help his students get over the death of a friend, she can help her employees cope with changing working conditions, and so forth. Everything that happens around them becomes an opportunity for those who would be better to get better. While this great benefit is being visited upon others, the Initiate in merely considering what to do or say to his friends, followers, or fellow travelers is refining his or her own thoughts and moods. By initiating others, self initiation is furthered -- both by articulation and seeing whether or not one's theories work in the world. The magical name for this state is the Practice of Alchemy.

One of the most important things to keep in mind is that the Temple is not interested in having you become a "tribal leader" within the Temple of Set. Rather it is finding a place as a "tribal leader" beyond the Temple of Set that is the focus. We will provide opportunities for you to test your ideas, develop skills, and refine your methods, but one does not gain Royal Power in the Outer World by finding Royal Power without our structure.

Gaining skills in Tribal Leadership will allow you to access new individuals and develop resources that will enrich your life. In turn these things will enhance the overall community of the Temple of Set by making you a more capable, creative and interesting Initiate. This may take any number of forms but is contingent upon you getting beyond simply proclaiming yourself Ruler of the World in the privacy of your own home and challenging yourself through interaction with others, some who will love you and others who will hate you. It is in this circumstance of challenge and interaction that the need for Work, for Magic and perhaps even for Xeper.

You will become a builder of Setian culture and community. By journeying to Conclave, you will meet lifelong friends, maybe even life partners. By honestly sharing your joys and struggles you will become part of a community that is developing new and better forms of magic and philosophy, new and better ways to see the world, new and better ways to act upon the world. Thus your Desires can be fulfilled.

Creating community may be one of the most interesting challenges within Setian Culture. We are a diverse group of individuals dedicated to our own development first and foremost. Often in the process of our own development there are periods where we experience both collapse and a tendency to engage in posturing as we are making changes in our lives and ourselves. This can lead to contractions and disconnection, for you and for other Setians.

The upside is that the more honest you are in your strivings, the more you are willing to share even the difficult stuff, and more authentic you can be to your experiences and to the wide ways those experiences can be interpreted, the greater your contribution to the development of a Setian community will be. The same skills you are Working upon for yourself can help to transform and enhance the Temple of Set while at the same time helping you to translate this Work and sense of Community into all other areas of your life.

Communities have a synergistic effect upon your Initiation. No one individual is capable of being an expert in everything, nor in having all their potential lines of development fully actualized. Being a part of a community can help make up for these factors, giving you access to those who know more about a subject or who have more experience with it while also providing people who excel at things you have only a minor grasp upon and who can thus show you your blind spots or insure that these things do not go overlooked to your peril.

The strongest benefit for taking part in the Setian community is that by engaging in Self-Change Work with others who are engaging in similar Work all of your Work can be enhanced. You will find peers to challenge yourself with, mentors to help you develop new skills, examples of what can potentially come of this Work and ultimately a chance to become such an example yourself.

Bring boldness to your Work. Bring honesty. Bring yourself authentically. In doing so you are setting in motion the Work that will form the roots of one of the greatest transformations in the history of Humanity, whether you realize it yet or not.

Closing Remarks

I began this series with the idea that it would represent one Setian's attempt to understand their own activities and interests within the framework provided by Ipsissimus Webb's original post.

This series was a spontaneous, not a planned occurrence. It represents my own struggle to overcome the temptation to the way of Hafiz. As it developed it became a conscious attempt to extend and refine Setian Culture. I have sought to reinforce what I find best: a culture of Doing, of Authenticity, and of open sharing of ideas and methods.

I have sought to provide a set of resources to allow other Setians to engage in Work in any of these areas should they ever find themselves dismayed about what they should, or could, be doing in pursuit of their Initiation. This is not a collection of things you must be doing but rather designed to give you a taste of what you could be doing.

By taking into account all of the various kinds of Work possible you can more fully embrace your specialties while becoming aware of your blind spots. In this way I have sought to make my readers more fully informed about the spectrum of practices available to them. It is my hope that it will lead some of you not only to engage these practices and ideas but for you to discover and share new ones.

Work will ground you and guide you. It will remind you that Initiation is not simply a product of the Mind but must be rooted in action. These actions must be guided by your own developing sense of Self. Be patient with yourself, but zealous in your dedication to return to Work when you fall off the Path of Practice.

On this the birthday of the physical vessel of Setnakt, whose Word Awoke me to the Aeon, do I call this two month Working to a Close.

So it is Done.

Set-Em-Heb

Brooklyn, NY

Walpurgisnacht, XLVII Aeon of Set.

4/30/12



The Aeon and the Eternal Word Intro

The late philosopher Rick Roderick once mused that the root of Philosophy begins with taking what most people use as rhetorical questions as serious questions. In some ways this collection stands as a result of my doing something similar with the assumptions I had and the tacit agreements I had taken part in regarding many of the fundamental ideas of Setian Initiation.

On February 14, 2011 E.V. I found myself alone with the Eternal Word of Set. Everything I had felt I knew for certain about it evaporated in a moment upon seeing the Word as it is found in the Xeper Formula of the Papyrus Bremner Rhind as transcribed by Budge in his *“Egyptian Language”*. I had of course seen this form of Xeper many times before, in the same book that was in my hand that day in fact, but it was not until that moment that I was ready to be shaken to my foundations by it.

I was alone with the Word, and I was not happy.

I spent a few months with the Word, trying desperately to understand its implications. I would wake up in the morning, scribble out the hieroglyphs on a whiteboard I keep in my kitchen, and begin experimenting with ways to express what it implied. I would read contemporary books on Egyptian language recommended to me by several beleaguered Egyptian professors who I was sending email to on a regular basis. I would read books on evolutionary theory, human evolution and cultural evolution, some which I had read before, as if my life depended upon it. I would subject some unexpected Setian house guests with what felt like incoherent rambling about what was occurring in my Understanding. I did not however share much of this with the Temple at large.

This changed while writing the material that has been collected in *“Work and Its Rewards”*. I found myself in attempting to outline the many ways one can engage in Initiatory Work that I had to refer to my research on the Eternal Word in order to explain myself. I could no longer talk about Initiation without also talking about what the Eternal Word was teaching me.

After that series was completed I began re-reading it in the hopes of making it more readable by others. In doing so many new questions arose about fundamental ideas. What do I mean by Aeon? I used the term Magus but where does it come from? Where did the idea of “Words” come from anyway? At the same time the need to contextualize my new sense of the Eternal Word within the context of the Aeonic forces which had helped to shape my Understanding arose, causing me to look more deeply at the Aeon Enhancing Word of the Aeon. I was creating a powerful charge of images and ideas in my mind.

What caused these to discharge into the series who are now reading came, as so many things have, from Dr. Aquino. He was kind enough to scan for me the original paper version of the _Book of Coming Forth by Night_. I had asked him to do this as I was begining to suspect that his Utterance, in its Aeon generating sense, could be considered in a manner like a verb-root in Egyptian. Upon seeing the scanned document, with the only character used for Xeper in it being the verb-root itself, my ideas unleashed like lightening.

Much like _Work and Its Rewards_ this collection is not a finished document. It is rather a sliver of my ideas from a very specific and volatile time in my Initiation. It will be subject to updates, corrections, and expansions, and may someday find a more completed form. As it stands may it provide you with a greater context for understanding the Aeon of Set and the Words define and Enhance the Work done within it.

Xeper,

James Fitzsimmons IV°

Sept 23, 2013

The Aeon and the Eternal Word



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Revised: December 28, 2012

Book I: The Aeon



Let us begin with the word “Aeon,” its origins, and its developed meanings.

Proto-Indo-European is a reconstructed language used by Linguists to present likely origins for the word developed in the existing Indo-European Languages. The proposed Proto-Indo-European word which is the progenitor of the current word “Aeon” is said to be *h₂eyu-, or h₂eyw- meaning “Vital Force,” “Life,” “Age,” and “Eternity.” This same root leads the Latin “aevum” and “aeternus” and in English to the word “ever.”

For this discussion the key descendent from *h₂eyu- is the Greek word αἰών (aiōn). Αἰών is a masculine word in the third declination with a few meanings. Αἰών early on meant “lifetime” or “the length of life of a man.” In time it took on the meaning of “generation” or what Anthropologists would call an “Age Grade.” This eventually led to an expanded meaning of a very long duration, or an epoch. It also has the meaning of “The Current World” or the world the speaker is living in.

Αἰών appears in the Homeric Epics meaning the early “Lifespan.” Plato uses αἰών to mean the “Eternal World” or the Realm of the Forms. It appears in the Old and New Testament Greek with its implication of “Eternity” being the standard translation. In this it shares an English translation with the Hebrew word עולם “olam” which has a similar interplay of the ideas of “World,” “Age,” and “Eternity.”

In the Second Century of the Common Era the notion of “Aeon” underwent an important transformation within the teachings of a Gnostic Christian heresy called Valentinianism. This movement was said to originate with the Egyptian thinker Valentinus, born in 100 CE, educated in Alexandria, and was involved with the Catholic community in Rome; though none of his texts survived to the present*. None the less, his ideas, or ideas attributed to him, would develop into a significant Gnostic movement.

Key to the Valentinian ideas is the notion of there being within the Celestial Realm a series of Worlds, or “Aeons” which exist as immaterial force. In total the Valentinians are said to have believed in 30 Aeons, divided into three sets of paired Aeons called “Syzygies” and were thought to have a sexual polarity. Our knowledge of these comes not from the Valentinians themselves but rather the Church Father Tertullian.

The First, and therefore most perfect, Aeons are known as the Ogdad. Its pairs of Aeons are:

- Bythos (Profundity) and Ennoia (Idea)
- Nous (Mind) and Aletheia (Truth)
- Logos (Word) and Zoe (Life)
- Anthropos (Man) and Ekklesia (Church)

The Second set of Aeons, thought to derive from the interaction of Logos and Zoe, and known as the Decad are:

- Bythios (Deep) and Mixis (Commingle)
- Ageratos (Unaging) and Henosis (Union)
- Autophues (Self-Existent) and Hedone (Pleasure/Bliss)
- Akinetos (Immovable) and Synkrisis (Blending)
- Monogenes (Only-Begotten) and Makaria (Happiness)

The Third set of Aeons, derived from Anthropos and Ekklesia, and known as the Dodecad are:

- Parakletos (Helper) and Pistis (Faith)
- Patrikos (Paternal) and Elpis (Hope)
- Metrikos (Maternal) and Agape (Love)
- Ainos (Praise) and Synesis (Intelligence, Understanding)
- Ekklesiastikos (Ecclesiastical) and Makariotes (Happiness)
- Theletos (Willed, Longed for) and Sophia (Wisdom)

Valentinianism would spend longer than two centuries in interaction with the Catholic Church, as a rival school of thinking. Surviving sources of this time hold the Valentinians as having been the most sophisticated of the Gnostic Schools and most intellectually rigorous. Their ideas, which had a clearly Emanationist quality, would also run into criticism and conflict with Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists. Nevertheless their Emanationist model of Aeons would continue to exert an influence on those trying to understand the Gnostics and the concepts of Late Antiquity.

*It is possible that The Gospel of Truth in the Nag Hammadi collection may be one of his texts as that was a title attributed to him from sources in Late Antiquity.

It would be another group of Gnostics, the Sethians, who would contribute another important concept to the cluster of ideas around the word "Aeon." Until fairly recently what was known about their beliefs came from the writings of Irenaeus, a Second Century Bishop of Lugdunum in Gaul. The Sethians focus was largely on the period before the Creation Narratives in Genesis, seeking to understand the origins of God. They presented a largely negative theology, describing the immobility, and ineffability, of the Divine.

The Sethians shared with the Valentinians a belief in pairs of sexually charged Aeons emanating from the One. The first of these was Barbelo who is referred to as "The Eternal Aeon." God and the Aeons were together in a Pleroma. Within the Pleroma however a crisis occurred, leading to a figure with a lion's head on the body of a snake called Yaldabaoth. Yaldabaoth would steal the Divine capacity to create from the Aeon Sophia, and use it as a demiurge, creating the material world separate from the fullness of the divine in the Pleroma. To do this he spawns beings called Archons who aid in the building of Materiality. It is the Yaldabaoth who creates Adam, mistakenly leaving a portion of the divine power stolen from Sophia within this new being. This capacity would in time transfer to the third son of Adam, Seth, from whom the movement would take its name.

The actual thoughts of the Sethians were largely unknown until the discovery of the Nag Hammadi Library in 1945. As such, misapprehensions of their ideas and practices abounded in discussions of this sect. One of the texts in the Nag Hammadi Library is a set of hymns known as "The Three Stele of Seth." These hymns are praise to Barbelo and outline a process of Ascension by the one singing the hymn from the material realm, up through the Aeons into the realm of Barbelo.

This process of Ascending demonstrated in "The Three Stele of Seth" would leave a mark upon the practical methods associated with the Gnostics. It was held that they sought to return through the Aeons to the One, and to do so that they must pass through the challenges of the Archons. Possibly based upon diminished knowledge of the Egyptian Book of the Dead, these Archons were thought to be passable through the use of certain words and actions. If you knew the word to get past a particular Archon it would provide you with access to the associated Aeon.

Thus we have the origins of the relationship between Word and Aeon.

There are two key figures, roughly contemporaneous, who contribute greatly to the notion of Aeons and the role that a magician at a certain level of being has in terms of these Aeons. They are Dositheos the Samaritan and Philo of Alexandria.

What is known about Dositheos comes from Early Church sources, few of which have much good to say. His dates of living vary widely, from the time of Alexander's Conquests to being a contemporary of John the Baptist. He was associated with the beginning of the Sadducees, a nearly atheistic Temple form of Judaism. Some sources claim that he was the Teacher of Simon Magus while others suggest he lived after him. He is held to be one of the founding figures of Mandaeism.

Dositheos is the person from whom The Three Steles of Seth was revealed. Thus it is thought that it is from Dositheos that the process of Ascending was developed, with its need to access the Aeons towards the goal of Divine contact. This notion of Ascending may be the source for the parody of Dositheos' supposed student, Simon Magus, in the New Testament book "The Acts of the Apostles" in which it is said that Simon claimed to be able to fly. Dositheos' role as teacher of Simon Magus would also provide an additional connection for our purposes. This would also connect Dositheos' notion of Ascending with the Zoroastrian religious title of "mogh," the source of the word "Magus."

Philo of Alexandria was a Jewish thinker whose life straddled the last century Before the Common Era and first century of the Common Era. As an Alexandrian Jew he was acutely interested in integrating what he felt were the best aspects of Greek thought with the religion of his people. In particular the Stocic Philosophers formed a significant influence on his ideas and it was from their discussion of Logos that he developed his own interpretation of this concept in alignment with Judaism.

Logos or λόγο, from λέγω "I say" held a few different meanings in Greek. It can mean that which is said, that which is thought or an account or narrative about something. Oddly, one of the things it does not mean is "word" which in Greek is said as lexis (λέξις).

Logos takes on a Philosophical meaning initially in the fragments of Heraclitus. For him it is Logos which allows for the connection between the individual mind capable of thinking in relations and the reality of the world's relations. Your mental world was capable of being in resonance with the objective world by means of spoken relations. In this sense the Logos is the narrative by which you come to understand the world. In this sense Logos began to gain the meaning of "reason."

The main figure who integrated the notion of narrative and more importantly reason into the concept of Logos was Aristotle. In outlining how to create arguments Aristotle outlines three key means: pathos, ethos, and logos. Pathos is the appeal to the emotions. Ethos is the appeal by one's moral character. Logos is the appeal to the speech itself and the quality of its thinking. It is this Aristotelian use of Logos which is today translated as "Reason" and it is from Aristotle's usage that Logos develops a connection to Rationality.

It was this notion of Logos from Aristotle that influenced the Stoic use of this same term. For the Stoics the world itself was animated and fully penetrated by a Divine Reason. The Stoic term for this pervading Reason from which all derives is "logos spermatikos" or "The Generating Word" or "Generating Thought." Here we find the notion of Logos as a seed from which the world develops, as well as the idea of a Divine Reason which pervades and animates the world.

Philo of Alexandria took this idea and applied it to the Jewish tradition. The Jewish God, who had become increasingly abstract within the Jewish Tradition since the Babylonian Exile, was separate and distinct from Creation. In order to Create he needed an intermediary force which allowed for the Creation to arise and which would permeate Creation. While lesser intermediary forces could be seen as the Angels of the Jewish Scriptures, for Philo the primary intermediary closest to the Jewish God was a demiurgical figure he called the Logos. God speaks, and in speaking the Logos comes into being, and by the Logos coming into being creation comes to be.

In addition to the Logos Philo is also known for his writings on the life of Moses. In Moses Philo finds a figure who had been transformed by his moment of contact with the Logos. When Moses encounters the burning bush it is from the Logos that he hears the Utterance of the name of God. Similarly it is from the Logos that Moses acquires the Law and derives from the Law his Book, the Torah.

So here we have a complex of ideas. From Dositheos we have the notion of an individual transformed and empowered by Ascending to and through the Aeons who can then engage in saving the material world. From Philo we get the notion of a Logos, a Divine Seed, from which Worlds are grown. We have a Logos which is capable of dispensing needed wisdom to individual humans when needed. Individual humans in contact with the Logos are transformed and this transformation leaves them with both a Law and a Book.

Needless to say the philosophical speculations of Philo had a strong influence upon Early Christianity, especially the author(s) of the Gospel of John. We can also see some of the influences from Late Antiquity upon the role of the Magus and the concept of Aeons.

Having looked a bit at the historic roots of the notion of Aeons let us now look at a related notion, that of the Magus.

The English word “Magus” comes from a Latinized form of the Greek μάγος magos. The Greeks in turn acquired the term from Persian magus. In the 4th Century the word entered into the Greek vocabulary following their contact with practitioners of Zoroastrianism. The Greeks did not quite understand the Zoroastrian tradition but what they did derive from their contact was the idea that the Magos was one who served a priestly function within this tradition. They were particularly concerned with the stars of the night sky as a means for foretelling the future as well as being adept at practical magic. In fact our word “magic” derives from magos, and the associated terms mageia and magiko displaced the indigenous Greek words for the practice of magic.

For most people this primary exposure to the idea of a Magus, or more the plural Magi, derives from the account of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. It is worth noting that Matthew was believed to be writing his account of Jesus’ life and ministry to a Jewish Christian community in Syria, and emphasized the failure of the Jews to accept the Messiah and instead Christ’s mandate to convert the Gentiles. As such the appearance of the Magi represented an early moment where the wisdom of the non-Jews in relation to Christ was greater than that of his own people.

It was said that attendant to the birth of Christ that Magi had witnessed an unusual stellar phenomena, the so-called Star of Bethlehem, and took this as a sign that an important new teacher was to be alive in the world. These Magi set off to visit the newly born future Teacher and brought with them gifts signifying his importance: Gold for temporal Ruling Power, Frankincense for the Sacred and Myrrh in preparation for his anointment in death. Although the number of Magi is never mentioned in the text, nor are their names, a tradition of there being three Magi, and expanded stories about their names and origins, entered early into Christian narrative.*

This notion of the Magi having discovered “one of their own” in their recognition of the Christ, combined with the Philo influenced doctrines related to Logos found in the Gospel of John, helped to suture together an association between the Magus and the Logos, and situated Christ within the frame, at least for some. More importantly though, the name of “Magus” entered into Christendom via the previously mentioned tale of Simon Magus and his Messianic claims.

*Few people realize how much religious narrative has in common with Fan Fiction.

Zarathustra, the First Magus

Little about the life of Zarathustra is known for certain. While tradition places his birth to some period in the 6th Century BCE there are credible arguments for him having been alive as far back as the 18th Century BCE. Two texts are attributed to him directly, the *Yasna Haptanghaiti* and the *Gathas*, take the form of Hymns and form the core of Zoroastrian religious practice. These texts are written in Old Avestan, an Indo-Iranian language closely related to the Sanskrit of the Vedas.

What is known is that Zarathustra was a part of a branch of the Indo-Iranian peoples living in what is today Iran. At this point in Indo-Iranian history these people had acquired knowledge from their contacts with Mesopotamia which had lead from a life of simple pastoralism towards a life of cattle raising and rustling, at least for some. A split between the population was explained in part by mythic characteristics. Those who retained the earlier pastoral traditions were associated with the forces of Order, the Ashavan, while those who had taken up Cattle Rustling as their main form of life were associated with the forces of Chaos, the Drujvan.

Like the religions of nearly all peoples at this time the religion of the Indo-Iranians focused primarily upon the notion of Cosmic Maintenance. Priests existed to act as intermediaries in this process insuring that all continued to go well. The sun would remain in the sky, the day would proceed as expected, and the rhythms of life would be predicable. It was to the tribe known as the Medes that Zarathustra was born. It is thought that Zarathustra was a member of his people's Priesthood, having been initiated as was common around the age of 15. The name that his people used for their Priests was *magauno* in Avestan, and it is the ultimate root word for Magus

Zarathustra however would not remain simply a Priest. At a point in his life he underwent a realization that there was only a single uncreated divine force, the embodiment of Asha or "Truth," and that this Truth was Consciousness. Because the ultimate Mystery of this Consciousness was incomprehensible initially it was reflected though seven other divine figures, perhaps seen as personifications of the Seven planets.

Zarathustra would use this realization as a force of reformation within his tradition under his apprehension of Asha, retaining aspects such as the tending of a sacred fire as a symbol for the Fire of Consciousness. More importantly he introduced a new purpose for the practice of religion itself. Rather than focusing upon Cosmic Maintenance as all before him had, Zarathustra made the central feature of his reformation the individual transformation by the light of Asha leading to personal salvation done by the deeds performed in life.

This shift of focus in religions from Cosmic Maintenance to Personal Salvation would become in time the center of gravity of all of the World's major religions. Zarathustra's realization was the prefiguring of each of these shifts, either within existing traditions or as heretical reformations which broke away from tradition. Based upon the work of Karl Jaspers the period of this major shift is known as the Axial Age and ran from roughly 800 BCE to 200 BCE. The Axial Age takes place throughout the Old World with the major centers having been Persia, India and China in the East and the Mediterranean in the West. Interestingly the influence, whether direct or indirect, of Zarathustra can be traced through this same geographic distribution, suggesting that these great Axial transitions were a reaction to the light of his original realization.

It was Zarathustra, with his apprehension of Asha, who would become the first man known to the world as Magus.

The full extent of the influence of Zarathustra is beyond the scope of a thread such as this. However a look at his influence, directly and indirectly, upon Western thought will prove illuminating.

The Pythagorean tradition, according to Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras*, held that their founder, Pythagoras, had studied with Zoroaster, the Greek name for Zarathustra, in Babylonian. Zoroaster appears in the Platonic *Dialog of First Alcibiades*, the standard introductory text of Platonism. There he is mentioned in relation to the heritage of the Persians whom the Greeks had been at war with not long before Plato's writings.

According to Pliny the Elder in the 1st Century CE, Zoroaster had become the figure believed by the Greeks to have invented magic. During the same period Plutarch refers in *Isis and Osiris* to "Zoroaster the Magus." Subsequent to this a wide variety of texts related to magical practice and Astrology would circulate through the Hellenic World under the attribution of Zoroastrian or his traditions' Priesthood, the Magi.

Zarathustra's teachings were largely unknown in the post-Classical West. He became a figure of myth, associated with lost wisdom and magic. In the 18th Century Zoroaster became a subject of interest to various figures of the Enlightenment. Voltaire suggested him as a potential model for Deism. Mozart created the character of Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* after the image of Zoroaster.

A century later Friedrich Nietzsche would return to the name Zarathustra for his myth of the Death of God and the transvaluation of all values in *Also sprach Zarathustra*. In a sense this text can be seen as an early indicator of the closing of the Age defined by the Axial realizations. That Nietzsche would choose the originator of those realizations to proclaim their Age's end was no coincidence.

At this point we have discussed the origins of the notion of “Aeons” and the parallel origin of the idea of “Magus.” These ideas were sutured together in the context of a period known as Late Antiquity (2nd to 8th Century CE). Late Antiquity has been largely undervalued as a period. This was the time of the Fall of the Roman Empire, a period of intense hybridization of ideas from the full extent of the Roman Empire, the rise of Christianity as the prominent religion of Western Europe, and finally the emergence of the Middle Ages.

Late Antiquity’s single greatest contribution for Magicians is the Hermetic Tradition.* This tradition was attributed to the figure Hermes Trismegistus. Interestingly this figure would be preserved in the West through the writings of the early Christians. Lactantius writing in the 3rd Century CE included Hermes Trismegistus as the oldest of the three great teachers of Antiquity, the other two being Moses and Orpheus. This idea would survive into the 17th Century when it was finally overturned on Philological grounds.

The Hermetic Tradition was built upon both practical magical methods, as retained in the so-called Greek Hermetic Papyrus (PGM) as well as philosophical and cosmological speculations retained in the works known as Corpus Hermetica. With the end of Late Antiquity these texts would be lost to the West except in name, though they would continue to provide inspiration and recrimination in the Eastern Empire and the Islamic cultures. The Corpus Hermetica would return to the West in the late 15th Century CE, becoming a vital aspect of the Renaissance.

What would pass on intellectually into the Middle Ages from Late Antiquity was a synthesis of Neoplatonism and Christianity, with the most significant thinker having been Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE). This world was built upon Aristotle’s Great Chain of Being, where all that could exist did exist and all that existed was held in a static hierarchy from the most base to most the Noble, each having a Divine Purpose (telos). Everything from the realms of plants and animals to the nature of human social ordering were a product of this Divine Purpose, and change within these systems was not possible.

Within Medieval Christianity there was only one way that this world could ever change in any way: the Apocalypse.

*For a book length exploration of Hermeticism in Late Antiquity see Ipsissimus Flowers’ *Hermetic Magic*.

The Revelation of John stands out as perhaps the oddest document contained in the compilation of texts known as the Bible. If you have read that compilation you realize just how odd it really is to be to stand out in that crowd. Of the books of the New Testament its inclusion was the most controversial, and it was not included in the Eastern Church's Canon. For those interested in an in depth analysis and history of the text Elaine Pagels' *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy and Politics in the Book of Revelation* is excellent.

Within the highly stable worldview of the Middle Ages Revelations sat as the one means of radical change. With the arrival of the Final Kingdom the old social orderings would be disbanded in favor of a new one with greater equality for the righteous. For most of this period it was a small spark of hope but it would take until 12th century for that spark to cause a fire.

Joachim de Fiore (1135-1202 CE) was the first to catch fire. A member of the Order of Cistercians Joachim was obsessed with piety, pilgrimage and most of all the Book of Revelation. Through study of the text and his own mystic visions he came to a doctrine that would rock the Medieval World. The World for Joachim was seen not as a static thing but rather something that was developing and processing in a relationship with the Divine. The Old Testament of the Hebrews marked the original development of humanity wherein a lone group was linked with the Divine. This was the Age of the Father, and was marked by the Patriarchal power of the Father and the story of his Chosen. Beginning with the birth of Christ a new relationship was developed between humanity and the Divine. No longer was the message for the Chosen alone but rather for all those others. The Patriarchal rule of the Father gave way to the growth of the Church as representative of this new Age of the Son. What Joachim realized was that like the Trinity of his God, there must be a third Age, the Age of the Holy Spirit, where the apparatus of the Church was dissolved as individuals came into direct contact with the Divine.

Joachim's realization opened the Pandora's Box at the end of the New Testament. If the relationship between humanity and the Divine was not a finished project as had been thought but rather something which was still developing then change was not only possible, it was the only way to bring about this Age. Various visions of what this would mean began to ferment around Western Europe, vying for attention and being subject to charges of heresy. Might women become the new rulers of this coming Age of the Spirit? Might the Antichrist attendant to the Revelation already be upon the Earth, or worse in the Church in Rome itself? Might the expansion of the Divine from the Chosen to the Gentile suggest that in this new Age to come those far beyond Western Europe would need to be brought the Divine Message?

You can guess how well this message of the dissolution of the Church went over in Rome. Indeed Joachim's ideas became the target of the most important Catholic thinker of this period, Thomas Aquinas, who made special efforts to undermine their influence in *Summa Theologica*. But it was too late, the idea was loose in the culture that not only was change possible, it was demanded by the Divine. This desire for the fulfillment of prophecy began to seed not only religious ambitions but political ones as various kingdoms began to see themselves as the vehicle of this New Age, and would serve as the Final Kingdom to rule the Millennium, as John of Patmos had foretold.

And into this frothy mix of Divine Revelations, the promise of a New Age and political struggle came the Hermetica.

*For a full discussion of the influence of Revelation and of Joachim's teaching see Arthur Williamson's excellent *Apocalypse Then: Prophecy and the Making of the Modern World*.

Byzantine emperor Alexios I was facing a seemingly insurmountable challenge in the 11th Century. Despite being the heir to the Roman Empire Alexios I was seeing his area of rule diminishing with the expansion of the Seljuq dynasty.

The House of Seljuq was a Turkish family who practice the Sunni variation of Islam that in time integrated features of Persian culture. With the unifying force of Islam they had managed to expand their empire far and wide through the Middle East and into Central Asia. By the 11th Century however the Seljuq empire was fraught with internal conflict as local rulers were attempting to consolidate their own powers rather than form an integrated empire.

Alexios I did not have the manpower needed to fight off the Seljuq so he made an appeal across the Schism to Urban II, the Pope in Rome. What he wanted was access to the armies of Western Europe under his command. What he got instead was the First Crusade.

The First Crusade was successful in fighting back the Seljuq in the Middle East and overtaking what Christianity was as "The Holy Land." It was this return of the True Church to the Holy Land which had opened the doorway for ideas like Joachim's as well as other readings of Revelation suggesting that the End was at hand. In order to equip Crusaders, keep track of goods and supplies and return found wealth to the ruling centers in Europe new economic methods were developed which would in time yield the first trans-national banking systems. It also brought Western European nations into significant contact with the Islamic World for the first time, and with it restored access to texts from the Classical World that had been thought completely lost.

The changing vision of the meaning of the present, the shifting economic systems and the return of "Lost Wisdom" fermented together, forming what has become known as the Renaissance. For Renaissance thinkers it was the Classical World that had held all wisdom and the older the wisdom the better. While works of the Greeks, such as Aristotle and Plato, were seen as significant the real prize, based upon Lactantius' ideas on Hermes Trismegistus, was the *Hermetica*.

In the 15th Century Marsilio Ficino was employed by Cosimo de Medici towards the re-founding of Plato's Academy in Florence, Italy. He was engaged with the translation of Plato's Dialogs towards this end when Leonardo da Pistoia discovered a cache of Hellenistic documents. Cosimo purchased the materials from da Pistoia and insisted that Ficino cease working on Plato for he now had something more important to translate: the *Hermetica*.

Ficino's translation of the *Hermetica* set off an intellectual firestorm in Europe. The most Ancient of Ancient wisdom had been restored just in time for the Apocalypse. And should it not be so? Should not the future Final Kingdom to Reign in the Name of the Lord have restored to it the most primordial revelations of that Lord? And should not the technologies contained there in, these practices known as magic, act as means for fulfilling the prophecies of the End Times at hand?

Ficino himself would contribute an important idea into this matrix, the "*Prisca Theologia*." Ficino, drawing upon Lactantius, would suggest that going back to primordial times there had been a single true theology that was being revealed through history. Beginning with Hermes Trismegistus and weaving through Zoroaster and the Chaldeans, the Greeks such as Pythagoras to Plato, into the Neo-Platonic thinkers and eventually into the Church of Rome the one true theology was becoming manifest in the World. This idea would go on to influence Giordano Bruno, Tommaso Campanella, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and eventually laid the seeds for Rosicrucianism.

There was awareness that the Ancient Wisdom might contain untruth and those engaged in these practices were monitored by Church authorities but were not banned outright. To insure that information could be passed freely systems of cryptography were developed, with Johannes Trithemius' *Steganographia* being the most important work in this tradition.

Much of the Hermetica was focused upon the practices of Astrology and lead to a great revival of this practice in Europe. In addition, texts on Alchemy from the Classical and Islamic World were being translated and integrated into this intellectual milieu. Rather than being seen as heresy initially, these practices were seen in light of the importance of Hermes Trismegistus and as such were not seen to be a source of theological conflict. Indeed, an entire class of "Righteous Scholar Magicians" was forming who brought together an interest in ancient languages, the Hermetica, and skilled observation of materiality and of the stars.

As the 15th Century gave way to the 16th massive social and political upheaval would transform the Western World. Working at the hub of these changes was the greatest representative of this neo-tradition of Righteous Scholar Magician: John Dee.

To get a sense of the world we are entering into in discussing John Dee some background is in order.

During the third period of expansion of early Islam, circa 661-750 CE, the entire extent of North African came under control of the Umayyad Caliphate. From here it became quite easy to stage an entry into the Iberian Peninsula, present day Spain and Portugal, which was conquered and brought under the Umayyad administration. When the Umayyad Caliphate collapsed its administration in Iberia would reorganize as the Caliphate of Córdoba, ruling from 929 - 1031 CE.

The Caliphate of Córdoba was rather liberal with its interpretation of the Islamic idea of "People of the Book," and the Iberian Peninsula became a haven for European Jews, unorthodox Christians and non-Abrahamic "Pagan" thinkers. Though second-class citizens they nonetheless were allowed to operate openly and the exchange of ideas and information within the city centers was high. Practices of later importance such as the Jewish Kabbalah and the first stirrings of Christian appropriation of these ideas were first developed in this area.

As a hot bed of "Unbelievers", Córdoba would become the target of the growing forces of Western Christianity. Córdoba's own internal struggles would lead to a collapse circa 1031 CE into smaller kingdoms and over the course of the next few centuries saw the shrinking of Islam's influence in Iberia. Finally in 1492 CE the entirety of Iberia was «Cleansed» of Islam via «Reconquista.» With the heathens beaten back and the new unification of the Spanish kingdoms Imperial Spain, convinced of its place as the Final Kingdom, commenced.

1492 CE marked two major incidents in the history of Imperial Spain that would shape the World to come. The most well known was the financing of the explorer Christopher Columbus in his attempt to find a trans-Atlantic route to the Far East which would lead to the Renaissance Era discovery of the Western Hemisphere. Less well known was the expulsion of all Jews from Spain, as the attempts to force conversion of Jews and other non-Christians under the Spanish Inquisition had failed to purify Spain to rule the Millennium.

The discovery of the «New World» in the Western Hemisphere would shatter many cherished beliefs but it would also suture new ones. The race for Imperial Power in this New World by the European nations was driven as much by a desire to be the Final Kingdom as it was by more conventional economic gain. Here were entire continents of non-believers who needed to be brought the Gospel, as had been foretold (if you looked long enough and hard enough) in prophecy. These new discoveries brought about questions regarding the utter lack of an account of these continents within Scripture, opening a doorway for skepticism regarding the veracity of these documents. Questions regarding the suitability of the Western Church to act as representative of the «One True Faith» began to emerge and old concerns about the purity of the Curia in Rome and its practices were sowing doubts throughout Europe.

By the beginning of the 16th Century the Old World's definitions of itself were withering under the weight of discovery. The time was ripe for new visions to emerge within this «brave new world.»

The period we are now discussing, termed the Early Modern Period, spanned between 1450 CE and 1850 CE, though as always the exact beginnings and endings are arguable. The beginning of this period is tied to the end of the Crusades and the general unification of the Western Church in Europe.

This would prove to be important as the newly unified Church, fortified by its military experiences in the Crusades, would expand outwards into areas of Europe which had for the most part been left fallow as far as enforcement of faith, and as such tended to be places where bits of archaic religious practices formed syncretic systems with a decidedly unsophisticated form of Christianity.

Within the major centers of Europe the changes that the Crusades had made necessity had become a new norm. Large sea vessels capable of moving troops and supplies, now without Holy War to engage with, began looking for new opportunities. Systems, such as banking, developed in support for military transport and pilgrims were applied in new ways.

In addition, those within the major centers began to question the spiritual mandate that was held by the Church in Rome. Were these individuals truly representative of the teaching of Christ or had they come to embody something of less transcendent value? If they had given up their mandate would it be possible for others to take it up, purifying the faith and undermining their temporal authority?

It would be the religious tensions that burst forth first. While Spain had looked to purge itself of unbelievers in the 15th Century through alignment with the Roman Catholic Church the 16th Century would see kingdoms aligning themselves with newly formed independent strains of Christianity lumped under the umbrella of Protestantism. Martin Luther's 1517 act of writing and publicizing his «Ninety-Five Theses» under the impression that he was purifying a faith corrupted by Catholic Power set off a chain of such separations throughout Northern Europe. Figures such as John Calvin would lead additional theological transformations of Christianity while Henry VIII of England coalesced developing calls for reform in England with concerns over his own temporal authority to produce the Church of England.

The Book of Revelation took on a new meaning in this time period. Not only was it possible for a given kingdom to see itself as the Final Kingdom but also the fracturing of Christianity seemed to reflect Revelation's warning against false Churches and false Christs. One's temporal enemies were more than just that, they were in league with Satan, a figure who up until the Early Modern Period had not had much influence upon Christian thought.

The figure of Satan originates within the Hebrew Scriptures. His one undisputed appearance is in the Book of Job, a text thought to originate sometime between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE. There one finds the figure of Satan as a member of God's Court who has the task of challenging God and his faithful. The text contains a number of common Levantine themes, including a tale of how a righteous man suffered and accounts of a conflict between the high god, in this case Yahweh, and a primordial watery serpent force, in this case Leviathan.

Outside of the canonical texts of the Hebrews the figure of Satan would undergo some elaboration, accounted for in the texts forming a part of the Hebrew Apocrypha. The First and Second Book of Enoch play the most critical role in fleshing out the rather vague figure of the Scriptures. Here the mythology of fallen angles, with Satan as their leader, takes shape, a concept that is not found at all in Hebrew Scriptures. The exact dates for these books are unknown though it is believed that they show influence from Zoroastrian sources.

Satan would gain a bit more space in the texts of the Christian Scriptures, but not by much. In the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke it is recounted that Jesus interacted with Satan

during a time of solitude in the desert where Satan was described as offering him rule of the earth, suggesting it was something that he could give. Issues related to demonic forces arise on occasion in relation to Jesus' Ministry, such as accusations that he was using the god Beelzebub to cast out demons. Satan's main role however was to be found in the Book of Revelations where in the end times he would raise up a Kingdom of Falsehood with tremendous temporal authority who would persecute the faithful, lead a War in Heaven and be cast down into the Pit.

In the Middle Ages the figure of Satan was given the iconography of horns, goat feet and items such as pitchforks. In general he was more a figure of mirth than a being seen as a real threat. When periodic accusation of Devil activities were made it was more often than not the Church authorities that dismissed them as superstition. The Light of the True Church reigned, so what had Christians to fear of Satan?

The changes underway in the early Modern Period would radically transform these standing traditions. Looking for explanations for those holding differing theologies, vying for temporal power, and a need to explain those largely powerless individuals in the rural territories engaging in «degenerate» practices would lead to a new mythology: The Secret Rule of Satan and the hidden Powers of his Church in the World.

The expanding Church's experience in the late Middle Ages meant they encountered many hold-over features of pre-Christian tradition as well as many aberrations to the faith that developed as a result of social isolation. This experience would coalesce at the start of the Early Modern Period into a concern about rural folk who were in league with the Devil, i.e. Witches.

Anthropologists see beliefs in malevolent sorcerers who may or may not be aware of their condition as such as a near universal feature of human cultures. In much the same way as Anthropologists have generalized the term Shaman to denote a certain type of universal ritual specialist, they too have universalized the title of Witch for these malevolent sorcerers. The notion of Witches as malevolent magicians goes back to Greek sources and had a major explosion during the Roman Empire only to vanish for the most part during the Middle Ages. For a more complete account of this phenomenon see *Witchcraft: a Very Short Introduction* by Malcolm Gaskill for the Oxford University Press. In the Early Modern Period this universal feature, combined with Classical sources and Biblical notions from Revelation would suture together as the notion of Witches and Witchcraft being a pervasive, underground, movement in European culture.

Unlike the Righteous Scholar Magicians working with the Hermetica, Witches were seen as being in league with Satan himself. Through renouncing the True Faith in favor of the unholy sacraments of the Devil, the Witches became part of a community who had done the same towards their own ends (*telos*) much as Satan had taken action towards his own ends against those of God. A complex mythology fusing ideas from Late Antiquity, including the accusations against Christians of child sacrifice and ritual murder, with remnant ideas from Paganism emerged outlining the practices of Witches, with *Malleus Maleficarum* being the most important text in this genre.

Where the Righteous Magician Scholars were mostly men of high social standing the majority of those accused as Witches were women. Typically they were considered elderly, which at the time could mean anything from late 20s to 40s and beyond and were unattached to a male figure either from never marrying or being a widow making them potentially sexually autonomous. Taboos of sexuality and of women more generally would permeate the literature on Witches and it is impossible to look at the European Witch Craze without seeing a tremendous amount of misogyny underpinning it.

The fear of Witches and of those in league with the Devil would permeate the Early Modern Period. As the communities of Christians began to splinter these accusations would increase tremendously, inspired by a belief that the reason these splinter groups were not fulfilling prophecy was due to forces working directly against them. The new construction of Satan, thanks to the Witch Craze, would combine the action of the Witches at the lowest rungs of society with the high level subversions of Faith being seen, real or imagined, by the opposition within the Christian faiths.

Within the early phases of the Protestant Reformation and the first formalized stirrings of the Witch Craze would emerge the most important of the Righteous Scholar Magicians for the English speaking world: Dr. John Dee (1527-1608).

Dee would integrate a profound understanding of Mathematics, Astronomy and Astrology, with the magical methods developed from the distribution of the Hermetica as well as other texts drawn from the Islamic World, or claimed to come from the Islamic World and before, that would make up the Grimoiric tradition of Angelic and Demonic Magic.* He would serve to the Court of Elizabeth I of England, travel throughout Europe, and would make contact with such important figures of Modernity as Rudolph II of Bohemia, Astronomer Tycho Brahe, and at least met with the father of Modern Empirical Science, Francis Bacon.

Dee's contribution has been much discussed of late and so I will not reiterate it here. What is significant however is that his reception of the Enochian Angelic Magic with the help of Edward Kelly can only be understood within the context it was received: a radical Apocalypticism which saw England as the place for the Final Kingdom of the Millennium. The Enochian materials speak directly of being means by which the End Times would be catalyzed.

With the coming End, living men were finally capable of receiving the wisdom God had given to the First Men, whereby they would know the Mind of God as they entered the New World on the other side of Apocalypse. This notion of the Apocalypse revealing the Mind of God underpins not only Dee's Work but also nearly all of the works of the great thinkers of Modernity. The development of the Sciences, of Empiricism and the new mathematics, the Calculus, which would allow for developments in Physics, were part of a pre-Millennial dispensation.

Among Dee's visions was placing England as the Final Kingdom by creating a grand empire that would span the world. He would create unfulfilled plans for colonization of Narragansett Bay in what is now Rhode Island and developed navigation methods that would lead the British Navy to become the most powerful, at least for a time, in the world. These notions were greeted warmly by Elizabeth I though not, however, by her successor James I.

James I cared little for the supernatural and marginalized those who did care for it. Dee, who had found patronage under Elizabeth I would find none with James I. He would live out the end of his life at his dwindling estate of Mortlake. His close association with both occultism and mathematics would affect the wave of intellectuals after him, and may have been the reason for the minimization of mathematics in the work of Francis Bacon. James I would pick up the significance of building an Empire in the New World, but he chose the area that is now the American South rather than Dee's northern suggestions.

James I's son Charles I would seek to unify England, Scotland and Ireland under a unified rule, as had been the dream of his father. His actions would lead to contention in parliament and would lead to the English Civil War. Not surprisingly, issues related to religion and to Apocalypse, would play into this conflict, from the issue of the Divine Right of Kings to the role of the Puritans and other even more radical Christian Sects like the Levelers and Diggers. The aftermath of the Civil war would inspire perhaps one of the most enduring Modern myths of Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Interestingly it would be a father and son, both Classicists, who would undo the Righteous Scholar

Magician's role in the West. Isaac Casaubon (1559 CE -1614 CE) was among the most learned men of his time and focused strongly upon philology, the comparative study of texts. He was well known for his translations of Aristotle, Pliny and others. Of importance to our story, Isaac Casaubon turned his attention to the Hermetica and made a remarkable discovery. Rather than the primordial, pre-Mosaic origin of this material widely accepted for Theological reasons, the books of the Hermetica betrayed linguistic attributes suggesting that they were of origin by his estimation in the 1st Century CE. This would undermine the notion that what the Scholar Magicians were doing was Righteous and shook their claims of spiritual authority.

Isaac's son Meric Casaubon (1599 CE - 1671 CE), had held the favor of James I, and fell strongly out of favor during the Civil war and by its victor, Oliver Cromwell. Casaubon was a strong critic of supernaturalism and in 1657 CE published an account of Dee's contact with Spirits and the origins of the Enochian system. Casaubon regarded these interactions as Satanic in origin and called upon those of his time to repudiate Dee's Work entirely.

The Magicians were now cast down into the same terrain as the Witches, mere Heretics to be disregarded. Into the cultural void this created would move the Scientists, many of whom would forget their own "demonic" origins in successive generations. Neither group would vanish completely, but they would have to take refuge in the fringes of culture, no longer holding patronages of Crowns and places of prestige in universities. Magic would continue, but it would do so behind closed doors, and behind those closed doors it would run into another tradition long marginalized, European Jewry.

*Owen Davies' *Grimoires: A History of Magic Books* is the single best scholarly source on this subject presently available.

Like all religions Judaism has a complex history of exoteric and esoteric practices. The major features of Judaism suggest standard Levantine motifs both in the language of the religion and in its mythology. Unlike the other Semitic Religions however Judaism has left a still practicing religious community as well as spawned two other major religions spun off from its doctrines, Christianity and Islam.

A full exploration of the shared as well as unique aspects of Judaism is far beyond the scope of a series like this. However, for the sake of our story, a few significant moments and movements within Judaism need to be discussed.

The first of these was the doctrine that developed around the Messiah, an anointed one of god who would lead the Jewish people to a Messianic age where they would rule. This doctrine is not found in early Judaism but seems to pick up importance following the period when Judaism was forcefully transferred to Babylon through the military defeat of the combined kingdoms of Israel and Judea in 587 BCE. This period in Babylon would see the solidification of Judaism's "abstract monotheism" for their own God* and a general atheism regarding all other gods. It would also see the integration of the notion of a Divinely Appointed World Savior adopted from Zoroastrian practices and tied to the Judaic desire for political autonomy.

The Babylonian Exile would end in 538 BCE with the ascension of Cyrus the Great of Persia and the creation of the Achaemenid Empire, also known as the Persian Empire. The Jews would return to their ancestral lands and begin the process of rebuilding their Temple and their religious practices. Both had been changed by their time in Babylon. Despite being returned to their lands they were now a subject nation, first to Persia, then to the Greeks and eventually to the Romans.

Being a subject nation fueled a good deal of political hope under the guise of Messianic dreams. A fair number of would-be Messiahs appeared; most were cast down or failed in one fashion or another. The political difficulties that the Empires ruling this kingdom have become legendary and in 70 CE, in response to a number of different agitating groups, the Roman occupiers destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

For others this period would lead towards an attempt to overcome via spiritual transcendence, and developed into a practice of Ascension likely shared by other Hellenistic Mystics of this time. Working from the visions of Ezekiel in the Prophetic texts of the Hebrew Scriptures, Simeon bar Yochai in the first century CE would meditate upon the Hebrew Scriptures to gain a closer vision of God's Work. Bat Yochai's explorations, and those of his followers, would lead to integration of Hellenic Hermetic ideas into Judaism. God was seen as having created the world through the Hebrew Language, and the Language itself was seen to have a holy quality, both in letter and number. These teachings would coalesce in Late Antiquity into a book titled *Sefer Yetzirah*, thought to date in written form to the 4th Century CE.

With the rise of Islam Judaism found itself a relatively safe place within the Islamic Empires. In particular Jewish scholars would hold a significant place in the Iberian Peninsula, especially Cordoba. In the 13th Century a book claimed to be discovered containing the secret teachings of Shimon bar Yochai, though the text suggest someone writing in Aramaic who did not know the language very well. This text would become the most important part of the Hebrew Kabbalah, and would outline a new Jewish cosmology and a new theology.

According to the *Zohar* God had not so much expelled Adam and Eve as the actions of Adam and Eve caused God to withdraw from the Creation. By actions taken by humanity the connection to the Divine could be allowed to flow, or by unethical conduct, inhibited. God himself was seen to have an anatomy like that of humanity, and even contained both male and female aspects that sought to be united, often in sexual terms.

Interestingly this development came shortly after the death of the Jewish Philosopher Moses Maimonides (1135 CE - 1204 CE). Maimonides had sought to situate Judaism within the rational philosophical traditions and to down play mystical aspects of the Faith. It has been suggested that the explosion of Kabbalah was a conscious movement against this rationalism.

Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia (1240 CE -1291 CE), born in Zaragoza, Spain would contribute practical exercises to the Kabbalistic movement. Through a combination of gesture, movement and concentration on Hebrew letters, words and the Names of God, Abulafia promised that important revelations could be had. The numerical analysis of words in Hebrew, as well as other languages, could reveal hidden meanings that would aide in one's understanding of God.

With the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 CE, the Kabbalistic speculations in Spain were scattered throughout Europe. Aided by printing, these ideas made there way throughout Judaism in Europe, North Africa and Western Asia. Practitioners would flock to key locations of Jewish tradition, with Safed in Galilee holding a special importance. Here would live and work the most important Kabbalist of the Early Modern Period, Isaac Luria (1534 CE - 1572 CE).

Luria's reinterpretation of the Kabbalah would focus largely upon the origin of the cosmos. God had created by withdrawing from the world in order to form a void, and then within this void he places vessels to contain his light. These vessels had shattered, leaving fragments scattered throughout the Creation. The goal of the Kabbalist would be finding and reintegrating of these fragments in a process of Tikkun Olam "Healing the World." When the world had been sufficiently healed through adherence to the Torah and tikkun olam the Messianic Age would come.

What Apocalypse was doing in Europe among the contending forms of Christianity during the Early Modern Period so too was the Messianic Age to do for Judaism. Various Messiahs were proposed, with the most important being the still controversial figure of Sabbatai Zevi (1626 CE - 1676 CE).

*This is discussed in light of a broader conversation regarding Judaism in Douglas Rushkoff's *Nothing Sacred*.

Sabbatai Zevi (1626 CE– 1676 CE) holds a number of distinctions. He was a Rabbi among a Sephardic community. He was a serious student of the works of Isaac Luria and the Kabbalah. He also engaged in conscious antinomianism of Jewish practice under the authority that he himself was the Messiah.

The details specifics of what Sabbatai taught and practiced have been lost. He did take the bold step of speaking the Tetragrammaton, Yahweh, out loud in public at the age of 22. He staged various acts that today would be seen as publicity stunts, such as marriage ceremonies to the Torah, or placing fish in cradles proclaiming that Israel would be redeemed under the Sign of Pisces. It is rumored that he engaged in licentious behavior and that the Sabbateans were practicing sexual rites in private based upon the sexual imagery of the Zohar.

It was during his travel to spread his teaching into the Ottoman Empire in 1666 when things took a turn. Sabbatai's friend and the one who first recognized him as the Messiah, Nathan of Gaza (1643 CE -1680 CE), had shared a vision of Sabbatai going to Istanbul and having the crown of the Sultan placed upon his head. Upon arrival Sabbatai was imprisoned. Eventually he was given an ultimatum: prove you are the Messiah by being killed and returning or convert to Islam. On September 16, 1666 CE Sabbatai appeared before the Sultan, having removed his Jewish garb, wearing a Turkish turban upon his head. He professed a conversion to Islam.

Some of his followers denounced him for doing this, stating it proved that he was a false Messiah. Others felt there was an esoteric meaning to this conversion and so converted as well, publicly professing Islam while privately maintaining their Sabbatean Judaism, a group known as the Dönme. Within the wider Jewish community Sabbatai's actions were seen as a warning against mysticism generally and Kabbalah in particular. Some would take a highly conservative route, leading to Hassidism, while others would begin a process of Modernizing Judaism.

Sabbatai's reputation and parts of his teachings were picked up a century later by another Jewish figure, Jacob Frank (1726 CE - 1791 CE) of Poland. Frank embraced the notion of "purification through transgression" and claimed to be a reincarnation of both Sabbatai Zevi and the patriarch Jacob. In time he proclaimed himself to be a deity, was excommunicated from the Jewish community and began a process of converting along with his followers to Roman Catholicism. This last step was seen with suspicion as being an attempt to recreate Sabbatai's conversion to Islam, though some 26,000 "apostate" Jews were converted as a result.

Frank would find a place for a time in the Court of Vienna where he was seen as bringing the Word of Christ to the Jews. He eventually moved to Offenbach claiming the title of "Baron of Offenbach." With their conversion, the Frankists would bring their particular line of Sabbatian Kabbalah, which retained Apocalyptic and Messianic elements, with them into the Polish Christian world. It would disseminate with various alterations through Continental Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.

It would be this line of Messianic Kabbalah which would be brought together with the Elizabethan Apocalypticism of John Dee within the most important magical order of the 19th Century: The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

The Rosicrucians were a myth written into reality. In a sense they were an early example of what contemporary writer and magician Grant Morrison terms a “hyper-sigil.” By crafting a narrative that would attract the imaginations of certain people, a new social reality can be made.

As John Dee was spending his last days at Mortlake amongst his looted library and estate his ideas were finding a new outlet on the Continent of Europe. Beginning in 1607 CE a series of pamphlets were circulated detailing the story of one Christian Rosenkreuz who was said to have created a society to the collection and preservation of the esoteric wisdom of the ancients and which was revealing this information now. Rosenkreuz’ story would have him traveling to the east to learn the Ancient Wisdom traditions preserved there. He would bring these traditions back to Europe and would found his Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross to disseminate this wisdom.

Dee’s influence upon these documents can be seen in the Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz. The invitation for the allegorical wedding of this manifesto is marked with Dee’s *Monas Hieroglyphica*. It is likely that his influence had come from Heinrich Khunrath (1560 CE – 1605 CE), an admirer of Dee’s work and a writer on the topic of Alchemy. Another influence upon the emergence of the group had been Rudolf II (1552 CE– 1612 CE) the Holy Roman Emperor who ruled from Prague and had collected many of the best thinkers of the day from a wide variety of fields to his court and who was a firm devotee to the development of Alchemy.

On the Continent Rosicrucianism was most closely associated with Germany and with opposition to the Roman Catholic Church in alliance with Lutheranism. It would also come to cohabitant with Speculative Freemasonry, a fraternal system derived in part from the Stone Masons of Medieval Europe. Because of the secrecy that such fraternal systems allowed Freemasonry and groups modeled on Freemasonry would flourish, as would claims to Rosicrucian wisdom, throughout the 17th Century.

In the beginning of the 18th Century a lineage of particular importance began in Germany. With a claimed date of founding in 1710 CE (though it is suggested that 1750 CE was more likely) the *Orden des Gold- und Rosenkreutz* (Order of the Gold and Rosy Cross) was founded in Germany by Hermann Fichtuld. The group was open to Master Masons and focused its work upon Alchemy. The group used a tiered degree or grade system like most Masonic inspired groups, with the format for this group being: Juniores, Theoreticus, Oracticus, Philosophus, Minor, Major, Adeptus, Magestus, Magus. Here we see the reason for our detour over the last few posts, as we find at the top of this structure a Magus Degree taking its name from the Zoroastrian tradition.

Not much is available regarding the practical Work of the *Orden des Gold- und Rosenkreutz* though its structural titles would lay a foundation for other groups. The *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (S.R.I.A.), a British Rosicrucian group founded in 1865 CE would use it as the basis for their own structure. Similarly open to Master Masons its Degree system was spread across three “Orders”:

First Order

Grade I - Zelator

Grade II - Theoricus

Grade III - Practicus

Grade IV - Philosophus

Second Order

Grade V - Adeptus Minor

Grade VI - Adeptus Major

Grade VII - Adeptus Exemptus

Third Order

Grade VIII - Magister

Grade IX - Magus

Within the S.R.I.A. was one Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie (1833 CE- 1886 CE). In his youth he had traveled to Vienna to act as a tutor and may have been exposed to ideas from the Asiatic Brethren, a group of Frankish Kabbalists. A linguist and translator by profession he would work in the office of Benjamin Disraeli when Disraeli was still a publisher. Mackenzie made a name for himself mainly through translations of and writing on the Classics, but in his spare time he became interested in Rosicrucianism and the Occult.

In 1854 he had met Paschal Beverly Randolph, (1825 CE - 1875 CE), an American who had founded the Fraternitas Rosae Crucis in 1858. In 1861 CE Mackenzie traveled to France where it is thought that he made contact with Eliphas Levi (Alphonse Louis Constant). When Robert Wentworth Little discovered some German rituals that he believed to be of Rosicrucian origin he recruited Mackenzie to help with the translation. This material would be used to found the S.R.I.A.

When Mackenzie died in 1886 CE a manuscript was found among his papers in code. It would come into the possession of William Wynn Westcott (1848 CE- 1925 CE), a coroner and leading member of the S.R.I.A. Westcott would recruit Samuel Liddell Mathers (1854 CE - 1918 CE) to decipher the text. Mathers discovered that the text contained the outline for a magical Order based upon the symbolism of the Four Elements of Earth, Water, Fire and Air with images drawn from the Kabbalah and Egyptian myth. Westcott and Mathers, along with Robert Wentworth Little then Grand Magus of the S.R.I.A. would use this document to found the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn using a Degree System based on the S.R.I.A. in 1888 CE. As with the S.R.I.A. it would be spread across three Orders:

First Order

Neophyte 0=0

Zelator 1=10

Theoricus 2=9

Practicus 3=8

Philosophus 4=7

Portal Grade

Second Order

Adeptus Minor 5=6

Adeptus Major 6=5

Adeptus Exemptus 7=4

Third Order

Magister Templi 8=3

Magus 9=2

Ipsissimus 10=1

Westcott and Mathers claimed that the Cipher manuscript originated within a German Rosicrucian group that had attempted, and failed, to create a Lodge in England some decades before. They contacted this group via a representative, one Anna Sprengel, who does not appear to have gone through the formality of actually existing. As the manuscript itself appears to be in Mackenzie's hand it seems more likely that it was the plan for an unfulfilled Order of his design to be created within the S.R.I.A.

The First Order of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn focused primarily upon a Kabbalistic approach to Magic for its lessons and Dramatic Rituals of the Freemasonic style for its Initiation Rites. Like much of the Rosicrucian Kabbalah there seems to be a trace of Frankish, and therefore Sabbatean, elements to this including the free pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. In a radical departure from Freemasonry and the S.R.I.A. the Golden Dawn was open to female applicants and as such did not demand that its members be Masons.

The Second Order, for those who had completed the Kabbalistic Training of the First Order focused instead largely upon practical magic and upon the Enochian Materials of John Dee, which Mathers had elaborated upon greatly from Dee's original accounts. Into this mix Mathers was to fold the newly discovered wisdom of the Egyptians being translated thanks to the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone in 1822 CE, and the practical Hermetic magic of Late Antiquity restored by the discovery of the Greek Magical Papyri in 1827 by Giovanni Anastasi (1780 CE -1860 CE).

No material associated with the Third Order exists, and it is widely believed that this Order was more theoretical with an administrative function beyond potential Temple Roles in the Order's Rituals. The titles for this Order however will prove to be important, with the most novel addition being "Ipsissimus" a Latin word meaning "My Very-most Self" which likely entered by way of Friedrich Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human* published in 1878 CE.

Between these two Orders the great streams of thought we have been discussing would come together. An authentic connection to the magical traditions of the Hermetica would be established. The Apocalypticism embodied in the Works of John Dee would be explored and expanded. The Messianic Kabbalah would be integrated as a foundation of the Order's Work, a quirk enabled by a policy of Philosemiticism under Oliver Cromwell after the Civil war (If you are going to be the New Jerusalem you are going to need Jews).

Although many people think of the Golden Dawn as having been a group of “old mustaches” due to its founders its actual popularity was largely with the literary and theatrical scene in England, with its early membership being mostly in their 20s. Early on much of the operations of the group would pass from its founding triad to Mathers’ wife Moina (Bergson) Mathers (865 CE – 1928 CE) and then to Florence Farr (1860 CE – 1917 CE) when the Mathers moved to Paris and appointed her Chief Adept in Anglia circa 1987 CE.

Although not nearly as well known as other members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn it is Florence Farr whose Work this series on Aeons truly pivots upon. She would provide a Key for a much more well known member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, who once saw himself as her suitor, Edward Alexander “Aleister” Crowley (1875 CE– 1947 CE).

When looking for examples of outstanding female magicians in the Occult Revival there are few figures who can stack up against Florence Farr. An actress, composer and director in London's West End she was a friend to some of the most important literary and artistic figures of her time. Oscar Wilde, Pamela Coleman Smith, Aubrey Beardsley, and William Butler Yeats were both friends and collaborators, while George Bernard Shaw was her lover for a number of years. In addition to this, as Soror Sapientia Sapienti Dona Data (S.S.D.D.) she was Chief Adept of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and oversaw its operations in Great Britain.

The Golden Dawn's co-founded Wynn Westcott had a significant interest in the wisdom of the past. Though not as skilled at translation as other early Golden Dawn figures Westcott provided a translation for an edition of the Chaldean Oracles, a text attributed to Zoroaster, and wrote books on the history of Rosicrucianism, number magic, and other topics. He also edited a series of works related to Ancient Wisdom under the title *Collectanea Hermetica*, which he encouraged members of the Golden Dawn to contribute to.

To this end, Florence Farr wrote a work about Egyptian Magic based upon the new materials recovered as a result of the Rosetta Stone translation and the discovery of the Greek Magical Papyri. The resulting book, *Egyptian Magic: Occult Mysteries in Ancient Egypt*, was published in 1896, when she was the age of 26. A strong focus is given to the Egyptian concept of the Human Soul-Complex and includes a chapter discussing Gnosticism and its retention of Egyptian themes. In particular, Farr focuses upon the doctrine of the Aeons within Gnosticism using a formulation of "the Aeon of (Name)" in her discussion.

Farr's tenure as Chief Adept of the HOGD saw the group expand largely through her circle of friends in the creative fields. The group would benefit from the Freemasonic access provided by the older generation of founders while the 20-somethings of Farr's association brought a theatrical flair both in delivery of the Workings and in prop design for the Chamber. As the original cohort of close friends and fellow magicians were leaving their 20s another young 20-something would enter into their Chamber, Edward Alexander "Aleister" Crowley.

Farr had met Crowley through an astral projection study group and oversaw his entry to the Golden Dawn after George Cecil Jones introduced him to the Order. Crowley very quickly became a close contact to the Order's Head, S.L. Mathers who was living in Paris with his wife. This sudden closeness disturbed another GD member, W. B. Yeats, who felt Crowley had displaced him from his rightful place in relation to Mathers. Yeats had previously been a rival for Farr's romantic affections with G. B. Shaw and now found himself rival for Mather's magical affection with Crowley. It has also been suggested that there may have been romantic tension between Farr and Crowley that contributed to this situation.

The tensions created by Crowley would find release in schism. A war of authority erupted between the London Golden Dawn and Mathers in Paris. The schism related to who could and could not grant membership to the Second Order of the system. The London GD had chosen not to allow Crowley, then only 23, to enter the Second Order. Mathers in Paris decided to defy and negate the Chief Adept's decision and grant Second Order recognition to Crowley himself. The ensuing interpersonal conflict would separate Mathers from the London Golden Dawn and would effectively end the organizations operations in 1900. Various splinter groups would form as a result, but the Golden Age of the Golden Dawn had ended.

For Aleister Crowley the end of the Golden Dawn would lead to a period of soul searching and spiritual weariness. Though he had sided with the Chief of the Order he and Mathers would part ways in 1900 and Crowley would relocate to Mexico. He continued to practice Magic but began taking a turn towards Yoga and Buddhism, inspired by his mountaineering associate Oscar Eckenstein (1859–1921) and his old roommate and former Golden Dawn Adept Allan Bennett (1872–1923), who had moved to Ceylon to study Buddhism. In 1903 he met Rose Edith Kelly and proposed marriage to her despite hardly knowing each other to prevent her from becoming a part of a marriage arranged by her parents. The following year the two would travel widely together, with a visit to Egypt in the spring of 1904 that would transform Crowley's life and ultimately bring together the notions of Aeon, Magus and Logos into a cohesive vision: the reception of *The Book of the Law*.

Aleister Crowley's family had been members of the Plymouth Brethren, a community of worshipers whose Christian doctrine derived from the world of John Nelson Darby (1800 CE- 1882 CE). Like many 19th Century Christians, particularly the American Baptist William Miller (1782 CE - 1849 CE), Darby felt that the time of Great Revelation was at hand. Unlike Miller, who had calculate the End of Days only to find himself and his followers still quite living on, Darby created a number of End Times doctrines situating himself and his followers in the period just before the End, a pre-Millennial period.

Darby's greatest contribution to Christian thought, and to the thought of Aleister Crowley, was a doctrine of Dispensationalism. Echoing Joachim of Fiore, Darby proposed that the Divine interacted with the faithful through a series of Progressive Revelations. As the faithful developed so too did God develop his Revelations, allowing for new and more perfect understanding of his Scriptures. There had been a Revelation for the Israelites, a Revelation for the Christian Church and there was now a new Revelation at hand in the time before the Millennium.

Darby's other major contribution, which has endured throughout American Protestantism, is the concept of the Rapture.

The Plymouth Brethren that Crowley had been born into felt that they were God's special chosen in this time before the End of Time. By practicing a rigid but primitive form of Christianity they were preparing themselves as God's Chosen for this final Dispensation. As such talk of the Apocalypse was common to Crowley's childhood and he himself claimed that his mother would liken him to the First Beast of Revelation in Chapter 13 of that book, the "Beast from the Sea."

In 1904 CE Crowley and his new wife Rose were in Egypt. On their initial honeymoon the two would spend a night in the great Pyramid where Crowley in a moment of playfulness would use the Golden Dawn "Bornless Rite" to entertain her. This rite, based upon the PGM "Stele of Jeu" is a Gnostic Rite of Ascension meant to transform the magician into a Divine Figure who could then engage in magic. In April of that same year they were again in Egypt when Rose would enter into trance states, telling Crowley that "they are waiting for you." Crowley dismissed these episodes at first and then began pressing her in the hopes of proving this all to be silliness. To his surprise she identified the Egyptian God Horus as being the one who was waiting and Crowley claimed she described the figure to match the Golden Dawn's ideas of Horus associations. He would take her to the Cairo Museum to point out who the message was from, and she identified the seated figure on the Stele of Ankh-ef-en-Khonsu i, a representative of Re-Harkrti, "Ra-Horus of the Two Horizons." What struck Crowley all the more was the Museum number for this piece: 666, the Number of the Beast from the Sea in Revelation.

He decided to pay attention. Rose told him to go into a room for one hour over the course the three days and to write down whatever he heard. The result was *The Book of the Law*.

Providing a full account of the reception of *The Book of the Law* is outside the scope of this series. Crowley's account of it can be found in *The Equinox of the Gods* as well as the compilation of his commentaries on the text published as *The Law is for All*. A transcript of the text can be read here while photographs of the original manuscript can be seen here.

Now what is interesting about *The Book of the Law* for this discussion is not so much what is in it but what is missing from it. Nowhere within the text is there any discussion of the notion of Aeons,

nor is any “Aeon of Horus” ever mentioned. In fact even in the 1912 published *Commentary on The Book of the Law* by Crowley no mention of an “Aeon of Horus” or of “Aeons” appears. In the span of publication of “*The Equinox*” Volume I, from 1909 to 1913 there is only one use of the phrase “Aeon of Horus” in the commentary on “*The Vision and the Voice*” found in vol. 1 no. 5, dated to 1911. The word “Aeon” does appear in some of the poetry published during this time, used in the sense of time duration or in the sense of “eternity,” with possible Farr derived Gnostic implication. There is also a mention of Ra Hoor Khuit as “Lord of the Aeon”, which comes up in the account of the “*Evocation of Bartzabel*” in issue vol. 1 no. 9.*

The doctrine of the Aeon of Horus as “The New Aeon” would not appear in Crowley’s published works until 1919 CE, with the publication of vol. 3 no. 1, aka “The Blue Equinox.” Previous to this, the notion only appears in the letter that would eventually be published as *Liber Aleph*. Written in 1918, if the edited and printed versions are to be believed, the notion of Aeons appears to have coalesced in Crowley’s thinking by this time. It appears in the discussion of the Magus as “Logos Aionos” starting around letter 68 and Crowley states explicitly the notion of the Aeon of Horus as being ruled by Horus the Younger in letter 85.

In its fully wrought form Crowley’s Doctrine of the Aeons has a remarkably Darbyite quality to it. Humanity had gone through a progressive series of dispensational revelations. The first of these known Crowley identified as “The Aeon of Isis,” ruled by mother-goddesses and humans as infantile adorers. The next dispensation, “The Aeon of Osiris”, was ruled by Dying Gods and “Salvation by Proxy” models. Now we were witnessing a new dispensation occurring, with Crowley as its Prophet that Crowley identified as “The Aeon of Horus (the Younger).”

Let us look at the origins of this doctrine and how it may have come to be between 1904 and 1918 CE.

*A recreation of this Working was recently done in collaboration with Kenneth Anger in Los Angeles.

Crowley came to this doctrine of Aeons based upon a single line in *The Book of the Law*, Chapter 1, verse 49:

“Abrogate all rituals, all ordeals, all words and signs. Ra-Hoor-Khuit [Re-Harakhty] hath taken his seat in the east at the Equinox of the Gods; and let Asar be with Isa, who also are one. But they are not of me. Let Asar be the adorant, Isa the suffered; Hoor in his secret name and splendor is the Lord initiating.”

Crowley would interpret this passage via the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn’s “Ceremony of the Equinox.” This Ceremony would be performed within 48 hours of the actual Equinox twice a year “to create a magical link between the Sun, as Light of Nature, and the Order.”* The Ceremony itself is done in the style of Freemasonic Lodge Magic, with various Officers in ceremonial seats. In the Ceremony the Hierophant sits and the east of the Chamber with two wardens, the Hierus and the Hegemon, conducting much of the Ceremony. Towards the end of the Ceremony the Hierophant leaves his chair and is replaced by the Hierus.

Although the Ceremony itself uses Masonic style titles for its roles and Officers it has been asserted, by Crowley and others, that these roles can be interpreted via Egyptian Symbolism as well. The Hierophant can be seen as Osiris while the Hierus is associated with Horus the Younger. In the transition of these two the Hierophant becomes no longer Osiris but Horus the Elder while the Hierus becomes the new Osiris.

Due to the imagery of “Ra-Hoor-Khuit” taking his seat in the east in the verse of *The Book of the Law*, Crowley chose to interpret this via the Equinox symbolism. As the Hierophant would be replaced by the Hierus so too would Osiris be replaced by Horus the Younger. Now Horus the Younger was the one overseeing Initiation.

In the 1912 CE Commentary this is how Crowley discusses the transition:

Quote:

AL III, 34:

“The Hierarchy of the Egyptians gives us this genealogy: Isis, Osiris, Horus.

Now the ‘pagan’ period is that of Isis; a pastoral, natural period of simple magic. Next with Buddha, Christ, and others there came in the Equinox of Osiris; when sorrow and death were the principal objects of man’s thought, and his magical formula is that of sacrifice.

Now, with Mohammed perhaps as its forerunner, comes in the Equinox of Horus, the young child who rises strong and conquering (with his twin Harpocrates) to avenge Osiris, and bring on the age of strength and splendour.

His formula is not yet fully understood.

Following him will arise the Equinox of Ma, the Goddess of Justice, it may be a hundred or ten

thousand years from now; for the Computation of Time is not here as There.”

As Crowley’s notion of this transition progressed he associated the Equinox mentioned not simply with the two annual Equinox events but with an Astronomical process called the Axial Precession or in Astrological terms the Precession of the Equinoxes. Due to a quirk in the Earth’s rotation the position of the stars in the night’s sky move westwards, shifting the relationship to the Fixed Stars that make up the Zodiac. Over the course of roughly 2000 years a given Zodiac star will align with the Equinox, and then the Equinox will transition into the next Zodiacal star system. Astrologers have used this to determine which Zodiacal sign rules a given span of time of roughly 2000 years as well. For the period of the Common Era (~1 CE to ~2000 CE) the Zodiacal Sign of Pisces has ruled, and would be transitioning into a new sig, that of Aquarius, which a change in rulership. With this association Crowley now had a fixed period for his Equinoxes, occurring every 2000 years, making his Equinox of Horus roughly equivalent to the Astrological Age of Aquarius.

What had occurred between the formalization of the Equinox of Horus in the writing of the “Old Comment” published in 1912 and the remanifestation of this same idea as “The Aeon of Horus” or “The New Aeon” in the Equinox in 1919 CE? The answer would be found in Crowley’s transition during this period from a Magister Templi to the being-condition he called Magus.

*Regardie, Israel *The Complete Golden dawn System of Magic*.

In 1909, based upon the Enochian visions described in *The Vision and the Voice*, Crowley would claim the Grade of Magister Templi within his A.'.A.'. Contained in the comment published with the text of this book in 1911 CE is an outline of the doctrine of Aeons drawn from the repeated use of the term "Aeon" in his visions and their association with Horus as "Crowned and Conquering Child," though "Aeon of Horus" specifically is never mentioned in the visions.

Based upon his visions, which discuss not only the Being-condition known as Magister Templi, but also the other two Degrees of the Third Order, Magus and Ipsissimus. In particular the Magus is discussed as being necessary for bringing a "New Aeon" into being in the Vision of the 27th Aeyther, with more details pertaining to the Magus in visions of the 6th and 4th Aeythers.

Starting in 1910 CE Crowley began pushing himself to more fully Understand the Magus Degree. This process would lead to new contacts in the realm of esoteric orders and would hold a major relocation to New York as well.

In 1912 he would publish *The Book of Lies*, which triggered Theodore Reuss, head of the German Ordo Templi Orientis to contact him claiming he had revealed the Secrets of that order's upper Degrees. Crowley claimed that wasn't possible as he was not privy to those Degrees, but intuited once Reuss came to him that it was of a sexual nature and triggered by "Psalm 36 - The Star Sapphire" Crowley's version of the Golden Dawn Hexagram Ritual for the A.'.A.'. is interesting for our purposes as the central point of this rite includes the appearance of Set, one of the few times Set is mentioned in Crowley's rituals. From Reuss, and his own fertile sexual imagination, Crowley would add a battery of sexual techniques to his repertoire as a magician as attested to in his diaries.

In 1909 CE Charles Stansfeld Jones (1886 CE-1950 CE) joined the A.'.A.'. after reading an issue of *The Equinox*. With Crowley's association with the O.T.O. he joined this Order as well, and would become the local head of the Order operating out of Toronto. Jones would spend a good deal of time working on the ciphers contained in *The Book of the Law* as a part of his A.'.A.'. Work under J.C.F. Fuller and then Crowley himself.

In 1914 CE Crowley relocated to New York to pursue writing, painting and his Task as a Magister Templi. This would become a period of intense magical Work, leading him to his attainment as Magus, whose Word was *thélima* [Thelema], and whose name was To Mega Therion, "The Great Beast", whose number was 666. As foretold in *The Vision and the Voice* he would proclaim a New Aeon to humanity as Magus. By the rules of the A.'.A.'. he would need to find a replacement for himself as a Magister Templi, and did so by Recognizing C. S. Jones as such on October 12, 1915 at the same time as his own Recognition as Magus.

The period of correspondence afterwards between Crowley and Jones, collected as *Liber Aleph* shows the formation and formalization of Crowley's Doctrine not only of the Aeons but also of the Magus in the A.'.A.'. as well as historically. He identifies seven previous Magi: Lao Tzu, Thoth, Krishna, Gautama, Moses, Dionysus, and Mohammed. History not being Crowley's strong suit he does not address these chronologically but rather as a means for outlining what he saw as the important contributions of each of these figures to his own Understanding of his new Aeon. Each would be identified with a Word that summed up their entire philosophy much as *thélima* summed up his own.

The Book of the Law was seen as the sign of the beginning of the New Aeon, though it would take Crowley some 11 years to develop sufficiently to act as the Magus of this New Aeon. The period of

private exchange with Jones and other Initiates of the A'.A'. and O.T.O. would lead to a renewed sense of purpose, culminating in the publication of "*The Equinox*" vol. III, no. 1 in the Spring of 1919 CE. The full system of the A'.A'., which contained detailed information on the Magus Degree was provided in "One Star in Sight" published as a part of Crowley's *Magick In Theory and Practice* published in 1929 CE. He would suggest in this text that a Magus could either Utter a Word which would instigate a New Aeon or could perform an Utterance that would enhance the existing Aeon in some fashion.

It is thus in Crowley that we find all of the various lines of thought discussed in this series brought together. Through the Name of the Beast taken from the Apocalypse, with an understanding crafted from Messianic Kabbalah and honed by the Enochian system, with the Gnostic doctrine of Aeons and the magico-philosophic traditions of Logos, sutured together under the Zoroastorian title a Remanifestation of all of these streams and the articulation of a new Being State was Recognized: The Magus.

By the design of the A.'.A.'. a Recognition was supposed to coincide with the Recognition of another into the Degree you were vacating. When Crowley had Recognized himself as a Magus he had Recognized C. J. Jones as a Magister Templi. Despite this Crowley took the Oath of the Ipsissimus in 1923 CE with no such co-Recognition. In fact during Crowley's lifetime he never recognized another Magus within the Aeon of Horus. When he died in 1947 CE he had not even made official provisions for the survival of the A.'.A.'. beyond his life, though he had with the O.T.O.

This did not prevent others from making claims to it. C. S. Jones would go through a period where he had claimed rapid ascent to being first Magus, and then an Ipsissimus before restoring himself to Neophyte. He made claims of an "Aeon of Justice and Truth" which superseded the Aeon of Horus, but never proclaimed a Word for himself nor seems to have felt he was the Magus of this Aeon.

In the period following Crowley's death the state of organized Thelema largely fell to nothing. As a result of this, and the events surrounding a quasi-O.T.O. groups known as "The Solar Lodge" a one time IX° of the O.T.O., Grady Louis McMurtry (1918 CE - 1985 CE) decided to do something about this situation. Using somewhat vague authority under the title of "Caliph" derived from a term Crowley had used for Karl Germer, the designated inheritor of the O.T.O., McMurtry began seeking out those others who had been IX° to ask them to either help or get out of the way in his attempt to revive the O.T.O. and defend Crowley's legacy.

In 1977 CE, he wrote a Charter declaring Thelema Lodge, of San Francisco, and designated it the Grand Lodge of the O.T.O. In signing this Charter he pronounced this under his authority as "Fratr Hymeneus Alpha 777, IX° O.T.O., 9=2, Caliph of the Ordo Templi Orientis." The charter can be seen here: http://www.parareligion.ch/2012/thelema_lodge_charter_1977.jpg. What is of note is the claim of 9=2, the designation in the A.'.A.'. for the Degree of Magus. To the best of anyone's records McMurtry was not a member of the A.'.A.'. proper, certainly not via Crowley. Also McMurtry never publicly proclaimed himself as a Magus other than this one time nor did he ever state his Utterance. He was never Recognized as such by any of the Students of Crowley in the A.'.A.'..

A witness to the signing of the Charter, Jerry Cornelius, has claimed that McMurtry had said "O-T-O" under his breath, making this his Utterance, wisely or foolishly, to empower the recreation of the O.T.O. Cornelius has used the authority of this "Utterance" to create an A.'.A.'. line from McMurtry that he has run for some decades.

Although certainly some may have thought themselves Magi none were regarded as such by other magicians. No one had come forth within the Western Esoteric Tradition. No one had come forth in the Eastern Esoteric Traditions. In fact the only one who did come forth and was arguably Recognized by the World, for a time, was one who had come "from no expected house": Anton Szandor LaVey (1930 CE - 1997 CE).

The tale of Howard Stanton Levey and his transformation into Anton Szandor LaVey, Magus of the Age of Satan, has been well documented elsewhere and will not be gone over again here. Instead a focus will be placed upon the contributions he made to the notion of Magus.

LaVey was not a trained scholar in any capacity nor was he a close student of any field. What he excelled in was getting a sense of the undercurrents in human behavior and being perfectly comfortable accepting all of it as it was rather than as some ideology would prefer it to be. This capacity gave him a rather dismal view of much of what passed for "occult wisdom" with perhaps his best critique being summed up in the introduction to *The Satanic Rituals*:

"Much magical curricula is padded beyond belief with pseudo-esoteric data, the purpose of which is: (a) to make it tougher to learn, since no one places any credence in what comes too easy (though they constantly seek shortcuts, give-aways and miracles); (b) to provide many things that can go wrong, so that if a ritual doesn't work it can be said that the student was delinquent in his studies; (c) to discourage all but the most idle, bored, talentless, and barren (translation=introspective, mystical, spiritual) persons. Contrary to popular assumption, esoteric doctrines do not discourage nonachievers but actually encourage them to dwell in loftier ivory towers. Those with the greatest degree of natural magical ability are often far too busy with other activities to learn the "finer" points of the Sephiroth, Tarot, I Ching, etc.

This is not intended to suggest that there is no value in arcane wisdom. But, just because one memorizes every name in a telephone directory it does not mean he is intimately acquainted with each person listed."

As LaVey was interested in who people were rather than the delusion of who they felt they should be he gravitated towards the figure of Satan and the notion that He would have a Church of his own. This had been the one ingredient that had been wholly lacking in the Golden Dawn's integration of the idea of the Early Modern Period. It would come back not as a component but as the center of gravity of LaVey's thought, along with its Witches and Warlocks, its profane rites and Blasphemous proclamations.

LaVey had seen that the world had changed. The end of the 19th Century really had been the end of the Modern Period. The superstitions of the past had been shown to be irrelevant towards the human animal. Man's religions were lies for the sake of individual psychological coping or mass social control. What those social forces had hated and repressed as the domain of Satan, humanity's animal and carnal desires as well as his higher capacities for reason and artistic expression unbound by "decency," were not the Enemies of humanity's fulfillment but the very road to it. Rather than cast out Satan why not valorize this shunned emblem of all that we were and ever really could be.

LaVey's ground level acceptance of humans as they were rather than as anyone would wish them to be would coalesce into what has been Recognized as his Word: Indulgence. This would be the

central principle behind his ideas and Teachings, the Word of the Age of Satan and the first major innovation in the Occult world since Crowley. It was not only a shift in the Occult World but it was a seismic social shift that propelled LaVey towards international fame and for a short time serious regard.

With regard to the notion of Magus LaVey took a fairly pragmatic approach. He did not care about Aeons, or about significant contributions to the realm of philosophy. He described the Magus V° of his Church of Satan in his February 15, 1970 National Insider column "Letters to the Devil" in the following manner:

"All Satanic Masters [IV°] are automatically encouraged to work towards the position of Magus but encouragement by this stage of the game is hardly necessary, as without the inventiveness and innovation potential which is required for the Magus, they would never have become Satanic Master in the First Place.

...

My position as Magus is predicated upon my bringing of Satanism to the light of day in an acceptable form for the first time in history."

In November 1970 he would, under the pseudonym "John M. Kincaid" for the Cloven Hoof aimed at the Church of Satan membership expand upon this:

"The Title of Magus V° is conferred upon members of the IV° who have discovered and brought forth a new magical principle and utilized it in a manner that profoundly affects the activities of the world. The position held by Anton LaVey as High Priest is monarchical in nature, papal in degree, and absolute in power. His exalted position is the result of doing what no other man has done in the span of millennium: bringing Satanism into the world as an organized, legitimate, aboveground persuasion - and with it restoring the dignity of man's own godhead."

Interestingly LaVey would never Recognize another Magus within the Age of Satan and the Church of Satan. He did not do so from 1966 to 1975 CE. He did not do so after 1975 through to his death in 1997 CE. He and he alone would be the one Magus of the Age of Satan.

But his Teachings and his example, positive and negative, did prepare one other for the Task: Michael A. Aquino. It would be this man, with the ren of Ra-E-Set, who would clarify the doctrine of Aeons and create a system that allowed for but did not demand the capacity of other Magi to come into being. And he would do it with his Utterance of Xeper, the Eternal Word of the Aeon of Set.

Dr. Aquino's experience on the North Solstice X, as recorded in *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* has provided a tremendous clarifying effect upon the doctrine of Aeons, Magi and Words. This has taken shape through the primary tools created in response to this experience, the Temple of Set itself.

The BoCFbN accepts the idea that Crowley's 1904 CE reception of The Book of the Law had in fact opened an Aeon of Horus. But the Aeon of Horus described is not that of Horus the Younger, as Crowley had claimed, but rather than of The Great Horus, Horus the Elder, "HarWar" in the text, and Hor-ur by contemporary transliteration.

The text suggests that the primary duration of this Aeon had lasted from the 1904 CE start to 1966 CE where it was superseded by "The Age of Satan." This would a time of purification, where Initiates could purge historical stasis and elusion. At the moment of the North Solstice, 1975 CE the Age of Satan was undergoing its full realization as the Aeon of Set and its Eternal Word, and the Uttered Word of its Magus, was and is Xeper.*

Right from the start of this Aeon of Set it would seem the notion of Aeons received from Crowley would have to be re-evaluated. If taken seriously his Aeon of Horus had not run the course of the ~2000 year interval of the Equinox of Aquarius. Less directly stated, it would appear that Crowley's association not only of his Aeon of Horus with Horus the Younger was in error but there was a fairly good chance that his Aeons of Isis and Orsiris, at least as he understood them, had been in error.

Dr. Aquino would return to Florence Farr's Egyptian Magic and would find a root of Crowley's notion of Aeons in this text. Rather than ruling Zodiacal periods the Aeons had been a Gnostic notion tied to one's individual Initiation. As one developed one could gain access to increasingly more sophisticated Aeons or refined Understanding while still retaining access to the previous Aeons traversed.

The Aeons that had come into being in the course of the 20th Century CE were not a product of linear time progression but reflective of the increasing sophistication of Initiates. They need not be tied to any fixed length of time but rather were a series of lenses through which one could view themselves, their interactions with others and their relation to nature. As Dr. Aquino writes, "[An Aeon] is simply an attitude which one chooses or is conditioned to adopt."

Dr. Aquino would bring his new vision to the Degree of Magus as well. Crowley had felt that each Aeon only had one true Magus, the one who Uttered it into Being. Others could in theory become something "Magus like" provided they were willing to subordinate themselves to the true Magus. Dr. Aquino would extend and elevate the dignity of this notion. While it might be true that each Aeon would only have one Utterer who called the Aeon into interaction with Time other Magi would, and should, develop within the Aeon with Words that shift the balance of Understanding within the Aeon and enhance the application of the Aeon's Primary Word.

Reflecting the seriousness of the Magus V° within the Temple of Set, Dr. Aquino would create a system of Recognition which required the High Priest/Priestess of Set to have come to see a Master as having pushed beyond the Temple's present Understanding in a manner which could enhance Xeper. For the HP's Recognition to be seen as valid it requires the affirmation of the entire Council of Nine; the only unanimous vote required by the Temple's By-Laws.

Dr. Aquino would embrace the entire synthesis of ideas we have been discussing with a tremendous

force of clarity. The Prince of Darkness was in fact the “God of Magicians” but he was not the simple character of the Christian Satan. Rather the Prince was a figure who philosophically could be seen as the Platonic First Form of Isolate Intelligence, from which each individual Isolate Intelligence was shaped after and resonant to it. It would be the name by which this Principle had been known in Ancient Egypt, as Set, that would be venerated as the Temple’s Patron, while opening the door for all other human apprehensions of this Principle to be studied and explored.

The Messianic Kabbalah, and its misrepresentations through the 19th Century occult world were dismissed. However, the Enochian material of John Dee would be retained. This material would be restored to the original transmitted orthography that Dee and Kelly had received and was subject to an Initiatory re-evaluation, leading to the 19 Parts of the Word of Set. It would outline the emergence of Life itself, of early human consciousness, of a flourishing of that consciousness in interaction with the Prince of Darkness, and the eventual enhanced remanifestation of this interaction under the guise of Four Orderings. Here it was not an Apocalypse that the Keys foretold but an emergence into a time which would seem as distant to present man as present man’s condition would seem distant to his early Hominid ancestors.

In an act of Play, Dr. Aquino would integrate the Apocalypse of John of Patmos by accepting Crowley’s own identification with the Beast of the Sea by taking on the title of the Second Beast, the Beast from the Earth. The Second Beast of “two horns” would heal the crippling wounds of the First Beast and begin the Reign of the Dragon.

Most importantly Dr. Aquino, as by his Word of Xeper, would make the individual’s own transformations central to the Word of the Aeon of Set rather than the need to announce it from every hilltop or to amass followers. It would act as a beacon to those most dedicated to their own development from all walks of life and stations in culture for the mutual benefit of their development.

By the Work and Word of the Magus of the Aeon of Set would it become possible to integrate and enhance all that had come before in preparation for the staggering newness that is to be.

*See my “The Egyptian Language and the Eternal Word” document link in my PoN “Above the Abyss” profile entry for an extensive discussion of this Word and its many varied implications.

When I began this series last month I had not timed it to conclude on this date, December 21, 2012. As many of you know there are a number of people in a froth over the fact that this date coincides with the five numeral dating system matching the date of Creation for the Maya, which was 11 August 3114 BCE. Due to a translation error of a stele at the Tortuguero site in Mexico by Dr. Michael D. Coe in 1966 the idea was born that this date would mean the end of the World for the Maya.

Inspired by the *I Ching*, a whole pharmacopeia of plant drugs and early personal computers Terence McKenna developed a graph thought to plot the interaction of stasis and creation through something he termed "Time Wave Zero." After the first calibration yielded nothing of particular significance he re-calibrated the system and noticed that on roughly this same date, Dec 21, 2012, his graph goes to the limit of novelty. McKenna had no idea what this would mean, though he would spin a good deal of blarney about it over the decades.

My favorite version from McKenna was the idea that on this day the fractal pattern of his Time Wave, which suggested that different moments had a resonant feature with other moments of the past that shared the same shape, came together on this day. From this moment of all time congressing with one time, the entire span of all time that had come before, and all time that could come after, would be unified together in a singularity. From this point all time could be contacted, and all time could be subject to Remanifestation.

This evening I will be, with the participation of the Setians of New York City, performing a version of the Apep Spell from the Bremner Rhind Papyrus. It is a restatement of the Heliopolis Cosmogony, reinforcing the shape of Creation in order to fell the forces of Delusion and Unproductive Regret. What empowers this spell is the Divine Formula of Xepera Xeper Xeperu, and it is from this Spell that the Eternal Word found its way to the Mind of the Magus Ra-En-Set.

So tonight, under the stars or elsewhere, think for a moment of what happens when all time is Ruled, even if only briefly, by the Word of the Aeon of Set. Think of the genealogy of ideas that needed to come together for the Aeon of Set to be. Think of those times that inspire you towards your own Divine Pattern. In doing so realize that tomorrow begins a cycle anew with its origins in this same Divine Pattern.

Xepera Xeper Xeperu

Book II: The Eternal Word

The Egyptian Language

The Egyptian language, which is first dated by inscription to circa 3400 BCE, is one of the oldest recorded languages among humans. It is classified as an Afroasiatic language (Hamito-Semitic in older sources) and shares features with related ancient languages such as Akkadian and Biblical Hebrew and with contemporary languages such as Arabic, Amharic and Hebrew. Although no longer considered a living language the liturgical language of Coptic Christianity, Coptic, is a direct descendent of Egyptian.

As with any language with such a long duration of use it underwent a number of changes over time. When the rule changes appear to take on clear features Egyptian linguists make distinctions within the language. For Egyptian there are the following divisions: Archaic Egyptian (Pre- to Early Dynastic Period), Ancient Egyptian (Old Kingdom), Middle Egyptian (Middle Kingdom), Late Egyptian (The Third Intermediate Period), Demotic (Late Period through Roman occupation) and Coptic (Roman time to the present).

Like most Afroasiatic languages Egyptian is built around “verb roots.” In most cases verb roots are made up of three consonants that can be modified by shifting vowel sounds in speaking and specialized characters in hieroglyphic writing. There is a fairly complex system for categorizing verb roots, with James P. Allen’s *Middle Egyptian* (2010) being one of the best learning sources for those interested in a detailed discussion.

The Eternal Word of Set, Xeper, comes from the verb root *xpr* or *hpr*.¹ The verb root *hpr* means most essentially “to evolve, to develop, to roll out of.” This aspect of “roll out” is likely to be how the verb root became connected with its hieroglyphic counterpart representing the Scarab Beetle.



This glyph in turn was based upon the animal *Scarabaeus sacer* that is indigenous to Egypt.



¹ Both the “x” and the “h” in this case signify a phoneme similar to the Scottish “-ch” in *loch* or the German “-ch” in *Ich*. Early Egyptological Linguists, such as those working in the 19th Century, tended to favor “x” while contemporary Egyptologists favor “h.”

Like most other scarab beetles *S. sacer* is a coprophagic beetle that collects dung and rolls it off to be buried and used as a food source for itself and for its offspring. You can find a brief video introduction to dung beetle behavior [here](#). For those interested in really diving deep into this topic *Evolutionary Biology and Conservation of Dung Beetles* by Clarke H. Scholtz et al. (2009) is excellent.

To give a sense of how verb roots such as *hpr* are modified I thought I would walk my readers through a few of the words which can be constructed from this root.



You'll notice in more than a few of these a lens shaped hieroglyph accompanying the *hpr* beetle. This is the glyph for "mouth" which phonetically signifies "r" and has the classification of D21 in the system of hieroglyphs developed by Sir Allen Gardiner and generally in use among Egyptologists. It is common in Egyptian for the first glyph from a root to act as a **phonetic complement** repeating the final sound of the root.








Interestingly the lens shape glyph also indicates futurity.



The following images are drawn from this Paul Dickson's *Middle Egyptian Dictionary* (2006). While by no means comprehensive they provide a sense of the many ways that the core concept of *hpr* "to evolve" can be transformed and the kinds of ideas that are thought to stem from it.


- [xpr m] amounts to {L1 D21 G17}
- [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 D21 G43 A53 Y1 Z2}
- [xpr] (*divinity*) Khopri {L1 D21 M17 A40}
- [xpry] children {L1 D21 M17 M17 A17 Z3}
- [xprw] form, shape {L1 D21 M17 M17 A53 G7}
- [xpr n] accrue to {L1 D21 N35}
- [xprS] the Blue Crown {L1 D21 N37 S7}
- [xpr Ds .f] who came into being of himself (of sun god), fermentation ? {L1 D21 S29 I10 I9}
- [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 D21 Z2}


  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1
D21 Z2}





  [xprw] form, shape {L1 D21 Z7 A53 Z3}


   [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1
G43 Y1 Z2}


  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1
L1 L1}


 [xprr] dung beetle, scarab {L1 Z1}


 [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 Z2}


    [ir xprw] assume a shape {D4 L1
D21 G43 A53 Y1 Z2}


 [sxpr] (*causative*) bring into being, create,
make, make grow (a garden) {S29 L1}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) effect (a deed), foster (truth),
turn, transform (into) {S29 L1}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) raise (a child), educate,
breed (animals), bring about (an event) {S29
L1}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) bring into being, create,
make, make grow (a garden) {S29 L1 D21}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) effect (a deed), foster (truth),
turn, transform (into) {S29 L1 D21}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) raise (a child), educate,
breed (animals), bring about (an event) {S29 L1
D21}

Less commonly known than the Scarab glyph there is another way to write the *hpr* root.



This is a purely phonetic set of characters with the circle signifying “h,” the square “p” and the mouth “r.” This is less common to find on its own but it does show up in inscriptions as a means of reinforcing how the beetle is pronounced or on its own.

Verb roots on their own have certain grammatical features. There are two major classifications, called **transitive** and **intransitive**. Transitive means roughly that transitive verbs describe an action that is

transferred from an agent (“The boy threw the ball”) while intransitive verbs describe an action that is not transferred but retained by the one “verbing” i.e. a change in state of the agent.

Hpr is an intransitive verb root.

The general rule of thumb for unmodified roots is that they can be read in three ways: as Imperfect Tense, as Stative Tense, or as an Infinitive/Verbal Noun.

I will be going into more detail on these tenses over the next few days but will provide the brief introduction to each from James Allen’s *Middle Egyptian* (2010), emphasis in original:

Imperfect Tense: “The imperfective expresses **imperfective or extended action**: action that is in some way repeated, ongoing, or incomplete. This is an aspect rather than tense. Like the perfective and other Middle Egyptian verb forms, the imperfective is essentially tensless. It often has to be translated by an English present tense, but it can be used with reference to past or future actions as well.” (Pg. 267)

Stative Tense: “The stative is a verb form used to express a **state of being** in which its subject is, was, or will be. Originally the stative expressed the perfect tense, that is completed action. By Middle Egyptian, however, other verb forms were used for that function, and the stative had come to express instead the **result** of a completed action. In this respect the stative is similar to the English past participle.” (Pg. 205)

Infinitive/Verbal Noun: “The infinitive is a verb form used to refer to action just as action, without reference to any tense, mood, aspect, or voice. The infinitive actually belongs to a special class of words, known as verbal nouns, which are used to describe actions as such.” (Pg. 163)

Thus we have three ways to read *hpr* into English just from the verb-root itself.



Imperfective: Become, Coming into Being, Evolving

Stative: Became, Have Come into Being, Evolved

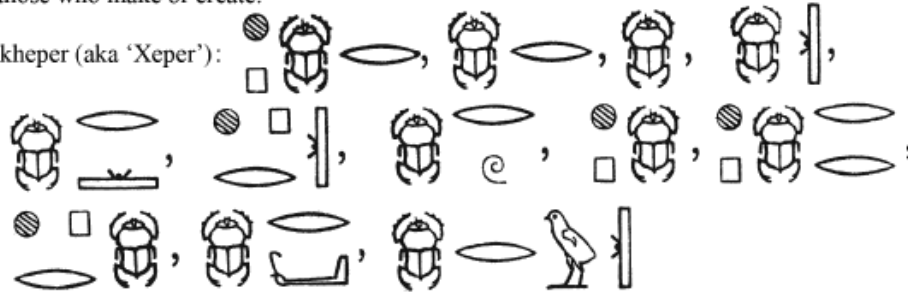
Infinitive/Verbal Noun: Becoming, Evolve/Evolution

As discussed above the primary root form of *hpr* is the scarab beetle glyph. Often however you find forms of *hpr* which read as roughly the same sound but which carry with it non-phonetic glyphs that give you a sense of the specific form or kind of *hpr* taking place.

Here is a brief list of variations of the fundamental *hpr* we would read as Xeper drawn from Wallis Budge’s Dictionary by Adepts Lansberry and Yagmin.

those who make or create.

kheper (aka 'Xeper'):



Based upon previous discussion you may already recognize aspects of these forms of Xeper. You can see the phonetic characters for "h," "p," and "r" acting as phonemic compliments to the beetle glyph.



Some others of these may not be as easily understood. I will not be going through all of these presently but I will give you a look at a few to get a sense of how the core idea of *hpr* can be modified.



This version of *hpr* is made up of the beetle glyph, the mouth glyph as a phonemic compliment and the spiral glyph (Z7). The Z7 spiral can be read as a "-w" or "-u" sound however by context and grammar it can be determined if it was voiced or not. The Z7 spiral is a variation of another glyph, G43, a quail chick.



The quail chick is what you end up with from the transformation of an egg. As such both it, and the spiral variant upon it, suggests "final" or "completion of stage." Thus this form of Xeper means "Completing the evolution of this stage."

Here we have another version:



Two characters we have met before, however there is something new here. The image of the arm out stretched with a stick (D40) is read to mean "force" or "effort," and most of the things you think about when you see someone with a club in their hand. When this glyph is added to the basic *hpr* complex you get something that would translate as "forced development."

You have probably noticed that in addition to the glyphs already discussed there is another one which appears commonly in this set, that of the scroll.



This can be written horizontally or vertically and holds the same meaning, “abstract idea.” In those versions of *hpr* that are modified by this glyph it means that one is not looking at a natural process of evolution or development but rather an abstract or conceptual one. This will be important for later discussions as the form of *hpr* found in the version of the Formula of the Aeon of Set, Xepera Xeper Xeperu, is constructed with this glyph



As an exercise see if you can figure out a translation of the concepts implied by the final form of *hpr* given above, the Beetle-Mouth-Chick-Scroll, characters.

Xeper

It is not uncommon for there to be remarkable outcomes when a Magus makes what seems like a minor comment. In some cases these comments transform in time into major life defining events. Take for example this short inscription to Michael A. Aquino from Anton Szandor LaVey in his first copy of *The Satanic Bible*:

“To Michael A. Aquino, who shall become more than can now be stated.”

During the expansion of the Church of Satan Magus LaVey suggested to Grotto Leaders that they spice up their rituals using texts on Anthropology, Fiction or other seemingly non-occult sources. Then-Priest Michael A. Aquino bought a reprint of Budge’s *Egyptian Language* which had been reprinted in 1966, the Year I of the Age of Satan. He used the information in the text to make the Workings of the Ninevah Grotto in Louisville, KY a bit more “spiffy.”

Chapter IX of Budge’s work focuses upon Egyptian Verb conjugation. While many of the other chapters use a variety of words to illustrate his points this chapter is built around the conjugations of one verb-root, *hpr*, which Budge translated as “Become.” The chapter uses a number of notable occurrences of this verb-root to teach the basics of conjugation, including a short section of a spell formula from the Bremner Rhind Papyrus IV. It is from this spell formula that the sentence “Xepera Xeper Xeperu” was first read by this particular Priest of Mendes.

Although Egyptian themes would not be predominant in Aquino’s continued Work within the Church of Satan he did retain an interest in the subject. This interest led him to continue reading books on Egyptian culture and art.

In the spring of 1975 he conducted a Working known as “The Sphinx and the Chimaera” (1975). This is notable for two reasons. This Working was the first to be conducted using the restored Enochian, which would develop into the Word of Set. Secondly the report of the Working takes the form of a long discussion between two mythic creatures observed by the Magician. Much of the discussion focuses upon the works of Plato and in some small ways the likely Egyptian origins of much of Plato’s ideas. Significant to our discussion is this passage quoted by the Sphinx when talking about Egyptian notions of time, cyclical regeneration, and immortality.

I was the spirit in the Primeval Waters.
 He who had no companion when his name Came Into Being.
 The most ancient form in which I Came Into Being was as a drowned one.
 I was he who Came Into Being as a circle.
 He who was the Dweller in his Egg.
 I was the one who began everything, the Dweller in the Primeval Waters.
 First the Wind emerged for me, and then I began to move.
 I created my limbs in my glory.
 I was the maker of myself; I formed myself according to my desire and in accord with my heart.”

The text attributes this quote to R.T. Rundle Clark's *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt* page 74. What it does not mention is that once again this passage was drawn from a version of the same Heliopolis Cosmogony that is the source for the Bremner Rhind spell that provides the core of Budge's Chapter IX.

Sometime in May of 1975 Magister Aquino found himself consulting works on Egyptian art. Nearly all of the images of Set were destroyed, reminding of Budge's discussion in *The Mummy* of the destruction of much of the imagery of Set by later cults, most notably that of Osiris. Magister Aquino would in a moment of playfulness and "Sudden sympathy for this 'old mythological figure,'" decided to restore an image of Set with his own hand, taking from Budge a line of hieroglyphs from a hymn that translate to English as "Let my Great Nobles Be Brought to Me." Satisfied with the results he put the image in his collection, not thinking much more about it.

On the North Solstice of 1975, the Year X by Church of Satan reckoning, and event took place that, if you do not know of it, chances are you really should not be reading this message. Troubled by the seeming destruction of the Church of Satan under Anton LaVey, Magister Templi (IV°-II') Michael A. Aquino conducted a Rite of Contact with the Prince of Darkness. What came was a series of insights condensed into the text known as the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. No better account of this experience can be found than the one contained in Dr. Aquino's *Temple of Set*.

The text contains two uses of the Egyptian glyph for Xeper. The first is to mark the Year X "Xeper" at the beginning of the text. The second is at the end of the text, where it is flanked by "Xeper" on the left and "Become" on the right. Dr. Aquino was kind enough to indulge me recently by scanning the original text of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. I was interested in seeing the original version of the glyph used the night of the Aeon of Set's opening rather than the later clip art used in *The Ruby Tablet* version of the text. My suspicion was that there might be something important there. Sure enough the versions of Xeper in the text are hand drawn versions of



This is the verb root *hpr* itself, with its universal mutability while forever remaining eternal and unchanged. It marked the essential idea of Xeper, which can be applied in an infinite number of ways but which forever returns to its own purity of essence. I can think of no better metaphor for the Utterance of Ra-En-Set as the Magus of the Aeon of Set than this. As all conjugations of *hpr* derive ultimately from the pure verb-root itself so too do all Words within the Aeon of Set ultimately derive from that Unnatural Fire brought from Heaven which illuminated Ra-En-Set's mind.

A few key quotes, some observations on the Primary Utterance and some exercises for those who want to integrate some of these insights.

The following quotes are drawn from *Temple of Set*:

The essence of the *psyche*, stated Set in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, is such that its existence is neither dependent upon the material nor imprisoned in it for testing or task-fulfilling purposed. Rather the physical body provides a vehicle in which the psyche can

become aware of itself and then reach out towards the limitlessness of its conscious existence.

This is a tremendously powerful realization. Your life, and your Initiation, is not a test. Your Work is not something you are doing in the hopes of passing the test of Immortality. Rather your existence, and its attendant pleasures and pains, are from the vantage point of the Eternal Word of the Aeon of Set a means by which you can become more self-aware. By making Xeper the fundamental value that frames your entire life, by casting off the mistaken notion that "This is a Test," you are capable of diving deeply into the experience of being alive and being willing to embrace whatever must arise as a result of your full engagement with the Real.

This orientation provides a model of existence very different from those of conventional religions and those of conventional occultism. If taken seriously it opens up the notion, states by Ipsissimus Webb at the 2001 Conclave presentation released as "The Task of the Magus," that one is alive to learn the nature of consequence, rather than trying to bring about specific results.

Your ability to align your consciousness with your *neter* rather than your superficial, animal, illusion of "self" is Xeper.

I will be discussing the notion and implications of the individual *neter* in a later discussion of the Formula of the Aeon. For more on this from Dr. Aquino listen to the interview he did for KHPR. This episode is strongly recommended generally and Magister Kauschen should be thanked profusely for making it happen and insuring its availability.

Key to understanding how this quote applies is that the Setian path is not one of transcendence and exclusion. You are not looking to make this alignment with your *neter* in order to avoid the Manifest Realm, to flee from life or to find solace in an unfulfilling existence but rather to place yourself in your proper center to more fully include and refine the Manifest Self.

Functionally this has some implications. It is far easier to set aside a healthy, fit body than it is one is chronic pain. The Pre-Modern Yogi's practice of sitting still until the body becomes decrepit and incapable of movement does no quantifiable good. Tending to your health, physically, emotionally and rationally, becomes a powerful means of insuring that when you need to set them aside it can be done without their looking to make distractions.

From the Analysis and Commentary on the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*:

I am therefore the tenth, appearing in the year X, and it has been my Task and Curse to Utter the Word Xeper. This is the Egyptian hieroglyphic term for "to become/to be/to come into being" and it is personified by the god Xepera (Kheph-Ra). This god was portrayed as the scarab beetle, symbolizing Self-generation and the dawn.

Summarily the Word Xeper refers to the transformation and evolution of the Will from a human to divine state of being - by deliberate, conscious, individual force of mind.

The formula of the Aeon of Set is XXX = Xepera Xeper Xeperu = "I Have Come into Being and Created That Which Has Come Into Being."

The second paragraph is by far the most significant and essential definition of Xeper. It outlines how

the act of Xeper is set into motion, through the deliberate refinement and use of the force of mind.

What is interesting is that the notion that the force of mind could make any changes to the human state was a shunned idea at the time of Xeper's reception. It was believed that once adulthood happened no further changes of any significance, except damage and degradation, could happen to the brain. Those who suggested that changes could be made in a creative fashion were shunned, removed from their positions and marginalized in their fields.

Many of the major legal conflicts of the Age of Satan (1966 to 1975) were driven by some reckless but insightful Psychologists who suggested that there were ways of changing the brain, against conventional wisdom. Their answer for doing this relied upon exogenous chemicals used in increasingly irresponsible ways. Their ideas exploded into the counterculture leading to a significant chunk of a generation believing that they could find the Divine from the results of a chemistry set or from eating a few exotic plants. With only a few notable exceptions very little of value came of this.

The Magus of the Age of Satan generally accepted the conventional view. You were who you were and should just embrace it, enjoy it, and accept it all. His approach was a kind of Magician's version of the notion "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." So you were a bit pathological, did things you felt guilty about and misfit with society. Great! Do your pathological thing, embrace the guilt as a feature not a bug, and say to hell with society by making your own private bubble against it.

It is notable that during the prime of his Magus-hood he aided in the Initiation of only one Master of note, someone who very much so decided that the Left Hand Path was not about retreating from reality or hiding in his basement.

What Xeper suggested was, free of outside chemistry, that the Force of Mind could be used for the transformation of Consciousness. What its Magus provided was an approach that integrated both the Rational and the Intuitive in a unique manner. Word and Sign, Logic and Imagination would feed together to gain access to the capacity to make change according to Will, internally and externally.

What is striking is that in the decades since there has been mounting evidence scientifically that the force of mind can in fact lead to the transformation of one's psychology. The discovery of Neuroplasticity, the mind's capacity to re-wire itself based upon its activity, during the 1990s has lead to a revolutionary re-examination of the Force of Mind's capacity to transform the brain and the individual's life.

Focusing the mind in specific directions, preferably by combining rational choices with imagery, can lead to the brain's transformation. The conventional model was wrong.

These methods, drawing only upon the internal skills at controlling and directing the force of mind, lead to slow but permanent changes in the structure of the brain, unlike introducing exogenous chemicals that only temporarily effect the chemistry of the brain. The rogue Psychologists and their progeny had been wrong.

The capacity for neuroplasticity showed that repeated patterns of behavior lead to stronger and stronger connections. The embracing of small pathologies and their indulgence leads in time to more robust versions of those same pathologies. A young man whose stage fright lead to creating

a false-persona following the path laid down by the Magus of the Age of Satan would in time develop into an agoraphobic hypochondriac finding any excuse not to leave his doll collection in the basement. The Magus of the Age of Satan had been wrong.

The combination of the rational and the intuitive with a focus upon integrating them towards desired ends has been verified and is now being integrated into a wide variety of fields. The Magus of the Aeon of Set had been right all along.

For those interested in how this capacity was discovered, and this one aspect of Xeper confirmed, see Jeffery M. Schwartz' *The Mind and the Brain*, a book destined for the Gift of Set section of the Reading List.

A few activities:

1. Keep a notepad by your bedside. When you wake up in the morning, the first thing to do is to take that notepad and write down this stem sentence:

If I bring 5% more Intention to my Becoming...

and then write down the nine answers that come to mind without any serious deliberation.

At night, just before falling asleep, take the notepad and write down this stem sentence:

If I bring 5% more Awareness to my Becoming...

and then write down the nine answers that come to mind without any serious deliberation.

Do this for at least 28 days and see what effects it has upon your Consciousness. After this period of 28 days review what you have written in the notebook and then write the following stem sentence

If any of what I have written is true I should...

and write down nine answers. Then start making those things happen.

2. This is a seven-day project. On the first day read the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. Then for the next five days read Dr. Aquino's Analysis and Commentary as well as his account of the reception of this document in *Temple of Set*. On the seventh night prepare your chamber in your customary fashion. Once this is done take up a copy of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* and read it aloud. Afterwards spend a few days noting your dreams and insights in relation to this Working and to the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*.

3. Find a small, inexpensive means of promoting the Temple of Set. Examples include sharing the Temple's website via social media, placing an anonymous ad in a local newspaper with the Temple's contact information, or otherwise finding a means for others to be exposed to Xeper in some fashion. Consider including the verb root *hpr* glyph in the ad.

For those of you interested in going back to one of the sources mentioned thus far, Archive.org has a digital copy of Sir Wallis Budge's book *Egyptian Language* available at

<http://archive.org/details/EgyptianLanguage>

I would suggest the PDF version as it retains the layout, feel and characters of the original text.

Sir Wallis Budge was an interesting figure in his own right, with a good deal of innuendo and controversy surrounding him. For those so inclined *Wallis Budge: Magic and Mummies in London and Cairo* by Matthew Ishmail may prove valuable.

Egyptian Language was originally published with its foreword dated as February 14, 1910. The book fell out of wide circulation for a number of years only to be reprinted as a mass-market book beginning in 1966. For some of you the potential significance of these things may already be known. For others they will emerge as we go along.

If you are someone willing to take serious my idea that the Primary Utterance of Xeper is best understood as the Utterance of the Verb-Root itself you very quickly run into a challenge. Because of its purity, and because of its infinite ways of conjugation, the Utterance can be tremendously overwhelming. It stands as a unique Fire within the Amethyst Realm, drawing all that was before into its light and shining forth in all directions. This is what one would expect of an Aeon Initiating Word, but it remains daunting nonetheless.

Humans for the most part aren't good with infinities. Having unlimited options leads to paralysis, or a tendency to revert to previous more limited ways. On an Aeonic Scale one of the functions of an Aeon Enhancing Magus is to provide a specific conjugation of the Primary Word of that Aeon which passes its Infinite Light through a specific lens. The Aeon Enhancing Magus' Work is more focused than that of an Aeon Initiating Magus, but in most cases it is less expansive.

The Temple of Set's model for what the Magi are comes from Aleister Crowley's Remanifestation of the Golden Dawn System's Degrees within his A.'.A.'. In "One Star In Sight" Crowley writes of the Aeon Enhancing Magus:

This does not mean that only one man can attain this Grade in any one Aeon, so far as the Order is concerned. A man can make personal progress equivalent to that of a "Word of an Aeon"; but he will identify himself with the current word, and exert his will to establish it, lest he conflict with the work of the Magus who uttered the Word of the Aeon in which He is living.

To use the linguistic metaphors we have been working with thus far, the Work of an Aeon Enhancing Magus can be seen as presenting a specific conjugation of the Primary Word of the Aeon, or providing an Object for its actions.

Remanifestation

The first Aeon Enhancing Magus to survive the Curse of that Grade in earnest was James Lewis, Magus of Remanifestation/Remanifest. For those of you unfamiliar with the story, it was a question from Magister Neilly to then-Magister Lewis about what happens to the Initiate after death that prompted the initial answer of “Remanifest.” In time this initial answer grew and developed until it became clear that this answer had far more implication than simply one of life and death but was scalable to the whole of Initiation.

Remanifest can be approached in many ways but the most fruitful for our discussion is to consider it as a response to the cyclical aspects of Xeper. As you evolve and unfold new qualities of your Being, these new qualities need to be enfolded into your lived experience. As Xeper transformed all of your being, dark and light, beneficial and hazardous, one could guide this process towards arranging this new Being in more optimized ways, realizing that as new Being continued to unfold you would need to repeat this process again and again.

Ipsissimus Lewis’ early fascination with Leviathan, and especially the Statement of Leviathan in *The Diabolicon*, tied his sense of where Xeper occurs as having to be in the here and now and not merely as a form of mental abstraction. His mode as a Magician was heavily influenced by the Aeon of Horus including, to some extent, the Kabbalistic interests of that mode. Interestingly Leviathan, Lamed-Vau-Yod-Teth-Nun, yields a numerical value of 496 in that tradition, which is also the number of Malkuth/The Kingdom, i.e. Manifest Reality. That the Work of the Word of the Grandmaster of the Order of Leviathan can only be tested in Malkuth/Manifest Reality should not come as a shock, but may act as a Key for some.

Being the remarkable fellow he is, Ipsissimus Lewis has the remarkable capacity to bring all of these implications crashing down on another Initiate who has claimed profound abstract realization with the simple question, “So what?” I have witnessed those two simple words deflate decades of pretension. That which cannot pass this elegant test can be seen as ever having been of true Initiatory significance.

So what does this have to do with Xeper, particularly in a linguistic orientation? The modified reading of the Verb Root *hpr* which most resonates with the Aeonic Formula “Xeper and Remanifest” is the previously discussed Imperfective Tense of the Verb. As previously stated:

Imperfect Tense: “The imperfective expresses imperfective or extended action: action that is in some way repeated, ongoing, or incomplete. This is an aspect rather than tense. Like the perfective and other Middle Egyptian verb forms, the imperfective is essentially tensless. It often has to be translated by an English present tense, but it can be used with reference to past or future actions as well.” (Pg. 267)

Whereas the Primary Utterance of Xeper is omnidirectional, Remanifest focuses upon the need for ongoing reiteration with feedback. Where Xeper can in some ways be regarded as Perfect in and of itself, Remanifest reminds that one’s Work is never completed, even in Death. Whereas the Primary Utterance of Xeper is Eternal, Remanifest brings this action to the present moment.

It was not by the drive towards Perfection that Xeper was Enhance but by the embrace and use of the imperfect aspects of our experience of Xeper. By this realization and its Teaching did James

Lewis become the first Aeon Enhancing Magus to push beyond to become Ipsissimus. By his Word was more of the Aeon of Set known, and capable of being known. By his Work was the 18 lettered formula revealed: Xeper and Remanifest.

Runa

I mentioned yesterday my novel take on the notion of Aeon Enhancing Words as acting either as modifiers for Aeon Initiating Words or as Objects of their action. Remanifest was discussed in the context of acting as a modifier to Xeper. Let us take a look at the concept of an Aeon Enhancing Word being the Object² of an Aeon Initiating Utterance.

The first Aeon Enhancing Word of an Object quality to have passed through the Curse of the Magus was Stephen Edred Flowers. His Word, Runa, also has the distinction of being the first Word Recognized by the Temple of Set as having “Trans-Aeonic” properties, meaning that it could be intelligible and applicable to those within all Aeons, not simply the Elect of the Aeon of Set. For my purposes this is helpful as I can contrast three Aeons’ Initiating Words in how they relate to Runa as their Object.

The story of how Edred Heard his Word is known to many of you. He did an excellent job of telling the story himself in a Radio Free Runa podcast and provides the broad outline of his experience in his presentation from the Austin Conclave available at KHPR’s website. Here is my own brief rendering of the tale.

In Texas near the North Solstice of the Year X day a Satanist I° was on an adventure. A friend of his girlfriend’s had been having dreams about a “Tibetan Master” they had seen a few weeks earlier at a Psychic Fair. The Tibetan Master, going by the name of “Norbu Chen”, had presented a supposed Mayan Crystal Skull, spoke with a strong Houston accent and had performed displays of his power that were suspiciously like an amateur Mentalist routine. Our Satanist I°, a young Journalism student by the name of Stephen E. Flowers, didn’t think much of this but going on a road trip to Houston was more fun than the classes he was taking so he decided to go along. When they arrived at the Master’s Trailer Park Monastery he waved them off. The friend claimed she was simply not ready yet for him. Stephen, in the backseat began to wonder if there was any genuine path towards transformation, something of value greater than occultnik game-playing. He began to snooze and then suddenly bolted upright upon hearing a single Word whispered in his hear: ROONAH! The others in the car had not heard the Word, only he had. The next day he went to the Library at the University of Texas at Austin. While he did not know what that message meant in full he knew enough to look into Germanic Linguistics. To his surprise he found two different types of texts on the Runes, the dry linguistic and cultural studies of the script as well as the experimental magical texts of Initiates of the Pre-World War II period of Germanic Revival. Armed with these two approaches, a means towards Objective knowledge and a means of Subjective Synthesis, he set out on a Quest.

His Quest took him through many adventures and associations. His membership in the Church of Satan lapsed into disuse as he came into contact with the German Lodges looking to preserve much of the pre-WW2 Germanic Revival, including such groups as the Guido von Liszt Society,

2 In case anyone is confused I am using the term “Object” in the grammatical sense, i.e. the thing that receives the action of the Verb either directly or indirectly. If it has been a while since you have reviewed this idea you might find this helpful [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object_\(grammar\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object_(grammar))

the Armanen Order and individuals who had been involved with the Fraternitas Saturni. He would undergo formal academic training in the United States and Europe culminating in a Ph.D. in Germanic Studies. He would participate in the international Germanic Heathen Revival and founded the Rune-Gild to spread authentic Runic methods and traditions. He would by unexpected routes rediscover the transformative source behind the Church of Satan in his encounter with the Temple of Set, leading to his eventual period as Grand Master of the Order of the Trapezoid. And 16 years after his initial experience in the back of that car he was Recognized as the Magus of Runa, "The Mystery."

We have some interesting patterns in this. He begins his Work within the Age of Satan, makes contact with Germanic Groups some of which were affiliated with the Aeon of Horus and finds his Recognition as Magus within the Aeon of Set. Also Runa is not a verb but rather an object, a thing, beyond the Initiate that, nevertheless, draws them forth.

Let us look at Runa from the vantage point of Thelema, Indulgence and Xeper.

Thelema

Thelema, an English transliteration of the Koine Greek noun θέλημα meaning «Will» derives from the verb θέλω. θέλω in turn means «to will, to wish, to desire, or to choose.» Thelema is the Word of the Magus of the Aeon of Horus, Aleister Crowley. θέλημα is somewhat rare in Greek sources though it shows up with some regularity in Christian Scripture, most notably the Matthew Gospel's version of what became the «Our Father» prayer. Crowley, as someone quite familiar with Christian Scripture, would see this in part as a blasphemous pronouncement, claiming that your Will equaled the Divine Will while also being able to rationalize how this was in perfect accord with the Christian Religion.

Apostate Plymouth Brethren are funny that way.

If we take Crowley's Thelema as a verb meaning «To Will Divinely» And Make Runa its Object what we have is the formula «Divinely Will towards the Mystery.» Thus by its interaction with Runa is Thelema given a direction and purpose, i.e., one not only Wills towards the Mystery but also for the Mystery itself. This is concealed in their connection, known to those who have enumerated the Law of Runa, «Reyn til Runa!» by the Tally of the Younger Futhark.

Indulgence

Indulgence, the Word of the Magus of the Age of Satan, Anton Szandor LaVey, comes from the transitive verb Indulge³ meaning “to give free reign to” or “to take unrestrained pleasure in.” LaVey's Utterance transformed this concept into a rising up of one's being from the primordial depths and radically embracing whatever was to be found there. Any push towards personal Divinity would need to be built with the foundations firmly in the Infernal.

If we take LaVey's Indulgence to mean “To give free reign to” and combine in with Runa we gain “To give free reign to the Mystery.” If we take it the other way we yield as “To take unrestrained pleasure in the Mystery.” By making Runa the Object of Indulgence one finds the primary Satanic Urge to Cast forth the Gates of Hell to unleash the Infernal, whatever the outcome, is made clearer. One's Being and Enjoyment is enriched by giving the Mystery of Existence free reign upon the Earth.

Xeper

If we take the Primary Utterance with the Imperfective inflection provided by Remanifest something new arises with the contribution of Runa. The repeatable process of Becoming and Remanifesting is given a clear direction by the Mystery. It also suggests that the Unfolding and Enfolding of our Self leads inevitably to the discovery of that Self's Ultimate Mystery. The Mystery becomes both the Object of Xeper by setting a direction and in a sense the Self or “I” which is the Subject of Xeper in time becomes the Mystery of its own Being by this process.

3 Yes, Indulgence can be used as a verb itself however “Indulgencing” has a sour ring to it to a modern English ear.

Xeper Re-Uttered

Beginning in 1993, a discussion within the Temple of Set was initiated by its High Priest, Dr. Michael A. Aquino, regarding something known as “Aeon of Set Working II.” The name was drawn from Anton LaVey’s idea that Magical Actions took place across 18 year cycles make up to two sets of 9 years. One of these 18-year cycles would count as a “Working Year.” As the Temple of Set was founded in 1975 E.V., 1993 E.V. marked the end of its first Working Year and the beginning of its Second.

In his original piece in the 1993 issue of “The Scroll of Set” Dr. Aquino suggests a number of important operational changes for the Temple of Set. Where by necessity the early years of the Temple of Set were marked largely by his personal Initiation, going forward the Temple of Set would need to be less about his Work and more about the Work of all who have been transformed by this School. Xeper would remain the Center of Gravity of Setian Initiation, but the results of its application by those transformed through it would take the foreground rather than the Work of its Magus.

This decision was perfectly in keeping with the personality and past actions of the Aeon Initiating Magus. During his original High Priesthood he had intentionally allowed the Scroll of Set to be made not of his pronouncements but from the Work of all other Setians. Indeed with the exceptions of his vital annual summaries his words are nearly absent from the early years of the Scroll. During his second High Priesthood he would retain and vitalize the notion of Orders for the Magistracy, pushing James Lewis to continue his Work with the Order of Leviathan, being an important supporter for then-Magistra Lilith Aquino and Magister Robertt Neilly’s dual explorations in the Order of the Vampyre and had personally re-consecrated the Order of the Trapezoid as a Chivalric Order. He helped Stephen Edred Flowers find the transformations needed for him to take the reigns of the Order of the Trapezoid, providing the model for the first transition of an Order within the Temple of Set.

In his initial discussion of Working II Dr. Aquino took the good ideas of the Temple’s past, of Orders and Pylons as means for Setians to Work together, and more nebulous structures like Elements, and set them as the future Centers of Work for the Temple of Set. It would not be one Star that guided the Temple but rather a constellation of Workers whose Work would integrate together to form the Temple of Working II.

It was during this same year that Donald James Webb entered the City of Pyramids, and was Recognized as a Master of the Temple. Webb’s own tale of transformation had begun in earnest with an act of Playfulness, calling upon the Prince of Darkness as part of a performance piece put together with a friend on the night of March 15, 1979. This same night marked the Recognition of Michael A. Aquino as an Ipsissimus; a coincidence, surely. Ipsissimus Lewis conducted his Recognition Working that year at Conclave, but Magister Webb’s attendance had to be cut short for to return to Texas to see his mother at a hospital on land that had once been farmed by past generations of his family.

It was while on those lands, which he had also used for his early explorations into Magic in the Idiom of Neo-Shamanism, that he realized this might be the last time he would be at this site. He opened a line of communication, saying that if there was anything he needed to learn from this place now was the time. The result was an experience that was retained in a document known as

the *Book of the Heb-Sed*.

Included among the ideas contained in that *Book* was that Magister Webb would need to lead a Heb-Sed Year within the Temple of Set. The Heb-Sed in Egyptian Culture was a special festival that was held first at the thirty-year mark of a Ruler's Reign, to show that he was still fit for service. The Egyptian festival often involved a combination of running, obstacle courses, wrestling and various feats of strength. Like most festivals in Egypt its organization was given over to the local Party Planners, the Priesthood of Set. As the Temple was approaching Aeon of Set XXX and Working II was about to commence such a made immense sense to those who heard of it.

Magister Webb had previously served an important role within the Order of the Trapezoid as Herald and Editor of its newsletter, *Runes*. As such he was often exposed to the cutting edge investigations of Trapezoidal Magic before anyone else, and had the task of prodding Knights into sharing their ideas. A strong influence upon his thinking was the Work of Stephen Flowers, particularly his Polarian Method. Magister Webb, who had a life long interest in all things Egyptian, decided as a part of this Year of Heb-Sed to found an Egyptian Order within the Temple of Set where he could test the Polarian Method in another cultural framework. He would wait until Conclave to officially consecrate this Order at the British Museum before a bust of Prince Khamuast, the first Egyptologist. It was in his honor that the Order of Setne Khamuast was named.

As a first project Magister Webb decided to apply the methods of his Teacher Stephen Flowers to the magic of Egyptian Late Antiquity. As his Teacher is a Linguist it was towards Linguistic sources that he began his project. He ordered a copy of Janet H. Johnson's *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshhoqy: an Introductory Grammar of Demotic*. Demotic was the form of Egyptian spoken during the Late Period in Egypt, after it had become integrated into first the Hellenic and then the Roman Empires. It has the most similar features to its descendent language of Coptic and was the form of Egyptian in use during the time of the writing of the Greek Hermetic Papyrus (PGM).

What happened when the text arrived was unexpected. As Ipsissimus Webb recently wrote:

"I slept late, had a nasty headache and am annoyed by someone knocking at my door. I open it, pick up a package containing *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshonqy - An Introductory Grammar of Demotic*. I go my office and read the section on **stative verbs**⁴ I suddenly Understand Xeper."

One of the ways to read an Egyptian verb without modifiers is as being in a Stative Tense. As quoted from James P. Allen's *Middle Egyptian* the Egyptian Stative tense is:

...a verb form used to express a **state of being** in which its subject is, was, or will be. Originally the stative expressed the perfect tense, that is completed action. By Middle Egyptian, however, other verb forms were used for that function, and the stative had come to express instead the result of a completed action. In this respect the stative is similar to the English past participle." (Pg. 205)

Magister Webb's challenge of seeing how to integrate his new apprehension of the Eternal Word into the Aeon of Set would guide his Work in the Heb-Sed Year of 1995-1996. He would spend that year working the first book on Setian Initiation aimed at a public market, *The Seven Faces of Darkness*. He would create the Order Book for the Order of Setne Khamuast, opening a new means for serious

4 If you read the 3rd Edition of Johnson's text linked above the section on Stative Verbs is now discussed using the term Qualitative. I will get into some of the reasons for this in a later post.

Egyptological research in the Temple. He was instrumental in helping set the stage for the coming into being of the Order of Horus within the Temple of Set.

Most importantly for our discussion it was found by the High Priest and confirmed unanimously by the Council of Nine that the unique apprehension which Magister Don Webb had come to for the Eternal Word was sufficiently different from Ipsissimus Aquino's Utterance to warrant his Recognition as V°, Magus of Xeper "I Have Come Into Being", on the Spring Equinox of 1996. As an adjunct to his Task and Curse he would also take up the Mantle of the High Priesthood of Set to act as the guiding transformer of the Temple as it set forth within Working II.

Let's look at a few quotes on the Stative, now Qualitative, Tense in Demotic from Janet H. Johnson's *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshhoqy*, Lesson 5 on Verbs.

"The qualitative was an adverbial form of the verb which indicated the state which resulted from the action of the verb. For this reason, the qualitative is often translated as passive.

...

In early stages of Egyptian, the qualitative (or old perfective) had endings which agreed in number and gender with the subject of the qualitative. Some of the qualitative forms in Demotic retained these endings, but by the Ptolemaic period they no longer necessarily agreed with the subject.

...

...the qualitative...indicated the state resulting from the action."

Being of a Setian Left Hand Path orientation, then-Magister Webb considered what implications could derive from conjugating the Eternal Word as a First Person Stative Verb. In English this would be rendered as "I Have Come Into Being" though some of the key implications are not highlighted by this translation.

If one were to say the First Person Stative Conjugation of *hpr* there would be a set of ideas associated with it. Because this experience of Xeper would be Stative, it would necessitate speaking of the things which have come before the moment of speaking the Word which had transformed you. In that sense speaking the Word would subsume within it all that had lead up to that moment. It would speak not only of these events but it would simultaneously speak of the resulting state which you and an individual achieved as a result of that past action. In a sense the present moment would be defined and informed by all that had come before while also allowing for the opening of new possibilities as a result of the occurrence of having said Xeper.

The-Magister Webb applied this sense of Xeper to the Formula of the Aeon of Set, Xepera Xeper Xeperu. If one takes this stative orientation it yields for this phrase the translation of "I Have Come into Being, by Coming into Being, the Way of Becoming Came into Being." His interest in Egyptian Magic would lead to his discovery that this Formula was found in the Bremner Rhind Papyrus as a part of a spell against Apep known as "The Spiral Force of Re and the Felling of Apep." This role of felling Apep was mythologically the function of Set on the Bark of Re, thus drawing a connection between the Word and Formula of the Aeon of Set with a primary function of Set in Egyptian Mythology.

The Word and the Prince did indeed go together for a long, long time.

Then-Magister Webb's interests in the Egyptian material found in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* lead him to another discovery. The phrase found around the Seal of Set, "Let My Great Nobles be Brought to Me" is also found, with some variation, in the text of *The Tale of Two Brothers*. This *The Tale of Two Brothers* is the story of how a simple farm hand, Bata, undergoes a series of conflicts and changes ultimately leading to his transformation first into Pharaoh and then into a God. When Bata becomes Pharaoh he proclaims as his first act "Let my Great Nobles be Brought Forth to me

that they might learn the truth of my Transformations.” The word used for transformations in this context was Xeperu, the Object of the Formula of the Aeon of Set. Then-Magister Webb’s research uncovered that Bata had been a form of Set, associated with the Nile Cattle cults form which the notion of the Bull of Ombos also derived. Here once again he had discovered that within the *The Tale of Two Brothers* was another connection of our Work and that of the Ancient Setian Religion.

More startling was that no one was aware of this. Dr. Aquino had not chosen these phrases because he knew they were Setian, but because they fit the experience he had on the night of the North Solstice X.

The culmination of much of then-Magister Webb’s research, both scholarly and magically, into the Egyptian Magic of Late Antiquity found its result in the book *The Seven Faces of Darkness: Practical Typhonian Magic*. As Ipsissimus Webb posted in this thread, he would present the first published copy of the text to Dr. Aquino himself on February 14 of 1995. This was the 75th anniversary of the publication of the Second Edition of Sir Wallis Budge’s *Egyptian Language* which had been the means by which the Eternal Word had entered into the mind of Dr. Aquino and opened the Aeon of Set. This encounter would also be the occasion where Dr. Aquino asked then-Magister Webb if he would be willing to act as High Priest of Set. The following year it was so.

It was also that year that the Temple of Set entered into my adult awareness, but that is a story for later.

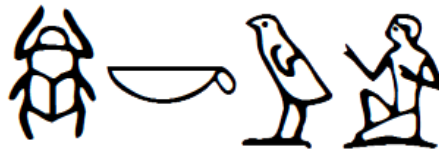
For those interested in the characters, the conjugation of *hpr* as a First Person Stative verb in Ancient Egyptian when explicitly written looks like this



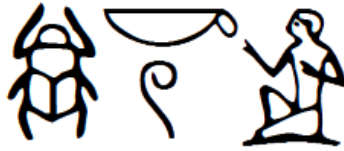
The second character is V31, a bowl, which has the phonetic value of “k.”

The glyphs combined would be said as *hpr.k*

In Middle Egyptian it would be common to retain this version to signify the Stative Tense for Magico-Religious contexts, as Ancient forms were seen as more magical conjugations. In other contexts it would more commonly be written as



or



both of which are pronounced as *hpr.kw*

In looking at the Middle Egyptian characters, keeping in mind our past discussion, a sense of what being in a position of being able to say Xeper as a First Person Stative Verb can be gained. One has developed or evolved to a place where an entire stage of development has occurred for you as a singular individual. Your time as an egg (subject of transformation) has come to an end and you are in the place to begin a new developmental process from the condition your past actions have created.

In 1993 as the Temple of Set was exploring what Working II would become I was a junior in an all boys High School operated by the Xaverian Brothers in Brooklyn. The school was in part an elite preparatory school for college, and for others it was something of a last chance reform school that they were sent to by their parents in the hopes that they would get out of the kind of culture that was pervasive in Brooklyn at the time.

As a kid I had always been attracted to all things Fortean, as well as Mythology and Heroic Narratives. I had also gained an interest in the Cyberpunk realm of fiction and art that defined the edges of the 1980s. I was also hyper aware of the so-called Culture Wars of the time period and was an avid watcher of various specials on how degenerate art would destroy the foundations of civilization, and that the Devil was hiding behind every 20 sided die and Heavy Metal album. By the time I had gotten to High School I had undertaken what research I could, discovered RPGs might be fun but seemed to have a negative impact on some people's social skills, that I didn't much care for Heavy Metal post-Ozzy leaving Sabbath, and that while there certainly didn't seem to be Satanists hiding everywhere there was a subculture of occultism and I wanted to know more about.

Luckily my Catholic High School had a very quirky set of brothers operating the Library. My Freshmen year they purchased the complete hardcover edition of the 1970s *Encyclopedia of the Occult Man Myth and Magic*. Richard Cavendish edited the series with an editorial board that included the likes of Mircea Eliade, John Symonds and E.R. Dodds. Rather than a purely sensational account of the topics covered, such as in the *Time-Life Mysteries of the Unknown Series* that I had devoured in Grammar School, here was a work that combined an erudite exploration of Western and Eastern Occultism from the lenses of Cultural Anthropology, Archaeology and contemporary practitioners. The arts direction drew from similar sources, supplemented with dramatic naked pictures of Maxine Sanders and some of the first publications of Austin Osman Spare's work from the collection of Kenneth Grant.

Man Myth and Magic wasn't the only excellent series on the occult that the Brothers kept on hand. Another series had an excellent discussion of the Golden Dawn and Aleister Crowley, which was my first exposure to Liber Oz. As a budding Ontological Anarchist I was completely taken by this, enough that I "liberated" it from the book and kept it in my wallet for years to come. An additional influence was an *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Music* that exposed me to the most subversive ends of the 60s, 70s and 80s.

My interest in Aleister Crowley eventually brought me into contact with the waning scene at Magickal Child. Excess had put its best days behind it, but it was still a repository of information on Crowley, Chaos Magic and a quirky hometown boy named Robert Anton Wilson. At the same time I was becoming involved with the New York Hardcore scene, though my own musical tastes were elsewhere; undergoing an insurgence of interest in all things Eastern than to acts like Shelter. This was helpful for me as it gave me my first exposure to people undergoing "conversion experiences" and helped me hone skills at learning to speak inside another's frame of reference in the hopes of getting them to see a bigger picture.

Crowley's oeuvre intersected with two other interests I had developed at that time. The first was the potential of controlled uses of psychoactives as a "booster rocket" for the early phases of self-transformation which Anthropology and the works of Andrew Weil had suggested. The second was the potential for sex and sexuality to be used as a path towards spiritual and personal fulfillment

that I had learned from a purloined copy of Marot Anand's *Art of Sexual Ecstasy*. Having a few substance abuse train wrecks in my immediate family made me very cautious about the value of the first interest and very disdainful of the effects of the illegal commercial drug trade. The second interest, well, this was NYC before its reformation under Giuliani, so that was fun...

Crowley's interest in Egyptian mythology pushed me towards more serious study of it as well. I quickly found that his Egyptology was off kilter, but still workable. I was surprised at how little information I could find about the god Set that painted him as anything other than a villain figure. This seemed inauthentic to me, as few mythic systems have pure "mustache twirlers," so I was always on the lookout for better information on the subject. In addition I was captivated by the figure of Khephra and the notion of Self-Creation.

1993 marked an intensive study of the Beat Generation and Colin Wilson's *The Outsider* in a class on the Literature of Rebellion. I loved the book and was completely taken by the ideas of Ouspensky and Gurdjieff outlined within. This year also brought the works of Joseph Campbell into my life, fusing my interest in Anthropology and Mythology together as a model for understanding humans. An honors class on Philosophy introduced me for the first time to the Works of Plato, Aristotle on through to the Existentialists.

As you can see, I was primed for something.

When I hit college, I began the process of finding the others. The Internet was just evolving what would become the World Wide Web and I was there with Mozilla 1.0 seeking contact with whatever oddballs I could find. I became a local promotions person for Invisible Records, and was put in contact with Genesis P-Orridge's Transmedia Foundation. Reading *Modern Primitives* introduced me for the first time to the ideas of Anton LaVey, who I had dismissed as a Crowley-Lite figure until then, and I was hooked. Chaos Magic similarly took what Crowley had laid the foundations for and gave me a practical path for putting it into action.

Then came The Process.

I was there from the first day of the group, and just unleashed everything that was in my mind and heart there. In turn I discovered others who were interested in similar ideas, and we began trading influences, methods, aspirations and struggles. One of the people involved, who I had turned onto LaVey, came back and told me about this group called the Temple of Set that he thought might interest me.

I ignored the suggestion.

I read a bunch of books on the Satanic Ritual Abuse panic for a class as an example of a Sociological "Demonology." Again and again the name Dr. Michael A. Aquino would pop up.

I ignored it.

I got involved with the Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros, which at the time was undergoing a serious internal upheaval. My Work with them got me interested in Runic Magic, and the only source that seemed to have anything of interest to say was someone named "Edred Thorsson." I thought his stuff was great as it combined my two passions, real scholarship and no-BS

magic. Then I found out he was involved with the Temple of Set.

It was getting harder to ignore.

A girlfriend at the time worked at a Bookstore Cafe that kept a decent zine collection on hand. She saw that there was an issue by a zine "The Fringeware Review" about Chaos Spirituality. She bought it for me, figuring I might like it. I did, but there was this interview with Edred Thorsson talking about Runic Magic and the Order of the Trapezoid while being interviewed by some guy named Don Webb. It was short but probably the most lucid thing in the entire issue. I did some research on Mr. Webb and discovered he was recently made the High Priest of the Temple of Set, and he was writing an interesting series called "Letters to the Fringe" as well.

Okay, time to stop ignoring this Temple of Set thing.

I became involved with the Temple of Set's discussion list, Xepera-l, in 1997. I was habitually reading the materials that were emerging on Xeper.org from the Temple's new High Priest while at the same time reading everything I could about the Temple from non-Setian sources; good, bad and indifferent. On Xepera-l I took a proactive approach to posting, as I had elsewhere, and was very serious about uncovering sources and exposing any shaky presuppositions. I expected to get kicked off ASAP based upon some of what I had heard about Setians, and was pleasantly surprised when I wasn't.

Once the combative phase of things came to an end I was surprised by the candor and thoughtfulness of those Setians active on the list. In particular the ones who combined those traits the most tended to be the "Upper Degrees" which came as a shock. Most occult groups I encountered treated their Upper Degrees as if they were untouchable figures whose lives were mysteries and who never bothered to interact with the general membership. On Xepera-l I was as likely to see Dr. Aquino and then-Magus Webb share music recommendations as I was to see them engage in deep consideration of the human condition.

Oh, I didn't want to like these folks. I wanted to keep going in the direction I was already going on. But the more I interacted with the Temple of Set the more I felt a magnetic pull towards it.

During my "due diligence" phase I tracked down copies of *The Seven Faces of Darkness* and *Hermetic Magic* to get a sense of what the Temple of Set might be like. I was captured by the discussions of Xeper and of the idea of the Fourth Blooming of Setian ideas. I was captured by the rendition of "The Spiral Force of Re and the Felling of Apep," though in my style I immediately went out to find alternate translations to compare. I was taken by the idea of a Divine Model whose two great enemies were Stasis and Delusion, including Self-Delusion.

There was also another theme in both texts that I was absolutely fascinated by but could not quite put my figure on. Both texts included a version of a PGM Spell related to a Celestial Bear Spirit "ARKTE." Then-Magus Webb's discussion of the Spell suggested that this Bear was connected with the constellation Ursa Major, the Big Dipper, which in turn had been the constellation of Set, and the place from which Set's influence emanated. The Bear Spirit Arkte was what had to be confronted before this Secret Place could be accessed by the individual.

I applied to the Temple of Set, was accepted, had a few interactions with then-Priest Pridgen which

were excellent, had a few other interactions with then Priest Silvers which were not and eventually resigned as mentioned earlier. My personal life needed a complete restart, my Academic activities were to take a decidedly experimental turn on my first serious dig project and frankly I felt like I couldn't honestly evaluate the Temple of Set from the inside. I focused for a few months on these issues specifically while continuing to test Setian ideas. When it was over I contacted then-Magus Webb about returning and he told me to wait until January. I took it to heart and continued posting on Xepera-I using what I had formed from my experience.

A few weeks later then-Magus Webb contacted me and said I could come back whenever I wanted, under his Sponsorship. I accepted and he wrote a very flattering letter to the Executive Director supporting my return. One of his comments was that at times I was displaying the most Setian voice on Xepera-I which locked into my Working going forward the question of how one does speak in a way that is most Setian, and indeed how one might Speak as Set.

Then-Magus Webb suggested to a mutual acquaintance, Philip H. Farber, that I become involved with the AOL Ceremonial and High Magick Forum to help contribute to the folder on the Temple of Set. The folder had been started under the suggestion of then-Priest Eric Kauschen, who was an active contributor. From our exchanges on this forum Priest Kauschen and I developed an Initiatory relationship, and then a friendship, forged from exchange of ideas, contrasting opinions and at times honest intellectual sparring. He has been and remains one of the most important figures in my Work.

In the winter of 1999 I made contact for the first time with another key figure in my Work, then-Priest Walter Gallo. We met for the first time in a bookstore next to the hospital I was born in. He had with him a ring he had recently won at an auction that had belonged to Ronald K. Barrett. RKB had worn the ring the first time he had met a young Walter Gallo and in turn a now mature Walter Gallo was wearing it to his first meeting with a young James Fitzsimmons. We exchanged pleasantries, contrasting opinions and eventually a few mutual book recommendations. Rather than a Student-Teacher relationship, as had been so common for Priest Gallo in his interactions with Setians in NYC, we were mutually influencing each other right from the start, and still are to this day.

In the fall of 1999 I attended my first International Conclave, held in Toronto Canada. The first night's Workings were a remarkable piece about the Deep Past and Deep Future conducted by the Order of Setne Khamuast, which made me realize that some day I would Work within that Order. This Rite was followed by a Working of the Arkte Element built around the Bear Spell of Fate and the protection of bears. From the moment the Working began to standing hand in hand with then Adept Phil Smart to my left, unleashing our anger and compassion, I knew I would need to become an Arkte Warrior and had a sneaking suspicion even then that something more was going on with Arkte that wasn't realized quite yet.

I went to everything at that Conclave. Every presentation, workshop and working, up until the very last event that I chose to sit out and talk with Magister Menschel instead. I had a strong sense that what I had experienced with this week would be important for the rest of my life, and that it might need to be protected and enriched. I had made contact with something that I had never found elsewhere.

The next year would bring a number of characters into my life. I was Recognized as an Adept in January of 2000. A month later I attended the Disinfo Con event put on by the Disinformation Company and developed a friendship starting that day with then-Adept Alan Cabal and finally

had a chance to touch hands with Robert Anton Wilson. That same year I also became concerned about the Temple of Set's future as there seemed to be a conflict emerging regarding its potential directions. Cabal and I roomed together at the Conclave that year in San Francisco, which as some of you may know is a fair bit like living for a week in David Lynch's Black Lodge. I explained my concerns to him, and he in turn revealed an erratic but deep love for this School and its continued existence.

One of the events that week which forever remains with me was being present for a singular event. It was at this Conclave that Magistra Lilith Aquino removed her Blue Medallion for the first time since the founding of the Temple and placed upon her Being the Purple Medallion as the Maga of Arkte. This was no whim or shallow desire but the product of serious deliberation and realization that something fundamental in her Understanding has emerged that forced her to rethink everything she knew about Initiation. I was stunned by the Power of the Recognition itself, and had a strong sense of elation and dread at what it might bring, for her and for the Temple of Set. Intuitively I knew that this Word would force a re-evaluation of Setian Initiation in a way that many likely were not interested in confronting. But like the Bear Goddess before the Big Dipper, in order to access the Secret Realm of Set, it could not be an optional confrontation.

Arkte could change everything.

Arkte

As in my discussion of Runa, Arkte suggests itself as an Object Noun Word. One engages Arkte by pursuing Xeper through Artke for example.

The word Arkte entered into the Temple of Set through the Works of Stephen Flowers and Don Webb on the magic of Late Antiquity. As Magistra Aquino's Work in the Order of the Vampyre began leading her towards a deep emotional concern for the welfare of animals the name of this obscure Bear Goddess was suggested for her proposed Warriors. In 1993 the Arkte Warriors were born.

The word Arkte is a Hellenic variation of the Greek word *arktoi*, a she bear. These *arktoi* were associated with the Cult of Artemis at Athens and especially the Initiation of women. This same word gave rise to the Greek word *arktikos* "of the north," lit. "of the (constellation) Bear." The root of *arktoi* goes back to the Proto-European **rkto-* which in turn is the root for the name Arthur, as in King Arthur, from the Welsh *arth*, which eventually yielded the Grail Mythos.

Bear Cults had been common features of Human groups in ranges with Bears throughout Modern Human existence. In the 20th Century they also formed the basis for speculation of even more primordial cultus among pre-Modern Humans, though this seems to have been mostly projection upon the data. Never the less it was in the same places that bears lived which our ancestors lived, and thus our lives have been intertwined for millennia.

Arktos, and in time Arkte, was of importance to the synthetic cults of Mercenary Soldiers of the Greco-Roman period. The peoples from various ethnicities came together to share their Secret as Initiated Warriors only to discover that they shared the same Secret: The Seven Stars Control Destiny. The Bear of Arktos, whose name is still retained in the constellation of Ursa Major, would become their shared symbol.

Thus we have with Arkte a complex of Protection of Animals and the sharing of Initiatory Secrets among Initiated Warriors. We also have an image connected with the Seven Stars of Destiny which the Egyptians knew were ruled by Set.

Let's look at some aspects of Arkte as a Word that tend to get less attention. As a Hellenic word it is written in Greek as ARKTE "Alpha, Rho, Kappa, Tau, Epsilon." Like a number of languages Greek has a numerical value that corresponds to its letters as well as other symbolic values. Using the system outlined by Ipsissimus Flowers in *Hermetic Magic* ARKTE yields the value of 426. It begins with the Lunar Sphere, then Capricorn, Leo, Pisces, and ending in Mercury.

There are many ways to read a symbol set but one way is that the process of Arkte begins with reaching that place where the Mutable and the Eternal meet, confronting the powers of Typhon as represented by the goat-fish of Capricorn, the forces of Life upon the Earth represented by Leo, the forces of Life Below the Seas represented by Pisces and ending ultimately at the Sphere of Mercury, who can travel to all Spheres and whose Work focuses upon Quick wits and the use of Fear for transformation. I will leave the task of actualizing this into a practical approach to each who read and are taken by this idea.

For me Arkte Work has been an extended meditation upon the relationship of the Force of Life with

the Force of Mind, past present and future. One of the most important Workings of my time in the Temple was an Arkte Working I wrote for the second Conclave at the Luxor in Las Vegas dealing with the notion of Arkte Shamanism.

It was the earliest human magico-religious practices, known as Paleo-Shamanism, which were focused upon our relationship with the Animal Kingdom mainly as a predator. Our unique ability to utilize tools and shaping of the landscapes had allowed us access to animal life in a way that fueled the rise of the Gift of Set within our species. Now, at the dawn of the 21th Century and the first Century of the Aeon of Set, the relationship between Life and Mind was set for a transformation. Rather than exploiting Life with Mind the time was coming for the Force of Mind to become a Protector of Life.

The Working itself was highly effective for those who took part. For me it was a stunning experience to see that my ideas had affected not only myself but seemed to have a profound effect upon senior Initiates who had guided my own Work. While everyone else went to party after the Working I decided to spend some time by myself, alone by pool side, contemplating the Black Pyramid we had consecrated to Set at the previous Luxor Conclave, and my potential place within the Aeon of Set.

Because of Arkte's focus upon the Force of Life it demands actions that take place beyond simply the Realm of Mind. Deciding it would be a good idea for Arkte Warriors to do a Simultaneous Working for the protection of animal life in Africa is easy. Doing your part of the Working in the East African Rift Valley is harder. Doing a Working to protect whales in your private chamber is easy, and might make you feel better. Doing a Working to protect whales on a private boat in the Antarctic headed towards direct conflict with whalers is hard. Caring about seals is easy. Making a huge commitment of time, effort and emotion to their rehabilitation after they have been attacked by other humans is hard. Arkte demands not only hard Work but also hard Action, and those who pursue it do indeed Xeper in a unique and powerful fashion.

Arkte also brings home the realization of Working II that the Personal is Initiatory. This includes becoming mindful of the ways that your actions of living impact upon the World. It also necessitates a good deal of disclosure of your individual experience, as my own need to explain how I got to the Temple before being able to speak of Artke shows. All Setians, even those for whom the Work of actively protecting the Force of Life does not yet make sense to them, can apply these aspects. By engaging with this Word as a means for setting the direction of your Xeper much will be revealed in strange and unexpected ways. And for those who cannot see how Life might relate to Xeper, consider for a moment that it is a Beetle, the most numerous and varied of forms of life on earth, which represents that Word.

Xeper through Arkte
AWKA!

The period following my Recognition as a IV° was marked in many ways by divestiture. I had served for five years as Director of the Soa-Gild and had helped to right its course while reaping the rewards of a long duration of focus upon the foundations of Setian ideas and what it means to be a First Degree, but that time was ended and needed by another. For seven years I had served as Sentinel for the Black Sun Rising Pylon in NYC and having completed the series of Workings I had intended to do in that role it was time to leave that Seat for others. Suddenly I was free to overt responsibilities to run anything.

So I started something new to run. For years I thought that the Temple of Set could benefit from some sort of interface with people before they enter the Temple and just as a general outreach endeavor. There were a wide variety of books on the public market which were the product of Setians, NYC certainly wasn't lacking in a diverse population of those interested in self-change, and I tend to get antsy when I don't have something to do, so now was the right time to do it. The Mehen Group was born.

One of the projects that group took up remains something I am very proud of. We were the first group to hold public discussions of Dr. Aquino's *Black Magic* once he chose to release it to the general public via his Home Page. On February 7, 2011 we held a discussion on Chapter 2 of that text focusing upon Ancient Egyptian ideas. In the course of the conversation Ipsissimus Webb's apprehension of Xeper as a Stative tense verb, and the implications for the Formula of the Aeon came up. I began explaining the idea, the way that past actions impact upon the present moment, opening and closing certain doors for future unfolding of the Self, and a strange sense came over me. I felt as if I had a really strong Understanding of Xeper and what was implied within its Re-Utterance. At the same time a tremendous drive began to form suggesting that I should dig deeper into the material that had feed into the North Solstice X Working because there might still be something there as yet unknown and important.

I considered doing some of that research the next morning, but frankly at times I'm unmotivated unless there is a really high leverage reason to do something. I was taking courses on Physics and Chemistry to prepare for a shift in focus in my Academic work away from the purely reconstructive towards helping people to better heal their wounds and make sense of their experiences. This involved brushing off old skills like Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry and other things I had not done with any seriousness in more than a decade. I had to focus upon those skills for contemplating change across duration and the verifiable aspects of Reality. I didn't have time to go chasing for trivia about the Eternal Word. As an intellectual outlet I was already stepping myself in contemporary discussions of the Evolutionary Algorithm idea of Dan Dennett and the ways that it could apply to biological systems as well as cultural systems.

What could someone seeking to heal, with a head struggling to calculate the Real who was investigating evolutionary processes of biology and culture, bring to Xeper? Didn't we already know everything that was likely to be of value about the Word? I'll leave it for another time.

February 9 I noticed an exchange on a discussion forum frequented by Dr. Aquino about Xeper. One of the participants, whose knowledge of Egyptian came from a single University class on the language, had some pointed critiques of the Temple's use of Xeper. Given the sense of rock solid understanding from two days before this came a hugely deflationary read for me, far stronger than the actual critique should have warranted. Might we be wrong about some of our knowledge related to the Eternal Word? Might there still be another apprehension of it that could more fully capture its

many implications?

Like I said, I often need a high leverage motivator. Now I was ready to take on the Eternal Word, for my own sake. I started reading various texts on Egyptian language, which is not my strong suit, and feeling nothing so much as growing, directionless confusion. I didn't know enough to be able to find an easy answer that would allow me to stop thinking about this topic. Instead more doubts, more confusion and more need to know more was what was forming.

February 14 I had attended a particularly brutal session in Physics at Hunter College. Feeling dejected I decided after class to stop into the Library to flip through the section on Egyptian Languages to address the contending aspects of confidence and doubt circulating in my subconscious. I knew a copy of Budge's *Egyptian Language*, was there and seeing Chapter IX to confirm what I already knew might make me feel a bit better about the doubts and post-class funk I was in.

What happened instead was wholly unexpected.

It was like a womb had burst, and now I was in unknown, and toxic territory. I stood there with Budge's Book in my hands and it felt like everything I had been up until then evaporated. Everything I had relied upon up until regarding the Word fell away as I realized that none of what I had expected was contained in the text. The specific form of Xeper and the sequence of the Divine Formula that provides the Formula of the Aeon of Set looked nothing like what I had expected.

I was alone with the Word, and I knew nothing about it.

As shocked as I was I knew that what I had beheld would also be my Path out of this. As shaken as I felt, I also felt just as strongly that I had beheld something of tremendous value that I did not yet understand, but that what I needed most was to become the person who did understand it and could articulate it.

Starting with nothing but the Eternal Word and a burning need to know at the deepest level what it really meant I began my Work.

This series of posts has been one of the results of my 21-month reinvestigation. As you have seen rather than destroy everything my Work on the Eternal Word has, for myself and perhaps for some others, placed the shock-wave originated from the events of the North Solstice X upon firmer and clearer grounds. I have attempted to include in my discussion up until now all of the best of what has come before in the Temple's apprehension of the Eternal Word and the ways in which inflection and nuance to that Word the Utterances within the Aeon of Set have provided.

Now it is time to speak about what I have discovered about that form of the Word I encountered on February 14, which has allowed me to integrate my own Understanding.



First, some background information. The following linguistic analysis is coming from the standpoint of Middle Egyptian. There are likely subtle nuances should these same characters be analyzed from the other periods of Egyptian linguistics.



This character is made up of the L1 Beetle Glyph, signifying the Verb-Root *hpr*, with the modifiers D21 "Mouth"/"Futurity" acting as a Phonetic Compliment and Y1 "Scroll" indicating that we are speaking of an "Abstract Concept" as well as meaning "Total."

As discussed before the Middle Egyptian *hpr* is best rendered into English as "Evolve" or "To Roll Out." The Egyptians felt that within each living system was a kind of code which would unfold in time with interaction with the environment, leading to the final result. An egg had the code within it that would unfold in time into a quail for example. A baby had within it a code which would unfold in time into an adult. While this code would unfold in unique ways to did not lead to results outside of the code. Grain seed did not grow into alligators, acorns do not develop into Elephants, or to use a contemporary metaphor from Magister Pridgen pumpkins do not suddenly become Cadillacs.

Although they did not know the specifics, their realization that there was a specific code within living things which would unfold in time and in feedback with the environment was quite prescient regarding what has been discovered related to Genetics and Developmental Biology.

The D21 modifier "Mouth" deals with speech and the capacity to speak. Its notion of futurity can include the idea of how one can speak the Future into existence. This relates to how the Egyptians understood Magic, or *heka*, which comes from the capacity to properly Perceive *sia* and the power to make things happen by "annunciate" *hw*.

The Y1 modifier "Scroll" as mentioned indicates "Abstract Concept." This suggests that the form of *hpr* we are discussing is not simply a biological process but an Evolution of something abstract, immaterial, and beyond that biology. Its function of meaning "total" also means that there will be nothing untouched by this *hpr* form unfolding.

Together these characters can be read as "Evolve through Force of Mind," or "The Total Evolution of Word and Mind."

As with all Egyptian Verbs this glyph can be read from three positions:

Imperfective: Evolve!

Stative: I have Evolved!

Infinitive/Verbal Noun: I, the Evolver, The Evolving One

In a broader sense what do we have in this glyph-complex? An image of Biological Development and the result of the unique human capacities of Symbolic Behavior, Speech and the creation of Durable Media; Bios and Logos, together in a single being.

What we have in this glyph is a summation of the Gift of Set and what to do with it.

There is another implication. When one has in fact undergone Xeper there are three things which will have demonstrably changed as a result: your biological behavior, your speech and the durable media that you create as a result of Xeper. Xeper cannot be something purely of the mind but must be reflected in changed behavior. Xeper will cause you to change your speech, and specifically what it is that you speak about to yourself and to others. And finally some means for transmitting your experience of Xeper will arise as a result of your transformations, whether this is art, journal writing, email, music, or a record in any other medium.

If there is nothing to communicate and no change in behavior, then there has not been Xeper.

If one has undergone a change which has developed their behaviors, has changed their ideas and left them with a need to communicate those changes then one can indeed say



Xeper!

What does it mean to Evolve?

In *Darwin's Dangerous Ideas* Philosopher Dan Dennett, Ph.D, presents what he calls "The Evolutionary Algorithm." An algorithm, as some of you know, is a step-by-step procedure that will yield a solution to a problem. The medium used to execute the algorithm need not be the same. In mathematics one can process an algorithm by hand, by calculator, computer, etc. The material does not matter; it is the logic of the algorithm that does.

What Dennett identifies as the Evolutionary Algorithm, which similarly can be processed by anything that matches its criteria, works from the following:

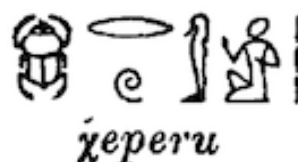
- 1) A code which can be copied (A Replicator)
- 2) The imperfect replication of the code, creating variations. (Mutation)
- 3) An environment which acts to eliminate some variations while retaining others suited to its conditions. (Design Space)

Once you have those three things in a system a process of Evolution will begin. You see this pattern of evolution within biological systems at the levels of genes, in terms of cellular conditions in organisms and in immune systems of specific organisms.

You also see this same pattern of evolution within the individual and societies through what Dr. Susan Blackmore refers to as "The Second Replicator." Here a code of ideas or behaviors are transmitted with variation by imperfect recall in an individual mind or exchanged between minds within the Design Space of culture. Once this capacity for idea and behavioral transmission becomes a significant part of Hominin behavior an unexpected bend in behavioral variability, complexity of tools and the size of the brain occurs.

In effect this has left a human species whose brain is in part the product of biology (Bios/First Replicator) and in part the product of culture (Logos/Second Replicator) bound together in a single entity. Which is also what we find bound together as a single Word as Xeper. We have the instructions of what to do with it, Evolve; take what you have, put it into environments which test and refine it, and share what you have gained from the experience only to find the new environment your past Evolution has created and reiterate the process again.

The idea of how one's own Evolution Evolves a new environment for Evolving brings us to the Formula of the Aeon



In the Spring of this year I undertook an experiment. Ipsissimus Webb posted a piece a few months earlier titled "Work and Its Rewards" which at the time had struck me as a brilliant framework. As so often happens when Ipsissimus Webb presents a brilliant framework not much discussion came

of it. I decided that I would use this post as a way to correlate a wide number of ideas, resources and topics of interest that could be put into practical use by anyone, but particularly Setians, which would help them to transform themselves and their worlds. A collection of the resulting writings can be read [here](#).

What came as a surprise to me at the time was that as the project went along I found that I could only speak of Work coherently within the context of the form of Xeper which had captured my Understanding. With this form of the Word suddenly the disparate interests I have sutured together unleashing the series of posts in that thread. There might be something to this, and there might be some relationship between Work and Xeper.

Let us look at the Divine Formula itself



The Egyptian language has a specific sentence structure, Verb-Subject-Object, or VSO. This is in contrast to English which has a Subject-Verb-Object structure. As such it can be a bit difficult to provide a proper translation however at the moment I will venture the following as a simple translation:

“I the Evolving One, by the process of Divine Evolution, Evolve My World.”

Looking into the specific characters of the formula reveals another level of nuance.

We have previously discussed the Xeper glyph complex, so I will refer you to there for now. In this context consider the Subject of the Formula of the Aeon to be someone who through Work has prepared his or her Body and Mind for the evolving transformation it is about to undergo.



Xepera

The verb of the Formula of the Aeon is made of the same characters as Xeper (L1, D21, Y1) with the addition of A40 “Seated God.” This new glyph provided the ending vowel sound of “-a” creating “Xepera” and it also reveals what one does to experience this Verb form of Xeper. The Body and Mind previously prepared by Work is exposed to the Divine Pattern of their Being, what Dr. Aquino refers to as the personal *Neter*. It is by the coming together of these three features that Divine Evolution comes to be. In this sense the alignment of these three features can be seen as what one does in an act of Greater Black Magic, whether an Illustrative Working to better perceive or an Operant Working to annunciate some idea into being.

This now brings us to the resultant of the Formula of the Aeon



Xeperu

The object of the Formula of the Aeon is made of the L1 and D21 glyphs we have already seen. The new phonetic character is the Z7 Spiral (a variation of G45 “Quail Chick”) providing the phonetic “-u” and meaning “final form” i.e. that the verb action is ended. Then we have three glyphs who serve non-phonetic conceptual roles informing of this new World created: A53 “Mummy” meaning “Likeness, Form,” A1 “Seated Person” meaning “Companion” and Z3 vertical dashes which acts to pluralize A1, making it “Companions.”

This suggests that your transformation through this process of Working the Self-Complex and bringing it into alignment with your Divine Pattern will lead to a result in a completed transformation which will include, or necessitate, the appearance of Companions who share a likeness with you, namely that they too have been through this process of Evolution.

“I who Evolve, Evolving by the Divine Pattern, Evolved my Evolved Companions in an Evolved Word.”

Whatever light I have cast upon the Aeon has only been possible because of that primordial Fire which Ra-En-Set brought down from the Heavens and to all of those who tended it, fueled it, and brought it to unexpected places between that time and now. None of what I have come to know would have been possible without those whose Works I have already mentioned along with three other people of note.

Magistra Patty A. Hardy, whom I first met at the Toronto Conclave, is the first I need to mention. Her tale of setting up her telescope at strategic locations during festival events to capture the exhausted and open minds of revelers in order to show them the Stars as Doorways to Wonder and to Teach them, should they be receptive, has stayed with me for all the years since. That the Egyptian Glyph for Star, *Sba*, also means "Doorway" and "to Teach" is no small thing, nor will it remain as obscure a Glyph as it may be for some now.

Magistra Guiniviere Webb, whom I also first met at that same Toronto Conclave. During that Conclave she acted as the Gateway to the Deep Past, was the Invoker of Arkte and was the first person I ever witnessed Ordained to the Priesthood of Set. Her Work upon Desire and the ways that this Desire allows for a point of contact with the churning pool of possibilities which the Anglo-Saxons called "Wyrd" has Illuminated my own explorations of Desire in relation to the Black Flame in fashions spoken and unspoken.

Finally, Magister Robertt Neilly, whom as you may have guessed I also met at the Toronto Conclave. While many of the I° there saw him as an imposing presence -- which he surely is -- I sensed then a tremendous warmth, caring and desire to see the success and growth of others stemming from his Work in trying to understand the shared substrate between humanity. While we may disagree on certain possibilities we share much, and my understanding of Xeperu was much enhanced by his explorations into congruence between transformed minds that he terms *Synesis*.

My own Understanding of the conjugation of the Eternal Word that has captured me is, appropriately, still Evolving. May what I have shared transform many who in turn transform my understanding further.



Setemheb "Set is Pleased"
October 2, XLVII Aeon of Set

Appendix

Notes on the Prince of Darkness (i): Etemology

The English phrase "Prince of Darkness" is a translation of a Latin phrase, *princeps tenebrarum*.

Princeps is a noun meaning "First one" or "Leader." It would in time expand in meaning to include ideas such as, "first in time or order; the first, chief, the most eminent, distinguished, or noble; the first man, first person." In the Roman culture *Princeps* was the title of the Emperor meaning that he was the "First Citizen" of the Empire. Originally it was use in the title of *Princeps Senatus*, "First Among Equals" which was a role in the Roman Senate. Caesar Augustus, upon becoming Emperor chose *princeps* as his title in place of *rex* because he felt it would cause less concern and opposition such as Julius Caesar had faced from the Senate.

The title of *princeps* would be used in the Eastern Roman Empire and would eventually give way to the contemporary word "prince" in English. While many now think of a Prince as one who is the son of a King the title was original one of a pure sovereign in their own right. The use of Prince for an heir apparent would not come into fashion until the 17th Century.

Tenebrarum is the generative conjugation of the word *tenebrae* which in Latin mans either "darkness" or "shadows." The darkness to which *tenenbrarum* speaks is specifically the darkness of night or the kind of darkness which appears in the absence of light, such as in prison or a cave. It is thought to derive ultimately from the Proto-Indo-European root "temes-" or "tem-." "Temes-" as a root yields such words as the Sanskrit *tamas* "darkness" as well as similar sounding words in Avestan, Lithuanian, Old Irish and Old Church Slovanic. Oddly the English word "temerity" which means "excessive confidence," "boldness," or "audacity."

The construct of *princeps tenebrarum* is first found in a text known as *Acta Pilati* or The Acts of Pilate, which is sometimes titled the Gospel of Nicodemus. The book first appeared in Greek and includes a description of the so-called "Harrowing of Hell," the descent of Jesus to Hell following his death to free those contained there. A final short section of the text claims to be an official report form Pontius Pilate to Rome discussing the Jewish refusal to accept Jesus as a manifestation of their God. It is in the context of the Harrowing of Hell that the term *princeps tenebrarum* is used in relation to Satan. The book is thought to originate around 150 CE and takes is present form in the 4th Century CE.

Princeps tenebrarum appears in the 11th Century hymn *Rhythmus de die mortis* by Pietro Damiani

Falsa tunc dulcendo carnis in amarum uertitur,
 Quando beuem uoluptatem perpes poena sequitur.
 Iam quod magnum credebatur, nil fuisse cernitur.
 8. At quae mens in summae lucis gloriam sustollitur,
 Aspernatur lutum carnis, quo mersa prouoluitur,
 Et ut carcerali nexu laetabunda soluitur.
 9. Sed egressa durum iter experitur anima,
 Quam incursant furiosa dirae pestis agmina
 Et diuersa suis locis instruunt certamina.

10. Nam hic incentores gulae, illic auaritiae,
 Alibi fautores irae, alibi superbiae;
 Vitii cuiusque globus suas parat acies.
 11. Iam si cedat una turma, mox insurgit altera.
 Omnis ars temptatur belli, omnis pugnae machina,
 Ne ad hostium pudorem sic euadat anima.
 12. O quam torua bellatorum monstra sunt feralium!
 Taetri, truces, truculenti flammæ efflant naribus,
 Dracontea tument colla, uirus stilant faucibus.
 13. Serpentinis armant spiris manus doctas proeliis;
 His oppugnant aduentates telis uelut ferreis,
 His quos attrahunt, aeternis mancipant incendiis.
 14. Quaeso, Christe, rex inuicte, tu succurre misero
 Sub extremae sortis hora, cum iussus obiero.
 Nullum in me ius tyranno praebeatur impio.
 15. Cadat princeps tenebrarum, cedat pars Tartarea.
 Pastor, ouem iam redemptam tunc reduc ad patriam,
 Vbi te uiuendi causa perfruar in saecula.
 Amen.

Here the Prince of Darkness is referred to as the yield of Tartarus, the Greek Underworld which functioned as an alternate term for Hell.

The phrase also appears in the 12th Century “*Sermones in Cantica canticorum*” by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 - 1153 CE).

Accepit tamen Satan regnum super omnes filios superbiae, factus princeps tenebrarum harum, ut regno humilitatis etiam superbia militet, dum in uno suo principatu temporali, et tali, multos humiles excelsos aeternosque reges constituit.

The kingdom of Satan, however, took over all the sons of pride, he was made the ruler of the darkness, in order to serve the kingdom of humility, pride, even when, his temporal sovereignty, and such a one, on the haughty to the humble aeternosque many of the kings he appointed.

It would appear that the phrase *princeps tenebrarum* was a term that entered early into the Church was retained through its first millennium.

Notes on the Prince of Darkness (ii): English Sources

The phrase “Prince of Darkness” in English is first attested to in the 17th Century. It appears in A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures, (1604 CE) by the Archbishop of Yorke, Samuel Harsnett (1561 – 1631 CE). Harsnett, as an Anglican, was strongly against the practices of exorcism conducted by the Roman Catholics.

“Darkness” derives from the Old English “deorcnyse.” The Old English “deorc” means, “dark, obscure, gloomy; sad, cheerless; sinister, wicked,” and likely derived from the Proto-Germanic “*derkaz.” This same root would provide the Old High German word “tarchanjan” meaning “to hide, conceal.”

[Note: For those Runsters reading this, the Proto-Germanic equivalent to “Prince of Darkness” would be “*Druhtinaz ab *Derkaz” or “Drighten of Darkness.”]

Yorke’s book would influence two of the most significant writers of the English Language: William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616 CE) and John Milton (1608 – 1674 CE).

Shakespeare used the phrase “Prince of Darkness” along with other figures drawn from Harsnett’s book in his tragedy King Lear. Based on the legendary figure of Leir of Britain the play recounts the story of King Lear’s distribution of his responsibilities to his daughters based upon nothing but flattery. The character of Edgar, who takes on the disguise of the insane vagrant Tom O’Bedlem, recites the line:

Act III, Scene IV, l. 140:

Edgar: The prince of darkness is a gentleman: Modo he’s call’d, and Mahu

The names of Modo and Mahu were both drawn from Harsnett.

Milton’s Paradise Lost would deal with the term more extensively and would frame the popular mythology of the figure of Satan as the Prince of Darkness through the subsequent centuries. What tends to get lost to contemporary readers is how deeply indebted the work is to Milton’s experience in the English Revolution and Restoration. At stake in this conflict were two key issues, that of Protestantism and Catholicism and separately the role of the King ruling as a Divine Authority and the desire for a Parliamentary system.

Tied into this conflict were the apocalyptic themes resonant in England at the time that had been strongly influence by Dr. John Dee (1527 to 1609 CE). Milton’s poem of the attempted toppling of God by a usurping Lucifer, his transformation into Satan, and his role as the Serpent of the Garden of Eden would reflect multiple feelings regarding the successes and failures of the Revolution and were rooted in Milton’s conflicts regarding what had happened.

Notes on the Prince of Darkness (iii): Setian Usage

The title “Prince of Darkness” had little role in the Work of the Church of Satan and its founding Magus. LaVey at his most cogent stuck pretty closely to using Satan, and Satan alone, as the name for the central figure of the Church. While he recognized early on the various devils of the cultures of the world, as seen in the Infernal Names, he stayed focused on Satan in most of his public discussions.

Within the materials circulated privately in the Church of Satan the title of “Prince of Darkness” was relatively rare. It did not appear in the Diabolicon or the “Ninth Solstice Message.” In the general discussion the key figure was Satan, as one would expect from the Church’s name.

The title of “Prince of Darkness” has had much more resonance with the Temple of Set. This begins, as did the Temple, with the Book of Coming Forth by Night where it is said:

The Satanist thought to approach Satan through ritual. Now let the Setian shun all recitation, for the text of another is an affront to the Self. Speak rather to me as a friend, gently and without fear, and I shall hear as a friend. Do not bend your knee nor drop your eye, for such things were not done in my house at PaMat-et. But speak to me at night, for the sky then becomes an entrance and not a barrier. And those who call me the Prince of Darkness do me no dishonor.

While Satan may be referred to elsewhere as a “Hebrew Fiend” it is indicated that “Prince of Darkness” is a title appropriate for Set. In his commentary Dr. Aquino notes, “Set was originally the god of the hours of darkness; hence, presumably, the suitability of the title “Prince of Darkness.” The word “prince” derives from the Latin Princeps, meaning “first”. Etymologically this is not inappropriate.”

As noted already the idea of Princeps relates to the idea of “Principle” and the Philosophical concept of “First Form.” Dr. Aquino, someone well versed in the Philosophy of Plato due to his background in Political Science would make an understandable leap: perhaps we could treat the Prince of Darkness as the First Form of that unique, separate Consciousness in Humanity. This insight would be strengthened by his exploration into the Egyptian influences in the genealogy of thought leading to Plato’s doctrine of Forms, suggesting that the concept of *netjer/netjeru* had played a seminal role in its development. Thus it could be said that Set was the *netjer* of Isolate Consciousness.

Stephen Edred Flowers would take this insight from Dr. Aquino and elaborate it into the idea that the Prince of Darkness represents the First Form or Principle of Isolate Intelligence. This construction acts as a Philosophical description of the Prince of Darkness free of any particular mythological model or cultural background. Indeed by identifying this Philosophical understanding of the Prince of Darkness it became simpler to view the various mythological and cultural practices that have developed as a result of different peoples and traditions attempt at address this Principle.

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Dr. Michael A. Aquino Temple of Set

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Notes on the Prince of Darkness (iv): My Take

While many Setians are familiar with the Platonic approach there is another parallel tradition in Vedanta which may help to illustrate the difference between the Principle of Isolate Intelligence as a Philosophical model and the various Deity figures seen as reflections of the Prince of Darkness in different cultural traditions.

The primary model of the Cosmos for Vedanta is one made up of three great divisions. There is a Gross Realm, which would be material reality. There is the Subtle Realm that is made up spiritual energies tied to emotions. And there is a Causal Realm that is made up of what are termed “Causal Principles,” an idea roughly analogous to the Platonic Forms of the Egyptian *netjeru*. The manifest universe is seen as being the result of Causal Principles being manifested through the Subtle Realm

and taking shape in the Gross Realm.

As an individual you have “Bodies” in each of these Realms. When you re awake you are mostly aware of the Gross Body. When you are dreaming it is the Subtle Body that you re interacting with. In deep, dreamless sleep it is the Causal Realm that you are experiencing through your Causal Body.

When an individual is interacting with a Divine Principle on a Gross level it is done through objects fashioned to reflect this Principle or through items thought to partake of its essence. When an individual is interacting with a Divine Principle on a Subtle Level this experience is had in the language of mythology and personality. When an individual is interacting with a Divine Principle on a Casual Level they are dealing with a featureless pure abstraction.

Now let us look at the Principle of Isolate Intelligence in this fashion. On a Causal level the Principle of Isolate Intelligence is without Form, but sets the ways in which the Principle manifests in the Subtle and Gross realms. How a given individual will create a Subtle construct to interact with this Principle is highly shaped by their individual psyche which contains a fundamental “Mytheme” system to draw upon to create meaning. If the personal representation is seen as useful and meaningful it can be passed on to others as a means for them to gain access to the deeper Causal Principle. Highly stable Subtle constructs become the provenience of mythologies and can be shared across generations.

The Subtle Deities that will develop to help people gain an emotional edge to access the principle will be different mythologically due to aspects of the culture in which the individuals are relating to it. Set, Odin, Tezcatlipoca, et al. are all Subtle Deity manifestations of the Principle of Isolate Intelligence. As Ipsissimus Webb notes in Uncle Setnak’s Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path (pg 12):

The Symbol for the Prince of Darkness is culturally determined. In a society ruled by Right Hand Path paradigms, the Prince of Darkness is the rebel against cosmic injustice, Satan. In a society where the release of energy from dissipating patterns is revered yet feared, it is Shiva. In a society that stresses the role of the LHP magician as cultural hero, it will be the supreme god of the pantheon like Odhinn or Tezcatlipoca. In a society where there is no central paradigm but many competing at the same time, it will be Set, the god against the gods.

In this sense Ipsissimus Flowers’ controversial comment at the Austin Conclave that philosophically “Set and Odin are the same thing” becomes understandable. In this he means that both Set and Odin are reflections of the same Causal Principle. What he is not saying is that Set and Odin are mythologically the same being. To say that they were the same mythological being is simply not true at all as the mythological and cultural trajectories of these two figures are vastly different while remaining resonant with the underlying Principle. The same for the other mythic figures mentioned.

Many people get hung up on this because their level of interaction with either figure is on a mythological level. They are familiar with the stories, perhaps use them as metaphors for understanding their experiences and form something in their psyche that is just slightly different than a literary figure. Others may have some amount of Subtle Deity Mysticism level interaction through devotional magic and they rightly intuit that being Devoted in this fashion to Odin has a very different Subtle feel than doing the same sort of thing with Set, (or Shiva or Tezcatlipoca). As neither of these approaches deals directly with the Causal Principle, that deeper level of resonance is

never experiences and thus cannot be truly understood.

The vast majority of magical techniques, Ancient and Modern, rely upon methods which emphasis the Subtle experiences. This can take the form of dealing with personified entities and Deity Mysticism or methods for interpreting events via the feelings of “energies” tied to emotions.

A huge part of what differentiates Setian Magic, with its focus upon the identification with and refinement of the manifestation of the Divine Principle of your own Being, is that it is intimately tied to the Causal Principles rather than through the valorization of Subtle experiences. This has historically left those who wish to treat the Prince of Darkness as a figure of Devotion or as a Subtle Deity who talks to them regularly somewhat at a loss, as they may not realize that there is something deeper, and ultimately greater, that we seek in Greater Black Magic.

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