

The Scroll of Set

Issue Number 139

Volume XXI-3

May 1995

Editor: Linda Reynolds IV°

Copyright © 1995 Temple of Set

[1] Initiation in the Hot Zone

- by Ronald L. Barrett, Jr. IV°

Life is wyrd. It is a conspiracy of inefficient mechanisms that assemble themselves into the most incongruous of organisms at the margins of order and chaos. Just as chickens might exist so that eggs can reproduce, so living creatures might be considered devices for replicating genetic programs, passing on copies of their blueprints before being consumed by the forces of entropic decay. Between assembly and decay these organisms operate as open systems, defying and delaying entropy through the exchange of matter and energy with their respective environments. Organisms may sometimes employ strategies of mutual cooperation in these endeavors, but more often the game is one of mutual consumption and fierce competition for limited resources.

Initiation is a self-ordering change process at the intersection of life and intelligence. Here the human organism is an open system to the experiences of both matter and spirit. As an evolving organism, the human being eats, shits, reproduces, and interacts with other life forms. As a developing proto-deity, the human becoming ascends to his own tune. It is important to understand that these processes are not exclusive of one another. Instead they form a complimentary dialectic in the initiatory process. Humans are not isolated from the natural order, but rather potentially independent of it. In order to achieve this independence, however, the Initiate must come to understand the material processes of his own life, and of those who would consume it.

Yuri X. was a twenty-something Eastern European immigrant and Haight Street junkie who was admitted last year to the emergency room at the University of California, San Francisco. This was the night that I was working a 12-hour graveyard shift as a clinical nurse on 9- ICU. Ordinarily I worked on the neuro-ICU, specializing in patients who have had neurosurgery for aneurysms, tumors, and head injuries. But it was a quiet night on the neuro unit, and things were getting heavy on "nine". So up I went, an R.N. with less than two years experience, to a place where anything could happen - even Yuri.

I met Yuri sometime after midnight. He came up from the E.R. on a gurney surrounded by cluster of doctors urgently scurrying about. He was not my

patient, but with three nurses working as a team in a "pod" of four ICU beds, we all became pretty intimate with one another by the end of the night. My patients were holding steady, so I offered to help.

In the meantime, Yuri had been semi-situated into the ICU. He was half-dressed in street clothes, with cardiac leads, IV fluids in his arm, and supplementary oxygen in his nose. He sat up in bed, trying to look cool despite his obvious signs of shock. His pants had been cut up to his crotch, displaying a set of large and diffuse bruises on each thigh. I couldn't figure it out.

While helping out with Yuri, I found out that he was strongly suspected of having necrotizing fasciitis, a fast-spreading and potentially fatal bacterial infection that causes the patient's skin to rot off. The only known treatment for the disease is to surgically remove an even larger area of tissue down to the muscle, and administer a broad spectrum of IV antibiotics in hopes that they will beat the critter before the patient becomes septic and dies.

Glancing over to Yuri's glass-walled room, I saw that he had found the controls to the television. With the T.V. facing away from me, I looked beyond Yuri to the scene of a familiar horror film reflected off the windows to the night sky. A young woman was being chased by a floating psychiatrist-turned-Cenobite. The movie was *Hellraiser II*.

"How come you're watching a horror film?" I asked.

"It takes my mind off things. It helps to see someone who's worse off than I am." He replied.

I was assessing his legs all the while. The "bruises" had spread beyond the rings that had been drawn on his thighs with a ball point pen. They were even larger than when I had seen them a few minutes ago. I nodded and gave Yuri a confident smile that concealed my thoughts. I knew both his prognosis and the ending to *Hellraiser II*. The woman in the movie was, in fact, much better off than he. A few minutes later Yuri was rushed to the O.R. to have large quantities of skin removed. There he went into cardiac arrest on the operating table. He survived the experience, but only to endure forty more days of steady torture and permanent disfiguration.

Almost a year later I received a newspaper article about necrotizing fasciitis from Magistra Reynolds. The title read something like, "Flesh-Eating Bacteria Consumes Little Girl". In addition to a sad case story, it described the increased incidence of this horrible disease as part of a more general reemergence of infectious pathogens in the human population. While not inaccurate, the story played upon the fears of the public without adequately addressing the cultural and biological conditions under which this disease was beginning to thrive.

The same can be said for *The Hot Zone*, a recent book by Richard Preston on the U.S. Army's response to a potentially deadly disease among a population of imported monkeys just outside Washington D.C. Closely related to Marburg and Ebola Zaire, incurable viral hemorrhagic diseases which cause massive internal and external bleeding among infected humans, Ebola Reston turned out to be a false alarm: a filovirus that kills monkeys in a similar horrific manner, but which turned out to be harmless in humans.

Nevertheless the book touches on a number of interesting topics. Preston gives a thumbnail sketch of the emergence of Ebola along the Kinshasa highway of central and eastern Africa in the 1970s. There it emerged mainly among prostitutes, hospitalized patients, and healthcare workers in Zaire and the Sudan. Although light on history, Preston does not skimp on the gory details of the chief manifestation of this disease: a condition known as disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC).

By no means restricted to viral hemorrhagic diseases [of which the filoviruses of Ebola and Marburg are but a small subset], DIC is a condition in which tiny little blood clots form all over the body. These clots fill up in capillaries, restricting blood flow to tissues, thereby causing them to die from a lack of food and oxygen. This cell death is rapid and global, affecting vital organs such as the heart, brain, liver, kidneys, and digestive system all at once. Paradoxically, because DIC uses up all the body's clotting factors, the victim begins to bleed all over - through the eyes, the nipples, the gums, the GI tract, and the lungs. While all this is happening, the virus is busy destroying the endothelial tissues which line the skin and every organ in the body. Not a pretty way to die.

Preston describes Ebola as a "slatewiper" that kills 90% of its human hosts within a week. There is no cure, and it may someday become airborne. Preston also spends a great deal of time describing the Army's containment facilities at USAMRID, a medical research center that is partly devoted to studying biological threats to the United States. Along with the CDC in Atlanta, USAMRID has some pretty fancy gear for dealing with very "hot" diseases, to include Racal "spacesuits" and Level 4 laboratories reminiscent of *The Andromeda Strain*.

As the story progresses, Preston reveals to us that, despite the high level of precautions taken to contain the monkey house in Reston, Virginia, the virus would have probably broken free anyway. The lesson was not that we dodged a bullet, but rather that the bullet that hit us was made of rubber and not lead. These filoviruses remain hidden somewhere in the rainforests of sub-Saharan Africa, and it is only

a matter of time before they reemerge, spreadable to any city within a 24-hour plane flight.

Preston's story, however, is a bit sensational. Basing his research on interviews with some of the persons involved, he fills in many gaps with literary license, telling stories about what these people would have thought or done in various situations. He also discusses what could have caused or been the result of event X or Y, based upon a rather cursory understanding of biology.

Preston makes a few mistakes in the book, such as attributing viral replication directly to the supposed "dissolving" of the body's tissues, and describing the virus "as more ancient than man" when no one has a clue as to its original host. Furthermore Preston's book is highly biased by Army sources. The CDC researchers, who have had much more experience with these diseases, tell some very different and interesting tales. Preston only alludes to the latter. Additionally, if what he had been writing were true, Preston's own visit to the Kitum cave, where two people may have contracted the Ebola virus, was highly irresponsible.

The moral of *The Hot Zone* is highly simplified. Preston talks about the rain forest mounting an immune response to the human race as result of our encroachment. This is more politically than biologically correct. The proximate determinants behind the emergence of these deadly filoviruses among humans lie in our increased contact with other primates possessing similar immune systems. Unfortunately Preston misses the irony of these diseases appearing in the monkey houses of Reston, Virginia, and Marburg, Germany. In both cases it was the demand for primates in the animal research of infectious diseases which brought these new pathogens to the human species.

Preston seems ill-informed about the social, economic, and historical conditions upon which Ebola had spread during the African epidemics. He does not consider how the fall of commodity prices in the mid-seventies, traditional marriage patterns, colonial divorce laws, and civil wars in the Sudan may have effected the practices of medicine and prostitution in these areas.

Preston throws around epidemiological slang such as "amplification" to describe the behavior of the virus, when in fact it has been the behavior of humans which have amplified its effects. Ebola was spread not by airborne transmission but by intimate contact with blood and body fluids through sexual intercourse, needle sharing, and traditional funerary practices.

Yes, only seven percent of those who contracted Ebola from contaminated needles [used by untrained missionaries to give vitamin shots to villagers] survived, but the survival rate was better

than 43% among those who were infected through direct contact with people having the active disease. Additionally fifteen percent of the Pygmies in Yambuku presented with antibodies to the virus without ever having symptoms.

Preston's "slatewiper" was not spreading unhindered across a flat surface, but rather a textured terrain comprised of highly complex bio-cultural interactions. An analogous situation exists for diseases such as AIDS and even necrotizing fasciitis. Yuri's drug habit and needle-sharing has helped to amplify the probability that others may contract what would otherwise be a rare disease.

That said, *The Hot Zone* does serve to raise the consciousness of humans as biologically-vulnerable organisms. Here I will introduce some issues for later expansion:

First, over-reliance on antibiotics during the past half-century has selected for highly resistant strains of old diseases. [Here I am referring mainly to bacterial infections. Viruses are treated not by antibiotics, but by "priming" the immune system through vaccinations and a small subset of drugs with limited effectiveness.] It is likely that these pose a greater threat to the human species than any of the supposedly "new" diseases.

The situation is analogous to our use of pesticides. Farmers have used strong chemicals to kill off most of a given generation of insects. But a very small percentage of mutants survive who are resistant to the chemical. A few years later, stronger chemicals are developed, and the cycle of escalation repeats itself.

Even with the recent revolutions in biotechnology, we have been steadily losing the antibiotic arms race. Housing lots of sick people in close quarters for treatment with heavy-duty chemicals, hospitals are the major breeding grounds for "new-old" diseases such as multidrug resistant tuberculosis (MDRTB) and Staph. aureus (M/NRSA). If you have walked into a clinic or hospital recently and wondered what happened to that once-familiar scent of ammonia, it is because there is a common nosocomial pathogen (a bug that grows in hospitals) called *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, that has adapted to the point that it can actually feed off of disinfectants made of quaternary ammonium compounds.

Laurie Garrett comments on this and other issues in a book entitled, *The Coming Plague* - a very thorough, well-written, and well-researched history of infectious diseases since the advent of antibiotics linked to a discussion of newly emergent pathogens, to include Ebola and Marburg. Garrett echoes the predictions of many epidemiologists and public health physicians that the days of magic-bullet cures are drawing to a close. Soon we will be

returning to a disease ecology not unlike the one that existed before the Second World War. However this alone should not have a drastic effect on human demography. The dramatic declines in human mortality and increases in longevity during this century occurred independently if not before most cures for infectious diseases were discovered. Our gains in somatic fitness over the last four generations have had more to do with improved nutrition and sanitation than all the high-tech interventions combined.

Second, the above issues do not exclude the possibility that the human species might suffer major losses from the "outbreak" of a new disease pandemic. Ebola and Marburg are somewhat scary in this regard.

Influenza is even scarier. The flu pandemic of 1918 killed 21 million people worldwide in a single season, more than the total number of AIDS cases thus far. In the United States a half million Americans died, and ten percent of the total workforce was bedridden. Influenza has a high mutation rate and a somewhat unique capability of recombining genetic material between different strains, including those that infect other animals such as pigs.

Chiefly an avian virus that lives in the intestinal tracts of water fowl, new strains of influenza emerge each year - spread initially by aerosolized guano. Every February teams of scientists confer to make their best guess at the next year's strain, from which a new vaccine is produced the following November. Like the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, researchers have been predicting the return of a flu as deadly or deadlier than the H1N1 strain of 1918. But nobody knows for sure. It is strangely humorous to think that civilizations of the 21st Century may suffer some of their greatest disasters not from nuclear missiles but rather flying duck shit.

Third, the influenza example illustrates an important principle of host-parasite coevolution. Flu is well-tolerated by its feathered hosts, producing symptoms only in humans, swine, and a few other mammals. If the flu were to kill ducks like Ebola Reston kills monkeys, it would soon find itself without a home. A more successful strategy of many human diseases is to base themselves out of a species in which they are ever-present and somewhat tolerated (endemic). From this base increased virulence can occur when a population of animals in which a disease is endemic comes into contact with a population in which it is not. There the forces of selection have yet to play themselves out over time, and so most anything is possible for at least the first few generations.

This same principle applies between different populations of humans as well. Humans have undergone at least two major epidemiological transitions over the last ten thousand years. The first occurred during the Neolithic, when increases in population density and the domestication of animals brought about a transition from chronic parasitic ailments to more acute and highly infectious diseases. The latter require high numbers of people to have a constant supply of susceptible hosts, as well as a critical population density in which to jump around. A fast-killing disease just doesn't spread very far in a band of 20 nomadic hunter-gatherers who are 50 miles from the next water hole. A slow-working parasite can.

The second transition occurred in different patterns and times as a result of urbanization. In the cities of Renaissance Europe, a number of acute diseases were being maintained by a steady flow of susceptible children. The adults who survived were immune to subsequent outbreaks. This was a gradual process that occurred over time. But not so in the New World, where explorers exchanged slavery and smallpox for tobacco and syphilis. The exchange was hardly fair, however, because the contact reunited, so to speak, a population that had undergone the second epidemiological transition with several that had not - at least not in the same manner. The results were devastating for the Native American populations, most of whom were killed by a form of childhood smallpox - endemic to the old world, epidemic to the new.

I would argue that we are currently undergoing a third epidemiological transition in which the entire world is becoming a single urban-like disease pool. The upside of this is that we are not likely to see any repeats of Cortez, because our respective immune systems, whatever their variability may be, are becoming adapted to the same disease ecology. The downside is that most of us will be susceptible should we be infected with diseases endemic to other species such as insects, birds, mammals, and, perhaps most importantly, other primates. We will also be increasingly susceptible to the diseases of our great-grandparents.

Preston's metaphors of heat and fire are pretty much on target. They just need a bit of expansion. The world population of humans is like a forest with six and a half billion closely-packed trees. It is capable of sustaining both a wildfire and a steady, smoldering burn. The human population is projected to be around 12 billion by the year 2025. This brings us to the larger principle of: "If it ain't one thing, it's another." Population curves of successful predator species show that, rather than maintaining a steady-state within the limits of their resources, they instead exhibit sawtooth patterns of

steady increases followed by precipitous declines in numbers. Human animals have exhibited a similar pattern during various periods of prehistory. Our current increase in numbers, unprecedented in any part of our past, is likely to be one giant sawtooth. It's only a matter of time before we take the plunge. The question is when and how.

Karl Johnson, a legendary virologist with the CDC who headed up the field investigations of Ebola Zaire, once stated that "a virus can be useful to a species by thinning it out". The problem is, however, that nature is indiscriminate with regard to whom it consumes. One of our best Initiates was killed by a virus that probably emerged from a species of Old World monkeys on the African continent. There is a very real possibility that this virus - HIV - and others like it may thin out our burgeoning population. But while indiscriminate and often incurable, these diseases are not uncontrollable.

Most of these "emergences" are not newly-evolved viruses, but rather old pathogens who have recently learned to exploit human hosts as a result of our cultural practices. Influenza is being maintained primarily through the practice of integrated pig-duck agriculture in China. Dengue Fever [watch this one] is "emerging" from open water storage tanks in urban areas. Rift Valley Fever is closely associated with a certain pattern of dams and irrigation. Legionaire's disease hangs out in the condensation of air conditioning ducts. Marburg and Ebola are following the trade in laboratory monkeys. AIDS is being spread by shared needles and unprotected sex. All of these are potential wildfires, and all can be contained before they get out of control. The trick is to avoid having to put on a spacesuit and put out a major blaze after it has already been started.

The Gift of Set has afforded us with the opportunity to conquer all predators but ourselves, and to live in any environment save those we create. The challenge is to somehow adapt to our own success. Here the Black Magician can find utility in the alchemical dialectic, where LBM is applied to the substance of external experience in order to create an environment that is optimally conducive to one's initiation. Likewise, through GBM, the lessons gained from these creative endeavors are applied toward transforming the substance of the self.

Just as human beings in spacesuits have not yet been able to isolate themselves from deadly viruses, so we humans Becoming cannot yet isolate ourselves from the biological conditions of our initiation. Biologically speaking, we are better off strengthening our bodies to defend pathogens through healthy living and exposure to reasonable risks than to seal ourselves off in barriers of false

protection.

Magically speaking, we must conduct initiation in the "Hot Zone" through integrated mind-body development, creativity, flexibility, lots of feedforward, and serendipitous decisionmaking. It's all a game of chance. But as Louis Pasteur once said, "Chance favors the prepared mind."

Reyn til Runa.

Suggested Reading

Garrett, L., *The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World Out of Balance*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994. While Preston might have favorable reviews from Stephen King and Robert Redford, Garrett is being hailed by Nobel Laureates. An immunologist-turned-international health writer, Garrett really did the foot work for this book. Written for the educated layperson, *The Coming Plague* explores the people, events, and larger issues surrounding the emergence of infectious diseases in the latter half of the twentieth century. The book contains chapters on the African Ebola Virus epidemics [from the CDC perspective], Lassa Fever, AIDS, the Swine Flu fiasco, Legionaire's Disease, and the eradication of smallpox. It is an interesting read, and full of footnotes and references. *The Hot Zone* pales in comparison.

Ewald, P., *Evolution of Infectious Disease*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. Written for those who have an affinity for the natural sciences, Ewald's book is destined to be a classic of evolutionary biology. For those of you who have heard that host-parasite coevolution leads to attenuation, Ewald will give you good reasons to think again. Virulence is strongly dependent on the mode of transmission, which in turn is strongly dependent on human behaviors. All this is laid out in his Cultural Vector Hypothesis. The book also contains some interesting predictions concerning HIV, and a chapter on biological warfare. A must read for bio-nerds.

Morse, S. (Ed.), *Emerging Viruses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. Contains articles written by leading researchers in all these bugs that we have been hearing about. Morse's own contribution is excellent. So is a historical piece by William McNeill, author of the classic *Plagues and Peoples*. The concluding section has articles assessing our preparedness and the politics of inter-governmental cooperation in disease surveillance. Otherwise the book tends toward the biotechnical, to include a review of Ebola by the stars of Preston's book.

[2] Protocol Note

The following has been added to the "Protocol" essay in the *Crystal Tablet*:

Personal Relationships

In general all Setians are expected to behave as ladies and gentlemen, and to respect one another's dignity and person at all times.

As only adults may be members of the Temple of Set, each Setian is responsible for his/her **own** "private life" behavior, to include romantic and/or sexual behavior. Neither the Temple of Set generally nor any member of the Priesthood is going to be a "parent figure" or otherwise referee in this area [as long as it is understood that sexual relationships are to be only between consenting human adults].

The Temple of Set's sole concern in matters of romance/sex between Initiates is that "no senior Initiate use his/her degree or office to influence such a relationship in any way, either positively or negatively". Obviously, despite *pro forma* statements along this line, junior Initiates cannot help being impressed and/or intimidated to some extent by senior ones. So for this policy to succeed, junior Initiates will have to be aware that the Temple of Set as a whole is **very** adamant on this ethic, and senior Initiates will have to **take the initiative** to ensure that the junior is not being taken advantage of in such a way.

Magical rituals, to include so-called "sex magic" rituals, are **not** an excuse for the disregard of any of these guidelines.

[3] Silence

- by Sharon Hipp I°

There are many kinds of silences, and in this silence in which I have currently placed myself, I will attempt to fully discuss my ideas on this particular subject.

Life Begins

In this realm of silence, we may sit for hours staring out a window and dreaming. Without the distraction of conversation, our minds are free to travel places out of which they would otherwise be locked. In those freewheeling moments we dare to dream that which we would be terrified to share in words because they are simply too precious, and we fear the potential of laughter at our most heartfelt ideas.

As we refine these dreams and bring them closer to earth, we dare to hope - hope that they can then become a reality. Some of us will need to remain in our cocoon of silence to cement our ideas and to

declare ownership. Only at that point are we then ready to share those dreams with someone else, and that someone must be fully trustworthy, for we are entrusting our hopes to him.

Life Renews

When things are particularly troubled, there is a compelling need to withdraw into silence - to think and possibly to reevaluate. During this period of silence we are able to carefully reflect on all that has led us to this point. We evaluate where we are and where we wish to go, and begin to consider the steps necessary to get there.

Can this person continue to be involved in my life, or will he present such obstacles that I will be unable to obtain my goals? Is my present location one in which I can grow, or is there a physically healthier environment - or perhaps do I need the strengthening that will come by enduring this location? What of my attitudes do I need to change?

We question, reflect, and question some more. This may be a time of reading, either for pleasure or for reference to affirm our decisions.

Between Lovers

This is perhaps one of the more beautiful silences: when two lovers communicate with their eyes and their hearts because words just will not suffice. There is a glow/aura about them that is unmistakable. You find yourself smiling because the feeling is so contagious, and you want to find your own loved one(s) to share this moment with.

Silence of Learning

In this room we metamorphose. The caterpillar becomes the butterfly and emerges a new being. Silence is needed for our minds to not be distracted. Full concentration is required to study, research, and plan. Reflections upon things past and passages into the future are melded to create a new universe.

Life Ends

There comes a time in all life when it must end. In this realm of silence we relive the wonders of this lost life. We refresh old memories, and we mourn its passing. This can be a time of healing or a time when a part of our own self dies because we feel our grief is simply too great to bear.

Silence of Anger

Two or more people stare in hostile silence at each other, thinking thoughts best left unexpressed. If the people are wise, they will govern even their thoughts very carefully, lest those thoughts unexpectedly become a part of the objective universe. The fire in their eyes and the coldness of their "touch" says all that needs to be said. Words

would only dampen the fire.

Silence of Pain

This silence demands that every ounce of your focus be directed inward to cope with the pain. The pain may be caused by harsh words which wound the heart and soul, or it may be a physical pain inflicted upon our outer bodies.

In either case we struggle to understand the pain itself. We feel it, but where exactly is it centered? In order to heal this pain, we must first locate/identify it. Most commonly the question "Why?" is asked. Rarely is a satisfactory answer found.

As we struggle with trying to understand the pain itself, the source from whence it came, and the process needed to begin the healing, there is a tendency to pull inward. Our mind becomes obsessed with this desire to understand questions, and possible answers fly across our brains. Decisions are argued within our hearts to share/not share the pain, to outwardly express/not express our hurt. All of this takes great concentration, so we retreat in silence to ponder.

Never-Ending Silence

This is the descent into Hell. This is the loneliest of all silences, the one of withdrawal. Your heart cries out to share, and you do not dare. Your arms ache to hold and be held, but the price has been too high, too often. The bricks are purposefully laid, layer upon layer, with gleeful maliciousness. Rarely are there ever openings for windows or doors, even hidden ones. So not only is the world walled out, but the mason is walled in. This is total abandonment: The world has abandoned you; therefore you will abandon it. It cannot be any more complete than that.

If a healing from this silence occurs, it will never be fully healed. A part of the wall will always remain. Each time the descent is made, a little larger portion is left behind in that world of silence. The path is worn a little deeper, so it is easier to follow. You no longer have to go in search of the bricks; they are in the pile you neatly placed aside when you removed a portion of the wall.

Silence of Madness

It is debatable which comes first- the "never-ending silence" or the "silence of madness" - but I think it is the latter. Sometimes the world becomes too much to bear. Our walls are constantly chipped away by those who are well-intentioned and by those who are not so well-intentioned. Total withdrawal is no longer safe enough. The bottom upon which we stood suddenly disappears, and we find ourselves falling into a bottomless pit.

This is the time we choose to simply go mad. No voices can penetrate our world, and our voice can no longer be heard at any level. Our pain ceases because it has become so all-encompassing that we are numbed by it. We are not lonely, because we no longer recognize other people and they no longer recognize us. This is our final safe haven before death. We do not need to worry about being “rescued”, because no one is certain where we are. Our walls are but a thin vapor, so they cannot be grasped and torn down. At last we are safe.

[4] **Words of an Æon Through the Eyes of the Newly-Awakened**

- by Brian Britton I°

In the beginning of the Æon of Set, its Magus uttered the word *Xeper*. Since then it has interwoven itself into the very fabric of our being.

What is *Xeper*? *Xeper* is “becoming” according to Ipsissimus Aquino. It represents the movement of the *psyche* towards deification through self-growth.

But that is just a simple definition. *Xeper* embodies a concept that has existed since mankind thought, therefore was. All it did was crystallize our understanding of this universal constant.

The idea of “becoming” has always been a part of the human psyche. All it takes is one word to build the framework upon which you can hang the concept itself, and *Xeper* is that word.

It is foolish to believe that just because *Xeper* was Uttered in the year X ÆS that what it embodies did not exist before that. On the contrary, *Xeper* has always been there; it’s just that few understood its meaning - and if they did, it was only a fragment of the whole.

This is why the Æon of Thelema and Age of Satan came into being. They were merely phases in our evolution toward a *nætic* Understanding of *Xeper*.

To *Xeper* one needs tools. One such tool is the Word Remanifest as Uttered by Ipsissimus Lewis. Like *Xeper* this is the fundamental lynch-pin upon which a universal concept hangs.

Remanifest is the idea of the crystallization of knowledge and experiences gathered during the process of *Xeper*. This crystallization, i.e. Remanifestation, is the process whereby the *psyche* integrates what has been learned and thus moves forward to *Xeper* again. This will then lead once more to the process of Remanifestation - a continual cycle that never ends as long as one wills to *Xeper*.

As explained by Ipsissimus Lewis in the *Crystal Tablet*, the Word Remanifest initially looked into “continuation of the self once the biological envelope eventually ceased”. This is one obvious

part of the word, but the self continues and undergoes *Xeper* while the biological envelope exists. This is the reason Remanifest is such an important concept, in that it is purely the vehicle upon which the continued *Xeper* of an individual will go on.

There must be a reason for the *psyche* to *Xeper*, and that can be explained by one single word, *Runa*. *Runa* is the crystallization of the universal concept of reaching out for the unknown. It gives us a reason to take the path of *Xeper* and Remanifestation. *Runa* is what is not known: the mystery which leads us to continually push aside the veil and look beyond what we already know. This is all a function of cause and effect. *Runa* is the cause for the effect of *Xeper*, for without *Runa* there would be no reason for one to *Xeper*.

Magus Flowers is quite correct that *Runa* will always exist, but that is true for all three concepts in that they were then, they are now, and they will always be. The reason for this is that they are truly universal concepts that are buried within the human *psyche*. All it takes is for the Magus to Utter the Word and cause the crystallization of the concept to coalesce in the mind.

Concepts that run through the very fabric of the Universe are what these three Words represent. Without them we would still be grasping at fragments of their whole, confused and in the dark. Hail the Prince of Darkness for these wonderful tools that you have handed us in our goal to reach you and take our place beside you in the universal scheme of things!

[5] **Black Runa**

Now Available from Runa-Raven and the Order of the Trapezoid:

Black Runa: Being the Shorter Works of Stephen Edred Flowers, Produced for the Order of the Trapezoid.

Black Runa contains articles written for *Runes*, the journal of the Order of the Trapezoid, between XXI and XXIV. Articles include: “Mysteries of the Graal”, “On the Way of Wotan and the Left-Hand Path”, “The Command to Look”, “Trapezoidal Runology”, “Runes and Angles”, “Runic Origins of the ‘Peace Sign’”, “Walburga in Khem”, “Trapezoidal Cinema”, “Infernal Contraptions”, and “Nazi Occultism Revisited”.

Only 504 copies of this book have been printed. Each copy is numbered/signed by the author. *Black Runa* is available for \$31.00 (postage paid) from Runa-Raven, P.O. Box 557, Smithville, TX 78957.

Part of the proceeds from the sale of *Black Runa* will go toward the printing of the *Codex Trapezoedicus* - the manual of the O.Tr.

[6] *Ruby Tablet Editor to Step Down*

Magister Robert Menschel, Editor of the *Ruby Tablet of Set* for the past six years, is looking for successor(s).

In those six years he has not only increased the breadth and depth of the *Tablet*, but he's also greatly improved the print quality and has computerized all of the *Tablet* except *Gems From the Trail*, while keeping the cost of the *Tablet* reasonably low [the per-page cost of the *Tablet* is at its lowest point ever].

Unfortunately the time required to update and distribute the *Ruby Tablet* has taken much time away from the Order of Shuti and other activities of personal interest. Magister Menschel feels that this is a good time to pass on the baton.

The Editor of the *Tablet* must be a III^o+ Priest of Set. Because the *Tablet's* computerized originals are in WordPerfect 6.0 format, any prospective Editor should be able to read and use that format [conversion to another format might be initially time-consuming, but is viable], and have access to a laser-quality printer and to low-cost photocopy companies.

Although a III^o+ Priest needs to be responsible for all editorial decisions and finances, much of the work can be done by II^o Adepts. This is an excellent project for a Pylon if any are interested.

[7] *Overheard at the Southwest Regional Conclave*

- by Rosemary Webb III^o

[Which conclave was admirably hosted by Priest Larry Evans and Adept Julie Stout, and which will be hosted next year by Magister Webb and myself.]

"My ears don't have hair on them, so I guess it's okay."

"If magic were all sweet and nice and easy, this would be the Temple of Santa Claus."

"I'm only demanding and aggressive when I'm not getting my own way."

"Sit down; squeeze together."

"I have not only known, but actually experienced pig sex; but of this secret I will speak no further."

"Is this ordeal connected with the III^o?"

"Why is my nose 'feminine' when I'm a man?"

"Throw me money, and I'll table-dance."

Larry Evans: "Good morning, everyone." One voice pipes up in a sing-song, schoolboy tone: "Good morning, Mr. Evans." Evans: "Well, at least one person will be staying after school."

"I'm sure you've been waiting all morning to hear the word 'phyllotaxis'."

"People play science fiction music when I'm around."

"I will now channel Magistra Hardy and explain the ϕ ratio."

"I'm glad that members of the Temple of Set are discovering that life is weird."

A local restaurant's featured "Fajita Rita Ritual" gave rise to "the Æon of the Cow ... and the Word of the Æon was Uddered: Heifer".

"One might view the Church of Satan as ten years of Æonic foreplay."

"You be good, or I'll read you a bedtime story."

[8] *The Will: Its Nature, Power, and Development*

by William Walker Atkinson.

London: L.N. Fowler & Co, 1915

- reviewed by Leon Wild II^o

Will is a faculty that is often taken for granted by magicians. Will is more than desire and intent.

I recommend this book as an introduction to the development and use of will. The book has an essentially pragmatic "new" psychological basis. The nature of will is discussed, to include desire, decisiveness, and action. The active will (or volition) is the aim of the book's exercises, which are useful for concentration and visualization development.

Atkinson's description of will almost goes as far as GBM, and is certainly useful in LBM concepts, in that the imagination creates patterns or mental molds which the will then causes to manifest.

[9] *Magic Heavy and Lite*

- by Don Webb IV^o

This article outlines two types of ritual magic that you may wish to add your repertoire during the Heb Sed Year. One is very hard, heavy duty, and can help achieve anything. The other is light, whimsical, and can teach you new things to achieve. If any great good comes your way from these practices, remember to share that good with the folk of the Temple.

On a recent visit to the Black Phoenix's Fane, my friend Priest Arnold Watson was describing a mutual acquaintance. He said of the gentleman in question, "He's one of that sort of person who assumes that someday he will suddenly be recognized as great without his having to do any hard work to get there." The description was apt. The gentleman had fallen to one of Set's foes, Apep, the *netter* of delusion.

Making progress in the mundane world is a goal of every Setian. The nature of "progress" is completely personal. For one Setian it might mean having enough money to set up her ranch in the country, for another mastering his craft of painting, for a third having the best lawn mower repair business in a beautiful Texas coast town. But all are linked by a common thread - hard and smart work is needed in the here and now. One does not become a master of anything by sitting on one's hands, believing that he has achieved some worthy goal by merely thinking about it. But what does the Setian have in his favor that the average bright, hard-working soul doesn't?

Ah, yes. That "Understanding of what we do". The formula *Xepera Xeper Xeperu* comes from a spell in the Bremmer Rhind papyrus for two purposes - overcoming the enemies of the Pharaoh on this world and having a coherent sense of self in the next. *Xeper* when Understood becomes a way of turning not only current adversity to current advantage, but also seizing each situation of need as a chance to immortalize the soul.

There is a little known but highly powerful way to achieve what you want, even becoming a millionaire. It is a working in two phases.

Phase One: Every night, after everyone is asleep, plan out your activities for the next day. These should be goals that you must achieve to achieve your greater long-term goal. Choose four of them, write them down on a sheet of holed paper, in order from the easiest to the hardest. Then imagine four great streams of darkness flowing to you from the four cardinal points. These represent the amount of energy available to you created by the actions of other magicians throughout time, which may be added to your own for a work tied to the eternal Setian intent. These spiral into you, filling you with power.

Go off to bed with this empowered feeling. The next day keep the sheet with you at all times. Do the tasks in order, giving each your focused, but not anxious attention. When you have finished all four tasks, have some time to yourself to relax and feel that sense of happiness which overcoming resistance gives. This part of the Work should be done during daylight hours, if possible.

To mark the achievement of all four tasks, write "*Xepera Xeper Xeperu*" at the base of the page. Say the formula in your native tongue: "I Have Come Into Being and by Coming Into Being created the way of Coming Into Being for those things that have Come Into Being."

Now imagine the four streams of darkness leaving you, except that this time a little more energy goes into the world than you drew in, since you have created energy by the conscious suffering you went

through to fulfill your tasks.

Put the sheet into a binder. When you do your pulling-in of power, you will feel that a little more has been added.

At first you may have trouble doing the work each day, but as you become master of yourself you'll be able to do it almost daily. When you can do the work without almost flawlessly, you are ready for Phase Two.

Phase Two is like the first but ups the ante. Pick seven goals to accomplish. Visualize seven streams of darkness - the four from the cardinal points, one from the *Tuat* below, one from the Constellation of the Thigh above, and one from your binder of deeds done. Proceed in the same manner, but write the formula of "*Xepera Xeper Xeperu*" in hieroglyphs. Master this formula, and you will find perfect truth, complete happiness, and the medicine of metals.

Now that you have an atomic weapon for your magical arsenal, let's try something a little lighter. How many of you have created a demon, spirit, golem, pardeos, or other magical construct to aid you in your enchantments? Hold your hands up - O.K. Now how many have got some magical entity, from land-wight to leprechaun, to work for you? Quite a few. Now I ask you: Where are these guys spending their off hours? I know you're not such mean bosses as to require constant service of these guys.

May I suggest that you take your spirits to UNCLE SETNAKT'S BAR AND GRILL? Yes, make that astral journey **today** to the center of the magical universe, to a charming pub for Setian ally-spirits. Merely escort your spirits to the place, and tell them they can come here for a little R-'n'-R; or stop in yourself if you like.

Imagine the bar any way you like, although it does happen to resemble a pub in Magister Austen's neighborhood. Behind the bar is a figure who looks a little like Jon Pertwee (the third actor to portray Dr. Who). If you've never had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Pertwee, think silver-haired, elegant, and tall - an intensely curious man with stories to tell.

The tables and chairs, the pinball machines, the art on the walls are up to your sense of imagination - but it might make an interesting meta-mind experiment to try and furnish the place, if any of you have a mind to do so among yourselves. The only house rule is "no gossip".

Outside it is a slightly foggy eternal night. Inside secrets of the magical universe and tales of adventure are exchanged by a variety of beings of all sizes and appearances. On the bar itself is a large red bell. It rings if the Temple should happen to be in trouble. If it rings, everybody goes home, tells the boss, and then runs off to fight.

In one corner are a couple of computer terminals for the techno-spirit that always has to have Internet accessibility. Two great enchantments are laid on the bar: (1) that everyone who goes there has a good time, and (2) no lame music can be played on the jukebox.

[10] Egyptian Anthropology

- by Don Webb IV°

In the Temple we toss around the words *ka* and *ba* a great deal, and some people even add the word *akh* [or its plural *khu*], on occasion. What do these things mean if anything? Other than the mumbo-jumbo factor, why do we use an exotic system of soulcraft?

The concept of our Prince Set was seen so clearly in the context of the culture of the Two Lands that we use the name employed by that culture. And if we want to get precise results, it would do us well to look at the philosophical and magical aspects of the culture that first defined Set. However poorly Egypt has been treated by occult writers, who seize upon it as a place to hang their ideas, it has been treated as poorly by the ice of monotheism.

For the serious seeker there are a few books, such as *Greek and Egyptian Mythologies* by Yves Bonnefoy, that are beginning to appear. The essay in that book by Philippe Derchain of the University of Cologne provided me with one of the clearest pictures of Egyptian soulcraft. Along with a few other resources (particularly Erik Hornung's *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* and Richard Wilkinson's *Symbols & Magic in Egyptian Art*), I'll provide a useful summary of his essay from a magical point of view.

First I hasten to point out that the Egyptians themselves weren't clear on soulcraft. Some ideas of body and soul included altar, the birthing stool, the wet nurse, the duration of life, and tomb as parts of the makeup. What follows is a schema common to most of Egyptian thought on the subject. Most Egyptian soulcraft has African roots, and traces of a similar belief are still held along the Nile valley, where Christianity is trying to obliterate them.

There are four subjective parts of the soul-body complex. These are the *ba*, *ka*, *akh*, and *sekhem*. Eight is a rare, symbolic number for the Egyptians. It is four, the number of totality, doubled. Four *tcham* scepters hold up the sky. There are four winds; the land has four sides, etc. Eight mainly shows up as the number of creator gods. I will deal with each of the eight and remark on the hidden ninth.

The Body: *Khat*

The physical body, while alive, is the residence of the *ba* and provides a magical link for the spiritual parts of the body-soul complex. Magic (*heka*) dwells in the body, mainly in the stomach. The body is full of veins filled with liquids that cause life, death, reproduction, etc. After death the body is a favorite place for the *ka* and the *ba* to visit, and the location of the body is a place from which the will of the deceased may return to act upon the living.

The Name: *Ren*

The name has the power to feed energy into the soul-body complex. If it is spoken of well, *ren* carries the good intentions to the *ka*. It can be used to summon or compel a being. It likewise causes self-judgment in the *Tuat*. Beings with names die; certain beings may have their true names hidden by Amon and therefore not be subject to death from the natural order. New names are given or claimed at turning points in the life of the mighty.

The Shadow: *Khabit*

The shadow is seen as being of extreme importance. It is the source of one's power of mobility, and one's reproductive power. The shadow may be stolen while someone sleeps, causing the object of the theft to die. Certain powerful sorcerers can detach their shadows and send them on missions of harm or espionage. The shadow follows the dead into the *Tuat*, thus assuring his mobility there. The shadow held the sexuality of the being, and to the extent one's sexuality survived death it was through the shadow. The *ba*, *ka*, etc. did not have sexuality as a constituent.

The Heart: *Ib* or *Ab*

This is the seat of intellect, passion, memory, and imagination. A person and his thoughts are very different. The thoughts are the "mother and father" of the being; he may choose to act on them or not. In the Hall of the Examiners the examination comes down to: Did you act on your good thoughts? Did you act on your bad thoughts? The action of the *ib* produces magic which drips down to the stomach, where it is stored. [As a historical note Peribsen, a Second Dynasty pharaoh, alone of the pharaohs took a "Set" name rather than a "Horus" name. His name means "Hope of all Hearts".]

Unlike most of the terms on this list, *ib* has a Semitic rather than a Cushitic origin. The Hebrew word *ab*, translated as "heart" throughout the Judæo/Christian *Bible*, has the same meaning.

The Ba

(plural: *baw*) Translations of this word include “fame”, “esteem”, “might”, or “regenerative power”. The *ba* is perhaps best understood as momentum - all of the power you’ve built up in your life. Some of this power is passive. For example, if you’re the boss of your company, you’ve got a certain amount of power all the time. Some of this is active - the skills and talents you’ve developed that can be called upon instantly.

The *ba* allows for regeneration/Remanifestation. In the *Tale of the Two Brothers* Set is called *Bata* (“*ba* of bread” = the seven sacrificial loaves), and he keeps coming back after being killed, eventually destroying his enemies and ascending to the heavens as an *akh*.

Persons with strong *baw* may undergo severe setbacks, but always return to their former glory or a greater state. The *ba* is the closest thing to what most people think of as “themselves”. The manifestations (*Xeperu*) of people are empowered by their *ba* and take on its characteristics. Thus a project started by someone will always have his “feel” about it.

The Ka

(Plural: *Kaw*) *Kaw* are images of what-is-to-be. As such they serve as “nourishment” to unfolding events. They are created by the “imaging principle” *heka* (magic).

Most things have a *ka* in them. For example, food and money have *kaw*, and it is the *kaw* of these things from which we draw nourishment.

Most gods and deified persons have fourteen *kaw*. Strength, power, dominion, nourishment, honor, brilliance, renown, authority, vision, hearing, influence, and knowledge lives are limited to the Earth. The *Tuat* has four: abundant goods, a beautiful burial, a long life, and a worthy posterity.

The *ka* is represented as a statue in tombs. It is occasionally shown as being visible as a duplicate of the king walking behind him. This representation (limited to the representation of the Heb Sed) misled early Egyptologists into calling it the “double”.

The *ka* is the life-force of things in motion. It can also be thought of as the inspiration for an action. Anytime anyone is doing “creative visualization”, he is creating a *ka*. When he puts that visualization into motion, he is creating a *ba* that is nourished by the *ka*.

When one reaches the level of magical development that “one is Become magic, himself”, one’s *kaw* may be so powerful that they will sustain any event that actually is put in motion. Although the cult of the *ka* died in Egypt about Roman times, the idea having been confused with that of the name, it lasted well into this century as the “*Kra*” of the

Tshi-speaking people and the “*Kla*” of the *Ga*-speaking people.

The average man’s *ka* needed the sacrifices of his family and a secure tomb to survive. Many *kaw* perished when Christianity [and later Islam] replaced the old ways.

Everyone had a *ba* and a *ka*. Only the Elect possessed the following soul parts:

The Sekhem

This term might be translated “power” (or even “god” - after *netjer* this is the term most frequently used for divine beings).

Persons who constructed their *ib* as a temple might attract a god to dwell there. This is not a union of the person with the god, but a construction of the intellect that the power of the god might reside there.

This power is impersonal and will manifest. For example, if you have undergone the spiritual discipline necessary to have your *sekhem*, or god-in-heart, be Thoth, you can either be a super-empowered scribe, or you can have an absolutely awful life as something else, while every scribe who meets you gets better. The Setian Priesthood has the *sekhem* of Set. If one’s purposes are as those of Set, this *sekhem* will empower you beyond your greatest hopes. If one enters this state and seeks to work against the purposes of Set, the power will burn its way out of you like a coal in a paper sack.

The Akh

(Plural: *khu*) The “effective spirit” is a difficult concept to grasp. It comes from a root word meaning “luminous” and originally belongs to the oldest of the Egyptian funerary cults, that of the stellar cult.

In early Egypt it was assumed that only the pharaoh had an afterlife [a common belief among certain African peoples], and that he ascended to the heavens as a star [again common African stellar theology]. The ascended being was called the *akh*. This was also the name for most demons, phantoms, and other supernatural beings who weren’t quite gods.

Not everyone got to Become an *akh*, but for those people who did a special power existed. They could summon their future selves in times of great need. This was considered a very dangerous operation. Often one’s future, immortalized self had very different ideas about what a person needed than his current self did.

The *akh* did not require sacrifices to survive, and had the power to move on the Earth, in the *Tuat*, and in the sky. It could affect the fate of all things its light fell upon.

The cult of the *akh* flourished in the first three dynasties, had a renaissance in the XIX and XX (Setian) Dynasties, and appeared in late antiquity, notably at the Setian oasis of Dalkh. The cult of the *akh* was re-established on Earth in 1904 in the city of Cairo, and has its most sophisticated practitioners among the readers of this article.

* * *

What's the use of this pretty collection? Like any map of the self from Jung's to Plato's, it can help as a way of analyzing where you are, what your strengths and weaknesses are, and what to work on. It can help you see things in the world - for example, the difference between a successful, dull man (strong of *ba*, weak of *ib*) and a brainy, unsuccessful guy. Do they travel well (strong of shadow)? Are they good at inspiring others (strong of *ka*)?

It can instruct you whom to pick for certain projects and when to use magic to aid your goals. It can also tell you something about the secrets and purpose of fleshly life. Consider that the ability to learn is in the *ka*, the created image, and that experience is the key to regeneration.

Come back to this model often. It does not reveal all its secrets at once.

The Word *Xeper* can only be spoken by an "I". Where in this Eight is the "I"? Am "I" my body? My heart? My *ba*? My *ka*? No. The self is hidden among the Eight. This is the secret of numbering the gods of creation as eight but the gods who rule as nine. We can each Become our own Ennead. We can each Become the "I" (which like any god is hidden in his temple) that rules the Eight. Each of the Eight may be mastered. Some may be of our own creation; others we have to destroy and rebuild according to our wisdom. Some are created by a moment's quiet reflection; others are built up only through years of hard work. Some may teach us; some may compel us to teach others. Think not lightly of this.

Offered to the Temple of Set at the command of the god in my heart in the Year of the Heb-Sed.

Ink SetNakt MerynAmonRe

[11] **Mirror ... Mirror ...**

- by Elena Thompson II°

(reprinted from *The Obelisk*, Smoking Mirror Pylon)

"Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of us all?" It is a question not asked only by vain and dangerous queens. In each of us there is that constant search for ways to truly see ourselves.

The motivations for finding mystical looking-glasses vary with age, personal experience, and growth. Children will look at the mirrors of parents

and playmates. They are finding their place in society's grid. The first of many painful confrontations will occur in childhood, with regard to uneven and mostly unfair reflections. Wistful faces gaze into the silvered magic of a quiet pond, earnestly going over every detail of chin, tear-stained eyes, and flushed cheeks. The pond will be kind and not respond to the child's wide-eyed queries.

Few children will grow into adults and find scrying glasses such as John Dee's. They will not destroy Spanish Armadas nor enjoy the confidences of royalty. It will be the fate of some to rely upon the false oracles of TV advertisements hawking the newest version of true beauty. Others will close their eyes tightly in pain, never to open them again. They are the ones easily herded in front of crosses or toward a city in the far east in which they will pray for oblivion - a place with no mirrors.

Then there are some to whom the possibility of true reflection is a hope that cannot be abandoned. They are creatures to whom society's mirrors were discerned as horrors created by desperate men. The human birthright of infinite potential was echoed not by perfect skin or social grace, but rather by relentless search for the inner essence of self. It is this that so many have tried to catch in the mirror. It is this that speaks to the indefinable part in each person that says: "I am me, and this is why."

It is the mirror, carefully hidden from the eye, and in the "I", that shows us our selves in flux. Here we may find souls stretched before the merciless cores of our many doubts. We have been clever, this human race. We hide descriptions of ourselves in astrology and Tarot cards. Our heroes and villains exemplify all that we love and fear about ourselves. Words and images are created many times just to distance us from the rawness of our own being. Yet just when one has numbed the pain of being, there comes the challenge and the hope of just one more mirror. There, in the cocoon of a starry night, we may gain the courage and look again into the reflections of our souls.

[12] **Interview with the Antichrist**

- by Steven S. Silvers II°

Since my re-entry into the Temple of Set this past December, I have been amazed by the significant changes that the Temple has undergone since my departure approximately four years ago. I have watched with great interest the exchanges in the past couple of *Scrolls* about the restructuring of the Temple as far as getting away from traditional Satanic imagery is concerned, and have to say that it seems to be the wise and prudent thing to do. I had lunch with Magistræ Aquino and Reynolds while visiting San Francisco recently, and our

conversation included reasons behind the major changes in the *Crystal Tablet* and indeed the image of the Temple in general. I believe that the decision to “lean away” from Satanism and its imagery is a good one for reasons I spoke to them about and here present to you, the readers.

It is my feeling [and obviously I do not speak for either of the above-mentioned Magistræ] that the despicable Judæo/Christianity community is facing a major cataclysm in the United States in the next few years that is going to spell its certain doom. I have seen this coming for some time, and my impression is that the process is going to speed up rapidly, and that during this period it will become more vicious than ever. Obviously it will continue to fulfill its appalling legacy by striking out at convenient targets. Clearly a “Satanic” institution would be most convenient, and, despite my deep fondness for some of the more “flavorful” aspects of the *Crystal Tablet* I received way back in XXIII, it would not be prudent to provide cannon fodder for rancid Christianity’s arsenal.

I may also add that, despite the G.O.P.’s significant gains in the House and Senate this past year, I do not believe that (1) they will hold their position for very long or (2) if they do, that it will affect the fall of what Dr. Aquino calls the “scarecrow merchants”. So never fear!

I would like to stress that the foregoing convictions are my own, and, while there are many in disagreement, so significant are they to me that I have ordered the “lion’s share” of my personal *Xeper* around them.

My Doppelgänger and I would like to thank Magistra Patty Hardy and Magister Ronald Barrett, Jr. for their article “Time And Empire”, which was nothing short of brilliant. I too have heard lyrics in songs that are very meaningful to me, and so enclose one herewith by Neil Young:

A dreamer of pictures running the night;
you see us together chasing the moonlight.

[13] *Ninjutsu*:
Warrior Way of the Left-Hand Path
- by Brian Hodges II°

The ninja accomplish even more than walking into the darkness and using it ... they are able to preserve their inner flame...¹

Much emphasis has been given over the past twenty-five years to the emergence of Japanese martial arts in American society. Perhaps one of the most popular [and most understood] has been *ninjutsu*. Commonly remembered as black-clad assassins armed with exotic weapons, they represent

an antithesis to the supposedly noble samurai warrior caste. Once the myths of the 1980s’ marketing hype are stripped away, what remains is an Asian philosophy distinctly Left-Hand Path in nature.

According to Magus Steven Flowers’ work *Lords of the Left-Hand Path*, the two criteria for determining adherents of that tradition are (1) a strong antinomian spirit in contravention of mainstream society and (2) the exaltation of the *psyche* and promotion of one’s consciousness to divine status.²

The ninja symbolized the antinomian feeling in contrast to the samurai, who were flashy, arrogant, and created a cult of sword-worship. The ninja were shadowy; they disguised their true nature and used whatever weapons they could find, including common farm tools. Legend had it that they descended from *tengu*, or crow-men; the more mundane explanation was that they evolved from the *yamabushi*, mountain warrior-priests who lived in seclusion and practiced esoteric disciplines.³ Their spiritual paradigm had little in common with the prevailing Zen philosophy of the day. Rather they utilized an eclectic system descended from Tantric Buddhism which emphasized the projection of the mind and will onto the greater universe.⁴

The ninja were typically familial in nature, and were composed of three levels: *genin* (field operatives), *chunin* (captains), and *jonin* (commanders). The two primary clans of ninja were the *Togakure-ryu* and the *Koga-ryu*, and *ninjutsu* as an art was passed from parents to children over the course of several centuries. Masters of stealth, close-quarter battle, and intelligence operations, they were typically hired by *daimyo* (feudal lords) to engage in various missions, including reconnaissance, assassination, leader protection, deception, and force augmentation. Modern military analysts will realize that they provided what would not be termed a “special operations” function.

Leaving aside the fighting system of *ninjutsu*, it becomes obvious that the ninja relied upon sorcery as much as they did physical strength. Their magical system was based on the five elements, which according to *Shidoshi* Stephen Hayes (the only Westerner trained by a Japanese ninja master) was composed of the following:

getsu - earth
ka - fire
sui - water
fu - wind
ku - void

Other systems, generally those adhering to a more Chinese paradigm, utilized *getsu*, *ka*, *sui*,

moku, and *kin* (earth, fire, water, wood, and metal).⁵ In either case both fighting and magical techniques were based on emulation or evocation of these elements.

For example, a fighting stance of the earth element would emphasize a wide, heavy position, with the feet rooted firmly to the ground and pulling energy up from it. A magical evocation of the earth element would project an impassable wall of force, impenetrable by the enemy.⁶

In addition to the five elements paradigm, the *mikkyo* (occult doctrines) could be divided into LBM or GBM categories in accordance with Setian philosophy. The ninja were expert in invisibility, water walking, shape-shifting, legerdemain, and psychological warfare - all categories of LBM. GBM techniques involved consciousness-enhancing meditation, esoteric practices of Shingon Buddhism (e.g. Tantra), and *kuji-in* (eighty-one finger manipulations designed to channel characteristic powers of elemental energy).⁷

What is most interesting about these praxes is their correlation to the occult studies of the Temple of Set. The *kuji-in* hand symbols are highly similar to runic *stodhas* (stances), and in some cases relate to identical concepts.⁸ The meditational practices emphasized the evolution to divinity, or attaining the "mind and eyes of God".⁹ Finally the characteristic legends of lycanthropy, invisibility, and mentalism demonstrated exploration in the combination of energy channeling and specific movement and behavioral techniques, which were used to induce fear in their targets.

It is interesting to note that most Japanese martial arts have the suffix *-do*, denoting a system or practice designed to augment spiritual development in Buddhism. The suffix *-jutsu* (or *-jitsu*) tends to signify a system or collection of techniques, usually intended for combat, without the accompanying spiritual emphasis.

Only recently has *ninjutsu* been termed *ninpo* by some practitioners to soften its "evil" connotations. This is pandering to the Right-Hand Path. *Ninjutsu* does not align itself with the characteristics of other martial arts or white-light philosophies; therefore, as Hayes has pointed out, *ninpo* is a "cultural impossibility".¹⁰ As the evidence clearly shows, the *mikkyo* of *ninjutsu* as practiced by the shadow warriors was truly Left-Hand Path.

Notes

1. Peterson 1986.
2. Flowers 1992.
3. Hayes 1981.
4. *Ibid.*

5. Peterson, *op.cit.*

6. Hayes 1978, Hatsumi 1987.

7. Hayes 1981

8. Thorsson 1984

9. Hayes 1981

10. Hayes 1980.

Bibliography

Flowers, Stephen, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path: A History of Spiritual Dissent*. Austin: Runa-Raven Press, 1992.

Hatsumi, Masaaki, *Ninjutsu*. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle and Co., 1987.

Hayes, Stephen, *The Ninja and Their Secret Fighting Art*. Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle and Co., 1981.

_____, *Ninja*, Volume 1: Spirit of the Shadow Warrior. Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle and Co., 1978.

_____, *Ninja*, Volume 2: Warrior Ways of Enlightenment. Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle and Co., 1980.

Peterson, Kirtland, *Mind of the Ninja: Exploring the Inner Power*. Contemporary Books, 1986.

Thorsson, Edred, *Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic*. York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1984.

[14] Liberty and Justice for All

- by Guiniviere Curfman II°

Finding myself to be in a rather patriotic mood one day, I discovered a facet of the Temple's philosophy that has also served as a part of the historical backbone of the United States government.

The founders of the U.S. saw fit to construct a political system based both on certain "unalienable rights" and a hefty dose of the medicine liberty has to offer. To quote the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self evident:
That all men are created equal; that they are endowed ... with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

So what is really being hinted at in this statement? "Liberty" is defined by *Webster's* as being: "The quality or state of being free; the power to do as one pleases." This is essentially the chalice of freedom of choice. We are only equal under the veil of Lady Liberty in that all citizens have the right and responsibility to create their lives according to their wills. A society based on such terms illustrates that free will is recognized as being the most valid explanation of why there are differences or inequalities among members of society.

Webster's word for a society that instead seeks to eliminate those inequalities is "egalitarian". How is the equality of egalitarianism different from that of liberty? The answer can be found lying dormant in the individual will. Free will cannot be a characteristic of egalitarianism, because having precise equality requires the destruction of differences among individuals. An egalitarian society understands that the gift of individuality is the poison of the collective consensus, and so advises its citizens to relinquish their personal will for that of the general will. This type of equality is but an illusion, and probably not very popular with those citizens who may eventually discover what is really entailed in bowing down to the "greater good".

On the other hand liberty flourishes where there is great differentiation. Liberty has become the freedom to find success independently - and to even possibly fail in that quest. Personal freedom does not necessarily ensure that individuals will be able to obtain their goals, although it can provide a map of the paths to those desires and aspirations.

In a society created from liberty, there can be equality found among those individuals who are in fact able to succeed. Liberty is then a quality of the elite-minded in that it demands nothing less than taking responsibility for your own chance of success.

In an essay called "The Temple of Set" Magister Don Webb ("Uncle Setnakt") aptly points out that seeking self development will cause the Temple to always be an elitist group. *Xeper* leads to an individually-determined freedom. To otherwise condemn the choice as unfair would be to fail to recognize that the ability to make personal choices is the central theme of their own willed conscious evolution.

I deem that it is this value of liberty which reflects a major factor in the separation of the Temple of Set from other groups and organizations. It is also the reason why the Temple of Set is **not** for everyone!

Luke Skywalker: "Okay, I'll try."

Yoda: "No try. Do, do!"

[15] **Occult Network Germania**

- by William D. Pridgen III°

The Occult Network Germania (ONG) was originally founded by Priest William D. Pridgen in XXVIII. It began as a small regional study group for the exploration of rune magic and Teutonic cosmology, essentially following the curriculum set forth in *The Nine Doors of Midgard*. It held to the principle of honor as set forth in the Order of the Trapezoid, which is essentially: (1) truth to one's

self, (2) truth to one's work toward fulfillment of one's oath, and (3) truth to one's associates.

While keeping these elements intact as essential parts of its structure, the ONG will now Remanifest as an element within the Temple of Set. It will primarily be a correspondence element, as most participants will likely be some geographical distance from one another.

There will be no hierarchical structure within the ONG. Priest Pridgen will act as sponsor, and Adept Eulit Hinson will be Editor of the ONG's newsletter *Aurora Borealis*, published four times a year. Everyone taking part in the work of the ONG will be considered as equals: cooperating Black Magicians with common interests working toward a common goal.

The basic approach to study and work will remain as it was when the ONG was founded: to use *TNDOM* curriculum as a guide and keep records of one's progressive work. Periodic reports of these records will be sent for review and evaluation by the Yrmin Drighten of the Rune Gild, Edred Thorsson.

It is expected that participating members will keep in periodic contact with at least two other members so that new ideas and findings can be exchanged. Also group meetings and/or workings can be arranged by members when the opportunity presents itself. In addition it is expected that each member will contribute at least one article per year to *Aurora Borealis*.

It is the avowed intention of the ONG to explore and promote the true Teutonic tradition for that which it essentially is - the LHP in an alternate setting. Inquiries concerning affiliation should be sent to Priest Pridgen or Adept Hinson.

[16] **Horus and the Magical Link**

- by Paul F. McAtee III°

The High Priest's discussion of Horus in the last issue of the *Black Pyramid* has raised some interesting questions, one of which opens the door to another enigmatic facet of the teachings of the Temple of Set: the Magical Link.

The Magical Link is something mankind has been exploring in one capacity or another since the vaguest recollections of the Gift of Set. To the best of my knowledge, no one has ever been able to "prove" its existence in terms of "objective" science or math adequately enough to convince another who did not already desire to have knowledge of it.

Yet we can see the shadows of its existence. Like gravity we cannot see it directly, yet we can see its effect on things. We can then postulate its existence. Furthermore we can observe previous attempts at defining it within different systems

throughout history.

In fact we can trace it back to the very ancient idea which holds that man himself is a replica of the universe (microcosm vs. macrocosm, SU vs. OU, etc.). This idea is often present in the most ancient of magical systems - the Cabalistic Tree of Life, the Chakras, the Yggdrasil Tree, *et al.* give us a model which applies not only to the external universe, but also to the human body or mind, thus asserting some kind of connection.

The idea is expressed in ancient texts such as the alleged *Emerald Tablet of Thoth*, which is credited with one of the most abused esoteric sayings of the "New Age" movement: "As above, so below." It can be also found in the *Biblical Lord's Prayer*: "... on Earth as it is in Heaven."

Granted, the above examples illustrate an RHP perspective on what we call the Magical Link, as they refer to a state wherein one is a slave to the principle - either because he is unaware of it and thus controlled by it, or perhaps because he has been taught that it is a one-way street only. The Black Magician is one who has discovered not only the existence of the Magical Link, but one of its darkest secrets as well: that it works both ways and can also be used toward the **exaltation**, rather than sublimation of the microcosm, if one so dares.

Another way of looking at it is that "on Earth as it is in Heaven" remains no less a truth for the Black Magician, but he has learned to apply it to a situation wherein **he** is the god living in Heaven. The fact that the Magical Link is indeed a "two-way street" is a fact that the Lords of the RHP have been trying to cover up for centuries. And it might have worked if it hadn't been for those meddling Setians!

It has been speculated that because of this principle the Initiate [unlike the man of science] does not need to go out and explore the entirety of the Universe first-hand in order to obtain knowledge of it. The Initiate need only explore his self, for within the self is the key to all creation. Thus young Initiates of the Temple of Set are often encouraged to seek wisdom inwardly.

Even more modern research exposes clues to the Black Magical usage of the Magical Link. Julian Rotter (a liberal behavioral psychologist) found enough evidence to assert in theory that those who **believe** they have free will seem to indeed possess it; such people tend to look at life as a great cornucopia of opportunities. Conversely those who **disbelieve** the existence of free will seem to lack it; such people tend to find themselves always victims in a world they are powerless to change.

In other words, change your mind and you change the world - which runs dangerously close to the *Crystal Tablet* definition of GBM: manipulating one's subjective universe in accordance with one's

will, thus producing a corresponding change in the objective universe.

Again we see allusion to a force which lies between the OU and the SU which seems to not only separate them, but facilitate interaction between them. In a cosmology where the SU is embodied by the principle of Set, and the OU by the principle of Osiris, then HarWer naturally emerges as the embodiment of that "middle man" principle, i.e. the Magical Link.

In his analysis of the *Book of Blasting Forth by Day or Night*, Magister Menschel draws the conclusion that HarWer is **humanity itself** - that which Set has brought into being to displace the cosmic inertia, and that which must exist while Set exists. Dr. Aquino's article "The Order of Horus", continued in the *March BP*, seems to focus a similar idea on a more personal level. HarWer is that aspect of ourselves which facilitates our personal interaction with the OU, while at the same time preventing our consummation by it. [For those who prefer the Runes, consider Dagaz.]

That very aspect of ourselves which fits the definition of HarWer in nearly every instance is our own physical body. Our bodies contain the Gift of Set, isolate intelligence as we know it, and at the same time allow that isolate intelligence to receive sensory data and interact with the OU at a safe distance, as it were. Our very bodies act as the buffer between Set-consciousness and the cosmic inertia.

If one attempts to Socratically reduce the components that comprise the self, one finds that those which constitute the body [and perhaps even a good deal of what we commonly refer to as the mind] are more properly considered a **possession** of the self, rather than the self *per se*. It is via this "body of Horus" that we manipulate and interact with the OU and at times even the SU.

This actually opens the door to what I speculate to be two aspects of HarWer. The first lies within our physical bodies, instilled with the Black Flame by Set, and used by us for purposes of interacting with the OU - primarily in the form of LBM. Perhaps the *Book of Blasting Forth By Day or Night* refers to us as the "Child of Imbalance" because it was by us (HarWer) that Set cancelled the imbalance, leaving the void in which he could truly begin creation. The second is a HarWer brought into being by **us** through usage of the Black Flame, and used as a function of GBM. But I'll get to that in a moment.

All this raises some interesting questions pertaining to the immortality of the psyche. If HarWer is necessary to prevent our consummation by the OU, and if HarWer currently fulfills that role by means of our bodies, then what will prevent the

diffusion of our psyche into the cosmic soup of the OU when our bodies can no longer do so?

Set seems to have brought HarWer into being in order to prevent his own consummation by the OU and facilitate his own interaction with:

“By HarWer I cancelled the imbalance, leaving a Void in which true Creation could take form as Set” and “... HarWer must exist while Set exists” (*Book of Coming Forth by Night*). This implies that for us to actualize Setamorphosis, the presence of our own HarWer is necessary.

But we know that our physical bodies are temporary, that biological death is an inevitability. So either (a) we content ourselves with the idea of initiation being a “this life only” pursuit, or (b) we must learn how to construct our own HarWer to act as a buffer between our isolate intelligence and the OU at the time following the death of our physical body.

Most Setians will probably be more interested in #b. So the question facing us is how do we construct our own life-after-death HarWer, to act as a buffer between our disembodied *psyches* and the cosmic inertia?

If previous speculations concerning HarWer are true, it would seem that Set created his HarWer by instilling his own essence (the Black Flame) in another race - humanity - which was itself previously just a function of the OU.

To construct our own LAD/HarWer, then, is it necessary for us to instill our own essence (also of the Black Flame) in another aspect of the OU?

This is where the Magical Link enters the picture. If HarWer is as closely related to the ML as circumstances seem to indicate, then perhaps the construction of our own LAD/HarWer is something we as Black Magicians have already been working at in some form. In using Black Magic to give order and meaning to the otherwise meaningless universe that surrounds us, may we somehow also instill in that universe some form of self awareness?

Keep in mind that the consciousness of HarWer as we know it is not pure Setian self awareness. It is a confused sort of half- awareness, partially intelligent and partially mechanical, being a composite fusion of Setian awareness and Osirian mechanism. In the cosmology of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, HarWer owes what little intelligence he has to Set, his creator. So we may expect a similar situation to exist in the construction of our own HarWer.

Remember that the ultimate result of GBM is to cause the OU to reflect our own idealized SU. In so doing, can we help but imbue that OU with aspects of our own consciousness? Such a “hybrid” OU will, like HarWer, lie just beyond our own SU but fall just short of the OU as recognized by others.

And it may further possess a sort of half-intelligence, a “bare this-ness” or “essence” of the isolate intelligence which brought it into being, i.e. the Black Magician creating it.

As has been implied by the most ancient of magical systems, the magician tends to see himself reflected in the universe that surrounds him. And what is a Black Magician if not his own intelligence?

Perhaps it will be just such a semi-intelligent buffer that will allow the *psyche* of the Black Magician to survive the death of his body. Whatever the case, as Ipsissimus Lewis is fond of noting, we’ll all have the opportunity to find out one day.

[17] **Addiction**

- by Ian C. Adams II°

“Addiction” may be defined as any habitual act which is detrimental to an individual in some way. Addiction comes in a multitude of forms: gambling, drugs, alcohol, even magic. Any excessive, uncontrolled behavior is potentially harmful. An insidious foe, addiction can creep up seemingly out of nowhere and affect the best of us. Even those who concentrate their entire lives around developing and strengthening the will can fall victim to it, as did Aleister Crowley.

Consider the implications of addiction. It may affect our ability to rationally see ourselves in an objective manner. Since most addicts deny their problem and delude themselves into thinking that nothing is wrong, their view of reality has become severely skewed. For the Black Magician this can be disastrous. After all, Black Magic requires a constant manipulation of the illusions of the subjective universe. If our own illusions are overwhelming our capacity to perceive our environment clearly, then possible harm results.

For the Setian to effectively practice magic, a clear, undistorted image of the universe is an absolute necessity. Not only that, but while your mind and/or body are in the process of craving cigarettes [or anything else], there is little chance of concentrating 100% on the task at hand. Ritual, meditation, even mundane actions will suffer to some degree. Anything which impedes our *Xeper* to such an extent must be discarded from our lives.

Accepting that one has an addiction, coming to grips with it, then ridding ourselves of the problem is not an easy task. But to achieve the levels of power and development of which we are capable is a task we must readily embrace and actively pursue. Take the time to really look at yourself objectively and discover whether or not you have any problems. If you don’t find any, good. If you do, great! You’ve just taken the hardest step in freeing

yourself - that of realizing and accepting that an addiction exists and deciding to do something about it. You must now work to rid yourself of it. Of course this won't be easy, but if you had expected an easy path in life, you would never have embraced the Black Flame. *Xeper* and Remanifest!

[18] The Temporal Magic of the Retroactive Enchantment

- by S. Thomas O'Connor II°

The Temporal Magic of the Retroactive Enchantment is now available to interested Initiates. This document is 20 pages long. It represents the Retroactive Enchantment-related work of several Initiates spanning the year of XXIX-XXX ÆS, and may be obtained from Sir Sat-antyr. Send \$2.00 and a note to me.

[19] Indulgence

- by Kathryn Borski II°

“Indulgence” is the art of evoking feelings, thoughts, or sensations within one’s self as directed by one’s will and tempered by the principles of *Xeper*.

There are two types of Indulgence: the internal and external. The internal manifestation of Indulgence is the “turning inward” of one’s consciousness in a way that helps one to better understand the self (self-indulgence). The external manifestation of Indulgence would be any action used to evoke feelings, thoughts, or sensations; such actions could assist the LHP magician in his magical work.

Indulgence taken to an extreme would lead to compulsion: an addiction to feelings, thoughts, or sensations and hence a loss of will-full action (self-control). The fundamental difference between Indulgence and compulsion is a matter of being: conscious decision-making versus unaware actions.

The latter state of consciousness [or lack thereof] is best described by P.D. Ouspensky in his references to the sleep-like state of most people. Sort of like eating an entire bag o’chips or box o’cookies without giving it a second thought, until the bag or box is empty and one’s awareness kicks in when experiencing a cessation of the sensation.

The states of being related to Indulgence and compulsion correspond with the terms “divine” and “mundane” in Ipsissimus Lewis’ definition of “Indulgence”, found in the *Crystal Tablet*: “the means through which that course can operate on a divine rather than mundane orientation.”

Xeper, the watchword for all Setians, assists the LHP magician by keeping a focus on Becoming so as to avoid the pitfalls of excessive Indulgence. In

my work I frequently ask myself, “How does this action assist or enhance my initiation or my ability to interact within the objective universe?” Such self-questioning is a personal check to strike a balance.

One practical application of Indulgence for the LHP magician would be actions that evoke a particular state of mind by which to focus one’s desires when performing GBM. Such actions could be the burning of copious incense of a particular scent or playing a certain melodic tune. Once filled with the feelings, thoughts, or sensations, the LHP magician must be able to focus and release. It is important to empty the *vaisseau d’emotion* (vessel of emotion), or one runs the risk of becoming a slave to his emotions rather than a master of them. Again this is where *Xeper* can help.

[20] Florida’s First Pylon

- by Clayton Bozeman II°

It looks as though the “sunshine” state is in for a rather long eclipse, as Saturday, May 20th was the occasion of the initial meeting of the Black Flame Pylon, a geographical pylon serving as a gateway for the Temple of Set for the increasing number of Florida Initiates. It is the first Temple pylon in the state, which historically has not seen such Setian activity.

The meeting was attended by seven Initiates from various locations around the state. Judging from the enthusiasm, this will be a very active group. The Black Flame Pylon will meet approximately every six weeks, and would like to invite all Florida Setians (residents or just visitors) to participate. For further information please contact our Sentinel, Adept Sheila Pimentel.

[21] Temple of Set Wordfinder

- by Linda Reynolds IV°

L-N-O-L-A-R-X-G-N-I-W-T-A-B-T
I-I-P-S-O-N-B-E-K-D-T-E-P-A-R
J-G-E-V-I-T-U-U-P-A-F-R-B-Y-A
T-H-N-R-E-R-U-B-B-E-W-W-Q-P-P
A-T-T-C-E-L-I-S-I-E-R-X-P-Z-E
B-W-A-N-S-D-P-S-L-S-Z-R-K-T-Z
N-I-G-A-E-K-R-M-X-A-I-L-E-D-O
A-N-R-I-R-H-A-O-E-E-I-L-E-A-I
H-G-A-T-P-J-G-N-S-T-D-L-R-E-D
T-N-M-P-E-W-N-T-O-N-L-E-E-N-B
A-C-J-Y-N-L-H-N-A-L-P-N-O-B-X
I-G-F-G-T-O-I-C-O-E-I-L-B-G-R
V-D-H-E-O-U-O-R-X-G-Y-S-E-J-M
E-P-V-D-Q-F-C-U-H-P-V-X-Q-J-A
L-M-M-A-S-S-U-T-S-E-L-D-N-A-C

So I got this new program, and it's stupid! But go ahead and try to solve it anyway, okay? The words to find are:

Anubis, Apet, Aquino, bat, batwing, Beelzebub, Belial, candle, Egyptian, Leviathan, lotus, night, nightwing, order, Osiris, pentagram, priesthood, pylon, scroll, serpent, Set, temple, trapezoid, Xeper.

And the first one to send me the completed puzzle along with an explanation of its **mystery** (?) gets a prize. Really.

[22] **Black Magic on the Isle of Man**

- by Michael Kelly III°

Over the bank holiday weekend of 5-8 May XXX ÆS, the quiet countryside of the Isle of Man was subtly but profoundly invaded by the first of this year's gatherings of the Gates of Albion Pylon.

Meeting on Friday evening were Island residents Priest Michael Kelly, Adept William Fleetney, and Setian Stephen Armstrong, and visiting Setians Magister David Austen, Priest Richard Le-Riche, and Priest Herbert Holzinger.

No meeting attended by Magister Austen can possibly pass without liberal doses of history, and this was to be no different, as Saturday morning saw a visit to the capital of Douglas, where the Manx Museum is located. This establishment houses a fine display illustrating history ancient and modern, including some rather fine examples of Runic and Ogham engravings. True his position as Grand Master of the Order of Merlin, Magister Austen took some time to browse a Manx dictionary.

A blistering hot afternoon found the assembled Setians in the fishing town of Peel, with the brooding ruins of a castle dominating the skyline of the bay. Those who had doubted Priest Kelly's promise of seeing Viking longships doubted no longer, as two or three of the vessels sat proudly in the harbour.

Sunday saw a visit to the ancient capital of the Island, Castletown, where we gathered around a monument which gave mention to the burning of a Castletown woman and her son as witches (the only such case to have occurred on the Isle of Man). Passers-by must have wondered why such a monument (in the centre of the town square) warranted such earnest attention, with Setians taking turns to be photographed by it, a savage witness to Right-Hand Path intolerance and rabid paranoia.

Castletown is also home to the old Witch's Mill, where Gerald Gardner, the founder of the contemporary witchcraft movement, established his museum of witchcraft. The building has long been empty but its hulking shape can still be seen.

After a tour of the castle itself, a little more general tourist sight-seeing followed, including the

famous Laxey Wheel.

On Sunday evening, we prepared for the outdoor working, on a cliff top overlooking the sea. When everyone had regained their breath, it was generally agreed that the arduous climb had been worthwhile, with a superb view and a wonderful atmosphere.

The working itself addressed the personal challenge of the Heb-Sed year: What must I do to enhance the Æon? Here was true Black Magic at work in its purest essence, devoid of theatrics - just six determined Black Magicians focusing their wills to cause change in the world. [The ritual outline will be published in the May *Albion Chronicles*.]

Goodbyes were said to Magister Austen and Priest Le-Riche on Monday as they set sail for London once again, and Priest Holzinger was taken for a tour of some of the more remote areas, such as the haunted Quakers' burial ground, King Orry's Grave, and the Island's wild and beautiful northern coastline.

For me personally, this gathering seemed to focus on one idea especially: using the memories of the past to revitalize the present and empower the future. *Xeper* and Remanifest!

[23] **Nine Tips from a Professional Writer**

- by Rosemary Webb III°

I've recently heard comments about how hard it is to write an article or letter. I'll agree; it's not easy, especially when you're first learning how to deal with initiatory materials as well. Here are some tips that I use to keep focused on the task at hand, which is communicating via the written word. These are some things that work for me; try them out as you choose.

1. Remember your [presumably initiatory] purpose. Ask yourself: How will this writing affect my *Xeper*? Others' *Xeper*? Why am I doing this? What am I doing?

2. Decide what your point is; then write about that.

3. Never send out your first draft. Always revise and proof-read at least once. I prefer to do this from a printed copy, because I look more closely at it than I do at a computer screen.

4. Review a style book for ideas and examples of good writing. I read Strunk and White's *Elements of Style* yearly. It's a short book, available at almost any used bookstore.

5. Let your draft sit for at least a day before you finish it. This lets you concentrate on what you actually did write, rather than on what you were intending to write.

6. Check how a letter or article sounds by reading your article aloud, at least to yourself.

7. If possible, have someone else read [or hear] and comment on your writing. Review points #1 and #2 before you decide whether to use comments.

8. Don't revise more than four times. If you're messing with the text this much, either you haven't done step #2 or you're changing words back and forth.

9. Don't sweat it. After you've done your best, send it off. Assume not everyone is going to understand what you've written, or agree with it. Review point #1 again, and move on to your next project.

[24] Notes from the Executive Director

- by Linda Reynolds IV°

My sincerest thanks to all of you who sent cards and messages of understanding when I lost a dear friend of thirteen years, my red-headed cocker, Tex. His ashes are buried behind my house in a grove highlighted by a newly-planted dogwood, and his memory will be sweeter because of all of you. Again, thanks.

I thought I'd mention the Reliquary once again, for all of the newer Initiates of the Temple who may not know about it. A trapezoidal shaped receptacle, it holds a great number of personal artifacts sent to me by Setians through the years since its creation and consecration at Conclave [can't remember which year]. There is still a lot of room within its sacred confines, so if you have something appropriate (not too much larger than your medallion) you'd like kept inside, please send it to me.

In answer to many inquiries regarding the Order of the Python's annual Art Show and Sale which will again take place at the upcoming Conclave, yes, we do accept art [in all its many forms] from non-Order members for display and possible sale. I only ask that you let me know in advance if you have any extraordinarily large pieces to display, so that proper facilities will be on hand.

[25] Recognitions

Ronald Barrett, Jr. was Recognized as a Master of the Temple IV° by the High Priest on April 30th. There will be a formal ceremony honoring his Recognition at the upcoming Conclave.

James Stone of South Australia was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priestess Carmel Severson on March 16th.

Ed Bryan, Jr. was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priestess Rosemary Webb on March 20th.

Brian K. Britton was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest William D. Pridgen on April 13th.

Matthew M. Mitchem was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest Michael Kelly on April 17th.

Bonnie Henderson-Winnie was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest William Van Patten on April 23rd.

Kathryn Borski was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priest Larry Evans on April 30th.

Brian Hodges was Recognized as an Adept II° by Magister Ronald Barrett, Jr. on April 30th.

Timothy Crowe was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priestess Carmel Severson on May 14th.

Sami Samarraï was Recognized as an Adept II° by Priestess Ruth Nielsen on May 14th.



The Black Pyramid

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°

[26] X-Files: The Truth is Out There

The people who killed JFK were "faceless" professionals, ordered to do the job. The biggest job in the whole deal was to set up the cover story that has lived and thrived now for more than thirty years. That is the hardest job and requires the experts. All the other stuff from Oswald to Specter is just created cover-story ... - Letter, L.F. Prouty to M.A. Aquino, 5/12/95

U.S. Air Force Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty was Chief of Special Operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Kennedy Administration, hence Pentagon coordinator for Unconventional Warfare, Psychological Operations, and all other "Black Ops" activities - about which he wrote his book *The Secret Team*. Back in the 1950s he had also been the HQ USAF liaison to the CIA's *MKUltra* project, working with mind-control experimenters such as Dr. Ewen Cameron, Dr. Louis Joylon "Jolly" West, and Jim Monroe.

In Oliver Stone's controversial *JFK* movie, Prouty was portrayed as "X", a mysterious government intelligence professional whom Jim Garrison met on the Washington, D.C. Mall:

Kevin Costner (Jim Garrison): "I never realized Kennedy was so dangerous to the establishment. Is that why?"

Donald Sutherland (X): "That's the real question, isn't it - 'Why?' - the 'how' is just scenery for the suckers. Oswald, Ruby, Cuba, Mafia - It keeps people guessing like a parlor

game, but it prevents them from asking the most important question - Why? Why was Kennedy killed? Who benefitted? Who has the power to cover it up?"

In 1964 the very same Dr. "Jolly" West, of all interesting people, was called upon to examine Jack Ruby, then in prison for killing Lee Harvey Oswald. West announced that Ruby had "sunk into a paranoid state manifested by delusions", including his belief that an ultra-right-wing conspiracy was behind Kennedy's assassination. On the basis of this diagnosis, Ruby became a candidate for mental treatment, whereupon another doctor put him on a program of "happy pills". Two years later Ruby was dead, officially of cancer, immediately after being granted a retrial. Comments Oliver Stone:

At the time of Ruby's death, the U.S. government was actively developing bacteriological weapons and toxins at the Army Chemical Corps research center at Fort Detrick. Via a program called *MKNaomi*, set up in 1952, the CIA's Technical Services Staff worked with the Chemical Corps to obtain such weapons for the Agency's use in the field. [Ranelagh, *The Agency*, page #207. Joint Hearings, *Project MKUltra*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977. Philip K. Melanson, "High Tech Mysterious Deaths", *Critique*, Fall/Winter 1984-85.]

The point here is that while allegations of injectable cancers, mysterious heart attacks, and other convenient deaths may sound paranoid and far-fetched, the U.S. military and intelligence agencies did - in undisputed, documented fact - develop these capabilities.

If you're interested in *MKUltra* and *MKNaomi*, see in particular John Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate"* (New York: Times Books, 1979). See also #19X on the reading list. *MKNaomi* achieved a dubious, momentary glamor as the villain in a 1992 NBC television movie *Danger Island* (rebroadcast 5/28/95) in which residue from an abandoned *MKN* research station created an islandful of human-to-monster mutations with ESP!

* * *

Once you get on the conspiracy theory roller-coaster, it never stops. You discover all sorts of fascinating names, projects, interconnections. This is why, among other things, the new television series *X-Files* has become so popular: It deals with a subject that everyone's curious about - the government's fiddling with, and coverup of, all sorts of bizarre stuff, terrestrial and otherwise, physical

and metaphysical.

In over two decades as an intelligence and unconventional warfare officer, I've seen my share of "X-files". But to understand the place of such things in government research, you must first understand the disproportionate role that **credibility** plays in that research.

The very nature of intelligence is that deductions, recommendations, and decisions must be made from **incomplete** information - from data to which you're not supposed to have access. That's why it's "intelligence" and not just routine academic, political, economic, and military research.

Because of this "incompleteness" factor, and the factor that you may be the **only** conduit of the intelligence, everything depends upon your reputation for analysis, objectivity, balance, and detachment. If you are perceived to be emotionally involved, biased, ulterior-motivated, or otherwise a "Fox Mulder", your effectiveness either ends outright or is compartmentalized into very limited and specific functions.

It is for this reason that real "X-files" are shunned in the intelligence community. No one **wants** to touch them or even acknowledge their existence; they are "career-wreckers". [This is mirrored by the *X-Files* television series, in which FBI Agent Fox Mulder is portrayed as being the FBI's "house kook".]

Fortunately this is not normally a problem, because the information that statesmen, politicians, and military leaders usually want from intelligence agencies doesn't pertain to "X-file" subjects, but rather to conventional political, economic, and military affairs.

"X-files" rarely contain information which is not already overabundant through civilian sources. As I'm sure you know, conspiracy theory is a mammoth subculture all its own, spawning innumerable books and periodicals, and most recently computer bulletin-board systems and Internet traffic. [A good source to consult on electronic media sourcing is Adept Walter Radtke, who SYSOPs the "Arsenal" conspiracy-theory BBS.] What distinguishes official government files from other writings is the understandable but erroneous notion that "if it's a government document, it's verified **truth**". All too often this is not the case, and particularly so in "X-file" cases - wherein analysts are merely "reporting on a phenomenon" without either endorsing it or drawing conclusions from it.

Throughout my own career, I was something of a "Fox Mulder" because of my well-known involvement in Satanism, the Temple of Set, the Black Arts, and weird stuff generally. My conventional credentials were never questioned, and

my conventional work routinely acknowledged to be of the highest caliber. Yet there was the “darkness in the background”: Where is this guy **really** coming from?

We have seen the ludicrous way that some of the anti-“Satanic” cranks and fundamentalists howled about this in the late '80s. The *MindWar* paper which I co-authored with a PSYOP general became a mini-*MKUltra* of its own, and even copies of *Secret of the Lost Ark* caused worried warehouse-searching and campus-calling. On the other hand, all of the principles outlined in *MindWar* were applied in the Persian Gulf War - which I must say I did **not** have in mind when preparing that paper. In fact, while a student at the National Defense University in 1987, I wrote a far more reflective research paper entitled *PSYOP: The Ethical Dimension*, in which I explored some of the difficulties and dangers inherent in psychological operations.

And Black Magic? Well, the extent of the U.S. government's interest in that sort of thing was limited to some rather ludicrous “long-range viewing” ESP experiments and related silliness. This resulted in some major megabucks flushed down the toilet at the Stanford Research Institute, the Institute for Noetic Studies, and similar y-in-the-sky flim-flam. You can read about this in Ron McRae's *Mind Wars* (#19W) and in various articles of mine from back-issues of the Order of the Trapezoid's *Runes* available on Glinda. This extended all the way to SRI spokesmen being flown to Washington to give presentations on their pulp in settings like the State Department's Foreign Service Institute [where I sat placidly in the briefing room trying not to laugh].

The inevitable failure of the SRI-type crankiness soured this government on anything remotely [no pun intended] metaphysical, which in my personal opinion is just as well, along the storyline and moral of the movie *Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things*.

Meanwhile China was going like a house afire with ESP/metaphysical research; except that on close examination it turned out to be just stage-magic tricks *a la* Uri Geller. Considering that China has an ancient tradition of some of the world's most sophisticated stage magic, one wonders at this contemporary naivete. Perhaps such arts were suppressed in the strident no-nonsense-ism of the early communist era, resulting in a new generation of Chinese scientists ready to be fooled.

But in the Cold War era the real hotbed for ESP/metaphysical **and Black Magic** research was the Soviet Union, where highly-secret laboratories under the ægis of the state security & intelligence apparatus explored anything and everything in these veins without any of the inhibitions caused by

popular religions or public opinion.

The Christianized West viewed all this with extreme skepticism, even disdain, and didn't make much of an effort to find out anything about it.

However the beauty of the West is all of the independent exploration constantly bubbling around in it, and in due course I bumped into #19U on the reading list, Michael Murphy's *An End to Ordinary History*. Murphy and his associate Steve Donovan of the then-active “Transformation Project” in San Francisco had an enormous file system on such Soviet research, mostly through friendly contacts in scientific circles. *ÆTOH* is thinly-disguised **non-fiction**, in which the “fictional” characters have non-fictional counterparts.

This is the same Michael Murphy who founded the Esalen Institute, that pleasantly-oddball “get in touch with your inner self” Shangri-la down the coast away from California's Big Sur. John Lilly (author of #19N) is an Esalen alumnus, as is Hunter S. Thompson (*Doonesbury's* Duke). Esalen got a segment in *The Occult Experience* (#F4A) along with the Temple of Set, which goes to show you what a nice, cozy, weird world this is!

In the early '80s I got together with Murphy and Donovan to exchange some magical research. Donovan graciously turned me loose on the TP's rooms & rooms of file cabinets, the contents of which proved vital in several *Runes* articles and other projects.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, I looked forward with interest to see how much of the heretofore-hush-hush material would surface. Some has, but not as much as I had anticipated. But then the new Russia has its hands full of many more pressing mundane problems, so it may well have back-shelved such esoterica until it has the leisure to review it at length. [And of course we now have the end of “state atheism” in Russia, which means that there are Christian factions arising with a very vested interest in keeping, shall we say, the Dark Side of the Force under wraps.]

Then there is the business with the north pole.

As you know, we have the four seasons and a variety of irregular weather and geophysical phenomena because Earth wobbles on its axis. Nobody knows **why** it wobbles; it seems that its normal orbital pattern around the Sun would have started it out with a perpendicular spin.

Did it get knocked into a wobble by some prehistoric collision, Velikovskyite or otherwise? Is it the result of shifting continental plates?

Be that as it may, this monkey-business with the pole has spawned yet another branch of “weird research”, which you may find nicely summarized in *Arktos: The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism, and Nazi Survival* by Joscelyn Godwin (Grand

Rapids, MI: Phanes, 1993 - ISBN 0-933999-46-1).
[How can you miss with a title like that!?!]

Saith Dr. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, he of #14X: “*Arktos* explores the tangled web of myths, scientific notions, and religious beliefs surrounding the poles. Given the fantastic and occult nature of his subject, Professor Godwin has given us a masterpiece of clarity and economy.”

Herein you will find a charming parade of hollow-Earth myths, the *WEL*, Agartha & Shambhala & Roerich [compare to #19U], the most sinister “Black Order” yet (of which the SS was just an “iceberg-tip”), Verne, Set, Poe, King Arthur, the Lost Ark, Thule, and of course Hitler’s escape to an “invisible existence” as a *Bodhisattva* in underground Antarctica, *a la* HPL’s *The Mountains of Madness*, via a sympathetic UFO.

Joe Bob Briggs says check it out. Trust no one.
Xeper.