

# The Scroll of Set

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Issue Number 110

Volume XVI-3

June 1990

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## [1] Elephant Feathers

- by Ronald L. Barrett III°

During the Set-X Conclave in New Orleans last summer, an Initiate posed a question to me which went something like this:

If we as Black Magicians are consciously existing outside of the natural order, and effect magical change solely by the will within ourselves, why then do we go through all the trouble of employing all these rituals and symbols in our magical work?

My answer at the time was that he was correct in theory, but that, at the present stage of most of our initiations, these symbols are probably necessary tools to help us in our respective journeys. The important thing is that we recognize that we are utilizing them to tap into our own potential, and that we are the ones who are in conscious command of this process.

The question also reminded me of *Black Magic* in the *Crystal Tablet*, wherein is given the example of Dumbo as an aspiring Black Magician who was eventually able to fly without having that feather in his nose. I realized that, given my own reasoning, I had yet to reach Dumbo's high level of initiation. This really bothered me. So here I sit in front of my keyboard, with spare time and this stupid elephant flying around in my head - flapping his ears and giving me that cute, animated grin. Questions are a powerful tool in initiation when they inspire the kind of exploration which can reveal new directions along the Left-Hand Path, and I think this one provides a good azimuth into the issue of the role of symbol and ritual in initiation. I will therefore give the elephant a run for his money.

Picture if you will the Constellation of the Thigh scintillating brightly on a clear and windy summer night. Somewhere on the side of a mountain, underneath a pile of rocks, is a strange creature wearing a black camel-hair robe, fumbling with a pack of matches. That creature is an initiate who recently joined the Temple of Set and is now attempting to execute a working with flawless precision. His intentions are noble, but his objective environment throws him a curve ball. Soon the flame he ignited goes out and his bell tumbles off the rocks, falling into a very objective abyss. What

does he do? He continues with his working, recognizing that, as a Black Magician he can make the bell ring. He makes the Flame burn.

This slightly-embellished story is autobiographical. The experience was an important one for me because I was able to demonstrate to myself a fundamental principle of Black Magic: I was the source, and I could work my will in any situation, bell or not.

But then an interesting situation developed. Because I saw many elements of my ritual as mere peripherals to my will, I began to get very relaxed about the way in which I conducted my workings. In some ways this was helpful because it allowed me to cut loose from some inhibitions, and allowed me to make "mistakes" without penalty. However I took it to the point where I began to see my actions as sloppy. Because of this some of my workings depreciated in their intensity and meaning. My will was not being exercised to its fullest potential.

The intensity and meaning that I was lacking in my symbolic ritual experience came not from these elements themselves, but rather from my perception of their diminished importance because of the way I treated them. When I recognized this, I realized that while I controlled these external symbols, I could not use them effectively unless I treated them by the same standard that I wanted them to work for me. They were only as significant as I what I made them to be. Thereafter I employed them with greater respect, and the intensity increased accordingly.

I tell this tale because I want to illustrate a point. As Black Magicians we recognize that we are the ones controlling a symbolic environment, which in turn affects us. And while a symbolic intermediate may not always be necessary, it is very useful. I could kick a stone on the ground and it would mean very little to me, or I could give that same stone considerably more meaning by deciding to place it on my altar as a ritual tool. If this object became associated with successful workings in which I achieved specific goals, then its effect on me would increase, and vice versa.

There is a reciprocal relationship between the symbol and the meaning I choose to assign it. Just as a boulder gathers potential energy when it is rolled up a hill, so my stone gathers potential energy by the work that I put into it. In this manner I am able to utilize a symbol which I created to amplify and focus my will toward Magical change.

Symbolism is not only just useful in magic; it is also necessary - even if we do have conscious control over it. Tomorrow morning I will exercise my will by exercising my body: contracting my sinews to move iron disks against the force of gravity. Eventually gravity will win, and I will lie under the weights, willing my arms to extend in vain. It is at that moment that an interesting phenomenon will occur: my partner will lightly place two fingers to the underside of the bar, and I

will be able to execute one more repetition of an exercise than I would otherwise not be able to do alone. Even though I shall reach the conscious limits of my will, there still remains unexplored territory which I have yet to utilize directly, but can nevertheless access with a little help. Some day, however, I will solve the gravity problem.

So the elephant can fly. Big deal. Has he tried to learn any new tricks lately? If he has the desire to continue learning new things, then I would suggest he consider plucking a few chickens.

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## [2] **Shadow Demon**

- by James Knowles I°

In shadows by day do I dwell. In night I stretch forth my wings and ride upon the hot winds of Hell. I see in darkness by the light of the Flame. I span the infinite reaches of the universe in search of prey. In time of sleep do I come and bring with me the serpent's venom. Blissful dreams become hideous nightmares. Deny me. Do you dare?

Who am I? Don't you know? See the red halo?  
"Only the Elect shall find what they seek."

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## [3] **I Am, but I'm Not**

- by Marilynn Labban I°

In exploring my Setian potential I have encountered two complex issues requiring introspection: (1) Am I a Satanist, a Setian, or both? (2) Do I want to expose myself as a different kind of being to others? Answers to these questions were difficult to formulate; however the *Scroll* and the *Crystal Tablet* were of great assistance in helping me to understand the relationship between early Satanism and the later, dynamic evolution of Setian philosophy.

If I use the term "Satanist" to define myself, am I not further perpetuating Christians' hideous myths about the negative character of Satan? The problem lies in profane individuals' misunderstanding and misdirected use of the word: that "Satanism" is the opposite of what they are [or at least pretend to be]. Therefore it is not to be allowed, and the "soul" of him who touches it will be punished. To them it means something bad and dangerous. Sensationalized "Satanic" crimes committed by immature or psychotic Christians have already given them living excuses for their cartoon-like notions of "Satanic" evil.

Unfortunately it is this caricature of "Satanist" that they try to crazy-glue to all who opposed their narrow, "scared-stiff" mentality and lifestyle. Tolerating this label puts me in the position of being judged by another's subjective definition of "Satanism".

I can't deny possessing some basic desires and actions that they define as "Satanic": specifically that I exist to live, experiment, and experience everything without fear of some mythical "dictator over souls". Therefore I accept being called a Satanist by those capable of understanding the origin and true multi-dimensional aspects of the word. But I still resent anyone using the word to define me when the *Bible*/Hollywood horror-flick representation is all he knows.

My final comment on this issue is: Don't call me a Satanist unless **you** are one, or are at least capable of leaving the Judæo/Christian myth behind.

This issue leads directly to the next. If one does not want to be thought of as "their" version of a myth, then someone has to attempt to set "them" right. We all live in a physical world, and somewhere down the line it becomes evident to others, especially close friends and relatives, that we are different. Certainly one can just "be different" and not offer reasons or insights. Often this is the wisest action. However they are still going to see you as different; and because they're not better informed, they will see you only in their subjective frame of reference. Personally I would rather have a say in the matter.

Educating others in the issue of Satanism is a dangerous game, and by our nature we complicate the matter. There is a dilemma to wanting to be recognized as different and unique beings, yet not being able to explain that difference to others because they lack the necessary ability to comprehend things at that level. The profane get more confused because we utilize symbolism and actions that conflict with their version of a Satanic world.

I enjoy the thrill I get from these symbols and ideas. That's why I use them. I often get a sense of pleasure when observing the profane person's horror and distrust in response to certain images and ideas. It reinforces my special existence and redefines my position on a basic level in the objective world. By observing the profane I discover what I am **not**; this crystallizes the definition of what I **am**. This situation creates confusion: We are **not** what they think; we just sometimes **appear** that way!

Educating some of the profane is possible, but it takes intuition and good LBM skills to accomplish this. I utilize LBM often to feel out people. Once you understand their basic beliefs, intellectual abilities, and cultural influences, you can determine if educating them on this subject is worth the trouble. In cases where ignorance and brain-cell deficiency rule, I prefer to slip into their world, get entertained [or whatever else I desire from them], then depart and hope that the next being is more

intelligent.

Perhaps if many of us are successful, a significant reduction of ignorantly-fueled hostility can be accomplished. I believe we are off to a moderate start, and that it is our responsibility to keep trying. It certainly does become frustrating, because many of the profane do not have the capability to learn at that level. I strongly feel that it is the Setian's responsibility to educate those who do.

So I am a Satanist who enjoys living and all the colorful imagery and suspense of the unknown that goes with it. Yet I want to be recognized as having higher potential and a more serious purpose for existence. Existing in a world which the profane originated in fear and superstition, and which we developed into fine art and beautiful magic, is the challenge of existence that I perceive through the Temple of Set.

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#### [4] **The Roots of Walpurgisnacht**

- by Stephen E. Flowers IV<sup>o</sup>

On one level the main significance to the Sean for Walpurgisnacht April 30 the fact that the Age of Satan was ceremonially declared by Anton LaVey on that date in 1966 the year One. This then also marks the advent of the Æon of Set, which would not be recognized until the Year Ten. On this level the meaning of Walpurgisnacht is obviously one of new beginnings - at least on a magical level - and a time to recognize our roots.

The apparent reason LaVey chose this night to declare the advent of the Age of Satan is that this is the night of the greatest traditional gathering, or sabbat, of the witches in Germany and central Europe. [See J.W. von Goethe's *Faust* for poetic descriptions of the gathering which is supposed to take place on the Brocken or Blocksberg - the highest point in the Harz Mountains.]

The most commonly given explanation of Walpurgisnacht is that it is the Festival Day of St. Walburga, an English abbess who died on February 25, 777 CE. February 25 is her true Festival Day on the Monastic Calendar, but it is said to have been "moved" to April 30 in the Roman Calendar. Conventionally it is simply explained that her April 30th Festival Day coincides with May Eve, which was important to the pre-Christian Teutons and to Celts as well. In Irish it coincides with Beltaine. So the dear old saint's day just happened to fall on a night important to the pagans and subsequently to the practitioners of survivals of pagan customs often identified as "witches." In this theory it is pure coincidence that St. Walburga's is associated with the "Witches' Sabbat".

This explanation has something to recommend it. It is very likely that for hundreds of years after the nominal [and almost always violently coerced] "conversion" of the various Teuton tribes to Christianity they continued to worship their own gods and goddesses in the guise of saints. This process of magical syncretism can be readily seen in the more modern context of the Afro-Caribbean region, e.g. "Santeria" - the cult of the saints. There we see how the pagan African gods and goddesses are symbolically "dressed up" in the outer forms and even names of Catholic saints. On an outer level the "faithful" may appear to be piously worshipping the martyred Christian or angelic being, but in the inner reality the underlying, purer, pagan form is being addressed.

There is overwhelming evidence that this took place in Europe as well, and that from the beginnings of Christianity to at least the time of the Counter-Reformation and Enlightenment (ca. 17th century) many were consciously practicing something which might be called "European Santeria". Several forms of this system, which varied from tribal area to tribal area, have been identified by historians of religion.

Such an explanation would already identify St. Walburga with some Germanic goddess having something to do with magic or witchcraft. The explanation could stop there, but amazingly enough it does not end with this.

The greatest single clue to a deeper and older authentic and non-arbitrary meaning for Walpurgisnacht comes on a clay tablet (Greek *ostrakon*) found in Elephantine in Egypt. The tablet dates from around 200 CE and reads "Baloubourg Se(m)noni sibylla (Walburg sibyl of the Semnones)". This "Walburg" is the same name which later becomes "Walburga." But its meaning would tend to make us think that it was originally more a title of magical name rather than an ordinary personal given name. The "Wal(u)" probably means "the dead" or "fallen" [as in *Wal-halla* (hall of the fallen)], while the "-burg" means "enclosure" or "fortress". So the name basically means "Fortress of the Fallen" - an ideal name or title for one whose major function would have been necromancy.

With this information an altogether deeper and more complex picture begins to emerge. It would seem that not only did the time of Walpurgisnacht and the places where this time was celebrated (high mountain top) hold sacred significance to the pre-Christian Germans, but also the very name of this saint has its roots in the practice of pre-Christian magic.

The true significance of May Eve is that it is the dark inner seed of the manifestation of the "Lord

May” - the herald of summer in which the seeds of magical will planted in the subjective universe are brought to fruition in the objective universe. Walpurgisnacht is the celebration of the Darkness on the eve of manifestation.

This significance was at least partially understood or intuited by Anton LaVey, and it is from this root that the Age of Satan grew out upon the world.

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## [5] **The British Vampire**

- by David Austen III°

Mention the word “vampire” and you conjure the imagination of many people but in different ways. Some may only relate to this creature in the character of Christopher Lee’s *Dracula*: a gaunt, aristocratic man of few words but showing plenty of fangs. To others he may be the sensual creation of Frank Langella’s Broadway and film version of the Vampire Count, or yet again the timeless character played by Bela Lugosi. Often missed from public sight is the silent movie *Nosferatu* as well as the modern color update starring Klaus Kinski.

These are variations on a theme and largely influenced by Bram Stoker’s classic novel *Dracula*. The only full-length, unabridged, film version of the novel was commissioned by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in the late 70s, and starred Louis Jourdan in the title role. Jourdan portrayed the Count as a highly intelligent being, as one would expect of someone who had lived for five centuries with all the qualities of the Lee portrayal. This version remained true to the book and ran for a total of 8 hours as part of the BBC’s “ghost story for Xmas” theme. Only second to this runs the Langella vampire, although the film seemed to lose its way as to following the book.

However Count *Dracula* and his related offspring are largely Transylvanian in origin and cause one to ignore the fact the vampire is common to many cultures.

Britain does have a scanty recording of the creatures, although the legend seems to have faded during the “Age of Reason” (18th century to the Industrial Revolution).

From medieval records we learn the British vampire was the “Jeeves of the ghouls”. He or she was not restricted to the hours of the night, and sought victims whenever he or she might choose. To dispatch the creature, decapitation and burning of the body proved quite sufficient.

As the Middle Ages gave way to the Reformation, phantoms of all kinds proliferated, but the vampire quietly faded into obscurity. Such remained the case for two hundred years until the closing years of the 18th Century.

In the north of England is situated Croglin Hall. It is a very typical North Country house of the period, in an expanse of grounds surrounded by a high wall. The building was of a single story with the guest wing facing the church and the local graveyard, hidden from view by the boundary wall.

An account tells us of a young lady house-guest, retiring to her room, after a pleasant evening’s entertainment. The time of year is late summer, the weather is warm, and the garden is lit by the light of a waxing Moon.

As the guest brushes her hair, she pauses to glance out of her bedroom window and in the moonlight notices a shadow stirring on top of the boundary wall. The shadow then drops to the ground, so the young lady, fearing an intruder, closes her window. Much to her horror the figure is moving across the lawn in loping movement.

Before long it is at the window, through which she beholds a cadaverous form with extended nails and protruding canine teeth. Transfixed with horror, she is rooted to the spot. As the creature realizes that it cannot get in, it proceeds to pick the leading from the window and effects an entry. At this point the guest commences to scream, eventually fainting.

Upon hearing screams, the owner of the house and the other guests break down the door to find the lady in a state of shock and with wounds about her throat. The master looks out of the window and upon seeing the creature scrambling up the boundary wall, discharges his pistol at the figure.

At first light a party is assembled and the churchyard examined. There a vault is found to have been recently disturbed. Upon entering the vault it is found the burials have been vandalized with the exception of one coffin. This was duly opened and there the cadaver is found to have a recently-incurred pistol ball wound with fresh blood about its mouth and the protruding canine teeth. The body is duly removed from the coffin and burned. Of the young lady or the incident no more is recorded.

This event proved a basis for a series of magazines, nicknamed “penny dreadfuls”, carrying the series “Varney the Vampire”. For another 80 years the vampire was to again withdraw to the sidelines, and the cavalcade of British phantoms took over the terrifying of the British public.

Not until 1897 did the vampire make its comeback with the publication of *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. The book was successfully translated into a stage play, and the vampire count had no less an actor than the great actor/manager (also Stoker’s close friend) Sir Henry Irving play him.

Unwittingly Bram Stoker visited a curse upon a then-new innovation by placing the tomb of Lucy Westenra within its grounds. This was Highgate Cemetery. From her vault Lucy hunts to sate her

vampiric lust upon Hampstead Heath, becoming known as the "White Lady of Hampstead".

Highgate Cemetery was created out of the gardens of four very large country houses. The famous flocked to be buried there, since not only did it provide for individual eccentricities but afforded a completely different environment from the overcrowded burying yards of London's city churches. Charles Dickens bought his family a vault in the cemetery, where they were all buried except the author himself, who at the insistence of Queen Victoria, is interred in Westminster Abbey.

Naturally being the "in place" to be buried, the cemetery soon became full, and land was acquired on the opposite side of the road. Thus the cemetery came to be split in two, the Old Section-West and the New Section-East, the latter being the burial place of Karl Marx.

By the 1970s the cemetery had deteriorated beyond the realms of belief. Through years of corruption by the Highgate Cemetery Company little maintenance was done. The imposing tombs and edifices were overgrown and also the victims of increasing vandalism. This was to increase with the antics of self-styled vampire-hunter David Farrant.

Farrant was a publicity lush, and made several claims of seeing a vampire in Highgate Cemetery, staring at him through the cemetery railings. Of course the media loved it. Fortunately Farrant's fall came in 1974 when he was sent to jail for four years and eight months, after being caught by the police in the act of vandalizing a tomb and interfering with a woman's body which had lain in the tomb since 1884. This further compounded the cemetery's problems, already evident since it had played host to the Hammer Movie Company.

Mercifully at the commencement of the 1980s, the Friends of Highgate secured the old Cemetery Company and the Burial Grounds, hopefully also its future. Were Lucy Westenra to walk from her unlocated tomb, she would do so among rare species of wild flowers and the homes of badger and foxes. Many of the monuments are being restored by the volunteer labour of the "Friends".

Amid several claims to have sighted the vampire, a rather cheap publication by one Sean Manchester claims to have tracked and killed the creature. These are of course highly suspect, since Manchester plays a great deal on the Transylvanian legends. At the final kill the author has reproduced an alleged photograph of the exorcised vampire. Apart from being an obvious fraud, using a poorly made up model, vampires - even British ones! - are spectral creatures and therefore are not captured on film.

I visited the cemetery last week on a glorious spring afternoon. The cemetery was coated in spring flowers of all kinds. I walked on ahead from the

main party with the guide, passing through the eerie Egyptian Catacombs, around the Cedar of the Lebanon Circle, and onto the upper levels. I asked the guide, "Is the vampire still sighted?" "Yes," he said. "Just the other evening ..." - and then a lady posed a question about some grave, so that he never did finish the answer.

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## [6] Reflections on a Working

- by Elizabeth Reynolds II°

Blackness. Drifting in eternal selfness, forever and eternity. I lay in wait for what was to come, but nothing came. I hung in expectation, but nothing was expected. I waited for a comforting hand, a familiar face, but none came. I gazed into my soul for answers.

An eternal soul. Pure energy flowing through space. Drifting. Forever and ever.

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## [7] "Church of the Awakening"

The Temple of Set has recently become aware of an Australian organization calling itself the "Church of the Awakening" operated by Robert Ledwidge. Ledwidge is a former member of the Temple of Set whose membership was cancelled several months ago for nonpayment of dues.

Ledwidge had never mentioned this "Church of the Awakening" to Temple of Set officials. We learned of it only through recent reports from other Australian Setians whom Ledwidge was trying to solicit for it. Also, in a recent Australian television documentary in which Ledwidge was one of the panelists as a self-acknowledged "Satanist", he gave his affiliation as that of the "CA" and made no mention of his former affiliation with the Temple of Set.

Reports to date indicate that Ledwidge may be continuing to claim affiliation with the Temple of Set, and/or circulating extracts from its publications as literature from the "CA", in violation of international copyright law. Even more disturbing are reports that the "CA" condones illegal drug use and may be involving minors in its activities in improper or illegal ways.

The Temple of Set in no way endorses or recognizes Robert Ledwidge's "Church of the Awakening", and has not given Ledwidge permission to reproduce or otherwise use any Temple of Set literature. Ledwidge himself is not affiliated with the Temple of Set in any way. Setians who may be asked about this situation, or who may be approached by Ledwidge, are requested to quote this article as appropriate.

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## [8] Work

- by James Knowles I°

What is the work of an initiate of the Left Hand Path? Work is individual. To make an attempt at defining it by a generalization would do nothing but defame it. My feeling, however, is that the work of each Setian ultimately affects all who tread the Path.

In light of all the changes occurring throughout the world, it is my view that each of us individually, in our own unique way, has contributed to the opening of the gates which allow us better access to those parts of the world which were closed to "outside" influence. Do we not each of us seek truth in all existence throughout the universe? Do we not, each of us, desire that individual union with the Prince of Darkness? And by this do we not, each of us, will the continuity of existence? We do!

True, life on Earth surrounded by the profane and uninitiated in society is mundane. We have set ourselves apart from this with the understanding that we are, each of us, a unique being. And each of us, in crossing the Infernal threshold of infinity has chosen to receive a "charge": "... Neither Heaven nor Hell shall be eternal save through man." "... Man is the child of imbalance, who shall resolve the issue between Heaven and Hell ... and establish the eternal freedom of the Satanic Will." "... Hell entrusts to thy care the guardianship of the eternal Will."

As we grow from our experiences and continue in our endeavors in our personal *Xeper*, the realization will appear that, as the Elect of Set, the "charge" we have chosen to receive is the continuation of the Majesty of Set. This can only be accomplished by ensuring the continuance of the race of mind. By this I mean there will be those who will come after us - the future Elect - who will accept the responsibility of guardianship in Earthly life. Each of us individually, as we experience self-gratification in the enhancement of *Xeper*, are at the same time impacting the continuation of mankind, therefore ensuring the continued existence of Set.

We are an army. We are a complete force throughout the infinite reaches of the universe. As each will is a great force, individually and unlike any other, so each great will contributes to the *Xeper* of the surrounding elite - the Elect. For in treading our own individual paths, we are all on the Path of the Left, each adding new dimensions of unique existence.

What is said is done so in truth and for understanding by those whom have raised their sails, daring venture into the Abyss. Truth will be as the serpent's venom to those harbingers of lies and "godly" ignorance.

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## [9] What Whispers and Roars

- by Don Webb II°

Why is it that when I hear a Setian speak, it is though I have recovered from decades of deafness? Are They not speaking the same language as the others? No - it is because I am hearing a real Being whispering Words I have waited for in the darkness.

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## [10] Gates of Albion Pylon Outing

- by Julian Clark III°

On April 28th and 29th, XXV members of the Gates of Albion Pylon met to partake of a mystical and magical tour.

On Saturday we drove to Somerset and visited Glastonbury, the legendary seat of King Arthur. After an extensive tour of the Abbey ruins, we had a look round the very old and quaint town. Later we visited Glastonbury Tor, a very high hill which according to legend is an entrance place to the "underworld". Many pagans perform rituals at the ruined church tower at the peak, as it was a place of worship long before the Christians arrived here.

After the Tor we visited the Glastonbury Well, where allegedly the Christian Grail was washed when brought to England. We tried the water. In my opinion it was foul, full of iron ore. Yet all these Wiccans come to meditate and pay homage. Perhaps I could disguise a tap in my back garden and persuade people to pay for a "mystical" experience!

The following day was one I fully enjoyed. If you come to England, perhaps we would be able to take you to visit the "Hell Fire Caves". They really are quite something, although it's hard to believe Sir Francis Dashwood had them built out of the kindness of his heart to "help the local unemployed". The chambers are really quite eerie. I thought it would be fun to hide and jump out at one of our party, but unfortunately he was delayed in the tunnel. I ended up scaring the hell out of some little old lady, but as Adept Parkin observed, "She got good value for her admission fee."

On the way back we stopped at the village of Mortlake to see the grave of Dr. Dee. Can you believe that on Sundays the church is **closed**! It appears that as congregations are dwindling, churches only operate on a part-time basis. Altogether we had good weekend.

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**[11] The Trapezium House:  
Magical Design in Building?**  
- by Peter Lima I°

I would venture to guess that most Setians are at least nominally acquainted with concepts relating to the implications of abnormal geometry in relation to the ritual environment. Undoubtedly there are more than a few practitioners of our art currently investigating these ideas in the contexts of their own experiments. Several tales of Lovecraft grasp a little feverishly at non-Euclidean geometries, and the basics of the concepts' occult significance were briefly, indeed tantalizingly ambiguously, alighted upon in the *Satanic Bible* and *Rituals*, not solely in the context of Expressionist cinema [though the Expressionist aesthetic is a very pertinent instance of the idea].

As a relative neophyte it would be presumptuous of me to attempt to add significantly to the body of thought in this area. I'll confine myself to relating a strangely-fortuitous discovery of my own [to the best of my knowledge, not previously noted] involving the very quintessence of the so-called "Law of the Trapezoid" exemplified in physical practice. While the locale is no more exotic than the Eastern seaboard nor the antiquity greater than about 1800 CE, the illustration may provide a springboard for at least one intrepid magician.

Roughly 30 miles south of Richmond, just off Interstate 95, sits the little Virginia city of Petersburg. A commercial center during the Confederacy, the city held an interest for other than locals and Civil war aficionados when I drove through it during a cross-country trip last summer. I stopped to view an edifice that was to be the most peculiar and potentially-significant sight of my odyssey.

Near the intersection of Market and Main Streets stands an unimposing three-story brick home. With its red-brick construction, black shutters, white trim, and modest size, its unremarkable appearance seemed identical to many other houses throughout the East and Southeast. But there was something subtly incongruous about its appearance.

The building was "wrong" in one specific way; the walls did not meet at right angles. Its lines were slightly but queerly angled to an obtuse degree. I imagine tour guides from the Petersburg Historical Commission are quick to point out that its design is merely the result of an eccentric builder's whim, and so the house is nothing more than a curiosity for the tourists.

The house was built in the early 1800s by Charles O'Hara, a local, who had been known to

"lend an ear" to the arcane counsels of his West Indian servant. One can only conjecture - and as initiates into the magical tradition we know how wildly conjecture runs - as to the full extent of this servant's knowledge of Caribbean lore. We know definitely that he imparted information concerning the supernatural danger of angles. Right angles were enticingly attractive to evil spirits, O'Hara was told. Evidently he trusted the servant enough to pay an increased price for the house he had built with this caveat in mind. There are no right angles or parallel sides anywhere.

After due consideration I find the account I was told of the Trapezium House's origin problematic. The servant's rationale must have been simplistic, due to his own limited comprehension of supernatural matters [as limited as most people's]. Any story will become distorted during a long span of years following an event. Barring the discovery of evidence, such as contemporary documents which contradict the idea, such distortion should be the rule rather than the exception.

If I appear to be suspiciously insistent on this point, it is for reasons of logic.

Buildings built following right-angled plans are far more common than alternative designs. Even the Egyptian pyramids, though trapezohedral in design in every way prior to the setting of their capstones [or upper portions], possessed right angles insofar as they possess square cross-sections. Truly tetrahedral designs, with three rather than four sides and a triangular cross-section, would not have exhibited this characteristic.

One expects far greater incidences of "evil spirit" manifestation [interpreted in any way you will: objectively, subjectively, symbolically, superstitiously] than actually exist. Mr. O'Hara would have had little to fear with a world full of such flawed right-angled buildings. Could, I wonder, the servant's warning have been the very opposite? Could the admonition have been against **obtuse** angles? Perhaps the Master O'Hara initiated the idea for the strange house, determined to conjure up "Spirits of the Angles", heedless of his terrified servant's protestations about violating the architectural norms.

Stephen King, in his excellent discussion of horror literature and films of the postwar era *Danse Macabre*, wrote at some length about Shirley Jackson's classic novel *The Haunting of Hill House*. In regards to geometry he wrote, "One thing we do know about Hill House is that it is all wrong. It is no one thing we can put our finger on; it's everything. Stepping into Hill House is like stepping into the mind of a madman ..." From Shirley Jackson's book he quotes a pertinent page which may be eerily familiar to Setians who've

acted with workings in uniquely-designed chambers:

Eleanor shook herself, turning to see the room complete. It had an unbelievably faulty design which left it chillingly wrong in all its dimensions, so that the walls seemed always in one direction a fraction longer than the eye could endure, in another direction a fraction less than the barest tolerable length ...

King connects the sensation with some of Lovecraft's endeavors in the same vein, though feeling that Jackson was more successful in grappling with the narrative problems of depicting such sensations. King says, "He [Lovecraft] wrote frequently of non-Euclidean angles that tortured the eye and hurt the mind ... Contemplating such things, he suggested, might be enough in itself to drive a man crazy. Nor was he far from wrong; we know from various psychological experiments that when you tamper with a man's or woman's perspective on the physical world, you tamper with what may actually be the fulcrum of the human mind."

Perhaps Mr. O'Hara's secret was not so "superstitious" after all. The peculiar Trapezium House of Petersburg will never, it is safe to say, be an edifice of such magical or mystical interest as the Pyramid of Cheops or Wewelsburg Castle. Yet it possesses an occult dignity in its own modern way; at the very least it is one of those roadside attractions just off to the side of the Left-Hand Path.

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## [12] Pylon Highlights

The Temple of Set strongly encourages communication between members. One of the ways that we do this is to organize into Pylons. They may be regional - attached to a particular geographic area - or special interest, such as correspondence Pylons. III° Initiates of the Temple normally organize and lead Pylons. However Adepts II° may obtain III°+ sponsorship to do so.

The following is a list and short introduction to some current Pylons. More information may be obtained by contacting the Pylon Sentinel via the Pylon Directory in the *Crystal Tablet*.

### Antywey

The Antywey Pylon was founded in XII by then-Priest Mitchell Wade, who acted as its Sentinel until the summer of XXIV, when he designated Priestess Rebecca Lance as his successor.

The Stele for the Pylon show two falcons standing guard at the gates of a trapezoidal Pylon. These two falcons are the divine pair Set and Horus. They were worshipped in several ancient Egyptian

Nomes as a single deity, Antywey: Horus and Set united and reconciled.

The Antywey Pylon is designed to act as resource and source of inspiration for Setians in Northern California. Meeting every three weeks to conduct workshops and group workings, the goal of its current Sentinel is to encourage Setians to share their ideas and inspiration by encouraging them to lead workshops on topics in which they might have an expertise or a interest. They are fond of moonlit beaches, outdoor workings, vampires, and black rooms in noisy warehouses. They are also renowned for their ability to successfully perform that tricky working "The Summoning of the Park Ranger".

### The Gates of Albion

The Gates of Albion Pylon was formed in XXV by Priests David Austen and Martin Szalay, highlighting the Temple of Set's continued growth in the British Isles.

In choosing the title "Gates of Albion", the founders sought to express the Pylon as a means of entry into the search through the mystical Britain (Albion). At the outset Priest Austen proposed a three-phase plan of development. Phase One encouraged the wide-spread membership to meet socially, putting flesh and bone to names. Phase Two encouraged individual interaction between Setians to enable articulate communication and mutual trust. The final phase developed the last two phases into ritual working situations.

Membership of the Pylon is governed by two principal qualifications: that the person be a Setian in good standing and also be resident within the British Isles. The Pylon publishes the newsletter *The Albion Chronicles*.

### Bifrost

The Bifrost Pylon takes its name from the flaming bridge in Norse mythology that was the pathway from Midgard (the world inhabited by humans) to Asgard, the abode of the Gods. The Pylon serves as a pathway to all members or personal magical growth and Godhood.

Meetings have been on an infrequent basis, but are held as often as possible. Topics discussed to date: GBM, LBM, Satanism in contemporary perspective, æonic Words, the Age of Satan, color symbolism, and the Temple of Set reading list. There are plans being made for a Pylon newsletter.

The Bifrost Pylon is composed currently by Atlanta, Georgia Initiates. We would like to extend membership to Setians of any degree in the southern United State. We welcome anyone traveling through the area to contact the Pylon Sentinel and the "Setian Welcome Wagon".



### **Black Diamond (Schwarze Diamant)**

The Black Diamond Pylon is a regional Pylon located in West Germany. Its members get together to (a) provide better communication networking for German Setians, (b) translate the Temple's literature into the German language, (c) foster a good public image of the Temple of Set and the Prince of Darkness in Germany, and (d) ensure the acceptance of only highly-ethical individuals with excellent personal standards into the Temple. The Pylon Sentinel is Priest Roland Winkhart, and the Pylon currently has six members.

### **Bull of Ombos**

The Bull of Ombos is located in Austin, Texas. Membership is available to local residents and is extended as well to Setians within the broader geographical region. The Pylon, founded in the year XX ÆS by then-Adept Stephen Flowers, is currently led by Adept Michael Rigby. The Pylon's eight members [including Magister and Magistra Flowers, Sentinels Emeritus] meet two or three times a month to discuss magic, perform group workings, and watch really awful horror movies. Recent workings have included computers, van de Graaf generators, and a nude altar (male).

The *Vox Tauri*, a quarterly publication edited by the Pylon Sentinel, serves as a communication forum within the Pylon, to Setians in the region, and to the Temple as a whole.

### **Canis Prometheus**

The Canis Prometheus Pylon began as a geographically-localized magical project under the Sentinelship of then-Adept Ronald L. Barrett, sponsored by Magister Flowers. Since then the Pylon has undergone several iterations, acting as a sort of switching-station for Setians moving in and out of the Colorado area. The best word to describe the Pylon, and its contributing members over the last two years, is "dynamic".

The name of the Pylon is a sort of taxonomic genus-species category. *Canis* is the genus to which the jackal, wolf, and domestic dog belong; *Prometheus* is the hero of culture in Classical Greek mythology who stole the knowledge of fire from the gods and brought it to man. Together they describe a Iycanthromorphic entity who bears the Black Flame.

Currently the Pylon is in a somewhat liminal state, with most of its members working in Albuquerque, New Mexico under the remote guidance of Priest Barrett. However, with the recent appearance of new Temple members in the Colorado area, it seems that there will soon be new activity in the Highlands.

### **Gates of Hell**

The Gates of Hell Pylon, started by Priest Roger Whitaker, led for approximately a year by Priest Larry Evans, and currently Sentineled by Adept Clayton Bozeman, is designed for those Setians who are geographically distant from one another. Gate Keepers assist Initiates in entering and in participating in activities. The Pylon newsletter *Flames from Hell* is available on a semi-annual basis.

### **Kaliyuga**

Priestess Patty Hardy is Sentinel of the Kaliyuga Pylon. Named for the *Kali Yuga*, the time-cycle of Hindu myth in which wisdom will be sought in the darkest and most materialistic level of existence, the Pylon covers the New England area. The Pylon was formally inaugurated at the Halloween XXIV ÆS meeting with the following, adapted from the consecration of the Lilith Grotto, Halloween VI AS: "O thou whose seat is within the Darkness, we honor thee. O thou apart from and beyond all natural order, hear our words. Draw near and bear witness as we dedicate to thee a new portal to the Temple of truth. Lend your might to our will, that this Pylon may stand as a sign of the Powers of Darkness." The Pylon publishes a newsletter *Night Vision*.

### **Mut**

Priestess Zajkowski is the Sentinel of the Mut Pylon. Priestess Zajkowski was a member of the original Church of Satan's Lilith Grotto in New York City, prior to the year X. The Pylon was founded in November XXIV ÆS and is located in San Francisco. Its membership is drawn from the Bay Area.

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### [13] *Fire and Ice*

Many people feel that the *Fraternitas Saturni* was as influential in German occultism as the Golden Dawn was to Anglo-American magic. In fact German occultism was the inspiration for the Golden Dawn, Crowley's O.T.O., and Rosicrucianism. *Fire and Ice* by Stephen E. Flowers, the first publication in English about Germany's greatest secret lodge, explores the history, rituals, and fascinating personalities behind the Brotherhood of Saturn. It is now available from Llewellyn Publishers.

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### [14] **The Children**

"The Children" is a band composed of Setians Adept Rip Reed and Priestess Rebecca Lance. *A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing* is a collection of songs

dedicated to the beauty of Satanism. Their remarkably haunting music is imbued with Satanic themes and ideas. Concerning availability of this work, contact Priestess Lance.



## The Black Pyramid

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°

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### [15] Sammy Davis, Jr. - Warlock II°

On May 16, XXV Sammy Davis, Jr. lost his fight with throat cancer. While many eulogies have been spoken or written about him, none has dared to discuss his involvement with Satanism. The following is abridged from my *Church of Satan* history:

Sammy Davis, Jr. was born in 1926 and at the age of 4 was learning dancing from Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. His father and uncle introduced him to show business as one of the Will Mastin Trio, and when the two elder men retired, Sammy went on to become one of the world's most noted singers, actors, and entertainers.

In February of 1972 he starred in a television movie entitled *Poor Devil* - not as the Devil, who was played by Christopher Lee, but as a lower-level dæmon who was hard-pressed to obtain his first soul from Earthbound humanity. Sammy, it seemed, liked people too much to trick them or trap them. His assigned victim, Jack Klugman, felt sorry for Sammy after the dæmon confessed his inability to exploit Klugman's various shortcomings. Klugman ran around San Francisco (where the movie was situated) trying to find his fiend/friend, including a phone call to the Church of Satan. Struck by the positive and sympathetic portrayal of Satanism in the film, I invited Davis to accept the honorary degree of Warlock II° in the Church. He answered:

I would be most happy to accept your honorary membership, and I am pleased to learn that no one was offended by our recent film *Poor Devil*. As I'll be performing in Vegas at the Sands Hotel from now until April 8th, perhaps you can arrange to present your award to me when I'm at the San Carlos Circle Star Theater during April 10-16. Once again, my thanks.

Peace and love,  
Sammy Davis, Jr.

On Friday the 13th of April Karla LaVey and I presented Sammy with an Honorary II° during his show at the Circle Star (apt name!). He was delighted with the recognition and made it a point to wear his II° Baphomet medallion on stage for the length of his entire show that evening to a sell-out crowd. Afterwards we were his guests for supper, and I talked with him at length about his long-standing interest in the occult.

*Poor Devil* was originally intended to be a pilot for a weekly television series. After it aired, however, Sammy was contacted by NBC and told that the series would be cancelled. Although *Poor Devil* was a smash success with the public generally, there was a massive deluge of protest mail from Christian institutions and activist groups. Nothing in the film was the least bit derogatory to other religions, but the very portrayal of Satanism as something "decent" was a red flag to the bull. It came as bitter news to Mr. Davis, his co-star Christopher Lee, and ourselves.

In the spring of 1974 Anton & Diane LaVey and I were again invited to visit with Sammy during another engagement of his at the Circle Star. Sammy made a point of greeting Anton with the Sign of the Horns during one of his songs, which Anton acknowledged - causing startled gossip in the audience. After the show we retired with him to the privacy of his personal suite at a nearby hotel, whereupon Sammy presented Anton, Diane, and myself with the special 18-karat gold bracelets given to his "personal family".

Anton and Sammy settled down to talk about Satanism, which both of them agreed was the wave of the future. Sammy had studied the *Satanic Bible & Rituals* in depth and was bursting with ideas concerning them, illustrating many of his concepts with stories from his own past as a trail-blazer and destroyer of social taboos in the entertainment field. For his part, Anton unfolded wondrous plans for the Church of Satan, including the possibility of Sammy's eventually becoming the Church's senior official for all of North America. Retrospectively it is difficult to say how Diane or Sammy or I might have reacted logically to such visions - but it was a night for magic, not logic.

Subsequent to the crisis of 1975, I was again invited to visit with Sammy at the Circle Star, and this time Lilith accompanied me. After catching my breath from Sammy's welcoming bear-hug, I told him the story of the events of mid-1975. He listened compassionately, then took my hand in a strong grip. "Hey, man," he said, "it makes no difference."

Since Sammy Davis had made it clear that he regarded both the LaVeys and myself as "family", I did not feel that I could involve him in the tensions

between us after 1975. Today I still think that I did the right thing by him in this regard, and Sammy himself quietly terminated his affiliation with the Church of Satan. In the newspaper-serialized version of his 1980 book *Hollywood in a Suitcase*, Sammy said:

It was a result of the same kind of influence [Sinatra's] that, for a time, I became a Satanist. I was introduced to some very interesting people, including the head of the Satanist church in the States, and became fascinated by their philosophy. I actually joined the church to find out what I could about their beliefs. As it turned out, it was a short-lived interest, but I still have many friends in the Church of Satan. In Amsterdam, for instance, the Satanists are very strong, and they never fail to send a deputation to see me as soon as I get into town. I say this only to show that however bizarre the subject, I don't pass judgment until I have found out everything I can about it. People who can put up an interesting case will often find that I'm a willing convert.

[This is the only time I have been compared to Frank Sinatra - and by a member of the Rat Pack at that.]

The Church of Satan's Regional Agent in Amsterdam was a Satanist I° named Maarten Lamers. After the 1975 crisis, as an "instant Priest", he organized what was probably the only functioning unit in the post-1975 Church - the Amsterdam Grotto (now defunct). The above extract from *Hollywood in a Suitcase* was edited out of the book as it finally appeared on the stands, and *Poor Devil* has been quietly censored from the lists of Sammy's films I've seen this past month. The managers of the Sammy Davis image would presumably like even his brief journey along the Left-Hand Path to be suppressed from public knowledge. Setians, however, can take pride in knowing the truth about this distinguished artist and entertainer. He was, and is, one of us.

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## [16] S.F.P.D. Developments

In *Scroll #XV-6* (12/89CE) I discussed the findings by the Office of Citizen Complaints, San Francisco Police Commission, concerning the 87CE raid on Lilith's and my home and subsequent investigation of us prompted by an Army Christian chaplain's fake "child abuse" allegations. Virtually all of my complaints were sustained by the OCC and then forwarded to the SFPD Chief of Police for action. Here is how the situation stands at present:

The OCC findings were all accepted without exception by the Chief of Police's Office. From there they went to the SFPD Management Control Office (MCO), which is in charge of recommending disciplinary or corrective action concerning SFPD officers.

Concerning Sandi Gallant, the MCO directed her Lieutenant that she be formally counseled concerning her collection and use of information, both on the job and in her secondary occupations (i.e. merchandising herself commercially as an "occult expert"). ["Counseling" is the least severe of three levels of corrective action which the MCO can direct, the other two being "admonishment" and "discipline".]

The MCO also directed her Lieutenant to review and purge her files of any improper intelligence information, i.e. any information that does not specifically relate to criminal activity. [This instruction will gut her files of all of the religious, political, and social "intelligence" she has been collecting.]

Concerning Glen Pamfiloff, he has received written reprimands in his personnel file (Level 3 = "discipline") concerning his statements regarding the investigation of Lilith & myself while it was in progress, and also because of his failure to cooperate with the OCC investigation of his conduct.

Pamfiloff has also been transferred out of the Juvenile Division into the Robbery Division, ending an 8-year career in Juvenile.

The MCO has further directed the Captain of Juvenile Division to review the entire investigation of Lilith & myself to determine if there were policy or supervisory problems and then to institute corrective changes as required. The MCO further found it improper that my letters to the SFPD were all unanswered and directed that this situation be corrected.

Meanwhile, as a result of my & other complaints, the San Francisco Police Commission has instructed the SFPD to write a general order directing that intelligence be gathered and maintained only on strictly criminal activities. This draft general order is to be presented to the Police Commission for review within the next week or so. The OCC says that if it is not strict enough, the Commission will ensure that it is made so.

Evidently Gallant's activities were just a part of widespread abuses by the SFPD Intelligence Division, which have drawn the ire of such groups as the National Lawyers' Guild and the ACLU. The OCC says that the Intelligence activities of the SFPD have generally come under a great deal of fire in the last six months.

As a consequence of the way our personal property was handled, the OCC requested that the SFPD revise its policies concerning the retention of confiscated property when no charges are filed. The SFPD has provided the OCC with this policy, but the OCC doesn't think it's good enough yet and is going back with a request that the SFPD consult with the City Attorney's Office and revise it again.

That's where things stand at the moment. I asked the OCC how I should interpret "all of this", and they said that in the context of OCC/SFPD actions it is a very definite vindication of my position and complaint.

It is gratifying to see that the ultimate outcome of this long and trying ordeal has been a positive one, not just for ourselves or even for the Temple of Set, but for many other law-abiding but "different" groups as well.

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### [17] **The Aristos of the Æon of Set: Of Fowles and Ferraris**

At the conclusion of the reading list for its first several years I quoted these lines from T.S. Eliot's "Little Gidding", made [more] famous by their cryptic use in John Fowles' *The Magus* (#61):

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

That Fowles was strongly moved by Eliot's lines is further demonstrated by his use of them for the concluding statement of the screenplay he wrote for the film-version of *The Magus*.

Paradoxically, however, it was precisely this goal that proved impossible for *Magus* protagonist Nicholas Urfe. The teaching of the Magus Conchis was that the quest for a "higher purpose" to human adventure was merely a conceit: there is no "god"; the sea of circumstances and events in which we swim is the product of pure hazard. In *The Aristos* Fowles developed this theme:

The purpose of hazard is to force us, and the rest of matter, to evolve. It is only by evolving that we, in a process that is evolving, can continue to survive. The purpose of **human** evolution is therefore to recognize this: that we must evolve to exist.

Fowles faulted all religions, all philosophies as being in some sense machinery to limit the free exercise of human perceptions and genius. He would presumably challenge even the Temple of Set because, despite its commitment to individualism, it

nonetheless erects an artificial structure by which this individualism may be defined and strengthened: our system of Recognized initiation. Fowles' ideal man

... knows everything is relative, nothing is absolute. He sees one world with many situations; not one situation. For him no judgment stands; and he will not permanently join, because if he permanently joins with others, however intelligent, however well-intentioned, he helps to constitute an elect, a Few. He knows from history that sooner or later every congregation of the elect is driven to condone bad means to good ends; then they cease to be a congregation of the elect and become a mere oligarchy.

The means by which the Temple of Set may avoid degenerating into oligarchy is really quite simple: it is to remain itself an existential **device**: to provide ever more excellent **means** but never a dictated, common end towards which those means are to be employed. Hence the necessary absence in the Temple of dogma, ideology, or anything else resembling a "common goal".

A few *BPs* ago I referred to Enzo Ferrari as a Magus. Why? Because he had created the concept (= Uttered a Word) of supercars which, while as excellent as they might be, were nonetheless incomplete and imperfect in themselves. Every one of his cars required the will of an individual human being, not necessarily Enzo himself, to activate and direct it. Individuals who drove Ferraris came away from the experience feeling "extended" in and of themselves - not [as in *Metropolis*] enslaved to a process, routine, or rhythm dictated by the machines.

The Temple of Set must similarly seek to be a device which "extends" those who experience it - not in a uniform common way, but in directions and velocities unique to each individual. This is perhaps the most difficult aspect of Initiatory Recognition, because each one of us, having undergone an exhilarating experience of personal Initiation, desires/expects others to partake of and therefore understand that same experience. [To the degree that such "mirror-imaged initiation" is perpetuated, of course, a kind of surrogate "immortality" surrounds the originator.] Setian James Sass recently referred to this as "institutionalized charisma":

The only difference between an organization that will endure in a charismatic way and a mere personality cult is that the personality cult dies with the personality. Who will fill LaVey's shoes in the "Church of Satan"?

I'm sure it will exist for some time after his death, much like the post-Crowley O.T.O., but unless it finds a leader capable of making an impact comparable to LaVey's, it will inevitably dwindle into a nostalgic charade.

This is the virtue of the Temple of Set: that it is elitist, that it does demand that individuals associated with it be lights in their own right, and that this standard will not be compromised. Thus will it continue to be the Black Order as it is now, long after the fleshly shells of its present Initiates have passed on.

The Achilles' heel of Fowles' own aristocratic existentialism was the crushing insignificance which the individual feels in his alone-ness: a mental state which Fowles termed the *Nemo*:

The *nemo* is a man's sense of his own futility and ephemerality; of his relativity, his comparativeness, of his virtual nothingness ... Nobody wants to be a nobody. All our acts are partly devised to fill or mask the emptiness we feel at the core ... We all like to be loved or hated; it is a sign that we shall be remembered, that we did not "not exist". For this reason, many unable to create love have created hate. That too is remembered.

It is the excellence of the Gift of Set which enables the Setian to transcend existentialism: to dispense with its "Devil", the *nemo*. To the Setian, the experience of consciousness **itself** reflects the divinity of Set, hence one's own divinity and "necessity supreme". An individual awakened to *Xeper* no longer craves profane validation of his or her significance; To Be/To Become in one's own Self-awareness is a far more sublime validation.

One might well say, therefore, that we have returned to "where we first started", as ancient recipients of the Gift of Set, and that - through the experience of Initiation - we do indeed "know the place for the first time". It is the restlessness not to have ceased from exploration that is *Xeper*, it is the "end" - a continuous consciousness of the ever-evolving, ever-cycling self - that is Remanifestation. To be or not to be: That is the question.

To be: That is the answer.