

The Scroll of Set

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[1] Astrology and the Æon of Set

- by Ruth Nielsen II°

The committed Setian is above all else a rugged individualist. In my discussions with Setians on the subject of astrology, a frequent comment has been that they don't like the idea of "something out there" determining what they will do. This concern has been turning over in my mind for some time as I sought to correlate what I have experienced of astrology first-hand in my ongoing studies, and what I have come to know of Set and Leviathan through the Temple of Set and its writings.

It was the reading of some of these that brought the mystery of astrology into focus for me for the first time. Here I use the word "mystery" in the sense explained in the "Apologetics" articles - a core belief that moves one into initiatory states when one explores it relevant to one's self or deity. A diluted/distorted version appears in mythology coexisting with the mystery. Its primary value lies in the personal answer to the question: "What does this mystery do for me?" The Setian means: "How does this mystery assist in my process of self-discovery, self-actualization, or *Xeper*?"

The questions that I had were the following:

- (1) How can a future event or condition be known in the present?
- (2) How can free will exist if its choices are already known?

It has been sad that Set does not remember the future. In considering this, I would like to suggest that Set, however, knows **where to look** for the future, and **how to discern it should he choose**. I suggest that this is so because the trail of Leviathan must reach into the future - if it exists at all and if it is true to its nature of being the principle of continuity and ageless existence. And exist, I believe, it does.

The future of any being's physical form in its lifetime is set in the genetic code with which it was born. It has been postulated by advances in the biological sciences that cells reproduce their own kind correctly even after mutilation, due to the code of creation, though man is capable of altering the code.

The reader is referred to *Quantum Healing* by Deepak Chopra, M.D. This author suggests that the

reason certain character traits show up for succeeding generations in families is also due to this factor of memory.

The reader is also referred to page #7 of the June 1988 *Scroll of Set* for Adept Ronald Barrett's article "The Genetic Code and the Gift of Set".

A question that presents itself and is dealt with in Dr. Chopra's book is: "Does memory exist beyond/in spite of/without matter?" In the larger view of things, I have come to suspect that this "memory" is the programming of the mechanical universe as well as the self-selected programs by which we initiated our own personal evolutions. I think of Leviathan as the spark of **initiative** that keeps everything moving along in the mechanical universe, and that nourishes the deep yearning within to realize our potential, thus inspiring us to use the Gift of Set.

As physical beings we are part of the mechanical universe, like it or not. That part of us which is, may hold the key to our immortality. That pattern of acting and reacting which gives us our character, personality, and shoe size may well have been deliberately chosen by **oneself** in a long-forgotten past in our first encounter with Set as a companion intelligent being, charting our course along the trail of Leviathan. It's my speculation that we chose then, for ourselves now and for the future. It is also my speculation that somewhere in our core being exist our future selves, already full-grown and willfully directing the choices of the moment to bring themselves into the existence we have chosen. The ebb and flow of life eternal begins and ever is **now**.

Perhaps Set can see the future - if he chooses. We could have free will even with the knowledge of our future selves because **we chose them and they are us**. Free will, I think, can exist even if its future choices are already known in the present, if one can accept the future selves. The choices of the future selves are none but our own.

In all this it seems that the greatest difficulty is the fear that such a belief will allow no choice nor exercise of will in the future. However it seems such a fear is due more to a lack of real self knowledge. We don't think much about the past and present having been determined by genetic material - even down to our emotional response patterns. I suggest that is so because we are familiar with the past and present.

We have experience in manipulating the "givens" of nature and nurture in the exercise of free will. It is true that we often delude ourselves into thinking that a willful act is truly willful when in fact it is an impulsive action related to genetic programming. But to the aware Setian such an act can be willful if it is done with knowledge of the impulse and the consequences.

We do not always have to choose against nature to be truly willful beings. But to truly control our destiny it is important to know as much as possible

how our choices originate from instinct and therefore genetic coding, and which responses are related to the core self and which to the mechanical universe that supports our physical being. Then we can be more in control of changes, can effect them more surely.

If such change is desired in the present, I suspect it is from a desire that has been carried forward from the past and is prompted from the future selves. With this in mind it is apparent that a very fruitful quest for the individual is an attitude and desire inventory. What, for example, has one accepted as fate, as something that couldn't possibly change no matter how much one desired it to change? What is said about the Setian daring even that which was thought impossible?

The basic fear expressed by most of us is the loss of free will. I think therein lies the answer to the future selves' nature. To be true to the past and present selves, the future ones can be no less firm in desiring such freedom for each of themselves.

In pondering their nature, then, and all their possible choices, we have first to relax and know that in our core being there will be no violation of our true nature. **That** is the message of the fear, I think. **That** fear is the safeguard, perhaps the "mark of the beast (Set)" that sets us apart from the other beings with whom we share the universe. What we'll be we are already, and already were self-determining, **if** we truly desire this state of existence as our most basic *modus operandi*.

The specifics of future lives [as to how that free will is used] are unknown to us except in special revelation for a good reason. In our own lifetimes we have seen bewildering changes. I for one never dreamt as a child that we'd see plastic wrap. However I believe that if such a premonition were important to my survival or sense of self, the future selves would have tipped me off.

It is for that reason that I have a respect for the ritual exploration of past and future selves. This technique is an excellent one for others to follow, to tune into the core being and get to know ourselves. Within that encounter we will know the future as we need to, not in the potentially-debilitating addiction of the curiosity-seeker, but in the role of the Black Magician seeking a means to *Xeper*.

What does all this have to do with astrology? For me it brings the study of astrology back to its ancient status as an honorable magical discipline, one of the tools of priests and magi. The Word of Magus Flowers, *Runa*, points to the **real** astrology, that part of the ancient science which has existed and always will exist as the truth, however poorly understood at present.

Astrology has suffered from the proliferation of incompetent and mercenary practitioners. Even the

well-meaning have inadequately witnessed their convictions, due to interpretations based upon perverted philosophical systems far removed from the ancient sources.

Reading the stars is one of the oldest recorded skills of mankind. It is logical that this too is part of the Gift of Set. The reading is not done as a "cookbook" affair as is generally supposed from the tabloids. The true reading is a combination of mathematical principles, astronomical observations, symbolical correspondences of an archetypal character that originated in ancient times, current psycho-physiological theory, and intuition.

It is impossible to function successfully as an aware astrologer without discernment. I have tried too many times to "call" an event without sufficient contact with my core being. For that reason I find it highly unlikely that I will ever consider astrology as a business for profit.

Current computer programs are remarkable in the printed reports generated of astrology charts covering all aspects of life. But it still takes considerable skill to individualize the readings. Every one I have seen had either a number of seemingly contradictory statements, or left unanswered a major concern of the client. It takes an expert to sift through this and provide the client with more than a colorful printout.

Over the 17 years I have studied astrology. I have noticed some areas of correspondence which eluded my efforts to circumvent them. I have tried to manipulate events, to hurry manifestations, to avoid setbacks. You name it and I have tried it. I have kept some records, but invariably what I was concentrating on turned out to not be the ultimate lesson.

I have learned through much frustration that the only way to really use astrology is with the large picture in mind. Day-by-day planetary events have little meaning except in relation to the course of one's life.

They are like mile-markers on the interstate highway of life, the path of which is charted by the slow-moving planets that may not even complete their orbit about the Sun in one's lifetime. Too often emphasis is placed on the moments of one's life by impatience and curiosity, but the years of one's life are lost to unwitting impulse.

In pondering the fact that I could not manipulate some situations written in the stars to "make them go away" [and here I refer especially to the retrogrades discussed below], I discovered ways to transmute them to useable energy. I must admit that I like pleasure like everyone else, and to do this is at times most definitely not pleasant. I have avoided and complained and stalled the work, and in the end regretted my wasted energy.

The method I've used on several occasions involved the use of ritual or periods of deep reflection unbiased as much as possible by emotional issues. I ponder what I feel to be the symbolic issues, both in their relation to the physical, mechanical universe and their potential higher octaves in the subjective, magical realm.

In this way will works an alchemical action upon the situation and derives the satisfaction of discovering far more than meets the untrained eye. I have discovered potential where once I perceived only nuisance and restriction. And the clues were in the mathematical relationships between the planets (aspects), the symbolic meanings [from my Setian perspective of astrological signs and the planets], and intuition lit by the Black Flame.

Therein I realized I could not ethically use the gift of astrology without discernment. That is the realm of Ma'at. It is not just a question of choosing between opposites. It is rather a matter of seeing layers of consequences from the mundane to the magical. It is seeing the octaves of experience available with the given situation and its projected time-period until completion. It is the weighing of the hidden to select that which the self most desires, to fulfill its will, an action I now believe is prompted by all the selves in concert, if recognized and accepted as such.

For those familiar with the psychiatric diagnosis of "multiple personalities", I have to smile at how unearthly real may be that concept. Successful treatment of the condition is said to occur when the patient has integrated all the personalities into one functioning "within normal limits".

One other important lesson I learned is that of patience. Now that I realize the horoscope of this lifetime was chosen by my selves past and future, I see it in a far different light. I have seen this specifically in the action of the planets called "retrograde motion".

Over and over again an action that I have noticed began at the time a planet goes retrograde for the first time from a specific point, is not completed or fully settled emotionally until the retrograde motion is finished for that point of the zodiac. "Retrograde", for those not familiar with this term, is the **apparent** back-and-forth motion of a planet over a few degrees in the zodiac. The weird thing is that this isn't even a real motion of the planet, but is an apparent motion caused by the turning of the Earth on its axis while the Earth orbits; this makes the planet in the sky appear at different spots.

Now when I look at the events and my reactions at the time of the retrograde, I can not only guess fairly accurately how it will turn out, but by tuning into the core self look for the meanings that my other selves may see.

I am no longer tempted to manipulate, even by ritual, a situation that may contain a hidden treasure until I have pondered it with all the magical tools I have. The primary ones I use are ritual for insight, astrology, Tarot, and infrequently numerology.

I have learned many things while studying as an Adept in the Temple of Set. One thing is that the writings have an energy within them that cannot but help to further one's exploration of the magical if one takes the time to read and reflect on them. Though they are sometimes difficult to understand, we have only to consider the source of their inspiration, and the means to greater understanding will be ours for the asking, though it take a lifetime to realize.

It is the great fortune of all the Initiates of the Temple of Set to have access to the works and Words of the Magi in our midst. No matter what each of us may have as a special area of study, it is well worthwhile to keep coming back to the writings of those who have labored before us in recording their efforts, inspirations, and Understandings. One never knows when in reflections upon those works, our own personal mysteries will come into focus.

[2] **The Door**

- by Patty Hardy III°

As I prepared to meet other Setians I° in the Set-XI Conclave hospitality suite, my mind drifted back to the moment I first stood outside such a suite. I recall asking myself what on earth could have led me to this: to prepare to walk into a den of vipers and pirates and big bad wolves; and then I collected my thoughts and walked in. I will never forget that moment.

Satanism is part of the Setian heritage. As a member of the Priesthood, I now know that the Satan who inspired serf and scholar against medieval Christianity was a confused mixture of Set's dark promise and the horned pagan life-gods demonized by the church. But when I came to the Temple, I had only three things to go on: my personal contact with Set that was the result of 10 years' solo occult study and practice, the Information Letter of the Temple, and the popular image of "Satanism".

Around every campfire of early man, there were those who huddled and told tales of the evils in the darkness; and there were a handful who took up a torch and walked into that darkness - who stepped beyond fear of the unknown in their desire for truth. When I meet another who has stepped through that door - a child of those who walked in the darkness - I know this is no ordinary human. And though each of us walks alone, there is a pleasure in meeting, and delight in the recognition of another.

[3] Overheard at Conclave

- collected by Ruth Nielsen II°

Introductions:

“I’m from Salt Lake City - the belly of the beast.”

“Hi! I’m from Portland, Oregon - his hindquarters.”

* * *

After encountering the ethereal beings discreetly hidden in a plain, small trunk, a certain Magistra of the Vampyric essence was heard to say, “I want a snake. I **want** a snake!”

* * *

“How many Setians does it take to change a lightbulb?”

“One to hold the lightbulb, two hundred to turn the world.”

* * *

The I°/II°/III° Meeting:

“Does anyone have any surprises or discoveries to share?”

Mumbled responses from somewhere in the room:

“I haven’t slept for 52 hours.”

“What day is it? I came here on Wednesday.”

“I was impressed with that somersault of yours the other night.”

“So was I. I tripped.”

* * *

“When I was an Adept, I knew a lot more than I did when I was Recognized to the III°. Trouble is, when I was an Adept and had all this knowledge, **nobody** asked me anything.”

* * *

“I felt so awkward. But I’ve been working with this one Magistra. She said, ‘You have a brilliance; you just don’t see it.’ And I wondered if she were crazy. I went to the Conclave working and saw all these beautiful peacocks - and now I am one of them.”

* * *

About the Conclave working:

“The atmosphere was quite charged, erotic actually. If it had lasted another hour, I’m afraid we’d all have been shades of Dennis Wheatley.”

* * *

“I recall remarking to someone on the intense expression on Dr. Aquino’s face during the working. She said, ‘That’s **not** Dr. Aquino.’ But I said it was, as I was standing with a good view. ‘That was **not** Dr. Aquino,’ she said again. And then I realized **who** it was.”

* * *

“I was amazed to survive the power of the working coherently.”

* * *

“Beware of the vampyres!” Mumbles of agreement rose from the group. One prince of a gentleman added, “Especially when a certain Magistra comes up and says, ‘What do you think of my dress?’ And all I could think of was what in the world must she look like underneath!” He sighs. “She’s gorgeous!”

* * *

“I have stopped being an armchair occultist and have become a practicing occultist. Conclave wrenched me from my chair.”

* * *

About Magistra Aquino:

“She is nobility, a presence greater than life.”

“She looks like what she is.” “In the working she wasn’t a vampyre; she was the Queen of Hell.”

“The way she deals with power is awesome. You never see the power fully until the working. Then it is unleashed. It explodes.”

* * *

About the magical current:

“We have seen the things that myths are made of.” “Conclave has been a place of sparks of intimate fire.” “We of the Fourth Ordering of Man have given back to the Constellation of the Thigh a name.” “People say they aren’t expressing themselves well, but I’m just getting these body rushes. And I think, ‘That’s something said by a **real being**, not a shadow.’”

* * *

About Ipsissimus Aquino:

“The power and majesty of the man is seen in the innocence of him. Realize he is most receptive in this innocence.”

* * *

“Dr. Aquino said to me once, ‘The only thing I do is look in various, sometimes strange places for gems of truth, make them coherent, and share them with others.’ There’s no arrogance there. I’ve only seen this simplicity that is absolutely sublime. That’s why he gets into so much trouble out there. He can’t lie. He expresses himself so well.”

* * *

“He lives in the **now**. He enjoys each moment. I saw him confronted with a dog that was 145 pounds of insanity, a dog that eats garage doors. And it came up to lick his face. The look on his face was priceless, as he gave himself to ‘dog lick face’.” There is an incredible photo of Dr. Aquino with a python, engaged in like activity. **Now** where is Geraldo?

* * *

“I had heard so much about him and was so awed by his writing I couldn’t imagine how I should greet him when we finally met. Do I bow, curtsy, or what?”

* * *

On another theme: "This is meant to be a low-key conclave." "The bus boys **must** know something is going on. They keep giving us those gorgeous smiles." "Well, perhaps it's because we don't destroy the furniture." "What do you mean? In my room there **isn't** any furniture!"

* * *

Reported overheard comments from the public lolling in the lobby:

"**Who** are all these interesting people?" "There's so much wealth here." "I hear it's the Reynolds group." "You mean Reynolds Aluminum?" Conclusion: A new myth has arisen. There now exists a secret occult society bent on world domination which recently met brazenly in the midst of Hollywood and calls itself the "Aluminati".

* * *

Tattooing:

A rather large group of Setians ventured into the mystique of the tattooed, submitting their bodies to the orgiastic mutilation of studied needle artistry. Lest you think this an exaggeration, here's what was overheard from the "willing victims", who also claim they want **more**. Reminiscent of tales of the lust engendered by the vampire's bite?

* * *

"The tattoo artist was really something else. First he says, 'We've got two live ones here from Ohio.' **Then** he says, 'I'll charge you extra if you enjoy it.'"

* * *

"Does it hurt? Do you like it?" one newly-tattooed Adept questioned a more "experienced" Magistra.

* * *

"I'm so slow ... I'm so slow ... I'm so slow ..."

* * *

Magus Flowers' workshop on his Word *Runa*:

In another place and article, comments on the workshop will be made in a serious mode, which the workshop truly deserves. All participants, however, were delighted by his unique and spicy wit, for instance: "The Golden Dawn spawned such prolific writers that I suspect it may have been a conspiracy of occult publishers to get people to buy books." "I just couldn't do the kind of work Ralph Blum would. I guess it's just a weakness of mine."

* * *

The Magic Castle - a place that gives new meaning to the phrase "skeleton in the closet":

"Did you try to use the phone in that quaint little booth?"

* * *

"Did you see that statue in the ladies' room -

the one of the Greek god with the switch on his thing?"

* * *

"Isn't the Doctor's father a real gem?" "Yes, and I can see where he gets his eyebrows from."

* * *

And the meal: For someone from bratwurst valley it was unforgettable. The company of Setians all dressed in their finest, nibbling a gourmet feast of succulent salmon, paté, and exotic salads as much a delight to see as to taste ... sipping exquisite wine with a Prince ... an evening of laughter and the fun that is pure Hollywood ... and a night of magic of all domains.

* * *

Thank you, Dr. Aquino, for having us as your guests at the Castle. It was an honor and a delight. And thank you, Magistra Aquino, for planning an unforgettable experience called Set-XI.

[4] **The Sensuous and the Cerebral**

- by Rosemary Webb I^o

One of my goals in attending Set-XI was to gain a better understanding of the Orders of the Temple. The Conclave offered two open meetings: the Order of the Vampyre and the Order of Shuti. The Bull of Ombos Pylon had recently done a Vampyric working, and on the plane ride to L.A. I had read Anne Rice's *Interview with a Vampire*, so I had a fair idea of what the O.V. was all about. But the Order of Shuti? Balance and opposites? This could be about anything.

Magistra Aquino chaired the Order of the Vampyre meeting. We listened to a tape of part of the Mythic Theatre Production by Abhoora Noestria (Setian Cinda Seaton). When the lights were turned up again, I was fully aware of my skin as a sensory organ. I felt that feral [energy?] hunger, sensuality, and eroticism like I had felt in my previous Vampyric working. Next O.V. members reported what they had been doing for the past year. Members and prospective members discussed workings and how to become involved safely with the O.V. The dangers of these feelings without control were emphasized again and again.

During the short break between the two meetings, I realized that what had been described I felt too. It was intensely pleasurable, exciting; but I felt like a little kind indulging in play-acting. Fun to do sometimes, but it just isn't me.

Magister Menschel started the Order of Shuti meeting by describing the interests of the Order, its previous workshop [over the Thanksgiving holiday last year], and the Order's publication *Dialogues*: reports of previous discussions and further discussion of them. Then he threw the floor open to

our comments.

Topics touched on in that hour and a half, and following the Order working, included: what opposites to consider, what is self and not-self, how the self is defined after it sheds the body it now inhabits, how to practice for that shedding [Astral projection or bilocation], how to create a language precise enough to convey shades of meaning to experienced Initiates while remaining accessible to new Initiates, how different tools for writing (a magical act in itself) reflect one's true self differently for different individuals, how to foster magic in children without indoctrinating them into a belief system, how introducing new ideas and techniques into a previously-effective magical repertoire seems to always produce a time when nothing is effective until the Initiate can incorporate the new item into a new and larger effective repertoire [new Setians be warned!], and many others I cannot reconjure.

A simple list of topics cannot begin to convey the freewheeling, but always considerate interchange of ideas and experiences. As each Initiate spoke - and virtually all did, even the shy ones with white medallions - each added a personal flavor to the energy in the room. All shared the marvels of their magical experiences, as we pondered together the greater questions that face us.

This was dialogue elevated to a sensual experience. My thoughts were energized, and I used others' experiences to supplement my own, and to hone my own ideas to their essentials. The O.S. meeting was a meeting of equals among the Elect: equals of more or less experience, but equals nonetheless, sharing of themselves willingly.

So if an integral part of yourself is the cerebral - if some of your most cherished memories are long, philosophical discussions - if you want to discuss the magical with others of your kind, investigate the Order of Shutti. Write for a sample of *Dialogues*, or start a mail-conversation with someone on these [or other] topics.

Most of all, though, remember to have fun on your quest, and don't lose sight of the physical while concentrating on ideas.

[5] **Secret Diary of a Conclave "Virgin"**

(aged 36-5/6ths)

- by Julian Clark III°

Monday, October 22 at 7AM: I left base camp in London with newly-Recognized Adept Garry Graves for Heathrow Airport, where security is so tight that you must arrive at least two hours before departure.

At approximately 11:30 we were taxiing along the runway. The last time I had flown was 26 years

ago, in a twin-engined, prop-driven aircraft of some antiquity. Up in the air; not so bad - until Adept Thomas says, as we bank steeply to the left, "Look - Wembley Stadium." I had never seen it at that height before and felt somewhat uneasy, to say the least.

At last we approach Los Angeles Airport. I feel cheated; I haven't seen the famous "HOLLYWOOD" sign, so we can't really have arrived. A moment later, Adept Thomas says, "There's the sign. Look, on the hill over there." I strain against my seat-belt. "Where?" At which point our pilot decides to bank to the right, the left wing comes up, and all I can see is an engine. Never mind; I know we are here because a little while later the Immigration Officer stamps my passport and says, "Welcome to Los Angeles."

Now I want you to bear in mind that the temperature when we left England was about 50°; when we stepped out of the airport, it was like walking into a furnace at 90°. We later discovered that California was experiencing a freak heat-wave for that time of year.

After a long taxi ride, we finally arrived at the Holiday Inn. 3:30 PM here, but time for bed (11:30 PM) in England. First problem: There were three of us, sharing, but only two beds. I dearly love my fellow Setians, but ...

Problem solved two hours later with the arrival of a roll-away bed. By this time I am not in the best of moods, so an ignorant barman does not go down well. I begin to have doubts about this pilgrimage. Finally at 9 PM I collapse in bed in a "coma", having now been up for some 23 hours.

The next day we start exploring Hollywood. How inexpensive everything is compared to the U.K.! People are friendly and courteous. Things will be O.K. after all. The barman was a "one off" (meaning "unique").

Conclave is just about on us now. Fellow Setians begin to arrive. I am taken by Priest Austen to meet, for the first time, Ipsissimus Lewis - who until this moment was just a name at the bottom of my E-mail. At the risk of making him blush, I found him a gentleman of the highest degree [pun intended].

Later on in the lounge a bespectacled gentleman approached me and said, "Hi, I'm Bob Menschel." Here was our Chairman of the Council of Nine introducing himself as informally as anyone could. I liked this more and more.

In fact this is a good point to pause and say to all of you whom I met at the Conclave that without exception you are **all** the nicest group of people I could have met, and it is my personal pleasure to be associated with you.

Back to the diary!

I'm suffering from jet-lag and unsure which evening it is. While I'm enjoying a conversation (one of many) with Ipsissimus Lewis, we're joined by "the man himself". The High Priest and Magistra Aquino were two of the reasons I had made a point to attend the Conclave; I desperately wanted to meet them. A quick "gulp" and "What do I say?" passed through my mind, as he firmly grasped my hand and said, "Hello." Conclave was going to be something special!

At the first general meeting Magister Menschel asked if I might be allowed the extraordinary favor of being allowed to videotape the introduction. Everyone generously agreed to this, and introductions were made as "de Mille" Clark tried to make a "blockbuster".

Obviously we were coming to points in the program where Setians were to assemble in smaller groups for Order meetings, workshops, etc. For me the highlight was the Conclave working, "The Dæmonic Confluence". I will attempt to put into non-mystical words what this working meant to me. We were divided into small groups, each with small quantities of essential oils. We worked separately, yet together, summoning elements and godheads and charging the oils with their essences. The oils were then brought together as our wills were sent out into the universe. Then the power we had raised was re-absorbed into ourselves as we were individually anointed with the oil and the charging it contained. What the working achieved in us in general, and in me in particular, I feel only time can tell. All those who participated in this working will find beneficial, subtle changes in themselves and in their lives; of that I am sure!

I have neglected to mention the Recognitions which took place during the working. Congratulations to all; a special welcome to my brother Priests Don Webb and Brian Zimmer, and my more personal felicitations to Magister Austen - a first for the U.K.!

This account of the working is a personal one, and others there may not necessarily agree with it. I can state without embarrassment that I was moved to tears by the sheer beauty of the working, and for a short period neither time nor space meant anything to me. Those of you who participated in the following day's discussion at the Priesthood meeting know what I am talking about.

The Magic Castle is quite something. The entertainment was terrific, but, amusingly enough, most of my pleasure came from talking to a piano. I informed Dr. Aquino that I felt stupid talking to a piano. He agreed, but pointed out that I was actually talking to Irma, the ghost playing the piano, so that was O.K.

In between Conclave appointments I was equally

thrilled to talk with fellow Setians about magical and mundane topics in a social setting. "Please drop the 'Priest Clark' and call me 'Julian'" was regularly repeated.

Sunday was the Conclave "day of rest", so in the company of Adepts Thomas and Graves (lovely name, that) I visited Disneyland. I was a bit disappointed, as it's really designed with kids in mind; they get all the fun. I later discovered that Magic Mountain was also open. Had I known, I could have indulged my "scare yourself witless" fetish - perhaps another year.

Do I detect a slightly gloomy atmosphere? Yes, Conclave is coming to a close. All my wonderful new friends are departing; some seem to have departed "secretly". I can't blame them, as I am experiencing "lumpy throat syndrome" myself. I blame it on the air-conditioning; it makes the eyes sting. As I state in later E-mail to Dr. and Magistra Aquino, I should kick myself because after all I am an "evil Satanist".

Finally it is our turn to depart. We enjoyed our last few hours in the wonderful company of Magistra Reynolds, among others, and now the taxi is waiting.

As the clocks were changed the previous Sunday, it is dark at 5:45 PM as we taxi once more down the runway. As we leave the ground, I am definitely on edge, as it didn't seem that we had the power for take-off. There is hardly any runway left as we finally limp skyward, and the engines are really straining to get us up. Perhaps there are peculiar air currents. Adept Thomas, who has an uncanny knack for "putting his foot into things", voices the same fears I feel, which does nothing for my confidence.

After an uneventful trip - we managed to stay in the air - we arrived back in sunny, freezing-cold London. Adept Clark and mini-Setian Neil await to welcome the weary pilgrim; then it's home to bed with dreams of a magical time in Hollywood and a return to next year's Conclave firmly in mind.

I don't know what I had expected in Hollywood. Stand-offishness? Conceit? No chance! Such qualities belong to mere mortals. All I found was an openness and friendliness offered by everyone and, I sincerely hope, returned by me in kind.

This diary has no end. It cannot end when each year such a party of people meet to share with one another their ideas, beliefs, discoveries - in short, themselves!

[6] **Set-XI**

- by Don Webb III°

Carry a Name across the dark light years on a stream of auric will. Now we have seen a constellation set in the sky by love and law, and we have seen a new myth voyage into the hearts of men, evermore to change, evermore to change.

[7] **Ritual Workshop: "Das Tierdrama"**

- by Stephen E. Flowers V°

There is a great secret to the creation of effective rituals - that they must be created according to working principles. These working principles are many in number and form, and I suppose that if one wanted to, one could create a whole, worldwide, cross-cultural typology of the ritual structures that have worked in the past. If they **have** worked, they **will** work. A structure is a framework through which any kind of magical aim or purpose can be effected.

A classic example of the way in which structures can be manipulated is found in the Black Mass. The structure is that of the Roman Catholic Mass, but its purposes may be diametrically opposed to that favored by the church. [In fact the ritual formula of the mass is based on old, pre-Christian Roman religious practice, and so is an example of the Christians creating and instituting a sort of "black mass" of their own - as a "mockery" of the official Roman cult.]

In the Temple of Set there are no official rites, which is as it should and must be. This leaves Setians in an interesting position when they undertake the practice of individual and group workings in a Setian context. Where are the rites to come from? There are many answers to this question. But one of the first of them comes in the form of a reformation and a maturing of existing Satanic rites. One of the great sources for these is, of course, Anton LaVey's *The Satanic Rituals*.

Before Initiates can adapt the working, they should first be familiar with the inner ritual or working structure of the rite. This is best done by reading or working through the rite, asking at each step: (1) What is the meaning of this procedure? (2) How is this meaning effected?

The overall sequence of steps is also essential, of course. The symbolic **actions** are often more important to the effectiveness of the working than are the words spoken during the ritual. [The actions - or "stage directions", to be profane about it - are sometimes referred to as "rubrics".]

The outline of ritual procedures given in Michael Aquino's *Black Magic* constitute just such

a structure for the outer framework of a ritual. It is what is done in the working segment that is our focus here.

Several years ago the Bull of Ombos Pylon performed "*Das Tierdrama*" in a Setian ritual context. Before revising the text, an analysis was done to see how it worked. Structurally it is quite simple. There is a "teaching" given by the "Sayer of the Law", repeated twice, which is followed each time by the rhythmic, mindless, responsive repetitive chants of the Tiermenschen answering to the precepts of the "Law". "Sind wir nicht Menschen?"

But it should be noted that it is as much the **rhythm** of the language as the meaning of the words that make the rite effective. [This is the same ritual process at work in the parts of the Catholic Mass where responses from the congregation are called for.] Again these are **tools** which can be put to any purpose by the aware Black Magician.

This part of the rite is followed by a threefold act by the celebrant: drinking from the chalice, caressing the flesh of the "altar", and gazing at the blade of a drawn sword. This involves three of the five senses - fitting for a Satanic rite. The Tiermenschen try to make the Sign of the Horns, mostly unsuccessfully. Another responsive/rhythmic exchange transpires. Finally a mouse is released from a cage, and the Invocator makes an insulting remark which degrades the human mental capacity.

The pivotal points in making this a more truly Black Magical working - turning the focus from the man=beast equation more to the man=god end of the spectrum of meaning - lie in the actions or non-actions of the Invocator. Instead of involving three of the senses, there is only a meditation on the shining blade of a knife (or surgical scalpel or other ferocious-looking surgical instrument). Here the symbolic emphasis shifts away from the world of the senses to that of the intellect - from accepting "human nature" to transcending it. Finally the whole use of the mouse is deleted, and the climax of the rite really comes with the exaltation of the name of Set: "Hail Set!" From the degradation of the original, an ennobling statement has been symbolically generated.

As a final note to this, it should be pointed out that the "true" nature of the revision was not fully understood until **after** the working had been physically performed. Workings are usually most effective when worked.

[8] **Flames Leap Up from Down Under**

The Temple of Set is pleased to announce the Coming Into Being of our first Australian Pylon. On September 13, 1990 Adept Adam Campbell (Sentinel), together with Adepts Kevin Grise and Wojciech Adler-Drozd, formally brought the Infernus Pylon into being.

The Pylon is based in Melbourne and is designed to advance the standard of Black Magic in Australia. The Pylon will concentrate on the practice of GBM, and will hold ritual workings and monthly workshops on a variety of subjects. A newsletter, *The Black Sun*, will be published by the Pylon. It will detail upcoming working plans, local news, and notes from each of the workshops.

While the Pylon is designed for Initiates in the Greater Melbourne area, all Temple members are encouraged to contact the Sentinel if they are going to be in the area. The Pylon reports they have already developed a penchant for holding outdoor workings, including one in a bat-filled cave within a seaside cliff!

[9] **Commentary:** **“Direction of Influence”** - by James Knowles I°

For a number of years I have had cause to constantly deal with a wide range of government officials - everything from local politicians to Capitol Hill. And in these dealings I have observed a number of anticipatory patterns. Some of these are more difficult than others, because a good politician is a master manipulator in his own right. But nevertheless these patterns do exist.

When I desire to change something, I scrutinize particular individuals in their daily activities more closely than usual. Additionally I closely watch their reactions to various hypothetical situations presented to each person whom I intend to use in order to achieve success. The mythical authority here is the hypothetical situation. I've learned that the mythical authority can be whatever the magician desires. Authority is granted as the magician wills, and does not necessarily need religious connotation.

Once I feel I have enough feedback to suffice for a GBM working, I carry it to the ritual chamber. During a GBM working an environment is developed which will divulge two or three most probable outcomes when particular pressure-points - permeable areas of anticipatory patterns - are “touched” in a certain way. Having completed a successful GBM working, I go and make adjustments by “touching” these pressure-points in a way I feel will most probably bring about the

desired outcome. Direction of influence is one of the most important elements in determining success in a Black Magical operation.

[10] **Commentary:** **“Direction of Influence”** - by Patty A. Hardy III°

While reading Setian Brunner's article “Direction of Influence” in the October *Scroll*, this came to mind: The Black Magician alone must take the first steps in formulating a picture of his or her universe. But in striving to improve this picture, and changing it, do not neglect the work already done, both by avowed magicians and by secular students of human nature.

While doing research for a paper for a night course on organizational behavior, I was amused to come across a discussion of influence tactics used by managers together with an analysis of the effectiveness of these tactics. It's then the job of the Black Magician to judge how such information can be applied to one's own environment. Anton LaVey's theories in *The Compleat Witch* may be effective in some cases, but in others you might as well be trying to kill a tiger with a slingshot: Not only will you fail to achieve your goal, but you will call unwanted attention to yourself. Select techniques with care. The ability to cause change is dependent both on the permeability of anticipatory patterns and reality constructions, and on the skill and focus of the magician.

[11] **Set-XI International Conclave** - by Cinda Seaton I°

Beloved Dr. Aquino:

A song of praise does arise from the ancient depths of my soul. It hisses through the spinning winds and roars in rhythm with the ocean tides, that its intensity be somehow expressed.

My heart's wisdom tells me that thy might sword has been wielded in ways we cannot know, that you stand as the pillar - celestial beam - amidst the yearning hearts and minds that are the cells of Set's magnificent body in this æon of time upon the Earth.

In serene dignity you sup upon the very core that is the magic and power of Set. At your side stands your magnificent queen, who emanates the rapturous beauty and powerful mystery that is the very gateway to your knowing - a knowing which soars beyond all format of analysis into that upon which it rests: its sacred Presence.

Thank you for devouring the flame so fully, so deeply, through its searing, ever-quickening degrees of resonance, that we may partake of its igniting

kiss. Thank you for extending the chalice, the promise of Set, that your courage has borne.

[12] **Editorial**

- by Nancy Flowers IV°

As I am sure you have by now realized, much of this issue is devoted to people describing their experiences of Conclave: perceptions and impressions, learning and growth. Conclaves are truly unique events - our yearly gathering to meet, explore, exchange, compare - and *Xeper*.

It was a never-ending source of wonder for me when I stood back and viewed the 50-odd [no pun intended ... well, those of you who know me know **that's** not true!] Setians gathered together for the purpose of working magic. Walking down Hollywood Boulevard in the middle of a group of 8 or so [What do you call a group of Setians - a gaggle, a clutch, a pride?], it struck me once again how diverse we are.

And as we trooped into one of those cheap, Heavy-Metal jewelry stores, I wondered at the sales clerks' reactions. Just what could this motley crew of 20-50-year-olds have in common? We clearly all knew each other. We're dressed in styles which range from conservative to tie-dye to Gothic death-rock black. We are dancers, students, teachers, accountants, computer experts, military. Our accents range from northeast to southwest and everything in-between. And there we were, all of us cooing over the little bats and spiders.

What **do** we have in common? We are all so very, very different. Unique. Sometimes this causes various types of difficulties: problems in communication; differences in approach, style, personality. Believe me, the world has never seen another such group of strong-willed individuals.

So what **do** we have in common? We respect the individuation for which each Initiate strives. We honor the Black Flame that burns so brightly in the deepest hearts of Set's Elect. We share ourselves together on that magical plane of existence where we work.

And when we meet together and work together, and when that sharing also sparks the fire of friendship, well, that's an added bonus. For me these truly precious relationships make returning to the World of Horrors bearable. So as I sit here at the computer, brand new little baby boa curled around my neck, to each of you out there whom I am proud to call friend, I want to say "thank you" for a truly memorable Conclave.



The Black Pyramid

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°

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[13] **Set-XI Afterthoughts**

I assume that elsewhere in this issue, and among Setians generally there is plenty of chit-chat about the Conclave, so I don't think I need to write a "formal report" about it here. Indeed it would take several pages of the *Scroll* to do so, and I would probably still miss several important points. A few observations nevertheless:

- Enthusiastic congratulations to all of those whose recent Recognitions were able to be formalized at Set-XI, and in particular to new Magister David Austen and new Priests Don Webb and Brian Zimmer. [Since the Conclave we have occasion to welcome another Setian, Richard Saunders of England, to the Priesthood as well.]

- Yet another word of appreciation [and marvel] to Priest Robert Robinson and Setian Cinda Seaton for their stunning "Mythic Theatre" Working. In commemoration of this Working, by decree of the High Priest of Set, the celestial constellations known to the profane as Ursa Major and Ursa Minor are henceforth to be known within the Temple of Set as *Sokaris* and *Nammu-Ani* respectively, as was sent forth during the Conclave Working.

- Thanks to all who participated in the Conclave's art show, and for the Order of the Python for bringing it all together. All of us are used to seeing beautiful Setian art in isolated settings; it is an entirely different sensation to see an exhibit of many kinds of it all in one place. [A foreshadowing of an eventual Temple of Set Archives/ Museum?]

- Appreciation also to Adept Ruth Nielsen for her "Aroma Therapy" workshop, in which Setians with an interest in the field of herbs, oils, and perfumes had an opportunity to explore and discuss this subject.

- I think that everyone who did not vanish in a puff of smoke at the Magic Castle enjoyed our Conclave Banquet and evening there, and it was a particular pleasure to be joined for the evening by one of the Temple's first Honorary Members [from the year X] Forrest J Ackerman, and also by my father Michael Aquino, Sr. It was quite a week for Forry, as the evening before our banquet he was one of the first recipients of a "Grimmy" (the "Oscar" for horror films) presented at Universal Studios.

- Speaking of Universal, many Setians took advantage of our Hollywood Conclave site to tour both it and Disneyland, narrowly escaping attacks by Cylons, King Kong, and Jaws ...

- Priestess Hardy's lecture on H.P. Lovecraft was an eye-opener for many Setians who probably thought they knew all there was to know about HPL [myself included].

- And as with all Conclaves, it was a delight to "put faces to names" of Setians who had traveled from the farthest reaches of the Temple's geography - with once again a sizable delegation from Britain - to meet one another. No matter how long we make them, Conclaves are always too short!

- This Conclave was particularly designed with lots of "free time" between various scheduled activities, and the consensus was that everyone liked it that way. So we will plan future Conclaves equally flexibly.

- After a discussion of several possible sites, the consensus was to hold Set-XII in the United States next year, with England as a projected location for Set-XIII. [I am still very interested in a Temple-wide Conclave on the other side of the Atlantic, as I am certain it will be a marvelous experience.]

- We had lots of photo & video hounds at Set-XI. This is great, but a reminder: All photos & videos were taken with the understanding of the subjects that prints would not be circulated without permission. Please be certain that you do not let such photos/videos out of your personal control without such permission. Thanks.

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The Conclave tradition dates all the way back to the year VI, when the Nineveh and Stygian Grottos of the Church of Satan met in Centerville, Ohio for the first Eastern Regional Conclave of the Church. That set off a flurry of Eastern & Western Regional Conclaves, but the C/S never quite managed a national one prior to its dissolution in X.

The Temple of Set did, however; and indeed its annual Conclaves have been genuinely "international" in their membership makeup - and twice in location (Windsor & Toronto, Canada). What we once thought were essentially "fellowship & fun" opportunities have evolved into something a great deal more significant - as many of the Temple's major policy and program innovations have come from Conclave brainstorming and deliberation.

As widely dispersed as Setians are geographically, and as intensely personal as our GBM workings necessarily are under such circumstances, the opportunity at Conclaves for such workings together - both in the Conclave Working itself and in specialized workings of Orders and individuals - testifies to the power and

permanence of Black Magic as an energy unique to the Temple of Set. It is, ultimately, what distinguishes the Temple of Set not only from conventional religions, but from occultism generally.

Mark your calender for Halloween of next year, and start now to think about "a big jump over the pond" for Europe in XXVII.