

The Scroll of Set

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[1] Miu

- by Demon O'Brien II°

Oh Miu, beloved of Bast! Ye who gleam black with blue. Eyes that flame, glowing within darkness, claws long and strong, fangs that overhang. A purr booming throughout the room.

You're my friend, ready to sit in my lap and listen to me groan and bemoan the humans around. Never an unkind word from your whiskered mouth; nothing but love rolls off your tongue. All of my three beloved, black Mius.

In the firelight I sit, flames leaping and dancing with joy. A log crackles and fills the air with the scent of fall. Hallow's eve is in the air, there and there and there! A crisp, cool breeze shuffles through the leaves, leaving a few to fall and die.

'Tis time to rejoice, Hallow's Eve is near! A time to worship and a time to play and dance. A time to listen to the Dæmons who call, beckoning to us Setians, one and all.

[2] Truth and Theory

- by Robert Menschel III°

[The following is a partial answer to some of the ideas expressed in Adept Ogle's "Subjective/Objective Theory/Fact" in the September XX/1985 *Scroll*. More may follow after the *Tarot Primer* is ready for publication.]

I agree that **scientifically** all significant Setian knowledge is theory. The only scientific truths are definitions, measurements, and rigorously logical deductions and extrapolations from these definitions and measurements.

Sometimes mutually-exclusive theories are equally valid, though of varying use. There is a complete, consistent, and valid set of mathematical equations which describe the orbits of the Sun and planets around the Earth. These happen to be very much more complex than the equations we normally use which describe the orbits of the planets [including the Earth] around the Sun.

And sometimes such mutually-exclusive theories are not equally valid. I value the opinions of many scientists, and none of them grants any validity to the "theory" of creationism, believing instead in the validity of evolution.

When Setians with a scientific bent compare Setian theories to alternate [competing?] theories, we

find without exception that Setian theory is either more valid or more useful [or both]. Setian theory is more in agreement with technical measurement, more in agreement with modern scientific theory and technical practice. Setian theory works better in the magical arena.

Setian theory is also more flexible and malleable, and therefore better able to reflect scientific, technical, or magical advances.

Intellectually Setian theory is more satisfying. And to those people with a Setian bent, it is also more emotionally satisfying.

The above intellectual analysis is well and good when we examine the validity of our theories, as we must. However we can not afford to question our knowledge during ritual [or during many other magical actions]:

Hail Set, [hypothetical] Prince of Darkness!
With my [supposed] power as [apparently] initiated Priest of the [hypothetical] Set, and as Adept magician [if there is any such thing as magic], I summon you [if you exist] into my chamber.

Would **you** respond to such a summons? And remember that our theories require **belief** in our magical abilities during ritual. If **you** don't have confidence in your own abilities, then you will be unable to accomplish any but the most simple of magical acts.

We scientists have a harder time maintaining that belief, that faith in our truths - they must **be** truths during ritual - than our more emotional brothers and sisters. But the ability to suspend our questions, to maintain that belief during ritual, strengthens our magic. And the results of that strengthened magic further support the theory.

We've discussed theory and belief. A third aspect of Setian knowledge is our philosophy of *Xeper* and the historical philosophies of *Indulgence* and *Thelema*. Yes, these are involved in our theory and our beliefs, but they are more than these - they are suprarational philosophies, neters, upon which our knowledge is based.

These philosophies are not above examination and discussion, for by such examination and discussion we expand and further our knowledge.

Xeper, *Indulgence*, and *Thelema* are basic truths upon which our knowledge is based. We can question statements about these concepts, but we have been unable to question the concepts themselves. More than being inherently valid, these neters simply **are**.

We have obviously exceeded scientific bounds. Science recognizes the existence only of that which it can measure. Magic recognizes that which is, measurable or not.

Science can be a valuable tool for magicians, and the Temple of Set uses science wherever practical

for the benefits it brings. We must also recognize the dangers and limitations of science; we must always remain the masters of our science and never become its slaves.

[3] **The Promise of Set**

- by Robert Robinson II°

Born in darkness, man struggles against his own true nature. Afraid of the power-potential within himself, man conceals himself in the white-washed myths of the weak-bodied gods of his own creation. Such a frightened, frantic beast is he, continuously at odds with his refusal to face himself as he truly is and was meant to be.

Very few accept the responsibility of uniqueness and realize the self-fulfilling promises that lie within.

Accept the blessing of being human! *Xeper* in spite of the pitiable mob that surrounds you!

It is a new age in the growth of the order of mankind. It is a time for men and women to look and see the truth of their own individuality. The opportunity to fulfill one's true destiny is there to be grasped. Reach out! Take hold!

Control the roles you play! Make a creative contribution to the quality of existence. Gratify the demands, needs, and desires of your carnal body and infernal mind. Make your divine design manifest! Take time for pleasure, and take pleasure from all activities. Let every act be a challenge answered. It is your duty, men and women of all humankind, to explore the fullest limitlessness of human emotion and know it as a power to control universes. This is the power of Set! It is to be utilized, channeled, and controlled - but never feared.

The power is of the darkness only because so little light has been shown there. Let the light of your wisdom and understanding read the reality of this force, And you will know life.

Greet the darkness as a friend. Reach out and touch the Black Flame of knowledge, and know the beauty and happiness that come with self-understanding and undenied self-love. Praise the everlasting Gift of Set by fulfilling its promise.

[4] **ECI**

- by Nancy Flowers II°

Time as a stormy ocean and the self, crowning the crest of a wave which is still water, of moment frozen motion of the swell.

[5] **Echoes from the North**

A Response to Adept K. Michael Ogle's "The Razor's Edge"

- by Robert Neilly IV°

The question of primary importance that Adept Ogle encountered recently in the course of his initiation was: "When and how should skepticism and intellect be embraced by the practicing magician?" [*Scroll* December XX].

More formidable than the question itself was the magically-balanced manner in which Apophis-PyrrArchnae answered it. I feel it is safe to state that Setian Initiates - of any degree, of all degrees - must have faced this fateful issue prior to their even knowing that the Temple of Set - and in some cases the Church of Satan - existed.

And don't we all face this test of truism in our everyday, non-natural existence? Dr. Ogle's written response to this particular facet of the Setian quest befits the sharing and caring attitude that we hold towards one another. Following are some few examples of what I found so "familiar" in Adept Ogle's self-generated answers:

Generally the intellect works after the fact; curiously people experience the illusion of it working before the fact.

More than merely stating that most people's mouths are in gear before their brains [or minds], this statement enhances the idea that each Setian's perusal of *Xeper* includes a sub-clause which is destined to promote a state of awareness that philosophers Gurdjieff, Ouspensky, and others have spoken about. One may be a skeptic, or one may be an aware skeptic who has "proven" the existence of a reality when the same has been summoned to him.

I suspect that most of us took the first step to "Come Forth by Night" long before any "philosophy" appeared in our minds.

Yes, the first of several steps - all of which have contributed to the states and beings of all the scientific philosophers we now find inhabiting our Temple's chambers today. What of philosophy? The higher learning we encounter as Black Magicians will cause our personal and collective philosophy to become alive. Put another way, we shall make part of our focus the attainment of the "be" that resides within the word of the being.

Finally, Adept Ogle, your paragraph that dealt with the reminder that the sorcerer provides for the skeptic seems to me to have contained the seed, or *naos*, of your convincing argument. Well done. Keep communicating, and *Xeper*.

[6] Movie Review: *Fright Night*

- by Demon O'Brien II°

How many of you saw *An American Werewolf in London*? C'mon, raise your hands ... That many, huh? I can see we all have great taste in movies.

Now I'm sure you're all wondering what I'm doing talking about *An American Werewolf in London* when this is about *Fright Night*. Well, they have a lot in common. They are both excellent films - both horror films with a touch of comedy - and both are very well done.

Fright Night is about a vampire, a modern vampire, and a teenage boy and his girl friend who find out about their new and bizarre next-door neighbor. The boy is an avid fan of "Fright Night", the local horror-movie show, and its host Mr. Vincent (played quite superbly by Roddy MacDowell).

The first thing our hero sees is his new neighbors carrying a coffin into their basement. This really gets his blood pumping! He tries to convince his girlfriend that he really did see a coffin. No one believes him. Then prostitutes start dying around town, and the kid saw one of them enter the vampire's lair and never exit. He tries to convince the local police but to no avail. They think he's crazy, as does his girlfriend. Then he resorts to Mr. Vincent, and the fun really gets started.

Chris Sarandon plays the vampire and plays it well. The man has style! He's suave and charming, but with just the right air of menace and evil. Roddy MacDowell is an excellent horror movie host - much better than Elvira could ever hope to be. [Ed. note: But by no means as sexy.] He is a wonderfully unwilling hero.

The special effects are fabulous. There's a transformation scene where a vampire changes from a boy into a wolf and back to a boy that'll knock your socks off. That alone was worth the price of the ticket.

Mr. Vincent's apartment is great. I tend to look at backgrounds, and some of the stuff in that apartment was fantastic. Try to notice the picture on the end-table; it's got Bela Lugosi in it.

All in all the movie is very good. It's an excellent combination of "scary" and "funny", and I highly recommend it.

[7] Seker/Sokaris: Godform, Neter, Death, Guardian Of The Ways

- by Robert Robinson II°

The greatest god who was in the beginning and dwelleth in the darkness. - *The Book of Coming Forth by Day* (Egyptian Book of the Dead)

During the Las Vegas Conclave there was a discussion about neters and the importance placed on a magician identifying with such an entity or principle by taking its name. I remember saying that I did not feel it was necessary to do this, and that my magical name was an anagram derived from the letters of my birthname.

Well, about two weeks later in doing some research on Egyptian god-forms, I came upon this guy named Sokaris (also called Seker), and the response was immediate and emotionally overpowering. Although I found just a few sources that had information regarding this intriguing figure, I began to slowly gain an insight into his meaning through ritual which went considerably beyond what Budge and others had to say. The following is therefore a combination of researched information and ritual understanding, and the line that divides them is tenuous at best.

Sokaris, known also as Seker, is an ancient Egyptian death-god who, according to E.A. Budge and other authorities, probably predates Osiris. Although not predating Set, Sokaris seems to personify some of the darkest aspects of this oldest of the Great Lords of Darkness.

Sokaris is lord of the Memphite necropolis on the western bank of the Nile River, and manifests in the cold gloominess and decay of the earth. It is for this reason that he is often referred to as the Soul of Geb, for he is the heart of the Power of Death which abides in the Darkness Absolute that is beyond life and the restrictions of time: Think of Sokaris as Post-Mortem Sentience.

Although some of the darker attributes of Set are manifested in Sokaris, his physical form usually most closely resembles that of Osiris and/or Horus. When Sokaris first appears in Egyptian prehistory, however, he is depicted as a pygmy with short, thick limbs and a large, bald, and horned head which was crowned with plumes and a scarab [representing even then the creative powers of Xepera].

As early as the Old Kingdom, Sokaris became identified with Ptah, the high god of Memphis, master of destiny and creator of the Universe. The composite deity was called Ptah-Seker-Osiris.

In the Late Period, when Osiris was thought to be incarnate in a bull, Ptah-Seker, Osiris was also

represented in that form. In Egyptian art S/S is most often shown to resemble Horus with the head of a sparrow hawk, or as a hawk-headed mummy.

To me, however, Seker/Sokaris appears in the form of a man with a Set-Horus head and a pair of outspread wings which emerge from the back of a two-headed serpent that forms his spinal chord. The serpent heads arc upwards to create a kind of "halo" around his head. There also seems to be a rather large and erect appendage rising up from between his legs that is a little at odds with his image of a god of death.

It is very interesting how Seker/Sokaris seems to personify the concept of duality by providing a Dark-Side counterpart for so many different Egyptian god-forms, and at the same time remain an entity unique and apart. Budge describes him as being "without counterpart, a universe unto himself".

The kingdom of Sokaris is the world of blackest darkness that lies beneath the ever-shifting sands of the great desert that forms the walls of the Lands of Death. The waterless and plantless terrain of this Underworld is inhabited by winged and multi-headed serpents who share their domain with demons and monsters who breathe fire and are of unimaginably terrifying aspect.

The principle shrine and sanctuary of Sokaris is Seku, the Gate of the Ways. It manifests in the form of a great pyramid which is called Ro-Setau. It is here that the legions of the Guardian of the Ways, and Lord of Death, await an opportunity to bring their master the fresh and bleeding hearts of the dead.

Within this shrine dedicated to Seker there is no provision made for the beatified, and his Priesthood apparently assumed that with death all life ended eternally. This is at least what most writers on Egypt who mention S/S assume the Sekerian Priesthood believed.

There is, however, an unspoken indication that the initiate to the mysteries of Death conquers his reliance on any promise of life and strives to establish an ever-evolving state of lifelessness which thrives on the Power of Death itself. When one considers that a far greater part of eternity is spent dead than alive, this is a pretty understandable attitude to develop. It is also little wonder that Sokaris, and what he symbolized, was one of the most loathed and feared gods of the Egyptian, or for that matter any other pantheon.

During the Sun's great journey into night, Af-Ra must cross the dreaded land of Sokaris. In order to accomplish this task, the boat carrying Af-Ra, attended by Thoth, Horus, and others must confront enemies which are fought off but never destroyed. [The Powers of Death cannot be conquered but

perhaps can be controlled?] Great care is taken to keep to the path and avoid the secluded place where Death (Sokaris) sits in majesty surrounded by his monstrous serpents and hideous slaves. It is not a happy place.

Ultimately Af-Ra's journey takes him past Ro-Setau, at which time the beetle of Xepera enters the boat, and the revivification of the dead Sun-god begins once more. This part of the kingdom of Sokaris is called Amhet because of the great stream of fire and boiling water which passes through it. Those who have incurred the displeasure of S/S are thrown into this molten hell and burned and boiled. When the serpent-boat reaches the northern boundary of Amhet, the fire in the stream is replaced by water. The serpent is transformed back into a boat, and Af-Ra continues his journey into the kingdom of the dead kings of Egypt.

There are a few indications that Set and Sokaris were united in some way during the conflict between the Setian and Osirian Priesthoods. Apparently Set had access to Ro-Setau that was not permitted to other Egyptian gods. Information on this subject is rather sparse, however, and I would greatly appreciate any suggestions from interested parties within the Temple who might have more or other information/insights at their disposal.

To be discussed at another time, perhaps, is the sometimes overpowering vampyric essence that seems to be part of the magic of this death-neter.

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[8] The Art of Seeming

- by Robert Robinson II°

Death, the most important experience of all, is neither end nor beginning. It is the cessation of one kind of existence and the inception of another. Life fades and ends, but death lives on lifelessly, a serpent eternally swallowing its own tail.

Life, the most important insight of all, is the awareness of the promise of death. Fought on the game board of existence, life is the battle to overcome the lie of the self. Its purpose is to awaken the perception of the simplicity buried deep within the shadowy darkness of chaos.

Duality, the most important idea of all, is never just one or the other. It is the ultimate cause and effect in which a thing is defined in reference to its opposite. Merging opposites transcend the

separation of forms. The unity of life in death is existence beyond both.

A barrier, a wall, a curtain made of steel; things that hinder the discovery of what's real. Death and life, the duality of being, are not what is, but are the Art of Seeming.

[9] **The Eye of the Vortex**

- by K. Michael Ogle II°

I fell into a reverie, and lo! the atoms were gambolling before my eyes. I saw how frequently two smaller atoms united to form a pair, how a larger one embraced two smaller ones, how still larger ones kept hold of three or even four of the smaller, whilst the whole kept whirling in a giddy dance. I saw how the larger ones formed a chain ... - August Kekule, 1890.

The psyche is a multitude. Thoughts and emotions, complexes, ideas, and dreams are its elements. There is no unique and individual "I"; instead a multitude of "I"s barter for control of the organism. And like the organelles of the living cell, the components of the psyche are in constant chaotic motion - all "whirling in a giddy dance".

The apparent self is the vector sum of the individual "I"s. And while the apparent self may at times seem static and unchanging, it is only because the movements of the individual "I"s may at times cancel one another. Like particles of dust floating in the light of an open window, one particle moving to the left is balanced and negated by a second particle moving to the right.

An ostensive goal of many psychological schools is to balance each "I" with a corresponding "opposite I" such that a psychological "equilibrium" is obtained. The apparent ego vanishes and the individual has "merged with nature". Layer upon layer of dust falls from the air to floor and does not move.

Imagine a woman dancing in the light of the open window. She revolves in pirouettes, the extremities of her body touching the points of an imaginary pentagram. She has chosen a state of dynamic balance over a state of lifeless equilibrium. Her position is a dangerous one; she struggles to maintain organization in a state far divorced from physical equilibrium.

Such a dynamic balance is represented in the Pentagram of Set by its inversion and separation from the surrounding circle. The effect of the Pentagram on the psyche may initially be to destabilize or destroy the equilibrium of the psychic components, to induce a state of turbulence. In contrast to the stale, crystalline order of the psyche's equilibrium structure, this would indeed be

chaotic and dangerous.

Once the equilibrium is upset, the components of the psyche must be brought back together again to form a new order. This requires the addition of a new "I" to serve as a center of nucleation. When silver chloride is cast into clouds, the water vapor will condense around it and organize into droplets of rain. When the images of a national heritage are cast into the realm of the masses, the masses will organize into political parties and factions. When the telemic image of the vampyre is ritually cast into the chaotic realm of the human psyche, the components of the psyche will organize themselves around that image. And a magnetic center, or vortex, is formed.

For self-sustained growth, the proper elements must exist within the system, the system must be far from equilibrium, and the vortex must be isolated from stable objects which might disrupt it. Once these conditions are met, it continues to feed itself and grow, like the proverbial snowball rolling downhill. Indeed the vortex can become much larger than the individual magician who created it.

Whether the nucleation center is subjective or objective makes little difference. The vortex can penetrate into either realm, breaking down the semipermeable membrane which separates the magical and the mundane. The will and indulgence of the magician move into the eye of the vortex, and the components of the magician's psyche and environment spiral around the eye, strewn across the blackness like the stars of the Milky Way, which spiral around and into the black hole at the galactic center.

Oroboros, the serpent biting his tail is symbolic of completion, eternity, inertia, and equilibrium. But imagine the serpent suddenly leaving his tail behind and uncoiling himself like a single molecule of DNA undergoing replication. In this form of the serpent Apep appears, and in his sweeping tail and body is the force of chaos - and destruction.

But within the ruby red, jeweled forehead lies the nucleation center which organizes the vibratory chaos into a dynamic, psychocentric vortex of growth, change, evolution, and becoming. Within the apex of the helical snake is the throne of the intelligence of the universe, the Golden Ratio, and essence of dynamic self-organization - the Majesty of Set!

Appendix

It is interesting to make note of two different classes of "ordered systems". [By "system" I mean any whole divisible into smaller parts. Thus you can have a physical system, a chemical system, a solar system, a political system, an economic system, a musical system, a psychic system, a

digestive system, etc. or any combination of the above.]

First, structure-preserving systems devolve into the equilibrium-preserving structure of the system. Once the equilibrium point is reached, the system is static - the only possibility for change being a change in the outside environment such that the equilibrium point is shifted. The increase in order is compensated for by a decrease in energy. Examples of this type of conservative self-organization include the crystallization of water when the temperature is lowered, or the change in lifestyle that occurs when someone makes a lot of money.

It seems to me that the Right-Hand Path is a movement towards equilibrium with nature, toward stasis instead of evolution. Hence the Right-Hand Path is a path of devolution - a path of crystallization of union with Nuit - and suicide is the most obvious and practical method of executing its aims.

More interesting are the evolving systems (or "dissipative structures" - so-called because they dissipate entropy to their environment) which are "autopoietic" (i.e. geared for self-renewal). While the structure-preserving systems devolve with equilibrium as their reference point, the dissipative structure evolves with self-reference [contrast "psychocentrism"].

The increase in order is accompanied by an increase in energy and is at the expense of the environment. Construction and destruction are perfectly balanced such that the system evolves into higher and higher forms of order. These structures can exist only when the components are far from equilibrium with each other or with the external universe.

Examples of these structures [other than such obvious examples as living systems, large corporations, etc.] are frequently encountered in chemistry and engineering. The only common one that come to mind is the vortex.

To invite evolution into one's personal sphere - to allow one's world to spontaneously organize into a dissipative structure, to **become** - are these not the trademarks of the Left-Hand Path?

The problems of stability of these systems can [and has] led to much speculation concerning the nature of free will, life after physical death, etc. I quote from Eric Jantsch, *The Self-Organizing Universe*:

It may be interesting to ask whether a dissipative structure is to be understood as a material structure organizing the flow of energy, or as an energetic structure organizing the flow of matter. At this level of self-organization, both descriptions are equally valid. They constitute

the two sides of a complementarity. At higher levels of self-organization, however, to an increasing extent a description will suggest itself which views energy systems as manifesting themselves in the organization of material processes and structures.

The question: Is the vortex a material structure affecting energy or an energy structure affecting the material structure? In terms of the Black Magically-created structures, I prefer the latter description. I will leave speculation up to the reader.

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Ouspensky, Peter D., *The Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution*, for the discussion of the "many 'I' theory" and magnetic centers.

Prigogine, Ilya, *Order Out of Chaos*, for a sophisticated but non-mathematical description of non-equilibrium thermodynamics and vortices, some speculation, and a fine critical review of classical philosophy as applied to science and the nature of life.

See also Eric Jantsch, *The Self-Organizing Universe*, for a survey of the scientific material and some interesting speculations.

I have not seen Prigogine's curiously-titled new book *The Living Flame: The Physical Chemistry of Free Will*, but another book of his - *From Being to Becoming* - requires an understanding of some sophisticated mathematical techniques but is worth the effort. Prigogine has won a Nobel Prize in chemistry for the theory of dissipative structures.