

The Aeon and the Eternal Word



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Book I: The Aeon

Let us begin with the word "Aeon," its origins, and its developed meanings.

Proto-Indo-European is a reconstructed language used by Linguists to present likely origins for the word developed in the existing Indo-European Languages. The proposed Proto-Indo-European word which is the progenitor of the current word "Aeon" is said to be *h₂eyu-, or h₂eyw- meaning "Vital Force," "Life," "Age," and "Eternity." This same root leads the Latin "aevum" and "aeternus" and in English to the word "ever."

For this discussion the key descendent from *h₂eyu- is the Greek word αἰών (aión). Αἰών is a masculine word in the third declination with a few meanings. Αἰών early on means "lifetime" or "the length of life of a man." In time it took on the meaning of "generation" or what Anthropologists would call an "Age Grade." This led to an expanded meaning of a very long duration, or an epoch. It also has the meaning of "The Current World" or the world the speaker is living in.

Αἰών appears in the Homeric Epics meaning the early "Lifespan." Plato uses αἰών to mean the "Eternal World" or the Realm of the Forms. It appears in the Old and New Testament Greek with its implication of "Eternity" being the standard translation. In this it shares an English translation with the Hebrew word עולם "olam" which has a similar interplay of the ideas of "World," "Age," and "Eternity."

In the Second Century of the Common Era the notion of "Aeon" underwent an important transformation within the teachings of a Gnostic Christian heresy called Valentinianism. This movement was said to originate with the Egyptian thinker Valentinus, born in 100 CE, educated in Alexandria, and was involved with the Catholic community in Rome. Though none of his texts survived to the present*. None the less his ideas, or ideas attributed to him, would develop into a significant Gnostic movement.

Key to the Valentinian ideas is the notion of there being within the Celestial Realm a series of Worlds, or "Aeons" which exist as immaterial forces. In total the Valentinians are said to have believed in 30 Aeons, divided into three sets of paired Aeons called "Syzygies" and were thought to have a sexual polarity. Our knowledge of these comes not from the Valentinians themselves but rather the Church Father Tertullian.

The First, and therefore most perfect, Aeons are known as the Ogdad. Its pairs of Aeons are:

- Bythos (Profundity) and Ennoia (Idea)
- Nous (Mind) and Aletheia (Truth)
- Logos (Word) and Zoe (Life)
- Anthropos (Man) and Ekklesia (Church)

The Second set of Aeons, thought to derive from the interaction of Logos and Zoe, and known as the Decad are:

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- Bythios (Deep) and Mixis (Commingle)
- Ageratos (Unaging) and Henosis (Union)
- Autophues (Self-Existent) and Hedone (Pleasure/Bliss)
- Akinetos (Immovable) and Synkrisis (Blending)
- Monogenes (Only-Begotten) and Makaria (Happiness)

The Third set of Aeons, derived from Anthropos and Ekklesia, and known as the Dodecad are:

- Parakletos (Helper) and Pistis (Faith)
- Patrikos (Paternal) and Elpis (Hope)
- Metrikos (Maternal) and Agape (Love)
- Ainos (Praise) and Synesis (Intelligence, Understanding)

- Ekklesiastikos (Ecclesiastical) and Makariotes (Happiness)
- Theletos (Willed, Longed for) and Sophia (Wisdom)

Valentinianism would spend longer than two centuries in interaction with the Catholic Church, as a rival school of thinking. Surviving sources of this time hold the Valentinians as having been the most sophisticated of the Gnostic Schools and most intellectually rigorous. Their ideas, which had a clearly Emanationist quality, would also run into criticism and conflict with Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists. Nevertheless their Emanationist model of Aeons would continue to exert an influence on those trying to understand the Gnostics and the concepts of Late Antiquity.

*It is possible that The Gospel of Truth in the Nag Hammadi collection may be one of his texts as that was a title attributed to him from sources in Late Antiquity.

It would be another group of Gnostics, the Sethians, who would contribute another important concept to the cluster of ideas around the word "Aeon." Until fairly recently what was known about their beliefs came from the writings of Irenaeus, a Second Century Bishop of Lugdunum in Gaul. The Sethians focus was largely on the period before the Creation Narratives in Genesis, seeking to understand the origins of God. They presented a largely negative theology, describing the immobility, and ineffability, of the Divine.

The Sethians shared with the Valentinians a belief in pairs of sexually charged Aeons emanating from the One. The first of these was Barbelo who is referred to as "The Eternal Aeon." Together God and the Aeons were together in a Pleroma. Within the Pleroma however a crisis occurred, leading to a figure with a lion's head on the body of a snake called Yaldabaoth. Yaldabaoth would steal the Divine capacity to create from the Aeon Sophia, and use it as a demiurge, creating the material world separate from the fullness of the divine in the Pleroma. To do this he spawns beings called Archons who aid in the building of Materiality. It is the Yaldabaoth who creates Adam, mistakenly leaving a portion of the divine power stolen from Sophia within this new being. This capacity would in time transfer to the third son of Adam, Seth, from whom the movement would take its name.

The actual thoughts of the Sethians were largely unknown until the discovery of the Nag Hammadi Library in 1945. As such misapprehensions of their ideas and practices abounded in discussions of this sect. One of the texts in the Nag Hammadi Library is a set of hymns known as "The Three Stele of Seth." These hymns are a praise to Barbelo and outline a process of Ascension by the one singing the hymn from the material realm, up through the Aeons into the realm of Barbelo.

This process of Ascending demonstrated in "The Three Stele of Seth" would leave a mark upon the practical methods associated with the Gnostics. It was held that they sought to return through the Aeons to the One, and to do so that they must pass through the challenges of the Archons. Possibly based upon diminished knowledge of the Egyptian Book of the Dead, these Archons were thought to be passable through certain words and actions. If you knew the word to get past a particular Archon it would provide you with access to the associated Aeon.

Thus we have the origins of the relationship between Word and Aeon.

There are two key figures, roughly contemporaneous, who contribute greatly to the notion of Aeons and the role that a magician at a certain level of being has in terms of these Aeons. They are Dositheos the Samaritan and Philo of Alexandria.

What is known about Dositheos comes from Early Church sources, few of which have much good to say. His dates of living vary widely, from the time of Alexander's Conquests to being a contemporary of John the Baptist. He was associated with the beginning of the Sadducees, a nearly atheistic Temple form of Judaism. Some sources claim that he was the Teacher of Simon Magus while others suggest he lived after him. He is held to be one of the founding figures of Mandaism.

Dositheos is the person from whom The Three Steles of Seth was revealed. This it is thought that it is from Dositheos that the process of Ascending was developed, with its need to access the Aeons towards the goal of Divine contact. This notion of Ascending may be the source for the parody of Dositheos' supposed student, Simon Magus, in the New Testament book "The Acts of the Apostles" which it is said that Simon claimed to be able to fly. Dositheos' role as teacher of Simon Magus would also provide an additional connection for our purposes. It which would connect Dositheos' notion of Ascending with the Zoroastrian religious title of "mogh," the source of the word "Magus."

Philo of Alexandria was a Jewish thinker whose life straddled the last century Before the Common Era and first century of the Common Era. As an Alexandrian Jew he was acutely interested in integrating what he felt were the best aspects of Greek thought with the religion of his people. In particular the Stocic Philosophers formed a significant influence on his ideas and it was from their discussion of Logos that he developed his own interpretation of this concept in alignment with Judaism.

Logos or λόγος, from λέγω "I say" held a few different meanings in Greek. It can mean that which is said, that which is thought or an account or narrative about something. Oddly, one of the things it does not mean is "word" which in Greek is said as lexis (λέξις).

Logos takes on a Philosophical meaning initially in the fragments of Heraclitus. For him it is Logos which allows for the connection between the individual mind capable of thinking in relations and the reality of the world's relations. Your mental world was capable of being in resonance with the objective world by means of spoken relations. In this sense the Logos is the narrative by which you come to understand the world. In this sense Logos began to gain the meaning of "reason."

The main figure who integrated the notion of narrative and more importantly reason into the concept of Logos was Aristotle. In outlining how to create arguments Aristotle outlines three key means: pathos, ethos, and logos. Pathos is the appeal to the emotions. Ethos is the appeal by one's moral character. Logos is the appeal to the speech itself and the quality of its thinking. It is this Aristotelian use of Logos which is today translated as "Reason" and it is from Aristotle's usage that Logos develops a connect to Rationality.

It was this notion of Logos from Aristotle that influenced the Stoic use of this same term. For the Stoics the world itself was animated and fully penetrated by a Divine Reason. The Stoic term for this pervading Reason from which all derives is "logos spermatikos" or "The Generating Word" or "Generating Thought." Here we find the notion of Logos as a seed from which the world develops, as well as the idea of a Divine Reason which pervades and animates the world.

Philo of Alexandria took this idea and applied it to the Jewish tradition. The Jewish God, who had become increasingly abstract within the Jewish Tradition since the Babylonian Exile, was separate and distinct from Creation. In order to Create he needed an intermediary force which allowed for the Creation to arise and which would permeate Creation. While lesser intermediary forces could be seen as the Angels of the Jewish Scriptures, for Philo the primary intermediary closest to the Jewish God was a demiurgical figure he called the Logos. God speaks, and in speaking the Logos comes into being, and by the Logos coming into being creation comes to be.

In addition to the Logos Philo is also known for his writings on the life of Moses. In Moses Philo find a figure who had been transformed by his moment of contact with the Logos. When Moses encounters the burning bush it is from the Logos that he hears the Utterance of the name of God. Similarly it is from the Logos that Moses acquires the Law and derives from the Law his Book, the Torah.

So here we have a complex of ideas. From Dositheos we have the notion of an individual transformed and empowered by Ascending to and through the Aeons who can then engage in saving the material world. From Philo we get the notion of a Logos, a Divine Seed, from which Worlds are grown. We have a Logos which is capable of dispensing needed wisdom to individual humans when needed. Individual humans in contact with the Logos are transformed and this transformation leaves them with both a Law and a Book.

Needless to say the philosophical speculations of Philo had a strong influence upon Early Christianity, especially the author(s) of the Gospel of John. We can also see some of the influences from Late Antiquity upon the role of the Magus and the concept of Aeons.

Having looked a bit at the historic roots of the notion of Aeons let us look at a related notion, that of the Magus.

The English word "Magus" comes from a Latinized form of the Greek μάγος magos. The Greeks in turn acquired the term from Persian magus. In the 4th Century the word entered into the Greek vocabulary following their contact with practitioners of Zoroastrianism. The Greeks did not quite understand the Zoroastrian tradition but what they did derive from their contact was the idea that the Magos was one who served a priestly function within this tradition and were particularly concerned with the stars of the night's sky as a means for foretelling the future as well as being adept at practical magic. In fact our word "magic" derives from magos, and the associated terms mageia and magiko displaced the indigenous Greek words for the practice of magic.

For most people this primary exposure to the idea of a Magus, or more the plural Magi, derives from the account of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. It is worth noting that Matthew was believed to be writing his account of Jesus' life and ministry to a Jewish Christian community in Syria, and emphasized the failure of the Jews to accept the Messiah and instead Christ's mandate to convert the Gentiles. As such the appearance of the Magi represented an early moment where the wisdom of the non-Jews in relation to Christ was greater than that of his own people.

It was said that attendant to the birth of Christ that Magi had witnessed an unusual stellar phenomena, the so-called Star of Bethlehem, and took this as a sign that an important new teacher was to be alive in the world. These Magi set off to visit the newly born future Teacher and brought with them gifts signifying his importance: Gold for temporal Ruling Power, Frankincense for the Sacred and Myrrh in preparation for his annointment in death. Although the number of Magi is never mentioned in the text, nor are their names, a tradition of there being three Magi, and expanded stories about their names and origins, entered early into Christian narrative.*

This notion of the Magi having discovered "one of their own" in their recognition of the Christ, combined with the Philo influenced doctrines related to Logos found in the Gospel of John, helped to suture together an association between the Magus and the Logos, and situated Christ within the frame, at least for some. More importantly though the name of Magus would enter into Christianity via the previously mentioned tale of Simon Magus and his status as a pretender to being the Messiah.

*Few people realize how much religious narrative has in common with Fan

Fiction.

Zarathustra, the First Magus

Little about the life of Zarathustra is known for certain. While tradition places his birth to some time in the 6th Century BCE there are credible arguments for him having been alive as far back as the 18th Century BCE. Two texts are attributed to him directly, the Yasna Haptanghaiti and the Gathas, for take the form of Hymns and form the core of Zoroastrian religious practice. These texts are written in Old Avestan, an Indo-Iranian language closely related to the Sanskrit of the Vedas.

What is known is that Zarathustra was a part of a branch of the Indo-Iranian peoples living in what is today Iran. At this point in Indo-Iranian history these people have acquired knowledge from their contacts with Mesopotamia which had led from a life of simple pastoralism towards a life of cattle raising and rustling, at least for some. A split between the population was explained in part by mythic characteristics. Those who retained the earlier pastoral traditions were associated with the forces of Order, the Ashavan, while those who had taken up Cattle Rustling as their main form of life were associated with the forces of Chaos, the Drujvan.

Like the religions of nearly all peoples at this time the religion of the Indo-Iranians focused primarily upon the notion of Cosmic Maintenance. Priests existed to act as intermediaries in this process insuring that all continued to go well. The sun would remain in the sky, the day would proceed as expected, and the rhythms of life would be predictable. It was to the tribe known as the Medes that Zarathustra was born. It is thought that Zarathustra was a member of his people's Priesthood, having been initiated as was common around the age of 15. The name that his people used for their Priests was magauno in Avestan, and it is the ultimate root word for Magus

Zarathustra however would not remain simply a Priest. At a point in his life he underwent a realization that there was only a single uncreated divine force, the embodiment of Asha or "Truth," and that this Truth was Consciousness. Because the ultimate Mystery of this Consciousness was incomprehensible initially it was reflected through seven other divine figures, perhaps seen as personifications of the Seven planets.

Zarathustra would use this realization as a force of reformation within his tradition under his apprehension of Asha, retaining aspects such as the tending of a sacred fire as a symbol for the Fire of Consciousness. More importantly he introduced a new purpose for the practice of religion itself. Rather than focusing upon Cosmic Maintenance as all before him had Zarathustra made the central

feature of his reformation the individual transformation by the light of Asha leading to personal salvation done by the deeds performed in life.

This shift of focus in religions from Cosmic Maintenance to Personal Salvation would become in time the center of gravity of all of the World's major religions. Zarathustra's realization was the prefiguring of each of these shifts, either within existing traditions or as heretical reformations which broke away from tradition. Based upon the work of Karl Jaspers the period of this major shift is known as the Axial Age and ran from roughly 800 BCE to 200 BCE. The Axial Age takes place through out the Old World with the major centers having been Persia, India and CHina in the East and the Mediterranean in the West. Interestingly the influence, whether direct or indirect, of Zarathustra can be traced through this same geographic distribution, suggesting that these great Axial transitions were a reaction to the light of his original realization.

It was Zarathustra, with his apprehension of Asha who would become the first man know to the world as Magus.

The full extent of the influence of Zarathustra is beyond the scope of a thread such as this. However a look his influence, directly and indirectly, upon Western thought will prove illuminating.

The Pythagorean tradition according to Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* held that their founder, Pythagorus, had studied with Zoroaster, the Greek name for Zarathustra, in Babylonian. Zoroaster appears in the Platonic *Dialog of First Alcibades*, the standard introductory text of Platonism. There he is mentioned in relation to the heritage of the Persians whom the Greeks had been at war with not long before Plato's writings.

According to Pliny the Elder in the 1st Century CE Zoroaster had become the figure believed by the Greeks to have invented magic. During the same period Plutarch refers in *Isis and Osiris* to "Zoroaster the Magus." Subsequent to this a wide variety of texts related to magical practice and Astrology would circulate through the Hellenic World under the attribution of Zoroastrian or his traditions's Priesthood, the Magi.

Zarathustra's teachings were largely unknown in the post-Classical West. He became a figure of myth, associated with lost wisdom and magic. In the 18th Century Zoroaster became a subject of interest to various figures of the Enlightenment. Voltaire suggested him as a potential model for Deism. Mozart created the character of Sarastro in *Die Zauberflote* after the image of Zoroaster.

A century later Friedrich Nietzsche would return to the name Zarathustra for his myth of the Death of God and the transvaluation of all values in *Also sprach Zarathustra*. In a sense this text can be seen as an early indicator of the closing of the Age defined by the Axial realizations. That Nietzsche would choose the originator of those realizations to proclaim their Age's end was no coincidence.

At this point we have discussed the origins of the notion of "Aeons" and the parallel origin of the idea of "Magus." These ideas were sutured together in the context of a period known as Late Antiquity (2nd to 8th Century CE). Late Antiquity has been largely undervalued as a period. This was the time of the Fall of the Roman Empire, a period of intense hybridization of ideas from the full extent of the Roman Empire, the rise of Christianity as the prominent religion of Western Europe, and finally the emergence of the Middle Ages.

Late Antiquity's single greatest contribution for Magicians is the Hermetic Tradition.* This tradition was attributed to the figure Hermes Trismegistus. Interestingly this figure would be preserved in the West through the writings of the early Christians. Lactantius writing in the 3rd Century CE included Hermes Trismegistus as the oldest of the three great teachers of Antiquity, the other two being Moses and Orpheus. This idea would survive into the 17th Century when it was finally overturned on Philological grounds.

The Hermetic Tradition was built upon both practical magical methods, as retained in the so-called Greek Hermetic Papyrus (PGM) as well as philosophical and cosmological speculations retained in the works known as Corpus Hermetica. With the end of Late Antiquity these texts would be lost to the West except in name, though they would continue to provide inspiration and re-creation in the Eastern Empire and the Islamic cultures. The Corpus Hermetica would return to the West in the late 15th Century CE, becoming a vital aspect of the Renaissance.

What would pass on intellectually into the Middle Ages from Late Antiquity was a synthesis of Neoplatonism and Christianity, with the most significant thinker having been Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE). This world was built upon Aristotle's Great Chain of Being, where all that could exist did exist and all that existed was held in a static hierarchy of most base to most Noble, each with a Divine Purpose (telos). Everything from the realms of plants and animals to the nature of human social ordering were a product of this Divine Purpose, and change within these systems was not possible.

Within Medieval Christianity there was only one way that this world could ever change in any way: the Apocalypse.

*For a book length exploration of Hermeticism in Late Antiquity see Ipsissimus Flowers' *Hermetic Magic*.

The Revelation of John stands out as perhaps the oddest document contained in the compilation of texts known as the Bible. If you have read that compilation you realize just how odd it really is to be to stand out in that crowd. Of the books of the New Testament its inclusion was the most controversial, and it was not included in the Eastern Church's Canon. For those interested in an in depth analysis and history of the text Elaine Pagels' *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy and Politics in the Book of Revelation* is excellent.

Within the highly stable worldview of the Middle Ages Revelations sat as the one means of radical change. With the arrival of the Final Kingdom the old social orderings would be disbanded in favor of a new one with greater equality for the righteous. For most of this period it was a small spark of hope but it would take until 12th century for that spark to cause a fire.

Joachim de Fiore (1135-1202 CE) was the first to catch fire. A member of the Order of Cistercians Joachim was obsessed with piety, pilgrimage and most of all the Book of Revelation. Through study of the text and his own mystic visions he came to a doctrine that would rock the Medieval World. The World for Joachim was seen not as a static thing but rather something which was developing, processing, in a relationship with the Divine. The Old Testament of the Hebrews marked the original development of humanity to the Divine, as one group alone had come into contact. This was the Age of the Father, and was marked by the Patriarchal power of the Father and the story of his Chosen. Beginning with the birth of Christ a new relationship was developed between humanity and the Divine. No longer was the message for the Chosen alone but rather for all those others. The Patriarchal rule of the Father gave way to the growth of the Church as representative of this new Age of the Son. What Joachim realized was that like the Trinity of his God, there must be a third Age, he Age of the Holy Spirit, where the apparatus of the Church was dissolve as individuals came into direct contact with the Divine.

Joachim's realization opened the Pandora's Box at the end of the New Testament. If the relationship between humanity and the Divine was not a finished project as had been thought but rather something which was still developing then change was not only possible, it was the only way to bring about this Age. Various visions of what this would mean began to ferment around Western Europe, vying for attention and begin subject to charges of heresy. Might women become the new rulers of this coming Age of the Spirit? Might the Antichrist attendant to the Revelation already be upon the Earth, or worse in the Church in Rome itself? Might the expansion of the Divine from the Chosen to the Gentile suggest that in this new Age to come those far beyond Western Europe would need to be brought the Divine Message?

You can guess how well this message of the dissolution of the Church went over in Rome. Indeed Joachim's ideas became the target of the most important Catholic thinker of this period, Thomas Aquinas, who made special efforts to undermine their influence in *Summa Theologica*. But it was too late, the idea was loose in the culture that not only was change possible, but it was demanded by the Divine. This desire for the fulfillment of prophecy began to seed not only religious ambitions but political ones as various kingdoms began to see themselves as the vehicle of this New Age, and would serve as the Final Kingdom to rule the Millennium, as John of Patmos had told.

And into this frothy mix of Divine Revelations, the promise of a New Age and political struggle came the Hermetica.

*For a full discussion of the influence of Revelation and of Joachim's teaching see Arthur Williamson's excellent *Apocalypse Then: Prophecy and the Making of the Modern World*.

Byzantine emperor Alexios I was facing a seemingly insurmountable challenge in the 11th Century. Despite being the heir to the Roman Empire Alexios I was seeing his area of rule diminishing with the expansion of the Seljuq dynasty.

The House of Seljuq was a Turkish family who practice da Sunni variation of Islam that in time integrated features of Persian culture. With the unifying force of Islam they had managed to expand their empire far and wide through the Middle East and into Central Asia. By the 11th Century however the Seljuq empire was fraught with internal conflict as local rulers were attempting to consolidate their own powers rather than form an integrated empire.

Alexios I did not have the manpower needed to fight off the Seljuq so he made an appeal across the Schism to Urban II, the Pope in Rome. What he wanted was access to the armies of Western Europe under his command. What he got instead was the First Crusade.

The First Crusade was successful in fighting back the Seljuq in the Middle East and overtaking what Christianity was as "The Holy Land." It was this return of the True Church to the Holy Land which had opened the doorway for ideas like Joachim's as well as other readings of Revelation suggesting that the End was at hand. In order to equip Crusaders, keep track of goods and supplies and return found wealth to the ruling centers in Europe new economic methods were developed which would in time yield the first trans-national banking systems. It also brought Western European nations into significant contact with the Islamic World for the first time, and with it restored access to texts from the Classical World which had been thought completely lost.

The changing vision of the meaning of the present, the shifting economic systems and the return of "Lost Wisdom" fermented together, forming what has become known as the Renaissance. For Renaissance thinkers it was the Classical World which had held all wisdom, the older the better. While works of the Greeks, such as Aristotle and Plato, were seen as significant the real prize, based upon Lactantius' ideas on Hermes Trismegistus, was the Hermetica.

in the 15th Century Marsilio Ficino was employed by Cosimo de Medici towards the re-founding of Plato's Academy in Florence, Italy. He was engaged with the translation of Plato's Dialogs towards this end when a cache of Hellenistic documents were discovered by Leonardo da Pistoia. Cosimo purchased the materials from da Pistoia and insisted that Ficino ceased working on Plato for he now had something more important to translate: the Hermetica.

Ficino's translation of the Hermetica set of an intellectual fire-storm in Europe. The most Ancient of Ancient wisdom had been restored just in time for the Apocalypse. And should it not be so? Should not the future Final Kingdom to

Reign in the Name of the Lord have restored to it the most primordial revelations of that Lord? And should not the technologies contained there in, these practices known as magic, act as means for fulfilling the prophecies of the End Times at hand?

Ficino himself would contribute an important idea into this matrix, the "Prisca Theologia." Ficino, drawing upon Lactantius, would suggest that going back to primordial times there had been a single true theology which was being revealed through history. Beginning with Hermes Trismegistus and weaving through Zoroaster and the Chaldeans, the Greeks such as Pythagoras to Plato, into the Neo-Platonic thinkers and eventually into the Church of Rome the one true theology was becoming manifest in the World. This idea would go on to influence Giordano Bruno, Tommaso Campanella, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and eventually laid the seeds for Rosicrucianism.

As there was an awareness that the Ancient Wisdom might contain untruth those engaged in these practices were monitored by Church authorities but were not banned outright. To insure that information could be passed freely systems of cryptography were developed, with Johannes Trithemius' Steganographia being the most important work in this tradition.

Much of the Hermetica was focused upon the practices of Astrology and led to a great revival of this practice in Europe. In addition texts on Alchemy from the Classical and Islamic World were being translated and integrated into this intellectual milieu. Rather than being seen as heresy initially these practices were seen in light of the importance of Hermes Trismegistus and as such were not seen to be a source of theological conflict. Indeed an entire class of "Righteous Scholar Magicians" were forming who brought together an interest in ancient languages, the Hermetica, and skilled observation of materiality and of the stars.

As the 15th Century gave way to the 16th massive social and political upheaval would transform the Western World. Working at the hub of these changes was the greatest representative of this neo-tradition of Righteous Scholar Magician: John Dee.

To get a sense of the world we are entering into in discussing John Dee some background is in order.

During the third period of expansion of early Islam, circa 661-750 EV, the entire extent of North Africa came under control of the Umayyad Caliphate. From here it became quite easy to stage an entry into the Iberian Peninsula, present day Spain and Portugal, which was conquered and brought under the Umayyad administration. When the Umayyad Caliphate collapsed its administration in Iberia would reorganize as the Caliphate of Córdoba, ruling from 929 - 1031 EV.

The Caliphate of Córdoba was rather liberal with its interpretation of the Islamic idea of "People of the Book," and the Iberian Peninsula became a haven for European Jews, unorthodox Christians and non-Abramaic "Pagan" thinkers. Though second class citizens they none the less were allowed to operate openly and the exchange of ideas and information within the city centers was high. Practices of later importance such as the Jewish Kabbalah and the first stirrings of Christian appropriation of these ideas were first developed in this area.

As a hot bed of "Unbelievers" Córdoba would become the target of the growing forces of Western Christianity. Córdoba's own internal struggles would lead to a collapse circa 1031 EV into smaller kingdoms and over the course of the next few centuries saw the shrinking of Islam's influence in Iberia. Finally in 1492 EV the entirety of Iberia was "Cleansed" of Islam via "Reconquista." With the heathens beaten back and the new unification of the Spanish kingdoms Imperial Spain, convinced of its place as the Final Kingdom, began.

1492 EV marked two major incidents in the history of Imperial Spain that would shape the World to come. The most well known was the financing of the explorer Christopher Columbus in his attempt to find a trans-Atlantic route to the Far East which would lead to the Renaissance Era discovery of the Western Hemisphere. Less well known was the expulsion of all Jews from Spain, as the attempts to force conversion of Jews and other non-Christians under the Spanish Inquisition had failed to purify Spain to rule the Millennium.

The discovery of the "New World" in the Western Hemisphere would shatter many cherished beliefs, but would also suture new ones. The race for Imperial Power in this New World by the European nations was pushed as much by a desire to be the Final Kingdom as it was more conventional economic gain. Here were entire continents of non-believers who needed to be brought the Gospel, as had been foretold (if you looked long enough and hard enough) in prophecy. These new discoveries brought about questions regarding the utter lack of an account of these continents within Scripture, opening a doorway for skepticism regarding the veracity of these documents. Questions regarding the suitability of

the Western Church to act as representative of the "One True Faith" began to emerge and old concerns about the purity of the Curia in Rome and its practices were sowing doubts throughout Europe.

By the beginning of the 16th Century the Old World's definitions of itself were withering under the weight of discovery. The time was ripe for new visions to emerge within this "brave new world."

The period we are now discussing, termed the Early Modern Period, spanned between 1450 EV and 1850 EV, though as always the exact beginnings and endings are arguable. The beginning of this period is tied to the end of the Crusades and the general unification of the Western Church in Europe.

This would be important as the newly unified Church, fortified by its military experiences in the Crusades, would expand outwards into areas of Europe which had for the most part been left fallow as far as enforcement of faith, and as such tended to be places where bits of archaic religious practices formed syncretic systems with a decidedly unsophisticated form of Christianity.

Within the major centers of Europe the changes that the Crusades had made necessary had become a new normal. Large sea vessels capable of moving troops and supplies, now without Holy War began looking for new opportunities. Systems developed in support for military transport and pilgrims such as banking began to look for new means of applying the skills they now held.

In addition those within the major centers began to question the spiritual mandate which was held by the Church in Rome. Were these individuals truly representative of the teaching of Christ or had they come to embody something of less transcendent value? If they had given up their mandate would it be possible for others to take it up, purifying the faith and undermining their temporal authority?

It would be the religious tensions which burst forth first. While Spain had looked to purge itself of unbelievers in the 15th Century through alignment with the Roman Catholic Church the 16th Century would see kingdoms aligning themselves with newly formed independent strains of Christianity lumped under the umbrella of Protestantism. Martin Luther's 1517 act of writing and publicizing his "Ninety-Five Theses" under the impression that he was purifying a faith corrupted by Catholic Power set off a chain of such separations throughout Northern Europe. Figures such as John Calvin would lead additional theological transformations of Christianity while Henry VIII of England coalesced developing calls for reform in England with concerns over his own temporal authority to produce the Church of England.

The Book of Revelation took on a new meaning in this time period. Not only was it possible for a given kingdom to see itself as the Final Kingdom but the fracturing of Christianity seemed to reflect Revelation's warning against false Churches and false Christs. One's temporal enemies were more than just that, they were in league with Satan, a figure who up until the Early Modern Period had not had much influence upon Christian thought.

The figure of Satan originates within the Hebrew Scriptures. his one undisputed appearance is in the Book of Job, a text thought to originate sometime between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE. There one finds the figure of Satan as a member of God's Court who has the task of challenging God and his faithful. The text contains a number of common Levantine themes, including a tale of a righteous suffered, and accounts of a conflict between the high god, in this case Yahweh, and a primordial watery serpent force, in this case Leviathan.

Outside of the canonical texts of the Hebrews the figure of Satan would undergo some elaboration, accounted for in the texts forming a part of the Hebrew Apocrypha. The First and Second Book of Enoch play the most critical role in fleshing out the rather vague figure of the Scriptures. Here the mythology of alien angles, with Satan as their leader, takes shape, a concept that is not found at all in Hebrew Scriptures. The exact dates for these books is unknown though it is believed that they show influence from Zoroastrian sources.

Satan would gain a bit more space in the texts of the Christian Scriptures, but not by much. In the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke it is recounted that Jesus interacted with Satan during a time of solitude in the desert where Satan was described as offering him rule of the earth, suggesting it was something that he could give. Issues related to demonic forces arise on occasion in relation to Jesus' Ministry, such as accusations that he was using the god Beelzebub to cast out demons. Satan's main role however was to be found in the Book of Revelations where in the end times he would raise up a Kingdom of Falsehood with tremendous temporal authority who would persecute the faithful, lead a War in Heaven and be cast down into the Pit.

In the Middle Ages the figure of Satan was given the iconography of horns, goat feet and items such as pitchforks. In general he was more a figure of mirth than a being seen as a real threat. When periodic accusation of Devil activities were made it was more often than not the Church authorities that dismissed them as superstition. The Light of the True Church reigned, so what had Christians to fear of Satan?

The changes underway in the early Modern Period would radically transform these standing traditions. Looking for explanations for those holding differing

theologies, vying for temporal power, and a need to explain those largely powerless individuals in the rural territories engaging in "degenerate" practices would lead to a new mythology: The Secret Rule of Satan and the hidden Powers of his Church in the World.

The expanding Church's experience in the late Middle Ages where they encountered many hold over features of pre-Christian tradition as well as many aberrations to the faith as a result of isolated developments would coalesce at the start of the Early Modern Period into a concern about rural folk who were in league with the Devil, known as Witches.

Beliefs in malevolent sorcerers who may or may not be aware of their condition as such is seen by anthropologists as a near universal feature of human cultures. In much the same way as Anthropologists have generalized the term Shaman to denote a certain type of universal ritual specialist, they too have universalized the title of Witch for these malevolent sorcerers. The notion of Witches as malevolent magicians goes back to Greek sources and had a major explosion during the Roman Empire only to vanish for the most part during the Middle Ages. For a more complete account of this phenomena see *Witchcraft: a Very Short Introduction* by Malcolm Gaskill for the Oxford University Press. In the Early Modern Period this universal feature, combined with Classical sources and Biblical notions from Revelation would suture together as the notion of Witches and Witchcraft being a pervasive, underground, movement in European culture.

Unlike the Righteous Scholar Magicians working with the Hermetica, Witches were seen as being in league with Satan himself. Through renouncing the True Faith in favor of the unholy sacraments of the Devil the Witches became part of a community who had done the same towards their own ends (*telos*) much as Satan had taken action towards his own ends against those of God. A complex mythology fusing ideas from Late Antiquity, including the accusations against Christians of child sacrifice and ritual murder, with remnant ideas from Paganism emerged outlining the practices of Witches, with *Malleus Maleficarum* being the most important text in this genre.

Where the Righteous Magician Scholars were mostly men of high social standing the majority of those accused as Witches were women. Typically they were considered elderly, which at the time could mean anything from late 20s to 40s and beyond and were unattached to a male figure either from never marrying or being a widow making them potentially sexually autonomous. A few of sexuality and of women more generally would permeate the literature on Witches and it is impossible to look at the European Witch Craze without seeing a tremendous amount of misogyny underpinning it.

The fear of Witches and of those in league with the Devil would permeate the Early Modern Period. As the communities of Christians began to splinter these accusations would increase tremendously, inspired by a belief that the reason these splinter groups were not fulfilling prophecy was due to forces working

directly against them. The new construction of Satan thanks to the Witch Craze would combine the action of the Withes at the lowest rungs of society with the high level subversions of Faith being seen, real or imagined, by the opposition within the Christian faiths.

Within the early phases of the Protestant Reformation and the first formalizing stirrings of the Witch Craze would emerge the most important of the Righteous Scholar Magicians for the English speaking world; Dr. John Dee (1527-1608).

Dee would integrate a profound understanding of Mathematics. Astronomy and Astrology, with the magical methods developed from the distribution of the Hermetica as well as other texts drawn from the Islamic World, or claimed to come from the Islamic World and before, that would make up the Grimoiric tradition of Angelic and Demonic Magic.* He would serve to the Court of Elizabeth I of England, travel throughout Europe, and would make contact with such important figures of Modernity as Rudolph II of Bohemia, Astronomer Tycho Brahe, at least met with the father of Modern Empirical Science Francis Bacon.

Dee's contribution has been much discussed of late and so I will not reiterate it here. What is significant however is that his reception of the Enochian Angelic Magic with the help of Edward Kelly can only be understood within the context it was received: a radical Apocalypticism which saw England as the place for the Final Kingdom of the Millennium. The Enochian materials speak directly of being means by which the End Times would be catalyzed.

With the coming End at hand finally were living men capable of receiving the wisdom God had given to the First Men, whereby they would know the Mind of God as they entered the New World on the other side of Apocalypse. This notion of the Apocalypse revealing the Mind of God underpins not only Dee's Work but nearly all of the works of the great thinkers of Modernity. The develop of the Sciences, of Empiricism and the new mathematics, the Calculus, which would allow for developments in Physics, were part of a pre-Millennial dispensation.

Among Dee's visions was the placing of England as the Final Kingdom by creating a grand empire that would span the world. He would create unfulfilled plans for colonization of Narraganset Bay in what is now Rhode Island and developed navigation methods which would leads the British Navy to become the most powerful for a time in the world. These notions were greeted warmly by Elizabeth I, however her successor James I.

James I cared little for the supernatural and marginalized those who did care for it. Dee, who had found patronage under Elizabeth I would find none with James I. He would live out the end of his life at his dwindling estate of Mortlake. His close association with both occultism and mathematics would effect the wave of intellectuals after him, and may have been the reason for the minimization of mathematic in the work of Francis Bacon. James I would pick up the significance of building an Empire in the New World, but he chose the area that is now the

American South rather than Dee's northern suggestions.

James I's son Charles I would seek to unify England, Scotland and Ireland under a unified rule, as had been the dream of his father. His actions would lead to contention in parliament and would lead to the English Civil War. Unshockingly issues related to religion and to Apocalypse, would play into this conflict, from the issue of the Divine Right of Kings to the role of the Puritans and other even more radical Christian Sects like the Levelers and Diggers. The aftermath of the Civil war would inspire perhaps one of the most enduring Modern myths of Satan in Milton's Paradise Lost.

Interestingly it would be a father and son, both Classicists, who would undo the Righteous Scholar Magician's role in the West. Isaac Casaubon (1559 EV -1614 EV) was among the most learned men of his time and focused strongly upon philology, the comparative study of texts. He was well known for his translations of Aristotle, Pliny and others. Of importance to our story Isaac Casaubon turned his attention to the Hermetica and made a remarkable discovery. Rather than the primordial, pre-Mosaic origin of this material widely accepted for Theological reasons the books of the Hermetica betrayed linguistic attributes suggesting that they were of origin by his estimation in the 1st Century EV. This would undermine the notion that what the Scholar Magicians were doing was Righteous and shook their claims of spiritual authority.

Isaac's son Meric Casaubon (1599 EV - 1671 EV), had held the favor of James I, and fell strongly out of favor during the Civil war and by its victor, Oliver Cromwell. Casaubon was a strong critic of supernaturalism and in 1657 EV published an account of Dee's contact with Spirits and the origins of the Enochian system. Casaubon regarded these interactions as Satanic in origin and called upon those of his time to repudiate Dee's Work entirely.

The Magicians were now cast down into the same terrain as the Witches, mere Heretics to be disregarded. Into the void this created in the culture would move the Scientists, many of whom would forget their own "demonic" origins in successive generations. Neither group would vanish completely, but they would have to take refuge in the fringes of culture, no longer holding patronages of Crowns and places of prestige in universities. Magic would continue, but it would do so behind closed doors, and behind those closed doors it would run into another tradition long marginalized, European Jewry.

*Owen Davies' Grimoires: A History of Magic Books is the single best scholarly source on this subject presently available.

Like all religions Judaism has a complex history of exoteric and esoteric practices. The major features of Judaism suggest standard Levantine motifs both in the language of the religion and in its mythology. Unlike the other Semitic Religions however judaism has left a still practicing religious community as well as spawned two other major religions spun off from its doctrines, Christianity and Islam.

A full exploration of the shared as well as unique aspects of Judaism is far beyond the scope of a series like this. However, for the sake of our story, a few significant moments and movements within Judaism need to be discussed.

The first of these was the doctrine that developed around the Messiah, an anointed one of god who would lead the Jewish people to a Messianic age where they would rule. This doctrine is not found in early Judaism but seems to pick up importance following the period when Judaism was forcefully transferred to Babylon through the military defeat of the combined kingdoms of Israel and Judea in 587 BCE. This period in Babylon would see the solidification of Judaism's "abstract monotheism" for their own God* and a general atheism regarding all other gods. It would also see the integration of the notion of a Divinely Appointed World Savior adopted from Zoroastrian practices and tied for the Judaic desire for political autonomy.

The Babylonian Exhile would end in 538 BCE with the ascension of Cyrus the Great of Persia and the creation of the Achaemenid Empire, also known as the Persian Empire. The Jews would return to their ancestral lands and begin the process of rebuilding their Temple and their religious practices. Both had been changed by their time in Babylon. Despite being returned to their lands they were now a subject nation, first to Persia, then to Greek and eventually to the Romans.

Being a subject nation fueled a good deal of political hope under the guise of Messianic dreams. A fair number of would be Messiahs would appear, most cast down or failed in one fashion or another. The political difficulties that the Empires ruling this kingdom have become legendary and in 70 CE, in response to a number of different agitating groups the Roman occupiers destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

For others this period would lead towards an attempt to overcome via transcendence, and developed into a practice of Ascension likely shared by other Hellenistic Mystics of this time. Working from the visions of Ezekiel in the Prophetic texts of the Hebrew Scriptures, Simeon bar Yochai in the first century CE would meditate upon the Hebrew Scriptures to gain a closer vision of God's Work. Bat Yochai's explorations, and those of his followers, would lead to

integration of Hellenic Hermetic ideas into Judaism. God was seen as having created the world through the Hebrew Language, and the Language itself was seen to have a holy quality, both in letter and number. These teachings would coalesce in Late Antiquity into a book titled Sefer Yetzirah, thought to date in written form to the 4th Century CE.

With the rise of Islam Judaism was find itself a relatively safe place within the Islamic Empires. In particular Jewish scholars would hold a significant place in the Iberian Peninsula, especially Cordoba. In the 13th Century a book was claimed to be discovered containing the secret teachings of Shimon bar Yochai, though the text suggest someone writing in Aramaic who did not know the language very well. This text would become the most important part of the Hebrew Kabbalah, and would outline a new Jewish cosmology, and a new theology.

According to the Zohar God has not so much expelled Adam and Eve as the actions of Adam and Eve caused God to withdraw from the Creation. By actions taken by humanity the connection to the Divine could be allowed to flow, or by unethical conduct, inhibited. God himself was seen to have an anatomy like that of humanity, and even contained both male and female aspects which sought to be united, often in sexual terms.

Interestingly this development came shortly after the death of the Jewish Philosopher Moses Maimonides (1135 CE - 1204 CE). Maimonides had sought to situate Judaism within the rational philosophical traditions and to down play mystical aspects of the Faith. It has been suggested that the explosion of Kabbalah was a conscious movement against this rationalism.

Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia(1240 CE -1291 CE), born in Zaragoza, Spain would contribute practical exercises to the Kabbalistic movement. through a combination of gesture, movement and concentration on Hebrew letters, words and the Names of God Abulafia promised that important revelations could be had. The numerical analysis of words in Hebrew, as well as other languages, could reveal hidden meanings that would aide in one's understanding of God.

With the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 CE The Kabbalistic speculations in Spain were scattered throughout Europe. Aided by printing these ideas made there way throughout Judaism in Europe, North Africa and Western Asia. Practitioners would flock to key locations of Jewish tradition, with Safed in Galilee holding a special importance. Here would live and work the most important Kabbalist of the Early Modern Period, Isaac Luria (1534 CE - 1572 CE).

Luria's reinterpretation of the Kabbalah would focus largely upon the origin of the cosmos. God had created by withdrawing from the world in order to form a

void, and then within this void he places vessels to contain his light. These vessels had shattered, leaving fragments scattered throughout the Creation. The goal of the Kabbalist would be finding and reintegrating of these fragments in a process of Tikkun Olam "Healing the World." When the world had been sufficiently healed through adherence to the Torah and tikkun olam the Messianic Age would come.

What Apocalypse was doing in Europe among the contending forms of Christianity during the Early Modern Period so too was the Messianic Age to do for Judaism. Various Messiahs were proposed, with the most important being the still controversial figure of Sabbatai Zevi (1626 CE - 1676 CE).

*This is discussed in light of a broader conversation regarding Judaism in Douglas Rushkoff's Nothing Sacred.

Sabbatai Zevi (1626 CE- 1676 CE) holds a number of distinctions. He was a Rabbi among a Sephardic community. He was a serious student of the works of Isaac Luria and the Kabbalah. He also engaged in conscious antinomianism of Jewish practice under the authority that he himself was the Messiah.

The details specifics of what Sabbatai taught and practiced have been lost. He did take the bold step of speaking the Tetragramaton, Yahweh, out loud in public at the age of 22. He staged various acts which today would be seen as publicity stunts, such as marriage ceremonies to the Torah, or placing fish in cradles proclaiming that Israel would be redeemed under the Sign of Pisces. It is rumored that he engaged in licentious behavior and that the Sabbateans were practicing sexual rites in private based upon the sexual imagery of the Zohar.

It was during his travel to spread his teaching into the Ottoman Empire in 1666 when things took a turn. Sabbatai's friend and the one who first recognized him as the Messiah, Nathan of Gaza (1643 CE -1680 CE), had shared a vision of Sabbatai going to Istanbul and having the crown of the Sultan placed upon his head. Upon arrival Sabbatai was imprisoned. Eventually he was given an ultimatum: rove you are the Messiah by being killed and returning or convert to Islam. On September 16, 1666 CE Sabbatai appeared before the Sultan, having removed his Jewish garb, wearing a Turkish turban upon his head. He professed a conversion to Islam.

Some of his followers denounced him for doing this, stating it proved that he was a false Messiah. others felt there was an esoteric meaning to this conversion and so converted as well, publicly professing islam while privately maintaining their Sabbatean Judaism, a group known as the Dönme. Within the wider Jewish community Sabbatai's actions were seen as a warning against mysticism generally and Kabbalah in particular. Some would take a highly conservative route, leading to Hassidism, while others would begin a process of Modernizing Judaism.

Sabbatai's reputation, and parts of his teachings, were picked up a century later by another Jewish figure, Jacob Frank (1726 CE - 1791 CE) of Poland. Frank embraced the notion of "purification through transgression" and claimed to be a reincarnation of both Sabbatai Zevi and the patriarch Jacob. In time he proclaimed himself to be a deity, was excommunicated from the Jewish community and began a process of converting along with his followers to Roman Catholicism. This last step was seen with suspicion as being an attempt to recreate Sabbatai's conversion to Islam, though some 26,000 "apostate" Jews were converted as a result.

Frank would find a place for a time in the Court of Vienna where he was seen as bringing the Word of Christ to the Jews. He eventually moved to Offenbach

claiming the title of "Baron of Offenbach." With their conversion the Frankists would bring their particular line of Sabbataen Kabbalah which retained Apocalyptic and Messianic elements, with them into the Polish Christian world. It would disseminate with various alterations through Continental Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.

It would be this line of Messianic Kabbalah which would be brought together with the Elizabethan Apocalypticism of John Dee within the most important magical order of the 19th Century: The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

The Rosicrucians were a myth written into reality. In a sense they were an early example of what contemporary writer and magician Grant Morrison terms a "hyper-sigil." By crafting a narrative that would attract the imaginations of certain people, a new social reality can be made.

As John Dee was spending his last days at Mortlake amongst his looted library and estate his ideas were finding a new outlet on the Continent of Europe. Beginning in 1607 CE a series of pamphlets were circulated detailing the story of one Christian Rosenkreuz who was said to have created a society to the collection and preservation of the esoteric wisdom of the ancients and which was revealing this information now. Rosenkreuz' story would have him traveling to the east to learn the Ancient Wisdom traditions preserved there. He would bring these traditions back to Europe and would found his Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross to disseminate this wisdom.

Dee's influence upon these documents can be seen in the Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz. The invitation for the allegorical wedding of this manifesto is marked with Dee's Monas Hieroglyphica. It is likely that his influence had come from Heinrich Khunrath (1560 CE - 1605 CE), an admirer of Dee's work and a writer on the topic of Alchemy. Another influence upon the emergence of the group had been Rudolf II (1552 CE- 1612 CE) the Holy Roman Emperor who ruled from Prague and had collected many of the best thinkers of the day from a wide variety of fields to his court and who has a firm devote to the development of Alchemy.

On the Continent Rosicrucianism was most closely associated with Germany and with opposition to the Roman Catholic Church in alliance with Lutheranism. It would also come to cohabitant with Speculative Freemasonry, a fraternal system derived in part from the Stone Masons of Medieval Europe. Because of the secrecy that such fraternal systems allowed Freemasonry and groups modeled on Freemasonry would flourish as would claims to Rosicrucian wisdom throughout the 17th Century.

In the beginning of the 18th Century a lineage of particular importance began in Germany. With a claimed date of founding in 1710 CE (though it is suggested that 1750 CE was more likely) the Orden des Gold- und Rosenkreutz (Order of the Gold and Rosy Cross) was founded in Germany by Hermann Fichtuld. The group was open to Master Masons and focused its work upon Alchemy. The group used a tired degree or grade system like most Masonic inspired groups, with the format for this group being: Juniores, Theoreticus, Oracticus, Philosophus, Minor, Major, Adeptus, Magestus , Magus. Here we see the reason for our detour over the last few posts, as we find at the top of this structure a Magus Degree taking its name from the Zoroastrian tradition.

Not much is available regarding the practical Work of the Orden des Gold- und Rosenkreutz though its structural titles would lay a foundation for other groups. The Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (S.R.I.A.), a British Rosicrucian group founded in 1865 CE would use it as the basis for their own structure. Similarly open to Master Masons its Degree system was spread across three "Orders":

First Order

Grade I - Zelator
Grade II - Theoricus
Grade III - Practicus
Grade IV - Philosophus

Second Order

Grade V - Adeptus Minor
Grade VI - Adeptus Major
Grade VII - Adeptus Exemptus

Third Order

Grade VIII - Magister
Grade IX - Magus

Within the S.R.I.A. was one Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie (1833 CE- 1886 CE). In his youth he had traveled to Vienna to act as a tutor and may have been exposed to ideas from the Asiatic Brethren, a group of Frankish Kabbalahists. A linguist and translator by profession he would work in the office of Benjamin Disraeli when Disraeli was still a publisher. Mackenzie made a name for himself mainly through translations of and writing on the Classics, but in his spare time he became interested in Rosicrucianism and the Occult.

In 1854 he had met Paschal Beverly Randolph, (1825 CE - 1875 CE), an American who had founded the Fraternitas Rosae Crucis in 1858. In 1861 CE Mackenzie traveled to France where it is thought that he made contact with Eliphas Levi (Alphonse Louis Constant). When Robert Wentworth Little discovered some German rituals which he believed to be of Rosicrucian origin he recruited Mackenzie to help with the translation. This material would be used to found the S.R.I.A.

When Mackenzie died in 1886 CE a manuscript was found among his papers in code. It would come into the possession of William Wynn Westcott (1848 CE–1925 CE), a coroner and leading member of the S.R.I.A. Westcott would recruit Samuel Liddell Mathers (1854 CE – 1918 CE) to decipher the text. Mathers discovered that the text contained the outline for a magical Order based upon the symbolism of the Four Elements of Earth, Water, Fire and Air with images drawn from the Kabbalah and Egyptian myth. Westcott and Mathers, along with Robert Wentworth Little then Grand Magus of the S.R.I.A. would use this document to found the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn using a Degree System based on the S.R.I.A. in 1888 CE. As with the S.R.I.A. it would be spread across three Order:

First Order

Neophyte 0=0
Zelator 1=10
Theoricus 2=9
Practicus 3=8
Philosophus 4=7
Portal Grade

Second Order

Adeptus Minor 5=6
Adeptus Major 6=5
Adeptus Exemptus 7=4

Third Order

Magister Templi 8=3
Magus 9=2
Ipsissimus 10=1

Westcott and Mathers claimed that the Cipher manuscript originated within a German Rosicrucian group that had attempted, and failed, to create a Lodge in England some decades before. They contacted this group via a representative, one Anna Sprengel, who does not appear to have gone through the formality of actually existing. As the manuscript itself appears to be in Mackenzie's hand it seems more likely that it was the plan for an unfulfilled Order of his design to be

created within the S.R.I.A.

The First Order of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn focused primarily upon a Kabbalistic approach to Magic for its lessons and Dramatic Rituals of the Freemasonic style for its Initiation Rites. Like much of the rosicrucian Kabbalah there seems to be a trace of Frankish, and there for Sabbatean, elements to this, including the free pronunciation of the Tetragramaton. In a radical departure from Freemasonry and the S.R.I.A. the Golden Dawn was open to female applicants and as such did not demand that its members be Masons.

The Second Order, for those who had completed the Kabbalistic Training of the First Order focused instead largely upon practical magic and upon the Enochian Materials of John Dee, which Mathers had elaborated upon greatly from Dee's original accounts. Into this mix Mathers was fold the newly discovered wisdom of the Egyptians being translated thanks to the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone in 1822 CE, and the practical Hermetic magic of Late Antiquity restored by the discovery of the Greek Magical Papyi in 1827 by Giovanni Anastasi (1780 CE - 1860 CE).

No materials associated with the Third Order exists, and it is widely believed that this Order was more theoretical with an administrative function beyond potential Temple Roles in the Order's Rituals. The titles for this Order however will prove to be important, with the most novel addition being "Ipsissimus" a Latin word meaning "My Very-most Self" which likely entered by way of Friedrich Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human* published in 1878 CE.

Between these two Orders the great streams of thought we have been discussing would come together. An authentic connection to the magical traditions of the Hermetica would be established. The Apocalypticism embodied in the Works of John Dee would be explored and expanded. The Messianic Kabbalah would be integrated as a foundation of the Order's Work, a quirk enabled by a policy of Philosemiticism under Oliver Cromwell after the Civil war (If you are going to be the New Jerusalem you are going to need Jews).

Although many people think of the Golden Dawn as having been a group of "old mustaches" due to its founders its actual popularity was largely with the literary and theatrical scene in England, with its early membership being mostly in their 20s. Early on much of the operations of the group would pass from its founding triad to Mathers' wife Moina (Bergson) Mathers (865 CE - 1928 CE) and then to Florence Farr (1860 CE - 1917 CE) when the Mathers would move to Paris and appointed her Chief Adept in Anglia circa 1907 CE.

Although not nearly as well known as other members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn it is Florence Farr whose Work this series on Aeons truly

pivots upon. She would provide a Key for a much more well known member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, who once saw himself as her suitor, Edward Alexander "Aleister" Crowley (1875 CE- 1947 CE).

When looking for examples of outstanding female magicians in the Occult Revival there are few figures who can stack up against Florence Farr. And actress, composer and director in London's West End she was a friend to some of the most important literary and artistic figures of her time. Oscar Wilde, Pamela Coleman Smith, Aubrey Beardsley, and William Butler Yeats were both friend and collaborators, while George Bernard Shaw was her lover for a number of years. In addition to this, as Soror Sapientia Sapienti Dona Data (S.S.D.D.) she was Chief Adept of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and oversaw its operations in Great Britain.

The Golden Dawn's co-founded Wynn Wescott had a significant interest in the wisdom of the past. Though not as skilled at translation as other early Golden Dawn figures he provided translation for an edition of the Chaldean Oracles, a text attributed to Zoroaster, and wrote books on the history of Rosicrucianism, Number magic, and other topics. He also edited a series of works related to Ancient Wisdom under the title *Collectanea Hermetica*, which he encouraged members of the Golden Dawn to contribute to.

To this end Florence Farr wrote a work about Egyptian Magic based upon the new materials recovered as a result of the Rosetta Stone translation and the discovery of the Greek Magical Papyri. The resulting book, *Egyptian Magic: Occult Mysteries in Ancient Egypt*, published in 1896, when she was the age of 26. A strong focus is given to the Egyptian concept of the Human Soul-Complex includes a chapter discussing Gnosticism and its retention of Egyptian themes. In particular Farr focuses upon the doctrine of the Aeons within Gnosticism using a formulation of "the Aeon of (Name)" in her discussion.

Farr's tenure as Chief Adept of the HOGD saw the group expand largely through her circle of friends in the creative fields. The group would benefit from the Freemasonic access provided by the older generation of founders while while the 20-somethings of Farr's association brought a theatrical flair both in delivery of the Workings and in prop design for the Chamber. As the original cohort of close friends and fellow magicians were leaving their 20s another young 20-something would enter into their Chamber, Edward Alexander "Aleister" Crowley.

Farr had met Crowley through an astral projection study group and oversaw his entry to the Golden Dawn after George Cecil Jones introduced him to the Order. Crowley very quickly became a close contact to the Order's Head, S.L. Mathers who was living in Paris with his wife. This sudden closeness disturbed another GD member, W. B. Yeats, who felt Crowley had displaced him from his rightful place in relation to Mathers. Yeats had previously been a rival for Farr's romantic affections with G. B. Shaw and now found himself rival for Mather's magical affection with Crowley. It has also been suggested that there may have been romantic tension between Farr and Crowley which added to this situation.

The tensions created by Crowley would find release in schism. A war of authority erupted between the London Golden Dawn and Mathers in Paris related to who could and could not grant membership to the Second Order of the system. The London GD had chosen not to allow Crowley, then only 23, to enter the Second Order. Mathers in Paris decided to defy the Chief Adept's decision and grant Second Order recognition to Crowley himself. The ensuing interpersonal conflict would separate Mathers from the London Golden Dawn and would effectively end the organization's operations in 1900. Various splinter groups would form as a result, but the Golden Age of the Golden Dawn had ended.

For Aleister Crowley the end of the Golden Dawn would lead to a period of soul searching and spiritual weariness. Though he had sided with the Chief of the Order he and Mathers would part ways in 1900 and Crowley would relocate to Mexico. He continued to practice Magic but began taking a turn towards Yoga and Buddhism, inspired by his mountaineering associate Oscar Eckenstein (1859-1921) and his old room mate and former Golden Dawn Adept Allan Bennett (1872-1923), who had moved to Ceylon to study Buddhism. In 1903 he met Rose Edith Kelly and proposed marriage to her despite hardly knowing each other to prevent her from becoming a part of a marriage arranged by her parents. The following year the two would travel widely together, with a visit to Egypt in the spring of 1904 transforming Crowley's life and ultimately bringing together the notions of Aeon, Magus and Logos into a cohesive vision: the reception of The Book of the Law.

Aleister Crowley's family had been member of the Plymouth Brethren, a community of worshipers whose Christian doctrine derived from the world of John Nelson Darby (1800 CE- 1882 CE). Like many 19th Century christians, particularly the American Baptist William Miller (1782 CE - 1849 CE), Darby felt that the time of Great Revelation was at hand. Unlike Miller, who had calculate the End of Days only to find himself and his followers still quite living on, Darby created a number of End Times doctrines situating himself and his followers in the period just before the End, a pre-Millennial period.

Darby's greatest contribution to Christian thought, and to the thought of Aleister Crowley, was a doctrine of Dispensationalism. Echoing Joachim of Fiore, Darby proposed that the Divine interacted with the faithful through a series of Progressive Revelations. As the faithful developed so too did God develop his Revelations, allowing for new and more perfect understanding of his Scriptures. There had been a Revelation for the Israelites, a Revelation for the Christian Church and there was now a new Revelation at hand in the time before the Millennium.

Darby's other major contribution, which has endured throughout American Protestantism, is the concept of the Rapture.

The Plymouth Brethren that Crowley had been born to felt that they were God's special chosen in this time before the End of Time. By practicing a rigid but primitive form of Christianity they were preparing themselves as God's Chosen for this final Dispensation. As such talk of the Apocalypse was common to Crowley' childhood and he himself claimed that his mother would liken him to the First Beast of Revelation in Chapter 13 of that book, the "Beast from the Sea."

In 1904 CE Crowley and his new wife Rose were in Egypt. On their initial honeymoon the two would spend a night in the great Pyrmaid where Crowley in a moment of playfulness would use the Golden Dawn "Bornless Rite" to entertain her. This rite, based upon the PGM "Stele of Jeu" is a Gnostic Rite of Ascension meant to transform the magician into a Divine Figure who could then engage in magic. In April of that same year they were again in Egypt when Rose would enter into trance states, telling Crowley that "they are waiting for you." Crowley dismissed these episodes at first and then began pressing her in the hopes of proving this all to be silliness. To his surprise she identified the Egyptian God Horus as being the one who was waiting and Crowley claimed she described the figure to match the Golden Dawn's ideas of Horus associations. He would take her to the Cairo Museum to point out who the message was from, and she identified the seated figure on the Stele of Ankh-ef-en-Khonsu i, a representative of Re-Harkrti, "Ra-Horus of the Two Horizons." What struck Crowley all the

more was the Museum number for this piece: 666, the Number of the Beast from the Sea in Revelation.

He decided to pay attention. Rose told him to go into a room for one hour over the course the three days and to write down whatever he heard. The result was The Book of the Law

Providing a full account of the reception of The Book of the Law is outside the scope of this series. Crowley's account of it can be found in The equinox of the Gods as well as the compilation of his commentaries on the text published as The Law is for All. A transcript of the text can be read here while photographs of the original manuscript can be seen here.

Now what is interesting about The Book of the Law for this discussion is not so much what is in it but what is missing from it. Nowhere within the text is there any discussion of the notion of Aeons, nor is any "Aeon of Horus" ever mentioned. In fact even in the 1912 published Commentary on The book of the Law by Crowley no mention of an "Aeon of Horus" or of "Aeons" appears. In the span of publication of "The Equinox" Volume I, from 1909 to 1913 there is only one use of The phrase "Aeon of Horus" in the commentary on "The Vision and the Voice" in Vol 1 no. 5, dated to 1911. The word "Aeon" does appear in some of the poetry published during this time, over as a sense of time duration or in the sense of "eternity," with possible Farr derived Gnostic implication. There is also a mention of Ra Hoor Khuit as "Lord of the Aeon" comes up in the account of the "Evocation of Bartzabel" in issue volume 1 no. 9.*

The doctrine of the Aeon of Horus as "The New Aeon" would not appear in crowley's published works until 1919 CE, with the publication of Vol. III no. 1, aka "The Blue Equinox." Previous to this the notion only appears in the letter that would eventually be published as Liber Aleph. Written in 1918, if the edited and printed versions are to be believed, the notion of Aeons appears to have coalesced in Crowley's thinking by this time. It appears in the discussion of the Magus as "Logos Aionos" starting around letter 68 and Crowley states explicitly the notion of the Aeon of Horus as being ruled by Horus the Younger in letter 85.

In its fully wrought form Crowley's Doctrine of the Aeons has a remarkably Darbyite quality to it. Humanity had gone through a progressive series of dispensational revelations. The first of these known Crowley identified as "The Aeon of Isis," ruled by mother-goddesses and humans as infantile adorers. The next dispensation, "The Aeon of Osiris" which was ruled by Dying Gods and "Salvation by Proxy" models. Now we were witnessing a new dispensation occurring, with Crowley as its Prophet which Crowley identified as "The Aeon of Horus (the Younger)."

Let us look at the origins of this doctrine and how it may have come to be between 1904 and 1918 CE.

*A recreation of this Working was recently done in collaboration with Kenneth Anger in Los Angeles which can be viewed here.

Crowley came to this doctrine of Aeons based upon a single line in the Book of the Law, Chapter 1, Vers. 49:

Quote:

"Abrogate all rituals, all ordeals, all words and signs. Ra-Hoor-Khuit [Re-Harakhty] hath taken his seat in the east at the Equinox of the Gods; and let Asar be with Isa, who also are one. But they are not of me. Let Asar be the adorant, Isa the suffered; Hoor in his secret name and splendor is the Lord initiating."

Crowley would interpret this passage via the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn's "Ceremony of the Equinox." This Ceremony would be performed within 48 hours of the actual Equinox twice a year "to create a magical link between the Sun, as Light of Nature, and the Order."* The Ceremony itself is done in the style of Freemasonic Lodge Magic, with various Officers in ceremonial seats. In the Ceremony the Hierophant sits and the east of the Chamber with two wardens, the Hierus and the Hegemon, conducting much of the Ceremony. Towards the end of the Ceremony the Hierophant leaves his chair and is replaced by the Hierus.

Although the Ceremony itself uses Masonic style titles for its roles and Officers it has been asserted, by Crowley and others, that these roles can be interpreted via Egyptian Symbolism as well. The Hierophant can be seen as Osiris while the Hierus is associated with Horus the Younger. In the transition of these two the Hierophant becomes no longer Osiris but Horus the Elder while the Hierus becomes the new Osiris.

Due to the imagery of "Ra-Hoor-Khuit" taking his seat in the east in the verse of The Book of the Law Crowley chose to interpret this via the Equinox symbolism. As the Hierophant would be replaced by the Hierus so too would Osiris be replaced by Horus the Younger. Now Horus the Younger was the one overseeing Initiation.

In the 1912 CE Commentary this is how Crowley discusses the transition:

Quote:

AL III, 34:

"The Hierarchy of the Egyptians gives us this genealogy: Isis, Osiris, Horus.

Now the 'pagan' period is that of Isis; a pastoral, natural period of simple magic.

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Next with Buddha, Christ, and others there came in the Equinox of Osiris; when sorrow and death were the principal objects of man's thought, and his magical formula is that of sacrifice.

Now, with Mohammed perhaps as its forerunner, comes in the Equinox of Horus, the young child who rises strong and conquering (with his twin Harpocrates) to avenge Osiris, and bring on the age of strength and splendour.

His formula is not yet fully understood.

Following him will arise the Equinox of Ma, the Goddess of Justice, it may be a hundred or ten thousand years from now; for the Computation of Time is not here as There."

As Crowley's notion of this transition progressed he associated the Equinox mentioned not simply with the two annual Equinox events but with an Astronomical process called the Axial Precession or in Astrological terms the Precession of the Equinoxes. Due to a quirk in the Earth's rotation the position of the stars in the night's sky move westwards, shifting the relationship to the Fixed Stars that make up the Zodiac. Over the course of roughly 2000 years a given Zodiac star will align with the Equinox, and then the Equinox will transition into the next Zodiacal star system. Astrologers have used this to determine which Zodiacal sign rules a given span of time of roughly 2000 years as well. For the period of the Common Era (~1 CE to ~2000 CE) the Zodiacal Sign of Pisces has ruled, and would be transitioning into a new sign, that of Aquarius, which is a change in rulership. With this association Crowley now had a fixed period for his Equinoxes, occurring every 2000 years, making his Equinox of Horus roughly equivalent to the Astrological Age of Aquarius.

What had occurred between the formalization of the Equinox of Horus in the writing of the "Old Comment" published in 1912 and the re-manifestation of this same idea as "The Aeon of Horus" or "The New Aeon" in the Equinox in 1919 CE? The answer would be found in Crowley's transition during this period from a Magister Templi to the being-condition he called Magus.

*Regardie, Israel The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic

1909, based upon the Enochian visions described in *The Vision and the Voice* Crowley would claim the Grade of Magister Templi within his A.'.A.'. Contained in the comment published with the text of this book in 1911 CE is an outline of the doctrine of Aeons drawn from the repeated use of the term "Aeon" in his visions and their association with Horus as "Crowned and Conquering Child," though "Aeon of Horus" specifically is never mentioned in the visions.

Based upon his visions, which discuss not only the Being-condition known as Magister Templi, but also the other two Degrees of the the Third Order, Magus and Ipsissimus. In particular the Magus is discusses as being necessary for bringing a "New Aeon" into being in the Vision of the 27th Aeyther, with more details pertaining to the Magus in visions of the 6th and 4th Aeythers.

Starting in 1910 CE Crowley began pushing himself to more fully Understand the Magus Degree. This process would lead to new contacts in the realm of esoteric orders and would hold a major relocation to New York as well.

In 1912 he would publish *The Book of Lies* which triggered Theodore Reuss, head of the German Ordo Templi Orientis to contact him claiming he had revealed the Secrets of that order's upper Degrees. Crowley claimed that wasn't possible as he was not privy to those Degrees, but intuited once Reuss came to him that it was of a sexual nature and triggered by "Psalm 36 - The Star Sapphire" Crowley's version of the Golden Dawn Hexagram Ritual for the A.'.A.'. interesting for our purposes the central point of this rite includes the appearance of Set, one of the few times Set is mentioned in Crowley's rituals. Form Reuss, and his own fertile sexual imagination, Crowley would add a battery of sexual techniques to his repertoire as a magician as attested to in his diaries.

In 1909 CE Charles Stansfeld Jones (1886 CE–1950 CE) joined the A.'.A.'. after reading an issue of "The Equinox." With Crowley's association with the O.T.O. he joined this Order as well, and would become the local head of the Order operating out of Toronto. Jones would spend a good deal of time working on the ciphers contained in *The Book of the Law* as a part of his A.'.A.'. Work under J.C.F. Fuller and then Crowley himself.

In 1914 CE Crowley relocated to New York to pursue writing, painting and his Task as a Magister Templi. This would become an period of intense magical Work, leading him to his attainment as Magus, whose Word was *thélima* [Thelema], and whose name was To Mega Therion, "The Great Beast, whose number was 666.. As foretold in *The Vision and the Voice* he would proclaim a New Aeon to humanity as Magus. By the rules of the A.'.A.'. he would need to find a replacement for himself as a Magister Templi, and did so by Recognizing

C. S. Jones as such on October 12, 1915 at the same time as his own Recognition as Magus.

The period of correspondence afterwards between Crowley and Jones, collected as Liber Aleph shows the formation and formalization of Crowley's Doctrine not only of the Aeons but also of the Magus in the A.'.A.'. and historically. He identifies seven previous Magi: Lao Tzu, Thoth, Krishna, Guatama, Moses, Dionysus, and Mohammed. History not being Crowley's strong suit he does not address these chronologically but rather as a means for outlining what he saw as the important contributions of each of these figures to his own Understanding of his new Aeon. each would be identified with a Work that summed up their entire philosophy much as Thélimia summed up his own.

The Book of the Law was seen as the sign of the beginning of the New Aeon, though it would take Crowley some 11 years to develop sufficiently to act as the Magus of this New Aeon. The period of private exchange with Jones and other Initiates of the A.'.A.'. and O.T.O. would lead to a renewed sense of purpose, culminating in the publication of "The Equinox" Vol III No. 1 in the Spring of 1919 CE. The full system of the A.'.A.', which contained detailed information on the Magus Degree was provided in "One Star in Sight" published as a part of Crowley's Magick In Theory and Practice published in 1929 CE. He would suggest in this text that a Magus could either Utter a Word which would instigate a New Aeon or Could perform an Utterance which would enhance the existing Aeon in some fashion.

It is thus in Crowley that we find all of the various lines of thought discussed in this series brought together. through the Name of the Beast taken from the Apocalypse, with an understanding crafted from Messianic Kabbalah and honed by the Enochian system, with the Gnostic doctrine of Aeons and the magico-philosophic traditions of Logos, sutured together under the Zoroastrian title a Remanifestations of all of these streams and the articulation of a new Being State was Recognized: The Magus.

By the design of the A.'.A.'. a Recognition was supposed to coincide with the Recognition of another into the Degree you were vacating. When Crowley had Recognized himself as a Magus he had Recognized C. J. Jones as a Magister Templi. Despite this Crowley took the Oath of the Ipsissimus in 1923 CE with no such co-Recognition. In fact during Crowley's lifetime he never recognized another Magus within the Aeon of Horus. When he died in 1947 CE he had not even made official provisions for the survival of the A.'.A.'. beyond his life, though he had with the O.T.O.

This did not prevent others from making claims to it. C. S. Jones would go through a period where he had claimed rapid ascent to being first Magus, and then an Ipsissimus before restoring himself to Neophyte. He made claims of an "Aeon of Justice and Truth" which superseded the Aeon of Horus, but never proclaimed a Word for himself nor seems to have felt he was the Magus of this Aeon.

In the period following Crowley's death the state of organized Thelema largely felt to nothing. As a result of this, and the events surrounding a quasi-O.T.O. groups known as "The Solar Lodge" a one time IX° of the O.T.O., Grady Louis McMurtry (1918 CE - 1985 CE) decided to do something about his. Using somewhat vague authority under the title of "Caliph" derived from a term Crowley had used for Karl Germer, the designated inheritor of the O.T.O., McMurtry began seeking out those others who had been IX° to ask them to either help or get out of the way in his attempt to revive the O.T.O. and defend Crowley's legacy.

In 1977 CE, he wrote a Charter declaring Thelema Lodge, of San Francisco, and designated it the Grand Lodge of the O.T.O. In signing this Charter he pronounced this under his authority as "Frater Hymeneaus Alpha 777, IX° O.T.O., 9=2, Caliph of the Ordo Templi Orientis." The charter can be seen [[url=http://www.parareligion.ch/2012/thelema_lodge_charter_1977.jpg](http://www.parareligion.ch/2012/thelema_lodge_charter_1977.jpg)]here[ur]. What is of note is the claim of 9=2, the designation in the A.'.A.'. for the Degree of Magus. To the best of anyone's records McMurtry was not a member of the A.'.A.'. proper, certainly not via Crowley. Also McMurtry never publicly proclaimed himself as a Magus other than this one time nor did he ever state his Utterance. He was never Recognized as such by any of the Students of Crowley in the A.'.A.'.

A witness to the signing of the Charter, Jerry Cornelius, has claimed that McMurtry has said "O-T-O" under his breath, making this his Utterance, wisely or foolishly, to empower the recreation of the O.T.O. Cornelius has used the authority of this "Utterance" to create an A.'.A.'. line from McMurtry that he has run for some decades.

Although certainly some may have thought themselves Magi none were regarded as such by other magicians. No one had come forth within the Western Esoteric Tradition. No one had come forth in the Eastern Esoteric Traditions. In fact the only one who did come forth and was arguably Recognized by the World, for a time, was one who had come "from no expected house": Anton Szandor LaVey (1930 CE - 1997 CE).

The tale of Howard Stanton Levey and his transformation into Anton Szandor LaVey, Magus of the Age of Satan, has been well documented elsewhere and will not be gone over again here. Instead a focus will be placed upon the contributions he made to the notion of Magus.

LaVey was not a trained scholar in any capacity nor was he a close student of any field. What he excelled in was getting a sense of the undercurrents in human behavior and being perfectly comfortable accepting all of it as it was rather than as some ideology would prefer it to be. This capacity gave him a rather dismal view of much of what passed for "occult wisdom" with perhaps his best critique being summed up in the introduction to *The Satanic Rituals*:

Quote:

Much magical curricula is padded beyond belief with pseudo-esoteric data, the purpose of which is: (a) to make it tougher to learn, since no one places any credence in what comes too easy (though they constantly seek shortcuts, give-aways and miracles); (b) to provide many things that can go wrong, so that if a ritual doesn't work it can be said that the student was delinquent in his studies; (c) to discourage all but the most idle, bored, talentless, and barren (translation=introspective, mystical, spiritual) persons. Contrary to popular assumption, esoteric doctrines do not discourage nonachievers but actually encourage them to dwell in loftier ivory towers. Those with the greatest degree of natural magical ability are often far too busy with other activities to learn the "finer" points of the Sephiroth, Tarot, I Ching, etc.

This is not intended to suggest that there is no value in arcane wisdom. But, just because one memorizes every name in a telephone directory it does not mean he is intimately acquainted with each person listed.

As LaVey was interested in who people were rather than the delusion of who they felt they should be he gravitated towards the figure of Satan and the notion that He would have a Church of his own. This had been the one ingredient that had been wholly lacking in the Golden Dawn's integration of the idea of the Early Modern Period. It would come back not as a component but as the center of gravity of LaVey's thought, along with its Witches and Warlocks, its profane rites and Blasphemous proclamations.

LaVey had seen that the world had changed. The end of the 19th Century really

had been the end of the Modern Period. The superstitions of the past had been shown to be irrelevant towards the human animal. Man's religions were lies for the sake of individual psychological coping or mass social control. What those social forces had hated and repressed as the domain of Satan, humanity's animal and carnal desires as well as his higher capacities for reason and artistic expression unbound by "decency," were not the Enemies of humanity's fulfillment but the very road to it. Rather than cast out Satan why not valorize this shunned emblem of all that we were and ever really could be.

LaVey's ground level acceptance of humans as they were rather than as anyone would wish them to be would coalesce into what has been Recognized as his Word: Indulgence. This would be the central principle behind his ideas and Teachings, the Word of the Age of Satan and the first major innovation in the Occult world since Crowley. It was not only a shift in the Occult World but it was a seismic social shift which propelled LaVey towards international fame and for a short time serious regard.

With regard to the notion of Magus LaVey took a fairly pragmatic approach. He did not care about Aeons, nor significant contributions to the realm of philosophy. He described the Magus V° of his Church of Satan in his February 15, 1970 National Insider column "Letters to the Devil" in the following manner:

Quote:

"All Satanic MAsters [IV°] are automatically encouraged to work towards the position of Magus but encouragement by this stage of the game is hardly necessary, as without the inventiveness and innovation potential which is required for the Magus, they would never have become Satanic Master in the First Place.

...

My position as Magus is predicated upon my bringing of Satanism to the light of day in an acceptable form for the first time in history."

In November 1970 he would, under the pseudonym "John M. Kincaid" for the Cloven Hoof aimed at the Church of Satan membership expand upon this:

Quote:

The Title of Magus V° is conferred upon members of the IV° who have discovered and brought forth a new magical principle and utilized it in a manner that profoundly affects the activities of the world. The position held by Anton LaVey as High Priest is monarchical in nature, papal in degree, and absolute in power. His exalted position is the result of doing what no other man has done in

the span of millennium: bringing Satanism into the world as an organized, legitimate, aboveground persuasion - and with it restoring the dignity of man's own godhead.

Interestingly LaVey would never Recognize another Magus within the Age of Satan and the Church of Satan. he did not do so from 1966 to 1975 CE. He did not do so after 1975 through to his death in 1997 CE. He and he alone would be the one Magus of the Age of Satan.

But his Teachings and his example, positive and negative, did prepare one other for the Task: Michael A. Aquino. It would be this man, with the ren of Ra-E-Set, who would clarify the doctrine of Aeons and create a system that allowed for but did not demand the capacity of other Magi to come into being. And he would do it with his Utterance of Xeper, the Eternal Word of the Aeon of Set.

Dr. Aquino's experience on the North Solstice X, as recorded in *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* has provided a tremendous clarifying effect upon the doctrine of Aeons, Magi and Words. This has taken shape through the primary tools created in response to this experience, the Temple of Set itself.

The BoCFbN accepts the idea that Crowley's 1904 CE reception of *The Book of the Law* had in fact opened an Aeon of Horus. But the Aeon of Horus described is not that of Horus the Younger, as Crowley had claimed, but rather than of The Great Horus, Horus the Elder, "HarWar" in the text, and Hor-ur by contemporary transliteration.

The text suggests that the primary duration of this Aeon had lasted from the 1904 CE start to 1966 CE where it was superseded by "The Age of Satan." This would be a time of purification, where historical stasis and elusion could be purged by Initiates. At the moment of the North Solstice, 1975 CE the Age of Satan was undergoing its full realization as the Aeon of Set and its Eternal Word, and the Uttered Word of its Magus, was and is Xeper.*

Right from the start of this Aeon of Set it would seem the notion of Aeons received from Crowley would have to be re-evaluated. If taken seriously his Aeon of Horus had not run the course of the ~2000 year interval of the Equinox of Aquarius. Less directly stated, it would appear that Crowley's association not only of his Aeon of Horus with Horus the Younger was in error but there was a fairly good chance that his Aeons of Isis and Orsiris, at least as he understood them, had been in error.

Dr. Aquino would return to Florence Farr's *Egyptian Magic* and would find a root of Crowley's notion of Aeons in this text. Rather than ruling Zodiacal periods the Aeons had been a Gnostic notion tied to one's individual Initiation. As one developed one could gain access to increasingly more sophisticated Aeons or refined Understanding while still retaining access to the previous Aeons transversed.

The Aeons that had come into being in the course of the 20th Century CE were not product of linear time progression but reflective of the increasing sophistication of Initiates. They need not be tied to any fixed length of time but rather were a series of lenses through which one could view themselves, their interactions with others and their relation to nature. As Dr. Aquino writes, "[An Aeon] is simply an attitude which one chooses or is conditioned to adopt."

Dr. Aquino would bring his new vision to the Degree of Magus as well. Crowley had felt that each Aeon only had one true Magus, the one who Uttered it into Being. Others could in theory become something "Magus like" provided they were willing to subordinate themselves to the true Magus. Dr. Aquino would

extend and elevate the dignity of this notion. While it might be true that each Aeon would only have one Utterer who called the Aeon into interaction with Time other Magi would, and should, develop within the Aeon, with Words that shift the balance of Understanding within the Aeon and enhance the application of the Aeon's Primary Word.

Reflecting the seriousness of the Magus V° within the Temple of Set Dr. Aquino would create a system of Recognition which required the High Priest/Priestess of Set to have individual come to see a master as having pushed beyond the Temple's present Understanding in a manner which could enhance Xeper. For the HP's Recognition to be seen as valid it requires the affirmation of the entire Council of Nine to affirm it so, the only unanimous vote required by the Temple's By-Laws.

Dr. Aquino would embrace the entire synthesis of ideas we have been discussing with a tremendous force of clarity. The Prince of Darkness was in fact the "God of Magicians" but he was not the simple character of the Christian Satan. Rather the Prince was a figure who philosophically could be seen as the Platonic First Form of Isolate Intelligence, from which each individual Isolate Intelligence was shaped after and resonant to. It would be the name by which this Principle had been known in Ancient Egypt, as Set, that would be venerated as the Temple's Patron, while opening the door for all other human apprehensions of this Principle to be studied and explored.

The Messianic Kabbalah, and its misrepresentations through the 19th Century occult world were dismissed however the Enochian material of John Dee would be retained. This material would be restored to the original transmitted orthography that Dee and Kelly had received and was subject to an Initiatory re-evaluation, leading to the 19 Parts of the Word of Set. It would outline the emergence of Life itself, of early human consciousness, of a flourishing of that consciousness in interaction with the Prince of Darkness, and the eventual enhanced remanifestation of this interaction under the guise of Four Orderings. Here it was not an Apocalypse that the Keys foretold but an emergence into a time which would seem as distant to present man as present man's condition would seem distant to his early Hominid ancestors.

In an act of Play Dr. Aquino would integrate the Apocalypse of John of Patmos by accepting Crowley's own identification with the Beast of the Sea by taking on the title of the Second Beast, the Beast from the Earth. As the Second Beast, of "two horns" who would heal the crippling wounds of the First Beast and begin the Reign of the Dragon.

Most importantly Dr. Aquino, as by his Word of Xeper, would make the individual's own transformations central to the Word of the Aeon of Set rather

than the need to announce it from every hill top or to amass followers. It would act as a beacon to those most dedicated to their own development from all walks of life and stations in culture for the mutual benefit of their development.

By the Work and Word of the Magus of the Aeon of Set would it become possible to integrate and enhance all that had come before in preparation for the staggering newness that is to be.

*See my "The Egyptian Language and the Eternal Word" document link in my PoN "Above the Abyss" profile entry for an extensive discussion of this Word and its many varied implications.

When I began this series last month I had not timed it to conclude on this date, December 21, 2012. As many of you know there are a number of people in a froth over the fact that this date coincides with the five numeral dating system matching the date of Creation for the Maya, which was 11 August 3114 BCE. Due to a translation error of a stele at the Tortuguero site in Mexico by Dr. Michael D. Coe in 1966 the idea was born that this date would mean the end of the World for the Maya.

Inspired by the I Ching, a whole pharmacopeia of plant drugs and early personal computers Terence McKenna developed a graph thought to plot the interaction of stasis and creation through something he termed "Time Wave Zero." After the first calibration yielded nothing of particular significance he re-calibrated the system and noticed that on roughly this same date, Dec 21, 2012, his graph goes to the limit of novelty. McKenna had no idea what this would mean, though he would spin a good deal of blarney about it over the decades.

My favorite version from McKenna was the idea that on this day the fractal pattern of his Time Wave, which suggested that different moments had a resonant feature with other moments of the past that shared the same shape, came together on this day. From this moment of all time concompressing with one time, the entire span of all time that had come before, and all time that could come after, would be unified together in a singularity. From this point all time could be contacted, and all time could be subject to Remanifestation.

This evening I will be, with the participation of the Setians of new York City, performing a version of the Apep Spell from the Bremner Rhind Papyrus. It is a restatement of the Heliopolis Cosmogony, reinforcing the shape of Creation in order to fell the forces of Delusion and Unproductive Regret. What empowers this spell is the Divine Formula of Xepera Xeper Xeperu, an it is from this Spell that the Eternal Word found its way to the Mind of the Magus Ra-En-Set.

So tonight, under the stars or elsewhere, think for a moment of what happens when all time is Ruled, even if only briefly, by the Word of the Aeon of Set. Think of the genealogy of ideas that needed to come together for the Aeon of Set to be. Think of those times which inspire you towards your own Divine Pattern. In doing so realize that tomorrow begins a cycle a new with its origins in this same Divine Pattern.

Xepera Xeper Xeper

Book II: The Eternal Word

The Egyptian Language

The Egyptian language, which is first dated by inscription to circa 3400 BCE, is one of the oldest recorded languages among humans. It is classified as an Afroasiatic language (Hamito-Semitic in older sources) and shares features with related ancient languages such as Akkadian and Biblical Hebrew and with contemporary languages such as Arabic, Amharic and Hebrew. Although no longer considered a living language the liturgical language of Coptic Christianity, Coptic, is a direct descendent of Egyptian.

As with any language with such a long duration of use it underwent a number of changes over time. When the rule changes appear to take on clear features Egyptian linguists make distinctions within the language. For Egyptian there are the following divisions: Archaic Egyptian (Pre- to Early Dynastic Period), Ancient Egyptian (Old Kingdom), Middle Egyptian (Middle Kingdom), Late Egyptian (The Third Intermediate Period), Demotic (Late Period through Roman occupation) and Coptic (Roman time to the present).

Like most Afroasiatic languages Egyptian is built around "verb roots." In most cases verb roots are made up of three consonants that can be modified by shifting vowel sounds in speaking and specialized characters in hieroglyphic writing. There is a fairly complex system for categorizing verb roots, with James P. Allen's *Middle Egyptian* (2010) being one of the best learning sources for those interested in a detailed discussion.

The Eternal Word of Set, Xeper, comes from the verb root *xpr* or *hpr*.¹ The verb root *hpr* means most essentially "to evolve, to develop, to roll out of." This aspect of "roll out" is likely to be how the verb root became connected with its hieroglyphic counterpart representing the Scarab Beetle.



This glyph in turn was based upon the animal *Scarabaeus sacer* that is indigenous to Egypt.

¹ Both the "x" and the "h" in this case signify a phoneme similar to the Scottish "-ch" in *loch* or the German "-ch" in *Ich*. Early Egyptological Linguists, such as those working in the 19th Century, tended to favor "x" while contemporary Egyptologists favor "h."



Like most other scarab beetles *S. sacer* is a coprophagic beetle that collects dung and rolls it off to be buried and used as a food source for itself and for its offspring. You can find a brief video introduction to dung beetle behavior [here](#). For those interested in really diving deep into this topic *Evolutionary Biology and Conservation of Dung Beetles* by Clarke H. Scholtz et al. (2009) is excellent.

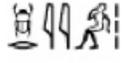
To give a sense of how verb roots such as *hpr* are modified I thought I would walk my readers through a few of the words which can be constructed from this root.

You'll notice in more than a few of these a lens shaped hieroglyph accompanying the *hpr* beetle. This is the glyph for "mouth" which phonetically signifies "r" and has the classification of D21 in the system of hieroglyphs developed by Sir Allen Gardiner and generally in use among Egyptologists. It is common in Egyptian for the first glyph from a root to act as a **phonetic complement** repeating the final sound of the root.



Interestingly the lens shape glyph also indicates futurity.

The following images are drawn from this Paul Dickson's "Middle Egyptian Dictionary (2006). While by no means comprehensive they provide a sense of the many ways that the core concept of *hpr* "to evolve" can be transformed and the kinds of ideas which are thought to stem from it.

-  [xpr m] amounts to {L1 D21 G17}
-  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 D21 G43 A53 Y1 Z2}
-  [xpr] (*divinity*) Khopri {L1 D21 M17 A40}
-  [xpry] children {L1 D21 M17 M17 A17 Z3}
-  [xprw] form, shape {L1 D21 M17 M17 A53 G7}
-  [xpr n] accrue to {L1 D21 N35}
-  [xprS] the Blue Crown {L1 D21 N37 S7}
-  [xpr Ds .f] who came into being of himself (of sun god), fermentation ? {L1 D21 S29 I10 I9}
-  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 D21 Z2}
-  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 D21 Z2}
-  [xprw] form, shape {L1 D21 Z7 A53 Z3}
-  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 G43 Y1 Z2}
-  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 L1 L1}
-  [xpr] dung beetle, scarab {L1 Z1}
-  [xprw] form, shape, modes of being {L1 Z2}
-  [ir xprw] assume a shape {D4 L1 D21 G43 A53 Y1 Z2}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) bring into being, create,
make, make grow (a garden) {S29 L1}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) effect (a deed), foster (truth),
turn, transform (into) {S29 L1}

 [sxpr] (*causative*) raise (a child), educate,
breed (animals), bring about (an event) {S29
L1 }

 [sxpr] (*causative*) bring into being, create,
make, make grow (a garden) {S29 L1 D21 }

 [sxpr] (*causative*) effect (a deed), foster (truth),
turn, transform (into) {S29 L1 D21 }

 [sxpr] (*causative*) raise (a child), educate,
breed (animals), bring about (an event) {S29 L1
D21 }

Less commonly known than the Scarab glyph there is another way to write the *hpr* root.



This is a purely phonetic set of characters with the circle signifying "h," the square "p" and the mouth "r." This is less common to find on its own but it does show up in inscriptions as a means of reinforcing how the beetle is pronounced or on its own.

Verb roots on their own have certain grammatical features. There are two major classifications, called **transative** and **intransitive**. Transitive means roughly that transitive verbs describe an action that is transferred from an agent ("The boy threw the ball") while intransitive verbs describe an action which are not transferred but retained by the one "verbing" i.e. a change in state of the agent.

Hpr is an intransitive verb root.

The general rule of thumb for unmodified roots is that they can be read in three ways: as Imperfect Tense, as Stative Tense, or as an Infinitive/Verbal Noun.

I will be going into more detail on these tenses over the next few days but will provide the brief introduction to each from James Allen's *Middle Egyptian* (2010), emphasis in original:

Imperfect Tense: "The imperfective expresses **imperfective or extended action**: action that is in some way repeated, ongoing, or incomplete. This is an aspect rather than tense. Like the perfective and other Middle Egyptian verb forms, the imperfective is essentially tensless. It often has to be translated by an English present tense, but it can be used with reference to past or future actions as well." (pg. 267)

Stative Tense: "The stative is a verb form used to express a **state of being** in which its subject is, was, or will be. Originally the stative expressed the perfect tense, that is completed action. By Middle Egyptian, however, other verb forms were used for that function, and the stative had come to express instead the **result** of a completed action. In this respect the stative is similar to the English past participle." (pg. 205)

Infinitive/Verbal Noun: "The infinitive is a verb form used to refer to action just as action, without reference to any tense, mood, aspect, or voice. The infinitive actually belongs to a special class of words, known as verbal nouns, which are used to describe actions as such." (pg. 163)

Thus we have three ways to read *hpr* into English just from the verb-root itself.



Imperfective: Become, Coming into Being, Evolving

Stative: Became, Have Come into Being, Evolved

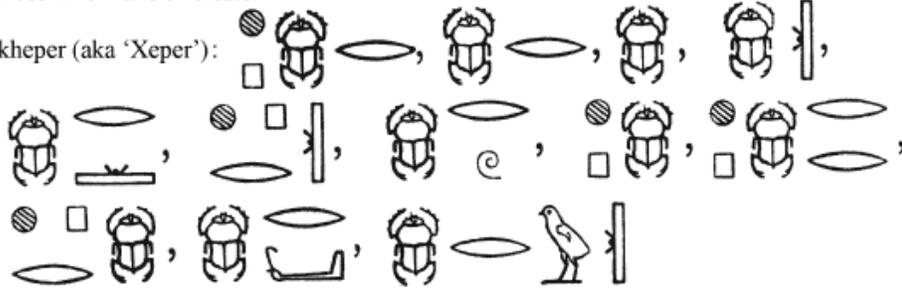
Infinitive/Verbal Noun: Becoming, Evolve/Evolution

As discussed above the primary root form of *hpr* is the scarab beetle glyph. Often however you find forms of *hpr* which read as roughly the same sound but which carry with it non-phonetic glyphs that give you a sense of the specific form or kind of *hpr* taking place.

Here is a brief list of variations of the fundamental *hpr* we would read as Xeper drawn from Wallis Budge's Dictionary by Adepts Lansberry and Yagmin.

those who make or create.

kheper (aka 'Xeper'):



Based upon previous discussion you may already recognize aspects of these forms of Xeper. You can see the phonetic characters for "h," "p," and "r" acting as phonemic compliments to the beetle glyph.



Some others of these may not be as easily understood. I will not be going through all of these presently but I will give you a look at a few to get a sense of how the core idea of *hpr* can be modified.



This version of *hpr* is made up of the beetle glyph, the mouth glyph as a phonemic compliment and the spiral glyph (Z7). The Z7 spiral can be read as a "-w" or "-u" sound however by context and grammar it can be determined if it was voiced or not. The Z7 spiral is a variation of another glyph, G43, a quail chick.



The quail chick is what you end up with from the transformation of an egg. As such both it, and the spiral variant upon it, suggests "final" or "completion of stage." Thus this form of Xeper means "Completing the evolution of this stage."

Here we have another version:



Two characters we have met before, however there is something new here. The image of the arm out stretched with a stick (D40) is read to mean "force" or "effort," and most of the things you think about when you see someone with a club in their hand. When this glyph is added to the basic *hpr.r* complex you get something that would translate as "forced development."

You have probably noticed that in addition to the glyphs already discussed there is another one which appears commonly in this set, that of the scroll.



This can be written horizontally or vertically and holds the same meaning, "abstract idea." In those versions of *hpr* that are modified by this glyph it means that one is not looking at a natural process of evolution or development but rather an abstract or conceptual one. This will be important for later discussions as the form of *hpr* found in the version of the Formula of the Aeon of Set, Xepera Xeper Xeperu, is constructed with this glyph



As an exercise see if you can figure out a translation of the concepts implied by the final form of *hpr* given above, the Beetle-Mouth-Chick-Scroll, characters.

Xeper

It is not uncommon for there to be remarkable outcomes when a Magus makes what seems like a minor comment. In some cases these comments transform in time into major life defining events. Take for example this short inscription to Michael A. Aquino from Anton Szandor LaVey in his first copy of *The Satanic Bible*:

"To Michael A. Aquino, who shall become more than can now be stated."

During the expansion of the Church of Satan Magus LaVey suggested to Grotto Leaders that they spice up their rituals using texts on Anthropology, Fiction or other seemingly non-occult sources. Then-Priest Michael A. Aquino bought a reprint of Budge's *Egyptian Language* which had been reprinted in 1966, the Year I of the Age of Satan. He used the information in the text to make the Workings of the Ninevah Grotto in Louisville, KY a bit more "spiffy."

Chapter IX of Budge's work focuses upon Egyptian Verb conjugation. While many of the other chapters use a variety of words to illustrate his points this chapter is build around the conjugations of one verb-root, *hpr*, which Budge translated as "Become." The chapter uses a number of notable occurrences of this verb-root to teach the basics of conjugation, including a short section of a spell formula from the Bremner Rhind Papyrus IV. It is from this spell formula that the sentence "Xepera Xeper Xeperu" was first read by this particular Priest of Mendes.

Although Egyptian themes would not be predominant in Aquino's continued Work within the Church of Satan he did retain an interest in the subject. This interest led him to continue reading books on Egyptian culture and art.

In the spring of 1975 he conducted a Working known as "The Sphinx and the Chimaera" (1975). This is notable for two reasons. This Working was the first to be conducted using the restored Enochian, which would develop into the Word of Set. Secondly the report of the Working takes the form of a long discussion between two mythic creatures observed by the Magician. Much of the discussion focuses upon the works of Plato and in some small ways the likely Egyptian origins of much of Plato's ideas. Significant to our discussion is this passage quoted by the Sphinx when talking about Egyptian notions of time, cyclical regeneration and immortality.

I was the spirit in the Primeval Waters.

He who had no companion when his name Came Into Being.

The most ancient form in which I Came Into Being was as a drowned one.
I was he who Came Into Being as a circle.
He who was the Dweller in his Egg.
I was the one who began everything, the Dweller in the Primeval Waters.
First the Wind emerged for me, and then I began to move.
I created my limbs in my glory.
I was the maker of myself; I formed myself according to my desire and in
accord with my heart."

The text attributes this quote to R.T. Rundle Clark's *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt* page 74. What it does not mention is that once again this passage was drawn from a version of the same Heliopolis Cosmogony that is the source for the Bremner Rhind spell that provides the core of Budge's Chapter IX.

Sometime in May of 1975 Magister Aquino found himself consulting works on Egyptian art. Nearly all of the images of Set were destroyed, reminding of Budge's discussion in *The Mummy* of the destruction of much of the imagery of Set by later cults, most notably that of Osiris. Magister Aquino would in a moment of playfulness and "Sudden sympathy for this 'old mythological figure,'" decided to restore an image of Set with his own hand, taking from Budge a line of hieroglyphs from a hymn that translate to English as "Let my Great Nobles Be Brought to Me." Satisfied with the results he put the image in his collection, not thinking much more about it.

On the North Solstice of 1975, the Year X by Church of Satan reckoning, and event took place that, if you do not know of it, chances are you really should not be reading this message. Troubled by the seeming destruction of the Church of Satan under Anton LaVey, Magister Templi (IV°-II') Michael A. Aquino conducted a Rite of Contact with the Prince of Darkness. What came was a series of insights condensed into the text known as the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. No better account of this experience can be found than the one contained in Dr. Aquino's *Temple of Set*.

The text contains two uses of the Egyptian glyph for Xeper. The first is to mark the Year X "Xeper" at the beginning of the text. The second is at the end of the text, where it is flanked by "Xeper" on the left and "Become" on the right. Dr. Aquino was kind enough to indulge me recently by scanning the original text of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. I was interested in seeing the original version of the glyph used the night of the Aeon of Set's opening rather than the later clip art used in *The Ruby Tablet* version of the text. My suspicion was that there might be something important there. Sure enough the versions of Xeper in the text are hand drawn versions of



This is the verb root *hpr* itself, with its universal mutability while forever remaining eternal and unchanged. It marked the essential idea of Xeper, which can be applied in an infinite number of ways but which forever returns to its own purity of essence. I can think of no better metaphor for the Utterance of Ra-En-Set as the Magus of the Aeon of Set than this. As all conjugations of *hpr* derive ultimately from the pure verb-root itself so too do all Words within the Aeon of Set ultimately derive from that Unnatural Fire brought from Heaven which illuminated Ra-En-Set's mind.

A few key quotes, some observations on the Primary Utterance and some exercises for those who want to integrate some of these insights.

The following quotes are drawn from *Temple of Set*:

The essence of the *psyche*, stated Set in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, is such that its existence is neither dependent upon the material nor imprisoned in it for testing or task-fulfilling purposed. Rather the physical body provides a vehicle in which the psyche can become aware of itself and then reach out towards the limitlessness of its conscious existence.

This is a tremendously powerful realization. Your life, and your Initiation, is not a test. Your Work is not something you are doing in the hopes of passing the test of Immortality. Rather your existence, and its attendant pleasures and pains, are from the vantage point of the Eternal Word of the Aeon of Set a means by which you can become more self-aware. By making Xeper the fundamental value that frames your entire life, by casting off the mistaken notion that "This is a Test," you are capable of diving deeply into the experience of being alive and being willing to embrace whatever must arise as a result of your full engagement with the Real.

This orientation provides a model of existence very different from those of conventional religions and those of conventional occultism. If taken seriously it opens up the notion, states by Ipsissimus Webb at the 2001 Conclave presentation released as "The Task of the Magus," that one is alive to learn the nature of consequence, rather than trying to bring about specific results.

Your ability to align your consciousness with your neter rather than your superficial, animal, illusion of "self" is Xeper.

I will be discussing the notion and implications of the individual *neter* in a later discussion of the Formula of the Aeon. For more on this from Dr. Aquino listen to the interview he did for KHPR. This episode is strongly recommended generally and Magister Kauschen should be thanked profusely for making it happen and insuring its availability.

Key to understanding how this quote applies is that the Setian path is not one of transcendence and exclusion. You are not looking to make this alignment with your *neter* in order to avoid the Manifest Realm, to flee from life or to find solace in an unfulfilling existence but rather to place yourself in your proper center to more fully include and refine the Manifest Self.

Functionally this has some implications. It is far easier to set aside a healthy, fit body than it is one is chronic pain. The Pre-Modern Yogi's practice of sitting still until the body becomes decrepit and incapable of movement does no quantifiable good. Tending to your health, physically, emotionally and rationally, becomes a powerful means of insuring that when you need to set them aside it can be done without their looking to make distractions.

From the Analysis and Commentary on the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*:

I am therefore the tenth, appearing in the year X, and it has been my Task and Curse to Utter the Word Xeper. This is the Egyptian hieroglyphic term for "to become/to be/to come into being" and it is personified by the god Xepera (Kheph-Ra). This god was portrayed as the scarab beetle, symbolizing Self-generation and the dawn.

Summarily the Word Xeper refers to the transformation and evolution of the Will from a human to divine state of being - by deliberate, conscious, individual force of mind.

The formula of the Aeon of Set is XXX = Xepera Xeper Xeperu = "I Have Come into Being and Created That Which Has Come Into Being."

The second paragraph is by far the most significant and essential definition of Xeper. It outlines how the act of Xeper is set into motion, through the deliberate refinement and use of the force of mind.

What is interesting is that the notion that the force of mind could make any changes to the human state was a shunned idea at the time of Xeper's reception. It was believed that once adulthood happened no further changes of any significance, except damage and degradation, could happen to the brain. Those who suggested that changes could be made in a creative fashion were shunned, removed from their positions and marginalized in their fields.

Many of the major legal conflicts of the Age of Satan (1966 to 1975) were driven by some reckless but insightful Psychologists who suggested that there were ways of changing the brain, against conventional wisdom. Their answer for doing this relied upon exogenous chemicals used in increasingly irresponsible ways. Their ideas exploded into the counterculture leading to a significant chunk of a generation believing that they could find the Divine from the results of a chemistry set or from eating a few exotic plants. With only a few notable exceptions very little of value came of this.

The Magus of the Age of Satan generally accepted the conventional view. You were who you were and should just embrace it, enjoy it, and accept it all. His approach was a kind of Magician's version of the notion "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." So you were a bit pathological, did things you felt guilty about and misfit with society. Great! Do your pathological thing, embrace the guilt as a feature not a bug, and say to hell with society by making your own private bubble against it.

It is notable that during the prime of his Magus-hood he aided in the Initiation of only one Master of note, someone who very much so decided that the Left Hand Path was not about retreating from reality or hiding in his basement.

What Xeper suggested was, free of outside chemistry, that the Force of Mind could be used for the transformation of Consciousness. What its Magus provided was an approach that integrated both the Rational and the Intuitive in a unique manner. Word and Sign, Logic and Imagination would feed together to gain access to the capacity to make change according to Will, internally and externally.

What is striking is that in the decades since there has been mounting evidence scientifically that the force of mind can in fact lead to the transformation of one's psychology. The discovery of Neuroplasticity, the mind's capacity to re-wire itself based upon its activity, during the 1990s has led to a revolutionary re-examination of the Force of Mind's capacity to transform the brain and the individual's life.

Focusing the mind in specific directions, preferably by combining rational choices with imagery, can lead to the brain's transformation. The conventional model was wrong.

These methods, drawing only upon the internal skills at controlling and directing the force of mind, lead to slow but permanent changes in the structure of the brain, unlike introducing exogenous chemicals which only temporarily effect the chemistry of the brain. The rogue Psychologists and their progeny had been

wrong.

The capacity for neuroplasticity showed that repeated patterns of behavior lead to stronger and stronger connections. The embracing of small pathologies and their indulgence leads in time to more robust versions of those same pathologies. A young man whose stage fright lead to creating a false-persona following the path laid down by the Magus of the Age of Satan would in time develop into an agoraphobic hypochondriac finding any excuse not to leave his doll collection in the basement. The Magus of the Age of Satan had been wrong.

The combination of the rational and the intuitive with a focus upon integrating them towards desired ends has been verified and is now being integrated into a wide variety of fields. The Magus of the Aeon of Set had been right all along.

For those interested in how this capacity was discovered, and this one aspect of Xeper confirmed, see Jeffery M. Schwartz' *The Mind and the Brain*, a book destined for the Gift of Set section of the Reading List.

A few activities:

1. Keep a notepad by your bedside. When you wake up in the morning, the first thing to do is to take that notepad and write down this stem sentence:

If I bring 5% more Intention to my Becoming...

and then write down the nine answers that come to mind without any serious deliberation.

At night, just before falling asleep, take the notepad and write down this stem sentence:

If I bring 5% more Awareness to my Becoming...

and then write down the nine answers that come to mind without any serious deliberation.

Do this for at least 28 days and see what effects it has upon your Consciousness. After this period of 28 days review what you have written in the notebook and then write the following stem sentence

If any of what I have written is true I should...

and write down nine answers. Then start making those things happen.

2. This is a seven-day project. On the first day read the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. Then for the next five days read Dr. Aquino's Analysis and Commentary as well as his account of the reception of this document in *Temple of Set*. On the seventh night prepare your chamber in your customary fashion. Once this is done take up a copy of the *Book...* and read it aloud. Afterwards spend a few days noting your dreams and insights in relation to this Working and to the *Book...*

3. Find a small, inexpensive means of promoting the Temple of Set. Examples include sharing the Temple's website via social media, placing an anonymous ad in a local newspaper with the Temple's contact information, or otherwise finding a means for others to be exposed to Xeper in some fashion. Consider including the verb root *hpr* glyph in the ad.

For those of you interested in going back to one of the sources mentioned thus far, Archive.org has a digital copy of Sir Wallis Budge's book *Egyptian Language* available at

<http://archive.org/details/EgyptianLanguage>

I would suggest the PDF version as it retains the layout, feel and characters of the original text.

Sir Wallis Budge was an interesting figure in his own right, with a good deal of innuendo and controversy surrounding him. For those so inclined *Wallis Budge: Magic and Mummies in London and Cairo* by Matthew Ishmail may prove valuable.

Egyptian Language was originally published with its foreword dated as February 14, 1910. The book fell out of wide circulation for a number of years only to be reprinted as a mass-market book beginning in 1966. For some of you the potential significance of these things may already be known. For others they will emerge as we go along.

If you are someone willing to take serious my idea that the Primary Utterance of Xeper is best understood as the Utterance of the Verb-Root itself you very quickly run into a challenge. Because of its purity, and because of its infinite ways of conjugation, the Utterance can be tremendously overwhelming. It stands as a unique Fire within the Amethyst Realm, drawing all that was before into its light and shining forth in all directions. This is what one would expect of an Aeon Initiating Word, but it remains daunting nonetheless.

Humans for the most part aren't good with infinities. Having unlimited options leads to paralysis, or a tendency to revert to previous more limited ways. On an Aeon Scale one of the functions of an Aeon Enhancing Magus is to provide a specific conjugation of the Primary Word of that Aeon which passes its Infinite Light through a specific lens. The Aeon Enhancing Magus' Work is more focused than that of an Aeon Initiating Magus, but in most cases it is less expansive.

The Temple of Set's model for what the Magi are comes from Aleister Crowley's Remanifestation of the Golden Dawn System's Degrees within his A.'.A.'. In "One Star In Sight" Crowley writes of the Aeon Enhancing Magus:

This does not mean that only one man can attain this Grade in any one Aeon, so far as the Order is concerned. A man can make personal progress equivalent to that of a "Word of an Aeon"; but he will identify himself with the current word, and exert his will to establish it, lest he conflict with the work of the Magus who uttered the Word of the Aeon in which He is living.

To use the linguistic metaphors we have been working with thus far the Work of an Aeon Enhancing Magus can be seen as presenting a specific conjugation of the Primary Word of the Aeon, or providing an Object for its actions.

Remanifestation

The first Aeon Enhancing Magus to survive the Curse of that Grade in earnest was James Lewis, Magus of Remanifestation/Remanifest. For those of you unfamiliar with the story, it was a question from Magister Neilly to then-Magister Lewis about what happens to the Initiate after death which prompted the initial answer of "Remanifest." In time this initial answer grew and developed until it became clear that this answer had far more implication than simply one of life and death but was scalable to the whole of Initiation.

Remanifest can be approached in many ways but the most fruitful for our discussion is to consider it as a response to the cyclical aspects of Xeper. As you evolve and unfold new qualities of your Being, these new qualities need to be enfolded into your lived experience. As Xeper transformed all of your being, dark and light, beneficial and hazardous, one could guide this process towards arranging this new Being in more optimized ways, realizing that as new Being continued to unfold you would need to repeat this process again and again.

Ipsissimus Lewis' early fascination with Leviathan, and especially the Statement of Leviathan in *The Diabolicon*, tied his sense of where Xeper occurs as having to be in the here and now and not merely as a form of mental abstraction. His mode as a Magician was heavily influenced by that of the Aeon of Horus including to some extent the Kabbalistic interests of that mode. Interestingly Leviathan, Lamed-Vau-Yod-Teth-Nun, yields a numerical value of 496 in that tradition, which is also the number of Malkuth/The Kingdom, i.e. Manifest Reality. That the Work of the Word of the Grandmaster of the Order of Leviathan can only be tested in Malkuth/Manifest Reality should not come as a shock, but may act as a Key for some.

Being the remarkable fellow he is, Ipsissimus Lewis has the remarkable capacity to bring all of these implications crashing down on another Initiate who has claimed profound abstract realization with the simple question, "So what?" I have witnessed those two simple words deflate decades of pretension. That which cannot pass this elegant test can be seen as ever having been of true Initiatory significance.

So what does this have to do with Xeper, particularly in a linguistic orientation? The modified reading of the Verb Root *hpr* which most resonates with the Aeonic Formula "Xeper and Remanifest" is the previously discussed Imperfective Tense of the Verb. As previously stated:

Imperfect Tense: "The imperfective expresses imperfective or extended action: action that is in some way repeated, ongoing, or incomplete. This is an aspect rather than tense. Like the perfective and other Middle Egyptian

verb forms, the imperfective is essentially tensless. It often has to be translated by an English present tense, but it can be used with reference to past or future actions as well." (pg. 267)

Whereas the Primary Utterance of Xeper is omnidirectional, Remanifest focuses upon the need for ongoing reiteration with feedback. Where Xeper can in some ways be regarded as Perfect in and of itself, Remanifest reminds that one's Work is never completed, even in Death. Whereas the Primary Utterance of Xeper is Eternal, Remanifest brings this action to the present moment.

It was not by the drive towards Perfection that Xeper was Enhance but by the embrace and use of the imperfect aspects of our experience of Xeper. By this realization and its Teaching did James Lewis become the first Aeon Enhancing Magus to push beyond to become Ipsissimus. By his Word was more of the Aeon of Set known, and capable of being known. By his Work was the 18 lettered formula revealed: Xeper and Remanifest

Runa

I mentioned yesterday my novel take on the notion of Aeon Enhancing Words as acting either as modifiers for Aeon Initiating Words or as Objects of their action. Remanifest was discusses in the context of acting as a modifier to Xeper. Let us take a look at the concept of an Aeon Enhancing Word being the Object² of an Aeon Initiating Utterance.

The first Aeon Enhancing Word of and Object quality to have passed through the Curse of the Magus was Stephen Edred Flowers. His Word, Runa, also has the distinction of being the first Word Recognized by the Temple of Set as having "Trans-Aeonic" properties, meaning that it could be intelligible and applicable to those within all Aeons, not simply the Elect of the Aeon of Set. For my purposes this is helpful as I can contrast three Aeons' Initiating Words in how they relate to Runa as their Object.

The story of how Edred Heard his Word is known to many of you. He did an excellent job of telling the story himself in a Radio Free Runa podcast and provides the broad outline of his experience in his presentation from the Austin Conclave available at KHPR's website. Here is my own brief rendering of the tale.

In Texas near the North Solstice of the Year X day a Satanist I° was on an adventure. A friend of his girlfriend's had been having dreams about a "Tibetan

² In case anyone is confused I am using the term "Object" in the grammatical sense, i.e. the thing which receives the action of the Verb either directly or indirectly. If it has been a while since you have reviewed this idea you might find this helpful [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object_\(grammar\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object_(grammar))

Master" they had seen a few weeks earlier at a Psychic Fair. The Tibetan Master, going by the name of "Norbu Chen", had presented a supposed Maya Crystal Skull, spoke with a strong Houston accent and had performed displays of his power that were suspiciously like an amateur Mentalist routine. Our Satanist I°, a young Journalism student by the name of Stephen E. Flowers, didn't think much of this but going on a road trip to Houston was more fun than the classes he was taking so he decided to go along. When they arrived at the Master's Trailer Park Monastery he waved them off. The friend claimed she was simply not ready yet for him. Stephen, in the backseat began to wonder if there was any genuine path towards transformation, something of value greater than occultnik game-playing. He began to snooze and then suddenly bolted upright upon hearing a single Word whispered in his hear: ROONAH! The others in the car had not heard the Word, only he had. The next day he went to the Library at the University of Texas at Austin. While he did not know what that message meant in full he knew enough to look into Germanic Linguistics. To his surprise he found two different types of texts on the Runes, the dry linguistic and cultural studies of the script as well as the experimental magical texts of Initiates of the Pre-World War II period of Germanic Revival. Armed with these two approaches, a means towards Objective knowledge and a means of Subjective Synthesis, he set out on a Quest.

His Quest took him through many adventures and associations. His membership in the Church of Satan lapsed into disuse as he came into contact with the German Lodges looking to preserve much of the pre-WW2 Germanic Revival, including such groups as the Guido von Liszt Society, the Armanen Order and individuals who had been involved with the Fraternitas Saturni. He would undergo formal academic training in the United States and Europe culminating in a Ph.D. in Germanic Studies. He would participate in the international Germanic Heathen Revival and founded the Rune-Gild to spread authentic Runic methods and traditions. He would by unexpected routes rediscover the transformative source behind the Church of Satan in his encounter with the Temple of Set, leading to his eventual period as Grand Master of the Order of the Trapezoid. And 16 years after his initial experience in the back of that car he was Recognized as the Magus of Runa, "The Mystery."

We have some interesting patterns in this. He begins his Work within the Age of Satan, makes contact with Germanic Groups some of which were affiliated with the Aeon of Horus and finds his Recognition as Magus within the Aeon of Set. Also Runa is not a verb but rather an object, a thing, beyond the Initiate which nevertheless draws them forth.

Let us look at Runa from the vantage point of Thelema, Indulgence and Xeper.

Thelema

Thelema, an English transliteration of the Koine Greek noun θέλημα meaning "Will" derives from the verb θέλω. θέλω in turn means "to will, to wish, to desire, or to choose." Thelema is the Word of the Magus of the Aeon of Horus, Aleister Crowley. θέλημα is somewhat rare in Greek sources though it shows up with some regularity in Christian Scripture, most notably the Matthew Gospel's version of what became the "Our Father" prayer. Crowley, as someone quite familiar with Christian Scripture, would see this in part as a blasphemous pronouncement, claiming that your Will equaled the Divine Will while also being able to rationalize how this was in perfect accord with the Christian Religion.

Apostate Plymouth Brethren are funny that way.

If we take Crowley's Thelema as a verb meaning "To Will Divinely" And Make Runa its Object what we have is the formula "Divinely Will towards the Mystery." Thus by its interaction with Runa is Thelema given a direction and purpose. One not only Wills towards the Mystery but also for the Mystery itself. This is concealed in their connection, known to those who have enumerated the Law of Runa, "Reyn til Runa!" by the Tally of the Younger Futhark.

Indulgence

Indulgence, the Word of the Magus of the Age of Satan, Anton Szandor LaVey, comes from the transitive verb Indulge³ meaning "to give free reign to" or "to take unrestrained pleasure in." LaVey's Utterance transformed this concept into a rising up of one's being from the primordial depths and radically embracing whatever was to be found there. Any push towards personal Divinity would need to be built with the foundations firmly in the Infernal.

If we take LaVey's Indulgence to mean "To give free reign to" and combine in with Runa we gain "To give free reign to the Mystery." If we take it the other way we yield as "To take unrestrained pleasure in the Mystery." By making Runa the Object of Indulgence one finds the primary Satanic Urge to Cast forth the Gates of Hell to unleash the Infernal, whatever the outcome, is made clearer. One's Being and Enjoyment is enriched by giving the Mystery of Existence free reign upon the Earth.

³ Yes, Indulgence can be used as a verb itself however "Indulgencing" has a sour ring to it to a modern English ear.

Xeper

If we take the Primary Utterance with the Imperfective inflection provided by Remanifest something new arises with the contribution of Runa. The repeatable process of Becoming and Remanifesting is given a clear direction by the Mystery. It also suggests that the Unfolding and Enfolding of our Self leads inevitably to the discovery of that Self's Ultimate Mystery. The Mystery becomes both the Object of Xeper by setting a direction and in a sense the Self or "I" which is the Subject of Xeper in time becomes the Mystery of its own Being by this process.

Xeper Re-Uttered

Beginning in 1993 a discussion within the Temple of Set was begun by its High Priest, Dr. Michael A. Aquino, regarding something known as "Aeon of Set Working II." The name was drawn from Anton LaVey's idea that Magical Actions took place across 18 year cycles make up to two sets of 9 years. One of these 18-year cycles would count as a "Working Year." As the Temple of Set was founded in 1975 E.V., 1993 E.V. marked the end of its first Working Year and the beginning of its Second.

In his original piece in the 1993 issue of "The Scroll of Set" Dr. Aquino suggests a number of important operational changes for the Temple of Set. Where by necessity the early years of the Temple of Set were marked largely by his personal Initiation, going forward the Temple of Set would need to be less about his Work and more about the Work of all who have been transformed by this School. Xeper would remain the Center of Gravity of Setian Initiation, but the results of its application by those transformed through it would take the foreground rather than the Work of its Magus.

This decision was perfectly in keeping with the personality and past actions of the Aeon Initiating Magus. During his original High Priesthood he had intentionally allowed the Scroll of Set to be made not of his pronouncements but from the Work of all other Setians. Indeed with the exceptions of his vital annual summaries his words are nearly absent from the early years of the Scroll. During his second High Priesthood he would retain and vitalize the notion of Orders for the Magistracy, pushing James Lewis to continue his Work with the Order of Leviathan, being an important supporter for then-Magistra Lilith Aquino and Magister Robertt Neilly's dual explorations in the Order of the Vampyre and had personally re-consecrated the Order of the Trapezoid as a Chivalric Order. He helped Stephen Edred Flowers find the transformations needed for him to take the reigns of the Order of the Trapezoid, providing the model for the first transition of an Order within the Temple of Set.

In his initial discussion of Working II Dr. Aquino took the good ideas of the Temple's past, of Orders and Pylons as means for Setians to Work together, and more nebulous structures like Elements, and set them as the future Centers of Work for the Temple of Set. It would not be one Star that guided the Temple but rather a constellation of Workers whose Work would integrate together to form the Temple of Working II.

It was during this same year that Donald James Webb entered the City of Pyramids, and was Recognized as a Master of the Temple. Webb's own tale of transformation had begun in earnest with an act of Playfulness, calling upon the

Prince of Darkness as part of a performance piece put together with a friend on the night of March 15, 1979. This same night marked the Recognition of Michael A. Aquino as an Ipsissimus. A coincidence, surely. Ipsissimus Lewis conducted his Recognition Working that year at Conclave, but Magister Webb's attendance had to be cut short for to return to Texas to see his mother at a hospital on land that had once been farmed by past generations of his family.

It was while on those lands, which he had also used for his early explorations into Magic in the Idiom of Neo-Shamanism, that he realized this might be the last time he would be at this site. He opened a line of communication, saying that if there was anything he needed to learn from this place now was the time. The result was an experience that was retained in a document known as the *Book of the Heb-Sed*.

Included among the ideas contained in that *Book* was that Magister Webb would need to lead a Heb-Sed Year within the Temple of Set. The Heb-Sed in Egyptian Culture was a special festival that was held first at the thirty year mark of a Ruler's Reign, to show that he was still fit for service. The Egyptian festival often involved a combination of running, obstacle courses, wrestling and various feats of strength. Like most festivals in Egypt its organization was given over to the local Party Planners, the Priesthood of Set. As the Temple was approaching Aeon of Set XXX and Working II was about to commence such a made immense sense to those who heard of it.

Magister Webb had previously served an important role within the Order of the Trapezoid as Herald and Editor of its newsletter, *Runes*. As such he was often exposed to the cutting edge investigations of Trapezoidal Magic before anyone else, and had the task of prodding Knights into sharing their ideas. A strong influence upon his thinking was the Work of Stephen Flowers, particularly his Polarian Method. Magister Webb, who had a life long interest in all things Egyptian, decided as a part of this Year of Heb-Sed to found an Egyptian Order within the Temple of Set where he could test the Polarian Method in another cultural framework. He would wait until Conclave to officially consecrate this Order at the British Museum before a bust of Prince Khamuast, the first Egyptologist. It was in his honor that the Order of Setne Khamuast was named.

As a first project Magister Webb decided to apply the methods of his Teacher Stephen Flowers to the magic of Egyptian Late Antiquity. As his Teacher is a Linguist it was towards Linguistic sources that he began his project. He ordered a copy of Janet H. Johnson's *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshhoqy: an Introductory Grammar of Demotic*. Demotic was the form of Egyptian spoken during the Late Period in Egypt, after it had become integrated into first the Hellenic and then the Roman Empires. It has the most similar features to its descendent language of Coptic and was the form of Egyptian in use during the time of the writing of the Greek

Hermetic Papyrus (PGM).

What happened when the text arrived was unexpected. As Ipsissimus Webb recently wrote:

"I slept late, had a nasty headache and am annoyed by someone knocking at my door. I open it, pick up a package containing *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshonqy - An Introductory Grammar of Demotic*. I go my office and read the section on **stative verbs**⁴ I suddenly Understand Xeper."

One of the ways to read an Egyptian verb without modifiers is as being in a Stative Tense. As quoted from James P. Allen's *Middle Egyptian* the Egyptian Stative tense is:

...a verb form used to express a **state of being** in which its subject is, was, or will be. Originally the stative expressed the perfect tense, that is completed action. By Middle Egyptian, however, other verb forms were used for that function, and the stative had come to express instead the result of a completed action. In this respect the stative is similar to the English past participle." (pg. 205)

Magister Webb's challenge of seeing how to integrate his new apprehension of the Eternal Word into the Aeon of Set would guide his Work in the Heb-Sed Year of 1995-1996. He would spend that year working the first book on Setian Initiation aimed at a public market, *The Seven Faces of Darkness*. He would create the Order Book for the Order of Setne Khamuast, opening a new means for serious Egyptological research in the Temple. He was instrumental in helping set the stage for the coming into being of the Order of Horus within the Temple of Set.

Most importantly for our discussion it was found by the High Priest and confirmed unanimously by the Council of Nine that the unique apprehension which Magister Don Webb had come to for the Eternal Word was sufficiently different from Ipsissimus Aquino's Utterance to warrant his Recognition as V°, Magus of Xeper "I Have Come Into Being", on the Spring Equinox of 1996. As an adjunct to his Task and Curse he would also take up the Mantle of the High Priesthood of Set to act as the guiding transformer of the Temple as it set forth within Working II.

⁴ If you read the 3rd Edition of Johnson's text linked above the section on Stative Verbs is now discussed using the term Qualitative. I will get into some of the reasons for this in a later post.

Let's look at a few quotes on the Stative, now Qualitative, Tense in Demotic from Janet H. Johnson's *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshhoqy*, Lesson 5 on Verbs.

"The qualitative was an adverbial form of the verb which indicated the state which resulted from the action of the verb. For this reason, the qualitative is often translated as passive.

...

In early stages of Egyptian, the qualitative (or old perfective) had endings which agreed in number and gender with the subject of the qualitative. Some of the qualitative forms in Demotic retained these endings, but by the Ptolemaic period they no longer necessarily agreed with the subject.

...

...the qualitative...indicated the state resulting from the action."

Being of a Setian Left Hand Path orientation, then-Magister Webb considered what implications could derive from conjugating the Eternal Word as a First Person Stative Verb. In English this would be rendered as "I Have Come Into Being" though some of the key implications are not highlighted by this translation.

If one were to say the First Person Stative Conjugation of *hpr* there would be a set of ideas associated with it. Because this experience of Xeper would be Stative, it would necessitate speaking of the things which have come before the moment of speaking the Word which had transformed you. In that sense speaking the Word would subsume within it all that had lead up to that moment. It would speak not only of these events but it would simultaneously speak of the resulting state which you and an individual achieved as a result of that past action. In a sense the present moment would be defined and informed by all that had come before while also allowing for the opening of new possibilities as a result of the occurrence of having said Xeper.

The-Magister Webb applied this sense of Xeper to the Formula of the Aeon of Set, Xepera Xeper Xeperu. If one takes this stative orientation it yields for this phrase the translation of "I Have Come into Being, by Coming into Being, the Way of Becoming Came into Being." His interest in Egyptian Magic would lead to his discovery that this Formula was found in the Bremner Rhind Papyrus as a part of a spell against Apep known as "The Spiral Force of Re and the Felling of Apep." This role of felling Apep was mythologically the function of Set on the Bark of Re, thus drawing a connection between the Word and Formula of the

Aeon of Set with a primary function of Set in Egyptian Mythology.

The Word and the Prince did indeed go together for a long, long time.

Then-Magister Webb's interests in the Egyptian material found in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* lead him to another discovery. The phrase found around the Seal of Set, "Let My Great Nobles be Brought to Me" is also found, with some variation, in the text of *The Tale of Two Brothers*. This *Tale...* is the story of how a simple farm hand, Bata, undergoes a series of conflicts and changes ultimately leading to his transformation first into Pharaoh and then into a God. When Bata becomes Pharaoh he proclaims as his first act "Let my Great Nobles be Brought Forth to me that they might learn the truth of my Transformations." The word used for transformations in this context was Xeperu, the Object of the Formula of the Aeon of Set. Then-Magister Webb's research uncovered that Bata had been a form of Set, associated with the Nile Cattle cults from which the notion of the Bull of Ombos also derived. Here once again he had discovered that within the *Book....* was another connection of our Work and that of the Ancient Setian Religion.

More startling was that no one was aware of this. Dr. Aquino had not chosen these phrases because he knew they were Setian, but because they fit the experience he had on the night of the North Solstice X.

The culmination of much of Then-Magister Webb's research, both scholarly and magically, into the Egyptian Magic of Late Antiquity found its result in the book *The Seven Faces of Darkness: Practical Typhonian Magic*. As Ipsissimus Webb posted in this thread, he would present the first published copy of the text to Dr. Aquino himself on February 14 of 1995. This was the 75th anniversary of the publication of the Second Edition of Sir Wallis Budge's *Egyptian Language* which had been the means by which the Eternal Word had entered into the mind of Dr. Aquino and opened the Aeon of Set. This encounter would also be the occasion where Dr. Aquino asked then-Magister Webb if he would be willing to act as High Priest of Set. The following year it was so.

It was also that year that the Temple of Set entered into my adult awareness, but that is a story for later.

For those interested in the characters, the conjugation of *hpr* as a First Person Stative verb in Ancient Egyptian when explicitly written looks like this



The second character is V31, a bowl, which has the phonetic value of "k."
The glyphs combined would be said as *hpr.k*

In Middle Egyptian it would be common to retain this version to signify the Stative Tense for Magico-Religious contexts, as Ancient forms were seen as more magical conjugations. In other contexts it would more commonly be written as



or



both of which are pronounced as *hpr.kw*

In looking at the Middle Egyptian characters, keeping in mind our past discussion, a sense of what being in a position of being able to say Xeper as a First Person Stative Verb can be gained. One has developed or evolved to a place where an entire stage of development has occurred for you as a singular individual. Your time as an egg (subject of transformation) has come to an end and you are in the place to begin a new developmental process from the condition your past actions have created.

In 1993 as the Temple of Set was exploring what Working II would become I was a junior in an all boys High School operated by the Xaverian Brothers in Brooklyn. The school was in part an elite preparatory school for college, and for others it was something of a last chance reform school that they were sent to by their parents in the hopes that they would get out of the kind of culture that was pervasive in Brooklyn at the time.

As a kid I had always been attracted to all things Fortean, as well as Mythology and Heroic Narratives. I had also gained an interest in the Cyberpunk realm of fiction and art that defined the edges of the 1980s. I was also hyper aware of the so-called Culture Wars of the time period and was an avid watcher of various specials on how degenerate art would destroy the foundations of civilization, and that the Devil was hiding behind every 20 sided die and Heavy Metal album. By the time I had gotten to High School I had undertaken what research I could, discovered RPGs might be fun but seemed to have a negative impact on some people's social skills, that I didn't much care for Heavy Metal post-Ozzy leaving Sabbath and that while there certainly didn't seem to be Satanists hiding everywhere there was a subculture of occultism and I wanted to know more about.

Luckily my Catholic High School had a very quirky set of brothers operating the Library. My Freshmen year they purchased the complete hardcover edition of the 1970s Encyclopedia of the Occult *Man Myth and Magic*. Richard Cavendish edited the series with an editorial board that included the likes of Mircea Eliade, John Symonds and E.R. Dodds. Rather than a purely sensational account of the topics covered, such as in the Time-Life *Mysteries of the Unknown Series* that I had devoured in Grammar School, here was a work that combined an erudite exploration of Western and Eastern Occultism from the lenses of Cultural Anthropology, Archaeology and contemporary practitioners. The arts direction drew from similar sources, supplemented with dramatic naked pictures of Maxine Sanders and some of the first publications of Austin Osman Spare's work from the collection of Kenneth Grant.

Man Myth and Magic wasn't the only excellent series on the occult that the Brothers kept on hand. Another series had an excellent discussion of the Golden Dawn and Aleister Crowley which was my first exposure to Liber Oz. As a budding Ontological Anarchist I was completely taken by this, enough that I "liberated" it from the book and kept it in my wallet for years to come. An additional influence was an Encyclopedia of 20th Century Music that exposed me to the most subversive ends of the 60s, 70s and 80s.

My interest in Aleister Crowley eventually brought me into contact with the waning scene at Magickal Child. Excess had put its best days behind it, but it

was still a repository of information on Crowley, Chaos Magic and a quirky hometown boy named Robert Anton Wilson. At the same time I was becoming involved with the New York Hardcore scene, though my own musical tastes were elsewhere, which was undergoing an insurgence of interest in all things Eastern than to acts like Shelter. This was helpful for me as it gave me my first exposure to people undergoing "conversion experiences" and helped me hone skills at learning to speak inside another's frame of reference in the hopes of getting them to see a bigger picture.

Crowley's oeuvre intersected with two other interests I had developed at that time. The first was the potential of controlled uses of psychoactives as a "booster rocket" for the early phases of self-transformation which Anthropology and the works of Andrew Weil had suggested. The second was the potential for sex and sexuality to be used as a path towards spiritual and personal fulfillment that I had learned from a purloined copy of Marot Anand's *Art of Sexual Ecstasy*. Having a few substance abuse train wrecks in my immediate family made me very cautious about the value of the first interest and very disdainful of the effects of the illegal commercial drug trade. The second interest, well, this was NYC before its reformation under Giuliani, so that was fun...

Crowley's interest in Egyptian mythology pushed me towards more serious study of it as well. I quickly found that his Egyptology was off kilter, but still workable. I was surprised at how little information I could find about the god Set that painted him as anything other than a villain figure. This seemed inauthentic to me, as few mythic systems have pure "mustache twirlers," so I was always on the lookout for better information on the subject. In addition I was captivated by the figure of Khephra and the notion of Self-Creation.

1993 marked an intensive study of the Beat Generation and Colin Wilson's *The Outsider* in a class on the Literature of Rebellion. I loved the book and was completely taken by the ideas of Ouspensky and Gurdjieff outlined within. This year also brought the works of Joseph Campbell into my life, fusing my interest in Anthropology and Mythology together as a model for understanding humans. An honors class on Philosophy introduced me for the first time to the Works of Plato, Aristotle on through to the Existentialists.

As you can see, I was primed for something.

When I hit college, I began the process of finding the others. The Internet was just evolving what would become the World Wide Web and I was there with Mozilla 1.0 seeking contact with whatever oddballs I could find. I became a local promotions person for Invisible Records, and was put in contact with Genesis P-Orridge's Transmedia Foundation. Reading *Modern Primitives* introduced me for the first time to the ideas of Anton LaVey, who I had dismissed as a Crowley-Lite

figure until then, and I was hooked. Chaos Magic similarly took what Crowley had laid the foundations for and gave me a practical path for putting it into action.

Then came The Process.

I was there from the first day of the group, and just unleashed everything that was in my mind and heart there. In turn I discovered others who were interested in similar ideas, and we began trading influences, methods, aspirations and struggles. One of the people involved, who I had turned onto LaVey, came back and told me about this group called the Temple of Set that he thought might interest me.

I ignored the suggestion.

I read a bunch of books on the Satanic Ritual Abuse panic for a class as an example of a Sociological "Demonology." Again and again the name Dr. Michael A. Aquino would pop up.

I ignored it.

I got involved with the Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros, which at the time was undergoing a serious internal upheaval. My Work with them got me interested in Runic Magic, and the only source that seemed to have anything of interest to say was someone named "Edred Thorsson." I thought his stuff was great as it combined my two passions, real scholarship and no-BS magic. Then I found out he was involved with the Temple of Set.

It was getting harder to ignore.

A girlfriend at the time worked at a Bookstore Cafe that kept a decent zine collection on hand. She saw that there was an issue by a zine "The Fringeware Review" about Chaos Spirituality. She bought it for me, figuring I might like it. I did, but there was this interview with Edred Thorsson talking about Runic Magic and the Order of the Trapezoid while being interviewed by some guy named Don Webb. It was short but probably the most lucid thing in the entire issue. I did some research on Mr. Webb and discovered he was recently made the High Priest of the Temple of Set, and he was writing an interesting series called "Letters to the Fringe" as well.

Okay, time to stop ignoring this Temple of Set thing.

I became involved with the Temple of Set's discussion list, Xepera-1, in 1997. I was habitually reading the materials that were emerging on Xeper.org from the

Temple's new High Priest while at the same time reading everything, good, bad and indifferent, I could about the Temple from non-Setian sources. On Xepera-I I took a proactive approach to posting, as I had elsewhere, and was very serious about uncovering sources and exposing any shaky presuppositions. I expected to get kicked off ASAP based upon some of what I had heard about Setians, and was pleasantly surprised when I wasn't.

Once the combative phase of things came to an end I was surprised by the candor and thoughtfulness of those Setians active on the list. In particular the ones who combined those traits the most tended to be the "Upper Degrees" which came as a shock. Most occult groups I encountered treated their Upper Degrees as if they were untouchable figures whose lives were mysteries and who never bothered to interact with the general membership. On Xepera-I I was as likely to see Dr. Aquino and then-Magus Webb share music recommendations as I was to see them engage in deep consideration of the human condition.

Oh, I didn't want to like these folks. I wanted to keep going in the direction I was already going on. But the more I interacted with the Temple of Set, the more I felt a magnetic pull towards it.

During my "due diligence" phase I tracked down copies of *The Seven Faces of Darkness* and *Hermetic Magic* to get a sense of what the Temple of Set might be like. I was captured by the discussions of Xeper and of the idea of the Fourth Blooming of Setian ideas. I was captured by the rendition of "The Spiral Force of Re and the Felling of Apep," though in my style I immediately went out to find alternate translations to compare. I was taken by the idea of a Divine Model whose two great enemies were Stasis and Delusion, including Self-Delusion.

There was also another theme in both texts that I was absolutely fascinated by but could not quite put my finger on. Both texts included a version of a PGM Spell related to a Celestial Bear Spirit "ARKTE." Then-Magus Webb's discussion of the Spell suggested that this Bear was connected with the constellation Ursa Major, the Big Dipper, which in turn had been the constellation of Set, and the place from which Set's influence emanated. The Bear Spirit Arkte was what had to be confronted before this Secret Place could be accessed by the individual.

I applied to the Temple of Set, was accepted, had a few interactions with then-Priest Pridgen which were excellent, had a few other interactions with then Priest Silvers which were not and eventually resigned as mentioned earlier. My personal life needed a complete restart, my Academic activities were to take a decidedly experimental turn on my first serious dig project and frankly I felt like I couldn't honestly evaluate the Temple of Set from the inside. I focused for a few months on these issues specifically while continuing to test Setian ideas. When it was over I contacted then-Magus Webb about returning and he told me to wait

until January. I took it to heart and continued posting on Xepera-I using what I had formed from my experience.

A few weeks later then-Magus Webb contacted me and said I could come back whenever I wanted, under his Sponsorship. I accepted and he wrote a very flattering letter to the Executive Director supporting my return. One of his comments was that at times I was displaying the most Setian voice on Xepera-I which locked into my Working going forward the question of how one does speak in a way that is most Setian, and indeed how one might Speak as Set.

Then-Magus Webb suggested to a mutual acquaintance, Philip H. Farber, that I become involved with the AOL Ceremonial and High Magick Forum to help contribute to the folder on the Temple of Set. The folder had been started under the suggestion of then-Priest Eric Kauschen, who was an active contributor. From our exchanges on this forum Priest Kauschen and I developed an Initiatory relationship, and then a friendship, forged from exchange of ideas, contrasting opinions and at times honest intellectual sparing. He has been and remains one of the most important figures in my Work.

In the winter of 1999 I made contact for the first time with another key figure in my Work, then-Priest Walter Gallo. We met for the first time in a bookstore next to the hospital I was born in. He had with him a ring he had recently won at an auction that had belonged to Ronald K. Barrett. RKB had worn the ring the first time he had met a young Walter Gallo and in turn a now mature Walter Gallo was wearing it to his first meeting with a young James Fitzsimmons. We exchanged pleasantries, contrasting opinions and eventually a few mutual book recommendations. Rather than a Student-Teacher relationship, as had been so common for Priest Gallo in his interactions with Setians in NYC, we were mutually influencing each other right from the start, and still are to this day.

In the fall of 1999 I attended my first International Conclave, held in Toronto Canada. The first night's Workings were a remarkable piece about the Deep Past and Deep Future conducted by the Order of Setne Khamuast, which made me realize that some day I would Work within that Order. This Rite was followed by a Working of the Arkte Element built around the Bear Spell of Fate and the protection of bears. From the moment the Working began to standing hand in hand with then Adept Phil Smart to my left, unleashing our anger and compassion, I knew I would need to become an Arkte Warrior and had a sneaking suspicion even then that something more was going on with Arkte then was realized quite yet.

I went to everything at that Conclave. Every presentation, workshop and working, up until the very last event which I chose to sit out and talk with Magister Menschel instead. I had a strong sense that what I had experienced with

this week would be important for the rest of my life, and that it might need to be protected and enriched. I had made contact with something that I had never found elsewhere.

The next year would bring a number of characters into my life. I was Recognized as an Adept in January of 2000. A month later I attended the Disinfo Con event put on by the Disinformation Company and developed a friendship starting that day with then-Adept Alan Cabal and finally had a chance to touch hands with Robert Anton Wilson. That same year I also became concerned about the Temple of Set's future as there seemed to be a conflict emerging regarding its potential directions. Cabal and I roomed together at the Conclave that year in San Francisco, which as some of you may know is a fair bit like living for a week in David Lynch's Black Lodge. I explained my concerns to him, and he in turn revealed an erratic but deep love for this School and its continued existence.

One of the events that week which forever remains with me was being present for a singular event. It was at this Conclave that Magistra Lilith Aquino removed her Blue Medallion for the first time since the founding of the Temple and placed upon her Being the Purple Medallion as the Maga of Arkte. This was no whim or shallow desire but the product of serious deliberation and realization that something fundamental in her Understanding has emerged that forced her to rethink everything she knew about Initiation. I was stunned by the Power of the Recognition itself, and had a strong sense of elation and dread at what it might bring, for her and for the Temple of Set. Intuitively I knew that this Word would force a re-evaluation of Setian Initiation in a way that many likely were not interested in confronting. But like the Bear Goddess before the Big Dipper, in order to access the Secret Realm of Set, it could not be an optional confrontation.

Arkte could change everything.

Arkte

As in my discussion of Runa, Arkte suggests itself as an Object Noun Word. One engages Arkte by pursuing Xeper through Artke for example.

The word Arkte entered into the Temple of Set through the Works of Stephen Flowers and Don Webb on the magic of Late Antiquity. As Magistra Aquino's Work in the Order of the Vampyre began leading her towards a deep emotional concern for the welfare of animals the name of this obscure Bear Goddess was suggested for her proposed Warriors. In 1993 the Arkte Warriors were born.

The word Arkte is a Hellenic variation of the Greek word *arktoi*, a she bear. These *arktoi* were associated with the Cult of Artemis at Athens and especially the Initiation of women. This same word gave rise to the Greek word *arktikos* "of the north," lit. "of the (constellation) Bear." The root of *arktoi* goes back to the Proto-European **rkto-* which in turn is the root for the name Arthur, as in King Arthur, from the Welsh *arth*, which eventually yielded the Grail Mythos.

Bear Cults had been common features of Human groups in ranges with Bears throughout Modern Human existence. In the 20th Century they also formed the basis for speculation of even more primordial cultus among pre-Modern Humans, though this seems to have been mostly projection upon the data. Never the less it was in the same places that bears lived which our ancestors lived, and thus our lives have been intertwined for millennia.

Arktos, and in time Arkte, was of importance to the synthetic cults of Mercenary Soldiers of the Greco-Roman period. The peoples from various ethnicities came together to share their Secret as Initiated Warriors only to discover that they shared the same Secret: The Seven Stars Control Destiny. The Bear of Arktos, whose name is still retained in the constellation of Ursa Major, would become their shared symbol.

Thus we have with Arkte a complex of Protection of Animals and the sharing of Initiatory Secrets among Initiated Warriors. We also have an image connected with the Seven Stars of Destiny which the Egyptians knew were ruled by Set.

Let's look at some aspects of Arkte as a Word that tend to get less attention. As a Hellenic word it is written in Greek as APKTE "Alpha, Rho, Kappa, Tau, Epsilon." Like a number of languages Greek has a numerical value that corresponds to its letters as well as other symbolic values. Using the system outlined by Ipsissimus Flowers in *Hermetic Magic* APKTE yields the value of 426. It begins with the Lunar Sphere, then Capricorn, Leo, Pisces, and ending in Mercury.

While there are many ways to read a symbol set but one way is that the process of Arkte begins with reaching that place where the Mutable and the Eternal meet, confronting the powers of Typhon as represented by the goat-fish of Capricorn, the forces of Life upon the Earth represented by Leo, the forces of Life Below the Seas represented by Pisces and ending ultimately at the Sphere of Mercury, who can travel to all Spheres and whose Work focuses upon Quick wits and the use of Fear for transformation. I will leave the task of actualizing this into a practical approach to each who read and are taken by this idea.

For me Arkte Work has been an extended meditation upon the relationship of the Force of Life with the Force of Mind, past present and future. One of the most important Workings of my time in the Temple was an Arkte Working I wrote for the second Conclave at the Luxor in Las Vegas dealing with the notion of Arkte Shamanism.

It was the earliest human magico-religious practices, known as Paleo-Shamanism, which were focused upon our relationship with the Animal Kingdom mainly as a predator. Our unique ability to utilize tools and shaping of the landscapes had allowed us access to animal life in a way that fueled the rise of the Gift of Set within our species. Now, at the dawn of the 21st Century and the first Century of the Aeon of Set, the relationship between Life and Mind was set for a transformation. Rather than exploiting Life with Mind the time was coming for the Force of Mind to become a Protector of Life.

The Working itself was highly effective for those who took part. For me it was a stunning experience to see that my ideas had effected not only myself but seemed to have a profound effect upon senior Initiates who had guided my own Work. While everyone else went to party after the Working I decided to spend some time by myself, alone by pool side, contemplating the Black Pyramid we had consecrated to Set at the previous Luxor Conclave, and my potential place within the Aeon of Set.

Because of Arkte's focus upon the Force of Life it demands actions that take place beyond simply the Realm of Mind. Deciding it would be a good idea for Arkte Warriors to do a Simultaneous Working for the protection of animal life in Africa is easy. Doing your part of the Working in the East African Rift Valley is harder. Doing a Working to protect whales in your private chamber is easy, and might make you feel better. Doing a Working to protect whales on a private boat in the Antarctic headed towards direct conflict with whalers is hard. Caring about seals is easy. Making a huge commitment of time, effort and emotion to their rehabilitation after they have been attacked by other humans is hard. Arkte demands not only hard Work but hard Action, and those who pursue it do indeed Xeper in a unique and powerful fashion.

Arkte also brings home the realization of Working II that the Personal is Initiatory. This includes becoming mindful of the ways that your actions of living impact upon the World. It also necessitates a good deal of disclosure of your individual experience, as my own need to explain how I got to the Temple before being able to speak of Artke shows. All Setians, even those for whom the Work of actively protecting the Force of Life does not yet make sense to them, can apply these aspects. By engaging with this Word as a means for setting the direction of your Xeper much will be revealed in strange and unexpected ways. And for those who cannot see how Life might relate to Xeper, consider for a moment that it is a Beetle, the most numerous and varied of forms of life on earth, which represents that Word.

Xeper through Arkte
AWKA!

The period following my Recognition as a IV° was marked in many ways by divestiture. I had served for five years as Director of the Soa-Gild and had helped to right its course while reaping the rewards of a long duration of focus upon the foundations of Setian ideas and what it means to be a First Degree, but that time was ended and needed by another. For seven years I had served as Sentinel for the Black Sun Rising Pylon in NYC and having completed the series of Workings I had intended to do in that role it was time to leave that Seat for others. Suddenly I was free to overt responsibilities to run anything.

So I started something new to run. For years I thought that the Temple of Set could benefit from some sort of interface with people before they enter the Temple and just as a general outreach endeavor. There were a wide variety of books on the public market which were the product of Setians, NYC certainly wasn't lacking in a diverse population of those interested in self-change, and I tend to get antsy when I don't have something to do, so now was the right time to do it. The Mehen Group was born.

One of the projects that group took up remains something I am very proud of. We were the first group to hold public discussions of Dr. Aquino's *Black Magic* once he chose to release it to the general public via his Home Page. On February 7, 2011 we held a discussion on Chapter 2 of that text focusing upon Ancient Egyptian ideas. In the course of the conversation Ipsissimus Webb's apprehension of Xeper as a Stative tense verb, and the implications for the Formula of the Aeon came up. I began explaining the idea, the way that past actions impact upon the present moment, opening and closing certain doors for future unfolding of the Self, and a strange sense came over me. I felt as if I had a really strong Understanding of Xeper and what was implied within its Re-Utterance. At the same time a tremendous drive began to form suggesting that I should dig deeper into the material that had feed into the North Solstice X Working because there might still be something there as yet unknown and important.

I considered doing some of that research the next morning, but frankly at times I'm unmotivated unless there is a really high leverage reason to do something. I was taking courses on Physics and Chemistry to prepare for a shift in focus in my Academic work away from the purely reconstructive towards helping people to better heal their wounds and make sense of their experiences. This involved brushing off old skills like Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry and other things I had not done with any seriousness in more than a decade. I had to focus upon those skills for contemplating change across duration and the verifiable aspects of Reality. I didn't have time to go chasing for trivia about the Eternal Word. As an intellectual outlet I was already stepping myself in contemporary discussions of the Evolutionary Algorithm idea of Dan Dennett and the ways that it could

apply to biological systems as well as cultural systems.

What could someone seeking to heal, with a head struggling to calculate the Real who was investigating evolutionary processes of biology and culture, bring to Xeper? Didn't we already know everything that was likely to be of value about the Word? I'll leave it for another time.

February 9 I noticed an exchange on a discussion forum frequented by Dr. Aquino about Xeper. One of the participants, whose knowledge of Egyptian came from a single University class on the language, had some pointed critiques of the Temple's use of Xeper. Given the sense of rock solid understanding from two days before this came a hugely deflationary read for me, far stronger than the actual critique should have warranted. Might we be wrong about some of our knowledge related to the Eternal Word? Might there still be another apprehension of it that could more fully capture its many implications?

Like I said, I often need a high leverage motivator. Now I was ready to take on the Eternal Word, for my own sake. I started reading various texts on Egyptian language, which is not my strong suit, and feeling nothing so much as growing, directionless confusion. I didn't know enough to be able to find an easy answer that would allow me to stop thinking about this topic. Instead more doubts, more confusion and more need to know more was what was forming.

February 14 I had attended a particularly brutal session in Physics at Hunter College. Feeling dejected I decided after class to stop into the Library to flip through the section on Egyptian Languages to address the contending aspects of confidence and doubt circulating in my subconscious. I knew a copy of Budge's *Egyptian Language*, was there and seeing Chapter IX to confirm what I already knew might make me feel a bit better about the doubts and post-class funk I was in.;

What happened instead was wholly unexpected.

It was like a womb had burst, and now I was in unknown, and toxic territory. I stood there with Budge's Book in my hands and it felt like everything I had been up until then evaporated. Everything I had relied upon up until regarding the Word fell away as I realized that none of what I had expected was contained in the text. The specific form of Xeper and the sequence of the Divine Formula that provides the Formula of the Aeon of Set looked nothing like what I had expected.

I was alone with the Word, and I knew nothing about it.

As shocked as I was I knew that what I had beheld would also be my Path out of

this. As shaken as I felt, I also felt just as strongly that I had beheld something of tremendous value that I did not yet understand, but that what I needed most was to become the person who did understand it and could articulate it.

Starting with nothing but the Eternal Word and a burning need to know at the deepest level what it really meant I began my Work.

This series of posts has been one of the results of my 21-month reinvestigation. As you have seen rather than destroy everything my Work on the Eternal Word has, for myself and perhaps for some others, placed the shock-wave originated from the events of the North Solstice X upon firmer and clearer grounds. I have attempted to include in my discussion up until now all of the best of what has come before in the Temple's apprehension of the Eternal Word and the ways in which inflection and nuance to that Word the Utterances within the Aeon of Set have provided.

Now it is time to speak about what I have discovered about that form of the Word I encountered on February 14, which has allowed me to integrate my own Understanding.



Some background information. The following linguistic analysis is coming from the standpoint of Middle Egyptian. There are likely subtle nuances should these same characters be analyzed from the other periods of Egyptian linguistics.



This character is made up of the L1 Beetle Glyph, signifying the Verb-Root *hpr*, with the modifiers D21 "Mouth"/"Futurity" acting as a Phonetic Compliment and Y1 "Scroll" indicating that we are speaking of an "Abstract Concept" as well as meaning "Total."

As discussed before the Middle Egyptian *hpr* is best rendered into English as "Evolve" or "To Roll Out." The Egyptians felt that within each living system was a kind of code which would unfold in time with interaction with the environment, leading to the final result. An egg had the code within it that would unfold in time into a quail for example. A baby had within it a code which would unfold in time into an adult. While this code would unfold in unique ways to did not lead to results outside of the code. Grain seed did not grow into alligators, acorns do not develop into Elephants, or to use a contemporary metaphor from Magister Pridgen pumpkins do not suddenly become Cadillacs.

Although they did not know the specifics their realization that there was a specific code within living things which would unfold in time and in feedback with the environment was quite prescient regarding what has been discovered related to Genetics and Developmental Biology.

The D21 modifier "Mouth" deals with speech and the capacity to speak. Its notion of futurity can include the idea of how one can speak the Future into existence. This relates to how the Egyptians understood Magic, or *heka*, which

comes from the capacity to properly Perceive *sia* and the power to make things happen by "annunciate" *hw*.

The Y1 modifier "Scroll" as mentioned indicates "Abstract Concept." This suggests that the form of *hpr* we are discussing is not simply a biological process but an Evolution of something abstract, immaterial, and beyond that biology. Its function of meaning "total" also means that there will be nothing untouched by this *hpr* form unfolding.

Together these characters can be read as "Evolve through Force of Mind," or "The Total Evolution of Word and Mind."

As with all Egyptian Verbs this glyph can be read from three positions:

Imperfective: Evolve!

Stative: I have Evolved!

Infinitive/Verbal Noun: I, the Evolver, The Evolving One

In a broader sense what do we have in this glyph-complex? An image of Biological Development and the result of the unique human capacities of Symbolic Behavior, Speech and the creation of Durable Media. Bios and Logos, together in a single being.

What we have in this glyph is a summation of the Gift of Set and what to do with it.

There is another implication. When one has in fact undergone Xeper there are three things which will have demonstrably changed as a result: your biological behavior, your speech and the durable media that you create as a result of Xeper. Xeper cannot be something purely of the mind but must be reflected in changed behavior. Xeper will cause you to change your speech, and specifically what it is that you speak about to yourself and to others. And finally some means for transmitting your experience of Xeper will arise as a result of your transformations, whether this be art, journal writing, email, music, or a record in any other medium.

If there is nothing to communicate and no change in behavior, then there has not been Xeper.

If one has undergone a change which has developed their behaviors, has changed their ideas and left them with a need to communicate those changes then one can indeed say



Xeper!

What does it mean to Evolve?

In *Darwin's Dangerous Ideas* Philosopher Dan Dennett, Ph.D., presents what he calls "The Evolutionary Algorithm." An algorithm, as some of you know, is a step by step procedure which will yield a solution to a problem. The medium used to execute the algorithm need not be the same. In mathematics one can process an algorithm by hand, by calculator, computer, etc. The material does not matter; it is the logic of the algorithm which does.

What Dennett identifies as the Evolutionary Algorithm, which similarly can be processed by anything that matches its criteria, works from the following:

- 1) A code which can be copied (A Replicator)
- 2) The imperfect replication of the code, creating variations. (Mutation)
- 3) An environment which acts to eliminate some variations while retaining others suited to its conditions. (Design Space)

Once you have those three things in a system a process of Evolution will begin. You see this pattern of evolution within biological systems at the levels of genes, in terms of cellular conditions in organisms and in immune systems of specific organisms.

You also see this same pattern of evolution within the individual and societies through what Dr. Susan Blackmore refers to as "The Second Replicator." Here a code of ideas or behaviors are transmitted with variation by imperfect recall in an individual mind or exchanged between minds within the Design Space of culture. Once this capacity for idea and behavioral transmission becomes a significant part of Hominin behavior an unexpected bend in behavioral variability, complexity of tools and the size of the brain occurs.

In effect this has left a human species whose brain is in part the product of biology (Bios/First Replicator) and in part the product of culture (Logos/Second Replicator) bound together in a single entity. Which is also that we find bound together as a single Word as Xeper. Not only do we have the instructions of what to do with it, Evolve; take what you have, put it into environments which test and refine it, and share what you have gained from the experience only to find the new environment your past Evolution has created and reiterate the process again.

The idea of how one's own Evolution Evolves a new environment for Evolving brings us to the Formula of the Aeon



xeper-á



xeper



xeperu

In the Spring of this year I undertook an experiment. Ipsissimus Webb posted a piece a few months earlier titled "Work and Its Rewards" which at the time had struck me as a brilliant framework. As so often happens when Ipsissimus Webb presents a brilliant framework not much discussion came of it. I decided that I would use this post as a way to correlate a wide number of ideas, resources and topics of interest that could be put into practical use by anyone, but particularly Setians, which would help them to transform themselves and their worlds. A collection of the resulting writings can be read [here](#).

What came as a surprise to me at the time was that as the project went along I found that I could only speak of Work coherently within the context of the form of Xeper which had captured my Understanding. With this form of the Word suddenly the disparate interests I have sutured together unleashing the series of posts in that thread. There might be something to this, and there might be some relationship between Work and Xeper.

Let us look at the Divine Formula itself

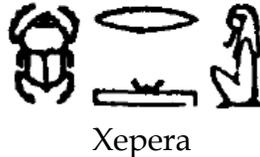


The Egyptian language has a specific sentence structure, Verb-Subject-Object, or VSO. This is in contrast to English which has a Subject-Verb-Object structure. As such it can be a bit difficult to provide a proper translation however at the moment I will venture the following as a simple translation:

"I the Evolving One, by the process of Divine Evolution, Evolve My World."

Looking into the specific characters of the formula reveals another level of nuance.

We have previously discussed the Xeper glyph complex, so I will refer you to there for now. In this context consider the Subject of the Formula of the Aeon to be someone who through Work has prepared their Body and Mind for the evolving transformation it is about to undergo.



The verb of the Formula of the Aeon is made of the same characters as Xeper (L1, D21, Y1) with the addition of A40 "Seated God." This new glyph provided the ending vowel sound of "-a" creating "Xepera" and it also reveals what one does to experience this Verb form of Xeper. The Body and Mind previously prepared by Work is exposed to the Divine Pattern of their Being, what Dr. Aquino refers to as the personal *Neter*. It is by the coming together of these three features that Divine Evolution comes to be. In this sense the alignment of these three features can be seen as what one does in an act of Greater Black Magic, whether an Illustrative Working to better perceive or an Operant Working to announce some idea into being.

This now brings us to the resultant of the Formula of the Aeon



Xeperu

The object of the Formula of the Aeon is made of the L1 and D21 glyphs we have already seen. The new phonetic character is the Z7 Spiral (a variation of G45 "Quail Chick") providing the phonetic "-u" and meaning "final form" i.e. that the verb action is ended. Then we have three glyphs who serve non-phonetic conceptual roles informing of this new World created: A53 "Mummy" meaning "Likeness, Form," A1 "Seated Person" meaning "Companion" and Z3 vertical dashes which acts to pluralize A1, making it "Companions."

This suggests that your transformation through this process of Working the Self-Complex and bringing it into alignment with your Divine Pattern will lead to a result in a completed transformation which will include, or necessitate, the appearance of Companions who share a likeness with you, namely that they too have been through this process of Evolution.

"I who Evolve, Evolving by the Divine Pattern, Evolved my Evolved Companions in an Evolved Word."

Whatever light I have cast upon the Aeon has only been possible because of that primordial Fire which Ra-En-Set brought down from the Heavens and to all of those who tended it, fueled it, and brought it to unexpected places between that time and now. None of what I have come to know would have been possible without those whose Works I have already mentioned along with three other people of note.

Magistra Patty A. Hardy, whom I first met at the Toronto Conclave, is the first I need to mention. Her tale of setting up her telescope at strategic locations during festival events to capture the exhausted and open minds of revelers in order to show them the Stars as Doorways to Wonder and to Teach them, should they be receptive, has stayed with me for all the years since. That the Egyptian Glyph for Star, *Sba*, also means "Doorway" and "to Teach" is no small thing, nor will it remain as obscure a Glyph as it may be for some now.

Magistra Guiniviere Webb, whom I also first met at that same Toronto Conclave. During that Conclave she acted as the Gateway to the Deep Past, was the Invoker of Arkte and was the first person I ever witnessed Ordained to the Priesthood of Set. Her Work upon Desire and the ways that this Desire allows for a point of contact with the churning pool of possibilities which the Anglo-Saxons called "Wyrd" has Illuminated my own explorations of Desire in relation to the Black Flame in fashions spoken and unspoken.

Finally, Magister Robertt Neilly, whom as you may have guessed I also met at the Toronto Conclave. While many of the I° there saw him as an imposing presence -- which he surely is -- I sensed then a tremendous warmth, caring and desire to see the success and growth of others stemming from his Work in trying to understand the shared substrate between humanity. While we may disagree on certain possibilities we share much, and my understanding of Xeperu was much enhanced by his explorations into congruence between transformed minds that he terms *Synesis*.

My own Understanding of the conjugation of the Eternal Word that has captured me is, appropriately, still Evolving. May what I have shared transform many who in turn transform my understanding further.



Setemheb "Set is Pleased"

October 2, XLVII Aeon of Set

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