

Anno IVv e.n.

☉ in ♄

☽ in ♀

Spring Equinox 1997 e.v.

Volume V Number 1

**Sekhet-Bast-Ra Oasis**  
**Ordo Templi Orientis**

c/o

12101 N. MacArthur Blvd.

Ste. D - 117

Oklahoma City, OK 73162-1899

(405) 720-6349

sbr@telepath.com

<http://www.telepath.com/sbr/>

<http://www.chickasaw.com/~nvithadt/sbr.htm>

<http://www.keytech.com/~macfinn/oto.htm>

Θελημα

# OPHTHICUS

The Quarterly Journal of Sekhet-Bast-Ra Oasis

Ordo Templi Orientis



# CONTENTS

Volume V Number 1

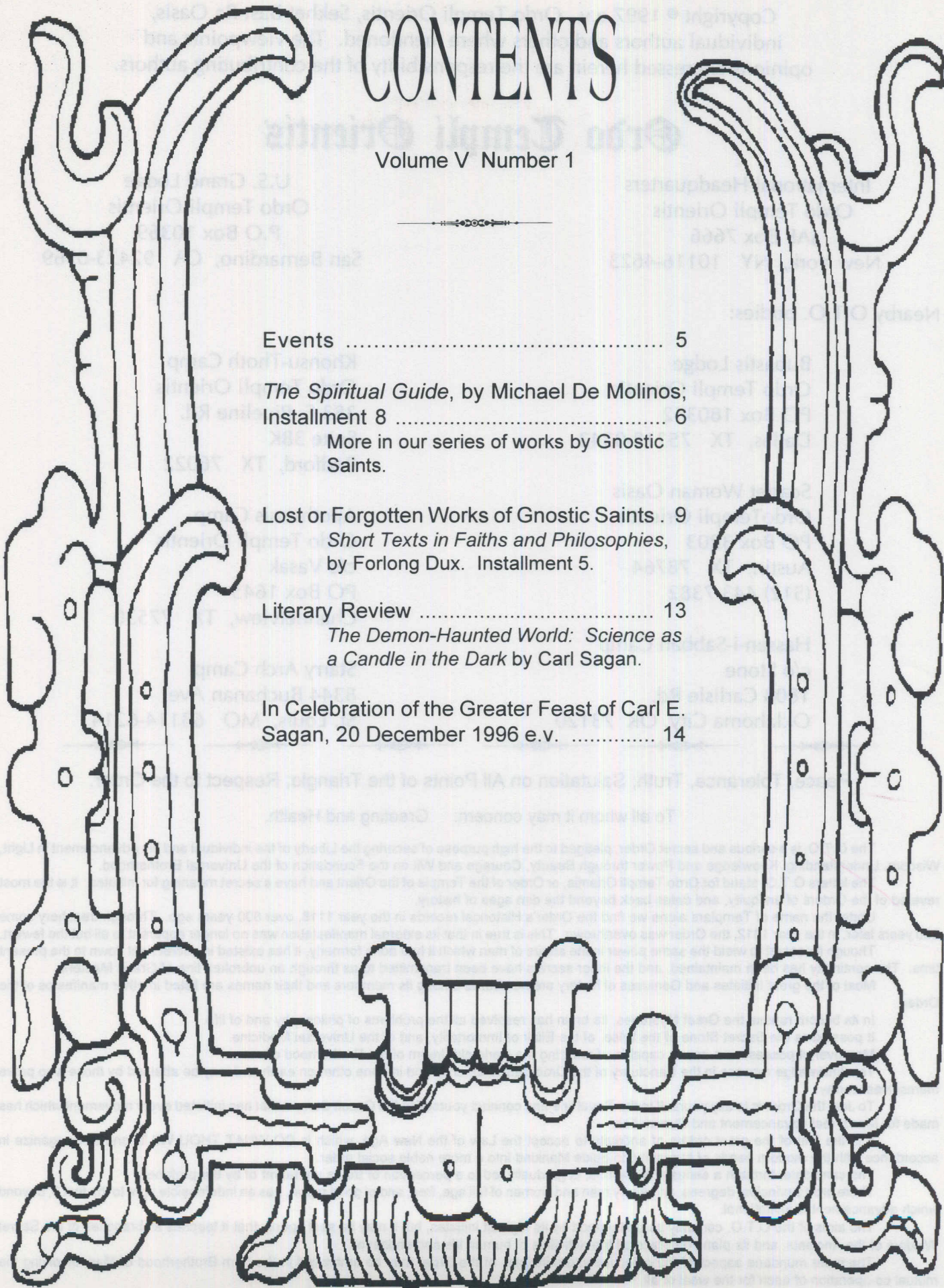
Events ..... 5

*The Spiritual Guide*, by Michael De Molinos;  
Installment 8 ..... 6  
More in our series of works by Gnostic  
Saints.

Lost or Forgotten Works of Gnostic Saints . 9  
*Short Texts in Faiths and Philosophies*,  
by Forlong Dux. Installment 5.

Literary Review ..... 13  
*The Demon-Haunted World: Science as  
a Candle in the Dark* by Carl Sagan.

In Celebration of the Greater Feast of Carl E.  
Sagan, 20 December 1996 e.v. .... 14







## EVENTS



The oasis holds regularly scheduled events each Sunday plus a couple of other times per month.

### CLASSES & STUDY GROUPS:

Recently there have been classes on Magick and Ritual Writing, Introductory Qabalah and even a very basic discussion of The Goetia. Classes usually occur on the second and third Sunday of the month. In the months to come there will be more Qabalah and Magick/Ritual classes.

Library & Discussion Night occurs every fourth or fifth Sunday. This is a time to take advantage of the Oasis's library resources and have discussions on new and different topics. Or, help in upgrading and improving the Temple's equipment at this time.

### INITIATIONS:

Sekhet-Bast-Ra performed three Minerval initiations in January. The First Degree followed the next morning. Two of our Candidates were from out of state.

Minerval initiations are scheduled to be held again in April. These may be followed soon by First Degree initiations. There's also a Third Degree scheduled for May. Call or email the Oasis for more information.

### ECCLESIA GNOSTICA CATHOLICA:

Regular performance of Aleister Crowley's Gnostic Mass occurs every first Sunday and third Thursday of the month.

All O.T.O. members and their guests are invited to gather at 7:00pm on these two evenings to celebrate this very special ritual.

### RITE OF ELEUSIS:

We have all been basking in the energy of Jupiter for some time. But that will all end on 29 March when the Rite of Mars will be performed at 8:00 pm. The Rite of Sol will follow. The date is yet to be determined, but will probably be in the May-June time frame.

The Holiday Season is upon us again and Sekhet-Bast-Ra Oasis has will perform the Invocation of Horus and a special ritual of our own by Frater Agavata.

As appropriate for this season, Sekhet-Bast-Ra Oasis has a new officer to handle the arrangements for feasting. Soror Bes-Na-Mavt has been aggressively planning for our Thelemic Holiday season. Additionally, to help out on the administrative functions of the Oasis, Frater Ta-Nech is now the Oasis' Assistant Secretary. Also the job of musical coordination for the Rites of Eleusis, the Gnostic Mass, and other rituals has been taken up by Frater Brava.

Many local, regional and national events are coming this year including the First O.T.O. National Conference, hosted by Black Sun Oasis in Akron, Ohio.

As always, check our website for latest updates to the local calendar and links to regional and national event pages.





merely to please God, and the holy and loving spirit teaches it everything with His sweet and enlivening unction.

Amongst the saints there are some gigantic ones, who continually suffer, with patience, indispositions of body, of whom God takes great care. But high and sovereign is their gift who, by the strength of the Holy Ghost, suffer both internal and external crosses with content and resignation. This is that sort of holiness so much the more rare as it is more precious in the sight of God. The spiritual ones who walk this way are rare: because they are few in the world who do totally deny themselves, to follow Christ crucified, with simpleness and bareness of spirit, through the lonesome and thorny ways of the cross, without making reflections upon themselves.

A life of self-denial is above all the miracles of the saints; and it doth not know whether it be alive or dead, lost or gained, whether it agrees or resists. This is the true resigned life. But although it should be a long time before thou comest to this state, and thou shouldst think not to have made one step towards it, yet affright not thyself at this, for God uses to bestow upon a soul that blessing in one moment which was denied it for many years before.

He that desires to suffer blindfold, without the comfort of God or the creatures, is gotten too far onwards to be able to resist unjust accusations which his enemies make against him, even in the most dreadful and interior desolation.

The spiritual man lives by God, and in Him, inwardly contented in the midst of his adversities, because the cross and affliction are his life and delight.

Tribulation is a great treasure, wherewith God honours those that be His in this life. Therefore evil men are necessary for those that are good; and so are the devils themselves, which, by afflicting us, do try to ruin us; but instead of doing us harm, they do us the greatest good imaginable.

There must be tribulation to make a man's life acceptable unto God; without it it is like the body without the soul, the soul without grace, the earth without the sun.

With the wind of tribulation God separates, in the floor of the soul, the chaff from the corn.

When God crucified in the inmost part of the soul, no creature is able to comfort it; nay, comforts are but grievous and bitter crosses to it. And if it be well instructed in the laws of discipline of the ways of pure love, in the time of great desolation and inward troubles, it ought not to seek abroad among the creatures for comfort, nor lament itself with them, nor will it be able to read spiritual books, because this is a secret way of getting at a distance from suffering.

Those saints are to be pitied who cannot find in their hearts to believe that tribulation and suffering are their greatest blessing. They who are perfect ought always to be desirous of dying and suffering, being always in a state of death and suffering. Vain is the man who doth not suffer, because he is born to toil and suffer; but much more the friends and elect of God.

Undeceive thyself, and believe that, in order to thy soul's being totally transformed with God, it is necessary for it to be lost, and be denied in its life, sense, knowledge, and power; and to die living, and not living; dying, and not dying; suffering, and not suffering; resigning up, and not resigning up itself; without reflecting upon anything.

Perfection, in its followers, receives not its glories but by fire and martyrdom, griefs, torments, punishment, and contempt, suffered and endured with gallantry and courage; and he that would have some place to set his feet on, and rest himself, and does not go beyond the reason of reason and of sense, will never get into the secret cabinet of knowledge, though by reading he may chance to get a taste, and relish the understanding of it.

## Chapter 8.

### **Pursues the same matter.**

You must know that the Lord will not manifest Himself in thy soul, till it be denied in itself, and dead in its senses and powers. Nor will it ever come to this state, till, being perfectly resigned, it resolves to be with God all alone;



patient: let nothing affright thee: all of it will have a time to end: God only is He that is unchangeable: patience brings a man in everything. He that hath God hath all things; and he that hath Him not hath nothing.

## Chapter 9.

### **For the obtaining of Internal Peace, it is necessary for the Soul to know his misery.**

If the soul should not fall into some faults, it would never come to understand its own misery, though it hears men speak, and reads spiritual books; nor can it ever obtain precious peace, if it do no first know its own miserable weakness; because there the remedy is difficult, where there is no clear knowledge of the defect. God will suffer in thee sometimes one fault, sometimes another, that by this knowledge of thyself, seeing thee so often fallen, thou mayest believe that thou are a mere nothing, in which knowledge and belief, true peace and perfect humility is founded. And that thou mayest the better search into this mystery, and see what thou art, I will try to undeceive thee in some of thy manifold imperfections.

Thou art so quick and nice, that it may be if thou dost but trip as thou walkest, or findest thy way molested, thou feelest even hell itself. If thou art denied thy due, or thy pleasure opposed, thou presently briskest up with a warm resentment of it. If thou spiest a fault in thy neighbour, instead of pitying him and thinking that thou thyself art liable to the same failing, thou indiscreetly reprovest him; if thou seest a thing convenient for thee, and canst not compass it, thou growest sad and full of sorrow; if thou receivest a slight injury from thy neighbour, thou chidest at him, and complainest for it, insomuch, that for any trifle thou art inwardly and outwardly discomposed, and lovest thyself.

Thou wouldst be patient, but with another's patience; and if the impatience still continues, thou layest the fault with much pains upon thy companion, without considering that thou art intolerable to thyself; and when the rancour is

over, thou cunningly dost return to make thyself virtuous, giving documents and relating spiritual sayings with artifice of wit, without mending thy past faults. Although thou willingly dost condemn thyself, reproving thy faults before others, yet this thou dost more to justify thyself with him that sees thy faults, that thou mayest return again afresh to the former esteem of thyself, than through any effect of perfect humility.

Other times thou dost subtly allege that it is not through fault but zeal of justice that thou complainest of thy neighbour. Thou believest for the most part that thou art virtuous, constant, and courageous, even to the giving up of thy life into the tyrants hand, solely for the sake of Divine love; yet thou canst scarce hear the least word of anger, but presently thou dost afflict and trouble and disquiet thyself. These are all industrious engines of self-love, and the secret pride of thy soul. Know therefore that self-love reigns in thee, and from the purchasing this precious peace, that is thy greatest hindrance.

## ❁ Lost or Forgotten Works of Gnostic Saints ❁

One of the many reasons why Sekhet-Bast-Ra started Ophiuchus Newsletter was to circulate the material in our research of Saints; mainly the little known and privately printed material, which has become public domain. This was started with Burton's pamphlet on his pilgrimage as an Islamic pilgrim. We have the fifth installment of another rare, hard to find work: Forlong's Short Texts in Faiths and Philosophies.

In 1897 in Edinburgh published for private circulation Forlong's Short Texts in Faiths and Philosophies. The work is unlike any other work of Forlong's work. It is in a poetic style and not the usual armchair scholarship which readers and students of



VII.

O Giver of life and immortality, show thyself  
unto us  
Throughout all the troubles and trials of our  
lives.  
As we pass through the watery wastes of earth  
and skies,  
Let thy spirit in a still small voice speak within  
us;  
So that, when freed from sin and flesh on the  
consuming pyre,  
We may arise pure spirits to dwell for ever with  
thee  
In those blessed and bright abodes of the  
righteous,  
Where rest the spirits of the just made perfect  
in thy spirit.

VIII.

We know thou abhorrest the ways of unjust  
men,  
Neither giving to them felicity here nor  
hereafter.  
But the contented spirit who resisteth evil,  
Curbing all sensual appetites, wrath and  
covetousness;  
Who injureth not his fellows nor pursueth after  
gain,  
Who hath controlled his affections and calmed  
his mind---  
That man hath broken the fetter which bound  
him to life,  
Hath inherited Brahma; and dwelling in him  
Is dead unto the flesh and has all but attained  
immortality.

IX.

We long to dwell in the secret place of the Most  
High,  
Where life is free and the heavens radiant with  
His light,  
Where the imperishable One shineth as the  
sun:  
There indeed is true happiness, and "the desire  
of our desires  
Is gratified" in thy abiding presence, O Lord  
Prajapati. ---

X.

Let us not, O Varuna, enter the house of clay:  
Have mercy, O Almighty, have mercy.  
We are weak and have sinned, Thou ever  
Strong One:

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy.  
Through thoughtlessness have we broken Thy  
laws:  
Have pity, O Brahma, have pity.  
Give unto us the spirit of love and prayer:  
Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy.  
Our souls are overwhelmed by great waters:  
Have mercy, Almighty One, have mercy.  
Though surrounded by waters, we are athirst:  
Have pity, O Lord, have pity.

XI.

He who considereth Thy perfections in devout  
abstraction,  
Who resteth not on his own understanding,  
words or virtues,  
Who liveth uninfluenced by the world and  
illusions of time,  
He cannot sin but dwelleth with Thee for ever.

XII.

Naught can be done without or apart from  
Thee;  
Right and Truth, Light and Darkness are Thy  
handmaids,  
And only as we serve Thee, can we obtain their  
aid.  
Thou art Dyaus surrounded by the Devas or  
"Light ones";  
An Ouranos whose ethereal covering shelters  
us.

XIII.

We see Thee in our earliest Trinity or Trienurti.  
In Aryman, Varuna and Brahma, as well as in  
Vishnu  
And Mitra or Surya, "The glowing and  
resplendent one."  
In these "three persons, the one god is shown,  
Each first in place, each last, not one  
alone.  
Of Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, each may be  
First, second, third, among the blessed."

XIV.

Loving all we hymn the praises of all,  
But especially of "the swift courser" --- "the  
Hunter"  
Who pursueth ever his kindly, bounteous race;  
Quickening our flocks and herds;  
Fortifying our young men and maidens,  
And enriching our lands with corn and oil.

XV.

To Thee, thou mighty Triune, Lord of all



When nought was, neither entity nor non-entity,  
Thou "THE I AM" breathed, "yet without afflation."\*

In darkness and chaos Thou wert "unseen light,"  
Ever "Pure Wisdom," the Infinite Logos, the Unchangeable,  
A spirit without matter, parts or passions,  
Omnipotent, everlasting, and the incomprehensible

XXV.

Thou sittest aloof, neither interested nor moving;  
Watchful only as the mirror is to receive shadow ---

An ever cold and passive beholder or unalterable Law;  
Calm and solitary in Thy unembodied unity.

XXVI.

It was Thy Spirit, impressed Maya or "Mirrored Illusion,"

That something, yet nothing; real only as the cause of all,

Yet unreal for existing not as a Being;  
Untrue, for without essence, though existent as Thy power ---

A part of Thy imperishable Soul, embodied in illusion,  
And waiting but for a few days to return to Thee again.

XXVII.

As the rains descend, form rivers, and run to the Ocean,  
So Thy spirit descends as life and merges again in Thee.



Thou art moisture in the water; the light in the sun;  
The sweet scent of the flower; and harmony of the spheres.

\*This divine term for deity, "THE I AM" of "HE IS", occurs primarily among Egyptians. Cf. Max Muller's *India, what it Teaches*, p. 248.

N.B. --- Hindus and European scholars will readily recognize the writhing from which we have culled these **SHORT TEXTS**, especially after reading *Short studies*, IV., on Vedas and Vedantism. It would have been

impossible, as elsewhere explained, to have given all references; but to show how close we have kept to the actual texts, we may here give an authoritative translation from the *Atharva Veda*, reminding us of the Heb. Psalm CXXXIX: "Varuna, the Lord of these worlds, sees as if he were near . . . If a man stands or walks or rides; if he goes to lie down or get up. . . . What two people sitting together whisper, Thou, O Varuna, knows it; thou art there as a third. . . . The two seas --- the sky and ocean --- are the loins of Varuna, yet is He contained in the smallest drop of water. He who flees far beyond the sky, even he would not be rid of Varuna the Lord . . . . He counteth even the twinklings of our eyes," etc. It is to avoid such wearying reading that these *Short Texts* are composed.

---

 *Literary Review* 

" *Because life is too short to read bad books.*"

*The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark.*

Carl Sagan.

Ballantine Books.

New York, New York 1996.

ISBN: 0-345-40946-9.

\$14.00.

Originally, I reviewed this book for two reasons: one to celebrate the Greater Feast of Carl Sagan, but the other reason has the last week taken on more important interest, the rebirth of superstition and the slow death of science. We were putting the finishing touches on the newsletter when the suicide of thirty-nine people occurred. These people were suppose to be bright and highly intelligent people, who believed that a mother ship was following the comet Hale-Bop and they were to kill themselves to get on board. It has turned out the object seen in the photograph that they believed was a spaceship was indeed a star.



for his work on the PBS series *Cosmos*. *Cosmos* was an Emmy and Peabody award winning show that was seen by over 500 million people in 60 countries. Sagan has published more than 600 scientific papers and popular articles as well as authored over 20 books including *The Dragons of Eden*, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1978.

Sagan played a leading role in NASA's Mariner, Viking, Voyager, and Galileo expeditions to other planets. He received NASA Medals for Exceptional Scientific Achievement and twice for the Distinguished Public Service and the NASA Apollo Achievement Award. Sagan received many other awards and honorary degrees for his contributions to science, education, preservation of the environment, humanitarian efforts, etc.

He is also the co-founder of The Planetary Society, a 100,000 member organization and the largest space-interest group in the world. The society supports major research programs in the radio search for extraterrestrial intelligence, the investigation of near-Earth asteroids and , with the French and Russian space agencies, the development and testing of balloon and mobile robotic exploration of Mars.

Sagan was elected chairman of the Division of Planetary Sciences of the American Astronomical Society, president of the Planetology Section of the American Geophysical Union, and chairman of the Astronomy Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. For 12 years he was the editor of *Icarus*, the leading professional journal devoted to planetary research.

Some of his latest research focused on the greenhouse effect on Venus; windblown dust as an explanation for seasonal changes on Mars; organic aerosols on Titan, Saturn's moon; the long-term environmental consequences of nuclear war; and the origin of life on Earth. A pioneer in the field of exobiology, he continued to teach graduate and undergraduate students in courses in astronomy, space sciences, and critical thinking at Cornell.

Sagan was also a founding member and Fellow of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal and a member of the Council for Secular Humanism's International Academy of Humanism. He wrote several articles for the *Skeptical Inquirer* (a magazine devoted to scientifically examining the claims of paranormal activity such as UFOs, alien abduction, channeling, etc.)

However Sagan's true joy was science. In his own words he states: "Science is still one of my chief joys. The popularization of science that Isaac Asimov did so well - the communication not just of the findings but of the methods of science - seems to me as natural as breathing. After all, when you're in love, you want to tell the world. The idea that scientists shouldn't talk about their science to the public seems to me bizarre." His last efforts were aimed at trying to promote more education and teaching of sciences in our schools. In his last book *The Demon-Haunted World*, he wrote: "I worry that, especially as the Millennium edges nearer, pseudoscience and superstition will seem year by year more tempting, the siren song of unreason more sonorous and attractive. Where have we heard it before? Whenever our ethnic or national prejudices are aroused, in times of scarcity, during challenges to national self-esteem or nerve, when we agonize about our diminished cosmic place and purpose, or when fanaticism is bubbling up around us-then, habits of thought familiar from ages past reach for the controls".

The candle flames flickers. Its little pool of light trembles. Darkness gathers. The demons begin to stir.

We will miss Carl Sagan and hope that the light will never die out.



*Love is the law, love under will.*