

# The Scroll of Set

---

Issue Number 75

Volume X-6

December 1984

Editor: Constance L. Moffatt III°

Guest Editor: Michael A. Aquino VI°

Copyright © 1984 Temple of Set

---

## [1] Christmas Retrospective

- by Michael A. Aquino VI°

For years now I've been watching non-Christians go through all sorts of contortions in December to have Christmasy kinds of fun without giving the appearance of selling out to the opposition. The Jews have built themselves a reasonably fancy nest with Hanukkah, which is supposed to commemorate the Maccabees' victory over Antiochus of Syria and the subsequent rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem umpty-ump years ago. This is all well and good, but no one can tell me that it isn't just a handy excuse for partying in December [scuse me, *Kislev* on the Jewish calendar].

The neopagan subculture hasn't quite gotten it together yet. Every year both Black & White Witches talk themselves blue and purple about the Winter Solstice, Candlemas, Yule, etc. and go through all sorts of contortions to demonstrate to anyone who cares that, whatever kind of fun they're having, it definitely is not icky **Christian** fun and furthermore is umpty-ump centuries older to boot.

The Church of Satan and Temple of Set have engaged in something of the same contortions. December was Winter Solstice time in the C/S, even if a grumpy Anton LaVey used to get dragged off to Christmas dinner with his in-laws every year. If I put up a tree, I made sure it was properly Satanic via red ornaments and a bat up top instead of the usual angel. Later on, in the Æon of Set, we could [and did] frolic within the complexities of the ancient Egyptian calendar and Khem's rich astronomical and magical traditions concerning this time of year.

But I must say, after watching this annual effort for so many years, that I wonder if we aren't beating a dead reindeer by mounting the barricades whenever the radios switch over to Xmas muzak and the Salvation Army ding-dongs materialize on the street corners.

The first question we should ask ourselves is how seriously the vast majority of Christians take Christmas. Now if you ask one if he/she respects the symbolism of the event, of course the answer will be yes. But once past the formal question, doesn't said Christian **really** think in terms of parties, trees, gifts, vacations, Santa Claus, and pigging-out? Couldn't he/she care less about

alleged incarnations of gods 2,000 years ago? Sure.

Similarly the majority of Christians could care less about non-Christians' and neo-pagans' frenzied efforts to disassociate themselves from Christmas. "If they want to make a production about **not** enjoying themselves, that's **their** problem," probably goes the opinion of the few who even think about it. And most don't.

I suppose that, when you get right down to it, I can't see anything really sacred about **any** date on the calendar - Halloween, Walpurgis, and the North Solstice included. Venerating a particular day or date is kind of silly when the actual religious or magical phenomenon takes place in the *psyche*, not in a fancy building, Macy's parade, or other fetish-object.

Fetish-adoration is O.K. for those who cannot comprehend or who have forgotten the actual metaphysical principle to which they are supposedly paying homage. If Set timed the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* for the North Solstice X, I suppose he thought it would thus have that much greater an initial impact on magical date-fetishists [including M.A.]. Well, I suppose it did! [In my past analyses and commentaries on that document, I never stopped to ask myself why an entity located circa Alpha Draconis should care one way or the other how much Earth is tilted towards the Sun.]

Getting holidays in magical perspective is rather like getting ritual implements and chambers in perspective. They're supposed to do things for **you** - not the other way around. If you want to put up a Christmas tree, go ahead and call the damn thing a Christmas tree instead of doing a soft-shoe routine about Yule-trees or whatever.

If you feel like celebrating Walpurgis a day or so early or late, or not celebrating it at all, for that matter, do so - and don't feel guilty about it. The only sin, as ASLV used to say, is self-deceit. If you go through a whole rigmarole to punch the ticket of a particular "event" and are so traumatized by the "chore" that the spirit of said event bypasses you completely, then what have you proved - and to whom?

Around San Francisco the Christmas trees come down "poof!" the day after New Year's. Last year there was one house on North Beach in which the tree stayed up, lit and glittering, until mid-February - by which time I presume it was disintegrating. Presumably the denizen of that abode thought the tree was a pretty thing to have in his/her living room, and enjoyed the good feelings he/she got upon walking through the door. That's magic.

---

## [2] So What's Going On with the *Scroll* This Time?

Yes, the *Scroll* is still officially Edited by Priestess Moffatt, but things got rushed for her this

month, so the HP (me) invited her to take a breather 'til the February/March XX issue. Original idea was to just skip this issue, but a few items began to pile up around here which I thought might be of interest to the Temple, so here comes this bootleg issue.

---

### [3] *Crystal Tablet Update*

As you may or may not know, shortly after the turn of each year a complete set of changes and updates to the *Crystal Tablet* is sent out to all Setians. This generally consists of sections of the reading lists with changes, the III° consultation roster, and any text-pages on which there have been significant changes.

This year the *CT* will also contain an expanded section identifying all Orders of the Temple as of 1/XX. It is still up-in-the-air whether the reading list will contain film, specialized organization, and/or music addenda, and/or internal cross-references to the forthcoming edition of the *Ruby Tablet*. We may introduce such refinements in bits and pieces in various sections of the list to see how [un]wieldy they may be.

So far we haven't had much success with our great idea of reviving the Inter-Member Communication Roster concept pioneered by the C/S around IV. It failed then through apathy, and so far few Setians have utilized it since we recreated it. There is a chance this may be because there is still some confusion with what data are appropriate. And some Setians may not know how to get on that particular roster, even though recent issues of the *Scroll* presumably provided guidance. So we're going to try one more route: the *CT*. A standardized form for ICR input will be added to the *CT*, and will thus be provided to every new Initiate of the Temple upon entrance. If the result is a roster sizable enough to justify the time of its preparation, we'll continue it. Otherwise it will be tabled again.

---

### [4] *Temple of Set to be Profiled in Film Documentary*

A couple of months ago I was contacted by an Australian writer by the name of Nevill Drury. He is the author and/or editor of 10 books on various aspects of occultism, most of which are probably unfamiliar to U.S. Setians because they are published by U.K. or Australian firms. I have found two of them - *The Occult Sourcebook* (an annotated directory) and *Visions* - and recently received a third - *Vision-Quest* - from Drury himself. I find them to be very sensitive, objective, and reflective in content - which I must say is a refreshing change from the bulk of what ASLV was wont to call "occult pornography".

Drury had now agreed to serve as consultant for a new documentary on contemporary occultism and speculative science. This Australian film, called *Magic, Myth, and Mystery*, would be produced by Frank Heimans of Cinetel Productions in Sydney. Cinetel's past films have also been documentary in nature and of the sort to appear on PBS/education networks. From two of our Australian (Lemurian?) Setians, R. Ledwidge and D.L. Hauyer, Drury had been alerted to the Temple of Set. Would we agree to be included in the film?

My initial response was no. 9 years of flashy media exposure during our C/S days had done us more harm than good, I said, and had not attracted initiates of the caliber we sought. Hence the Temple of Set had deliberately avoided all but the most understated and dignified kinds of coverage. We might not be as well-known as the C/S, but the quality of those seeking us out to affiliate was significantly higher.

Drury and Heimans flew to San Francisco in late November as part of a pre-filming scheduling tour, and we got together for lunch. The upshot of it was that I was convinced of their intention to make a serious study of their subject. So I agreed to an interview segment focusing on the Temple.

The Cinetel crew arrived one day in early December and spent two evenings shooting footage of interviews with Magistra Sinclair and myself in our home. What we were accustomed to regarding as a tranquil sanctuary from the bustle and noise of the outside world became a maelstrom of cameras, lights, mikes, recorders, and wireswireswires.

A film interview under such conditions is decidedly surrealistic. For one thing, the Temple's philosophy is relatively complex and somewhat abstract, and this wouldn't do for the average film audience. So there were several retakes as Heimans tried his best to get me to use shorter words and fewer compound/complex sentences.

At the other extreme, over-simplification of the Temple's philosophy would make it seem puerile and crude. Hopefully a balance was struck; we will see when the finished product makes its appearance in July of this coming year.

Although Lilith and I had initially agreed to do the interview sequence gratis, Heimans presented the Temple with a \$250 donation at the conclusion of the filming.

The final film will be approximately 2 hours in length. Prior to editing there is no way to determine how much coverage there will be of the Temple of Set, but we are guessing somewhere in the neighborhood of 10-15 minutes.

The film's scheduled topics are a rather interesting cross-section of the "cutting edge" in contemporary metaphysics as seen through the eyes

of Drury and Heimans. As explained by Drury, here's a list of the participants/interviewees:

(1) A sequence of stage magic, shot at Hollywood's Magic Castle [which I had recommended to Drury during their original fact-finding trip].

(2) Stan Grof, a teacher/counselor at Michael Murphy's [see *Runes*] Esalen Institute below California's Big Sur.

(3) Us, as Satanists. [Drury and Heimans had tried to contact Anton LaVey, but had received no response. They did, however, dig up the producer of the IV/1969 documentary *Satanis* (on the early Church of Satan) in Los Angeles, and obtained permission to include some clips from that film in their documentary.]

(4) An interview with "Z Budapest", Wiccan-witch. Currently residing in the S.F. bay area, ZB came to the attention of the U.S. occult subculture a few years ago when she opened the "Feminist Wicca" store [in the Los Angeles suburb of Venice, I think] and was hassled about it by the local authorities. From a recent TV appearance she made in S.F., "Z" is less militant and more "cookie-lady-witch" these days, with flowers in her hair and the usual Tarot reading routine. [After telling a few Tarot fortunes, she passed out cookies to the TV studio audience, and everybody ate one, after she had called upon the m/goddess to bless them. Sort of like Catholic communion, I guess, except that "Z's" cookies looked munchier than the Catholics' wafers.] But I digress ...

(5) An interview with Charles Tart, Professor of Psychology at the University of California's Davis campus. Tart, according to Drury, is a leading researcher in the area of human consciousness and has authored two books, *Altered States of Consciousness* and *Transpersonal Psychologies*. [I am not familiar with either. Must look them up.]

(6) Margot Adler, authoress of a book called *Drawing Down the Moon*. I've never heard of her or her book, but Drury considers her an "authority" on Wicca in the U.S. I will reserve judgment 'til I see the book in question. [Whatever happened to Raymond Buckland, the Frosts, Leo Martello, Louise Huebner, and Sybil Leek? I'm not complaining, mind you ...]

(7) Michael Bertiaux [in Chicago, I think]. Magistra Wendall struck up an acquaintance with Bertiaux some time back and published a few of his essays in her *Magic Cat* newsletter. My only familiarity with Bertiaux is through those essays, which I must say I thought completely incoherent and adolescent. Presumably Drury was/is sufficiently impressed with him to add him to the film. so perhaps I didn't see Bertiaux at his best. Judgment reserved.

(8) Michael Harner, Professor of Anthropology, New School for Social Research, who specializes in shamanism and is author of a book called *The Way of the Shaman* (with which I am not familiar). Nevill Drury's own philosophy is essentially shamanistic, so I presume that he approached Harner as one of the scholars/writers in that field whom he thought most authoritative.

(9) Kenneth Ring, Professor of Psychology, University of Connecticut. Ring is interested in "near-death experiences" and has authored two books on this subject, *Life at Death* and *Heading Towards Omega*. Drury feels Ring has made a pretty good case. I remarked that, following my own scanning of NDE literature, I have still found no "smoking gun" which could validate NDE as something truly disconnected from the physical brain (dreams, hallucination, etc.) Off-hand I can't say whether I've specifically come across Ring's books in my scanning, so judgment reserved in his case.

(10) Selena Fox, a "New Age pagan" of something called the Circle Network" in Madison, Wisconsin. Your guess is as good as mine.

(11) J. Gordon Melton, head of the Institute for the Study of American Religion (ISAR). Melton publishes an *Encyclopaedia of AR* and contacted us a year or so ago for input concerning American Satanism. Seems like an amiable enough sort. He himself is a Christian clergyman, however, which *a priori* argues against his capacity for objectivity unless he takes his religious office with a grain of salt. All I can say is that the most interesting "Christians" I've met have been *de facto* Satanists ...

(12) H.R. Giger of Zurich, Switzerland. Giger is the artist responsible for the sets and monster of the film *Alien*, and has also published a book of his art entitled *Necronomicon*. Drury tells me that Giger is a most fascinating individual, whose residence is decorated in a most Alienated fashion, so I'm looking forward to the film's presumed coverage of same.

(13) Zachary Cox, editor of something called the *Aquarian Arrow* in London. Cox is a Thelemite; I am not familiar with him. [Drury apparently tried to line up Kenneth Grant, but he was playing hard-to-get. No great loss, unless of course you're heavily into the penis-worship school of Aleister Crowley.]

(14) Alex Saunders ("King of the Witches", remember?). Saunders has agreed to perform a sort of "fire-dance" for the film. Saunders is reportedly semi-retired as a practicing Wiccan. Since Saunders was based in Britain, the Church of Satan and Temple of Set never encountered him. We heard about him via his occasional book/magazine appearances, usually followed by impassioned

denials by all other Wiccan prima donnas that he was **their** king. Presumably he was **somebody's** king.

(15) Warren Kenton, English Cabalist. Not familiar with him.

(16) The Fellowship of Isis, Clonegal Castle, Ireland. This ought to be one of the film's more interesting segments. The FOI is a "mother goddess worship" group headed by Olivia and Patrick Robertson. It and/or they own this old castle and have set it up as a Wiccan retreat. If they're talking about the MG as Isis, then presumably it's got some Egyptian flavor as well. I've never heard of them before, so will wait to see how they come across in the film. Might make an interesting point of contact for the Temple of Set in Ireland.

(17) Janet and Stewart Farrar, "expatriot British witches", in Dragheda, Ireland. Your guess is as good as mine.

And, since the film is an Australian production, there will also be a goodly proportion of Down Under material as well, to include: Kirlian photography, NDE, biofeedback, Aboriginal shamanism, something called the "Christos technique" [which has to do with "out-of-the-body" (OOB) experiences and "past-life therapy". Drury referred me to Robert Monroe's work published by Delacourt Books], spiritualism, popular occultism, and sensory-deprivation tanks.

By now you're probably wondering how Heimans, Drury & Co. are going to stuff all of this into 2 hours of film! I can't figure it out either. But it looks as though they're having a lot of fun trying.

Shooting is supposed to conclude sometime this coming March, and the editing should be done around July. At that point the film will be released in Australia, and shortly thereafter in the U.K. So far it has not been marketed to the U.S., but if so it would probably show up on PBS TV.

Heimans and Drury have kindly promised a VHS videotape to us [again as a complimentary gift], so Setians will be able to view the film even if for some reason it is not openly broadcast in the U.S.

Cinetel has asked only that we take appropriate care to ensure that the cassette is not copied or pirated. Probably the best way to ensure this is to show it at the Set-VI Conclave in Las Vegas, so we'll plan on doing that. So now you **really** don't want to miss Set-VI, do you?

---

## [5] Magical Mail-Order

The *Crystal Tablet* sez that you don't need ooga-booga magical accessories to do magic, but of course it's fun [and occasionally magically appropriate] to have a few powders, incenses, skulls,

candles, and whatever decorating your den. Setians in the larger metropolitan areas can usually find one or two occult shops to patronize, but what about those of you who are out in the middle of nowhere?

We have come across at least one occult shop that is geared for mail-order: "The Alchemist" in St. Louis, Missouri. You'll recall that St. Louis used to be the stomping-ground for Gavin and Diane Frost's School of Wicca, and "The Alchemist" presumably got off the ground as a resource for aspiring Wiccans. Since then the Frosts packed up their school and moved it to North Carolina, but "The Alchemist" chose to remain in St. Louis. Every time we've dropped in, they've been very friendly & helpful, and their standard stock of items includes Black as well as White Magical accessories. Among other things, they regularly stock the *Satanic Bible* and *Satanic Rituals*, which are increasingly difficult to find these days.

"The Alchemist" will send a free catalogue upon request, so if you'd like one, write to the store.

The Temple of Set has no connection with "The Alchemist" [nor any other business] and cannot guarantee its services. If you should do any business with it, please drop the Executive Director a note and let us know how satisfactory or otherwise you found it.

Our eventual objective, as you might guess, is to develop a list of a number of source outlets which can be recommended to Setians with some confidence.

Setian Demon O'Brien of Atlanta, Georgia has passed along to us the name of "The Eye of the Cat" in Los Angeles, California. Demon reports: "They have Set, Sekhmet, Bast, Thoth, Nephthys, and most of the other Egyptian gods/goddess' incense. They also have a nice pentagram candle 6" high and in most colors. They take credit-card orders over the phone, and they're very helpful - seem to know their stuff."

---

## [6] Book Review:

### *The Complete Golden Dawn System Of Magic* by Israel Regardie

- by Michael A. Aquino VI<sup>o</sup>

It has always seemed to me that if it were recognized that the Earth is not flat, theories presupposing and pre-requiring a flat Earth ought to be tossed out the window - or at least removed to museums of the quaint & curious.

The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn is an acknowledged historical forerunner of Aleister Crowley's A.'.A.'. , as well as of the subsequent Church of Satan and Temple of Set. But the G.'.D.'. 's cosmology, Egyptology, and reliance upon Hebrew Cabalism are thoroughly obsolete by

modern standards. So why try to pump blood back into the veins of this decomposing corpse?

Regardie's earlier work *The Golden Dawn* is the authoritative reference in its field, i.e. as a record of G.'.D.'. documents and principles. Now comes this *CGDSM*, which is a monster volume (6 lbs on my bathroom scales) selling for about \$40, published by the Falcon Press in Arizona. As a longtime fan of *The Golden Dawn*, I pounced on *CGDSM* with a certain eager anticipation.

Quite frankly I am disappointed. First of all, the book is extremely confusingly organized. It is divided into 10 volumes with neither a common table of contents nor a common index to consolidate them. Each volume has its own topical table of contents, but it is rather difficult to ascertain who wrote which section - Regardie, an original G.'.D.'. initiate, a self-proclaimed modern G.'.D.'. initiate, or an outside consultant. And while I am interested as a historian in what turn-of-the-century G.'.D.'.ers had to say on certain topics, I must say I could care less how modern pretenders to the G.'.D.'. mantle try to pontificate on its coat-tail.

I would recommend *CGDSM* only to Golden Dawn enthusiasts who (a) have a list of original G.'.D.'. magical mottos handy to separate the authors of the original G.'.D.'. material from the modern take-offs, (b) have Regardie's original *Golden Dawn* handy to help sort out the various topics and articles, and (c) have the time and patience to fool around with this irksome task just to supplement *GD*'s already excellent coverage of the historical Golden Dawn.

Otherwise, well, back in my C/S III<sup>o</sup> Grotto Leader days I used to place a copy of de Lawrence's *Great Book of the Magical Art* (about the same size and weight as *CGDSM*) on the keyboard of my organ when I wanted spooky "white sound" as a background to some Nameless Rite or other. It held down an octave of keys all at once and was heavy enough to stay in place. It also looked great sitting on the coffee-table to impress profane visitors who didn't know a damn thing about magic, since it was big and fat and "occult-looking". No further comment.

---

### [7] **Movie Review: 2010**

- by Michael A. Aquino VI<sup>o</sup>

Arthur C. Clarke took a big Nietzschean bite when he concocted *2001: A Space Odyssey* in collaboration with Stanley Kubrick back in the late 60s, even if he had to tone the theme down from *Childhood's End* so audiences wouldn't go ape over the scene of primitive ape-men getting their initial dose of high intelligence from Karellen, the alien "Satan" (1953).

Even after Karellen had been sanitized into to a black monolith, the notion of mankind's being an experiment in evolutionary intelligence by a higher, extraterrestrial source of intelligence **separate from and isolate within** the Universe was enough to make any Satanist stand on his seat and cheer every time "Also Sprach Zarathustra" boomed out in the theater and the Sun & planets moved once more into key alignment.

But, after injecting a sample "second-stage" human with "third-stage" intelligence at the end of the film, *2001* left you hanging. You got treated to a psychedelic light show, which was pretty fancy for those pre-*Star Wars* days, but that was it. Nevertheless it was artistically acceptable, as though Clarke & Kubrick were content to "set a stage" and then let inspired audiences take it from there.

I don't know why Clarke decided to revive the *2001* theme now. Perhaps Hollywood has become a compulsive sequels addict and dangled the appropriate carrot in front of him until he jumped for it. Maybe he decided to cross sequel-swords with Isaac Asimov's *Foundation's Edge*. But, for whatever reason, we got *2010*.

You would logically expect *2010* to reveal the mysteries of (a) the monolith and (b) the "third-stage" human, right? It does neither. Instead you get encounter-group dramas in space, as the joint American/Soviet crew use up extra script material from *Dynasty* en route to Jupiter to revive HAL and see about that-there monolith and the dormant "Discovery" spacecraft that Dave Bowman parked prior to his light-show trip at the end of *2001*.

After 2 hours of wondering whether Roy Scheider would go to bed with the good-looking Soviet cosmonaut-commander [he didn't], I learned nothing about the monolith that I didn't know from *2001*. It creates an extra Sun in the solar system, which is supposed to make everyone on Earth so happy that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. immediately make peace. [This I still can't figure.] The monolith also trashes a nice Soviet cosmonaut who tries to touch it [maybe it's supposed to be Indy Jones' Ark?], and warns humanity to stay the hell off the Jupiterian moon Europa. So I left the theater with only one interest: What's on Europa?

To me it looks as though Clarke, having gone this far, simply didn't have the nerve to take his story further towards its inescapably Satanic premise. Too bad.

He missed a good opportunity for an ending, however: At the beginning of *2010* Scheider & wife are fooling around with their semi-intelligent dolphin pets. I would have liked to see the monolith dose the dolphin population of Earth with full "stage-two" intelligence, whereupon they would announce that **they** now controlled the watery areas

of the planet and would make it tough for humanity unless it disarmed. Hence world peace. And a **second** high-intelligence species on Earth, with all that implies.