



ANCIENT RITES was created early '89. All members used to play in other bands before. The line up consisted of Johan and Philip (guitars), Stefan (drums) and Gunther (bass/vocals). One year later the "**Dark Ritual**" demo was released and spread throughout the entire underground worldwide. Soon after the recordings Philip died in a car accident, problems forced the band to replace Stefan by drum roadie Walter (Stefan committed suicide by blowing his brains out with a shotgun a few years later) and Johan decided to leave the Metal scene since he never really could relate to the Satanic philosophies of the band. Pascal and Bart (guitars) joined and the "**Evil Prevails**" (1992) was recorded and released through their own label Fallen Angel Records and later on through several other record companies (Wild Rags USA and Colombian Warmaster). Pascal was fired (twice) because of a lack of dedication. As a three piece **ANCIENT RITES** released several split ep's (After Dark Records and Greek Molon Lave Records), a split lp and appeared on compilation CD's and tapes (Tessa Records). '94 The debut full length album "**The Diabolic Serenades**" was released through After Dark (CD version) and Midian Creations (lp format). Licensing deals were signed to guarantee a worldwide distribution (Osmose, Morbid Noizz). After Dark guarantee a worldwide distribution (Osmose, Morbid Noizz).

After Dark turned out to be a total rip off and went bankrupt leaving no penny for the band that had invested all money in recording the album. '95 A deal was signed with Dutch MASCOT and "BLASFEMIA ETERNAL" was released January '96. The band has toured Europe and the U.K. several times with acts such as ROTTING CHRIST, IMPALED NAZERENE, CRADLE OF FILTH, SADIST, VADER, MALEVOLANT CREATION, AT THE GATES, DISSECTION, BEWITCHED, OCCULTS etc. Throughout the years of A.R.'s existence the band always had to deal with a lot of misfortune (boycotts, bomb threats, cancelled tours, violence at concerts, ripped off for large amounts of money by our former label and tour promoter, members ending up in hospital or dying), however anger can be turned into power and all the hardship can be an inspiration. Recently Bart left the band which made A.R. a duo working with session guitarists like Mike, Erik, Michael, Raphael, Emil, brother of Jon of DISSECTION and Chris. Today A.R. became a five piece, a steady line up is again achieved. New blood within the ranks means even more inspiration. **ANCIENT RITES** are: ERIK (guitars), RAPHAEL (guitars), RAF (keyboards), WALTER (drums) and GUNTHER (bass/vocals).

Obviously there is a connection between our band's name and lyrical approach. The **ANCIENT** part refers to our fascination towards Ancient/Medieval civilizations and empires which are forever buried by time and dust while the **rites** stand for our connection with Satanism and the Darkside in general. Ever since my childhood I'm consumed by these topics and obviously this fascination has a big impact on our work. My life has been a constant quest for historical and Satanic knowledge, to see with my own eyes and experience everything I learned through literature and studies. I have travelled through the Sahara by camels and witnessed remains of ancient civilizations in desolate

places, I have entered the temple of Baal where thousands of years ago infant sacrifices took place, descended down Portuguese crypts, visited ancient Greek temples, travelled through Spanish mountains by horse, walked through medieval cities all over Europe and saw where Joan of Arc was burned alive, followed rivers surrounded by castles that are silent witnesses of the splendour of medieval Flanders, France, Germany, was in the centre of Minoan, Mycenaean, Fenician and Carthaginian War civilizations which walls and streets much to my surprise still were quite intact. All A.R. members relate to the Satanic life/death Code based on wisdom, strength and self respect. The Satanism we are into is ranging from symbolic Goat Worship to a more down to earth, realistic approach guided by our own instincts and principles. All this and more is reflection on my lyrics and work in general...

We try to avoid being influenced by any other musicians since we feel originality is important in order to survive as a band. It is surely not the easiest way and often not rewarded but we are not interested in imitating others. Anything obscure or dark, not only music, can be a source of inspiration: certain types of art, occult literature, weird poetry, cult movies, woods/forests/lakes/mountains, satanism, history. Of course we keep track on interesting new releases but I believe our roots are much closer to the first generation of Black Metal and basic Heavy Metal. There's this old touch in our work which is caused by the fact we spend many years in the underground. All A.R. members have a long tradition in Metal and this is reflecting on the music we create.

This strong background is an advantage but we also are aware of modern technics and avoid stagnation. Our music is a mixture of Infernal aggression and melancholic atmospheres. Other types of music we appreciate are soundtracks of horror movies, medieval/ancient music, Gothic Dark/Death Wave. The