AFRICAN DIASPORA RELIGION

Green Egg

A Journal of the Awakening Earth

Vol 29, No. 114
July / August 1996
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($8.15 Canada)

Divine Riders
Trance

Voodoo and Hoodoo
Ritual Behind Bars

0 74470 81276 0 07

Woman With the River in Her Walk

by ***Elizabeth Barrette***

Oshun,
You embody
All the affection of our
Ancestors

Your mirror
Holds the reflection
Of moving waters,
Your fan
Folds the breezes
Into sweet evenings.

Your jewels
Sparkle at the crest
Of every wave,
In the sweep
Of every shell,
Mother-of-pearl and
Royal purple, and the
Soft pinks of passion.

Ah, but Your body—
Your body flows in lush curves
Like the River caressing
The fertile mud,
Your voice is the song
Of rain and rapids,
And when You walk
We see the sway of the
River In Your stride.

Oshun, Riverlove,
Bless us with your favor,
That we may see
The beauty in our selves
And in each other.

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Maerian Morris ..... Editor
Orion Stormcrow ..... Forum Editor
Jeanne H. Koelle ..... Design and Layout
Dean Stiles ..... Front Cover Layout
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Mari Jackson 29, 30
Katlyn 23
Jeannine Masiello-Stuhmer .....
Inside front, 13, 16, 17, 18, 50
Mark Neville 8
Phoenix & Arabeth 43
Scott Thomas 10, 52
Gordon Yaswen 39

About the Cover

Our cover artist this issue is Lisa Iris and her piece is titled *Mother Earth*. Lisa Iris' paintings appear in *Aurora Rising* magazine, New World Music CD/cassette covers, the Queen's Cards and the Signature Collection of Wearable Art, and are exhibited at the Crystal Dolphin, located at 780 North Highland Avenue NE, Atlanta. Lisa was also a guest artist for the Airstorm World Airbrush Expo 1994 in Atlanta, GA. *Mother Earth* is available as a 24 x 28 print (1-800-828-7664).

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From the Editor

Exu, Coyote, and Oshun

In 1993, at the Ancient Ways festival, which happens—rain or shine (inside joke—sorry Glenn), in late Spring each year here in Northern Califomia, I attended an Umbanda workshop held to introduce curious Pagans to some of the Orixa, their rhythms and chants, personalities, likes and dislikes, and so forth. The workshop was preparatory to the Bembe scheduled for that evening. It was made clear that this workshop was not intended to formally invite the various Orixa, but simply to introduce newcomers to the chants and information which would be drawn upon later at the Bembe.

It was a beautiful, sunny morning, the drum rhythms were contagious (to say the least), and there was an air of expectancy, a hum of building energy and enthusiasm. A strong tribal sense of community identity was apparent among the Umbanda members of the workshop. Many of them were dressed primarily in white and wore numerous multicolored beaded necklaces. They also tended to hang out together, standing on the outskirts of the workshop area.

We were sitting in the sun, and as the workshop progressed beyond the introductory talk and into the chants for that evening, I began to sense within myself the liklihood that the light trance I was starting to feel licking around within me could blossom into a full trance that would be entirely inappropriate to the intent of the workshop.

Exu, we were told, is always invited first at Umbanda rituals, and would be that night, and as we were leaming his drum beats and chant, I shook my head several times and got up to move around and shake off the impending trance. As I stood moving and shaking my legs and arms, I noticed several Umbanda members laughing and covering their heads and pouring a sweet scented herbal preparation over themselves. I gathered that this preparation, "Florida Water," acts as an herbal ward against inappropriately-timed arrivals of various Orixa deities (i.e., possession). I didn't sense any harmful intent from the 'nearby' energies I could feel hovering about me, but they did seem rather exuberant and insistent and I wondered if I should wander over and ask for some of that Florida Water, but I didn't know any of them, and felt awkward interrupting and intruding upon them. This would also have required me to pick my way through the group of listeners that sat between the Umbanda members and myself.

As the drumming continued, I could barely stand it that we were all sitting down and listening—increasingly, I wanted to get up and dance. "Why wait?" I thought. "Why not have the Bembe now? Right now!" I had to exert a lot of will to stay seated and not go any deeper into trance.

Now, Exu, I've come to understand, has quite a reputation as a trickster. This had just been explained a few moments before, but I hadn't fully grokked the extent of his tricks. Nor, I am coming to realize, have I yet. As I sat there struggling internally, I decided to look away from the drumming and up into the hills above the little meadow we were sitting in. Against the gold and sage colors of the hillside, I spotted a sandy-colored coyote sitting above us and watching us intently. Immediately making the connection between Exu as trickster and Coyote, the Native American Trickster, I felt a growing sense of amusement and delight as I waited to see what would happen next. The trance seemed to recede as I watched the coyote intently regarding us. No one else appeared to notice Him, as they were caught up watching the drummers and listening to the chanting. As I watched the coyote, He turned and looked right at me, His tongue lolling out for a moment in a grin as He stood up, still staring at me. I gently nodded a greeting to him and he quietly slipped off behind a manzanita bush.

I turned my attention back to the drumming, and once more the surging desire to open up to what seemed to be several loudly knocking deities, returned in force. It felt very sexual—like a tide rising in me from the Earth and another showering down from the hot skies, and I knew how easy it would be to let those tides meet in my heart and, once again, that it wasn't the time to do so.

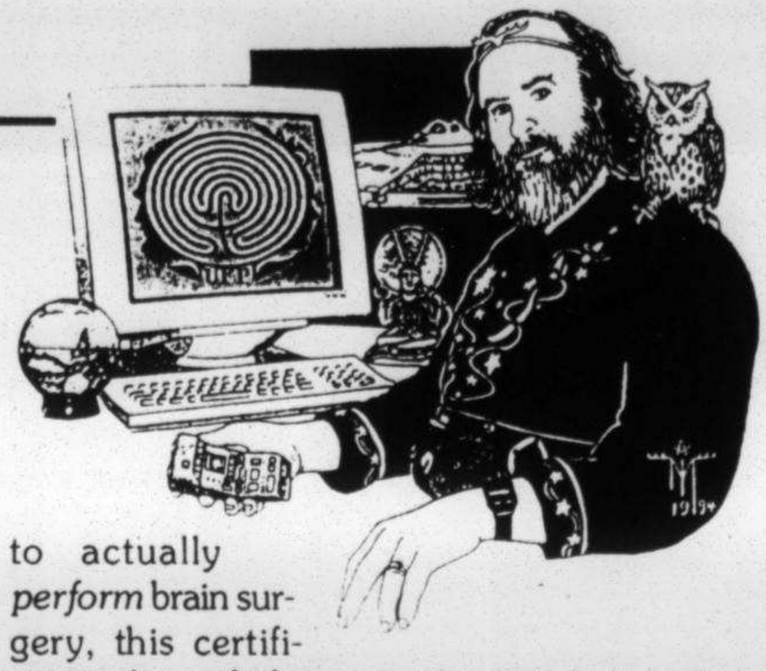
When they started drumming Oshun's rhythms, it was too much. Not wanting to go on with the struggle to hold back, I had to get up and leave. That year, in my own magickal community, I was already working deeply with another archetypal energy and at the time, it seemed wise to keep things clear and avoid the Bembe that evening. But my interest was definitely piqued. Now, I've always been a cheap date. The Gods have tended to wander in and out of my body at Our mutual will. Still, I have to say, the Orixa have a vitality, a vibrancy—that is not only attractive, but powerful.

Since that day at Ancient Ways, I've not had the opportunity to attend any rituals of the African Diaspora Religions. But occasionally, I'll remember that experience, or be reminded of the Orixa through artwork, or an article, or particularly, through some interesting synchronicity, and I'll feel that surging feeling again. It's been happening as I've been working on this issue of Green Egg. Particularly, as I write this editorial. Right now, in fact. GE

Maerian Morris

Oberon the Other Page...

Pagan Clergy Part II:



A few months ago I received a communication which read: "Please inform your readers about the Universal Life Church, Inc., which exists to allow people of all religions the right to become ordained ministers & perpetuate religious freedom...their willingness to ordain anyone, irrespective of religion, for free could have an enormous impact on the Pagan community...it might bear having an article in GE about the opportunity for Pagans to become legally ordained [with] an established organization behind them."

The ULC no doubt seemed a very neat idea when Kirby Hensley founded it back in the '60s, and Hensley is truly an inspired visionary (and nut-case), who occasionally makes a sort of weird sense (quote from him: "The three most important things in life are sex, food and freedom; and anyone who doesn't try to get as much of all three as possible is a damn fool!"). He came up with this nifty notion that anyone oughtta be able to define his own personal spiritual trip as a legitimate religion, and if the government was gonna grant special privileges and exemptions to established churches, then anybody who wanted to should be able to get in on the deal. So he offered to ordain anyone who sent in five bucks. Cool, huh?

But here's the rub: Being a Priest or Priestess is a calling requiring considerable skills and training. Not everyone is so called, and many who are may be unsuitable. The assumption here is that being Clergy is a simple task requiring no skills or training whatsoever, and in Hensley's case (a self-ordained fundamentalist Xian preacher) he's probably right.

But a Pagan Priest or Priestess needs to be a skilled ritualist, counselor, teacher, community organizer, magician, healer, loremaster/mistress, therapist, spiritual guide, thealogian, historian, folklorist, visionary, etc. This Work calls for knowledge in herbalism, mythology, rites of passage, chants, music, drumming, shamanic journeying, spells, talismans, and possibly even midwifery. A Priest/ess must have a spiritual calling and a personal relationship with the Gods, and be able to channel and carry the energies of a group ritual. They must be psychologically together, personally responsible, authoritative but non-authoritarian, compassionate, wise and charismatic enough to hold a group together. Moreover, this is a lifetime commitment, not to be undertaken lightly.

Ordination is the culmination of extensive and highly specialized training designed to ensure that a person is fully qualified to undertake the incredible responsibility of the Work. Without the training, any "Certificate of Ordination" is utterly meaningless. Frankly, it annoys me no end that people would think that an Ordination obtained from "Bishop" Hensley is equivalent to one achieved after years of training! By their practice of mail-order ordinations without any study or training, ULC has unwittingly created a system which has served largely to discredit the whole idea of ordination. This opinion is widely held, with ULC generally regarded as a scam. Claiming ULC ordination would certainly not improve one's credibility with the authorities, let alone the Pagan community!

To this my correspondent replied:

"...We all know it's not about a deep commitment to a particular religion. There is no training given (unless you want to study their mail courses), & I don't think they claim anything like an absolute & in-depth ordination program. But, you see, there is the point that it's legal. Through the ULC, my priestess—an initiate of our tradition—was able to legally perform my handfasting when it became clear that the Covenant of the Goddess credentials weren't going to be here in time. It was important to me to have our religious ceremony legal—it pisses me off that it isn't automatically so. What I'm saying is that I've found the ULC to be useful to me. Pagans must press for changes—we want to marry, name, & bury our own with no interference from the authorities. But we are so scattered & so diverse (&, often, so ephemeral) that it is almost impossible to get ourselves recognized—& there is an enormous fear of imposing dogma & doctrine on ourselves. We need something to back us up; if it's the ULC for the interim, so be it. It's surely one option. After all, it wouldn't be the first time that a shaky organization has been used to good ends. I'm simply pointing out how it can be used to our own ends, as a short term weapon against the persecution we face. There has to be something to bind us, of our many traditions & beliefs, together without killing growth & diversity."

Well sure, and maybe I'd like to be allowed to perform brain surgery, and maybe I could find some fly-by-night outfit that, like the Wizard of Oz, would give me a Diploma certifying me to be a bona-fide brain surgeon. But unless I have the skills and training needed to actually *perform* brain surgery, this certificate isn't worth the paper it's printed on, and I would be grossly irresponsible if I were to go around claiming, on the basis of having this Diploma, that I *was* a brain surgeon. And imagine if I solicited people actually in need of such surgery, to come and have me operate on them! We no more need a bunch of untrained people conducting rites on the basis of a ULC certificate than we need unqualified quacks with a mail-order MD diploma attempting to practice medicine.

If you feel truly called to become a Pagan Priest or Priestess, please be responsible and become qualified for the job! Every Pagan and Wiccan group has its own training program, some relatively simple, and some highly complex, each according to the needs of that particular tradition. Church of All Worlds, for instance, has a program which takes a minimum of three years, and you can bet that an ordained CAW Priest or Priestess is not only legal, but fully qualified!

If someone in the Pagan community wants to get legally married, there are an ever-growing number of legally-ordained Pagan Clergy around to do the job. Most Pagan groups labeled "Churches," and many others as well, can provide such Clergy upon request, or a helpful referral. It simply isn't necessary, desirable or ethical that every member of the congregation has to be Clergy!

And as for having "something to bind us, of our many traditions & beliefs, together without killing growth & diversity"...well, that's what our growing networks of alliances and federations are for. It's my fervent hope and millennial dream that such associations as the Covenant of the Goddess, Pagan Federation, Pan-Pacific Pagan Alliance, Association of Earth Religion Churches, Universal Federation of Pagans, Pagan Interfaith Assembly, Pagan Web and others will ultimately coalesce into a seamless vast interconnected system to which we will all belong, and which will address all our needs for legality, training programs, civil rights issues, etc. in a context of diversity and flexibility. GE

Oberon

Religions of the African Diaspora

by ***Phil Wayne***

The Gods of Africa are here.

Almost everyone knows about Santeria. At least, they have heard the name. Some few more may know that it's like Voodoo, at least a bit. But these are not the only footprints that Africans have left on the shores of the new world. Candomble, Catimbo, Umbanda, Batuque, Xango, and many others are still widely practiced. Each house (like a coven for Wiccans) has its own version, and there are regional versions of specific deities as well. Hundreds of them.

Most of the African gods came here with the people who worshipped them—slaves. As surprising as it sounds, most of the African slaves did NOT end up on the shores of North America.

The custom of the Yoruba and Fon selling war captives as slaves is documented as early as 1121 in an Arabic manuscript. During the early 1500's, Europeans also began buying slaves from the tribes on the east coast of Africa. Of these, almost ninety percent went to Brazil. The remaining ten percent were split among Spanish South America and the eastern coast of North America. While the practice of selling slaves did not begin with the discovery of the New World, African slavery of Africans was not marked by the cruelty, humiliation and mistreatment so prevalent among slave owners of European descent.

During the "Great Diaspora" from Africa (1500 to 1880) almost everyone agrees that the slave trade brought peoples from Northern and Central Africa to Europe and America as slaves. The exact number of people transported will forever remain a mystery. Joao Pandia Calogeras (in *A Politica Exterior do Imperio*, Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Nacional, 1927-1933, pp 283 ff) estimated that 12 to 14 million people were taken from the Yoruba-Dahomey, Igbo, and other tribes. Other sources indicate that the actual number reaching the shores of North and South America was in the 3.5 million range.

By 1560, Brazil had a population of about 30,000 Whites, 30,000 enslaved Africans, and 70,000 enslaved South American Indians. Compared to the North American population (about 40,000 free Europeans, 8,000-10,000 enslaved Europeans, and about a thousand enslaved Africans), the African portion of the population in Brazil was huge. This led Portugal in 1605 to declare Brazil "a negro country."

By 1817 (the first year we actually have accurate figures for South America), Brazil had a population of 3,817,000. Of these, about 1,000,000 were of European extraction. The rest were either Black, "Indian," or of mixed descent.

The great numbers of Africans in South America and Cuban (along with cultural differences among the slave-owning societies) resulted in slaves being treated much differently from those in North America. There was greater tolerance and conditions under slavery were far superior to those in the North. Africans formed tribal groups to replace the ones that had been supplanted. The old gods were kept and worshipped, if not openly, at least with a wink and a nod.

The groups became known as "nations," and each nation corresponded to a tribe or tribal group from Africa. Each nation had its own set of gods, and traditional drum rhythms. Some of the gods (such as Oxossi) barely have left traces in modern Africa. Others (such as Ogum) are still widely known and worshipped. There were many nations: Male, Dahome, Yoruba, Congo, Igbo, Bumbu, and others whose names have probably been lost for all time.

South American slavery was a strange beast. In Brazil, laws were passed to guarantee that the slaves would not be overworked, and had to be fed and clothed. Manumission was a common practice. Married couples were not allowed to be broken up, and children had to stay with their parents. When, in 1880, slavery was finally outlawed in Brazil, the slaves were the only group to have a guaranteed day off once a week. They were guaranteed food, clothing, and shelter. These were things many of the non-enslaved population could not manage. Small wonder then that some of the most impassioned speakers against the abolition of slavery were the slaves themselves, who didn't want to have to endure the same seven day work week without enough money for bread that their unenslaved compatriots had to endure!

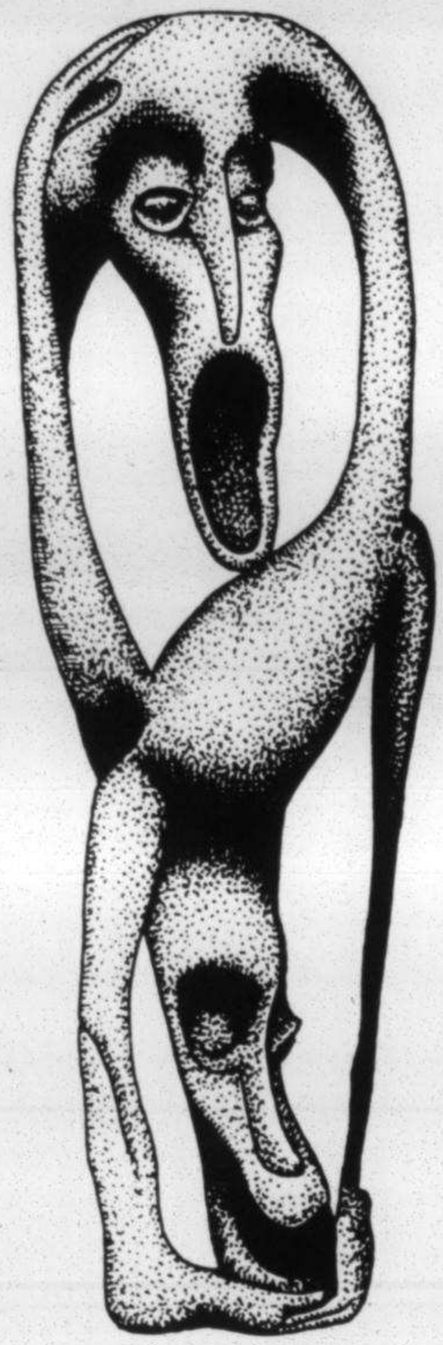
The Africans of Brazil kept their language, songs, and ceremonies. Religions such as Xango, Catimbo, Candomble, and Macumba blossomed. They were nourished, and kept their full ritual strength both by the Africans and Whites as well.

Zacharias Wagner, who lived in Dutch Brazil from 1634 to 1651, describes a ritual he attended:

When the slaves had worked for six days, they had to be given Sunday off. They would come together in their special places and dance all day to the sounds of their drums, drinking garapa as they danced until they could not recognize each other...

Of course, the reason that they could not recognize each other was because they had become possessed by their gods. The fact that many Portuguese also attended these is documented in many places. The earliest reference seems to be Gregorio de Mattos in the early 1600's, who wrote:

All these quilombos with their masters, teaching calundas and fetishism by night. Thousands of women attend them, as many Portuguese who each think themselves the new Narcissus. These dances must be the devil's work, since only he can



produce such ecstasy.

De Mattos sounds more like a participant than an observer.

There are many more references to White participation in African rituals. De Mattos writes of having attended "many dances, where the bearded faces outnumber the black ones by five to one." The tradition has continued down to the present time, with Umbanda, Candomble, and Santeria being the leading representatives of the custom.

Conditions in Cuba and the Mediterranean were much the same as in South America. Haiti and New Orleans (much under French influence in both cases) took the name of the priest (vodun) and applied it to the new religion (now called Voodoo). In Cuba, much like the Quakers who came later, the slaves created a society of friends—Lukumi (Yoruba for "this is my friend"). This became what is now known as Santeria.

Starting about 1830, and continuing until the 1950s, the African religions in Brazil were suppressed by the government. In some areas, the suppression was rigid and enforced. In others, not even the Catholic church could manage to keep their priests from attending African ceremonies. The suppression was far more rigid and vicious in the cities, where the Church held more power.

Even at its worst, the suppression in Brazil was light compared to that of North America, where there were not enough slaves to form nations. Instead, the Europeans there ruthlessly removed any trace of African culture from their slaves. African languages were forbidden to them. They could not own drums or property. African style marriages were declared null and void (mostly by the churches of the time). African ceremonies were forbidden. Children were routinely sold as soon as they could work. Only in Louisiana, which was solidly under French control, did the African presence have a chance to blossom.

Wherever the Africans practiced, they did it either in secret or under the watchful eye of the Catholic church. In order to appease the local churches, Africans frequently adopted the iconography of the local church, often Catholic. Elegua, who was often a whimsical child in Africa, became the child of Atocha. Xango, who had a legend concerning how he dressed in women's clothes, but was still a warrior, became Santa Barbara. Yemaya, a sea goddess whose main colors were blue, became an image of Mary also dressed in blue, standing on a crescent moon. This process was called syncreticism.

Syncreticism changed the face of most African religions. Catholic and Christian icons became more and more popular. Saints names took the place of the old African names. In some areas, such as "high" Umbanda houses, even the icons have given way to a simple glass of water, accompanied in Elegua's case by a cigar.

Many of the old gods became associated with different saints, depending upon what part of the new world they were transported to. Exu/Legba was often associated with the Devil, or Christ (!). In Recife, he was associated with St. Bartholomew. In Porto Alegre, he was associated with St. Peter, who was also a gate keeper. In Cuba, he was associated with St. Anthony.

Yemaya in Bahia was associated with Our Lady of Candelmas. In Recife, she became Our Lady of Sorrows. In Cuba, she was associated with La Virgen de la Regla. In Porto Alegre she was Our Lady of the Navigators.

Although each of the areas combined Yemaya with a different iconography, she remained most immutably Yemaya. She was still worshipped under her own name, with songs often remembered from Africa and still in use.

In Umbanda (a Brazilian offshoot of Candomble), syncreticism was carried even farther. The gods are organized along various "lines," each with a leader. An African line consists of mostly Yoruba-Dahomey gods, while a Loa line mimics closely the Lwa of the Voodoo pantheon, of mostly Fon derivation. Many houses also have Chinese, Oriental, Norse, Buddhist, and Wiccan derivations.

The pantheons may be diverse, but the style remains undeniably African. Private ceremonies take many different forms, but the public ones, whether Santeria, Voodoo, or Umbanda, tend to center around the actual incorporation of one or more gods into a human body. This process is often called possession. It enables the followers of the several gods to speak to them directly, without an intercessor in terms of a priest or priestess.

In the New World, the contribution of Africa to the religion is sporadic with no single source. Instead, a large number of influences are pitched together and mixed well. In Catimbo, an admixture of local Indian legends produced something unique. In most of the Orixa-based religions, only one or a few Orixa can mount a medium during a ceremony. In Catimbo, often many hundreds do this, staying sometimes for mere seconds before giving way to the next.

At the other end of the spectrum, Santeria ceremonies often get one (or none) of the Orixa to mount a medium. In an Umbanda bembe, it would be considered a very bad sign if no Orixa were to mount a medium, but Santeria considers this to be normal.

In either case, when the Orixa mounts the medium, favors are dispensed and problems solved. Absolution is given for past sins, and penance is exacted if necessary.

This scenario is what enabled the early Africans to adopt a veneer of Christianity. They saw the Christian god come into the

body of Christ, dispense favors, solve problems, give absolution, and exact a penance when needed.

Much like the assembly of saints, the African gods formed a linked family, each having its own relationship with the others, yet each also have some distinct personality.

Exactly how mediums are chosen also varies widely. In Santeria, a long and costly training is required before the initiate is allowed to host an Orixa. Until the training is completed, often at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars, no trance is allowed. In contrast, Umbanda demands that the Orixa choose their mediums before any training is given. Most mediums may not start training until they are possessed first.

In Candomble, the Orixa is enticed in with song and dance, the medium often offering up their own songs and dances in the process. The catimozeiro needs neither song nor dance, although each Orixa and spirit announces an arrival with a snatch of song or dance.

In many of the secret societies in Africa, psychotropics are used in the ceremonies to enhance the spiritual visions of the mediums. Likewise, the use of Jurema and Yage is important to many of the new world rituals.

Even the names of many of the African gods are recognizable in the new world. After some 400 years, this in itself is testimony to the strength of their personality. Elegba/Elegua/Legba has the same place in nearly all the Orixa religions. He is always sacrificed to before all ceremonies, no matter what their specific religion. Ogun is a blacksmith and military presence in both the Yoruba and Fon based houses.

Around Maranhao, many of the old gods have been strong since the 1600's. Nago, Nupe, Tapa, Yoruba, Surrupira, as well as the cult of the dead still survive here. Elegua, Orun, Xango, Yemonja, Shapani, Osain, Abaluaie are from the Yoruba. From the Fon: Lisa, Loko, Verekete, Subo, Dosu, Nanamburucu, and Bade.

In Sao Luiz, the Orixa became go-betweens for reaching the saints, since for the first few hundred years the Catholic church kept Africans out of the church on the grounds that they had no souls and so, could not be saved.

Syncreticism has had a rather odd fallout. Because so many of the matches were *ad hoc*, they tended to fall into and out of favor. During the 1920s, when Xango was strongly identified with Santa Barbara because both protect people from lightning, St. Jerome who aids her, was associated with Oxum because Oxum was Xango's wife. The fact that the sexes were inverted in both cases made little difference.

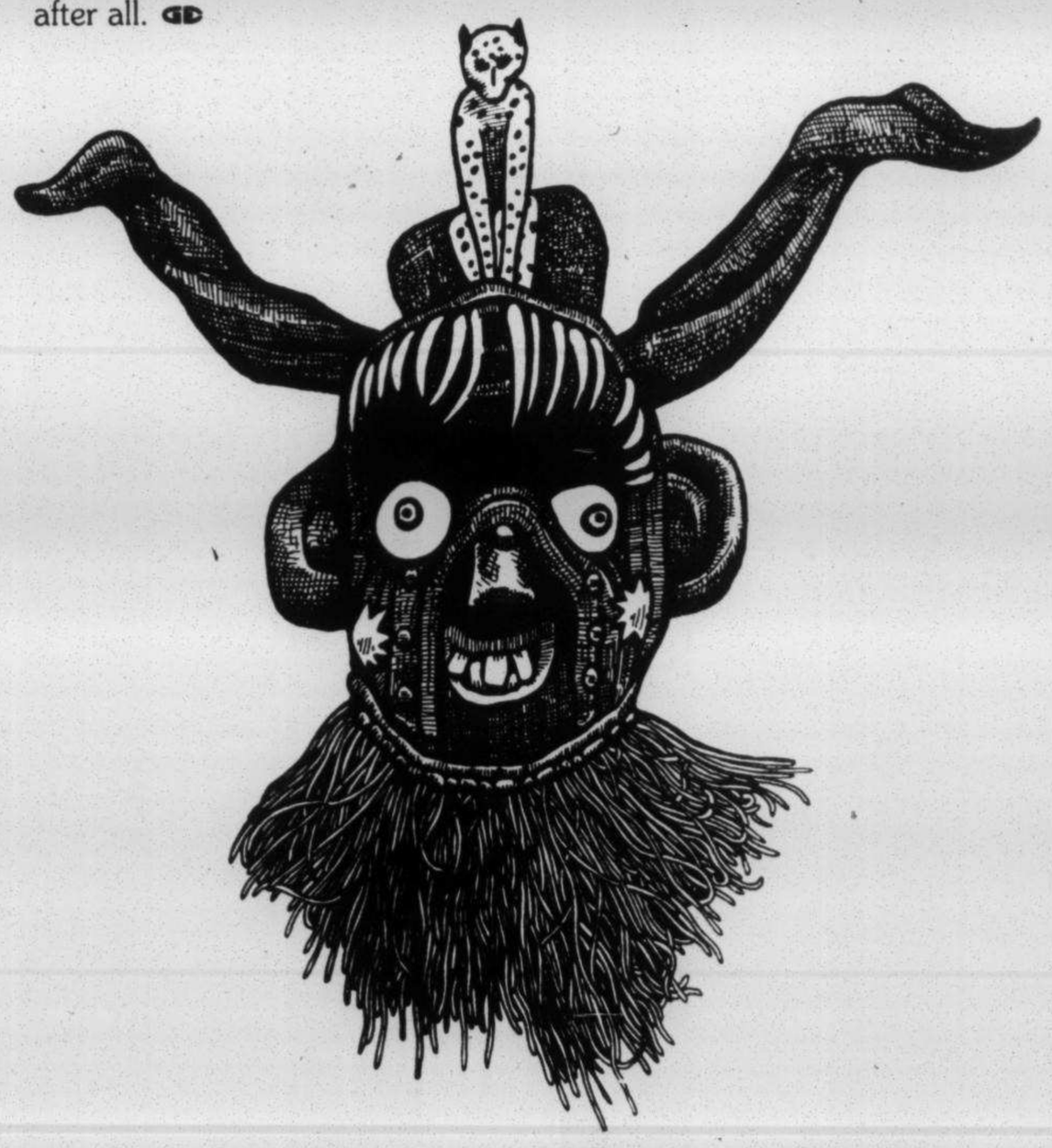
This variance in form has evolved from the original African stock, in which there was not one form of Exu, but twenty-one. There was not one form of Xango, but twelve; and sixteen different forms of Oxum. These various forms (called paths) may be applied to different syncretic variants in different areas. To say that there is only a single form of Exu is to deny all the rest.

The regional nature of these religions cannot be too strongly stressed. In Africa, a city belonged to a single deity. Those who lived in that city worshipped that Orixa. In the New World, each house of Orixa is an independent entity. In some Orixa religions (such as Santeria) there is more uniformity than in others. Even among Santeria houses, there are differences of opinion. In many other religions, such as Umbanda, the differences are more pronounced. Umbanda has only three real threads tying all of the houses together. First, no money is ever charged to enter a ritual. Any house which forces people to pay a fee to enter a ritual is not an Umbanda house. The motto of Umbanda is "Faith and Charity." Second, Umbanda is unique in that no animal sacrifices are performed. Third, the heads of initiates are not shaved. Umbanda has probably moved farthest away from the African model, while Santeria has followed it rather closely.

When the Africans came to the new world, they were often without their priesthood. Old gods who had no priests were merged. Bastide, in "The African Religions of Brazil" (p 277) talks about Nago Exu, Bantu Bombomgira, and Fon Elegua. They were not the same, but they served the same function. In Brazil, Exu/Elegua is solidly fused into a single entity, with Bomba Gira as his wife and consort.

From the early 1500's to the present day, African religions in the New World have been a growing, evolving force. The notoriety of the last few years is more of a sudden flare than anything permanent. However, the African deities have been worshipped continuously for many years. They have altered both in name and iconography, yet somehow remain the same. They have been worshipped by people of all races *at least* since the 1500's, and perhaps earlier.

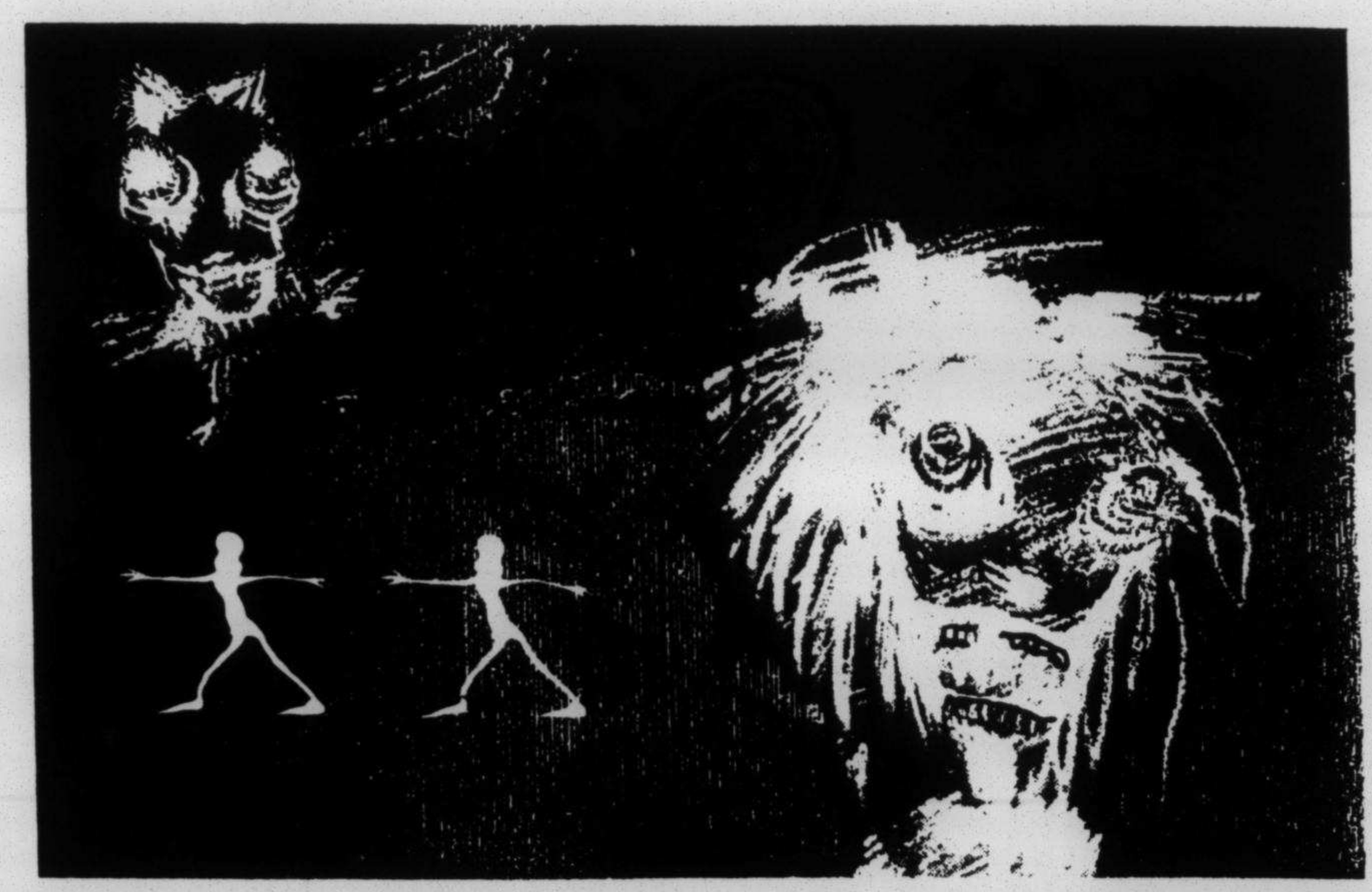
Now, finally, the gods of Africa are coming into the light. Aside from being able to talk to you face to face, they aren't that different after all. GE



Divine

by **Julian Vayne**

Evokation, Invokation and Possession in Modern Magick



Drawing the spirits of the unseen realms into direct contact with humanity is one of the most enduring features of magickal practice. Whether today we are happy to see these forces as 'real' external, conscious entities, archetypal forces or emergent properties of the whole universe is immaterial. The experience of summoning the 'spirits of the vastly deep' can certainly be one of the most profound that a magickian can have. Although the terms are somewhat interchangeable this 'calling' can happen in at least three main ways.

The first is evokation. This is the process whereby a spirit or being is called to be present in the temple in order that the magickian may utilize the being's power or instruct it to do his Will. (I'm deliberately using straightforward, perhaps arcane language here rather than dwelling on the many facets of this process which I'm sure the seasoned magickian will be aware of.) One might evoke a demon from the Goetia, an Enochian Senior. One might evoke a being which has been directly created by the magickian such as a thoughtform or 'imaginary' entity. One might also invoke a whole group or abstract collection of beings—the 'spirits of the fiery south' or 'the ancestors.'

The second process, invokation, is a far more personal one. Usually one force, generally a god or goddess is invoked. The process of invokation, is classically, the process of ritual identification with the deity or force in question. Crowley in his invokation to Thoth shows how the magickian begins by declaring all the attributes of Thoth; wise one, god of magick and writing, lord of the crescent moon, etc. Then the magickian identifies herself as the true devotee of the god, calling herself 'true worshipper', 'priest of his word' etc. Finally, as the ritual climax approaches, the identification with Thoth is made: 'I am the great god Thoth', 'I have given form to the word,' 'I have the knowledge of all things in heaven and earth' etc.

Possession is the third process and the one most outside of the scope of the western magickal tradition. Shamanic practices and some magico-religious systems (such as Voudou) maintain a vigorous tradition of possession. To generalize, in the possessed state the individual loses all sense of consciousness and is absorbed utterly into the force which is 'riding' her (to use

Riders

the Voudoun term).

These three ways of interacting with the underlying forces in the universe (called 'unseen forces' because they are everywhere and therefore often overlooked) are part of a spectrum. When one evokes the forces of Air at the Eastern Watchtower, the forces are drawn into the temple to permeate the atmosphere and the being of the magickians. In this respect, it partakes somewhat of invokation also. Equally, a long ritual to assume the godform of Odin might well mean the loss of consciousness at some stage. As such an invokation of this type shades off into the field of possession. When we consider possession we might think of the business in terms of trance. Trance is often used to mean a catabolic, relaxed and semi-conscious state, whereas in fact, trance is a far more general term. One can be in a deep trance while climbing or playing the piano. In the same way, the more extreme forms of possession, as witnessed by terrified whites in the Voudou Peristyle, are only one aspect of the system. Yet within the Western occult tradition the full loss of one's 'faculties of reason' has not been a process much encouraged. The emphasis has been more on use, control and subjugation of the unseen forces. Giving oneself up to these powers is, in the West, a relatively new idea.

The Tantric translations of Arthur Avalon and the more esoteric speculations of the Golden Dawn began to mean that the notion of dissolving the self in ecstatic union with the divine became more and more accepted. Investigations into the practices of ecstatic Classical Pagan cults, such as those of Dionysis and Artemis, revealed a tradition of possession. The influence of Buddhism and Hindu thought further suggested that 'giving up' was an important part of the soul's quest for enlightenment. Finally, Crowley says much the same thing when he tells the adept to give every last drop of their blood into the chalice of Our Lady Babalon, for to dive into the principle of the eternal woman-whore-goddess is the only way to cross the abyss.

Today, despite (or perhaps because of) the current vogue of shamanism, the process of possession has still not become an incorporated feature of modern magickulture. I suspect the reason for this is that the techniques involved are ones fraught with practical and psychological difficulties. Possession, as arguably one of the highest states of union with the forces of the cosmos, requires its fuel to come from the most basic level. Drumming, chanting, psychoactives, sex, dance—these are the primary ways to possession. Possession is a dangerous process since it requires a total letting go of the ego and consciousness boundaries. One needs to know that intelligent, supportive people will be around you, since you are about to lose consciousness and be ridden by the divine.

Of course, one of the reasons that occultists are so wary of possessions is that spiritualists and channellers seem to be able to enter five states of profound possession before breakfast. There is a certain air that being possessed by a force smacks more of communicating with UFOs and dolphins than 'proper' magick. Despite this, in the UK there are groups who regularly use possession in their rituals, though much more in the USA—Charismatic Christians.

Charismatics and other such Christian groups regularly used dramatic, impassioned invokations (prayer), song, dance and rhythm in their rites. Their devotees speak in tongues, heal and the 'holy spirit' comes upon them, frequently blotting out consciousness and sending them into ecstatic states. Whatever one might think about the theology of these cults, their possession is quite real. So, too, are the powers which possession brings with it.

It would be wrong to say that being possessed gives the individual any new abilities. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons that it has been ignored by much Western occultism. Rather, possessed people are able to act like gods, both by conforming to the expectations of the group in terms of how the deities act and by displaying more-than-human powers, such as the ability to handle red hot irons, to hold the breath for upwards of ten minutes, to prophesy, to heal, etc.

What the possessed person experiences is secondary, perhaps, to the experience of those individuals who are in the company of the possessed person. Even so, the clear experience of physically breaching the veil between the worlds has many profound effects.

Modern magick needs to look more closely at possession. This ability to become 'drunk on god' is certainly implicit in the symbolism of western magick (Atu I–The Fool is the classic example). By allowing possession to become the preserve of the messianic Church and charlatanous channellers we are cutting off an historic and powerful aspect of magickal practice. Certainly in recent years there has been a re-emergence of possession style methods in Western magick. The technique of 'seething' which is being revived by Norse tradition inspired Pagans is a fine example. Here we have a system which uses the physical body as its tool and aims for dissolution of the individual sense of self as an aid to prophecy. I believe that magickians must engage in dialogue with practitioners who have paths of which possession is a vital part. It would be beneficial to consult Voudoun and South American priest/esses as well as those shamanic practitioners with a genuine background in this area.

The skills, methods, and symbolism of Western occultism are very powerful. Yet this total 'giving up' of consciousness to become submerged in 'the divine' is naturally one of the most difficult things for the repressed Westerner to do properly. We know the techniques intellectually and have all the resources necessary to draw upon. Let's stop acting out the roles of the gods and start really being them. GD

Heroic American Survivals of Traditional African Religions

Voodoo & Hoodoo:

by **Bruce Davis**

Voodoo is alive and well in the United States. Its survival is a remarkable example of adaptability in a religion. Despite the enslavement of Africans which uprooted them from their homeland and families, they succeeded in keeping the broad ideas of their religion intact and adapting it to the New World.

Voodoo as practiced in the United States has traditionally been characterized as a collection of superstitions and a system of magic that is used to hurt people. It is also insinuated that it is not a real religion. This is a misconception, but it is still believed by many people, even those of African-American descent. Close scrutiny of the religion shows that American Voodoo is a unique religion that has developed its own character while retaining many of the concepts present in traditional West African religions.

The survival of the African Diaspora religions through their flexibility and in spite of genocide has been discussed elsewhere. Syncreticism, or the process through which African symbols have been ascribed to Catholic deities has also been examined. *(See African Diaspora Religions on page 4)* As is the case of nearly all religions, Voodoo has changed due to the social pressures it came into contact with.

In North America, the West African religions brought by the slaves were influenced by the dominant religion of the US—Protestantism. This denomination of Christianity requires a sincere personal change to be converted, unlike Catholicism, which only requires the ritual of baptism to be considered a Catholic.

Due to the pressures of Protestantism, some specific roles that existed in West African religion changed. In Africa, there were three roles in the religion: the priest, who was primarily concerned with the religion itself, the medicine man (or woman), who essentially practiced positive magic and the sorcerer, who dealt with negative magic. Sometimes these roles overlapped one another. Under Protestantism, the influence of the priest declined as did the manifestation of the metaphysical side of the religion, and the remaining roles, medicine man and sorcerer (who could often be the same person) gained prominence.

While the US was primarily Protestant and English, Louisiana was an exception, being French and Catholic. Depending on where the slaves found themselves, they adapted their religion differently.

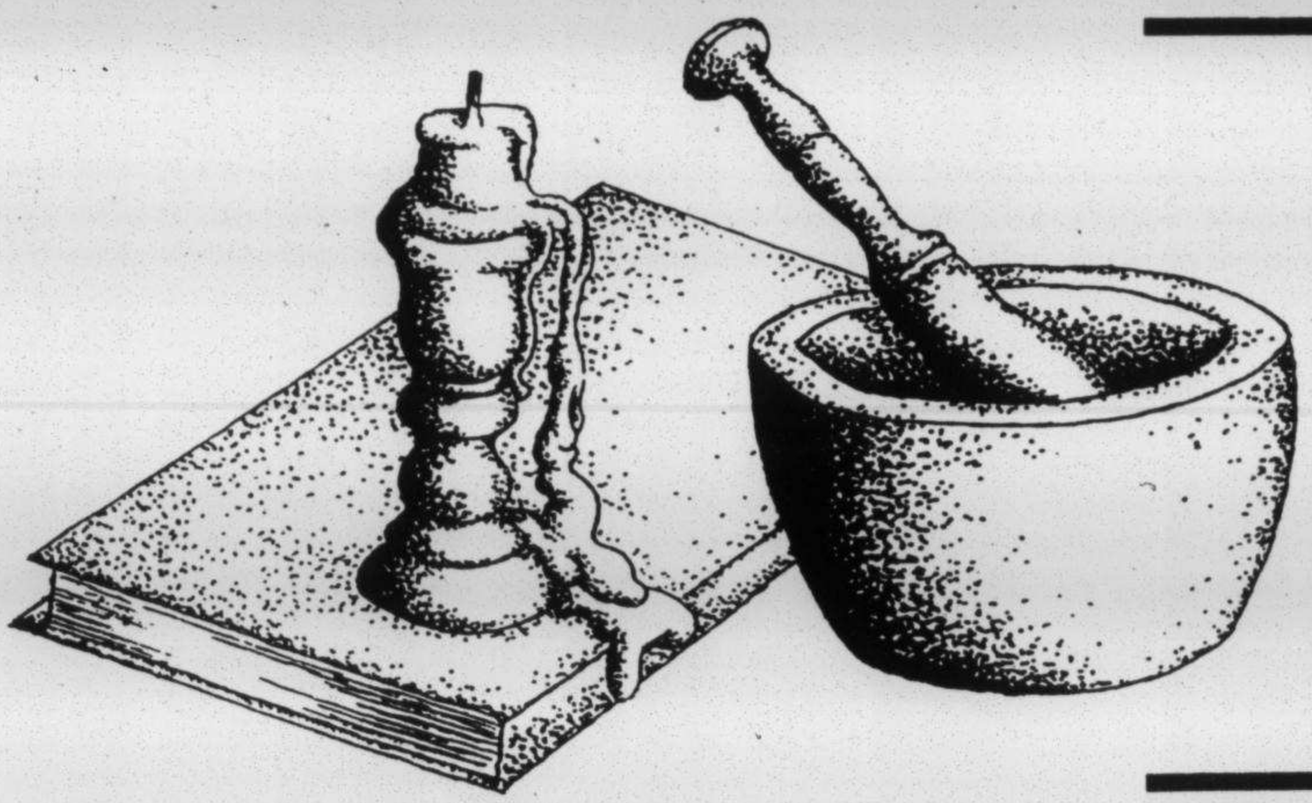
One place in the US where Voodoo has both magical and metaphysical aspects is the city of New Orleans. It is the acknowledged Voodoo capital of America. As in many of the other Southern states, Voodoo had already begun to be practiced there by the slaves after their arrival from Africa. The decisive factors in New Orleans were its early French and Catholic history and the fact that after the Haitian revolution of 1791 and declaration of independence in 1804, scores of French planters fled

the island and made their way to New Orleans. Their slaves brought their religion, called Voudoun, with them. It had more of a religious background to it. The practice in New Orleans was reinforced by the religious ideas brought by the slaves from Haiti.

Voodoo in New Orleans has preserved more of its philosophical content since its beginning. Elements of this syncreticized religion are similar to that of West African religions, even though they may have undergone some transformation. They include the hierarchy of deities that are worshipped, priests and priestesses (called kings or queens in New Orleans) of the religion, initiation rituals, ceremonies involving dancing and possession, the role of the practitioner, ancestor reverence and the magical system itself. Of course, the religion has changed over time since its beginning in various ways.

Voodoo has kept the structure and character of the deities that were worshipped in Africa. These deities are sometimes loosely referred to as gods, but are most accurately described as Spirits. The word Voodoo is actually a corruption of the Dahomean word "vodu", a term that refers to the Spirits or objects associated with them. In Africa, a distinction was made between the Creator God and the Spirits below it which receive their power from the Creator and represent different natural and human attributes. All of the Spirits are reflections of the positive or negative aspects of nature and humanity, and this reflects the belief that both are necessary and natural parts of life. The Spirits came into existence to help humankind, because the Creator God is so remote and incomprehensible to humans. In turn, humans worship them because there is a recognition that each needs the other. American Voodoo has kept this system, with the African Creator God identified with the Christian God and the Spirits are identified with the saints. A third group of spiritual beings who are recognized are the ancestors, who continue to play a role in Voodoo.

Voodoo in New Orleans before 1900 was dominated for the most part by Voodoo queens, although there were male priests who made contributions The names of several queens have come down to us, most notably Sanite Dede, Marie Saloppe and Marie Laveau (1794-1881). While not the first, Marie Laveau is probably the most



well-known Voodoo queen. She used a variety of methods to become the main queen of New Orleans, and she held that position for forty years.

After Marie Laveau stepped down as reigning queen, Voodoo no longer had a central authority in New Orleans. People started independent sects of the religion. Voodoo was still practiced, but the rituals and ceremonies became more private and hidden to the public. As a result, the magical aspect of Voodoo, called Hoodoo, became more well-known. Hoodoo is a part of Voodoo and any well-versed Voodoo queen or king has knowledge of it; but some practitioners emphasize the magical aspect over the religious aspect. Voodoo is still practiced in New Orleans, but Hoodoo is more visible to the public.

In order to be a Voodoo king or queen, or even a Hoodoo worker, one must undergo an initiation ritual which is a continuation of a tradition that is present in traditional West African religions. Zora Neale Hurston, an anthropologist and folklorist, underwent several different initiation rituals while studying under several Hoodoo practitioners in New Orleans. She described these initiations and other experiences in her book *Mules and Hen*. The initiations varied in individual details according to whom she was studying with, but they served the same function. Their purpose was to prepare the initiate for the specialized training to follow. A few similarities they had with initiations in West African religions are a period of seclusion for the candidate while being initiated, sexual abstinence, the donning of new clothes after the initiation, and learning about their new role.

Ceremonies involving possession and ritual dancing are central to American Voodoo. These ceremonies may be for a specific purpose or for special occasions, such as thanking Spirits for their help. Hurston described a ceremony where both possession and dancing were key elements. A specific dance to kill someone was performed before an altar with a statue of Death on it. Hurston, along with several other devotees and the main practitioner, took part in the dancing, and several people were possessed. Hurston recorded a case of possession which did not involve dancing.

She asked a Hoodoo doctor named Luke Turner how Marie Laveau did her work, and his reply was, "She go to her great altar and seek until she became the same as the Spirit, then she come out into the room where she listens to them that come to ask. When they finish, she answer them as a god." This quote describes a Spirit possessing Marie Laveau and giving advice to her clients.

Another interesting aspect of Voodoo ceremonies is that when particular Spirits are called upon, they are no longer called by their African names in some cases. Some vaguely defined Spirits mentioned in one initiation Hurston underwent were Great Moccasin, Kangaroo and Jenipee. The functions of the Great Moccasin were to "stir up the particular Spirit I may need for a specific task." This sounds similar to one of the functions of the Spirit Legba in the Dahomean pantheon in Africa, that of messenger of the Spirits. Without His help, man and the Spirits could not communicate with each other. The Great Moccasin could be another name for Legba.

Hoodoo can be used for good or evil. This is a retention of the African idea that good and evil are complementary and relative to one another. Voodoo and Hoodoo have long been stereotyped as only being used for evil but there are just as many examples and uses of Hoodoo for good purposes as there are for evil. The practitioner is ultimately responsible for what he or she does.

The use of sacrifices and offerings during these ceremonies is an important retention from West African religions. A sacrifice is defined as the killing of an animal to present it to the Spirits, while an offering is the presentation of foodstuffs or other suitable items. They

are integral parts of the religion and occur in different contexts. In Africa animals used for sacrifice include cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and dogs. In American Voodoo, the sacrificing of goats and chickens is very common. Zora Neale Hurston recorded the sacrifice of sheep and chickens in two different rituals in New Orleans and the sacrifice of black chickens and goats is mentioned in the St. John's Eve ceremony conducted by Marie Laveau, along with the hanging of offerings of sugar cane and syrup in trees for the Spirits. Items used as offerings in Africa include such items as various types of food, milk, water, beer, wine and items such as money, incense and tobacco. This practice continues in Voodoo and some of the most common offerings are rum, cigars, coins, foodstuffs and flowers.

Voodoo is a distinct American religion that has persisted despite the prejudiced motives of writers, scholars and uninformed people in general. Rather than being a hodge-podge of religion and superstition, of Catholicism and primitivism, it is actually a well-considered religious system with ideas behind it that are not obvious to the casual observer. Voodoo has retained the basic ideas of the West African religions it originated from, while freely adapting to suit the needs of the people who practiced and continue to practice it. This colorful religion is a living tradition and a testament to those who brought its principles from Africa in their hearts and refused to be spiritually dominated.

The role of the Voodoo king, queen or practitioner not only includes keeping the metaphysical side of the religion alive, but also serving as an intermediary between a devotee and the Spirits, who are in turn intermediaries to the Supreme Creator. This system of intermediaries is a survival of West African religious customs. In some African religions, one can approach the Spirits only with the help of intermediaries, usually the priests, priestesses, medicine men or diviners. In the Yoruba religion in West Africa, the pattern goes like this: if a devotee has a problem, he or she goes to a special priest called a babalawo, who is a specialist at divination. The babalawo finds out what the devotee should do about the problem, which may include making a sacrifice or an offering to a certain Spirit at their shrine. This requires a priest or priestess of that shrine to guide the devotee in making the offering or sacrifice.

Other West African religions have a similar pattern. This pattern has its parallel in America when a practitioner may be approached by a client, who may or may not be a believer in Voodoo. Since the roles of diviner priest and medicine man have been assimilated into one person in Voodoo, the practitioner performs some type of divination to find out what is wrong and how to remedy the situation. The remedy incorporates the practitioner's skills in Hoodoo. If a client goes to a practitioner and wants to improve his or her love life, for example, the practitioner may do some ritual work after a reading is done on the situation. He or she will also advise the client to do certain things at home while the work is being done to keep up the influence of the ritual work.

The idea of ancestor reverence found in West African religions is continued in Voodoo. Ancestors are another group of intermediaries, along with the practitioner or the Voodoo Spirits who may be called upon to help with problems. They are respected, revered, and are thought of as being between the world of man and the Spirits. Forms of acknowledgment may consist of certain ceremonies or certain parts of ceremonies dedicated to honoring the ancestors. For example, the annual St. John's Eve ritual held by Marie Laveau dedicated a section to the Ancestors, which consisted of dancing with human skulls and baby coffins. On a smaller scale, which is suited to individual practitioners, offerings to the Ancestors may be left on a homemade altar. These are simply two examples, and by no means are they the only ways to show respect to departed Ancestors.

In the Yoruba religion, there are two types of Ancestors: family ancestors and deified ancestors. Family ancestors are honored by the family group only, while the deified ancestors may be honored by an entire area or community because of some special quality. This concept is present in Voodoo. A specific example of a deified ancestor is that of Rose Yaffa Frank, who was a Voodoo priestess in New Orleans. She has an ancestor shrine dedicated to her at the New Orleans Voodoo Museum.

The magical system used in Voodoo is part of the religious worldview and a way for humans to ask for the help of the Spirits in a definite and concrete manner. As stated before, this magical system is called Hoodoo, and it is widely practiced in the South. The terms Voodoo and Hoodoo have become confused and gradually became synonymous with each other in those areas outside New Orleans where it was practiced.

What most people think of as Voodoo is actually Hoodoo. It has proven itself to be just as flexible as its religious counterpart. For example, it can be practiced with or without a religious context, because what is important is the faith of the person practicing it. It is generally less structured than Voodoo and has no set ritual methods. There are certain broad outlines, but the individual decides on the details when performing a ritual. Of course, this magical system has changed since being brought to the US, but one basic idea remains: use whatever works. For example the medicine men and sorcerers in Africa had access to African herbs and probably had their own ways to perform their rituals. When they were forcibly brought to the US, they still had that knowledge, but were cut off from familiar surroundings and materials to use. So they used what they could find, instead. This trend in Hoodoo has continued and accounts for the many variations between practitioners. Everyone has a different way of doing things, and they all work.

Certain non-African elements were integrated into Hoodoo as it came into contact with Catholicism. Marie Laveau is popularly credited with integrating statues of Catholic saints, holy water, incense and candles into Voodoo but it is far more likely that the trend started before she began to practice Voodoo and she merely continued it. Candles, incense, oils, washes (special herbal preparations poured over a person), talismans, powders, herbs, and perfumes are all used to perform spells. In New Orleans there are stores called botanicas that sell these items. Originally, a botanica meant a store that sold Santeria paraphernalia, but it is equally applicable to Hoodoo supply stores. Animal sacrifice is still a part of Voodoo, but candles, incense and oils have been adopted as another way to make magic. GE

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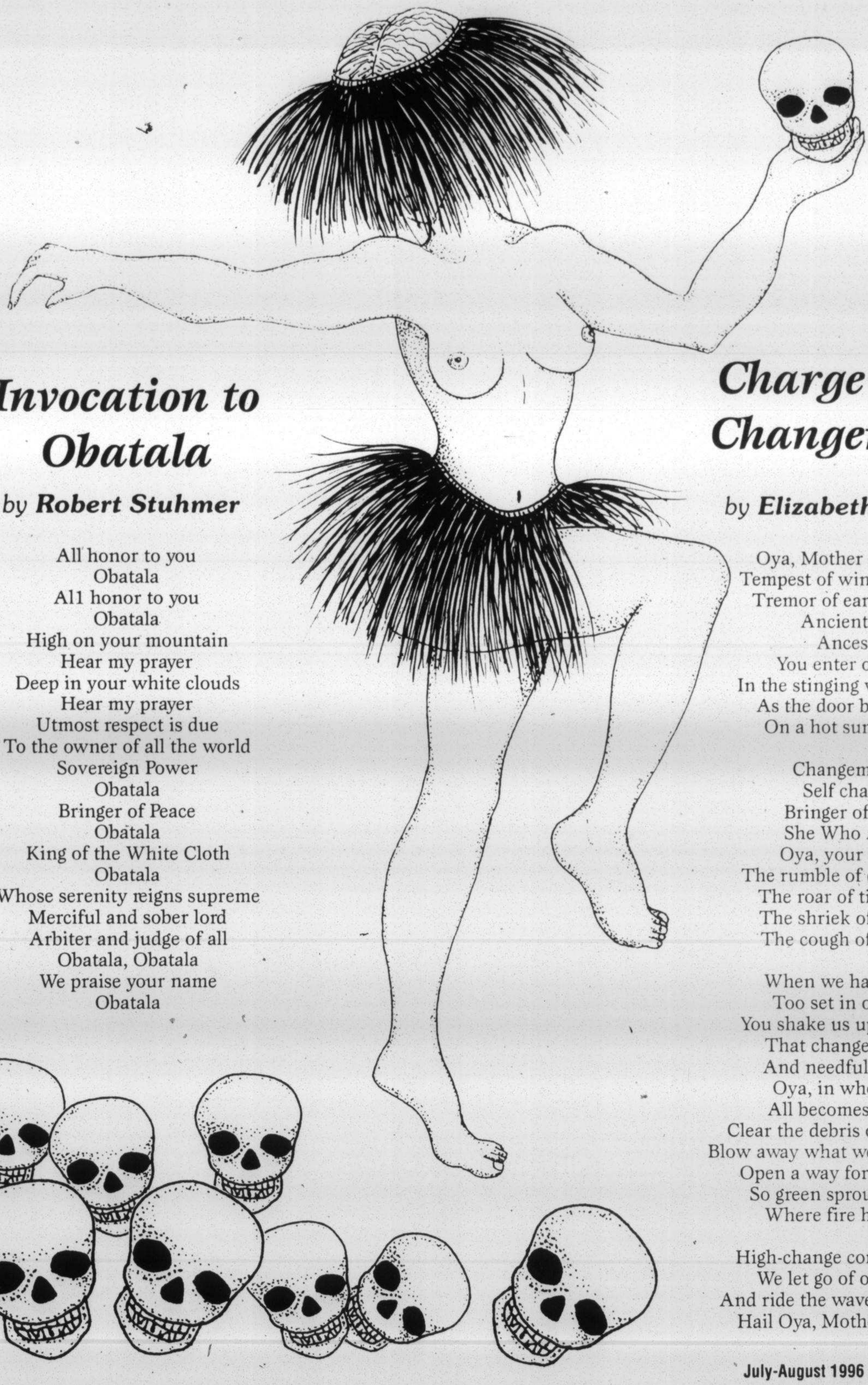


Invocation to Obatala

by **Robert Stuhmer**

All honor to you
Obatala
All honor to you
Obatala
High on your mountain
Hear my prayer
Deep in your white clouds
Hear my prayer
Utmost respect is due
To the owner of all the world
Sovereign Power
Obatala
Bringer of Peace
Obatala
King of the White Cloth
Obatala
Whose serenity reigns supreme
Merciful and sober lord
Arbiter and judge of all
Obatala, Obatala
We praise your name
Obatala

Charge of the Changemaker

by **Elizabeth Barrette**

Oya, Mother of Storms,
Tempest of wind and water
Tremor of earth and fire
Ancient One
Ancestor
You enter our lives
In the stinging whirl of dust
As the door bangs open
On a hot summer day

Changemother
Self changer
Bringer of Chaos
She Who Adapts
Oya, your voice is
The rumble of earthquakes
The roar of tidal waves
The shriek of tornados
The cough of volcanos

When we have grown
Too set in our ways
You shake us up, remind us
That change is sacred
And needful as breath
Oya, in whose arms
All becomes possible,
Clear the debris of our baggage
Blow away what we no longer need
Open a way for new growth
So green sprouts may rise
Where fire has passed

High-change comes courting:
We let go of old anchors
And ride the wave into morning.
Hail Oya, Mother of Storms!

In Defense of Santeria As A Wiccan Path

or

We Do Chicken Rite!

by ***Jeannine Masiello-Stuhmer***

My husband and I are Witches and Pagans. Witchcraft is generally considered to be somewhat of a subgroup of the broader Pagan world, but I make the distinction because, although we are Witches, our practices encompass a wide range of expression, not necessarily typical of Witchcraft alone. One of the influences which we incorporate into our working is a tradition originating in the Yoruba region of Africa, commonly known in this country as Santeria.

Our home is filled with working altars and shrines to deities of many cultures around which the web of our days is often woven. Pagan visitors are always struck by their beauty and variety. However, once it is realized that some of this sacred space is devoted to the gods of Santeria, the reaction is often less than enthusiastic, with many responses ranging from slightly uncomfortable to downright insulting.

Let me say at this point that neither my husband nor I are novices to the Craft. Nor are any of the members of our respective covens. The majority of Pagans of our acquaintance are intelligent and open-minded people. They can usually see the beauty in diversity and know that although some ideas or practices may not appeal to them, they may still contain some merit. Yet among these relatively wise and enlightened individuals occasionally surfaces an underlying current of dogmatic self-righteousness rarely seen outside the realm of the most fundamental of monotheists.

Of course, the word which evokes such an outpouring of indignation is *Santeria*. The practice of Santeria certainly may seem somewhat alien, even to Pagans well-versed in a variety of traditions. The extremely specific (and often secretive) methods of working with the Orishas seem to overly complicate the relationship between ourselves and our gods. Each Orisha has a day of the week, a day of the year, a number, specific colors and a precise list of foods, flowers and incenses which are appropriate offerings for that particular deity. Often, the use of anything else in worship is a positive insult. This type of imposed order tends to go somewhat against the grain, especially to those of us who like a bit of anarchy in our religion. Added to this is the use of Christian imagery and a veneer of Catholicism which, although adopted by slaves out of necessity and easily ignored or discarded, might certainly make many Pagans uncomfortable. These are very valid and understandable obstacles to including Santeria in one's Pagan working. But rather, it seems that the Pagans that are most zealously outspoken against Santeria are almost always ignorant of the actual origins and practices of Santeria. The first, and often only thing which this word brings to their minds is *Animal Sacrifice*.

Their imaginations seem to run screaming to pictures of poor chickens, dragged to a tortured death to appease some vicious and humorless primitive god, and the blood-bespattered practitioners thereof who either don't know any better or are charlatans of a sort who will, at the drop of a hat (or a substantial sum of cash), kill some livestock to lend credence to a spell which really couldn't possibly work anyway. Now all this may sound like a born-again preacher's perception of Pagans generally; however, to a surprising number of modern day Pagans, Santeria seems just that.

The very first thing they bring up is the cruelty of animal sacrifice and the inherent bloodthirstiness of a set of gods that would require such. When in response we mention the ancient sacrificial offerings to our more commonly worshipped Celtic or Greek deities and ask whether or not they, too, must be bloodthirsty by association, the answer, all too often is "Oh, but that's different." The overall attitude seems to me to run perilously close to the idea that Life equals Good, and Death equals Evil, despite lip service given to the more common "Death as a part of Life" motifs which run all through Pagan experi-

ence and ritual.

Moreover, these individuals generally aren't vegetarian and are seemingly unaware of the truly horrifying conditions which constitute the lives of the creatures that they buy, neatly cut up and packaged, in their supermarkets as though the Kentucky fried drumstick they casually munch was somehow created harmlessly in some sterile, bloodless laboratory. They seem to feel as though hiring a butcher as hitman will keep the blood off their hands (and their karma). However, if we eat meat, wear leather sandals, etc. we are certainly responsible, at least in part, for the deaths of the many animals which we've consumed in our lives.

A sacrificial animal, in contrast to the 'store-bought' kind, usually lives a life which is healthy and normal for its species, dies with honor and dignity, and its meat is not wasted—it is usually eaten with a real sense of thanksgiving and full awareness of its origin. The priest or priestess who performs such a sacrifice does not do so casually, but with compassion and an understanding of his or her own mortality.

In our lives, the practice of Santeria is but one facet of our Pagan ways. As such, we don't perform (or have performed for us) animal sacrifices. We don't find it necessary to our religious expression, and I suspect that we simply wouldn't have the stomach for it. We do, however, view those to whom this is an important part of their spiritual path as worthy of respect—or at the very least, not necessarily worthy of disrespect.

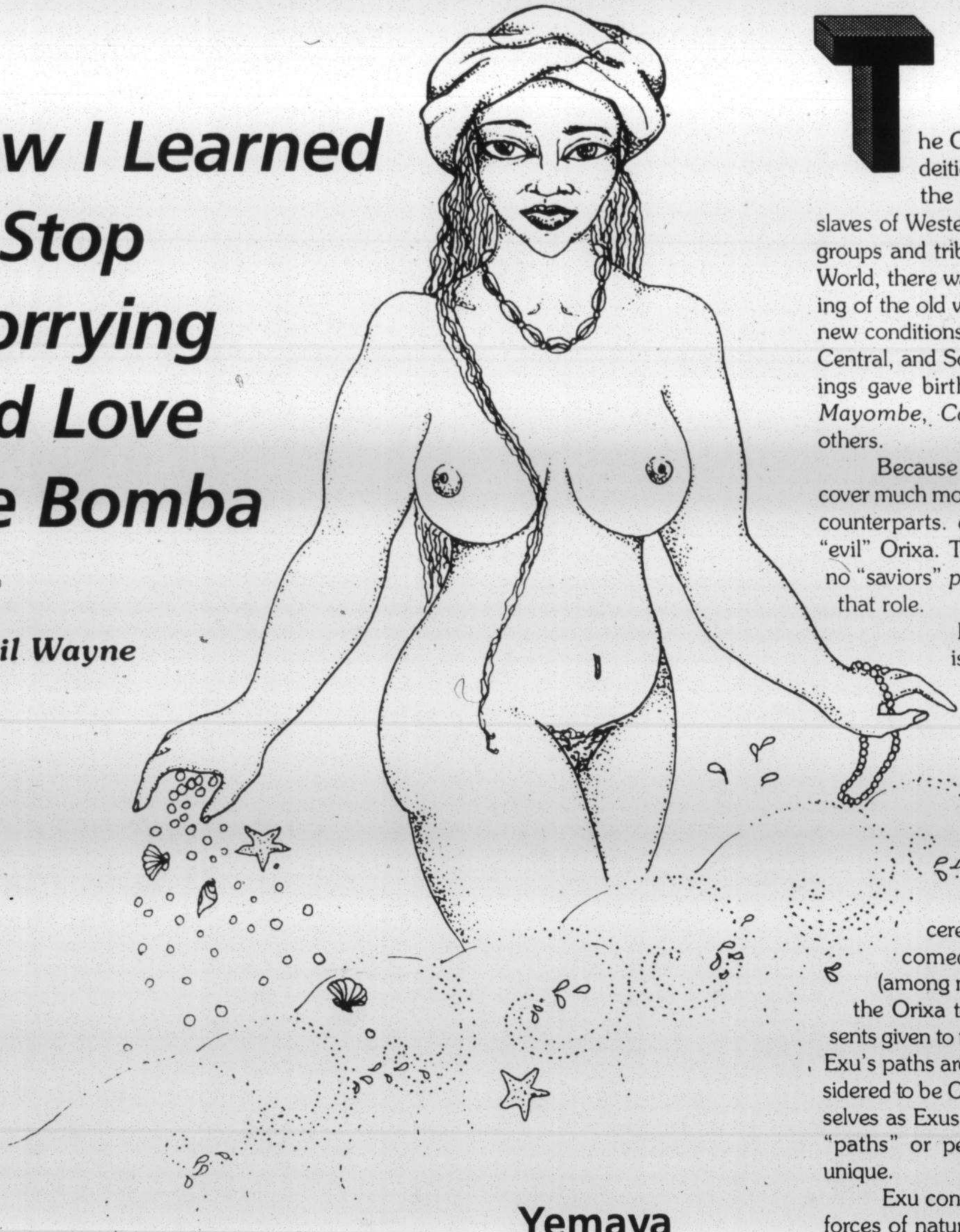
Another interesting perception which we occasionally come across, is that this religion is not a part of our cultural background and is appropriate only to people of African descent. This view is not as prevalent or as popular with most Pagans due to its inherent silliness—after all, as Pagans we have begged, borrowed and stolen ritual, mythology and esthetics from every culture that sat still long enough to leave a legacy. If we were all limited to our own cultural heritage, Paganism would at the very least lack the vitality which is one of its hallmarks. I, for one, am not really drawn to the Italian concept of the Strega which this sort of argument would limit me to (although, I suppose I could go further back to the Romans). In reality, we all work with the myths and metaphors to which we are drawn regardless of our country of family origin. This is appropriate. We must be interested enough in a chosen path to learn whatever we can about it, and inspired enough by it to create rituals which work for us within it. At different times in our lives, different Gods call us to come to know them and their ways. Life is constantly changing and the Pagan religions have a unique potential to reflect this.

The rich African traditions are some of the rare, living, Pagan religions of archaic origin still in existence on this Earth. Because of this and their (to European eyes) exotic nature, they appear more powerful and more immediate than many of those energies which we are used to dealing with. In our practice we have found this to be true in many ways. Thus, although this can be difficult, it is crucial to learn as much as possible about these powers before jumping in and playing with them. If this is done without fear and prejudice, incorporating African traditions into our Craft can be an exciting and rewarding experience. GE

A Brief Introduction to the ORIXA and Their Fellow Travelers,

Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomba

by **Phil Wayne**



Yemaya

The Orixa are a group of African deities which were transported to the New World along with the slaves of Western Africa. When the multiple groups and tribes were brought to the New World, there was a great mixing and re-honing of the old ways, and they adapted to the new conditions with a vengeance. In North, Central, and South America the new groupings gave birth to *Xango*, *Santeria*, *Palo Mayombe*, *Candomble*, *Umbanda*, and others.

Because of the mixing, the Orixa often cover much more ground than their European counterparts. e.g., there are no "good" or "evil" Orixa. There are no "punishers" and no "saviors" *per se*. All are capable of filling that role.

In all of the Orixa religions, it is believed that one or more Orixa watches over each person, like a personal guardian angel or nagging great aunt. The Orixa are most attracted to the people who are like them in mannerism.

Exu (ay-shoo) is the first Orixa called in any ceremony where the Orixa are welcomed. He is the "door keeper" (among many other things), and allows the Orixa to come and go, and the presents given to the Orixa to be passed to them. Exu's paths are (surprisingly) not strictly considered to be Orixa, rather in a class by themselves as Exus. There are many hundreds of "paths" or personalities for Exu. Each is unique.

Exu controls the world by "ajogun," or forces of nature. These forces concern love, hate, life, death, gain, loss, mental peace and

also unrest, etc. Exu controls all of these, and if approached in a pleasing manner he can be kind and generous. Poor manners, or unkindnesses toward him or his children, can bring immediate retribution.

Exu likes highly spiced foods and pepper rum. He smokes cigars in great quantity, and is rarely seen without something in his mouth. He (and his children) are fond of brightly colored clothes and costuming. He loves sexuality and sensuality, and his children are often called hedonistic. He loves to talk, and will claim the limelight as often as he can. It is difficult for his children to be confined. Like Exu, his children love sex and love, and are rarely monogamous. Their lives are often roller coasters, with highs and lows which may occur within days. It is an Exu child who will get off of two years of unemployment and walk into a $100,000 a year job. Exu children, like Exu himself, have a highly developed sense of what getting even means, and it is tightly tied in with their sense of justice.

Exu loves wine, and song, and dance. While other Orixa may be moderate, not Exu. Exu, and his children, will take every opportunity as it is offered, immediately. He is extremely sexual. Every male statue of Exu will have either an erect phallus or a nail. Female Exu's will have large, sensuous hips and full breasts.

One of the lesser known Exu paths (outside of Brazil) is **Bomba Gira**. Bomba Gira is the sacred whore. She is Exu's wife, and works in his bar taking customers upstairs for their pleasure and her profit. Like other Exus, she can be kind or cruel depending on how she is approached.

With all of this, Exu's task is also that of messenger. Each of the Orixa has their own Exu, who carries messages and presents to other Orixa, and to the world of men as well.

Yemaya (whose name in Yoruba means mother of fishes) is the sea-mother. She loves children, and will raise those given to her by her daughter Oxum, who cares more for the sex than the inevitable result. Like many mothers, she can have a nasty temper, but tends to keep it in check even when it can be roused, which is only very, very rarely.

Yemaya and her children love the ocean, as well as any place where water can be found in motion. There are many pataki of her giving gifts by means of using a wave to place them at the feet of the recipient.

As she enjoys motherhood, her children are also important in the Orixa pantheon. Some say her sons were **Xango**, whose power is in lightening and thunder, and **Ogum**, who works metal and is one of the group called the "Warriors" with Exu and Oxossi. Her daughters are **Oya**, who lives in the market place and whose power is in the tornado, and **Oxum** who is concerned with sensual love and wealth.

Children of Yemaya often can easily see another person's point of view, as she can in her role as peace maker (what mother doesn't know *that* one?). No matter what the insult, she and her children forgive easily, and will do so many times.

Yemaya is concerned with money only in the sense that it provides for her family. She is more concerned with emotional fulfillment than food. Often, she (and her children) will end up as counselors to others, while not having their own problems listened to.

Ogum is a metal smith, and also one of the "Warriors." His fiery temper (for right or wrong) is legendary. One pataki tells of him coming on a group of men after a long and hot day. There were bottles of palm wine laying all over the ground, and the men were obviously feeling little pain. When Ogum asked for a drink, they laughed at him as if it were a joke. In a fury, Ogum drew his sword and beheaded all of them before he realized they were laughing because there was no wine left. They had finished it all. Like their father, the children of Ogum are quick to take offense. It is not that Ogum has no sense of right and wrong, but rather that his temper often blots out his sense of judgment.

Ogum is most often seen as the harsh warrior, taking women, wine, and war as a way of life. He is by nature (when it can be tamed) a ferociously hard worker, and will seldom stop working except when forced. For Ogum, his work is never done, and he must work until the end of time with his tasks.

Ogum is also the Orixa of iron. Iron is so important that in Nigeria people will swear an oath on a piece of iron—in courts of law! The nature of Ogum is so tied in with both hot vengeance and cool justice that they are inextricably tied into this single Orixa.

It is not that the children of Ogum (like Ogum himself) do not have pleasures. However, they prefer them quickly done and over with so they can get back to work—and the more intense, the better.

Ogum deals with metal objects of all kinds: surgeon's knives, railroad spikes, gold, silver, cars, trucks, and bridges. All have the watchful eye of Ogum.

Oxum is Ogum's sister, both of them children of Yemaya. Her joys in life are sensuality and sexuality. Her children will spend hours getting her clothes lined up and their "look" just right. She makes her decisions from her heart, even when logic dictates otherwise.

In relationships, Oxum doesn't want equality. She demands control. She does not want to be anything but number one. She is the female, the sexual, sensual lover that everyone wants. Her children (both male and female) are masters/mistresses of seduction and sensuality. In spite of all the femininity, there is also the *ikodi oxum*, which is a male kind of energy which still holds the same highly sensual, sexual power. For children of Oxum of either sex, a day spent in bed with a willing lover can be as good as any vacation.

With all her love of sexuality, children are not for her. She can't

Oxum

be fettered by their demands, and soon gives them to Yemaya to raise.

Given her sexuality, she needs to have a way to finance the life style to which she would like to become accustomed. Money is, for her and her children, not a goal so much as a tool to be used to make life honey-sweet and sensual as oil. The things in life like food shopping and car maintenance she will leave to others, who can be hired, while she spends all day in bed with her lovers.

The slightest misstep can ruin her mood. A noticed blemish in the mirror, or a suddenly noticed spot on clothing, can ruin a day (or several days) for her, and for those around her as well. If offended, she does not forgive easily. Her children are often the same way; unforgiving once they are insulted. Oxum's children often have the finest of finery, and the best of food and drink. Of course, a bit of rounded belly and heavy thigh will be noticed immediately, and promptly banished.

Because she is so intimately concerned with how people view her, her children will often ask advice about a proposed action from as many people as possible. When every one has been consulted, they will be ignored. However, they will feel as if they had been listened to. Because of this, Oxum's children often make great leaders, and can deal with interpersonal rivalries in small groups as well.

Oxum and her children can't be confined or held in small areas either physically or mentally. To do so would simply rob them of their vitality. Oxum's children need to be free to operate on their own, unchained by anyone or anything.

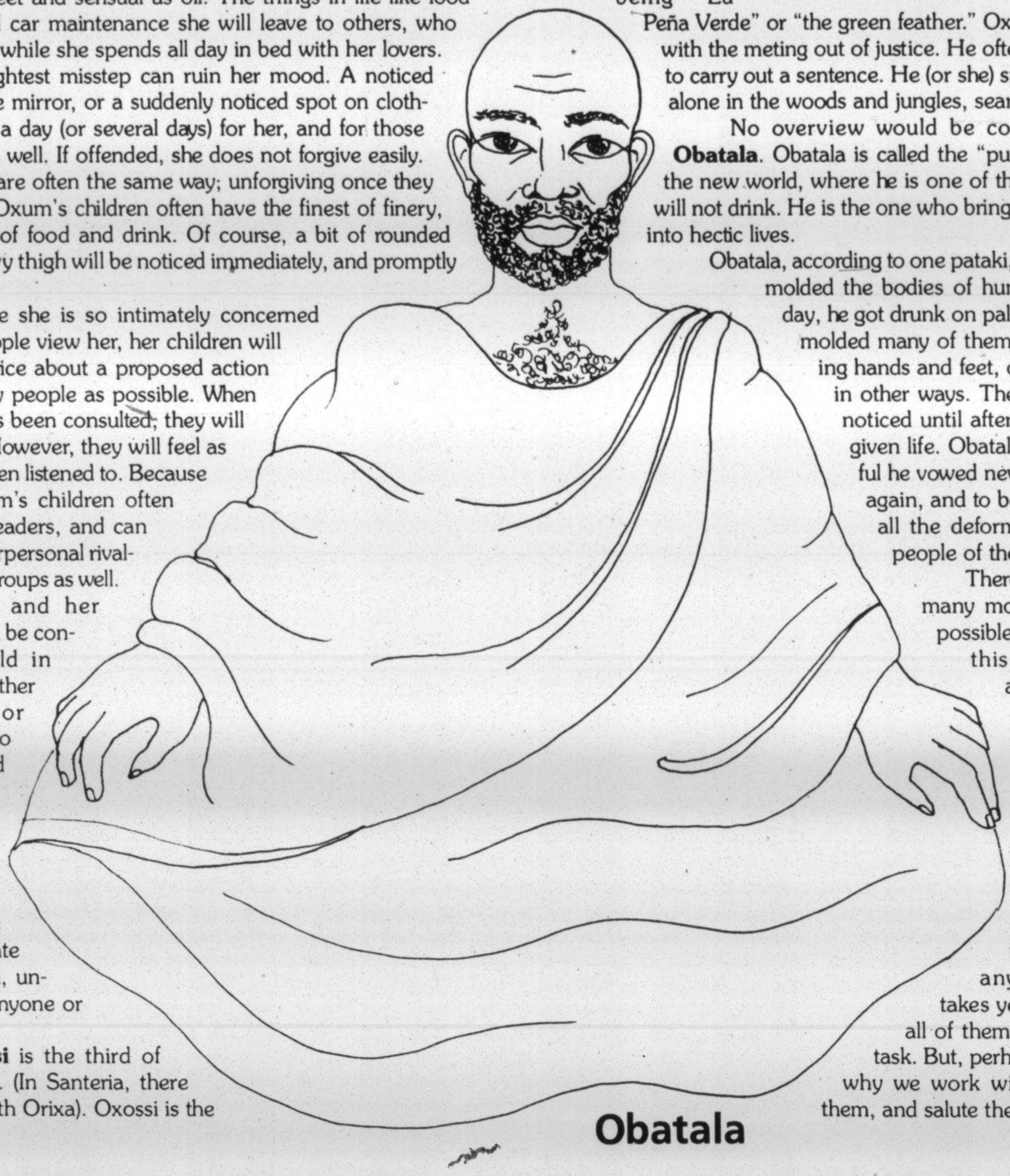
Oxossi is the third of the Warriors. (In Santeria, there is also a fourth Orixa). Oxossi is the most new world of the Orixas. He is Native American. Oxossi is also female, with the most well known path being "La Peña Verde" or "the green feather." Oxossi is concerned with the meting out of justice. He often is the one sent to carry out a sentence. He (or she) spends much time alone in the woods and jungles, searching out game.

***Phil Wayne** was initiated into a Wiccan group in 1961, and has spent the last six plus years working within a "low magic" Umbanda house as an undeveloped medium, studying the religion with Mama Renee.*

No overview would be complete without **Obatala**. Obatala is called the "pure white king" in the new world, where he is one of the few Orixa who will not drink. He is the one who brings peace and calm into hectic lives.

Obatala, according to one pataki, was the one who molded the bodies of human beings. One day, he got drunk on palm wine, and mismolded many of them. They had missing hands and feet, or were disfigured in other ways. The errors went unnoticed until after the figures were given life. Obatala felt so remorseful he vowed never to touch drink again, and to be the protector of all the deformed and crippled people of the entire world.

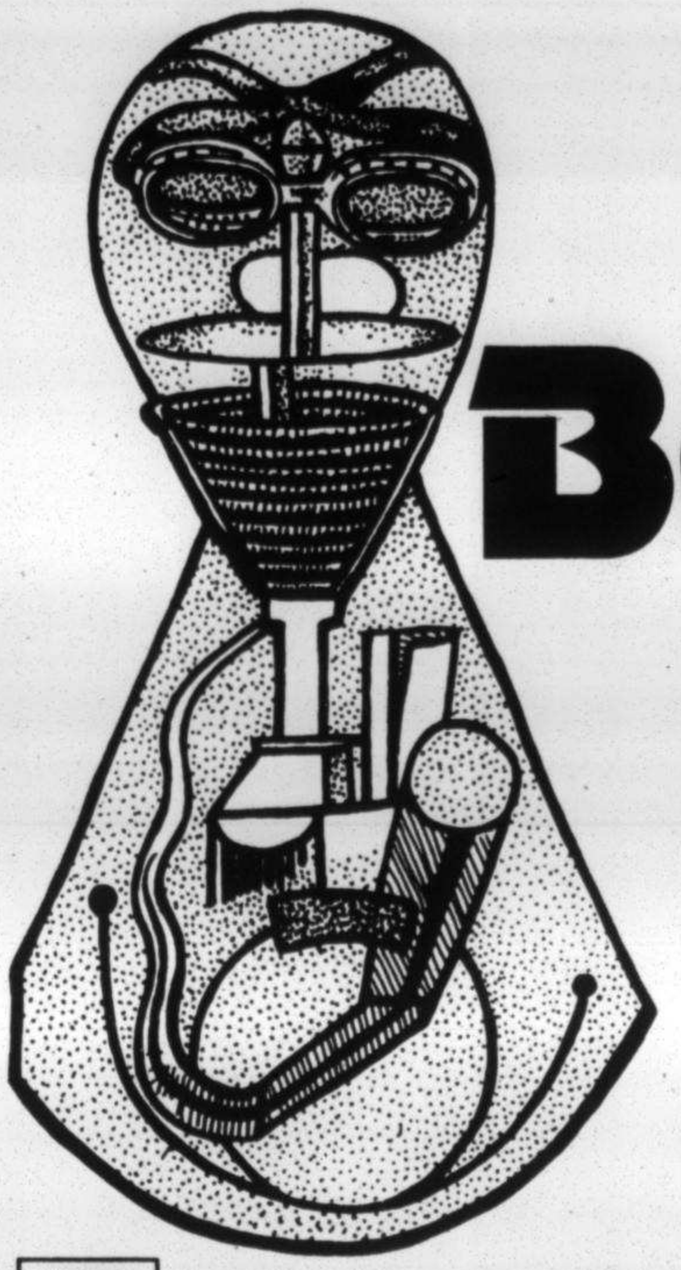
There are many, many, many more Orixa than is possible to talk about in this brief overview, and there is much to say about each of the ones that we have talked about that is still unsaid. **Xango**, **Orisa Oko**, **Orixanla**, **Nana** are only a few of these. To know any one of them takes years, and to know all of them is a superhuman task. But, perhaps that is exactly why we work with them, talk to them, and salute them. Exu O!



Obatala

PAGAN COWBOY JOE

BY JANA HOLLINGSWORTH



("Benin Dream" originally appeared in Teish's Carnival of the Spirit, *reviewed in the Muses section of this issue of* Green Egg. *"Benin Dream" is reprinted with permission.)*

Benin Dream

by ***Luisah Teish***

In 1989 while I was in Benin City, Nigeria, I attended the drumming session for an Olokun initiation.

At the initiate's request, I'd been allowed to visit him in his solitude. The officiating priestesses lived in a cave of sorts, but the area housing the initiate was immaculate; the earth floor was covered with palm mats, and the mats were covered with white cloth. During my visit the initiate was covered in *efun* (white chalk) from head to toe, including his eyeballs! He was unfocused, spoke slowly, and said he had been dreaming nonstop for an eternity (actually it was seven days).

After I had been there awhile, I sneezed. The officiating priestess entered the room carrying an herb broom. She promptly cleaned the initiate, then swept the atmosphere and threw the broom out. My visit was over, but she invited me to attend the drumming ceremony that was to take place outside her cave the next night.

I arrived late in the evening, my head covered in a white eyelet *gele*. I wore white shoes and carried a small white clutch purse. This I knew was proper attire for such a ceremony.

My driver proudly led me to the seat of honor, which had been reserved for me. I sat quietly, determined to observe every aspect of the ceremony.

The participants began to gather. As I recall, four drummers came carrying small tublike drums that looked like the East Indian *tabla* but produced a distinctly different sound. They were followed by at least thirty *shekere* players, all women, who began immediately to make rushing sounds with their instruments. The congregation, a cast of hundreds, made a circle around the swept-dirt center. Everyone's body was painted with white chalk. After about half an hour, a priestess entered and blew white powder around the circle. She raised her arms as if lifting weights, and leaned left and right as part of the invocation to the four directions. Once sacred space was established, she let out a call and a procession began. In the procession were the priestesses who had officiated over the initiation. They were dressed in costumes made of red and white cloth in various proportions and sprinkled with cowrie shells. The initiate was in the middle of the procession. Now the drums started and the women began to display the initiate and to teach him to dance. I tried to watch the steps.

Eventually the first priestess walked over to me and blew a handful of white powder directly into my face. Unwillingly I began to tremble from the inside and tears rolled down my cheeks. I became aware of my driver tugging at my purse and shoes. "You must go and dance," he said. I shook my head no in an attempt to clear my blurring vision. "Yes," my driver said, "this thing is happening to you...you must go and dance now...." I wanted to sit and observe, but the priestess returned and blew another handful of powder into my face.

I remember a resounding cry and a bolt of energy as if lightning had struck me in my spine. I have no memory of moving from point A to point B, only of being there in the center of the circle, feeling my legs moving beneath me and my chest and hips gyrating.

I heard a voice above my head ask, "Who is that dancing?" I lifted my eyes to the night sky, then saw and felt the Full Moon descending into my mouth, squeezing itself down my throat and into my belly.

I became aware that I had been moved to an inner chamber, a place where life-sized figures made of chalk were somehow painted or inlaid with gold. I looked around, trying to identify the sculptures. I recognized Shango, the God of Thunder in male and female form, erect and pregnant. Before I could see much more the priestess grabbed my jaws and pushed my lips forward into a fish mouth. I knew what this meant. This is the way I'd been taught to give medicine to babies. With the lips pursed in this manner it was almost impossible to reject the substance now being poured down my throat. Oh but I tried. Water and leaves and grit found their way into my belly.

Then they removed my gele and again there was a great cry. They called the name of the Thunder deity because a few days before, the women of a distant village had braided my hair in the style worn by devotees of Shango (He is my Father, by the way). I was washed from head to toe; then they smeared me with chalk and drew lines on my face and body. My crisp white eyelet clothing was now streaked with chalk and bits of green leaves.

As I looked around me, people moved in the dark, their Black faces covered in white chalk, their eyes fully opened, staring at me. I thought I was in a Fellini movie or a painted mime drama. I felt as if these people and I were hovering somewhere between the worlds.

Then the priestesses began making predictions for me. Some of them were worrisome, some of them wonderful. All have proved to be true... GE

Luisah Teish is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, actress, teacher of African spirituality, and priestess of Oshun.

The House That

Eschewed Exu

A myth conception

by ***Ian Bear***

Many of the people were torn from Africa and forced to live in a new land. The Orixa followed them, and many still honored them in this new land. The people were also told to follow a new religion. Many folks just combined the teachings of the new and old religions, and got along just fine. The new religion was very powerful, but its priests would often look the other way if those who followed the Orixa also used the Saints from the new religion. The Saints and the Orixa had many good times together, and wisdom was shared between traditions.

Then there came a time when a more intolerant brand of this new religion came to the land across the sea. Angry preachers denounced the Orixa and the old ways. They especially hated Exu, who they compared to the devil, an evil creature from their own religion.

An Orixa house abandoned Exu and would honor him no longer, believing the unfounded rumours that he was totally evil. Exu's altar and offerings were thrown out on to the streets. They attempted to call the Orixa without Exu, and declared their sect free of his evil influence.

The leader of this house demanded that all those in the house would be required to observe strict doctrinal purity in order to protect their house from the evil still lurking without.

Since this house would not call on Exu to open the gateway, the other Orixa could not come down. Exu could still come however, and he decided to come in their places instead. It was lots of fun, but exhausting. The opportunities for mischief were quite limitless. One minute he would be pretending to be Xango, shamelessly aping his most pompous posturing, and the next minute he might need to fill in for Oxun, and confer outrageous blessings on the gullible.

Wreaking havoc on the house was all too easy. Since doctrine, dogma, and obedience were favored by the leader of this house, all Exu had to do to cause conflict was channel contradictory information to the important mediums in the house. He also began creating new, complicated and obnoxious rules for everyone to follow, channeling them through the divine pronouncements of those in deep trance. A devotee might be seen spinning three times counterclockwise, genuflecting twice, kissing the medium's right foot twice and the left one three times, and mumbling some complicated required greeting. Considerable disgruntlement and ceaseless in-house bickering ensued as Exu had his fun with them.

One night, as Exu came away from another of their fractured ceremonies chortling to himself at some particularly hilarious revenge he had pulled off, he saw Obatala standing in the road in front of him. Exu ran up to greet the beloved father of the Gods. Obatala addressed him with surprising sternness.

"Been having a grand, glorious time causing trouble, haven't you?"

"Yeah, that'll teach them to abandon me!"

"I don't think you've taught them anything. They still dishonor you as much as ever."

"They need to be made an example of!"

"When they abandoned you, they are lost to all of the Orixa, because it is you who stands at the gateway for all of us. You have responsibilities that go with that."

"But I'm having so much fun messing with their heads!"

"It is not enough to just get your kicks from revenge. We need your help to win our way back to these people. Many of them are good people sincerely seeking a way to the divine. You could be their guide."

"Why should I? You said I didn't have to follow any rules anymore, didn't you?"

"I have freed you from taboos, but the ways of wisdom do not change. If you continue in this way, the people who curse you as the cause of the mysterious troubles visited on them will be quite correct in doing so. You must find a way to teach them instead."

Exu walked away from this encounter puzzling over what he had heard. Obatala seldom spoke so sternly, and this had his attention.

Searching for answers, Exu took on a mortal disguise and traveled on the Earth. He watched how the fundamentalist preachers were working the crowds, and saw how much danger there was to the Orixa. Their memory was fading and fewer offerings were being made as the new preachers would convince people to cast out the Orixa. Obatala had been right, something needed to be done to win people back.

One day as Exu was walking down the road, he passed a dilapidated old church at a dusty crossroads. At the corner sat an old man in worn, carefully mended priestly attire. He seemed somehow dejected and distracted, and Exu asked him what troubled him so.

"No one will come to my church anymore. I pray every day, ring the church bells, and say mass, but nobody will come."

Exu asked "Is it because they are following the Orixa instead?"

"Oh heavens no. The Orixa folk were some of the best of the congregation. Their worship was so enthusiastic. They took care of things in our community, as I have."

"You didn't mind that they followed the Orixa?"

"Not at all. I've been around long enough to know that there are many paths to the sacred. I'm not like that new preacher that everyone is following."

"What of this new preacher?"

"He has set up his tent outside of town, and it has been the ruination of our community. He preaches hate and fear and robs the people of their money."

"Then why do they follow him?"

"He is flashy and dazzling where I am drab and commonplace. He distracts people from the simple virtues. He is a fine actor, good looking, and rich. I cannot compete with that. It almost makes me angry. He cares nothing for our people when I have given myself to a life of poverty, charity, and service. I have prayed for a divine messenger to show these people the truth about this new preacher."

Exu responded "Perhaps one will come then. Miracles can happen in strange ways. Listen, I been traveling quite a long way and I am very thirsty. Do you have any water here?"

"Oh yes, entirely too much water. The roof leaks and there is no money to fix it, and no one to help. But I'm kvetching again. I can get you water from the holy spring in back of the church. Come this way."

"Thank you sir, but I would really appreciate it if you would bring the water here to me at this crossroads."

The old priest returned with a cup of clear, cool spring water and offered it to the thirsty traveler.

"Blessings to you old one. You do not realize how much this means to me. May your parish prosper anew."

Exu continued his journey in the direction of the tent at the edge of the town. As he disappeared down the road, the priest wondered who this dark, twisted looking traveler had been. Was he some sort of wandering holy man?

After Exu set things right in the parish by crashing the speaking in tongues at the rival preacher's tent (With hilarious results of course), he decided to return to the Orixa house that had abandoned him. Exu had an idea to try out. He had been watching the new preachers carefully and had learned a trick or two along the way.

He returned to the house to see that the seekers there were definitely sensing something missing. Their rituals had become listless, yet there were still those among them who hungered for the divine spark. If they found nothing with the Orixa, they might go seeking other paths, and perhaps fall victim to the spiritual predators Exu had seen in his journey. Exu now saw that he had been wasting his energy teasing them, and that he must

find a way to help the house.

Exu began giving the mediums a new kind of message. He would applaud the sincerity and goodness of each seeker after the Orixa, and drop big hints that great gifts would come to those who continued their quest further. He instructed them to make elaborate, troublesome, but harmless offerings so he knew who among them he could count on to make their offerings. Offerings would show up at the oddest places around town, puzzling passers by. It was time to put his plan into effect.

At the crossroads at the edge of town just before midnight, a seeker of Ogun arrived and began making offerings. As he was chanting, he was startled to see the Yemaya medium from his Orixa house arrive and also start making offerings at the crossroads. One by one, all the more active mediums of the house showed up at the crossroads to make an offering. They began to talk to one another.

"You mean Obatala also told you to make an offering at this crossroads?"

"Yes, and Oxossi too. He told me that there had been an ancient native sacred site here."

"Oxun told me I would discover the key to truer, deeper love."

"And Xango told me that my drums would be blessed by him this night."

"Yemaya, Iansa, and the others all asked us to make an offering here at the same time. What could this mean?"

A cock crowed in the distance and suddenly all the seekers at the crossroads were illuminated by a soft white glow and their hearts were filled with the Holy Spirit. A kind, gentle voice spoke to them. "Indeed you may wonder how it is that all your Orixa have asked to come here all at once. You are all blessed and chosen, and I have something very important to say to you. How is it that you have each called different Orixa, and yet you all see me?"

One of the seekers piped up "Does this mean that all the Gods are one? Our leader has been saying this may be so after all."

"Children, there is more. All things come to you through me."

"Oh great and mighty one, we will follow you. You have filled our hearts with bliss and show us wisdom."

The soft pulsing, effervescent light began to swirl and gather itself up into a vague form of pure white light energy. The voice continued, "You have come to this sacred place to receive my special blessings, and you are among those who may look upon my true form if you have courage and grace. Do you wish to see the true glory of me?"

The seeker of Obatala spoke: "Oh please great one, show us your true face that we may know your fullest blessings."

"Are you ready for this?"

"Yes we are ready" the others said.

"You know it has been said that the face of the one true God is terrible to behold for mere mortals. Are you sure you are truly ready in your heart?"

"Yes, we must know the mystery of the almighty one who calls to us through all the Orixa."

"Are your sure you will not look away in fear at the pure glory of me?"

"We are strong, we will do our best."

Exu released the cone of pure white light and assumed the form of a brownie-like

sprite with a face half red, half black, and amazing harlequin patterns of red and black tattooed on his skin, which he had no clothes to hide. He was especially proud of this look and had been dreaming it up for some time.

The flock were quite startled by this sudden shift in appearance. "Why look, it's Exu! We've been tricked!"

Exu spoke calmly "Do you still trust me? I am calling you home."

Two of the seekers were too shocked by Exu's brazen appearance and walked away from the crossroads shielding themselves. The rest stayed to listen more. Exu knew that all seekers must pass his test, and that some may not be ready.

"You have made offerings to me and blessed me. The paths of the Orixa are open to you, but you must always pass through my gateway to reach their realm."

"So why is it that we have to go through you. What makes you so special?" demanded to seeker of Iansa.

"If you do not honor me, that which you are afraid of will destroy you. There must be no part of yourself you will not look at, no question you are too afraid to ask, no rule you are too afraid to test. You have held yourself apart from the other Orixa through fear and blind obedience. I see now that you are ready to grow beyond these things."

"Our leader has warned us of how evil you are. Why should we trust you?" asked the seeker of Ogun.

"I wish you no harm, though there is something very special I ask of you."

"You're not asking us to sell our souls to you, are you? We were warned about this."

"Oh, heavens no, nothing of the sort."

"So what do you ask of us, most peculiar looking one." the Xango seeker intoned.

"All I ask is that you now drum, dance, chant, and make your offerings as you have been requested to. You have opened the gateway and the Orixa will come."

One by one, the people began to call upon their Orixa, and the Orixa, who had gathered around to watch this scene, connected with the mediums as never before. The people were moved by their new depth of experience, and knew that Exu had indeed showed them a new realm. Exu taught them a song to help him depart at the end. All agreed that they would always include Exu in their workings, even if it meant starting a new house without their leader, who had been beginning to sound dangerously like the fundamentalist preachers who had been plaguing the land with their hate and fear disguised as white light.

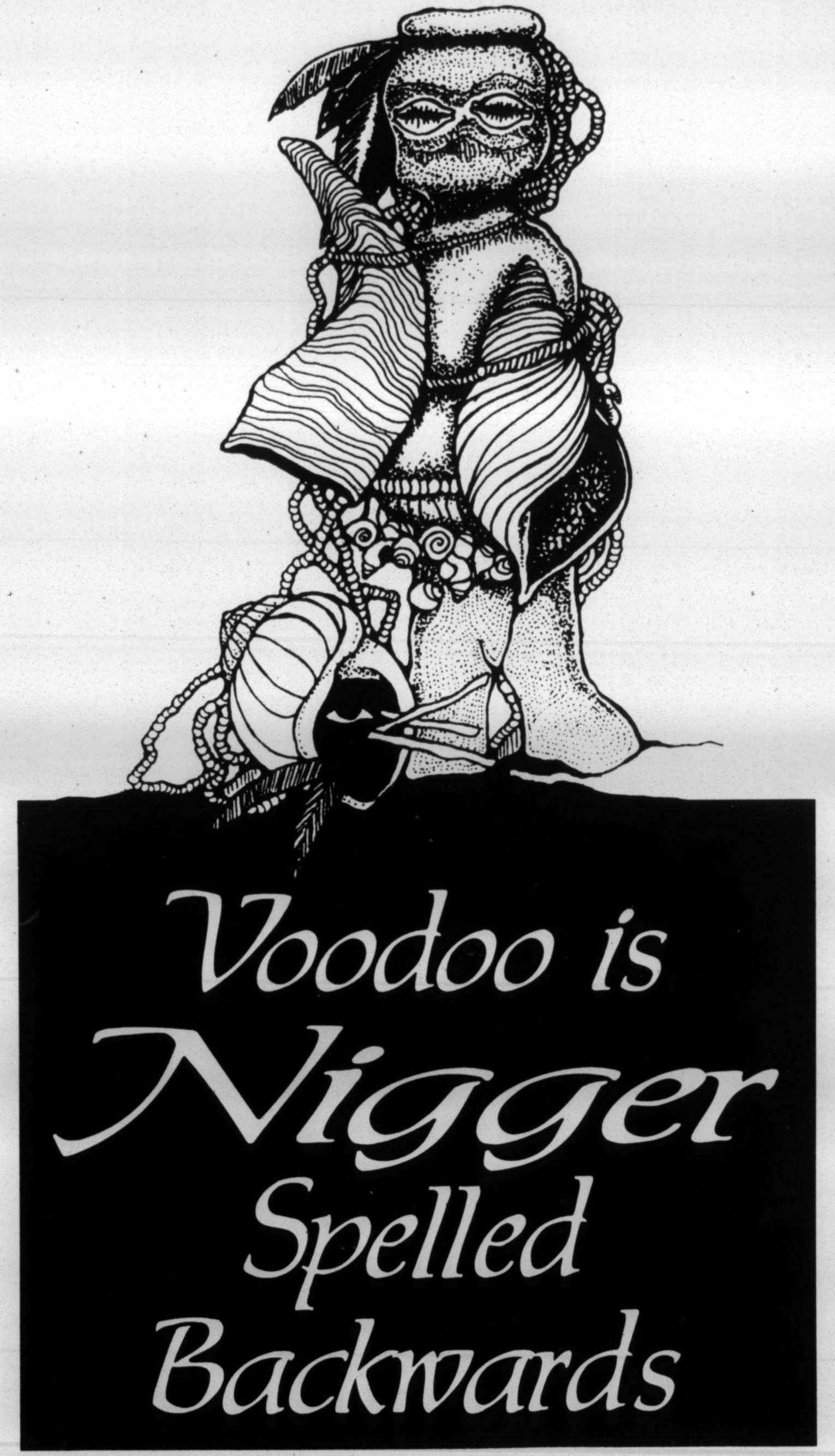
As Exu departed the physical realm from the crossroads, he saw Obatala waiting for him.

"Well done, my son. You have grown in wisdom, though you remain as naughty as ever."

They embraced and laughed.

"I have learned from you also my son. You have borrowed from other traditions, and learned to distinguish the good and bad among them. I have come to see that in these times of change, we must respect other ways, or we will become rigid and intolerant. If we wish to defeat the forces of intolerance and hate without becoming like them, we must find our allies on the other paths." GE

by **Judy C. Murray,**
Hillbilly Voodoo Witch
Whispering Willows Coven



Voodoo is Nigger Spelled Backwards

I never cease to be amazed at the reactions of my colleagues and Craft kindred in the magickal community over the word "Voodoo." When I offered to teach a workshop on the subject during a Craft gathering, some feathers got ruffled. It was feared that since the word had such negative connotations, it might scare people away (that particular set of chickens no longer roosts with my flock). And when I was first applying to Covenant of the Goddess, I was questioned closely as to whether I used Christian iconography in my magick because of my Voodoo practice, since much American Voodoo uses Catholic images.

The ceramic icon that hangs on my wall is not the Virgin Mary; it is the lovely black Voodoo Goddess Erzuli, Goddess of Love and Beauty, the African-American Venus and my beloved patroness. The holy water and blessed salt I use in my wangas comes not from the local Catholic church, but from my Witch altar, with the traditional Book of Shadows blessings said over them ("I exorcise thee, oh creature of water...").

No offense to my Christian kin, but I am a Witch, as my kinfolk, the conjure women and root doctors of African-American Voodoo are Witches, and I worship as a Witch worships.

Furthermore, the root base for my coven's rites are Cherokee, not Judeo-Christian Qabalah. We were born in East Tennessee, not Rome or Jerusalem. We use the Cherokee totem animals instead of the archangels in our conjurings. The spirit of the Tsa-la-gi who lived here so long, and the blood of our African kin who were brutally lynched here, have given their magick to the ground and sunk our roots deeply. The Indians and the African-Americans, no less than the Europeans, are our forebears and the ancestors whom we honor in our rites.

Voodoo is a bad word to Americans in general and Craft people in particular. The word smacks of the non-acceptance and bias of the majority in the Bad Old Days. It has been applied to the Old Religion in an unfavorable manner, making it a dirty word like "devil worshipper" or "liberal Democrat." There has also been a flap in recent years over animal sacrifice among the Hispanic people in Florida who practice Santeria, the South American avatar of Voodoo. A lot of vegan "eggs are murder" Wiccans were quite upset over the slaughter of chickens and other sad-eyed farm animals as a part of native religion. (Interestingly enough, it was the Orthodox Jews, who *also* have to slaughter their meat animals using ritual, that supposedly were the original litigants in the case.)

Craft people in general have been working very hard at gaining public acceptance of late. Witches are actually welcomed into ministerial associations in Salem, the same town that once hung such people for even existing. We don't wish to see this good work undone. Any term that causes a knee-jerk echo of the old anti-Witch hysteria is carefully shunned for fear of sparking reprisals. Everyone knows Voodoo is evil; Tarzan movies tell us so.

Then of course, we Americans are desperate to hang on to the few hated-by-all minorities we have left. It just ain't cool to beat up niggers and faggots on Saturday night behind the Dairy Queen no more. It might get you fined for littering or something (unless you're a policeman in L.A.). Worse, Rush Limbaugh might laugh at us.

Most Americans have grown sick of this climate of political correctness. It took them a long time to swallow the concept of equality for women, Blacks, Hispanics, Jews, Catholics and Asians. And they keep changing their minds. They're still choking on gays, Moslems, Buddhists and Hindus; and they ain't about to let no Voodoo practicing Witches in the door. Just imagine the jokes on Jay Leno: ("So now Witches are wanting to be accepted as a real religion. What's next, the Vampire Anti-Defamation League and the pro-Werewolf Lobby, I mean, *c'mon...*")

Finally, not to tread on too many toes, but much of what many people call Wicca reminds me of watered-down cotton candy. This glowey-eyed Pollyanna attitude, the kind of Wicca that can be politically correct and palatable to the American public, often sacrifices essential parts of our religion in the process, Voodoo being one such part. Indeed, a number of so-called Wiccans are afraid of the very word Witch and disdain to use the term.

Voodoo is an extremely American faith; it is also an extremely accepting and adapting faith. It has had to be, given the plight of our Black kindred for the past few centuries. Just as it has worked well with Christianity and Native American faiths, so it works well with Celto-Saxon Wicca. Indeed, what *is* Voodoo if not African-American Paganism? It is interesting that Christianity or Islam are considered to be "true" African-American religions, and Voodoo is not. Why not? And this is true for African-Americans, too. Are Black people saying that a

religion is valid only if it originated in the Middle East? Why aren't there Black people resurrecting the Egyptian mysteries or flocking to the Voodoo temples? Who knows? All I can say is: "It leaves more for me." Sorry, but there was religion in Africa prior to 33 C.E.

Interestingly enough, many African-Americans get somewhat perturbed at the thought of a White person practicing an African-derived religion. Why, they ask, do you even want to practice Voodoo? My answer: "Because it works."

As far as having any African ancestry, I don't know if I do. The human race evolved in Northern Africa, not to mention the debts our present society and our occultic religions owe to Africa as a whole and Egypt in particular; so all Terran humans have blood ties to Africa somewhere in their background.

Also, I have immediate ancestors who were either Confederate soldiers or slave owners. Perhaps it's a karmic thing. Few people know it, but many a White slave owner's children nursed on a Black woman's breast (read Alex Haley's *Roots* if you don't believe me). And, as all us good Witches know, mother's milk is heart-blood.

Let us not forget the tragic devastation to the Black people's lore and tradition. Lore and tradition are very important to us Celtic, Druid-derived Wiccans. By ancient rules of hospitality, since our immediate ancestors destroyed Black people's (and Red people's!) traditions, we must make them part of ours. It makes African Americans our kin, over and above the genetic ties we already possess. Their ancestors become ours, ours become theirs; their Gods are our Gods; we share the same parentage. My mother's Mother is Erzuli, who enflames me with love; my lord is Legba, the Voodoo Thoth-Anubis, the wily, crutch-walking trickster God, who plays occasional software jokes on his little White daughter. That's all I need to know.

Why Voodoo? Because I have a knack for it. Because the Goddess Erzuli pierced my heart with a pink-green flame during one of my fledgling, amateurish childhood rituals. Because, like Wicca, it works.

Like the Celts, Voodoo people are very inclusive. The majority of Black Voodooists I meet simply regard me as sister Judy, not the honky devil come to rip them off. I get the same feelings from them that I get from any other tribal kindred; the same feeling that I often *don't* get around many self-proclaimed Wiccans.

Also being a religion with ties deep into the Stone Age, Voodoo dovetails perfectly with both Wicca and Native American shamanism. The three go together like sugar, milk and cocoa beans, making a whole greater than the parts. I guess you could say my religion is chocolate.

One dividing line between Wicca and Voodoo is the amount of noise generated during the ceremony. Many Wiccan covens, especially the Unitarian varieties, tend to be very staid, solemn and ceremonial in their practices (what we heathen hillbillies call "Episco-Wiccans"). Voodoo people tend to kick up quite a ruckus, especially when the Loa are riding.

Another unique feature of Voodoo is the veve, the symbol of the Loa we are invoking. The *veve* (or vever) is a magickal design which we draw in cornmeal and/or other powders on the ground and then dance all over the top of, to raise the power we send out in our spellwork. We drop offerings of food, drink and other things onto the veve and then beat the drums and trample it into the ground while howling at the moon. The energies this raises are not to be believed!

And, not to upset yo' little White tummies none, but we do occasionally slaughter our chickens and turkeys. Some of our people hunt and fish on a regular basis, too; and, yes, it's done in a ceremonial way. To do it otherwise would be disrespectful of both the Gods and the chicken. I believe that if you're going to eat meat, you ought to look it in the eye at least once. Don't criticize me for pouring chicken blood into the ground as an offering for the Gods when you nibble on the Colonel's finger-licking carnage every Sunday. Compared to commercially-prepared meat, farm animals are slaughtered with less distress and by more humane methods. In case you didn't know it, meat from the store usually came from an animal in great pain; i.e., chickens who were boiled alive then shocked to death on the rectum.

"And how were your chicken nuggets today, sir? Any fries with that?"

I won't lie to you for anything other than personal gain. I think that, while the work of public acceptance has been very important and mostly beneficial, there comes a point when we must choose between pleasing the Puritans and keeping our Craft. As anyone who meets me finds out, I am not only an unabashed Witch, but also an unabashed homo, and the very worst kind of homo, at that: the kind that wears dresses and does "the girl thing," without sacrificing "her" claim to manhood (I love Cloe Willena, my extended clitoris, a lot, thanks. Besides, who wants to wind up on Geraldo?)

In other words, I'm already socially unacceptable. If the Puritans get in an uproar over me, what else is new? Am I complaining? Sweet Hella's Icy Womb, *no*! I'm proud. Proud of my wo/manhood, proud of my vocation, proud of my rune-rattling, drum-pounding ancestors and their dark-skinned-heathen-Voodoo-Witchly ways.

It's not that I'm such a saint that I wouldn't succumb to the luxury of bigotry along with the rest of my fellow Americans and many of my fellow Wiccans, given the chance. It's simple that, given my religion, my sexuality, and my Voodoo heart, I really can't afford it.

Recommended reading:

Gover, Robert, *Voodoo Contra*. Samuel Wieser, York Beach ME, 1985. (Another stupid White man, excuse me, anthropologist, makes a fool of himself with native peoples; but is smart enough to realize it. A good book for Nigra-hating fundies to lip-read and not understand.)

Haskins, Jim, *Voodoo and Hoodoo*. Original Publications, Bronx NY, 1988 (Old Southern recipes and some almost-not-totally wrong opinions.)

Bertiaux, Michael, *The Voudon Gnostic Workbook*. Magickal Childe, New York, 1988 (The guy's a nut and writes like a Hollywood Witchdoctor and I *love* it. Highly recommended. It'll either confuse or scare le grande merde out of you.)

Rigaud, Milo, *Secrets of Voodoo*. Arco Publishing, NY, 1969 (Well researched, very Qabalistic. Excellent for ritual magick oriented people.)

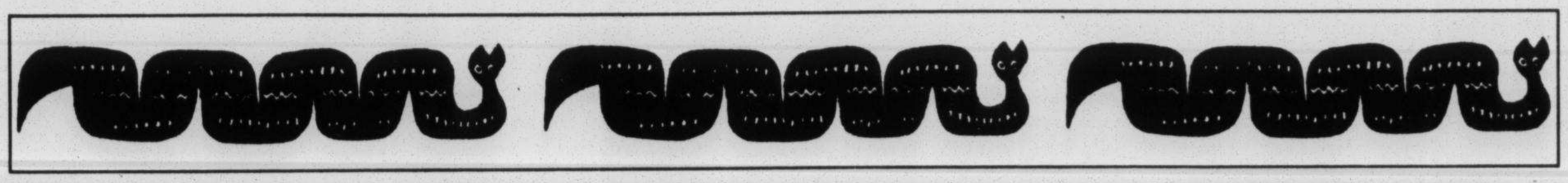
Deren, Maya, *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*. McPherson, London, NY, 1953

Gonzalez-Wippler, Migene, *The Santeria Experience*. Llewellyn, St. Paul MN, 1992 (A very personal look at South American Voodoo—Santeria, by the same scholarly sister who wrote "The Complete Book of Spells, Ceremonies and Magic")

I also heartily recommend the "New Orleans Voodoo Tarot" by Louis Martinie' and Sallie Ann Glassman: Destiny Books, Rochester VT, 1992. It's the same deck I use. The book is chock full of Voodoo lore and spells. The deck itself is gorgeous. Sallie is the same artist who did the Enochian deck.

Also, please feel free to write me (and don't forget them Jack Chick tracts!) at:

PO Box 4372
Bristol, TN 37625 GE



Part One

by ***MadDog***

How could a day be so hot with no sun in sight? The sky was a uniform color of slightly tarnished brass, and a light wind served only to move around the hot, humid air. Sweat trickled down the insides of his arms and was absorbed by the cotton of his sleeves before it reached his cuffs. This white flannel suit was too heavy for the weather, but it was the lightest thing he had brought to wear.

Back in London, the days would still be gently warm, but nights would be getting a bit nippy; and the chestnut and beech trees would be starting to turn a glorious shade of bronze. Here, in Key West, plants that he was used to seeing only in flowerpots were thirty-foot trees with exotic names like frangipani, poinsettia, and mimosa. Eliot wished to God now that he had stayed in London, but guilt and a Puritan sense of duty had brought him here instead.

He stood on the comer of Duval and Fleming streets outside his hotel, paralyzed with indecision. He wanted to find a woman called Madame Souslamer, who might hold the key to unlock his wife's mind, but he had no idea how to find her. All he knew was that she was a healer of some kind, that she was Haitian, and that she might be in Key West.

A mule-drawn wagon with the word 'Ice' printed on its side rolled slowly down Fleming Street, white dust being kicked up by the mule's hoofs and the wheels of the wagon. Ice, that was a commodity that would surely be in demand today by anyone with the money to afford it. The wagon stopped in front of a house with a sign that said 'Ice Today' in the front window. A strong-looking young White man got out of the wagon, placed a piece of burlap over his right shoulder, then with a huge pair of tongs pulled out a block of ice that must have weighed twenty pounds, set it on the burlap and carried it into the house.

Eliot's attention was distracted by the sound of a little dog yipping beside him. He looked down and around to see a small yellow mongrel pulling at the trouser cuff of what

THE BLANC Madame Souslamer &

at first appeared to be a clown. Next to him stood a thin, old Black man dressed in striped pants that were obviously too big for him, held up by a piece of rope, a plaid coat that was too small and missing its buttons, and a black stove-pipe hat. Beads of sweat trickled down his brow into his smoked glasses. He held a dented tin cup in one hand and a dirty white cane in the other. Eliot realized that he was blind and that his dog was trying to keep him from crossing the street.

A horse-drawn carriage rolled down the street as well as a couple of motor cars, their wheels throwing up more dust. Smiling, the man kept trying unsuccessfully to free his pants from the grip of his dog. At this rate he would never get across the street. Ordinarily, Eliot would never have spoken to a stranger; but, seized by an impulse he didn't understand, he asked "Might I possibly be of assistance in helping you across the street?"

"Sho', blanc. Les' go," and the man slipped his hand through Eliot's arm as if he had been expecting to all the time. The dog immediately let go of his cuff, and the three of them walked across Fleming Street together. When they were across, Eliot asked the man, "How do you know that I'm White?"

"By you voice. You talk White," and he laughed.

The man had a sort of French accent. Perhaps he was Haitian. Perhaps he knew Madame Souslamer. Quickly Eliot asked him, and just as quickly he replied "I no know, but you ask Ramon Fernandez. He know," and at that he turned and, with his dog, began walking away on Duval Street.

"But where do I find this Ramon Fernandez?" Eliot called after him.

"Bahamatown," the man replied over his shoulder. "Turn left on Whitehead," and he disappeared around the corner. Consulting a map of Key West that he pulled out of his coat pocket, Eliot found that Whitehead Street was a block away, so he went there, turned left and wondered how he would know when he got to Bahamatown.

On his left were two-storey white mansions surrounded by well-tended gardens and tall shade trees and separated from the street by black wrought-iron fences or white walls of coral blocks. On his right, were small bungalows set close to the street, many unpainted or with peeling paint of yellow, pale blue, or light green. They had wooden shutters over the windows, their louvers angled down to keep out the sunlight and let in the breeze. In the shady spaces between these houses sleeping dogs lay motionless as if dead, and chickens walked slowly, softly clucking in their throats as if they disapproved of the way things were going in general. From backyards he occasionally heard the bleating of goats.

Eliot had decided to come to Key West only three weeks ago, after his last visit to Divonne-les-Bains, the sanatorium near Geneva where his wife Vivienne had been committed—where he had committed her. Following an agonizing meeting with her doctors he had wandered into the garden of the hospital and sat on a wooden bench facing the still, grey lake. The words delusion, paranoia, neurasthenia, incurable, and hopeless reverberated in his mind like hollow stones, and he lost all awareness of his surroundings.

How long the doctor had been sitting on the bench beside him he didn't know, until he heard a quiet voice murmur "They may be wrong, you know." Startled, he looked around to see a small, middle-aged man in a tweed suit, crisp grey hair carefully brushed, gold-rimmed pince-nez spectacles balanced on his nose, and coffee-colored skin dark against his white shirtfront.

Dr. Belisle had been present at Eliot's meeting with the hospital staff but had said little. What few remarks he had made came in a soft accent that marked him as from one of the colonies—Jamaica perhaps or maybe Trinidad. Now he gravely assured Eliot that his wife's illness was indeed inexplicable and incurable from the perspective of modern medicine. But he, Dr. Belisle, knew of a healer—knew her personally, in fact—who specialized in diseases of the mind.

She didn't accept all cases that came her way, and when she did accept one, her methods might seem a little irregular from the modern (he hesitated to say from the White) perspective. But she had a remarkable facility for finding where people's minds had gone and reuniting them with their bodies. She represented, Dr. Belisle paused dramatically, Mrs. Eliot's only hope.

He didn't know where Madame Souslamer was now, but he had heard that she had moved to Key West. It was no use trying to contact her by telegraph or mail; if Eliot wanted her to cure his wife, he would have to go to her in person. When they shook hands and parted, Dr. Belisle warned him that if he did go he should mention his quest to no one else, particularly no one at the sanatorium. This warning was hardly necessary to one as circumspect as Eliot. As he walked away he heard Dr. Belisle murmur, "Papa Legba, ouvri barriere pou li."

And that was why, on this stifling September day, a Harvard-educated poet and book editor from London found himself on a dusty street on a tiny island at the southernmost tip of North America trying to locate a woman who sounded very much like a witch doctor.

After walking several blocks on Whitehead Street, Eliot was beginning to feel dizzy and lightheaded from the heat, when he saw a handpainted sign over the door of a pink bungalow: Fruits de Mer, R. Fernandez, prop. "You ask Ramon Fernandez. He know," the blind man had said, and here was Fernandez' fish market. Eliot opened the screen door and stepped in.

The bungalow was dark inside; and if it wasn't cool, at least it was merely warm, not hot. On wooden counters heaps of fresh shrimp and oysters lay on beds of ice, baskets of live crabs blew bubbles and clicked their claws angrily, and piles of dead fish stared unseeing at the ceiling, their scales shining in a narrow shaft of sunlight that came through one of the shutters. Eliot heard voices in a back room, and when he called "Hello" a short, thin brown man with a short, thin mustache came in wiping his hands on his undershirt and adjusting his trousers. He looked like someone who would be named Ramon Fernandez. "Yessir, you wan' fish today?"

"Not exactly. In point of fact, I'm looking for someone named Madame Souslamer, and I was given to understand that you might know of her whereabouts." As soon as he had finished, Eliot knew how stilted and pompous he sounded, and he wondered if the man would even understand what he meant.

The man looked serious and replied "Ah, you the one she been espectin'. You follow me—come this way," and he turned and walked into the back room. Puzzled, Eliot followed him. Expecting? Had Dr. Belisle written her that he was coming? But he hadn't decided to come at all until after his return to London. And besides, Dr. Belisle had said that he didn't even know for sure if Madame Souslamer was in Key West.

They went through a small kitchen and out a back door into a yard bare of grass, and there the man left him. The dirt was shaded by a kind of lath roof held up by six posts set in the ground. In the middle of it was another post painted with floral designs and what looked like a green and yellow snake spiraling up it. At the base of the post were several burnt-out candles, some wilted flowers, and

some dishes of dried-out food. To one side was a small blue concrete trough or pool, and on the other was a large cabinet painted like the post with floral and serpentine designs. At the far end in a wicker chair sat a large Black woman.

She was wearing a grey, sleeveless smock that had not been recently laundered, and her bare feet were dirty. Her long hair stood out from her head in matted ringlets, and she was smoking a hand-rolled cigarette. Her tiny eyes were encased by folds and rolls of fat, and she studied Eliot closely for a moment before speaking.

"Ah, I been waitin' fo' you, blanc. You take you time come here. Now you sit down we talk."

The blind man had called him blanc too. Did Haitians call all White people blanc, or did these two sense a blankness within him? He looked around for somewhere to sit and saw only a three-legged child's stool. He looked at the Black woman, and she nodded and pointed at the stool. "You sit, there." And he obeyed.

"I am Madame Souslamer you know. You tell me you name and why you come here now." And Eliot stumblingly and haltingly told her his name and about his wife, their marriage, her madness, and his misery. As he talked, she smoked impassively, finished one cigarette, and rolled another. At last he was finished, and she asked, "So you want me find you wife's soul, where it gone, and bring it back 'cause the blanc doctors can't, that about it?"

That was about it, and Eliot admitted it.

"But you don' like people like me. You write bad things 'bout people like me in you poem. So why you here?"

Eliot thought about the sarcastic description in his poem, "The Waste Land:"

Madame Sosostris, famous
clairvoyante,
Had a bad cold, nevertheless
Is known to be the wisest woman in
Europe
With a wicked pack of cards.

How the devil did she know about that? Surely she didn't read English poetry. With as much humility as he could muster, Eliot assured her of his respect, confidence, and even admiration and asked her for her help. For the first time she smiled, ground out her cigarette in the dirt, got up and walked to the cabinet.

Opening it, she withdrew a bundle wrapped in cloth, went to the center post, lowered herself to her knees, and unwrapped the bundle. Eliot hoped that it didn't contain Tarot cards and was puzzled to see that it held several spindle-shaped stones, which she placed on the ground among the candles and plates of food. She began whispering to the stones, then got up again, went to the cabinet, and returned with a bottle of clear liquid that she poured and rubbed over them. Then she began whispering to them again and holding them up to her ears.

Sitting on the stool, his knees nearly up to his chin, sweating in his heavy suit, and watching this spectacle, Eliot began to wonder if she was having him on. But he'd come this far, so he determined to see it through. At last she nodded, wrapped up the stones again, replaced them in the cabinet, and returned to her chair.

As Eliot watched impatiently, she rolled another cigarette, lit it, then spoke: "Now I know where you wife's soul, who got it, how to get it back. You got to do just what I say and do everthin'. Tomorrow afternoon you come to the South end of Duval Street. You go through wood, over earth, into water, then I do what I do."

"But what time do I come, and where exactly?"

"You don' lissen too good, do you? After noon, and you look for the way through the wood. Also, this gon' to cos' you some money."

"I certainly expect to pay for services rendered. How much do you expect, and do you mind telling me what you intend to do?"

"The horse don' need to know where the rider wans to go. An' I need ten dollar for provisions. Now give me the money and go." The man with the mustache had appeared at his side and was motioning with his head that Eliot was to follow him toward the door. Eliot gave Madame Souslamer a ten-dollar bill and left, wondering if he would ever see her again. As he left her house, a mourning dove in a nearby mimosa tree began a plaintive call that seemed to follow him down the street.

The walk back to his hotel took longer than he expected. He hoped to take a taxi, but none came by. In fact, except for him nothing in Key West seemed to be moving at all. As he passed

Continued on Page 51

TIDEMOTHER

-AN INVOCATION TO YEMAYA

Tidemother
Ocean Mama
Your curves are the swell of waves
Your belly is the womb of the world
Your arms are wide enough for all

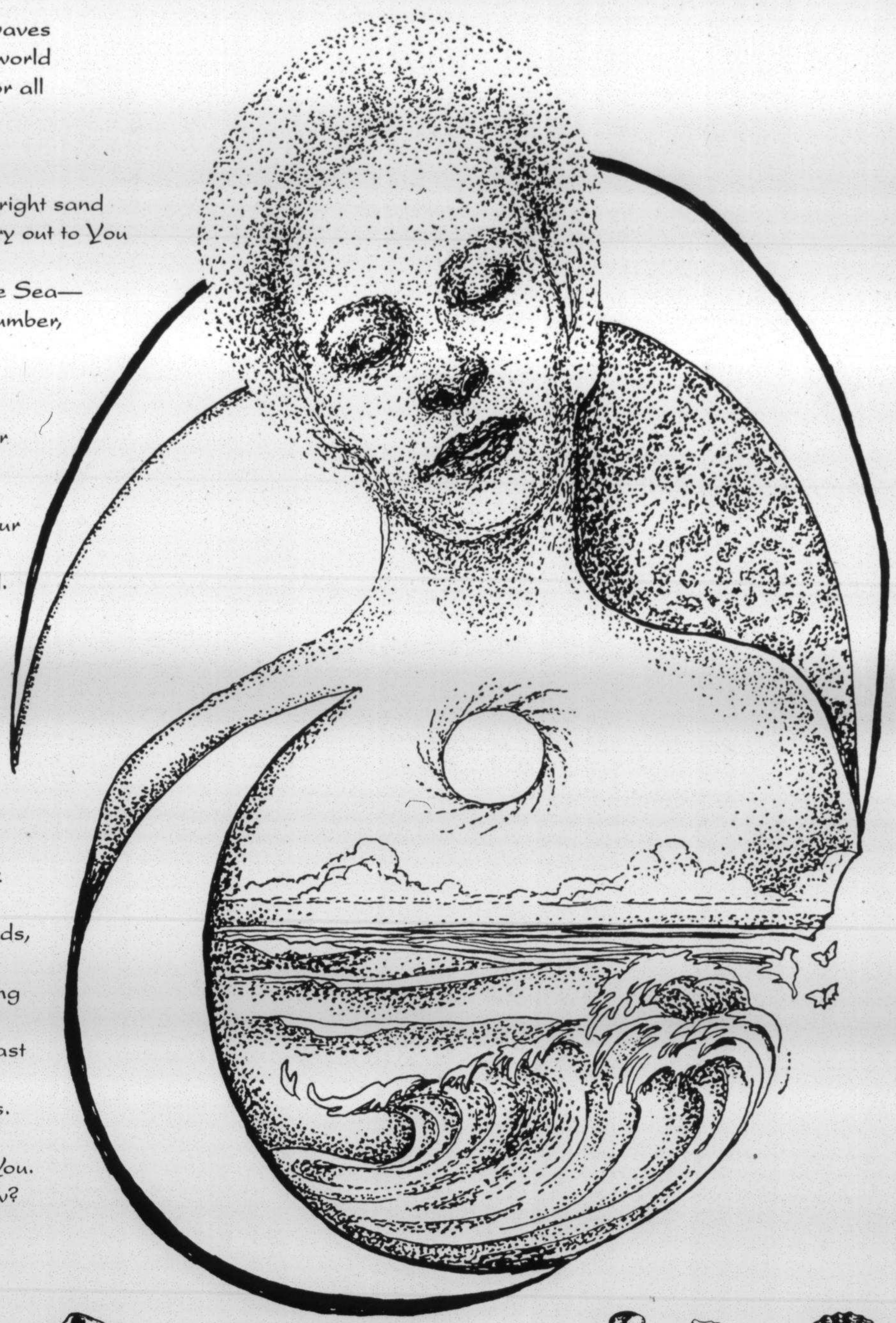
You dance with the Moon
Your breasts shed white foam
Your feet glisten against the bright sand
Your ears hear us when we cry out to You

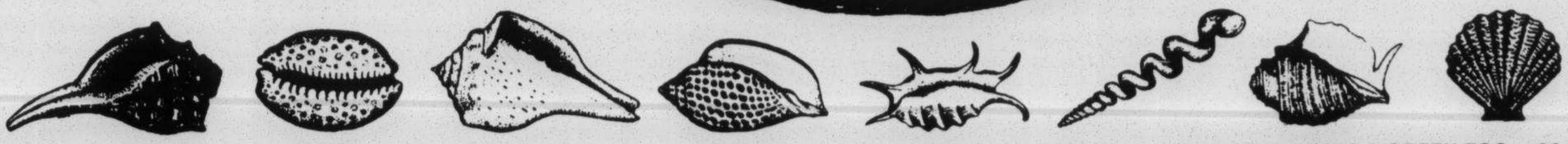
You may not be the Star of the Sea—
You are more like a Sea Cucumber,
All colors and craft, able to
transmute
Poison to protection.
Nobody bothers You, that's for
sure!

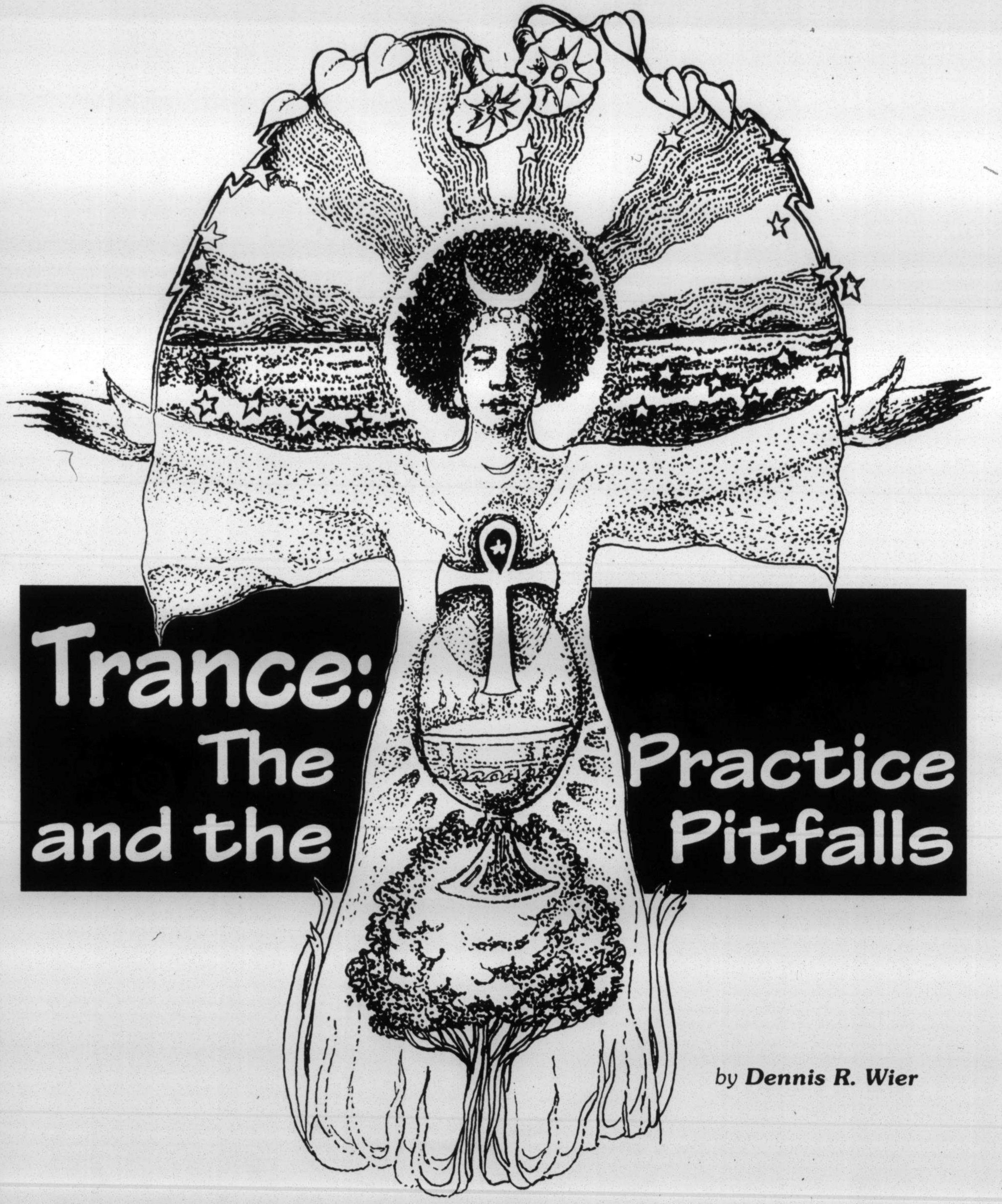
Now we drape the altar in Your
favorite shades
Blue and cream, sea and sand.
Our hands caress the sleek
cowrie shells
The large whole ones for
beauty, the smaller
Flattened ones through which
You may address us.
We set before You those things
which
You have found pleasing:
A conch shell, fluted and pink
A gourd rattle
And many images of shorebirds,
dolphins, and whales.
Crystal and silver glitter among
them.
We share with You a fine repast
of watermelon
And cornbread with molasses.

The tides of our lives turn to You.
Will You come and join us now?

by ***Elizabeth Barrette***







Trance: The Practice and the Pitfalls

by **Dennis R. Wier**

Trance as a Tool

Trance is a repetition or looping of consciousness. When the content of the trance has achieved a resonance, special types of psychic forces are generated. The effects of these special psychic forces are often identified with the behavior which produced them.

Powerful yogic trance states are often created by the long term practice of meditation. When the mind is temporarily anchored in trance, a yogi may become sensitive to subtle influences or may gain enhanced and subtle perceptions. In addition, yogic trance states can also produce effects at a distance.

Trance—for a yogi—is merely a tool consciously chosen to produce a specific result. Trance for most other people is an unconscious choice made to relieve pain or to avoid uncomfortable feelings or situations.

Our Unconscious Trance States

Most people slip in and out of various kinds of trance states hundreds of times during what is called the "normal waking state." Gurdjieff taught that to become aware that you are asleep is the first step in waking up. If you are interested in staying awake, it is quite helpful, now and then, to count your trances, just to make sure you haven't slipped back into unconsciousness.

There are light trances, deep trances, short-term trances and life-long trances. There are pain relieving trances and pain producing trances. There are healing trances and pathological trances. I have been studying trance for the past 25 years and I want to explore with you just a few important areas where trances can be found: hypnosis, addictions, religions and work.

So what is a trance? To many psychologists a trance is a state of limited awareness. Some psychologists would also characterize trance as a form of sleep, or dreamlike awareness or a kind of altered state of consciousness. Certainly trance has long been associated with hypnotic states, and with the altered states of consciousness of dervishes, shamans and yogis. Meditation does produce strong trance states. However, in my opinion, trance states are much more common than is normally believed.

If the unusual trance state of a shaman or a yogi is desirable, then we might be tempted to believe that all trance states are desirable states.

Hypnotic Trances

The type of trance studied most has been the hypnotic trance. Milton Erickson, the great psychotherapist, had wonderful and nearly immediate psychological cures in a great many of his patients. His technique was called "Ericksonian hypnosis." Many people tried to explain what it was that he did, because in many cases, his patients claimed that they were not hypnotized and they were not in any kind of trance at all. Erickson's recorded dialogs were analyzed for years to try to find out what it was exactly that made his form of hypnotherapy so successful.

Richard Bandler, John Grinder and others were successful in finally analyzing and modelling Erickson's techniques. They devised what they called "neuro-linguistic programming," also known as NLP, which is based primarily on Erickson's techniques. With NLP it is relatively easy to hypnotize a person and to keep that person in a trance state without their being aware that they are in fact in a trance. The technique of pacing and leading a subject from a rich or varied set of thoughts to a limited or impoverished set of thoughts is a technique used consciously by hypnotists, advertisers, sales people, preachers and politicians.

Many stage hypnotists use Ericksonian or NLP derived hypnotic techniques in order to induce trance. TV hypnotists on daytime television can induce a trance after only a few minutes of seemingly innocuous talk. During this time, the subject can be given post-hypnotic suggestions to alter behavior and perception in peculiar ways during the TV show.

Television advertisers and the designers of commercials are aware of the techniques of Bandler and Grinder and use them often in commercials. The trance-induction potential of television media is well-known and is often used for manipulating consumer tastes. However useful television is for commercial and social control reasons, it cannot be reasonably argued that promoting an impoverished reality is, in the end, really socially beneficial.

Salespersons, preachers and politicians are aware of NLP techniques and often consciously use Ericksonian techniques in order to promote their own agendas. As you talk with a salesperson or listen to a preacher or politician you might never admit that you were in a trance of any kind. Have you ever spaced out listening to a preacher? Politicians? Computer software salespersons?

Some professional sales training institutes unabashedly teach hypnotic techniques to their sales trainees. It is clear to them that if a buyer is put into a hypnotic trance then it is much easier to sell a product. Because the ethics of using such techniques on the unaware is questionable, some states have laws that give you the right to cancel a contract within 24 or 48 hours of signing. Supposedly, this gives you time to "wake up" from your unconscious state.

So how can you tell if you are in one of these ordinary, unconscious trances? You are in a trance when your attention is limited and there is a certain repetition of thoughts. In an extreme case, your attention is so limited that it feels like "tunnel vision." The repetition of thoughts might be mantras, songs, repeating fantasies, or even the math calculations of balancing your checkbook. That song you can't get out of your head indicates a trance. Concentration, when the mind is focused on a specific problem or thought, is also a form of trance. You could characterize trance cybernetically as an awareness loop, or a circular flow of consciousness.

Repetition of mantras, the whirling of dervishes, the chanting and drumming of shamans, the repetition of TV commercials all induce trance by limiting your attention and overloading your mind with repeated thoughts. The purposes may be different, the results may be different, but in my opinion the difference in trance is mainly of degree.

Once your mind is flying around in a tight loop, at some point you become used to this tight loop. You can also say that you have learned the loop. At that point, you might have the feeling that you can think ordinary thoughts even though another part of your mind is still flying around in this tight loop. The part of you that is the conscious 'you' is the observer of the 'you' that is the automaton flying around in this endless loop. The conscious 'you' is actually in a trance even though you feel perfectly conscious. Here's why.

Normally, you have certain cognitive abilities such as the ability to remember things accurately, the ability to make judgements, you are generally aware of your body if you put your mind to it, you are alert to your surroundings, and you generally are not observing yourself doing things, you are doing them.

These cognitive abilities draw on our energies. When we learn new things, learning means that we can do it more efficiently. That means, we don't need to put all of our energy into maintaining what we have learned. At the same time, doing something by habit does take some cognitive energy, which leaves our conscious mind a bit short. Particular types of loops will absorb greater amounts of our energy, leaving our conscious minds relatively disabled.

When we let our mind go in a loop, and then allow ourselves to step away and observe, the observing part may actually not function at full capacity. That means, your memory might not work so well, you may not be able to make a judgement, you will probably be much more self-observing, you may not be aware of your body, you may not

be aware of your surroundings so much because of fixed attention. You might even hallucinate. Some psychologists call this trance logic.

What is interesting is that this dissociated or trance state is often combined with rewards. That is, we are generally encouraged to go into trance even though this state results in a somewhat disabled mental condition.

Whether you are passively watching TV football, or engaging in rational rigorously precise thoughts, or having an emotional jolt of religious fervor, or feeling patriotic passion, or if you are an addict of any kind, or if you have the compulsive mindset of a mass murderer you are in a trance. Why? Because all these states encourage a fixed, narrow attention span and they all reward the repetition of an impoverished set of thoughts. Most of the above are pathological trances, that is, over the long term they will produce pathologies.

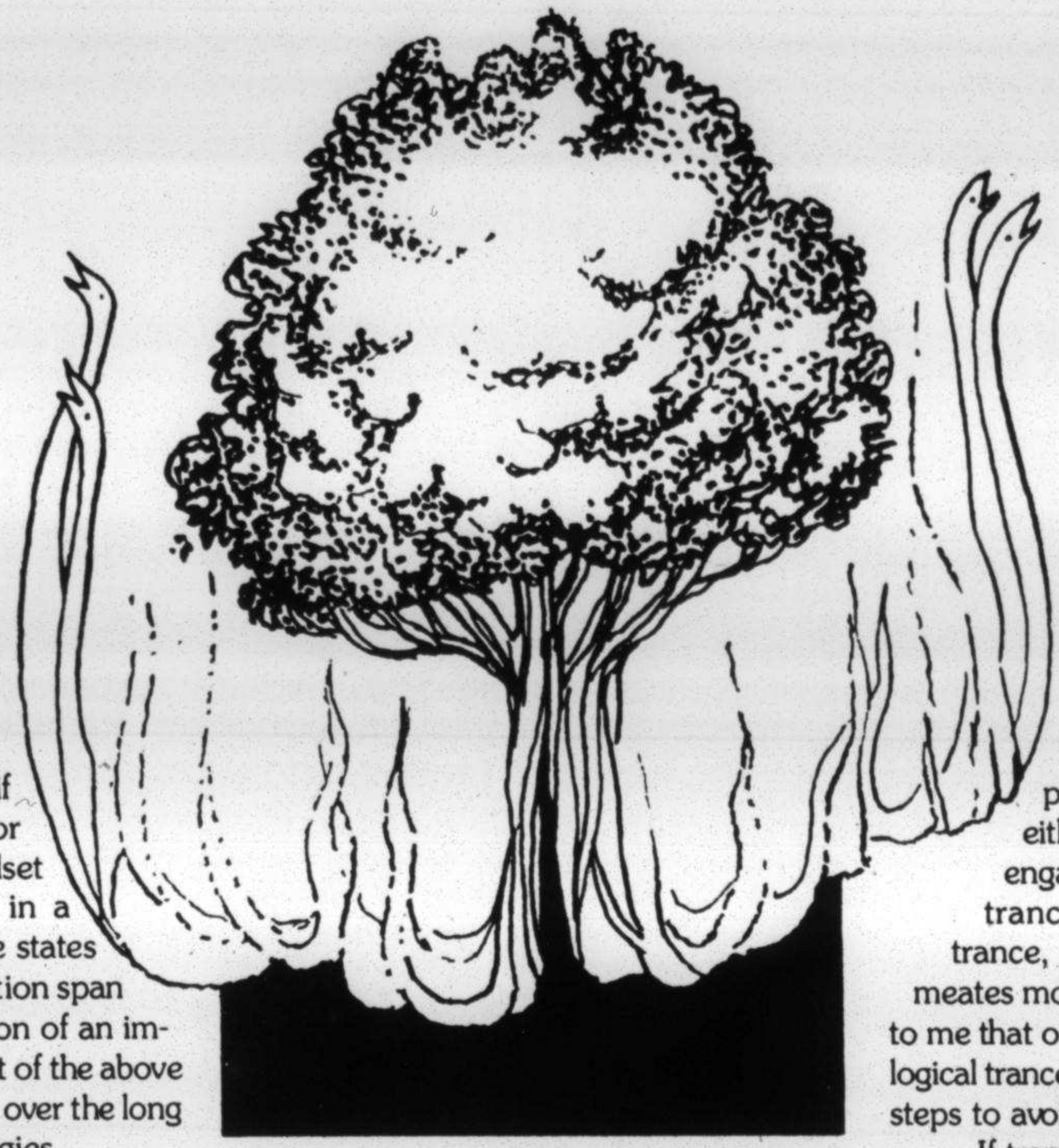
It is well-known that when you are in a trance your attention can be diverted effectively enough to produce anesthesia sufficient for dental work or some types of surgery. Lamaze natural childbirth breathing techniques uses the resulting narrowed span of attention to help reduce pain. This narrowing of attention, the concentration of the mind on maintaining the breathing patterns, diverts the attention from the physical pain sensations during childbirth with the result that the mother becomes less aware of any uncomfortable sensations. The power of a mind in a trance can do things which it ordinarily cannot do. Giving birth painlessly is only one example.

Trance can also be used to reduce psychological pain such as anxiety, fear, worry, as well as the universal Weltschmerz. Instead of consciously addressing the causes of the pain, trance can successfully divert the attention so that one is aware of neither the pain nor the causes of pain.

Hypnotic trance is only one way to remove pain. Alcohol, drugs, religion, work, consumption, and TV trance addictions can also be counted as other ways of removing pain. I believe addictions of all sorts are forms of pathological trance.

Pathological Trance States and Addictions

Addiction can be better understood if we think of it not merely as "substance abuse,"



or performance addiction, but as a form of an impoverished reality that is maintained by a pathological trance. Limited awareness, tunnel vision, the special characteristic that identifies a dysfunctional, impoverished reality, also identifies a type of pathological trance state that may be also a characteristic of all addictions.

Here's a nice self-destructive general recipe to get into a pathological trance and stay there: First, you must impoverish your reality by removing all distractions and limit your awareness to a single, or at most a very few objects of attention. This narrowing of attention can be helped along by the passions inspired by drugs, trauma, by joining some religious or political movements or by staying at home and watching a lot of television or your computer screen. It would be a good idea to get rid of distractions like kids, magazines or books—especially books that give you options or make you think about other possibilities. Second, you must convince yourself that all options—other than your chosen perfect ideal, of course— are "evil" and every attempt that your monkey mind makes to have variety must be crushed and that you must keep your mind "pure" and only allow thoughts about your chosen passion. This mental trick will serve to concentrate your attention firmly on the object.

Controlling Addictive Trances

Addictive trances reward an impoverished thought-set. You can help reduce any addiction by rewarding the enrichment of your thoughts. This means to expand the variety of your thoughts without trying to remove the thoughts you think are the problem. Start at any place in your addictive trance. Continue expanding and enriching your thoughts with new and stimulating ideas, people and experiences. When the variety of your thoughts becomes robust, ideas will be self-generating and the addictive trance will naturally cease to exist by definition.

While pathological trances are not at all desirable, most people nearly all of the time are either in a pathological trance or are engaged in trying to get others into trance. It is precisely pathological trance, not the yogic trance, that permeates most of our waking reality. It seems to me that once we can identify these pathological trances on a personal level we can take steps to avoid them.

If trance is defined as fixated thinking, then nearly all human activities create some type of trance. The bounded circles of thinking that keep us in trances are countless. The entire "ordered universe" is a trance. But there is an escapist pleasure in remaining in trance and a deep human fear of the chaos which can result if there were no trance "order" to life.

Socialization itself is the process of putting a person into a long-term trance. You do not go to work naked because of socialization. The socialization process started by parents and continued by religious training, schools, universities and employment in different ways all create a multiplicity of long-term trance-states, the result of which puts you in a bounded circle of limited but socially acceptable activity. Without these long-term trances your life would be more chaotic and perhaps you would be more painfully aware of too many choices. Every choice we make limits our options and makes life seem more manageable. When we stick to our choices at all costs we are in a pathological trance.

Perhaps the most important aspect of pathological trance is that it creates an unawareness or a "sleeping state." When your thoughts are limited in variety and your attention becomes fixed, the fixation alters perceptions, can create dream states, visions and hallucinations. In this sleeping state you are unaware of new information. Entranced by the street magician, you are unaware that the pickpocket has removed your wallet. The pathological trance state can create illusions which do not exist and cause the failure to

perceive what does exist. On the other hand, the trance state of a yogi or a shaman can be a tool to illuminate what is not normally perceived.

Religious Trance

There are religious healers who, by means of their special meditative trances, can perform healings in others. Such healers may certainly be envied for these powers. Yet, unfortunately, even meditative trance states can become pathological trances if they become an end in themselves. By knowing how to identify pathological trances it may be possible to avoid them.

Like any other trance, religious states of ecstasy can be created by narrowing one's perception to the religious object. Second, every attraction that would draw you away from the adored and worshiped object must be seen as an impediment in some sense. Third, all rational and ordinary thought stops. When this is accomplished, the only content left in the mind are the artifacts of the religious object, and this, and the resulting perceptions, is what the supplicant may appreciate as "religious ecstasy." So long as the ecstasy does not become an obsessive end in itself, these trance states may be very valuable.

Proselytizing religions often use methods that will induce trance. Peer pressure, confessional types of testimonials, sense deprivation, lack of contradicting testimony, hysteria, hyper-emotionalism all contribute to constrain awareness and to increase suggestibility. Suggestibility continued over time will give rise to hallucinatory trance states. When combined with the rewards of stress release, the trances become pathological and addictive.

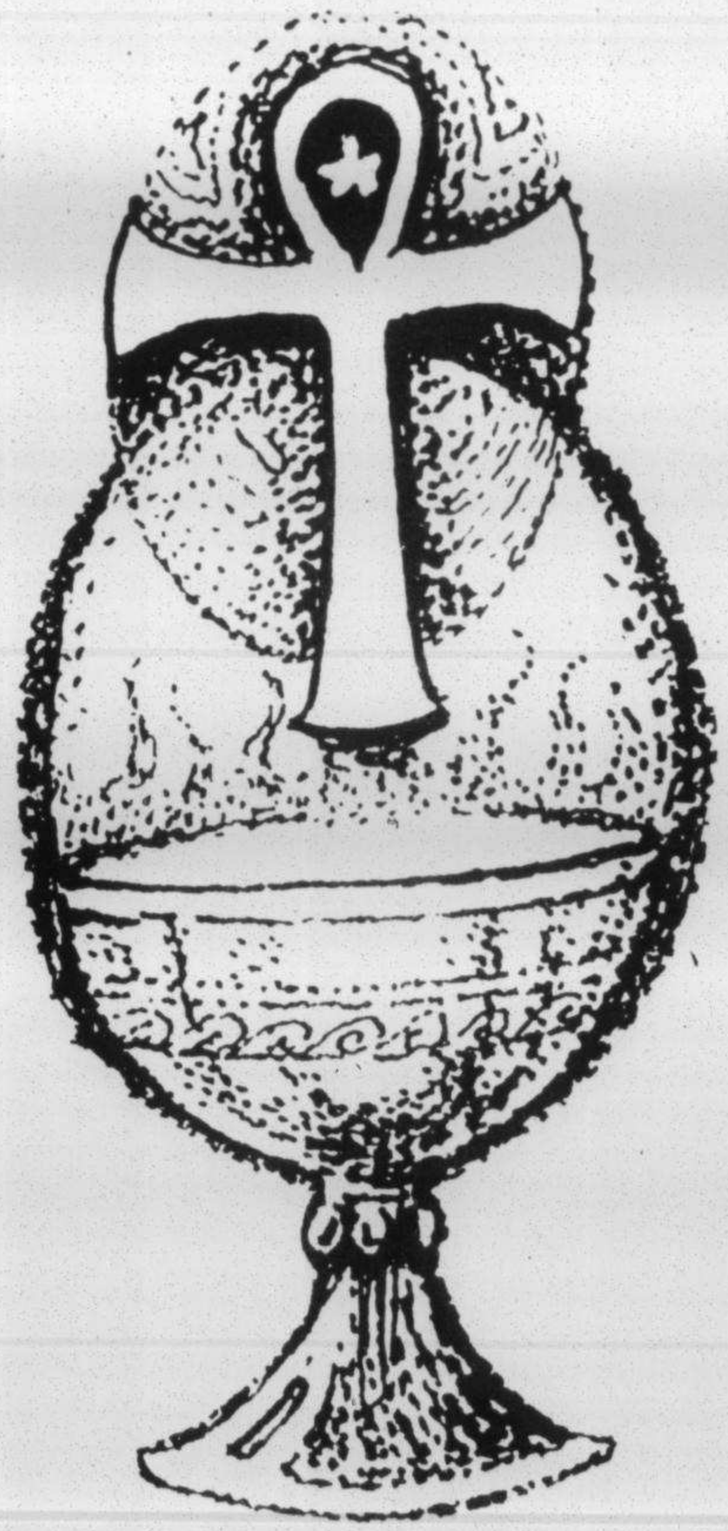
Religious fervor, as a state which feeds upon itself without end, is also quite definitely an addiction or a pathological trance state. The concentrative force of trance can also block out any sense of compassion for humans, and can be itself the basis for unimaginable cruelties. Religious addiction often carries with it an intransigence and intolerance of different points of view that can be as dangerous as a drug addict with a loaded gun. When religious fervor is combined with the rule of law and armed with deadly force, religious addicts effectively stop the evolution of a better type of human being.

Trance in the Workplace

The person who can put long, continuous hours at a difficult job may only be capable to doing this if in a trance. The pleasures of an engaging job can produce feelings of timeless states. Repetitive jobs narrow the attention to only the work at hand. Part of the mind is engaged in the job, but another part of the mind is free to dream. The dream-state produced is exactly characteristic of trance. In this dream-state, the work is being performed, but the worker is not necessarily aware of working. He may be visualizing a beach, having sexual or power fantasies or other hypnoidal and hypnotic dreams. The worker seems awake, but is really in a trance of reduced awareness.

Work addicts are almost revered for their devotion to the duty to work. Calvin and Zwingli have convinced entire societies that the person who works and makes money is closer to God and has most assuredly an eternal lease in one of heaven's plushier communities. Employers love work addicts because of this devotion which so enhances profit. Work addictions are not limited to any one particular industry. As a professional computer consultant, I have seen how some employers shamelessly exploit willing computer programmers who are addicted to computers.

Trance in the work place makes it easier to control information and employees. If an employee only does the job and knows neither what others are doing nor how they do it, that employee will never become a threat to the owners of the business. One presumes –falsely–that the owners of a business would be the only ones who would be aware of what their business is really doing. Yet, owners are themselves in trance and many times keep their attentions on the "bottom line." They, too, may not be aware of the social or environmental impacts of their business. Unfortunately, one of the disastrous side-effects of most trances is that they not only inhibit awareness but also they disable communication. One cannot communicate what one is not aware of.



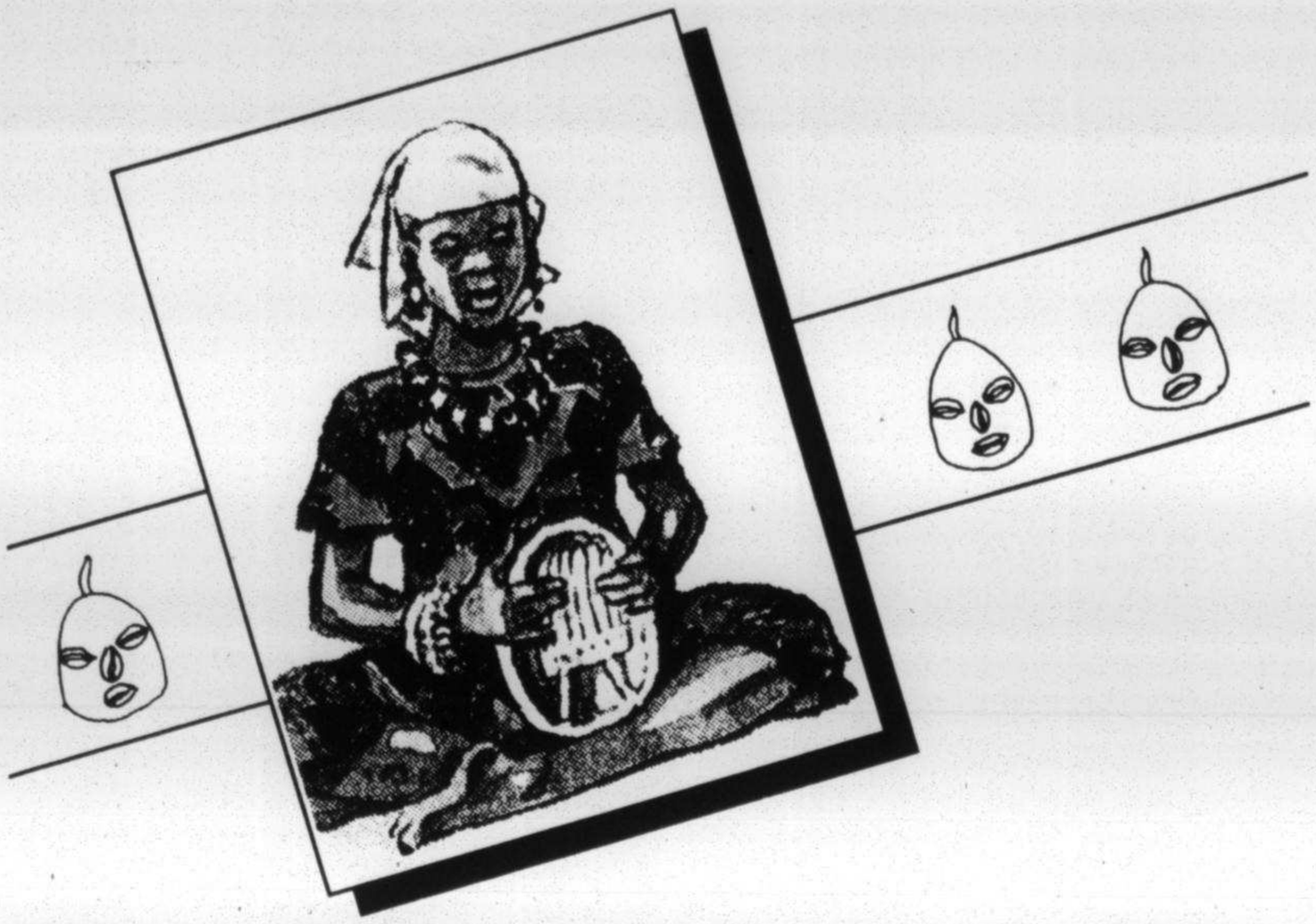
The most serious social side effect of pathological trance is the reduced awareness and disabled communication. Communication of information is critical for any system to function. Human systems as well as computer systems, ecological, biological, political and social systems and more all require clear, accurate, timely communication of information in order to function. The lack of clear, accurate, or timely communication between individuals is the basis for misunderstandings, disappointments, hurt feelings, resentment, and violence. The human, economic, agricultural, industrial and social systems that rely on people who are in pathological trance has disastrous consequences.

Pathological trance is unfortunately almost universally encouraged within business organizations. The more an employee can with single-minded determination execute the orders and policies of his organization, the more that employee is rewarded, promoted and respected. Single-mindedness, however, is a pathological trance. And trance always implies that there are areas where the employee is "asleep," unaware.

When organizations encourage trance in their employees, and since trance disables communication, then there can be no wonder why there are so many system dysfunctions in the world.

When we do not choose our trances, and are unaware of the types and nature of the pathological trances in our lives, then there are things we are unaware of. What we are unaware of causes more human suffering than the sometimes painful knowledge of "the truth." One goal of a robust and magical life is to be as aware as possible of our options. When our unconscious pathological trances cripple our options the result is often disaster and tragedy in our personal lives, our society and in the environment. GE

Dennis R. Wier is a computer consultant and a long-term meditator (since 1965) who lives in Switzerland with his wife Doris. His comments are the result of his personal realizations and investigations. He may be contacted by snailmail at The Trance Institute; CH-8311 BrÅtten, Switzerland, or by email at drwier@pax.eunet.ch



An interview with Stella Chiweshe

by *Philip H. Farber and Djenaba*

Peter Gabriel's W.O.M.A.D. tour (World Of Music, Art and Dance), is one of the foremost events bringing world music and culture to European and North American audiences. The last W.O.M.A.D. was in 1994, and at the Saratoga Springs, New York appearance of the tour we had the incredible experience of meeting Stella Chiweshe, a Mbira musician and priestess from Zimbabwe, Africa.

Mbira, a type of thumb piano, is also the name of the spirit that informs the music. Mbira offers a connection to the Earth, and to the ancestors, whose souls can be brought forth to give advice and energy to their living descendants. Playing Mbira is traditionally reserved for men, and it is a tribute to Chiweshe's inner strength that she was able to challenge the traditions and realize her calling.

W.O.M.A.D. publicists led us to Chiweshe's tour bus, and we found her sitting in an armchair in the back, her instrument beside her. She radiated calm and joy as she punctuated her speech with laughter, music and snorted of some kind of snuff. We would have been happy to bask in her presence all day, and we remained there until the publicists came to drag us off to our next interview.

PHF: Can you tell us about the instrument you play?

Stella Chiweshe: Mbira. The music is called Mbira. The instrument is called Mbira. It is Mbira music. People ask and say, 'where do you put this music?' People want to say, 'this is jazz,' 'this is classical.' But Mbira is just Mbira.

P: Are there particular rituals that Mbira is associated with?

Stella: It is connected with the Earth and with our being. [There are] people, there are animals, there is water, but it is very much in touch with water, which is the home of Mbira.

P: Mbira is both the music and the spirit?

Stella: Yes. It is a spirit with beauty who can change at any time to be a very rough patron to me. He does the music, but I am the one who plays.

P: Mbira participates when you play?

Stella: When I play, it's different. It's very complicated. You cannot understand it, really, but you can try to follow. When I go on stage to play, it's never like I'll write down to say, 'I will do something every day,' that today I'll [name of a song], and today I'll play [another name]. It's not like that. [She laughs.] Because I'm taken. You know? I'm taken when I go with Mbira. I'm taken and then I follow.

P: You connect with Mbira first, and the music follows?

Stella: It's like I'm thinking I want to play a half hour, and I've agreed with everybody, and it's being written on the big screen that I'm playing a half hour. Then when I go on stage, half hour always come. So, this is the end and I keep on playing, and I don't know which song it is. I keep thinking, [she whispers] 'Which song is this? Which song is this?' If I play with somebody, I'll ask, 'Which song is this?' When he tells me, I come to where other people are....

P: Is part of the performance for the audience to connect with Mbira?

Stella: For some people, they distract themselves, by thinking first of 'Oh, the music is starting...How is she playing? How does this instrument look?' [She laughs] And during that time, Mbira is going. There is a message which each one should get when they start to listen to Mbira. Whenever you are to listen, even if it is only 30 minutes, it is to listen carefully...

D: Mbira is water?

Stella: When you talk about 'what is Mbira,' it is very difficult. It is like talking about how the storms and the trees were created... It is something you don't understand. I also don't understand. For me, it is the Earth. I'm just talking about for me. I don't know what it is for somebody else.

D: When you go on stage, it just comes?

Stella: Mbira will make you very assertive in front of people. Because Mbira is not you. When you say, 'I want it like this. I want it like this,' that is not Mbira.

D: It is what it is.

Stella: That's right. [she plays a few notes on the Mbira] And then there will be silence

and people will start to say, 'What's wrong? What's wrong?' [She plays some more, something rhythmic and organic, like drops of silver rain falling on the grass.] This is Mbira. And when we start to play, there is no discrimination of first minute. [She plays some more, singing along with the Mbira, for a few minutes, like sunlight striking the wet grass. Time sat still, illustrating her point more eloquently than words.] Then we hear the Yay! from the people.

P: In this country people expect music to be something that occupies your mind for a while, and then it's gone...

Stella: Yes. This is like just wanting the time to pass away without really getting down to reality. They [use music] to just keep dragging and forget about the struggling, instead of trying to solve it.... If people are more like that, then there are more tears.

P: What led you to Mbira?

Stella: The children do not understand what the elders are doing. But I was always on this side where they were going. I was young... my age was not allowed. But if they wanted to kick me out, they had to stop work. Because I was not going to ask anyone to sit and watch. The excitement led me to follow them. The excitement, if it was from Mbira. I kept on following them when they went to drumming. When I had grown up with my grandfather and my mother, it was a church place. You had to go to church on Sunday. If you play Mbira, you've got to go and confess, and you can't live in the community. You cannot live in the community if you are not uptight. [general laughter]

D: It's like that here, too.

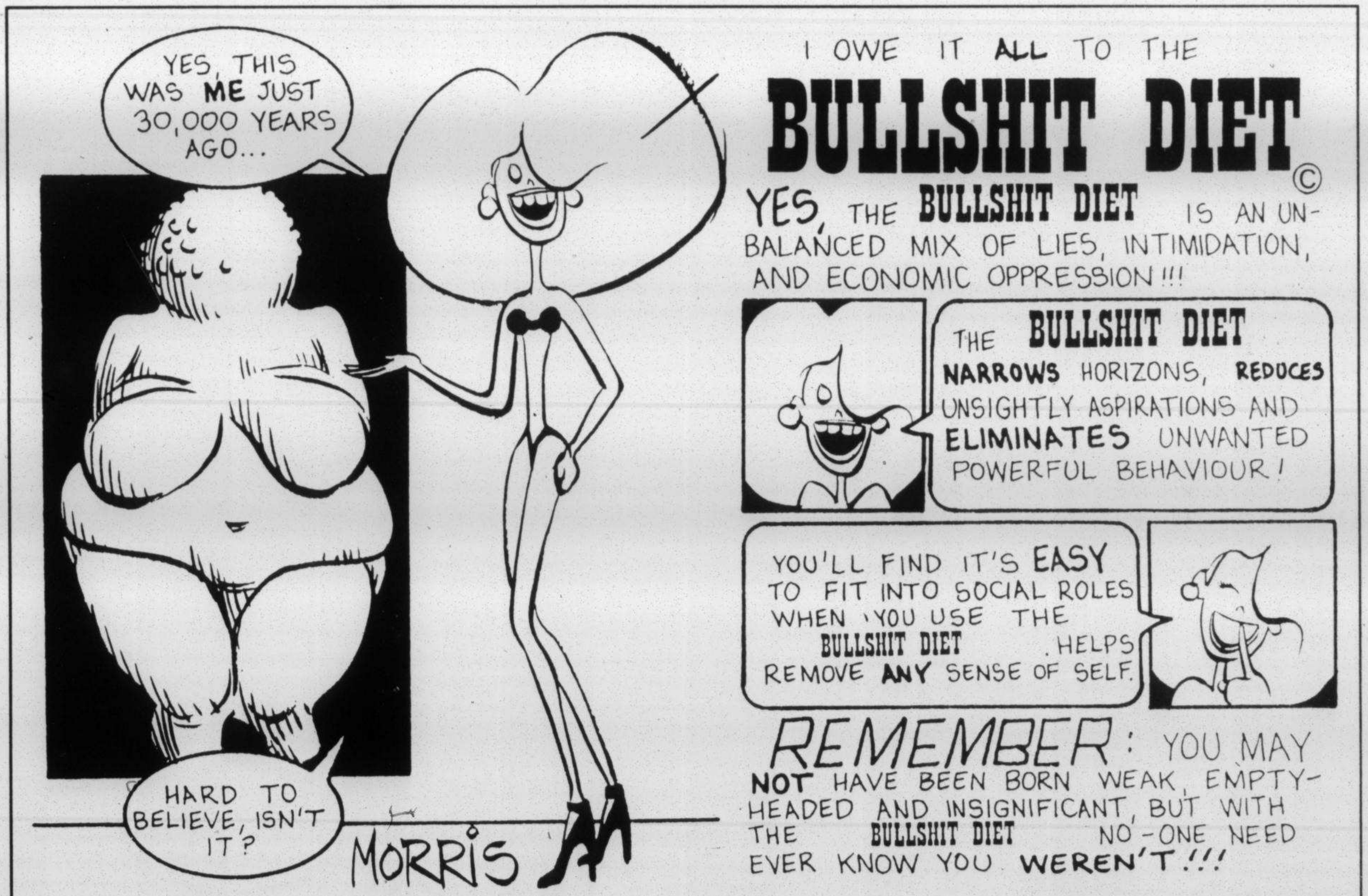
Stella: A long time ago when the lions were still free, Mbira was not yet in these songs. [She laughs] There was living a person who is now the fifth ancestor of my mother. His spirit was talking through my mother, but he didn't say his name from when she was nine years old, until I was seventeen. Nobody knew what to do if a person was possessed, what to ask. The spirit was always telling me this is what happens everywhere. Here too. The spirit just comes and we don't know what to do because we didn't grow up with it. You were told not to do that. Then the old man himself said 'let me come and talk by myself.' The people did whatever is done to chase away the spirit, but he was still coming. Then Mbira players were invited into our house. It's our place to play for the spirit to tell us who he is... So the only words he said were, 'My name is Kowzaa. I'm not going to be chased away by what you do. And I'm a person who doesn't want to invite other people's grandchildren to play Mbira, because I've got my own grandchildren. There, they are sitting. And there will be four of them playing Mbira. It pointed to me. It was such a tense moment. I crawled inside myself when the finger pointed to me. It was so far away from me, I couldn't believe it. When I couldn't believe it, I forgot about it. Then, after two years of really forgetting, then it started. I wanted to hear Mbira every day, every time. I had to learn.

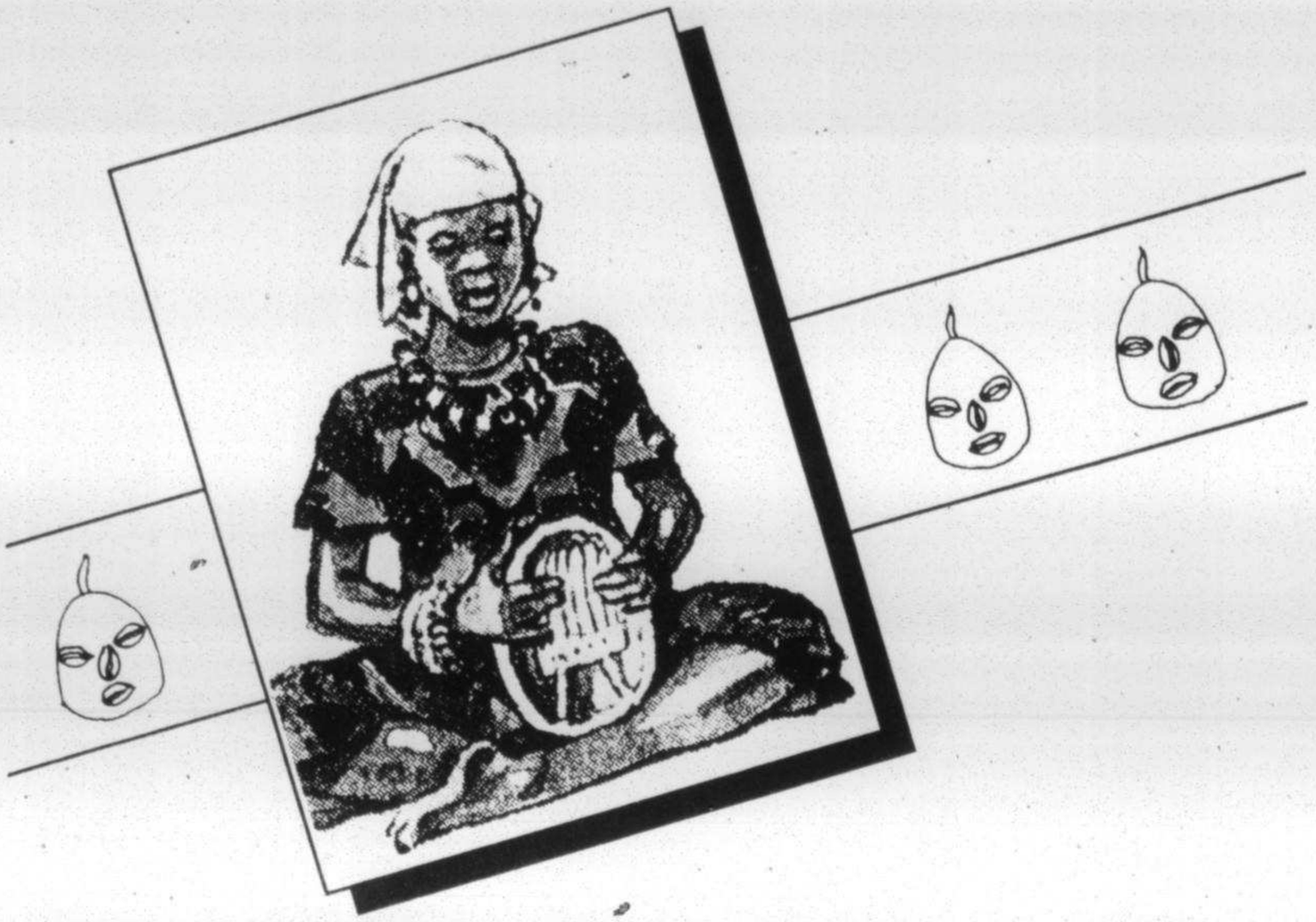
D: You had remembered at that point?

Stella: No, I didn't remember. I had forgotten, because I didn't believe the finger had pointed at me also. GE

Philip H. Farber is a freelance writer, and author of FUTURERITUAL: Magick for the 21st Century (Eschaton Productions, Chicago, 1995).

Djenaba is a fitness expert and world music fan.





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Stella: For some people, they distract themselves, by thinking first of 'Oh, the music is starting...How is she playing? How does this instrument look?' [She laughs] And during that time, Mbira is going. There is a message which each one should get when they start to listen to Mbira. Whenever you are to listen, even if it is only 30 minutes, it is to listen carefully...

D: Mbira is water?

Stella: When you talk about 'what is Mbira,' it is very difficult. It is like talking about how the storms and the trees were created... It is something you don't understand. I also don't understand. For me, it is the Earth. I'm just talking about for me. I don't know what it is for somebody else.

D: When you go on stage, it just comes?

Stella: Mbira will make you very assertive in front of people. Because Mbira is not you. When you say, 'I want it like this. I want it like this,' that is not Mbira.

D: It is what it is.

Stella: That's right. [she plays a few notes on the Mbira] And then there will be silence

and people will start to say, 'What's wrong? What's wrong?' [She plays some more, something rhythmic and organic, like drops of silver rain falling on the grass.] This is Mbira. And when we start to play, there is no discrimination of first minute. [She plays some more, singing along with the Mbira, for a few minutes, like sunlight striking the wet grass. Time sat still, illustrating her point more eloquently than words.] Then we hear the Yay! from the people.

P: In this country people expect music to be something that occupies your mind for a while, and then it's gone...

Stella: Yes. This is like just wanting the time to pass away without really getting down to reality. They [use music] to just keep dragging and forget about the struggling, instead of trying to solve it.... If people are more like that, then there are more tears.

P: What led you to Mbira?

Stella: The children do not understand what the elders are doing. But I was always on this side where they were going. I was young... my age was not allowed. But if they wanted to kick me out, they had to stop work. Because I was not going to ask anyone to sit and watch. The excitement led me to follow them. The excitement, if it was from Mbira. I kept on following them when they went to drumming. When I had grown up with my grandfather and my mother, it was a church place. You had to go to church on Sunday. If you play Mbira, you've got to go and confess, and you can't live in the community. You cannot live in the community if you are not uptight. [general laughter]

D: It's like that here, too.

Stella: A long time ago when the lions were still free, Mbira was not yet in these songs. [She laughs] There was living a person who is now the fifth ancestor of my mother. His spirit was talking through my mother, but he didn't say his name from when she was nine years old, until I was seventeen. Nobody knew what to do if a person was possessed, what to ask. The spirit was always telling me this is what happens everywhere. Here too. The spirit just comes and we don't know what to do because we didn't grow up with it. You were told not to do that. Then the old man himself said 'let me come and talk by myself.' The people did whatever is done to chase away the spirit, but he was still coming. Then Mbira players were invited into our house. It's our place to play for the spirit to tell us who he is... So the only words he said were, 'My name is Kowzaa. I'm not going to be chased away by what you do. And I'm a person who doesn't want to invite other people's grandchildren to play Mbira, because I've got my own grandchildren. There, they are sitting. And there will be four of them playing Mbira. It pointed to me. It was such a tense moment. I crawled inside myself when the finger pointed to me. It was so far away from me, I couldn't believe it. When I couldn't believe it, I forgot about it. Then, after two years of really forgetting, then it started. I wanted to hear Mbira every day, every time. I had to learn.

D: You had remembered at that point?

Stella: No, I didn't remember. I had forgotten, because I didn't believe the finger had pointed at me also. GE

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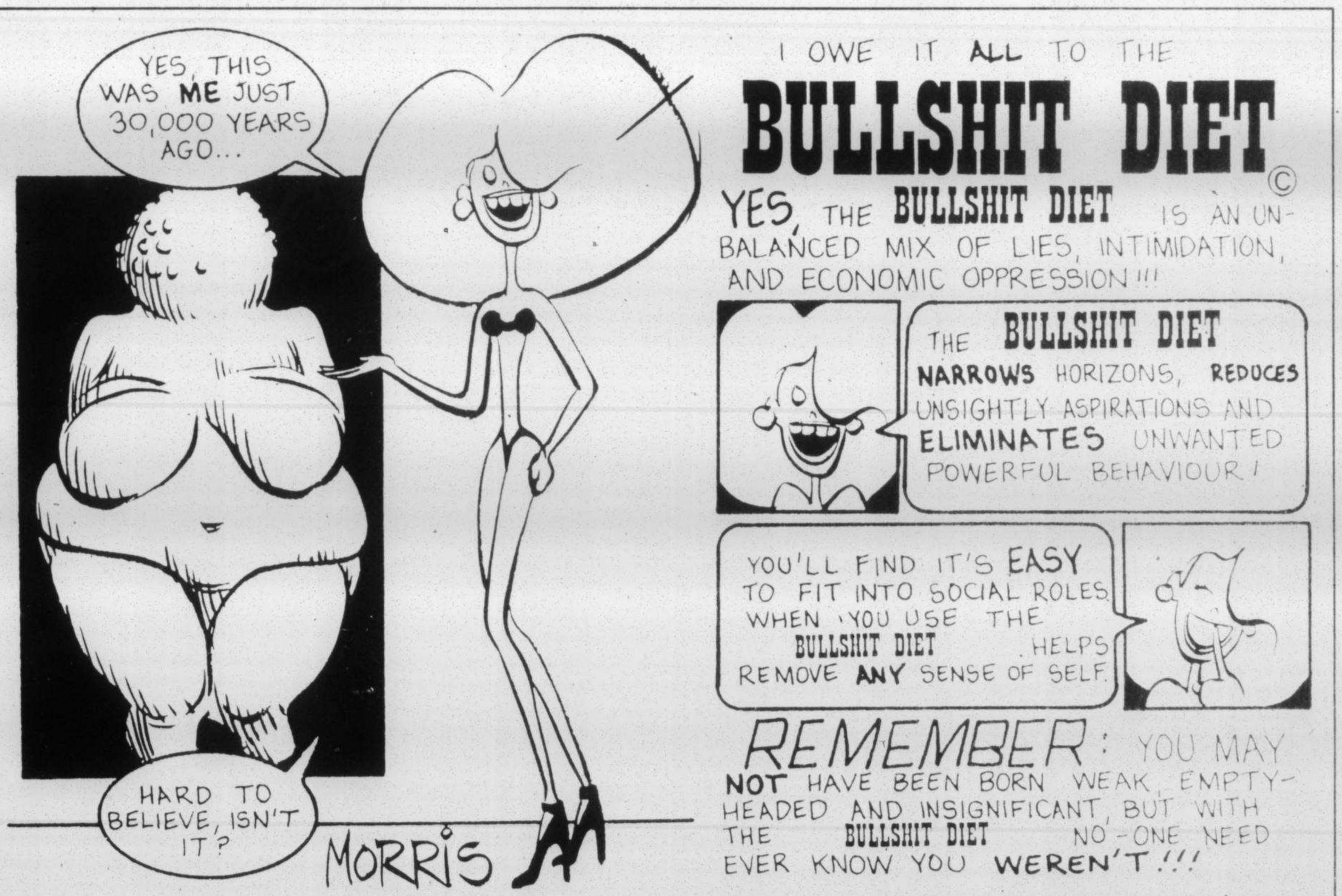


THE REWILDING:

WILD SELF — PART II

by **Jesse Wolf Hardin**

"When we get
out of the glass
bottles of our
ego,
and when we
escape like
squirrels
turning in the
cages of our
personality
and get into the
forests again,
we shall shiver
with cold and
fright,
but things will
happen to us

so that we
don't know
ourselves.

Cool, unlying life
will rush in,
and passion
will make our
bodies taut
with power,
we shall stamp
our feet with
new power
and old things
will fall down,
we shall laugh,
and institutions
will curl up like
burnt paper."

—D.H.Lawrence

Alexander Marshack described humanity as a "persistent flowering of an ancient reality." The rewilding of the self is neither a retreat to the past nor a transformation into something new. Instead, it is a re-formation, a reflowering, a reinhabitation of original form. It is simply being who we really are—simply being. It is the uncomplicated if difficult cessation of all pretense, artifice, conditioning, labeling, distraction, regulation, manipulation, domination, preoccupation with the future, suppression and repression. Rewilding is a coming into self.

Wild Mind:

"Remember the
feeling as a child
when you woke
up and the
morning smiled—

It's time, it's
time, it's time
you felt like that
again.

So come with me
and leave your
yesterday
behind—
and take a giant
step outside your
mind."

—Taj Majal

"In Nature
there's no
blemish but the
mind;

None can be
call'd deforme'd
but the unkind."

—Shakespeare

The human mind is a wild place, an unfathomable wilderness of image and sensation, memory and precognition. Within its realm, between its roots and branches and the quick steps of its creatures exists everything that has ever been and can ever be. The world resides in the mind as surely as the mind resides in the world. We know it's wild the way it wanders into dangerous terrain the minute we aren't watching, gets lost like a little kid in a department store of pictures and ideas, tosses off civil constraint and dives into the moist folds of carnal indulgence at every licentious opportunity. You can be in the midst of a geometry test or taken up with the repair of a malfunctioning carburetor when the mind will race off to enjoin such savage themes as sex, play and death. The wild mind sings whatever song it wants, even if you're tired of hearing it. There is no such thing as confined mind. It cannot be separated from its natural proclivities and desires, neither by the dogmatic guilt trips of organized religion, nor the pronouncements of custom-bound authorities. Even in jail, the mind goes wherever the hell it wants. It easily penetrates the stiffest security measures, slipping through the bars no matter how close they're placed, breaching the illusory impermeability of reinforced concrete in the mind's insistent quest. The wild mind acknowledges no limitations, boundaries, rules or taboos—and it is therefore without limit.

Wild consciousness knows itself as inseparable from everything around it, and even as it reaches out to pierce and ponder things far away, it is delving into the depths of its own essence and meaning. As such, it experiences a degree of the pain and joy of seemingly disparate forms, aching for the Earth at the bite of the bulldozer's wicked blade, and reveling to the giddy lift of wind beneath the heron's wings. It joins all the other lifeforms crawling and stalking, living and dying, laughing and crying, feeling the stretch of their skin and the water against their scales, making love above the abyss.

Wild mind is omnifarious and omnipresent, present in all forms and in all places at once. As an extension of planetary mind, it is the numinous force that unites all things in a common field/body of recognition and purpose. In recognizing and acknowledging

something we touch it, connect to it, and thus identify with it as a portion of our greater self. Spinoza wrote that we are only as large as our loves. A deep identification with every element of the Nature results in the most profound love—a self love that encompasses every form and motion constituting an indisputably magical world.

Wild mind spins within the contours of cyclical time, tuned into the lunar and solar cycles, the monthly red tide of a woman's menstrual flow, the changing of the seasons and each persons lifetime of circling back into wisdom, and then back into the earth. Wild consciousness is tuned into body time, the organic cycles of hunger and exhaustion, satiation and rest that are surely more relevant that any imposed linear time-frame. Civilized time is clock time. It is a potentially conscious humanity regulated by the unforgiving and boring regularity of a blatantly unconscious machine. Civilized time hasn't the ability to adjust to natural and personal rhythms, or synchronize with interterrestial rhythms.

The wild mind exists in the perennial perceptual now. The primacy of immediate experience over preoccupation with past or future concerns is the hallmark of primal (of first importance) consciousness and evidence of a (sometimes uninvited!) rewilding–in-progress. No self-respecting savage would eat without tasting every morsel of nuance, or focus on some inflated future scenario at the expense of current sensations. Temporal bliss is a function of presence—savoring the precariousness of the instant, the intense immediacy and depth of the always changing, eternally present moment.

The watch is a symbol of our internalized control and self-imprisonment, handcuffing us to the binding schedules of a mechanized, desensitized world. The audible ticks usher us from one second to another, marking time like a military band for the march of mortal minutes off the cliffs of our demise. Feel in every watch the suffering of the third-world miners, foundry and factory workers who lived and died to see the metals of the Earth set into this saddened form solely to keep cadence for our intemperate rush through existence. Feel the weight of those factories, and the weight of the mountain pillaged for ore. Feel the weight on your wrist—and throw the watch away!

The constant, charged, orgasmic engagement with life peculiar to the wild is a result of living in-tense-ly, fully in present tense. In the wild mind, sensate experience takes precedence over abstract symbols. Original mind knows the world by feeling it rather than thinking about it. Feral mind, yanked free of the tethers that bound it, refusing to continue to be distracted by the displays of irrelevant input, held back by assumption or held down by weighty conclusion, will increasingly abandon internal dialogue for smell and feel, for the omnipresent reality of powerful visions and authentic emotions.

Wild mind is not fearless, but it is saved the contemporary neurosis of fearing that which doesn't yet exist. When not directly and physically faced with an unavoidable threat, the natural hominid mind, like plant and animal mind, exists in a heightened condition of awakeness, passion, and awe—a constant state of arousal and bliss.

The left brain, agent of logic and language, has been developing along with the rest of our beings since the very beginnings of our mammalian evolution. The so-called primitives of today have a left hemisphere no less highly formed than the colonial modernists appropriating their land. They realize that in balance with the nonlinear right hemisphere, the rational side of their psyches may contribute to the continued survival of the tribe, but that if allowed to predominate the result is certain alienation from the wild self and the wild lands sustaining them. As a result, they have come up with various checks on the hegemony of left brain thinking. Rituals, vision quests, meditation, ecstatic dance, tantra, sex magic, the fine art of riverside leisure, and the careful consumption of psychoactive plants all serve to prevent the subordination of wild mind to the dictates of the imposing/opposing linear reality.

Logic is no substitute for intuition and instinct, vision and dream. Language, for all its beauty, is no substitute for the actual sensory experience of that which it describes. The right brain houses the long submerged instincts of wild self, learned not in a matter of years, but through lifetimes of learned experience, genetically/spiritually/energetically recalled by a key smell, a terrifying noise, or the embrace of dreamstate. As far removed as people seem to be from the raw processes of their own nature, they may surprise themselves by one day leaping out of the way of a speeding car they never actually saw, or wake up in the middle of the night from dreams of places and experiences more impossibly real than anything they've ever known in the course of their mundane lives. Dreams are the wild mind having its say.

Power dreams are the dreams of the Earth dreamed through our wild selves. Dreams put us directly in touch with the phenomenal and numinous world, in spite of daytime denials and conditioning. The psychic and genetic codes, and the very will of the planetary whole are accessible through dreamstate.

Visions are waking dreams, preeminent moments of peak wildness, of total connection with the flux and context of life and the living Earth. By applying our assigned creativity to these gifts of Vision, we can recreate wild culture from wild mind. Those Visions of utmost importance will be those that contribute to the free evolution of diverse life and the unimpaired processes and rhythms of manifest Nature, of planet Gaia. Visions of ourselves contained within the Earth, and of the entirety of Nature within us.

"We know ourselves
to be made from this earth.
We know this earth is made
from our bodies. For we
see ourselves. And we are
Nature. We are Nature
seeing nature. We are
Nature with a concept
of Nature. Nature
weeping. Nature speaking of
Nature to Nature.
The red-winged blackbird
flies in us, in our inner sight.
We see the arc of her flight.
We measure the ellipse.
We predict its climax.
We are amazed.
We fly."

—Susan Griffin

Practice visionary mind. Practice quiet mind, sensual mind, attentive mind, wild mind, the only hope for salvation—not for our "souls," but for most higher lifeforms including ourselves—begins with the reenchantment of the human mind, along with the reinhabitation of the feral body.

Wild Body:

"Beauty is
momentary in
the mind—

The fitful
tracing of a
portal;

But in the
flesh it is
immortal.

The body dies;
the body's
beauty lives."

—Wallace Stevens

"Be a good
animal, true to
your animal
instincts."

—D.H. Lawrence

The civilized mind imagines itself a separate entity from the body that houses it, a conscious soul piloting an imperfect vehicle of breakable bones and needy flesh. To the contrary, wild mind, natural mind, extends well beyond that muscle we call the brain, with a physiological sentience that shuttles along the network of nerves, translated through the actions of enzymes and hormones, forming a true body of knowledge. It makes "sense" of the world not through intellectual analysis, but through animal senses that defy restraint, unhesitantly and intimately interacting with the rest of the Earthen body, Gaia.

The human body is a wild thing, an animal true to its creature nature irrespective of any manipulations of the mind. The ambiguous relationship between the civilized and their bodies can be found in their expressions as well as actions: "He's such an animal," "She eats like an animal," or "They were reduced to little more than animals." Once, when I referred in a talk to our animal selves, a student stood up and emotionally proclaimed "I'm no animal!" While most people accept humankind's casting, they cling to the notion that they have somehow transcended the base reality of their animalness. They rationalize that because "we can think," or because "we have souls," that we are more sentient, conscious or ordained than the other lifeforms. Civilized humanity seems to consider itself as either God's mirror image appointed to manage chaotic Nature, or as a species evolved into a "higher" state, removed from Earthen contaminants. They see themselves as cleaner, liberated by their rationality from the dirt, the dark, the microscopic and unseen, the fermentative compost forever welcoming us to the depths of its heat. They feel betrayed by the escape of gas, the flow of menstrual blood, an untimely erection, hair sprouting in "undesirable" places, the wrinkles that record their laughter and tears, and the inevitability of their mortal demise.

The ongoing war against Nature will not stop so long as the civilized mind wages war on the functions and sensations of its body. The five senses, and so-called extra-sensory perception, form the channels of communication between the narrowly defined self and the rest of the world. We are linked to that which we touch, held by that which surrounds us. We come to know a "thing" through its smell, taste, and appearance— not through the non-sense of extrapolative analysis. And the world knows us the same way. A garden responds to song. A tree sends out warnings through its roots at the first bite of our incontinent chainsaws. Moving through this canyon my presence is communicated in waves of recognition passing from boisterous blue jays to ground squirrel to deer like an alarming wind blowing through the boughs of pines.

The domesticated body is deadened, "freed" of the senses, isolated not only from the processes of Nature, but from its own processes. Many of the human diseases not directly caused by technology's poisoning and irradiation of the environment are the result of our disassociation from the cycles, needs and warnings communicated by our own bodies. They are the product of our dis-ease, our lack of ease, our discomfort with our corporal being, our mortal wholeness. We sign up for redemptive, soteriological religions that focus on the promise of an afterlife to the neglect of lived experience, and yet spend fortunes on medical technology in an effort to postpone our certain fate. By avoiding danger we miss out on growth. Insulating ourselves from the sensation of pain, our padding prevents the full experiencing of pleasure. Learning to block out the noise of sirens, we miss the subtle twitters of birds, the music of rain, and the sound of approaching feet. Learning to ignore the smells of asphalt and garbage rotting in the alleys, we lose the ability to discern the scent of wildflowers growing next to the sidewalk, or to pick up the aroma of a lover from afar. Eyes averted from the fight down the street, the wino in the gutter, the blackened smokestacks and glaring chrome of commerce or the eyes of passing strangers—likely miss the graceful swoop of the pigeon, the details of an important encounter, and the intricacies of turbulence on the surface of a child's swimming pool. Physical and perceptual barriers erected for our comfort and protection block sight of the interactive world and our unfulfilled animal potentials.

Reinhabitation of the wild body begins with reimmersion in the senses, engaging every aspect and element of the living planet, every experience, with every one of our atrophied senses. To engage traumatic pain is to heighten our ability to feel, increasing the range and depth of experience, equally intensifying any ecstatic experience. Ecstatics are people who embrace themselves and the world through their senses, living in a hyperstate of sensate awareness and bliss punctuated by the occasional experience of suffering. The wild body is an ecstatic organ, an organ and agent of Gaian bliss.

The practice of its reinhabitation involves refamiliarizing ourselves with the feel and function of our flesh. The senses take us into ourselves, even as they reach out and thereby enlarges us. Feel the blood pushing through your veins, the way food affects your energy or packs into your bowels. Notice what postures cause you to tighten up and which movements increase your range of movement. When you urinate, rather than trying to rush it and ignore it, feel the pleasure of its emptying, and the way the bladder contracts upon itself.

Enter the wilds to open the senses, and resist closing them down upon your return to the habits and distractions of the city. Interpret the world without internal comment whenever possible, reading the nuances of everything around you, tasting reality with the tongue, the ears, the nose. When using your hands be sure and register the sensations of everything you touch, from the smooth coldness of steel to the incrementally warmer keys of a typewriter in use. Use them to explore the cryptic patterns of tree bark, and learn the desires of your dog or cat. Rub one hand with the other. Touch yourself, squeeze a sore shoulder or lightly scratch a seldom touched spot. Accept that its okay to make yourself feel good, and it will be easier to do the same for others. Focus on contacting the world through your skin without using your hands, touching the bed, the wall, or the grass outside with the seldom engaged small of your back, elbow, butt, toes or forehead. Alternately touch your face with varied materials and textures such as a feather, loofa, wind polished bone, a dry sponge or rough piece of wood—and carefully notice how each feels according to its character and the motions you impart.

Isolate all the senses but one, and then know and live the world through that one alone. With the ears plugged and a blindfold on, we ease through a world made entirely of smells, distinct and yet blending into an aromatic tapestry with shape and substance. When going about your regular daily affairs, avoid sliding into rote behavior with shut-down senses, ignoring the way the chair cradles your back, the air dries the sweat on your neck, or the messages of hormonal exepheremones released by others in your presence. Everything around you is a transmitter of sensations, in communication with you, the receptor.

Wild body is instinctual body. With our detachment from our instincts humanity became easy prey—not for hounding beasts, but for the predatory artifice of modern society. Intuition and instinct are the will and wisdom of both the personal and planetary bodies.

Wild body is a sexual body. Whether straight or gay, the affected androgynous or repressed celibate, male or female, young or old, the body is influenced and empowered by sexual predispositions, characteristics and drives. Next to death, the sexual act is the great unifier, bringing us into oneness with all elements of our self, with our lovers, and with the seamless environment around us. But even alone, the urges of the wild body call to us for attention. We walk about charged with the energy of our sexuality, the dynamic force of the universe itself—life endlessly pursuing completion, dissolution, and reformation. Endlessly moving. Cycling. Spiraling. Upping the ante, the amperage, and the velocity. Women can take their temperatures regularly and learn to feel for the dropping of the egg, and become intimate with the fluctuations in the level and form of their desires. Men can tune-in to the rise in testosterone in their bloodstream, and revel in the jump and plunge of their mammalian urge for union.

Our animal sexuality is one venue for passion, the fuel of both art and evolution. An ally of immediacy, passion takes us beyond objectification, back to the intensity of present time, responding directly to fete or foe, task or poem. The wild body runs on the pulse of passion. The passion to experience miraculous, finite life.

We are impelled by the wild imperative. The ways in which we manifest this are expressed in wild language, acts, creations and culture. GE

by ***Jacque Omi Zaleski***
of Iron Oak, ATC, CAW

Preparing For Ritual Behind Bars

Ever wonder what it would be like to spend time behind bars, locked-up, put-away? Want to hear those doors bang behind you as you go through a series of electronic and manual locks? You can find out real easily what it would be like there; just begin a prison ministry.

I say "real easily," but that only applies to getting into prison as a visitor; it took me 3 years to get into prison as a minister. The known world is not ready to accept Pagan clergy and we are often too willing to accept the label of a "second class" religion. Don't buy into that label. The need for prison ministers is so great that I could make my full time job traveling from prison to prison just within the state of Florida.

The incarcerated Pagans range widely in age and in terms of confinement. I have no idea why most are confined, although they often tell me. I have one on death row and one who may leave next month to begin life as a college student. One is native Irish, many Native American, several Puerto Rican, and everything in between. So far all are male; I have never heard from a woman prisoner.

My story started in 1991 when the first letter came from a prisoner. He wanted me to write and to visit. The following March Reverend Pete Davis of Aquarian Tabernacle Church (now my mother church) encouraged me to go into the prisons. I hit blank walls over and over again until Chaplain Franklin Smith of Indian River Community Correctional (IRCC) responded to the pleas of two young men.

Chaplain Smith is a deeply dedicated minister, as well as being a fine southern gentleman. He is the only father many of his young men know. His facility serves about 250 young men, 16-20 years old. They are all first time offenders and categorized as least likely to return to a prison environment.

I was first scheduled to arrive at IRCC on Samhain in 1994, but that was called off and re-scheduled for Yule. On December 20th I was again called for a "re-scheduling." My response was that if the Christian young men were going to celebrate their Christmas holiday, then my young men would celebrate their Yule. Two of them were waiting for me; they had asked for me. And I was going to be there alone on December 21st with the State of Florida's blessing, or with TV cameras and newspaper reporters if permission to visit them was withheld.

For a year now I have visited every month. Although I plan to travel over 25 weekends this year, I will still be there once a month. For what I gain from the experience far exceeds anything else I do for my own spiritual enrichment. My 30-year-old daughter, a placement officer in a fashion design school and a model, who was the first person to ever visit IRCC with me, calls it "A real win-win, mom. It's perfect; a win both for them and for you."

My daughter is right. My relationship with my two sons, 33 and 18 years old, has always been a big disappointment to me because they are both water signs and rather "flow" through life with very little inner drive. As a result, they both recoiled from the high standards I place on myself, my drive, and my projective personality. We really *don't* speak the same language. It would be easy for me to assume that I'm just not good with young men even though I really don't believe that. But I now know that I can serve young men and maybe make a difference in their lives.

So when I see the red pen marks on the calendar that say "prison" I gather up the items that the state has approved for me to take into the prison. I use a macaw feather to cast a circle, a tiny container of salt, plain olive oil for consecration, tarot cards (now, getting those in was nearly as hard as getting me in!), altar cloths, and my robe. I dress in a clerical collar (ATC dress code) and my hair pinned up. At the start of ritual, I let my hair down and put the robe over my collar and slacks.

I always leave early since it is an hour's drive to IRCC and I hate making "my boys" wait. The chaplain tells me that I'm the only visitor that most of them have ever had.

We meet in a 20 foot square interior garden. Three "walls" of the garden are the interior glass halls of the prison. The forth wall is brick. People watch us as we worship, but we have gotten used to it. The fountain is in the north, the barbed wire is all over the top of the walls, and two palm trees (our Lord and our Lady) are right in the center of the garden.

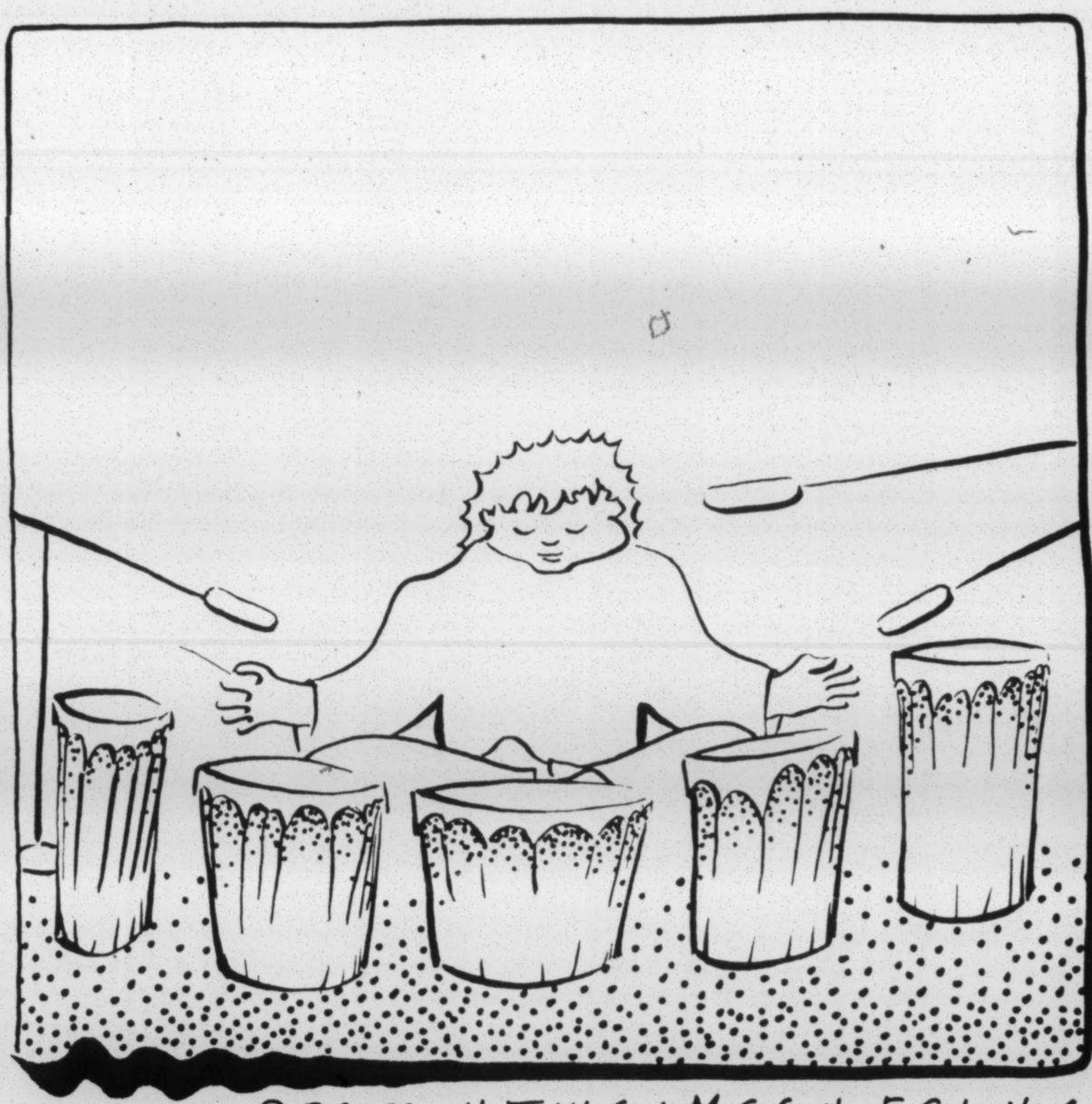
We use chairs as altars and have a lesson often based on the changes in the two trees and many plants we see in the garden. Meditation often takes them to vast open spaces, with rolling hills, where they are riding a white well-groomed horse while richly dressed, at peace, and in total control of their lives. I suggest that they go someplace like that in their daily meditation so that when confronted with a disruptive situation they can go there instead of buying into a confrontation that may lengthen their stay inside prison walls.

In February of this year my husband, Roger Paraselsu Coleman, and I visited another prison (over an hour away) because my first incarcerated student was on work release there. Although I had made previous arrangements, we had to make two trips, on different days, and then waited over an hour to be allowed a few minutes with him (he was in leisure time and not busy). It was a dreadful place, but he was allowed to hug me for the first time. That hug alone and the one at the end of the visit was worth all the effort we had made, for the hug said more about his gratitude than any words ever could.

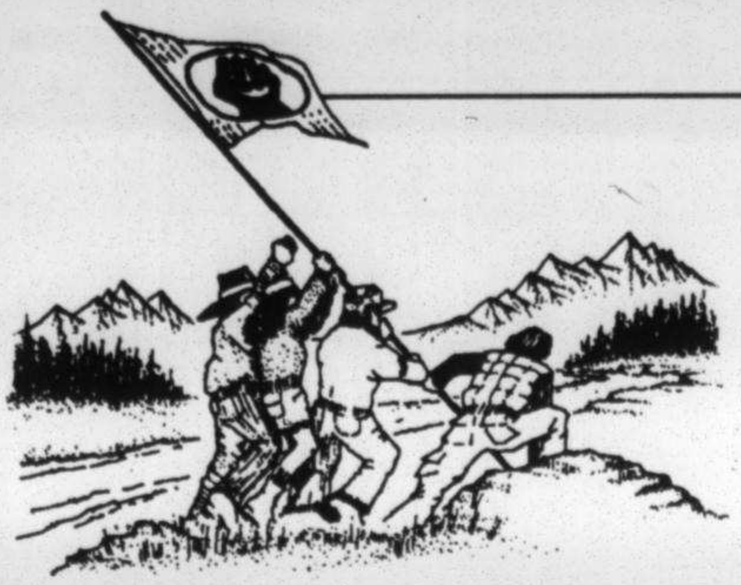
I was elated to hear that he will be employed in March and he hopes to be released in April '96 or February '97. He wants to return to school; this time to college. He's very bright and a very powerful magician (for his age and experience level), but he's also deeply hurt and angry. I can't help but hope that my visits might have helped to prevent him from using his magick for harm. What more could any teacher ever ask?

So take the step, and visit a prison, just remember Pete Davis' words: "They don't call them cons for nothing." They get no favors at the parole board by becoming Born Again Pagans so they may be very sincere, but always be very cautious.

All the effort is worth it, it really is worth it. Don't accept the label of a "second class" religion. We are a **first class** religion which is maturing and it's time to take care of our own; ALL of our own. GD



MAURICE, A PERCUSSIONIST, WAS A MUSICIAN OF SILENCES. HE EMPHASIZED THE SPACES BETWEEN THE NOTES. AS HIS REPERTOIRE BECAME RICHER, THE SILENCES GREW LONGER, UNTIL ENRAPTURED HE PLAYED MUSIC ALL THE TIME.



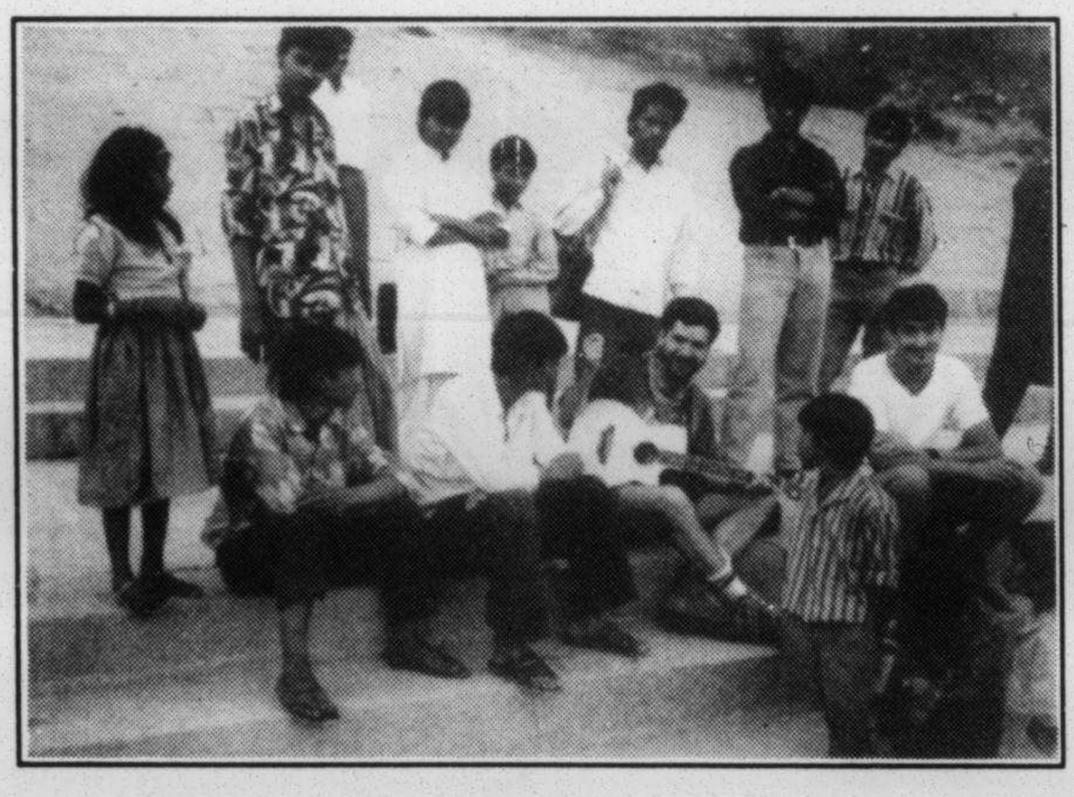
As the World Churns

The Green Baba

Part One

by ***Darryl Cherney, The Green Man, CAW***

"Call me Green Man," I suggested to the Nepali bookstore owner who, like all the locals, wanted to know the name and nation of every tourist that passed by. I would then go on to explain that "before Jesus, Europeans had many gods, just like the Hindus." I'd give a little rap about the Green Man bringing green back to the world every Spring, pointing to the green clothes I wore for effect every day of my journey through the East. I'd then segue into my work as an environmental activist. I had a large stash of postcards of the redwoods and would explain that California wasn't just L.A. as they gawked at and passed around the pictures of the pristine Headwaters Forest and the gaudy Drive-Thru Tree, the latter photo always being the most popular. Then I'd talk a little about logging, American-style. Ultimately I'd take out my guitar, sing a few songs and gather up a crowd of 50 or so people who were ready for any change of pace. I had my routine down pat.



Yes, I was traveling solo through Nepal and India in the Spring of 1996, in search of culture shock therapy and something, as Monty Python would say, "completely different." I found it.

Katmandu is a polluted, overcrowded metropolis with cows. It wasn't until I hauled my fever-ridden self onto a bus at 5:30 am and headed to Lake Pohkara at the base of the Annapurna Range and the foothills of the Himalayas that things began to get interesting. I was on a mission from the Goddess. Dissatisfied with environmentalism as we know it, I sought to see how the other half lived and if it could make an impact on my jaded, New York-born, California-transplanted brain. It did.

Vishtar was the Rajneesh-following, Nepali hippie waiter at Pohkara's Pyramid Restaurant, an establishment whose primary recommendation is that you don't get sick eating there. After three days of hanging out with him, I decided to ask him for his address. He subsequently informed me that I'd have to write to him using his real name and explained that he had changed it because his real last name meant "slave." He then gave me that characteristic Nepali matter-of-fact look (that is always particularly out of context when they tell you something that blows your mind) and said to me: "I'm an untouchable."

Twenty years of schooling came colliding into the present as I experienced my first epiphany of the journey. "Untouchable" was a word I learned in the fifth grade, and my association with it didn't match the thoughtful, rebellious man I was now speaking to. The caste system, to which I was previously oblivious, was now revealed to me. From that point onward I recognized the castes of each floorsweeper, rickshaw driver, shop keeper, and hotel owner I encountered.

The Annapurna Range, though not as famous as Mount Everest, is actually where most of the trekkers go, as it is gentler with more to see. Three of the world's ten highest peaks stand side by side. My first glimpse of the tribal hill people came as my guide, Hum (rhymes with broom), and I fell behind a convoy of 25 mules and 50 mountain folk on their way home. These people live without internal combustion, grow their own food, hand-cut their firewood, hand-chisel bricks for their houses out of stone, and carry up to 200 pounds on their backs secured by straps around their foreheads for 25-mile hikes up to 15,000 feet. Forget the back-to-the-land movement, these people had barely left the stone age.

Except for one thing. The first time I saw a mule carting down huge baskets full of empty coke bottles to get their return deposit, I knew that something was wrong. Cultural pollution. Just visiting the mountains destroys them and the people that live there. Still, I had to be here now, as they say, and learn the lessons I had come to learn. Talk about a commitment to recycling! The truth is they can't afford to blow off the nickel deposit.

My friend Vishtar earned $20 a month waiting on tables. On that salary, he had to pay $10/month rent, send money back to his younger siblings to go to school (which is not free in Nepal!), and survive. This economic Berlin-wall and Hindu-based caste system froze these people into place. I began to wonder why there were any jobs at all left in the United States if you could pay third-worlders as little as 75 cents a day. The only explanation I could come up with was that there are some things that even a Nepali won't do, and so we Americans must still factory-farm our own chickens.

Speaking of animals, the co-existence of the critters (referred to by one Nepali newspaper as "urban fauna") and humans is striking. Cows, chickens, dogs, humans, goats and monkeys all living under virtually identical conditions. Living on the same streets, sleeping on the same stone surfaces, eating the same food, watching nonchalantly the same motorcycles, bicycle rickshaws, and occasional taxi cab careen by. The dogs and cows sleeping in the middle of the street seem to know the vehicles won't hit them and don't even flinch as the wheels miss the outstretched legs by half an inch. There seemed to be no laws, no functioning police, no permits, licenses, insurance or age requirements needed

Continued on Page 51

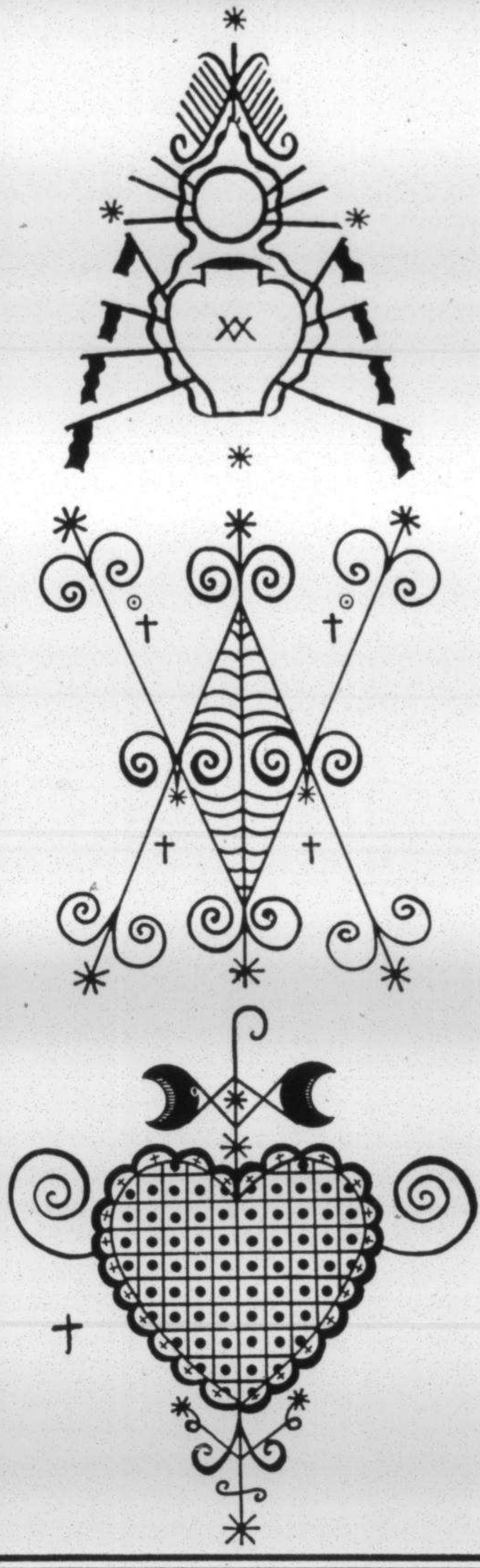
ORISHA CALENDAR

Caribbean, Central & South American Festivals

Compiled by Phoenix & Arabeth

<u>Fixed solar dates</u> (based on correspondences to Catholic saints' feast days)

Ja 6	**Simbi** - loa of clairvoyance	Haiti
Ja 6	**Nosso Senhor de Bonfim** (Our Lord of a Good Ending) the great feast of Candomblé	Salvador, Brazil
Ja 17	**Ogun** - orisha of metals and war	Cuba
Ja 17	**Legba** - loa of gates & crossroads protector of the home	Haiti
Ja 20	**Oxossi** - orixa of woods & hunting	Brazil
Ja 4th Sun	**Omolu** (Candomblé)	Brazil
F 2	**Oya** - goddess of wind & storms	Cuba
F 2	**Iemanja** - mother-goddess of the ocean	Bahia, Brazil
Mr 17	**Dambala** - loa of wealth, luck, happiness	Haiti
Mr 19	**Agaynu** - volcano god, Shango's father	Cuba
Easter	**Oxala** - father of mankind	Brazil
Ap 19	**Gédé** - loa of the dead; spell-master	Haiti
Ap 23	**Oxossi** - orixa of woods & hunting and **Ogum** - orixa of metals and war	Brazil
My 13	**Festa de Pretos Velhos** black African ancestors	Brazil
My 15	**Azaka** - loa of fields and the harvest	Haiti
My 17	**Ochossi** - orisha of fields and woods	Cuba
My 17	**Oddudua** - mother of the Orishas	Cuba
Jn 22	**Candalaria** - for Iemanja at the ocean	Brazil
Jn 29	**Legba** - loa of gates & crossroads protector of the home	Haiti
Jn 29	**Ogun** - orisha of metals and war	Cuba
Jl 4	**Agwe** - loa of sea, navigation, fishing	Haiti
Jl 25	**Papa Ogou (Ogou Feray)** fighter against miserable conditions	Haiti
Jl 26	**Grand Delai & Grande Aloumandia**	Haiti
Jl 26	**Iansa** - wind & storm goddess	Brazil
Jl 29	**Maitresses Silvertine & Lorvana**	Haiti
Ag 15	**Sesta da Boa Morte** (Our Lady of a Good Death) celebrates end of slavery	Brazil
Ag 24	**Oxumare** - god/goddess of the rainbow	Brazil
S 8	**Birthday of Yemaya & Oshun**	Cuba
S 8	**Oxun** - sensual love goddess of beauty, pleasure	Brazil
S 8	**Erzuli (Ezili)** - river bank loa of love & luxury	Haiti
S 24	**Obatala** - father of the Orishas	Cuba
O 4	**Orunla** - orisha of divination	Cuba
D 4	**Xango** - orixa of fire, lightning & drums	Brazil
D 8	**Ayida Wedo**	Haiti
D 17	**Babalu-aye** - orisha of infectious diseases	Cuba
D 17	**Omolu**	Brazil
D 30	**Seven African Powers Celebration**	
D 31-Ja 1	**Iemanja** - goddess of moon, sea & motherhood = **Yemaya**	Brazil Cuba



ONE WORLD

Multicultural holy days, festivals, celebrations & rituals from all the world's cultures and religions, plus new & full moons, eclipses, meteor showers & comets are updated weekly on the Internet in Phoenix & Arabeth's

One-World GLOBAL CALENDAR

at

http://www.zapcom.net/phoenix.arabeth/1world.html

GLOBAL CALENDAR

CAW Nest Listings

The Church of All Worlds exists as a web of Nests and Proto-Nests listed below in Zip Code order. All Nests invite contact and participation from local Pagans. If you are within driving distance from any of these locations, please give them a call (or write a letter) and ask for information about activities. Those with an asterisk* also publish a Nest Newsletter. Send $1 for a sample copy.

At least three active, registered CAW members meeting at least once a month are required to start a Proto-Nest (or a Study Group, if prisoners). After a Proto-Nest has been in operation for a full year, and has one Scion (4th Circle), it may be chartered as a full CAW Nest and be covered under our IRS Group Exemption Letter.

If you are interested in starting a Proto-Nest, please contact CAW Central at Box 1542, Ukiah, CA 95482 for a starter packet. If you wish to be listed here as a contact person for "Proto-Nests Forming," you must *specifically request such listing*. Include your address & phone *as you wish to have it published*. NOTE: to be listed here as a contact you **must** be a dues-paying member of CAW!

Our on-line CAW Teaching List, affiliated with Lifeways, may be reached via: **listserv@caw.org "subscribe caw-101."**

Australian Nests & Proto-Nests

CAW Australia HQ
Seán Knight 04-324-3507
35 Melalevca Cres, Tascott NSW 2250

Hornet's Nest
GhostGum 02-600-9445
Box 143, Casula NSW 2170

Gathering Proto-Nest
Anthorr Nomchong 06-281-3446
Box 408, Woden, ACT 2606
anthorr@spirit.com.au

Primeval Soup Nest
Caroline Tully 03-571-9385
7 Turner St, E. Malvern VIC 3145

Crows' Proto-Nest
Gerald Osgood (09) 443-3746
GPO Box G498, Perth, WA 6001

European Nests & Proto-Nests

Isis of the Silver Star Proto-Nest
Ulrich Glaser 07-145-3450
Ostergasse 9, Markgröningen
714 Germany

Foggy Bog Proto-Nest
Janet/Stewart Farrar/Gavin Bone
Herne's Cottage, Ethelstown
Kells, Co. Meath, Ireland

Ordo Arcanae Lucis Deae PN
Dio Wier +41-52-347-1002
Sunnehaldenstrasse 7
Brütten, CH-8311 Switzerland
drwier@pax.eunet.ch

US Nests & Proto-Nests

Polyamethyst Proto-Nest
Liza Gabriel (800) 279-1511
Box 552, Shutsbury, MA 01072

Circle of Liberty Proto-Nest
Arthur Torrey (617) 647-1759
Box 563, Dedham, MA 02027
atorrey@freethought.pn.com

Family Tree Proto-Nest
Dan Graham (603) 437-3287
18 Folsom Rd, Derry, NH 03038
thais@mv.mv.com

Purple Pomegranate Proto-Nest
Manawyddan/Mevrian
(718) 469-3846
365 Westminster #6E
Brooklyn, NY 11218

Triskelion Nest *Crowings On
Larry Cornett (703) 281-3335
Box 3434, Merryfield, VA 22116
lcornett@erols.com

Rowan & Oak PN* *The CAWdrom*
Lewis Moody (703) 343-7926
1229-6th St. SE, Roanoke VA 24013

Ancient Totem Proto-Nest
Mr. Bill Stewart (910) 723-8024
Box 24731, Winston-Salem NC 27114
tedunbear@aol.com

Reptskellion Proto-Nest
Talyn & Maggie (770) 565-0946
Box 965145, Marietta, GA 30066

(Proto) Nest of the Phoenix
Catherine Deville (404) 794-5243
Crafty Graphics/BFF Enterprises
5920 Roswell Rd. Ste B107 #261
Atlanta GA 30328
CatDeville@aol.com

Holy Oak Nest *Holy Oak Journal*
Paul Moonoak (904) 472-9395
Box 12625, Gainesville FL 32604

Double Helix PN *Double Helix*
Star Scoggin (615) 386-3379
Box 121793, Nashville, TN 37212

Morningstar PN *Southern Oracle*
Scott Johnson (901) 872-7567
676 Germantown Pkwy #404
Cordova, TN 38018
magan@magibox.net

Eggs, Eggs Everywhere PN
Moria Mineweaser (606) 225-8808
Box 21955, Lexington KY 40522
memineo@ukcc.uky.edu
*Egging Us On...

Heartspring Proto-Nest
Pam/Jesse Skaar (502) 531-6703
455 Ed Howe Rd.
Munfordville, KY 42765

Spirit Weavers Nest *CAWbweb
Cindy & Ronn (419) 531-9785
Box 2867, Toledo, OH 43606
firemage@ix.netcom.com

Dragon Family Proto-Nest
Kris Jensen (414) 357-6571
Box 24124, Milwaukee, WI 53224
75521.3251@compuserve.com
*Dragon Droppings

Well of the Phoenix Proto-Nest
Jack Ingersoll (608) 849-8317
Box 77, Dane WI 53529
ljkj@itis.com *Well of Phoenix News

Our Lady of the Lakes Nest
Mary Siegle (612) 722-6229
Box 14872, Mpls, MN 55414
siegl@maroon.tc.umn.edu

Standing Stones PN *Stone Soup
Maureen & Donal (605) 342-1575
8103 Pioneer Circle
Rapid City, SD 57702
laffinbear@aol.com

Beth Lushede PN *Glendower
Maenwyn Rati (816) 252-6023
Box 520291, Independence MO 64052
maenwyn@thirdwave.net

Protozoa Proto-Nest
Pat Mathis (405) 573-1803
424 Crawford, Norman OK 73069
patrick@cyberhall.com

Mother Dragon's Proto-Nest
Manyfingers (903) 463-8524
520 Dean Dr, Dennison TX 75020
*The Dragon Speaks

Ur PN *The Importance of Being
Bob Reid/Rosy (214) 601-2512
3031 S. Fwy, Ft. Worth TX 76104
redmari@anet-dfw.com

Arrakis Proto-Nest
Parris McBride (505) 986-8154
102 San Salvador, Sante Fe NM 87501
ParrisMcb@aol.com

Star City Sanctuary *Stardate
Marilyn L. (818) 882-6172
Box 5001, Chatsworth, CA 91313
ay448@lafn.org

Live the Dream Proto-Nest *LTD
Terry Gibbons (818) 361-6737x3
6454 Van Nuys Blvd. #150
Van Nuys, CA 91401

IDES Nest *Idol Chatter
Jessica Weiss (415) 665-5201
915 Cole St. Box 106
San Francisco, CA 94117

Delta Dragon Nest
David Hall (209) 474-7421
2111 Lido Cir, Stockton, CA 95207
airsafe@stockton.net

Hwysddyrnysdd Proto-Nest
Maerian Morris (707) 925-6499
Box 488, Laytonville, CA 95454
Maerian@aol.com

2 Rivers Nest *Barsoom Fish 'Rap
Donald Wilson (916) 967-3749
POB 3491, Citrus Hghts, CA 95611

Great Blue Heron Proto-Nest
Lynsa Siprelle (503) 233-2712
2234 SE 30th. Portland OR 97214
lynsared@teleport.com
*Great Blue Herald

Outpost Proto-Nest *Outpostulate
Dänae (503) 688-9183
Box 40972, Eugene, OR 97404
jspencer@efn.org

Mother Rest Sacred Grove PN
Gwen Wells-Wittwer (360) 332-1666
Box 3713, Blaine WA 98231

Open Hearts-Open Minds PN
Cindy Fry (206) 525-9214
aa924@cleveland.freenet.edu

The InterNest
majordomo@daft.com
"subscribe internest"

Proto-Nests Forming

Australia

Rowan Hagen 02-9955-3309
Box 143, Casula, NSW 2170

Al Lester/Des Judge (003)281-473
Swan Dr., Swan Bat, TAS 7252

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Frederic Lamond (011-43) 4252-2674
Moosweg 3, Trabenig
Wernberg, Kärnten A 9241

Canada

John Percy, 2160 Seal Cove Circle
Prince Rupert, BC V8J 2G3

United States

Conrad Bishop/Elizabeth Fuller
115 Arch St. Philadelphia PA 19106
(215) 925-2838 indepeye@aol.com

MoonDance
Box 515, Cary, NC 27512
moon@osl-south.csc.ncsu.edu

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10785 Shagbark Trail
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Christie M. West Ganisa@aol.com
4120 Ingham St, Lansing MI 48911

Wm. Uriel Andros (417) 759-7854
Rt 3 Box 332, Fair Grove MO 65648

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1947 Barker, Lawrence KS 66044
(913) 843-8590 Sunlion@aol.com

Betsy C. Pyle (913) 827-8622
231 S. 5th, #1, Salina KS 67401

Sheleen Williamson (210) 560-3319
370 Elm Grove Rd, Sequin TX 78155

Jai Michael (602) 432-3623
Box 46, Bisbee, AZ 85603

Rebeccalyn Jenson (602) 254-5309
HC 74, Box 4136, Mayer AZ 86333

Tim Black (520) 282-7880
Box 10303, Sedona AZ 86339

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1928 Leucadia Scenic Ct.
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keith@ixi.saic.com
Eve Morgan (916) 987-0532
8917 Aksarben Dr.
Orangeville, CA 95662
Ruth Smith (916) 841-1119
311 Brue St. #24, Yreka CA 96097
John Cunningham (907) 694-4946
733 W. 4th Ave. #780
Anchorage, AK 99501

Prison Study Groups

Brotherhood of Ancient Ways
Falcon Flamestar #173033
ACI Box 1151, Fairfax SC 29827
Earth's Embrace Study Group
John B. Burroughs
Box 57, Marian, OH 43301
Stone Circle Pagans Study Group
William Snodgrass #303563
Box 1812, Marian, OH 43301
Stone Temple Pilots Study Group
Duane Ballard #228-951
Box 5500, Chillicothe, OH 45601
Templars of the Lost City SG
Charles Eakins, Jr. #884228
CIC Box 601, Pendleton IN 46064
Right Hand Path Study Group
Guy Scott #185553
KCF, Kincheloe, MI 49788
Left Hand Path Study Group
Ronald Vroman #235815
KCF, Kincheloe, MI 49788
Agents of Ariadne Study Group
Scott Sandlin #201712
CCO, 216 Gebdron Rd.
Iron River, MI 49935
Cerridwen's Cauldron Study Grp.
Michael Lee Hood #206728
MPCF, Hwy 218 S, 1200 E. Wash.
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641
Beto-1 Freedom Group
Charles Tolan #612454
Beto-1 Unit, Box 128
Tennesee Colony, TX 75880
Falcons' Lair/Flight of Phoenix SG
Ronald Blackwell #663116
TDCJ-ID Beto Unit, Box 128
Tennessee Colony, TX 75880
Green Life Fellowship Study Grp.
Bradley Cox #726905
PACK-1, TDCJ-ID, Rt. 3, Box 300
Navasota, TX 77869
Clements Unit Pagan Study Grp.
Robert Meek II #629253
TDCJ, 9601 NE 24th Ave.
Amarillo, TX 79107-9606
Circle of the Rising Spirit SG
Richard Bable #80218
ASPC Winslow Apache #123
POB 3240, St. Johns, AZ 85936
**Whispers From Within*
Brotherhood of the Goddess SG
Dave Anderson
Box 760, Campbellford
ON K0L 1L0 Canada

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maenwyn@thirdwave.net

Mobilization in Cyberspace for Earth Religion Rights

by **Larry Cornett, CAW, ERAL**

A major mobilization in cyberspace is taking place to help Earth Religionists with legal problems associated with their religion in real space. It grew out of the recent efforts to help the Eastern Virginia custody case, in which dozens of people from across the United States offered to help, many of whom were on the Internet. It is now fueled by the widespread occurrence of similar cases and the knowledge that, through networking, effective help can be mobilized.

A national Earth Religions Assistance Listserv (ERAL) is now operating on the Internet, moderated by the WADL Director for Virginia, owned by a member of the Triskelion Nest, and hosted by a friendly Naturist. The purpose of ERAL is to improve communications among Religious Rights Activists helping Earth Religionists facing legal problems associated with their religion.

Over thirty Earth Religion Rights activists and TechnoPagans are currently participating in ERAL. Current members include key members of WARD, WADL, AMER, the Lady Liberty League, CAW, CoPRR, the Covenant of the Goddess (COG) and several Unitarians. ERAL Members are now helping in other cases, including job discrimination cases in South Dakota and Arizona and organizing the listserv and its rules to accommodate dozens of members. When ERAL is fully operational, we might help deal with several new cases per week. Doing this while keeping its volume of e-mail relatively low (an average of less than ten posts per day) is a challenging task that would be impossible without other Internet initiatives.

ERAL needs volunteers to provide a listserv for Educational initiatives (like educating social workers and child custody investigators about the positive nature of Earth Religions), a listserv for its organizational discussions, a Listserv for legal research and associated discussions, and a newsgroup on which to post religious rights cases for forwarding to ERAL.

A key Covenant of the Goddess Internet activist has set up a set of Earth Religions Assistance Websites, starting at http://205.226.66.2/~rowanf/ERAL/eral.html. They have links to various religious rights webpages including those of WARD, AMER, CoPRR, Iron Oak, ACLU, etc, along with various legal information areas.

In addition, an Earth Religion Assistance FTP site (ERAF) has been set up to store and make available legal documents and other information. The first item posted in this site was the paper on Freedom of Religion in the United States prepared by Marija. ERAF is to be linked to the Earth Religion Assistance webpage. ERAF was been set up by a local CAW member.

We have also been offered a domain on a host computer, by a Northern Virginia TechnoPagan with good two way connectivity to the Internet, to host more sophisticated interactive webpages, newsgroups, listservs, FTP sites, etc. An expert programmer of such domains are needed.

The Earth Religions Assistance initiative is also looking for Earth Religionists and other friendly folk on-line who do not need to be experts but who need to have good e-mail access and a sense of listserv etiquette to moderate our listservs, and help in other ways. In addition, we are looking for other Websites and FTP sites containing pertinent information to link with, and for pertinent files to load into our FTP site (and brief descriptions of their content and potential use suitable for including on a website).

To get directly involved in this initiative, contact Larry Cornett by e-mail at lcorncalen @aol.com. Donations towards the more than $300 spent helping the Virginia mother and/or for the initiative on the Internet can be sent to:

Larry Cornett
9355 Sibelius Dr, Vienna, VA 22182-1632

CAW Annual Meeting at Heartspring in KY

Over the past two decades the Church of All Worlds has been holding its annual General Meeting each Summer in Northern Califia. This year, we would like to celebrate the establishment of Heartspring, our new sacred land in Kentucky, by holding our Annual Meeting at the **Heartspring Lughnasadh** during the weekend of **August 2-4.** We intend this to be the beginning of a rotation of the Annual Meeting to different locations around the country (and eventually, around the world!), in the same way that the World Science Fiction Convention rotates its location each Labor Day.

Business of the Annual Meeting includes the election of Officers on the Board of Directors, and voting on Amendments to our By-laws. All active members (that means dues current!) of CAW may vote, either in-person at this meeting, or by mail-in ballots, which will be included in the next issue of *The Scarlet Flame,* our quarterly membership newsletter.

Candidates for Board positions so far are: President—Orion Stormcrow Morris; Vice-President—Avilyn Pwyll or James Assad; Treasurer—Apple McCann; Secretary—Eric HeBert or Heather (Melian) (our GE/CAW receptionist).

To arrange to attend Heartspring Lughnasadh, contact **Moria** at **(606) 225-8808.**

MUSE REVIEWS BOOKS

Celebrating the Great Mother:

A Handbook of Earth-Honoring Activities for Parents and Children

by Cait Johnson and Maura D. Shaw, Destiny Books, VT, 1995, $16.95

Do you remember when we had to haunt musty old used bookstores to find the few books marginally available to people interested in 'the occult?' There was a time when a single bookshelf was almost enough. Aside from Crowley and dusty arcane volumes from just past the turn of the century, did Sybil Leek, Justine Glass, and Robert Graves stand practically alone with your tarot books? Remember when the *Spiral Dance* and *Drawing Down the Moon* came out?

Now we walk into B. Dalton's and there's a blizzard of Pagan books. While a few of them continue to present new material, most of these books are primarily useful as reference tools for yummy seasonal recipes, making pretty altars, or interesting how-tos for people with two left hands who suddenly feel like plaiting straw into corn dollies at Lammas. With a few exceptions, (and this is changing too, now) these books are geared to adults.

As the Pagan Community grows and matures, you can bet we'll see more books geared to Pagan families and children. In particular, Pagans have already been asking, "just how can we best share our religions with our children?"

Celebrating the Great Mother is a good introductory book dealing with this topic. A simple, well organized and nicely packaged book, its two authors' goal is to help parents, caregivers, teachers and counselors come up with meaningful spiritual experiences that kids can relate to. "Creating a Life-affirming culture begins at home."

Part One of this book offers adults techniques for developing their children's sensitivity to the Sacred and their own inner wisdom through dream journals, visualizations, tarot play, the making of talismans, and direct interactions with Nature. A general summary of Earth-based spirituality provides a grounding context for the material without getting too redundant.

Part Two is organized in the ever more familiar seasonal festival fashion, with a selection of useful and fun ways to celebrate our holidays. There's a section with suggestions for further reading, and a limited resource list.

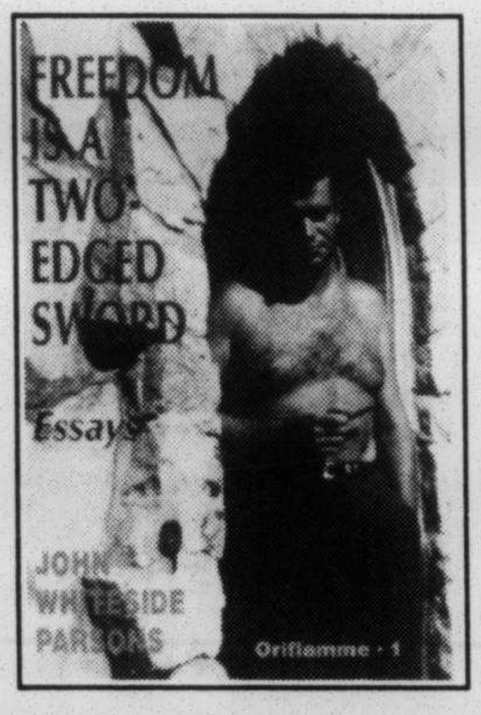
Celebrating the Great Mother would probably make a good gift for parents who are somewhat new to Paganism. ***—Maerian Morris***

Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword & Other Essays

by John Whiteside Parsons, Falcon Press/OTO, 1989, $9.95

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.

Rarely do I read a book that merits my unconditional recommendation: a work so worthy and useful and beautiful that I joyfully read and re-read it many times, a book for all seasons, a book to discuss with waterkin, a book to grok in fullness. I know only a handful of these books and, for the last five years, I have recommended one higher than the others: *Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword & Other Essays*.



As an individual, Parsons merits study at least as much as any great mind in our century. Born to brilliance, wealth and great physical beauty, he led an astonishing life. By day, Parsons worked as a scientist and inventor, developing technologies which led to some of rocketry's great breakthroughs and co-founding the Jet Propulsion Labs in Pasadena and the California Institute of Technology. In the evening, Parsons played in the arts, rubbing elbows with the high and low-brow denizens of star-struck Los Angeles. And, as one of the century's most compelling magicians, he served as *magister templi* for the famous Agape Lodge of the OTO and, at one time, as Aliester Crowley's favored protégé and likely successor. Parsons lived in utter devotion to Goddess at a time when this seemed unthinkable and his poetry to Her rivals *The Song of Songs* in passion and depth.

At his peak of magickal exploration, Parsons, together with renowned Beat artist Cameron and the controversial L. Ron Hubbard (!) enacted the now-famous Babalon Working, an elaborate sex magick ritual designed to incarnate Goddess. The Babalon Working, and its astonishing implications, continues to attract interest from a wide spectrum and certainly merits its reputation as one of the extraordinary magickal events of the century.

Parsons died in a suspicious laboratory explosion on Midsummers in 1952 and, in a chain of events that rivals the plot of any best-selling thriller novel, his magickal (and other) notes wound up far from anyone who cared to publish them. As a result, his collection of essays didn't see print until 1989.

But how well worth the wait! Parsons instantly engages the reader with his majestic prose and uncompromising standards of dignity and responsibility. The title essay, a six part manifesto, weaves together a heady blend of cultural and historical scholarship, semantics, physics, and Goddess worship to reconcile the primal individualism of Crowley's Thelema with a breath-taking paean to each and every woman, as Goddess in Her own right, to find within herself the power to manifest Goddess and, quite literally, save the planet. I've seen people moved to tears by this essay. I've seen people moved to greatness.

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Wicked: The life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West

MUSE REVIEWS BOOKS

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In this book, Oz is not pretty. Let me warn those who come to this book expecting a rosy fairyland or escapist reading that this is an Oz where the majority of the population is oppressed in some fashion, where people have sex, go to the bathroom, and engage in politics. This book brings forward the Shadow side of Oz and tells the story of Elphaba, the "Wicked Witch of the West," from her own experience. The author implies in his acknowledgments that part of his motivation to write this story springs from an intense concern over the actual nature of evil, and indeed, the characters in *Wicked* engage in a fair share of dialectic about it. (One of the weaknesses of the book is the author's tendency to indulge overmuch in philosophical discussions about good and evil.)

Elphaba is born to a "unionist minister" and his nobleborn wife in the Rush Margins of South Munchkinland ("the breadbasket of Oz"). From birth her skin is green. Her first set of teeth are pointed like a shark's, and she bites off the finger of a woman attending at her birth. Always the touch of tears or pure water "burn like fire." The first word she utters is "horrors."

Elphaba does not believe in a soul; in spite of being a minister's daughter, she is an atheist who fits in nowhere and whose heart is keenly aroused to political injustice. During her lifetime she witnesses the gradual takeover of the land of Oz from the royal "Ozma line" by the Wizard, who evolves a fascist state to which Elphaba opposes herself forever. As can be guessed, the circumstances in which this happen make Elphaba seem "evil," especially because she repudiates conformity and champions the pariahs of Oz—the Quadlings of the South, who are considered almost subhuman by the Munchkinlanders of the East and the Gillikinese of the North, and the speaking, "enspirited" Animals, who are eventually banned from all posts and reduced to beasts of burden.

In her youth, Elphaba attends Crage Hall, the female academy of Shiz, where she rooms with Galinda of Gillikin, the future Glinda. Elphaba's greatest inspiration was the Goat professor, Doctor Dillamond, whom she assisted in research on the nature of consciousness and life. When this Doctor is mysteriously murdered in the research facility, Elphaba suspects the worst. At this time, her younger sister, Nessarose, the future "Wicked Witch of the East," enters the academy.

Nessarose is a religious fanatic born without arms, although pretty and winsome, regardless. Here Maguire has dealt most creatively with the emphasis on her famous Shoes: as Nessarose is her father's special pet, she receives from him a glorious pair of shoes which Glinda later enchants so as to permit her to stand and move about without assistance. Elphaba receives nothing, and although used to being tolerated rather than loved, the Shoes become for her a symbol of affection, and the subtext of the story contains very poignant references to experiencing that affection; stepping into the Shoes of Nessarose.

In fact, the more acquainted you are with the previous Oz stories, the more you will appreciate the obscure references to items and persons such as Dr. Nikidik, tamorna fruits, Ozma's father Pastoria, tiktok creatures, and the Fairy Queen Lurline. Lurline was said to have enchanted Oz into a fairyland and Lurlinism is the "paganism" of Oz. The Good Fairy image of Lurline is clearly mirrored in Glinda's beauty, attitude, and role. But the foil to Lurline is Kumbricia, the "Kumbric Witch," a darker Goddess image associated with beasts and storms and earthquakes. Elphaba is unconsciously groomed to resonate with the role of the Kumbric Witch and in this is "assisted" by her Fate—a crone named Yackle, who appears many times during and even before her lifetime and who extends a malign "protection" over Elphaba's life, so that she may "taste and measure all the disappointments of life." As a consequence, Elphaba has a doubting character that accepts no goodness on faith.

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BOOKS

Celebrating the Great Mother:

A Handbook of Earth-Honoring Activities for Parents and Children

by Cait Johnson and Maura D. Shaw, Destiny Books, VT, 1995, $16.95

Do you remember when we had to haunt musty old used bookstores to find the few books marginally available to people interested in 'the occult?' There was a time when a single bookshelf was almost enough. Aside from Crowley and dusty arcane volumes from just past the turn of the century, did Sybil Leek, Justine Glass, and Robert Graves stand practically alone with your tarot books? Remember when the *Spiral Dance* and *Drawing Down the Moon* came out?

Now we walk into B. Dalton's and there's a blizzard of Pagan books. While a few of them continue to present new material, most of these books are primarily useful as reference tools for yummy seasonal recipes, making pretty altars, or interesting how-tos for people with two left hands who suddenly feel like plaiting straw into corn dollies at Lammas. With a few exceptions, (and this is changing too, now) these books are geared to adults.

As the Pagan Community grows and matures, you can bet we'll see more books geared to Pagan families and children. In particular, Pagans have already been asking, "just how can we best share our religions with our children?"

Celebrating the Great Mother is a good introductory book dealing with this topic. A simple, well organized and nicely packaged book, its two authors' goal is to help parents, caregivers, teachers and counselors come up with meaningful spiritual experiences that kids can relate to. "Creating a Life-affirming culture begins at home."

Part One of this book offers adults techniques for developing their children's sensitivity to the Sacred and their own inner wisdom through dream journals, visualizations, tarot play, the making of talismans, and direct interactions with Nature. A general summary of Earth-based spirituality provides a grounding context for the material without getting too redundant.

Part Two is organized in the ever more familiar seasonal festival fashion, with a selection of useful and fun ways to celebrate our holidays. There's a section with suggestions for further reading, and a limited resource list.

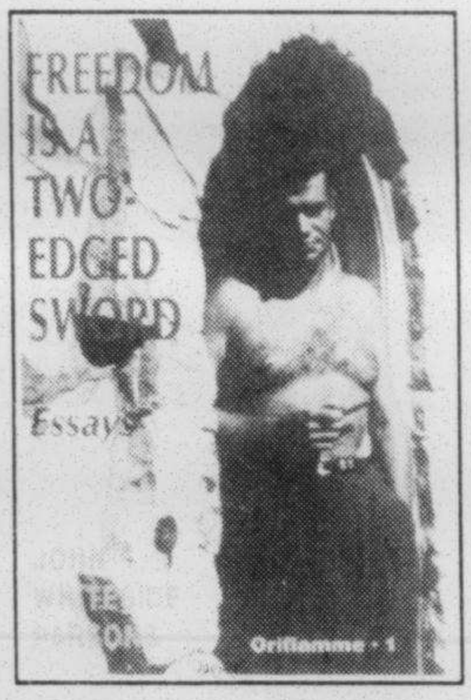
Celebrating the Great Mother would probably make a good gift for parents who are somewhat new to Paganism. ***—Maerian Morris***

Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword & Other Essays

by John Whiteside Parsons, Falcon Press/OTO, 1989, $9.95

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.

Rarely do I read a book that merits my unconditional recommendation: a work so worthy and useful and beautiful that I joyfully read and re-read it many times, a book for all seasons, a book to discuss with waterkin, a book to grok in fullness. I know only a handful of these books and, for the last five years, I have recommended one higher than the others: *Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword & Other Essays*.



As an individual, Parsons merits study at least as much as any great mind in our century. Born to brilliance, wealth and great physical beauty, he led an astonishing life. By day, Parsons worked as a scientist and inventor, developing technologies which led to some of rocketry's great breakthroughs and co-founding the Jet Propulsion Labs in Pasadena and the California Institute of Technology. In the evening, Parsons played in the arts, rubbing elbows with the high and low-brow denizens of star-struck Los Angeles. And, as one of the century's most compelling magicians, he served as *magister templi* for the famous Agape Lodge of the OTO and, at one time, as Aliester Crowley's favored protégé and likely successor. Parsons lived in utter devotion to Goddess at a time when this seemed unthinkable and his poetry to Her rivals *The Song of Songs* in passion and depth.

At his peak of magickal exploration, Parsons, together with renowned Beat artist Cameron and the controversial L. Ron Hubbard (!) enacted the now-famous Babalon Working, an elaborate sex magick ritual designed to incarnate Goddess. The Babalon Working, and its astonishing implications, continues to attract interest from a wide spectrum and certainly merits its reputation as one of the extraordinary magickal events of the century.

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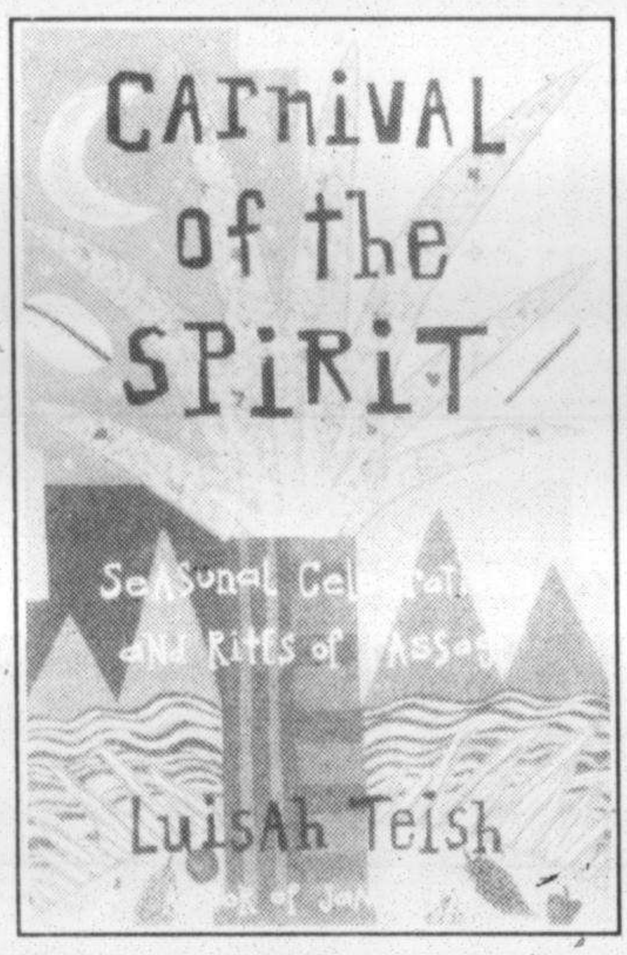

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Dedicated to "Oshun Olo'shogbo, Goddess of the River, to the ancestor Ethel Waters, and to mermaids everywhere," *Carnival of the Spirit* is a cross-cultural exploration of ways in which we mark the Turning of the Year.

Tiesh notes in her introduction, "Today I celebrate the seasons with rituals from all over the world. Occasionally I am fortunate enough to participate in large public rituals on ancient 'sacred sites.' Most often, however, my seasonal celebrations are held at my home with extended family members. And a few of the rituals are based on the astrological aspects of the day/hour. These are simple, personal, and secret.

"I have learned that every day is a Holy Day. And the Earth is a sacred place where the power of the Sea and the beauty of the Sky express Mother Nature's love for humanity, and the wonder of Creation."

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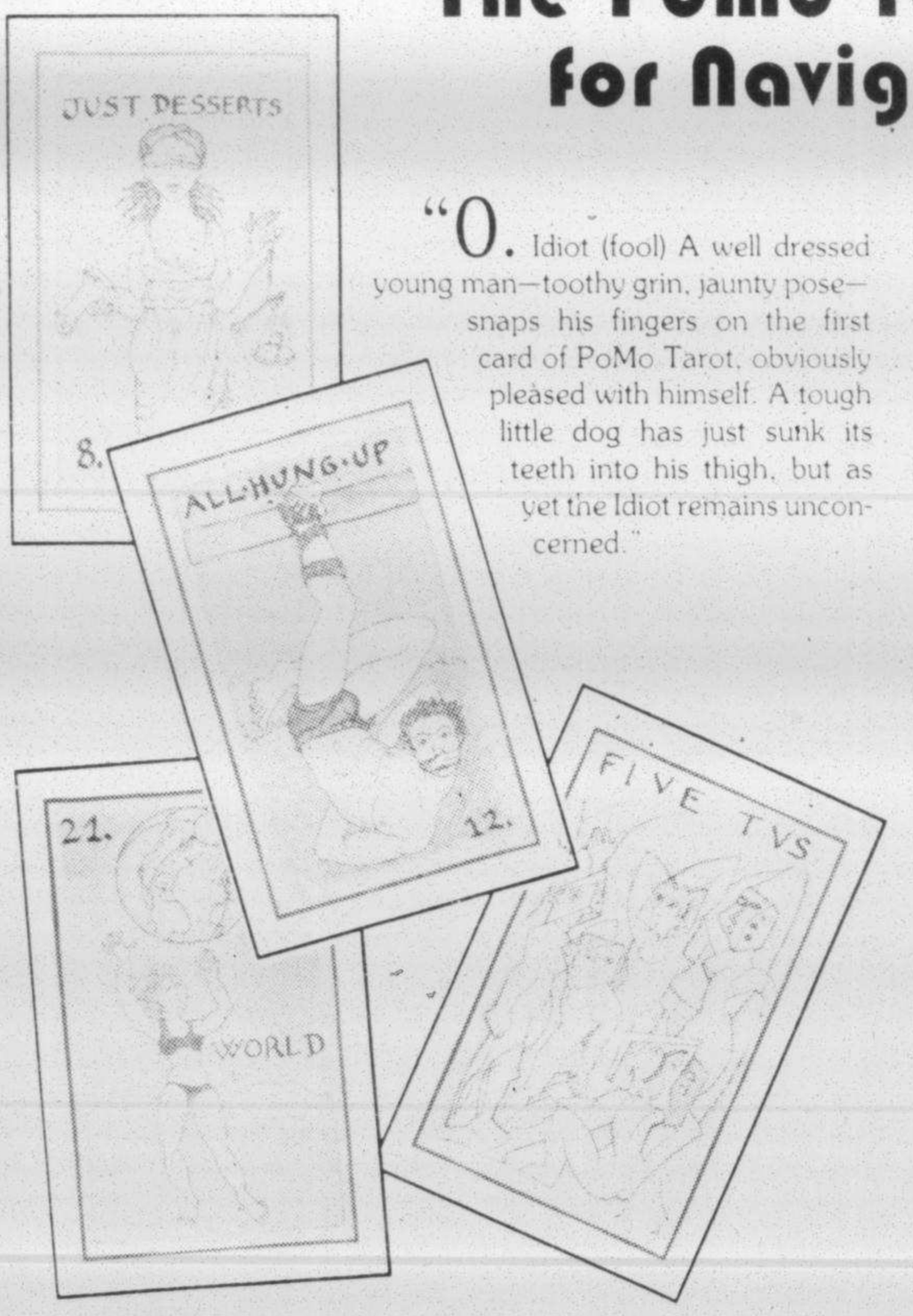
The PoMo Tarot: A Post Modern Deck for Navigating the Next Millennium

by Brian Williams, HarperSanFrancisco, 1994, $30



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This deck is really *strange*. Have you seen it yet? The first time I saw it, at the interesting PoMo loft of some friends of mine, I was having a wonderful time, but a day or so after I'd played with it, and innocently left it sitting on the counter, the hard drive in the next room crashed. Now, are these events related? Hmm..."...as yet the idiot remains unconcerned..."

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Endless Wave

by Gabrielle Roth, Raven Recording, Red Bank, NJ, 1996

Don't bother trying to sit still for the Endless Wave. Designed to get the listener moving, to stimulate ecstatic dance. The Wave moves through five rhythms. These are intended to be a "movement map" which leads to ecstasy and spiritual release, and are accompanied by simple instructions designed to help the listener to "move beyond self consciousness into your wild and mysterious free spirit."

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"Movement is my medicine," says Roth, "it's my meditation, my practice...we were all born to move, to surrender to the beat. Your soul is a dancer. No effort. No judgment. Pure energy in the moment."

Roth's five Rhythms are FLOWING, a fluid, rounded beat continuously in motion, which builds energy through inhalation; STACCATO, sharper interrupted beats focusing on exhalation; CHAOS, wild and abandoned rhythms encouraging trance; LYRICAL, light and airy rhythms which lend the dancer wings; and STILLNESS, which brings the listener inward and grounds the energy.

For those of us interested in exploring trance, who may not have access to a local group of shamanic drummers, this is a good place to start.

—Edge Ryals

Universal Mother

by Sinead O'Connor, EMI Records, 1994

Sinead offers the world, especially the Pagan world, a beautiful example of a Pagan-inspirited album that demonstrates what a Pagan worldview looks like in the context of one woman's life. In fact, the Charge of the Goddess is one of the first things we see on the liner notes; possibly intended to establish the sacred spirit of the album. Her devotion is subtle, not blatant, and she advises her listeners to hear *Universal Mother* on a headset and in sequence. We believe she has created a spell ("a prayer from Ireland") intended to heal the suffering of Ireland and of children in general through "re-membering" the truth about their pain. Sinead has used her experience as a mother and as an abused child to connect with the Mother Goddess and with Ireland as Her child, abused by another.

The first song, "Fire on Babylon," is a melodic shriek that refers to an enigmatic "she" who "gave me lies" and has "taken everything I liked." ("I watched her torturing my child.") Is Sinead describing the actions of England toward Ireland? If we accept the song-sequence as a spell, leading to its climactic Cone of Power, then yes—and more; for the penultimate track, the rap song "Famine," skewers the myth about the Irish potato famine and states that the Irish people have been abused and controlled into forsaking and forgetting that "we used to worship God as a Mother/ Now look what we're doing to each other." Sinead states in "Famine" that the Irish people are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and that this is what ultimately causes violence among the people. Pagans in general could consider Sinead's album to speak for themselves as well. Consider the Burning Times, and the acts of legal and physical violence perpetrated upon Pagans today, both in the closet and out. Perhaps our sense of persecution forms the taproot of dysfunctional behavior in the Pagan community: backbiting, politicking, rumor mongering, grudge holding, ad infinitum. If we too are the Children of our Divine Parents, can we not see how we have been abused by the false "Father" of patriarchy? And how we visit our abuses on each other?

Sinead says, "If there is ever gonna be healing/ There has to be remembering/ And the grieving/ So that there can be FORGIVING/ There has to be KNOWLEDGE and UNDERSTANDING." The album ends with the simple and gracious song, "Thank You for Hearing Me," which gently chains the ways in which Sinead is grateful, even to those who have broken her heart. This song grounds the fierce intent invoked by the rest of the album and releases the "prayer" into the world, into the soul.

The tracks that occur in-between, such as "Red Football" ("My womb is not a football for you"), "Scorn Not His Simplicity," and "All Babies," enlarge on the right of a person to exist and be loved, on the need for and the need to be the Universal Mother, and how sorrow teaches compassion. Sinead sings with her greatest passion, like a true daughter of Brigid, and yet delivers her songs with great delicacy. The sound is Irish folk with a touch of rock; some tracks sound like litanies and others are outright lullabies. They echo in the mind after being heard.

—Paul B. Rucker and Colleen V. Volkner

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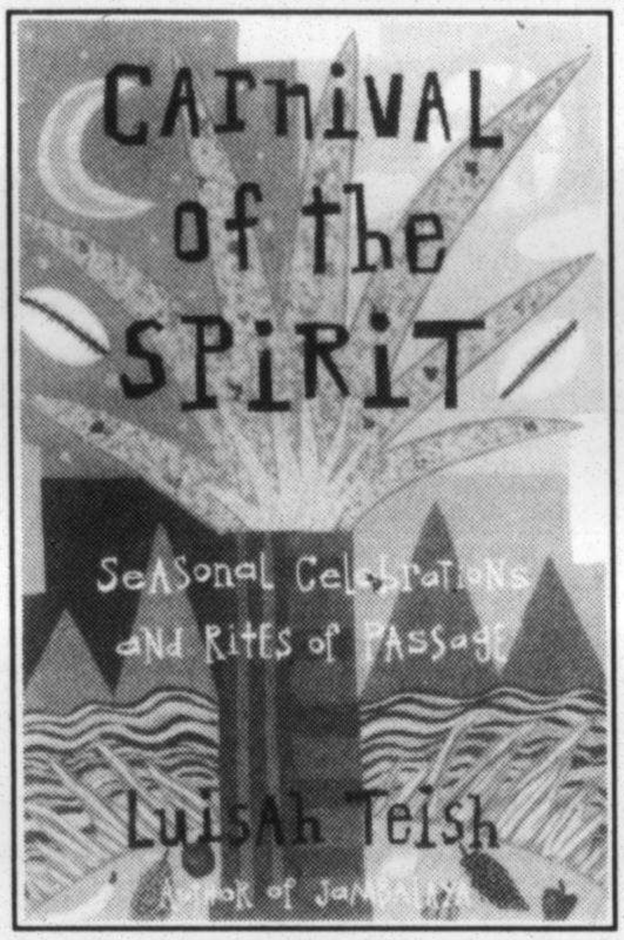

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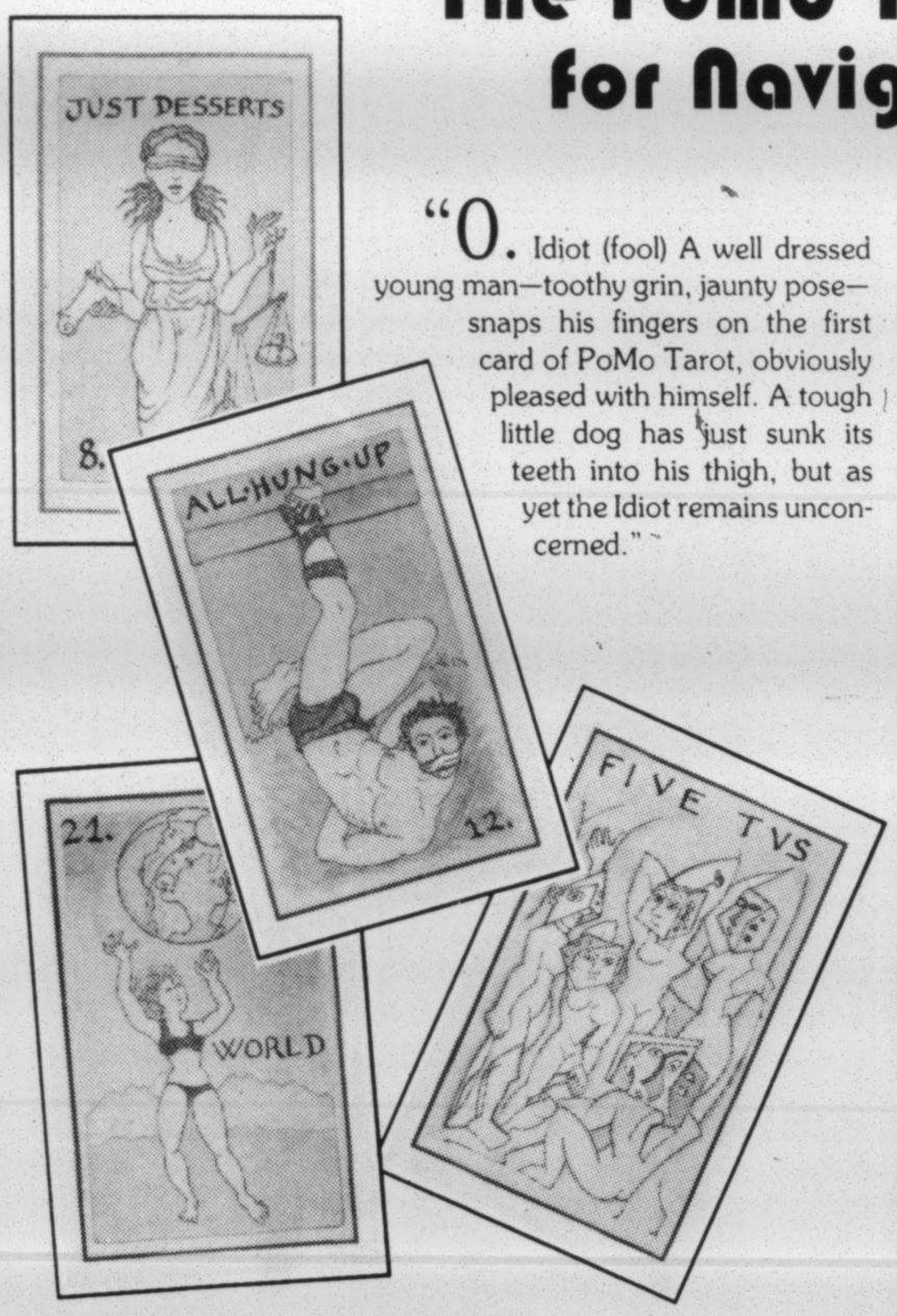

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"Movement is my medicine," says Roth, "it's my meditation, my practice...we were all born to move, to surrender to the beat. Your soul is a dancer. No effort. No judgment. Pure energy in the moment."

Roth's five Rhythms are FLOWING,

a fluid, rounded beat continuously in motion, which builds energy through inhalation; STACCATO, sharper interrupted beats focusing on exhalation; CHAOS, wild and abandoned rhythms encouraging trance; LYRICAL, light and airy rhythms which lend the dancer wings; and STILLNESS, which brings the listener inward and grounds the energy.

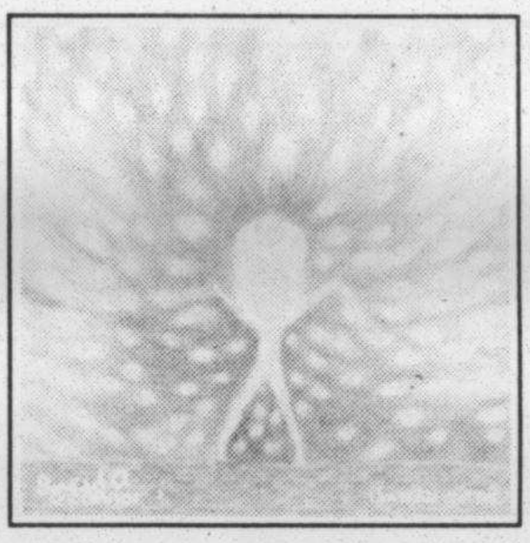
For those of us interested in exploring trance, who may not have access to a local group of shamanic drummers, this is a good place to start.

—Edge Ryals

MUSIC

Universal Mother

by Sinead O'Connor, EMI Records, 1994



Sinead offers the world, especially the Pagan world, a beautiful example of a Pagan-inspirited album that demonstrates what a Pagan worldview looks like in the context of one woman's life. In fact, the Charge of the Goddess is one of the first things we see on the liner notes; possibly intended to establish the sacred spirit of the album. Her devotion is subtle, not blatant, and she advises her listeners to hear *Universal Mother* on a headset and in sequence. We believe she has created a spell ("a prayer from Ireland") intended to heal the suffering of Ireland and of children in general through "re-membering" the truth about their pain. Sinead has used her experience as a mother and as an abused child to connect with the Mother Goddess and with Ireland as Her child, abused by another.

The first song, "Fire on Babylon," is a melodic shriek that refers to an enigmatic "she" who "gave me lies" and has "taken everything I liked." ("I watched her torturing my child.") Is Sinead describing the actions of England toward Ireland? If we accept the song-sequence as a spell, leading to its climactic Cone of Power, then yes—and more; for the penultimate track, the rap song "Famine," skewers the myth about the Irish potato famine and states that the Irish people have been abused and controlled into forsaking and forgetting that "we used to worship God as a Mother/ Now look what we're doing to each other." Sinead states in "Famine" that the Irish people are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and that this is what ultimately causes violence among the people. Pagans in general could consider Sinead's album to speak for themselves as well. Consider the Burning Times, and the acts of legal and physical violence perpetrated upon Pagans today, both in the closet and out. Perhaps our sense of persecution forms the taproot of dysfunctional behavior in the Pagan community: backbiting, politicking, rumor mongering, grudge holding, ad infinitum. If we too are the Children of our Divine Parents, can we not see how we have been abused by the false "Father" of patriarchy? And how we visit our abuses on each other?

Sinead says, "If there is ever gonna be healing/ There has to be remembering/ And the grieving/ So that there can be FORGIVING/ There has to be KNOWLEDGE and UNDERSTANDING." The album ends with the simple and gracious song, "Thank You for Hearing Me," which gently chains the ways in which Sinead is grateful, even to those who have broken her heart. This song grounds the fierce intent invoked by the rest of the album and releases the "prayer" into the world, into the soul.

The tracks that occur in-between, such as "Red Football" ("My womb is not a football for you"), "Scorn Not His Simplicity," and "All Babies," enlarge on the right of a person to exist and be loved, on the need for and the need to be the Universal Mother, and how sorrow teaches compassion. Sinead sings with her greatest passion, like a true daughter of Brigid, and yet delivers her songs with great delicacy. The sound is Irish folk with a touch of rock; some tracks sound like litanies and others are outright lullabies. They echo in the mind after being heard.

—Paul B. Rucker and Colleen V. Volkner

Mother of the Night

I am the Mother of the Night.
The Great Dark Depth, the Bringer of Light.
All that was, that is, that ever shall be,
all that could or should can only come from me.
High above and far below. I am the ebb, I am the flow. The stars in the sky, the fish in the sea. Every seed, every stone, every critter is me.
I am the Center, the Beginning, the End. I am without and I am within. I am the liar, the nest, and the den. I am the Earth, the Water, and Wind.
The Horned Cow, the many-teated Sow, the Queen bee, the Mothertree, the Pregnant Womb, the Grain-seed broom, the candle's wick, the matrix, and woman, you are my daughter.
Praise and Love to the Mothers of the World.
Praise and Love to the Sisters of the World.
Praise and Love to the Women of the World.
Praise and Love to my daughters.

To the women in the fields, who plow and plant and turn mill wheels. To those who spin and weave at looms who make the mats, the cloth and brooms. To those who sew the royal robes, to those who pierce the child's earlobes. To those who rub and oil and braid. To all the Queens and all the Maids.
Praise and Love to my daughters.
To those who nurse babes on their breasts, who carry on without due rest. Then rise up early as the dawn to mend the fence and mow the lawn. To those who mix and stir the pot, to those who bake and clean and mop, to those who have and who have not.
Praise and Love to my daughters.
Praise and Love to those who seek, to those who know, and those who speak. To those who smile with tender eyes, whose wisdom penetrates the lies. To those who sing and those who cry. For those who fight for right and die! To those who live to ripe old age, to great-grandma the family sage. Praise and Love to my daughters.
To those unborn and yet to come, we bid you on with song and hum. From other worlds and through birth-water. Come forth child, beloved daughter.
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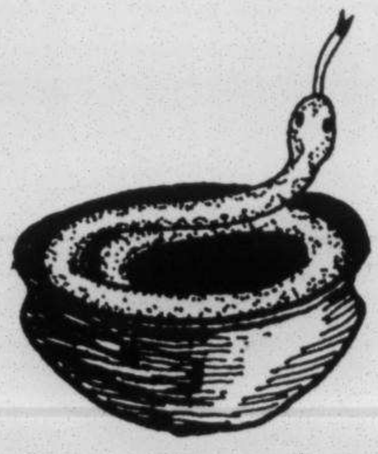

*by **Luisah Teish,***
original praise-poem
for Yemonja, 1992

The Blanc *Continued from page 28*
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By the time he arrived back at his hotel he was exhausted and thirsty. The Hotel La Concha had been built only recently, and its clean, white stucco exterior reflected the afternoon heat onto the sidewalk. Inside, the dark mahagony panelling of its cool lobby was shiny with fresh varnish, and brass ceiling fans rotated slowly overhead. Eliot ordered some ginger ale and a bucket of ice brought to his room, and after a drink and a bath he slept until the dinner hour was nearly over.

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Green Baba *Continued from page 42*
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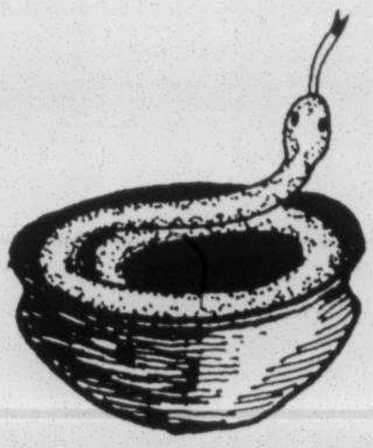

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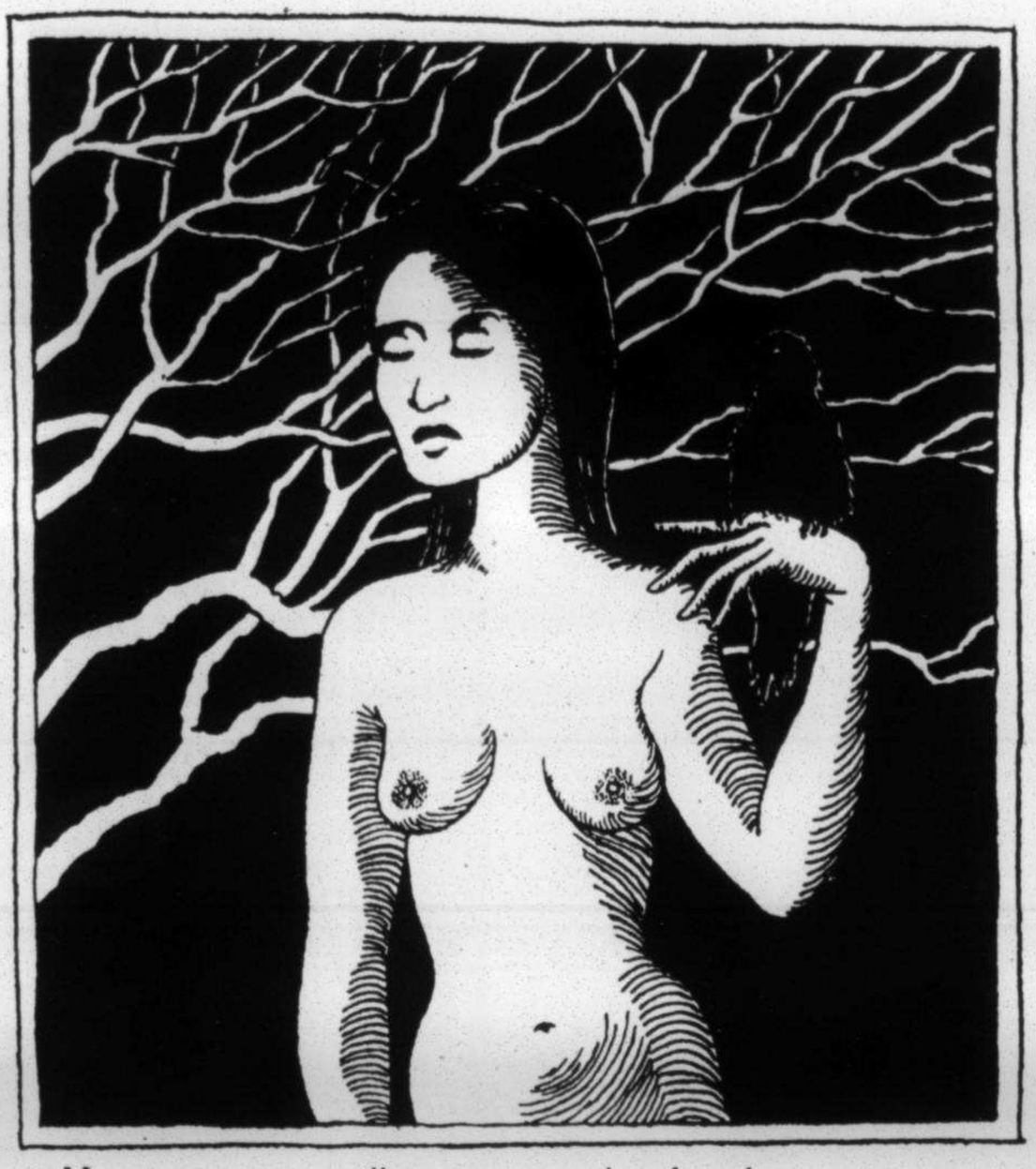
The Elf Queen's Daughters



They Came From
The Very Stars,
Dear Kindreth...

Their appointed Charge to plant Gardens of sentient Life across the Galactic Rim, and treasured, more than Their very existence, were three Rings of Power that accompanied Them, guarded lovingly as the most cherished of Their countless precious cargoes.

Eons ago, so far away into the past that even Elven memory hazes in the recollection, the M-star Solus beamed to Them as a beacon in the Celestial Gauze. Upon Their closer approach, the big Green Egg of our Holy Mother's Body, so alluringly Fertile in Her youth, sang to Them Her siren song of Life as-yet unrealized, the promise of Fertility, Nurturing, Growth, Healing, and Solace. They could not resist the luxury of momentary respite upon Her single bounteous Pangean continent. Years into their never-ending journey, Seeding the Stars—but for the instant of a blink in the Great Mother's Eye—They rested for a moment, made love to Her, and the promise of Her young Motherhood was realized. Then, moving once more out along the Spiral of Milky Stars within the Galaxy's lens, They left Her to Birth Her Children, the God/dess(es) of old.

They had bonded with the Trees and became Guardians of Gaia. Those were the ones we honor as the Star Guardians in our Circles today, that we ask for guidance and help that we may do our workings properly. The Star Guardians guided the growth of the young Gaia. From the Jurassic fern Forests to the deciduous Forests of this age those Guardians have remained available to those who know how to envoke them.

There were no humans when the Star Folk came, but They prepared the Planet for us. When our forebearers appeared half a millon years ago, they found an environment groomed for their pleasure, that they could be one with. Then, as the geologic events of Ice Age followed Ice Age... thrice in the space of 250,000 years... civilization was compressed into the equatorial regions. Effectively destroyed, each time it arose anew to encompass the Northern regions of our World. In that time the Tales and Sciences of the Fey spread to all Quarters of the Earth, becoming part of all cultures. Each time the Ice receded, Faerie culture traveled north through the Lands, as Hunters followed the Herds following the Ice.

They raised the Temples of Atlantis, and later still, during the cataclysmic planetary Magnetic Shift, subsequent Polar Processions and accompanying climactic ravages, they sent their Golden solar-sailed vessels to the Four Directions, and the safety of the tectonic driftwood that had scattered continents so widely upon Her diverse beauty, that thus, in the parting, Their Garden might be preserved...

Some of Their Priests and Priestesses came ashore upon North Africa, and raised Their Orion of pyramid observatories along the eastern shore of the planetary Milky Way, just south of the Fertile Nile Delta, so that the knowledge of our Heritage, and the source of our very existence might survive the ages, even these thousands of years hence. There, They passed into the oblivion of the Sand upon which they built, preserved eternally in the perpetuity of Their descendants and Their monumental architecture.

And as the ancient memories of Original Union and common Heritage faded from the memory of these peoples, they made terrible war against one another: The Faerie Wars.

So now, my Sister-Lover-Water-Brothers, standing upon the threshold of Dreams unimagined by those countless ancestors, glorying in a time, not of war, but when even the hint of worldwide annihilation enforces an uneasy Truce among the diverse descendants of all races and cultures deriving from our common Starseed ancestry, we look once more, with longing, to the vast expanse Above that gave us Birth.

How glorious the future brightly gleams! For Elven Farsight sees a time, little more than seven years hence, when Hyperdrive technologies power new Starseed vessels forth beyond Sun Father's gravity-grip, and Ramscoop engines provide us with Star-hopping Wings to fly unto the space beyond, once again Deosil, moving with the Spiral of Starry Promises, flowing like Milk, to range forth across the Void along the path of our Parents, the Mothers and Fathers of our very Life's heritage. Inward amongst the newest Birthings, soon to greet our Sisters and Brothers, the descendants of Those that once sowed our Garden, so very long ago upon Their appleseed Journey of Birthing. When, at long last, we hug them close against us, in long-awaited, full-bodied embrace, and declare:

We Come From
The Very Stars,
Dear Kindreth! GE

Elf Queen's Daughters
POB 337
Redwood Valley, CA 95470
Please enclose a SASE!

Jane's Tidings

Isn't it great the way this works? You send Jane your Pagan- and Wiccan-related news, and she (with the help of some excellent and long-suffering editors) sends it out all over the world! Plus you get her undying gratitude! That address again: Jane, ***POB 64, Portland, ME 04112*** *or e-mail* ***pjane@maine.com.***

Witch hunt

The National Spiritualist Association of Churches suspended Valerie Van Winkle as president of the Temple Heights Spiritualist Church and Camp of Northport, Maine, after finding her guilty of claiming to be a witch. Norma Sheldon, a church member, apparently claimed Van Winkle "hissed at her and put a hex on her"; other evidence of her supposed witchcraft included the facts that she liked cats and occasionally wore black. Van Winkle speculated that the church, a Christian mediumistic organization with about 2,500 members, actually had its eye on the camp property, valued at $200,000.

(Associated Press, 4/17/96)

More cheap exploitation

By the time you read this, the movie "The Craft" will have opened and, I hope, closed. It's about four high-school girls who "discover their inner power through witchcraft," according to the promo. It features alternative music and black lipstick; the promotional photo shows four sexy young things in micro-miniskirts, marching forward with menacing expressions. Just what we needed, right?

(Columbia Tristar press release)

Hey Carl, want a card reading?

Carl Sagan, astronomer to the masses, has written *The Demon-Haunted World,* a blunt attack on all forms of magical thinking including occultism, astrology, Tarot reading, prayer, meditation, channeling and other religious and paranormal phenomena. His passionate defense of the scientific outlook as the only source of trustworthy data about reality has raised hackles in more religions than ours, but he does cite medieval Witch-burnings as "legally and morally sanctioned mass murder" based on erroneous beliefs.

(Charleston, W.Va., Gazette, 4/14)

Sorry, Mr. Sagan

A feature story in the Hartford Courant explored the "divination binge" going on in America. Among writer Garret Condon's findings: About half the pay-per-call services nationwide are psychic hotlines. Tarot-card sales are at an all-time high. The former director of the CIA's psychic program dismisses the proliferation, saying less than 1% of the population has true "anomalous cognition." Among the newer manifestations of divination are Tarot, biorhythm and I Ching sites on the Internet.

(Hartford Courant, 3/11)

Legit in Kansas City

The *Kansas City Star* runs a weekly column by Vern Barnet, a minister who writes brief explanations of the beliefs of different denominations. In January, he wrote about Pagans, quoting a local Pagan, Rhiannon Bennett. The story explained the origins of the word "pagan" and offered a brief look at our spirituality, ending with Bennett's address for those interested in learning more.

(Kansas City Star, 1/24)

Goddesses in Boston

The Boston Globe Magazine took a look at Goddess spirituality as it is practiced in that area, and found its practitioners "very ordinary-looking ... The yearning to honor women's spirituality is anything but offbeat." The story focused on a weekend women's gathering led by Starhawk, and on the role of the Unitarian Church in giving Goddess worshipers a place to call home. The story skimped on the role of men in the movement, but otherwise offered a thoughtful introduction and some hints for Boston-area seekers.

(Boston Globe Magazine, 3/17)

Iron Oak update

Most of you by now are familiar with the Church of Iron Oak, the Florida coven fighting to establish a federal precedent allowing Wiccans (and by extension all religions) to worship at home. They continue to need financial support from the Pagan community (send it to POB 060672, Palm Bay, FL 32906-0672) for the cost of taking the depositions that will help bolster their case. Jacque Zaleski, one of the leaders of Iron Oak, underwent a grueling deposition process herself, and the case is now before federal Judge Anne Conway, who will decide whether it is worthy to go to trial. Jacque has inherited a house which needs a new roof but could be worth $45,000 to $60,000; anyone willing to lend money against that house should contact the above address. *(Iron Oak newsletters)*

Courageous council

In other Iron Oak news, Jacque Zaleski was asked to give an invocation at a City Council meeting in Titusville, Fla. She did so, with some public uproar. While the local newspaper printed an opinion article lumping Pagans who "exalt and pray to the trees and nature" in with "murders, rapists and those who sexually or otherwise abuse children," a dramatic political cartoon depicted a pilgrim figure labeled Religious Intolerance, using a copy of the Constitution to light a pyre under Ilene Davis, the councilwoman who asked Zaleski to give the invocation. Meanwhile, Zaleski's husband, Roger Coleman, continues the long process of recovering from serious pelvis injuries received in an automobile accident. He has received much healing assistance from the Pagan community, leaving some of his hospital staff bemused by the number of cards, etc. that came his way. *(Iron Oak newsletters)*

God as a woman

Maclean's, a Canadian magazine, did a cover story this spring titled "Can God Be a Woman?" Illustrated with a picture of a 7-foot bronze female nude in the position of a crucified Christ (a modern sculpture originally intended for a church, which now serves in part as a memorial to women slain at a University of Montreal massacre), the article delved into the phenomenon of women fleeing mainstream religions—some joining what they called "the exuberant goddess circles sprouting across the country"—or demanding change within the religions they practice. Among the evidence cited in the article: The York Mystery Plays, a Christian performance that's been going on in England for six centuries, this year cast a woman as God. A Canadian sociologist, Reginald Bibby, has produced evidence that in his country, women's church attendance has more than halved over the last four decades. The author also quotes a woman who skeptically joined a tour of Greek goddess sites and sneered at the "middle-aged women doing spacey things in baggy gowns"—until a ritual where she called out the names of her mother and grandmothers and great-grandmothers and began to weep. *(Maclean's, April)*

Heavy-metal path

A disturbing article in *Spin* magazine highlights some Norwegian Pagans whose music, "black metal," preaches the overthrow of Christianity by violent means and the return to the religion of Odin. The article referred frequently to pentacles (an accompanying photo depicted a reverse pentacle).

(Spin, January, via correspondent)

Family values

Charles Chapman, a Wiccan who operates a religion-oriented shop, is fighting with the proprietor of "The Anderson Jockey Lot," a place where various dealers gather. Chapman was told in a letter, "We have noticed the merchandise you are selling and have made a management decision that it is not family oriented type of merchandise." Chapman mentions that other dealers on the lot sell Bibles and Christian-related material, and notes the irony of the "family oriented" comment in a place where others are selling semi-automatic assault rifles. Chapman's lawyer was able to speak with the owner, who expressed an objection to what he saw as "devil worshiping stuff"; at last update, the lawyer, Scott Thomason, is compiling an inventory list and seeking details (including case numbers) of similar situations that were successfully resolved. Write to "A Circle of Light," 111 Amy St., Anderson, SC 29624.

(Communication from Tenagis)

"Shaman" denounced

The New Hampshire Intertribal Native American Council came out strongly against a man said to be a Native American shaman who was charged with sexually assaulting two teen-age girls. "We are outraged by the alleged wrong done to these women and children under the guise of Native American spirituality," Chief Charles Crazy Bear Richardson said of the charges against Alan Champney, also known as Spotted Wolf.

(Associated Press, 4/23)

Pop culture strikes again

In April, Showtime offered "Sabrina the Teen-Age Witch," about a girl sent to live with two eccentric aunts who inform her that she's a descendant of witches and warlocks (yes, warlocks). She uses her newfound magical powers to work at her new high school, endowing a romantic rival with zits and empowering her sneakers to help her win a track meet. It all sounds rather harmless and stupid, but Jane doesn't have cable, so one of you fine folks will have to enlighten me ...

(New York Times, 4/9)

Know your gods

The Academic Decathlon is a national competition in which teams of high-schoolers compete in mastering various sets of knowledge. This year's decathlon participants are asked to know something about "Gods and Goddesses from Various Cultures who Empower Humans," among them Ishtar, Bran, Isis, Parvati, Ogun, Odin, Pele and Vulcan.

(Academic Decathlon Web page)

Part of the web

The author of a *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* religion story on children's perceptions of God was sensitive enough to weave a Pagan 11-year-old's beliefs seamlessly in with those of Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Greek Orthodox children. "He's really comforting," says Galen Hair of his God, who happens to be Zeus...

(Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 2/1)

Event Horizon

A one year (six issues) subscription to a more comprehensive list costs $11 US; $16 Canada; $19 other. From Larry Cornett, 9355 Sibelius Drive, Vienna, VA 22182-1632. The latest version of the complete calendar can also be downloaded from the CAW files area of the Ice Fire BBS at (703) 354-4176. The Complete Calendar is also on a Webpage at http://www.io.com/~cookec/pagan.d/calendar.htm

June 28-July 10
NAT'L RAINBOW GATHERING
Ozarks Bioregion (MO or AR)
Free, bring food, etc. to share. Camping, sweat lodges, ceremonies, drumming, dance, pot luck everything. Write to Rainbow c/o Box 6430, Taos, NM 87571.

July 4-7
LIBERTY SPIRIT GATHERING
Prescott National Forest, AZ
$60/person, $110/couple, $200/family
Isaac Bonewits, Ashleen O'Gaea & Canyondancer, Oberon & Morning Glory Zell, Joe Bethancourt, Marc Alvin Hart, David Korup, Adam Walks Between Worlds & Walkabout. Don Davis, SPIN, 4036 Shady Oak, Las Vegas, NV 89115. (702) 223-4662

July 4-7
DRUM AND SPLASH
Artemis, PA $35
Camping, swimming, drumming, dance, partying at Pagan Campground. Drum & Splash, 4 Quarters Farm, RD 1 62 C, Silver Mills Rd., Artemis, PA 17211 (814) 784-3075

July 4-7 ..... DRUM FEST & SUBGENIUS X-DAY DRILL
Sherman, NY
Camping, drumming, strange Subgenius happenings, etc. Brushwood Folk Center, 8881 Bailey Hill Rd., Sherman, NY 14781 (716) 761-6740

July 4-8
RAVENWOOD GATHERING
Mt Tampalpas, CA $30
Campout, party, music, workshops, rite of Pan, honor trees. Attendance limited to 75. Freya's Folk, 537 Jones St. #165, SanFrancisco, CA 94102

July 11-14 ..... SACRED SPACE
Timonium, MD $60+hotel room
Conference with Selena Fox, Dennis Carpenter, Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, etc. focusing on Samhain. Sacred Space, 5400 Eisenhower Ave, Alexandria, VA 22304. (703) 823-7560

July 15-21 ..... SIRIUS RISING
Sherman, NY
Camping, drumming, ritual, Thelemic Theme. Brushwood Folk Center, 8881 Bailey Hill Rd., Sherman, NY 14781. (716) 761-6750

July 20-21
GATHERING OF THE TRIBES
NW Washington $20
Celebrate & consecrate Pagan burial grounds, drum, bonfire, potluck, camping. Gwen Wittwer POB 3713, Blaine, WA 98231. (360) 332-1666

July 23-28 ..... STARWOOD
Sherman, NY $100
(some workshops cost extra $10)
Rituals, workshops, music, bonfire drumming & dance, partying, etc. Don Kraig, Nicki Scully, Silver Raven Wolf, Jon Ott, Oberon & Anodea, Orion & Maerian, Ivan Stang, Gavin & Yvonne Frost, Kenneth Deigh, etc. ACE, 1643 Lee Rd. #9, Cleveland Hts, Ohio 44118. (800) 446-4962

July 26-28 ..... LAMMAS FAIR
Angelus National Forest $25
(Preregistration only)
Games, rituals, camping, bonfire drumming, etc. Lammas Fair, POB 1272, Manhattan Beach, CA 90267.

July 26-28
GREEN SPIRIT FESTIVAL
SW Wisconsin
Nature walks, feasting, Diva attunement, Lughnasad Festival. Circle, POB 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572. (608) 924-2216

July 26-28
MIDSUMMER MOONDANCE
Bloomington, IN $35
($45 after 7/4)
Camping, Wise Men Circles, Wood Women Circles, rituals, etc. Elf Lore Family, POB 1082, Bloomington, IN 47402-1082.

August 1-5 ..... WITCHSTOCK
Perry, Ohio $30 ($42 @ gate)
Camping, drumming, music, workshops, etc. Harvest Moon Haven, POB 247, Geneva, OH 44041. (216) 381-9814

August 2-4
CAW HEARTSPRING LUGHNASAD
Central Kentucky $35 by 6/20; $50 by 7/20; $60 at gate.
On CAW's own Eastern land, Heartspring. CAW Annual Meeting, ritual, workshops, camping etc. with Anodea & Richard, Aeona, Oberon & Morning Glory, Orion & Maerian. Call Moria (606) 225-8808

Aug. 2-4 ... LAMMAS FESTIVAL
Georgia area $20
Rituals, workshops, etc. Avalon Isle, POB 6006, Athens, GA 40604. (704) 548-6244

August 2-4 ..... LAMMAS
Chandler, NC $10 + food
Rituals, camping, pot luck, etc. Serpentstone, POB 368, Chandler, NC 28715.

Aug. 7-11 ..... DRAGONFEST
Denver, CO area
Rituals, workshops, camping, music, bonfires, etc. Dragonfest, POB 6927, Denver, CO 80206

August 8-11
SUMMERHAWK FEST
Sherman, NY
Camping, drumming, Thelemic ritual, etc. Brushwood Folklore Center, 8881 Bailey Hill Rd, Sherman, NY 14781 (716) 761-6750

August 22-25
CAW GROW CLOSER III
Needmore, IN
CAW and Polyamory fun, workshops, rituals with Oberon, Maerian, Orion, Aeona, etc. Dragon Family (414) 273-6502 or Ken (414) 357-6571

Aug. 29-Sept. 2 ... HEARTSONG
Sherman, NY
Camping, drumming, ritual in Family oriented Festival. Brushwood Folklore Center, 8881 Bailey Hill Rd, Sherman, NY 14781 (716) 761-6750

August 30-September 2
PAGAN MUSIC FESTIVAL
Artemis, PA $75 by 7/20
($110 after 7/20, $140 after 8/17)
Tod Allan, Kiva, Big Blow & Bushwhackers, Mothertongue, Rhythm Alive, Andras & Dierdre, etc. 4 Quarters Farm, RD 1 62C Silver Mills Rd, Artemis, PA 17211 (814) 784-3075

August 30-September 2
GATHERING FOR LIFE ON EARTH
Vancouver, BC, Can. $70-$100
A children- and family-centered Wiccan event limited to about 100. This is a meat, drug and alcohol free gathering. Gathering for Life on Earth, 7231 - 120th St. #190, Delta, British Columbia V4C 6P5 Canada

Sept. 6-8 ..... EARTHDANCE
Pine Mountain, Georgia $20
($35 after 7/31)
Workshops, ritual, drumming, music, swimming, group camping. Stormy, c/o Hazel Nut, POB 186, Auburn, AL 36831. (334) 821-5945

September 12-15
GATHERING OF THE TRIBES
Tennessee $25
Rituals, workshops, bonfires, drumming. etc. Branwen (770) 516-6115

Sept. 13-15 ..... AUTUMNFEST
Georgia Mountains $15
Festival in beautiful private area of State Park. Grove of the Unicorn, POB 13384, Atlanta, GA 30324. (404) 296-6429

September 19-22
WILD MAGICK GATHERING
Needmore, IN
Fall Equinox celebration with drumming, dance, rituals, workshops, camping, etc. Elf Lore Family, POB 1082, Bloomington, IN 47402-1082. (812) 336-5334

September 20-22
MABON MOUNTAIN MYSTERIES
Jemez, NM $20
Mabon celebration in the NM mountains. Workshops, rituals, drumming, dancing, bardic circle, clothing optional, vendors, camping. CLC, POB 9824, Albuquerque, NM 87119.

Sept. 20-22 .... WICCA '96 $95
Australian Wiccan Conference with a Rites of Passage theme, workshops, lectures, etc. A.W.C., POB 224, Hahndorf SA 5245 Australia. Call Helen (08) 338-1011

Sept 20-22 ... MAGICAL MABON
Land O'Lakes, FL
Rituals etc. with Pagan Allied Network (PAN). (813) 341-0111

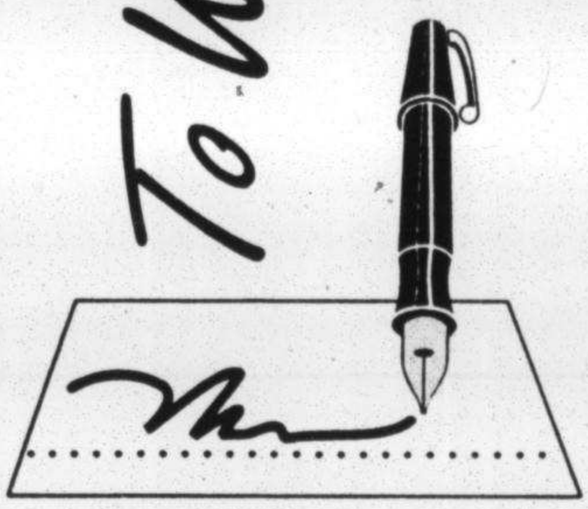
September 27-29
AUTUMN EQUINOX
Gatlinburg, TN
Camping, ritual, potluck, food, find Pagan folks. Cerren Ered, POB 936, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. (423) 436-5865

October 4-6 ..... HEARTBEAT
Central Kentucky $25 by 7/1; $35 by 8/1; $50 after 8/1
On CAW's Eastern land, Heartspring. Harvest rites, herbal lore, seminars. Pam Skaar, 455 Ed Howe, Munfordville, KY 42765. (502) 531-6703

Oct. 5 ..... WHO ON EARTH IS THE GODDESS?
Ashland, OR $75 in advance
Conference with Ed Buryn, Laurie Lovecraft, Bob Scarlatt & Kai, Z Budapest, Oberon & Morning Glory, Mary Greer, Anodea & Richard, Darryl Cherney, Diane Darling. Andy Conn, 644-A Freeman Lane #131, Grass Valley, CA 95949. (916) 274-2956

October 17-20
7th HIGHLANDS OF TENNESSEE SAMHAIN GATHERING
near Gatlinburg, TN
$75 pre-reg; $90 at gate
Rituals, workshops, etc. with Isaac Bonewits, Oberon & Morning Glory Zell, Gavin & Yvonne Frost, Lady Amethyst & Lord Taliesin, etc. H.T.S.G. '96, POB 6006, Athens, GA 40604. (706) 369-6813

To Whom It May Concern...



This is an effort to pass on some of the **public service** announcements we receive regularly. If you or your group wishes to reach out to the larger Pagan community, please send **short** notices to this column, which we will publish **once only.** No sales—that's what ads are for. If you want a listing for your paid events, please don't send it here—take out a display or classified ad! (Though we may run notices for special benefits.) If you want to contact other Pagans, or want pen-pals, please take out a "Personals" ad in our Classifieds!

GREEN EGG'S E-MAIL ADDRESSES:
Send submissions to
Maerian@aol.com
Forum letters to:
GEforum@aol.com
Advertising to:
Aeona@aol.com
All others to:
GEmagazine@aol.com
GE World Wide Web site:
http://www.caw.org/green-egg

PAGAN POLITICAL COLUMNIST

Ron Sinclair, editor of *Labyrinth of New England,* has asked me to be the journal's political columnist—"A Call to Arms," as Ron phrased it. I rather envision the arms of the Goddess and her Consort outstretched to us rather than drawn guns or crossed sabers—athames, as the case may be.

If anyone has news to share regarding our Pagan Community, First Amendment—especially religious freedom issues, and/or wants a case publicized, please contact me through my personal e-mail address (grotonwitc@aol.com or newadl@aol.com) with a header flagging their communication as "PERSONAL" (eyes only) or "PUBLIC" (for publication)

Diane Des Rochers, BA;MC,
Regional Director:WADL-New England
POB 384, Groton, MA 01450-0384.
(508) 448-5584
grotonwitc@aol.com

C.O.G. AND 'THE CRAFT' MOVIE

There seems to be some confusion about this movie and Covenant of the Goddess' involvement in it. For the record, COG had absolutely no official connection to the film.

The confusion appears to be arising from the assistance that the production company received from a Wiccan who happens to be a COG member. Pat Devin, currently First Officer of the Southern California Local Council, was hired as a technical consultant on the film. At the time she worked on "The Craft" she was a National Public Information Officer for the Covenant, but she was not representing COG's interests or opinions in her work there. Ms. Devin never claimed that she was, but her role in COG did become known to the film company, and it has since appeared in their publicity information and has been spread through outlets such as "Entertainment Tonight".

At the moment the Covenant has no official position for or against the movie. I will say that even if the concerns about possible anti-Wiccan elements prove out a boycott or other public protest is still inadvisable in my opinion. Recall what happened when conservative Christians led the charge against "The Last Temptation of Christ." Anything that draws attention to the film will only make it rise higher in the charts.

Feel free to tell any who ask you that the Covenant of the Goddess does not endorse or support the movie "The Craft" in any way. If I can answer any questions, or help in any way, feel free to ask.

Sincerely, Paul Suliin pio@cog.org.
Western Public Information Officer,
Covenant of the Goddess

PHANES PRESS WEB SITE

The ALEXANDRIA website provides educational resources on the relationships between philosophy, cosmology, myth, and culture. There is also a Villa of the Muses and the Liberal Arts which will be opening in the near future. The permanent address is: http://cosmopolis.com

PHANES PRESS is a publisher of books on the spiritual and philosophical traditions of the Western world including ancient religions, mythology, Greek philosophy, alchemy and the Hermetic tradition. The entire catalog is now online, with subject, author, and title indexes, at: http://phanes.com —David Fideler

NEWS FROM IRON OAK: THIS IS OUR BIGGEST APPEAL! PLEASE HELP!

Iron Oak needs cash to continue the case. Iron Oak is retaining Donald Jacobson, a South Florida attorney and his associate to defend the right to home worship for this final push into court. He is replacing Dick Wilson, who helped temporarily until a previous commitment required that he withdraw, at least from the active effort. The names of everyone who have offered help have been given to Mr. Jacobson.

We need help! Mr. Jacobson and his associate have agreed to spend the next few weeks trying to get us a win, but he needs $10,000 to do it. We have $6,000 in the account partially due to a nice reception at ATC in Seattle, WA last week. Also, two stores paid for their legal fund T-shirt sales and the Spring Mysteries attendees generously purchased items for sale and many donated their cleaning refund to the cause. Nearly $1,200 was raised! Donations by those attending Stones Rising at Four Quarters Farm, ATC are still coming in and is helping us meet the goal.

If ever there was a time to help, that time is now. Please fight with us by sending a donation now! We believe we will win, if we can only get into court, but we need your help to get there.

Also, if there are any who could afford to loan us money, please let us know. Jacque inherited a tract house in Titusville last month which needs a new roof, but is likely worth about $45-65,000. If you are willing to loan Iron Oak money and would like it to be against that house, please let us know. We need help!

Dr. J. Gordon Melton (author of *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*) told Jacque that this case will make history because it will right many wrongs. He strongly defends a Pagan's right to worship at home and anywhere without interference. We have also been told: "The only way that they can beat you is if you give up." If the Pagans in Florida go down; it will likely hurt everyone.

If you will be a friend or associate and would like to help, contact The Church of Iron Oak, POB 060672, Palm Bay, FL 32906. Those who need information can reach Mr. Jacobson at (407) 338-9610

Roger (Paraselsu) Coleman
Responses to: ironoak@aol.com

YOU HAVE *GOT* TO BE KIDDING!!!!

Re: To Whom it May Concern, 'Federal Tax Writeoff,' in GE 113: The IRC (Internal Revenue Code) does NOT provide any 'writeoff,' credit, deduction, or adjustment to income for giving money to prisoners or any other individuals! Sanford Jordan is clearly trying to separate ignorant people from their money.

I urge you to print a prominently placed notice in the next issue of GE warning people not to send this individual money and informing them that gifts to individuals are not tax deductible. (In fact, I wouldn't consider contacting this individual for any reason.)

Brightest Blessings!
(a state revenue agent)

"SATANISTS 4 LIFE"

As a number of anti-choice leaders converged for a leadership meeting at Christian Fellowship Church to discuss their plans, a flock of black-clad, devil-mask-wearing, sinister but stylish satanists is spotted approaching the church by Scheidler's toady, Tim Murphy. Acting with his usual incredible speed, Murphy stood & gaped as the group passed by, chanting "Hail Satan, Hail Scheidler" and "Don't Abort the Anti-Christ!"

They took up position in front of the church, performed an evil ritual, sounded the Trumpet of Doom, and waved placards reading: "Pro-Life, Pro-Satan, Pro-Schiedler" "Save A Soul For Satan" "He's Dark, He's Evil, Mmmmm!" (with a picture of Operation Rescue leader Flip Benham wearing devil horns) and several others too dark to describe.

They chanted with fanatical fervor: "Hey Hey, Ho Ho, Women's Rights Have Got To Go!" "Operation Rescue is led by a man, he's busy carrying out Satan's Plan!" "If you don't choose 'em, we can't abuse 'em!" "Not the Church, Not The State, Satan Will Decide Our Fate!" and many more.

The satanists also passed out fliers:
CELEBRATE UNHOLY WEEK!

Satanists 4 Life are here to express our support and solidarity with Operation Rescue and pro-life forces taking UnHoly Week and the battle for preborn children to the streets of Chicago. Abortionists and clinic deathscorts must be punished for their theft of untainted souls from Satan's flock. Less abortions means more souls for Satan, and also more rape, murder, war, and sin—all in the name of traditional family values! Hail Satan! For this we are pleased, and we rejoice that the pro-life movement has eagerly made ties with and taken in militia men, klan members, and others that would cleanse the abortion mills with unholy fire. The links between Christian Reconstructionism, Christian Identity, and Satanism are many and united we can defeat abortion through low-intensity warfare. We must acknowledge the leading role of Joseph Scheidler, spiritual guider to the militant pro-life movement (following in the steps of Adolf Hitler, the occult fascist who outlawed abortion immediately upon attaining power), for his truly evil genius in bringing us all together. Hail Satan!

DID YOU REMEMBER TO DRESS?

Pat Mathis' "Did You Remember to Dress?" sign was featured at a recent art exhibition titled "Biting the Apple: Modern Lovers" in Oklahoma City, OK. The sign was hung first in line on the wall of the entrance hallway of the gallery so that it was the first work seen as you entered the gallery.

ANIMISM SUBMISSIONS WANTED

I am writing a book which illustrates 'animsim/everyday magic.' This book takes the form of short 'true life' stories of personal experiences/interactions/communications with the natural world around us, be it plant, animal, mineral, etc. The stories show how, through these interactions, we receive some kind of teaching/healing/insight or personal understanding, which in turn empowers our life.

Your valued contribution would help to promote what I see as an important educational venture, to bring about fuirther healing, balance and alighnment to our Sacred Earth, and our own Wild Hearts. I feel there is a great need to get these stories out there, circulating. I am sure through their very simplicity they will touch many hearts and minds.

If you find this request appeals to you, then please contact me. Your story can be either written or taped. Please include the situation/circumstances leading up to the event, and what meaning your experience had, and how it helped and empowered you. All included contributors will be acknowledged in the book, and will have the opportunity to advertise any personal work or services they offer to the public.

Willow Darling, 126 Parc-y-dre,
Tuthin, Clwyd, N. Wales LL15 1PH UK

Recommended Pagan Publications

*There are over 700 periodicals currently being published in the worldwide Pagan community. This is not meant to be an exhaustive compilation, but a brief overview of some of the best that we receive in exchange for GREEN EGG, grouped into categories according to production and format. Our personal favorites in each category are marked with an Asterix: ** ***—Oberon***

Well-produced Pagan magazines

(typeset with saddle-stapled wrap-around one- or 2-color non-glossy cover) — NEW!

THE ROSEWOOD RUNE— Rosanna Tufts, ed. Dedicated to The Way of the Nature Mystic and the practical application of magickal lifestyles; since 1996. Articles, reviews, astrology, recipes, poetry, letters, events, art. Cover b&w. 20 pp. 4/yr. Cover $3.25, sub. $12/yr. 8544 Castlemill Circle, Baltimore, MD 21236. (410) 931-2845

SPINNING IN THE LIGHT: A Magazine for the New Age of Spiritual Enlightenment— Beverly Kohlstaedt, ed. Published by the Guardians of Light / & Life-Clan of the Spider Universal Life Church since 1995. Articles, horoscopes, calendar, reviews, rituals, recipes, poetry, letters. Cover black ink on colored paper. 28 pp. 8/yr. Sub. $18. 850 S. Ranch Dr. #2-355, Las Vegas, NV 89106. (702) 631-6764

Small format Pagan journals

(typeset with saddle-stapled wrap-around one-color cover) — NEW!

PAGANSTONGUE— Raji Dorotez, ed. Published by the Omnitheistic Church Press since 1995. Articles, poetry, art; strong focus on gale male sexuality. Poorly typed & badly printed. Cover black ink on colored bristol. 52 pp. 8-1/2"x5-1/2". 4/yr. Sample $5, sub. $18/yr US/Canada. POB 4322, Berkeley, CA 94704.

WALKING THE TALK— no editor listed. The journal of Save Our Sacred Sites, published since 1996. Articles, artwork, photos covering academic and spiritual debate, promoting dialogue between groups and safe, harmless ways of living with ancient monuments. Cover black ink on colored stock. 28 pp. 8-1/2"x6". 4/yr. Sample £3, sub. £6/yr. 9 Edward Kennedy House, 196 Worthington Rd., London W10 5FP England.

Pagan newsletters

(usually no cover; often just loose pages stapled in the upper left corner) — listed alphabetically

ECO-GNOSIS— no editor listed. Published by Gaia's Children, a Naturist society, since 1996. Articles, editorials, reviews; no art. 6 pp. 6/yr. Sub. $8/yr. 17248 Gulf Blvd., N. Redington Beach, FL 33708.

HORNS AND CRESCENT— Meagan & Jennifer, eds. Published since 1995. Goings-on in the New England area for folk interested in Wiccan, Pagan, and other Goddess-based spiritual pursuits. Articles, calendar, networking. Beautifully designed with some art. 8/yr. Sample 50¢, sub. $5/yr US. POB 622, Mills, MA 02054.

MOONWEB— Don, Maulita, Amathaon, eds. An occasional publication of Circle Cithaeron, "a collective of Pagan scholars following the Eldrytch Tradition of work with wild Nature." Published since ?? Contains rituals designed to be worked simultaneously across the US and Canada. @4/yr. Free for 2 US 1st-class postage stamps per issue. POB 15461, Washington, DC 20003.

MYSTIC AEGIS— Fiana Marian, ed. Published by the Charleston Area Pagan Network (CAPN) since ?? Articles, editorials, poetry, reviews, columns, networking, announcements, prison outreach, unique computer-generated art, including b&w cover. 14 pp. 8/yr. Sample $1, sub. $8/yr. CAPN, POB 41962, Charleston, SC 29423.

MYSTIC MAGIC— Lara Light, ed. Published since 1995. Articles, letters, columns, spells, calendar. 6 pp. 12/yr. Sample SASE, sub. $5/yr. POB 387, Springfield, ORE 97477.

NEW ORLEANS VOODOO CROSSROADS— A monograph of rituals and writings by Severine "Muslima" Singh, from Black Moon Publishing, since 1994. Dedicated to furthering global awareness and cultural exchanges among all people. "We revere the ancestors and serve the spirits." 8 pp. with no art. 4/yr. $3.50 ea. POB 19469, Cincinnati, OH 45219-0469.

NEWS FROM THE MOTHER GROVE— Norma Hoffman & Ed Chapman, eds. Membership newsletter of Àr nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, snce 1989. Membership news & notes, intereviews, events. No art. 10-12 pp. 6/yr. Sample $1, sub. sub included with membership in ADF. POB 1483, Highland Park, NJ 08904. (908) 249-6680

NIAWEH NOTES— Diana Paar, ed. Newsletter of the Niaweh Nest of the Church of All Worlds since 1993. Articles, reviews, Nest reports, calendar. No art. 3 pp. 4/yr. No info on price. Niaweh, 7717 Brashear St. #2, Pittsburgh, PA 15221.

NOTES FROM TAYCHOPERA— Beket, ed. Official newsletter of Sun Raven Protogrove ADF, and of Goddess Chapter, an informal network of Neopagans whose familial roots stretch back to the Colonial Era in the New World. Since 1989. Personal notes, news & views, letters, reviews. Typeset, well produced. 22 pp. 4/yr. Sample $2. Sub. $8 US, $12 foreign. POB 8212, Madison, WI 53708. (608) 249-2250

ORION AT TWILIGHT HIGHLIGHTS— Published by the store since 1994. Articles, calendar, news, columns, reviews, letters, etc. 12 pp. 12/yr. Sample 50¢. No sub. info. 2934B Colby Ave., Everett, WA 98201. (206) 303-8624

PAGAN VOICE— Cat Summers, Julian Vayne, Paul, eds. Monthly magazine of Paganism and Magick since 1991. Articles, news, interviews, reviews, calendar, cartoons, art. Attractively typeset and magazine-formatted, but no cover. 16 pp. 12/yr. Sample £1, sub. £10/yr. 13 Barnstaple Walk, Knowle, Bristol, England BS4 1JQ.

PANEGYRIA— Pete Pathfinder Davis, ed. Newsletter of the Aquarian Tabernacle Church since 1983. Articles, news & views, clipped cartoons. No art. 10 pp. 6/yr. Sample $2, sub. $12/yr US. POB 57, Index, WA 98256. (206) 793-1945

PAN'S GROVE— Nella, ed. A new age catalog with a newsletter containing articles, poetry, info. on: Hinduism, Buddhism, Paganism, Mother Earth, astral travel, & other rad stuff. Some art. Sample $1.80. POB 124838, San Diego, CA 92112.

PHILANOR NEWS— Helena, ed. Published by Philadelphia Area Network of Old Religions since 1991. Articles, events, poetry, calendar. Typewritten, very little interior art. Cover black ink on colored stock. 22 pp. 5/yr. Sample $1.50. Sub. $6/yr US. POB 53505, Philadelphia, PA 19107. (215) 441-8341

OPEN WAYS— Kris Demien, ed. Newsletter of the Nine Houses of Gaia since 1991. "Gateway to the Pagan Communities." Articles, poetry, reviews, calendar, news. Some art. 16 pp. 6/yr. Sample $1, sub. $6/yr US. POB 66932, Portland, OR 97290.

OUR PAGAN TIMES— Moonchild, ed. Newsletter of New Moon New York, a non-profit Pagan networking organization; since 1991. Articles, news, events, poetry, calendar, "Community Bulletin Board." Some art—mostly clips. Attractive professional format and design. Front page black ink on colored stock. 18 pp. 12/yr. Sample $2, sub. $15/yr US. POB 1471, Madison Sq. Sta, New York, NY 10159. (212) 689-9636

THE RAVEN'S CRY— Tanoth Eris LaFey, ed. A newsletter published by Ravenscry Temple and Seminary of Celtic Wicca, for the Wiccan/Pagan community at large. News & views, poetry, letters, cartoons. Some art of varying quality. B&w cover. 28 pp. Sample 50¢. POB 534, Taylors, SC 29687.

RENEWAL— This newsletter exists "to share the views of modern Odinists, both within Australia and worldwide." Privately published since 1994. Brilliant articles, editorials, news, reviews, letters. 8 pp. 4/yr. Sub. $12/yr. Oz, $16/yr. elsewhere. POB 4333, Univ. of Melbourne, VIC 3052 Australia.

THE RUNESTAR— Richard Clarkson, ed. A neat little newsletter of Norse Shamanism, published since 1995. 4 pp. 12/yr. Sample $2, sub. $20/yr. 205 Durban Ave., Hopatcong, NJ 07843. (201) 398-8244

...to be continued

Major Earth Religions Rights Organizations

by ***Larry Cornett, CAW, ERAL***

Below is a list of major organizations in the United States focused on helping Earth Religionists facing legal problems associated with their religion. Note that Witches Against Religious Discrimination (WARD) also has state representatives in 34 states, the Witches Anti Discrimination Lobby (WADL) have coordinators in 18 states, and the Witches League for Public Awareness (WLPA) is expanding to include state representatives. Many of these organizations also help in public education, responding to slander about Earth Religions in newspapers and the media.

I have also shown the public contacts for the Earth Religions Assitance Listserv (ERAL), as of May 7, 1996, which has members of all of the national organizations and several regional organization on-line.

In addition to these Earth Religion Rights oriented groups, the ACLU can sometimes be helpful, along with major Pagan networking organizations and churches like the Covenant of the Goddess, the Free Spirit Alliance, and the Aquarian Tabernacle Church (which also have some members active in ERAL). The best help if you have a legal problem comes from attorneys licenced in the state in which the problem is occurring. Most of these organizations will help your attorney, and some may be in a position to help you locate a Pagan-friendly attorney, along with various local Pagan networking organizations.

Alliance for Magical & Earth Religions
(AMER)
POB 16551
Clayton MO 63105
CARLISLE@wuchem.wustl.edu
http://www.webcom.com/~magus/amer.html

Earth Religions Assistance Listserv
Larry Cornett
9355 Sibelius Drive
Vienna, VA 22182-1632
lcorncalen@aol.com
http://205.226.66.2/~rowanf/ERAL/eral.html

Lady Liberty League
c/o Circle Network News
POB 219
Mt. Horeb WI 53572
circle@mhtc.net,

Witches Against Religious Discrimination
(WARD)
Attn: Joyce Siegrest
P.O. Box 23149
Providence, RI 02903
rosegate@ids.net
http://www.ids.net/rosegate/ward.html
http://www.northcoast.com/~caw/ward.htm

Witches Anti Discrimination Lobby
(WADL)
c/o Silver Raven Wolf
Box 1392
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-1392
Author of *To Ride a Silver Broomstick*

Witches League for Public Awareness
(WLPA)
POB 8736
Salem MA 01971
WLPA@ CelticCrow.com
http://www.CelticCrow.com/

ERAL Public Contacts

Rev. James Assad Chapter Director
Witches Against Religious
Discrimination(W.A.R.D.)
California Chapter
POB 2610, McKinleyville CA 95519-2610
Phone: (707)825-7903
jassad@northcoast.com
Web Site:
http://www.northcoast.com/~caw/ward.htm

Ms. Chris Carlisle
The Alliance for Magical
and Earth Religions (AMER)
PO Box 16551, Clayton MO 63105
CARLISLE@wuchem.wustl.edu

Goldie Brown
P.O. Box 624
Monroeville, PA 15146-0624
Witchesí Anti-Discrimination
Lobby (WADL)
roserunes@aol. com

Larry Cornett
9355 Sibelius Drive
Vienna, VA 22182-1632
Phone: (703) 281-3335
Fax: (703) 281-3335
call first, not a dedicated line
VA Director, WADL
Scion, Church of All Worlds
lcorncalen@aol.com

Pete Pathfinder Davis
Aquarian Tabernacle Church (ATC)
PO Box 409, Index, WA 98256-0409
Phone: (360) 793-1945
Covers Washington State and nearby areas
AquaTabCh@aol.com (W WA only)

Sarah Glenn
PO Box 8275
Lexington, KY 40533-8275
Rainbow Wind, QPN (Queer Pagan
Network)
Regional contact for Kentucky and
surrounding states
RainboWind@aol.com

Diane DesRochers, BA; MC
P.O. Box 384
Groton, MA 01450-0384
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Forum Editorial Policy

We try to print letters that represent all sides of important issues. We may edit for brevity; 300 words or less is preferred. GE does not print unsubstantiated personal attacks; letters containing attacks or criticism will be made available to those concerned so they can respond in the same issue. We do not print letters whose authorship we cannot confirm, but we will withhold addresses on request. GE reserves the right to reprint letters.

Electronic letters are welcome at GEforum@aol.com. *Please include a mailing address.*

(Due to an early deadline, many letters about issue #114 will appear in #116. To be printed in issue #115, letters must be received by July 10.) —Orion Stormcrow, Forum Ed.

Dear Forum Readers,

Two issues ago (my first as Forum editor) over 1/3rd of the material I received had to be cut out. Included were two very long letters regarding the Cathedral of the Pines controversy. While of great import to the community, there just was not room for either letter. Fathom informed me that this was a fairly common occurrence. So, we came up with the idea of an Uncut Forum, sold as a separate publication for $2 each. Oberon and I worked up a format and waited for the orders to come pouring in. Well, a few drops later and it was time to put the new Forum (GE #113) to bed and we didn't have enough letters to fill the space we had set aside. It's likely that this is due to the new publishing schedule, or perhaps my editorial style was too daunting? So, almost all of the unpublished letters from #112 went into #113. This issue also has fewer letters and it seems our bright idea (actually, we stole it from Penthouse) is going the way of the Edsel. We therefore apologize to those four folks who actually requested the UF and our new business manager swears that the refund checks are in the mail to you.

Orion Stormcrow

Go forth and thin no more

Dear Green Egg, 4/7/96

Eeek! Now I'll have to subscribe! With more issues a year, the chance of me finding GE in the bookstore on time will probably be nil!

I'll bet you're sick of me writing all the time saying "I love your magazine!" so I'll add some complaints this time. First, though, I would like to say the Sex and Spirit issue (#112,) was very inspirational, and "Will there be a Harvest," "The Holy Prostitute" and "The Charge of the Union" were excellent. I would love to get in touch with the Circle of the Winter Moon, but they didn't give an address. I'll print mine at the end of this letter, and maybe they'll write to me.

My minor complaint is that the new smaller and lighter type for the Forum section makes it much harder to read. The new typeface is more artistically pleasing than the old, but I think you should save it for poetry and short articles, and use the old typeface for long articles and the Forum.

My major complaint is that the artwork is getting very one-note again. There are a few men, but naked women with big bazoongas seem to be the order of the day. You can break this habit slowly: start with naked women with small bazoongas, or naked women with big bazoongas and cellulite. Eventually, they can wear clothing. Or, each naked babe could be accompanied by an equally naked and attractive dude. (Angel's illustration on page 19 of #111 is a great example of this! What a God— literally!)

About the bumper stickers: Oberon's Medallion would make a great sticker. In fact, you should make a small one on a translucent background for people to put in their car or home windows. It can be our version of those little fishes; no one but other Pagans will know what it is, especially if it's placed sideways.

Bright Blessings, Holiday
POB 1813, Gilbert, Arizona 85299

Dear GE,

Although I enjoyed the articles in #112, I hated the illustrations for their lack of diversity. Where are the people of color? Where are the Asians, Africans, Native Americans or Hispanics? Where are the people of size? Where are the older people? Do only young, white thin people have sex? That's the impression I get from those pictures.

Please change your illustrations to reflect the diversity among real Pagans. I'd like to see drawings of sexy fat people, sexy older people, sexy people in wheelchairs. By only using illustrations of people who look like *Playboy* Playmates, you reinforce negative stereotypes about fat people, people over thirty, people of color, etc.—especially women. Let's be inclusive in our images, not exclusive. Lets go beyond the stereotypes to find the beauty in ordinary people.

Sincerely, Norma Eiler-Bounk
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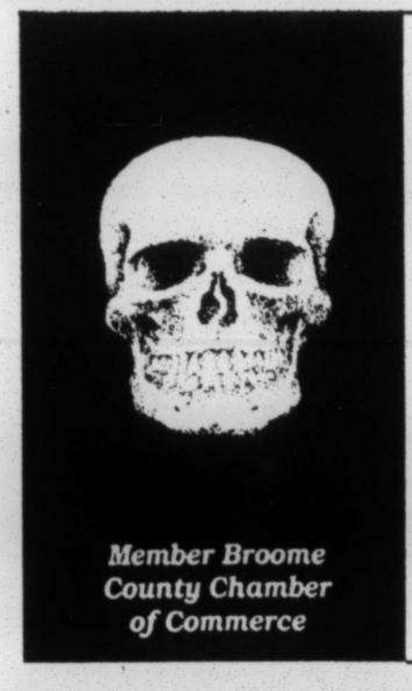

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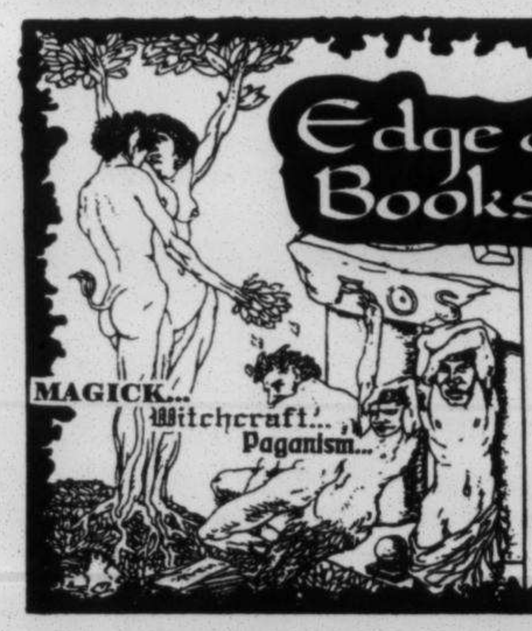

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(We are always delighted to receive and print art that reflects the full diversity of the human form. So, to all you artists out there, let's submit some! We can only print what our contributors send us! —OZ)

Editor: 5/21/96

"I am a thick woman in a thin world..." The words beginning an essay in a recent issue of *SageWoman* echo in my head. Over and over I hear them. They hit way too close to home. The reality of those words ever-so-slowly eats away at the very core of my being. My life, my love, my self esteem, my body, my heart all ache at the implications behind that sentence. Yet, every morning I wake up and look in the mirror. I try to find something beautiful in the image that looks back at me. Sometimes, if I am lucky, I succeed. I go out and face the world of people who see not a human being, not a spiritual being, not an individual with hopes and dreams and thoughts to convey, but simply, a fat person. A person who does not fit into the paradigm of what a woman is supposed to be. The same paradigm that says, "beautiful girls are dumb (not to mention easy)," "smart girls are ugly," "athletic girls are lesbians," and "fat people are jolly." With stereotypes like that, I ask myself, who can win?

This evening, I picked up the most recent copy of *Green Egg*. I read a letter from Cameron Crain and could not hold back my tears. Here was a man who had it figured out. A man who seemed to have an uncanny understanding of what myself and thousands of women nationwide deal with on a daily basis. He wrote with profound clarity about the pain and pressure of being a woman living in an image based society fueled by the media. He courageously shared his own battle with his cultural conditioning. A battle, it would seem to me, he is winning. I welcomed his words and eagerly read on to see the response of the editors of a magazine I have enjoyed and respected for some time now. I was disappointed with what followed.

The first response, from Maerian, in the beginning seemed compassionate and empathic. She explained the lack of diversity in the art submitted to them, citing that, "The work...reveals our cultural biases." But then her attitude changed. Cameron was accused of "attacking slim women because others were not included..." I re-read his letter to see if I'd missed something, but could find no such "attack." He specifically honored the art by stating, "Those svelte women are beautiful and the Goddess, but they are one percent of the population." When Cameron referred to the pictures as "horrifying," I took it to mean the VOLUME of skinny images. Never did he condemn the subjects of the art nor deny their beauty. He only took issue with the obvious omission of other body types.

The second response, penned by Orion, conveyed similar sentiments that I found to be equally baseless. His comment about a woman (the Editor) choosing the pictures is an insult to our intelligence. Why wouldn't she be a casualty of the same cultural conditioning?

Most disgusting of all, however, was the attitude of the publisher himself, Oberon. I was (and still am) appalled at the lack of compassion and the complete arrogance that exuded from his response. He chose to make no concessions for the choices made, but instead, to justify the lack of diversity by expounding upon the beauty of the editor and the artists involved—a point I still don't see the relevance of. The rest of his response, whether he liked it or not, actually made Cameron's case: Oberon was kind enough to, "let us in on a little secret: most artists will draw what they personally consider a turn-on..." THAT'S THE POINT. Cameron stated that, "These figures come through in our artwork because they exist in the collective consciousness of our culture." A consciousness largely influenced by the media.

The media has dominated this culture for decades. It tells us what to wear, what to eat, what to buy, what to drive, and most disturbingly, what to think. We live in a society that has only the mind that the media gives it. For some forty-plus years now we have been consistently brainwashed into believing that the only sexy woman is an anorexic/bulimic woman. So, when artists of this age create images of their ideal, they create reflections of this attitude. One needs only to look at the Renaissance and Baroque periods of art to realize that we, as a society have lost touch with the female form. Reubins, Da Vinci, Rafael and Michaelangelo all created masterpieces depicting subjects that were rounded, shapely, soft, and who would deny, beautiful. These artists knew the female body and treasured it for its natural shape consisting of a round belly, child-bearing hips and soft, supple breasts.

I am a thick woman in a thin world. I blame no one and expect no sympathy. I do, however, expect the same respect I give to others. I expect to be judged by the person I am and not the body I carry around with me. I expect to love and be loved by my community. I expect the people around me to not only see my size and shape, but to love, honor and respect my size and shape. Often, as I was today, I am disappointed. Disappointed by the leaders of a community that claim to respect diversity, yet do not support that claim by representing diversity in their publication. Disappointed by those same leaders who do not look beyond their own egos long enough to accept the observation of a community member and admit to their shortcomings. Yes, I am disappointed. I am hurt. I feel dishonored and disenchanted. " 'An it harm none, do what ye will"—intentionally or not, you failed.

Demeter Morningstar
908 Oak Ave., Davis, CA 95819

(Demeter, I have already apologized and accepted responsibility for the lack of diversity in the art in issue 112 and have taken steps to correct this by soliciting new material. By "attack" I was referring to Cameron's specific comments "waist of an overcooked french fry," "damn skinny," and "stone hard grapefruit breasts." Aside from holding the opinion that those comments were indeed, attacks on slim women, I agree with Cameron's concerns and with yours. I was also uncomfortable and embarrassed when my body was used to make a point in an argument. This

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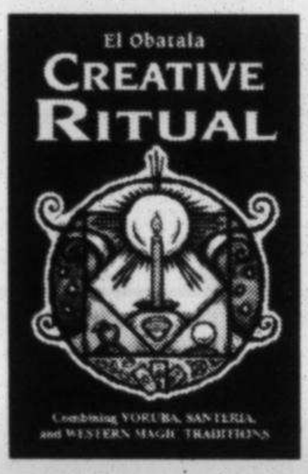

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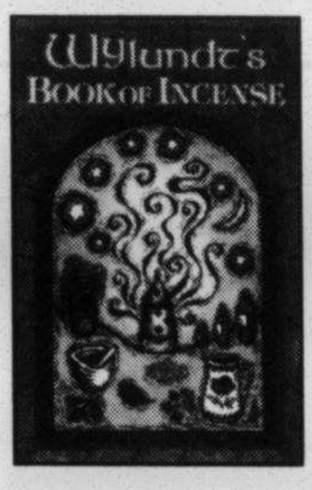

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is one of those times where the staff of Green Egg *is not in agreement. Still, I reverence diversity of opinion as well, and while personally uncomfortable, chose to let the opinions of the others stand. MM)*

(Demeter, You bring out many cogent points. We do live in a world which promotes the "Barbie doll" image of woman. One has only to look at the Venus of Willendorf (30,000 year old archaeological discovery) to see the ancients revered the bounty inherent in large women.

There was a recent Kathy *cartoon where she thinks that this man she just met is overweight, then chides herself for being judgmental over looks and wonders what kind of person he really is. Then we get to hear the man's thoughts, "She'd be cute if she lost a few pounds." As we stated in the last issue, we knew there would be a strong response from the community and we welcomed it. It has resulted in many new submissions of art with differently bodied/colored people in it. It has also sparked a lively debate which hopefully has educated all of us about our unquestioned assumptions. Your powerful and articulate letter cannot fail to move anyone who reads it. Yet I must take issue with some points in your letter. You say, " I re-read his letter to see if I'd missed something, but could find no such "attack." Yet, Cameron clearly states "the pictures are horrifying. The woman on the cover has the waist of an over cooked french fry. She is so damn skinny!" The Renaissance artists you mentioned painted women considered beautiful by their culture. The "perfect woman" has been a very different looking lady in different cultures and times. And all those who do not fit in with the cultural "norm" experience some form of rejection such as you have. My comments about the art being chosen by a woman were to respond to earlier letters which berated us for the lack of male images in our pages. It is clear that you have been wounded by the society in which we live, but all of us have been to some extent or other. Referring to all slim women as "anorexic/bulimic" says to me you have as much anger towards those born ectomorphs (skinny body types) as you do toward the culture which victimizes them as much as you, but in a different way. While the "slim ankled maidens" are, indeed a minority in the diverse manifestations of the Goddess, they do represent significantly more than 1% of the female population. I cannot help but feel if we had only published one picture of a "skinny" woman, we would have received the same level of response. OS)*

SHAME ON YOU!!! All of you.

Oberon, Sun no more looks like the cover of Sacred Sexuality than I do. For god's sake, that woman's RIBS are sticking out!! And so the fuck what if the Playboyesque pictures win the awards? Competition is patriarchal, Piscean-age bullshit and I've always been amazed that you guys gave a shit about it at all.

And if you'd ever dealt with anorexia/bulimia you'd know why some people find those images horrifying. When one percent of the population represents everyone's sexual fantasies, we KNOW we're fucked up. One of these days you people will stop making excuses and walk your fucking talk.

Until then, ciao. Phoenix Willowtide

(Sun is indeed a slim woman. I don't think Oberon was referring to resemblance of features (they look just like sisters!) but to body types. In one sense, you do look like our "cover Goddess" in that you are dark, sexy and very beautiful. The rest of the readers will have to take my word on that. OS)

And for those who just read the articles. . .

Just want you all to know that you have put together one INCREDIBLE magazine, and I'm

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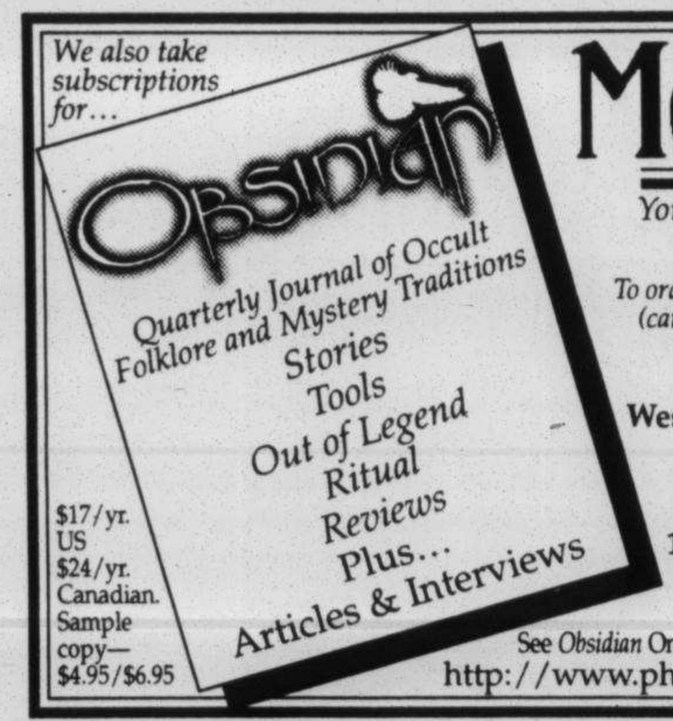

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sorry there aren't more like it out there.

I'm also writing in reference to Joanna E. Hautin-Mayer's article, "The Intimate Path." (GE 112) What a relief it is to see monogamy recognized as a valid Pagan love style!!! I was beginning to think I was behind the times or something, with my views on love and the unions between people being as conservative as they are. The truth is, from my experience, that the monogamous relationships that I've been involved in have been deeply spiritual unions for me, and I believe that this is because with one partner, one's energies tend to be less dispersed, thereby keeping the individuals in question strong. (I don't discount polyamory at all. Though I've never experienced it, I'm sure that there is just as much personal power to be gained through multiple partners—that is, for those for whom the lifestyle is comfortable.) Basically, what I mean is that since there is less—on the mundane level—to focus on, it allows for more energy to be put toward one's spirituality, if that's what one wants. Also, there are those elements of commitment, sacrifice, and metamorphosis that Ms. Hautin-Mayer spoke of, and I firmly believe that much deeper levels of Love can be reached through a monogamous union. Most importantly, let's remember the concept of balance—black/white, love/trust, night/day...It is rare that more than two elements are shown to conflict in order to bring things into balance.

Again, I don't wish to discount anyone. I'm just grateful for this article, because it lets me know that I am not alone, not an out-dated loser, not any less of a Pagan in other people's eyes due to my preferences. Thank you, Joanna!

In Perfect Love and Perfect Trust
Walks in Shadows

(Having been part of CAW since I was seventeen, my relationships have been polyamorous in all but one case. Since I had never tried monogamy (and I wasn't getting laid much otherwise,) I agreed to the demands of my ladyfriend. Three months into the relationship, she slept with someone else. Go figure. I also challenge your assumption that "much deeper levels of Love can be reached through a monogamous union" when you have admittedly never been polyamorous. One monogamous relationship hardly qualifies me as an expert in both fields, but I'm not making any blanket statements about it either. OS)

Gossip of the Gods

Dear Friends, 5/15/96

I am glad to see that "Gossip of the Gods" has aroused interest and comment among readers (which is more than I get for "Pagan Cowboy Joe," sad to say). The American emphasis of GoG is a flaw I recognize, but the piece was originally improvised as an exchange of letters on a computer bulletin board, and that's just the way it turned out. Changing it would involve a total re-write. The Gods are busy everywhere, but their activities in the U.S. are easiest for us American gossip-mongers to follow.

The main point I wish to make, however, is that GoG was not written for or by beginners. If you don't know Greek mythology, religion, and history backwards and forwards, you'll miss half the humor and most of the point. I've contrived a little "Gossip of the Gods" quiz; you don't need to consult the original article, just your knowledge of matters Greek.

1) Why does Dionysus, left-over hippie and theatrical director (people have somehow missed the second point), support a "Save the Tigers" fund instead of "Save the Leopards?" Hint: It has to do with Alexander the Great.
2) Why is Hercules a plumber? Hint: Remember the most degrading of his Twelve Labors.
3) Why is Hades a secret partner in a diamond cartel? What two things did Triptolemos, Demeter's traveling salesman, originally distribute? Who is Euboleus?
4) Why is Athena a professor of political science? Hint: Look up the root of the word
5) Who is Croessus of Lydia and why does he know about Apollo's high fees? Hint: Read it in Herodotus. Why is it specifically Gaia and Themis who laugh over Apollo's attempt to re-establish Delphi?

This is just a sprinkling of the background knowledge that went into "Gossip of the Gods." There are corrections I'd like to make—Hera should be described as "Sovereign Goddess of the Argives," not "Mother Goddess of the Pelasgians"—but you can learn a lot from GoG if you know how to look. Like most humor, there's more to it than just fooling around.

'S thusa Ban-Dia! Jana Hollingsworth

Sex, spirit and pleasure

Greetings GE

I enjoyed your issue on sexuality. I agree that sexuality for spiritual purposes is important but I think sex for entertainment and pleasure is very overlooked. I have lost track of those who complain that sex is an obligation and duty and no longer a source of satisfaction. What could possibly be worse, except forced sex, than feeling sex is a duty or obligation to perform.

Perhaps we should all consider ways of bringing joy back into our lives and why not start with sex. Perhaps all that is needed is a little variety in the location or technique, maybe some role acting.

Who could possibly care what goes on between two consenting adults in the privacy of their home as long as it brings them happiness? If a man wants to dress-up as Batman and make love to his significant other while bouncing on a bungee cord,

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(Woody Allen says, "Sex without love is a meaningless experience. But, as far as meaningless experiences go, it's one of the best." OS)

Dear Friends;

Greetings. I am writing as the "contact person" for Rainbow Wind in Pennsylvania. Rainbow Wind is a new Pagan organization for lesbians, bi's and gays. With that in mind I wanted to express my delight and disappointment with your beautiful issue on Sex and Spirit. It is tremendously reassuring in the current period of sexphobia, that the Pagan press celebrates it. The contributing artists did a wonderful job of rendering beautiful women with both sensuality and eroticism. Unfortunately, the hunks were, well, quite absent. I was glad that Gae Sidhe mentioned the male cross-dressers in her article. I strongly encourage readers to check out "Blossom of Bone" by Randy Connor where he provides a fascinating account of "gender-variant" peoples and their roles in pre-Christian religion. And thanks to Edward Butler for his article challenging the ideas of formal gender polarity. This remains a sore point among queers attracted to Paganism and Wicca. Actually I suppose many of us could assert that we possess gender polarity within ourselves.

It's unfortunate that no one contributed a piece to address issues revolving around living with HIV/AIDS and sexual desire. And also the desire to explore spirituality through safe and consensual S&M play. These are the challenges and desires that I struggle with while I continue to consume my medications and fight to remain healthy. I would be interested in seeing reader's comments on the above. Or rather than hogging the Forum, folks can write to me about the above and/or their interest in Rainbow Wind.

Blessed Be! Craig McKissic
509 S. 22nd St., Philadelphia, PA 19146

Codes-n-Clergy

Dear Green Egg:

As a solitary female practitioner, I truly appreciated Oberon Zell's "Codes of Conduct" article from his Oberon the Other Page editorial in issue #112. Many women, and men for that matter, come to Paganism because of the belief that neither sex is superior to the other. Being that there is no sexism among the Gods and Goddesses, we are not under the rigid sexual mores that dominate the patriarchal and monotheistic religions, such as Christianity. We are free to express our sexuality as we see fit as long as other people are not harmed in any way. Unfortunately, there are some folks, especially males, who view the Craft as an anything-goes-type spirituality believing that it's okay to force sexual attentions on unwilling women and to scope out youngsters under the age of consent for their own selfish use. Oberon Zell is to be commended for bringing such a sensitive issue to light. Change does not happen until we are willing to open our eyes to problems.

I came to the Craft about three years ago after a divorce opened my eyes to the sexist attitudes and behaviors against women in Christianity. I got sick of priests and "prominent" male congregation members coming on to me (verbally and physically) and of being looked down upon because I was a divorced female. I knew that I could never excel to anything higher than a non-paid religious instructor for elementary school children or as linen washer for the priests' altar cloths, also non-paid. I also no longer believed in the God or the holy book of my childhood, understanding those things to be highly misogynistic.

Coming to the Craft was a homecoming for me. I had always believed in the way of Paganism yet felt that I had to keep those beliefs secret for fear of disapproval from family members. I was happy to be more than just a "little woman who knows her place" for I know the God and Goddess loves men and women equally. There cannot be equality among the sexes if some bozo insists that it's his inherent God-given male right to feel up some unwilling woman or to put the make on an unsuspecting child, teen or pre-adolescent. As Mr. Zell stated, we need to be more aware of who is coming into our communities because safety comes before individual "rights" and we don't need the bad publicity that many of the Xian denominations have gotten due to sexual abuse of female church members and children. We have enough bad publicity in Christendom without having done anything!! All we need to do is work together. It doesn't matter if one is a coven member or a solitary, like myself. I am benefiting the community that I love by reading and being aware of various issues and by my response, whether I write or converse with others.

Blessed Be, Hadassah-Star Allison Tucker
POB 385, Winter Park, FL 32790

(I'm glad you found your true home among the Children of the Goddess and God. Unfortunately, the child abuse laws, though created for a good purpose, essentially declare a person to be

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guilty until proven innocent. There are places in this country where your children would be taken away from you solely because of your religion for their own "safety" and your individual rights be damned. This has happened and continues to happen with alarming regularity. And the Fundies will condemn us no matter what. OS)

Dear Oberon;

I've gotta hand it to you guys! Just when I get lulled into complacency you manage to come out with an editorial (GE 112) that "blew my socks off." It's a good thing I was sitting where I was sitting when I got around to reading it (I tend to "check out" the Forum first)...otherwise I'd have had to make a "laundry run" a few days early!

After going back over the material again, I noticed all the quotation marks and that it was a series of responses from a HP of a group which has...or believes it has been subjected to a pattern of sex abuse. Considering the track record of your publication, I'm guessing there has been some effort at "fact checking" and sufficient confirmation has been established for you to raise these issues...and I have no problem with that.

However, as a male rights activist I feel compelled to raise the issue of false accusations and contest certain areas of the editorial.

The first issue (Q/A #1) is "consent." Specifically, if compliance (or "lack-of-complaint") is not to be taken as consent...then what is "consent"? We only know what our sensory organs tell us. What happens to "good old fashioned spontaneity" (ala "Conan")? Interestingly enough, at the few festivals my limited resources allowed me to participate in about the mid-80's...many women had no trouble at all telling me to "get lost"...but they seemed to have more difficulty vocalizing with others. Even now I scratch my head on occasion about this. Was it because I am a blonde and the others were brunette? Some of the seasoned festival goers I attended with had a picture of a fellow dressed up as Pan that had attended a previous festival, and assured me that it was not unheard of for suchly attired personnel to grab an unsuspecting female and carry her squealing (happily?) into the bushes. This is rare but (I repeat) not unheard of. While I have to grant that according to popular myth, our particular peer group is supposed to be more "aware" than most due to our inherent proclivity toward psychic phenomena; at a pragmatic level the only way I can see putting this issue completely "to rest" would be for festival promoters and Pagan clergy to provide a booth staffed by a notary which would supply consent forms of a format acceptable to the courts of that area. Needless to say, any sexual activity (without the consent forms) would have to be expressly forbidden until all three forms are completed ("his," "hers," and the festival promoters). Even this might be insufficient, depending on the local courts. For example (as one former "Okie" to another) you may be interested to know that the Okla. Legislature almost "fell over" themselves in their haste to pass a "spousal rape" law...but the state judges won't accept any prenuptial agreement which specifies the frequency of conjugal relations...or even consummation (unlike CA).

In regards to Q/A #2 I've got to wonder aloud, as a Pagan ceremonial sex-magickian, how many times I've been approached by gnostics, Xtians, or even the newly converted Pagan to either orchestrate a ritual or train in ritual without the sex! I can still hear the response a former (Pagan) fiancee gave me when I began attempting to delineate specific ritual behaviors ("Rhythmic breathing!" "Visualization?!" "SANSKRIT!" "That's too much work!") Oh, I can and have worked quite well with other Pagans in Circle with non-sexual methods...

In regard to Q/A #4: The process supplied by the HP is (believe it or not) uncomfortably close to the EEO law and company employment policy on sexual harassment. If this "The Farm" is the same one I read about in the newspapers last year they are a collection of individuals characterized by the AP (itself no "slouch" in the left-wing dept.) as "radical" (feminists and gay/lesbian activists) who somehow managed to get the entire Justice Dept. and FBI involved in a series of petty harassment incidents including paint on the gate to their property, one or more large firecrackers (M80's???) on their lawn and...if I remember right...something about a dead skunk. Lest any misconstrue my attitude, let me hasten to write that certain astrological aspects in my Nativity predispose me to "fair play." I will cite the following metaphor as an example: We are all familiar with the Jim Bakker/ Jessica Hahn incident. Had this layman been the trial judge he would have made the following decision:

A) Jim violated principles inherent in his God-concept (celibacy/fidelity) and award would be made to Jessica (less legal fees) as a result of the Karma inherent in the blasphemy of same.

B) Jessica accepted a more than generous outside-the-court cash settlement ($250k if I recall) paid in monthly installments over the period of about ten (10) years and only recently (to the court) complained of the original incident which occurred about 10 years previously. This makes Jessica guilty of prostitution and she would be fined an amount equal to her award less her legal fees. Jessica would also be required to write a 200-word letter to the court expressing her gratitude for not being sentenced to incarceration as well.

C) The case would be dismissed "with prejudice" (meaning there would be no appeal).

D) Both attorneys would be summoned to my chambers and required to assist me in gathering all data available on this phenomenon-at our collective expense. It is perhaps noteworthy that about a year after the trial Jessica posed for *Playboy*...and according to a friend that was a subscriber, attempted to organize a bunny "revolt" (the girls wouldn't "buy into" it) just because the law allowed them to do it. The only one who listened to Jessica was Mrs. Hefner...who promptly divorced Hugh

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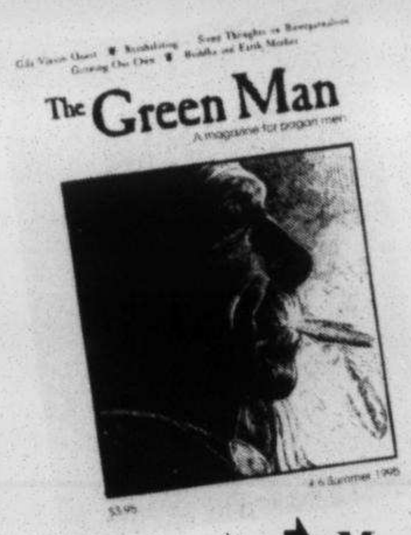

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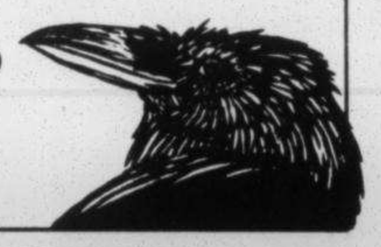

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and sued for everything she could get.

Reference Q/A #5: The HP cites a number of statistics...and I'm sure she's right. But ignored (or omitted) were those which identify former victims as future abusers. Are we to exclude her daughter...as well as the rest of those "harassed" (mentioned in the opening paragraph) ?

This is not to say that in my observations at those festivals I attended there was "letter of-the-law" interpretations of existing festival rules. In fact, things seemed to move pretty smoothly and everybody (for the most part) seemed to be pretty well "laid back." Everybody tended to "get along."

But it was, and continues to be, that over-critical interpretation of these terms and policies has spawned the male rights movement and an increasing membership in male rights organizations in our "mainstream" society. Indeed, as currently interpreted in most (if not all employers...including the various levels of government) the only successful defense to an accusation of sexual harassment is if the contested action (even those as innocuous as handing out Valentine's Day cards...to the entire office) in deed and in fact, never occurred. And since approximately 75% of the marriages in this country come about as a result of workplace related contacts...

It would seem that the behavior of the Judicial Branch in these issues is "suspect." Not only have they chronically refused to define a process by which a falsely accused employee may file an Action, but a relatively recent US Supreme Court decision removed all requirements for proof of damage or injury of the accuser. It's almost as if the courts want to compel accusation but, being frustrated by procedural restraints, are doing the next best thing.

Such actions seem, to this writer, to distract us from those societal phenomena more deserving of our attention. Photocopy of specific examples has been provided. Are the phenomena, recently occurred in Gilmer, TX (earlier mailing) and Wenatchee, WA indications of a "point" manifestation of mass hysteria or something more accurately termed as "infectious"? The pages of the GE Forum in years past dealt extensively with allegations of Paganism in regard to "ritual abuse." And my own research exposed the International Multiple Personality Disorder Society as the source of a good deal of the persistence of this "mythos" of "satanic ritual abuse" of children. Yet the accompanying article of the antics of "King Stallion" implies, to this layman, there is probably a more subtle and complex answer...were I able to more accurately formulate the question. But then Pluto rules complexity...doesn't He?

BB

Greywolf
Dallas, TX

(As people who have had to deal with more than our share of false accusations, Pagans must be especially careful not to tar our own men with the same brush. OS)

Angels and Faeries and Vampires, oh my!

Dear Forum,

With the burgeoning of interest in vampires and the increasing beliefs in psychic/spiritual/astral vampires in particular, I was wondering how those who work in the realms of the psychic, the spiritual and the astral react to such entities. What is the official Wiccan, Neo-Pagan stance on psychic vampires? Do they exist? What are their potential effects on magical workers or their rituals? Are such beings considered evil by Witches or students of the occult, and, if so, why? Are there any covens or circles anywhere that knowingly tolerate the presence of such a being in their midst—or are all psychic vampires, regardless of their religious convictions, barred from public and group ritual because of their potential to disrupt the energies gathered in such a rite? Please let me know—I welcome a wide range of opinions and views. Material may be selected for use in upcoming articles on the topic, but I'll ask your permission first before printing anything.

Michelle
POB 474, Hinckley, OH 44233

(Wiccan and Neo-Pagan groups (as a collective body) have no official stance on anything. Ask any six W/Nps for an opinion and you'll likely get eight different ones [as there are likely to be at least two Geminis in the group.] OS)

(The existence of psychic vampires is, however, widely acknowledged in the Pagan community, and often discussed as a problem. Everybody seems to know what they are, though not everyone will necessarily agree that a particular individual is one. Dione Fortune's book Psychic Self-Defense *discusses ways of recognizing and dealing with such entities. —OZ)*

Dear Morning Glory, 5/10/96

I was thrilled to find that *Green Egg* #111 was devoted to Faeries. Your article titled, "Etiquette in Fairy Land" was one of my favorites. I have been

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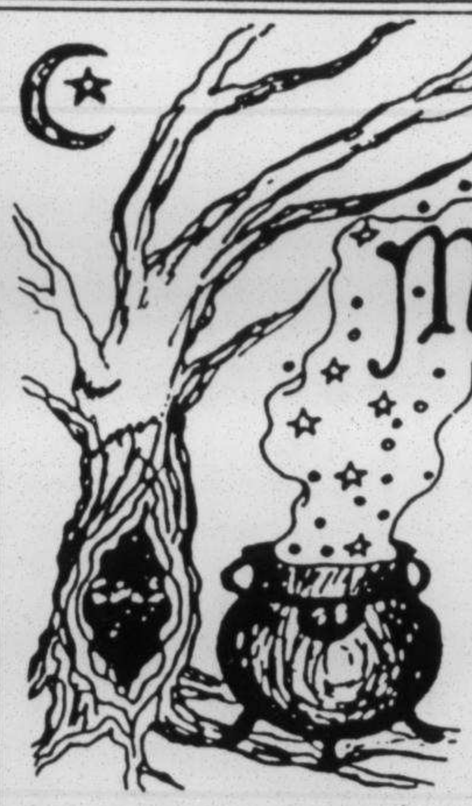

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following my dreams for over a year and recently had my first lucid dream and dream orgasm. I am ultimately interested in astral travel, because I am in the Navy and my body is sometimes thousands of miles from my fiancé. Even now, I am in the Persian Gulf and Susan is in Portland, Oregon and we connect telepathically every night.

Most importantly I have been visited by a Faery twice—on a steel ship! The first time was in a dream on October 4, 1995. I dozed off in the signal bridge, the highest space on the ship and surrounded by glass windows:

I am trying to read the display paper in news paper box at a bus station. Children are milling about and block my view so I give up and leave. Before I exit the automatic door, a baby, just learning to walk, wanders out the door. I walk quickly, trying to catch it. Outside the door is a waiting bus. The baby continues as if trying to board the bus, but falls off the curb. In slow motion, I watch her little head strike the rubber tire of the bus before she hits the dirty ground. I am stunned, I see the baby lying on the road it is much smaller than before. I kneel and lower my hand to pick it up, now, even smaller (about 5" tall). I watch the tiny, sky-clad, chocolate-colored Faery climb onto my hand. From behind, I see her black top-knot, which hangs to her waist. She clutches my finger with her tiny hands and pulls herself up (she was quite substantial). I gaze at her lying in my hand, she looks like a skinny old lady, the word ugly briefly enters my mind. Until she smiles brightly at me, her toothless grin emphasizes the wrinkles of her wise, friendly face. A young blond-haired girl is standing beside me wearing a faded yellow dress. I carefully hand her the Faery, she holds it lovingly to her chest, and sincerely thanks me. I tell her, "You're welcome," and walk away. I can hear her excitedly saying, "Mommy, that man took my baby and..."

The second was at "tween-time," after a dream, but before I woke up, on February 27, 1996. This time she came in my state room, a steel room with only one porthole which was shuttered, light-tight:

I saw a small child climbing into my mirror, as if leaving my room. I reasoned that it was just a shadow or something. But when I was fully awake, I realized the mirror was where my book shelf is.

And so, I have two questions: *A Witch's Guide to Faerie Folk* says that iron is taboo to Faeries, and that different forms of iron are a protection against Faeries. Is steel and aluminum equally baneful? If so, Darcy showed remarkable courage in visiting me in my ship.

In the Navy we have "official calls" or formal visits between officers, governed by the strictest military protocol. While I want very much to visit Darcy in Faery Land, it is difficult for me to do so alone. Do you feel that Darcy would be offended by my not returning her visit? I know that Faeries have a protocol that is alien to us, but I usually follow my instincts when dealing with them.

As George Bernard Shaw said, "Youth is a wonderful thing. What a shame it's wasted on the young."

SM1 Edward Carroll, MILDEPT
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Green Egg....

Thanks for issue #113.

While I am not a Pagan—or any other title that I can categorize, it is nice to see your new GE carrying on the traditions of the older version of many years back. I enjoyed the art and feedback in every issue I ever saw. Pagans as a whole, however sometimes tend to forget that Earth is a unique learning experience where anything goes and where there is no end to the traps designed to stop spiritual progress. We currently have over 4 million "star children" here with soul origins from all over the Universe. We have hundreds of thousands of souls who were of angelic status-of both the dark and light sides, we have Earth Children souls in the millions who unlike the angelic light souls, have never personally carried on a flowline dialogue with the One Creator of all. The Bible was originally done for the angelic group, but was chopped up so badly by the dark side reps, that it has been a total source of confusion and disinformation for most. Those who have Earth-based souls of Earth origin, naturally gravitate toward Mother Earth and Earth-based gods. Those with origins outside Earth, gravitate toward literature more in line with "Star Trek" or "Urantia" (The book on Cosmology). As most sacred texts point out, Earth has been under the control of the dark side or domination factions for thousands of years. They have twisted truth and enslaved humanity with true brilliance. Every negative human thought usually has origins in circuits once set up by this faction.

We humans have several minds and playing with LSD is a good way to cut off at least one of these minds. LSD was once used by machinists to erode tool steel. It works in the brain circuits by

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eroding away the electrical synapse points of metals. It can't harm oxygen circuits—or many more persons would be confined to wards all their lives. Pot simply clogs up the synapse points and is not so much a part of the dark sides mode to wipe out star children on mission.

Another subject I see raised is the validity of homosexual equality and this again has simple origins that any big stock rancher could explain. Cattle and stock revert quickly in a generation or two to sexual deviations if they fail to get enough nutritional supplements and minerals in their diet. Much the same problem cropped up in Rome when the elite there had their slaves sift all the flour and remove all the roughage and germ...which carried the nutrients.

We have a sickly society who are all but brain-dead from the processed foods that fail to supply enough nutrients. On top of that we are burdened with a never ending onslaught of parasites in everything we ingest...and of course the two legged variety, that, as the dark side elite, set us up for mental enslavement. Rather than fight among our groups and cults, we should be looking at the problems facing us from a higher perspective. This is a training ground for souls and our Creator has given us as long as we desire to find out what works and what doesn't. Things that are fun often don't work and are dark side traps. Perhaps I can do an article sometime on a few hundred typical dead end traps.

Love & Light — Alison Fry

(Well, Alison, this all seems very interesting. I am curious about your sources, though. LSD, for example, has never been used industrially for any purpose, to my knowlege. And it doesn't work on the brain as you describe—it affects the seratonin levels. I'll leave the comments about "sexual deviation" to our readers. OS)

Dirt on Earth First!

An Open Letter to ABC Network News from the *Earth First! Journal*, April 7, 1996

On Friday, April 5, the ABC news program World News Tonight with Peter Jennings aired a report linking the non-violent environmental group Earth First! with Theodore Kaczynski, the alleged Unabomber. The piece was riddled with distortions and inaccuracies, and can only be described as a hit piece on Earth First! and the environmental movement. ABC's sensationalistic coverage has done serious damage to the reputation of the Earth First! movement, based on the word of Barry Clausen, an individual employed by the timber industry.

The ABC hit piece begins with footage of an Earth First! protest circa 1988. A group of people are shown in the midst of a chaotic scene of violence; fists are flying, people are screaming. The imagery, which sets the stage for the rest of the piece, is clear: these people are violent, crazed extremists. The real story behind this footage, however, provides quite a different context. That day, two protesters, in an act of civil disobedience, had locked themselves by the neck to a logging road gate. In the moments just prior to the footage aired, these activists had been attacked by loggers, and were dragged by their necks in an attempt to open the gate. The decontextualized footage aired by ABC showed other activists attempting to intervene in order to protect their friends. The person throwing punches was one of the loggers, although ABC does not mention this.

ABC bases its allegation of a Unabomber-Earth First! link on two flimsy pieces of information. The first is Kaczynski's alleged presence at, as ABC calls it, "a meeting which top level leaders of Earth First! attended, at the University of Montana." In fact, this "meeting" was actually an environmental conference sponsored by the Native Forest Network, a grassroots environmental group working to protect temperate forests worldwide. Over four hundred people attended, including environmentalists from Poland, Scotland, England, Chile, Mexico, Canada and Australia. Even representatives from the US Forest Service attended the conference. Activists associated with Earth First! also attended the event, but had no role in the conference proceedings. Kaczynski's alleged presence at the conference (his name does not appear on the conference registration list) links him to Earth First! no more than it links him to the US Forest Service.

(The most interesting fact presented in the story, completely glossed over by ABC, was news of an FBI list of conference attendees. Is attending environmental conferences an activity now considered suspicious by our government? The November, 1994, conference occurred before excerpts of the Unabomber manifesto were released which linked the Unabomber to environmental thought.)

The second piece of information is ABC's contention that two of the Unabomber's victims were on "Eco-Fuckers Hit List" published by, in ABC's words, "a radical environmental journal." (This is the motto in the masthead of the Earth First! Journal.) A quick shot of the hit-list page was followed by a quote from Leslie Hemstreet, a member of the editorial staff of the Earth First! Journal. In the quote, Hemstreet says something like "We cannot be held responsible for what Theodore Kaczynsky may have done with any information he may have gotten from us, because

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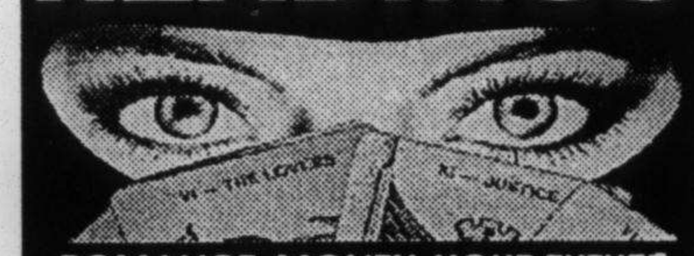

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Farewell Evangeline

Dear Friends and Nestmates,

I regret to inform that on March 11, Evangeline Walton passed from this Earth.

For those of us fortunate enough to discover the wild power and majesty of the Celtic Gods and Heroes through her powerful, beautiful re-tellings of the Mabinogi tales, she will always hold a special place in our knowledge and love of the Old Gods.

Known mostly for her four volume retelling of the branches of the Mabinogi, *The Children of Llyr, The Song of Rhiannon, Prince of Annwn, The Island of the Mighty,* she also wrote *The Sword is Forged* and a dark fantasy *Witch House.*

Since first reading her novels, I have read classic, scholarly and modern re-tellings of the Branches of the Mabinogi, and none have held my attention as her work did. I sometimes fantasized finding an hidden trove of Celtic literature that escaped the fires of Church and raider, and asking Miss Walton to take them and handle them with the same care and wisdom she had proven to possess.

A great Bard has returned to the Summerlands, may they give her a chair of Honor at the high table, May Math present her with the heart of the stag, for she brought the Old Ones nearer to our hearts.

Parris McBride

(Evangeline Walton will surely be missed! As will Timothy Leary. On May 31, just after midnight, he passed on into his next trip. Seventy-five years old, he had suffered from prostate cancer for some years. He was surrounded by friends and family. Tim was known and loved by literally millions despite the smear campaign waged against him by the government for several decades. He was the "Guru of the Psychedelic Movement" and author of many books. Last Labor day weekend, Tim was canonized (with a real canon) at the Hog Farm's annual Pig Nic in Northern Califia. We will all miss him though, of course, he's just outside, looking in. OS)

Urva

Dear Dragon Singing,

Urva, Our Lady of Hot Water, is a Goddess I worship fervently, though She is seldom as cruel to me as She seems to be to you. During severe migraine binges, I have been known to take three showers per day, which is all my hot water heater can supply. A hot shower is also one of the most sensuous experiences life has to offer.

All hail to the Goddess of Showers!
She transforms our tubs into bowers
Of wat'ry delight.
I wish that I might
Rejoice in Her showers for hours.
'S thusa Dia!

Jana Hollingsworth
4322 5th Ave NW, #3, Seattle, WA 98107

(I am concerned that there has been no mention of Urva's consort, Eddy, God of Hot Tubs. OS)

Glitches

Dear GE;

In reference to the Forum in #113 (Hum a few Bears). I am, at the risk of seeming clueless, moved to ask how my name and address became affixed to William's letter. Is this one of those "It's a Mercury is retrograde-thing—you're not gonna understand" sorts of things?

BB

Robert Wanke
Dallas, TX

P.S. Will asked for correspondence. I'll need his address to forward any mail from this to him.

(The answer is simple—we screwed up. Sorry. Will Tracy's address is POB 1704, Canyon Counrty, CA 91386-1704 –OS)

Dear Green Egg:

Either somebody made a data-entry error in tabulating the results of your 1995 readership survey question on the sexual orientation of GE readers or a lot of GE readers aren't telling you the truth about their sexual orientation, for the figures published in GE #113 are wildly inaccurate.

How can you have 61 percent of GE readers being heterosexual, 49 percent being bisexual, 20 percent being lesbians, 18 percent being gay men and 11 percent being celibate? That adds up far in excess of 100 percent.

I clearly recall the 1993 readership survey found that 65 percent of GE readers were heterosexual, 21 percent were bisexual, 11 percent were

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homosexual (There was no distinction between gay men and lesbians then) and the remaining 4 percent were either celibate or declined to state their orientation.

While I cannot dismiss the fact that many GE readers have come out of the closet as either gay or bisexual since the 1993 survey (I myself came out bisexual in 1993—on my 40th birthday—after 20 years of being exclusively gay), I would appreciate it if GE readers would be honest about stating to the magazine's readership survey whether they are straight, gay, bi or celibate. It would certainly make it easier for GE to ensure that the figures it receives on its readers' sexual orientations are accurate. The numbers cannot add up to more than 100 percent.

Obviously, a correction of this year's figures on this category is in order.

Blessed be, D. B. Skeeter Sanders
44 Front St, #3, Burlington, VT 05401
skeeter@cafenono.com

P.S. I had moved since I sent my last letter to GE in Dec. 1995 (but wasn't published until the May/June 1996 issue). The above addresses, therefore, are correct retroactive to Jan. 1, 1996.

(The total number of surveys returned was 283. 174 people designated themselves as "heterosexual," 139 as "bisexual," 56 as "gay male," 7 as "lesbian" and 30 as "celibate." This comes to a total of 406 responses! Obviously many people checked more than one answer, which accounts for the totals being more than 100%. If we are to take the total number of responses not as the actual 283 returned surveys, but as that 406 answers, then the percentages would be: heterosexual 43%, bisexual 34%, gay male 14%, lesbian .02%, celibate .07%. Do those figures make more sense to you? —OZ)

Iron Oak

Dear Green Egg,

Living in the Central Florida area for many years, I have observed Ms. Zaleski's Church of the Iron Oak with their constant pleas for financial support in regards to their ongoing lawsuit with the city of Palm Bay. This issue could have been resolved years ago if Ms. Zaleski had been a true practicing wise person. Several groups in the Palm Bay area have had festivals in their homes with no repercussion for the past decade, but thanks to Ms. Zaleski's antics many Pagans in the Palm Bay area have been forced underground.

It was with great interest that I read Ms. Zaleski's article in issue #112. I was not surprised as I read the article and recognized it for what it was, another Iron Oak plea for money. Not only was it a plea for money it was a thinly disguised advertisement for an Iron Oak marketing scheme. If *Green Egg* wishes to support Ms. Zaleski in her ongoing litigation that is well within the magazines editorial rights, but her "article" should have been placed and labeled with the advertisements and charged accordingly.

Ms. Zaleski's states in her advertisement that if there is a choice between two festivals to attend the one on Pagan-owned land, yet all of Iron Oak's Festivals take place on a public campground.

One final issue I take offense with in Ms. Zaleski's ad is that of Pagans/Wiccans who drive rusted-out cars and have no permanent mailing address. Even though I am a professional I know a few who fit the description given by Ms. Zaleski. WE are more concerned with our spirituality and communing with the god(dess) rather than amassing fortunes and becoming like the mainstream religions we have left behind.

In closing if Ms. Zaleski and Church of the Iron Oak represent what it means to be Wiccan/Pagan then count me out.

Sincerely EAJAR
address withheld by request

Rev. Jacque Omi responds:

Dear Green Egg,

I'm very sad that Eajar feels that "a true practicing wise person" is one who practices their religion underground. Personally I glow with my love of the Goddess and have no desire to hide those feelings from anyone. I gain inner peace and strength by singing Her praises in my back yard with friends and the children who share this experience with us are taught that they too can have love and joy in their hearts, instead of being taught to feel ashamed. It is for them that this freedom battle is being fought; not the adults who are free to make their own choices of how to worship.

If my goal was to make money then why have I no financial reserves now, when I did before I defended the right to worship Her? And why, if I was so self-centered and selfish, would I sit still in a home mortgaged to the limit and wait for it to be burned by those outside of Paganism who would also find fault with my freedom to worship, lie about my beliefs, and publish my home address on the world wide web? (see http//www. forerunner.com/champion/).

Please consider the concept of helping each other toward a better life, "marketing" to each other and helping others to increase their self-esteem instead of finding fault with others.

It is our choice: We can stand together, or die alone.

Eajar, you know where I live if you change your mind. I note that you requested that *Green Egg* not print your address, but She knows where you live.

Jacque Omi HPS of Iron Oak
POB 060672, Palm Bay, FL 32906

(EAJAR, the troubles caused by Palm Bay's violation of CIO's constitutionally guaranteed rights can no more be laid at Jacque's door than the rape of a woman can be because she dresses provocatively. The city of Palm Bay has created this mess. They lost their court case and now, if CIO can afford the price of justice, they will have to pay damages. A win in this arena will have far reaching repercussions for the entire Pagan community and beyond. The principals involved have risked everything they own seeking justice. This fight has served the rights of all religious people, not just Pagans, to practice their religion without undue harassment from the government. When they win their settlement, it will give serious pause to any local,

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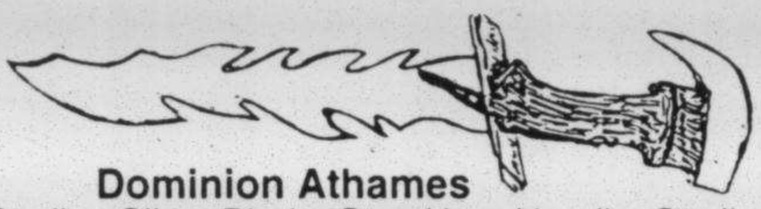

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state or even the federal governments who abuse their powers at the expense of religious minorities. Sticking one's head in the sand and hoping the lions don't notice is a tactic strongly supported by the lions. OS)

Leftovers

Dear GE, 3/30/96

In my first issue of your magazine (#112) there were very interesting articles that I enjoyed. I have a friend who conducts Pagan/Wiccan classes and I've read many of the past issues of GE. I have noticed a few forum letters that were very anger oriented and so quickly to persecute. Using wise words, "can't we all just get along?" I critique as much as the next person, but I try not to contribute to the prejudices which so often force to battle. I, like everyone, would like to think things aren't as bad as they really are.

I must say, however, that most of the people who write the Forum seem to be very articulate and are eager to get their points across. Hopefully I will receive a warm welcome into your GE fantasy (a fantasy for me anyway).

I am seventeen and hoping to be taken a little under the wing. I've been in the Craft for about 2-1/2 years and I have much to learn about the Pagan Community. What I do know is I would like to share with others of a like mind. I never knew such places existed but I'm sure glad they do.

Goddess Bless,
Fox Fire
Stockton, CA

(Fox Fire, CAW has a Nest in Stockton: Delta Dragon Nest c/o David Hall, 2111 Lido Circle, Stockton, CA 95207. I was seventeen when I joined CAW, 27 years ago. OS)

Dear Oberon,

Do you all ever deal with the issues of Pagans with invisible or visible disabilities, and the fact that people with disabilities are treated sort of like trees you can chop down willy nilly? Have you ever thought of making GE available on cassette, large printing, computer disk and (most difficult to do, in Braille? *Hikane'* is a wonderful magazine for women with disabilities, but men are not allowed. If you are good as your reputation, then like *Hikane'*, you should have outreach formats for people who need or want alternative formats. It is fine to send me the regular print format, especially since I doubt you have other formats. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,
Gwen Wheelock
Bowie, MD

(Gwen, GE was produced as a audio book for the blind for some time, but there was a lack of demand which made the effort impractical. All of these suggestions, while noble, require a financial investment far beyond what we can afford. Perhaps when someone wills us a million dollars...OS)

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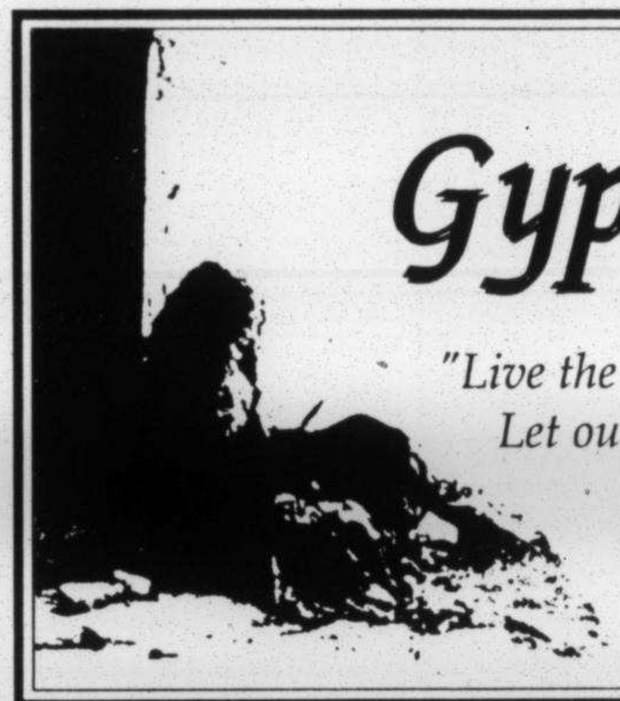

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Submissions deadline: June. 1-15
Ads, Calendar & TWIMC due by 7/10

#116: "Buddheo-Paganism"
(Nov./Dec. issue; goes on sale in Oct.)
Submissions deadline: Aug. 1-15
Ads, Calendar & TWIMC due by 9/10

#117: "The Druids"
(Jan./Feb. '97 issue; on sale in Dec.)
Submissions deadline: Oct. 1-15, 1996
Ads, Calendar & TWIMC due by 11/10

#118: "Paganism in Science Fiction"
(March/April '97 issue; on sale in Feb.)
Submissions deadline: Dec. 1-15, 1996
Ads, Calendar & TWIMC due 1/10/97

#119: "Modern Primitives"
(May/June issue; goes on sale in April)
Submissions deadline: Feb. 1-15, 1997
Ads, Calendar & TWIMC due by 3/10

#120: "Native American Traditions"
(July/Aug. issue; goes on sale in June)
Submissions deadline: April 1-15
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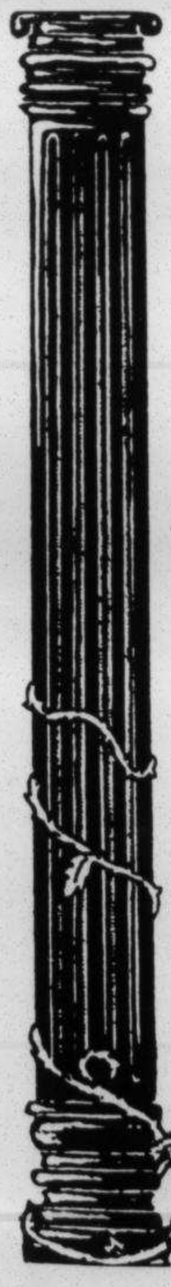

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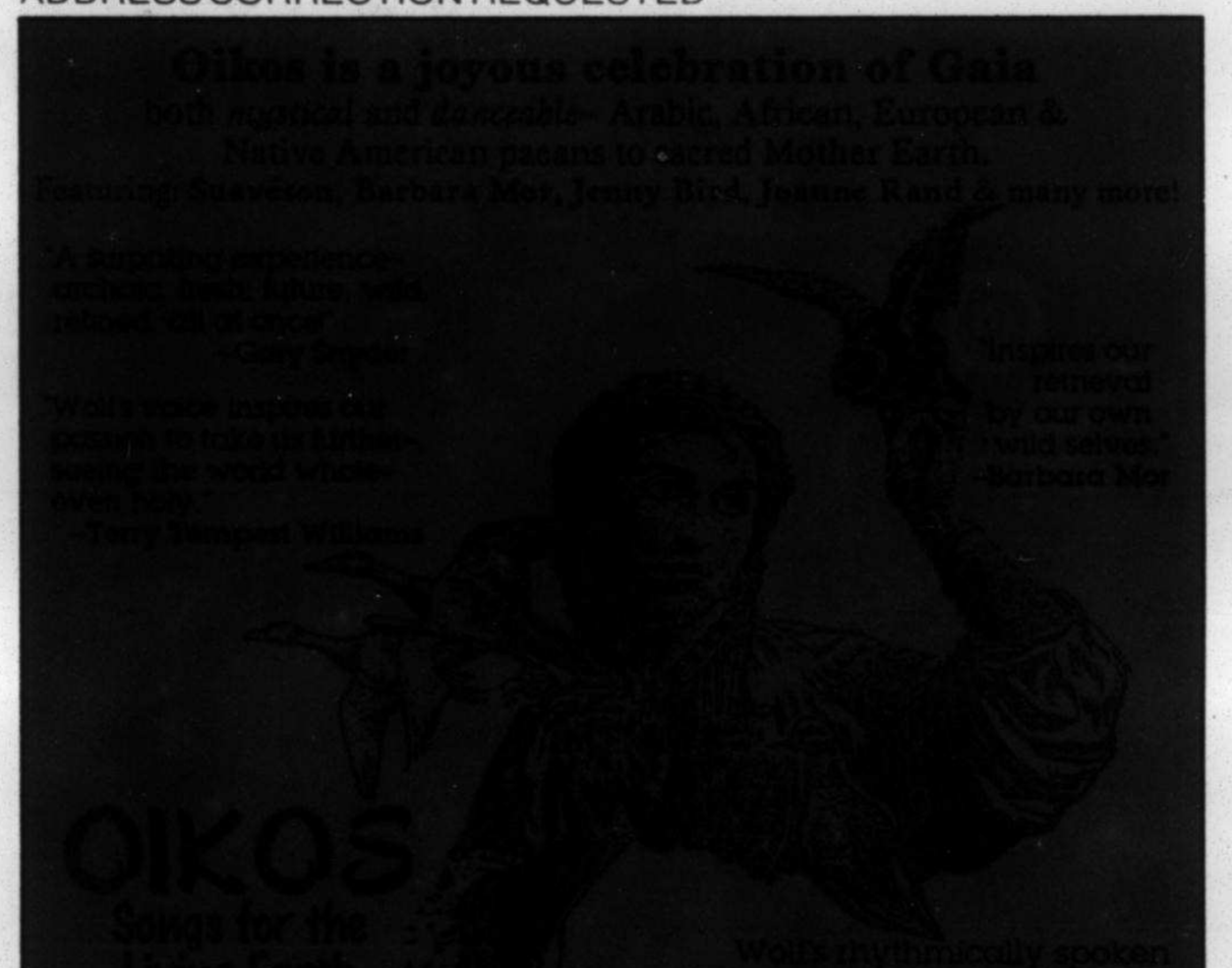

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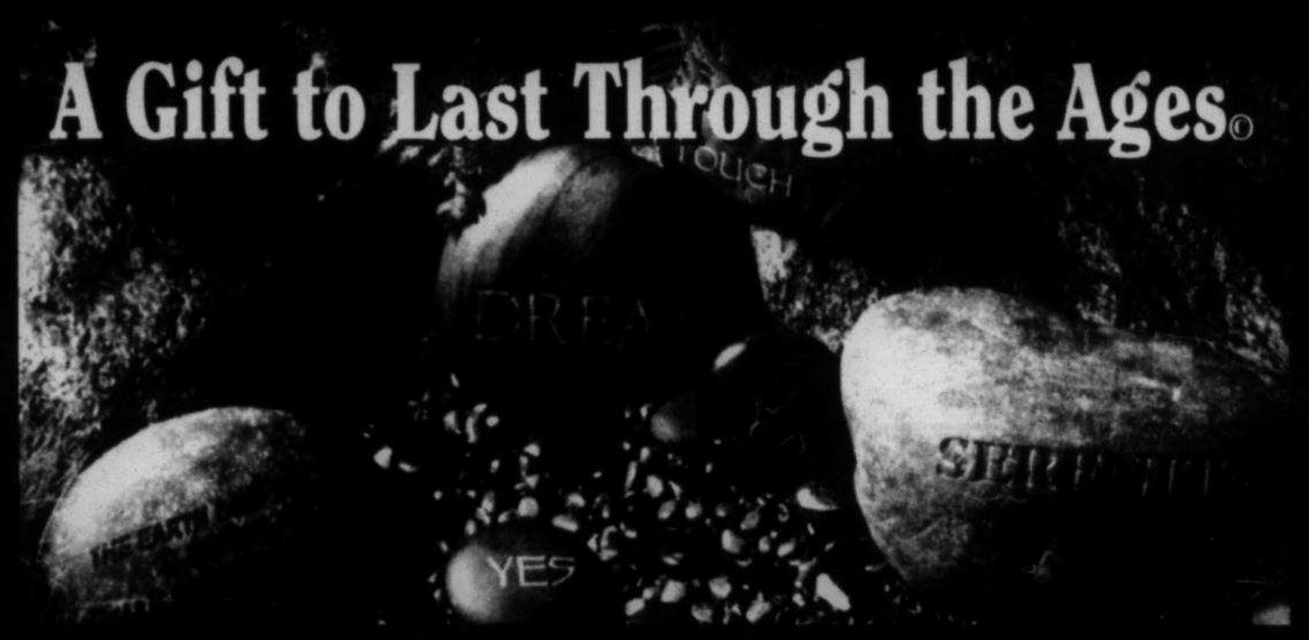

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