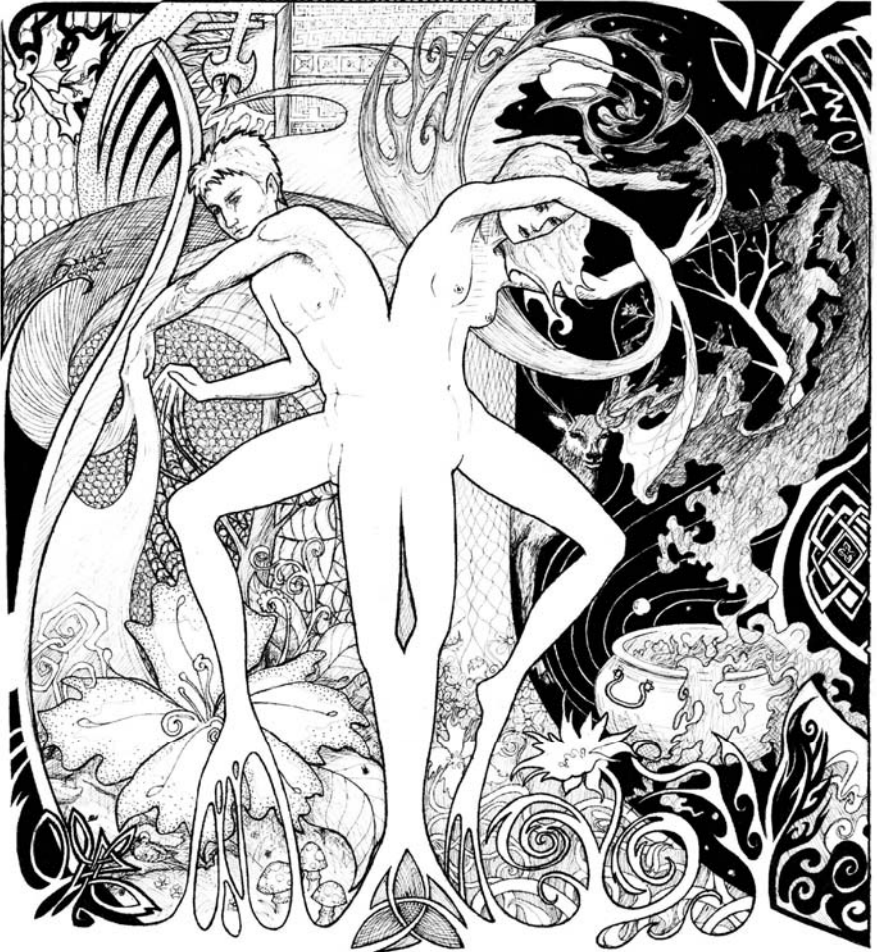


Summer 2003

Issue 21

OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin



Clergy Council Issue

OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of
Ar nDraiocht Fein
Issue 20

Oak Leaves is the quarterly journal of Ar nDraicht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, Inc. It is intended to be both a newsletter informing members and the Neopagan community of ADF's activities, as well as a forum for our scholarly and artistic explorations.

STAFF

**Chronicler &
Editor-In-Chief**

Athanasios

Proof Editor:

Pandora

Art Editor:

Heather S. Koerner

Advertising Editor:

Selene Tawny

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Oak Leaves is free to regular members of ADF. A membership application can be found at the end of this issue. Non-member subscriptions had be obtained for \$20.00. Details in the back of this issue.

OWNERSHIP & POLICY

The content of all submitted

material remains the property of the author/artist. Copyrights should be honored and respected, and nothing should be reprinted without the express permission from the author. All opinions expressed in Oak Leaves are those of the authors, and not necessarily of ADF.

For information on submission guidelines and advertising rates contact the Senior Editor, Athanasios at:

athanasiosofspfd@aol.com

Or Write:

Athanasios

C/O

Grove of the Twilight Owl, ADF

P. O. Box 2793

Springfield, OH 45501

COVER DESIGN

Georgia Papadakis

Find ADF on the
World Wide Web
at:

ADF.org

Table of Contents

Oak Leaves Issue 21

Feature

Clergy Council Speaks
Compiled by Athanasios Page 6

Poetry

Dead, Mad or a Poet by Bridin Crowstone Page 32
Lake Superior: A Spirit of Place
by Bridin Crowstone Page 33
Hermit & Eyes of Orion by Lupercus Page 41
Water Blessing for Endangered Water
by Sorcha Page 61
Daily Devotionals by Heather Koerner Page 62

Reviews

A Druid's Bookshelf
by John Michael Greer Page 56

Essays

Progress by Cathbad Page 25
Leadership, Herding Cats 2
by Caryn MacLuan Page 28
Sacred Reality—The Beginning of Theology
by Rev. Robert Barton Page 34
Up To My Neck In Shinto
by John Michael Greer Page 48
Alone In A Crowd—Solitary Clergy
by Jeremy Mallory Page 49
Solitary Perspective compiled By Sadbha Page 51

Editorial

Falling Acorns... by Athanasios Page 4

Misc...

Clergy Council List Page 5
Mother Grove List Page 66

Falling Acorns....

A Letter from the Chronicler

By Athanasios

I know most stories are supposed to start with, “It was a dark and stormy night...” but this one was actually “a cool and soggy morning...” The last day of Wellspring, the site of the ADF Annual Meeting, I was up very early – as I normally am. It had rained for eighteen hours straight starting Friday night and ending late Saturday. The weather was cold, and the ground was soggy. The people, however, were warm and friendly and there was an energy in the air that electrified me. On the last day of the Annual Meeting, early Sunday morning, I decided to take a walk.

I retraced the steps I took a year before, when I took my oath as a dedicant priest. Before I went to the Nemeton, I stopped to visit a friend I had made the year before. A twisted old and majestic tree, that stands next to a long deceased husk of a tree. The two monoliths stand together as opposites, one living and the other long dead. I thought about the future, the responsibilities I shoulder, and how I can pursue excellence. I then embraced my twisted friend, and asked for his blessing. Before leaving the sanctity of the twisted old tree, I stopped to reflect at the foot his brother; the dead obelisk of a once living tree. Here I thought about the changes that have taken place within ADF over the past year, and the role I may have played in them. Upon closer inspection I noticed hundreds of crawling, and creeping things that have made their home in this deceased tree. I then embraced the tree, asking for the blessing of the ancestors to allow me to learn from my past failures and victories alike.

It was now time for me to visit the Nemeton, a place I had not set foot in since I had been to Wellspring the year before in 2002. I went up to where the sacred fire would be, a raised area, and looked around –



**Come Check Out
Our Wares!**

**Herbs, hand made
candles, jewelry, pouches,
Essential oils, organic
cosmetics and more**

www.praktikalmagik.net

selene@praktikalmagik.net

being mindful of my surroundings. I closed my eyes and reaffirmed my oath to my Patrons, and to ADF. Upon opening them I saw a rabbit about thirty feet away eating some leaves, and staring at me. I took this as a good omen.

I don't know how long I stood there, at the Nemeton, but it seemed like an eternity. I reflected on the people I have read about in past Oak Leaves, and Druid's Progresses, and some of them who are no longer around; those people who are no longer within our Fellowship, or who have become inactive. I reflected on the responsibilities I have, and my hope for the future. I said a prayer to my patrons, "Keep me strong, and always filled with divine motivation. Keep me from burning out!" Immediately I heard the pecking of a woodpecker. A smile on my face, and a need for affirmation I asked the Gods, "Is this a sign of your blessing?" Then immediately I heard it again, the woodpecker serenading me with his sound. It was at this point that I knew that my pilgrimage to Wellspring was realized for what it was - a time for renewal and dedication. I was ready to go, back into the world and fulfill my responsibilities charged with the blessings of the Nature Spirits, the Ancestors, and the Shining Ones.

The subject of burn-out is an issue that I have been thinking a

Continued on Page 64

Clergy Council Members

Ordained Clergy

- Isaac Bonewits
- Earrach Canali
- Bryan Perrin
- Fox
- Robert Ellison
- Ian Corrigan
- Robert Barton

Dedicant Clergy

- Christopher Sherbak
- William Pierson
- Norma Hoffman
- Linda Demissy
- Robert Knox
- Sue Parker
- Barbara Wright
- Robert Henderson
- Matt Ducar
- Bardd Dafydd
- Carlynne Deaver
- Hekatia
- Gwynne Green
- Athanasios
- Shawn Miller
- Duir Art ap Mona
- Todd Covert
- Caryn MacLuan
- Gannd

Clergy Council Speaks...

Compiled by Athanasios

The Clergy Council is a standing committee within ADF with the responsibility of educating, ordaining, and supervising the clergy within ADF. I asked the members of the Clergy Council to share a short bio of themselves, and to answer some questions about their ideas of what a priest is, and what their role is within our Fellowship. Those that chose to participate are compiled below.

Robert L. Ellison

My name is Rev. Robert Lee Ellison, better know to all my friends as Skip Ellison. I'm currently serving as Archdruid of Ár nDraíocht Féin (ADF). I was elected in May of 2001 and will serve until May of 2004.

I started in the Neopagan movement when I was initiated into a Celtic Traditional Wiccan coven in 1982. I worked with the coven in several positions and then in the fall of 1990, had the opportunity to attend a workshop presented by Isaac Bonewits on ADF.

His workshop interested me enough about ADF that I joined the organization soon after. I was mainly impressed by Isaac's vision of a religion that would be open to everyone, public and that, some day in the future, would have groves and temples in every city.

I was the organizer for a grove near my home in Syracuse, NY in 1991 and then became it's second Senior Druid, a position that I held until August of 2001 when I stepped down due to becoming Archdruid of the organization.

Within ADF, I've served on its Mother Grove, the board of directors, since being appointed by Isaac in 1992. Over the past nine years, I've held the positions of Registrar, Scribe, Vice-Archdruid and now finally, Archdruid.

During the time I've been with ADF, I've had the pleasure of working on the revisions to ADF's Study Program. When the Magician's Guild was formed within ADF, I was elected as it's first Chief. In that capacity, I've been working with the other guild members to create the magician's section of the Study Program.

In my personal life, I'm a retired industrial electrician and spend my time now traveling around the US, Canada and Europe attending festivals to talk about ADF and present workshops on a Varsity of subjects. In my free time, I have a little more than 17 acres of land that needs to be tended with many gardens to be worked in.

As a member of ADF's Clergy Council what do you think the role of a Priest is within ADF?

I see the role of the Priest and Priestess as that of the spiritual and religious leaders for our members. A Priest or Priestess can also be a person to turn to in time of need, when you need someone to listen to you or to help with problems in your community. They are in many cases the public face for ADF, the person the larger community interacts with.

How does this compare to the role of the Priest within Indo-European Society, or - if any - the cultural focus that you follow?

In many of the Indo-European cultures, the Priest and Priestesses were the communities representatives to the Deities and to the other Kindreds. They led the sacrifices, were the people knowledgeable in how the rituals were to be performed, were the people that talked to the Spits of the Land in settling new places and were the people with the longest established ties to the Deities, i.e. people dedicated to one particular God or Goddess.

Within ADF today, we are bringing back and gathering together a group of people to serve as the community representatives, be it of the large community in a grove or the smaller community of a household. That group is our Clergy Council. In time I see ADF having Priestesses and Priests in every region where we have members. This would be very comparable to the IE tribes that all had their Priests and Priestesses living among them.

What is your vision of ADF, and how does the Clergy Council impact your vision?

In the next 27 years, I see ADF growing to encompass the entire US and Canada, with members in every state and province and with legal recognition in Canada as we have in the US today. Having a strong Clergy Council, with dedicated people willing to work with our members to attain those goals, is a central part of this vision.

ADF no longer grows around any one person. It is a collection of many wonderful people with common ideas and the desire to bring back the worship of the Kindreds as our ancestors would have done. As more and more people find out about ADF, this collection of people will grow. By being part of the public face for ADF, the Clergy members expose more and more people to ADF and its goals and so allow us to grow strong.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about ADF what would it be? Why?

I'd like to see a different way to allow our members to communicate in real time. Email lists are a vast improvement over the random newsletters that came out when I first joined ADF, but they still have many problems. I feel that one of the major problems is the lack of immediate feedback.

When you are talking to someone face-to-face, you have the immediate feedback of their body language and can react to them as they react to your words. With email there is no immediate feedback and many problems results when people don't understand how their words are being taken. Emoticons help a little, but many people 'read past' them or do not understand that what is being said is said in a joking manner instead of a threatening manner.

With the spread of broadband connections and web cameras, I'd like to see places where ADF members can get together and actually see each other as they are talking. In my travels, I have found that by talking to people face-to-face, most problems can be quickly resolved. If we use the new technology to do the same over the web, I'm sure that many of the problems caused by email will disappear.

In closing, is there anything you would like to share?

I firmly believe that ADF will be growing in the future. Many people are looking for something that is missing in their spiritual life and I think that ADF can fill that need. ADF is still a 'youngster' at 19 (1984 to 2003). As we grow into our maturity and expand in size, we will



Artwork by Heather S. Koerner

find that our message will be reaching more people, people who will be 'coming home' to join us once again.

Rob Barton

Rob Barton joined ADF in 1991 and was a founding member of Wakula Cypress Grove. After moving to Houston in 1992 Rob became a member, grove bard and Vice Senior Druid for Bri Leath Grove. During this time he also became a member of the ADF Prisoner Relations Committee. Rob eventually served as Senior Druid for Bri Leath Grove for two years and received his Lay Clergy credentials from Arch Druid Isaac Bonewits in January of 1995. Continuing Bardic studies, Rob is now a faculty member for the ADF Bardic Guild, and was also a founding member, Council of Honor member and Chief of the ADF Warriors Guild. Twice elected to the Mother Grove of ADF,

once serving as Non Officer Director and once as ADF Preceptor Rob was fully ordained as an ADF Priest by Arch Druid Skip Ellison in 2002. Rob is currently a member of Garran na bPreachain Naomh; Grove of the Sacred Crows, ADF and he has also been appointed to serve as ADF Clergy Council Preceptor.

As a member of ADF's Clergy Council what do you think the role of a Priest is within ADF?

As I look at what the priesthood of ancient Indo-European cultures did, and realize that their jobs were performed within the context of cosmic religious beliefs, and add into that equation the fact that these religions were completely culturally institutionalized, a picture of I.E. priesthood starts to emerge. In that picture we see a clergy that is among the folk and is part of the folk, an expert and specialist in dealing with the sacred but not so much sharing an identity with the sacred that separates them from the people. So while an I.E. priest or priestess facilitates interactions with the sacred or situations through which the sacred is experienced they remain the face of the people that is turned toward their gods and do not become the face of the gods manifest among the people. While the I.E. clergy are experts on hierophany (the perception of the sacred) they do not become a hierodule (individual through whom the sacred is manifest or perceived). This tells us what our clergy have been.

Next we have to turn to questions of what our clergy are and what they shall be. For this we must contextualize our role in the world of today. What do our people need our clergy to be and to become. I believe that our clergy still operate as experts in hierophany and that we as clergy do not become hierodule and I do not see that changing. In other words I think that an ADF Priestess or Priest has an identity that is among the people and so they act as representatives of the folk and not as representatives of a special agency of the gods. Our clergy have no exclusive sacramental function which is reserved to be performed by clergy only which means that our clergy are not sacramental in nature and do not act as a requisite mediator between the folk and the sacred. And so I conclude that I must identify our clergy as sacrificial in nature in that they facilitate acts of sacrifice and acts of sacralization for the people and as a member of the people. Along with the sacrificial function of our clergy is an educational function in which our clergy teach.

How does this compare to the role of the Priest within Indo-European Society, or - if any - the cultural focus that you follow?

The methodology that I try to employ in answering any question or functional concern is to start with a first question designed to explore

what has been or how this function or concern was dealt with in the past by the ancient cultures to which I look for inspiration. So as you see from my answer to the previous question my starting point was to ask: What have the clergy among our ancestors been? What was the role of clergy among the ancients? Then this is contextualized relative to the people of today. This I feel gives some consistency or at least conceptual continuity between the practices of the ancestors and the folk of today.

What is your vision of ADF, and how does the Clergy Council impact your vision?

There is in our spiritual family a great potential, a potential to grow to nourish and to inspire. I see this every day and in the face of every new member. If anything can be said to have changed about my feelings, I am personally more excited about ADF than I was that November day in 1991 when I joined. I have spent over a decade now participating in this dynamic growing organization which is diverse and inclusive. I think that things are right on target, we have passed the big hurdles that organizations face early on, through these transitions we have held together and I foresee us holding together into the future. The Clergy Council fits in perfectly with the vision that I see. All things are as they should be. Yes, there is certainly room for growth and we will continue to grow and mature as an organization. The egrégoire that we have developed and that we foster every day is beyond the idea or vision of any individual or even small group of leaders, it has come to live a life of its' own a life which is more than the sum of the parts.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about ADF what would it be? Why?

I don't want to sound like I lack vision for the future or that I am a Pollyanna but honestly there is precious little that I would outright change. This, for two reasons the first is that I think we are right on schedule and doing well, moving toward this wonderful destiny as a people; secondly I don't think that I or any single member or leader has the right to individually choose a major change for the organization even should I or anyone have the power to do it and the strongest personal conviction of the rightness of the change. As we grow we will make changes but these changes must be made by all of us as a folk always based on a concept of 'we' must decide what is best and never on a concept of 'I' know what is best.

In closing, is there anything you would like to share?

Only a prayer: May we continue to be blessed by our gods and ancestors as we move forward together. As their voices whisper quiet wisdom through the veils of worlds may we bless ourselves with the wisdom to quietly pause so that we hear and when we hear may we remember to listen. *Biodh e mar sin*

Bardd Dafydd



Artwork by Heather S. Koerner

I was always fascinated by Pagan religions. When I was about 10 I found a book in the school library called 'The Magic and the Sword' which was a re-telling of the Greek

Myths. I loved that book! I must have checked it out 6 times. Later I discovered Sci-Fi and fantasy fiction and loved *Stranger in a Strange Land*, *Mists of Avalon* and other books containing wizards, Druids and magic. I always believed that magic was real and from time to time I thought I noticed it happening. In 1995 I discovered the Neopagan movement and was overjoyed. I joined ADF in 1996 after meeting Isaac at Free Spirit Gathering and seeing Mugwort Grove's ADF Ritual.

Myrddin and I formed Red Oak Grove on the drive home from Wellspring '97 which was also when most of the Guilds were formed to begin designing the revised Study Program. I was a founding member of the Seers Guild and became the 1st Chief Seer. Later I was appointed Chair of the Grove Organizing Committee where I did a lot of work standardizing the process to form new Groves. I was then elected Chief of the Council of Sr Druids and served on the Mother Grove in 1998-2000.

I'm still Sr Druid of Red Oak Grove in New Jersey, and we're in the middle of a growth spurt right now, growing from 8 to 25 members in just a few months. I'm also Archivist of the Seers Guild, 1st circle Satirist, 3rd circle Storyteller and faculty member in the Bardic Guild, a Dedicant Priest and Deputy Chief of the Clergy Council.

In the Muggle world I've been a Boy Scout leader, president of our local Rotary Club, and active in several community associations. I am currently a computer applications trainer, the Director of RYLA (a youth leadership training organization I developed) and, most importantly, the proud father of the coolest 8 year old boy in Southern New Jersey.

As a member of ADF's Clergy Council what do you think the role of a Priest is within ADF?

An ADF Priest is more like Rabbi ('Teacher') than a Catholic Priest,

who is an intermediary between a member of the congregation and God. We should fill all of the usual roles of a minister: leading Ritual, training, counseling, marrying, burying, running the church, etc., but our primary spiritual duty is to teach the members of our Groves how to do ritual for themselves and establish their own connections with the Kindred.

How does this compare to the role of the Priest within Indo-European Society, or – if any – the cultural focus that you follow?

We know very little about what roles a Druid Priest may have played 2,000 years ago in Ireland or Wales. Did they counsel their people or were there specialized healers that filled that role? Did they teach or were there teaching specialists that did that? Did they pour oil into the fire or were there dedicated Sacrificers that poured the oil, while the Priest spoke some words? Did the same priest make offerings and also read omens or would two different people have handled those duties?

We really have no idea. If I had to guess, I'd imagine that as the Druid class became larger and more powerful it tended to branch out into many specialized functions. So that in the Druid's heyday, there were many different people doing many different highly specialized jobs. Just as today in a large Cathedral you'll have a variety of Priests, Nuns, Altar boys, etc. doing all the jobs that a single minister would handle alone, in a small church.

In my own Grove we have had times when there were just 2 members and we did all the parts of ritual between us. And now we have about a dozen people sharing those same jobs.

One other point about the difference between the ancient Druids and those of today: Our special mission, in this place and time, is to be able to explain our religion to a society that looks upon it as extreme fringe and weird. Two thousand years ago, it was the Christians who had some explaining to do. Now it's us. We need to be very careful with this. We need to be very open, but not pushy. We need to be a little cautious with what we say, but not appear secretive. We need to be extra knowledgeable, but not come across as know-it-all. We need to be friendly, but not seem needy. We need to be confident, but not seem cocky. And we have to try very hard to make it look like we're not trying too hard!

What is your vision of ADF, and how does the Clergy Council impact your vision?

I actually have several different visions of ADF and they are not completely compatible. I don't think ADF really knows what it wants to be when it grows up. Are we a religion? Or a group of related religions? Are we a cultural appreciation society that loves the Iron Age? Or are

we a bunch of people who wish we lived back then? Is ADF a group of individual members? Or are the Groves the members? I think some people would be surprised to find that there are ADF members who envision ADF in very, very different and in-compatible ways. These differences keep springing up from time to time and they keep us from moving forward with any speed, because for every step we take in one direction, there are many members complaining that we're going the wrong way.

So one of the first things the leaders should do, in my opinion, is to clarify that vision as best we can, then clearly describe that vision to the membership and then be prepared to perhaps wave good-bye to many of them.

If I had to pick a single vision for ADF right now I'd have a hard time. I just tried it and kept bumping into problems. We need to have some long and serious discussions about it, but first we need to listen closely to the members and see what they think. It's the members who are paying for ADF and many of them don't belong to Groves. So we have to make sure we listen to the Solitaries as well as the people in the Groves.

So what can the Clergy Council do in this process? We can help gather the ideas and opinions and help formulate a shared vision, as best we can.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about ADF what would it be? Why?

But...but...I *can* wave a magic wand! I have a real nice one, with a crystal on the end and everything! I wave it all the time but I'm not a Billionaire yet , so I better keep practicing, huh?

Oh! You mean if it worked like the Fairy Godmother's? Simple!

I'd put us all in a small , secluded village in the middle of an old oak forest, with lots of high-paying part-time jobs that we can do from home by computer, or service jobs that we do for each other (Jimmy can be our Blacksmith, Seabac makes the mead, Ian entertains down at the Pub, etc.) We'd have plenty of time to figure out all the Bylaws and Study Programs and other annoyances, and be able to spend the majority of our time re-creating and enjoying a meaningful new religion for ourselves.

Why? Because email seems to have been diabolically designed as the perfect tool for sharing the most words with the least understanding. We really need to hold hands, look into each other's eyes and decide what to do next. How can you help ADF? Get yourself to as many festivals and public rituals as you can and talk to people, face to face, about our Druidry.



Artwork by Heather S. Koerner

Epona

Hi! I'm Carlyne Deaver, aka Epona at ADF events or online. At Well-spring 2002 I swore an oath as a Dedicant ADF Priestess and am committed to serving my community in any way that I am able. I am currently the Pacific Region Director on the Mother Grove and was actively

involved in the drive to separate our regions into more manageable and meaningful areas to better serve our members. I am the Senior Druid for Cascade Dragonsong Grove located in the Seattle area of Washington State. Prior to moving to Seattle in 1998, I was the Senior Druid and one of three founders of Triskele River Grove located in SW Ohio, serving Cincinnati and the surrounding areas, including Northern Kentucky and Southeastern Indiana.

I am Chief of the ADF Naturalist's Guild and Scribe/Pursewarden for the ADF Magician's Guild. I am a member of the ADF Seer's Guild, ADF Liturgist's Guild and am active on the Grove Organizing Committee. As a former solitary member, I have always been an advocate for the solitary members of ADF and as the Pacific Director have asked for their input into regional activities and MG voting issues. I am very interested in several Guild Study programs and recently volunteered to be the Coordinator for the Children's Education and Parenting SIG.

On a personal level, I am a mother of three great children, ranging in age from 3 years to 10 years. I have been home schooling them for the last 2 years and we're having a great time learning together. Last summer I decided to go "back to school" and finish my degree in Natural Resources. I am currently a senior planning on graduating mid-2004. In my spare time, I enjoy camping, traveling, reading, movies, and computer games. I love animals and have a Great Dane that thinks she is a lap dog, a Golden Retriever that is my son's Shadow, three cats that go from being attention hogs to leave me alone in the blink of an eye, a parrot that has decided he likes my husband more than me and a horse that thinks he's a house pet!

As a member of ADF's Clergy Council what do you think the role of a Priest is within ADF?

I think that the role of a Priest in ADF is to serve the organization and the greater Pagan community as a whole in any manner that a Priest may be called upon. I think that an ADF Priest should be able to act as a

pastoral counselor, listening to the needs of their congregation, or, if they do not have a congregation (I do not believe that one must have a congregation to be a Priest) then to listen to the needs of their community and assist in solving problems to the best of their ability. I believe a Priest needs to serve ADF by representing the organization to the outside world, pagan and non-pagan, alike in a positive and professional manner. I see the role of a Priest in ADF as being a spiritual role – to help the folk of ADF in spiritual matters as needed, things like blessings, weddings, funerals; but also as being someone that the folk can count on in other ways – less spiritual perhaps, but not necessarily. I'm thinking of a Priest as someone that can be called upon when someone is having a tough time or just needs a sounding board, or someone to listen. I know that there have been times in my life, especially the last couple of years, when I really could have used some help from outside my family. Just someone to talk to that isn't going to be judgmental or take the conversation back to my family. I think that a Priest in ADF could have filled that role for me and I would like to be there for others that may need similar help.

How does this compare to the role of the Priest within Indo-European Society, or - if any - the cultural focus that you follow?

I think that the spiritual roles I mentioned are probably similar to those of IE Priests, but I doubt that the more secular role would have been a part of the role of an IE Priest in non-modern times.

What is your vision of ADF, and how does the Clergy Council impact your vision?

I'd like to see ADF continue to grow while not losing sight of its current members and their needs. I think that there are a lot of members and potential members out there that are either new to Druidry, new to paganism in general and/or are isolated from Groves, whose needs in ADF aren't being met. I think that there have been changes recently that are addressing these needs, and look forward to continued progress on that front. One of the biggest complaints I hear is that ADF is a political body and not a spiritual one. I think that having an active Clergy Council and implementing the Clergy Training Program will be a tremendous step towards making ADF a more religious or spiritual organization and less of a political and social one. The Clergy Council has a tremendous amount of potential for spreading the spirituality of ADF. The members are all committed to ADF and to doing what it takes to make ADF as great as it can be.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about ADF

what would it be? Why?

Is this a trick question? Seriously, there are two things I would like to see – more ADF members in the Western US so that there was more of a sense of community in this area and a loss of the politicking that goes on in ADF. I think both are getting much better but if I had to choose one, I'd change the politicking in ADF.

In closing, is there anything you would like to share?

I just want people to know that I am here and available as needed for anyone in ADF. If you just need a shoulder to lean on or someone to listen, I'm here for you – via phone, email, or in person - as much as possible. I am excited about the work that has been going on with the Clergy Council and invite any ADF member to contact me, or other Clergy Council members if they have any questions or need help in any way.

Todd Covert

I'm the founder and Senior Druid of one of ADF's largest local fellowships, Raven's Cry Grove, based in the Los Angeles area. At this writing, I'm also serving as ADF's Pursewarden (or Treasurer), following a one year tenure as Administrator (and a brief stint as acting Chief of the Council of Senior Druids). In April 2002, the ADF Mother Grove granted me Dedicant Priest status and membership in the Clergy Council.

ADF's embrace of the path of study so important to the Druids of old, combined with its emphasis on public ritual have been central for me in my involvement with the organization and my decision to organize a Grove in Los Angeles--a community heavily populated with Pagan folk, but lightly so with those identifying themselves as "Druidic" in their path. Our Grove has grown fairly steadily and, at the time of this writing (early 2003), has a membership of 21--up from just six two years earlier. The consistently enthusiastic response from newcomers at our public rites to the offertory and devotional aspects of our work has been gratifying to myself and to my fellow Grove members.

My involvement in Paganism goes back to my early teens--about 1973--when my mother was considering becoming Wiccan. Her interest faded--falling back into the family's longtime Unitarianism--but I found the books on Wicca she gave me at the time to be a continuation of my earlier childhood interests in mythology and religions (to say nothing of Halloween and horror movies!). After studying and working with noted

ritual theatre specialist Richard Schechner briefly in the early '80s, I plunged into a decade or so of freeform Taoism, before winding up back at Wicca--this time as a result of efforts to explore my Irish-Scottish-Welsh heritage. I am still a legally-ordained priest of an American branch of a well-established British Traditionalist Wiccan tradition (heavily Celtic in orientation) and balance that magical work to some degree with my ADF Druidism.

Other influences were Michael Harner's shamanism workshops and a longtime association with An Claidheamh Soluis/Celtic Arts Center in LA (of which group I was president, 1999-2000), where I have studied the Irish language for several years and teach classes in Celtic history and spirituality. My work as Executive Administrator of the C.G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles has also informed my spirituality in some measure.

I self-identify these days as a "Celtic Pagan"...though my personal path, as well as that of Raven's Cry Grove, is specifically Gaelic. I have been fortunate enough to have travelled extensively in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Cornwall and was recently married to fellow ADF member Elizabeth Chesley in Glasgow. I'm particularly obsessed with the Isle of Skye, where I have solo hiked in the Black Cuillin Hills and done personal rituals dedicated to the warrior goddess, Sgathach--much akin in my view to my longtime matron deity, the Morrígan. Other deities with whom I have a close relationship are Manannán Mac Lir, Lúgh, and Brigid.

As a Pagan clergy person, I see myself as having responsibilities beyond merely serving as chief priest and liturgist of an ADF Grove. In common with many members of the Neopagan clergy--of whatever tradition--I serve in a sort of chaplaincy, performing weddings and funerals for solitary members of the larger community who have no ready access to clergy. In addition, I feel the responsibility to serve as an ambassador of sorts to the larger community, teaching and delivering guest lectures whenever possible, but more generally just seeking to foster a sense that Neopagan clergy are as ethical and professional as those of any other faith community, if not more so.

As a member of ADF's Clergy Council what do you think the role of a Priest is within ADF?

A Priest in ADF is likely to carry several roles for our community--though this may vary considerably depending on how many other clergy members reside nearby. I'll speak to my own experience here, since the nearest ADF clergy person is about 1200 miles away from me.

We are above all a resource for the members of our community. This includes not only members of ADF and their families, but also members of the larger Pagan community of which we are a part and for

which we are committed to providing public ritual. The ADF Priest may take a leading role in facilitating that public ritual (including both writing and leading the rites if necessary) or may identify and develop others capable of and willing to do so. As clergy, we must be ready to perform rites of passage for our immediate and extended communities and also to provide such education and counseling as we are capable of providing. And all of this requires we must have the skills to both explain and inspire--the Priest must embody the highest expectations of the community for conduct of ritual that seeks to reconnect with the spirit of the Old Ways.

We are a symbolic presence in our communities, too, though, in some measure. The public face of ADF's mission requires that we be visible and that--in turn--requires that we be ethical. It requires that we set standards for our public activities as demanding (or more so) as those established for the clergy of any other faith community. Indeed, as members of a spiritual community that is not widely known or understood by the mainstream, we must perhaps set a higher standard.

And we are part of the leadership of ADF as a national religious community. We accept the responsibility of working as peers to define what we wish the spiritual nature of that community to be.

How does this compare to the role of the Priest within Indo-European Society, or - if any - the cultural focus that you follow?

The ancient Druids and their equivalent practitioners in the other IE cultures are our role models from a philosophical perspective--which is to say we begin with the manifold realms of learning and art they mastered as inspiration for our own training and vocation, but we do not oblige ourselves to slavishly imitate the details of their practices. One certainly draws the line at human sacrifice or the toleration of slavery or concubinage, for instance. But the way in which all the lore of the community--and not just its religious traditions--reside in the Druid, the Fili, the Bard as living repositories of the culture should inspire us to follow their example as best we can in a radically different world.

The Druids of the ancient world were the final authorities on the conduct of public ritual. Modern Neopagan tradition (and the broader humanistic movement of Western culture) call to us to reduce the authoritarian trappings of priesthood and to inspire the individuals we serve to develop their own relationship to the Powers they offer praise and prayer to both through example and gentle guidance.

What is your vision of ADF, and how does the Clergy Council impact your vision?

ADF is, for me, above all, a community where those who feel called to

reconnect to the highest and most deeply rooted principles and practices of the ancient Indo-Europeans can be both inspired to do so and feel that they have a safe home in which to do so. I believe that the membership of the Clergy Council comprises a variety of approaches to this calling and the ability of the members of the Council to support each other is the single most important standard they can provide for the larger community.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about ADF what would it be? Why?

I'd dispel the stereotype that clings to it that it is too slavishly devoted to book-learning and legalism at the expense of other ways of experiencing the numinous dimensions of our world. There are as many poets and seers in our community as scholars--and many of our members are both. But the stereotype remains. We will always be held back from real growth as long as this remains true.

In closing, is there anything you would like to share?

Nope. Thanks for the opportunity to share so much!

Athanasios of Springfield

I, Athanasios of Springfield, have many responsibilities within ADF. I am Senior Druid of Grove of the Twilight Owl in Springfield, Ohio. In my capacity of Senior Druid I sit on two committees hosted by the Council of Senior Druids; the Grove Coordinating Committee, and the Grove Organizing Committee. I am the Chief and Preceptor of the ADF Scholars Guild, which I helped organize in 2002. I am also a member of the Liturgists Guild, and Registrar of the Clergy Council. Additionally, I am the editor of Oak Leaves, and I am the organizer for Oi Asproi Koukouvayies - The White Owls, the ADF Hellenic SIG.

Outside of ADF I am High Priest of Three Roads Coven, a Polytheistic Hellenic Wiccan Coven, since 1998. Within the organization Nova Roma I am a priesthood holder, holding the priesthood of Flamen Pomonalis.

In the secular world I sell yellow page advertising as an account executive for R. H. Donnelly, the largest stand alone publisher of yellow pages. I have a beautiful wife; Pandora Tys Pygys, a mischievous beagle; Rusty, two cats; Lodin & Morpheus, and a ball python; Pythagoras.

As a member of ADF's Clergy Council what do you think the role of a Priest is within ADF?

I believe the primary role of the priest today is the same as it was before

the Pagan Revival, and that is to offer sacrifice to the Gods. Sacrifice is essential, it is the understanding that we make offerings to Them for Their blessings upon us. Anyone can offer sacrifice to the Gods, but it is the Priest who is specifically commissioned to offer sacrifice on behalf of the community in which they serve. Additionally, the maintaining of sacred tradition is essential to the priesthood.

The facilitation of Rites of Passage is another area of jurisdiction for the Priest. Rites of Passage can take many forms; birthing, matrimony, initiation, and funerary. It is important to make sacred the events of our lives. The priest can assist an individual, or group of individuals, in their transitions of life by helping them to stay connected to the Sacred.

A Priest should be ever striving for wisdom, not simply knowledge - - contained in books -- but practical wisdom, that will draw him closer to the Gods. It is this striving for wisdom that will make a priest beneficial in the realm of counseling others. I do not see a priest as being a counselor to people just because he is a priest. But I do see a priest that is striving towards wisdom, and virtue, as a source of edification, and counsel because of this quest for wisdom. For knowledge without wisdom is simply information.

How does this compare to the role of the Priest within Indo-European Society, or - if any - the cultural focus that you follow?

Within Hellenic culture the role of the Priest was essentially of keeping sacred tradition, and offering sacrifice to the Gods. Many of the secular magistrates also had priest-like roles, and would function as ritual facilitators. The role of the priest of today should be similar to the roles that priests played in classical times, however, we live in a different day and age. Therefore, the role of our clergy will be different, to facilitate the changes within Paganism by the influx of the Pagan Revival. The priests of today are similar in many ways to the priests of yesteryear, but with subtle differences based on the cultural climate with which we live in. The expectations of clergy are simply different. We need to maintain a sense of modernization, without losing sight and respect for the ancient traditions. A happy balance, and equilibrium must be maintained.

What is your vision of ADF, and how does the Clergy Council impact your vision?

My vision for ADF includes more organized cultural diversity. ADF was established as an Indo-European spiritual tradition, albeit with heavy Celtic leanings. I would like to see implemented the concept of "Churches within a Church," or culturally specific groups operating under the umbrella of ADF, and within ADF. Not simply "special interest groups" but sub-organizations within ADF that are organized

specifically for the purpose of promoting, educating, and honoring the Gods of their particular spiritual/cultural tradition. I see ADF acting as the spiritual umbrella for Norse, Greco-Roman, Slavic, and other traditional forms of Indo-European spiritual traditions all operating under the guidance and leadership of ADF as a whole. I see the Clergy Council playing a vital role in this undertaking, because the membership of the Clergy Council will need to assist in the leadership in these “Churches within a Church” concept. Additionally, I would like to see EVERY member of the Clergy Council actively involved in something within ADF.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about ADF what would it be? Why?

If I had a magic wand and could change one thing about ADF I would get rid of the apathy. I know, and understand, that people have many obligations and responsibilities in life. However, it is essential that our leaders play an active role within the organization; locally, regionally, and nationally. Too many people seem to possess an attitude of, “I don’t care,” or “my opinion doesn’t matter.” This apathy takes on many forms, but the end result is the same – the slow decay of the organization. Apathy is a terrible thing, and it will be the death of us if we do not recognize it as a problem, and make efforts to cure this disease.

In closing, is there anything you would like to share?

I would like to add that I consider the work I do for ADF an honor, and a privilege. I am humbled by the vast knowledge contained within the minds of our membership. It is an honor that I cannot put adequately into words to say proudly that I am a Dedicant Priest within ADF.

Short Autobiographies of Participating Clergy Council Members



Artwork by Heather S. Koerner

Earrach of Pittsburgh

I read Isaacs book Real Magic back in 1973 and although I don't remember any mention of Druidism in the first edition, it was about that time that I was first getting interested in Druidism and the mythology of the British

Isles. I just about wore out the local library's copies of Piggott's "The Druids", and Hawkins' "Stonehenge Decoded". Although I've considered myself a Druid-ish pagan since the early Seventies, I've been doing things publicly with other neopagans since the mid Eighties. Long the solitary, in 1986 I finally met other pagans, in-the-flesh, at a nationally advertised pagan festival held at, of all places, the group camp facilities at Raccoon State Park (40 minutes from Pgh!). It was quite a cool event featuring Gavin and Yvonne Frost and Issac Bonewits. At the time, Issac was just starting to promote a new organization he'd cooked up called "ADF"...

From the contacts I'd made at that festival, I became involved in the startup (c.1988) of a pagan networking collective called ASH (Allegheny SpritHaven). It was a loose association of half a dozen individuals who desperately wanted Pittsburgh to have at least "something" like a functional community, yet we knew that in the process we'd always have to respect the autonomy demanded by Neopagans which nonetheless tends to hamstring such efforts. After all, as CAW's founders always said, we are *all* "POPE's"... We had done a couple public rites at the old LifeWork Center near Bloomfield and had started the (still continuing) tradition of the Community Beltane Picnic in South Park. In October of 1990 we held our first (and only) weekend-long community festival at Raccoon: "Harvest Home". It turned out very well for a first effort.

I continued collecting contacts and maintaining the ASH mailing list and kept the ASH effort going (as a community events newsletter) well through the mid-Nineties. Meanwhile, back in the late eighties I had joined ADF and was going to its national festival, "Wellspring" each May up at Brushwood where the Starwood festival is held. I applied to ADF to start a "Proto-Grove" in our area, and by 1992 had enough experience and prospective members to found "Sassafras Grove, ADF". Sassafras is Pittsburgh's chapter of ADF, a form of modern Druidism focused on serving the Mother and the Blessed Ones by providing quality, open Neopagan rites on a regular basis to the community, a very good fit for my "calling".

By the end of 2002 Sassafras grove has conducted 83 public rituals celebrating the turning seasons of the Pagan year. At the Wellspring Gathering in the spring of 2002, I was one among a group of the first members to be fully ordained as ADF Druid-priests.

When called upon to state what I've found the most rewarding in my work as steward of this 'process' we call Sassafras Grove, I'd have to say it's been watching the Subtle Pattern grow over the years. It's all about working hard and never giving up, and time after time being given undeniable blessings in return. It comes in many ways. At times it comes in signs and good fortune, beauty, tears, and most often, through the goodness of the incredible people who come our way. It's just not always clearly definable at first yet I've come to recognize it's prox-

imity: “there’s something here; something we’re being given - or being told...” Often obscure at first, yet, given time and perspective, irresistibly the Pattern emerges and our diligence is confirmed for us as having been “worth the trouble.” I have come to believe that this is the place



Artwork by Heather S. Koerner

for “Faith” in Neopagan pursuits; without it, one may never hang-in there long enough to discover the keys necessary to recognize the blessings you’re already being given.

Enough for now, I’ve already rambled on too long...

Bryan Perrin

Bryan Perrin, aka SKRAELING!, promotes the religious practice of the inspired creative act. The search for the muse is his focus and the creation and creative process are his sacrifice.

Bryan’s extensive studies and natural talents enable him to honor the kindred’s with Ceremonial Arts. Idolatry, regalia, devotional objects, esoteric rants & song, construction of shrines and symbolic spaces are all aspects of Bryan’s ritual drama.

Through an interest in European folklore, art and natural histories, Bryan was drawn to ADF in 1989. As founder and Senior Druid of Green Man Grove he hosted many holidays and ritual celebrations. Interpreting the ADF ritual outline from an artistic and theatrical perspective, Bryan’s enthusiasm inspires the congregates to become participants and to create performances for other worldly audiences.

Acknowledging Bryan’s artistic contributions, Archdruid and ADF founder Isaac Bonewits anointed him Chief Artificer. Additionally as the organization’s first elected Chronicler, he designed and produced the Druid’s Progress. His art has been widely published and exhibited.

Bryan was ordained as Druid Clergy in recognition of his dedication and monumental body of work.

Before the end of the last century, Bryan left the Metro Druids and, like the Salmon of Knowledge, moved upstream. He now lives with his family in the mountains North of the City, near the reservoir that feeds his old home.

Hekatatia

I live in La Crosse WI with my husband and two cats. I have a Bachelor of Science in Archaeology and intend to pursue a Masters in the same field within a couple of years. My primary areas of study have been Britain and Ireland, including an internship in Wales. In addition to

ADF, I am a member of Hellenion where I am a clergy student.

I joined ADF in 1998 because I was attracted to the commitment to scholarship and pan-Indo-European focus. After a few solitary months I joined Sun Raven Grove of Madison WI. In 1999 I organized a Pro-togrove in my area. River of Fire earned our Provisional Grove charter in 2001 and I was chosen as Senior Druid. I honor both Greek and Celtic deities in my household and collectively with my Grove. I completed the Dedicant Program in 2000 and now mentor Grove members through the program.

Within the larger organization I was elected Member's Advocate in 2002. I am an ADF Dedicant Priestess, which places me on the Clergy Council. I have been an 'Office elf' (email volunteer) for a couple of years.

I am a member of the Grove Organizing Committee, the Liturgist Guild Scribe, and a member of the Seers and Scholars Guilds. You can often find me at the ADF IRC chats on Sunday nights, and I welcome members to contact me there or through other means. I like to hear from all members, especially those who feel they need more contact with others and those who would like to share their opinions on current policies or events.



September 26, 27, & 28

Elysium

The Heartland Regional Festival

Location:
Camp Clifton—Yellow Springs, Ohio

- Cabins
- Showers
- Meal Plan Available
- Workshops
- Music
- Rituals

www.draknetfree.com/grottoadf

Progress

An essay

By Cathbad

I read in the paper that the new highway was coming, and it would change the lives of everyone in the village. We would be able to go to the city in half the time. The village would grow. There would be more jobs. I guess I was happy for that. I believed in progress. However, I still did not feel right about the highway. You see, it's route was designed to run through a local park. The town's mayor assured us that the park would be largely unharmed as the highway would be designed to 'minimise' damage to the natural surroundings. We would hardly know it was there. We would not even be able to see the highway winding through the mountains and hills surrounding the village. Yet there was one tree at the entrance of town. The ancient oak that had stood its ground for centuries protecting this village would have to come down. A small price to pay for progress.

Yet I was uncomfortable. I was not what you would call an activist, or a 'tree hugger.' But I had grown up with that massive oak. I had climbed it and played under its ancient branches as a child. My friends and I even built a crude tree fort in its heights. The oak protected us from all sorts of imaginary demons, pirates and bogeymen. What adventures we shared from high within its branches! I shared my first kiss with Melanie Howell under its watchful guise. I passed out beneath it after my first drunken night with my mates when we were in high school. I married Emily in the shadow of its branches. In my more contemplative moods I sat beneath its ancient limbs and read, or thought. Sometimes I slept the afternoon away within its protective presence. What dreams I dreamt!

True, I had not visited my ancient friend much after I grew into adulthood. But I always took it for granted that she would be there, watching over me and my family. That my own children would share its joy. And now it was to be felled and replaced by a mass of concrete and steel. Suddenly I grew angry. This would not stand. This could not stand. Without much thought I packed my rucksack with a blanket and some food and water, and I set out for the oak. I would defend this tree, not by force but by my presence. I would speak out in defiance of those who would fell my ancient friend.

I arrived at mid day. The giant oak stood defiantly above the orange cones and construction tape that had been erected all around it. I ignored the barriers and approached my ancient friend. I placed a hand on its massive trunk and felt it tremble. I knew what I would do. I climbed into the oak, high into its branches and found the remains of the tree fort I helped construct twenty years before. There I sat in silence. My presence calmed the oak, as the presence of a good friend calms one before death. I felt her gratitude. Here I would wait with my friend until the day when the men with chainsaws and bulldozers would come.

During the days I spoke from my perch to countless news reporters and politicians in defense of the oak's right to exist. Of what this tree meant to the community. I defied the local police and challenged them to remove me. I am certain most thought I was crazy. Crowds of spectators grew as the days passed, and some of them took up the great tree's cause. Many had the same types of experiences as I under the branches of the ancient tree, and wished to be near it in its last moments. Tents began to rise around the oak and a protective barrier was formed.

By night I would listen to my fellow defenders as they talked and sang beneath the tree. They would tell stories of what this symbol of our village meant to them. Marriages, first kisses, picnics, reunions... all under the protective limbs of this oak. I wondered how many decades, even centuries, of history this oak retained in its ancient memory.

Each night after the campers finally rested I would sit alone high in the branches of the oak tree, leaning against its massive trunk. I opened my mind and heart and listened. I accepted the healing of the oak tree, for all of the petty hurts and concerns I faced in my everyday life. I listened to the ancient wisdom of the oak, and gained an understanding of the necessary but neglected symbiotic relationship man had with nature. I learned of the changes that had taken place in these hills, how many of the great trees brethren had fallen to progress. How progress had stripped man of his relationship with nature and how man's spirit had been damaged in the process. I was ashamed and saddened. My tears fell onto the oak's rough bark.

Finally they came, the men with the chainsaws, seventeen days after I had taken up my vigil. The police came with them, obviously expecting to forcibly remove me and my companions from the slaughter house. My fellow protectors linked hands and formed a human ring around the base of the ancient oak, and a confrontation seemed inevitable. I had dreamt of this the night before, and the oak had imparted its

final lesson. The oak, the protector of this village for hundreds of years, had accepted its fate. The wheel must turn, and we must face our deaths with courage and dignity. I climbed down from the tree and touched it one last time, giving thanks for the lessons and the healing it had bestowed. I felt gratitude in return. I walked down the hill. Those around the tree followed, as if by some unheard command. I swear to this day I heard the tree scream above the sounds of the chainsaws and axes and bulldozers that attacked and hacked away its life.

As I reflect now upon my experience high in the ancient oak's branches I marvel at the courage and strength my friend showed. Even in the face of death the oak was teacher, healer and protector. Some would call the sharing of the lessons tree magic, but I believe it was much more. In staying with the oak I became the tree's magic. The symbol of what man's relationship with nature should be. A relationship of mutual protection and respect. In return the oak shared the wisdom and courage of the ancients with me, and through me passed it to the others who had spent weeks beneath the massive limbs. I benefited from those lessons for the rest of my life. I had perspective and learned to face life's challenges with dignity and courage. And now, at the age of eighty, I lay on my own deathbed and the wheel turns for me. I am not afraid, for the courage of the oak runs within me.

[Note: My inspiration for this work is the story of a young ecological protestor in England who lived in a Holly tree for three months to prevent it from being cut down for the sake of a bypass. When I read of the experience this young man had I recalled my own experiences in the Yellow Springs nature preserve near Dayton, Ohio, where I often visited a massive oak along the path to the Spring. I asked myself, what would I be willing to do to save that oak if it were in danger? What lessons would I learn from the experience? I hope you enjoyed this as much as I enjoyed writing it. – Cathbad, Bristol, UK 2003

Chris Akins, aka Cathbad, has been a member of ADF since 1999. He is a solitary practitioner living in Bristol, United Kingdom. Prior to moving to England he was a member and Purswarden of the 6th Night Grove. He enjoys writing and nature.]

Leadership

Herding Cats 2: Motivating & Empowering Cats by Caryn MacLuan

Many of us have used the adage, “Organizing pagans is like herding cats.” As a long time cat-herder tending multiple cats, I’ve learned that herding cats is easy once you know what motivates the cats. As a veteran of 18 years in the Coast Guard, I’ve learned that leading people is easy once you know what motivates them. As a mother of two teenage boys, I can tell you these concepts also work for parenting but sometimes you have to use them imaginatively.

This is the second of a series of essays exploring concepts of leadership and group dynamics. Such concepts apply both to the modern neopagan movement and to non-profit/volunteer organizations. In our last episode, we talked about those traits that make a team powerful and effective both from the leader’s and the member’s standpoint. This essay will cover motivating and empowering people.

How do you get a group of people (or perhaps yourself) to do what you want them to do? We all need a reason to act. We act often act best when we act out of a feeling of :

OWNERSHIP

Ownership means that the individual or group feels they are a part of the common goal and they are **empowered** help make that goal happen. I know that’s only one sentence but it says a great deal so lets break it down.

The Webster dictionary defines ownership as:

- 1 : the state, relation, or fact of being an owner.
- 2 : a group or organization of owners with owner being described as:
 - 1 a) to have or hold as property.
 - b) to have power over : (CONTROL wanted to *own* his own life).
- 2 : to acknowledge to be true, valid, or as claimed .

As we use the word in leadership situations, ownership is the state created when a person or group **feels** that they control their role in the accomplishment or success of the task, goal or organization. They have a stake in the common good.

Next let’s consider **empowerment**. Again we look to the dictionary and find:

- 1 : to give official authority or legal power to.

2 : ENABLE (defn: 1 a : to provide with the means or opportunity b : to make possible, practical, or easy c : to cause to operate 2 : to give legal power, capacity, or sanction to)
3 : to promote the self-actualization or influence of

We find some of the same words used in both definitions. We can think of empowerment as those acts of a leader that strengthen individual sense of effectiveness. Empowerment is not simply a set of external actions; it is a process that changes the internal beliefs of people.

We know from psychology that individuals believe themselves powerful when they feel they can adequately cope with environmental demands - that is, situations, events, and people they confront. They feel powerless when they are unable to cope with these demands. Powerful people respond smoothly to situations, events and people they confront. We feel powerless when we are unable to cope with such demands or when we feel that we have no control in a given situation.

What difference does it make what I do or contribute? You're going to do what you want regardless. So why bother?

Any leadership practice that increases an individual's sense of self-determination tends to make that individual feel more powerful. The theory behind these ideas can be traced to the work of Alfred Bandura, who conceptualized the notion of self-efficacy beliefs and their role in an individual's sense of personal power in the world. I would take it one step further and say that empowerment also involves TRUST. Trust from the leaders in the abilities and works of the people within the organization.

OK, so how do we get there?

Well first of all we need to understand the kind of leadership structure we inhabit or the one that we want to create. Is it a monarchy or a democracy? Does one person wield all the power? Does everyone else respond to authoritative commands? Is it a group effort dependant upon the works of many towards a common goal? A democracy takes much more effort on the part of the members of the group. A monarchy's top down leadership structure is efficient when it works, though few cats or pagans will tolerate a monarch for very long. Monarchies also open gateways to abuses of power. Such abuses may be acts of commission by those with marginal ethics. They may also be acts of omission by those with marginal leadership training or skills.

Beware the ego trap. Putting yourself or letting others put you on too high a pedestal, leads to some nasty falls. It's a long way down and the Gods *love* to inspire us with lessons in humility when *they*

(not you) feel its necessary.

In his handbook, *The Prince*, Niccolo Machiavelli assures us as aspiring leaders that only by carefully amassing power and building a fearsome respect can we become great leaders. The shadowy court life of 16th-century Italy demanded such treachery to ensure one's power. It's hard to imagine Machiavelli's advice today with anything but disdain. And yet, we see a great deal of power hoarding, building and struggles in the pagan community. Some leaders focus solely on strategies and tactics. They work only to increase their own power and influence rather than on their service to the folk. When this Machiavellian quality crosses between groups and it can further encourage leaders to defend their power base and abandon their true service. And what dear readers has this gotten us? *Witch Wars*, not empowered pagans.

**OK, enough about what *NOT* to do. Let's talk about what *TO* do.
Start With The End in Mind** (*Stephen Covey*).

We will never get where we want to be unless we know where we are headed. Remember the Laws of Magic, we can't realize a clear desire with a fuzzy focus. We, and more importantly our group, need a clear vision of the goal in order to have any hope of reaching it. How can we, as leaders, empower group ownership of a common vision?

Determine what the goal of the Group is. Now if we are in a monarchy and we are the monarchs herding cats/pagans, simply sit down and determine this for yourself. If however we prefer to work with a group, we need the help and support of the whole herd. In order for the group to have *ownership* of a goal, they need to feel they are *empowered*. They need to have a stake and say in determining the goal.

We might begin with a brainstorming session (maybe more than one). Get some markers, flip charts (or big pieces of paper) and some tape. As folks come up with ideas, list them on the paper large enough to be seen by all. When you run out of room on one piece, tear it off and tape it to the wall. Make sure to get everyone's ideas down and let the group decide which ones to cross off. This empowers individuals by ensuring that everyone's ideas are seen and no one needs to feel like their input had less weight or significance.

Break down the Goal into its component parts or steps. Once we determine the goal, we then need to determine the steps that need to be taken in order to get there. Continue working towards simpler steps until they are in segments that individuals can accomplish. Then ask for volunteers. Discover what people want to do. We all do best that which we want to do. Also, we are much more likely to get volunteers if the group has *ownership* in and contributed to the process which created the task and goal.

Creating Group Cohesiveness/ Ownership: Whenever possible,

work together as a team face to face and not over email. Plan meetings or events that encourage group interaction. Undertake activities that have a visual impacts such as a roadside pickup, a stream cleanup, or a painting party for someone in need. We all like to celebrate the success of our efforts. Things that individuals do that contribute to the final outcome build *ownership*. Leaders encourage and support of actions that increase individual inclusion. The more people are recognized and appreciated for the work they contribute to the whole, the more they will be motivated to contribute, the more they contribute, the more *empowered* they will feel and the more *ownership* they will have in the group.

Please understand that I am only scratching the surface here. There are dozens of different ways to motivate and empower people. I encourage you all to spend some time checking out the resources available to you locally and through the internet. The answers you need are out there, you just have to go find them. Good Luck!

The following are my sources and resources:

World Wide Web:

- Run Searches on Leadership, Leadership Development, Motivational Leadership, Empowerment, Organizational Dynamics or Change or Transformation

Group Dynamics, Stages of Group Development Books:

- *Serving Humanity* from the Writings of Alice Bailey
- *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun* by Wess Roberts, Ph.D
- *The Art of Communicating* by Bert Decker
- *Personal Counseling* by Richard Knowdell & Elwood Chapman
- *Mining Group Gold* by Thomas Kayser
- *How to win friends & Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
- *First Things First* by Stephen Covey
- *How to Make Meetings Work* by Michael Doyle & David Straus
- *On Becoming a Leader* by Warren Bennis

Classes:

Check out your local colleges for courses on conflict resolution, management for non-profit organizations.

Also study in Neuro Linguistic Programming or Tony Robins' series may also help but it can be expensive. Check out your local library, many times folks will donate their audio tapes for the above series and you can check them out.

Poetry....

“Dead, Mad or a Poet”

Sleep a night on the Tor, they teased us three,
Angus Dubh, young Sim, and me,
Full of the drink, and full of jest,
The taunted us to dare a test,
And see if the olden tale was right,
“Go stay on the Faery Tor one night,
Unless you are a cowardly set,
Sons of sots, or a harlot’s get,
Are you made of milk, or sterner stuff?”
They mocked until we’d had enough,
So the three of us took oath and swore,
We’d stay all night at the top of the Tor.
The moon was dark and the wind was still,
That night we slept at the height of the hill.

Angus Dubh? He died next morn,
And the leeches said ‘twas a fault inborn
Made his heart stop, but I know for sure,
Angus was strong and his heart was pure.
Young Sim and I came safely down,
But Sim, he’s now the fool of the town.
Och, his mother was daft, I heard them say,
But that’s not why he changed that way.
And me, you ask, how did I fare,
After my night in that haunted air?
I make poems, for I have no choice,
Words burn in me, and they want my voice,
No home, no wealth, no wife, no peace,
Only the poems that will not cease.

Now listen! For I won’t say it twice,
Open both ears to my advice,
Stay off the Tor, my lass, my lad,
Or you’ll end up dead, or a poet, or mad.
You’ll be gone, or raving, or poem-cursed,
And I don’t know which of these is the worst!

By Bridin Crowstone

Lake Superior: A Spirit of Place

I am the Keeper of this wide water,
I am its soul and essence,
I am its form and face.
I am the Spirit of this Place.

She comes to honor me -- this small sister,
With offerings of cornmeal and tobacco.
Familiar gifts. Acceptable.
She sits on my bright-pebbled shore,
And whispers words of respect and love.

We gift each other with the other's grace.
I am the Spirit of this Place.

I give gifts in return:
A stone round as a made marble;
A stone marked like a shark's head;
A black stone, pitted with ancientness;
A cup of water for ceremony.

I am an Elder. Powerful,
Ungentle but generous,
Fierce, fearsome, beautiful.
She is human -- frail, warm, aware.

She is a child of Earth, and so am I.
In this unending moment, we embrace--
I am the Spirit of this Place.

I will remember...

By Bridin Crowstone

Sacred Reality - the beginning of theology

By Rev. Robert Barton

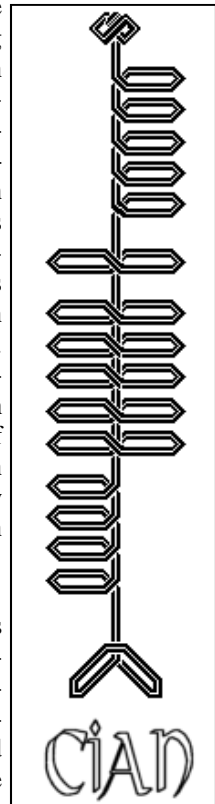
A central theological principle: In the general study of religions there is a concept which is considered the starting point for understanding and articulating the theological system of any faith. This most basic concept of religion, known as **sacred reality** (*Cunningham & Kelsay*), is the foundation upon which any theology and/or religious morality system is built. It is with sacred reality, or more precisely, the ontology or “nature of being,” of sacred reality, that we begin to investigate or formulate the belief structure of any religion. Every religion will have some key element of its understanding of the cosmos that is central to its theology; this element can be called its sacred reality. When we understand the specific sacred reality, also known as **absolute reality**, as the central point in a given religious system, we can begin to clearly see the **paradigm** or world view of the participants of that faith. Furthermore, we are able to follow how the resultant theological, cosmological, liturgical and moral patterns form. Sacred reality can be seen expressed in various religions in any of a multiplicity of forms: utopia or the perfect world, heaven as divine presence, divine law, absolute forms and sacred order to name just a few. As we begin to examine the beliefs and practices of any faith we must ask the key question: What is the nature of the sacred reality of this faith? With the answer to this question we have set the stage for a thoughtful, reasoned approach to understanding any faith.

Sacred reality in a cosmic system: Many cosmic religions, ancient and modern, have a view of sacred reality which is, at its most basic level, a concept of sacred order. This sacred order applies to the whole world of the particular people, extending through every level of existence. Gods, spirits, the people, the land, tradition, myth and all other aspects of the cultural system are reflected in and supported by the sacred reality. All things are as they should be when they are aligned with the sacred order. While the implementation of sacred order applies throughout all levels of the society it is generally limited to the geographical area which is inhabited by the people of the society. Order is seen as the way of the folk and of the land inhabited by the folk, with order being confined to the social and spiritual institutions of the people and their gods with a strong **liminal** sense of how far that order extends.

Concepts of ‘the order of the people’ do not extend beyond the borders of the people and their ‘world’. When these faiths speak of how the ‘world’ was formed they are generally addressing issues of how the order was given to the land on which they live and how the order was given to the people. So cosmic creation myths most often only apply to the people, the gods of the people, the area in which the people live and to the otherworlds of these people and their gods. **Liminality** as an active concept provides a strong sense of the edges between what is inside of the system of order and that which is outside of or beyond the system.

Perhaps it is because of the very culturally specific nature of cosmic religions that we do not historically see religious wars or crusades among people who adhere to them. There is no need to convert neighbors or others to embrace a specific religion. Religious pluralism seems to be the norm among the peoples of cosmic faiths. For instance, examine the Ancient Greeks and Macedonians as Alexandros extended his empire while embracing and honoring the gods and ways of the people being conquered. This same pattern was the one that the Romans would later follow by extending their socio-political system without direct assault on the religious systems of the peoples being conquered. Though the Romans did interpret local deities in terms of the Roman pantheon and the Romans carried the worship of their own deities with them setting up temples in newly conquered lands there was no policy of stripping local cult of culturally specific deities. The attitude of these faiths seems to be one of ‘we will worship our gods on our land and you worship your gods on your land’. This type of pluralism is seen today in cosmic religious organizations such as Ár nDraíocht Féin where each local congregation will worship a set of gods specific to the local group identity and in which the various congregations do not necessarily share the same exact set of gods though they often have some gods in common.

The role of clergy: In these cosmic religions the internal establishment, maintaining and reinforcement of the sacred order are the primary concerns of group religious practice and of group religious leaders. Ceremony, ritual, social custom and law all combine toward the goal of maintaining the sacred order throughout the life of the folk. Often these areas will be under the authority of specialists;



Artwork by Wry Welwood

as an example, observe the tribal structure of the Celtic peoples who had a priesthood which performed the religious ceremonies, memorized traditional law, conveyed myth and maintained the genealogies of rulers and aristocrats. All of these activities are related to the maintaining of the order among the folk and between the folk and the world, and the priesthood responsible for maintaining that order will be charged with these functions. The primary focus of these cosmic clergy is going to be **orthopraxis** (*Cunningham & Kelsay*) or the observance of certain standards or religious practice. Cosmic clergy maintain the order of the **egregore** or group spiritual identity within the folk and the relationship of that egregore with gods and spirits.

Law and morality: Law and morality will also follow this sense of sacred order with the conceptions of right action being based on how it maintains the order of the culture. The result of this can be seen in the Brehon laws of Ireland which are based on the earlier law systems employed during the cosmic religious period. This was a living law system, in that it operated on a certain set of principles designed to maintain order within the law served the or- were brought in a sembled the modern which the case is directly involved, victim versus the within modern cos- toward being ethi- primary concern quences or result of The rightness or action is judged by the projected and intended result on the parameters of order. This type of morality is what ethicists call **teleological** (*Zeuschner*) in nature. When actions are taken to unbalance the order, we often see the primary legal concern being 'how may the perpetrator rebalance this offense' with the reestablishment of order being the primary objective.

Clergy in a cosmic system are experts in the maintaining of sacred order ...

society, and so the der. Legal cases way that more re- civil court of law, in between the parties and in which the perpetrator. Morality mic systems tends cally-based with the being the conse- the proposed action. wrongness of an

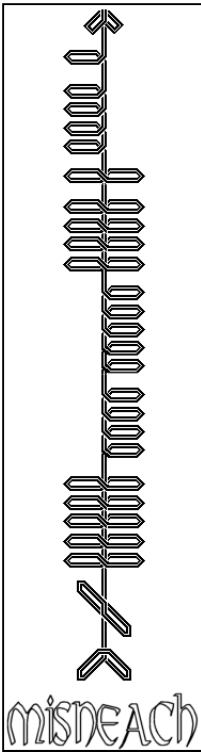
Time: Time in a cosmic system often works in a way that we would call circular with a pattern of periodic renewal. In many ancient languages the word used for 'world' is also a word used for 'year' (*Eliade*). One year may not necessarily be cosmically connected in a historical sense to the year before or after it or in a sense in which one year progresses into another. As a new year starts, the world is cosmically recreated and starts fresh and in tune with the sacred order. Often the people will celebrate this renewal with a rite in which they participate ritually in the process of renewal, sometimes performing a ritual

version of the original, world-creating cosmic sacrifice. As an example of this renewal we may examine the Gaelic festival of **Samhain** (summers end) in which the people have a celebration of cosmic renewal which takes place on a day out of time which is neither part of the preceding year nor part of the succeeding year. This day between years is also a day between worlds in which various realms come together and the borders between the realms of spirits, gods and ancestors thin or collapse. This day is seen as a cosmic crisis where order is lost and the world returns to chaos. This cosmic crisis lasts until the cosmos is safely recreated and the order reestablishes the world in a way that is for that very first moment in perfect alignment with the sacred order. The new 'world-year' will then progress normally in the proper order until the process of renewal must be repeated.

Health: Good health in a cosmic system is considered a characteristic of maintained personal order. When a person becomes ill there is an idea that something is out of order often with a piece of the person missing or stolen. Observing the healing rites of a Siberian Shaman we see the healer often undertakes a spiritual journey beyond the edge of this world and into another realm with the goal to find and retrieve the missing soul or spirit fragment of the patient. The goal in this healing technique being to return the piece to the rightful place in the order of the person and so to return that person to good health. In some cultures we see healing facilitated by the reciting or singing of the original cosmogonic myth over the person who is ill and in so doing the patient is returned to the original state of order. Health can also be negatively affected by the intentional disruption of the order of an individual. And so we see the ancient Greeks using a wax figure of an intended victim and piercing it with a spike in order to disrupt the order of the object of the curse. Health, be it good or ill is a direct result of the maintenance or loss of order.

Summary of points so far: So far in this article we have examined how the most central concept of theology, that of sacred reality, is the foundation of any individual system. In order to understand and articulate any particular theological system we are best served by starting our investigation with the nature of the specific sacred reality in the religion which is the object of our study. We have also observed that in many cosmic religions the concept of sacred reality is seen as sacred order. This sacred order directs and defines the paradigm of the people in the cosmic system. We have seen how theology, morality, liturgy, law and the very structure of the society all flow from this central sacred order.

Further examination: I will now engage in a short examination



Artwork by Wry Welwood

of sacred reality in a contrasting religious system and see how a different approach to this most central theological principle generates an entirely different religion. I have chosen a form of universalism which embraces a radical monotheism and which is the dominant religious system in modern western culture. The theology of the monotheistic Christian religion also known as classic theism has had a large influence on the social institutions of the modern Western world. The paradigm of this newer religion is so very different from that of the world view of cosmic religions that there is a great deal of misunderstanding when these religions come in contact with one another. As cosmic religion is being revived in the West it will come into contact with classic theism at an ever increasing rate. With this constant contact, leaders of cosmic religions would do well to examine the basic theological principles of the monotheists in order to understand why they have such a radically different paradigm and how that paradigm sees the world.

A contrasting system: Sacred reality in this radical monotheistic system holds that there is only one god, that this one god is absolute and that he transcends the universe. This god is the first cause which created the universe, and that the universe is created according to the divine will of this single god. Time in the universe is historical in that it has a defined beginning and is projected to have a defined end. This form of universalism holds that the entirety of creation is subject to this system and that there is only one absolute truth. Divine will is made manifest through divine law which is absolute. This single god is **omniscient** (all knowing), **omnipotent** (all powerful) and good. Good is defined by being in accordance with divine law while evil is defined as anything that is not in accordance with divine law. An evil act is considered a sin which is a violation of the divine will by breaking of the covenant established through the inherent authority of divine law. **Orthodoxy** as correct belief according to an authoritative standard (Reese) takes precedence in the monotheistic system.

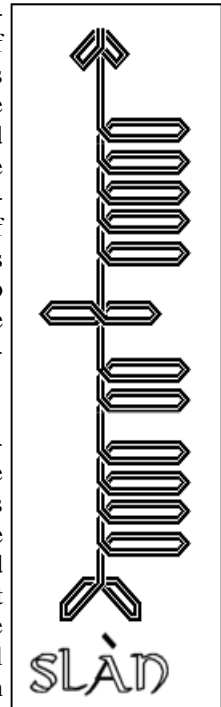
Clergy in this system are generally considered to be experts at interpreting and enforcing divine law and so they interact with the people as the representatives of the single god. Morality and legal systems tend to be formalist or **deontological** meaning that they are based on an obligation to the law without regard to consequences. Any offense of morality is an offense not against the victim but against the divine law. Any sin or

offense, being against the authority expressed through the law, can only be justified or forgiven or punished by the legal authority. We see this view active in our modern criminal court system where a person is placed on trial against the Crown or State as the authority who established the law that was broken. The violation against the victim is not included in the formula for justice because the wrongness of the offense was that it violated the law.

The view of classic Christian monotheists that there is one absolute truth and that this truth is expressed only through the law of one faith is the source for a missionary zeal in which they attempt to spread this truth to others. Awareness of this absolute truth is a gift that they wish to share in order to save others from falsehood. While the intention to save others is usually born of a sincere concern for others and is viewed as an obligation on the part of the faithful, tolerance and pluralism are not values required by the formalist morality system though they may be values held by the individual.

A comparison of systems: I would like to briefly compare the two systems discussed above in order to see how the fundamental differences in the concepts of sacred reality results in pervasive differences between the resultant world-views. We have in a cosmic theology a sense of sacred order which gives shape to creation. This sacred order includes the land, gods and people within the system but does not necessarily extend indefinitely to include all of existence. While in the classic theistic system we see an idea of sacred reality being one all-powerful god who transcends all of creation and who establishes creation through his divine authority. Time in a cosmic system tends to be cyclical with a constant pattern of renewal while the Christian system has a historical time with beginning and end.

Clergy in a cosmic system are experts in the maintaining of sacred order and act as an agent of the folk while clergy in the universal system are experts in divine law and often act as an agent for divine authority. Morality in a cosmic system tends toward being teleological with the concern being the effect of an action on the system of order while in the Christian system morality tends to be deontological with the primary concern being whether or not an action is correct according to the rules. Rectification for an immoral act in a cosmic system tends to be



Artwork by Wry Welwood

made toward the victim of the act while rectification of an immoral act in the universal system is made toward the authority of the law.

Rightness of an individual in a cosmic system tends to be based on a dynamic system of balanced relationships with all aspects of sacred order while rightness in the universal system is considered to be a state of being relative to divine authority. In a cosmic system the individual commits right-action or wrong-action while in the Christian system the individual is in a state of rightness or wrongness based upon their actions being good, in accordance with the law, or evil, in violation of the law.

These two systems, one cosmic, the other universal, differ at the most central level of theology, that of sacred reality. It is this fundamental variance that establishes the numerous differences between these theologies at every subsequent level of the paradigms. Religions often differ for very precisely defined theological reason. We can now see how and why these two religions differ so greatly. The differences here have nothing to do with either one faith or the other being more advanced or more evolved. Here the differences between these religions follow progressive interpretations of the world based upon two very different sacred realities.

Conclusion: In this article I have explored what I believe to be the most basic and central principle of theology, the principle of sacred reality. I have examined this principle at three different levels. First, I have discussed sacred reality as a general principle from which, I believe, all other principles of any theological system flow. Secondly, I have examined two specific and contrasting views of sacred reality and how both of these views establish a coherent theology at the heart of their particular religious system. Thirdly, I have compared two vastly different sacred realities and the resulting theologies, showing how a difference at the most fundamental level can result in pervasive differences at all levels.

I am convinced that any theological education should start with an understanding of sacred reality first as a general concept and secondly as manifest in the specific religion. All theological discussion be it general discourse or apologetic in nature should begin with an initial description of the sacred reality in the religion being examined. Comparative religious or comparative theological exercises are best served by first articulating the fundamental sacred reality of all faiths examined in order to understand the differences in belief of the most basic level and at all subsequent levels of the faiths.

Continued on Page 42

Hermit

By the soft shining light
Of the six-rayed star,
Beckoning those who would
Climb, to the peak,
Reaching, hoping, grasping
To attain to the grey-robed
Figure holding the lantern.
Staff in hand, suspended.
Looking down, seeing the many,
The few, those who will
Eventually aspire, those
Who will engage the fire.
The few who will lift
The veil and for but
A moment, glimpse the end,
Which is the beginning.
The nine in the one
That is zero.
North to below, to
Beneath the abyzs,
Back up, through and
Eventually higher.
The darkness is indigo,
Stars of the night,
Suns of space and
Daughters of eternity.
Nine is the one that is zero.

– **Lupercus**

Eyes Of Orion

Entombed in flame
Eternal, blood of She
Who awaketh, risen as the One
From slumber infinite.
Fate as faith,
Priest as Priestess.
On the wings of Angels,
The belt of Orion,
The eye of Isis.
Embraceth the Aethyrs,
The sigils, the path.
We are but as slaves
Uninitiated, as we seeketh
Her wisdom, Her blessing.
Her touch melts the divide,
Spans the abyss, is
The source of the limitless
Light that existeth
When the spiral was born.
Storms of stars,
Raining galaxies
Upon the heads of Hers
Who play planets as pawns
In the game of time.

– **Lupercus**

Continued from Page 40

Referenced Texts:

Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and The Profane*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959

Lawrence S. Cunningham & John Kelsay, *The Sacred Quest*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002

Robert B. Zeuschner, *Classical Ethics East and West*. New York: McDraw-Hill, 2001

Notes

1. World' here has a specific denotation of the land and system of the people and their gods. Modern connotations for the word 'world' tend toward thinking of the physical planet or universe. When we see a translation of 'world' from an ancient language into modern English we must be careful to contextualize this concept of 'world' relative to the original language and society and how the concept of 'world' existed in that language and period, rather than modern concepts.

2. I have long taken exception to a widely held view among religious researchers that seems to consider universal religions to be somehow more advanced or evolved than cosmic religions. To demonstrate this presumed evolutionary superiority of the universal religions they point to the success of universal faiths and how they have supplanted so many cosmic religions around the world. This leads to a view in which cosmic religions are seen as primitive while universal religions are seen as sophisticated. There is a mistake of reasoning here in the simple fact that they fail to consider the actions of these religions. We must consider that the universal religions of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam are the three most successful universal religions and that they all historically have a specific mission of conversion and expansion which is facilitated by a dedicated class of clergy who operate as missionaries. Cosmic religions by their nature do not seek converts and do not send out missionaries. When this is considered, the success of universal religions in supplanting cosmic religions need not be attributed to any presumed special superiority or sophistication on the part of universal faiths but may be simply attributed to the missionary zeal of the universal faiths.

3. I must clarify that A.D.F. has established no theological orthodoxies on these particular issues. I describe A.D.F. here as a Cosmic religious organization simply based on structure and practice. Many members of A.D.F. will be found to embrace a universalistic theological concept known as pantheism. Though pantheism is a concept of universalism, it does not necessarily exclude the practice of a cosmic spiri-

tuality. As a result, many A.D.F. members will be found to hold a universalist concept of pantheism while maintaining a cosmic religious practice.

4. Please note that my use of 'priesthood' here is simply a convention of writing and is in no way intended to imply gender identity associated with clergy. In fact, we can see in historical religions that clergy roles were filled by myriad genders with some specific positions reserved for a particular gender. Clerical gender issues among cosmic religions make for some interesting research. In this context, gender is neither always biological nor is it limited to two genders. Eunuchs, the socially transgendered, the androgynous and various types of virgin are all gender categories which have to be considered in such an examination.

5. While the above example compares to smaller socio-political groups we should note that as societies become more urbanized and sophisticated, such as the society of first century Rome, these various specific areas of knowledge will generally be divided among specialists in the various fields. While these functions flow from the older concept of priesthood, this division becomes necessary due to the increase in population density, changes in demographics and larger geographical reach of the society.

6. This is in contrast to another term, **orthodoxy** (Cunningham & Kelsay), which is concern for the maintaining of certain standards of belief. Though these are related terms and often spoken of together as one thing they are actually different theological concepts. This small difference usually is not considered of any great import but in this discussion it is important for our understanding of cosmic religion. While in cosmic religions such as Druidism orthopraxis is the more important of these two concepts, many universal religions hold that orthodoxy is the more important on these concepts.

7. I specifically address the time period of a year in this paper but I must point out that a cosmic system may actually have a cycle that covers a multi year expanse prior to the cosmic renewal. An example of this would be the Hindu concept of periodic world renewal. It can also be observed that the Coligny Calendar actually covers a multi year expanse of time.

8. Theological discourse in the variant schools of radical monotheism has reached an extreme depth but has done so at the expense of breadth. Theologians of the monotheistic schools have articulated their own system in minute detail yet they generally have great difficulty understanding other theological systems. In fact, many monotheist scholars firmly believe that cosmic religions do not have coherent theological systems.

Up To My Neck In Shinto

Contacts With A Japanese Pagan Tradition

By John Michael Greer

Imagine three men standing on the bank of the Pilchuck River on a cold gray February morning. Low gray clouds catch on the fir trees on the hillside across the river. The water sweeps past, clear and cold. The men are clad in skimpy cotton loincloths, ceremonial headbands, and not a stitch else. One of them's the chief priest of the only fully operational Shinto shrine in North America, Rev. Koichi Barrish, who has the physique of a life-long martial artist and has been doing this every morning for over ten years. The second is Rev. Naomichi Sato, a young man from a family of Shinto priests, who is spending two years at the shrine as part of his graduate training; he's tall by Japanese standards, very thin, and shivering. The third is a middle-aged Druid up from Seattle on the bus, not quite sure what he's supposed to do: me. I'm about to get quite literally up to my neck in Shinto.

We recite a series of norito, formal prayers in Japanese, and shout names of kami while making purifying gestures, are sprayed with salt, and then plunge into the flowing river and stand neck-deep in the icy water while holding clasped hands in a mudra and reciting a purifying

norito over and over again. At first the water's cold enough to drive the breath straight out of my lungs...and then the inner heat cuts in, and while it's not exactly comfortable it's bearable for the five minutes or so we spend in the water. Then it's out onto the bank, a few more chanted words, and back to the shrine.

The shrine is a relatively plain but attractive frame-construction building tucked away in a bend of the Pilchuck River about an hour by car northeast of Seattle, on 25 acres of mostly undisturbed Puget Sound forest. All the proper Shinto amenities are in place -- two torii gates, a temizu (place for washing hands and mouth before approaching the shrine), lots of gohei (zigzag hanging shapes of paper that represent the presence of spiritual powers), a couple of outside shrines, stone lion dogs guarding the entrance way, and a path down to the river bank for misogi shuho, purification in running water.

After toweling off, resuming clothing and sipping some mugicha (barley tea), we head into the shrine, along with Rev. Barrish's wife Donni, for chiyosai (morning worship). The kami

have already received their morning food offerings, and *chyosai* consists of more *norito* in archaic Japanese, chanted in a steady tone and rhythm, followed by drumming on a large *taiko* drum. The shrine is gorgeous inside; the main public room, or *haiden*, doubles as an aikido dojo, but the far end has something like a stage on it, with all the traditional fittings of a shrine: paired spears and shields of archaic style (the Japanese stopped using shields in combat before the beginning of recorded history, but all Shinto shrines still have them), garments for the kami, hanging scrolls, ritual implements, tables for offerings, and so on. Behind are the doors that open onto the *honden*, the room where the *goshintai* (sacred items that serve as embodiments of the kami, somewhere on the spectrum between a consecrated statue and saint's relics) are kept.

The chief kami enshrined at Tsukubaki Grand Shrine of America are Sarutahiko no Okami, who is the chief of all the earthly kami, and is pictured as an old bearded man with a long nose, carrying an old-fashioned socketed spear and a straight, two-edged sword; and his wife, Ame no Uzumi no Kami, one of the heavenly kami, whose spirited dance on the High Plain of Heaven lured the sun goddess Amaterasu no Omikami out from the cave where she was hiding, and who is thus, among several other things, the patron kami of dancers and entertainers. There are half a dozen other

kami whose *mitama* (very roughly, spiritual manifestations) are enshrined there, including the founder of aikido, Morihei Uyeshiba, who is considered to be a kami by many aikidoka these days. All of them have *goshintai* in the *honden*, and all of them receive praise and offerings, though Sarutahiko no Okami is the *kamisama* (chief kami) of the place and receives most of the offerings.

Kami, the spiritual powers revered by Shinto, have given endless trouble to Western scholars with too Judeo-Christian a notion of divinity. Some kami, such as Amaterasu no Omikami, correspond fairly closely to the common scholarly notion of what a Pagan god is supposed to be, but others are a lot harder to put into the mental frameworks familiar to contemporary academics. There are, for example, big rocks that are kami; there are swords that are kami; there are people, such as Morihei Uyeshiba, who have become kami on or after their deaths -- or, in the view of some, were actually kami all along. Those familiar with the Pagan traditions honored by ADF, though, will recognize this same complexity among Pagan objects of worship. The Latin word *numen*, the usual word for a worshipped being in classical Roman Paganism, was just as flexible as kami -- in fact, the two terms translate each other with a good deal of exactness.

After worship, I make a donation

and receive an omamori, a protective talisman of Sarutahiko no Okami. Then we retire to Rev. Barrish's living room, which is in the Japanese style, where we chat about connections between Shinto and Druidry for a while and drink more barley tea, before I say my goodbyes and head out for the bus back to Seattle.

A couple of Druidical comments come forcefully to mind.

First of all, the Tsubaki Grand Shrine of America was created from the ground up by a very small number of people with limited financial resources. Members of ADF's Warriors Guild can probably tell us all in lurid detail how little money an honest martial arts teacher generally makes. And yet Tsubaki Grand Shrine is, as far as I know, light-years beyond anything the Druid community in this country has been able to manage. That's something that should give us pause, and challenge us.

Second, with regard to a debate a while back about paying dues to belong to a religious organization, this is what Shinto has been doing for centuries. In Japan, you pay a modest annual fee to belong to the ko, or lay member's association, of the shrine whose

ceremonies you attend. You also make small cash donations when you visit the shrine -- there's a little box and white envelopes. If you come for certain kinds of special blessing ceremonies, or have the priest come out to do a blessing for new construction, somewhat larger (though still modest) donations are involved. That's how the whole Shinto system pays for itself, and except for the time between 1868 and 1945 when the whole system was hijacked by the government as an imperialist ideology, that's how it

has paid for itself since the early Middle Ages.

Third, the entire structure of Shinto practice is oriented toward service in two directions. The first, obviously,

is service toward the kami. The second, only a little less obviously, is service toward the parishioners who keep the thing going and paid for. Revs. Barrish and Sato spend some of their time doing what, say, Christian clergy do -- they officiate at worship services and rites of passage -- but the sort of well-meaning amateur counseling that apparently makes up the rest of the Western clergyperson's stock in trade is not one of their specialties. Instead, they provide practical access to spiritual powers for people who need and/or want it.



In Japan right now, for example, one of the main services provided by Shinto clergy is car blessings. When cars came in, some thoughtful Shinto priest realized that people might be more comfortable with the new technology if it were blessed with the energies of a relevant kami; such blessings have become common practice in Japan, about as automatic as getting the title registered. Successful Shinto priests are spiritual entrepreneurs, paying attention to the needs and desires of present and potential clients and figuring out ways to apply the spiritual technology of Shinto to those needs and desires.

It's not a bad model, and it applies with particular force to the common Pagan debate about paid clergy. Plenty of people want to be paid to be Pagan clergy; the problem has been, I think, that most of 'em haven't really grasped the challenge of coming up with a model for clergy practice that other people would actually be willing to pay for. There's already an oversupply of clergy on the Christian model -- specialists in worship and rite-of-passage ceremonies with a sideline in counseling. This is not the only model in town. Hoodoo practitioners in the Spiritual churches have been pioneering another model, one with deep roots in African and African-diaspora cultures, in which the clergyperson also offers practical magic to clients -- the magician-priest model.

Shinto offers another, which makes full and creative use of the practical applications of Pagan religion -- call it the blessing-priest model. There are no doubt others.

A couple of final notes. First, Rev. Barrish invites anybody visiting the area to come on down to Tsubaki Shrine of America; no, you don't have to do misogi shuho...though I'd actually recommend it. Driving directions are on the website, www.kannagara.org ; email or call before you arrive. Second, he does annual week-long tours that visit the most important Shinto shrines in Japan, including the Grand Shrines of Ise; the most recent one cost about \$2200 a head, including air fare, and from what I can gather was quite an experience. Might be worth considering for those who would be interested in getting a thorough taste of Shinto. His email is on the website.

Finally, he's extremely interested in helping to get a shrine set up on the East Coast somewhere. Dunno if anyone's interested in following up on this, but I promised I'd ask. It might not have to be a full time operation; the Naropa Institute people in Colorado have one on a corner of their property, which Rev. Barrish visits once a year to do appropriate ceremonies. If there's anyone who wants to follow up on this, contact Rev. Barrish via the website.

Shinto Access

Resources for Shinto Research

Shinto hasn't received anything like the same attention in the West as have Asian religions such as Hinduism and Taoism, but there are some excellent books available in English. Particularly recommended are:

Czaja, Michael, *_Gods of Myth and Stone_* (New York: Weatherhill, 1974).

A study of a particular class of rural roadside shrines in Japan, this book transcends the narrow focus of its subject to present an excellent glimpse of Shinto in theory and practice. Includes a good summary of the core Shinto myths.

Jean Herbert, *_Shinto: At The Fountainhead of Japan_* (New York: Stein & Day, 1967).

Long out of print and difficult to obtain, this is certainly the largest and probably the best study of Shinto theology in English.

John K. Nelson, *_A Year in the Life of a Shinto Shrine_* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1996).

Probably the best introduction to shrine Shinto as practiced in modern Japan. Unfortunately Nelson's other book on Shinto, *_Enduring Identities_*, devotes ten pages to other scholars' views about the study of religions for every page it gives to its supposed subject, and deserves to be neglected.

Picken, Stuart D.B., *_Essentials of Shinto_* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994).

A solid research handbook with detailed information about nearly every aspect of the religion...

Picken, Stuart D.B., *_Shinto Meditations for Revering the Earth_* (Berkeley, CA: Stonebridge, 2002)

..and, by the same author, a small, elegant and useful handbook of Shinto prayers and practices, including complete instructions for mi-sogi shuho.

Alone in a Crowd

Solitary Clergy: Ministry in the Mean Time

By Jeremy Mallory

Mom calls when she's bored. And when she's bored, she starts to think about all sorts of things, suddenly developing an ex nihilo concern for my dental health. "So have you made an appointment yet?" Innocent questions, of course. (I hadn't, as a matter of fact.)

As usual, the conversation turned to the horrible job market—one would think that someone might want to hire an ethicist—which brought up another issue that we had discussed several years earlier: seminary. I am attending a divinity school now with a Master of Divinity program that would open the door to ordination in the Episcopal Church: why not consider that?

Unlike her concern for my two front teeth, this question was not entirely from left field. Ordination has been an open question for me for several years, frustrated mostly by the nagging fact that I don't really believe that Jesus is either the Savior or the Son of God (two little devils in the details). Barring that, however, it's a real option, in theory.

Ministry is, of necessity, a service to both humans and gods. One of the aspects of Neopaganism that sets it apart from many other religions is that anybody can communicate with and worship the gods directly, without mediation. Anybody can be of service to the gods, which means that essentially every person is a priest in this broad sense.

Serving people, however, is a somewhat different story. Not everyone wants to, needs to, or should. There are particular skills associated with ministering to other people that have marked out a vocation for almost as long as humans can remember. It is in this sense that a religion that has a (somewhat Lutheran) conception of a "priesthood of all believers" could still have a group of people elevated as clergy: these are the people who not only serve the gods but have taken up the special task of serving people as well. They have learned the different ways people approach the Divine, and how one person can help another on this path.

ADF acknowledges that while every person is a priest, only a designated few are Priests. The Clergy Council is in the process of developing a Training Program for those who wish to serve both gods and humans in order to teach the specialized skills required. This cadre will, over time, help all of the members of ADF fulfill their spiritual needs.

But "all of the members of ADF" is now known to include roughly 55% Solitaries, people who do not belong to a Grove for multiple rea-

sons. In that light, it seems appropriate to ask the question, is there a way in which a Solitary should be able to be a Priest, in the narrow sense of the term?

A Solitary Priest could not be a hermit. She cannot evade the requirement that ordination is a way to answer a call to public service: a Priest serves gods and people. She would have to participate actively not only in ADF institutions nationally and locally, but might also find a way to minister extra-institutionally (perhaps focusing specifically on the spiritual needs of Solitaries, which are in some cases slightly different from Grove members). She can write liturgy for Solitaries and Groves, and counsel people one-on-one. She can participate in theological discussions, and visit Groves. Perhaps she might even serve as a "Guest Druid" for High Days. She might reach out to Solitaries of other Traditions in her area, given that a slim minority of all Pagans are members of definable Traditions, but they tend to monopolize "pan-Pagan" or community events in many areas. She could participate in interreligious dialogue with representatives of other faiths, and help to serve a diversity of people within her community but outside of ADF. She serves the gods, but has also clearly taken on the mantle of serving people as well.

I would challenge ADF, as it conceptualizes the Clergy Training Program, to think about how to account for Solitaries of various sorts in that program. Does there need to be a separate Solitary-oriented track? Perhaps, perhaps not. Should official ordinations be open to Solitaries? Perhaps, perhaps not. Must all Clergy training lead to ordination? Perhaps, perhaps not. Is there, in fact, a way in which an individual not affiliated with a Grove can be called to serve both gods and people? On that there is no question: it is absolutely so. It is up to ADF to figure out how it wants to deal with that fact.

Ministry changes as ministerial needs change. While futzing around with the idea of an M.Div., I read *The Impossible Vocation* by John Snow. The book is subtitled *Ministry in the Mean Time*. It is a difficult time to be a minister in any Tradition, but difficult times call for excellent ministry (the book addresses various difficulties ministers face and how to address them successfully in new ways, rather than falling into old patterns). It would be a shame for ADF to create a ministerial education system that did not adequately address the needs of over half of the membership in some form or another.

My mother reminded me—or perhaps made it up: it has become somewhat difficult to tell the difference—that when we visited Canterbury Cathedral long ago, the organist was playing Haydn's *Missa in Angustiis*, usually translated as "Mass in Times of Anxiety" (but better known as the "Lord Nelson"). As I write, the *Kyrie* from that mass is playing. The plaintiveness of the "eleison!" stands out to me like a waterfall in the silent forest. Do these difficult times call for a re-visioning of how ADF thinks of Priesthood.

Solitary Perspective

Compiled by Sadbha

(From the Solitaries E-Mail List)

Question: *How do you perceive/define Clergy?*

Answer's:

1) Clergy are members of a religious organization trained and willing to provide support (spiritual and emotional), to the organization's members. Clergy is also responsible for developing and leading ceremonies.

2) Clergy are formally trained spiritual leaders or guides. They are servants of their communities by providing spiritual counseling, creating and/or officiating worship services and rites of passage, and working for the greater good of humanity.

3) I suppose I perceive clergy as being someone trained in the ways of the religion. Clergy must be available for lay people as well, not necessarily just for rituals but also for consultation & discussion.

4) I define a cleric as an individual invested with the authority to dispense the sacred experience of a religious community. This implies to me that the individual is both scholastically knowledgeable about the religion and wise (wise implying the internalization or actualization of the sacred) in its mysteries. Further a modern cleric can apply this fusion of knowledge and wisdom to relevant experience of the community, for example the implication of the Druidic religion in relation to substance abuse, political paradigm and ecological habits to name a few. Further the cleric is voluntarily assuming an active role in her or his religious community.

5) A person trained and knowledgeable in our Druidry who presents a good example of the nine virtues.

Q: *How do you think Clergy should serve and be available to the members of their community, including Grovers and Solitaries in their areas?*

A's:

1) First, be easily accessible by providing contact information (phone, email, address). Second would be to take an active interest in the members of their community by making an effort to communicate with and get to know them. To tell the truth, I don't know exactly **how** clergy differs from most of the leadership of ADF.

2) Clergy should be accessible to others via phone, email, snail mail, in person, travel and simply by being active, vocal and visible within their local communities. Clergy should be activists, educators and readily available to serve in whatever capacity they are needed – sacred or profane.

3) I know that as a solitaire, I would love to have a clergy person with

whom I could speak, either thru e-mail or the telephone, or whatever. I would think that weekly or monthly e-mails to groves & sol's in their area would be helpful.

4) Clergy is a community institution, a cleric should be an active participant or developer of his/her community, in some form or another. Clergy should be making themselves available to help the individual members of her/his community apply the religions perspectives to their life. Counseling, education, activism are the roles of a Priest. The term even infers a leadership role in its etymology. Grove Priest can serve many roles both within and outside a grove in order to develop infrastructure and community resources, liturgy performance the possibilities are great for a Grove Priest especially if the Grove has more than one. A Solitary has the ability to educate and develop community resources the same as a Grove Priest does.

5) By setting an example and offering spiritual advice when needed.

Q: *Can a Solitary be a priest?*

A's:

1) Yes, I do think a Solitary could still council, help guide, support, and just generally work with other Pagans, though they may have a harder time of it. I don't really see much of a difference between a Solitary priest working with a distant Pagan than a Solitary Pagan working with a distant priest... There is still the physical distance and all that goes along with it.

2) Yes. Anyone who is properly educated and trained can serve as priest/ess. Having a Grove or being Solitary does not make a difference in the call to serve as priest/ess.

3) I would imagine that a sol could be a priest/ess as long as they were willing to participate in ritual if needed. I think that clergy is more important as a go to. When someone has a question or needs clarification on a topic.

4) Yes. However Sols who choose not to be active in their community have no need to become a Priest. A Priest implies a community leader if the Sols has no desire to lead or be active than the acquisition of the station of clergy is irrelevant. Now if the Sols is someone who intends to develop community resources then there is clearly a vocation for it. If we require Groves to perform a minimum level of community involvement there is no reason not to require the same from Clergy.

5) I think so.

Q: *What would it mean to be a Solitary priest?*

A's:

1) It means that the priest would have to work through some disadvantages, of course, both in his training and the actual "Work" of being a priest.

2) It would mean more freedom. A Solitary priest/ess would have the

potential to reach more people by not being tied down to any one Grove.

3) To be a solitary priest/ess one would be on a quest for truth & knowledge but be willing to share their findings. Perhaps thru the written word if they were complete hermit types.

4) If I where to become a Priest (which I intend to do) I believe as a solitary my primary work would involve networking with over Druids in my locality and forming if not a Grove a communication structure to interact as a community, and I would build from there. The key ideas for polytheistic Neopagan clergy must be infrastructure, networking, and visible activism. Local dedicant study groups or discussion sessions are great avenues for this pagan night out or even if applicable Druid night out!

5) They must have a full understanding of our Druidry and it must be proven (I.e. they must have completed the DP) and must continue to uphold the standards.

Q: *Whom would a Solitary priest serve and how?*

A's:

1) Whom? Anyone who would be willing to work with one, I guess. As for how... Email, phone, IM, mail, and through prayer...

2) Whom? Instead of first serving and representing the interests of a particular Grove, a Solitary priest/ess would serve a much larger community – the whole of Pagandom wherever they may be living or traveling. A Solitary priest/ess would have no vested interest in any one specific group/Grove – they would serve anyone, everyone. How? The same as a Grove priest/ess, only on a larger scale. A Solitary priest/ess could teach workshops, officiate worship services at festivals or other Pagan events, be available to counsel those in need, etc.

3) A priest/ess should serve whomever needs him/her.

4) I might have stated it before but a Solitary Priest would serve the general community in any manner possible the Clergy Council is an excellent avenue for Solitary Clergy to serve as is leadership in the org. in general. A Solitary Priest should be just as capable of serving as anyone else. And like any other Solitary they are subject to the limitations of local and interest.

5) Themselves and their own families...one other way they could serve is through active participation in the elists (i.e., offering advice when needed there).

Q: *Is there a difference between Geographic Solitaries and Voluntary Solitaries in terms of how they might be "called" to ministry?*

A's:

1) Possibly. The Geographic Solitary might take the call as a sign to finally make a move so they are not alone and start working and training that way. Then again, so might a Voluntary Sol.

2) Sure, different strokes for different folks. It would depend on a person's reasons for being Solitary or seeking priest/esshood in the first place.

3) Sure there is a difference between geographic & intentional sol's. Everyone's calling is different. Geographic sol's might be very willing to do work on-line or telephone where they converse with people regularly while an intentional sol might be more willing to do research or liturgical work & then share that with another that it might be spread throughout ADF. Just an example.

4) I believe so. Lets face it Priests are people and motivation to serve must be the foundation for Clerical work. If a person chooses to be a Solitary because they have no desire to interact with the greater Druid or Neopagan community there is little vocation for a Cleric in that person at that place and time. The factors that determine this can be anywhere from being shy to having been burned, but whatever the case the motivation to get out there serve is not present. Now if a Solitary simply chooses the path because of say ideological differences with the local Grove or because they don't know anybody else in the area, then the Solitary may very well have the vocation for Clergy and simply needs to develop communities infrastructure, perhaps finding others in the community who share similar ideas and views, or by building on the cooperative success of the current local Grove without becoming a member.

5) I would imagine geographic solitaries have no choice in the matter while Voluntary have chosen to walk the path alone.

Notice: A Weekend Of Shinto

Members and friends of ADF who would like to experience Shinto in person may be interested in attending the harvest festival at Tsubaki Grand Shrine of America this autumn. The festival is on Sunday, October 5, 2003 beginning at noon at the shrine near Granite Falls, WA. Several ADF members have already expressed an interest in attending, and Rev. Barrish has issued an enthusiastic welcome for all. We hope to arrange space to stay near the shrine for out-of-town visitors the night before. More information? Please contact John Michael Greer at P.O. Box 95674, Seattle, WA 98145, or by email at threeynx@earthlink.net. For more information about Tsubaki Grand Shrine of America, including driving directions, visit www.kannagara.org.

AUTUMN GATHERING

September 12 – 14, 2003

Wyalusing State Park, WI

An Ar nDraiocht Fein Gathering and Neopagan Retreat!

As the year winds to a close we come together for reflection and celebration. Our Guest Speakers is ADF Archdruid Skip Ellison.

- Presentations and Workshops
- Rituals & More...

HOSTED BY RIVER OF FIRE GROVE, ADF

For more information: <http://riverfire.tripod.com/fest.html>

Q: *Would a Solitary priest be a different "type" of priest than a non-Solitary one? Consider an old cliché about the old wise man who sits atop a mountain and councils all who seek with his wisdom and insight. He doesn't lead ceremonies or isn't *really* part of a support system, but would he still qualify as clergy/priest/ess?*

A's:

- 1) Though the hermit-mystic is not part of a communal support system, he still has value and purpose as a guide to those who seek. He is a different type of priest, but still a priest in that he gives spiritual counsel and inspiration.
- 2) I think that, in terms of the example of the old wise man, that if you view someone as clergy, then they are clergy.
- 3) The old wise 'Person' is not necessarily a Cleric but more appropriately a mystic. The two are not synonymous, Cleric and Mystic. Though that is not a comparison of worth or value it is a question of function. Clergy is a social institution of religious leadership, Mysticism is a highly developed and specialized skill that more often then takes the individual out of social continuum and into a highly esoteric world (by esoteric I mean a individually experience of the sacred). I believe that such individuals may in fact be both wise and knowledgeable but they at least at the moment do not possess the vocation for community service and therefore are a distinctly separate function.
- 4) I think so....it is hard to lead ceremonies if you do not have a regular congregation but that shouldn't mean you are any less knowledgeable about Druidry...

The Druid's Bookshelf

By John Michael Greer

Speaking To The Gods

Ceisiwr Serith, *A Book of Pagan Prayer* (Boston: Weiser, 2002); ISBN 1-57863-255-2; in print at \$19.95.

The art of prayer has been one of the more neglected aspects of religion in the modern Pagan movement for many years now. This would be surprising enough in any context, since prayer is a central way of relating to gods, ancestors, spirits, and other sacred beings in nearly every religion on record. It's even more surprising in that most of the mainstream religions of the modern West rely on it almost exclusively, even to the neglect of many other parts of humanity's collective toolkit of religious methods. Yet this very familiarity may well form the core problem; many people in the Pagan community today are there at least in part because they feel alienated by more conventional forms of modern religion, and tend to veer away from anything too reminiscent of Judeo-Christian spirituality.

A good handbook of prayer from a solidly Pagan perspective thus has quite a bit to recommend it. What longtime ADF member Ceisiwr Serith has presented here, though, goes well beyond this. *A Book of Pagan Prayer* is among the best books on the subject of prayer written in the last century, and offers a wealth of material for the practicing modern Pagan.

A Book of Pagan Prayer begins with four chapters on the theory and practice of prayer. The first, "The Role of Prayer," situates the art of prayer in the context of ancient and modern Pagan spirituality, discusses the relationship between prayers and offerings, and the nature of the beings to whom Pagans pray. The second, "The Basics of Prayer," outlines the place of words, posture, movement, dance, music and gestures in Pagan prayer. The third chapter, "Preparing for prayer," relates Pagan prayer to a variety of simple ritual practices -- purification, the establishment of sacred space, the lighting of a flame, and preliminary prayers. The fourth, "Composing Prayers," is perhaps the best guide in print to formulating prayers, and should probably be committed to memory by aspiring writers of Pagan ritual as well.

The chapters that follow contain the prayers -- more than 450 of them, covering almost every imaginable setting and situation in which prayer

might find a place :prayers for the family and household, prayers for the different times of the day, prayers for seasons and lunar phases, prayers for stages of the life cycle, prayers of thanks and prayers asking for many different kinds of help from the gods. These aren't oriented, as too much of modern Pagan writing and poetry is, to an idealized imaginary past; they deal with the realities of life as a Pagan in today's world. Thus there are prayers for summer days at the beach, prayers for those stuck in rush hour traffic, prayers for planting tomatoes, prayers for serving on a jury and for sending a child off to her first day at school.

A final chapter discusses litanies and mantras, and is followed by an unusually useful collection of end matter: a table of the offerings traditionally preferred by different kinds of gods and spirits, a glossary of deities, an index of prayers by first line, an annotated bibliography and a general index.

Prophecy is a risky business, but this book appears to have all the makings of a Pagan classic. I can think of few better gifts for someone new to a Pagan spiritual path, and few better sources to hand to people who are curious about Paganism and are looking for something beyond the hype and misinformation that too often surrounds it.

Wave Of The Future?

Philip Carr-Gomm, *Druidcraft: The Magic of Wicca and Druidry* (London: Thorsons, 2002); ISBN 0-00-713388-X, in print at \$19.95.

Today's Pagan community offers an interesting mix of common themes and radical diversities. From a handful of starting points -- Wicca, the Druid revival, Carleton College's Reformed Druids of North America, and a handful of books such as *The White Goddess* and *The Spiral Dance*, to name some of the more prominent -- the contemporary revival has expanded in a dizzying number of directions. At this point, despite the presence of common historical and intellectual roots, it's hard to name more than a few things that are shared by all the groups, traditions and movements that are part of the modern Pagan revival.

While this has its positive features, it also leads to quite a bit of reinventing of wheels -- is it really necessary to come up with yet another way of consecrating sacred space, just to prove that one's own newly minted tradition is different from all others? -- and helps foster habits of disorganization and political factionalism that have kept the Pagan revival from having anything like the impact on modern Western societies it might have achieved. A case can thus be made for some movement in the other direction, toward the establishment of common ground and the fusion of diverse traditions into a common spiritual language.

Such a project has recently been essayed by Philip Carr-Gomm, current head of the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids (OBOD), in a slender but interesting volume entitled *Druidcraft*. Carr-Gomm's project is a fusion of English Wicca and the OBOD variety of modern Druidry. As Carr-Gomm himself points out, this combination is less problematic than it seems, since both traditions emerged from the twentieth-century English occult scene at the hands of two men, Gerald Gardner and Ross Nichols, who happened to be very close friends and drew substantially from each other's work. Yet Pagan politics have often drawn radical lines of division between the resulting traditions, defining each in terms of how it differs from the other. A hybrid of the two thus challenges some deeply held assumptions in the Pagan community.

For all that, practitioners of OBOD's style of Druidry, or of Wiccan traditions like those discussed in Marian Green's useful books, will find themselves quickly at home in *Druidcraft*. Carr-Gomm has used the semifictional device of a "forest school of Druidcraft" in which to place the book's instructional material; each chapter contains a bardic tale, a dialogue between student and teacher, a set of practical exercises, and a discussion of the historical sources of the material presented. The result is highly readable and, for the would-be practitioner, extremely user-friendly.

Those who come to *Druidcraft* with significantly different ideas about what Druidism teaches, or what Wicca is, are likely to have a little more trouble with it. Very little of what's discussed in the book has to do with either the religion of the historical Pagan Celts, the alleged source of modern Druidry, or with the magic of the historical English cunning folk, the alleged source of modern Wicca., and Carr-Gomm's easy blurrings of the boundaries of time, place and culture are likely to get on some reader's nerves. Thus Celtic Reconstructionists of the more dour sort, among others, are unlikely to get through the book without flinging it at least once against the nearest wall. Yet taken as what it is -- a creative fusion of two of the most vigorous modern Pagan spiritual paths -- *Druidcraft* succeeds very well, and it would not surprise this reader, at least, if it inspired others to attempt to weave the diverse threads of modern Paganism into new patterns.

Gods Of The Earth

Philip Borgeaud, *The Cult of Pan in Ancient Greece*, tr. Kathleen Atlass and James Redfield (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988); ISBN 02-26-06596-0, out of print.

Peter F. Dorsey, *The Cult of Silvanus: A Study in Roman Folk Religion* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992); ISBN 90-04-09601-9, in print at \$95.00.

Jennifer Larson, *Greek Nymphs: Myth, Cult, Lore* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001); ISBN 01-95-12294-1, in print at \$65.00.

One of the pleasures of modern scholarly literature, from a Pagan point of view, is the way that pressures in the academic world have pushed younger scholars into the frontiers of classical religion. In the wake of figures such as Martin Nilsson and Walter Burkert, there is not much more that can be said just now about the Olympian gods and the main outlines of Greek and Roman religion. Aspiring young academics are thus forced to look further afield, toward elements of classical Paganism that have not received the same exhaustive attention by the major scholars of the last generation or so. In the process, a good deal of light has been brought to bear on some of the more neglected and more useful corners of these ancient Pagan faiths.

The three books cited here are among the better results of this trend, and all three deal with what are sometimes called the “minor traditions” of classical Pagan religion: the small gods, close to nature, who were mostly left out of the great literature of the age but who received a good proportion of the reverence of ordinary Pagan people in ancient times. For the modern Pagan, these are often more interesting deities than the great gods of the Olympian pantheon, and the rituals, practices and social forms that developed around the minor gods often provide a much clearer view of classical Paganism as a lived religion than do the more formal, and often more political, traditions surrounding the more famous gods and goddesses.

Each of these books has its own subject -- Pan, the horned and horny goat-god of Arcadia, who came to be worshipped outside his home province after the battle of Marathon, where he was widely held to have reduced an invading Persian army to the sort of fear we still call “panic”; Silvanus, the Roman god of forests and agriculture, who had no place in the official calendar of Roman religious life but received an active cult at the hands of many ordinary Romans; and the nymphs, spring and water spirits who played an important role in ancient Greek myth and religious life.

Each of these books also has its own approach, and spectators of the academic wars of the last two decades will have no trouble assigning each author to a place on the hotly contested battlefield of contemporary classical studies. Bourgeaud’s book is a good example of the

French school, as much a work of literature as any of the sources it discusses, with a close focus on textual materials and a lively style. Larson's makes a sustained foray in the direction of gender politics, seeking to use the nymphs as a social and religious factor to cast light on the life of women in classical Greece; it draws from texts and archeological sources in roughly equal measure. Dorsey's work, finally, is a conservative piece of hard scholarship, solidly founded on archeology and epigraphic studies, which makes few speculations and contents itself with laying out the verifiable facts about the elusive god it studies.

Despite these differences, though, all three are well worth reading, and not merely by those interested in the particular subjects they explore. All three deal with the interface between Pagan spirituality and the natural world, a subject of central interest to many modern Pagans; all three offer glimpses of the way that Pagan life in well-documented ancient settings was carried on by ordinary people. All three, furthermore, present clear, accurate and solidly referenced information about these matters. At a time when the modern Pagan movement is still in the process of outgrowing its early infatuation with imaginary histories, scholarly works references like these are worth many times their weight in grandmother stories.

Consumer Alert

On a less pleasant note, New York publishing firm Black Dog and Leventhal recently released a large hardback entitled *Secrets of the Druids* by John Matthews. It's a selection of material from Matthews' useful three volume collection of Druid Revival materials, *The Bardic Sourcebook*, *The Druid Sourcebook*, and *The Celtic Seers' Sourcebook.*, minus footnotes, bibliographies, and contact information for Druid groups -- among the better points of the original volumes. Worse, the publisher shrink-wraps each copy, so that potential buyers don't find out in advance that it's just a rehash of material Matthews has already published. Shame on the publishers for this sort of deceptive practice! Please let other people interested in Druidry know about this, and encourage them to buy or borrow the original three-volume set.

The Druid's Bookshelf reviews new and classic books of interest to members of ADF and other modern Druid traditions. Suggestions and submissions of books to review are always welcome! Please contact me via ordinary mail at P.O. Box 95674, Seattle, WA 98145, or by email at threeynx@earthlink.net.

More Poetry...

Water Blessing for Endangered Waters

Mananan Mac Lyr, Lord of the Sea
And Gatekeeper of the Otherworld
Your curragh unerringly traverses the nine waves,
As you hold the key to all worlds.
I humbly ask of you to consider these waters
As I honor you both today, My Lord.
Grant to them your love and strength,
As my hands reach out upon their sorrow
To offer my own hope and blessings,
Please bless the spirit that dwells within them
Allowing it to find the healing it deserves
So that it may run clear and bright once again.
Bee eh myr shen (So may it be)
Dy row mie eu (thank you)

*Finish the ceremony by giving offerings to both
Mananan and the river or lake respectively.....*

Sorcha (Melissa A Ng)

More Poetry on the next page...

"Daily Devotionals"

The Universe moves sensually
Up and around
Through and beyond
Sight and mind

They touch my cheek
Lightly
They feel like scales and feathers
Hard and slick

I create for Them an image
A blessed creation
Of love and peace
Contemplation and joy

They take that creation
That image of my soul
And smile
Their mouth full of teeth
Sharp and pointed.

Their eyes dance with merriment
Liquid silver and bright
I am mesmerized by Their eyes
And frozen by their joy
Warmth fills me

I smile with the Universe
Aware of happiness
Truth and joy
Dark and light

Sensual and liquid

The Universe nods their lumbering head
Whips Their long tail
And curls up to sleep
Silent again, enjoying my gift
Waiting for another

Waiting for me
To once again
Awake Them from Their slumber
For joy or pain
They are here and alive

I close my eyes
And listen to Their quiet breath
So faint I might miss it
If too busy
With work and school

Would I but wish
To hear it always
I open my eyes to the day
Awake, and Aware
To move and live

My gift, my life
Within the Universe
Of the Universe
And for the Universe

By Heather Koerner

Continued from Page 5

lot about lately. I know people that have served the Pagan community well, with diligence and with all their heart. Yet some of these people find themselves burnt out within a few years, or their motivation is sucked out of them by the responsibilities they carry. I have thought a lot about what it means to be a priest, and a leader. The word vocation comes to mind, from the Latin word vocatio or “calling.” I truly see service to the Gods, and to the Pagan community as a calling. Those that pursue a leadership, and clerical role, without a true calling to it will ultimately burn-out. Isaac Bonewits said in his article, “The

Vision of ADF,” “...Nor do we assume that every member of our religion will have a genuine vocation to the clergy, though it's likely that a high proportion will for the first couple of decades. Instead we expect that eventually the vast majority of our people will be laity.” Those couple of decades are almost over, and ADF is changing. It is coming of age, and maturing into the community that we call our own. With a true vocation to divine service a man or woman dedicated to the priesthood, and to leadership, will get the necessary fortitude to maintain themselves – even when the easy route would be to give up.

Isaac, in his article on Vision, continues by saying “...everyone is expected to com-

The Druids of 6th Night Grove, ADF are proud to present:

SUMMERLAND 2003

August 22nd thru 24th, 2003

Camp Clifton
Yellow Springs, Ohio

ADF Unity Festival &
Pagan Spiritual Retreat

www.6thnight.org/summerland.html

E-mail: 6thnight@6thnight.org for more information

THREE REALMS

A PACIFIC DRUID FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 16TH–19TH, 2003

COME TO WHERE THE THREE REALMS
– LAND, SEA, AND SKY – MEET!

Join us for an exciting,
fun-filled weekend of camping,
workshops, crafts, music and dance,
ritual, food, and all-out merriment!

Located at Sage Hill Campground, in Los Padres
National Forest, just north of Santa Barbara, CA.

Information and registration details at...

WWW.RAVENSCRYGROVE.ORG/3REALMS.HTM

or contact the Festival Coordinator, at (323) 377-6879.

PRICING:

\$25 for ADF members

\$40 for the public

\$70 for families

\$15 for Day Passes

AN EVENT SPONSORED BY
RAVEN'S CRY GROVE, ADF

municate with the Goddesses and Gods in her or his own way -- spiritual growth is not a monopoly of the clergy...If there is such a thing as "spiritual excellence," we need to be striving to express that as well." Love of the Gods, and service to them, and the community, is not a task solely enjoyed by the clergy. It is placed upon all of us, and we should all strive to find our vocation. In what capacity we can best serve the Gods, and our community.

I would urge everyone to find their vocation in life. Ask yourself, "How can I, as an individual, best serve the Gods, and my community?" Each one of us has gifts that we can use to serve

the Gods, and our community. It is finding these gifts, and acting upon them that will allow each of us to work in harmony with one another for the greater good of the community.

On a different note...I hope everyone is getting used to the new format. The response has been very positive so far. Next issue will deal with organizational material, including updated By-Laws, annual meeting minutes, and other material of an organizational nature that all members should at least be aware of.

Blessings:

Athanasios



Mother Grove of Ar nDraiocht Fein

Archdruid — Skip Ellison

Vice Archdruid — *Bardd Dafydd*

Scribe — *Epona*

Preceptor — *Jenni Hunt*

Member's Advocate — *Meredith*

Chief CoSD — Flip Rutledge

Guild Master — Gwynne Green

Non-officer Director — *Todd Covert*

Canada RD — *Farrell McGovern*

Heartland RD — Duir Art ap Mona

Northeast RD — Francesca Hedrick

Southeast RD — Atemlos

Upper Midwest RD — *Hekatatia*

Lower Midwest RD — Bjorn Patsson

Northwest RD — *Aigeann*

Southwest RD — *Kirk Thomas*

Several positions on the Mother Grove were up for election this year. The official tally of the elections, as well as the minutes of the Mother Grove meeting will be in the next issue of Oak Leaves. The list above, however, is current as of June 2003. [Those in italics were elected in May by popular vote].

Congratulations
To
Raven's Cry Grove
And
Muin Mound Grove

On April 18, 2003 **Raven's Cry Grove** became the First Fully Chartered Grove within ADF.

On May 30, 2003 **Muin Mound Grove** became the Second Fully Chartered Grove within ADF.

What is a Fully Chartered Grove?

From the By-Laws of the Council of Senior Druids:

A Fully Chartered Grove meets all other requirements of a Provisionally Chartered Grove, but consists of a minimum of nine current ADF members, and has maintained that minimum membership for at least two consecutive years, and also has a minimum of one current Grove member who has been granted Lay or Ordained Clergy status by the Clergy Council of ADF, and has submitted a "Request to Fully Charter a Grove" form to the Grove Organizing Committee of the CoSD, and been issued official notification of the approval of that Charter status by the Chair of the Grove Organizing Committee.

RED OAK GROVE, ADF
proudly announces the 7th annual:



The theme is Our Harvest Home - a celebration of the arts and sciences produced by our Druidry.

EVENT WILL INCLUDE:

- A Harvest Thanksgiving Ritual, followed by a Harvest Feast
- Bardic Competitions in these categories:
 - Bard (music)
 - Fili (poetry)
 - Seanchais (storytelling)
 - Cainte (satire)
- Mead making workshop
- Mead Tasting Competition (bring your best mead to enter!)
- Lots of other workshops

LOCATION: Four Quarters Farm in South-central Pennsylvania.

For details, and to reserve your spot, go here:

<http://www.redoakgrove.org/fallfest>

Or contact us for information:

RED OAK GROVE
9 Cooks Mill Ct
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054