The Druids' Progress

Report Number Eight
Fall 1991 C.E.

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

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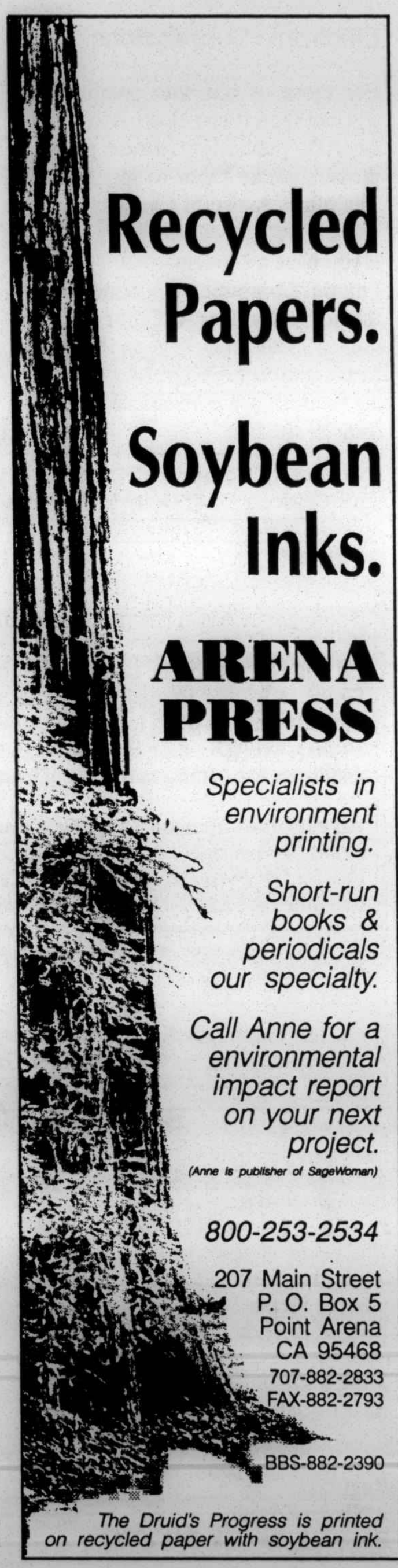

Electronic Submissions

For those of you with computers, you can submit text electronically to any ADF publication (please, please, please). Send them to me, Nancy Thalblum, Assistant Chronicler.

If you have a Modem:
I'm on CompuServe. Send mail through EasyPlex (ASCII or Binary file) to 73727,2123. I'm on Prodigy. Leave mail for VFTB34A. Or call me to arrange a convenient time to transfer the file.

If you need to talk to me about this, call me at (212) 543-8295 between the hours of 9 A.M. and 10 P.M. Eastern time. If I'm not home, leave a message on the answering machine and don't forget to include your phone number.

If you have no Modem:
Mail your file to me at P.O. Box 358, Bronx, NY 10463-0358 on 5 1/4" or 3 1/2" PC-formatted diskettes, or your text on paper (but this will slow down its appearance, since somebody will have to keyboard it). ⛛

Correction

Some words were accidentally chopped out in the Biographical Sketch of James Duran (page 38, *DP#6).* The opening sentence should read: "Dr. James J. Duran received his Ph.D. in Linguistics from Stanford University in 1975, after receiving an M.A. in African Studies from Duquesne University *in Pittsburg and an M.A. in Linguistics from Michigan State in* East Lansing." We regret any confusion that might have been caused. ⛛

Cover art, "Cernunnos" ©1991 by Bryan Perrin. Full color original from his Celtic series of Deity Icons (see ad elsewhere in this issue).

Attention Attention Attention

There are editorial changes concerning both *DP* and *NftMG*.

Ed and Norma will be taking over production of *News from the Mother Grove*, effective immediately. All editorial submissions for *NftMG* including copies of all local grove newsletters should be sent to them at: *NftMG*, c/o ADF, P.O. Box 1483, Highland Park, NJ 08904. Submission deadlines for *NftMG* is the 1st of every odd numbered month.

All editorial submissions for *DP* should be sent to Nancy Thalblum at: *Druids' Progress,* c/o ADF, P.O. Box 358, Bronx, NY 10463-0358. Deadline for *DP #9* is January 1st, 1992 C.E. and for *DP#10* is July 1st. These deadlines are firm. If your submission is a day late it will be held for the next issue. Therefore if you are concerned about making deadline, call me at (212) 543-8295. See "Electronic Submissions" above about how to submit an article.

NOTE: These are editorial changes only! All exchange ads and subscriptions should still go to the Mother Grove Headquarters in Delaware.

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The Druids Progress

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A Word from the Archdruid

It's been an eventful year since the last *DP,* with both wonderful and tragic events occurring. First, the good news:

The Pagan Population Explosion continues: Our Registrar, Niszsa Zeron and his wife Lorie have a new baby. Her name is Kayleigh Rhiannon Zeron and she was born May 19th, at around 5:30 am, in Bear, DE, weighing in at 8 lbs., 14 oz. And on August 31st, at 12:36 pm in Englewood, NJ, our one-time Assistant Everything Barbara Coontz Giacalone and her husband Charlie greeted Sylvia Rose Giacalone (7lbs., 0 oz.). Congrats!

The Wellsprings Gathering was a tremendous success. 55 current or past ADF members and five others showed up for a weekend of fellowship, ritual and learning. Several folks went through their First Circle dedications, and long discussions were held about cosmology, liturgy, the training program, and fund raising ideas. By the end of the weekend, all five non-members had joined and a few lapsed members had re-upped! The entire festival was superbly planned and run by the folks at Stone Creed Grove in Cleveland, and actually made a small profit (some of which has been sent to the ADF General Fund). Your exhausted Archdruid didn't have to do anything except show up and talk (and talk and talk). I didn't get to spend time with everybody like I had originally planned, since I spent most of the evenings discussing plans with the Senior Druids present, but next year I'll be sure to cover the entire festival grounds. Hint for future festivals: don't be shy about asking me to come by your campfire and visit, that's a major reason why I go to festivals in the first place. In any event, Wellsprings made me feel very hopeful about our future. I now know that ADF can grow and evolve even without my presence.

Now for the not-so-good news. The War in the Persian Gulf went according to Bush's plans. Over 100,000 Iraqi men, women, and children died from Allied bombing raids, and tens of thousands more are dying from disease and hunger. The Kurds were suckered into trying a revolt, then abandoned until bad press forced Bush into taking action to protect the survivors. Less than three hundred American men and women died, the Kuwaiti aristocracy has been restored, and no one in the U.S. saw any bodies till the war was over, so it's been declared A Major Victory and Americans have been congratulating themselves in an orgy of jingoistic pride. I'm sorry if this description offends some of you, but this war was nothing that a true warrior would find honorable. Killing women and children by remote control, leaving the enemy's deadliest soldiers alive so that they can butcher their own people, starting a war when we knew that devastating ecological sabotage was a probable result, and turning our backs on people we had encouraged to revolt – these are not the actions of warriors defending their people, but of soldiers extending an empire. The only ones who really won this war were the wealthy and powerful in the nations involved (including Saddam Hussein). Once again, the guilty and the innocent alike were slaughtered with our tax dollars.

Trouble struck close to home for members of ADF as well. One of our earliest members, Betty Carpenter, was in a major car accident and was severely injured. Betty is the wife of artist Jim Odbert (who drew our logo) and the creator of the "Bog People" robe design that many of us older members use. Thanks to a lot of magic she has made a remarkable recovery but, like most artists, she has no medical insurance and is in desperate need of financial assistance to pay for her hospital expenses. Donations can be sent to "Ecumenicon" at 404 East Melbourne Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20907. Mark your checks "Carpenter Fund" on the memo line. If you are lucky enough to have one of her stuffed shoulder dragons, or to have met her at one of the many science fiction conventions and Renn fairs she attends, send her some financial and magical energy to aid her continued recovery.

Unfortunately, there's more bad news. On February 17, 1991, Sherri Anne

Harrington, also know as Guthrune Bjornsdottir, was killed. Anne was the Pursewarden of the recently formed Stone Oak Grove, ADF in Arlington, Texas. According to the local police, her husband, Robert Meek (then Senior Druid of the grove) has formally confessed to her murder. Robert Meek is presently confined in a psychiatric institution and we are informed that it is unlikely he will be brought to trial. We have also been told that Meek had earlier undergone surgical removal of a brain tumor. At its meeting of April 21, 1991, the Mother Grove suspended Robert Meek from membership in ADF, thus removing him from any position of trust; and banned him from participation in rituals, meetings, and events. With the death of Anne Harrington, the removal of Meek, and the resignation of the third officer, Stone Oak's charter was necessarily revoked. We grieve for Anne's shocking death.

This horrifying series of events has had several repercussions. I spent hours on the phone with local law enforcement officers and a reporter, giving them material about Neopaganism in general and ADF in particular. As a result, the police are now sure that this tragedy was the result of a domestic fight and not part of a ritual "sacrifice," as Anne's parents had feared. The reporter agreed not to print such allegations without checking with us first, and warned us that a year or so from now, if Meek does go to trial, the story will erupt into the news again.

Stone Oak Grove's bank account, which consisted mostly of subscription money for *Northways,* the publication of the former White Horse Kindred (the Norse group from which the grove was founded), is supposed to be turned over to the Mother Grove, according to the ADF by-laws. Beket Asar, our national Pursewarden, will be sending partial refund checks to those subscribers (there wasn't enough left in the account for full refunds) if and when this money is received. A few local ADF members have decided to try and start another grove, based on Celtic themes, to be called Heatherwood (after Anne's two-year-old daughter).

Not so tragic, but certainly darned annoying, is that I have been diagnosed as having Eosinphilic Myalgia Syndrome, or EMS, also known as the "tryptophan disease." EMS causes extreme fatigue, universal muscle pain, memory loss, and frequent severe headaches. In advanced cases, which (Dian Cecht be praised) I don't have, paralysis and even death have resulted. Unfortunately, there is no known cure, so my homeopathic physician has been experimenting with various remedies, some of which have helped and all of which have cost money. I might have been able to handle it better, if I hadn't already had other medical problems. Magical, meditative and relaxation work begun recently appears to be effective. I am cautiously optimistic, but could use all the healing energy you can send me. The EMS, by the way, is the primary reason why there was no Spring issue this year. I simply haven't had the strength or energy to write materials for *DP* after performing all my other Archdruidical and mundane duties, and my slowness held up the entire publication.

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New Complexities in Indo-European Caste Systems and Cosmologies

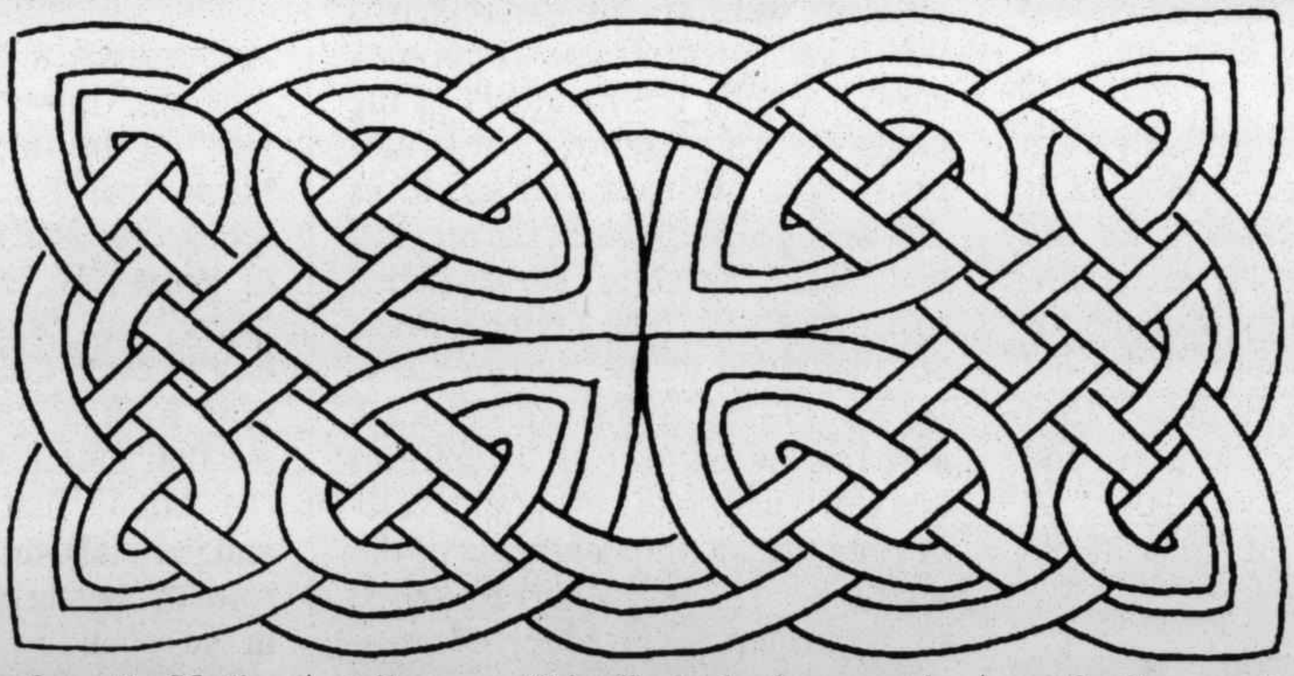
by Isaac Bonewits

Our story so far: In the first few episodes of our continuing saga, *All My Oakgroves,* we've established two key concepts for understanding the world(s)views of the Indo-European Paleopagans. The first concept is a polytheological and sociological one called the "trifunctional ideology," discovered by Georges Dumezil and his followers. The second is a related cosmological one of the "Three Worlds plus Fire," identified, I believe by me, from a variety of Dumezilian and other IE studies.

Dumezil had the brilliant insight that the same major characters kept showing up in all the different IE myths and legends of which we had records; furthermore, they seemed to reflect a common social structure among all the IE cultures. There were usually two deities who ruled over matters of magic and law; he called this the "first function" of "magical and judicial sovereignty." Examples include Odin and Tyr, respectively, from the Norse pantheon, and Mitra and Varuna from the Vedic. The "second function" includes the war gods (often, but not always, thunder gods as well) such as Thor and Indra. Then you have the "third function" of fertility; this was usually handled by brother-sister pairs such as Freyr and Freya or else by twin brothers such as the Asvins.

The IE cultures all had stories of two "Wars in Heaven:" the first, a battle between the current Gods and a previous generation of (often monstrous) deities, such as the Formorians (Irish), Giants (Norse), Titans (Greek), Devas (Iranian), or Asuras (Vedic); the second, a war between deities representing the first two functions on one side against those representing the third function on the other, such as that between the Norse Aesir and Vanir. The current Gods, of course, beat the previous ones (though often taking some of them into their ranks), and the deities of first two functions either conquered or established a truce with the third function deities, resulting in the divine status quo of the myths.

The social structures depicted in the IE myths and legends reflected the three functions: clergy (who were responsible for magical/religious and judicial functions), warriors, and producers (farmers, fishers, herders, craftspeople, etc.). Leading each IE tribe was a "king" who had responsibilities towards all the other functions and who was usually married to the local Earth Goddess. Dumezilians speculate that the "war between the functions" stories represent memories of IE conquests of local (non-IE or earlier-IE) peoples by invading clergy and warriors. This fits well with the usual theories of bloodthirsty patriarchal Indo-Europeans raping, pillaging, and looting their way across Europe and Asia, though not so well with more recent studies indicating that IE cultural diffusion may have been rather more peaceful than that, albeit stressful to the changed cultures.



As for cosmology, the IE tales make constant references to land, sky, and various sorts of waters (lakes, rivers, springs, the sea, etc.) as comprising all of normal physical reality. For example, there was one famous Celtic chieftain who reportedly said that he had only three fears: that the sky would fall down upon him, that the sea would overwhelm him, and that the earth might open up under him. I believe references to these three events occurring as punishments for oath breaking can also be found. Parallels often existed between the functions and the "Three Worlds:" clergy were associated with the Sky, warriors with the Waters, and producers with the Land. Fire was viewed as extremely sacred and existed in all Three Worlds (caste-wise, it was associated with the kingship which affects all other castes). Multiple associations were created between aspects and incidents of mythology, the caste system, the Three Worlds plus Fire, sacred trees, the multiple deaths of kings, and so forth – not all of which fit perfectly.

Over the last few years, it's become increasingly clear that these views of Indo-European polytheology, sociology, and cosmology are just too simple. As Deborah Lipp pointed out, they leave no room for the forgotten or rejected people and spirits who exist in every society and religion, and they ignore a number of complexities. In fact, I think I've been suffering from "monothink" – the popular Western fantasy, based on monotheistic thinking patterns, that there is one best explanation for everything – as have almost all the

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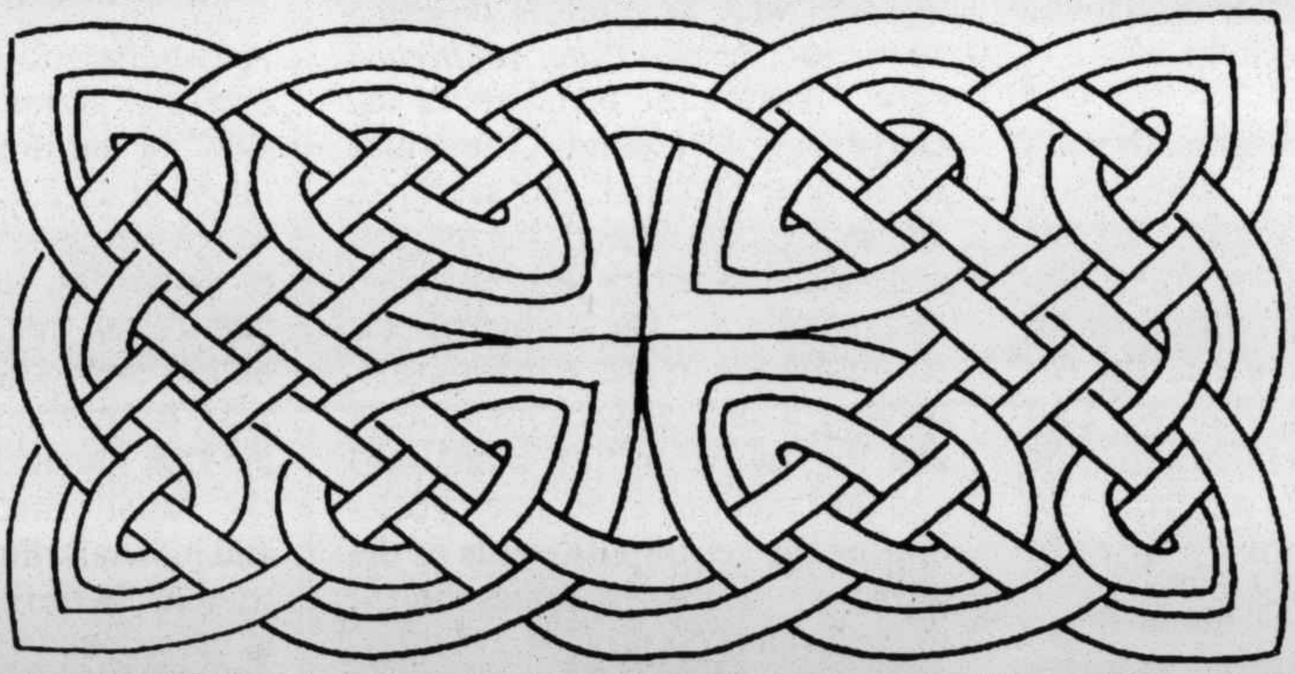

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other Western scholars I've been studying. So I decided to try using "polythink," by taking a polytheistic, pluralistic approach to the same materials. New answers quickly became a parrot. In this essay, I'd like to share them with you.

For the first time in several years, I've re-read Alwin & Brinley Rees' *Celtic Heritage,* in which they discuss the ancient Irish and Welsh cosmology and social systems from a Dumezilian approach. Most of their discussion focuses on the Irish, so I'll concentrate on them for now. The Irish caste system had the king on top, then the druids, then the warriors. So far, so good; this is the same IE social structure I just reviewed. But their third "producer" caste was split into an upper and a lower class. The upper producer class consisted of the wealthy farmers and advanced artisans, the lower of the folks who got stuck with the society's dirty work – agricultural serfs, satirists, clowns and jugglers, kitchen help, etc.

Each of the castes traditionally had a province of Ireland symbolically connected to it: Connacht for the druids, Ulster for the warriors, Leinster for the free farmers, Munster for the serfs. But in some of the old tales, Munster was split in two: East Munster for the regular serfs and West Munster for the weird ones. A similar cosmology of "provinces" arose in ancient Wales.

The "weird ones" included social outsiders such as foreigners, aboriginal (pre-Celtic?) people, sorceresses, madmen, criminals, etc., plus various types of supernatural "Outsiders," such as elves, giants, Formorians, banshees, and so forth. In short, when we talk about the Outsiders, we mean people and spirits associated with aboriginal mysteries, female power, danger, magic, and chaos in general – frightening concepts to a patriarchal culture obsessed with maintaining the cosmic order. There is also a hint (via the aboriginal and female power concepts) that this part of the cosmology is intimately associated with the local Earth Goddesses.

The people at the very bottom of the social scale were thus associated with the forces of primordial chaos. I believe the ancient Vedics had a very similar caste system, with the Sudras (or "untouchables") separated from the lower part of the producer caste and associated with female power, demons, and magic. Paradoxically, in Ireland and Wales (and India?) these forces of chaos were intimately connected with the king who resided in the center of the system (in the "Middle Province") and who was the primary guardian of order. So while the ancient Irish and Welsh had one cosmology of four provinces plus the center, they simultaneously had one of five provinces plus a center/outside combination.

Naturally every physical province had all kinds of people living in it, and indeed these cosmological/social patterns were apparently repeated within each province *and within each caste.* Among the members of the clergy caste, for example, the druids *per se,* who presided over sacrifices and were judges as well (the magical and judicial rulerships), corresponded to themselves. The diviners/poets corresponded to the warrior caste, because of their connections to death and the ancestors (for divination) and the creation of epic poetry celebrating the accomplishments of the warriors. The bards corresponded to the farmers (as providers of musical nourishment and support), and the lesser musicians (no doubt along with the servants who helped with various druidic activities) to the serfs. Perhaps the highest ranking local or national druid corresponded to the local king or national "high king" and also had a connection to the Outsiders. (Consider that Odin, who was king as well as chief magician of the Aesir, learned *seidr* – "women's magic" – from Freya.)

Simultaneously, although the Rees' don't make this explicit, the other castes had members who corresponded to these druidic subcastes. Among the serfs, for example, we can find sorcerers (=magicians), satirists and soothsayers (=poets and diviners), clowns and jugglers (=bards), etc. If indeed every major caste had subcastes within it reflecting the larger pattern, then you could very quickly get many subcastes. If the larger pattern had then been reflected into each of the subcastes to produce sub-subcastes, you would have eventually gotten a result similar to the Hindu caste system (and I'll guess that's exactly what happened in India).

Is this all confusing? Very. Yet, as the Rees' put it, "the co-existence of contradictory cosmological systems is by no means peculiar to Celtic traditions." Rees & Rees make a very good argument that we may need to think of the lower half of the "third function" as a distinct, if not separate, "fourth function." Perhaps the "Outsiders" constitute a fifth function as well.

Another way to consider this "fourth function," however, is as the "shadow side" of the third. As most of you know, Indo-European metaphysics seems obsessed with the alternation of polarities, usually described as "dark" and "light." There's a dark half to every Celtic day, month, and year, for example. It's occurred to me that Dumezilian writings about the "dual" first function (magical and judicial), the confusion over the roles of "berserks" and "werewolves" in the second (warrior) function, and the roles of the third (producer) function's twin (or sister-brother) deities, all would be much clearer if we assumed that each function has a dark (= dangerous) side and a light (= safe) side.

That would give us a pattern where the first function would consist of the magician (dangerous) and the judge (safe); the second function would be the werewolf (dangerous) and the hero (safe); and the third function would give us the serf (dangerous) and the producer (safe). The Outside/Center function then consists of the Outsiders (dangerous) and the king (safe). What the

mythologies make clear, of course, is that these "dangerous" and "safe" categories do not equate with "evil" and "good," since you can have, for example, good Outsiders and evil kings. However, the conservatism of most tribal societies would lead to prejudices for and against the safe/dangerous polarities.

Before we leave the topic of social castes as reflections of metaphysical beliefs, and go on to a very brief discussion of cosmology; here's a correction about our former color-coding system in ADF. Rees & Rees mention in a footnote that Dumezil, in *Rituels Indo-Européens à Rome,* attributed blue and sometimes green as the color for the third function. Rees & Rees agree by listing the matching Irish colors. Previously I've said that blue belonged to the warriors, and I may have been in error, perhaps caused by the fact of the Norse having yeoman warriors (who would mix the second and third functions). For now, let's try using the following color attributions, slightly different from those published before: clergy = white, warriors = red, producers = blue or green, serfs = brown, Outsiders = black. So if we want to be democratic and decide that we have no serfs or outsiders in our community, then our three primary colors could be red, white, and blue! That ought to annoy just about everybody...

J.D. LaBash of Stone Creed Grove has repeatedly mentioned to me that the Three Worlds of the Land, the Waters, and the Sky, don't work properly for Lithuanian mythology and cosmology. Instead, they used terms that are usually translated as "Sky," "Land," and "the Underworld." The Vedic peoples are said (in English) to have used "Sky," "Middle Air," and "Land" as their Three Worlds, while the Norse had a total of Nine Worlds instead of three. During a cosmological lunch at Wellsprings this year, J.D., Paul Maurice, Ian Corrigan, myself, and several other participants came to some tentative conclusions of how one cosmology can reconcile all these seemingly different systems.

Firstly, Mircea Eliade pointed out in several of his books the nearly universal tendency for tribal peoples to have a cosmology with a vertical axis (a World Tree, a shamanic pole, a magic mountain, etc.). In Indo-European terms, that vertical axis may have originally reached from a "Celestial Realm" in the far heavens (where dwelt the distant creator deity and sometimes the major tribal deities), through the "Middle Realm" (of ordinary mortal activity), and down to an "Underworld" or "Chthonic Realm" (where demons, dead people, old deities, and other chaotic beings dwell – i.e., a lot of the "Outsiders").

Secondly, the Three Worlds of the Land, the Waters, and the Sky may all have been on a horizontal axis filling the Middle Realm, and reflected into the Celestial and Chthonic Realms as well. The ancient Irish, for example, had "Lands" in the Celestial Realm and underneath the ocean (which was equated with what I'm calling the Chthonic Realm). There were also Celestial and Chthonic "Waters", and possibly types of "Sky" as well. This sort of multiplication could be done in various ways by the different IE cultures, including dark/light variations, leading to different numbers of what are usually translated as "Worlds."

Thirdly, Fire, as a primeval divine force, was seen as existing in, and communicating between, all Three Realms and all Three Worlds. The stars, sun and moon were Celestial fire; underground coal, peat, or volcanic fires were Chthonic. In the Middle Realm, fire existed in the Sky (lightning, smoke), on the Land (camp, hearth and forest fires), and even in the Waters (alcoholic beverages, soma).

Finally, some of the confusion in IE cosmological studies may have been caused by the translators. We have to remember that none of these ancient peoples used modern English, so the words we see in translations may not be precise matches from culture to culture. As one example, the term in Sanskrit that gets translated as the "Middle Atmosphere" or "Middle Air" may really mean (local or near) "Sky," while the word usually translated as "Sky" in Vedic cosmological studies may translate better as what I've called the "Celestial Realm." I don't read Sanskrit so I don't know for sure, I just have my suspicions.

So how can we tie all of this up into a nice neat package? We can't. Some of our confusion about Indo-European cosmologies can be explained, if not simplified, when we realize that the IE peoples loved to combine simple units into amazingly complex patterns (look at Celtic interlace, for example). Just as castes could be subdivided to reflect other castes, then divided again to display a dark/light polarity; so too there could be Worlds within Realms (or vice versa?), each split along the dark/light line.

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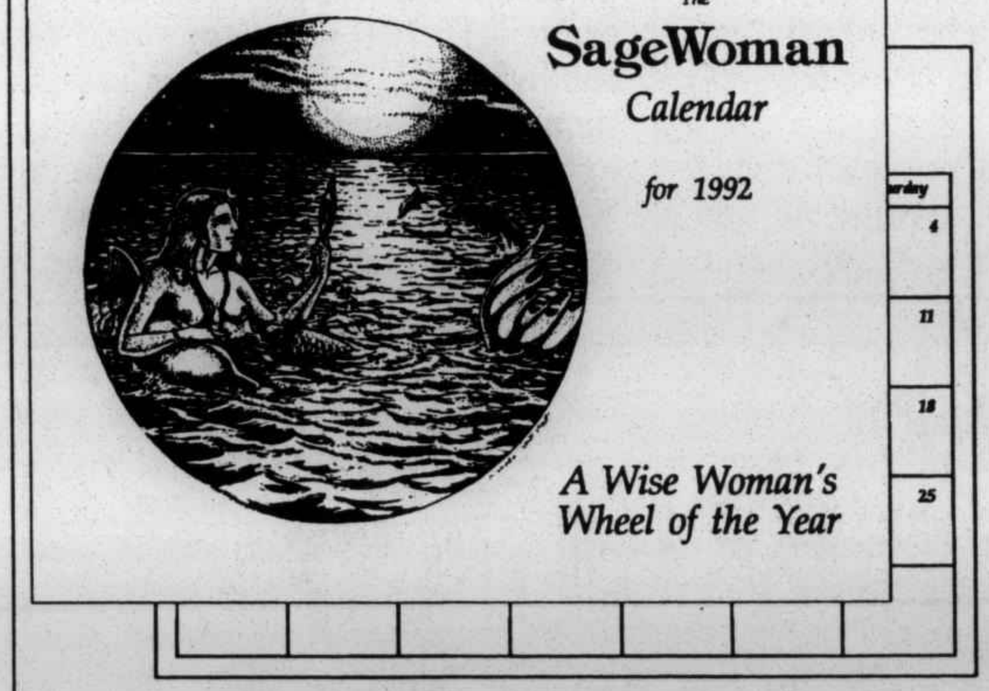
They might even have been split again along an Otherworld/Here polarity (which would explain why there are so many ways to get into Faerie – via Sidhe hills, ocean voyages, diving into lakes, becoming a bird and flying there, etc.). The "Otherworld" is a concept that shows up universally in religions as the "place" where spirits live. Usually it's perceived as interpenetrating mundane reality or the "here" in which most people live their lives, but with particular locations where it is easiest to contact. The Otherworld isn't the same as the Underworld (Chthonic Realm) or the Celestial Realms, but it is connected to them, as it is to the Three Worlds. The supernatural Outsiders might have been viewed as living mostly in the Otherworld and using its connections to travel throughout the realms and worlds. Each IE culture would have associated various sorts of beings, from the demonic to the divine, with each of the "places" we've defined. Among the Irish, for example, the Outsiders were usually chthonic, but were sometimes associated with very distant lands, waters, or skies. The dark/light split might also throw some light (you should pardon the expression) on the "good demons" and "evil gods" in different IE myths, many of whom are said to be descended from both dark and light spirits.

What does all this mean for ADF? To begin with, it gives us a new vocabulary with which to discuss these ideas for the next couple of years. It also means that those of us who are comfortable working with the Three Worlds of Land, Waters, and Sky can continue to do so. Others may prefer to focus on the Three Realms of Celestial, Middle, and Chthonic existence (OK, J.D.??). The dark/light or dangerous/safe polarity can be used, as can the Otherworld/Here polarity (just don't get trapped into evil/good dualisms). Fire burns through all these categories of reality (yes, there is dark fire – consider Balor, the evil sun god, for example) and can be used symbolically to tie them all together (with the smoke carrying the sacrifices up to the Celestial Realms).

When creating new liturgies based on the standard ADF pattern, you can choose the combination of these concepts that most closely matches the ethnic pantheon with which you are working, then use it to "recreate the cosmos" and to do the preliminary power raising. If the English text of your rituals uses this new vocabulary of realms and worlds, and you follow the new liturgical design by creating your vertical axis first, followed by your horizontal, then people from other ADF groves attending your rites will have no trouble understanding what you're doing.

You can also use this cosmological overview as a guide to laying out your ritual site, as I describe in my liturgy article elsewhere in this issue.

And that's enough for now – all these metaphysical and cosmological interlaces have given me a headache...



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Changes in the Druid Liturgy

by Isaac Bonewits

I've said repeatedly that neither the words nor the structure of the ADF standard liturgy are carved in stone. Over the years, a number of people have made major and minor changes in it. This article will discuss those changes and present a current (summer '91 C.E.) version of the standard outline.

Why do we have a standard liturgical design at all? (1) So that members going from one grove's services to another will have no trouble understanding what's happening. (2) So that new liturgies can be created swiftly through simple modifications of a familiar standard design. (3) So that everyone can benefit from using a liturgical design that will fit with any Indo-European ethnic focus. (4) So that groves can do joint ceremonies easily. (5) So that each grove can take advantage of the work done by all of us on the most effective liturgical design. (6) So that an ADF ritual has a recognizable style and structure, thus fostering our sense of identity.

The new outline owes a great deal to the cosmological discussions and ceremonies held at Wellsprings and Starwood this year. I've synthesized the results of those discussions and ceremonies with my own research and experimentation, as well as feedback from other people who have attended and participated in ADF rituals. Special thanks are due to Ian Corrigan, Paul Maurice, J.D. LaBash, and Deborah Lipp, though they should not necessarily be blamed for my results.

So here is the new standard outline that I would like folks to use for the next couple of years. The numbered items are the observable steps of the ceremony as it is performed. Items in *italics* are optional steps.

Most of this will seem very familiar to those of you who have read the earlier versions of the script or who

The Druid Liturgy

A.D.F. Standard Outline

Summer 1991 C.E.

Preliminary Ritual Activity
- (A) Briefing
- (B) Individual Meditations & Prayers
- (C) Lighting the Sacred Fire(s)
- (D) Pouring the Sacred Waters
- *(E) Consecrating the Sacred Pole*
- *(F) Consecrating the Altar & Tools*

1st Phase: Starting the Rite & Establishing the Group Mind

Clear-cut Beginning: Consecration of Time
- (1) Musical Signal
- (2) Opening Prayer

Consecration of Space & of Participants
- (3) The Processional / Sigil Marking
- (4) Purification(s) of Participants
- *(5) Purification(s) of Site*
- (6) Honoring the Earth Mother

Centering, Grounding, Merging
- (7) The Grove Meditation
- (8) Unity Chant/Song
- (9) Stating Ritual Purpose & Historical Precedent
- (10) Naming Deity(ies) of the Occasion & Reasons for Choice

2nd Phase: Recreating the Cosmos & Preliminary Power Raising

Describing the Vertical Axis
- (11) Planting the Cosmic Tree / Honoring the Sacred Pole
- (12) Evoking the Gatekeeper / Defining the Ritual Center
- (13) Evoking the Fire & Water Deities & Linking to Center

Gaining Assistance and Preventing Interference
- (14) Invoking the Bardic Deity (ies) or Spirit(s)
- (15) Acknowledgement of the Outsiders
- (16) Filling Out the Cosmic Picture
  - Ex.: Triad Invoc. of Nature Spirits, Ancestors, Deities in Three Worlds
  - Ex.: Invoc. of Helpful Beings of each World/Realm
  - Ex.: Invoc. of Helpful Beings by Province/Function
- (17) The Settling & Focusing

3rd Phase: Major Sending of Power to Deity(ies) of the Occasion
- (18) Descriptive Invocation of Deity(ies) of the Occasion

Primary Power Raising
- (19) Praise Offerings, Dance, Libations, etc.
- (20) The Sacrifice
- (21) Seeking the Omen of Return

4th Phase: Receiving and Using the Returned Power

Preparation for the Return
- (22) Meditation upon Personal and Group Needs
- (23) Induction of Receptivity
- (24) Consecration Agreement

Reception of Power from Deity(ies) of the Occasion
- (25) Consecration and Sharing
- (26) Acceptance of Individual Blessings
- (27) Reinforcement of Group Bonding
- *(28) Spell Casting/Rite of Passage*

5th Phase: Unwinding and Ending the Ceremony

Unwinding the Energy Patterns Created
- (29) Thanking of Entities Invited in Reverse Order
- (30) Thanking the Gatekeeper & Closing the Gates
- (31) Affirmation of Past/Future Continuity & Success
- (32) Unmerging, Regrounding & Recentering: Meditation
- (33) Draining off Excess Power: The Restoration

Clear-cut Ending: Deconsecration of Time & Space
- (34) Final Benediction
- (35) Announcement of End
- (36) Dissolving the Sigil
- (37) Musical Signal

have attended any ADF ceremonies. In the rest of this essay, I'm going to discuss only the significant changes.

The Site

This diagram of the *nemeton* (sacred area) is based on the Celtic provinces as cosmological categories (an innovation by Ian and Paul). Those of you who are familiar with Vedic and Norse rituals will notice that this design is 180 degrees rotated from the Vedic pattern and 90 degrees from the Norse (I wonder about the Iranians'). We will be using this as our standard layout, however, for most ADF rituals (except perhaps for small group ethnic workings). The diagram assumes that you will have one round central fire with a main altar nearby, plus four smaller square fires (and/or altars) at the edges of the nemeton in the four directions (these fires/altars could be simple shrines with candles for small groups). Note that the association system for the four directions is totally different from the standard Wiccan associations, and that the fourth fire (for the Serfs/Nature Spirits) may be an innovation of our own. The new layout includes a well or cauldron (or a sacred shaft if you control the nemeton's land), and a sacred pole to represent the cosmic tree. The congregation may sit or stand in a ring either inside or outside of the four outer fires, depending upon how many people are attending. Pole idols could be placed near one or more of the fires. If you control the land, a ditch and rampart could be built around the entire nemeton.

Roles

The clergy for this full-scale version include: the Presiding Druid (to watch over the rite), the Bard (to lead music and chants), the Diviner or Seer (to do trance inductions and divinations), and a brand-new ancient role: the Fool. This person represents the forces of chaos in a controlled manner, keeps the ceremonies from becoming *too* pompous, and redirects attention back to the ritual when problems occur. In addition, he/she invites late-comers, helps children, the elderly and impaired participants, feeds the Outsiders, and otherwise assists the other clergy. We first used a Fool in ritual during the Starwood gathering in late July of '91. Meryl Perrin made a perfect Fool of herself at the main ADF rite (which included our first ADF handfasting!) and later at a second handfasting. Everyone agreed that her role added a great deal to both ceremonies.

Additional clergy for this rite include a Triad of the Sacred Trees: the Oak & Yew Priest/esses (to speak the main prayers and invocations in the liturgical and the vernacular tongues, respectively), and the Birch Priest/ess (to tend the fires, fill cups, and otherwise assist).

Various individuals can double and triple-up these roles as needed, for example: The Druid & Bard & Diviner, the Oak & Yew, the Birch & Fool, or the Bard & Fool. The entire rite can even be done with a single clergyperson. With less than the full complement of seven, the clergy present should walk from place to place as appropriate, to match the nemeton layout. As usual with ADF rites, additional people to serve as cupbearers or aspergers (sprinklers) may be necessary with large congregations.

Preliminary Ritual Activity

This section has been added to the outline to ensure that these vital steps are not forgotten. Steps B-E may be done simultaneously, perhaps while other clergy are doing the pre-ritual briefing. All of the active clergy should take the time to do at least a few minutes of meditation before beginning the ritual. The fire(s) should be lit in a ceremonial fashion at least fifteen minutes early. Water should be poured into the cauldron or back into the well with a blessing (cauldron) or acknowledgement of inherent sacredness (well). If the reflection of the sun or moon can be "caught" in the water, do so, with a mention of "fire in the water." If the sacred pole and the altar are not permanently consecrated, use the fire and the water to consecrate them. Ditto for the ceremonial tools upon the altar.

1st Phase

Step 4 is new. There seems to be a general consensus among the Senior Druids that the participants need to be blessed and purified, of mundane thoughts if nothing else. This can be done during the Processional by having the participants pass "gates" with people representing the Three Worlds (smudging/incensing for Sky, sprinkling for Waters/Sea, and anointing with clay or ocher for Land), for example. Step 5 is now called "purification" rather than "exorcism," to emphasize the non-paranoid nature of this step. Step 6 is now called "Honoring the Earth Mother," and no longer assumes that people will always sing the "Earth Mother Chant" (from the Reformed Druids of North America) here. Many people find it difficult to sing (though Stone Creed Grove has written a new tune that is much easier). Some folks don't like having anything from the RDNA in the liturgy, so they're free to do something else dramatic here to honor Her. For example, another innovation of Stone Creed Grove is kissing the Earth (or otherwise making intimate contact with

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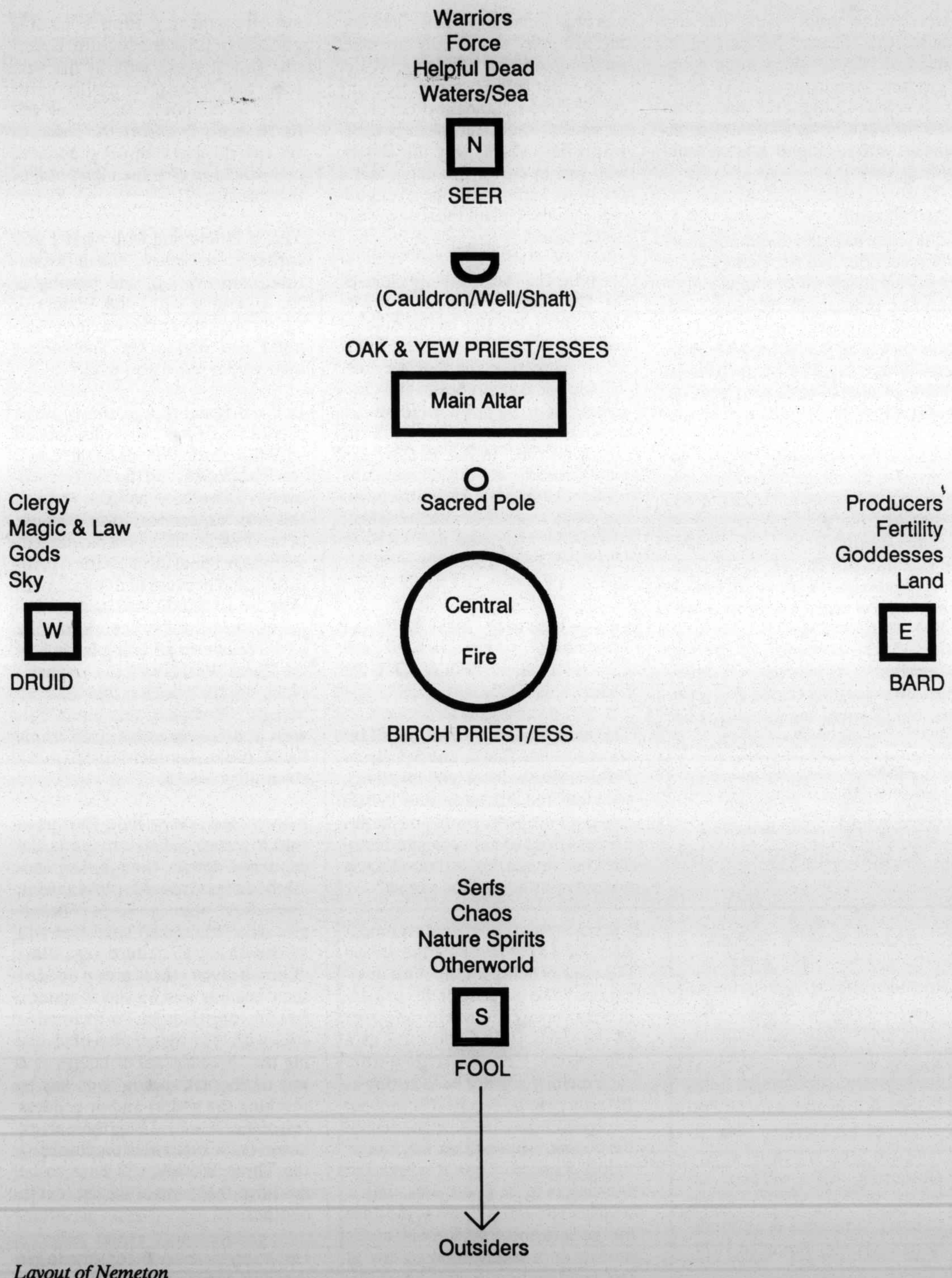

Layout of Nemeton

Her) at this point. Step 7 is now called the "Grove" Meditation instead of "Tree," since some members have been using different meditation symbols to get the same effect (they thought being a tree was inconsistent with having to move around during the rite).

2nd Phase

This phase has a new name and some new contents. We're placing a more overt emphasis on the universal liturgical process of recreating the cosmos as part of worship. For details on the IE cosmologies, see my preceding essay, *New Complexities in Indo-European Caste Systems and Cosmologies*.

Step 11 is new and very simple. We start with the image of a cosmic tree growing through our nemeton and reaching from the Chthonic Realm to the Celestial Realm. This guided meditation can be built around the sacred pole (that's *bile* in Irish) near (but not too near!) the central fire.

Step 13, the evocation of fire and water deities, is new and was added because everything I could find about ancient IE ritual suggested that fire was of supreme importance, and that the fire deity was usually the chief matron/patron of the clergy. Water is the other primary way of reaching the Otherworld, and the other end of an ancient Indo-European polarity with Fire. This is why the Dagda, who was in part a fire deity, had a celebrated affair with the river goddess Boann, to plant the seed of "fire in the waters."

Step 15, the Acknowledgement of the Outsiders, is something we've been doing for the last couple of years. In order to make the cosmos we are recreating complete, we must include some reference to the Outsiders, yet we do not want to invoke or evoke them, nor to give them any power over us. In this step, we can mention both magical and mundane beings who might be a potential threat (physical, magical, or psychological) to the ceremony, and make it clear that we will not tolerate any disturbances.

Step 16 used to be called the "Triad Invocations," and has now been given a broader name: "Filling Out the Cosmic Picture."

This step originally consisted of invocations to, firstly, the spirits of Nature (both local and ancient), secondly, the Ancestors and Predecessors of the participants, and thirdly, all the deities of a chosen pantheon. This last invocation bothered a few members, as being "too vague."

Let me repeat the original argument from *DP#4* for invoking the deities as a class of being for the third invocation: "The purpose of this invocation is to open ourselves to the power of the Gods [and Goddesses] as a collectivity. The power flow from each divinity will not be as strong as the energy to be received later from the specific god and[/or] goddess of the occasion, but neither will it be as tightly focused. Thus if a weather working is to be done later, with a weather god and goddess as the ones for the occasion, a person who needs healing or prosperity may receive at this point of the rite some appropriate strengthening from a healing goddess or [a] god of wealth. Everyone in the grove will, at the very least, find themselves exalted spiritually to the point where they will find it easier to absorb the power of the specific god and[/or] goddess to be invoked later at the high point of the ceremony."

This is in keeping with what I said earlier in that essay: "Each invocation, consecration, and passing of (or asperging with) the Waters of Life brings more power to the group mind and makes the subsequent invocations more powerful."

In our original liturgy, these "three classes of beings" were associated with the Three Worlds of the Land, the Waters/Sea, and the Sky (respectively). This section has gone through the most experimentation, because of the dissatisfaction (just mentioned) with the original third (deities) invocation, and because of disagreement over the associations. The most frequent variation has been to invoke all three classes of being in each of the Three Worlds with the emphasis placed on the worlds rather than the beings. Of course, this doesn't always fit precisely with a given ethnic focus, either (as mentioned in the cosmology essay).

Nonetheless, every Indo-European culture recognized Nature spirits, the dead, and deities, though they usually had other types of spirits as well. These three primary classes of beings give us a "universal" triad that will work with any IE culture, regardless of how a given ethnic group divided their cosmos and/or social system. So after long thought, I'm inclined to stick with the original plan of invoking the three classes of beings as a way of "bootstrapping" our way to reaching the god(s) and/or goddess (es) of the occasion. Using three altars, however, or otherwise emphasizing the Three Worlds, will have to be modified from one ethnic system to another.

However, there are other ways to get the same general effect of recreating

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the rest of the cosmos while attracting useful energies. As mentioned in the new outline, you can also do a series of invocations to helpful beings who are characteristic of the different worlds or realms in the ethnic system you are using (such as the Nine Worlds in Norse religion), or you could invoke helpful beings associated with the cosmological provinces and their related "functions:" magic/law, force, fertility, and chaos (but be careful about this last one).

Oh yes, as Deborah Lipp pointed out in her article in *News from the Mother Grove,* ("The Four Passings in Druid Ritual", Vol. 2, # 6), there are a variety of ways in which the power from each of these invocations can be passed to the participants: chants, anointings, the passing of symbolic objects, asperging, etc. Having everyone drink from a cup is not the only way to do it.

3rd Phase

In step 18, The Deity(ies) of the Occasion are no longer limited to one goddess and god each time. Quite a bit of variety is possible here, provided that overall gender balance is maintained over the course of the year. For one good system, see Deborah Lipp's *Seasonal Rites, Seasonal Gods,* in *DP#6.*

In step 19, Praise Offerings can be other than our usual poetry, song, music, drama, etc. Simple circle or snake dances can be done in some situations, massive libations can be poured, works of static art can be dedicated to the Deity(ies) with or without being destroyed, fruits and vegetables from home gardens can be offered (with some being destroyed and the rest consecrated during the Return), heartfelt prayers can be spoken or thought silently, etc.

As for step 20, The Sacrifice is now singular on all occasions. Too many people were anxious about the acceptance of the Praise Offerings being Sacrificed. Anxiety and fear scatter energies, rather than building and focusing them. Some people were even saving their best materials for possible second and third rounds of offering, rather than giving their all the first time. So after some thought, I've decided to assume that the Deity(ies) will usually accept our gifts the first time (after all, it's been a loooong time since anyone gave them anything!).

So step 21, the Omen seeking, is now about the *type* of divine response to expect *during the Return*, rather than the previous yes/no acceptance query. "Negative" runes or omens can be read as divine assistance in dealing with hardships rather than divine wrath (unless of course the Diviner gets hit by lightning or something). The omen(s) received should be announced *very briefly,* then used to shape the meditations in Steps 22 and 23. Later the omens can be used to shape or even completely revise intended spell castings or rites of passage, since they will indicate the precise flavor of psychic energy we can expect the Deity(ies) to provide us for our thaumaturgical or theurgical workings.

4th Phase

Step 24 has a slightly changed name. It's now the "Consecration Agreement" and may or may not consist of the old "Catechism of the Waters" (something else I borrowed from the RDNA). Any substitute material should be (1) a call and response type, and (2) constitute a group agreement about the nature of the upcoming consecration.

5th Phase

These steps have been slightly renamed for clarity and reordered to make a more symmetrical reversal of the opening steps. Step 36, which used to be the Recessional, has been changed to a dissolving of the sigil by having the grove members walk off in all directions. This avoids the effect of a recessional seeming to continue the ceremony when you're trying to end it, and also provides the symbolism of the grove's blessings being dispersed into the mundane world. Another alternate, invented by Niszsa, is "imploding" the nemeton by having everyone come towards the center and hug each other.

That's it for this discussion. Sometime this winter, if enough funds are available for special publishing projects, we will release an "official" prayer book of the ADF liturgy as well as private shrine work, including complete sample scripts and technical advice on performance.

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Pagans in Recovery
by Isaac Bonewits

Like many people in the helping professions, I grew up in a dysfunctional family, the child of parents who grew up in severely dysfunctional ones. I had a number of unpleasant things happen to me as a child and became an anorexic (yes, it happens to males too). I've got most of the personality characteristics of people from such backgrounds: low self-esteem, a fear of both failure and success, a tendency to attract and be attracted to people from similar backgrounds, compulsive rescuing, a terror of making mistakes (which leads to writer's block), an unwillingness to ask for what I need, etc. For a few years, my co-dependent enabling behavior towards a best friend's alcoholism almost destroyed ADF. Last year my son, Arthur, was born and I've become determined to break the cycles of dysfunction before I start repeating my parents' patterns.

I guesstimate that if we added up all of the Neopagans who are current or recovering alcoholics or drug addicts, adult children of alcoholics and/or drug addicts, adult survivors of childhood abuse (physical, emotional, and/or sexual), have eating disorders (such as anorexia or compulsive overeating), who are sex and/or love addicts, etc., that we would wind up with 99% of the entire Neopagan community – and 150% of our clergy.

Here are some definitions I've stolen from the W.E.B.S. material (see below): "addictive behavior is the compulsive use of destructive substances or behaviors to relieve, temporarily, the psychological pain that arises from abuse, or deprivation of basic needs, in early childhood." (Various sources) "Toxic shame is the core of addiction" and compulsive/addictive behavior is "a pathological relationship to any mood-altering experience that has life-damaging consequences." (John Bradshaw, *Healing the Shame that Binds You.)*

Our community's Dionysian reaction against the Apollonian asceticism of the mainstream religions has been used by many of us to excuse substance abuse and compulsive/addictive behaviors. This reaction was justified, but the dualistic extremes which many of us reached have caused great pain to ourselves and our loved ones.

Before Matthew Fox, the heretic Catholic priest who invented Creation Spirituality, was officially "silenced" by the Vatican, he wrote and published a brilliant open letter to Grand Inquisitor Ratzinger, called "Is the Catholic Church Today a Dysfunctional Family?" *(Creation,* Nov./Dec. 1988). He showed just how easy it is for a religious organization to become as crazy as an alcoholic family, when its leaders and members don't pay attention to their personal power and control issues (see my open letter to Selena Fox last *DP,* and the responses in this and next *DP).* Dealing with these issues has become increasingly important, not just to my personal life, but to ADF and the entire Neopagan community.

All of this finally got me to join a "Twelve Step" group. I'd been familiar with the Twelve Step programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Al-Anon, etc., for several years, having many friends involved in them. Participating from the inside has been a revelation. I've discovered many other people who can't remember most of their childhood, who are filled with inexpressible rage, who can never find the right Mother's Day or Father's Day card to send because they all seem inappropriate, etc.

There are problems with the Twelve Step programs as they currently exist. Perhaps the major one for a Neopagan is the fact that, despite an officially "nondenominational" position, most interpretations of the program use mainstream monotheistic language when talking about the divine. The overwhelming majority of Twelve Steppers talk about an omnipotent, transcendent male deity as their "Higher Power" (and for them it works). The underlying theology is guilt-based and emphasizes the powerlessness of the individual in the face of addiction and/or obsession. These problems have been used by some Neopagans to avoid getting the help they need.

I won't go into a missionary trip about the Twelve Step programs, especially since I'm just a beginner at them. They have their weaknesses (mostly polytheological), but they are nonetheless the most powerful and effective systems I have ever seen for healing the inner child and giving the adult appropriate life skills. I believe that all of us, especially the clergy, could learn a lot from them. In time we will create our own versions that are more in keeping with Pagan principles and beliefs (see recent issues of *Green Egg* magazine). Meanwhile, there is nothing better available for those of us who are in pain from addiction, obsession, and/or victimization issues.

There are plenty of Pagans working with the programs now. In fact, just about every festival I've been to in the last couple of years has had Pagan Twelve Step meetings. These are usually multi-program meetings

Pagans in Recovery

A quarterly publication for Pagans working with various 12 Step programs such as A.A., O.A., & Al-Anon.

$8.50 per year, $2.50 per sample, to: "Church of Earth Healing," 22 Palmer St., Athens, OH, USA 45701

(people from A.A., O.A., N.A., Al-Anon, etc.) devoted to discussions of how the Twelve Steps can be adapted by Neopagans. There are even support groups meeting in local occult stores.

Other Pagans have been trying to invent entirely new approaches, such as the W.E.B.S. (Women Emerging and Becoming Sane) material coming out of Berkeley, California (write to Starwhite, c/o Lifeways, 2140 Shattuck Ave., #2093, Berkeley, CA 94704 – enclose a few bucks and a large SASE). Many Neopagan organizations are starting to deal with issues of addiction and obsession, and/or requiring their clergy to learn about these issues.

So I can't recommend highly enough an unfairly obscure (one might almost say "Anonymous") Neopagan publication called *Pagans In Recovery*. This quarterly newsletter costs only $8.50 per year ($2.50 for a sample issue). Make out and mail your checks to: "Church of Earth Healing," 22 Palmer St., Athens, OH, USA 45701. Everyone planning on becoming ADF clergy or on becoming counselors of any sort inside the Neopagan community, should subscribe if they want to be able to help their fellow Neopagans (let alone themselves) deal with these issues.

If you know of other Pagan-based recovery groups and publications, be sure to let us know about them. If any of you would like to write an article on how ADF polytheology can work with a recovery model, we'd love to see it! To those of you who are struggling to resolve these issues in your lives, remember: you are not alone. ☥

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— Isaac Bonewits, Archdruid ADF

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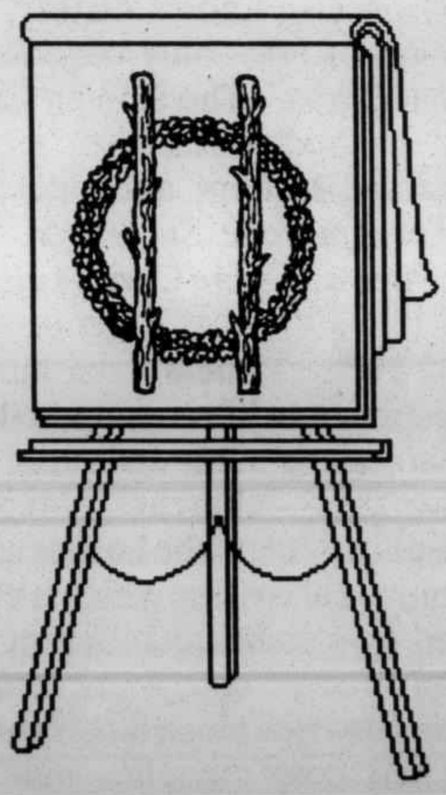

Do Pagans Need Paid Clergy?

by Robert

"Do not pour new wine into old skins, lest the wine ferment, the skins burst and the wine be wasted! New wine should be poured into new skins!"

Pagans hankering after "mainline religion" forms of organization, like the Church of Wicca in Toronto or the Chief Druid, would do well to ponder Jesus' wise words. Because forms of religious organization (the "skins") are not neutral vessels: they express intimately the spirit (the "wine") of their religion and would constrain any radically different way.

Paid Professional Clergy Express Dualist Worldview

The West's "mainline" religions – Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Judaism and Islam – are all scripture based patriarchal monotheistic religions whose spirit is *dualist*: i.e. they conceive of their single Father God as a *separate* spiritual entity from all His creation, including all living creatures and human beings. This God is so remote that He communicated with humanity only through a small number of chosen *prophets*, whose writings represent authoritative *Holy Scripture*.

Christianity alone also postulates that this God incarnated into human form only once in known history, in the person of His "only begotten Son, Jesus-Christ." The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches see their ordained bishops and priests in a direct *Apostolic Succession* to the apostles who were Christ's disciples.

God's separateness from humanity and mundane life is expressed by the separateness of his dedicated places of worship – churches, synagogues, mosques – from the houses used for mundane activities, which is emphasized by a radically different architectural style and – in mediaeval Europe – by a much larger size, with the bell tower the tallest building in the city. (In the contemporary materialist West, corporate skyscrapers have become the tallest city buildings, and thereby the new de facto temples.)

God's separateness is also expressed by the distinction between professional *clergy*, who are trained to expound his word as revealed in the Scriptures, and the ordinary *laity*. To emphasize the separateness further, clergy must not engage in any mundane money making activities, so that they have perforce to be paid by their congregations. The latter are taught from childhood that only clergy have the authority to expound God's word, and are therefore prepared to pay for this service.

Since communication during catechism, school and sermons is strictly one-way – from the clergyperson to the lay congregation – the latter can be very large: up to several hundreds of people in large city churches, which spreads the cost of paying for the clergyperson's upkeep.

A Priesthood of All Pagans

The Pagan spirit is not just different from this: it is the very opposite. We conceive our Goddess(es) and God(s) to be *immanent* within the whole of life, and within our own individual souls. Each of us can communicate directly with any of Them at any time, and They can take the initiative at any time to communicate directly with any of us in spontaneous mystical experiences.

If the definition of a "priest" is a person able to communicate with the deity, then all Pagans are priests, and we have achieved what the Reformed churches aimed for: a *priesthood of all believers*, except that Pagans don't have to "believe" anything, since we *know*.

Coven, Grove, Nest

Some Pagans are content with this one-to-one relationship with their God(esse)s and feel no need for any form of organized religion. Most of us, however, would find membership of a one-person sect lonely and boring: so we join up with likeminded others for religious celebrations, sharing of religious experiences, joys and problems, and in some cases healing and other magical work.

Such sharing has to be on an egalitarian basis, however, because each of us is equally capable of contacting the god(dess) within, and has thus equally valid experiences to contribute to the group. Newcomers lacking the experience and self-confidence to do so can learn best from all the more experienced members of the group, rather than from just one professional "clergyperson".

The framework for this Pagan sharing and collective worship is the Wiccan *coven*, Druid *grove* or Church of All Worlds *nest* of not more than 13 people, though the ideal number is between 6 and 8. Not because the number 13 was prescribed by Gerald Gardner in *Witchcraft Today* 36 years ago, but because it is the largest group size in which everyone – women as well as men, the shy as well as the self-confident – can find the confidence to speak. Members of small groups also have a better chance of developing bonds of mutual affection leading to a *group soul* or *extended family*, that allows most questions to be settled by a spontaneous consensus.

Of course, even small groups require leaders to organize common activities, preside at rituals and articulate the consensus. The best leaders will be those who share out the required work among all experienced members: only insecure high priestesses and grove leaders will try and do everything themselves, and thus find themselves working 60 hours a week on coven or grove business.

In groups of more than 13, discussions tend to become dominated by a small group of loud-mouthed exhibitionists, which can only be avoided by having a formal chairperson and rules. Consensus is more difficult to achieve, so that one requires the alienating procedure of majority votes, whose results must then be formally minuted. Above 30, we are back to one-way communication between a recognized *clergyperson* or a small inner group and the bulk of the *congregation*, which is alien to Paganism's egalitarian spirit.

Just as all Pagans can communicate directly with the ever present immanent deities, so we need no special consecrated building to do so. Since our God(desse)s are found in Nature, an open space in beautiful surroundings is the most appropriate place to contact them. When the season or weather are unsuitable for outdoor working, a member's home is the most appropriate venue, where the size of contemporary living rooms again limits the maximum number of participants to around 13.

This has all been discovered by 36 years of trial and error. Gerald Gardner himself thought that the "witches" he was initiating would become the clergy of a renascent Paganism when times became sufficiently tolerant for us to come out of the broom closet. Many groups down the years have tried to establish "outer courts" of non-initiated Pagans – the Pagan Way, the Green Circle (in England), and many others – but they have all collapsed after a comparatively short period, or else spawned a new type of small group. It is the small group – coven, grove, nest – that has shown itself best capable of surviving and enduring: a sure sign that it is the best form of Pagan organization for the current age.

Nor is this form suitable only for a minority religion. If nuclear families of father, mother and children can still be the main framework for raising children in the largest cities, why shouldn't the slightly larger "extended family" of 6 to 13 people be the main framework for sharing religious experience even when the majority of the population have become Pagan, as they must if the planet is to survive? Why not two or three covens, groves or nests in every street, just as there is a nuclear family in almost every house?

Each such group will indeed be *exclusive* of all but its own members who are bound together by ties of love, but no higher degrees or special aptitudes are required to be accepted in such a small group: just the ability to think and feel for oneself – the hallmark of all Pagans – and to relate affectionately to others.

Many Pagans do not feel the need to be initiated as witches, and to learn spiritual healing, shamanistic channelling, astral travel and other magical techniques. But that does not mean that they need initiated Witches or Druids as intermediaries between themselves and the Goddess and God. They will still be their own priests, and join small groups of non-initiated Pagans rather than a Wiccan coven.

Gatherings

For the four major Pagan festivals, it is more fun to celebrate in larger groups: hence the *gatherings* of several hundreds of people which have sprung up in North America in the 1980s and are now spreading to Europe.

Such gatherings can be organized by Pagans who have made it their vocation to do so – e.g. Selena Fox for Pagan Spirit Gathering – or in rotation by each coven in turn within a geographical area. In either case, the organizer(s) have to commit themselves to certain disbursements when hiring a site, which they will then recoup by charging an appropriate admission fee to the participants.

A magazine that doesn't offend somebody, couldn't possibly interest anybody.

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During the gathering, large rituals have to be properly planned and organized in advance, but this is also best done by individual covens or groves in rotation, than by professional *clergypersons*. In this way, the different groups can learn from each other's ritual and organizational methods, and the best and most effective methods will spread.

Counselling

Counselling and comforting at times of crisis or bereavement is best done within the coven, grove or nest by the members of one's extended family, who know one best. Taking on the counselling of unaffiliated people is a full-time occupation for professional therapists, a particularly suitable occupation for Pagan high priestesses who want to serve the Goddess full-time.

They will generally be more effective than your average secular Freudian, Jungian or Reichian, because they will seek the goddess and god within their client and try to bring them into his/her consciousness, instead of squeezing him/her into some theoretical category. When they feel the client's main underlying problem is loneliness, they will be well qualified to pilot him/her towards the small group with which (s)he would be most compatible.

Information for Enquirers

Esoteric bookshops have become our main interface to the non-Pagan world. They are becoming more numerous year by year, and are spreading from the main cities to small towns. Most will usually stock not just the leading books on Paganism, but also the small magazines put out by many small Pagan groups. The interested enquirer need only buy and read them all, and then write to the group whose magazine tone appeals to him most.

"Inter-Faith Councils" tend to spend more time debating social issues – drugs, crime, helping the homeless, environmental issues – and seeking common positions with which to influence the public powers, than in debating abstruse theological points. It is therefore more important for the person representing his/her local Pagan community to be fully representative of their points of view on these questions, than to hold a doctorate in theology. (S)he should be elected to this position at a seasonal gathering.

The only Pagan priestly functions that thus require full-time dedication are running a Pagan or broader esoteric bookshop, and working as a professional psychotherapist. All coven, grove and nest work is best shared among all the experienced members, who can therefore do it on a part-time basis side by side with earning a living. The latter should not be regarded as a waste of time by dedicated Pagans: in a pantheistic religion, all activities including work are ways of serving Life and therefore the God(desse)s within and all around us. ⛛

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Repaying the Debt... Paying the Priesthood?

by Caroline Wright

The article "Religion and Money" by Nanshe in *DP#6* brought up the question "Is it ethical for our leaders to charge for work they do in the Craft?" by looking at the question from the point of view of the recipients. A very good exercise indeed, for us to think about what it means for us to receive so much, how we treat our teachers, and how we treat our teachings.

The conclusion reached by Nanshe was that paying the priestesses and priests is the best though small way for us to show our gratitude and appreciation. The gift of money, she implies, is the best we can do. But is it the best we can do? Is it truly the best and most valuable gift we have to offer? Personally, I am insulted by the suggestion. The greatest repayment is in what we do with our received gift, how we in turn use it in the world. I am horrified at what happens when priestess and trainee become seller and customer. Regardless of how we dress that up in talk of "love offerings," we end up with either initiation-via-expensive-seminar or Roll-Royce-driven gurus.

What about our spiritual debt, though? Yes, we incur a debt when we are given so much time, attention, care and nurturance. Priestesses and spiritual teachers give generously – sometimes to a degree we feel unworthy of, or bewildered by. What can we do to give back when we have received so much? In America, the first thing we think of is money. Money, because we value it so highly; money, because we think it is a currency valid in all situations; money, because we think it is good for taking care of debts in all realms. There are, however, realms in which the appropriate "repayment" is not money, where money in fact is not a valid currency. The realm of love and spiritual teaching is one such realm.

My teachers told me that my repayment was to be in the form of service to others. What I received I was to pass on, and I was to be as generous with myself as my teachers had been with me. There was a reason, I was told, and the reason was this: that the world is in such profound need of love and healing that our repayment had to be outward (rather than back inward to the individual teacher). I was also told that my greatest gift to the Gods was to live out a life in the way I had been taught to.

The problem with money, we soon see, is that if your repayment is in that currency, you are let off the hook for a dollar fee. The lifetime of service is then optional, a frill you may or may not choose to do in addition. This is a psychological reality, regardless of the words that may be spoken.

An illustration of this principle is an experience of my own. When I was twenty years old I came to a devastating culmination of an adolescence of bulimia, suicidal depression, and alcoholic drinking. In a crisis I somehow ended up meeting a man, a sixty year old metal scrapper from one of the roughest neighborhoods in Philadelphia, who was to become my healer and teacher. He was Native American, in religion and race, and had spent his life, until seventeen years before, as a heroin addict, car thief, bank robber, and prison inmate. He now scrapped metal and lived in a boarding house, and gave of himself to the hopeless kids who came his way. For free. On his own time. For as long as they needed.

For the next year after meeting him, I spent about six hours a day talking to him, listening to him, walking around parks and sitting in coffee shops. At night I would do exercises, read, meditate, and do whatever small tasks I could in my own personal life. I was not easy to put up with but I was tenacious in my grip of this chance I had been given. How he put up with me, I could not understand. I am probably alive today, a well and happy woman with a University degree and a good life, because of him. I was never asked for anything in financial terms, though he was very poor and still is. An offer of money would have been refused, vehemently and categorically.

But there were many things asked of me, both then and now, which could not realistically have been asked of me had I been a paying client. These were no more or less than what priestesses training students can and should ask of their pupils: to follow through on my given exercises, to arrive on time for meetings, to give priority to my spiritual commitments. If I hadn't given enough to these things, he would have sent me away. He would have said "You don't value this highly enough for me to continue." And he would have been right.

Taking this into the Pagan community, a priestess can say these words (and these words, if true, are words which should be spoken) to a person who is not paying her. She cannot say them to a person who has paid for the course or seminar or what-have-you. The seeker has become a customer at the moment of payment, and is entitled to get what he paid for. The time, teaching, and counseling has become a product to which the customer has a right. And that is a sad state of affairs for the priestess, because she can no longer make the demands that might be warranted.

And what of repayment, the subject that brought up this example in the first place? How can I possibly repay my teacher-friend? His reply was that he himself had received his healing from addiction and his spiritual teaching from people who gave it freely. His work with me and others was his repayment for that; he had been told, seventeen years previous, to give his experience to who-

ever might need it, as freely as he had received it. And so he passed those instructions on to me. Because he gave the gifts he had freely, I am a vibrant, life-loving Pagan today.

My repayment to him is to share my experience, strength, and hope with whoever is in need. For the rest of my life. I have honored that obligation; I give and will through my life give the gift I received. I will never charge for work I do in the Pagan community, for counseling of Pagans in need, or for any of those things called "clerical duties."

If each of us thinks about what we have received from the Earth and from our Gods, we each find our own sense of commitment to them. Likewise from our teachers we have all received gifts that we should stop and acknowledge. But what acknowledgement is the best one? What should we give to them, and what should we give to the world? To my mind, we owe our teachers, our priestesses, our guides respect, attention, the time they ask for, to carry out our training with the dedication of the truly indebted. And the other part of the repayment, which enriches the world, is to share what you are and what you have, with whoever asks it of you.

But what of Professionalism?

Not leaving our stance as recipients of spiritual services by our clergy, let us look at the argument that a paid clergy (whether by fees or in salary) is in our best interest. What is the benefit of a paid clergy? They are better trained? We can expect more of them? They can devote their time exclusively to their priestly work?

But the cart is before the horse, here. Let us ask the questions the other way around. How can we insure that our clergy is competent? How can we show the value we have for them? How will our clergy serve us best? In what circumstances will our religion thrive? Is the answer "By paying them proper salaries!" I think not. If we pay a priestess a salary we can demand excellence from him or her, but we are not fostering a system in which her own priestly skills can achieve greatness.

Why? Because for her to be really good at her job, and we are to get the most from her, we must be "excellent" for her as well. We must be able to be demanded of likewise. It is a two-way relationship. If we show up late, don't do exercises set for us, don't learn our parts for rituals, we undermine the priestess. But if we pay her salary, she cannot dismiss us from her training. She has to put up with us, even if it is to the detriment of her and her standards.

If you go to a priestess for some sort of counseling or teaching, she should be able to tell you the price she expects. That which, if you are not prepared to give, she will dismiss you so she does not compromise herself. The price may be in hours of meditation, in endless ritual practicing, in late nights of reading, in the pain of self-examination, in service to other Pagans. Your teacher should demand the best you have in you, and be ruthless in that respect. If she is willing to do that, you may become a great priest or priestess yourself. That and only that will make the critical difference.

I am reminded of the esoteric group in London, which a close friend joined last year. In this order, which is over a hundred years old with about seventy active members, the training for initiates is extensive and in-depth. The order has for its new initiates a free ten-year course of classes which meet every two weeks except for a three-month summer break. The way that they keep the attendance at the class as high as they do (almost 100%) is by enforcing the rule that no one can miss more than one class consecutively. If you do, you are out of the class for good. Of course a good number drop out over the first few years, but the self-selection creates a small but extraordinary group.

All classes, and all other meetings of the order, are begun at the appointed time, to the minute, and the doors are locked. Any latecomers (even the head of the order!) knocking at the door are ignored. Again, no recriminations, but no exceptions. And what is the result? A professionalism that those crying out for a salaried clergy in Paganism would envy. None of the members of this order are paid, all have full-time jobs or are otherwise supported. What we see here is that the creation of a sense of value and priority has been effected in a non-financial, highly effective system based on expectation and consequence.

Picture the above scenario, but in this case the new initiates have paid a fee, or the group as a whole is paying the salaries of the members leading the classes. I can hear the lawsuit threats, the "I didn't pay good money to be treated like this!", the firing of the leaders for their unbending ways. Money spent on a fee or a salary makes that person beholden to us on some level, and makes them into an employee. It makes their income dependent on, yes, pleasing us. Their rent may not be paid if they fire us. Or if we fire them. Rent-paying is stiff competition for standards and excellence. What the above example shows is excellence and mutual respect among members, created by a system based not on fees or money but on high expectations and logical consequence.

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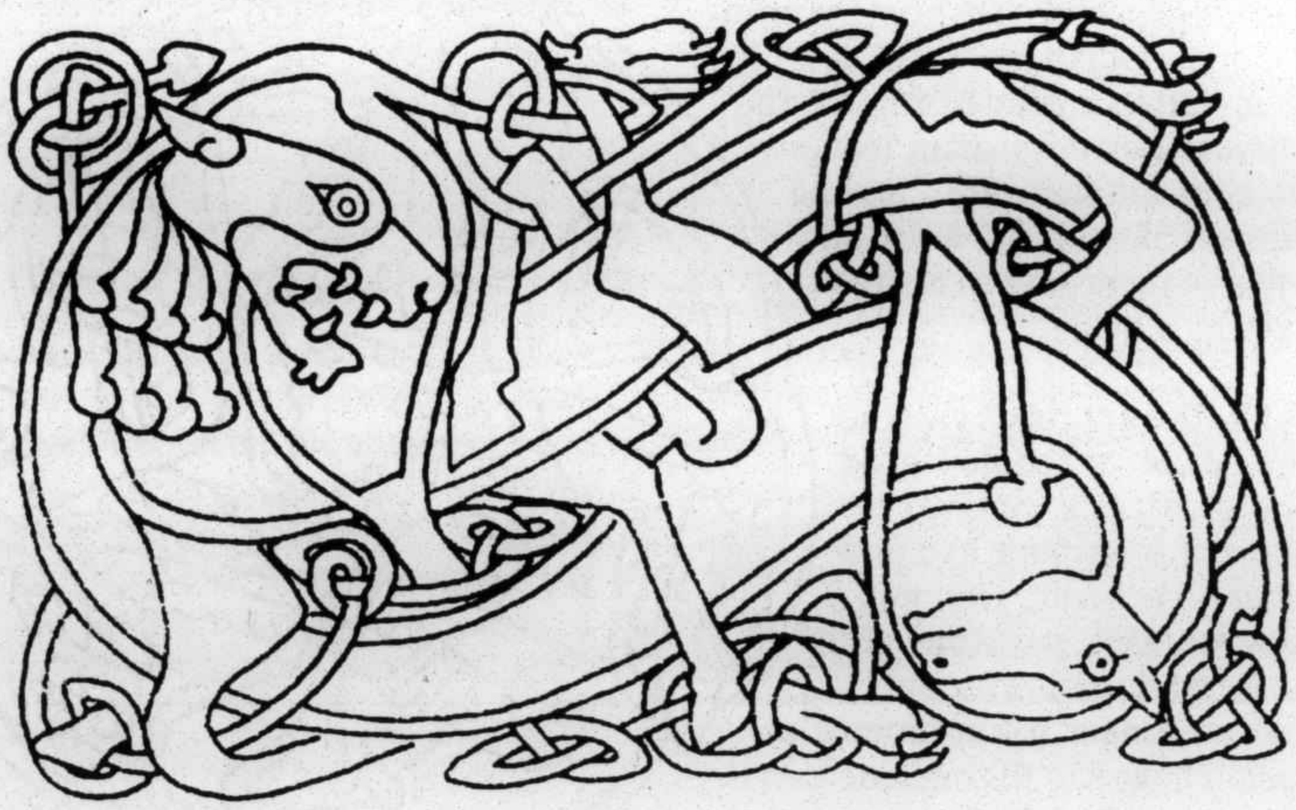
I think all priestesses or priests in the Pagan community, in whatever tradition, should take a look at how we approach the problem of commitment and quality. Traditional Wicca has many of these non-financial requirements of its members, and from them and cases like the one above we can think more creatively about this. Money is a smokescreen for the real issue.

Likewise, from the other point of view, any Pagan thinking about charging for Craft or spiritual teaching would do well to look at these questions. Having to go out to a mundane job to get the rent money may not be very glamorous, but the integrity it offers us in our Craft work is real, if we would only realize it and take advantage of it.

We can learn a lot from this example, because it clarifies the issue of excellence by separating it from the issue of money. We do, in the Pagan community, need to deal with the issue of quality. Whether in our rituals, in our psychic abilities, in our magical practices, quality means effectiveness. And what have we if we are not effective? If our minds cannot focus, if our bodies cannot be stilled, if we cannot attune ourselves to our Gods, then where are we? Let us explore more effective ways to bring out in ourselves that which we need to achieve excellence. Money is not the answer.

The Irish Pagan Movement

The Irish Pagan Movement was founded in 1988 in response to the many Pagans in Ireland who still practise the Irish Pagan Tradition, and who were looking for an organization to represent them within the community at large. Our roots lie in the ancient Oral Tradition of this land and is quite different from other traditions which have recently been brought to our shores. Our aim therefore, is to represent and promote Paganism as practised here in Ireland, to maintain the best aspects of our tradition in our modern world, and to take our Tradition into the future by networking with other groups and organizations worldwide. We are the only organization representing The Irish Pagan Tradition in Ireland, if you would like to know more about us, please write to The Irish Pagan Movement, The Bridge House, Clonegal, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford Eire.



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The Thomas Morton Alliance is an international network of politically-active Pagans, founded onthe knowledge that we cannot truly celebrate our Paganism unless we also aid and defend that which is sacred. The TMA is:

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- In defense of Mother Earth and the Web of Life against ecocide.
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- Pro-lesbian and gay liberation, against bigotry
- Against class privilege and elitism and its manifestations in our community; pro-egalitarian and pro-cooperative
- For defense of Pagan spiritual rights against bigotry and attack, whether legal, media or in daily life

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Paying for Clergy: A Personal View

by Isaac Bonewits

In order to devote the time to ADF that it requires, I have in the past, like other Neopagan leaders, avoided looking for full-time employment, settling for part-time and free-lance work (in my case, as a computer consultant, trainer, and desktop publisher). When times are good, this generates enough money to allow me the luxury of spending many hours per week on ADF; counseling, writing, researching, lecturing, etc., as well as managing the other officers and volunteers, doing Neopagan public relations work, and answering telephone calls from the membership. Of course, I still don't get all my letters answered quickly, and I have to turn down many requests for help, but there are a limited number of hours in a week, and some of them have to be spent earning a living.

While this approach gives me the flexible schedule I need and provides a minimal income, it is unstable and provides no benefits. Deborah is now working part-time from home while caring for our baby, and no longer has insurance either. I have had to conclude that it is irresponsible for me to risk their health and welfare to devote needed time to ADF.

So for over a year I've been seeking full-time employment. My irregular free-lance background, combined with the recession, has made companies reluctant to hire me, so while looking, I continue to seek temporary assignments. Starting last October, those assignments dried up – no one in New York City is hiring even temps until after the economy improves. As I mentioned in "A Word" this issue, I'm recovering from EMS, which has added to my medical expenses while making my job searching more difficult.

By late December of last year I was in a state of near despair. We owe thousands of dollars in medical, dental, and other bills (even the baby isn't paid for yet!), the landlords were threatening to evict us, our car died, and the cupboards were bare. Then Niszsa organized a campaign of emergency support among the Board members and Senior Druids. This resulted in enough food and money arriving to keep us going for a while, for which I will always be grateful.

But though we've still (in early Sept.) got a roof over our heads, we have the same problems we had before. Temp hiring has not picked up (three of my agencies have gone bankrupt), and neither have my earnings from magical teaching. We are once again seriously behind on the rent and in danger of eviction.

The whole topic of salaries for Neopagan clergy is a highly controversial one, as the preceding essays, the panel discussion in the current and next issues of *Fireheart*, and the essays and letters in several other recent Neopagan publications, demonstrate clearly. For me it's no longer a matter of theory. My stipend from ADF was originally set as 30% of all unmarked donations up to a maximum of $3,600 per year. This is obviously not enough to live on and the maximum was never actually reached. Then it was suspended completely last summer until the loans from Board members, for printing *DP#6*, are paid off. At this point ADF owes me over $1800 and there is barely enough in our bank accounts to meet current obligations to the membership.

The Fund Raising Committee and other members of ADF have been working on plans to stabilize ADF's finances and to provide at least partial support for me. Although we have a few genuinely poor members, the vast majority are making good incomes. I don't think it's unreasonable for me to want to support my family above the poverty line – especially when I know that I could be earning as much as any of you at a full-time corporate job.

Here are some of the suggestions that have been made so far:

1) Raise the cost of a regular membership to $40-50 per year (with a sliding scale for those who really can't afford it), using the extra money to fund one or more modest full-time salaries.
2) Once a year encourage every member to donate 2% of her/his year's previous income to ADF.
3) Encourage the members to make monthly pledges to ADF. These could be mailed in or automatically deducted from the Visa or MasterCard accounts of those who have them.
4) A special club of high earning members could be organized who can afford to donate a higher percentage to ADF.
5) Forget about it. Let me (and the other officers) burn out and let ADF collapse like so many other Neopagan groups have over the years.

Obviously, these approaches all have their weaknesses. (1) Raising the cost of membership might discourage many people from joining, and it will be a few years before we have enough members to generate even one living wage this way. (2) This approach would mean that money would only come in once a year. (3) Monthly pledges are hard for people to remember without constant prodding, which is usually resented, and a significant number of members may not have credit cards. (4) A special club of people who provide most of ADF's income would be suspected of having undo influence. (5) So far, this seems to be the likeliest choice.

You'll notice that I'm not just talking about supporting me here. Andras Corban Arthen argues the related points cogently in recent issues of the *ESC Newsletter*. ADF, like other public Neopagan churches, should be able to have full-time staff (not a cult of individuals), in order to accomplish the goals that volunteers simply can't. All the points that Andras makes in reference to the EarthSpirit Community are relevant to ADF, the Church of All Worlds, and many other large Neopagan groups. As Andras puts it, contributors to organizations such as the Sierra Club, Greenpeace, and the ACLU, "don't expect to receive immediate and tangible personal benefits for every dollar they give; they support these organizations because of what they stand for, because of the work these organizations can do that no individual can very well accomplish."

Once the *ADF Study Manual* is released this fall, we're going to have lots of people, inside and outside of ADF, wanting to participate in the College. This is going to make the Preceptor's job (which involves administering the study program, reviewing transcripts and other evidence of studies, etc.) quickly zoom to a full-time schedule. Unless we want to make participation in the program *very* expensive, we're going to need additional funds to give Domi (and eventually other members of the Council of Lore) a stipend.

The Unitarian Universalists don't coordinate their worldwide network of local congregations, their publishing activities, and their clergy training entirely with volunteers. They pay a handful of people (very) modest salaries so that they can happily devote their lives to Unitarian Universalism without cheating their families. Is it really asking so much of the Neopagan community to allow our leaders, most of whom routinely put in 60-80 hour weeks at less than minimum wage, the same opportunity?

For those who are curious, the current (as of June 2, 1991 c.e.) breakdown of how non-earmarked donations are divided goes like this: 38% to the Chronicler's Fund, 20% to the Executive Fund, 15% to the General Fund, 15% to the Registrar's Fund, 10% to Debt Repayments, and 2% to the Land Fund. That includes 0% for staff stipends.

I would like to throw this discussion out to the membership. Should I resign as Archdruid and let someone else volunteer him- or herself into burnout? Should we try to recruit independently wealthy Neopagans to run ADF? What sort of stipends are appropriate for people working full-time to run a large Neopagan church? How should we raise money to pay such stipends?

One thought that occurred to Senior Druid Bryan Perrin of Green Man Grove: if every member of ADF took the time and energy this fall to convince two friends that ADF was worth joining, we could triple our membership and bring in an extra $15,000 – not to mention planting scores of new groves. Mind you, he's not talking about going door-to-door, he's talking about sharing your ideals and your interests with people you already know. Of course, this only works if you really believe in what ADF is trying to accomplish...

If 30 each of the members who make more money than I do were to become supporting ($100), sustaining ($250), or lifetime ($750) members, we would generate a one-time amount of $33,000. If everyone were to donate $5 per week, we would generate $78,000 over a year. If everyone sent in 2% of their income on a monthly basis, the annual results would equal at least $90,000. With any combination of these approaches, we could pay two or three people a survival stipend, get a good start going on the Land Fund for the College of Druidism, and develop a capital base to provide a safety net for the next couple of years. Except for the dozen poorest members of ADF, we're not talking about serious deprivation here – Neopagans routinely spend far more money than this on toys and entertainment.

Don't forget that you can always make earmarked donations for specific purposes such as running the study program, increasing the Land Fund, buying new regalia to sell, repaying debts, making educational videotapes, buying research books and periodicals – even for the support of the Archdruid! Earmarked donations go 100% to the targeted use you prefer, so you know exactly what's happening with your money (and of course we publish financial reports). Eventually most of it will be tax-deductible.

Leave the issue of staff stipends aside for a moment. We're currently receiving enough good material for *DP*

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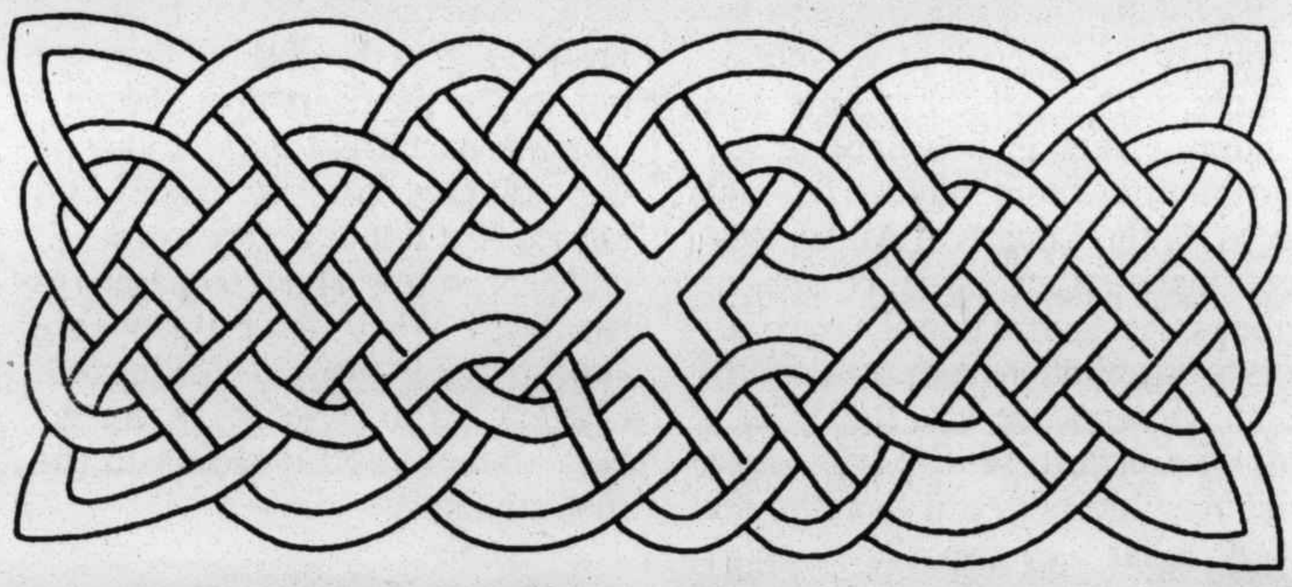
that we could easily go to four issues per year, or raise the number of pages per issue. A suggestion was made at Wellsprings that we split *DP* into a scholarly publication *(The Journal of Druidic Studies??)* and one that would be focused on our efforts to adapt Druidism to modern times. Any of these choices would require a great deal more money than we currently bring in. (Remember, most publications don't survive on their subscription income alone, on the contrary, they survive and grow based on advertising revenues. We have very few paid advertisements because no one in the Mother Grove can afford the time to pursue the many potential paying advertisers.)

Several members of the Mother Grove routinely pay the expenses of their offices (phone calls, postage, printing, time not earning a living, etc.) out of their own resources, hoping for eventual partial reimbursement from the General Fund. If the GF doesn't increase in size soon, however, the Registrar/Chief Grove Organizer, the Preceptor, the Pursewarden, and others will have to start cutting back on their ADF activities, just to protect themselves and their families. It's simply not fair to expect the Board members to financially carry ADF by themselves. We certainly wouldn't expect a UU congregation, Greenpeace, or the ACLU to function this way!

I'm afraid that we are all going to have to hold our noses and accept the bitter fact that the reason non-profit organizations are constantly asking for money is that running them *costs* money, even without the gem-studded chalices, solid gold ritual tools and thousand dollar suits for the clergy so popular among some mainstream religions. As I said last issue, major projects require major funding. Reconstructing an historically and philosophically authentic Druidism, adapting it to the modern world, raising Neopagan clergy standards, providing public Earth-centered worship for the hundreds of thousands of people who want it, and making Earth Religions a part of the mainstream in time to save Our Mother – that's a pretty good-sized project. We're not going to do it with nickles and dimes.

A Challenge to All

We of Stone Creed Grove, ADF, have decided to tithe from our donations to support the Archdruid. We challenge all the other groves to do likewise, since we believe the Archdruid deserves our support for all the effort and work he has put into ADF. Also, we ask individual members to consider their own finances and see what they can do to help support the Archdruid.



Yes, Archdruid Isaac Bonewits' *Real Magic*, The occult classic that subverted a generation of Neopagans, is back in print – this time from Weiser's. Thrill to his rude comments about traditional occult dogmas! Gasp at his horrible puns! Chortle over the things he said twenty years ago that he's embarrassed about now!

Real Magic can now be purchased in occult, metaphysical, and New Age stores all around the U.S. and Canada. Or, you can send $10 (plus $2 p.&h.) to A.D.F. (at Box 9420, Newark, DE, USA 19714) and let us have the profits! Either way, you'll be getting the best beginner's introduction to magic ever written, and a clearer understanding of the magical techniques used by the largest Neopagan Druid organization in North America. Try it, you'll like it!

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Letters

Just a quick note to let you all know I think "*The Druids Progress*" is getting better and better with age, like fine wine and wild women.

Everything in it is so mind-blowingly great. I like subjects picked over and combed thru by Isaac, Deborah, and all the rest. Very straightforward, but with some sense of humor. The piece "The Enemies of Our Enemies" by Isaac is superb. Right on!

Our family belongs to ADF even though we have never met any of you on "Pagan Ground." I did meet Isaac, Deborah and "cute bundle of joy" Arthur at the New York Renaissance Festival in September, 1990. Sweet family.

I like that ADF has so many Groves all interconnected with the Mother Grove. It can be a good source for networking and sharing.

We are raising our four children Pagan and feel so much freedom in the Pagan community to really grow as people and as a family group.

We are starting a Pagan Farm Community in Northwestern Vermont. It is for Pagans and their children. A meeting place to make friends, share, camp, swim, hike, play, worship in the Great Outdoors. Open to the Pagan public May 1 – October 1.

Send S.A.S.E to:
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P.O. Box 42
Fairfield, Vermont 05455

Michaela de Liuda-Oleson

Friends just gave us a copy of your piece on Selena/Circle. It seems to be getting "mixed reviews" and causing a "stir" (per usual). I have two, count 'em, two words for you: Thank you.

I've also been meaning to let you know how good it is to know more Pagans are integrating the concept and forethought of/for Generations (the children) into consciousness/practice (re: long-back interview in *Green Egg*) – Okay. So I'm a bit of a procrastinator.

Mer Maid
(ed. *Demeter's Emerald*)

Slainte! Thank you so much for the masters of brochures and the *adorable* snake ad. I will be taking advantage of them very soon!

I *loved* your articles in *NftMG*; I agree with most of your statements concerning the Mid-East, but I do feel that Saddam needed stopping. Whether the "war" was right or not (no war ever is, to my mind) is not the *real* issue. Were we led up the garden path; will our decision-makers *learn* from this experience and give *us* what *we* need instead of what *they* want? Let us pray that this is so, and gear some of our power toward that end, as well as toward lasting peace.

Please tell Deborah that I am saddened by her resignation, but I understand her reasons. I, for one, feel that when a person has the love and support of their mate, then that mate can be naught but a help and a treasure – this is true whether the couple are a man and woman, two men or two women. Shame be upon those who would use petty politicking to attempt to undermine that beautiful relationship and advance at the expense of another!

Padruig

My name is Stephanie Wardwell, and I am a graduate student in the Department of Folklore and Folklife at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. I am also an eclectic Wiccan, and have been practicing for about two years. These two points in my life have come together in the formation of my dissertation topic, tentatively titled *Contemporary Neo-Paganism: Modern Ritual and Ancient Roots*. I am just now beginning to set up my research proposal, and am hoping that you and your network may be able to help me.

One of my goals in this project is to examine modern Pagan celebrations, including legends and stories about the particular Sabbats and the rituals that go along with them. There seems to be very little written material on this subject for me to work with, and what is written does little to clarify why each celebration is important and what the relevant symbolism is for each. This is where I hope that you may be able to assist.

I am asking for people to send me stories, legends and ritual that they know and use in the annual celebration of the quarters and cross-quarters. I am only looking at the Sabbats at this point and not the esbats. Submissions could include ancient legends collected for ritual use, stories people have written for themselves, rituals they use to honor the relevant deities, songs and poetry created for the occasion, etc. I am also interested in the process of ritual construction. Entries of that sort would include an explanation of the defining process for major elements of the ritual, the significance of the tools and chants chosen, and anything else the priest/ess sees as important to the particular ritual. I will accept all entries in either handwritten form or on computer disk, either 5 ¼" or 3 ½", using Wordperfect, Wordstar 3.3 or Multimate II. All entries should list whether the informant wrote the work themselves, or if the work was passed on to them and by whom. I also need the informant's name, address, occupation and philosophical alignment for possible follow-up. If they do not wish their name used, I can use their Craft name, or make up a name to be used. However, I do need their real name for the purpose of non-threatening follow-up. It's more discreet to write to Joe Smith than to Mordecai Thunderstroke! I am also willing to accept celebratory art, preferably with

an explanation of the important symbolism to the informant and where the work was obtained. All entries can be sent to:

Stephanie Wardwell
c/o Dep. of Folklore and Folklife
415 Logan Hall
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6304

Stephanie Wardwell

Dear Isaac:

I read your letter and the current issue of *"The Druid's Progress"* with great interest. I'm not sure when in the fall you published this editorial, but as of mid-August, it was out of date! Lilith Aquino has resigned from our Board of Directors. Her husband Michael has retired from the military and the Aquinos have returned to San Francisco. Since SF-St. Louis is one hell of a commute for a monthly meeting, Lilith stepped down. Her place on the board has been filled by Peggy Ochs, the publisher of *"Earth Notes"* and *"The Magical Confluence"*.

Lilith remains an active and well-respected member of Alliance for Magical and Earth Religions (AMER). In fact one of our current projects was brought to my attention by Lilith – a particularly offensive column in the *Reader's Digest*. Lilith also helped us to collect information on Eric Pryor, the con artist who made quite a splash recently on the West Coast. She and her husband have also participated in our letter-writing campaign to let ABC Television know that their forthcoming TV film *The Craft* is an insult to all occultists and friends of religious freedom.

Lilith and Michael have shown themselves to be dedicated to religious freedom for all Americans. I am sorry that you are not, since the ADF could be quite a powerful force in the struggle for a fully-operative Constitution.

Perhaps you are not aware that all members of our organization sign, as part of their application for admission, our Statement of Purpose, which is a pledge to work for religious freedom for all members of magical and earth religions who *harm no one*. In our Statement of Purpose, we specifically exclude those who purport to, or actually do, harm others. All of our Satanist members have signed this pledge, and, as far as I know abide by it. Though signing this pledge is not exactly as rigorous as swearing to the Wiccan Rede, it comes pretty close.

I am sure that you haven't yet seen our definitions of magical and earth religions. Here they are:

Magical Religion: any religious belief or practice which includes, as an aspect of its faith or an element in its ritual, the practice of what they call magic or the use of psychic powers.

Earth Religion: any religious belief or practice which holds as a tenet a reverence for the Earth.

You will note that it is the individual's identification of him- or herself as a magical or earth practitioner which matters to us. Our definitions are broad-based by intent. Our organization provides a means for uniting otherwise antagonistic groups behind the banner of what may be the only thing they have in common – the desire for survival. Though our definitions include the majority of non-mainstream religions in this country, our goal is still religious freedom for everyone.

Among its members, AMER represents several different breeds of Neopaganism, Judaism, Christianity, Satanism, and Native American religions. In fact, one of the chapters we hope to charter in the near future is based around a core group of Christian mystics; another around a core group of the Ordo Templi Orientis. Yet a third proto-chapter is being organized by a long-time Satanist.

We are happy that persons from so many differing systems of belief can work together for religious freedom. We are only sorry that you won't be joining us in the struggle.

Ms. Chris Carlisle
President, AMER

P.S. Although I disagree with your stand on Satanists as members of AMER, I have not forgotten your kindness in steering me to Carolyn Clark, and thence to the Craft. I am still grateful for that help, more than 10 years later.

Isaac Responds

Dear Chris:

I do appreciate and share your concern for religious freedom and civil liberties. After all, I founded the Aquarian Anti-Defamation League fifteen years ago to do precisely the sorts of things that AMER is doing today. We didn't allow Satanists into AADL, however, for most of the reasons I mentioned in my essay last issue. It seems, however, from your letter that you missed most of my major points, since you didn't address any of them.

Although Satanism is certainly a magical religion, it is by no means an Earth religion. Satanic attitudes towards the Earth are not ones of reverence, since Satanists revere nothing but themselves. Instead, like other Christian fundamentalists, they view Our Holy Mother as "dead" matter, open for their exploitation. And they consider Wiccans and members of other Earth religions to

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be sanctimonious cowards who are too frightened to use magic for its "true" purpose: dominating everyone and everything around them.

If Michael Aquino is such a champion of freedom, why did he spend time in Germany re-enacting the Satanic rituals of the Nazis with his friend Edred Thorsson?

How can you be so naive as to believe any pledge signed by someone who worships the Christian "Father of Lies?" Satanists pride themselves on their abilities to deceive the people they consider "fools." They are perfectly capable of swearing to any oath you like (yes, even the Wiccan Rede) and then violating it at their whim. Certainly they would not let you see them doing so.

Let the Satanists go to the ACLU or hire advertising agencies. Don't give them our time, money and energy – we need these scarce resources to care for our own people and the Earth. And we don't need worshippers of evil riding our coattails.

We recently received *DP#7* at the *GNOSIS* office. Congratulations on publishing a thought provoking journal that dares to saunter in where angels fear to tread. I found "Pagan and Fascists: A Word of Warning" by Gerald E. Desmond of particular interest, in part because the question of mixing religion and politics has concerned me since at least 1983 when I edited a special issue of *CoEvolution Quarterly* on that theme.

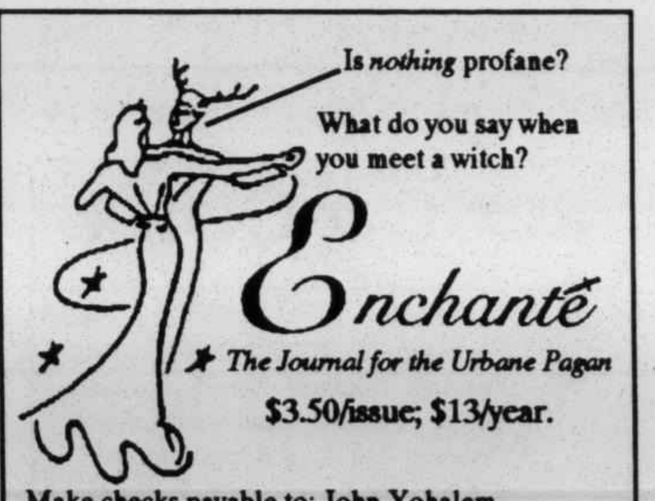
However, while Desmond is to be congratulated for his extensive research and clear writing, there were a few aspects of his article which may lead to misunderstandings on the reader's part, and I would like to address those.

First, Desmond's reference to *GNOSIS* distorts our work and intentions. He says: "And lately, even the very respectable quarterly *Gnosis* has taken to publishing articles lionizing Julius Evola, one of the doyens of contemporary European fascism and racialism." What Desmond fails to mention is that our material on Evola appeared in a *Gnosis* issue whose theme was specifically examining "The Dark Side" of esotericism. In that issue we ran three interrelated articles – one positive one by a respected English author on Evola and his esoteric teaching, one critical one by an Italian scholar on Evola's background and politics, and my own critical essay which attempted to examine why esotericism and Paganism are sometimes distorted towards supporting neofascist politics and why they are not necessarily synonymous. In other words, the sympathetic piece was balanced by two critical pieces, and Evola's role as a WWII Nazi collaborator and later mentor of neo-fascist youth was explicitly pointed out.

Of course, you may wonder why *GNOSIS* would run even one piece out of three that had anything positive to say about a deplorable character like Evola. We did it because our guiding philosophy is to foster critical intelligence on the part of our readers, and one way to do that is to approach a give subject from several, often conflicting perspectives. It is relatively easy to publish (and read) material that tells the readers what to think and what "politically correct" conclusions to draw. It is more difficult (but ultimately more rewarding) to run material that includes both pro and con perspectives and which encourages the readers to judge for themselves. This was commonly the policy at *Whole Earth Catalog/CoEvolution Quarterly* (now *Whole Earth Review*) where I cut my editorial teeth doing survey reviews which gave access to the whole political spectrum, from far left to far right.

This was also the policy at *Critique* magazine which Desmond takes to task for running ads for revisionist books. (Actually Desmond inaccurately claims that they "peddle" such books, which is not true.) Still, they *did* run such ads occasionally, but they also ran ads for brain machines, natural tobacco, obscure UFO magazines and much else. (For that matter, *DP#7* has ads for both Earth First! and voodoo orders, both of which are condemned in some quarters.) Robert Anton Wilson, who regularly wrote for *Critique*, as did I, described that journal as "the damnedest collection of crackpots, serious social critics, metaphysicians, conspiracy buffs, UFOlogists, debunkers, and oddballs ever assembled in one magazine. Editor Bob Banner prints almost anything, no matter how far right or far left, if amusing, and absolutely unique." Whether this was a wise editorial policy or not is open to debate – *Critique* has been out of business for at least a year, so it is something of a moot point. However I do know that any given issue of *Critique* at its peak was guaranteed to challenge, offend, exhilarate, and confound the reader simultaneously. Personally I consider this a rare feat for a magazine and I was sorry to see *Critique* go.

To return to the main thrust of Desmond's piece, like him I am disturbed by the wedding of fascism and Paganism. Unfortunately, Desmond doesn't provide any insight into why this convergence occurs. He lists groups and publications which combine the two, but instead of giving any enlightening explanation as to what in tarnation is going through these people's minds, he concentrates on giving *DP* readers advice on buzzwords to watch out for so that



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they can quit reading offending material. This seems gratuitous advice in that in almost every case you'd have to be proficient in French, Flemish, or Italian in order to read the stuff in the first place, and it's so obscure that you'd have to search high and low in order to find any to quit reading!

Desmond's bibliography is worthwhile as far as it goes (I'm familiar with six out of the eight books he lists) but none of the resources provides any insight into *why* Paganism and neofascism end up as not-so-strange bedfellows. Merely condemning the phenomenon is not enough. If North American Neopagans really want to wrestle with this conundrum, perhaps they might consider some of the following:

- Is is possible to revive a religious orientation free of its past associations?
- Are there social and political pitfalls awaiting groups who step outside of the norms of received Judaeo-Christian morality and seek a pre-monotheist way of life?
- Does seeking a spiritual path wedded to one's ethnic roots predispose one to ethnic chauvinism and racism?
- In looking back to old Europe for inspiration is one unavoidably linked to all others with the same backward glance?

Working out the answers to these and other tough questions would be extremely worthwhile not only for ADF members but for the alternative spiritual community in general. However, I doubt that it will be possible to gain any real insight into the thinking of European Pagans (of whatever persuasion) without either reading their material or eliciting information from them, as distasteful as this might be. One doesn't have to agree with them or cave in to their prejudices in order to do this; but it may require a different approach then Desmond seems to advise. Desmond wisely warns against writers who denigrate groups as "infectious" or "debilitating," yet the subtext of his piece seems to be that the bad European Pagan groups and publications are themselves so infectious that naive American Neopagans might be bamboozled by what he describes as "fascist blatherings about race, nation and blood." Well, anything is possible, I suppose, but one does not have to stretch things much to see this as the paternalistic philosophy of the Vatican with its Index of proscribed books applied to the ranks of Neopaganism. It also carries the risk that any publication, be it *The Druids' Progress* or *Gnosis,* which runs material from a variety of viewpoints (including some which are controversial) in an effort to encourage critical thinking, may find itself smeared by association with unpopular perspectives. In this manner probing discussion and understanding are actually discouraged.

Jay Kinney
Publisher, *Gnosis*

Note: We've also received letters from the Eglise Druidique des Gaules, publishers of *Druidisme,* vigorously denying that they are right-wingers. Those letters, plus a response from Gerald E. Desmond, will appear next issue.

After reading and taking plenty of time to digest the letter from Ellen Evert Hopman (*DP#6*) I wish to respond to her criticisms regarding our community.

I had the opportunity to meet and talk to Ms. Hopman at E.S.C.'s Twilight 88 as well as at Rites of Spring 1989. At both of these gatherings she was quite vocal concerning her opinions about health (or ill-health!) of the attendees – though I cannot remember anyone ever having to ask. Now that she has decided to make her opinions public, I have decided to do the same.

Several of my friends are members of the minority of Pagans who smoke cigarettes and of this group I know of not one who is ignorant of the dangers and health consequences of smoking tobacco. Several of these people have told me that they enjoy smoking and I can understand that, as I will smoke a pipe full of tobacco occasionally and enjoy it thoroughly. Other smokers have simply found their addiction to be beyond their control and have been defeated after attempting to quit. Either way, most people in the smokers group know what's going on.

Why Ms. Hopman feels the need to criticize these or any other Pagans I don't know. While I am not a healer in the same sense that she is, I have spent most of my adult life involved in the worlds of adult sports and fashion photography with what are some of the most attractive and healthful people in the country. I consider myself to be at least as expert as herself concerning the visual connotations of health and beauty...

Since Ellen has decided to assume a position as some kind of leader in our community, I for one, would ask that she attempt to lead by example... Most of us are working as hard as we can to perfect ourselves as quickly as we can. We are well aware of our short comings.

While Ms. Hopman wants us to think that it's the clan-mother archetype that's strong within her it sounds more to me as if it's the gripe-mother archetype or maybe just another pot calling the kettle fat.

Either way, give me a break!

Briarhawk

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Selena Fox — The Neopagan Community Responds

Greetings Isaac:

Thank you for communicating your ideas, concerns, and suggestions about Circle to us. Getting feedback from those we network with is important to us. It helps us grow.

All of the suggestions you proposed in your letter also have been made to us in some form during the past year by others on Circle Network who continue to be supportive of Circle in its change process. All of these suggestions, as well as others, have already been implemented to some extent in the past year.

To assure that Circle continues to operate within the dictates of the law as it grows and changes, Attorney Gregory Rihn joined the Circle Board of Directors at Yule 1989. Among the work he is doing is updating Circle's constitution as well as its by-laws, with the help of others.

Selena Fox initiated Circle's reorganization process in Fall 1989 because she felt that Circle, as well as she, needed improvement. As one of the first steps in this improvement process, Circle published an annual report for 1989 which was sent to all those affiliated with Circle Network who had made contributions that year. A referendum inviting these contributors to participate in the change process by giving feedback and suggestions was included with this annual report. This generated hundreds of responses. We have added your letter to the other feedback we have received so far. We are considering all feedback, negative as well as positive, in charting present and future directions for Circle.

The 1990 Circle Annual Report will be published this Spring. It will contain a summary of the networking activities, publications, healings, events, public relations, Nature preservation, and other work that Circle has done during 1990; a financial report; and a review of progress made in organizational restructuring. We hope that this Annual Report will help bring about a better understanding of Circle's functioning as a non-profit organization. Beket, Circle's Accounting Advisor as well as ADF's Pursewarden, has addressed the various points you raise in your letter in her own response to you. We hope that our Annual Report and her letter will dispel your misconceptions and misunderstandings about Circle.

If you and others reading our reply to you wish to offer us suggestions and feedback in the future, we invite you to call or write to us directly.

Regardless of whether or not you and your organization, ADF, continue to remain affiliated with Circle Network, may we continue to find ways to work together on behalf of the Craft and related forms of Paganism.

Blessed Be,

Board of Directors
Circle Sanctuary, Inc.
Selena Fox, President
Dennis Carpenter, Vice-President & Treasurer
Gregory Rihn, Attorney General & Corporate Secretary

PO Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 USA
(608) 924-2216 weekdays 1-4 pm central time

An Open Reply to "An Open Letter To Selena Fox"

by Beket-Asar

I first met Selena Fox at roughly the same time Jim Alan did, in the early seventies through Lady Cybele. I have been an active member of the Circle Community since the middle of 1980. In my varying roles of friend, volunteer, active participant, occasionally advisor, and sometimes even vocal critic, I have come to know Dennis and Selena better than most people in the Neopagan community. Likewise, I have observed Circle functioning firsthand for a decade. As such, I have been privy to information that relatively few Neopagans have had access to.

Thus, I feel that I must speak out to correct as much as I can of the disinformation currently circulating about Circle and to state as unequivocally as possible that I continue to support Circle Sanctuary without reservation.

I shall address some of the specific issues brought up in Isaac's 'Open Letter to Selena Fox' in roughly the order in which they were presented.

I have never witnessed Selena taking a picture of anybody without seeking permission to do so. She also explains that she uses some in a slide show that she occasionally presents at workshops across the country. No picture is printed in C.N.N. without every effort to identify all those in the picture and to obtain their consent, although this usually entails a number of long-distance phone calls. Considering the large number of photographs printed in C.N.N. over the years, it would not be surprising to learn that through simple error, permission had on rare occasion been asked of the wrong person or that an individual partially obscured in a group photograph might find him/herself more identifiable than others would.

I was present when Selena took pictures of people dancing around a bonfire. It was at PSG in either 1982 or 1983. Selena, explaining that she had a new camera and wished to test it to see if it would take pictures at night with an extremely fast film, asked permission of those present to

do so. I did not hear any objections. I have seen the photographs in question. All the people in them appear as silhouettes, precisely what one would expect of night photography without a flash or infra-red equipment.

Although Circle has sponsored workshops and concerts by various Neopagan teachers and musicians, events which necessarily entail different arrangements, it has been Circle's policy not to waive the admission fees for anybody attending PSG save for several work exchanges for working during the gathering as Circle staff. PSG was started in part as a response to the 1980 Pan Pagan Festival, a gathering as top-heavy in big-name Pagans as I have ever attended. From the outset, PSG was meant to be a gathering of ordinary Pagans where all attendees would be as equal as possible and where nobody would have special privileges, including the privilege of getting in free. Since Circle sponsors, organizes, and staffs PSG, it seems to me that it has the right to set the gathering's policies.

It was only after hearing people like me carry on for several years that an organization as all-inclusive as Circle should be as all-inclusive in terminology as in practice and that the W-word was an etymologically incorrect buzzword that Circle decided to adopt broader terminology to describe its focus and range. This was not meant to exclude Wiccans, but to include people following other paths of Nature spirituality, people who feel left out by the term 'Wicca'. Selena herself has clarified this in the Spring 1990 issue of C.N.N.: "It [Circle] is rooted in Wiccan spirituality and will continue to be." "...I will continue to be publicly identified as a Wiccan priestess as I have in the past."

The Fall 1980 issue of C.N.N. enunciated Circle's official policy on providing individual contact references: "Although we will continue to serve all the folks on Circle Network as a clearing house for information about the Earth Religions Movement, it is no longer feasible for us to handle Network referrals on an individual correspondence basis as we have been doing. From this time forward, contact requests will be handled in two ways: through classified ads Network members take out in this paper & through Network, the Pagan Spirit Alliance (or PSA, for short)." However, Selena has advised me that Circle continues to provide as many individual contact references as time and workload permit. In addition, referrals by telephone began last year.

I was present this past spring when the Circle critic mentioned in Isaac's letter to Selena burst into a work party at the farm unexpectedly. In a hot-tempered fashion he made remarks to Dennis and Selena about the future of both Dennis and Circle that Dennis and Selena interpreted as being threatening in nature. Because of this and other actions, the Circle Board of Directors and others involved with Circle decided to end network affiliation with him and his group. Upon this decision, Circle and the other group mutually agreed that they needed to distance themselves from each other in order for the healing process to take place. Several people who have recently disassociated themselves from this group and its leader informed me that their primary reason for doing this was the group's ethics.

Nor is it reasonable to assume that any guide contains or ought to contain a listing of every group claiming to be Neopagan. There are Satanic groups and neo-Nazi groups both parading as Neopagan. There have been groups in which the high priest has forced unwilling female students to provide him sexual favors. And so on. The question is not do we draw a line in accepting advertisement, but where do we draw the line. There has been no definitive answer and until there is, Circle has the right to draw its line where it so chooses.

Preparatory to writing this article, I excavated my file of back issues of C.N.N. and reread every word written about the sanctuary land since the land fund was first established in 1980. The people who originally sent in their visions of Circle Sanctuary seem to have expected the sanctuary to be all things to all Pagans. Circle, however, does not seem to have ever claimed that the sanctuary land would be freely available to members of the Neopagan community to come and go as they pleased. Considering the volume of work done at Circle and the relatively few people doing that work, it isn't even remotely practicable to have people constantly blowing in and out with the winds. Considering the terms of Circle's conditional use permit, it is not even feasible from a legal standpoint.

The conditional use permit Circle received after the zoning dispute with the Town of Brigham and the Iowa County Board severely limits the number of people who can be on Circle's land at any one time (thirty-five adults at most events) and also limits the occasions on which people may be present at Circle. These are most definitely not the conditions Circle wanted, and it's hardly fair to blame Circle for the terms imposed on it by the Iowa County Zoning Commission.

It is precisely because of the terms of its conditional use permit that Circle urges people to arrange in advance to visit the sanctuary, preferably when events are scheduled to take place. Information on how to visit Circle Sanctuary has been printed in most issues of C.N.N. since the Summer 1984 issue. A schedule of events sponsored by Circle is printed in C.N.N. More detailed information on these events is published in the *Sanctuary Circles* newsletter.

The land Circle is located on is part of the driftless bioregion of Wisconsin – it was missed by the four Pleistocene glaciations. As such, it is very hilly land with outcroppings of sandstone. In several places there are sheer drops of a hundred feet or more from these outcroppings. There is a creek on the property, wetlands, and several species of wild preda-

tors. Although children are very welcome at Circle Sanctuary, it is simply not a safe place for unattended children, especially younger children and those with little or no experience of a rustic environment. Therefore, parents who bring small children with them to the sanctuary are told that they need to watch their children and pay attention to where they wander. While Circle would like to provide childcare at all its events, there usually isn't enough staff on hand to do so. Thus, the primary childcare responsibility has to lie with the parents. On rare occasions a workshop involving meditation or trance work is listed as not suitable for small children or others who cannot maintain silence.

I find it quite reasonable to expect people to supervise their children in a potentially hazardous environment. Likewise, I find it appropriate to suggest that participants in a workshop involving meditation or trance work will find the value gained from such a workshop significantly diminished by noisy interruptions.

I have never heard Selena refer to a 'secret' board of directors, nor has the board been necessarily limited to three persons. Back in 1981 there were, in fact, two separate boards, one to handle church matters and the other to handle the acquisition and financing of land for the sanctuary. This separate board, long since coalesced with the church board, had eleven members whose names were published in the Winter 1981 issue of C.N.N.

Some of the people who serve in an advisory capacity to Circle have indicated that they do not wish to have their names published because their religious affiliation is not known outside of the Neopagan community and they wish to keep it that way. If I were Circle, I certainly would not eschew expert advice simply because the person giving it did not deem it safe to emerge from the broom closet.

In the Spring 1990 issue of C.N.N. Selena wrote: "One of the first things I asked Gregory [Rihn] to do after he joined the Circle Board was to help change our present legal governing structure so that more people can get involved. I feel that the Circle constitution and by-laws need to be revised." It can take quite some time to make these types of changes properly, but I have no reason to believe that these changes will not be made. I find it particularly strange to note the way everybody seems to have forgotten that of all the people who recently have been advocating changes at Circle, the very first to do so was Selena herself.

While I would like to see Circle adopt a more democratic structure, my motivations in that regard are strictly personal. Religious organizations do not have to be democratic in nature. Throughout history virtually no religions or religious institutions have been democratic. While historical precedent is no justification for continuing a practice, neither is it a mandate for change. Additionally, it is manifestly unfair to expect Circle to adhere to an organizational format that is not uniformly imposed on all Neopagan organizations. We cannot have a uniform organizational structure unless the Neopagan community in its entirety has a governing body capable of imposing such standards. We are not ready for that now and we may never be.

Until the Neopagan community has a standardized organizational structure, Circle has the right to have any organizational structure allowed by law that it desires.

In the fall of 1990, well before Isaac's letter to Selena was published, Circle sent out a flyer announcing that it had obtained a mortgage for the remaining $90,000 owed on the sanctuary. I immediately sent a copy to Isaac with the notation that Circle obviously had proper financial records.

Apparently a misunderstanding has arisen through the use of accounting terms by nonprofessionals. Isaac seems to be using the term 'books' to mean financial records and Selena has been using it to mean actual physical journals and ledgers. It would probably be better to define 'books' as the financial data collected by any system capable of gathering financial information in a processable manner. Such systems range all the way from computer software to checkbooks that produce carbon copies of the checks written in the format of a cash disbursements journal. Within this definition, Circle does have financial records.

Like most nonprofit organizations, Circle keeps its financial records on the cash receipts and cash disbursements basis. Instead of having ledger sheets with headings such as 'postage', 'telephone', et cetera, Circle has file folders with these headings. During the year receipts are sorted into the appropriate folder. At the end of the year the receipts are compared to the check registers to pick up any missing expenditures. The contents of each folder are then totalled.

This method is an acceptable one for collecting financial information and is certainly no more cumbersome than any other paper method. Circle has generally chosen the correct categories to classify expenses and has mostly placed expenses in the proper categories. The only major problem I have found is a lack of inventory records, a problem ADF shared until I became Pursewarden.

I understand that Circle has at times fallen behind in its financial recordkeeping, but it certainly wasn't because Circle wasn't looking for assistance. Circle has asked me several times to provide accounting assistance, but until very recently I have not had the time to provide anything more than advice. Since money is such a dirty word to so many in the Neopagan community, there aren't that many Pagan accountants, and certainly no others within commuting distance of Circle. This is hardly Circle's fault.

Regarding the publication of Circle's

financial statements, Selena stated in the Spring 1990 issue of C.N.N. that "...a financial report will be included as part of the 1990 Circle Annual Report..." I have been helping Circle prepare the statement of activity that will be included with that report.

Circle has four bank accounts. Most of Circle's cash flows through its checking account. One of its accounts is a savings account routinely required by mortgage lenders. Circle also has a small account in a large Madison bank. Its purpose is to facilitate the conversion of the foreign currency Circle receives to U.S. dollars. Finally, Circle has a money-market account which it has had since the land fund was first established in 1980. It currently serves as a reserve fund. Money not needed in Circle's day-to-day operations is funnelled into this account to take advantage of higher interest rates. Money is drawn from this account whenever Circle's incoming cash flow is insufficient to cover fixed expenses or if an unexpected (emergency) expense arises that has not been provided for elsewhere in Circle's budget. None of these accounts is secret and none is intended to provide for Dennis and Selena should Circle ever fold. Dennis and Selena have each proved that they are quite capable of earning their own incomes in the mundane sphere by the careers they had before becoming involved with Circle.

In case anybody is interested, Dennis and Selena were under vows of poverty until December 31, 1990. They have never made any secret of this. Until this year neither had ever received any salary from Circle. Early last year Dennis and Selena announced their intention to officially abandon their vows of poverty. They have done that this year. Selena has consulted with me about the tax consequences of this step and to help determine equitable salaries for Dennis and her. Dennis and Selena have taken this step because they have realized that they would not have a retirement income in their old age unless they started to earn income in their own right.

A large portion of Dennis' educational expenses have been paid for out of the money Dennis and Selena have earned counseling, teaching, writing, and doing other work. Because of their vows of poverty, they were required to turn this income over to Circle, which then used it to pay the educational expenses.

Lest somebody consider this some sort of financial sleight-of-hand, it should be pointed out that Dennis is working on his doctorate in humanistic psychology. The Circle tradition draws upon the principles of humanistic psychology. Even if Dennis and Selena had not turned their income over to Circle, it would still be appropriate for Circle to provide Dennis with some type of scholarship. Most mainstream churches routinely provide scholarships for both divinity students and for clergy seeking further training in areas related to their ministry.

Selena herself is currently preparing to return to grad school and is busy lining up financial aid. Circle will not be paying any part of her educational expenses.

In my opinion, Circle is fiscally responsible. I have found no evidence of malfeasance by Circle.

Circle is far and away the largest Neopagan organization that exists today. Like any other large organization, it has offended some and disappointed others. It has inspired envy and jealousy in some who have seen the glory of being a well- known Pagan leader guiding a large organization but have discounted the many hours of hard labor a large organization entails. A few saw the income a large organization generates but failed to consider the many expenses inherent in any large organization. Circle has also inadvertently inspired enmity in a few who thought it should abandon its mission to cater to their petty whims or make exceptions to its policies.

A few of these individuals with their own personal axes to grind have been spreading their own particular versions of reality far and wide. As a result there have been all sorts of strange stories about Circle careening about the Neopagan community. Because the overwhelming majority of the members of our community, even normally very astute members like Isaac, have not had the ongoing intimacy with the history, development, and functioning of Circle that I have had, they have had no way to distinguish truth from 'bovine scatology'. I hope I have managed to make this distinction clearer. Finally, *all* of us, not just Selena, need to touch base with a specific Neopagan root—"perfect love and perfect trust".

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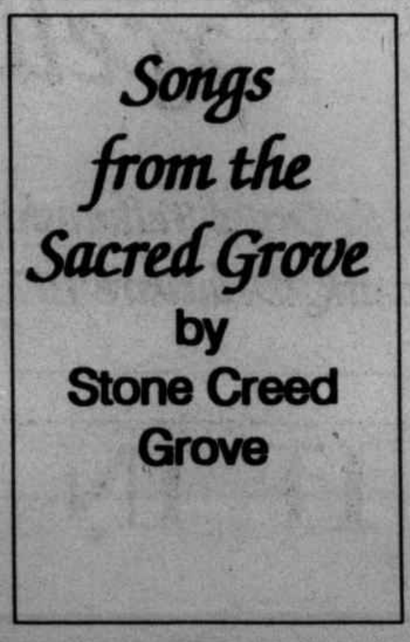

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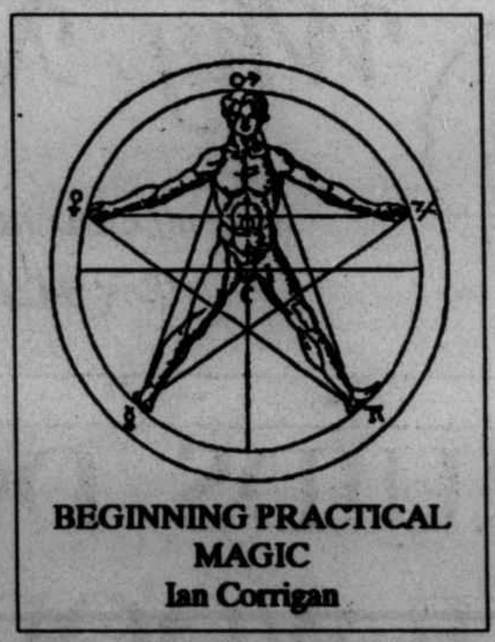

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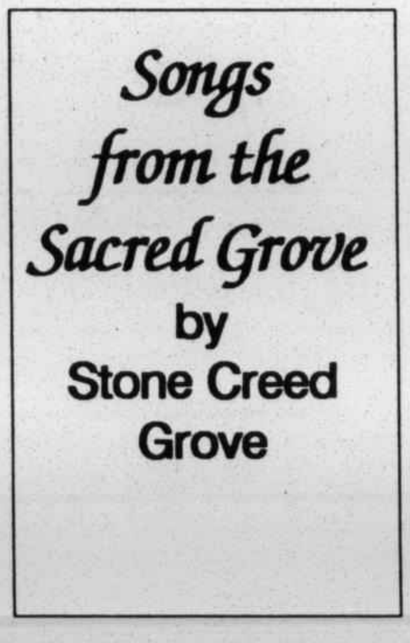

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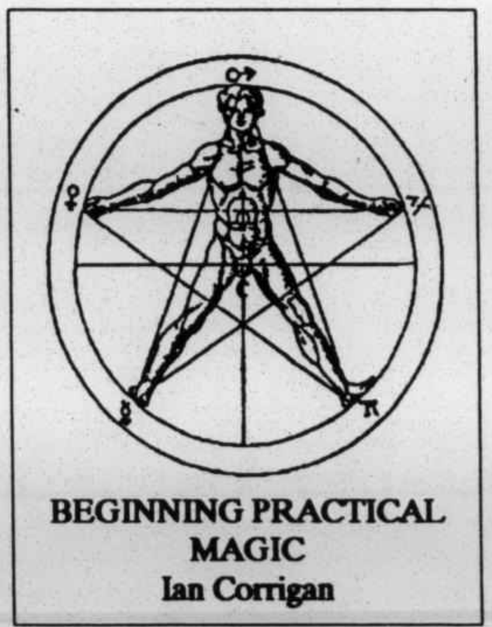

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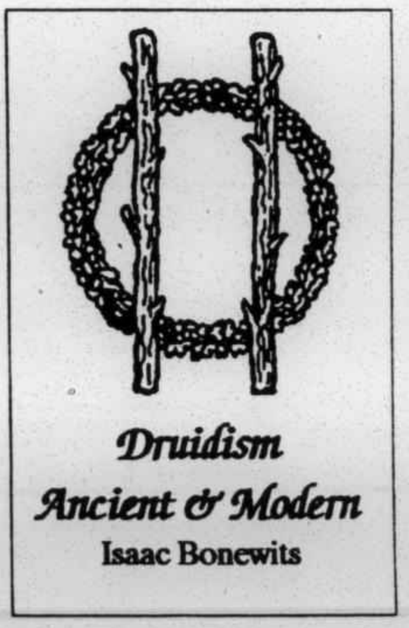

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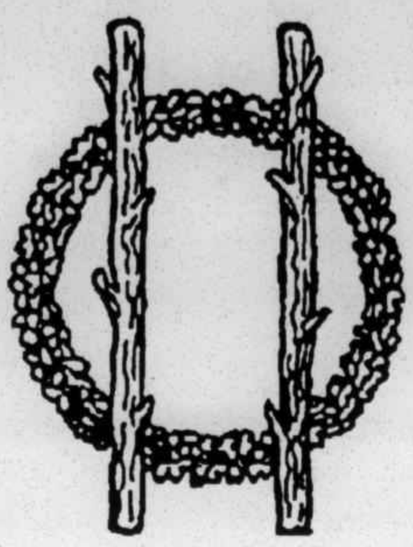
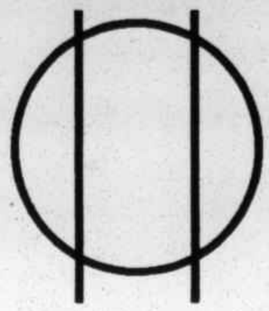


Druid Sigil Pins! — New! 2" tall, heavy cast metal with sturdy fasteners. Made by ADF's own George Hersh. Requested Donation: Bronze $25, Silver $40, and $3.00 P&H per order (up to 10 pins).



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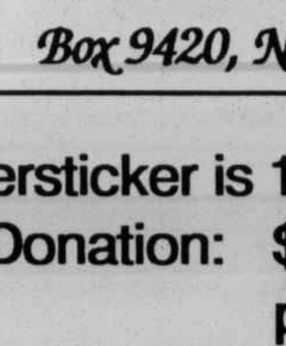

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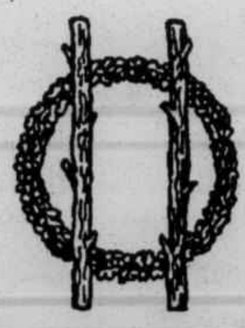

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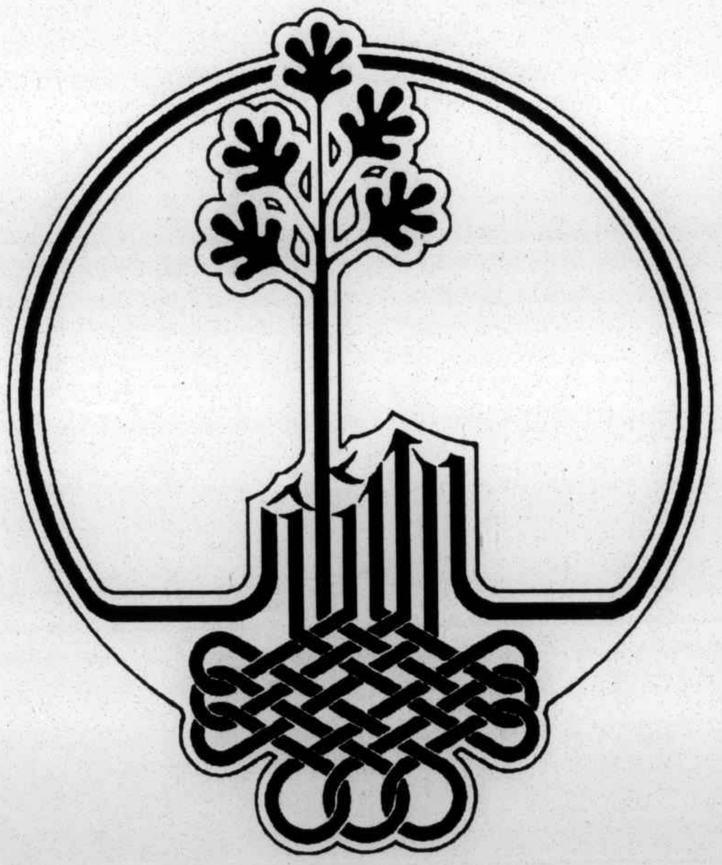

Fall 1991

fiscal management and even basic survival of any corporation – be it nonprofit or for-profit – requires that an accurate set of books be kept. I never saw such a set of books, and never heard of any such books existing. Personally, I suspect such books are not "secret", as is Selena's right to keep them so. I suspect (that as of my last contact with Circle, which was May of 1990) such books did not then and never had existed. I suspect no one at Circle knows with any accuracy how much money has come in, how much money has gone out, and where it has been spent.

I also suspect that this situation has come about not because Selena and Dennis intended to defraud anyone, but because neither of them has any idea of how to keep a set of books, and because Selena's almost irrational passion for secrecy has prohibited the hiring of a competent bookkeeper. As a former editor of mine once said: "Far more businesses are run into the ground through incompetency, ignorance, and mismanagement than are looted by owners and managers with criminal intent. In other words, look for stupidity first and fraud second."

Regarding threats of lawsuits against ADF – I have, truthfully, never heard Selena directly threaten a lawsuit against anyone, that I can remember right now. At the March 31, 1990 meeting, I heard the lawyer (Greg Rihn) on Circle's board of directors threaten lawsuits regarding the mailing list issue and – I believe – against people who criticized Selena openly. However, I urge you to remember that this lawyer is a volunteer, and as such is not being paid for any work he does. Bringing a lawsuit on a contingency basis for something that does not involve direct physical harm is virtually unheard of. I suspect bringing a lawsuit against an individual or a group who openly criticized Circle or asked embarrassing questions of Circle's board of directors would not only be prohibitively expensive – and a challenge to First Amendment rights – but would make a matter of public record things that have so far been "secret." The local newspapers in Madison have already had one juicy religious scandal to write about. I suspect they would enjoy another one.

During two separate staff meetings in 1990, Selena stated she had rejected her former vow of poverty. I do not know how this relates to being supported by the church as opposed to drawing a salary. I do know that both Selena and Dennis have lived in virtual poverty for many years, in regard to lifestyle, clothing, housing amenities, vehicles, and vacations. While I worked at Circle for six months, I saw a significant amount of money coming in from donations, book sales, and newspaper subscriptions and ad sales. I, too, am baffled by where the money has gone.

I truly believe Selena is a good person with a good heart. She means well, and tries to do positive magic. Unfortunately, (and this is just my personal opinion) she has isolated herself out on the Circle farm for many years, away from daily mundane contact with non-Pagans, and in doing so has perhaps lost her "grounding". It is not good for anyone to be surrounded primarily by uncritical followers, people who are in awe of you, those who hang on your words and never question your ideas. Too much respect and too little criticism is unhealthy, which may be why legend says the Caesars had a man stand beside them during parades in their honor, whispering into one ear "The Caesar is but a man and a mortal." Sadly, I'm afraid Selena has no one to do this for her, and as a result has alienated one group of followers right after another with her hubris.

What a church (501C) can do, legally, and what it should do, ethically, are two different issues. Everything Circle has done with donations, name changes, and new directions in focus, is legal. "Ethical" is open to interpretation. Those who disagree with totally legal but ethically questionable changes in a church they supported both financially and emotionally have little recourse but to turn away, sadder and poorer, but much wiser.

Someone (I can't remember where I read it) once said, "Put not your trust in priests." Maybe we should have listened.

From Terry Ingersoll:

I am extremely pleased with your very well written letter to Selena and to the entire Neopagan community. You address the issues very succinctly.

The problem which sickens me the most is that this letter will not reach those who contribute the most money to Circle. For, as you admit, Circle opens the door to Paganism. Once people come inside, they find organizations like your own and usually abandon Circle because it doesn't fulfill their needs for advanced teachings or community. Circle has no continuing training program, so people don't stick around to develop a tradition through Circle. So, the people who give the most (order a book or tape, subscribe to the publications and give a donation) are the people who read *Drawing Down the Moon* or *Spiral Dance*, among other sources, see Circle recommended and write. They are not the ones who will read your letter. Believing in this dream that is so new to them, excited by the possibilities of Paganism, they give freely to the organization which opened the door to them, trusting. Within a year, they usually have found a group in their area and Circle no longer carries the dream, and they contribute money to a local organization.

I see the issue as a moral one more than financial. Lots of organizations keep sloppy books, without defrauding anyone. Financially, I have never felt Circle board members were hoarding money for their own personal benefit. But I have felt that Circle has not been responsible to those who gave so generously. Publications seldom were done on time because Selena and Dennis gave other things higher priority. Selena spent much energy in dissipating herself;

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not concentrating on the needs of the people who contribute. Dennis put more energy in avoiding Circle work by going to school and saying he worked constantly. The land is not accessible, for both of the residents burn themselves out too much to allow more inputs (people) to invade their lives. No matter what their personal problems are, though, they are responsible to these people who contribute. With only the publications to guide them, especially in remote or prejudiced areas, Circle cannot ignore these needs!

From the beginning, I now feel, Selena wanted a private sanctuary. I came to this conclusion by observing how the land is laid out. It would be very hard to have access to the land and have privacy for the residents. The house is right on the road in. It's a one house piece of land. The septic system is outdated, going right into the stream nearby, and will take $30,000 to update for more people because of the rocky landscape. My question is: was this land ever intended to be communal? I doubt it. Selena has always wanted her own place, a retreat, and now she essentially has it. But the guilt is killing her, for she knows what she is doing. She is a very intelligent and caring person. She has gotten what she wanted in a devious way because she was not able to ask directly for what she needed. We have all done this at some time in our lives, but this time it has affected many people.

Selena tried to change the church without asking anyone, and announced that anyone who didn't like it could leave. For, we have no voting rights. All these new people who come in do not realize how autocratic Circle is, that they are essentially supporting Selena and her dream, but her dream is changing and she thought the Pagan community would understand and just follow her. It hasn't happened that way, and I am glad. Perhaps we still cannot reach those who are keeping Circle financially strong, but eventually the voice of the people will be heard, and we will not have an autocratic "circle" inviting people to become involved, but a true democratic Circle: an open, loving place for all to share.

Thanks again for your courage and sense of responsibility.

From Candace M. Delaney:
Thank you for your open letter to Selena, seen in *The Star*, Yule 1990. It has helped to ease some of my confusion in this matter by allowing me a new perspective.

I didn't understand what all the fuss was about, and maybe I still don't. As you said in your PS, each of us has the right to change, screw up, and be otherwise fallible. You forget, we do *not* have to apologize for it. Those judgments are made on other levels.

There was a time when Selena challenged, took the initiative, and made a commitment to create something that changed our lives. We can all take the lessons we learned through her success and extend them and multiply them for good.

If Circle and Selena are one of those many things that come into our lives, change us forever, and then are gone; so be it. We gave her the right to take donations and do whatever has been done with them when we gave her the money without getting specifics in return. We cannot change Selena's path, we can only decide our own. If you feel your trust was betrayed, do something about it. If you demand redress, seek it.

If you disagree with Selena, cease to support her work, but do not speak against anyone.

If a class action lawsuit is what you desire, initiate.

If you feel Selena's actions are not the image you want the public to see, take the challenge and make the commitment to be seen. This applies to us all! (I do not criticize your commitment Isaac, unless you are looking to improve your position in the public arena with a witch hunt.)

There's not much worse than a bunch of whining witches!

Selena does not have to do anything different because she is being true to Selena. Tomorrow she will be different again, as will we all.

Public condemnation, demands for apologies, and anger only creates a level of distrust and negative attitudes. This then becomes the environment the community will have to work within. I find the entire affair to be confusing. Bitching, complaining, avoiding, and otherwise putting blame on Selena does nothing but increase the negativity. What does someone stumbling around in the dark, looking for the illuminated path think? Let us reach inside for our own strengths and join together in a new circle of love and trust having learned from (what we perceive are) the mistakes of others.

Let us celebrate the blessing of the Goddess in her many forms, give thanks to the Gods, welcome the harmony of coming into balance, be reinforcements to the body of our Mother Earth, take our contacts and make new connections, and otherwise, just do it. Maybe GROVE will be in the future what Circle was in the past, maybe Blue Star, maybe ADF. All of them and more should grow and prosper.

Let us thank Selena for holding up yet another mirror so we may see ourselves again. Let us extend to her an open hand, not a fist, in case she needs our help.

May only the brightest of blessings fall upon all our lives.

From Cara Marguerite Drusilla:
I read your open letter concerning the troubles at Circle with interest and with compassion for you, who had to write this, and, for Circle, about whom this is. When the problems at Circle reached my attention last year, I was horrified and deeply critical of those who had sparked the controversy. I saw this as another Neopagan "Holy War," directed at

someone for no just cause. I wrote to those "revolutionary" members of Circle and to Circle, itself. I unilaterally censured the "revolutionaries" for meddling in matters of business that I felt were outside their purview and I supported Circle. I have read the minutes of that famous meeting and was saddened by the hostility and lack of any clear answers coming out of that meeting. People seemed only to talk and never to listen to what was being said, so busy were they preparing their own statements. So many things went unanswered and the minutes left me with a strange and empty feeling. It was an exercise in futility; it raised a huge cone of sadness. Those minutes are powerful reading.

In the months to come, still writing to both sides, it became clear to me that the "revolutionaries," while perhaps wrong in their initial methods of reaching out to the rest of us, were not wrong in that attempt, and that what they had to say was important for us all to hear, and, moreover, *that they were right in their concerns.* And, I thank them. They began something that we must all think about, *but, they were not wrong to begin it.* The Neopagan community, if it is to survive as a visible and viable alternative to other paths, must be able to stand the scrutiny of friends and enemies alike. Churches or public "member-supported" lands must have a financial base that is open to anyone who asks to see it, as are the books of most public charities in this country. At the very least, these books must be beyond reproach; must be kept accurately and if the organization is incorporated as a public charity (i.e. a non-profit organization), those books and financial statements have to be filed yearly with the I.R.S. for tax purposes to retain non-profit status.

One year later, with an article published in the newsletter started by those "revolutionaries," my own written concerns for Circle completely ignored within Circle, my attitude has changed about Selena Fox and Circle. I still believe that Ms. Fox must be respected for all the good work she has done in the past, but, that she must also be held accountable for those things within the running of Circle that demand accountability. This is not "personal," it is "business." And, any good business person will expect honesty and accountability with whatever business that person is dealing, and, will know that that same accountability applies back. (If you doubt it, look at the recent S & L scandal effecting our banking community.) None of this is a great mystery but is just a normal part of doing business – it is assumed. That assumption of Circle's honesty is, perhaps, one of the things that angers people most when they first read or hear that "Circle is under attack." It is hard to realize that Circle has betrayed the trust of all of us who have sent it money, referred people to it, loved and honored it, and, considered it a shining example of what has become an international Neopagan network and holy place. For Selena Fox to set Circle apart from normal business practices while handling hundreds of thousands of member's dollars is sheer folly and begs for trouble. That she and Circle have been doing it for so long without complaint from anyone is outrageous! But, nothing is forever; the truth is out.

I was on the Board of Directors of an international environmental organization working for threatened and endangered species and I know how careful we were. Any hint of wrongdoing would have blown us out of the water. We had just as many "enemies" as any Neopagan Church does. We had to satisfy the state and federal government, whom we often opposed, and, we were working on an international policy level and were active members of international treaty organizations. Our handling of our funds *had* to be above reproach; our effectiveness began with accountability.

The mishandling of funds or even the hint of mishandling of funds can destroy any organization. Even Circle. Add to that the misinformation or lack of information coming from Circle and the stage is set for confrontation. Circle has developed a siege mentality that cannot be ignored. One is either "with them," (i.e. does not question anything) or "against them." This attitude is puerile and self-serving. Frankly, I expected better from them. Their behavior is not particularly intelligent nor have they addressed any of the very serious problems that face Circle in any substantive way. Mostly, it seems that Circle is conducting business as usual and ignoring the problem until it goes away. Their arrogance over all of this is, perhaps, the most troubling of all. It is stunning in all of its ramifications!

Circle has filled such a special place for people in the Neopagan movement for so many years, it is painful, indeed, to learn that an organization one has trusted and grown to love is sick in its heart, maybe corruptly so. Can Circle be saved? Of course it can. IF those in positions of power within Circle wish it to be and take the very positive measures to see that it looks back to its Neopagan

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roots of morality and ethical dealings and makes the changes which will satisfy all people that the inner-workings of Circle are reputable, beyond reproach, and, something that all who love Circle could emulate. As one of the Grandmothers of Neopagan organizations within the United States and with a reach outside this country, Circle should lead other groups by example, not show those who look to Circle for guidance that the founders of Circle consider themselves outside the law, insulated by their egos. Circle is still well loved, but it must deserve that love. There may come a time when the Neopagan community stops being indulgent over the problems within Circle and simply divorces itself from Circle. That will be a loss. But, that radical change will not have been lightly taken. And, the Neopagan community will have sent a clear message to all within it that honesty, freedom of information, and integrity are essential, vitally inherent to the functioning of *any* group. The Gods demand no less from us. If we are to honor Them and follow Their ways, we must be honest and honorable in our lives. That goes for Circle, the "revolutionaries" at Phoenix Arcana, you and ADF, and me, in the running of my Lyceum. No one is above the Law. *No one.* And, one ignores the Law at one's peril.

From Greg of Amaranth Energies:

Your Open Letter To Selena Fox now circulating around the country is a shining example of your arrogance and what is rotten in the Neopagan community. Your so-called investigative reporting is rife with unsubstantiated rumor, patronizing remarks, character assassination, and no real evidence of any misconduct on Selena's part.

One can only conclude that this is another low water mark in your incessant campaign against the Craft and Wiccans in general. From your period at *Gnostica*, to the diatribes in the old *Green Egg*, to the more recent *Fireheart* panel, your attacks on Wicca are well documented.

Whether you like it or not, there is nothing wrong with Circle being a hierarchical organization with a small Board of Directors and Selena in charge. Many Wiccan groups and Christian churches have similar structures and function quite well with them. Pope John Paul's Catholic Church is not a democracy, yet, for the most part, it is an efficient, ethical, religious institution.

The proof of an organization is in what it does, not in how detailed its bylaws and membership requirements are on paper. We have had personal experience with many dubious so-called democratic groups with piles of published bylaws, ground rules, financial reports, behavior codes, meeting minutes, etc. Creating bureaucracy does not guarantee quality, ethical behavior, well-spent funds, or for that matter, democracy. Such institutions are easily manipulated and controlled by politically active, power oriented individuals. Many small groups become paralyzed by process and political infighting in the name of so-called democracy. Resources are wasted, and goals are never realized.

Circle, on the other hand, as you jealously acknowledge, is a well-run, financially lucrative, and successful organization. Thousands of people have been introduced to the Craft and Paganism by the tireless efforts of Selena Fox and Circle. For over sixteen years she has regularly published the most informative and best of the Pagan publications – *Circle Network News (C.N.N.)*. Selena has been an excellent spokesperson for all that is good and honorable about Paganism. Her hard work and leadership in obtaining Pagan legal rights and church recognition is unsurpassed. PSG remains one of the largest and best organized of the Pagan summer festivals: even if they don't pay you to attend.

Circle remains the best of the Pagan information and referral networks. If some of their more obnoxious detractors are removed from referral lists – so much the better. You publicly state that you will no longer refer people to Circle while demanding that Selena refer inquiries to people she dislikes or no longer trusts. Why should she adhere to any standards set by you; especially when you refuse to abide by them yourself?

Members of Amaranth Energies were also disturbed when we received the unsolicited hit piece referred to as a transcript of the revolutionary members of Circle's meeting with Selena. The conclusions we drew were quite different from yours. Selena impressed us as very brave, self-controlled and magnanimous in confronting a set-up, star chamber, inquisition conducted in part by a den of thieves. When Selena's friend and attorney pointed out that theft of church property (Circle's confidential mailing list), was an illegal and actionable offence, the thieves ludicrously attempted to justify their actions by comparing them to civil rights protests. Rosa Parks or Martin Luther King would have never stolen sacred property while using the ill-gotten gains to slander the good name of a church. It sure looks like these people did just that, and by any reasonable standards openly committed serious breaches of ethical conduct if not crimes.

The same individuals then demanded that Selena give up the ministry she spent most of her adult life building, and turn over all church assets to them. Fortunately for us all she rejected this absurd proposal. Whatever dispute these neophytes had with Selena's policies or teaching methods, they must pale by comparison to their deliberately public exposition of rude and boorish behavior.

About the money: you refer to "enormous sums" and "hundreds of thousands of dollars" in ominous conspiratorial terms. Yet, you present no credible evidence that one dime of donated money has been misappropriated by Selena, Dennis or anyone else. It would be nice to believe that the Neopagan community is large or generous enough to regularly donate hundreds of thou-

sands of dollars to Circle or anyone else. Our experience leaves us with serious doubts. So, who are your "reliable sources" and what are the "enormous sums" to which you allude? You correctly point out that Selena and Dennis do not live lives of luxury while continuing to maintain that they are misusing Circle funds. Where is your proof? You have publicly stated for many years that Pagan clergy should be paid for their services, while implying that it is somehow scandalous for Selena to allegedly write some personal checks and Dennis to pay for some classes. Who are you kidding?

As you are quick to point out, the fruits of your priestly efforts have amounted to less than "most members of the Neopagan community," and it "infuriates" you to see all that money flowing into Circle. Do we detect a major case of sour grapes twisted into a pathological vendetta against someone better qualified to make their Pagan ministry pay?

While providing no evidence of massive fraud or any wrong doing, you then attempt to compare Selena and Circle to the Bakkers and P.T.L.: warning Pagans that "the shoes are now on our feet." Is this yet another unsubstantiated, cheap shot calculated for maximum shock value and negative effect? Or what? Jim Bakker was convicted of tax, real estate, and mail fraud in court. Comparing them to Circle is most unfair.

Regarding the land: Selena has never to our knowledge stated or implied that donations to the land fund imparted individual ownership rights or open, unrestricted access to Circle Farm. When considering questions of liability, fire safety, damage to the land from over use, and conservative mid-western neighbors, access must of necessity be controlled. Not doing so would be negligent. If Selena tires of the witch wars and continued negativity in the Pagan community, and turns the land over to friends of The Earth or Greenpeace, I may not agree with her. But as high priestess of Circle she has every right to do so. Members of Amaranth Energies have freely donated to Circle's property and legal defense funds because we felt they were doing a good job and providing valuable community service. We do not feel that these donations give us veto power over what Selena says or does, or that our donations constitute unlimited free access for us to move in at Circle Farm.

If Selena wishes to widen her horizions concerning nature mysticism or environmental spirituality, that is just fine. She may be on to something. At this time Circle does not appear to us to be any less Wiccan. For those who must hear the "W" word in every other sentence to feel secure, they are free to withdraw from Circle and send their donations to the Frosts, Lady Sheba, Glinda the Good or whomever.

If people want to know what is being done with their donations, they can read "Around Circle Sanctuary" in C.N.N. Plenty of information is provided. They could also attend the events and workshops at Circle Farm their donations help support. As for positive steps Circle is taking with its Board of Directors, bylaws and accounting, they can read C.N.N. for timely updates.

If people need to feel secure by reading piles of bylaws, codes of behavior, financial reports, training systems, etc., they can join you and other careful consumers and Pagan politicians in a number of organizations like A.D.F. There is something for everybody.

Your demands that Selena do public penance for unspecified sins are ridiculous, vituperative and repugnant. We still have freedom of religion in this country, meaning that Selena is not required to conform Circle to yours or any one else's vision of a proper theocracy.

Though you are obviously daring Selena to jump in the ring and mud wrestle with you, we are hopeful that she will remain positive, ignore your recriminations, and continue her ministry that is an inspiration and credit to us all.

Unfortunately however, contrary to your opinion, your widely disseminated, rude, and arrogant attacks are very relevant to the situation at Circle. If Selena and Dennis are forced to pull back from their positive Pagan ministry to deal with the bile that you have dumped on the community, we will all pay the price. The damage may be irreparable.

You appear to be deliberately fanning the flames of Pagan fratricide and witch war: the most vile and self-destructive tendency continuing to plague our community.

As you prophetically point out, "Hubris, the overwhelming pride that offends the Gods" can have "disastrous results for our whole community." This you appear determined to show us all.

A Response to Greg from Deborah Lipp

I cannot possibly delineate all my objections to your letter, nor can I effectively point out all its internal inconsistencies – there are too many of both. Let me start with a few obvious ones:

You accuse Isaac of being anti-Wiccan, then criticize him for stating that Circle should remain Wiccan, then accuse him of participating in "witch wars." Is he a witch or ain't he? Is he fighting for or against Wicca? You don't seem to know. In

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fact, Isaac is a third-degree priest of the NROOGD tradition, making him as Wiccan as anyone. If sticking out your neck, and exposing yourself to possible attack and ridicule in order to keep Wicca as honest, ethical, scholarly, and lasting as possible, constitutes being anti-Wiccan, then we need more anti-Wiccans!

You criticize Isaac for "character assassination," and claim that personal attacks are detrimental to our community. They are, indeed. Why then did you circulate a letter calling Isaac "arrogant," "patronizing," and "pathological"? Is this to demonstrate how to debate a controversy without "cheap shots"?

You demand evidence of financial misappropriation, then state that writing personal checks out of a church account is not misappropriation, then sneer at the notion of reading a financial report. Therefore, what evidence could satisfy you? We could show you a financial report, but you wouldn't read it – no, we couldn't, because Circle has never published one to anyone's knowledge, and *that* is the problem. How do we provide evidence for the lack of something's existence, except eyewitness accounts?

Yet you say those eyewitnesses don't exist, that Isaac merely published rumor. You sneer at the phrase "investigative journalism," yet what journalist would publish the names of anonymous sources? None of Isaac's sources, not those against Selena, nor her supporters, nor those who remain neutral, were willing to have their names published. That is their right. Isaac's obligation was to document their material, to check it with Selena, and then publish the most accurate information he could.

I will now come forward as one witness, albeit a minor one. In 1987 I co-led a ritual at PSG. Before that ritual, and at all rehearsals, photography was expressly banned from the ritual. Nonetheless, Selena leapt into the middle of the circle and snapped pictures. The next thing I knew, friends called to tell me that my picture was in *C.N.N.* If that wasn't enough, the picture was reprinted "with permission" (not mine) in *The Utne Reader*. At no time was I, nor other people who appeared in that picture, ever contacted. I realize this is not the evidence of fraud you demand, but it does corroborate that one of Isaac's sources is genuine. So are the others.

So many of the important issues raised in Isaac's letter, and in the original "revolutionary" mailing, are not addressed by you, that I must assume you don't care about them. In fact, you state, "Whatever dispute these neophytes had with Selena's policies" is unimportant, because they were "rude." If your standards were universal, the history of free exchanging of ideas and of social change would be dismal indeed. Neophytes! How many years in the Craft does one need before one can object to perceived wrongdoing?

You state that there is nothing wrong with Circle being hierarchical, or with Selena not paying speakers for PSG, or with Selena receiving pay as Circle's leader, or with her limiting access to the land. I agree in all cases. You fail to understand Isaac's objections, which are to a difference in *stated* and *actual* policies.

If Circle is a hierarchy, it is disturbing that so many of its members feel otherwise. If Selena would publish bylaws – a step you object to – then members would *know* what, if any, democratic rights they have, and could make informed choices. If Selena objects to paying, or covering any expenses of, speakers at PSG, then why does she demand those same perks when she speaks elsewhere? If Selena wishes to be paid for her work, I believe it is an excellent idea. But dipping into the collection plate (i.e. writing checks for personal expenses from church funds) is not the proper way to do so. If access to the Farm must be limited, then publish the limitations, and give members no illusions about what their donations do and do not entitle them to. What Isaac asks for, in other words, is consistency, honesty, and openness. However, someone who believes that the Catholic Church "is an efficient, ethical, religious institution" is unlikely to understand that.

Some other points: You say "many small groups become paralyzed by process". Circle is not a small group, and running it like one may be one cause of the current problems. You refer to Circle's mailing list as "stolen sacred property" – is all church property *sacred*? Including toilet paper, dishwashing liquid, computers, and mailing lists? You object to the comparison to the Bakkers because Selena has not been convicted of any crime, yet Isaac states that the comparison is apt because the Christian community refused to criticize its leaders until things had escalated to a terrible point – must we make the same mistake, and wait until the evidence bowls us over with its weight?

You say that Isaac "demands that Selena do public penance". This is not true. Isaac made "suggestions" in response to a published request by Selena. His suggestions included that Selena admit that mistakes had been made. Do you consider that penance? Or that such a suggestion violates Selena's religious freedom? I'm baffled.

Isaac's article addresses specific issue after specific issue, while stating more than once how painful the article was to write. You, on the other hand, addressed few issues and seemed to enjoy using emotional, insulting language ("repugnant," "bile," "diatribe," "jealously," "obnoxious," and so on). Isaac has openly asked for responses from Selena and the community, and will publish as many as space permits, including Selena's and yours. If "witch wars" are backbiting attacks devoid of real debate, then I suggest that your finger may be pointing in the wrong direction.

The Chalice and The Blade — A Review and Discussion

by Eran

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History is like a vast Rorschach test. It is a series of symbols upon which one can hang all the hopes or fears, loves and hates, that also inform one's personal life. The biggest difference though is (in theory, at least) the classic Rorschach test is not performed consciously; that is, a psychiatric patient does not set out to find or create symbols that will match preconceived notions or intents. This is not always so with interpreters of history.

If we accept these statements to be so, what a writer claims about the past says at least as much about the inner workings of the mind of the writer as it does about "actual" history. Further, being a series of symbols, history can be presented to the reader in any way the writer wishes. A presentation of history can be used for several purposes, used, for instance, to make particular points or to place particular ideas and associations of ideas into the mind of the reader.

Not only is there the choice of which symbols to hold up for the reader's scrutiny — and sins of omission here are as telling as crimes of commission — but there is also the option of how to represent the meaning of those symbols. If Person A killed Person B, is that a bad thing? Was Person B a John Kennedy or a Nazi general, a rapist or a child? Perhaps Person B was in a hopeless coma, or was trying to kill Person A. Do we also tell these details in relating the story? Do we call the killing a murder, an assassination, an execution, self defense, a sacrifice for the greater good, death with dignity, euthanasia?

Any book about history is, and must be, a philosophical essay or religious tract, most especially so those books that purport to finally tell the real truth about what happened. Many historians and archaeologists realize this, if unconsciously. Some will write, overtly to finally let the truth be known, but oftentimes covertly to effect a revolution; sometimes just within the thinking of their field, but just as often within the larger World community.

It is vital to understand the meaning, use, and power of the concept of symbol. Symbols mean, like Humpty Dumpty's words, exactly what we want them to mean, no more and no less, and it is utter nonsense to talk about what they "objectively" mean. "Meaning" is something that takes place in us, not in the world of testable, objective fact. So in any work of historical interpretation, it is not the least dishonest to reinterpret symbols in any way we choose, in order to advance our cause — so long as the reader is aware that's what we're doing. The only possible dishonesty comes when we intentionally lie about how a particular culture interpreted its own symbols, or when we intentionally omit details in order to distort the picture.

Many feminist historians have realized the power of reinterpreted symbols, and have seen they can advance a very different view of history than that usually presented. Riane Eisler's *The Chalice and the Blade* is a very good example of this trend. The book is based firmly in Marija Gimbutas' work (see *The Language of the Goddess*), which is an effort to see all positive, life-affirming images in history as epiphanies of the Goddess, of feminist ideals, and of women.

Contrary to what one might think, these various concepts are not necessarily related. If they were, such books as this would serve no purpose, for their points would already have been made. Eisler and Gimbutas are part of a movement to make these ideas related, that is, to interpret them in such an interlocked manner one can hardly think of one without immediately conjuring up the others.

Here are a couple of examples of the careful manipulation and interpretation of symbols in Eisler's book. We are told early, on page 2, that red ocher, sprinkled onto bodies in Paleolithic graves, is "the surrogate for the life-giving or menstrual blood of woman". This is part of her argument that the culture of Old Europe made "the association of the powers that govern life and death with woman".

Now, it is absolutely true (in whatever sense you wish to take the word "true") that red ocher has, in many societies, represented menstrual blood. This is because, in those societies, red ocher represents blood, of any type — foot blood, arm blood, circumcision blood, the blood of an innocent victim, whatever — the stuff that runs in your veins and arteries. Obviously, menstrual blood is still blood, so also obviously, it is one of the many things represented by red ocher.

But if we choose to mention just one source of blood, and present that blood as different from blood from other sources, we can "prove" that women's menstrual blood was considered more important in societies that sprinkled red ocher on their dead than was any other "kind" of blood. Such is the force of the interpretation of symbols: the dead were not being given back blood, which represents life; they were being sprinkled with menstrual blood, which represents the power of "woman".

The intent here is to make these connections in the mind of the reader, so that we begin to see exclusively menstrual blood; and therefore exclusively women, as life-giving, nurturing, and loving; and further, that we begin to see red ocher-using cul-

tures as based exclusively around "feminine" principles and ideals.

Conversely, Eisler seldom uses the word "male" without modifying it with such words as "cruel," "dominating," or "brutal". She treats "male violence" as if it was one word; male is violent, violent is male. In Eisler's hands, these are all powerful techniques, brilliantly used.

Once these sorts of connections are quite firmly implanted, it becomes easy to claim that a prehistoric society, about whose social structure we know next to nothing, must have been ruled by men if it shows signs of having been involved in wars, and must have been run by women if it looked peaceful and cooperative.

An example of this is the civilization of ancient Crete, which showed many signs of being peaceful and valuing arts and learning. Since this is so, and since there are few, if any, paintings or sculptures of rulers of either sex, Eisler assures us that Crete was matrilineal, matrifocal, and had Queens on its thrones. Most other writers, such as, for instance, Campbell and Frazer, talk of Kings, and see evidence of sacrifice, ritual regicide. These ideas don't fit Eisler's view of Crete however, so she ignores them. What evidence one presents depends entirely upon the view of history one hopes to advance in the minds of the readers.

Throughout Paleolithic religious art, there are thousands of opportunities to interpret history, by choosing symbols, by grafting meanings onto symbols, by rejecting symbols. Gimbutas and Eisler talk extensively about Goddess statues, and about certain animals and various signs on ancient tools and cave walls which they interpret as representative of female energies. They attempt to show, by the great numbers of such symbols, that the societies which produced them were Goddess-centered in their religious and social thinking.

Neither writer says much about images of horses, other than to interpret these as masculine – a common enough view among historians and anthropologists – and to point out the violent "Kurgan" invaders (known to most scholars as "Indo-Europeans") were very big on horse imagery. Yet, by far, horses are THE most common animal in Paleolithic art. If preponderance shows orientation, and if the horse is masculine, then it is simply not true that Paleolithic people were Goddess-female-oriented.

Further, there is evidence, as pointed out by Hadingham (*Secrets of the Ice Age*), Piette, and others, that horses were domesticated as long as 40,000 years ago, long before the "Kurgan" peoples made use of them – in other words, in the midst of the period that is claimed to be the heyday of the worship of the Great Mother. Such is the force of omission of chosen facts and symbols; we are led to believe only male-dominated cultures tamed horses and utilized extensive horse imagery, and that male symbols such as horses are a good indicator of violence and repression, when it just ain't so.

It is also important to note that not all interpreters agree with Gimbutas on what is a male symbol and what is a female symbol. Most particularly, Gimbutas seems to rely on a principle of association whereas others, such as Leroi-Gourhan (*Treasures of Prehistoric Art*), rely on balance. For example, if symbol A is unquestionably a female symbol (as with inverted triangles), Gimbutas would tend to see a nearby symbol B (say, a pair of parallel lines) as also a female symbol, under the assumption that nearby symbols repeat and reinforce the same concept. Leroi-Gourhan, however, would claim the nearby symbol would be put there in order to achieve balance and partnership (my word for it), and was therefore probably a male symbol.

Since Gimbutas started with a couple of undeniably female symbols, and since, somewhere in Paleolithic art, every symbol is associated with nearly every other, she is able to claim that practically everything was intended as a female symbol. Leroi-Gourhan, on the other hand, shows balance and egalitarian emphasis. His analysis shows about half of all symbols were female-oriented, and about half were male.

The difference rests in what associations one is trying to make in the mind of the reader. Eisler likes the idea of showing some selected, presumably peaceful, ancient cultures concentrated heavily on female symbolism, so she follows Gimbutas. If one followed Leroi-Gourhan, the conclusion would be that Paleolithic peoples put equal emphasis on both masculine and feminine aspects of Deity; and therefore, presumably, on both masculine and feminine aspects of people and culture.

Let us examine one point of evidence presented by Eisler, which is a typical case of selectivity in interpretation and presentation of both symbols and historical fact. She mentions the opulent and well-appointed Sumerian tomb of Queen Shub-ad as evidence that even as late as the First Dynasty of Ur, women were held in high esteem. She says a male body was found laid out next to the Queen's, a man who might have been her husband. If so, he hardly received the same treatment and respect as did Queen Shub-ad. Eisler interprets this as indicating Sumerian Queens, and therefore, women, were held in higher regard.

In truth, Shub-ad's tomb is a spectacularly opulent one, having been filled with a great number of lovely items and treasures. Interestingly, Eisler previously had negative things to say about the "Kurgan" habit of burying their dead chieftains in opulent graves, stating this was an indicator of the very violent and repressive cultural models she disapproves of. If opulent graves truly do indicate a repressive culture, then a Queen in one would seem to imply either a) women were as guilty of participating in these repressive cultures as men were, or b) respect

for women does not stop a culture from being repressive, or possibly both. Eisler does not pursue these thoughts.

It is a shame too that Eisler does not describe Shub-ad's tomb in any detail. A wonderful description of it can be found in Volume II, Part 1 of Campbell's *Historical Atlas of World Mythology*. Buried with Shub-ad were not just that one other male body, but roughly sixty other bodies, men and women. This was an example of a burial custom (called, among other things, "suttee") that goes back at least eighty thousand years, in which an important person's entire household is buried when that person dies. Graves at La Ferrassie and Shanidar are examples. See Vol I, Part 1 of Campbell's *Atlas*.

Eisler doesn't like this custom when it comes to burying kings and tribal chieftains. But she is careful to avoid mentioning it in the death of a Queen – and also doesn't mention the custom's extreme age, preferring to allow the reader to think such an idea came from the male-oriented "Kurgans" rather than from the Paleo- and Neolithic Goddess-worshippers.

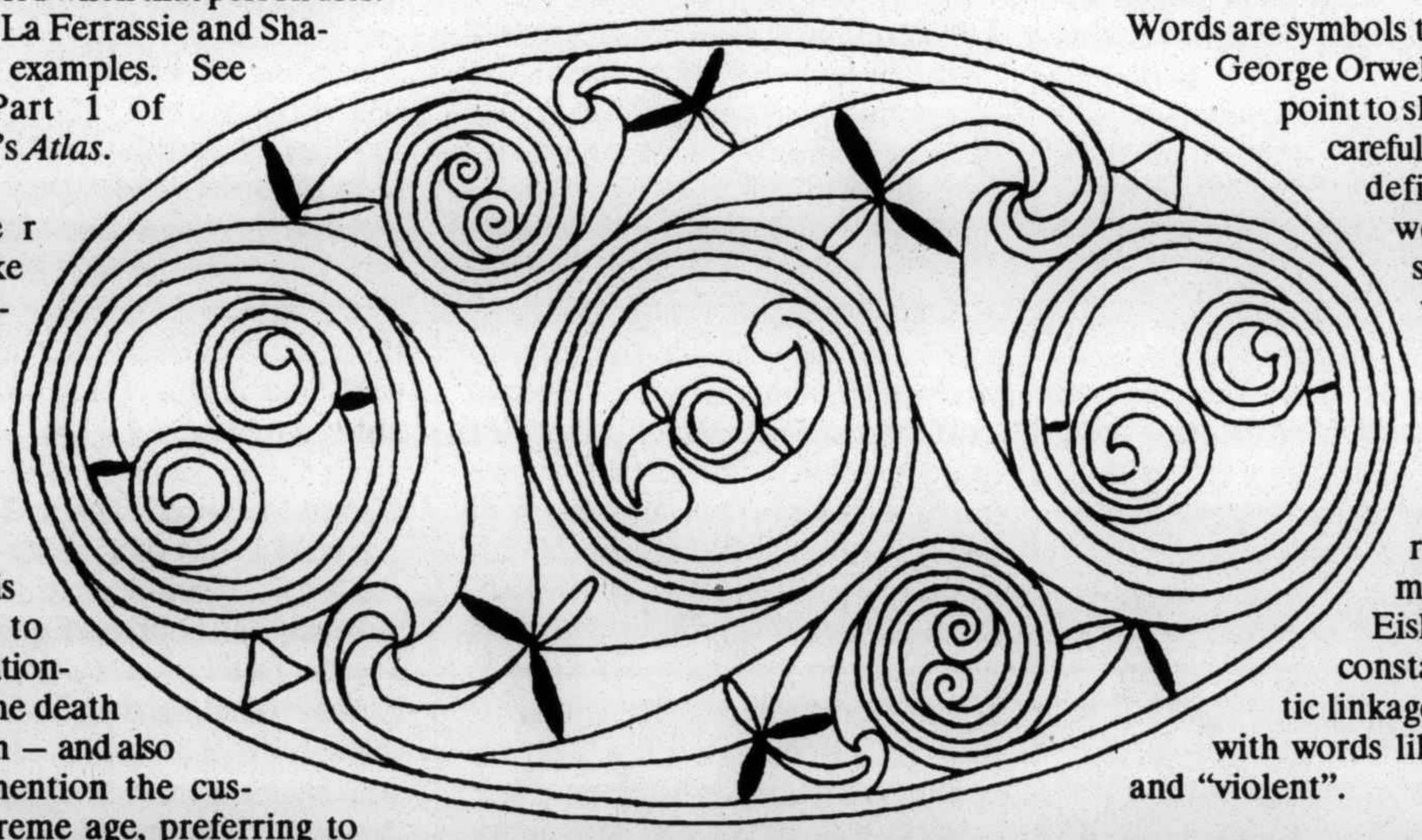
Nor does she mention that human and animal sacrifice, other customs she disapproves of, were first practiced by Mother-Goddess-worshipping agricultural peoples; the very peaceful and loving society that was overrun by the violent "Kurgans". Instead, she follows a growing trend of "questioning" this, since it doesn't fit the idea of what Goddess-worshipping peoples were like.

Opulent graves too go back a long time. It is simply not true (in whatever sense you take that phrase) that male-dominated Indo-Europeans invented the custom of so honoring their important dead. There are graves throughout Old Europe, going back a hundred thousand years or more, in which tools, ornaments, flowers, weapons, and other items were placed in a grave along with the body. Once more, see Campbell.

If, as Eisler claims, such practices as decorated graves and suttee are evidence of violent, hierarchic cultures, then the golden age of worship of the Goddess either did not exist or was as violent as any other; conversely, if Old Europe was as peaceful as she claims, then the supposedly "male-oriented" customs such as suttee and decorated burials, horse imagery, and so on, are as prevalent in peaceful as in violent societies. The point Eisler tries to make, that recognition of supposedly male imagery is a good indicator of the violence level of a culture, simply does not stand up to scrutiny.

By the way, the male body next to Shub-ad was probably a favorite consort of hers, but was not the King, her husband. His name was A-bar-gi, and his tomb was found below hers, and was every bit as opulent.

This kind of lack of historical knowledge, or selectivity in its presentation, disturbs me in a book such as Eisler's, because it is difficult to know what other historical statements to trust – as when she says, in the introduction, that Columbus proved the World was round. He did no such thing, as it had been known for at least 5000 years previous that the World was round. Columbus wanted to prove it was economically feasible to sail westward across the Atlantic from Europe to China and India. He was wrong. Since he didn't discover any lands then known to Europeans, had he been intending to show that the world was round, he would have failed there as well.



Words are symbols too, and, as George Orwell made it a point to show us, the careful use and redefinition of words can shape our view of history, and therefore, of ourselves. I have already commented on Eisler's almost constant semantic linkage of "male" with words like "brutal" and "violent".

The intellectual current of which Eisler is a part is in the process of coining a vast number of new words – equalitarian, gylanic, androcratic, Kurgan, and so forth – for the purposes of both expressing certain new shades of meaning, and hiding others. The reason for this seems to be to allow one to make sexist statements without appearing to be sexist.

"Kurgan" is not actually a new word. It is a new use of an old word. Neither the Indo-Europeans, nor any historians or anthropologists, nor anyone else ever used this word to represent a people. A "kurgan" is a particular type of burial mound used

by a particular group of Indo-European tribes. Eisler uses it in an attempt to cement our view of these people as being obsessed with death, and with causing death. Male-oriented people are the Death-Mound People, as contrasted with the female-oriented, life-affirming Goddess people.

Eisler decries "dominator" cultures, and approves of "partnership" cultures, two words carefully devoid of gender- stereotyped overtones; then, she consistently associates the word "male" with violence and domination, "woman" with peace and cooperation. Halfway though the book, she replaces "dominator" with the term "androcratic," to describe the male-dominated, violent cultures heralded by the "Kurgan" peoples; a word intentionally designed, she tells us, to indicate that "male" cultures are, by definition, "dominators", whereas "woman" cultures are, also by definition, "partnerships".

She avoids use of the terms "matriarchy" and "patriarchy" because both imply, to her, dominator modes, and she does not allow the possibility that a woman-oriented society would ever do such a thing as engage in domination. Yet the paradigm she holds up as the ideal social structure is that of a mother and a child; exactly what the word "matriarchy" means, i.e., "rule by the mother".

Eisler is, of course, not the only one to compare the ideal model for society to a mother and child. Barbara Walker (*The Skeptical Feminist*) does this as well. The true nature of this relationship is there made plain, as Walker speaks of the mother "owning" the child. Since the parent-child relationship is good, and is not a dominator model, someone might point out that "patriarchy" is also a parent-child relationship, rule by the father. This would force one to admit either that our culture is not a true patriarchy, or is not actually male dominated, or the goal Eisler is after might be unabashedly sexist; but that, in any case, the terms "dominator" and "partnership" are a smokescreen.

This verbal circumlocution makes it more difficult to see some of the contradictions in Eisler's presentation; but contradictions there are, nonetheless.

For example, she insists the cultures of Old Europe were "gylanic", by which she means men and woman were equally valued ("gy" for woman, "an" for male, with the "l" as the link or connection). Yet she then goes out of her way to show how many of the activities in Old Europe's culture were performed or controlled, she says, by only one of the two sexes (in this case, women); and further, how almost every aspect of that culture should be interpreted as an epiphany of woman-ness. In other words, an emphasis on "woman" is the same, in her mind, as equality.

A concentration on women and what she views as feminine values is then equated to equalitarianism (roughly the same idea as egalitarianism). Conversely, of course, an androcratic society, one that concentrates on men and what she views as masculine values, is anything but equalitarian, and is also invariably violent and warlike.

This is the kind of firm association of words and symbols which she attempts to make. One should not think of "gylany", i.e., peace and freedom and equal valuation of all, without thinking of feminism. One should not think of war and violence and inequality without thinking of men.

According to her definitions, this seems to me to be a very non- gylanic attitude. It would seem she is trying to bolster one gender's image at the expense of the other. She even mentions "man's infamous inhumanity to man – and to woman" as though inhumanity is a masculine trait, and is something women are not capable of.

If one followed Leroi-Gourhan's interpretations of Old Europe, the culture one would see would be far more equalitarian and gylanic than anything described by Gimbutas or Eisler. And, since Eisler admits cultures in that era were peaceful and cooperative, one might conclude that equal emphasis on both male and female concerns leads to peace and cooperation. This is the promise made by the title of Eisler's book, but betrayed by its contents; for modern [Wiccan] Paganism uses the joining of a chalice and a blade as the supreme symbol of the union of creative opposites, the harmonious joining of masculine and feminine energies into a creative whole, in which equal emphasis is given to both.

Yet Eisler seems incapable of imagining a society that is balanced in this way. She defines war and violence as "male concerns"; so putting any emphasis on "male concerns" means, to her, one must have wars.

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But then, as we say in computer science, this is not a bug; it is a feature. Eisler and others are battling what they see as very dangerous and undesirable cultural attitudes and historical interpretations. The method used for trying to rid us of these bad things is to say they are traits of men, or of masculinity, or of male-dominated cultures, or of any society that has a male god; and so we should instead concentrate on the Goddess and "woman" and feminism.

Thus, Eisler and her peers see the roots of most of our social ills in their perceived emphasis on men and male concerns. They tend to see male concerns as revolving around rape, war, beer, and rape. Eisler wishes to turn us away from this set of concerns and toward a different set – naturally enough, female concerns – without making the same mistakes; without, in other words, putting down men to the extent that she perceives men as having put down women.

But as long as violence and hatred are viewed as male concerns, it's hard to not sound negative about men, and Eisler does little or nothing to alter this view. In her exposition of the imagery evoked by the title of the book – *The Chalice and the Blade* – Eisler reveals that she is not interested in an equalitarian, gylanic society, but rather in the struggle of women vs. men. Or, to put it in Cosmic terms, of Woman vs. Man, of the Goddess *against* the God, rather than, as in Wiccan imagery, of the Goddess joining with the God. For she repeatedly makes precisely the sexual distinctions one would expect between a chalice and a blade; but she views the second as being the enemy of the first, not possibly in partnership with it. The blade, she says, is not simply masculine; it is violent and death-dealing, in unremitting opposition to the life-giving, feminine symbolism of the chalice.

She seems to view all of history in this context, as a vast war between the female and the male. Even Hitler, she says, was really out to repress women and feminist ideals; Jewish men, she says, were persecuted because they are more effeminate than Aryans. (Why then did Hitler equally attack blacks, Catholics, and Communists? Are they effeminate as well?)

Men, as represented by the blade, are violent and cruel, and cultures set up according to their values are warlike and authoritarian. Women, represented by the chalice, are nurturing and loving, and cultures that reflect their values are peaceful and help all individuals actualize their full potential. Who is drawing propagandist, sexist distinctions here? The evidence of Queen Shub-ad shows that the problem is domination techniques vs. cooperative techniques, and has nothing whatever to do with sexual politics.

If one wishes to grab a bunch of traits, attitudes, and attributes, and arbitrarily label them "male", and a bunch of others to arbitrarily label "feminist", that's fine. People, individuals, and cultures do that kind of redefinition and classification all the time. But it tells us nothing to then say "male cultures are violent," because we had previously agreed that, by convention, "violent" is to be a "male" trait; so "male cultures are violent" reduces to "violent cultures are violent," which, though true, is hardly a revelation.

For all her repetition that she is trying to display the differences between partnership and dominator cultures, Eisler states the roots of one rest in feminine concerns, and the roots of the other in masculine. In doing so, she has completely bought into the Rambo-is-male definitions of our culture. This really is no different from the usual sexist politics and historic interpretation, mixed with some sophisticated Orwellian doublespeak.

For any readers interested in a classic textbook on unabashedly sexual-political social engineering and historical reinterpretation, I highly recommend *The Chalice and the Blade*.

Φ

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Oak Planting Ritual
by Camille Grant

Last Beltane, Bill and I promised at our Beltane observance, to plant an oak tree in our yard, in honor of the God, and we asked that he send us one. Last week a friend who is active in a tree-conservation and planting organization gave us some enormous acorns for burr-oaks (appropriate, no doubt, to our chronic financial condition)! We followed his instructions, though he said he doubted any of then would germinate – too old and dry. One, however, did and we were overjoyed. So then we had to plant it in dirt, and decided we should have a planting and naming ceremony for it! We looked over all our ADF stuff and also some other things we have but didn't find anything on the subject. So we wrote our own. It seemed to come out well, so I thought I'd share it.

We used triads wherever possible. Stage directions and some observations that might be of interest are included. Please let us know if we did anything inappropriate, or if we left anything out.

Processional:
The altar was set up in the yard holding, on a white cloth, an image of the God and one of the Goddess; a silver pitcher with water; a dish of salt; and incense, unlit. The priest enters first, carrying fire in the form of the Year-fire candle. The priestess follows, with the oak-child in a pot of earth, but uncovered and visible. (A bag of potting soil was beside the altar, there was no room *on* it.)

Opening:
Optional. We offer incense, salt and water to the quarters.

Invocation to the Creator
"Great Hidden One, All-Maker
We show you our hands; see they are clean for the Work.
We offer our hearts; see they are right and loving and just.
May our spirits be strong, and fit to cherish this life we hold."

Invocation to the Gods and Goddesses
"Sky-Father, Earth-Mother, Keeper of the Waters, Receive this sacred child. Smile upon him, accept him to your care. Guide us, that we may help you nurture him. Let him rise up strong to his estate. Quicken him and give him strength. May his heart be solid and good, His spirit strong and true. Let his crown be rich and green, let his sinews be mighty. Let his life be long, and his children many.

Naming of the Oak-Child
"Little Prince, son of many mighty kings, your life has begun. It is the Mother's holy womb that cradles you. It is the Father's sacred fire that warms you. It is the blessed Keeper of Waters that nourishes you.

We name you Fangorn, Tree-beard, Forest-Father. Receive this holy water in token of our care and homage. Sleep now and dream; prosper, and grow strongly and well."

Stage directions for the planting:
Following the invocations and the Naming, two inches of potting soil were used to cover the oak-child. Then water from the pitcher was poured over it. (We can't plant the newly sprouted seed in our yard right away, lest it freeze, it has to be in a pot so we can keep it inside if the weather turns cold.) After this, we both drank some water, and poured a libation on the ground as well.

It seemed we should have some sort of ending, but we couldn't think of anything. We left the oak-child on the patio after telling it goodnight.

Pre-Ritual Impressions:
When I opened the plastic bag the acorns were germinating in and found this one, I felt very strange. It was as if I held a human or animal child – I could feel its life, its *presence* – in my hands. The reason this was an odd sensation, I think, is because I never felt that way about a plant before. I never would've thought in terms of bonding with a baby tree. I picked it up and took it in to Bill, holding it in both cupped hands and offering it to him. He looked, and felt happy but wouldn't touch it – he was afraid of hurting it, the way some plants die if you touch them. I don't think Fangorn will, though, life feels very strong in him.

We don't have any trees in our backyard, not one. There is grass, and some waxleaf ligusdown hedges along the fence in our neighbor's yard behind us, and hibiscus and dwarf pittosporum in the flower-bed on the patio, but no trees. When Fangorn is big enough, we will put him in the middle of the yard where he will have lots of room. He'll have to grow in several pots, though, until we are sure he will survive.

I feel kind of bad that he has to live in a subdivision backyard instead of a forest, but Bill thinks he couldn't be more needed than here. I hope he'll be happy. Anyway, we can be sure nobody will be able to cut him down, and that's nice. (Well, not for quite a while, at least.)

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A DRUID PRINCE

by Anne Ross & Donald Robins

A Review by Camille Grant ©

Those of us making the ongoing effort to study and reconstruct the Celtic Paleopagan society often get discouraged; for years, little or no serious work in the field has been pursued in the hallowed groves of academe, or so it sometimes seems. So it is a real pleasure to see a book like this one achieve the popularity it has, especially since it was written by two eminent academicians who clearly have a deep sympathy with their subject.

The story behind the book begins in 1984, when a peat-cutter in the English midlands discovered the well-preserved body of a Celtic male about thirty years old at the time of his death. The remains, when carbon-dated, indicated that he had lived between 50 and 100 C.E., and examination disclosed that he had died as a victim of a ritual sacrifice. After an initial flurry of enthusiasm and a research effort by the British Museum, interest died. The investigation was then taken up by Dr. Anne Ross. An archaeologist whose field of specialty is the Celtic peoples, Dr. Ross had done extensive research on the bog-bodies found in Denmark. In search of a technological approach to the task, she was joined by Dr. Don Robins of the Institute of Archaeology at the University of London, whose PhD is in solid-state chemistry. Together, the two have produced a fascinating and enlightening depiction of "Lovernios," the Druid prince who they believe voluntarily gave his life as a sacrifice to the triform Celtic deity(-ies) Hesus/Taranis/Teutates.

I am aware that some of my fellow members of ADF steadfastly deny that the Paleopagan Druids ever performed rites of human sacrifice. However, the facts, vouched for by many sources, do not bear out this view. Ignoring and denying validity of the facts will not alter them, nor will making the subject taboo to the serious scholar, regardless of how much we may wish to deny our spiritual and even physical kinship to such a culture. Therefore, those who feel they cannot bear to be forced to revise their rosy view of the Celtic culture or of the Druids should be warned not to read this book. However, anyone with an open mind and a sincere desire to learn the reality will not be disappointed.

The Life and Death of a Druid Prince is an engrossing look at both the culture and the individual. Through the masterly deduction and the solid research procedure of Drs. Ross and Robins, we come to know a remarkable and sympathetic man, and we are much the richer for knowing him.

There are two or three points in the findings on which I think even further deduction is possible – not surprising, since this book captures both the imagination and the intellect and makes one think, which is clearly what Drs. Ross and Robins intended.

Two thousand years ago, during a tragic and desperate time for his people and his religion, lived a young and nobly-born Druid named Lovernios. He gave up his life for a purpose in which he deeply and sincerely believed. Now he speaks again. Of all the people alive in the world today, it is perhaps we who share so many of his beliefs who have the ears to hear him most clearly. I think he would be pleased to know we are here, listening.

In addition to the solid scientific grounding, this book is a joy to read. Dr. Ross's prose style is not the dry, boring exercise which is regrettably all too often encountered in works written by archaeologists. It combines plenty of hard fact with a flowing style which catches the reader up on a tide of excitement and interest. I think everyone who is interested in the Celts, Paleopaganism and the Druids should make this book a must. And one last suggestion: Buy it. Chances are that you'll be loath to return it if borrowed, because you'll want to read it more than once.

[It should be pointed out that the narrative of "Lovernio's" life and death summed up by Camille is highly educated speculation by Drs. Ross & Robins, rather than historical fact. I highly recommend this brilliant archaeological detective story. – Isaac]

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The Pagan Delegation

by Otter G'Zell, editor of *Green Egg*

"The times, they are a'changin'..." For nearly thirty years Bob Dylan's words have been ringing through the events of our era. They remain as applicable now as ever, especially in regards to the Pagan community. In the '60s, we consisted of a handful of small and isolated groups, groves, covens, nests, lodges and temples. Seldom did any of these have more than a dozen members and nearly all met in members' living rooms or back yards. Nonetheless, we proliferated during those years, and developed rituals and liturgies appropriate to our various traditions. *Green Egg*'s data base now includes over 730 Pagan groups of enormous variety, with many more out there, I'm sure, that have not yet come to our attention.

By the '70s our numbers had grown large enough to support several community-wide publications, such as *The Waxing Moon, The Crystal Well, The Wiccan, Korythalia, Insight, The New Broom, The WICA Newsletter, The Pagan!, Nemeton, Earth Religion News, Gnostica Gnus*, and of course, *Green Egg*. These provided vehicles for networking and dialog that really helped define and solidify our sense of Pagan community. While *GE* may have been the most generic and widely circulated journal of its time, *Circle Network News* appeared in 1978, immediately upon the cancellation of the old *GE*, and has taken the networking function far beyond what *GE* ever attempted. Pagan publications continue to proliferate – currently we have over 500 listed in the *GE* data base!

In the '80s, as Margot Adler notes in the 2nd edition of *Drawing Down the Moon* (essential reading!), the Pagan Festival movement came into its own. There are now over 50 major Pagan festivals occurring annually around the country, with attendance at each of many hundreds! (For complete listings, send $4 to Larry Cornett, 9527 Blake Lane, #102, Fairfax, VA 22031). These festivals have had an inestimable cross-pollinating influence, bringing Pagans of diverse traditions together to share rituals, teachings, music, chants, lore, crafts, costumes, and loving. For their brief durations they give us the living experience of a tribal community, met, as our People have since time immemorial, for Festival. Here we find our true Family, our true Home. And here we discover our Great Secret: Unity Through Diversity. Out of these festivals have grown important regional councils, alliances and associations.

Now the 1990s are upon us. What new directions will our growing community take in this final decade before the new Millennium? Our next mission is already unfolding as we become more public and engage in outreach into the wider community of our global village. Pagan groups are now beginning to acquire land – sacred territories in which to live, worship, celebrate the seasons and host events. Circle Sanctuary and CAW's Annwfn were among the first, but many more parcels of land are now coming into Pagan hands, often bought through the auspices of regional councils and festivals, such as Heartland and Starwood. Public Pagan rituals, such as were held around Earth Day last year, have generated local support in many communities, and I anticipate regular weekly public services soon being offered in some areas in response to popular demand. These will eventually require our obtaining our own church buildings, temples and meeting facilities as we outgrow even the largest private living rooms! I also foresee the emergence of a truly global Pagan network – a "United Federation of Pagans" (with a nod, of course, to Star Trek, whose Vulcan IDIC could be a perfect motto for such a Federation, as it stands for "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations).

At this stage we are beginning to interact with other faith communities. On Earth Day last year, CAW and many other groups across the nation participated in large interfaith ceremonies for the healing of the Earth. It was very exciting to be engaged in mutual efforts with other churches, some of which were former enemies. As a polytheistic religious movement, I see Paganism as playing a vital role in future interfaith dialogs, for the simple choice of not believing in "One True Right and Only Way" allows us to be open to many differing spiritual paths while still retaining our own unique identity. In fact, we have recently been contacted by the editor of *Hinduism Today*, who has subsequently declared that Hindus, all 900 million of them, are actually Pagans and should unite with fellow Pagans of Euro-American traditions into a worldwide pan-Paganism!

Thus I foresee Pagan religions participating in future convocations of the World Council of Religions, the Global Forum on Human Survival, the World Parliament of Religions, etc. We are already receiving tentative invitations from some of those

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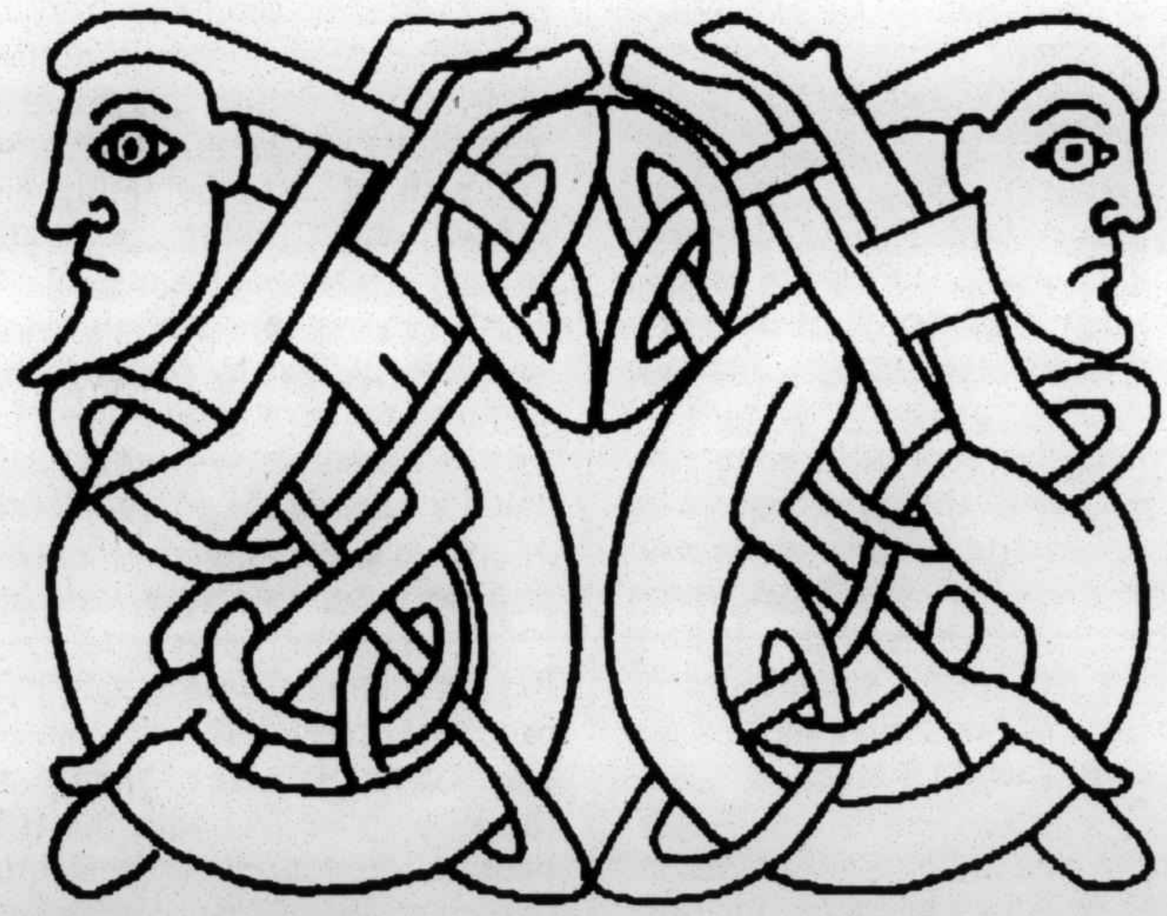
assemblies, and more will surely follow.

This brings up an interesting problem we have never had to consider before: How do we select the Pagan delegates to such meetings? It's easy for hierarchical religions such as Roman Catholicism or Tibetan Buddhism: they just send the Pope, or the Dalai Lama. But we're not set up that way, nor do we wish to become so. Some of us individually have been attending such conferences over the years, both locally and nationally, on a more-or-less informal basis, but we are generally reluctant to speak for Pagans other than ourselves. Some organizations such as the Covenant of the Goddess do have systems for election of spokespeople and perhaps these could serve as models for the overall movement. Moreover, being a "Pagan leader" in one tradition or another may not necessarily be the same as being a viable spokesperson for the larger Pagan community. Delegates to such conferences must be selected by the Pagan community as a whole, and be invested with that vote of confidence. Factors for consideration might include a person's knowledge, training, dedication, integrity, national reputation, experience with interviews and debates on radio and TV, authorship of books and other writings, contributions to the Pagan resurgence, PR activities, eloquence, education in comparative religions, diplomatic skills, travels, attendance at various national Pagan festivals and events, workshop and teaching abilities...

Although one hoped-for "summit conference" between representatives of the Pagan and fundamentalist Christian communities has fallen through due to deceit, misrepresentation and a total lack of integrity on the part of the Christians, who turned the whole thing over to an egomaniacal warlock named Eric Pryor, many of us continue to work towards a truly egalitarian Pagan/Christian conference. Hopefully such an event will be possible in the near future. Since the panel that has fallen through had called for six representatives on each side, I would like to ask every Pagan reading this to take a moment right now to list your own recommendations for whom you think those six delegates should have been.

Some possible candidates might include (in alphabetical order): Margot Adler, Isaac Bonewits, Ray Buckland, Z Budapest, Laurie Cabot, Scott Cunningham, Andras Corbin, Selena Fox, Judy Harrow, Tamara James, Anodea Judith, Aidan Kelley, Kenny & Tzipora Klein, Leo Martello, Diana Paxson, Lady Sabrina, Lady Sintana, Herman Slater, Starhawk, and Otter and Morning Glory Zell. Doubtless you will think of others. Please name three men and three women whom *you* would feel confident in fielding to any important interfaith conference as Pagan representatives. Send your recommendations to Anodea Judith: 3073 Richmond Blvd., Oakland, CA 94611.

By preparing a slate of delegates chosen through democratic nomination by our own people, we will have taken steps toward becoming prepared for future opportunities as they materialize. Any attempts at serious dialog between the Pagan community and other religious communities must be handled with the utmost integrity, and the selection of our delegates is a very great responsibility. I trust you to choose wisely. ⛛



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A Modest Proposal
by Geneva Hagen

Most Pagans have a deep desire to experience that level of consciousness at which our souls' roots are intertwined with those of all other life on our planet. But there are good reasons why this experience is so rare. Our Earth is in agony, and we instinctively recoil from that wall of suffering into safer and more comfortable territory. Through magical techniques, a wide variety of interesting altered states are available for our distraction and amusement – but special effects will never take the place of communion. True spirituality carries with it some material obligations. Would we try to sit in meditation while our neighbor's house burned down? – especially if it was the other half of our duplex!

Many ailments afflict our Earth now. In North America, we have factory farming and other forms of animal abuse. Ecological systems are everywhere under stress, largely because of population pressure. Brutal wars are raging in dozens of countries. But the key to these problems may be found in the one that is worst of all – the one that has killed more people in the last five years than all the wars, revolutions and murders of the past 150 years combined. I am speaking of world hunger.

Terrible as it is, the kind of famine we see in Africa accounts for only 10% of hunger-related deaths, and the solution is simple and obvious: send food. But the other 90% of hunger consists of almost invisible "chronic undernutrition", which does not make the news, because it is not unusual; it is the ordinary way of life for almost a billion of us, and can be measured by the infant mortality rate. Long-term solutions are required; this type of hunger is not going to be ended during one big telethon. The victims require opportunities that will allow them to become self-sufficient: to be able to grow the food they need, or to earn enough money to buy it. Providing this opportunity will require ingenuity and sustained commitment on a grand scale. However, if we can follow through, we will also be laying the foundations for population control, for no nation has ever stabilized its population without first eliminating widespread hunger. In turn, population control is essential for restabilizing Earth's ecosystems. And since most wars are fuelled by hunger, overcrowding and ecological degradation, we might finally have conditions that could lead to world peace. Peace is out of the question while whole populations are starving.

Pagans have a key role to play in this process, because of the high value we place on the Balance of Nature, and the kinship we feel with the tribal peoples who continue to be stripped of their culture and threatened with extermination – and also because of our ritual techniques to align the heart and mind with the will for a collective purpose. Experts agree that *will* has been the only missing ingredient; the technology necessary to end hunger already exists, and the Earth is already producing enough food to feed more than twice our present population.

Up to now, ending hunger has sounded like dreary, plodding work that frightens and repels people. But a mythology of hope could transform this task into a joyful challenge that will call forth the best in each of us, and clear the way for a true and sustainable experience of planetary consciousness for the individual.

Members of CERES (Convocation of Earth Religions to End Starvation) have begun applying their energy and will to the task at hand. We publish a quarterly newsletter, fund various small projects in the Third World, and offer a by-mail lending library and networking opportunities. To find out more, write:

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Running the Wax
by George Hersh

Mind, heart, and body prepare together.

The lamp burns alcohol blue, near-invisible under the goose-neck work light.

The room is neither too hot nor too cold. Keep the door closed.

Each tool has been reground and polished to that contour which can delicately release one drop of molten wax; Blunt rounded blades, not those scalpel-sharp points that only look precise.

Some waxes work easily, others resist change: hard, soft, compliant, elastic high surface tension or low, a family of eccentric individuals.

How much to heat the tool, how fast to let it cool, how much wax to take up, how much to warm the shank of the tool, driving the bead of wax forward as a glistening drop, ready to leave the tool and harden the work, just so, just there.

One hand steadies with the other. The last touch is in the first touch.

Not fast, not slow; Not shallow, not deep; Not weak, not strong. Steady.

Wax, lamp, and work form a close triangle, the tool darts, a hummingbird, lamp, wax, lamp, work, lamp, wax, lamp, work, there, now there, now there, now there. A stream of wax flows drop by drop from the blocks to the growing form.

"In this work, the first hundred mistakes prepare for the next hundred mistakes."

The completed shape is touched-up, textured, scraped, carved a little, smoothed, sand-papered, polished with stinking lighter fluid, dried, polished again. A little more here, a little less there, enough.

When no more work can be found, the finished form is gated and sprued; pipes of wax to become channels for entering metal and escaping gases; joined to the work, part of it, demanding the same care.

The gated finished work is buried in thick, creamy, plaster investment, is dried, and given to the fire.

The wax burns away. Only a space remains, a ghost, a complex knotted bubble in the plaster.

Under reducing oxyacetylene flame, raw silver glows orange, golden, suddenly slumps into liquid, (green flash as borax kills scum), pours like mercury into the mold, cools to red, hardens black.

The mold is thrown into water.
It sings and the plaster crumbles.

The metal has taken the form of a thought.

Return to the uncarved block.

(For mass production, from the metal master, a rubber mold is taken, from that mold duplicate wax forms are cast, from each duplicate, a new metal form is cast. There is about 5% shrinkage in this duplication process. The new duplicates are about 5% smaller in linear measure.)

George is the artist who created the wonderful Druid Sigil pins we are now offering, as well as a member of the ADF Mother Grove.

Megalith
by Leigh Anne Hussey
A Review by George Hersh

Hussey's earlier tapes have been Pagan versions and revisions of folk songs, carols, hymns and ritual music. *Megalith* is a new departure, worth exploring on many levels. Hussey is a skilled musician and linguist and a deeply experienced crafter of Pagan ritual. She uses here a variety of religious images and the corresponding Celtic languages to produce intense fusions of present-day art and archaic sources. In many songs, a poetic English translation overlies and mingles with the sound of the Celtic base language to create a feeling of direct participatory understanding. Full texts and translations are supplied in linear notes.

Hussey cares about music and poetry as access to Pagan power. She is not inflexibly solemn, but the overwhelming impression is of awe and honor for the Goddesses and Gods. The selections include wordless musical offerings, guided meditation, invocation, evocation and strong emotional associations. The tone and tempo shift deftly and powerfully from pipe and bodhran to synthesizer rock, with a wide range of acoustic, electronic and synthesized instruments. Many choral pieces are well-crafted multi-part harmony. I would not expect anyone to listen to this music with a participatory open mind and remain unchanged.

Accessibility is Not Just Ramps!

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In a way, the wheelchair is a lousy symbol of the handicapped. It represents one extreme, rather than the typical. Also, while it is very visible, (I guess this is why it is used as a symbol), it leads to lots of false assumptions. Many of us have handicaps of one sort or another, but relatively few are in wheelchairs. This subject is of personal concern to me because in the past few years I have developed painful heel spurs, tendonitis, and related problems. In our local community, I know of people who have MS, asthma, hearing impairments, visual difficulties, and back problems.

Abilities vary, from person to person, from time to time. Both a two year old and a ninety year old person is going to have difficulties keeping up with a ritual designed by and for the average twenty-five year old. What is needed in ritual planning, and planning for many sorts of group activities, is awareness of the potential participants and their likely abilities. If you feel you are very unlikely to include the very old or very young, maybe some of this isn't relevant. But are you sure you are not discriminating unfairly, by not thinking in the widest possibilities you can?

For example, visual perception varies. It's not either/or, 20/20 or totally blind. Many people have some vision problem, but it is seldom obvious. People are color-blind, nearsighted, have tunnel vision, lack depth perception. (Isn't it interesting that all these terms have meanings other than strictly perceptual?) Are there non-visual cues, in case they can't see? Can people position themselves so as to make best use of their vision and hearing?

Hearing ability varies a great deal. Many of us lose some hearing as we get older, especially when exposed to as much noise as most city dwellers are. How are the acoustics in the ritual space? Do the speakers' voices carry well, are they easy to understand? Are there non-verbal or non-auditory cues in the ritual, in case everyone didn't hear the words? And do people understand the language? (if they are supposed to.)

Is the site accessible? Not just by wheelchairs, but by non-drivers, non-car-owners. Do you have arrangements so that people can use public transportation if possible, or other plans to provide rides? Are there easy to follow instructions on how to reach the site? How far do you have to walk from a car or other transportation to get to the actual ritual? Will flights of steps or rocky ground have to be traversed?

Once you are there, is the ritual set up realizing not everyone can walk and stand for long periods of time? (I remember a ritual at PSG last year, where everyone was supposed to stand hip to hip, arms around shoulders, for over an hour. This was difficult for some people. It was impossible for me.) I can no longer stand in one spot for more than 10 or 15 minutes. Then I HAVE to sit. There often isn't a place to sit, or if you sit, you are out of the ritual – or you get stepped on, or ignored. (I have been to several rituals where I have not received the chalice or other ritual sharing, whatever it was, because I was sitting instead of standing, or because of where I was sitting.) I can dance round for a little while, but not fast. I am very afraid of being pulled too fast, or going off balance in ritual dance. Also, having to hold hands for a long time is not always good, especially with people of very different heights. Having arms around each other shoulders is even worse, if you are short as I am (5' 1"). I also suspect a few people feel uncomfortable with the high degree of physical contact found at some rituals.

Children need to be considered too. They are smaller, have a shorter attention span, tire more easily, and so are prone to certain problems. Even if their eyesight is perfect, they may be too short to see what is going on. If the ritual is long, or late at night, they will become tired and cranky. They may not understand what is going on, and want to wander off. Many rituals just don't have children in mind. If the ritual does not include children, are there provisions for childcare?

What about the problem of intellectual accessibility? Do you have to know Greek or Gaelic? Do you have to be well read to understand the ritual? One of my coven brothers is very bright, but dyslexic. He just can't read as well or as fast as the rest of us. Even a very bright beginner may not have read all the same books as the planners. Do you tell the story, or assume everyone knows it? Good ritual speaks to *everyone's* unconscious. If it need to be elaborately explained, it may need to be rewritten.

Then there is the problem of different creative abilities. In your training, do you expect the artist to sing, the writer to sew, the musician to be a good speaker? Developing new talents is a fine idea, but do you force people along one path that they may not be comfortable with? I am very verbal (obviously) but I am at a loss when it comes to singing. (My coven once gave me the present of a bucket, to help me carry a tune.) It's not fair, to me or to the ears of the group, to expect me to sing. Other people are beautiful singers, but don't work well with words. Or they dance or draw, sculpt or sew. Do you encourage the talent Nature gave some people already, or do you look for certain abilities and ignore others? Use the talents people have already whenever possible, rather than wishing they could do something else.

Do you welcome people from different class and ethnic backgrounds?

Or do you subtly insult Catholics, Jews, Blacks, Hispanics, the Irish (satire, here) or whomever? Are you working on being non-sexist, non-racist, non-hetero-sexist, non-couplist? (That last one is tricky; so much of our culture is based on the idea that people come in twos, straight or gay.)

Another major problem is what to do about the emotionally disturbed who seem to gravitate to us. I have seen a great deal of inappropriate acting out and emotional catharsis. I have enough problems of my own. I don't want to spend fifteen or twenty minutes of a ritual while someone pours out her life story. My only suggestion here is: plan to pace the ritual so there is some way the leader can keep things moving, and leave the catharsis for small, close-knit groups where it may be appropriate.

This means, when planning a large ritual, never have a time when everyone says something without some controlling factor on what is said. Don't have as part of the ritual, "tell your story". Some people will be too shy to say anything, and some will want to talk for an hour. Instead, have people "say your name, and three words that describe you." Most people can say that much, and the person looking for an outlet will have to look elsewhere. I know this is seldom a problem in Druid rituals, but it is a constant problem, in my opinion, in feminist and "new age" rituals. Ritual can be therapy, but should it? Under most circumstances, no. If it becomes therapy for one or two people, it is unfair to the rest of us. Save it for specific healing rituals, if people want those.

By the way, I am sure the subject of alcohol will come up. If we are being careful to have rituals that a person with a hearing problem or a mobility problem is comfortable with, what about people with chemical problems? In my opinion, alcoholism is not a disease. That is a myth that a huge industry has formed around. As Pagans, I feel we should recognize that. There may be small minority who actually have a biochemical-based problem with alcohol. I think it is mostly a lie perpetrated by people for self-justification or profit. The 12-step programs are a subtle form of Christianity, drawing heavily from Calvinism, and are antithetical to Pagan theology. It is based on the idea that we are humans are sinful and helpless without God. They just use more secular terms like "a higher power". I would like to see Neopagans come up with our own methods of healing alcohol and drug problems without violating our basic worldviews. Also, I wonder what the Catholic Church does about this issue. Do they say, if its part of a religious ritual, it will not affect you like a drink in a bar would, or do they have chalices full of grape juice?

Anyway, I don't think ramps are the only answer. You need to think ahead, and use imagination. If you are planning a ritual for a small grove, you usually know who will be there, and what they can or cannot do, like sing, or stand, or that they have a child, or an early morning job. But if you are doing larger rituals, you have to assume that maybe someone there will have different needs and abilities.

This is an exercise you might try, if you plan a lot of rituals. Try going around for a time blindfolded or with ear protection headphones on (the kind they use for machinery operators, or at gun ranges). Try wearing heavy weights on your feet, or hobbling yourself. Be ingenious. Think about what a ritual would be like under those circumstances, or even what its like to get around your house, and try to do your daily chores.

I think it boils down to, are people comfortable enough with the *form* of the ritual to pay attention to the *contents*? If I have to stand, or feel conspicuous or left out sitting down, I can't pay attention to the meaning of what's going on. If I can't hear or see or understand the ritual, there is no point in being there. I have attended too many rituals where I or others cannot be fully involved, for what ever reason. I think considering special needs is especially important for open or public ritual. I don't think Neopaganism, or any major group within it, like the Druids, should be only for the elite.

I realize, in rereading this, that I am assuming most of the problems of older people to be physical handicaps of some sort, like difficulty standing for long periods or not seeing well, perhaps more than one. I am still relatively young. We should ask some people who are in their sixties and seventies. Trouble is, it seems like Neopaganism is still a young religion in more ways than one.

All of this is open for discussion and criticism. This essay is meant to bring up a lot of questions for consideration, not to be the answer to anything. ⚶

An Announcement to Our Differently-Abled Members

If you need help of any sort from ADF in order to increase or improve your participation in Druidic activities, please let us know. Publications are being put on tape cassettes by Niszsa and rituals can be modified to accomodate most handicaps and impairments (write to Isaac if you have specific suggestions). We want every member to have the opportunity to give and get his or her utmost, but we can't make changes if we don't know what's needed.

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The GEO Column — for Grove Executive Officers

By Dawnie Niszsa

When a grove is chartered its organizers accept a great deal of responsibility. However, there is one task which is being neglected by most groves – grove reports. All chartered groves must make reports to the Mother Grove and, though not required, protogroves are also strongly advised to do this.

There are good reasons for filing reports with the Mother Grove. We are not just trying to make life tough for you. These quarterly reports are designed to help ADF and your grove.

The first way they do this is to keep the Archdruid in touch with members. Isaac wants to know what is happening so he can make decisions which will benefit ADF and its members. Reading grove reports enables him to keep the members in conscious view. It helps him to make good decisions and give the guidance which will help ADF grow strong.

As Registrar, I am equally committed to seeing ADF grow well. I approach my job as Registrar with a feeling of great responsibility. The job is more than just record keeping. I try to involve myself personally with groves and members to overcome obstacles. It is my job to find within the membership the people who can work the practical magic of change. Seeing the grove reports gives me the opportunity to suggest networking, make connections with others with the same problems. I also seem to be, now, the one grove organizer in ADF who has met more defeat and faced more problems head on. By reading these reports I can bring my experience to bear. So far the few groves submitting reports are doing well. I do anticipate trouble, hopefully it will never come, but if it does I will be there to help. Reading the reports regularly will enable me to spot things as they are growing, to defuse them before they manifest, to help solve them should they actually occur.

Both Isaac and I are concerned that all groves can learn from their experiences. To this end the reports are essential.

Okay, so what are the reports that need to be filed? There are four categories which need to be addressed. These are activities, membership, finances, and the Senior Druid's report.

The activities report should provide dates and major points of grove meetings, dates and general descriptions of Holy days and other rituals, the date and description of the groves' public service. Attached to the activities report should be copies of the grove's meeting minutes. When describing activities include where and what was done. What magic was performed, who was affected by the public service, how did the grove react; these are some questions which could be answered.

Subtly important is the membership report. It helps us to keep in touch with how your grove is growing. If the growth is happening too quickly the work involved could bog you down. If it happens too slowly you might feel defeated. Being able to watch over this will allow us to give aid when it is needed. In addition to this, it provides a little spirit of competition between groves. The level of membership can indicate the quality of the service being provided by a grove.

The financial reports need not be any more complex than a personal checkbook register. It should include dates, description of each transaction, increase in funding (credits, deposits, income), decrease in funding (debits, expenses, withdrawals), and a running balance. To this end a three column journal is best used. For your own records (not necessarily part of the quarterly report) you should keep track of individual member's donations. We will soon be recognized by the federal government making donations deductible. Again, having these reports helps us to spot potential problems. In addition, the IRS may require us to be able to show this information.

The last report is the Senior Druid's report. This should reflect his/her opinions and observances. If advice is needed this is a good opportunity (though we are always just a phone call away) to ask for it. Do you see any trends? Is there anything of comment happening in the community? Is there something which needs to be done? These are just a few of the things which can be addressed.

When should you write and send the reports? Generally, it would be best to write activity reports shortly after they happen. Financial records are obviously an ongoing effort. The membership roster should be constantly updated. Finally, the Senior Druid should be writing his report during the entire quarter, but could do it at the end of each quarter.

Send all reports to the main address (preferably two copies) within two weeks after the Equinoxes and Solstices. If we approach this effort with the spirit of partnership we should be able to aptly avoid problems in the future. ☥

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Philosophical Foundations of Divination
(or Why Do We Fool Around with Those Cow Entrails, Anyway?)
by Anne Newkirk Niven

Any thorough examination of the art (or possibly, proto-science) of divination requires a philosophical analysis of belief in its efficacy. In short, if I do not believe that divination works, I am unlikely to care two figs about the relative values of the Waite-Rider tarot deck versus Celtic Runestones. Divination has been a popular adjunct to religious practice from classical (and probably pre-historic) times to the present, and therefore it is logical to imagine that it must speak to some widespread need in the human psyche. Furthermore, most long-lived, popular religions (with the possible exception of Christianity) utilize some form of divination. It fulfills some logical function in many, if not most, religious belief systems.

What, then, are the underlying tenets which make the practice of divination possible, even useful, to religious believers? First, I believe it is necessary to define divination. The Webster's New World dictionary defines divination as: "1. the act or practice of trying to foretell the future or the unknown by occult means, 2. a prophecy; augury, 3. a successful guess; clever conjecture." Investigating further, one finds augury defined as "the practice of divination from omens", and omens defined as "a thing or happening supposed to foretell a future event." In short, divination is basically the process of attempting to find hidden knowledge, especially knowledge related to the future.

This leads me to conclude that the practice of divination requires the following three beliefs to first be present:

1. Hidden knowledge exists.

2. It is possible for humans to discover such knowledge through occult means.

3. The discovery and use of such knowledge by humans is desirable.

Although these three tenets may seem obvious, they have powerful and far-reaching implications – for religion, science, and everyday life.

First of all, tenet one: Hidden knowledge exists. This belief, in turn, relies on several others: belief in knowledge (which implies belief in an orderly universe – if all was chaos, no knowledge could be said to exist); belief in existence (again, if all were illusion, no true knowledge could exist); and belief that human knowledge does not fully encompass the universe. The last belief points to the difference between divination and science (which is also a search for hidden knowledge), namely, that divination attempts to discover knowledge not governed by physical laws and facts. If one believes that science holds all the answers, then divination is irrelevant at best. For example, it would seem nonsensical to use divination to find out the distance from Chicago to New York, since such knowledge can readily be ascertained by scientific means. If, however, I wished to discover whether I ought move from Chicago to New York to look for a job, science will be useless. Hence, in my search for an answer to my question, I might turn to divination.

The second tenet further narrows the philosophical basis of divination: It is possible for humans to discover such (hidden) knowledge through occult means. Much of the modern world is built upon a repudiation of this principle. Scientific materialism (which is the philosophical basis for modern Western civilization) asserts that all useful knowledge is discoverable by scientific means – hence, even if science does not hold all the answers now, it is the only useful method of discovering more knowledge. Marxism, for example, or modern capitalism, both of which are outgrowths of 19th century scientific materialism, have little use for divination, since both rely on the basic philosophy that ordinary reality is the only reality with any meaning. Since divination is an attempt to access non-ordinary reality in search of hidden knowledge, its very nature precludes its usage by the dedicated materialist. One might well imagine that the third definition of divination quoted above – "3. a successful guess; clever conjecture" was written by a scientific materialist.

If one finds oneself in agreement with the first two tenets, the third may still come as a philosophical or religious stumbling block to the use of divination. It is at this point that many religious believers will part ways from one another. Religious people may share many common beliefs: that the world has order and is not illusory; that science does not have all the answers; and that non-ordinary reality is both real and accessible by humans. But the question of whether the knowledge discovered by divination is beneficial for humans reveals a major difference between religions

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– the question of whether hidden knowledge ought to be the sole property of the Divine.

There are really three schools of thought upon this matter: that occult knowledge belongs to God (or the Gods, etc) alone; that it ought to be controlled only by the clergy; or that it ought to be available to all persons. (A question very similar to this was one of the primary reasons behind the Protestant reformation in Christianity, and has still not been settled in that religion to this day.) On the question of divination, Christianity generally is united; human access to occult knowledge is rejected because it conflicts with belief in an all-knowing, all-powerful God – to attempt to know what God has hidden is a sin. Only in extraordinary circumstances is such knowledge beneficial (such as the divinatory dreams of the patriarch Jacob, or the apostle Paul), and then it is the revelation of God, not the discovery of man (sic).

For modern Neopagans, Witches, Shamans, Druids, Ceremonial Magicians, New Age believers and the like, divination is not a problem. Broadly speaking, most folks in the "Aquarian Movement" (for lack of a better term) agree that more knowledge is a good thing, and that psychic gifts (such as are often utilized in divinatory practices) are useful to human beings. What many may disagree about is the extent to which divination works, and why it works (or does not.) Explanations in the community range from beliefs in channeling higher entities, to connecting with the Earth Spirit, to revealing the Will of the Gods, to expressing one's own Higher Power.

Whatever else may be disagreed upon, however, the religious use of divination asserts beliefs in an orderly universe, the accessibility and value of non-ordinary reality, and the value of all levels of knowledge for human use. With that in mind, I look forward to learning as much about as many different experiences of divination as possible – I never know what the Multiverse has to teach me next! ⌀

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Former Wiccan "High Priest" joins the Pentecostal Church

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Background Information

During the month of October 1990 many Pagans and Witches in the US were aware that Texas televangelist Larry Lea had plans to bring his three-day "prayer breakthrough" to San Francisco, beginning on Halloween night. He targeted Halloween because "these are not just kids having fun, there is actual devil worship." Lea, who has performed mass exorcisms in other cities, had originally planned a march through San Francisco on Halloween night. But entreaties from various other religious groups, including the Archdiocese of San Francisco, convinced him that this was not a good idea. Indeed, immediately after he announced his crusade plans several groups began to plan demonstrations. A group called GHOST (Grand Homosexual Outrage at Sickening Televangelists) invited all groups and individuals to a "peaceful celebration of our diversity, tolerance and freedom to be who we are." Another group, Queer Nation, planned a demonstration outside the Civic Center, the location of the prayer crusade. Bernie Ward, the host of the Sunday morning radio show "Godtalk," called for a "jihad jubilee" to square off against Lea's warriors. Clearly, the citizens of San Francisco were not as eager as other cities had been to host Lea's self-styled exorcism.

Pagan Response

Most of the local Pagan and Wiccan groups had decided to keep a low profile at Samhain. Don Frew, Public Information Officer for the Northern California chapter of Covenant of the Goddess, sent press packets to the major media. In these he explained what Samhain means to Pagans and Witches and supplied the media with names and phone numbers of responsible members of the Pagan community in case the media wanted more information. In the meantime, an individual named Eric Pryor called Bay Area Pagan Assemblies ("BAPA"). He told BAPA that he planned to hold a demonstration against Lea at the crusade site, and that he had already contacted all the major media and informed them of his intent to do so. Pryor told BAPA and the media that he was a Witch and the High Priest of the New Earth Temple. BAPA recognized him as a militant, but since dissemination of information about the Craft and Paganism is the basis of their charter as an organization, they decided to go along with him and try to keeps tabs on the situation. This may have worked to some extent. Pryor was quoted in the San Jose Mercury News as having plans to go to the crusade in disguise and disrupt the prayer service. This did not happen. And it should be noted that Pryor was set on doing his demonstration and would have done it without BAPA's support.

The Demonstration

(Those of you who would like to see the ritual demonstration, various news clips that show the media response, the Talk Show and other interesting bits of footage can send for a copy of the video; see BAPA info at the end of this article.) Pryor's demonstration, on October 30th at 3:00 pm in the Civic Center Plaza, was set up as a binding ritual that would contain the negative energy Lea was putting out and send it back to him. Members of BAPA, CoG and various other organizations attended, as did well-known feminist Witch Z Budapest. But most of the other participants in the ritual were probably "civilians," San Franciscans who had heard about the ritual and attended to show their displeasure for Lea and his followers.

Pryor had a black candle that represented Larry Lea and he began the ritual/demonstration by saying that he was going to send Lea's negative energy back into the crusade hall. But the candle wouldn't light, so Pryor improvised. He saw Z Budapest and invited her into the center of the circle referring to her as "a very special lady." He gave her a broom to charge and use to swat the candle, saying that the candle was like a pet that might misbehave and not obey you—so you give it a swat. Unfortunately, he then offered the broom to anyone else who wanted to come into the center and hit the candle. But many of the participants were very likely not aware of the magickal implications of the candle, so they directed the full force of their angry emotional response at it. And Pryor himself came forward and stabbed the candle with great force, cutting it in half. Although Janet Christian of BAPA told Pryor this was not appropriate, he explained his actions by saying that people should take out their anger on the candle and not on Lea's person. But anyone with even the smallest amount of magickal training knows that when an object has been charged, it is the person it represents: the medium is the message! This apparently did not occur to Pryor. At this point, a number of Witches pulled away from the circle and began to do countering magic. Ironic that Witches would actually be working to protect Lea. In point of fact, Lea got very sick the day after the crusade. And sometime between the end of the crusade and the beginning of January, Lea's father died. (More about this later.)

The Talk Show

The "prayer breakthrough" began on October 31, the day after Pryor's ritual and demonstration. That morning a local TV program called "People are Talking" featured a panel discussion in which Pryor took part. Other panel members included Bernie Ward, who has his own radio talk show; the Rev. Dick Bernal, pastor of the Jubilee Christian Center ("JCC") in San Jose, a Pentecostal church which has a membership of about 5,000; a Presbyterian minister

who is also a licensed psychologist; and various Christian individuals who felt they had been possessed by the devil. The Rev. Larry Lea did not attend, and the moderator of "People are Talking" commented that he had tried to contact Lea to appear on the show, to no avail. Additionally, both Pryor and Bernie Ward had also tried unsuccessfully to meet with Lea for debate and discussion. This is significant because according to Ward, Lea has complained vociferously in print that he had been misrepresented by the press and never allowed to express himself properly. Bernie Ward specifically stated that Lea's organization gave his office the run around for two weeks when Ward tried to get in touch with him.

The audience was packed with Christians, mostly members of JCC. Pryor, of course, was supposed to be representing the Pagan and Wiccan contingent. Since Lea's crusade was based on exorcising San Francisco of demons, it is not surprising that part of the discussion turned to the concept of exorcism. Perhaps to show that Witches, too, have interesting ceremonies, Pryor re-enacted a small portion of a 36 hour long exorcism he did on a young woman who turned out to be his girlfriend. The footage showed him kneeling over her and making stabbing motions with his athame while chanting in what Pryor claimed was Hebrew. This part of the talk show got so many Witches and Pagans upset that Don Frew was flooded with calls from all over the Bay Area, all essentially saying "Who the f-ck is this guy? None of us are this bad, he must be working for Lea." After the talk show, Pryor was approached by the Rev. Bernal who invited him to attend the crusade as his guest. Since BAPA had been thinking of organizing a Christian/Pagan religious summit meeting sometime in the future, Pryor's attendance at the crusade was to be an act of good faith.

The Crusade

The actual three day "prayer breakthrough" crusade began on the evening of the 31st. While there was some media coverage of Pryor's ritual, most of the television stations were focusing on the demonstrations held on the 31st outside the crusade hall, which had no particular Pagan focus. It was obvious from the crowds that this was where the real action was going to take place. So vehement was the feeling of the city against Lea's holy war that the SF police department had stationed riot trained troops at the Civic Center as a precaution. In spite of the police, the protesters were able to block most of the incoming buses that brought the Christians to the site. Protesters screamed slogans like "racist, sexist, anti-gay, born-again bigots go away!" One protester wore a shirt that said "the Romans were right – throw 'em to the lions!" Huddled in the buses, the Christians were taken aback. No one, not even Lea, had expected anything like this. Inside, Bernal had arranged for Pryor to be seated with the other pastors because, Bernal said, "you're a pastor yourself, just of a different faith." According to Pryor, "They guarded off the area because there were a lot of Christians who wanted to meet me, they saw the show, and people who wanted to touch me, and there was this whole St. Paul syndrome that they had about me." Pryor attended all three days of the crusade. The demonstrators outside stayed non-violent and after about an hour or two, the police urged everyone to go down to the Castro district of San Francisco. There, 14 city blocks were roped off for the Halloween party that occurs every year on Castro street. The crowd complied, and a good time was had by all. The next two days of the crusade were uneventful, and so Samhain passed. But this was not to be the end of things.

The Conversion

On November 10, the weekend after the crusade, Pryor was invited to come to attend services at JCC as Bernal's guest. Bernal sent a car to pick Pryor up and housed him in a hotel for the weekend with all expenses paid. Sometime between November 10 and November 22, Pryor called several Pagans and said that he was going to go underground at JCC and get the goods on the Christians. To some people he alluded that there was money to be made from the Christians and that he could then give that money to the Pagan community. When he told this to Janet Christian, she responded that no Pagan would want money gotten that way. Then on November 22 an item appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* saying that Eric Pryor had become a Christian. "This is a mystery to me, but I am denouncing my former practice," Pryor said in the article. Shortly after this, BAPA discovered that Pryor led all his new fundamentalist friends to his apartment to collect and publicly burn all of his ritual objects. Pryor then moved out of his lower Geary Street apartment where, according to various sources, he had been living in poverty with his girlfriend. The two are now married and live in Santa Clara. JCC has given him the use of two cars: one a van and the other a Volkswagen. He also has been given an office at JCC. And during one of the Sunday services, Dick Bernal flat out stated that some money had been given to Pryor. This brings up the question: was the conversion bought?

Pryor's Wiccan "Credentials"

Pryor's actions at the ritual and his conversion prompted BAPA and CoG to do some serious checking up on his claims regarding credentials and training. Pryor said that he had been trained and initiated by Herman Slater, proprietor of The Magickal Childe in New York City. He also claimed to have studied with Lady Sabrina of Our Lady of Enchantment and Priestess Carole Bulzone of the store Enchantments. He claimed ordination by the Frost's Church of Wicca and initiation as a 3rd degree Gardnerian by Rolla Nordic. When these people were contacted for verification, it was discovered that only one of his claims had any truth to it: Herman Slater did know Pryor, but never trained or initiated him. (Later, Slater reversed this statement, saying that he remembered Pryor being initiated into the

Welsh tradition by Slater's High Priestess.) None of the other people that Pryor mentioned even knew him. Rolla Nordic, in addition to not having initiated Pryor, is not a Gardnerian. Even murkier, in early January Pryor sent Rolla Nordic an initiation certificate, made up by Pryor himself with cover letter, asking Rolla to sign it. The certificates state that Pryor was initiated by Rolla in the Spring of 1977. However, in a formal statement signed by herself and two witnesses, Rolla has attested that she does not know Pryor, either within the Craft or socially.

The Proposed Christian/ Pagan Forum

Before Pryor's conversion, the BAPA board had informally discussed the idea of a "religious summit" between the Christian and Pagan communities. The summit would be organized as an open forum and panel discussion. The media would be invited and the chosen moderator would be someone both sides could feel comfortable with. By the time Pryor announced his conversion, many Pagans were feeling wary of interaction with him. Even those who didn't know about the credentials checking BAPA and CoG had done were upset about his actions at the ritual demonstration. But the possibility of a friendly interface developing between the two communities was still attractive to some Pagans, and a date was set for the two groups to meet. The only day that the Christians would agree to meet was December 21, which of course was the Solstice and inconvenient for the Pagans.

Before the meeting Don Frew sent a registered letter to Bernal. He stated that contrary to what Bernal might have heard from other sources, Pryor was not now and never had been a widely known leader of many Witches. Don also detailed the information gathered from the credentials checking that had been done and warned Bernal that Pryor had talked to various Pagans about going underground at Jubilee Christian Center. If Pryor were, in fact, a misguided Pagan "Robin Hood," Don wanted Bernal and JCC to be forwarned and to realize that the Pagan community definitely does not endorse this kind of action. When Pryor found out about the letter, he called Don and threatened legal action against him. Because of this threat, Bernal was informed by the Pagans that Pryor could not be present at the meeting on the 21st. Bernal agreed to this, but when the Pagan contingent arrived on the 21st, it was Eric Pryor who opened the door for them. Pryor insisted that he be allowed to attend the meeting, saying that it was his right. The Pagans said that if he insisted on attending, there wouldn't be a meeting. Pryor left, but his wife attended and both sides taped the meeting. The Pagans who attended the meeting were Anodea Judith of Church of All Worlds ("CAW"), Russell Williams and Don Frew of CoG, and Eric Marsh and Diana St. Martin of BAPA. The Pagans left the meeting feeling ambivalent about the forum; some wanted to go ahead if Pryor's role was defined and limited, some didn't want to participate at all.

Pagan Participation and Control

On December 29, Russell Williams of NorCal CoG wrote a letter to Bernal telling him that NorCal CoG was not interested in participating in the forum. Russell enclosed a list of Pagan organizations for Bernal to contact regarding possible participants. On behalf of NorCal Council, Russell also wrote to the listed organizations giving them info about Pryor and advising caution if they decided to get involved. In the meantime, Larry Lea came back to Jubilee for a guest sermon on January 6th. In it, he referred to Pryor as a leader of the Wiccans and a "former general in the devil's army." BAPA's Eric Marsh had gone to JCC specifically to hear what Lea might say about Witches, and Marsh taped the sermon. He then wrote to Lea, care of JCC, and informed him that Pryor is not now and has never been a significant leader of the Wiccans; that Witchcraft is a democratic, non-hierarchical religion; and furthermore the idea that Witches constitute "the devil's army" was deeply offensive. Eric Marsh never got a response to his letter from either JCC or from Lea.

On behalf of BAPA, Diana St. Martin sent a letter to Bernal telling him of various concerns and questions they had about the forum. Specifically, she told him that the selection of the Pagan panelists must be in the hands of the Pagans. In response, Pryor's wife Sandra called Diana and informed her that, while the Pagans could contribute input to the selection of the Pagan members of the forum, the final control would be in the hands of JCC and Eric Pryor. The follow-up to Cassandra's words came in a letter from Pryor himself, and the rationale for the Christian control of the Pagan panelists was that since the Christians were picking up the tab for the event, they retained control over who the Pagan panelists should be.

Pagans Begin Pulling Out

At this point many Bay Area Pagans began having serious doubts as to the point of all this. How fair could the forum be if the Pagans couldn't pick their own panelists? The feeling on the part of many Pagans was that this whole thing was starting to smell fishy, more like a set-up than a dialogue between two opposing but equal groups. NorCal CoG had already told Bernal that CoG wasn't interested in participating; on January 10th Eric Marsh wrote to Bernal and stated that BAPA would not participate. Hoping to keep the forum together, the Christians reconsidered their position of control and told the Pagans that we could choose four of the six panelists. Two of the panelists were already chosen by the Christians and were non-negotiable: they

wanted Herman Slater and Lady Sintana for sure. And they had two other Pagan panelists that they refused to accept even if Pagans themselves chose them: Z Budapest and Laurie Cabot (although it is interesting that Laurie Cabot was herself approached by JCC to be panel member and had turned them down.) CAW as an organization did not support the forum, but they felt that individuals within CAW should feel free to make their own decision on it. When I spoke to CAW's Anodea Judith about the forum she felt that any negotiation, even under difficult circumstances, is better than no negotiation at all. In the end, even CAW pulled out after Pryor informed Anodea that the proposed moderator, J. Gordon Melton, would have no jurisdiction in setting ground rules for the panel.

The Apology

By mid-January Pryor realized that he was not going to get the kind of whole-hearted support he wanted from the Bay Area Pagan community. He wrote and sent out "An Open Apology to the Pagan Community" in which he apologized to the community for his actions during the ritual demonstration. He said "It is unfortunate that, being human, I have made mistakes which have proven to be offensive, i.e., the incident with the candle in the circle, allowing people such as Z Budapest to dominate at certain points in time, getting caught in a frenzy and the mayhem of the crusade, resulting in a poor representation of the true Wicca and Pagan community. For this reason alone, I am truly sorry and apologize wholeheartedly for failing to clearly represent the craft." He continued: "I will continue my efforts to secure a forum to promote a clear, scholarly, open and truthful dialogue between the Pagan and Christian communities as the unique situation I am in has afforded me the wonderful opportunity to bring together leaders from both communities." He named J. Gordon Milton (sic) as the moderator. He stated that the money from the forum would go to a mutually decided charity, and that "the bottom line is that matters of the spirit in this day and age on a dying planet are more important than any one person or person's egos, for is not the eventual goal of all to be able to live and let live and seek truths as we perceive them to be." He also renounced any former titles that "may have" been given to him and banished himself from the Pagan community (on that last point, really, he needn't have bothered.) At several places in this apology, he states that he is indeed sorry for his unhappy effect on the Pagan community. What is perhaps most interesting about this apology is the cover letter from Pryor's wife Sandra that was sent with it to Eric Marsh of BAPA. In it, Sandra Pryor chides Marsh and BAPA for pulling out of the forum and says, "I hope you realize that you are playing with fire, for Eric (Pryor) has quite a few more tricks up his sleeve, so I suggest that you back off." And later "Further, the forum will be held at a location which will remain undisclosed until Eric (Pryor) chooses to announce it, probably at the last minute."

The Problem is...

After reading his full apology, Pagans who are not familiar with this whole affair may wonder why the Bay Area Pagan community has been so anxious about this forum and about Eric Pryor. Consider the following:

Bernal's view of Pagans and Witches seems to be condescending at best. In an October article that appeared in the *San Jose Mercury News*, he said: "They're sweet, sincere people, who are operating out of ignorance, not malice. I don't condemn these poor people; I want to convert them. I was a dope-smoking, LSD-taking hippie myself once. Some of our greatest pastors today are old, burned-out hippies." However, when Larry Lea preached at JCC on January 6th, (with Bernal sitting close by to hear what he said) he referred to Witches as the devil's army. If after all the talking BAPA has done with Bernal, he still has no problems with Witches being called "the devil's army," why bother with a forum? It seems that the fundies will believe what they want to believe, not what they hear from the Pagan community.

While this forum is under the auspices of JCC, Eric Pryor seems to have total control of the proceedings. Letters written to Dick Bernal are answered by Eric Pryor. Except for the December 21st meeting, no one seems to be able to speak to Bernal directly about the forum. In a letter to Anodea Judith, Pryor stated that he is handling the forum, he represents the official position of JCC, and therefore he is the one who will choose the panelists from the submitted list. The question then becomes, can the Pagan community trust Eric Pryor to set up a forum that would respect both sides? Pryor seems to be getting increasingly militant in his Christianity. The first communique from Pryor, a January 11 letter to Eric Marsh, was signed simply "Yours in Christ Jesus, Eric J. Pryor." A February 7 letter to Janet Christian is signed: "Yours in Christ Jesus, the only begotten son of God King of Kings, Eric J. Pryor, A Christian Gladiator."

Even though he has apologized for his actions during the ritual, his actions after the ritual are still troubling. His idea about being a spy at JCC was repugnant to the Pagan community. And then there's the matter of his blaming Z Budapest for the crazy energy during his ritual demonstration. In an article for the *Magickal Messenger*, Pryor acknowledged that Lea had gotten sick immediately after the crusade, but he blamed this on Z Budapest: "I made a mistake at that ritual, having Z Budapest there. She was kind of wild, with all that energy. Well, when I whacked the figure-candle with my athame, there was a lot of energy. Larry Lea got real sick. He's been very ill, but he's coming around now." He also blames Z in his open apology to the community, saying it was a mistake to let her dominate the ritual. (What is this, a variation on "the devil made me do it?")

Pryor keeps stressing that he wants

to promote a dialogue between the two communities that will lead to spiritual growth. Yet since his conversion he has had few good things to say about the Pagan community and its members. In the *Magickal Messenger* article, he refers to Janet Christian of BAPA as a "bitchy little 'my wand is bigger than your wand' type." In the same article he condemns Don Frew as a self-aggrandizing Satanist. In a personal letter to Eric Marsh, Pryor states "with the Holy Spirit running through me, I feel it necessary to expose the self-aggrandizing control oriented mindset of the Neopagan group or groups here in the Bay Area." Both in direct communications to individuals and in articles, Pryor has shown that he thinks West Coast Pagans are arrogant, self-serving, bickering and backbiting. In a letter to Anodea, he specifically says that it is time for the people of the Lord to "humble and possibly save the Pagan nation from its rampant, sinful, self-aggrandizing activities." And in a letter to Russell Williams, Pryor says: "It is obvious to me that the Neopagan movement is being deceived by the prince of the air (Satan)...May our Heavenly Father have mercy on your sinful, demonic soul." If he doesn't respect individual Witches and Pagans, and doesn't think much of the community as a whole, how can there be any kind of respectful dialogue?

Perhaps the most damning evidence of anti-Pagan propaganda occurred when Pryor appeared on the Larry Lea ministries television show on January 28th. It's true that the show might have been taped before Eric Marsh wrote to inform Lea that Pryor has never been a Wiccan leader and that Witches are not the devil's army. But the fact that the interview was run long after Lea would have received the letter indicates that the Christians are not interested in what the Pagan community says. Rather, they are milking Pryor for their own cause. Bernal introduced Pryor as "the chief Wiccan of the Wicca cult...who influences the Pagan community. This is their leader. He's like a Paul." Later Pryor himself says to Lea that when he sat in on the crusade as Lea's guest, "if I found you to be practicing...any form of militarism that would breed hatred or violence or something, I was going to do my best to terminate you." And later, Pryor himself agrees with Lea's statement: Lea says: "We just talked about this today, and Eric informed me, he said 'You know, if a true Witch or someone who's really into Witchcraft, if they perceive that you are going to bash them, try to block them from doing what, by the Constitution, they have the legal right to do, they're just as prone to shoot you as they are to pronounce a curse on you.' And you told me that that night you were prepared to do that if you found us to be that kind of people." Pryor answers: "Well, that's right."

In Conclusion...

"So," you may be saying, "this is all very interesting but what does it have to do with me or my coven (or grove or group or whatever)? I don't live in the Bay Area and why should I worry about what's going on in Northern California?" Well, unfortunately, we're not sure this whole mess is going to stay in Northern California. Originally, Bernal and Pryor had planned to hold the forum here in the Bay Area, and then take it on the road. To those Pagans not in the Bay Area and not informed about the events surrounding Lea, Pryor and Bernal the idea of a religious summit with Christians might sound inviting. But most of us who have been down here in the trenches since Samhain don't want to have anything to do with the above individuals. (Even people who are outside of the Craft and who've heard this story from me tell me that this whole thing sounds like a set-up.) If they bring the forum to your town and try to enlist Pagans as panelists, be forwarned. **We aren't trying to tell you not to do it. We only ask that you** read this document very carefully and if possible write to the organizations listed below to get input from them. Especially recommended is the BAPA tape, which you can get for $6 to cover the cost of the tape and the postage and handling. As a point of interest, JCC also has a tape of Pryor's conversion that they are selling. I don't know exactly what is on it, but their price is $25. There is one humorous note to all this. Recall that Pryor's ritual demonstration was supposed to contain the negative energy and send it back into the crusade hall. And now, it's the Christians who have Eric Pryor. Sounds to me like the spell worked!

For more information, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the following:

BAPA (Bay Area Pagan Assemblies)
P. O. Box 850, Fremont, CA 94537
Phone Voice and FAX: 415-487-GAIA (video tape is $6, recommended!)

North California Local Council COG,
Russell Williams, P. O. Box 90304,
San Jose, CA 95109

The Church of All Worlds, 2140 Shattuck Ave. #2093, Berkeley, CA 94704

Donald H. Frew, Public Information Officer, NorCal Local Council, CoG,
P. O. Box 4243, Berkeley CA 94704

Grateful acknowledgment to members of BAPA, NorCal CoG, CAW, Reclaiming, and to all the other individuals who contributed to the fact checking and review of this article as it was being written.

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Vedic Religion
by Brian K. Smith, Ph. D.

Brian K. Smith is currently an Associate Professor for the Program in Religious Studies and the Dept. of History at the University of California, Riverside. He is the author of *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), a superb discussion of Vedic ritual theory and practice, *Manu's Human Principles: A Translation of the Manu Smrti* (with Wendy Doniger, Penguin Books, 1991), and numerous articles on Vedic studies. He has also taught classes on New Age religions, including Neopaganism, at Barnard College.

About five thousand years ago or so (give or take a millenium), the ancestors of the peoples we now call the "Indo-Europeans" launched a series of migrations from their original homeland in the Russian steppe lands. Accompanied by the herds of cattle upon which they depended for their sustenance, waves of them swept westward as far as the British isles and southward into what is now Iran, Pakistan, and India.

The Indo-Europeans defeated all they encountered, in large part because of their monopoly on what must have been the equivalent of the H-bomb in the ancient world, the horse-drawn chariot. Conquering those who were indigenous to Europe and South Asia, it was the Indo-Europeans who became the dominant Germanic, Icelandic, and Scandanavian peoples, the Celts, the Romans, the Greeks, the Persians, and the Indians. The descendents of the Indo-Europeans thus all belong to a common cultural and linguistic group or family; modern Iranians and Indians are literally the blood brothers and sisters of those of us who trace our lineages back to Europe.

The branch of Indo-Europeans that entered the South Asian subcontinent perhaps as early as 2,000 B.C.E. called themselves "Aryans" or "nobles" and have left us with the oldest known Indo-European text. The work is entitled the *Rg Veda*, and it was fixed in its present form probably no later than ca. 1200 B.C.E. Subsequently three other *Vedas*, the *Sama, Yajur*, and *Atharva*, were also composed.

The religion and culture of the Aryans in India is known to us entirely from these texts, which is why it has been dubbed "Vedic." All religions of India can be said to be dependent, in one way or another, on Vedic religion. Hinduism purports to be merely a continuation of the Vedic tradition despite numerous and significant innovations and departures. The Vedas are regarded as absolutely authoritative and sacred by Hindus; they come as close as anything to what we might call the "Hindu Bible" although the contents of the Vedas are largely unknown to most Hindus. Other religions, e.g. Buddhism and Jainism, originated out of explicit opposition to the doctrines and practices of Vedic religion. These "heterodox" traditions can be said to have been negatively shaped by Vedism.

What kinds of features can be isolated as distinctive and characteristic of this ancient Vedic religion? I will here discuss four: 1) tripartition (the notion that things come in "threes"); 2) the warrior mentality; 3) naturism or the worship of deities who are indistinguishable from natural entities or phenomena; and 4) the cult of fire sacrifice.

The tendency to categorize things and beings into triads was one of the many inheritances Vedism received from its Indo-European roots. Georges Dumezil, this century's most influential scholar of the Indo-Europeans, has persuasively argued that since the Indo-Europeans belong to a common language family it is probable that they also had certain commonalities in the way they thought. Dumezil has spoken of a shared "ideology" and has found evidence for it by comparing the mythologies, theologies, histories, epics, folk tales, and especially social structures of the various peoples who comprised the Indo-European community. What has emerged from Dumezil's exhaustive and wide-ranging comparisons is "*l'ideologie tripartie*," the "triparitite ideology" or Indo-European trait of classifying in triads.

Dumezil's findings for some cultures of the Indo-European world have been received with skepticism. But in the ancient Indian context, at least, Dumezil's hypothesis is borne out. Vedic texts are replete with triads, beginning with the categorization of the social classes of Aryan society into *Brahmins* (priests), *Kshatriyas* (rulers and warriors), and *Vaishyas* (commoners).

(Over time, the Indo-European heritage of tripartition was transformed, driven to some extent by the exigencies of the Indian situation. As the Indo-European invaders parked their chariots and settled in India, they eventually found room in their social theory for a fourth class. The Shudras or servant class located at the bottom of the now quadripartite social structure was created as the slot in which the assimilitate indigenous populace was placed by the Aryan conquerers.)

The cosmos as a whole is also divided into three parts – earth, atmosphere, and sky – and the deities of the Vedic pantheon are assigned to one or another of these three "worlds." Time could be organized in this manner as well. The day is divided into morning, midday, and afternoon, and sometimes the seasons are listed as spring, summer, and the rains.

A second feature of ancient Vedic religion is that it is imbued with the ethos of warriors. The Vedic period in India was one in which the Aryans fought not only with the indigenous

peoples of South Asia (who are derisively called *dasa*s or "slaves" in the texts) but also with each other. The social and political order of the time was shaped by competition between numerous small tribes of interrelated people led by "kings" (really more like warlords or gang leaders) who contested with one another for land, power, and wealth (in the form of cattle). The somewhat incestuous nature of Vedic warfare is indicated by the fact that the ancient Sanskrit word for "enemy" is the same term used for "first cousin."

In such a world, the values of the military often prevailed. In the most ancient texts of India, power and dominance were unabashedly embraced and unashamedly displayed. Vedic religion sometimes appears as simply war by other means. The hymns of the Veda include ones like the following in which the warrior and his armour are praised:

> His face is like a thundercloud when the armoured warrior goes into the lap of battles. Conquer with an unwounded body; let the power of armour keep you safe. With the bow let us win cows, with the bow let us win the contest and violent battles with the bow. The bow ruins the enemy's pleasure; with the bow let us conquer all the corners of the world.... Whoever would harm us, whether it be one of our own people, or a stranger, or someone from far away, let all the Gods ruin him. My inner armour is a prayer (*Rg Veda* 6.75.1-2,19).

The deities were petitioned for (among other things) victory, the surpassing of others, and the destruction of one's enemies. Among the principal gods worshipped in Vedic religion was Indra, the Thor of South Asia. Indra was the deified quintessence of the Vedic warrior, known for quaffing huge quantities of the intoxicating soma juice and marauding about fighting the demons. This god stars in an important creation myth of the *Rg Veda* where the universe was created when Indra defeated a cosmic serpent who had coiled around the "waters of life." Indra and similar gods of Vedism are thus the apotheoses of the militarism that characterized the people and times of ancient India.

Other gods and goddesses of the pantheon reveal a third feature of Vedism, what we might call Vedic naturism. We have already seen that Vedic divinities are assigned to one or another of the three cosmological worlds of earth, atmosphere, and heaven. Many of these deities are identical to natural phenomena or entities one finds in these locales. In the sky, for example, are gods (Surya, Aditya, Savitr) whose names are also the names for "sun," Candra (the moon), as well as Dyaus, the God of the Sky itself; the atmosphere is the cosmic space of the God of Wind (Vayu) and Thunder God Indra and his "storm troopers" the Maruts, among others; and this world is the home of the Earth Goddess (Prthivi). In all cases, the deity and the natural phenomenon or entity are fundamentally indistinguishable. The earth *is* Prthivi, wind *is* Vayu, the sun *is* Surya, etc. Other deities represent dawn (the goddess Ushas), night (the goddess Ratri), the river Sarasvati — and even the forces of chaos or disorder are deified in the figure of Nirrti.

The divine in Vedism is manifest, not transcendent; the sacred is found within nature and not apart from it. This theology is obviously polytheistic, although different deities at different times might be extolled as the highest or even only true god or goddess (and all other deities are then regarded as merely forms of Him or Her). And, as we shall see, Vedic rituals are usually correlated with the natural rhythms of day and night, new and full moon, the change of seasons, and the solar year. A religion much like Vedism, it would seem, is certainly what most people nowadays mean when they speak of Paganism.

The deities of the fire sacrifice that played such a central role in Vedic religious life are of special importance. Agni is the God of Fire and is therefore among the principal gods of the pantheon. Agni is one of the only deities who is said to live in all three cosmological worlds: he is fire here on earth, lightning in the atmosphere, and his form in the sky is the sun. Furthermore, Agni is the messenger and priest of the Gods. Offerings poured into Agni's mouth (i.e. the sacrificial fire) are carried up (via smoke) so that other deities may share in the meal. Agni's role as priest is celebrated in the very first hymn of the *Rg Veda*: "I pray to Agni, the household priest who is the God of the Sacrifice, the one who chants and invokes and brings most treasure" (*Rg Veda* 1.1.1).

Vac is the goddess incarnating sacred speech. It is she who represents the power of the *mantra* or verbal spell that accompanies every ritual action, and it is Vac's power that lies behind the sacrality of the Vedas themselves. In one hymn of self-praise, Vac declares that "I am the one who says, by myself, what gives joy to gods and men. Whom I love I make awesome; I make him a sage, a wise man, a Brahmin" (*Rg Veda* 10.125.5).

A third major deity of the sacrifice is Soma who, like other Vedic divinities, is no different than the part of nature it also names. But what was soma? The texts indicate that it was a plant of some sort that was pressed for its juice which was offered to the Gods in the sacrificial fire as well as consumed by the sacrificer and his priests. But the exact plant that was called by the name "soma" remains a scholarly mystery. What is fairly certain is that the plant's juice had an intoxicating, perhaps even hallucinogenic, effect on the drinker. Witness the following exclamations of megalomaniacal bliss that have been preserved in *Rg Veda* 10.119:

> Like impetuous wind, the drinks have lifted me up. Have I not drunk Soma? The drinks have lifted me up, like swift horses bolting with a chariot. Have I not drunk Soma?... In my vastness, I surpassed the sky and this vast earth. Have I not drunk Soma? Yes! I will place the earth here, or

> perhaps there. Have I not drunk Soma? I am huge, huge! flying to the clouds. Have I not drunk Soma?

The worship of Agni, Vac, and Soma brings us to the fourth characteristic of Vedic religion: the overwhelming importance of the ritual of the fire sacrifice. Most of the Veda is dedicated to the philosophy and practice of the sacrifice or *yajna*. Utilizing three sacred fires that stood for the three worlds; offering oblations of milk, grain, meat (goats, sheep, cows, and horses were regularly slaughtered), soma, or even human beings (there is some evidence for human sacrifice in Vedic times); and employing anywhere from four to sixteen priests (depending on the complexity of the ritual), the Vedic liturgy is among the most detailed and complicated ever invented.

The power Vedic texts attribute to the sacrifice can hardly be overestimated. It was through the sacrifice that the Gods created the world in the beginning, and it is by continual sacrifices even now that the cosmic order or *rta* is maintained. It is the responsibility of human beings to see to it that the Gods are kept happy and well fed through the offerings of oblations. If the Gods are pleased they will reward the sacrificer in various ways, both tangible and spiritual. Over time, the sacrifice took on such efficacy that it was thought to operate automatically. If correctly performed, ritual action would inevitably entail the desired reaction, and pleasing the Gods came to take a secondary place to carrying out the details of the sacrifice in the proper manner.

The effects of the sacrifice were threefold. First, the sacrifice was said to have cosmic results. Performed at the junctures of day and night (i.e. dawn and dusk), of the lunar fortnights (i.e. new and full moon), and of the quarters and halves of the year, Vedic rituals were thought to promote the continuity of time itself. Without the daily fire sacrifice or *Agnihotra*, one text claims, the sun would not rise in the morning or set at night. It was the sacrifice that reversed the tendency of nature to entropy; it was the fire ritual that literally held things together and kept the cosmic order humming right along.

The second set of effects of the sacrifice we might call material and sociological. The sacrificer was promised material rewards for offering sacrifices, including such things as good crops, good health, sons (this was, as the reader might have already guessed, an overwhelmingly patriarchal society), wealth, victory over one's enemies, and long life. At another level, the sacrifices one offered was a kind of measuring stick of one's social status. Just as Americans might gauge status by the size of the wedding or bar mitzvah one puts on, in Vedic India one's social standing was dependent on the type, size, and frequency of the rituals sponsored. Vedic texts thus speak of the sacrifice's power to create or construct a "self" (*atman*) and a "world" (*loka*) for the sacrificer in this world.

Performance of sacrifice could also result in a "divine self" located in a "world of heaven" for the sacrificer after his death. But like the status ("self") and standing ("world") created by the sacrificer for himself in this life, those of the next life were relative to the sacrificer's ritual resume. The divine self is "born out of the sacrifice," that is, it is the product of the rituals one performs in this life: "The sacrifice becomes the sacrificer's self in yonder world" (*Satapatha Brahmana* 11.1.8.6), or as another text puts it, the sacrificer "is united in the other world with what he has sacrificed" (*Taittiriya Samhita* 3.3.8.5).

The sacrifice, in sum, was supposed to have a *constructive* effect – on the cosmos (conjoining the parts of time and providing for temporal continuity), on the human being in this life (creating a social status for the sacrificer), and on the human being after death (for one's destiny in the afterlife was also a product of the rituals one had performed in this life). One is what one does, one's future is the result of one's present actions, and it is here that we can identify the origins of the later Indian "law of *karma*."

Already by the sixth or seventh century B.C.E., new religions with new philosophical assumptions had arisen in India. Vedic religion *per se* was replaced by Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and other alternatives. Its prestige lives on, however, among the Hindus who revere the Veda as a holy book and who have incorporated some Vedic doctrines and practices into the Hindu tradition. Westerners have recently "discovered" that a handful of Brahmins in India today still perform the Vedic sacrificial rituals, carrying on a tradition that now stretches back some three thousand years. Such Brahmins now enact their archaic rites before the eyes (and cameras and tape recorders) of scholars who are, in their own way, participating in the project to preserve the Vedic tradition.

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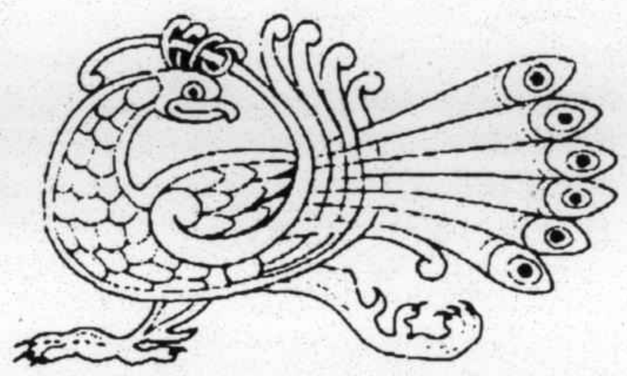
Highlights of Recent Mother Grove (Board of Directors) Meetings — March, April, June '91

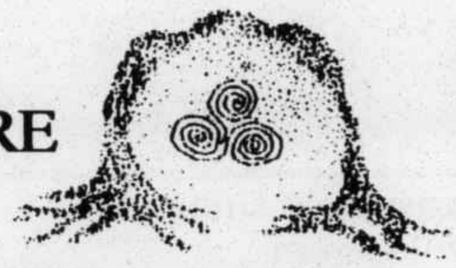
March 2, 1991 C.E. — Clarification from previous meeting: institutional subscriptions to *DP* (only) for libraries are $25 per year, first class mail... Pat Tuley resigned from MG and as Chronicler. Isaac took over hat... All literature and ads have been updated... Application for tax exempt status determination has been filed with I.R.S.... We are starting to get fund-raising and marketing advice from members who are experts... Now have 265 members, about $700 in bank or about to be, debt about $3,900... Green Man Grove chartered in Jersey City, NJ... Discussion of registering members who are conscientious objectors to war. We'll need a brochure/policy statement outlining reasons why some Neopagan Druids may choose to be C.O.'s. Grey Cat, Domi will work on it... Local groves must file quarterly reports on: activities, membership, finances, meeting minutes (informal), and Senior Druid's report on problems, ideas, and/or successes. *Grove Organizers' Handbook* needs updating... Discussion of Archbard. Should be someone who successfully organizes a bardic guild, since organizational skills are as important as performance abilities. Eventually, a Third or inner Circle Bard elected by guild.

April 21, 1991 C.E. — Now have 291 members, about $850 in bank or about to be, debt about $3,400... New literature and membership cards have been printed... Isaac and Nancy have been sick, slowing down publications... Domi will have first draft of *Study Manual* out to MG and Council of Lore in a few weeks [did]... By-laws modified: (1) to allow people under 18 to join with permission of parent/guardian; can't be major national or local officers. (2) Archdruid given power to suspend grove charters temporarily until MG can vote on. (3) MG can suspend as well as revoke charters. (4) Members can be suspended or expelled for confessing to (as well as committing) felony crimes-with-victims. (5) Related additions of "suspension" to current sections on expulsion... Stone Oak (Arlington, TX) Grove's Senior Druid, Robert Meek suspended and banned for confessed murder of his wife, Anne Harrington (the grove's Pursewarden). Grove charter revoked. Money from grove account should be refunded to *Northways* subscribers, prorated... Shadow Weaver (Billerica, MA) Grove's charter revoked for nonfeasance... "Good neighbor" policy approved for local grove organizers to improve community relations... Would-be protogrove organizers will be sent an application and questionnaire about intents before granting protogrove status from now on. Niszsa will design by next Mother Grove meeting [did]... Dragondance Grove (in San Jose, CA) charter approved... Another charter application not voted on, since notarized signatures were missing.

June 2, 1991 C.E. — Archdruid's report stressed need for serious fundraising effort... Now have 300 members, about $1,000 in bank or on way, debt around $2,900... Wellsprings Gathering was great success, brought in about $400 in memberships, regalia donations, and gift from Stone Creed Grove... *DP* moving slowly due to Isaac's illness... MG agrees to use spot color on *DP* covers, no slick pages or covers (not recycled/able)... New percentages for income distribution agreed upon: 10% will now go to pay debts, 2% to Land Fund, 38% to Chronicler's Fund, 15% to Registrar's Fund, 15% to General Fund, and 20% to Executive Fund... Niszsa's proposed application for grove organizers approved, will be sent to current ones as well for survey results... Debbie submitted a position paper on the topic of Paleo-Druid vs. Neo-Druid approaches to crime and punishment, arguing that expulsion might be more appropriate than suspension for serious crimes. Isaac suggested she expand this paper for *DP* to let the membership discuss the issues, since we have as yet no formal procedure for establishing official religious doctrines in ADF...

These are highlights only. For a copy of the full minutes, send a 9"x12" self-addressed envelope with 2 ounces' worth of postage for each meeting to: MG Minutes, A.D.F., Box 9420, Newark, DE, USA 19714. All votes and agreements were unanimous unless otherwise noted.





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Groves & Protogroves

(In Zipcode order, as of August 1, 1991 C.E.)

Green Man Grove, ADF
Bryan Perrin
Box 3495
Jersey City, NJ 07303

Avalon of Riverdale Protogrove, ADF
Nancy Thalblum
Box 358
Bronx, NY 10463-0358

Muin Mound Protogrove, ADF
Georgeanna Kavanaugh
Box 592
E. Syracuse, NY 11758

Finger Lakes Grove, ADF
William Elston
Box 169
Odessa, NY 14869

Sassafras Protogrove, ADF
Earrach
c/o M.B.E.
412 Smithfield St., #125
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Waters of the Brandywine Grove, ADF
J. Niszsa Zeron
Box 9420
Newark, DE 19714

Cedar Light Grove, ADF
Will Pierson
Box 21723
Baltimore, MD 21222-6723

Little Acorn Protogrove, ADF
Robert Holbrook
Box 36
Unionville, VA 22567-0036

Unnamed Protogrove
Mary Anna Singer
Box 53-1293
Miami Shores, FL 33153-1293

Stone Creed Grove, ADF
Paul Maurice
Box 18727
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Unnamed Protogrove
Julie Daugherty
Box 1344
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

Unnamed Protogrove
Jon Ryner
Box 1922
Clinton, IA 52732-1922

Sun Raven Protogrove
Beket Asar
Box 8212
Madison, WI 53708

Heartwood Protogrove, ADF
Stormraven
Box 3322
Kansas City, KS 66103

Heatherwood Protogrove, ADF
Pamela
Box 151056
Irving, TX 75015-1056

Protective Willow Protogrove, ADF
Padruig
Box 154008
Waco, TX 76715

Unnamed Protogrove, ADF
Megan Moore
Box 46034
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Dragondance Grove, ADF
Debra Wilson
45 N. First St., Box #269
San Jose, CA 95113

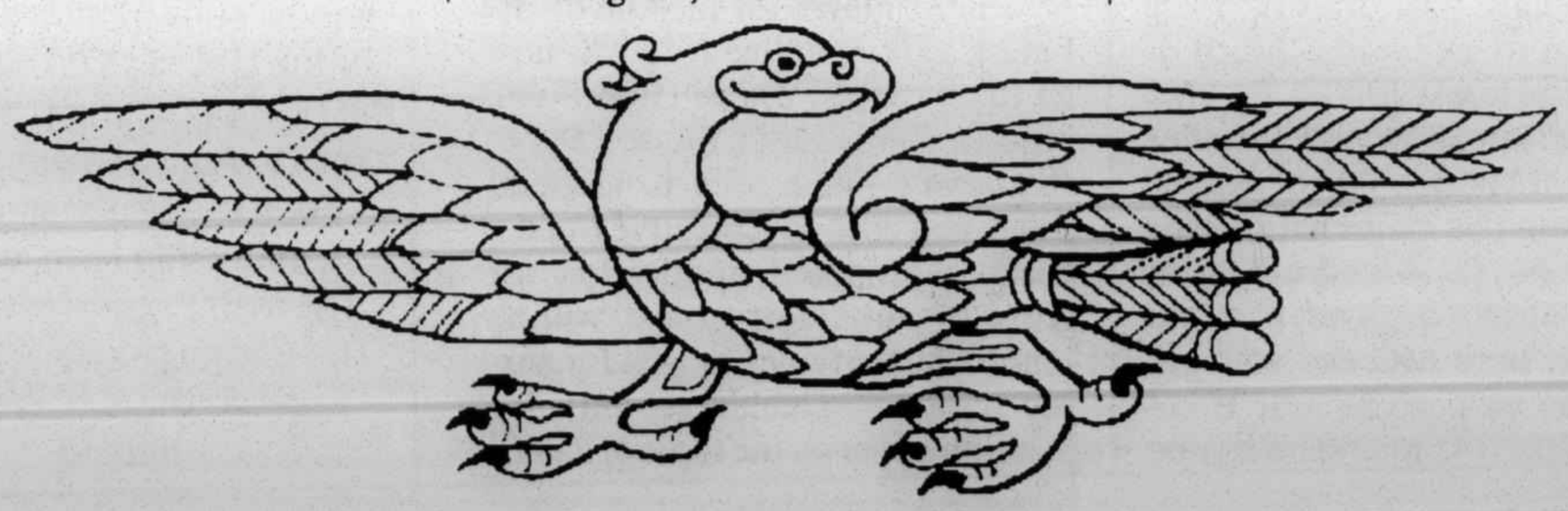
Ravenscloak Protogrove, ADF
John Laviolette
Box 1493
Sacramento, CA 95812

Garran Siorghlas: Evergreen Protogrove, ADF
Domi O'Brien
Box 66311
Seattle, WA 98166

Celibourne Protogrove, ADF
Lisa Sabatino
Box 1382, Station A
Hamilton, ON
L8N 4C2 Canada

Unnamed Protogrove
Robin Fletcher
Box 2241-U
GPO Melbourne, VC
3001 Australia

The term "Protogrove" refers to one or two ADF members in a given area who are trying to get a grove started. We have some without post office or mailing service boxes in: San Diego CA, Dade City FL, Watervliet MI, Columbia MO, Greenfield MO, Kingston PA, Nashville TN, Houston TX, and Laramie WY. If you would like to start a grove of ADF in your area, or to contact one of these protogroves just listed, write to: Niszsa Zeron, ADF Registrar, Box 9420, Newark, DE, USA 19714.



We Know the Challenge of Financing a Second Home.

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These osprey feed each winter in the coastal forests of Latin America, but return to the United States each spring to produce their next generation.

The Nature Conservancy recognizes that protecting a rare bird's breeding ground in the north is of little value, if its "second home" in the tropics is not protected as well.

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The Nature Conservancy

Conservation Through Private Action

For more information, call toll-free 1-800-628-6860.
(or write The Nature Conservancy, Box PSA, 1815 N. Lynn Street, Arlington, VA 22209)