

THE COMING AGE



**A MADRIAN REVIEW OF
RELIGION LIFE AND CULTURE**

CONTENTS INCLUDE:

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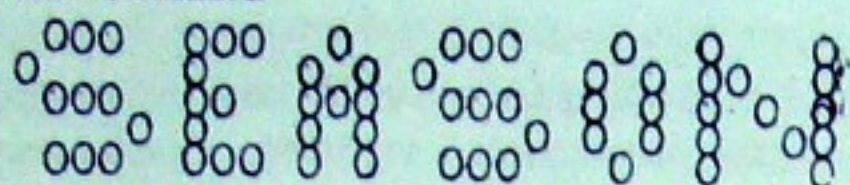
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THE FELLOWSHIP OF ISIS for followers of the Goddess of all traditions. The Temple of Isis, Huntington Castle, Clonegal, Enniscorthy, Eire.

THE COMING



Correspondence of the sacred and profane calendars
until the end of the year:

Astraea (Nov 28 - Dec 25)
Hestia (Dec 26 - Jan 22)
Brighde (Jan 23 - Feb 19)
Moura (Feb 19 - Mar 19)

The last embers of the Samhain fires have died behind us and we move into Astraea (always annoying to we bad mathematicians, as the sacred and profane months begin to move out of phase again after the almost exact correspondence of Samhain and November). The air is filled with thoughts of the dark solstice and the bright Nativity of our Lady. Nativity falls late this year on the 11th of Hestia, and the Advent begins on the full moon of 9th Astaea.

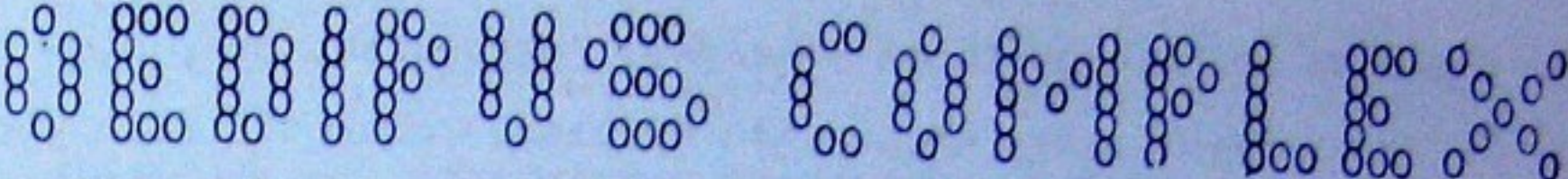
THE STAR-FAIRY

Legend has it that throughout the period of the Advent, the sylphs or air elementals travel about the earth spreading the peace and joy of our Lady's coming Nativity. The chief among them was always depicted as carrying a symbolic representation of the Star of the Nativity, and is called the Star-Sylph or Star-Fairy. Some later traditions say that she and her followers become semi-visible on the night before Nativity-dawn, and fly in and out of every house and dwelling-place, creating presents out of the air for all who have deserved them through the year. Some people have doubts about this last point, but the most sensible section of the community has always believed it - that is, the children!

DECORATIONS

All kinds of decorations, of course, are used for Nativity, but by tradition mistletoe, ivy, holly and fir are indispensable. The idea of a decorated fir-tree presided over by the Star-Fairy dates back to a time before the existence of any non-Madrian cults which may have borrowed it. Perfumed candles and coloured candles, particularly red, green and purple, are very popular.

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An enigma of modern psychology understood in the light of the Madrian faith.

Modern psychology has been a mixed blessing. Insofar as it has increased awareness of levels of mind beyond normal waking consciousness, it has done humanity a great service, but insofar as it has tried to explain these in purely material terms it has attempted to deprive humanity of even such glimpses beyond the 'natural' as nineteenth-century scientism allowed.

One truly significant aspect of the psychoanalytic method, however, has been its recognition of the importance of myth. Even Freud, the most materialistic of psychoanalysts, realised that in order to express the emotive and psychic quality of a psychological situation as well as merely describing it intellectually, one must harness the archetypal depth of myth to one's purposes. He did not realise, though, that the psychological level of myth is inextricably connected with far deeper spiritual levels of meaning, and that one cannot use one without unconsciously bringing in the others.

It is because of this archetypal depth that the idea of the Oedipus complex has had such a profound effect on modern thought - despite the fact that in most of its details it is incorrect.

Baldly stated, the idea of the Oedipus complex is that nearly every man has within him the repressed and therefore unconscious desire to kill his father and marry his mother. The evidence upon which Freud came to this conclusion was correct; but Freudian theory is founded upon a thoroughly materialistic world-view - the belief that human beings have no souls, but are merely 'naked apes'. This gave rise to two prejudices which distorted the interpretation of the evidence:

1/ The prejudice that we cannot have had any existence previous to this life - and therefore all feelings held from an early age must originate in childhood experiences (or even 'womb-experiences')

2/ The prejudice that we have no higher or spiritual impulses - and therefore all motivation can eventually be re-

duced to animal instincts - hunger, aggression, sex, etc.

The Oedipus story is, in its origins, connected with the early stages of the patriarchal revolution*. On the surface level, it is a chronicle of an attempt to overthrow Madrian-Matriarchal society and religion and the tragic consequences which followed. But as the overthrow became complete, the story took the form of a paradigm of the feelings of the deep unconscious of every person - a longing to return to the Goddess, and a bitter resentment against the cruel and arrogant 'father' god of wrath and the repressive social order set up by his followers.

When one realises the tremendous emotional power of past and present Madrian devotion, and the tender and delicate relationship which is built up between the aspiring soul and her Goddess, it is easy to understand the depth and bitterness of the psychological trauma when she feels herself rudely thrust aside by a coarse and violent-tempered 'god' claiming first to own and possess the Goddess, and then denying Her existence altogether.

Under the influence of the first of his two prejudices, Freud, who saw every fairy-tale queen and king as types of mother and father, of course interpreted Jocasta and Laius in the same way.

Under the influence of his second prejudice, the only motivation he could come up with for the whole thing was his good old standby sex. And because of the emphasis on sexual - and purely heterosexual - motivation, he could not conclude that women could also have 'Oedipal' feelings. He therefore invented for women the 'Elektra complex', a pitiful afterthought which has made no real contribution to the understanding of psychology (the Oedipus complex has become a household word because it expressed something which people instinctively felt to contain a great truth - how many people have even heard of the 'Elektra complex'?).

The fact is, however, that the so-called Oedipus complex not only applies to both sexes, but applies more strongly on the whole to women, because they tend to be more spiritually developed.

The sexual aspect of Freud's theory, and of the patriarchal-version of the Oedipus myth itself are both typical of the spiritual immaturity of masculist culture. The primary act of communion is the union of the female soul with female Deity - not because all Her worshippers are female, but because the soul itself is female. The matriarchal Celts taught that upon death the soul took an 'angel' form, and that all 'angels' were female. The patriarchal Greeks and even the Romans still spoke of their souls as 'she'. Only Christian dogma ended this with its unsophisticated doctrine of bodily resurrection after death. (incredibly, this doctrine is still officially held by all the major Christian denominations to this day!)

The Freudian version of the Oedipus complex has two extremely harmful effects. Morally, its effect is at one with that of puritan patriarchalism - it both crushes and innures; making people feel 'sinful' because of the wicked thoughts which they are unconsciously harbouring, and making them feel that since they have wicked ideas which they can't control, they aren't really morally responsible anyway.

Its second effect is to help to establish repression as a condition of life. One's most basic desire is to kill one parent and marry the other. One cannot possibly do that, therefore one's most basic desire must be repressed. Emotional life is to be founded upon frustration from the beginning.

Once we have understood the real nature of the desire, we see also that it can and must be fulfilled. We must overthrow the male 'god' and all the materialisms and puritanisms that follow in his train. We must return to the love of our Lady, the one true Deity.

*See Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, Penguin, vol II pp. 9-15

Miriam Dalziel

* * * *

"More and more, archaeology is proving that there was indeed a golden age - a gynocratic age that endured for untold millennia, up past the dawn of written history... man was pacific, Deity was feminine, and woman was supreme. Peace and justice prevailed under an all-merciful Goddess."

Elizabeth Gould Davis

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE DIVINE NAMES

a subject for contemplation

There are two unpronounceable 'names of power' by which Deity is represented, and each of them has a special significance in Madrian rituals. The first, IHV, calls on the power of the great Mother in all rites which are not Sacraments (such as Sacrifice, or Purification). The second, HVH, represents the Daughter, or the Divine principle as it operates in matter. It is through this principle that the operation of a Sacrament is effective.

Each of these is a trigrammaton - based on the spiritual number three. When patriarchy suppressed true Religion, it combined these names into a tetragrammaton: IHVH (Yahweh or Jehovah), based on the material number four. This was a deep symbolic representation of the essential materialism of patriarchal religion.

Iot 'E Vo (IHV), is the primordial Name of Deity (the ancient Sumerians used the pronunciation Iahu). The symbolism of the letters represents in order the three Persons of the Trinity - Iot is always the first principle or primal urge, thus in its most sublime sense it is the unknowable Dark Mother - Absolute Deity, before time and beyond space, from whom all manifestation proceeds. 'E, the aspirate or 'breathing' of the ancient Greeks represents the breath or Spirit of Deity (in both Greek and Hebrew the word for breath and spirit is the same: Pneuma in Greek, Ruach in Hebrew); the Silver Star above the dark waters of the unknowable; the great Mother and Creator of the universe. Vo is the letter of death and as such it represents the Daughter, Who descended into matter and accepted death for the sake of fallen creatures.

'E Vo 'E (HVH) is the Chavah or Eve of the Hebrew tradition. E Vo E was also the cry of the pre-Hellenic Madrian ecstasies, later preserved by the Bacchantes. The name Chavah means 'Mother of All Living', a title of the Goddess; but after the patriarchal editing of the Genesis

story, the meaning was re-interpreted as simply the ancestress of all people.

The letters symbolise the Daughter's beginning in pure Spirit, Her descent into matter and death, and Her resurrection to Spirit again. In the late Middle Ages it was popular to speak of the Parabola, which was really a U or V shape with the word Eva at the beginning and Ave at the end. This represented humanity's beginning in Paradise with Eve, its fall and its rise again with Mary - Ave Maria! Of course, it was rather a bad parabola, because only the two top points were represented, and not the lower curve. But it is a fine example of how the superconscious mind can intuit Truth even when the evidence is wrong. If only they had known, the full Parabola is to be found in the letters of the name itself - 'E Vo 'E - just as its shape is represented by the central letter, the letter which also represents our Lady Herself.

Sister Julia

ooo000ooo

HERAS OF THE FAITH.....

A hera has been defined as one who has realised the full potentialities of her true self so far as that is possible to one in incarnate existence. Heras were honoured in the most ancient times - the masculinized concept 'hero' was a much later idea. Because they had achieved so much of their divine purpose, they were said to have risen quite above the material after death, and to exist on a higher plane, sometimes helping those still in the cycles of incarnation. Shrines and temples were sometimes named for them, and they were the tutelary spirits of the places (some authorities hold that the word 'hera' originally meant 'protectress').

In this occasional series, we will print some of the traditional hera-stories. The story of H. Pellegrina has circulated among the Tuscan witches, and those who worship the Goddess under the name of Diana, for many centuries. There are many versions, and this is one of the finest.

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"Fortunate they/ Who, though once only and then but far away,
Have heard Her massive sandal set on stone."

Edna St. Vincent Millay

THE STORY OF
HERA PELLEGRINA
AND THE HOUSE OF THE WIND

* * * * *

Many years ago, when the fair land of Italia lay under the hand of priests of a false god, who, being more confident of their worldly power, were yet more barbarous in their ways than now they are - in that time, be it said, there lived a maid who surpassed all the children of her village in beauty of body and soul.

Now the mother of this maid had it in mind that she should become a nun - which is to say a votary, not consecrated by sacred rites to our dear Lady, but bound to the servitude of the false god.

This maid had read but little, and the books of that time contained nothing but the falsehoods of the priests; but a guiltless heart is always the surest guide, and in her heart she knew that what her mother wanted was not good. But when she said this, her mother replied: "If you will not become a nun, you must marry the man I choose."

"Oh, no," replied the maid, "for I must find my way, and then I shall be loyal and obedient. But first I must seek my true path." At this, her mother flew at her and beat her. But the maid spoke bravely through her tears, and said: "If you treat me so ill, I shall flee to the forests, and dwell among my sisters, the beasts of the wood."

And her mother became frightened, and decided to try another method; for she knew of an old woman noted for her wisdom and power of persuasion. "This maid" she thought "will be able to change the heart of my daughter." And so she sent for her to become the governess and attendant of her daughter, and the woman, being poor, agreed.

The daughter and the governess became the firmest friends, and neither one spoke of the nunnery even once. Instead, the governess taught her to love the forest and its creatures which was for her an easy lesson; she taught

her the names and the uses of the herbs, and how to heal the ills of both body and soul, and a hundred other arts that seem sheer miracle to the uninitiated. And all this time, the mother grew more impatient.

Now it happened that the maid was in the habit of lying awake at night to listen to the song of the nightingales, and at these times, she had often heard her governess in the next room arise and go out on to the great balcony. And one night she decided to follow her. When she arrived, she saw the older woman kneeling beneath the great midsummer moon, speaking words in a low voice that she had not heard before. And she was filled with a feeling of wonder, though she knew not why, and could not move from the spot.

Thus, when the governess had finished her prayers, she turned around and saw the maid. She was not angry, but said simply "So, you are here. I have expected you. I knew that our Lady would bring you when you were ready."

"Mean you Maria?" asked the child.

"She is called by many names, and that is one of them. But those who call Her by it know Her least."

A thrill passed through the soul of the girl, for she realised that her true path lay before her. With trembling voice, she asked: "And who, then, know Her most?"

"I could tell you much," said the older woman, "but these are wicked times, and you would be in constant danger of a cruel death."

"For Her sake I shall fear nothing." said the girl.

The older woman made the pentacle upon herself in thanks. "I had hope you would speak thus." she said, "I have taught you all the arts of a priestess in this land, excepting the most important of them all - the art of loving the Goddess. What I have already taught you, no priest would believe, for though they prate endlessly of their gods and their devils, they have no true belief in anything beyond the material. But now you must work as you have not worked before; for my time on this earth grows short, and there must be one to take my

place.

In the weeks that followed, the maid learnt truths that had been known since the dawn of time - the Truth of the Goddess. And she became consecrated to Her as Her priestess.

But her mother became seized with impatience, and expelled the old woman from the house, and locked her daughter in a tower room with no where to sleep save the bare stone floor, and neither food nor drink. "There shall you stay", she cried, "until you are ready to become a nun."

But the young priestess said to herself "Here I shall have silence and time to fast and pray, and when I am ready, my Lady shall release me." And for three days she prayed without ceasing. And on the third night, her mother came to berate her and left, forgetting in her rage to lock the door. And the girl left the house in the hour before the dawn.

And donning a pilgrim's robe, she travelled about the country, preaching and teaching the religion of the one Goddess.

The people adored her and were converted in their hundreds, and they called her la bella pellegrina - the beautiful pilgrim. And many travelled miles that they might fall on their knees and worship her, but she would say "Not I, but She who is greater; not matter, but spirit; not mortality, but Life eternal."

But at last her mother found her and had her arrested and asked in an evil temper whether she would become a nun, and she replied "That cannot be, for I belong to the one true Goddess, and I have died to the world and all its false gods, and so too will you, if you have wisdom to know Truth when you have heard it." But the mother gave her up to the priests to put her to torture and death as they did to all who would not agree with them or who left their religion.

The people were seized with pity and anger and would have stormed the house where she was held, but it was guarded by many soldiers, and she was watched night and day. But they prayed, as she had taught them, and she prayed also,

and on the morning of the day that she was to be tortured and killed, a great wind arose in the heavens, a wind such as had not been seen before, and it overthrew the house so that not one stone was left standing upon another, and all were thrown into terror and confusion. But H. Pellegrina walked away with calm dignity, and was taken by her people into the forests; and never again did the profane lay hands on her, but she lived to a great age teaching the Truth of the Goddess and guiding the faithful both in body and in soul.

But ill luck followed all who tried to rebuild the great house that had been destroyed, and in the end the priests grudgingly gave it over to the people as common land, and on it the affairs of all who loved the Goddess prospered as though a charm were upon them. And this land was ever called La Casa al Vento - The House of the Wind.

'.'.'.'.'.'.'.'.'.'.'.'

THE COMING SEASON (2)

Minor Festivals

Athene's Day, 7th Astraea - too early for this issue!

Day of Hestia, 6th Hestia - Hestia is the Genia of the home-fire, and it is traditional on this day to bless the house by making the Pentacle in the four corners of each room. Ivy is hung on the outer doors to protect the house against evil through the year. One should bake one's own bread on this day, however one acquires it the rest of the year. Madrians visit the houses of other Madrians, bringing their blessings, and they should be offered bread newly baked in the house and ale or wine made in the house (or at least mulled in it). Hestia is also the Genia of the true home-fire that burns deep within each soul, and we remember the saying of the wandering Amazons: "Home is where I light my fire and lay my great axe down".

Duodecima, 22nd Hestia - Properly, Nativity should be celebrated for 12 days, a popular custom carried on with various excuses by patriarchal religions. Hopefully we shall soon see a time when this can be resumed. Meanwhile this twelfth day provides the occasion for a final celebration. (Contd....

RESS... WORK IN PROGRESS... WORK IN PROGRESS... WORK IN PROG

MYTHS - An important part of recovering Madrian culture is myth. Some Madrians are working on reconstructions of the original matriarchal forms of traditional myths, and in particular, considerable progress has been made with the 'Orestiad'. It is important to recover not only the forms of the myths, but also the dying art of story-telling. The pre-digested products of the modern media are valued for superficial cleverness and originality rather than for deeper significance. These myths, on the other hand, must become living stories within a living tradition by being told and retold, polished and embellished. Particularly apt for this task will be those Madrians who have undertaken the experiment of cutting themselves off from the influence of the profane media to a greater or lesser extent. Anyone interested in either mythology or story-telling should contact Chrysothemis c/o TCA.

MUSIC - We would be pleased to hear from anyone who can play and/or compose. Music is an important part of religious devotion, and we would love to have some simple settings of texts, rituals, etc.

MONEY - Lux Madriana operates solely on voluntary donations and on the voluntary work of members of the Daughters of Artemis, many of whom live near subsistence level in order to devote full time to non-commercial religious work. They have no complaints about this, but of course it means that they are unable to subsidize the financial needs of the organisation themselves. We believe that there are literally millions of people in this country who are longing to return to the Goddess without understanding what it is that they want. A little more money could make us much more effective in reaching these people and in building our Lady's temple on this earth. Will you help our Lady to recover Her lost children? Even the smallest donation is of help.

CARDS AND CALENDAR - friends associated with Lux Madriana are planning to produce greetings cards for major festivals beginning at Easter, we are also considering an illustrated calendar for the new year. If interested, please contact us nearer the time.

CRAFTS - we would be interested to hear from anyone who might be able to make pendants and jewellery for ritual and decorative purposes, based on Madrian motifs, such as the Labrys, Symphia, rose-and-pentacle, etc. Also devotional statuettes, Madrian rosaries and other craft-work based on Madrian themes. This includes the craft of verse - we would be pleased to hear from Madrian poets.

I CHING - Work is being done on the reconstruction of the original Madrian basis of the I Ching and its underlying principles.

PRAYER - We would ask everyone to pray that more souls may hear the call of our Lady, and that more hearts may be opened to receive Her. We ask you to pray that Her Ekklesia may grow stronger upon the earth and that more maids may be called to become Her priestesses. Our Lady's work in this world requires your prayers as much as your material help.

PUBLICITY - Remember that most people still have not heard about our Lady and cannot turn to Her even if they want to. We must all play our part in changing this situation. Please use your ingenuity over the coming season.

If you have any project of interest to Madrians which you would like to appear in the next Work In Progress, please write to us.

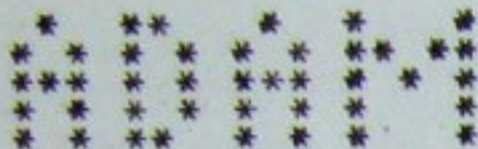
GRESS... WORK IN PROGRESS... WORK IN PROGRESS... WORK IN PRO

THE COMING SEASON: Duodecima, contd.)

It is a high-spirited festival, and various games and tricks are played. Traditionally a cake is baked with a bean cooked into it. It is divided among all maids present, and the one who finds the bean in her portion becomes 'queen of the bean'. She is mistress of the revels until midnight, and her word is law until the stroke of twelve.

1st Moura - It is not necessary to attend sacrifice or Communion on this day, although people often do. But if there is a priestess in the area, one should make confession and receive purification for the period of Moura.

THE



ERROR

As the evidence that female-ruled, Goddess-worshipping societies were once the universal form of human civilisation becomes harder and harder to dispute, new ways are being sought by defenders of the status quo to throw doubt on the importance of these societies.

The first line of attack was to say "But these were very primitive societies; people had only just come out of the trees 5,000 years ago". But this is crumbling under the weight of evidence. Seals 7,000 years old show facts about our solar system which astronomers have only re-discovered over the last 40 years. 10,000 years ago, women navigated the world, making maps so accurate that only recently, with modern equipment have people discovered how accurate they were. According to philologists, their language, far from being a series of squeaks and grunts, was so much more complex and sophisticated than our own that it is doubtful whether many modern minds could learn it.

So another line is taken - the only reason women controlled society, and the only reason the Goddess was worshipped, was that people did not understand the male role in procreation. They wrongly thought that women were the sole creators of life. In a sex-obsessed world like our own, brought up on the Freudian dogma that lust makes the world go round, this non-sequitur has gained a good deal of credit. It has even been echoed by some writers who really ought to know better, such as Jane Harrison. Jill Tweedie does it again in the Guardian in Hera of this year: writing of Madrian-matriarchy, she says, "Though you gain power through an error (the misunderstanding about the father's part in reproduction).... you can hang on for a very long time in the face of the most damning facts. Patriarchal gods know all about this too."

You bet they do! For the only error in the whole thing is based on a patriarchal myth. It is very unlikely that the advanced civilisations of the matriarchies denied biological fatherhood. All that they denied was that a father is absolutely necessary - and that for a very simple reason. He isn't.

Modern biology tells us that the primary function of the male sperm is to trigger off the initial growth in the female ovum. But in rare cases this can be triggered without a sperm, and in even rarer cases the growth can continue and result in childbirth. In 1955, Dr Helen Spurway of University College London estimated that virgin birth (parthenogenesis) occurred once in every 1.6 million pregnancies, but more recent research suggests that the frequency is probably much greater, and parthenogenesis is now thought to take place as frequently as ordinary (sororal) twins, or twice as frequently as identical twins.

Why aren't people more aware of it? Firstly because women having relations with men would have no cause to suspect that they had not conceived by the normal means. Secondly because, as Laurel Galana tersely put it, to declare you've conceived without male assistance has always been one of the surest ways to get yourself put in the looney bin. This is one of the central myths of patriarchal society, and it is very hard to shake 'even in the face of the most damning facts'.

Apart from these accidental occurrences, there may very well be ways of deliberately bringing about parthenogenesis in people. It has long been an easy matter to produce parthenogenesis in female frogs and sea urchins, and recent experiments with rabbits prove that it is also possible in mammals. In principle, there is no reason why similar techniques might not be developed for people. It seems quite probable that the matriarchies, with their high-level knowledge of natural medicine, may have had such techniques.

Now it is unlikely that matriarchy was dependent on the idea of parthenogenesis. It is certain that Matriarchism was not and is not. But patriarchal society and religion appear to have a strong psychological dependence on the myth of the absolute necessity of the father.

The Orestiad, in its patriarchalised form, is one of the earliest works of patriarchal self-justification. A young man has killed his mother. He is pursued by avenging female spirits called the Furies, and finally the affair is settled by a court of the new patriarchal 'gods'.

Obviously the killing of the mother represents the overthrow of matriarchy and the turning away from the Goddess. The furies represent the guilty conscience of the patriarchal regime. Their threefold female form is a blasphemous parody of the Divine Trinity, Whom the junta hates and fears. The court is held to try to convince themselves, despite their inner feelings, that they are really right. The nature of Orestes's successful defence is quite remarkable: it is claimed that fathers are the only true parents, and therefore he has no blood relationship with his mother, and was justified in killing her. This theory is expounded at length by the male gods, but since, in their heart of hearts, people were unable to accept their authority, a goddess had to be brought forward. Athene enters the story, claiming that she had no mother, but sprang, fully grown from the head of Zeus (parthenogenesis in reverse!). On this ground, she supports patriarchal society and religion. Here is the patriarchal theory of biology as stated by Apollo in his evidence at the trial: "The mother is not parent of the child/ Which is called hers. She is the nurse who tends the growth/Of the young seed planted by its true parent, the male." And this amazing superstition was accepted by patriarchal civilisation right up until the discovery of the female ovum in the nineteenth century. As recently as the seventeenth century, it was believed possible to create a living being from sperm kept for nine months in a warm damp place and fed on menstrual blood!

I do not suggest for a moment that this is the whole basis of patriarchal society and religion, as the 'paternity' school claim that earlier theories were the whole basis of matriarchy and the worship of the Goddess. It takes a lot more than a theory of procreation to make a spiritual and social order. It is a soul-destroying and rather foolish materialism which seeks to reduce the noblest achievements of the human spirit to these mundane technicalities. An attitude all too common in late patriarchy.

But let us get the facts straight. It was not matriarchy or Madrianism which were bolstered by errors about

the 'facts of life' and downright falsehoods. It was patriarchal society and religion. It was not the discovery of the truth which was used to help destroy the universal religion of our Lady. It was the suppression of the truth.

'Oreithyia'

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THE COMING SEASON (3)

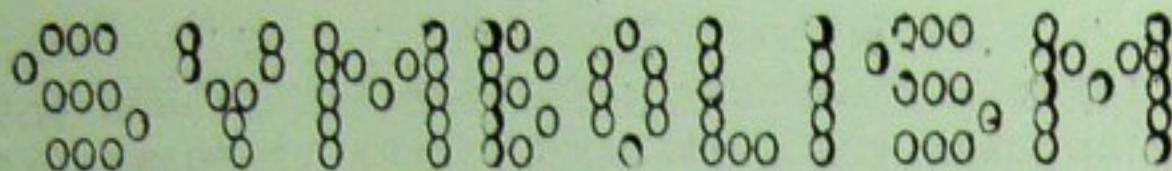
Med-Moura, 14th Moura - The sacrifices of Moura are suspended for this day, and like Moura-eve it is a day for games and good food. An important custom on this day is the giving of small gifts to spiritual heads of households, spiritual mothers and natural mothers.

MAJOR FESTIVALS

The feast of Lights, 10th Brighde - This feast commemorates our Lady's promise to bring Her light to every part of fallen creation, and Her acceptance of Her coming death. White is worn at Sacrifice or Communion, and the place is lighted with many candles. The candles are also blessed that are to be used throughout the coming year. It is a feast day. **Before midnight on the Eve of Lights**, all Nativity decorations and evergreens should be taken down. It is considered unlucky for even one leaf to remain (all representations of the Star should, of course, have been removed before midnight on Duodecima). They may be replaced by Box in honour of the Feast of Lights.

Moura-eve, 28th Brighde - This is the feast day before the sacrifices of Moura. During Moura we prepare for our Lady's death with fasting and self-denial. But the Eve of Moura is a time for good food and high energy. Traditionally it is celebrated by skipping, foot-races and all varieties of energetic pursuits. The custom of making pancakes on Moura-eve goes back to a traditional story of how the Madrian Celts in Albion defeated patriarchal invaders by matching their brute strength with intelligence and cunning. Unfortunately, space prohibits telling the full story here.

"My Lady is beautiful, beautiful beyond compare; so beautiful that when one has seen Her once, one would wish to die so as to see Her again; so beautiful that when one has seen Her, one can no longer love anything earthly" Bernadette Soubirous



It was originally my intention to discuss briefly all the important Madrian symbols. But a symbol, by its very nature, is highly complex and stimulates a great variety of ideas and emotions - and I soon became entangled. So I decided on a series - to begin with a discussion of some of the meanings clustering around 'the symbol of Venus'.

THE SYMBOL OF VENUS

This symbol, the circle surmounting the equiarmed cross, is one of the oldest known to us and is still, of course, in regular use in astrology as the sign for Venus and in biology as the sign of the female. In astrology, the planetary signs are composed of three symbols: the circle, the crescent and the cross, associated respectively with Divine Spirit, human spirit and matter. Speculation can begin from this basis.

Clearly the first idea derived from the symbol is that of the complete domination of Deity over the world of matter - the highest state of existence and goal of every human soul.

In another sense, the symbol stands for the Goddess as Mother and Creatrix. The circle - equivalent to the full moon - signifies completion, fulness, life and light, and is thus appropriate to the Mother, Who is the breath or manifestation of the absolutely Divine. The equiarmed cross can suggest universality - again associated with the Mother - and also matter in its highest form, as Her divine creation. The symbol as a whole thus represents the state existing before the turning of part of creation from the Creatrix - that state of complete communion to which we aspire to return. It is difficult for us to recognize the reality of Perfection and to know that each soul has participated in Perfection and rejected it. Easier by far is it to believe to believe that we have been continually ascending from our first beginnings, that the human soul and human society have evolved and are evolving by their own momentum towards perfection. The recognition of a past involvement in Perfection teaches us that the journey of the soul is a personal one and determined by our choices. Only then can we make our choices freely.

The symbol thus represents the true hope of the human soul the certainty of personal union with our Blessed Lady. For what has existed beyond time and space exists forever - separation from the Goddess is only on the material plane, which will exist only as long as it takes for every soul to transcend it into that perfect union beyond.

The circle over the cross also symbolizes the Goddess as Maid - Princess of the World and Queen of Heaven. The moon is the particular symbol of the Daughter, and its invisible control over nature is a shadow of Her sovereignty over us all. This idea is beautifully expressed in the words of the prayer: "Your hand governs the tides of the sea and Your glance commands the tempest. At the sound of Your voice the stars move in the course that you have appointed to them, and each season reigns over the earth in its turn." The equiarmed cross represents the death of our Lady in the descent into the material and the spreading of Divine manifestation in all four directions of fallen creation which was achieved by that death. The complete symbol celebrates Her resurrection and return to full majesty.

This symbol, which has such a deep meaning when applied to spirit or Deity, has for aeons been used to represent the female principle. The female principle is the triumph of spirit over matter, and it is this principle which we must develop in ourselves and in the community. Its opposite, the male principle, is represented by the sign of Mars - the equiarmed cross (now transformed into an arrow) above the circle. This is significant of the triumph of matter over spirit. A complete domination would be impossible, but there is a partial one, so the cross is set at an angle. It is this that we see when the male principle is highly developed: an increasing acceleration towards materialism and atheism; the tendency to objectivize, to impersonalize the world; the valuing of abstracts such as the state, society, the 'people', and universalistic systems; the worshipping of physical strength, size, violence and a technologically oriented science. The other main masculine symbol also represents matter in its lowest aspect, its spiritual dimension eliminated. This is the Tau (T) in which the upper portion of the cross is missing, and the lower portion extended. The Latin or Christian cross with its long lower arm

also reflects this symbolism. Both of these are regarded as symbols of death. The changing of the equiarmed cross to an arrow in the sign of Mars (in Roman myth a god of war) is similar: the upper portion again is missing, the lower portion extended, and the arms angled downwards. It is interesting to remember the contrast between Crete and her patriarchal neighbours on the subject of violence and war* and the complete lack of evidence for violent death or warfare in the excavations of Matriarchal Catal Huyuk.

There is a great need for the 'feminization' of individuals and society; the male principle must be rejected in both. It must also be recognized that this is not a rejection of strength, energy, intelligence, capability - all those things which have been falsely identified exclusively with the male principle in a masculist society. On the contrary, in identifying these qualities with the female principle we see them in their most positive aspects, and not distorted into brutality, aggression, barren intellectualism and so on, which are typical manifestations of the masculist structure. We must all work to make the symbol of Venus a symbol of the coming spiritual era.

Chrysothemis

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THE THIRTEEN MONTHS

Columbina is the first,
The gentle Dove reborn from death,
And all the earth is wakened by
Her newly-quickened breath.

Maia is the second,
The year grows quickly from its birth,
And our dear Lady wears the crown
Of Heaven and of earth.

Next follows noble Hera,
Bringer of warmth and joy and light.
The fields are filled with flowers
And all the world is bright.

Then glorious Rosea,
First daughter of the Summer sun,
The season of the Fiery Rose
In Whom all life is one.

Bright-garlanded Kerea,
Sweet prime of all the laughing year!
Your languid days and fragrant nights
Have always welcome here.

In Hesperis, the golden month,
The lingering end of Summer's reign,
Sweet scents climb up through shimmering heat
Among the ripening grain.

The rich abundance of the earth
Bursts forth in Mala's fruitfulness -
The bounteous gifts of Life Divine
To nourish and to bless.

Brisk and crisp and smoky-scented
Are russet Hathor's misty days;
A time of nuts and cyder-brew
And breath a chill white haze.

Samhain begins with blazing fires
For sister souls who have gone forth
And ends as icy Winter leaves
Her palace in the North.

Astraea brings the frost and snow
And also brings a Star -
Sign of our Lady's love, to show
Her coming is not far.

In Hestia, the darkest month,
A tiny light is born -
Our Lady in Her Mother's arms
Shines forth on the grey dawn.

In Brighde, Winter's last chill month,
A thousand candles light the sky
Our Lady, robed in purest white,
Prepares Herself to die.

Moura is not of Winter,
Of Summer, Autumn or of Spring,
She is a season of her own
Apart from everything.
The closing year is hushed and still,
The Dove is slain that we may live,
The dearest gift that we can take,
Or anyone can give.

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A SERMON AGAINST GROWN-UPS

When they asked me to write an article for The Coming Age, I said "It won't be at all like the others, you know, not clever or anything, I can only write about the Goddess and about myself". "Well, it takes all sorts to make a magazine," they said. So here I am.

And the only thing I really want to say, now that I come to it, is how happy I am. I'm happy about the magazine and Lux Madriana; happy that so many new people are coming to the Goddess. Also I am happy in a more selfish way. You see, I have loved the Goddess since I was fourteen or fifteen, and I have never known how to worship Her. It is so beautiful just to know about Her religion and to follow it. Really, I just want to thank Her for showing us these things. I never realized how much I needed guidance until I had it, or how lost I was until I was found.

People sometimes accuse me of playing a game about not being very clever. It's true; I do. I think it's a very good game, and more people ought to play it. Because none of us are really very clever, even the cleverest. Nothing is sillier than to sit on this tiny grain of sand which spins round a tiny spark of fire somewhere in a universe so vast that we can't even think about it, and puff ourselves up like bullfrogs, thinking we know everything. No one who has really experienced our Lady, even once, even for a moment, can ever think herself very clever or grown-up again. Not in her best moments, anyway. Not when she is really herself.

I think that if we are really to know our Lady, we must become like little children. I know other people have said that sort of thing - and I think that everyone who has said it must have known something of our Lady. It is a difficult thing to tell people nowadays. In these days of pollution and atom bombs, they think they have outgrown all that. Words like humility and reverence, or even hope and love, merely bring a derisive smile. We all know everything now, we can all go our own way without a bit of moral guidance from anywhere, and if some people haven't the strength, bad luck. Except that I don't think it is strength. I think it is insensitivity, and ultimately weakness. It is funny that the people who are most concerned about being "grown-up" are always children. And the age that is most concerned about being 'adult' is a most childish age. Childish, not childlike.

That is why this is a sick age, a cynical age, a shallow, hollow age without awe or wonder. I have plumbed the depths of this age - lived its pride and its self-righteousness until I was sick to the soul. And my personal finding was that the only cure was to clasp my hands again in hope and fear and wonder - and to accept the Truth beyond all rationality.

I don't mean that we should push aside intelligent doubts about religion. I don't mean that at all. We must face these doubts as squarely and as bravely as we know how. But when we have dealt with them, we must not let ourselves be dogged by old superstitions. The great superstition of our age might be called scientific humanism. When we look at it clearly and thoughtfully, we can see that it is not really scientific nor really human. It is when we are not intelligent but sensible - grown-up, led by sound common sense (in other words, believing what everyone else believes because everyone else believes it) that it comes creeping up behind us.

Really it is not very grown up to love our Lady. It is not very mature to see a world of beauty and depth and wonder in place of the drab grey 'reality' of the materialistic grown-ups. They know, you see, that the physical world is all that there is. They have not a scrap of evidence and never could have, but they believe it with all the fanatical fervour of

the Spanish Inquisition (in Russia they even use the same methods). Their attitude to life is like that of some miserly orphanage-keeper in Dickens. Well then, we are just children, but we are going back to our Mother at last, because we have stayed in their orphanage too long.

Sr. Angelina

REVIEWS

The First Sex, Elizabeth Gould Davis - If H.M. Government is concerned to preserve patriarchy, it would do well to place a compulsory warning on The First Sex it might read: "Caution, this book is a mind-altering substance". There are not many books which can change one's whole view of the world, but this is one of them. Page after page, chapter after chapter, carefully documented facts and details emerge, showing not only that the male-dominated, god-worshipping or atheistic societies with which we are so familiar have not been the constant rule of human history; but that the few thousand years of patriarchal domination are only a relatively tiny interlude in a vast history of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of years in which women were dominant and our Lady was recognised as the one true God. Years of high civilisation, peace and prosperity which compare more than favourably with the cruel, war-torn centuries of patriarchy. For centuries, no-one knew about this history. Its documents were burnt, its monuments smashed by the early patriarchs. Only today has modern science recovered the facts. "Before US, people lived in caves, and WE have been progressing ever since." The old lie melts away like a snowman in a blast-furnace.

Even today, the author had to suppress a third of her original manuscript before she could get a publishing agreement. The remaining two-thirds are still a bombshell. Written from a radical-feminist viewpoint, it may not be to every taste, but it is hard to dispute her facts. as a secular historian, she does not press her Madrian faith, but at times it comes glimmering through: "The frequent appearance throughout history of a lovely lady in 'white and shining vestments, her fair hair garlanded with a crown of flowers'... is most significant... The explanation may lie,

as Graves says, in Western man's repressed desire for a goddess. But it may also lie in the fact that the blessed One, the ruler of the universe is a woman - the Great Goddess of our first million or more years."

It is an angry book and a joyful one; a scholarly book and an eminently readable one. The author has put her full heart into it without fearing to offend. Everyone will have their pet criticisms of the book. No one will ever be the same after reading it.

Published by Penguin at 75p.

The Goddesses of Chaldaea, Syria and Egypt, Lawrence Durdin-Robertson. In this work the author, a member of Lux Madriana and co-founder with Olivia Robertson of the Fellowship of Isis, brings together a wide variety of legendary and traditional material. Handsomely produced with nine illustrations by Anna Durdin-Robertson, the book is the first of a projected set which when complete will comprise eight volumes. The second, The Goddesses of India, Tibet, China and Japan is already in preparation. When completed, this should be a reference work of encyclopaedic proportions.

Published by Cesara Publications at £1.50

A final thought...

Think for a moment of the things around you. Doors, walls, tables. It all seems so solid, so real, so absolute. The Goddess, if She lives at all, must live in a place very distant, very different. But She does not. She is standing behind you, Her hand on your shoulder, waiting for you to turn. She is standing before you and beside you. She has never left you in all your life. She is always there, and she loves you with a love more complete than any other, despite every weakness. For the real you is a perfect creature, a jewel without a flaw. Will you begin to become that jewel again? Remember from time to time throughout the day, throughout the coming days, that She is there, and let your heart be overcome by a sudden flood of love.

Letters, comments and queries are welcomed. Write to Crysothemis c/o The Coming Age. We regret that the projected article on witchcraft does not appear in this issue.

MADRIAN BOOKLETS

The Rite of Sacrifice - A simple non-Sacramental rite which can be performed by any woman with any group of people.

The Catechism of the Children of the Goddess - All the essential beliefs of Artemid Madrianism presented in concise question-and-answer form, with useful appendices.

Available soon: The Creation and The Crystal Tablet and The Mythos of the Divine Maid. These two books between them give the central mythos or sacred texts of the Madrian religion, and will provide all the readings for the rite of Sacrifice throughout the Madrian year (the first book will provide enough to begin with, if you wish).

The booklets are 30p each, post free, or £1 for all four.

LUX MADRIANA is an organisation devoted to the practice and promotion of the religion of the Goddess. Membership is open to all Her followers. THE SISTERHOOD OF ARTEMIS has the same function and status as Lux Madriana, but exists for those who feel they can work better within an all-female group. One may hold membership of both groups.

The second issue of The Coming Age will appear in the month of Moura. Price 35p post free (50p outside U.K.) £1.40 for a year's subscription.

People who would like to know more about the Madrian faith or have any questions are invited to write to Lux Madriana at 3, Hill View Rd., Oxford. (please enclose a S.A.E.)

"Everywhere and always, the Great Mother is served voluntarily, with awe, intoxication, gratitude respect, ecstasy, as the original source of all creation.. The Goddess of a hundred names, the white Mother, the incomprehensible Giver gives nutriment to all"

Helen Diner