

July 2009



*Hi all and welcome to the 42 issue of Pagan World!*

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*See you next issue!  
Bright blessings,  
Diana  
July 19, 2009*

**From WICCAN REDE BELTANE 2009**  
**PETER J. CARROLL FEATURE – Morgana & Sddie**

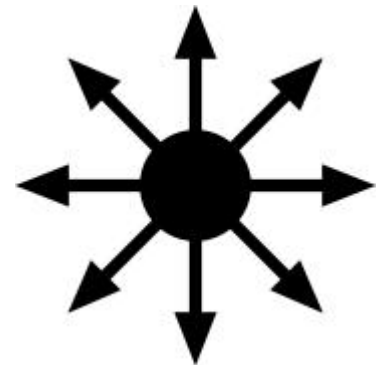
**Who is Peter J. Carroll?**

Good question. Somewhere his name rings a bell, but from where?

Last September (2008) I decided to go to the “Colours Of Chaos” conference in London. Intrigued by the recent developments within Chaos Magic I was not disappointed by the talks I heard. Suddenly the mystery guest appeared – Peter Carroll. Things were beginning to dawn.. He was obviously an appreciated guest judging by the warm welcome the audience gave. His down to earth attitude and his very British sense of humour and use of understatement immediately struck me. How refreshing!

Having mentioned the release of his new book “The Apophenion”, I immediately approached Mogg from the publishing house “Mandrake of Oxford” with a request for a review copy. Peter was also behind the bookstall. So who better to ask than the author himself? “Yes sure.” was the answer. To cut a long story short this chance meeting lead to an interview a couple of months later, in the UK. Plus receiving a review copy of “the Apophenion”. (See review elsewhere in PW.)

So who is he, you may still be asking? As one of the founding members of “Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros” (IOT) he is one of the luminaries of modern magick, specifically “Chaos Magick”. Whilst Austin Osman Spare has been described as the “Grandfather of Chaos Magick”, Peter Carroll has been one of the most influential authors.



Born on January 8, 1953 in the South of England he grew up in the post-WWII years of modernisation, the developing Welfare State and the Sexual Revolution. He writes, “I enjoy 'the sixties' immensely. In England this cultural period extends from about 1968 to 1978. The women wear flared jeans and long hair and take the pill. The publishing houses reprint Crowley and a tidal wave of esoterica follows. Soon I start doing this stuff for real, I get my own black robes and together with the London Illuminati of the day, start conjuring in gothic graveyards and luridly decorated bedsits. I scrape through college with a precisely calculated minimum pass, 'a gentleman's degree' as we call it.” (1)

And like many of us at the time we go overland to the mystical land called India. ☺

However it was in the late 1970's when Peter joined forces with Ray Sherwin and published a magazine called “The New Equinox” that his imprint was really made. In about 1977/78 IOT was founded. The name Thanateros refers to the duality of Thanatos (Death) and Eros (Love) Incorporating elements of Thelema, Zos Kia Cultus (or school of magic developed by Austin Osman Spare), Shamanism, Tantra and Taoism it was a new magickal order.

“The new style of magic they introduced, focusing on practical skills as opposed to metaphysical systems, became known as Chaos Magic. In the 1980s they began to attract a following in England, Germany and Austria, including influential occult writers and practitioners.” (2)

He led the group for a number of years before going into retirement. This was partly caused by what has been called the “Ice Magick Wars” and the disagreement with Frater U:D:. The appearance of his recent book “the Apophenion” (08-08-2008) would appear to have marked another turning point in his career.

### **What is Chaos Magick?**

It has been defined as being:

“Chaos Magick today essentially is a system derived from many individuals, formed into a new method of sorcery. Chaos Magick is a TOOL, not a structure. Many techniques and traditions are brought into this effective form of sorcery yet anything at anytime can be changed, altered or more or less form fitted to achieve the results desired.

Chaos Magick is formed from many traditions, in the current age it seems almost perfect. There is nothing, which would be denied or ignored due to dogma. The system of Chaos implements the foundation of change and progression.”

“Chaos Magick is not a system within itself. It is actually a definition of action, course of study and a non-linear way of looking at the subjective universe. Everything can be changed, altered and will to become something else. If you are sure it won't happen, it probably will and can. Chaos Magick can be as dangerous as it is beneficial. It demands a mind, which is able to understand the fragile nature of being that is known as I and what our potential of growth is. It also demands one to Know thyself.”

(From “Chaos Magick and Luciferism” by Michael Ford) (3)

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### **Meeting Peter J. Carroll – the interview, November 2008, UK, Part One**

***M: Is there anything from a biographical point of view which has been influential on your life?***

P: In my youth, I had and I still do have occasionally some psychic things with my mother. Just matters of family business and I sometimes hear this... I sometimes hear her voice from a vast distance away saying something very brief which is confirmed later on. I have experienced it a few times. In my childhood there was one particular example of when I wanted something very badly – it was only a toy, I was only about ten – and I got it against insane odds, and I began to wonder if Will could have a direct effect on reality. I began to wonder about that at a young age. And when I became about sixteen or seventeen, I read every book on Witchcraft in the library, in the local library. There weren't many books on Magic those days.

***M: No, because we're talking about the seventies.***

P: When I went to college, I went there to study chemistry, which I had found fascinating up to the age of about sixteen. By the age of about eighteen I knew as much chemistry as I really wanted to know for one lifetime, and I found the presentation of chemistry and the subject material itself and the teachers at university incredibly dull. And so I basically started reading a lot more widely in

Magic. A lot of material was starting to be published at this time, and I think I begun reading Eliphas Levi, and then Aleister Crowley, and people like William Gray. I got hold of the massive Golden Dawn book and within a couple of years a few friends and I were doing a few experiments with rituals and spells.

***M: You were actually in London by this time?***

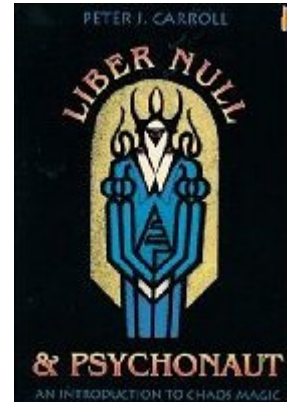
P: Yes I went off to London at the age of eighteen, but it must have been about '71. And I studied chemistry there for three years, without much enthusiasm, and then mucked about for about a year; then a year of teacher training, followed by a couple of years of teaching, and then set off overland to India. But in the years before I left for India, I just about managed to get my first set of ideas together, which was published in the now very ancient Morton Press white edition of "Liber Null".

***M: Morton Press?***

P: Yes. I only ever saw one copy that he made. And then when I got back from all my travels from India and Australia, I moved to East Morton, and Ray (Sherwin – ed.) republished the book, and sold the limited edition to the Sorcerer's Apprentice. We republished what was known as the "Red Edition".

***M: And this was before you got the "Illuminates of Thanateros" (IOT) together?***

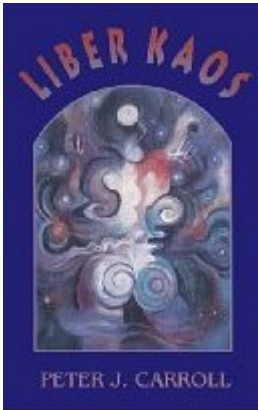
P: Well, we basically started that up in Leeds. Well, you know, in East Morton. And then Chris Bray republished "Liber Null" and he also published an extension to it, which I called "Psychonaut". Then I went back to India for about a year and when I came back I arranged (to have the book published)... in fact, Israel Regardie helped me. Israel Regardie persuaded Weiser's to take on the book. And then after that I was contacted by Frater U.D. in Germany. He invited me over to do some lectures and seminars, and it was really from that that the German and Austrian parts of the Pact developed over a period of about four or five years. People from America went back and created an American section. And the British section became pretty large as well. During that time I produced the next book, which was "Liber Kaos". Then there were the events of the "Ice War", where basically Frater U. D. got connected to a very authoritarian cult, which I didn't know very much about but I very much disapproved of what I heard of. Then there was big fallout between him and me because he was basically trying to take members out of our organisation into this new one. It was a big schism, a big war for about a year that has come to be known as the "Ice War". It's all up on the 'Net. Anyway, after that Frater U. D. was effectively kicked out of the IOT, and of other magical orders as well. I went back and did one final annual meeting in Austria and after that I decided to retire and take a long sabbatical.



***M: But there has been quite a few annual general meetings in Austria since then?***

P: Yes, they have carried on. An AGM can be held anywhere; it has been in England a couple of times, and in America a couple of times. And just as a sort of parting

shot I wrote “Psybermagick”, which is just a sort of collection of bits and pieces structured rather like “The Book of Lies”. It was quite a short book really.



There were several reasons for leaving. I really had to give more attention to my family and business. It was taking up an awful lot of my time. And I also wanted to research some theoretical things, particularly in connection with three-dimensional time. I actually spent many years on that, learning a great deal of physics I missed out on in college and it was quite a big labour working all that out. A lot of what I came up with has since appeared on my Specularium website (<http://www.specularium.org>) which I have kept going ever since.

But then about four years ago I was contacted by the “Maybe Logic Academy”, which was set up by Robert Anton Wilson as a sort of online lecture facility. He invited me ... initially I think we did an eight-week course, and that went off pretty well and a lot of people turned up from there. And then I repeated that, and then I did another one on Chaos Magick in business. That was for a period of about a year or two and I liked the structure of it, but I didn’t like the way it just came to an end and everybody seemed to want it to keep it going, so I decided to open the Arcanorium College (<http://www.arcanoriumcollege.com>) which basically stayed open all the time. Quite a number of people who’ve been on my Maybe Logic talks have joined me on that and I got some old friends from the old days to help me with it. Then it was partly that, that got me on writing the final book, “the Apophenion”. I had all these ideas I have been researching for more than a decade and the people on Arcanorium gave me a critical appraisal on it and some helped with the spelling and thus the book came out of there. Arcanorium continues, and that’s about it very rapidly.

**S: The first question that immediately came to mind was “Liber Kaos” was probably more of a popular science book than a book on magic. Apophenion compared to Liber Kaos was an easy reading and it was very well explained in layman’s terms.**

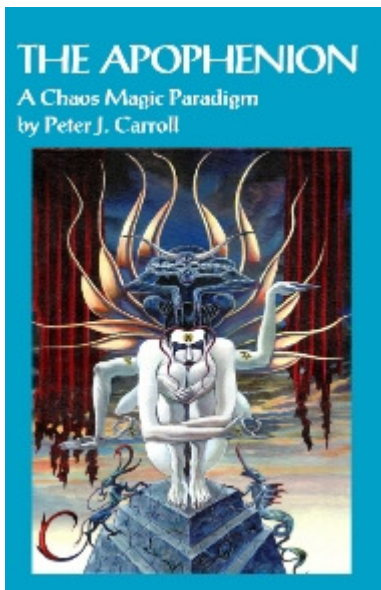
P: This was partly because I had plenty of feedback on Arcanorium College while I was writing it, and everyone was asking me to explain things that I put up as we went along. They’d say I don’t understand this, so I had to rewrite to make it understandable. And everyone says this latest book is much easier to understand. Even my mother claims to have understood it. So yes, I spend a lot of time explaining myself and trying to make things clear. You see, the first two books were notebooks for myself. When I sat down to write them in my twenties and early thirties, I thought what book would I liked to have picked up when I was eighteen, because many of the books I picked up when I was eighteen seemed to be very confusing and not very straightforward. I thought I’d write down what were essentially my magical notes. My notes to myself about how to do things. If it’s difficult to read, that’s because I basically wrote it to myself, not an audience. Whereas with the Apophenion, my audience read it as I was going along, so I had to make it comprehensible to them as well.

**M: One’s mind does change as one gets older, whether you like it or not. You have an expectation as a young person. But when you look back on it, you think: “I never actually changed”. Have you found it now with the Apophenion, that, say, some of the ideas you had at eighteen, actually**

**haven't changed? And you get to a point where you say: "okay, I can verbalise now, what I couldn't then". Have you had that kind of experience?**

P: Well, they do say that all philosophy is autobiography. That's why people write philosophy when they're older, rather than when they're younger. When you're younger you have all kind of ideas. They don't fit together very well. As you get older, you polish them up and make them fit better. Maybe that's why the book seems more coherent. Some of the ideas in the early books may be interesting in themselves, but may contradict other ideas. Whereas perhaps writing a book later in your life you have time to make it coherent.

**M: In my experience one has a vision, and life experience either contradicts or confirms it. Have you had that experience? Just take working with magic, at a given point you find out this works and that doesn't work.**



P: There are many theoretical things in the Apophenion. The germ of some of those ideas are in the early books, but they were only wild guesses. I would say: "surely there must be some connection between divination and clairvoyance" or "there must be some connection between casting spells and quantum randomness. How can you affect something which is fixed? It must be, or must not be, fixed". So in the early books I sometimes invoked those ideas, but didn't do so in any detail. What I did during my sabbatical was basically try and make the theory make sense. So that's why the last book seems to make sense, whereas the early books are just some wild guesses. There are one or two bits in the early books that I would revise now if I were rewriting them. Not that they were wrong, but they were just incomplete. I would definitely write them in a different way now. I spent most

of my early career doing intensely practical things – lots of rituals, lots of spells -, and I spent the later part trying to understand how these things work in theory. Or how they could work. Or what such phenomena say about the way the universe works. I used the phrase in the Apophenion, borrowed from Thomas Vaughn, that 'a witch is a rebel in physics'. If you experience something magical happening, or you believe that magical things can happen, then that really says something quite unusual about the universe. And culture doesn't tend to believe it generally. Some would say it's anti-scientific or against the laws of cause and effect, or reason. But when such things happen, I at least am interested in developing a theory to explain it. Most of the developments of culture have come up by people trying to understand anomalies or things that don't fit. And it struck me that magic was showing me some anomalous behaviour in the universe that deserves investigating.

Some people seem to be into magic purely for the romance of sorcery and because they enjoy doing it, because they find out it works. Those things have appealed to me too, but it also interests me on a philosophical and theoretical level as well. Some people don't respond to that. At the Colours of Chaos conference some people cheered or booed to various things. They said "quantum physics", and half the audience went "Yay!", half the audience went "Boo!". In this week's New Scientist, there was a lead article on how information leaks back from the future. We've been talking about this for centuries in magic, now there seems to be some sort of acceptance even amongst the hard physicist community. It is a quite recent

development. And even philosophers, who these days are often very far behind cutting-edge science, are finally beginning to wake up to the underlying weirdness of the universe. I think that the magicians are ahead of the philosophers at the moment in accepting these things, but the reasons for which they accept them are often quite different. I think yes, there seems to be a bit of a change of paradigm. I think it's been going on since the revolution at the end of the sixties, really, still ongoing, perhaps.

***M: That seemed to reach a peak between '76 and '80. So many people were active in that period, and it's still having an effect.***



P: That may have something to do with the generation of the 1950's finally getting into their thirties and forties, and finally achieving access to publishing and finally achieving positions of influence in society. We might have seen it flare in that period, but I think it probably goes back to the people born in 1950 or a bit after. I think one exception is Robert Anton Wilson. When I met him, he was about as old as my dad, yet he was at the leading edge of many of the ideas of my generation. And that's what really impressed me about him. He just died, and he must have been in his late seventies. In many respects he was way ahead of his time.

***M: There really seems to be a lot happening in that era. I mean there was the generation of Aleister Crowley and the Golden Dawn, and then suddenly there were these young people. There must have been a change in the Inner Planes...***

P: Some people put it down to the 1944 education act. [laughs]. Also a lot of people say that every occult revival is led by a publishing revival, and it was in that era when books became quite cheap. I was looking at the history of the publications of Crowley's Equinox. When it first came out, it was basically only a folio magazine, or whatever they call it, but it cost a working man's wages every week. We had a mass of cheap paperbacks produced. Imagine if you wanted to buy the Key of Solomon back in the 1930's. You couldn't afford it. But now we have it in paperback, for the fees of an hour's work. I think all these things made a big difference. Also, the war did away with most of the certainties. When I grew up, I was never taught patriotism, but my father grew up with it. I wasn't taught to revere the Church or anything, really, which previous generations were. So, there were very big changes. It was also the first time in history when young people had money and didn't have the obligation to marry young. And it was the first time in history when the parents didn't have to be dependent on their children at their old age. Before they were desperately pushy with their children. That's something I know from the Third World. When people have huge families the first thing they want to tell you is "There's my old age pension!"

***M: And what was your reason to go to India? Why India, and not America, for example?***

P: The Hippie Trail was less well established in those times. Nowadays "backpacking" just means getting on a jet to anywhere in the World, but in those days it was expensive to do that. But it was still popular to go overland from England all the way to Kathmandu. The land route was open; we didn't have the

terrorist problems that we have now. We had the tales of the people who went and came back. And the lure of the mystical East. I had previously travelled to Morocco one summer, but I couldn't say I cared for that. I mean, I like the exoticism of their culture, but I didn't like the way the people behaved. India just seemed to call. It was far away enough to be fascinating, but not so far you couldn't get there. My girlfriend and I just literally walked to the south of London with a piece of cardboard saying "India". It might have amused the British lorry drivers.

***M: But that was the way we use to travel those days.***

P: Yes. I did the London – Leeds trip about six times, mostly faster than the train. I wouldn't like to try it these days. Economists have calculated that 1974 was probably the highest quality of life we ever had in this country.

(to be continued)

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- 1 <http://www.maybelogic.org/materials.htm>  
<http://www.maybelogic.org/peter.htm> "A brief Autohagiography" (November 2008)
- 2 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illuminates\\_of\\_Thanateros](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illuminates_of_Thanateros)
- 3 <http://www.scribd.com/doc/8407801/Chaos-Magick-and-Luciferism>

See also:

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter\\_J.\\_Carroll](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_J._Carroll)  
[www.specularium.org](http://www.specularium.org)  
<http://www.arcanoriumcollege.com/>

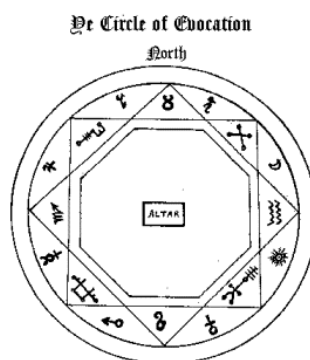
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Liber Kaos. (1992) ISBN 0-87728-742-2

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Peter wrote in January 2009 "(the) Original Falcon Press have just brought out a new edition of my Psybermagick"

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## NEWS FROM PFI – MAY 2009

### Impressions of the 9<sup>th</sup> PFI Netherlands Conference



Here are a couple of impressions of this year's conference in the Netherlands:

#### ***From Dagda:***

Failte everybody, 😊

We are just back from the yearly Pagan Federation International gathering, we really had a lot of fun there. This Dutch event has a really nice buzz to it. 😊

We bought some nice Pagan books and stuff from Tante Toet, which included a lovely Dutch Drenthe Mid Winter Horn, which was used in the opening and closing rituals, and a lovely silver Shiela Na Gig. (They always have good occult stalls at the event). Thanks for the Drenthe horn Tante Toet, it really made a lovely Dutch welcoming for the people and the Otherworld Spirits that were there at the Rituals and the Conference.

This year Boann and I did the opening and closing rituals in a Fili/Druidic style. Which reading from the web reviews everyone really enjoyed. There was a special emphasis on friendship, tolerance, kindness, on acknowledging each other and remembering that we are all on a spiritual journey.

The atmosphere throughout the day was warm, fun and really friendly. For many people it felt like they were coming home, an oasis of peace to recharge their spiritual batteries and to safely be their pagan selves among friends. Pagan events like this are a really lovely way for new people to safely enter the Pagan world. We had a great time there and we met a lot of nice people there.

The team of people that helped us with the Opening and Closing Rituals did an excellent job and all the PFI and PFI Netherlands participants were great. The real credit for these rituals' success goes to the all the people that participated. Roughly two hundred people opened up and gave their warm positive friendly energy to the rituals, and also to the event for the day.

As has been said already Lady Bara did an excellent job and really deserved the applause she received at the closing ritual, as this year's event had a lot of teething problems for her solve and overcome.

The whole event was a really great Pagan gathering of the Tribes. This year we had 250 people mostly Dutch, but others were from Belgium, Bulgaria, Cornwall, Hungary, England, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, USA and Russia.

Some of the topics covered in the talks and classes there were;- Astral Travelling, Belly Dancing, Irish Dancing, The Elysian Mysteries, Irish Wakes and the Bean Chaoine tradition,

And even Morgana stepped in at the last moment to help out, she gave a talk on "God and Goddess names and their place in Wicca". We also had the lovely Kit Berry the author of the 'Stonewylde' books there, whose books were completely sold out.

There was one point in the closing ritual that really stood out for me, when Cornish Ebany gave thanks to the spirits of the Air, the birds outside joined in and sang very melodiously just before and after Lady Bara's standing ovation from the PFI members. In Irish myths birds are sometimes spirits of the Shee and also our ancestors in disguise. The spirits must have been very happy with all the singing they were doing.

After the closing ritual there a nice meal served and then the fun started up again with Luc and Caroline s excellent Belgian Band 'Panasche'. They were in top form and played some really good music. This event was really how a pagan event should be, energetic, exciting, friendly, with new experiences blended with practical experience and knowledge. Yet it still kept its lust for life, intelligence, kindness and fun aspects."

***Tinkerbelle:***

"I loved the opening and closing rituals! The description of "gathering of the tribes", was including everyone, and the path through the Beltane fires... fabulous! The workshops I did were very different but very good in their own way. GardenStone about Asatru, Frigga about the Seidhmothers, Boann & Dagda in a personal and moving workshop that brought me to tears..."

***BajorRon:***

"... and to finish things off, a dance workshop, belly-dancing with Luna Verde, while my husband went for something quieter, Kit Berry's lecture. Luna had already started when we came in, and I was immediately thrown into deep water, being handed a veil and told to improvise with it. I did my best to recall the lessons from the previous workshop, and after a while I started to feel reasonably assured. Belly-dancing is an interesting way of moving, and requires a rather sophisticated technique that is not easily mastered and requires a lot of practice. It is wonderfully earthy and because you are focussing so hard on what your body is supposed to do, any floaty feeling is quickly dismissed and replace by an enjoyment of your body. Luna presented us with a rich variety in musical styles and challenges. Always a great way to conclude the formal part of this conference!"

**Gwiddon:**

“I got to admit that this is the first pagan event I've been to in almost three years, and my very first conference in Europe. As someone who's organized pagan events before, I can really tell how much effort it requires, so my hat goes off for Lady Bara - despite the last minute changes she was able to make it all work!! I also appreciate being given the opportunity to participate in the ritual, and deliver the message in my native language - Russian. As I was saying the words, the old spirits of my motherland perked their ears and peaked into the sacred space to listen to what is going on 😊”

**Kit Berry/Mr. B:**

"We're back now! Safe and sound!... although it was sad to have to leave.

We had an outstanding time. We were so well looked after by Sorcha and Ebany and everyone we met was so friendly and welcoming. It made our trip to Netherlands so memorable. So a big thank you to Sorcha and Ebany for looking after us.

The PFI conference was a wonderful event and was a great opportunity for us to network and tell everyone about Stonewylde. And what a success that was! However, it was clear that Sorcha, Ebany and others had already done a great job of promoting Stonewylde before we'd arrived. We sold out of the books very quickly with the last Magus being snapped up in a frenetic lunge past a couple of other browsers! We also sold a lot of t-shirts and cards. We just wish we had taken more stock with us to satisfy all the newcomers.”

On behalf of PFI I would like to thank everyone for making this a memorable day! What a great crowd – looking forward to continuing the networking in cyberspace on PFI Forum.

[www.forum.paganfederation.org](http://www.forum.paganfederation.org)

**Blessed Be,  
Morgana**



## **How Tortoise Lost His Tail** **Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime Legend**

Across the river of death lay the gigantic tortoise that bridged the gulf between the land of men and the land of souls. The spirits of men were required to cross the river before they could reach the world of eternal life, and the only path by which they could travel lay across the tail of the tortoise. It stretched over the swiftly flowing river from one bank to the other.

No one knew what would happen when death came, and the spirit set out on its long journey to the land of spirits, until a man returned to tell them of his experiences.

'I travelled across a wide plain,' he said. 'In the distance I saw the gleam of running water and knew that I would have to cross the river. When I came close to it, I saw that the banks were steep, and that no man could hope to live in the rushing torrent. But the way was made plain. There is a giant tortoise by which the souls of men may cross. On the far shore the shell of the tortoise rises up like a mountain, and its head is as big as a small hill. Its mouth is full of sharp white teeth, and its eyes gleam like fire.'

'There is no other way to cross. I stepped on to the tail and ran across as quickly as I could, but I had not gone half the distance when the tortoise wriggled and I fell into the river. I was tossed about like a twig and carried into a dark tunnel. I thought I would have died a second time, because I was dashed against rocks, and bruised and cut by their sharp edges. Look, you can see the scars which will tell you better than any words of mine that what I say is true.'

'Presently I was carried into the daylight again, and I saw many people playing by the banks of the river, hunting, and gathering firewood. Some of them were our own people who have died, but I do not think that the river is the true land of spirits. It may be that they are still resting before they continue their journey.'

The river swept me past them and carried me into the ocean, where I was battered by the waves, and the salt water stung my wounds. I was washed to and fro. The salt water healed my bleeding body, and after a long time I was thrown up on a sandy beach. When my strength returned I kept the sun on my left side, crossing wide plains and high mountains, until at last I reached my home. You can see for yourselves that I have returned.'

'What shall we do?' he was asked. 'When the time comes for us to die, how shall we escape the tortoise with the long tail and the wicked head?'

'Someone who is strong and fearless and has the power of the great spirits must take an axe and cut off the tail of the tortoise. Men will then be able to travel the road in safety.'

'Who shall it be?' they asked, and they looked at the wirrinun, the sorcerer who lived with them.

'I know you are looking at me,' he said with a smile, 'and you are relieved that it is me who has the power and not you. Very well. I shall die this night, and I will do as you wish. But when you bury my body you must also bury my axe with me.'

The next day the spirit of the wirrinun rose from his body in the newly-dug grave, took his axe and set out for the river. He went by a circuitous route and climbed a tall tree, where he sat on a branch, waiting to see what would happen. Far below him the souls of men reached the river bank, looked round them, and when they realised that there was no other way across the river, began to walk along the outstretched tail. Before they reached the opposite bank, the tortoise twitched his tail, and they were shaken off and swept away in the river.

The wirrinun descended the tree, went over to the tip of the tortoise's tail, and ran lightly across it. He sped over like a gust of wind, feeling the sharp jerk as the tortoise tried to shake him off, but he was running so fast that he reached the body of the creature before the tail could swing into action. Turning round, the medicine man gave a terrific blow with his axe and severed the tail at the root. The tortoise reared up, twisted in the air, and fell on the bold wirrinun. But the sorcerer was ready for him. He wriggled clear, the axe descended a second time, and the ghastly head rolled on the ground.

With a sigh of relief, the wirrinun went to a tall tree and cut it down so that it fell across the river, providing a safe bridge for all the souls who would come that way. At the root of the tree there was a snake which uncoiled its body and flicked its tongue at him. With a final blow he cut off its head.

The body of the tortoise was still quivering, and the wirrinun felt a momentary pang of pity. After all, the creature had but obeyed the will of the great spirits who had designed the pattern of the universe, and had appointed him as the pathway for men's souls. It was destiny that had brought him to this place and had changed the passage of souls for all the days to come. The tortoise had been the unwitting instrument of fate, and the bulk that lay helpless on the river bank had not acted of its own volition.

The wirrinun could not restore its tail, but the snake's head still lay by the tree stump. He picked it up, cut off the poison fangs with his knife, and joined it to the stump of the tortoise's neck.

That is why every tortoise has a short, stumpy tail and the head of a snake.



**MARIJA GIMBUTAS AND THE EUROPE OF THE MOTHER**  
**By Morgan Mac Phoenix – Athame nr 19 – Year 4 – Litha**  
**Translated by Luna Verde, December 2008/January 2009**

In many Wiccan and neo-pagan traditions, it is generally accepted that the figure of



the Goddess, as feminine principle, is seen in the triple nature of Virgin, Mother and Crone, just as in the verses of the “Triple Goddess Chant” by Zsusanna Emese Budapest<sup>1</sup>.

But how old is this concept? How far do we have to travel back in time to discover its origins?

Many students of Antiquities have asked this question, just as many of the followers of the Goddess asked where and when we should look for the origin of their own cult...

In modern history people tried many times to give a convincing answer to this question: there have been made many researches made, many studies and a lot has been written about this subject. We could quote James Frazer<sup>2</sup>, talking about the cult of Diana, Charles Godfrey Leland<sup>3</sup> about the Italian tradition, Gerald

Brosseau Gardner<sup>4</sup>, who suggests the possibilities of Eastern origins, Margaret Murray<sup>5</sup>, who analyses the cult in Western Europe, Robert Graves<sup>6</sup> who studies the evolution of the feminine divine figure through the millennia, Merlin Stone<sup>7</sup> who shocked the public opinion with the title “When God was a Woman”... and we could continue this way, quoting many names of people who racked their brains about this question...

There have been many suppositions made, many solutions have been given to solve the enigma of the origin. And the work made from a discipline whose research methods<sup>8</sup> are very recent, and is nourished from those hypotheses and theories, which can help the studies asking the correct questions about the ancient times: Archaeology.

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<sup>1</sup> “The Holy Book of Women’s Mysteries, Z. E. Budapest, Wingow Press (Berkeley, CA)

<sup>2</sup> J. Frazer will deepen the cult of Diana in the Sanctuary of Nemi in his book “The Golden Bough”, to bring back to the pre-roman times, to the Sabeian culture.

<sup>3</sup> C. G. Leland, keen on antiquity and mythology, is author of “The Gospel of Witches”, a book which should be known by all the Goddess worshippers, because, though it is outmoded, it could be used as a document about witchcraft literature.

<sup>4</sup> The author, in his book “Witchcraft today”, explains in chapter VIII how witches and their practices should come from the East, in particular from Egypt.

<sup>5</sup> Archaeologist, already notified in her time, M. Murray reconstructs an interrupted pagan cult of the Triple Goddess through historical documents and fragments in her book “The Witch Cult in Western Europe”.

<sup>6</sup> The humanists, because of his dictionary of classic mythology already know Graves: he was in fact an expert of Old Greece. Already from this work we can find, in the form of some hints, the figure of the Goddess, which he studies and analyses anyway in a magisterial way in his “The White Goddess”, work known in this case also by many witches, where a lot of aspects of the Multiform are illustrated.

<sup>7</sup> The author invites in his work to re-discover a past which is burned away from millennia of “Judeo-Christian myth”, as he describes it himself. The social figure of the matriarchy is here compared to the following one which substituted her with violence: the patriarchy.

<sup>8</sup> E. Harris and the principles of stratigraphy

Though neo-paganism and Wicca are in most cases “happy revivals”<sup>9</sup> of ancient cults and of course they cannot speak really of a true chronological continuity (especially in the case of Wicca), archaeology wants to analyse the ancient civilisations through the finds which are left in the strata of the earth, and it is very important to understand that what we believe in today, has a very ancient origin anyway. Nowadays there are some hints of concepts of very old rituals, even from pre-history!

I will not talk at length about this relationship between ancient times and neo-paganism, because it could certainly be necessary to write another article about it. It is necessary, however, to remember that from an archaeological point-of-view, and because of her studies about the Goddess cult, her language and the civilisation which represented her, the Lithuanian Marija Gimbutas stands out.

Born in Vilnius on January 23, 1921, in an upper class family, she followed from her childhood, studies about traditions and folklore of her land. She attended a school, which was founded by her parents (both doctors, her father was interested in history and was also a publisher). They respected these tradition and formed an opposition to the Polish-Catholic schools that were everywhere in the country.

It would be the folkloric and mythological imaginary of the Lithuanian inheritance, of very ancient origins, which inspired Marija in her interest about ancient times.

After her father’s death, when she was only 15, she was devastated about this loss, and she began to study the funeral rituals before the Christianisation and got the first intuitions about the pre-historical idea of “re-generation”, where life and death are two faces of the same coin. At 16 years old, she participated in an ethnographic expedition and it would sharpen her knowledge of the Lithuanian traditions<sup>10</sup>.

We can see that these are already very good basics for her future career as expert of ancient history, and in particular of the pre-history of her own land and, later, of Europe... a career which would be fully recognised only from 1949, when she finally moved to the United States, where she published her first books.

One of the greatest merits of Gimbutas is certainly to have proposed an alternative vision of archaeology, different from the one that was already accepted from the most people, already going back a number of centuries.

Gimbutas had a very interesting insight during her studies, about the sociological aspects: she was wondered if that “patriarchy” which it was for the women a synonym of negation of value, cancellation of memories, subordination in any aspect of life and finally expulsion from the sacred things, meant as an active role within the religions as a symbolic and cosmogonic role in Stories about the Creation”<sup>11</sup>, had always been present in human history, or maybe if it was the result of any “evolution” (or “involution”).

It is remarkable that her archaeological excavations just began during a year when the need of ideals were no longer possible to contain in the patriarchy and in the capitalistic ideas, this was the year 1968. Her theory, which we will examine later,

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<sup>9</sup> I hope that the representatives of these modern religious movements will not attack me, because of this very approximation of very beautiful systems, which have many deep spiritual and philosophical aspects.

<sup>10</sup> For a complete biography of Marija Gimbutas, I would advise the book “Signs out of time” of Luciana Percovich.

<sup>11</sup> “Signs out of time”, L. Percovich.

has a feministic accent, especially if we study her intuitions, connected to the cultural and religious dimensions of the pre-history Europe, also through a huge number of finds.

We must say anyway, that the ideal motivations, in the works of Gimbutas, are secondary to the linguistic, anthropological and most of all archaeological aspects. After saying this, we can pay attention to the theory she formulated about the migrations of the Indo-Europeans, without expecting to be exhaustive about such a large and multiform subject, and without the intention of going very deep into details, theory which is much discussed between all historians and archaeologists. At a certain point of human history, all sources – archaeological and historical – inform us that around 3.500 BC the human race was shaken from raids of populations, of which we don't know the origin, but which are generally indicated as Indo-Europeans, migrating from an "Urheimat"<sup>12</sup>, situated between the Urals and the river Danube, and superimposed to the Neolithic, pre-Indo-European civilisations, as military elites, imposing their social structures and their religions.

We remember the end of Crete and her civilisation thanks to the Mycenaean conquer for example, while Gimbutas talks about the so called "Calcolitic invasion" of the "Labrys people", to the detriment of a previous older European folk.

Gimbutas identified the Europeans with a war culture of the Bronze age (6000-4000 p.t.<sup>13</sup>), the Kurgan culture, so called starting from the characteristic burials (tumuli) where the local princes<sup>14</sup> were buried, or the representatives of the "nobles".

This revolution, as she called it as the "theory of Kurgan", was a revolution of prospects about the origins of the European culture, in a chronological sense, moving back into time at least for more than 5000 years (before the last ice-age – Willendorf and Laussel 27.000/17.000 p.t.) and also in the way we understand the word "civilisation", which the most people thought to be collocated at the times of the wars and the glorious legends of heroes and gods of the Olympus.

Her research moves from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age and iron-age (10.000/4000 p.t.). Talking about this old-European culture, Gimbutas tells about a primitive Europe, discovered during the excavations of the decade 1968-1978 in the heart of Europe, in the Danube area, the Balkans and here and there also in Italy (Puglia and Sardinia).

In this areas was a long, peaceful civilisation, marked from the common cult of a Great Mother Goddess, a divinity of birth, death and re-generation, organised in a matrilineal structure which gave the women and the priestess an enormous political and religious power.

In a different way of the Kurgan, the burials of this civilisation had various forms: they don't show traces of a real hierarchy of the societies: the burials are mostly shared from more individuals, never totally closed, even re-opened when needed<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Ur-heimat, Fatherland.

<sup>13</sup> P. t. = present time

<sup>14</sup> It is probable that this civilisation had a social organisation like the "chiefdom".

<sup>15</sup> As we will see, for this culture the death is not a reason of an unnecessary pain, but it was also sacred as the birth, and the burials were also ceremonial places, where the Goddess of Death and Re-generation was worshipped, just like the ancestors, who had an enormous importance in old Europe, as it also was in more recent, different cultures.

In most cases they had the forms, which reminded the figure of the Goddess of simply her holy womb, from which everything comes and where everything must go back with the death. They were room-shaped burials or situated in a natural or artificial cave, and the walls were often painted inside with red or Ochre, which reminded of the colours of the liquid of the labour and of the menstrual blood.

Later, with the well known “Indo-European migrations”, recognized from Gimbutas in the people she calls Kurgan<sup>16</sup>, we can see the end of the ancient European culture, devastated, especially in the area of the Black Sea, from the coming of population of Indo-European origin, who brought very different values and life-style. The Kurgan came with horses, iron weapons and a hierarchical, patriarchal structure founded on the war.

Well, Gimbutas connects to this point of history the birth of the idea that for thousands of years that man is, because of his gender, stronger, more intelligent, more important, MORE par excellence than the woman, and that for a long time women would be oppressed and be subordinate to man.

The Indo-European civilisation, which will migrate in waves in this period, will substitute the older culture without any difficulties, because they had always had a peaceful existence<sup>17</sup> and were not able to defend themselves from the new comers. The cult of the Great Mother Goddess, which in her various aspects of birth, death and re-generation had chthonian connotations, is now changed into Uranic cults, dedicated mostly to male divinities, who only sometimes are accompanied from female, subordinated deities.

From then on, the Goddess will take into account of these divinities, male and warriors, who will have the power to discuss about her supremacy, what never happened before.

Analysing the various finds during her excavations, Gimbutas suggests a probable decodification of those aspect of the Mother Goddess, which appears as the focus of the ancient European civilisation. She will describe three basic aspects of the divinity.

The Goddess of birth, giving life and fertility, bringing prosperity for the people, the animals and vegetation, protecting the labour and the children<sup>18</sup>, who was represented in a corpulent form, emphasizing the hips, the glutei and the breasts, anatomical body parts which are connected with the labour and fertility; only a



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<sup>16</sup> As we already siad before, the Kurgan were big burials where the princes of this “new” civilisation were buried, together with their wives, concubines, slaves etc.

<sup>17</sup> There are not enough facts we can use as proof to testify a warriors organisation of the ancient european civilisation.

<sup>18</sup> We must always remember that the labour was a high-risk situation for the woman and the child, who were never sure to survive in an environment which was surely more hostile than a modern clinic.

Goddess with a large belly, voluptuous breasts and a remarkable vulva could assure the births and save them from any complications<sup>19</sup>.

It is clear that only a Goddess, as being a woman, had the power to give birth, because for the ancient Europeans the gift of creation, the labour, was a property of the woman, while the role of the father was not always clear.

The Goddess of death, who did not represent the end of existence but just a fundamental and necessary stage to go further with a constant and irreversible cycle, and who was represented in a different way from the previous one (mostly carved in bone or ivory), with a rigid posture, with big round eyes, similar to the birds of prey – sacred to her because they were connected to the rite of scarification (extreme body modification)<sup>20</sup>, often represented with a dangling tongue, as a foreseeing of the Gorgon of classical memory, image which gives fear and mystery, subjects connected to the other world, always kingdom of the unknown to the men, because what we don't know we fear.

Finally, strictly connected to the previous aspect, we have the Goddess of re-generation, put near the symbol of the egg, meant as cosmic egg, bringer of life and birth.

It is natural to bring back the concept of death and re-generation to what we said before: the death was often seen as fundamental stage before the re-birth: the illusive terror around the death was transforming itself into the gentle promise of a re-birth<sup>21</sup>.

To give the reader a suggestion, I want to remember that we will read in the *Bucolicae* of Virgilius about a peculiar religious ritual, to obtain a swarm of bees for a good honey harvest: the BUGONIA, a bull sacrifice, from which's flesh the honey bees would come into life (the bee and the bull are connected to each other since very ancient times, as it is evident in the picture of BUCEFALO, of the culture CUCUTENI, found in the valley of High Seret, Ucraina, 5700/5500 p.t.).

Also some rites of the Thesmophories<sup>22</sup> suggested the sacrifice of piglets, from which's flesh were obtained nourishment for the fertility rituals of the earth. Their death as promise of re-birth for the earth and her fruits.

One of the symbols connected with this aspect of the Goddess is the serpent, which when changing periodically his skin, is one of the best representatives of the re-generation concept.

The bear which every winter goes to sleep and wakes up in the summer, bringing cubs with her, was also identified with the image of the Goddess of death and re-

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<sup>19</sup> We can get a rather clear idea from this majestic Goddess, sitting on a throne (see picture above), with lions on both sides, giving birth to the child who comes out between her legs. She was found in a wheat container from the Sanctuary of Catal Huyuk, central Anatolia, Neolithic period (8000 years p.t.)

<sup>20</sup> During this peculiar funeral, the dead were not immediately buried, but exposed outside on special platforms, where the birds of prey deprived the body from the flesh, leaving only the bones. The removing of the flesh was considered necessary to complete the death process: after only the bones remained, the person could be buried and the second process could begin: the re-generation.

<sup>21</sup> This is a concept we find back in many ancient civilisations, as Mircea Elide also remembers (1954; 1991 p.52), affirming that in all cultures we see an idea of periodic re-generation of life, even on the cosmologic level, supposing the repeat of the cosmogonic events. Life and time are cyclically re-generated.

<sup>22</sup> Ritual which we can find back, according to my personal archaeological experience, even in the Bronze Age, as the last theories testify within the context of the excavations by the Wells of Nova, nearby Monte Amiata, northern Latium, at the border with Tuscany).

generation: the hibernation was perceived as a symbolic death, premise to the summer wake, bringer of life.

All these images of fertility, connected with the various aspects of the Goddess, are symbols of power, abundance and multiplication, and referred to the perpetration of life because they saved the forces as guarantee for the cycle, constantly threaten from death.

The fertility symbols are also connected to the lunar cycle, similar to the menstrual cycle<sup>23</sup>, or to the seasons, representing the dying and reawakening of nature. As Gimbutas reminds us: “The Mother Earth arises as a young goddess in all her splendour at spring” and as the year goes by, she becomes an old wise witch at autumn, but her climax will be during the pregnancy between spring and summer, the moment when all creation will flourish.

The male divinities are depicted as allegories of the vegetation spirits, which die and rises up cyclically... While the female deity was considered eternal<sup>24</sup>, the male divinity, connected to the vegetation, was born from the Goddess, grew up with her loving care and, as mature man, coupled with her at the beginning of spring, being father of himself, and dying at the beginning of winter (to be born again at Winter Solstice, as the many people following Wicca would like?).

I think it will be useful, to go to the last aspect I wanted to write about in this article, to mention another interesting work of Gimbutas: she tries, as forerunner of the archeomythology, to create some parallelisms (we have a clear example in the final part of “The living Goddesses”) between the ancient-European cult of the Goddess and the female divinities of the later religious traditions, normally fitting in the pagan context.

We must say that the figure of the Goddess evolved in many forms, certainly losing her predominant role of Lady of the Universe and dealing mostly with being brought near the much more important male, most Uranic divinities, as a wife, sister or mate. To give a limit to our references we remember that we see Rhea beside Chronos, Hera beside Zeus, Freya beside Odin etc.

It is true that the importance of the Goddess will continue to exist in all the periods of Paganism and pagan cults, with the figures of Athena, Artemis, Astarte, Demeter, Diana, Melusine, Arianrhod etc., all aspects of one and only initial archetype: the Goddess.

The Mother Goddess, represented with the child since the Neolithic, will come through till nowadays with the image of Isis and the baby Horus, or the votive statues of Capua, also called Capuane and even with the image of the Virgin Mary,



<sup>23</sup> The moon was one of the most evident manifestations of the Goddess. Her cyclus represented the menstrual cycle of the divinity, and the priestesses, as all women, were mirrored into the Goddess who scanned the cyclic motions of her existence through the menstruation.

<sup>24</sup> The Goddess becomes mother after being a young girl, and then old, just transforming herself through the seasons, to renew herself at spring, never dying.

last bulwark of the female divinity in a patriarchal and monotheistic cult as Christianity..

The Goddess of Death will evolve in the figures of Astarte, of the Celtic Morrigan, to come to the far away goddess Kali, represented with wide open eyes, fangs and hanging tongue...

We can at last remember the aspect of Re-generating Goddess in Persephone, who, after having been in the Hades with her husband, comes back at spring, bringing with her the re-birth of the earth (Demeter, her mother, wakes up full of joy), or the Sumerian Ishtar who goes into the Death Kingdom to ask Eriskegal the life of her brother Tammuz, who also comes back to life..

Just as the ancient Mother Goddess, these are all chthonic divinities, and they are seen as counterpart of their mates, brothers, lovers of husbands, which are represented as sky gods.

The clever intuitions of the Lithuanian Gimbutas seems to us, as followers of the ancient cult, animated from something more than passion for archaeology.

Brilliant archaeologist, sure she is, but who could say that she was also a witch?

After leaving by the reader with this provocative question mark, I leave here also the bibliography, just in case one is interested in the sources which inspired this article, and I close it with the significant words of M. Gimbutas: "The intellectual inheritance of the western civilization goes back much more deeply into time than what we recognized before, to the ancient devotees of the Goddess who could think symbolically but also in abstract way".



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**The Alexandrian Tradition,  
Interview with Maxine Sanders  
By Christopher Blackwell**

I was initiated into the Alexandrian Tradition back in the 1980s so this will be personally interesting in more than the usual ways.

Maxine Sanders goes back to the beginning of the Alexandrian Tradition in the early 1960s. The 60s seem to be a mythical period at least when I compare the documentaries with what I remember of the period. Then I assume there were as many 1960s as there were people that experienced it.

When I e-mailed Maxine, she was kind enough to get back promptly and graciously gave her permission. It is always delightful to interview well-known and respected people and see what decent people many of them are.



***Christopher: You recently published an autobiography, 'Fire Child'. What was it like to go back over your own life and the beginnings with Alex and the tradition you two created in that period?***

Maxine: I had attempted writing an autobiography several years' ago; the title was 'Dancing with Destiny'. It was rubbish. I had been going through a particularly dark period; the writing was a soul cleansing rather than a serious attempt of publishing.

Writing 'Fire Child' was easy; I had kept diaries from the time of my first Initiation into the Mysteries.

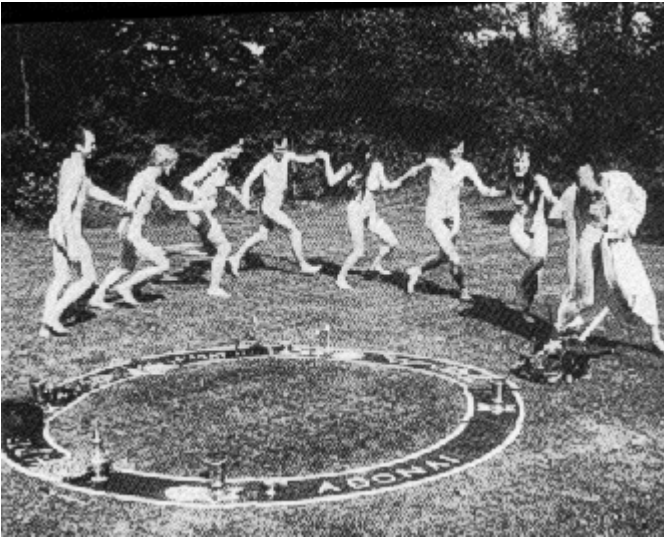
I had been inspired to write 'Fire Child' after meeting the American Witches whose curiosity was refreshing and at times a little shocking to my English reserve. However, I felt they had a right to know; so much title tattle, gossip and distorted truth needed to be corrected. It was time to put the facts down regardless of personal sentimentality.

It was strange reading the diaries; memory had distorted so many events, sometimes exaggerating them, sometimes omitting the more painful experiences. I did not linger over the diaries; the life of an Initiate can be dramatic but in the main, repetitive ritual, meditation and magical practices that would have bored the reader. In between my commitments of animal care and magical work, 'Fire Child' took under a year to write. I felt there was more that could be told, however, being bound to the laptop, my magical work was constantly calling me and when the last chapter was sent to the publisher, I was delighted.

Writing and public speaking are not my forte; I am a Priestess loving the work and practice of magic and Witchcraft. Maybe, when I find magical workings or animal care too much, I will write a follow up, perhaps concentrating on my magical training and experiences. I still find it amazing how members of the Craft find time away from their magical Craft commitments to produce and publish their writings,

contribute articles to magazines and occult internet forums. I suspect they are academic witches and ccultist.

**Christopher: Each has our own experience with the 1960s. How did it seem to you at the time?**



Maxine: The 1960s were a transition from a world of cruelty, fear and trepidation to the fulfilment of practicing the Sacred Mysteries. I think I rather missed the freedom aspects that most teenagers experienced during the sixties. The disciplines demanded of the Initiate made the world of 'Peace man' alien to me, although on reflection, Alex and I did seem to be amongst the lights of the time. It all felt a natural progression and even though there were times of emotional distress, the magic and the work of the Craft was so intense I did not want it to stop. It

was a time of unconscious accumulation of magical experience and knowledge.

**Christopher: What was it like having the attention of the media, especially when its treatment could swing wildly from one extreme to another?**

Maxine: Alex was a naturally magical person who loved teaching the ways of magic and being part of a working Coven. He also thrived on media attention, his magnetic personality attracting students, academics, and inevitably, the paparazzi.

I was convinced there were people with a vocation to enter into the realms of the Sacred Mysteries who needed to know that practitioners of Witchcraft existed; we were not made of thistledown.

Alas, newspapermen and any type of journalist were a constant source of irritation to me.

Alex always said yes when asked for an interview no matter what type of newspaper, magazine, TV, radio or film company. After giving interviews, the journalists' articles were titivating and many were an outright concoction of lies. Slowly, serious journalists started to write truthful articles, TV documentaries were made although it was a long time before we insisted on editorial rights or asked for a fee, which was always minute; we were not blasé or professional, we were sincere in our religious beliefs and practice.

Eventually Alex did become rather outrageous in some of the documentaries; in retrospect, I believe this was the beginning of our separate ways.

**Christopher: Did being open about your religion carry its risks back then, even more than today?**

Maxine: The first article appeared in a local paper called 'The Comet'; the day after the publication, I was stoned in the street; the persecution continued for several

years. Witches lost their jobs and their homes. Families turned their backs on previously loved brothers and sisters.

I believe those witches of the sixties had courage of their convictions; they helped bring about several dramatic changes in the law allowing freedom of worship etc.

I also believe those witches who practiced their rites secretly, indeed many still do; were just as admirable; in that they kept their workings pure and away from the profane. I am torn in my opinion as to who were the wisest.

***Christopher: Some seem to put the title High Priest or High Priestess in front of their names as though it were a cool title to decorate themselves with. In your opinion what are the basic requirements to being a High Priest or High Priestess?***

Maxine: There are many first degree Priests and Priestesses who have more knowledge, compassion and magic in their little toes than many of the egotistical who parade Witchcraft conferences stating they are just as ordinary as anyone else and then proceed to ask 'Do you know who I am' when treated indifferently.

The requirements to achieve the rank of the High Priesthood are numerous. However, it is by their actions they are known and remembered.

***Christopher: Did you and Alex ever have any real time to yourselves?***

Maxine: Alex and I shared a love of the Craft and each other. Then and since, the Craft has been predominant in my life. Being an Initiate of the Sacred Mysteries takes a commitment that often means sacrificing ordinary aspects of life.

***Christopher: At what point did you decide to seek a different life for yourself and leave the teaching to younger Priestesses?***

Maxine: There is sometimes confusion with regard to the three aspects of the Goddess. In the main the Maiden is fit and capable and in preparation for motherhood. When the Crone comes into being, she has a different beauty from that of the Maiden and Mother. Aspiring to the natural cycle, the Craft follow her suit. It is not for the older priestess/teacher to deny youth their ability whilst she can take on a new role that uses her experience. For instance, she may advise on the dance and the more physical aspects of Craft work. The younger Priests and Priestesses have the ability to raise power via physical means, hence part of my reasoning that youth is by far the better teacher.

Today, the Craft has been sanitized; it is rarely described as a fertility cult. Yet that is exactly how it was portrayed and practiced in the sixties when I was Initiated into its mysteries. The Craft is ever practical as are its priesthood who understand we are helpless against age and fate. I thoroughly enjoy being an Elder in Witchcraft and am delighted to pass on my experience to the future.

***Christopher; Why the countryside and why Wales?***

Maxine: I like living in Snowdonia although the cold and damp demand log burners and open ranges. My grandparents were Welsh.

**Christopher: What is it like to have privacy and peace and quiet at this point of your life?**

Maxine: I enjoy the isolation, although recently I have been asked to travel and talk about my experiences; this has enabled me to earn some money to pay the bills and more interestingly; I meet Initiates all over the world. I knew they were there, now I have pleasure in their company.

**Christopher: Now what have you planned for yourself?**

Maxine: Planning my future has never been successful; now I trust in the Universe.

**Christopher: How would you like Alex and you remembered?**

Maxine: Alex will be remembered for being the 'King of the Witches' and the work he did.

I would hope to be remembered as a priestess of the Goddess dedicated to the work of Witchcraft.

**Christopher: Having been part of Wicca for so long and seen it develop and change, what is your opinion of how it has changed? What is good and what is not so good?**

Maxine: Not only do I believe in Magic, I trust in the power of the circle in which I work. I also have confidence in Universal laws and truth.

Change is constant and sometimes difficult to embrace.

I do not like all the changes that are happening in the world of Witchcraft, although many are worthy of consideration. When they are workable it is good; if they do not work for me, I waste little energy persisting; this life is too short to suffer disappointment for long!

I have never known the Craft not to be in the throes of change and diversity which is probably why it so joyous a practice.

**Christopher: How can our readers learn more about you, Alex, and the Alexandrian Tradition?**

Maxine: I am not sure how to answer that question. Alex and I thoroughly approved of the fact that every coven was independent, although that seems to be changing in some traditions of the Craft. The Craft I was initiated into, did not seek converts; I still subscribe to that philosophy.

Being an Initiate of the Sacred Mysteries takes a dedication that necessitates forgoing ordinary aspects of life. Many believe they have a vocation and some are mistakenly accepted into the circle via Initiation. Not all Initiates penetrate the inner workings; some eventually realize their desire to live the ordinary life. This is usually because they find the self-discipline too demanding and the life of the priesthood not as they imagined.



The magic casts them aside without sentimentality.

Most are unscarred by the experience but all who go through Initiation are prone to the activation of their inner centres at any time in seemingly inexplicable circumstances. Some are happy to become devoted servants of the circle even though they will never penetrate the mysteries. There are those who are hedge witches and not always in need of Initiation; their application of knowledge is highly respected. Others consider they are hereditary yet have not received Initiation or training. All words and no magic!

A coven or teacher who does not investigate the would-be Initiate's motive and goes ahead with the Initiation is irresponsible. Alex and I disagreed on this; he would say 'Who am I to refuse Initiation'.

Good old-fashioned covens want to initiate those with a vocation and magical potential; numbers make a crowd, not priesthood or a Witches' coven. The Tradition is not of particular importance. Although there are differences in every circle of the Craft the circle we are attracted to, usually have the keys to our individual spiritual/magical development.

The Witch trains in methods of gaining direct contact with Universal energies that enable him/her to practice the Sacred Mysteries that allow us to experience strange realms of being separate from the ordinary and mundane.

It is wise to 'know thyself' when entering the Temple of the Mysteries. A true vocation will not be denied the Sacred Mysteries, although the path of the Initiate is not always easy to traverse.



**Moon Lore**  
**by Rev. Timothy Harley**  
**[1885]**

**III. LUNAR ECLIPSES**

All round the globe, from time immemorial, those periodic phenomena known as solar and lunar eclipses have been occasions of mental disquietude and superstitious alarm.

We will now produce a number of testimonies to show how these lunar eclipses have been viewed among the various races of the earth in ancient and modern times.

The Chaldæans were careful observers of eclipses, and Berosus believed that when the moon was obscured she turned to us her dark side. Anaximenes said that her mouth was stopped. Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and the Mathematicians said that she fell into conjunction with the bright sun. Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ (born B.C. 499) was the first to explain the eclipse of the moon was caused by the shadow of the earth cast by the sun. But he was as one born ahead of his time.



Grimm writes: One of the most terrible phenomena to heathens was an *eclipse* of the sun or moon, which they associated with a destruction of all things and the end of the world. I may safely assume that the same superstitious notions and practices attend eclipses among nations ancient and modern. The Indian belief is that a serpent eats up the sun and moon when they are eclipsed, or a demon devours them. To this day the Hindus consider that a giant lays hold of the luminaries and tries to swallow them. The Chinese call the solar eclipse *zhishi* (*solis devoratio*), the lunar *yueshi* (*lunæ devoratio*), and ascribe them both to the machinations of a dragon. Nearly all the populations of Northern Asia hold the same opinion. The Finns of Europe, the Lithuanians, and the Moors in Africa, have a similar belief.

Flammarion says: Among the ancient nations, people used to come to the aid of the moon by making a confused noise with all kinds of instruments, when it was eclipsed. It is even done now in Persia and some parts of China, where they fancy that the moon is fighting with a great dragon, and they think the noise will make him loose his hold and take to flight. Among the East Indians they have the same belief that when the sun and the moon are eclipsed, a dragon is seizing them, and astronomers who go there to observe eclipses are troubled by the fears of their native attendants, and by their endeavours to get into the water as the best place under the circumstances. Some of the tribes of American Indians speak of the moon as hunted by huge dogs, catching and tearing her till her soft light is reddened and put out by the blood flowing from her wounds. To this day in India the native beats his gong, as the moon passes across the sun's face, and it is not so very long ago that in Europe both eclipses and rushing comets were thought to show that troubles were near.

Captain Beeckman gives an amusing story of an eclipse in Cantongee, in the island of Borneo, on the 10th of November, 1714. We sat very merry till about eight at

night, when, preparing to go to bed, we heard all on a sudden a most terrible outcry, mixed with squealing, halloing, whooping, firing of guns, ringing and clattering of gongs or brass pans, that we were greatly startled, imagining nothing



less but that the city was surprised by the rebels. I ran immediately to the door, where I found my old fat landlord roaring and whooping like a man raving mad. This increased my astonishment, and the noise was so great that I could neither be heard, nor get an answer to know what the matter was. At last I cried as loud as possibly I could to the old man to know the reason of this sad confusion and outcry, who in a great fright

pointed up to the heavens, and said, '*Look there; see, the devil is eating up the moon!*' I was very glad to hear that there was no other cause of their fright but their own ignorance. It was only a great eclipse of the moon. I smiled, and told him that there was no danger; that in a little while the moon would be as well as ever. Whereupon, catching fast hold of my sleeve, as I was returning to bed, he asked me if I was sure on't (for they take us white men to be very wise in those matters). I assured him I was, and that we always knew many years before when such a thing would happen; that it proceeded from a natural cause, according to the course and motion of the sun and moon, and that the devil had no hand in it. After the eclipse was over, the old man, being not a little rejoiced, took me in.

Thucydides tells us that an eclipse of the moon delayed the departure of the expedition against the Syracusans. The preparations were made, and they were on the point of sailing, when the moon, being just then at the full, was eclipsed. The mass of the army was greatly moved, and called upon the generals to remain. Nicias himself, who was too much under the influence of divination and omens, refused even to discuss the question of their removal until they had remained thrice nine days, as the soothsayers prescribed. This was the reason why the departure of the Athenians was finally delayed.

At any eclipse of the moone, the Romanes would take their brazen pots and pannes, and beat them, lifting up many torches and linckes lighted, and firebrandes into the aire, thinking by these superstitious meanes to reclaime the moone to her light.

In the *Edda*, an ancient collection of Scandinavian poetry, embodying the national mythology, Managarmr is the monster who sometimes swallows up the moon, and stains the heaven and the air with blood. Here, says M. Mallett, we have the cause of eclipses; and it is upon this very ancient opinion that the general practice is founded, of making noises at that time, to fright away the monster, who would otherwise devour the two great luminaries.

Finally, to close this chapter, students of sacred prophecy may still elect to deem these purely natural occurrences as supernatural, but the truth will remain, in spite of their misconceptions, that eclipses of the moon have no concern with the moral destiny of mankind.

**Gypsy Sorcery and Fortune Telling**  
**by Charles Godfrey Leland**  
**[1891]**

**CHAPTER VIII**  
**ROUMANIAN AND TRANSYLVANIAN SORCERIES AND SUPERSTITIONS,**  
**CONNECTED WITH THOSE OF THE GYPSIES**

In her very interesting account of Roumanian superstitions, Mrs. E. GERARD (The Land Beyond the Forest), finds three distinct sources for them firstly, the indigenous, which seems to have been formed by or adapted to the wild and picturesque scenery and character of the country; secondly, those derived from the old German customs and beliefs brought by the so-called Saxon, in reality Lower Rhenish colonists; and thirdly, the influence of the gypsies, themselves a race of fortune-tellers and witches. All these kinds of superstition have twined and intermingled, acted and reacted upon one another so that in many cases it becomes a difficult matter to determine the exact parentage of some particular belief or custom.

In all probability the oldest sorcery of all was entirely concerned with driving out devils and injuring enemies—just as most of the play of small boys runs to fighting or the semblance of it, or as the mutual relations of most animals in the lower stages consist of devouring one another. This was the very beginning of the beginnings, and it would be really marvellous that so much of it has survived were it not that there still exists a great outer circle of human darkness, and that this darkness may be found in thousands of varying shadows even in the brightest sun of modern life.

Of all people living in Europe the peasantry of Italy and Sicily and the gypsies seem to have retained most of this Shamanism and witchcraft, and as the latter have been for centuries its chief priests, travelling here and there disseminating it, we may conclude that even where they did not originate it they have been active in keeping the old faith alive. In Roumania, where the gypsy is called in to conjure on all occasions, people believe themselves to be surrounded by whole legions of devils, witches, and goblins. There is scarcely a day or hour in which these bad spirits have not power, and a whole complicated system, about as laborious as the mastering an unknown language, is required in order to teach an unfortunate peasant to steer clear of the dangers by which he supposes himself to be beset.

On Wednesday and Friday no one should use needle or scissors, bake bread, or sow flax. No bargain should ever be concluded on a Friday, and Venus, here called Paraschiva, to whom this day is sacred, punishes all infractions of the law. There was among the Wends a flax-goddess, Pscipolnitza, and the shears as emblematic of death are naturally antipathetic to Venus, the source of life. Whether Mars has anything in common with *Mors* I know not, but in Roumania he is decidedly an evil spirit of death, whence Marti, or Tuesday, is one, when spinning is positively prohibited (here we have Venus again), and washing the hands and combing the hair are not unattended with danger. Whence it appears that the devil agrees with not a few saints in detesting neatness of the person. And as it is unlucky to wash anything on Saturday, or to spin on Thursday, or to work in the fields on Thursday between Easter and Pentecost. Add to this that, as in Russia, more than half the days in the year are Saints' days, or fast days or festivals on which it is unlucky to work at all. This belief in *holy* days which bring ill-luck to those who work on them, which is still flourishing in every country in the world, goes back to ancient times. A distinct difference is here to be observed however between *naturally* resting from

work—on certain days, which is of course an inherent instinct in all mankind, and the declaring such rest to be *obligatory*, and its infraction punishable by death, disaster, and bad luck, and still more the increasing such Sabbaths to such an extent as to interfere with industry, or the turning them into fast days or Saints' days with observances.

## **Superstitions**

There is always a treasure to be found where the first swallow is seen. Among the Romans when it was observed one ran to the nearest fountain and washed his eyes, and then during the whole year to come, the swallows will carry away all your complaints of the eyes.

The skull of a horse over the gate of a courtyard, or the bones of fallen animals buried under the doorstep are preservatives against ghosts. In Roman architecture the skulls of oxen, rams, and horses continually occur as a decoration, and they are used as charms to-day in Tuscany. Black fowls are believed to be in the service of witches. The skull of a ram placed at the boundary of a parish in Roumania keeps off disease from cattle; it was evidently a fetish in all ages. In Slavonian, Esthonian, and Italian tales black poultry occur as diabolical—to appease the devil a black cock must be sacrificed.

A cow that has wandered away will be safe from witches if the owner sticks a pair of scissors or shears in the centre crossbeam of the dwelling-room. The Folk-lore of shears is extensive; FRIEDRICH derives it from the cutting of the threads of life by the Fates. Thus Juno appears on a Roman coin been the handmaid of the Virgin Mary, and to have stolen her scissors, for which reason she was turned into a bird—the swallow's tail being supposed to resemble that article. Gypsies in England use the shears in incantations.

It is very dangerous to point at a rainbow or an approaching thunderstorm. Probably the devil who here guides the whirlwind or directs the storm regards the act as impolite. He punishes those who thus indicate the rainbow by a gnawing disease. Lightning is averted by sticking a knife in a loaf of bread and spinning the two on the floor of the loft of the house while the storm lasts. The knife appears not only in many gypsy spells, but in the Etruscan-Florentine magic.

The legends of Donidaniel and the College of Sorcery in Salamanca appear in the gypsy Roumanian *Scholomance*, or school which exists somewhere far away deep in the heart of the mountains, where the secrets of nature, the language of animals, and all magic spells are taught by the devil in person.

Whoever turns three somersaults the first time he hears thunder will be free from pains in the back during the twelvemonth. It may be said that it is most unlikely that any person who is capable of putting it in practice should suffer with such pains.

To be free from headache rub the forehead with a piece of iron or stone. This may be a presage of the electric cure or of that by metallic tractors.

It is unfortunate in all Catholic countries to meet with a priest or nun, especially when he or she is the first person encountered in the morning. In Roumania this is limited to the Greek *popa*. But to be first met by a gypsy on going forth is a very fortunate omen indeed. According to a widely-spread and ancient belief it is also very lucky to meet with any woman of easy virtue—the easier the better. This is doubtless derived from the ancient worship of Venus, and the belief that any thing

or person connected with celibacy and chastity, such as a nun, is unlucky. It would appear from this that the Roumanians, or their gypsy oracles, have formed an opinion that their own *popas* are strictly abstinent as regards love, while Protestant priests marry and are accordingly productive. Why the Catholic clergy are included with the latter is not at all clear. It is lucky also to meet a gypsy at any time, and doubtless this belief has been well encouraged by the Romany.

Likewise, it is lucky to meet with a woman carrying a jug full of water, etc., but unlucky if it be empty. So in the New Testament the virgins whose lamps were full of oil received great honour. The lamp was an ancient symbol of life; hence it is very often found covered with aphrodisiac symbols or made in Phallic forms. It is barely possible that common old popular simile of Not by a jug-full—meaning not by a great deal—is derived from this association of a full vessel with abundance.

It is a Roumanian gypsy custom to do homage to the *Wodna zena*, or Water-woman (Hungarian gypsy, *Nivashi*), by spilling a few drops of water on the ground after filling a jug, and it is regarded as an insult to offer drink without observing this ceremony. A Roumanian will never draw water against the current (also as in the Hungarian gypsy charms), as it would provoke the water-spirit. If water is drawn in the nighttime, whoever does so must blow three times over the brimming jug, and pour a few drops on the coals.

The mythology of the Roumanians agrees with that of the gypsies. In deep pools of water lurks the dreadful *balaur* or *Wodna muz*—i.e., the Waterman (*Muz* is both gypsy and Slavonian) who lies in wait for victims. In every forest lives the *mama padura*, or *weshni dye*—the forest mother—who is believed to be benevolent to human beings, especially towards children who have lost their way in the wood. But the Panusch is an amorous spirit who, like the wanton satyrs of old, haunts the silent woodland shades, and lies in wait for helpless maids. Surely this is a corruption of great Pan, who is not dead after all, but merely banished to the land beyond the forest.

A curious book might be written on the efficacy of nakedness in witch-spells. In some places in Roumania there is a spirit always naked (at least appearing such), who requires a new suit of clothes every year. These are given by the inhabitants of the district haunted by such an elf, who on New Year's Night lay them out in some place supposed to be frequented by him or her.

In 1866, in a Wallachian village in the district of Bihar, to avert the cholera, six youths and maidens, all quite naked, traced with a ploughshare a furrow round their village to form a charmed circle over which the disease could not pass.

When the land is suffering from long droughts the Roumanians ascribe it to the gypsies, who by occult means make dry weather in order to favour their own trade of brickmaking. When the necessary rain cannot be obtained by beating the guilty Tziganes, the peasants resort to the Papaluga, or Rain-maiden. For this they strip a young gypsy girl stark-naked, and then cover her up in flowers and leaves, leaving only the head visible. Thus adorned the Papaluga, or Miss jack-in-the-Green, is conducted with music round the village, every person pouring water on her as she passes. When a gypsy girl cannot be had, or the Tziganes are supposed to be innocent, a Roumanian maiden may be taken. This custom is very widely spread.

**What is Shamanism? Shamanic Journeys through Daghestan**  
**By Michael Berman BA, MPhil, PhD**

*In a strange region he scales steep slopes  
Far from his friends he cuts a lonely figure...  
So momentous are his travels among the mountains  
To tell just a tenth would be a tall order*

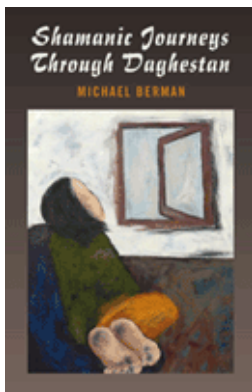
These lines from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* could also be used to describe the way of the shaman, because he/she lives a life apart from other too, and has difficulty in conveying in words just what it is that he/she experiences when journeying into other realities. Perhaps this is why the accounts of such journeys were often turned into folktales, as it was the only way to make them both understandable and acceptable to people not familiar with the landscapes to be found and experiences to be had in such worlds. *Shamanic Journeys through Daghestan*, published by O-Books in 2009, is full of such stories.

So what is shamanism? We could simply say that what shamans practise, whether they call themselves indigenous, urban or neo-shamans, is what shamanism is, but this would just be avoiding the question and would be of little help to anyone. Instead, the following definition is proposed:

A shaman is understood to be someone who performs an ecstatic (in a trance state), imitative, or demonstrative ritual of a séance (or a combination of all three), at will (in other words, whenever he or she chooses to do so), in which aid is sought from beings in (what are considered to be) other realities generally for healing purposes or for divination—both for individuals and / or the community.

As for the practice of shamanism, it is understood to encompass a personalistic view of the world, in which life is seen to be not only about beliefs and practices, but also about relationships—how we are related, and how we relate to each other. In shamanism the notion of interdependence is the idea of the kinship of all life, the recognition that nothing can exist in and of itself without being in relationship to other things, and therefore that it is insane for us to consider ourselves as essentially unrelated parts of the whole Earth (Halifax in Nicholson, (comp.), 1987, p.220). And through neurotheology, this assertion so often heard expressed in neo-shamanic circles that all life is connected, can now be substantiated. This is because it has been shown that during mystical ecstasy (or its equivalent, entheogenic shamanic states [states induced by ingesting hallucinogens]), the individual experiences a blurring of the boundaries on the ego and feels at one with Nature; the ego is no longer confined within the body, but extends outward to all of Nature; other living beings come to share in the ego, as an authentic communion with the total environment, which is sensed as in some way divine (Ruck, Staples, et al., 2007, p.76).

Traditionally it was the role of the shaman to maintain the equilibrium of the community he / she represented by focussing on the interrelationships within it and resolving any discord there may have been. The neo-shaman, on the other hand, tends to work within in a much wider community where not everyone shares the same practices and beliefs. Consequently, his or her work is generally more concerned with helping individuals rather than the community.



## **Shamanic Journeys Through Daghestan**

By Michael Berman BA, MPhil, PhD

[978-1-84694-225-9] £14.99 October 2009

### **ENDORSEMENTS AND REVIEWS:**

By gathering and reproducing en bloc the various stories contained in this book, Michael Berman does a valuable service in that he reminds us of the rich and variegated religious-cultural heritage of the Daghestani peoples. For rendering otherwise dispersed source materials readily accessible in a single volume, this book is to be congratulated. ... I greatly enjoyed each of the stories contained in this book, just as I very much appreciated Michael Berman's interpretation of them. I trust you will too. - Dr Andrew Dawson, Lancaster University, UK

An engrossing and enlightening journey into a fascinating country and genre. The stories are skillfully narrated and critiqued in a manner that retains their original vigour while making them accessible to a reader unacquainted with the tradition. This is storytelling at its most insightful and potent. - Wayne Rimmer PhD, teacher trainer & Director of Studies at International House in Moscow.

Michael Berman draws upon his extensive experience as a storyteller to bring to life the fascinating shamanic traditions of the little-known Daghestani people. - Bob Trubshaw, author, photographer and Commissioning Editor of Heart of Albion Press.

Michael Berman understands better than most the power of the stories that make our world. In this, his latest study of shamanic narratives, he takes his skill in elucidating the unity in diversity to the mountains of Daghestan - and comes back to everyday reality with some real treasures to share. - Julienne Ford PhD, formerly a lecturer at Middlesex University and the founder of the publishing company Superscript.

In the shallowness of an unsettling time that equates myths with lies, and from a region, between the Black and Caspian Seas, where such a mixture of peoples hangs on to ancient traditions and the proud idiosyncrasies of its own languages, Berman's wide-reading and passion for the shamanic roots of stories (still being told) make for a disturbing vision of what the human race (in the grip of glib authoritarian pressures) no longer wants to face in itself. These stories have been hammered out of a harsh landscape, and break the bounds of all comfortable behaviour. They find their truth where reality stops; but they also expose, in the layers of their building, influences of folk-lore elsewhere. Berman is most interested in their shamanic echoes, but they are also a pared-down revelation of Daghestan itself, the rich residue of its history and culture, and a compliment to its hard-bitten, gnarled, but generous and perceptive grasp of the paradoxes of human nature. - R.G. Gregory, author and founder of Word in Action, a travelling theatre company that has performed all over the world.

All intellectuals driven by nationalist sentiments directly or indirectly are always preoccupied with searching for the most ancient roots of their budding nations in order to ground their compatriots in particular soil and to make them more indigenous (Znamenski, 2007, p.28). In Daghestan, as in the neighbouring

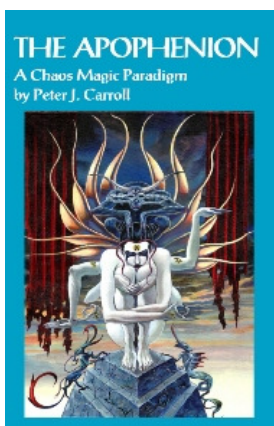
countries of Georgia, Chechnya, and Azerbaijan, these roots lie in shamanism and the stories in this collection clearly show this to be the case.

Known as the land of the mountains, Dagestan lies immediately north of the Caucasus Mountains, and stretches for approximately 250 miles along the west shore of the Caspian Sea. With its mountainous terrain making travel and communication difficult, Dagestan is still largely tribal and, unlike in most other parts of Russia, the population (2,576,531 in 2002) is rapidly growing. Despite over a century of Tsarist control followed by seventy years of repressive Soviet rule, there are still 32 distinct ethnic groups, each with its own language, and with so many indigenous ethnic groups, Dagestan is unquestionably the most complex of the Caucasian republics. The histories and stories of the elders provide the people with evidence of who their ancient ancestors were. This book, one of only a handful available in English on the country, contains both the texts of some of the tales and commentaries on them, focusing in particular on their shamanic elements.

Michael Berman BA, MPhil, PhD, works as a teacher and a writer. Publications include *The Power of Metaphor* for Crown House, and *The Nature of Shamanism and the Shamanic Story* for Cambridge Scholars Publishing. *Shamanic Journeys through Dagestan* and *Shamanic Journeys through the Caucasus* are both due to be published in paperback by O-Books in 2009, and a resource book for teachers on storytelling - *In a Faraway Land* - will be coming out in 2010. Michael has been involved in teaching and teacher training for over thirty years, has given presentations at Conferences in more than twenty countries, and hopes to have the opportunity to visit many more yet. For more information please visit [www.Thestoryteller.org.uk](http://www.Thestoryteller.org.uk)



### **Book reviews by Morgana**



The Apophenion – A Chaos Magic Paradigm  
by Peter J. Carroll

Mandrake of Oxford ISBN 9-78169-928650. See also  
[www.mandrake.uk.net](http://www.mandrake.uk.net)

This is Peter's first book since 1995 (*PsyberMagick*). During his absence he has spent a number of years working out some "of his notes" – as he fondly refers to his earlier books – and "The Apophenion" is the result.

He writes "Apophenia means finding pattern or meaning where others don't. Feelings of revelation and ecstasis usually accompany it. It has some negative connotations in psychological terminology when it implies finding meaning or pattern where none exists; and some positive ones when it implies finding something important, useful, or beautiful. It thus links creativity and psychosis, genius and madness."

As he explains in the introduction, in each chapter he takes a look at the way we understand how the world works, ruthlessly destroys it, and then offers an alternative. He kills the idea of being, the self, consciousness, literal truth, unilateral time, the Big Bang theory, and transcendence; he speaks of

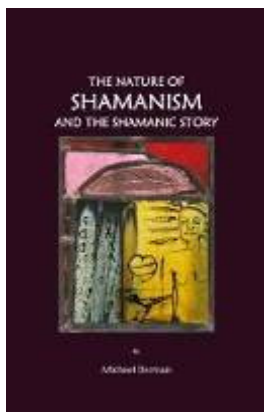
Panpsychism, the Multimind, Neopanthemism and a plethora of other ideas that we might have already heard of, but most certainly not in this context.

Carroll takes ideas that already exists, then puts them through his mind in new and exciting ways which inevitably alters our perception of magic forever. This book however has the added value of being understandable for those few of us without Masters degrees in Physics, Mathematics, Astronomy and Philosophy. Whilst the book was being written it was analysed and reviewed on the go by the wonderful people at the Arcanorium College (<http://www.arcanoriumcollege.com>), so there was plenty of feedback.”

And indeed this has made the book a pleasure to read. Peter’s dry British humour helps us to understand in real terms some very complex theories. For many pagans and witches his chapter “Neopanthemism – DIY religion” is illuminating. He describes 8 themes which “seem to characterise the emerging Neopanthemism” including the feminine perspective, belief and intent, personal narrative and Mythos.

Julian Vayne, a fellow Chaos Magician writes: “Algebra explodes across the appendices of the book scattering the non-mathematicians towards the Epilogue where things are nicely rounded off in laypersons terms. The truth may well be that we live in vorticitating hypersphere with three dimensional time that, as the author beautifully asserts, "...invites us to become apprentice gods." The very fact that I can now say 'vorticitating hypersphere' and know what that means is a testament to the authors explicatory powers.”

Highly recommended to those who want to know more about current magical theory.



### **The Nature of Shamanism and the Shamanic Story**

By Michael Berman BA, MPhil, PhD

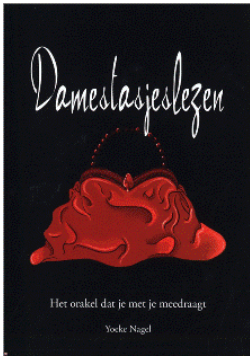
Cambridge Scholars Publishing ISBN 9781847183569

Wiccan Rede readers will recognise Michael’s name as the author of a few articles about Azerbaijan and Ossetia. As Shamanic teacher and storyteller Michael has first hand knowledge of the folks of the Caucasus.

I enjoyed reading this book because for once this isn’t a book arguing for Shamanism ‘as the next best thing to apple pie’, but a sober look into the roots of Shamanism. The chapter Shamanism – A Religion. A Way of Life, or a Methodology? is particularly interesting. Shamanism – like Wicca – seems to have suffered something of a process of sanitization, as if, for example, using hallucinogenic drugs somehow ‘degenerated’ the whole practice.

Michael continues by using a number of stories to illustrate Shamanic journeys to Lower, Middle and Upper World. One is perhaps a surprising choice – *the Shamanic Story of Jonah* but as Michael writes it is the universality of its appeal. He also uses stories from Georgia, Germany and Korea to illustrate how mythology, sagas and folktales can provide us with inner or Shamanic journeys. In fact he later devotes a chapter on the *Parallels between the Shaman and the Storyteller*. Many Pagans will recognise the importance of the oral tradition Michael is describing. And how we all need to be adept storytellers.

## Book reviews door Morgana



### **Damestasjeslezen – het orakel dat je met je meedragt – Yoeke Nagel**

A3 Boeken ISBN 978-90-7740-858-2 (Groot format paperback: pp 108)

Zie [www.A3boeken.nl](http://www.A3boeken.nl)

Yoeke is geen onbekende bij Wiccan Rede lezers. Velen zullen haar ook kennen uit de tijd dat ze bij Onkruid werkte. Haar vlotte manier van schrijven is herkenbaar, met een vleugje understatement en grote dosis humor.

Dit boek is dan ook een plezier om te lezen. De titel al wekte bij mij een curieuse blik van Wat is dat nou? Dametasjeslezen? Nooit van gehoord. En toch als gebruikster van natuurdivinatie waarin synchroniciteit een belangrijke rol speelt spraak me deze methode meteen aan.

Ja, wat je meedraagt inclusief al dat leefgruis is niet gering. Yoeke legt ook uit dat niet alleen de inhoud belangrijk is maar ook de tas zelf (grote, vorm, material, hoe het gedragen wordt) van belang is. Maar de werkelijke duiding – de inhoud. Ja daar gaat het om. Als de tas wordt omgekieperd wordt de inhoud spiraalgewijs – van het centrum uit gelezen. Yoeke geeft een vrij uitgebreid list van dingen die je kunt tegenkomen en de betekenis en verschillende aspecten daarvan. Het is zeker anders dan een tarot lezing juist omdat de plaatjes zeer persoonlijk zijn. Maar daar ligt juist ook de uitdaging van interpreteren.

Een leuk boek zeker voor de praktische heksen onder ons.



### **Het magische spreukenboek – Joke en Ko Lankester**

De Kern: ISBN 9789032 505059 (pp 218, groot paperback)

Joke en Ko zijn geen nieuwkomers en zijn bekend voor hun eerdere werken o.a. over wierook, orakels, jaar feesten enz.

Dit is hun meest recente werk en – zoals de titel doet vermoeden – gaat over magische spreuken. Een spreuk is een middel om met behulp van magie een gewenste verandering tot stand te brengen. Inderdaad spreuken, spreken, invocaties het heeft allemaal te maken met kracht bij onze magische werk te zetten. Een duidelijke intentie weergeven.

In 11 hoofdstukken behandelen ze de geschiedenis van de spreuk en hoe je zelf een spreuk kunt maken en gebruiken. Ze beschrijven verschillende soorten spreuken; voor gezondheid, voor relaties, voor bescherming en voor spirituele ontwikkeling.

Aan het einde van het boek worden diverse correspondenties weer gegeven – de elementen, de planeten, oghamtekens, dierenriemtekens – eigenlijk in dit boek heb je alles bij de hand!

En als finale een serie fotos uit diverse landen met allerlei amuletten en talismannen. Prachtig! Aanbevolen voor iedereen die wil graag werken met spreuken. Een bijzondere inspiratiebron.

**Religie**  
**Heidendom/paganisme:**  
**levensstijl, levensbeschouwing, religie**  
**door Frigga Asraaf**

Religie houdt de gemoederen dikwijls bezig: in brede maatschappelijke zin, op persoonlijke vlak van veel mensen en zeker ook binnen heidendom/paganisme. Daar de begrippen heidendom en paganisme woorden van gelijke strekking zijn, gebruik ik ze in dit schrijven door elkaar. Een vraag die mij al langer bezighoudt, is of religie in zijn algemeenheid als norm moet worden gezien in een maatschappij. Mijn antwoord op deze vraag is nadrukkelijke ontkennend. Uit de titel van dit artikel zou al naar voren kunnen komen dat voor mij binnen heidendom religie allerm minst de norm is. Mijn opvattingen over heidendom zijn mede gevormd door wat ik in de loop der jaren gezien, gelezen en gehoord heb van mensen van verschillende stromingen en van heidendom in het algemeen. Mijn beeld is natuurlijk mede gekleurd door Asatru, mijn eigen levensbeschouwing.

Het lijkt mij voor heidenen en paganisten zaak te beseffen dat wat binnen de eigen traditie algemeen aanvaard, is voor een andere stroming wezenlijk anders of niet eens aan de orde is. Iets waar ik zelf ook nog altijd op bedacht moet zijn, gebruik van dezelfde woorden wekt in deze nog wel eens een verkeerde voorstelling van zaken. Hoe anders heidendom op bepaalde punten ook moge zijn ten opzichte van monotheïstisch geloven als christendom en Islam, het gedrag van de gelovigen, dus ook van heidenen en paganisten, met betrekking tot bepaalde zaken is soms wonderlijk overeenkomstig. Bijvoorbeeld het plaatsvervangend beledigd zijn voor een god of goden of een eisende houding uit hoofde van religie, de vanzelfsprekendheid waarmee men allerlei vaak vermeende rechten opeist en een heilige overtuiging van het eigen gelijk.



Religie is een intrigerend en regelmatig ook een verontrustend fenomeen, want aanhangers hebben nog wel eens de neiging religie te laten verstarren waardoor het een dwingend karakter krijgt. Seculier is een begrip dat ik steeds vaker gebruik als ik zie wat religie met mensen kan doen. Naar mijn mening wordt het tijd dat aanhangers van religies, tradities en levensbeschouwingen volwassen worden en beseffen dat tijden veranderen en religie niet langer vanzelfsprekend is voor iedere bewoner van deze aardbol. En dan doet een premier van Nederland in het jaar 2008 de uitspraak "zonder geloof kun je niet functioneren". Verbijsterd nam ik kennis van deze uitspraak die naar mijn mening in volle glorie de kortzichtigheid van geloof laat zien. Geloof is namelijk iets waar mensen voor kiezen in te geloven naar mijn mening, net zo goed als de eigenaardige aanspraak op weten in deze. De scheiding van kerk en staat en de neutraliteit van de staat ten aanzien van geloof zijn in zo'n opmerking ver te zoeken. Ik hoor sommige paganisten nu denken: Maar wij geloven niet, wij weten. Dan denk ik: Dat is jezelf voor de gek houden!

Al vaker heb ik in artikelen verteld eenmaal volwassen beseft te hebben dat ik een religieus en spiritueel mens ben, want van huis uit heb ik er nauwelijks iets van meegekregen. Vanaf het begin van mijn kennismaking met Asatru en de daarbij behorende goden spreek ik bij voorkeur van traditie of levensbeschouwing. Nooit heb ik geloof in goden als norm gezien, noch binnen Asatru, noch binnen heidendom in het algemeen.

De diversiteit van heidendom/paganisme wordt regelmatig genoemd door heidenen zelf. Voor mij zit die diversiteit hem niet alleen in de verschillende stromingen, maar ook in de verscheidenheid binnen al de stromingen en de vrijheid om heidendom als levensstijl, levensbeschouwing of religie te zien. Ik heb echter de indruk dat de aanvaarding van dit verschil voor een aantal mensen lastig is. Het roept soms sterke emoties op. Zoeken naar overeenkomsten is leuk, geeft bevestiging en roept mogelijk zelfs een gevoel van veiligheid op. Voor het zien van verschillen is echter durf nodig, want juist die verschillen zetten naar mijn mening aan het denken en maken misschien wel dat je vaste opvattingen op losse schroeven worden gezet. Soms heb ik het gevoel dat er een ideaalbeeld bestaat van paganisme dat uit elkaar spat bij een confrontatie met verschillen van andere tradities. Ideaalbeelden leiden vaak tot teleurstellingen, zeker als dit ideaalbeeld is ontstaan uit persoonlijke maatstaven die over het gehele heidendom worden gelegd. Daar kan door anderen immers nooit aan voldaan worden. Zo'n ideaalbeeld kan tot van alles leiden ook tot fundamentalisme. Elke religie, traditie en levensbeschouwing kent immers zijn fundamentalisten dus ook paganisme is daar niet vrij van. Men kan altijd en overal mensen treffen die hun starre manier van denken, hun kader van geloven over hun mede aanhangers willen plakken en boos en venijnig worden als mensen zich hier niet naar schikken.



Hoeveel weten we eigenlijk van elkaars stromingen en is het nodig alle heidense stromingen te kunnen doorgronden? Op de eerst vraag is het antwoord volgens mij: gemiddeld maar weinig en op de tweede vraag kan ik volstaan met: nee. Zelf kom ik er ook pas de laatste tijd aan toe eens wat nader kennis te maken andere tradities en betrap ik mezelf er op nog regelmatig teveel van mijn persoonlijke denken en Asatru uit te gaan. Het beseft dit te doen, maakt dat ik er weer aan voorbij kan gaan. Welke de gemene delers binnen de heidense stromingen zouden zijn wordt me niet duidelijker, eerder verschaft het me meer inzicht in de verschillen en deels brengt dat begrip. Al met al blijf ik er van overtuigd dat er wel degelijk gemeenschappelijk zaken en belangen zijn, alleen is dat niet zo iets eenvoudigs als 'we geloven allemaal in goden'.

Wat mij betreft is er een duidelijk aan te geven verschil tussen gemeenschappelijke belangen en gemene delers. Het eerst gaat om praktische zaken als serieus genomen te worden in onze religie en het tweede gaat om wat de religie inhoud. Kijk voor het laatste eens naar de geschiedenis en waar dat toe geleid heeft: moord en doodslag om het even heel zwart-wit te stellen. Wat mij betreft is het voor onderlinge samenwerking dus zinniger ons te richten op de gemeenschappelijke belangen en theologische discussies voor een andere gelegenheid te bewaren.

Er zijn naar mijn mening misvattingen over de vermeende gemene delers, bijvoorbeeld dat iedere heiden een goddelijk expressie in de natuur herkent. Toverij is een andere misverstand, want waar het bij sommige stromingen een onlosmakelijk onderdeel is: niet elke paganist of heiden gelooft er in. Sommigen wijzen het zelfs af als onzin en bijgeloof. Het andere uiterste is weer de groep heidenen die mythologie letterlijk nemen. Kortom: de verscheidenheid in een notedop!

Wat mij betreft staat binnen heidendom het individu voorop: de persoonlijke beleving, ervaringen en standpunten. In die individuele benadering ligt voor mij een aanmerkelijk deel van de kracht van heidendom. Daar hoort voor mij de vrijheid bij te kiezen wat men wel of niet wil geloven, bijvoorbeeld in geesten, goden, toverij en dergelijke. Binnen stromingen kan dat soms iets anders liggen, zonder geloof in de God en de Godin en toverij heeft het weinig zin toegelaten te willen worden binnen de traditionele Wicca heb ik begrepen. Hoewel ik ook mensen die tot een coven behoren heb gesproken die in krachten te denken. Abstract denken in deze ken ik ook van aanhangers van andere heidense stromingen inclusief Asatru.

Aanhangers van druïdisme hebben op vragen over goden ook wel aangegeven niets met goden te hebben of van doen te willen hebben. Goden behoren bijvoorbeeld wel tot de kern van Asatru en breder tot heidendom maar zijn die kern nadrukkelijk niet als je het mij vraagt. Wellicht stuiten we hier op christelijk denken, waarvan we allemaal, vaak onbewust, nog altijd doordrongen zijn. In het christendom immers draait alles om God, hij is de kern en staat zo'n beetje altijd centraal. Voor mij staat binnen Asatru en heidendom in zijn algemeenheid zoals eerder al gezegd de mens centraal en het leven op dit ondermaanse in het hier en nu. Geestelijkheid is niet de norm maar mensen zijn dat. Het is immers vanuit ons mens-zijn dat we het leven ervaren. Het woord leek is in deze interessant om naar te kijken. Het is verwant met het latijnse laicus en het griekse laikos en betekent 'behorende tot het volk'. Het wordt gebruikt om het verschil aan te duiden tussen 'het volk' en de geestelijke stand. Heidendom heeft naar mijn mening geen geestelijke stand, wel priesters en priesteressen. Een geestelijk leven en eventueel een daarbij behorend priesterschap is echter een keuze, mogelijk eigen aan een stroming, maar daarmee niet een norm. En eventueel priesterschap is alleen voor de priester of de priesteres zelf, of anderen hem of haar in die rol erkennen doet niet ter zake. Jezelf priester of priesteres noemen is naar mijn mening een manier om aan te geven je leven in dienst van goden of geesten gesteld te hebben. Niet meer, niet minder. Er is geheel geen gezag of iets anders aan te ontleen, al helemaal niet ten opzichte van andere mensen.

Al eerder heb ik aangegeven het geen goede zaak te vinden om anno 2009 religie als norm te nemen. Gelijkwaardigheid van mensen is waar het om gaat ongeacht religie of levensopvatting. Voor mij is het van de zotte dat er over gelovigen en niet-gelovigen wordt gesproken omdat de laatste als iets niet-zijnde worden aangemerkt. Wat mij betreft zou eerder het andersom moet zijn. De vanzelfsprekendheid religie als de norm te zien, vind ik ergerlijk, met betrekking tot religie in het algemeen, maar zeker ook binnen heidendom.

Wel acht ik het van belang de wereld te laten weten dat we er zijn. Dat is echter iets heel anders dan de wereld Asatru, druïdisme, hekserij, westers sjamanisme, Wicca en Wiccahekserij te willen openbaren. Voorgaand is maar een rijtje van heidense stromingen dat ik hanteer om nog enigszins het bos door de bomen te kunnen blijven zien, maar er zijn natuurlijk nog meer stromingen op te noemen.

Is religie synoniem voor spiritualiteit? Spiritualiteit is een geestelijke levenshouding volgens de Dikke van Dale. Aan heidenen hoeft ik vast niet uit te leggen dat de meeste van dit soort begrippen vaak vanuit christelijk denken worden verklaard? Een belangrijk deel van hetgeen ik zoek in een levensbeschouwing is een verbinding met de wereld om mij heen: mensen, natuur waar ik deel van uitmaak en de werelden om mij heen met onstoffelijke wezens en krachten, voor mij allemaal gelijkwaardige onderdelen. Mijn waarneming, mijn beleving!

Er zijn honderdmiljoenen gelovigen op deze aardkloot te vinden, maar wie zegt mij dat we onszelf niet met zijn honderdmiljoenen voor de gek houden? Wie weet blijken de atheïsten wel gelijk te krijgen, maar dat ontdekken we dan pas als we dood zijn. Mij lijkt het heel wel mogelijk dat 'iedereen' gelijk heeft en alles en niets naast elkaar kunnen bestaan om het zo maar te zeggen. Oftewel 'onze' heidense onstoffelijke geesten en werelden zijn net zo reëel als het niets waar een atheïst mogelijk van uitgaat.

Een belangrijk vraag voor mij blijft altijd: hoe serieus nemen we onszelf als paganisten? Zijn we in staat tot zelfspot en beschikken we over de nodige humor voor het broodnodige relativeren? Of grijpen we naar onze (tover)wapens om elkaar (onstoffelijk) de hersens in te slaan uit hoofde van onze levensstijl, levensbeschouwing of religie? Voor vrijheid van meningsuiting is moed nodig en zelfvertrouwen. Ook voor verdraagzaamheid is moed en zelfvertrouwen nodig. Zaken die essentieel zijn om elkaar vrijheid van levensstijl, levensbeschouwing en religie te gunnen.

Aanvaarden en begrijpen zijn twee verschillende dingen en vaak genoeg is het aanvaarden zonder begrijpen. Voor aanvaarden hoef je het er ook helemaal niet mee eens te zijn! Aanvaarden betekent immers niet dat er ook maar iets veranderd voor jezelf, want de eigen opvattingen worden er niet meer of minder door. Er blijken slechts dingen naast te bestaan. Durven we als heidenen en paganisten de uitdaging aan om van onze eilandjes af te komen? Durven we wezenlijk te kijken naar elkaar? Durven we het aan vastgeroeste standpunten over religie en levensbeschouwingen los te laten en nieuwe wegen te ontdekken? Durven we wezenlijke verscheidenheid in diversiteit aan? Ik ga die uitdaging graag en met plezier aan en daag mijn mede heidenen uit hetzelfde te doen!



De veelzijdige seidhvrouw Frigga Asraaf zag in 1960 het levenslicht op Hillegersberg, een deelgemeente van de stad Rotterdam en volgens een volksverhaal de berg van de reuzin Hillegonda. Van jongs af aan is er interesse in het occulte geweest. Eenmaal volwassen volgde Frigga allerlei trainingen en workshops in binnen en buitenland, waaronder Touch for Health, holistische massage, reiki, sjamanisme, familieopstellingen, runen en seidh. De vijftien jaar ervaring met seidh en runen en asatru waar ze ondertussen op kan bogen is een weg geweest van vallen en opstaan. Alleen en samen met anderen was en is het een ontdekkingsstocht naar een eigentijdse seidhtraditie. Frigga heeft een heel eigen stijl van werken ontwikkeld en ze deelt haar kennis graag met anderen.

## Természeti démonok a magyar néphitben - Osara

A Consuales Ludi avagy Consualia ünnepe római fesztivál volt Consus, a tanácsok istenének tiszteletére december 15-én. Consus egyben védelmezte az eltárolt terményeket a tél idején. Nevéből származik egyébként a konzul szó is.

A learatott gabonát föld alatti üregekben tárolták; Consus temploma szintén a föld alatt volt. Szentélyét egész évben föld borította, s csak ezen az egy napon nyitották meg.

Marsot szintén tisztelték ezen a napon, csakúgy, mint az etruszk eredetű lares szellemeket, az egyes családok jóindulatú, védelmező házi istenségeit.

A fesztivál ideje alatt a lovakat, öszvéreket, szamarakat nem dolgoztatták, hanem végigvezették őket az utcákon virágfüzérékkel feldíszítve. A Circus Maximusban szekérvetköltséget is tartottak.

Romulus idejében ezen a napon történt a szabin nők elrablása. Romulus olyan hírnevet szerzett Rómának, miszerint Róma menedékkül szolgál mindenki számára, aki új életet akar kezdeni. Éppen ezért Róma vonzotta a száműzötteket, menekülteket, gyilkosokat, bűnözőket és szökött rabszolgákat egyaránt. Róma hírneve egyre nőtt, ahogy lassan már öt dombot benépesített a hét domb közül, amelyekre épült. Romulus előtt azonban újabb probléma kezdett körvonalazódni. Mivel a város leginkább menekültekkel népesült be, a betelepülők között elég kevés embernek volt felesége, ezért Romulus úgy döntött, hogy a városba nőket is be kell telepítenie.

A probléma megoldása végett Romulus megrendezte a Consualia ünnepét, amire meghívta vendégként a szomszédos szabin törzset is. A szabinok mind eljöttek, és magukkal hozták a lányukat is. Amikor megérkeztek, Romulus leült szenátorai közé. A támadásra jelt adván felállt, kioldotta lila palástját, majd újra maga köré terítette. Karddal felfegyverzett hívei kardot rántottak, és csatakiáltások közepette megrohanták a szabinokat, és elfogták a lányukat, de a férfiakat hagyták sértetlenül elmenekülni. Összesen mintegy 700 szabin nőt raboltak el és vittek Rómába ezen a napon.

Az erdélyi havasokban rengeteg történetet jegyeztek fel a vademberekről, vadleányokról. A vadleány csak édes tejet eszik, elszereheti a pásztorokat, elveszi az erejüket. Meztelenül jár, földig ér a haja. Általában tizenkét vadleány jár együtt, egy csapatban. A vadember gyapjas testű és szakállas.

A magyar hitvilág kifejezetten sok erdei lényt is ismer. A palóc kontyu sötét gödrökben és völgyekben „koncsorog, állítólag azért, mert elüzetett. Már Zrínyi említi az erdei csodát, aki füvet rág, s aki elől az emberek elfutnak. A kalotaszegiek vadöreg néven ismerték; aki hosszú szőrrel fedett, zömök testű, vad tekintetű ember, fent a havasokon ide-oda barangolt, az erdő és a vadak felett örködött. Ha favágó szerencsétlenül járt, „a vadöreg rázta meg. Ha bosszantották, tiszteletlenül beszéltek róla, hazamenet meghajigálta őket és odvassá tette a kivágásra kijelölt



fákat. Ezért esténként egy tönköt hagytak neki áldozatul. Reggel húst és bort tettek egy fa alá, mert a vadöreg, amíg ők heverésznek, minden munkájukat elvégzi.



A vadleány kapnikbányai hiedelem szerint a legerősebb embert is lefogta és megkötözte. A vadleányt ismerték a láposi magyarok is: meztelenül jár, az arca szép, a testét azonban földig érő szőr fedi. Földig ér a haja is, amely a homlokán egy kicsit szétfésült, ujjai hosszúak, körmei a sarlóhoz hasonlítanak. Lábnyma keskenyebb és hosszabb, mint az emberé, lábának a körmei is nyomot hagynak a földön, a talp szőre is észrevehető a porban, sárban, a hangja visító. Ha felbosszantják, olyan szelet csinál, hogy fákat tör ki, széthányja a pásztor kalibáját. A

domokosiak szerint meg lehetett fogni: amerre jární szokott, fél pár csizmát kellett kitenni. Kíváncsiságában felpróbálta, de mindkét lábát beledugta, így aztán nem futhatott el. A képzetet ismerték a mezőségi és székelyföldi magyarok is: erdei leánynak, éneklő kisasszonynak, víg leánynak emlegették.

Az erdők anyjáról a hóstátiak csak annyit tudtak, hogy elvitte a gyermek álmát. A fákban lakó szellemekről ez ideig két adatot jegyeztek fel: az egyik a múlt szelleme, amely a Rima forrásának ezeréves fájából meséli a múlt eseményeit. A másik a görgény-üvegcsuri tápió: szakállas zuzmóval benőtt fa volt ez, amelyben ember lakott. Tövéhez kenyeret tettek, és nem vágtak volna bele, mert vér folyt volna belőle, és minden szerencséjüket elvesztették volna.

Osara



## **Az ősi és gonosz Necronomicon - Sddie**

Sokan fordulnak hozzám levélben és személyesen, kérdezve, hogy tudok-e valamit a Necronomiconról, illetve hol lehet megtalálni az eredetét. Úgy döntöttem, nem árt néhány valódi információt leírni.

A legenda Egy örült arab, Abdul Ahazred írta Kitab Al Azif címmel, valamikor Krisztus születése után 730 (más források szerint 800) környékén. Arabról görögre fordították, majd Olaus Wormius latin verziója terjedt el kicsit jobban. Körülbelül



800 oldalas mű lehetett, a latin verzió a 700. oldalon hiányos volt. Maga a könyv egyfajta grimoire, varázslatgyűjtemény, melyben titkos mágikus formulák találhatók ősi, elfeledett, borzalmas istenek megidézésére.

A valóság

A Schlagecraft kiadó 1977-ben jelentette meg először a Necronomicon című könyvet. Egy bizonyos Peter Simon nevű úr írta. A műben keveredik a Lovecraft-mítosz, a sumér-akkád-babiloni-asszír

mitológia, továbbá a szerző élénk fantáziája.

Lovecraft előtt semmi bizonyítékunk nincs Necronomicon vagy Kitab Al Azif nevű könyv létezésére, halvány utalás szintjén sem. Ezzel szemben Lovecraft rengeteg levelében vallja be, hogy ő maga találta ki eme művet.

Edwin Bairdnek (1924 február 3):

Egyszer kisebb gyűjteményt hoztam össze keleti cserepekből és műtárgyakból, kijelentve magamról, hogy elkötelezett Mohamedán vagyok, és felvéve az Abdul Alhazred álnevet - melyet felismerhet, mint azon bizonyos mítikus Necronomicon szerzőjét, melyet különböző történeteimbe belerángatok.

Robert E. Howardnak (1930, augusztus 13):

A gyakorta idézett mítosz-ciklus Cthulhuval, Yog-Sothoth-tal, R'lyehhel, Nyarlathoteppelel, Nuggal, Yebbel, Shub-Niggurath-tal, stb. stb. - engedje bevallanom, hogy mindez saját szintetikus keverékem, mint Lord Dunsany Pegana-jának népszerű és változatos pantheonja. (...) Abdul egyik kedvenc álom-figurám - valójában magamat hívtam így öt éves koromban, mikor elkötelezett híve lettem a Lang-féle 1001 éjszakának. (...) Nagyon szórakoztatónak találom, hogy eme mesterséges mitológiát gyakorta idézett volta miatt az eredetiség szele lengi körül.

Robert E. Howardnak (1930 október 4.):

...öt éves koromban olvastam az 1001 éjszakát. Akkoriban turbánt tekertem a fejemre, égett parafadugóval szakállt rajzoltam magamnak, és a (csak Allah tudja, honnan szedett) Abdul Alhazred szintetikus néven hívtam magam - akit később, a régi idők emlékére feltámasztottam, mint a hipotetikus Necronomicon hipotetikus íróját!

Robert E. Howard-nak (1932 május 7.):

A Necronomicon megírásáról - bárcsak lenne elég energiám és zsenialitásom megtenni! Attól tartok, komoly munka lenne, a különböző részletek fényében, melyeket az idők során hozzáadtam! Ennek ellenére lehet, hogy kiadok egy cenzorált Necronomicon-t - azon részeivel, melyek legalább nagyjából biztonságosan használhatók az emberiség által! Mikor von Juntz Fekete könyve és Justin Geoffrey versei a piacon vannak, ideje gondolkodnom a jó öreg Abdul halhatatlanná tételéről!

Robert Bloch-nak (1933 május 9.):

Amúgy nem létezik Abdul Alhazred, az örült arab Necronomiconja. Ezen pokoli & tiltott könyv saját kreálmányom, melyre a W.T. (Weird Tales) csoport többi tagja is utal írásaiban

Robert Bloch-nak (1933 július eleje-közepe ): Ezen hónapban háromszor is utaltam rájuk, s ezért szokatlanul sok levelet kaptam, melyekben Alhazred, Eibon, & von Juntz munkáinak elérhetősége iránt érdeklődnek. Minden esetben kénytelen vagyok bevallani, hogy csak fantáziám szüleményei.

Miss Margaret Sylvester-nek (1934 január 13):

A Necronomiconról - be kell vallanom, hogy eme szörnyű & iszonytató kódex pusztán a képzeletem szülötte! (...) Szórakoztatja a különböző írókat, hogy egymás szintetikus démonjait & elképzelt könyveit használják - így Clark Ashton Smith gyakran beszél a Necronomiconról, míg én az ő Eibon könyvére utalgatok. Ötleteink egybemosása szinte meggyőző pseudo-háttérrel biztosít (...) - bár természetesen egyikünk sem kívánja valóban félrevezetni az olvasóinkat.

Harry O. Fischer-nek (1937 késő február):

Az Abdul Alhazred nevet valamely felnőtt (már nem emlékszem, ki lehetett) találta ki nekem 5 éves koromban, mikor vágytam arra, hogy arab legyek - az 1001 éjszaka hatására. később úgy gondoltam, vicces lenne ezt egy tiltott könyv írójának nevéként felhasználni. A Necronomicon cím egy álom folyamán ötlött eszembe.

A modern mítosz

Létezik egy harmadik gondolati megközelítés is. Ők azok, akik úgy gondolják, bár Lovecraft nem hitt a Necronomiconban, az álmai egy valódi, de nem fizikai világot, könyvet mutattak meg. Ezen hozzáállás igazságértékét nem lehet meghatározni. Ami viszont tény: a hit hegyeket mozgat. Beszéltem olyan emberekkel, akiknek gonosz és megmagyarázhatatlan élményük volt eme kellemes tengerparti fantáziaregénnyel.

Fiatalabb korban (14-18 év) kívánjuk a csodákat, azt hogy különleges dolgok történjenek velünk, ami által mi is különlegessé válunk. Leggyakrabban ez a szerepjátékos fiatalok körében történik. Félreértés ne essék, nem azért, mert az RPG bármilyen szempontból káros lenne, sőt, ellenkezőleg. Ilyen csodakeresésre azok hajlamosak, akik rendelkeznek elég fantáziával a szerepjátékokhoz. Sajna a fantasy történetekben leggyakrabban a negatív főhős hatalma túl van domborítva (a pozitív szereplők csak nagynehezen tudják legyőzni), így a hatalommániás tinédzserek inkább ilyen szerepkörben igyekeznek tetszelegni. Ha megvan hozzá a fantáziájuk, akármi megeshet. Végzőként csak ennyit: csak olyasmit olvassunk, amiről nem hisszük azt, hogy árthat nekünk.



## Gondolatok a rituális meztelenségről

### - Caballus

És meg foglak szabadítani titeket a szolgaságtól; s jeléül annak, hogy igazán szabadok vagytok, meztelenül végezzétek szertartásaitokat; így táncoljatok, daloljatok, lakomázzatok, zenéljeteek és szerelmeskedjeteek, mindezt az én dicsőségemre.



A fenti idézet a gardneriánus Árnyak könyvéből való, és az Istennő parancsa címet viselő rituális szöveg egy részlete. A Parancsban, ahogy a legtöbb wicca röviden nevezi, az Istennő személyesen szól híveihez, és saját magáról és a Wicca útról közöl fontos kinyilatkoztatásokat. Az idézett rész a rituális meztelenségre, a Wicca egy olyan hagyományosan jellemző gyakorlatára utal, mely napjainkra egyre inkább háttérbe szorul, a rituális korbácsoláshoz, vagy a Nagy Rítus valóságos bemutatásához hasonlóan. A rituális meztelenség a Wiccán belül elsősorban a gardneriánus és alexandriánus tradíciókra jellemző, és a Wicca XX. századi újjászületésének első évtizedeiben általánosan elterjedt volt a wiccák között, hiszen ebben az időszakban a boszorkánysággal foglalkozók túlnyomó többsége ebből a két tradícióból került ki. Később azonban gombamód szaporodni kezdtek a különböző Wicca tradíciók, és a világ

wiccáinak és boszorkányainak gyakorlatából egyre inkább kimaradtak azok a hagyományos elemek, melyek a modern ember számára furcsának, zavarbaejtőnek vagy kellemetlennek tűntek. Erre a sorsra jutott a rituális meztelenség is, melyet napjainkban már csak a legkülöncebb vagy a legortodoxabb wiccák követnek, és persze azok, akik a wiccát csak ürügynek tekintik egy kis meztelenkedésre. A rituális meztelenség, azaz a wiccák azon szokása, hogy meztelenül végzik szertartásaikat, a vallás nyilvánosságra lépésének kezdetétől vitákra adott okot, és a vádaskodások és félreértelmezések melegágyául szolgált. Ez természetesen nem meglepő egy olyan társadalomban, melynek a meztelen emberi testhez fűződő viszonyát hosszú évszázadokon át a kereszténység formálta. Az a vallás, mely a testet a szellemnél alacsonyabbrendűnek tartja, a meztelenség és a szexualitás közé pedig egyenlőségjelet tesz, egyaránt bűnösnek tekintve mindkettőt. Még napjainkban is találkozhatunk olyan emberekkel, akik úgy gondolják, a Wicca nem szól másról, csak a szexről, és a Wicca rituálék valójában okkult körítéssel fűszerezett orgiák. Furcsa továbbélése ez a középkori boszorkányperek koholt vádjainak, melyek az ördöggel való paráználkodásról szóltak. Az erkölcsös társadalom olyan értetlenséggel és agrasszív elutasítással fogadta a rituális meztelenséget, hogy a wiccák védekezésre kényszerültek, és bizonygatni kezdték, hogy a rituális meztelenségnek, és úgy általában a Wiccának egyáltalán semmi köze nincs a szexualitáshoz. Ezáltal azoknak a rosszul értelmezett erkölcsi normáknak a foglyaivá váltak, melyektől eredendően szabadok voltak. Mielőtt azonban belemennénk a rituális meztelenséggel kapcsolatos vélemények boncolgatásába, vizsgáljuk meg magukat a tényeket.

A gardneriánus Árnyak könyve több helyen is említi, hogy a Wicca rituálékat meztelenül, másnéven skyclad (azaz égbe öltözötten) kell végezni. Az egyik ilyen utalás az Istennő parancsából fentebb idézett rész. Egy másik rész, mely a Megfelelően felkészülve címet viseli, leírja, hogy az egyes rituáléokra milyen módon kell előkészülniük a résztvevőknek. A legelső mondat szerint a megfelelően felkészült wicca:

Meztelen, de szandált (nem cipőt) viselhet. Egy másik rész szerint, mely a Skyclad címet viseli:

Fontos, hogy kezdettől fogva meztelenül dolgozzunk, mert ezáltal teljesen természetessé válik, és nem fog munkaközben felmerülni a gondolat, hogy nincs rajtam ruha, ezáltal elvonva a figyelmet a munkáról. A wicca szertartások meztelen gyakorlásának ellenzői gyakran érvelnek azzal, amikor komolytalannak akarják



feltüntetni az egész kérdést, hogy mindez csupán azért került be a gardneriánus és később az ebből erősen merítő alexandriánus tradícióba, mert Gerald Gardner, a modern wicca mozgalom elindítója, naturista volt, és szeretett meztelenkedni. Először is tudnunk kell, hogy a rituális meztelenség nem csupán wicca gyakorlat, hanem széles körben elterjedt szokás volt a régi időkben. Az Istennő Parancsát, melyből a cikket indító idézet való, Gardner és egyik főpapnője, Doreen Valiente, közösen írták. Az idézett rész azonban nem csupán az ő agyszüleményük, hanem Charles G. Leland Aradia, avagy a boszorkányok evangéliuma című könyvén alapul, mely a toszkánai boszorkányok vallási és mágikus gyakorlatainak gyűjteménye. Ebben a következőt olvashatjuk:

Szabadok lesztek a szolgaságtól!  
És eképpen mind szabadokká váltok!  
Ezért, férfiak és nők,  
Legyetek mind meztelenek.

Hogy a boszorkányok között mennyire volt elterjedt a régi időkben a meztelenség, azt nem tudjuk biztosan. Mindenesetre a boszorkányüldözések korában az egyház által leírt boszorkánygyűlések általános eleme volt a meztelenség és az ördöggel való paráználkodás. Ez természetesen egybevág az egyház azon törekvésével, hogy a

boszorkányok praktikáit istentelen, bűnös színben tüntesse fel. Ezért nem tudhatjuk, hogy a meztelen boszorkányok elképzelés pusztán a képzelet szüleménye volt-e, vagy pedig valóságos tényeken alapult (hiszen hozzá kell tennem azt is, hogy még az sem elfogadott nézet, miszerint a boszorkánypercek adatainak kapcsolata lenne bármilyen valós, akkoriban létező boszorkánykultusszal.) Mindenesetre, ha például a repülőkenőcs használatára gondolunk, mely egy narkotikus növényekből álló készítmény volt, és a repülés élményét idézte elő használóiiban, akkor feltételezhetjük, hogy egy-egy ilyen közös repülés alkalmával a résztvevők valóban meztelenek voltak. A boszorkánykenőcsöt ugyanis a test teljes felületére kellett felkenni, és miután hatni kezdett, a résztvevők valószínűleg nem azzal voltak elfoglalva, hogy visszavegyék levetett ruhadarabjaikat.



Elégé megalapozottnak tűnik a feltételezés, hogy a kereszténység előtti Európában a vallási és mágikus szertartások némelyikét – legalább azokat, melyek a termékenységgel kapcsolatosak –, meztelenül végezték. Erre leginkább a fennmaradt és lejegyzett népszokásokból következtethetünk. Általánosan elterjedt szokás volt például meztelenül táncolni a mezőn, a gabona termékenységének biztosítása érdekében. Janet és Stewart Farrar egyik könyvükben megemlíti egy dublini barátjukat, akit gyerekkorában a szülei május 1. előestéjén éjfélkor testvéreivel együtt kivittek a szántóföldre, ahol az egész család meztelenül táncolt a fiatal növények között. A gyerekeknek azt mondták, azért, hogy ne fázzanak meg az elkövetkező 12 hónapban. Valószínűleg ez

volt az elfogadható válasz, amelyet nem annyira kínos, ha a gyerekek kikotyognak... például a pap előtt. A meztelenségnek a szakralitással való összekapcsolódása azonban nem csak a kereszténységtől oly távol álló pogány vallások esetében fordult elő. Megtalálható volt például a zsidó próféták gyakorlatában is. A Bibliában például, mikor Saul akarata ellenére révületbe esik, és letépi ruháit, az emberek azon tanakodnak, vajon ő is próféta-e:

S míg innen eljutott (Saul) Rámába a próféták házáig, leszállt rá az Isten lelke, úgyhogy prófétai révületben volt, míg oda nem ért Rámába a próféták házához. Még a ruháját is levetette és Sámuel előtt is prófétai révületbe esett, – egész nap és egész éjjel ott fetrengett levetkőzve. Azért mondják: Saul is a próféták közé tartozik? (1 Sámuel 19:23-24)

Ehhez a hagyományhoz csatlakozott Assisi Szent Ferenc is, aki egyik első radikális prédikációját anyaszült meztelenül adta elő az Assisi San Ruffino katedrálisban összegyűlt tömeg előtt.

A rituális meztelenség okára sokféle magyarázat született a wiccák között is. A válaszok egy része fizikai vagy metafizikai/energetikai okokkal magyarázza a skyklad rituálék fontosságát, a másik részük pedig szimbolikus értékűnek tekinti, és annak pszichológiai hatását hangsúlyozza.

A legtöbbet vitatott érv a rituális meztelenség mellett az, hogy a ruha gátolja a mágikus rítusok során a mágikus energiák kibocsátását. Ezt a tézist még wiccák

között is sokan vitatják, bár az Árnyak könyve egyik fejezete, mely a mágikus hatalommal (energiával) foglalkozik, eléggé egyértelműen utal erre a nézőpontra: A hatalom a testben szunnyad, és a gyakorlottak többféle módon is képesek előhívni és használni... A hatalom a testből a bőrön, és talán a testnyílásokon keresztül árad ki; ezért kell megfelelően felkészültnek lenned. A legkisebb szennyeződés mindent tönkretesz, ezért fontos a teljes tisztaság. A megfelelően felkészült rendszeresen visszatérő kifejezés az Árnyak könyve szövegében, és egyértelműen a meztelenségre utal (l. a korábbi idézetet). Ezt támasztja alá az is, hogy a legutóbbi idézet hangsúlyozza a tisztaság fontosságát. Ha a legapróbb szennyeződések a bőr felületén károsan befolyásolják a hatalom kibocsátását, akkor a ruha viselése minden bizonnyal sokkal súlyosabb következményekkel járhat.

Egy másik érv a skyclad rituálék mellett az, hogy egy szoros vagy kényelmetlen ruhadarab megnehezítheti a megfelelő fizikai és szellemi ellazulást, és akadályozhatja a koncentrációt. A meztelenség állapota a szabadság és korlátozatlanság érzetét nyújtja, és a legcsekélyebb mértékben sem vonják el a figyelmet a bőrrel érintkező ruhadarabok által keltett ingerek. Ezt az álláspontot képviseli a Skyclad című fejezet következő részlete is:

Bőröd, ha nem korlátozza semmi, sokkal könnyebben bocsát ki energiát, és az áramlás sokkal szabályosabb. És amikor táncolsz, szabad vagy, és korlátozatlan. A probléma mindezzel csak az, hogy a mai ember számára sokkal zavaróbb lehet az a tudat, hogy meztelen, mint az a csekély mértékű korlátozás és figyelemelterelés, amit egy laza és kényelmes öltözet viselése jelent. Természetesen ez abból a belénknevelt nézetből ered, mely szerint a meztelenség szégyellni való dolog. Erre a problémára is utal az Árnyak könyve Skyclad című fejezetéből korábban idézett részlet, mely azt tanácsolja, hogy kezdettől fogva dolgozzunk meztelenül, így előbb-utóbb hozzá fogunk szokni a meztelenséghez, és az nem fogja elterelni a figyelmünket.



Ezen a ponton elértük a rituális meztelenség pszichológiai és szimbolikus vonatkozásait. A meztelenség ugyanis szimbolikus erejű állapot, szimbóluma a korlátozatlanságnak és a szabadságnak. Ahogy a Parancs mondja: s jelül annak, hogy igazán szabadok vagytok, meztelenül végezzétek szertartásaitokat. A meztelenség ezenkívül a wiccák közötti egyenlőséget is jelképezi. Bármennyire is különböző társadalmi és kulturális háttérrel rendelkezünk, a körön belül mindenki egyenlő. Ruhák nélkül mindannyian egyszerűen csak emberek vagyunk. Hasonló módon segíti elő a meztelenség a különféle szerepeinktől, hamis énképeinktől való megszabadulást. A hétköznapi forgatagában rengeteg szerepet játszunk el, minden helyzetben megpróbáljuk a lehető legmegfelelőbb képet mutatni magunkról a világnak, és önmagunknak is. Mindeközben valódi énünk még saját magunk számára is megfoghatatlanul rejtőzik ezernyi álarc mögött. A mágia gyakorlásához mindennél fontosabb, hogy az ember tisztába jöjjön azzal, ki is ő valójában, és amikor a körben a mágikus operációt végzi, valóban önmaga legyen, mert csak valódi énje rendelkezik azzal az erővel, mely képes megváltoztatni a valóságot. Ebben is segíthet a rituális meztelenség, főleg, ha csoportosan dolgozunk. Hogy milyen ruhát veszünk fel, nagymértékben az határozza meg, hogy milyen képet akarunk mutatni magunkról. Meztelenül egyik leghatásosabb eszközünk

vagyunk megfosztva, mellyel hamis képet vetíthetnénk magunkról a világ felé. A skyclad munka ebből a szempontból igen hasznos lehet, mert az okkultizmussal foglalkozók között túl sokan vannak, akiket elbűvölnek a külsőségek, az eszközök, a látványos rituálék és a káprázatos rituális öltözetek. Mindezek pedig elvonják a figyelmüket a lényeges dolgokról. A rituális meztelenség nemes egyszerűségében kiváló ellenszere lehet ennek a betegségnek.

Végül, a meztelenül végzett szertartások segíthetnek bennünket abban, hogy leküzdjük azt a társadalom által ránk kényszerített és belénk nevelt elképzelést, mely szerint a test alacsonyabbrendű a szellemnél. Mivel e szerint a nézet szerint a test nem csak egyszerűen alacsonyabbrendű, hanem egyenesen a bűnök forrása, ezért el kell takarni. Ez a hozzáállás teljesen idegen a wiccától, melyben a fizikai sík ugyanolyan fontos, mint a lelki vagy a szellemi. Sajnos úgy tűnik, hogy a wiccák közül sokan beleestek az erkölcsös társadalom csapdájába, és bizonygatni kezdték, hogy a rituális meztelenségnek semmi köze nincs a szexualitáshoz. Holott a wicca nézet szerint a szex egyáltalán nem bűnös, sőt szent dolog. És bár láthattuk, hogy a skyclad rituáléknak sok praktikus oka lehet, az mindenkinek egyéni dolga kellene legyen, hogy eldöntse, miért is vetkőzik le, ha úgy dönt, meztelenül akarja bemutatni szertartásait. Hogy a szexualitás mégsem teljesen idegen a rituális meztelenségtől, az az Árnyak könyve következő részletéből is egyértelműen kiderül, mely a rituális meztelenség jótékony hatásaival kapcsolatban azt írja, hogy: És mind közül a legfontosabb, hogy partnered testének érintése lelked legmélyéig felkavar, és így tested a legtöbb energiát bocsátja ki, amire csak képes. Az, hogy napjainkban a wiccák többsége nem alkalmazza a rituális meztelenséget, sőt sokan kifejezetten komolytalannak tartják, valószínűleg nagyrészt annak a következménye, hogy bár egyre többen akarnak szabadulni az elmúlt korszak patriarchális, monoteista vallásaitól, és az általuk rájuk kényszerített béklyóktól, úgy tűnik, még új vallásukban és világnézetükben is foglyai maradnak a tőlük örökölt, néha tudatos, néha tudattalan szinten működő beidegződéseknek. Így aztán soha nem érik el teljesen azt, amiről a rituális meztelenség többek között szólt: a szabadságot. Hiszen a Nagy Istennő így szólt híveihez: jeléül annak, hogy igazán szabadok vagytok, meztelenül végezzétek szertartásaitokat...



## ***É chegado o fim do verão...***

**By Juanna Gouveia, PFI Brazilia**

Durante muitos anos procurei entender como as tradições pagãs resistiram ao cristianismo. Essa busca levou constantemente ao Halloween, ou Dia das bruxas.

Fui excomungada da Igreja Católica e estou certa que um dos motivos se deveu ao meu anseio por explicações.

Aos 13 anos, quando abandonei a Igreja, eu adentrei ainda mais nos estudos sobre paganismo. Na Wicca meu real caminho, busquei entender melhor o significado das celebrações e necessariamente, o primeiro Sabá que vasculhei foi o de Samhain.

Voltei ao passado onde nossos ancestrais mais remotos eram politeístas e tinham como base o culto ao feminino, e uma Deusa e um Deus que partilhavam o mesmo espaço da criação. Não existiam demônios ou seres malignos no universo, o mal era uma característica totalmente humana, permitida pela lei do livre arbítrio colocada para nós pela força maior da Criação, a força feminina e, portanto chamada de Grande Mãe.

Neste retorno conheci o povo Celta e a divisão de suas celebrações em duas partes, a quente e a fria, marcadas respectivamente pelas festas de Samhain e Beltane.

Cada festa tinha suas características próprias dentro da mitologia e da cosmovisão dos celtas. Eles acreditaram em todas as leis de espaço e tempo, o que permitia que o mundo dos espíritos se misturasse com o dos vivos.

A palavra **Samhain** (pronuncia-se SOUEN) significa **sem luz** ou **sem sol**, mas no Gaélico Escocês *samhuinn* significa Fim do Verão. Mais tarde a evolução da língua daria origem a Samhain que significa Novembro em Gaélico Irlandês, mas que, por sua vez, em Gaélico Escocês significa **All Hallows**. All Hallows seria, portanto, o festival dos mortos, o festival em que se comemorava o fim de uma época e o início de outra.

Foi desta palavra All Hallows que surgiu o tão conhecido Halloween que tem origem na Igreja católica. Vem de uma corrupção contraída do dia 1 de novembro, Dia de Todos os Santos é um dia católico de observância em honra aos santos. Mas, no século V d.C na Irlanda Céltica, o inverno oficialmente começava em 31 de outubro. O feriado era Samhain, o Ano novo céltico. Alguns bruxos acreditam que a origem do nome vem da palavra *hallowinas* - nome dado às guardiãs femininas do saber oculto das terras do norte, hoje a Escandinávia.

Na noite de 31 de outubro (hemisfério norte) e 1º de maio (hemisfério sul), o Deus morre e o mundo mergulha na escuridão. Nessa noite a barreira entre o mundo espiritual e o nosso mundo torna-se mais tênue, facilitando a comunicação com os mortos. É quando o Deus se sacrifica para tornar-se a semente do seu renascimento em Yule. É a época mais escura do inverno e marca **o fim e o início** do ano no calendário Celta.

Tempos depois, os Romanos adotaram as práticas célticas, mas no primeiro século depois de Cristo, eles as abandonaram. O Halloween foi levado para os Estados Unidos em 1840, por imigrantes irlandeses que fugiam da fome pela qual seu país passava e passa ser conhecido como o Dia das Bruxas.

Para nós bruxos, a data marca uma morte simbólica de toda a natureza e do próprio ser humano para renascer no ano seguinte, fechando o ciclo da natureza que é conhecido como a Roda do Ano. O sentido do Samhain é nos sintonizarmos com os que já partiram para lhes enviar mensagens de amor e harmonia. É uma data festiva, pois marca o início de um novo período em nossas vidas.

Devemos comemorar com muita dança e fartura. Nomes dos que se foram são queimados no caldeirão para que sejam sempre lembrados, além de atirar moedas e mensagens escritas com pedidos dirigidos aos espíritos. As cores do sabá são:

Laranja (cor da vitalidade e da energia que gera força.). Os druidas acreditavam que nesta noite, passagem para o Ano Novo, espíritos de outros planos se aproximavam dos vivos para vampirizar a energia vital encontrada na cor laranja, o Preto (cor sacerdotal das vestes de muitos magos, bruxas, feiticeiras e sacerdotes em geral, cor do mestre.) e o roxo (cor da magia ritualística.).

O altar deve ser adornado com maçãs (símbolo da vida eterna). Uma das tradições mais comuns praticadas pelos povos antigos era a de colocar várias maçãs em um grande barril de água. Várias mulheres se reuniam em volta do barril, e a primeira que conseguisse pegar uma das maçãs seria a primeira a casar no próximo ano. Abóboras e suas máscaras, conhecidas como Jack O'Lantern, utilizadas por pessoas que precisavam sair durante a noite de Samhain. As sombras provocadas pela face esculpida na abóbora tinham a virtude de afastar os maus espíritos e todos os seres do outro mundo que vinham para perturbar, e as velas que indicam o caminho para os espíritos, também fazem parte deste sabá.

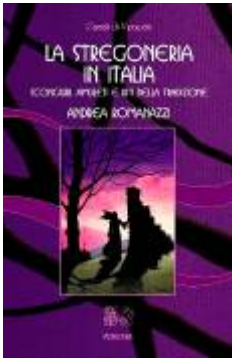
O local deve ser enfeitado com aranhas que simbolizam o destino e o fio que tecem suas teias, o meio, o suporte para seguir em frente. Morcegos símbolos da clarividência, pois que vêem além das formas e das aparências, sem necessidades da visão ocular. Captam os campos magnéticos pela força da própria energia e sensibilidade.

Por ser o *Grande Sabá*, todos os Pagãos consideram Samhain como a noite mais mágica do ano. Muitas práticas adivinhatórias foram associadas ao Samhain, as mais comuns eram aquelas que prenunciavam casamentos e fortunas para o próximo ano que estava se iniciando.

Samhain é um tempo para a reflexão, no qual olhamos para o ano mágico que passou e estabelecemos as metas para nossa vida no ano que entra. Ainda hoje continuo minha caminhada, essa busca eterna pelo conhecimento da Arte e sinto-me agraciada pelos Deuses sempre que mantenho acesa a chama. O Velho Rei morre, mas sua alma vive na criança não-nascida, a centelha de vida no ventre da Deusa. Por isso celebro os dois mundos, o natural e o sobrenatural, e acredito na renovação da vida.

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## **LA STREGONERIA IN ITALIA: SCONGIURI AMULETI E RITI DELLA TRADIZIONE** By Andrea Romanazzi

Sin dai tempi più arcaici gli uomini hanno cercato di contrastare le manifestazioni più estreme della Natura attraverso un'azione magica, che si è evoluta nei secoli generando credenze, riti e tabù. In Italia, in particolare, è sorta così una religione popolare di antica origine pagana in grado di proteggere dalla Natura ma soprattutto di rispondere alle esigenze terrene e materiali del devoto. Il libro affronta le espressioni di stregoneria popolari e rurali italiane, in un viaggio tra i rituali e gli scongiuri che sanciscono i momenti di passaggio della vita umana in un attento quadro degli antichi usi e costumi della nostra penisola. Non è facile trovare un filo d'Arianna nella cerca dell'Antica Tradizione stregone italiana. Amore però ci viene in aiuto e guida il nostro viaggio tra i rituali e gli scongiuri che sanciscono i momenti di passaggio di nascita, fidanzamento, nozze e gestazione. Il suo linguaggio è infatti da sempre legato alla malìa. Non vi è dramma passionale o storia amorosa che a essa non si riannodi, e spesso l'arte della fascinazione si confonde con l'arte d'amare.

Il testo Stregoneria in Italia, eredito Venexia Editrice, di 250 pagine, tenta così di fare un compendio di quella tradizione stregone italiana, descrivendone tecniche, ritualistiche, scongiuri, formule ed amuleti, modi di trarre pronostici, la discendenza della strega italiana, le credenze sul malocchio, la fattura, le modalità per toglierle o realizzarle.



## **GUIDA ALLE STREGHE IN ITALIA** By Andrea Romanazzi

Sin dai tempi più arcaici gli uomini hanno cercato di contrastare le manifestazioni più estreme della Natura attraverso un'azione magica, che si è evoluta nei secoli generando credenze, riti e tabù. In Italia, in particolare, è sorta così una religione popolare di antica origine pagana in grado di proteggere dalla Natura ma soprattutto di rispondere alle esigenze terrene e materiali del devoto. Il libro propone un viaggio tra i borghi, le valli e le foreste incantate che hanno ospitato i raduni delle streghe. Questi vengono rievocati insieme alla caccia alle streghe, che fece dell'herbara un'entità malefica legata al demonio, e all'eredità pagana, i cui simboli resistettero all'avvento del cristianesimo e ai tentativi dell'Inquisizione di cancellarli. Regione per regione, l'autore narra le leggende e le tradizioni che fecero di queste zone la dimora preferita di maghe e fattucchiere e offre al lettore, grazie a mappe, indirizzi e consigli pratici, gli strumenti per organizzare veri e propri itinerari magici tra i sentieri di campagna e gli anfratti nascosti del territorio italiano, in cui guaritrici e sciamane raccoglievano le erbe medicamentose e officiavano i sacri riti in onore dei loro dèi. Il libro diviene così una clavicula per coloro che vogliono sentire, come l'autore, la sacralità delle terre del Sabba, un vademecum per chi desideri addentrarsi nel Roseto delle divinità che non furono, come vedremo, dimora di demoni ed entità malefiche, ma espressione di antichi rituali pagani di fertilità e procreazione, gioia e fecondità, demonizzati con l'emergere delle religioni monoteiste.

L'autore augura dunque un buon viaggio ai lettori, sperando che nel momento della visita possano percepire il furor panico dei luoghi descritti, ma anche le vibrazioni sottili e mai estinte di terre in cui oggi la storia del pagus rivive.

Se vuoi una qualunque informazione puoi scrivermi alla mail [andrji00@libero.it](mailto:andrji00@libero.it)

## **Contact us !**

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