



Yule Issue Y.R. XLVII

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Editor's Notes

The big news for me is that after 14 years, I've move www.geocities.com/mikerdna to the new address www.rdna.info . Not many changes to the site otherwise. Please note many links and photos will take a few months for me to correct by hand, so be patient. Most of the features are up and running now.

This issue is a bit of a slap job, I hope to return to a better quality for Oimele.

Deadline for the **Oimele** issue is January 17, 2009. For Submissions: Send to mikerdna@hotmail.com



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News of the Groves

A fuller list of the known active Reformed Druid groves is available at
www.geocities.com/mikerdna/wheretrove.html

Carleton Grove: News from Minnesota

Hi, I redesigned the Carleton grove's website for the first time in 13 years!
It's nothing special, though. Just some new content and links.

<http://orgs.carleton.edu/Druids/>

I feel like I need some spiritual energy these days... maybe it's time for a walk in the forest.

Avery
idotneednostinkinbadges@yahoo.com

Habitat Grove: News from Quebec

I've established a pseudo-grove here in Montreal Canada by the St. Lawrence River. I'll be here until December 2011, so stop on by if you are in the area. It's not so far from NY, VT, NH, ME you know, so I'll be taking on folks willing to make the journey from the New England area and eastern Canada. I hope to team up with the other RDNA grove in Quebec once the winter tones down a bit.

I've moved my long-time personal website from www.geocities.com/mikerdna to a new site www.rdna.info. Steve Savitzky (Carleton AD 1968-1969) and I tried to set up www.rdna.org but we couldn't transfer it well enough, and may just set up a forwarding page. The **.info** ending seems more suitable in some ways, since the RDNA is simply not "organized" in any way and I've always enjoyed sharing information more than running things. Interestingly enough the other RDNA endings are mostly biotech industries.

-Mike the Fool

Koad Grove: News from Ohio

Koad Protogrove celebrated Samhain with Rowen Wood Grove in Toledo, Ohio as a "combined" ritual that featured both RDNA and Traditional components. 24 people were in attendance for the ritual. In one portion of the workings, 9" wooden dowels inscribed with ogham were passed along to each participant (2 to each) and the participants then struck a simple rhythm on the ogham sticks as a candle was passed from an altar in the southeast to one in the northwest at which the candle was extinguished. Oghams were read directly after the ritual

Yours in the Mother,
Phagos
Koad Protogrove

Triple Horse ProtoGrove: News from Oregon

Celebrate the return of the light with our Pagan community, present, future, and from millennia past!

Clan of the Triple Horses Protogrove, Medford, Oregon, will celebrate the Winter Solstice with a brief rite Thursday, December 17, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. at the Labyrinth at Rogue Valley Medical Center, Medford. We will honor the returning Sun King amid the beautifully lit landscaping.

Each participant should dress warmly and bring a small biodegradable offering to leave at the labyrinth, a small token handmade gift if he or she wishes to share in a “gift exchange” of our energies and hobbies, and a candle if he or she wishes. All these items are entirely optional.

We will caravan to the home of a member in Talent after the rite to relax and munch. Finger food dishes would be appreciated.



Dr. Druid

A column for medical questions, concerns and confusions with answers from Dr. Druid.

Submit your questions to:
Doc.Druid (at) Gmail (dot) com.

Please keep sending the questions and controversies to him.



Green Book Gems: Quotes on Community and Sharing

From the Green Books of the RDNA available
at www.rdna.info/arda.html

Collected by Mike the Fool

From the Irish, Green Vol 2

Contentment

Enough is as good as plenty.

Be happy with what you have and you'll have plenty
to be happy about.

The far hills may be greener, but the hill you climb
on the way to work is less steep.

The slow horse reaches the mill.

Night never yet failed to fall.

If you rush the cook the spuds will be hard.

The apple won't fall till it is ripe.

A pund o' care winna pay an ounce o' debt.

Greed

Every man is born clean, clever and greedy. Most of
them stay greedy.

The greedy man stores all but friendship.

Dispensing charity is the only advantage in amassing
a fortune.

A mean act is long felt.

If you lend your coat don't cut off the buttons.

There's little difference between a closed hand and a
fist.

It's easy to sleep on your neighbour's misfortune.

Charity begins at hame, but shouldna end there.

Hope

"I hope to" is a weak man's way of refusing.

He who has never hoped can never despair.

There's nothing that trouble hates facing as much as
a smile.

Love

If you live in my heart, you live rent-free.

A flicker that warms is better than a blaze that burns.

From the Africans, Green Vol 2

Proverbs on Cooperation and Contentment

When the right hand washes the left and the left
hand washes the right, then both hands will be clean.

Good fellowship is sharing good things with friends.

The string can be useful until a rope can be found.

The Bird, Green Vol 3

John Shea Mystery: An unauthorized
biography of God, pg. 26.

The following passage starts the Dutch
Catechism:

"In A.D. 627 the monk Paulinus visited King
Edwin in northern England to persuade him to
accept Christianity. He hesitated and decided to
summon his advisers. At the meeting one of them
stood up and said: 'Your majesty, when you sit at

table with your lords and vassals, in the winter when the fire burns warm and bright on the hearth and the storm is snowing outside, bringing the snow and the rain, it happens of a sudden that a little bird flies into the hall. It comes in at one door and flies out through the other. For the few moments that it is inside the hall, it does not feel the cold, but as soon as it leaves your sight, it returns to the dark of winter. It seems to me that the life of man is much the same. We do not know what went before and we do not know what follows. If the new doctrine can speak to us surely of these things, it is well for us to follow it.'

A Starfish, Green Vol 3

Anonymous, collected by Scharding

One day a young man was walking along a deserted beach. He saw a frail old man bend over and pick up a starfish and put it back into the receding ocean. He watched for awhile, and to his amazement, the old man picked up one starfish after another and placed it back into the water. The young man walked up to the old man, who was holding a small starfish in his hand, and said,

"Old man, why are you putting starfishes into the ocean."

"They will die on the drying sand unless I put them into the water." he replied.

"But that's silly! There are thousands of beaches in the world and millions of starfish who will die each day. Why should you waste your time on such a meaningless act."

The old man paused, and in reply he tossed the starfish far out into the water. After a while he spoke, "It makes a difference to this one."

Wisdom of Islam, Vol 3

Happiness Is Not Where You Seek It

Nasrudin saw a man sitting disconsolately at the way-side, and asked what ailed him.

"There is nothing of interest in life, brother," said the man; "I now have sufficient capital not to have to work, and I am on this trip only in order to seek something more interesting than the life I have at home. So far I haven't found it."

Without another word, Nasrudin seized the traveler's knapsack and made off down the road with it, running like a hare. Since he knew the area, Nasrudin was able to out-distance the tourist.

The road curved, and Nasrudin cut across several loops, with the result that he was soon back

on the road ahead of the man whom he had robbed. He gently put the bag by the side of the road and waited in concealment for the other to catch up.

Presently the miserable traveler appeared, following the tortuous road, more unhappy than ever because of his loss. As soon as he saw his property lying there, he ran towards it, shouting with joy.

"That's one way of producing happiness," said Nasrudin.

Grateful to Allah

One day Mulla found that his donkey was missing and began to cry. Suddenly he stopped crying and began to laugh and sing. He ran about the village rejoicing in his good fortune. A villager asked him why he was so happy about losing a donkey. Mulla replied, "At least I wasn't riding the donkey when it disappeared. If I had been riding it, I would also have vanished!"

Various Other Quotes, Vol 3

Community and Conversation

In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity. -Richard Baxter

The basket that has two handles can be carried by two. -Egyptian

Eat according to your taste, and dress according to the taste of others. -Moorish

Two are an army against one. -Icelandic

The avalanche has already started. It is too late for the pebbles to vote. -Unknown

Man can do without his friends but not without his neighbors. -Egyptian

Better a neighbor over the wall than a brother over the sea. -Albanian

Choose the neighbor before the house and the companion before the road. -Moorish

Argument is the worst sort of conversation. -Jonathan Swift

Without conversation there is no agreement. -Montenegrin

"Yes and No" make a long quarrel. -Icelandic

Faults are thick where love is thin. -Welsh

The faultfinder will find faults even in paradise. -Henry Thoreau

Real progress is made not by the loud, ostentatious, push majorities, but always by small and obstinate minorities. -Henry Skolimowski

Nothing makes you more tolerant of a neighbor's noisy party than being there. -Franklin Jones

Whether women are better than men I cannot say, but I can say they are certainly no worse. -Golda Meir

Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction. -Antoine de Saint Exupery

An old southern Methodist Preacher was asked if there is a difference between union and unity. He replied, "You can tie two cats' tails together and throw them over a clothes line, in which case you have union, but not unity." -W.T. Purkeson

Always forgive your enemies, nothing annoys them so much. -Oscar Wilde

Wisdom of the Native Americans, Vol 4

Community & Communication

All children of Earth will be welcome at our council fires. -Seneca

The more you give, the more good things come to you. -Hopi

Give your host a little something when you leave; little presents are little courtesies and never offend. -Seneca

Always assume your guest is tired, cold, and hungry, and act accordingly. -Navaho

Never help a person who doesn't help anybody else. -Hopi

The grandfathers and the grandmothers are in the children; teach them well. -Ojibway

The bird who has eaten cannot fly with the bird that is hungry. -Omaha

One finger cannot lift a pebble. -Hopi

What should it matter that one bowl is dark and the other pale, if each is of good design and serves its purpose well? -Hopi

A people without a history is like the wind over buffalo grass. -Sioux

A people without faith in themselves cannot survive. -Hopi

Be satisfied with needs instead of wants. -Tenton Sioux

You are never justified in arguing. -Hopi

An angry word is like striking with a knife. -Hopi

If I am in harmony with my family, that's success. -Ute

It is good to tell one's heart. -Chippewa

Remember that your children are not your own, but are lent to you by the Creator. -Mohawk

It takes a whole village to raise a child. -Omaha

You can't get rich if you look after your relatives properly. -Navajo

One foe is too many and a hundred friends too few. -Hopi

A man or woman with many children has many homes. -Lakota

Never see an old person going to carry water without getting a bucket and going in their stead. -Twanas

Do not wrong or hate your neighbor, for it is not he that you wrong but yourself. -Pima

I have been to the end of the earth. I have been to the end of the waters. I have been to the end of the sky. I have been to the end of the mountains. I have found none that are not my friends. -Navajo

Justice and Law

He who is present at a wrongdoing and does not lift a hand to prevent it is as guilty as the wrongdoers. -Omaha

It is less of a problem to be poor than to be dishonest. -Anishinabe

The rain falls on the just and unjust. -Hopi

Never sit while your seniors stand. -Cree

Even animals have their taboos. -Northern Plains Indian

Each person is his own judge. -Pima

Man's law changes with his understanding of man. Only the laws of the spirit remain always the same. -Crow

Aphoristic Advice, Green Vol 4

Grief

If we only wanted to be happy, it would be easy; But we want to be happier than other people, and that is almost always difficult, since we think them happier than they are. -Baron de Montesquieu

One may not reach the dawn save by the path of night. -Kahlil Gibran

Laughter is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship, and is far the best ending for one. -Oscar Wilde

The art of life is to know how to enjoy a little and to endure much. -William Hazlitt

If life is a grind, use it to sharpen your wits. -Anon.

Morality

None of us can boast about the morality of our ancestors. The records do not show that Adam and Eve were married. -E.W. Howe

It is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust. -Samuel Johnson

On Karma alone be your interest, never on its fruits; let not the results of Karma be your motive, nor be your attachment to inaction. -Bhagavad Gita, 2, 47

I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed. -Jonathan Swift

It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend. -William Blake

A virtue to be serviceable must, like gold, be alloyed with some commoner but more durable metal. -Samuel Butler

A man should be of good cheer about his soul... if he has earnestly pursued the pleasure of learning, and adorned his soul with the adornment of temperance, and justice, and courage, and freedom, and truth. -Plato

The highest good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures; yet itself does not scramble, but is content with the places that all men disdain. It is this that makes water so near to the Way. -Tao Te Ching 8

The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried. -G.K. Chesterton

'Do the duty which lies nearest thee', which thou knowest to be a duty! Thy second duty will already have become clearer..-Thomas Carlyle

Do not wait for extraordinary circumstances to do good; try to use ordinary situations. -Jean Paul Richter

Men show their characters in nothing more than in what they think laughable. -Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Your destiny shall not be allotted to you, but you shall choose it for yourselves. Let him who draws the first lot be the first to choose a life, which shall

be his irrevocably. Virtue owns no master: he who honors her shall have more of her, and he who slights her, less. -Plato

What is morality in any given time or place? It is what the majority then and there happen to like, and immorality is what they dislike. -Alfred North Whitehead

Moral indignation is jealousy with a halo. -H.G. Wells

Greater is he who performs the commandments from love than he who performs them from fear. -Mishnah, Sotah, 31

Nothing makes you more tolerant of a neighbor's noisy party than being there. -Franklin P. Jones

Christ could not imagine people believing in his teaching of humility, love and universal brotherhood, quietly and deliberately organizing the murder of their brother men. -Leo Tolstoy

If a man own land, the land owns him. Now let him leave home, if he dare. -R.W. Emerson

There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice. -Mark Twain

I can resist everything except temptation. -Oscar Wilde

The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. -Oscar Wilde

Lord, give me chastity, but not right now. -Ambrosius

I can sympathize with people's pains but not with their pleasures. There is something curiously boring about somebody else's happiness. -Aldous Huxley



Winter and Warfare

From *The Earliest Welsh Poetry*, pg. 96

Wind piercing, her bare, hard to find shelter;
Ford turns foul, lake freezes.
A man could stand on a stalk.

Wave on wave cloaks countryside;
Shrill the shrieks from the peaks of the mountain;
One can scarce stand outside.

Cold the lake-bed from winter's blast;
Dried reeds, stalks broken;
Angry wind, woods stripped naked.

Cold bed of fish beneath a screen of ice;
Stag lean, stalks bearded;
Short evening, trees bent over.

Snow is falling, white the soil.
Soldiers go not campaigning.
Cold lakes, their colour sunless.

Snow is falling, white hoar-frost.
Shield idle on an old shoulder.
Wind intense, shoots are frozen.

Snow is falling upon the ice.
Wind is sweeping thick tree-tops.
Shield bold on a brave shoulder.

Snow is falling, cloaks the valley.
Soldiers hasten to battle.
I go not, a wound stays me.

Snow is falling on the slope.
Stallion confined; lean cattle.
No summer day is today.

Snow is falling, white the mountain's edge.
Ship's mast bare at sea.
A coward conceives many schemes.

Gold rims round horns, horns round bards.
Roads frozen, air gleaming bright;

Two Welsh Winter Poems

Green Book Volume 2

Brief twilight, tree-tops bowed down.

Bees in honeycombs, faint cry of birds.
Day bleak,
White-mantled hill-ridge, red dawn.

Bees in refuge, cold lid on the ford,
Frozen when ice forms.
None may escape death's coming.

Bees in prison, green-hued ocean.
Stalks dried out, hillside hard.
Frigid, bitter, the world today.

Bees in shelter from winter's wetness.
Pale honey, hogweed hollow.
Foul hold on a man, cowardice.

Long night, bare heath, brown hillside,
Grey shore, gulls in a clamour,
Rough seas: it will rain today.

Dry wind, wet road, brawling water-ways,
Cold corpses, lean stag,
River in flood: it will clear.

Storm on the mountain, rivers embroiled,
Floors of houses flooded:
To one's sight, the world is a sea.

You're not a schoolman, you're not a greybeard,
You'll not answer a crisis:
Ah, Cyndilig, if you'd been a woman!

Stag crouches curled in the coombe's nook.
Ice crumbles, countryside bare.
The brave may survive many battles.

Bankside crumbles beneath the scrawny stag's hoof
High-pitched the wind, screeching.
One can scarcely stand outside.

Winter's first day, darkened surface of heather.
Spuming the sea-wave.
Brief day: let your counsel be done.

With shield for shelter and stallion's spirit
And men, fearless, peerless,
Fine the night for routing foes.

Swift the wind, stripped the woods.
Hollow stalks, hardy stag.
Stern Pelis, what land is this?

Though high as the tawny horse were the snow,
The dark would not make me grieve.

I would lead a band to Bryn Tyddwl.

With high seas beating the embankment and ford,
Snows falls on the hillside,
Pelis, how can you lead us?

Not a worry for me in Britain tonight
Raiding Nuchein's lord's lands
On white steed, Owain leading.

Before you were bearing arms and buckler,
Fierce bulwark in battle,
Pelis, what region reared you?

The man God releases from too strait a prison,
Red lance of a leader,
owain of Rheged reared me.

Though a ruler's gone to Iwerydd's ford,
From the band, do not flee!
After mead, do not seek disgrace.

The morning of grey daybreak,
When Mwing Mawr Drefydd was charged,
Mechydd's steeds were not pampered.

Drink does not make me merry,
What with the tales and my thoughts,
Mechydd, branches your cover.

They encountered at Cafall
A bloody carcass, despised.
Rhun's clash with another hero.

Because the spearmen of Mwing slew Mechydd,
Bold lad who knows it not,
Lord of heaven, you've given me anguish.

Men in combat, ford frozen,
Wave frigid, ocean's breast grey:
These may summon to battle.

Mechydd ap Llywarch, dauntless nobleman,
Comely, swan-coloured cloak,
The first to bridle his steed.

Mountain Snow

The Earliest Welsh Poetry, pg. 100

Mountain snow, each region white;
Common the raven calling;
No good comes of too much slumber.

Mountain snow, deep dingle white;
Woods bend before wind's onslaught;
Many couples are in love
And never come together.

Mountain snow, wind scatters it;
Moonlight far-spread, leaves pale;
Rare the rogue who claims no rights.

Mountain snow, stag nimble;

Common to Britain, proud princes;
A stranger requires cunning.

Mountain snow, stag in rut;
Ducks on the lake, ocean white;
Slow the old, soon overtaken.

Mountain snow, stag bending;
The heart laughs for one loved;
Though a tale be told of me,
I know shame wherever it be.

Mountain snow, shingle white grit;
Fish in ford, shelter in cave;
Who acts harshly is hated.

Mountain snow, stag in flight;
Common for a lord, gleaming blade,
And mounting a saddle-bow,
And dismounting, anger well-armed.

Mountain snow, stag hunched-up;
Many have muttered, truly,
This is not like a summer day.

Mountain snow, stag hunted;
Whistle of wind over tower eaves;
Burdensome, Man, is sin.

Mountain snow, stag bounding;
Whistle of wind over high white wall;
Common, a quiet beauty.

Mountain snow, stag on sea-strand;
An old man knows his youth lost;
A foul face keeps a man down.

Mountain snow, stag in grove;
Raven dark-black, roebuck swift;
One free and well, strange he should groan.

Mountain snow, stag in rushes;
Marshes freezing, mead in cask;
Common for the crippled to groan.

Mountain snow, tower's breast studded;
The beast searches for shelter;
Pity her who has a bad man.

Mountain snow, crag's breast studded;
Reeds withered, herd shunning water;
Pity him who has a bad wife.

Mountain snow, stag in gully;
Bees are sleeping well-sheltered;
A long night suits a robber.

Mountain snow 'liverwort in river;
Wed unwilling to trouble,
The sluggard seeks no swift revenge.

Mountain snow, fish in lake;
Falcon proud, prince in splendour;
One who has all does not groan.

Mountain snow, lords' front rank red;
Lances angry, abundant;
Ah god, for my brother's anguish!!



Types of Theology,

Part 2 of 2, (9 pages)

By Daniel Hansen

Originally titled “Celtic Theology”

Introduction Note by the Inquirer’s Editor, Mike

This article is included to give people a wider appreciation of the types of genres that exist in various theological systems of religions around the world.

MONOTHEISM

Monotheism is the belief that there is one God and only one, in contrast to henotheism and polytheism. The term monotheism is derived from the Greek mono (“single”) and theos (“god”), and it refers to the religious experience and philosophical perception that emphasize God as one, perfect, immutable, creator of the world from nothing, distinct from the world, all-powerfully involved in the world, personal and worthy of being worshipped by all creatures. It is distinct from that God’s creation. This one god is all-powerful, being the only source of divinity in all existence. It may have servants and adversary who foolishly tries to supplant it, but with complete power and knowledge, the god is supreme in its authority over everything.

The term monotheism has generally been used theologically rather than for philosophical or cross-cultural descriptions of religion. Philosophers have used the term theism with the same meaning as monotheism, and cross-cultural descriptions find categories like monotheism and polytheism to be inappropriate in describing some religions. The term monotheism presupposes the idea of theos – a divine being with mind and will, fully personal, conceivable in images drawn from human life, and approachable through prayer. It also presupposes the unity of the divine and raises one theos exclusively to absolute supremacy and power, producing and governing everything according to the divine will. In this respect monotheism differs from those views that accept plurality of divine beings. In a strict sense, monotheism best describes the idea of God in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and in the philosophical systems based on these traditions. Jews, Christians, and Muslims drew on the fundamental monotheistic vision of ancient Israel, each group filling out the picture of god with colorings and shapes drawn from its own particular culture.

Most Monotheistic faiths, whatever one’s actual personal beliefs are, assume a certain amount of aloofness from the deity. Finite servants may take an active role, in order to oppose inevitable rebellions, but the God only takes more subtle action.

While monotheism has many elegant cosmological aspects, from a social standpoint monotheists make lousy neighbors for those of differing religions. Monotheism often arises in antagonism to other view of divine reality. One of the most obvious contexts against which monotheism defines itself is a plurality of divine beings or forces, which is commonly called polytheism. Central to polytheism is the notion of theoi, personal divine beings within nature and society. These gods have personal wills, control specific spheres, and interact with one another to make a functioning organism. The functioning of nature is seen as the operation of a plurality of divine wills, and this plurality and conflict are extended to human life and society. Typically there is a head of a pantheon, but this high god is limited in power and authority and is often thought of as old or impotent.

Monotheism distinguishes itself from the various forms of polytheism in that the whole realm of divine power is unified, with no conflicting wills or limitations. God has unlimited authority and power but is *theos*, possessing personal will and relationship to the world. The plural forces are seen as qualities and attributes of god or as subsequent beings of the created world. In the monotheistic view, god transcends the world of nature and human society; the world is not the locus of divine power, for God is the universal creator of everything out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). Humans find value and integration of meaning by realizing their common creature-hood and serving this one universal God. Revelations from God is the source of unified, universal meaning.

Related to polytheism is what Max Muller called henotheism and what others have called monolatry” worshipping one god at a time or raising up one most powerful God as the only one to be worshipped. The other gods, while real, are downgraded before this supreme God. Monolatry means one God worshipped as supreme, though the lesser gods of other peoples are recognized. Henotheism (see below) would be the view that different gods can be worshipped as the supreme God one at a time without implying that the other gods do not exist.

In contrast to monolatry and henotheism, monotheism universalizes the power and authority of the one God exclusively, for even sharing power with lesser gods would be a limitation that cannot apply. Monotheism is intrinsically universal, transcending tribal or nationalistic limitations; the one God has authority and power over all peoples, friends and enemies alike. Monotheism refuses the henotheistic idea that one god can be worshipped as supreme at one time and another at another time, although it does allow for the experience of various aspects of the one God at different times.

A form of thought close to monotheism but still related to polytheism and henotheism is theistic dualism (see above). Typically, this experience of the divine reality separates out the hurtful or evil elements and associates these with another divine power, thus setting up a divine struggle with echoes in human life. One unified supreme God is posited as the good divine force, and the source of evil can be thought of as many beings or as one evil being.

Strictly speaking, monotheism does not allow the one god to be limited even by the causes of destruction and evil; these causes cannot be divine forces outside the will of the one god. Ultimately the one God must be the sources of all reality and events, including those that humans experiences as evil and destructive. Some forms of monotheistic thought do allow for evil beings as creatures of God, permitted to cause destruction and evil for various purposes within the overall authority of the one God. These demons, devils, and satans are only part of the panorama of human existence, and they cannot limit or act against God’s power, authority, and will.

In setting up a typology of monotheism to show the ideal types toward which various monotheistic religious traditions point, it is important to realize that even within one tradition there will be different experiences and philosophies of monotheism. A case in point is to look at Christianity. Within Christianity there are three main divisions of practice of worshipping the divine, there is the Roman Catholic tradition which sees itself as the “universal” church, the Greek Orthodox tradition, and the Protestant tradition which encompasses a whole plethora of tradition that can be a mild form of Christianity to a Hell-fire and damnation form of Christianity.

Unlike most other forms of spirituality, there usually isn’t much room for other theologies. The most charitable are generous enough to claim that the gods of other faiths are either aspects of the one true deity, or powerful celestials mistaken for the true source of the divine.

To the monotheist, either non-monotheist are delusional, trying to worship forces that don’t exist, or are being deluded by sinister beings, rebels against the god who lure the gullible away from the Truth. This means they are a) not the equals of those who follow the true way, b) fools who need to be shown the true way, or c) willing enemies of the true way who need to be dealt with.

Critiques of traditional monotheism have come to the analysis of the type ideology and society associated with monotheism the description that monotheism as a political ideology linked with the notion of divine kingship and leading to totalitarianism. The “New Right” in France blames monotheistic ideology for suppressing human freedom and forcing people to adapt atheism as the only alternative. They seek a neo-Pagan resurgence as a new location of the sacred in the plurality and freedom of human life rather than in the monolithic totalitarian of monotheism. Some believe that

monotheism can no longer sustain and provide creativity for modern culture, calling for a return to the creative sources of polytheism. Feminist thinkers have criticized monotheism as a model for the highest form of patriarchal power and authority; in monotheism, god is imagined as male, omnipotent with unilateral power and authority over the world, separate and autonomous, exclusive, and opposed to everything related to change, sensuality, nature, feeling, and femininity.

Monotheism (man'-o-the-izm) noun, the doctrine or belief that admits only one god. Monotheist. Monotheistic. [Greek, mono, one, only; *theos*, god].

PAGANISM

When delving into the ancient Celtic religion of the Druids, other than being called pre-Christian, it is usually referred to as being “**Pagan.**” Pagan or Paganism is a term now used in a religious sense to designate a person who is not a Christian, Jew, or Mohammedan or has no religion at all, and it has been borrowed by many groups and people in the modern Neo-Pagan revival, some of which claim connections with ancient Paganism. Some of the controversies and difficulties around the concept of Paganism begin with the word itself. How the Latin word *paganus*, from which it comes, acquired the meaning of all non-Christians is not entirely settled. In profane Latin of the 1st century CE, *paganus* was used in two senses: first, in the meaning of “rural” to describe the inhabitants of a *pagus*, or country district; second, in the sense of “civil” or “civilian,” in contrast to the “military”. It was long assumed that the Christians eventually adopted the term *paganus* to designate non-Christians, either because the inhabitants of country districts resisted conversion to Christianity or because the Christian was a *miles Christi*, “a soldier of Christ,” and therefore to be distinguished in a religious sense from the non-Christian civilian. It is significant, however, that the Christians did not adopt the term *paganus* in the meaning of non-Christian before the age of Constantine. They commonly employed the Scriptural terms – *nationes*, *gentilis*, and *ethnicus*. With Paganism still so strong in urban centers, especially in the West, there was no reason for making sharp distinction between urban and rural conditions and for adopting a term for non-Christians that would apply primarily, if not exclusively, to rural areas. However in the 4th century when Christians became more numerous and increasingly conscious of their own solidarity and social and religious prestige, the analogy of the contrast between *paganus* and *militaris* undoubtedly suggested the employment of the word as an appropriate designation, but not necessarily a derogatory one, for non-Christians as profane persons, outsiders, not members of the Christian community. The term seems to have had a history of popular usage before it was given literary and official sanction. It is first employed officially in a rescript of Valentinian I of the year 370 CE. No firm decision among these possibilities has yet emerged from scholarly disputes.

Another major source of difficulty in understanding Paganism is that outside of the literate cultures of the Mediterranean basin, which left a number of theological and liturgical writings that still survive, nearly everything we know about Paganism was written down by Christians who were more interested in denouncing Pagan ideas and practices than understanding them. Still, the clues that remain have been fitted together with the evidence of archaeology and cross-cultural comparisons to make some conclusions fairly certain.

Perhaps the most important key to understanding ancient, classical, and medieval Paganism was that there was never just one form of “Paganism.” Rather, there were “Paganisms,” hundreds or even thousands of them, forming a wildly diverse patchwork of beliefs and practices that extended across the pre-Christian world. No single generalization is true of them all. Some worshipped goddesses, while others did not; some were polytheistic, while others worshipped a single deity; and still others had objects of worship that are difficult to fit into the modern category of “deity” at all.

Pagan practice was as diverse as its theology. While there were common patterns of ritual and devotion, every deity had his or her quirks and habits, and in many cases different temples had their own unique traditions of ceremony. There was a vast variety of different theological and ritual traditions that flourished, and no doubt there were many wildly different threads in the tapestry of ancient Paganism that have fallen through the gaps in the historical records that are lost to us completely.

In such an environment, religious diversity ran riot. What can most confidently be said of classical Paganism, as it appears in the historical sources, is that they were deeply rooted in the life and the traditions of local communities. Each city or rural area had its own particular gods or spirits, who were honored with their own particular rites. Certain deities had a wider appeal and were popular across large regions and a few were all but universally revered across the classical world.

There was little if any sense of exclusiveness. Travelers routinely offered sacrifice to the gods of the towns they visited, and a priest or priestess of one divinity would as a matter of course take part in the offerings to other Pagan traditions. Pagan practices endured longest in the countryside, where old habit die hard.

Today the concept of Paganism implies a belief in a variety of Nature gods and spirits, and sometimes implying delight in Nature, the senses, and the things of this world. It generally refers to a believer in polytheism of the ancient world. Today there is a revival in the concept of Paganism usually referred to as Neo-Paganism or the “new” Pagans. It must be remembered, though, that the validity of the Neo-Pagan movement does not depend on a continuous history. A revived religion can easily be as relevant, as meaningful, and as powerful as one with an uninterrupted history. The fact that the Pagan gods and goddesses were not worshipped for a time, as some modern Pagan theologians have pointed out, does not make them nonexistent or powerless, nor make reverence to them a waste of effort.

Neo-Paganism is therefore a general term that is used for the Pagan and quasi-Pagan movements that have become public in much of the Western world in the latter half of the twentieth century. Many of these groups claim connections, historical or spiritual, with earlier Pagan traditions in Europe, although scholars have forcibly challenged the existence of these connections. There are a variety of groups that claim to follow the Pagan path, but in a modern conception. They have emerged in recent times to revive and spread what they call the Pagan way of being, to protect Pagan sacred places and more generally Mother Earth. They make use of herbal medicines, and various cultural mythologies along with various occult rituals for developing the powers latent within the human mind with a view to approaching the earth with heightened awareness and sensitivity. For the Neo-Pagan, the divine is immanent, and it is this belief that motivates and sustains the individual.

The last three decades of the 20th century saw the unfolding of four major trends in the Neo-Pagan movement. First was the sheer growth in the number of people identifying themselves as “Pagan” in Western Europe, North America, and Australia. While estimates vary wildly, a rough guess based on the average of various surveys suggests that by 2000 CE, there were between half a million to one million people in the Western world who considered themselves to be Pagans.

The second trend was the emergence of a plethora of new Pagan traditions and approaches. Starting in the 190s, Wicca and its close equivalents were joined in the Neo-Pagan community by groups and individuals worshipping Celtic, Norse, Greek, Egyptian, Hawaiian, and Slavic gods and goddess – to name only a few of the more popular sides of the Pagan revival. A less impressive side to this trend was the emergence of quasi-Pagan systems that drew inspiration from fantasy fictions and the media.

The third trend, an even more powerful force for diversity, was a shift from group centered, initiatory model of Pagan practice to a more individualistic approach based on self-initiation and solitary practice. The publication of Scott Cunningham’s *Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner* (1988) marked an important phase in this shift. The impact of this and other similar books has been measured in the growth of “solitaries” as a widely recognized class of Pagan worshippers.

The fourth trend was the emergence of the Pagan festival as a major nexus for the growing Pagan subculture. Modeled on science-fiction conventions and partly on medieval reenactment events – both are products of subcultures that overlap significantly with the Pagan scene – Pagan festival sprang up in the 1980s and 1990s, partly as an opportunity for Pagans to socialize, worship, and learn together, and partly as a substitute for more permanent forms of organization within the Pagan community – a project which has been attempted at various times with very limited success.

Modern Druidism, whether it is called Neo-Druidism, Druidry, or Reformed Druidism generally falls into the category of being part of the Neo-Pagan movement. Although even within the modern concept of Druidism there is considerable variation based on the central theme of Celtic Druidism.

PANENTHEISM

In the Greek *pan* means “all”, *en* means “in”, and *theos* means “god.” Although theism is often contrasted with pantheism and **panentheism**, the idea of all, totality, is prominent in every form of theism and doctrine of the high religions. The term panentheism is attributed to the German philosopher K.F. Krause (1781-1832), a student of Henel and Fichte. Krause thought of the deity as a divine organism inclusive of all lesser organisms. He said that god is more than nature and man. As such panentheism admits a plurality of active agents within the reality of the supreme agent. Panentheism avoids extreme monism and extreme pluralism, and it does this, it claims without obvious paradox. It sees extremes as a chief source of philosophical paradox. Since God does not determine all, the problem of evil is less formidable for panentheism than for other classical theisms or pantheism as usually formulated.

Panentheism is a variation of pantheism with connections to monotheism, which differs in only one point. The universe is a part of the divine, and all things are connected to it. The world exists in God and all reality is part of the being of God, but God is not exhausted by the world. However, the divine is more than the universe, both containing (immanent) and transcending it, and is thus self-aware. Such views are often closely related to mysticism. This model is useful for explaining both clerics and Druids connect to the divine; the former call on the godhead for their powers, while the Druids tap into the divine force present in the universe.

In metaphysics, it utilizes a real distinction between the essence of God and “His” existence, or considers God as having accidents really distinct from “His” nature. Panentheism stands as a kind of surrelativism holding for a real convertible relation of dependence between God and the world – not only is the world dependent upon god, but god is dependent upon the world. It regards the world as an actual fulfillment of God’s creative possibility.

Today panentheism describes the views of those who introduced a polarity in the notion of god as both eternal and temporal and as including yet transcending the world.

Panentheism is rooted in a conviction that the world as possible in the mind of god becomes actualized and thereby adds to God’s actuality. Panentheists give special importance to what they call a logic of polarities as the only means of escaping ultimate dilemmas arising from the use of categories.

The major source of Western pantheism and panentheism is Neoplatonism. The Neoplatonic doctrine of emanation became the cornerstone of Arabic philosophy, coming to full prominence in al-Farabi, Ibn sina, and Ibn Rushd. Panentheistic themes in interplay with Islamic monotheism played a central role in the Sufism. In Judaism, panentheistic elements are central to the medieval kabala and Hasidism. Via Augustine and Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, Neoplatonic panentheism formed the framework of much Christian mysticism.

John Scotus Erigena (c. 810-877) was an Irishman Neoplatonic philosopher who became the head of the palace school at Laon, but little else is known of his life. His importance lies mainly in his knowledge of Greek and his work as a translator and interpreter. Erigena viewed creation as the production of Ideas in the Word, and designated a stage of contemplation for such productivity in quite the same manner as do present day panentheists. Moreover, his distinction of God as Creator and god as the End of all things implies fulfillment, and reads much like the concept of primordial and consequent natures of God. Man is a microcosm of the universe, midway between animals and angels, redeemed by the incarnate ‘Logos’: “Man is the microcosm in the strictest sense of the word: he is the summary of all existence; there is no creature that is not recapitulated in man”.

The Scottish born Celtic theologian John Duns Scotus (c. 1265-1308) insisted on freedom in all acts of creation, traces of panentheism may be seen in his view of God as being necessitated to the will of ideas of things, and in his doctrine of the univocity of being. Further his ideas on infinity and his insistence upon the limitations of metaphysics imply on polarity. He was an extremely subtle thinker using the distinction between what God could logically do and what God actually did (the doctrine of the ‘two powers’) to undermine the primacy of reason, replacing it with a primacy of will or love. In his metaphysics he developed the idea that the principle of individuation is not matter, but a kind of

individual uniqueness (*haecceitas*), that by virtue of which any being is this being: “By grasping just what things are of themselves, a person separates the essences from the many additional incidental features associated with them in the sense-image, and sees what is true... as a more universal truth.”

Pantheism rests upon a principle of polarity that holds contraries may both be true without one excluding the other. Pantheists seem to look upon one set of contraries as always implying the possibility of the other. In applying the notion of polarities to causality, pantheists place a real reciprocal relation of dependence between cause and effect. Speaking of God as the first cause does not limit “Him” to a mode of action found in secondary causes; rather it affirms “His” transcendental perfection. Only through analogy can reality be represented as both one and many, without the oversimplification of either monism or pluralism.

PANTHEISM

Within **Pantheism**, God is the universe, or rather, the universe and everything in it is divine. The term pantheism goes back to the English writer and founder and first Chosen Chief of the British Meso-Druid movement, John Toland (1670-1722). Toland coined the word pantheism and held that the universe is God. It comes from the Greek *pan*, ‘all’, and *theos*, ‘god’, the belief that all is god and god is all, the total of everything that exists; it implies that the apparent diversity of the universe conceals a unity, which is God, the Absolute, or the One; it also implies that evil, suffering, change, limit, are as much parts or aspects of God or the One as good, immutability, infinity, eternity. The specifics can vary, but the general concept is that the divine power flows through all things; the divine is totally immanent. Although pantheism is monotheistic, its deity is ultimately impersonal, and much like primitive polytheism, it defies nature. While this unifying source may have all sorts, it does not have a personality, or at least not one that anything finite can comprehend. Spirits are likely to be part of the metaphysics but are not necessary.

Its origins are found in both religious mysticism and philosophical speculation. The primary corollary to the pantheistic paradigm, from a philosophical standpoint, is that all things are connected on the primal level. In a pantheistic worldview, divine and perhaps all magic comes from the sacred power of all things. There may still be powerful spiritual forces. Just because all things are connected to the divine doesn’t mean that all things are equally powerful. However, everything has the potential to becoming more divine, and all that separates a mortal from a “god” is enlightenment.

Several varieties of pantheism are acknowledged. Some strictly equate God and the universe. Of these, absolute pantheism defines God as the basic reality and the universe as merely the way he appears. Model pantheism identifies God and the universe as real, but finite, modes of that substance. God is part of the universe in dynamic pantheism and is its immanent force or “soul.” In contrast for emanational pantheism the universe or its animating force are just part of God, who is also transcendent. The former sees the universe as a lesser level of being, projected out of the divine being. The latter views the universe as finite, developing half of God’s bipolar nature.

In Hinduism, the roots of such views lie in later parts of the *Rg Veda* (knowledge in verse). In the Upanisads, the doctrine of Brahman reflects a number of theistic, pantheistic, and panentheistic views. Sankara’s Advaita Vedanta synthesized these in its assertion of the sole reality of Brahman and the corresponding unreality of the world. Ramanuja also emphasized the Brahman’s transcendence but reasserted the reality of the world as the body of Brahman. In Mahayana Buddhism, especially in Asvaghosa and Nagarjuna, there is a trend towards assertion of the ultimate unreality of ordinary existence and the sole of reality of what might, in other traditions, be called Absolute (*tathata*, *sunya*). In the 17th century pantheism is exemplified in the work of Jakob Boehme and Spinoza.

Either variant of the pantheist or panentheist looks on the non-pantheist with gentle condescension, with the idea that they have a part of the picture but can’t see the overwhelming whole. However, both atheist and theists object the pantheism. Atheists acknowledge the inherent power, unity, immensity of the universe, but they see no reason to consider them divine attributes. Traditional Jewish, Christians, and Islamic theists reject pantheism because they affirm a personal ethical god who created

and intimately relates to the universe but whose existence is entirely distinct from and independent of the universe. For them, if God is eternal, infinite, and/or necessary, so is the universe, but if the universe is temporal, finite and/or contingent, then so is god. Either conclusion is problematic. If one asserts that God and the universe are respectively eternal and temporal, infinite and finite, and/or necessary and contingent, then one has the task of making intelligible how both members of these pairs of incompatible properties can be true of the God-universe relation. Since no one has yet failed to make some distinction between transcendent and immanent aspects of infinite beings, there never has been a complete and utter pantheism.

Ignoring fundamental metaphysical distinctions, pantheists approach or discuss reality in a univocal, rather than an analogical, manner that does not take into account differences as well as sameness. Some pantheists reduce the notion of transcendence to the potentiality of the world or of man. By establishing transcendence, which stands for perfection, as a mere extension of this world or finite being to the degree that all perfections of finite being, such as personality, immortality, and freedom, become ultimately meaningless. Pantheism does not seem to grant the infinite positive value except as a mere quantitative inclusion of all things. It makes no distinction between actual infinity, which must be looked upon as pure perfection, and potential infinity, which involves incompleteness or imperfection. Reason demands that a superlative being – and the Infinite is presented by pantheists as superlative – be judged as actually and absolutely infinite.

Pantheism (pan'-the-izm) noun, the doctrine that identifies God with the universe, everything being considered as part of or an emanation from Him; belief that god is in all things. Pantheist. Pantheistic(al). Pantheology, a system that embraces all religions and all gods; worship all gods indiscriminately. [Greek, *pan*, all; *theos*, god].

POLYTHEISM

Polytheism is the default cosmology for the majority of the ancient Celtic world. The term polytheism is derived from the Greek *polus* (“many”) and *theos* (“god”) and hence denoting “recognition and worship of many gods,” is mainly in contrast with monotheism, denoting “belief in one god.” To understand polytheism, we must look at the base component theism, meaning the belief in “gods” as distinct from other types of powerful or supernatural beings (ghosts, ancestor spirits). Historical (or rather pseudo-historical) theories concerning the origin of polytheism were closely related to the evolutionist views as characterized early *Religions-wissenschaft* (religious “wisecraft”). It goes something like this: Primitive humanity was aware of its dependence on a variety of powers that were often conceived as individual nonmaterial (“spiritual”) beings – for instance, the spirits of departed humans, especially ancestors – or as spiritual entities. One of many contact modes with this world of spirits was shamanism, a level of primitive beliefs and ritual behavior. Sometimes more important figures emerge in these systems, especially in connection with accounts of origins and beginnings of all things (first ancestors, culture heroes, originator gods), but such figures are not always central in the actual cultural life of the community. Even originator gods often remove themselves subsequently to the highest heavens and remain inactive. Although this theory is no longer generally accepted, this account of things has been reproduced here because for some time scholars have viewed it as a kind of initial stage in religious development, the final stage being monotheism. In this view, animism becomes polytheism, and the latter evolves (how and why, nobody seems to know) into monotheism.

There is an opposing view to religious evolution and it is known as the “Ur-monotheism school” (Kulturkreislehre), which asserts that monotheism was the original creed of mankind and that polytheism developed as mankind degenerated from a more innocent state. The element of theological apologetic in this theory is evident.

Turning from speculative historical guesswork to the phenomenology or morphology of polytheism, one is struck by the curious fact that polytheism, while it is one of the major and most

widespread phenomena in the history of religions, has attracted less than the attention it deserves. It seems to have fallen, as it were, between two stools of “primitive religions” and monotheism. Like all phenomenological ideal types, polytheism does not appear in a pure type. The historical variety is not easily reduced to a common denominator. Nevertheless some basic and characteristic features are discernable, even though not all of them may be present in each and every case.

Perhaps its most striking fact about polytheism is its appearance in more advanced cultures only. This may, incidentally, be one of the reasons why the evolutionists saw it as a post-primitive phenomenon. In most cases, at least for our purposes, the phrase “advanced culture” means a literate culture, although as in the case of the Celts polytheism is also found in non-literate cultures. Usually such cultures practice a more sophisticated agriculture (for example, one in which the plow supercedes the hoe), although, once again, this is not necessarily the case everywhere,

The above considerations are not meant to explain or otherwise account for the appearance of polytheism. They merely suggest the cultural and spiritual background against which the emergence of polytheism becomes intelligible. In every religion, society attempts to articulate its understanding of the cosmos and of the powers that govern it, and to structure the relationship with powers in appropriate symbolic systems. In the Celtic society under discussion, man already faces the cosmos: he is closely linked to it but no longer inextricably interwoven in it. There is a sense (at least minimal) distance from nature and even more distance from the powers above that are now “gods”, that is, beings that are superhuman, different, powerful (though not omnipotent) and hence beneficial or dangerous – at any rate their goodwill should be secured – and to be worshiped by cultic actions such as sacrifices. These divine beings are personal but not material; above all their behavior and motivations are similar to humans. Their relevance to human life is due to the fact that, unlike primitive high gods (originator gods), they intervene in human affairs, either on their own initiative or because called upon to do so in prayer, sacrifice, or ritual.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of gods, as compared to humans, is their immortality. Though not eternal in the abstract, philosophical sense the gods, as the worshiper knows them, are the “immortals.” Herein lies the main distinction, not (as in monotheistic religions) in a fundamental difference of essence that then, on the philosophical level, becomes transcendence. Even when the difference is emphasized, it is not a contrast between creator and creature, but one of levels of power and prominence.

Yet although the gods to whom man relates are durable and permanent, this does not mean that they do not have origins or history. Their history is the subject of mythological tales, including accounts of their family relations, love affairs, offspring, and so on. These gods are personable and herein resides their religious significance: they are accessible.

Most polytheistic religions possess a highly developed mythology that is not restricted to theogony and cosmogony though it is often used, or deliberately manipulated, to account for things as they are and to legitimate the cosmic, social, political, and ritual order.

There are many gods because man experiences the world in its variety and manifoldness. Hence there is also socialization among the gods, of a nature that is either local or tribal-ethnic (gods of specific localities, cities, countries, families) or functional (gods of specific arts, gods of illness, cure, fertility, rains, hunting, fishing). These areas can be general and overlap with several other deities, or be focused and unique to each individual god/goddess, or anywhere in between. An important corollary of polytheism is that, though the major deities can be very powerful, no god can be omnipotent. The multiplicity of gods of necessity produce a hierarchy of major and minor gods and a pantheon, or overall framework in which they were all combined.

Celtic Paganism is generally viewed as polytheistic. Some of the Pagan gods and goddesses in Ireland were known also throughout Europe; others remained strictly local. Unfortunately we have no direct evidence concerning the Pagan Celtic divinities or indeed Celtic paganism in general, however, the Christian and medieval Celtic sagas concerning the shape-shifting, immortal, and magical gods of Wales and the Irish Tuatha de Danann offer a tempting glimpse of Pagan gods stripped of their divine status but still in possession of their Otherworldly powers. The identification of many personalities of the Tuatha de Danann with Pagan divinities is strengthened by what is known concerning the

Continental Celtic gods – though it should be remembered that this knowledge comes through the biased eyes of classical commentators. Nevertheless the Irish Lugh is clearly the same as the powerful Gaulish god Lugus. Certain divinities seem to have had adherents on both sides of the Irish sea; these arguably include Nuada, Manannan mac Lir, Goibniu, and Danu, who may roughly be corresponded to the British Nodens, and Welsh Mamawydan fab Llyr, Gofannon, and Don, respectively. Others, particularly goddesses, were native to Ireland and are associated with the natural landscape. The River Boyne commemorates Boand, while Ireland was supposedly named for three women of the Tuatha de Danann: Folda, Banba, and Erui. ‘Cath Maige Tuired’ (the Battle of Moytura), a saga that tells of the conflict between the Tuatha de Danann and their rivals the Fomhoire, has often been read as a type of Irish theomachy (a war between the gods) and has been compared to the battle between the Titans and the Olympians known from classical mythology. Care must be taken however, for ‘Cath Maige Tuired’ is a Christian text.

The Tuatha de Danann are not the only remnants of Irish Pagan deities. Many commentators have seen the shadowy figures of gods and goddesses behind heroes such as Fionn mac Cumhaill and saints such as Brigid.

Most forms of polytheism accept the existence of divinity beyond any given pantheon. While dogmatic polytheism is theoretically possible, once the idea of multiple deities is accepted, attempting to refute the notion of more gods elsewhere is difficult at best. Historically, most pantheons ruled over a people or nation, which tended to be synonymous in ancient times. This means that from a cosmological standpoint, nonviolent encounters with most other religions are not particularly traumatic to the state pantheon.

Polytheism (pal-i-the-izm) noun, belief in the existence of many gods, or in more than one. Polytheist. Polytheistic [Greek *polus*, many; *theos*, a god].

Now that we have looked at the various theologies, we will begin by looking at the concepts and perceptions as presented in Celtic mythology in general. Then we will be looking at a brief overview and the individual deity descriptions as they are broken down into the three main Celtic traditions of the Gaulish, Welsh, and Irish mythologies.



DRUIDIC DRESS

By Daniel Hansen

Typically we associate Druids as wearing long white robes as related in Pliny’s description of the mistletoe ritual. According to the Ancient Laws of Ireland, Druids had the privilege of wearing six colors in the plaid or stripes of their robes, and their tunics reached the heels, while the tunics of others reached only to the knees. Kings and queens reserved to themselves the right of wearing seven colors in their Tartan

robes; lords and ladies five colors; governors of fortresses, four young gentlemen of quality, three; soldiers, two; and the common people, one color. When the Druids were officiating in their official capacity they each wore white robes, emblematic of holiness as well as of the sun. When officiating as a judge the Druid wore two white robes, fastened with a girdle, surmounted by his Druid's egg encased in

gold, and wore round his neck the breastplate of judgment. The Druid sitting in judgment also wore a golden tiara upon his head and two official rings on his right hand fingers. On ordinary occasions the cap worn by the Druid had on the front a golden representation of the sun under a half moon of silver, supported by two Druids, one at each cusp, in an inclined position. Suspended at his side was his Druid knife. He wore a white cap, in shape and appearance like a fan. Around his neck was a golden chain, from which was suspended a golden plate, inscribed with the words: "The gods require sacrifice." The Druidical dress was uniformly and universally white garments, emblematic of the affected purity of their mind. In order to render their appearance more venerable and imposing they encouraged their beards to flow on their breasts.

About 600 BCE, a Druid named Abaris visited Athens Greece. He was described by Himerius as "not clad in skins, but with a bow in his hand, and a quiver hanging on his shoulder, and a plaid wrapped round his body, a gilded belt encircling his loins, and trousers reaching from his waist down to the soles of his feet. He was easy in his address, agreeable, and secret in management of great affairs. He spoke Greek with great fluency."

For the modern Druid, currently there is no official dress code to follow. At a Druid ritual it is possible to see individuals wearing robes or cloaks of just about any color from white to red to blue to black or multiples colors. Casual street attire is also commonplace at modern Druidic rituals and gatherings. Both men and women also commonly wear Celtic style jewelry or all sorts. Some carry staves or wands and others carry drums and tambourines. Since many Druid rituals are held outdoors, it is best to dress for the weather.



RDNA Dress Styles

RDNA Vestments

By Mike the Fool, ARDA 2, Part 4, 2005

"In accordance with Druid practice, certain vestments may be worn by Second Order and higher Druids during a meeting. Also, however, in accordance with *Reformed* Druid practice, it should be stressed that vestments are only *permitted*, not required." (David Frangquist) While the custom of dressing up for rituals has generally fallen out of practice at Carleton, occasionally it is revived. Other Groves in the Reform have generally adopted some individual customs of dressing, as is their right, most still choosing to use the traditional bed sheets.

Several systems of vesting have been suggested over the years. With the exception of some of the Higher Orders, these usually break down into matters of robes and ribbons. Usually Second Order Druids, or higher, by dint of their enthusiasm, usually wear white robes (kind of like the ancient Druids). We strictly caution those people who live in the Southern US that they should not wear hoods, as this may be misconstrued by the locals and we recommend a nonwhite color robe for those regions. Unfortunately, according to Larson, the Klan has also adopted the use of colored robes

The Third Order Druids usually wear white robes with their red or white ribbons of office around their neck, depending on if it's the Summer Half of the Year (wear Red) or the Winter Half of the Year (wear white). If a grove has other officers (such as a bard) they, of course, can be designated to wear distinctive symbols or ribbons.

IF you have a really gung-ho and rich grove you can, of course, choose to have seasonal robes for your Archdruid and/or grove members. Some of Isaac's & Frangquist's suggestions are listed here: Throughout the season of Geimredh, the robe is black with white facing. During Earrach, the robe is black with white and red facings. At the point of the Beltane service at which the sacrifice is accepted, a change to or addition of a red robe is made. Through out Samradh, the color is red or green. At Summer Solstice and Lughnasadh, the robe is green. The Samhain service begins in green, until the sacrifice is rejected, at which point a black robe is put on and over it a white facing or robe. As for the other High Days, at Winter Solstice he suggests a solid white robe and at Oimele black with a white facing or overgrown, to which red may be added during the service. No suggestions are made for spring equinox or fall equinox. For those of you who are poor, or who think this whole thing is silly, he suggest a simple black robe with white facings for the Winter Half of the Year and red facings for the Summer Half of the Year

The use of plain white robes, with variously colored ribbons, is really much simpler and cheaper. The following traditions seem to have developed: The ribbons are usually at least two yards in length, (purchased, if at all possible, at the Ben Franklin Dime Store in Northfield Minn.) with their raw ends either sewn, painted with clear nail polish, or taped with Scotch (or Irish) tape to prevent raveling. See Records of the Council of Dalon ap Landu for rule governing ribbons-of-office. There is a great deal of room here for invention, if you should so choose.

Among the Hassidic Druids, now disbanded, two other pieces of vestment were worn. The first was a special skullcap, usually of a knitted or crocheted of variegated green yarn, called an acorn cap; while the second was a green and white prayershawl called a *tellit*, which (unlike the acorn cap) is usually worn only at services or daily prayers.

If a Druid is interacting with Wiccans, one should be careful that one's Druidic ribbons or robes of office do not impinge with the system being used by the Wiccans.

Black Robes

Every once in a while, one will hear of a custom that "only Patriarchs may wear a black robe" and that if a Patriarch does so he may not wear at the same time the symbol of any Order other than the one he is the Patriarch of. All this is "in honor of the first Patriarch" and is an insider joke concerned with the fact that David Fisher, Founder of the RDNA and the Patriarch of Grannos, wore a black cassock and eventually became an Anglican Priest. In point of fact, hardly anyone (including the Patriarchs) ever wears a black robe at Druid services.

Also note: this fun about black robes has nothing to do with either a postulated historical phenomenon called "Black Druidism" (supposedly a system of "Black Magic" - a racist term that- used by Evil Renegade Druids, way back when) nor a modern cult called "The Druidic Craft of the Wise" (whose leaders wore black robes and practiced some rather unsavory techniques of psychic manipulation). The reason there is no connection with either of these two concepts is twofold: none of the Founders ever heard of them, and no reputable scholar ever has either. For more details on these two concepts, see Other Druids.

Ritual Vestments for Druid Services

By Isaac Bonewits, 1978?

One of the things that makes a ceremony dramatically effective is the sort of clothing being worn by the participants. Among the Reformed Druids a white robe for Second and Third Order members has been customary, with the priestesses and priests wearing their red or white ribbons-of-office. The following suggestions have recently been made about vestment customs and local Groves are free to use, change or ignore them as they see fit:

The system used by the Masonic-Rosicrucian Druids in the British Isles could be modified thusly: First Order Druids would wear green robes; Second Order Druids would wear green-and-white robes; Third Order Druids would wear white robes; Bards would wear blue tabards over their regular robes; Guards would wear dark red or brown tabards, etc.

AND/OR everyone not wearing robes could wear Paleopagan styles of clothing, usually of the Celtic or Germanic sort. This would ease some of the trans-temporal clashes so common at Druid rites and would add greatly to the ritual gestalt.

AND/OR special seasonal tabards could be worn by the Archdruid (and other officers?) presiding over ceremonies. Simple rectangles (about 18"x36") of cotton or linen could be carefully embroidered, then sewn together at two corners. These would be worn over the head and belted. Each tabard would have a large tree on the front piece and a large Druid Sigil (II) on the back piece, both in the appropriate seasonal foliage. One set of possibilities runs thusly:

From Samhain to Midwinter: Rowan tree with bare branches, mistletoe and light snow.

From Midwinter to Oimecl: Holly tree with berries/mistletoe and heavy snow.

From Oimecl to Spring: Fir tree with new needles and light snow.

From Spring to Beltane: Fruit tree in bloom, with budding branches.

From Beltane to Midsummer: Oak tree in full green.

From Midsummer to Lughnasadh: Sequoia tree in full green.

From Lughnasadh to Fall: Fruit tree with fruit, some leaves starting to turn.

From Fall to Samhain: Sugar maple tree turning gold and scarlet, dropping.

Druidic Fashion Collage

By Mike





NEWS SECTION



Taiwanese Druid 'Beats' World of Warcraft

By [Bryn Williams](#) | Dec 2, 2009

A World of Warcraft player from Taiwan becomes the first to snag every single achievement in the game.

[MMO Champion](#) is reporting that a Taiwanese [World of Warcraft](#) junkie has officially become the first player in the world to attain every achievement in the game. The level 80 Tauren Druid known as "Little Grey" actually missed one world event achievement, but a bug in the PvP achievements balanced this out.

Technically he's still missing BB King (added with Patch 3.2.2) and his World Events achievements are down to 138/139 because of that, luckily a bug with an old PvP achievement gives him 165/164, that's how he got 986/986. The achievement count obviously doesn't take Feats of Strength into account because it's technically impossible to get all of them. (Well I guess you could race change to compete for the first level 80 undead/tauren/troll/orc/blood elf on the same character but I don't think you'll get all of them)

Not too shabby. That's a lot of time and even more effort.



Getty Images

It dawns on Druids they're a day early for solstice

December 25, 2009

“It welcomes in the new sun” ... Arthur Uther Pendragon, aka John Rothwell, celebrates the dawn nearest the winter solstice. *Photo:*

LONDON: Pagan worshippers who braved freezing temperatures to celebrate the winter solstice at Stonehenge were dismayed to discover that they had turned up on the wrong day.

About 300 people dressed in robes met at the stone circle on Monday to greet the rising of the sun on the shortest day of the year. Unfortunately, their calculations were slightly out. They had arrived 24 hours early.

The winter solstice occurs when the tilt of the Earth's axis is at its furthest from the sun, resulting in the fewest hours of sunlight of the year.

More often than not the solstice falls on December 21 but the exact time varies each year.

The 2009 solstice fell at precisely 5.47pm on Monday, meaning that, because the sun had already set, the official celebrations should have taken place at sunrise on Tuesday. Hundreds of enthusiastic worshippers, who had arrived at Stonehenge before dawn on Monday, went ahead and celebrated anyway.

English Heritage, which manages the ancient site in Wiltshire, opened the gates and welcomed the worshippers despite the miscalculation.

A spokesman for English Heritage said: "About 300 people turned up a day early on Monday morning.

"We took pity on them and opened the stone circle so they could celebrate anyway. They were a day early but no doubt had a wonderful time.

"There has been a bitter chill there over the past few days but it has been absolutely gorgeous in terms of light and photography.

"People always assume that because the summer solstice is June 21, the winter solstice will be December 21.

"They should always check because it does change."

Arthur Uther Pendragon, a pagan leader who celebrated the solstice on Tuesday, said: "It is the most important day of the year for us because it welcomes in the new sun. There were hundreds of people there.

"If we'd celebrated on the 21st it would have been the right day but the wrong sun - when the whole point of the occasion is about welcoming in the new sun.

Mr Pendragon, formerly known as John Rothwell, said he had performed "about three handfasting ceremonies" or pagan marriages, as part of the celebrations and joined in prayers for world peace. "It's a new beginning," he said.

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