

# MEZLIM

Practical Magick for the New Aeon

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THE PAGAN GATHERINGS ISSUE

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# EDITOR'S FORUM

As we move through this season of primary elections, I'm struck by the familiar quality of some of the political rhetoric. It reminds me of a long standing conceptual rift in the Pagan/Magickal community, between "traditionalists" and "eclectics."

The conservatives (traditionalists) are insistent upon adhering to the "original" teachings and staying within the guidelines established by the founding fathers. The liberals (eclectics) are ready to "kick the bums out", because they feel like the incumbents have lost touch with reality. (And who voted for them, anyway?)

The debate shows up in Wicca, Thelema, Golden Dawn, Shamanism ...in any system that's been around long enough to breed a few "heretics." It might even be funny if it didn't lead to strife among the members of our chosen community.

Fortunately, the majority don't seem to take the subject too seriously. In fact, many treat it as a running joke. However, there are those that have such an emotional stake in walking the "One True Bright White and Shining Path" that they have little room in their hearts for

compassion or humility. This goes equally for fanatics of both extremes.

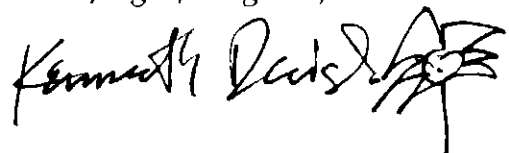
When the ideal becomes more important than the people to which it applies, it stops being a good idea.

When we become so attached to our beliefs that we have no more room to explore and learn and play... and when we can't allow others this same room...then we have no more room to grow.

While I believe that the majority of the community avoids this fray all together, there are enough "fire breathers" on both sides to keep things stirred up. And, this limits the quality of cooperation and cohesion that is so important in our extended and extensive family.

As long as it's just "talking politics," there's no problem. Certainly there's always room for creative debate; but when the debate begins to look like the negative advertising used by the democratic front runners, maybe it's time we remembered that we are all on the same side.

Love/Light/Laughter,



# A Gathering Primer

by J. Perry Damarru

## What is a Pagan Gathering?

Although there are some 200,000 self proclaimed Pagans in the U. S. alone, that leaves a whole lot of people who have never been to a Pagan Festival, never danced around a May Pole or bonfire, never sat through a sweat lodge ceremony or passed cakes and wine at a Wiccan Circle. This article is for those, and for all of you readers who have been wanting to go, but just haven't gotten around to it - yet.

A Gathering is many things. It is a wondrous revival of the old regional Fair - except that this region is one of the mind. It is a gathering of the Tribes of the Magi. It is a celebration of Life, Community and our connection with the Earth.

Many of the Gatherings we have today grew out of seasonal celebrations, where many Pagan groups and individuals would come together to share in their common love of the Earth, the Goddess and the God.

As interest in the old and new Earth religions has grown, so to have the festivals spawned by the movement. As the overall Pagan movement has become more diverse, so have the nature of the gatherings. Today there are festivals for Wiccans of all traditions, Druids, New Agers, ...

Although there are many points in common, each one of these events has its own unique character. The real definition of any gathering is to be found in your experience of it. *(See the festival calendar on page 30 for more information on gatherings near you.)*

## Why go to a Gathering?

Perhaps the most common reason that people have for attending gatherings is to meet a variety of needs that they feel cannot be met by their existing community. It is an opportunity to meet and interact with people who are going to be - for the most part - non-judgmental, accepting, caring and supportive of your own personal path. [This is a tall order to be met by an unruly mass of strangers.]

Most gatherings offer a variety of educational workshops. These are opportunities to discover new and fascinating areas that you may want to explore throughout the year.

These explorations also lead to interaction with other people with whom you probably share more than an interest in Wicca, Shamanism or recipes for flying ointment. They probably have similar problems relating to the people that they have to interact with on a daily basis. They may have similar doubts, delusions and dreams. And they may be able to share with you some of the insights that have helped them as well.

Finally, and if for no other reason, people go to gatherings because they are fun. Where else can you revel openly for days at a time in the celebration and joy that distinguishes any good gathering?

## Planning

If you don't plan ahead for your gathering experience - you'll wish that you had. On

the other hand, not planning is a terrifically effective - if uncomfortable - method of learning. Also - inevitably - there will be SOMETHING that you forget.

Some simple guidelines for starting off: Read the promotional material provided by the festival planners carefully. This should provide you with information concerning the facilities (shower; toilets; water; swimming; food service, etc.) which will be available at the site. Also: Prepare a list of what to bring. This may become fairly extensive, for example, most gatherings have open rituals as well as dances where costumed dress is suggested. Depending upon your particular tradition, this may mean packing not only ritual garb and other appropriate costuming, but also magickal tools and paraphernalia. (Maybe even some body paint!)

On the more practical side, you'll need to list such items as required camping gear, foodstuffs (preferably ones that keep without refrigeration), swimsuit, towel, biodegradable soap, a flashlight (with fresh batteries!), and everyday comforts like toilet paper and toothbrush.

And, don't forget to plan for the unexpected. There's nothing like huddling in a soggy sleeping bag all night, unable to sleep or even relax, because you weren't prepared for rain, to take all the fun out of a gathering. It's not that hard to weatherproof your tent; bring along a wool sweater & socks; and pack appropriate rain gear. On the other end of the barometric spectrum, those blindingly sunny days call for attention to sensitive areas of skin - especially those not generally exposed. Bring plenty of sunscreen, and, as drinking water is not always readily available, be sure to bring along a couple jugs of this as well. Dehydration can set in before you realize it,

causing irritability, nausea and general malaise.

Of course there's also no substitute for experience, and you will inevitably learn new and interesting lessons from each and every gathering that you attend.

## What to Expect from Your First Gathering

As with any new experience, it's difficult to know what to expect from your first Pagan Gathering. For that matter, it's difficult to know what to expect from your tenth Pagan Gathering. You can, however, expect the unexpected.

Some people may be put off at first by all the naked bodies - or they may feel suddenly and completely at home. It's important to realize that nudity at pagan gatherings does not constitute an invitation for sex. More often than not, it's one of the only chances the person gets to leave all that behind. If someone wants to jump your bones, chances are, they'll ask.

One common experience for first time festival goers (and even for seasoned Pagans) is a feeling that "everyone else belongs here and I don't." It's only natural when confronted with such overwhelming diversity to feel somewhat alienated. This feeling will pass as you discover that almost everyone else has experienced similar feelings - and that they keep coming back anyway.

## First Things First - What to do When You Arrive

After getting through the gate and signing the usual waivers, there's a natural



tendency - usually after a long and grueling car trip - to want to jump out and run around. This is not always a good idea. Better to go ahead and unpack your car, get your tent set up (most summer festivals are in primitive camping areas) and your car moved off to the parking area, than to wait until after dark and be forced to set up camp by intuition.

Once you have finished setting up, you'll want to spend some time getting a feel for where everything is. This can come in handy if you wake up in the middle of the night with a sudden need to find your way to the toilet.

## General Etiquette

The basis of etiquette at these events is the same as elsewhere. Respect for personal boundaries - both your own and everyone else's.

This means - for instance - that if someone introduces herself as Stardancer, you don't ask her for her "real name." If she wanted to go by that name, she would have used it. Many people at gatherings have a very real need to maintain anonymity. They could easily lose their jobs if the wrong people discovered their involvement in the Pagan movement. Such Pagan or "Craft" names may also be chosen to express elements of your personality, which may not be clearly expressed by "Shirley", "George" or "Tiffany."

Respecting each other's boundaries also mean listening to what is being said. "No" means "NO." It doesn't mean, "follow me back to my tent and let's talk about it."

If you feel like someone is coming on to you, check it out - don't assume. This goes equally for both men and women.

There may be a number of altars set up around the gathering site. These altars are sacred to the people who put them in place. Honor their space. Don't touch anything on the altars without their express invitation.

As you roam around the gathering site, you may come across a small group of people forming a circle. They may or may not be performing a healing. They may or may not want to maintain a measure of privacy. Be sensitive. Don't enter or break an existing circle.

Some workshops or rituals may include the casting of a Temple or Circle. If you are not going to want to stay for the duration - withdraw quietly before the circle is cast.

Etiquette is one of the most important things to pay attention to at any gathering. It allows us to get along with a minimum of stress. There are some simple and common sense guidelines to follow that keep you out of trouble. The essence of manners and etiquette is that it keeps us from stepping on each other's toes. It lets us know where our boundaries are and how to respect them. This is especially important in an atmosphere where many people are quite open and vulnerable.

For all you fanatical shutterbugs out there, be prepared to restrict your usage of this "soul stealer" at a gathering. While some of those present are more than happy to pose for your camera, there are many who DO NOT WANT their picture to be taken under any circumstances in these settings. Snapping away without asking is, at the very least, rude and invasive in a space where people are trying to be loving and respectful. So, no photos without permission, please.

## Gathering Glossary

**Skyclad:** A common state of undress at clothing optional gatherings. This term is traditionally used among those Wiccans who go "skyclad" during their rituals.

**Mundane:** Anyone who doesn't go to Pagan Festivals and doesn't understand why any sane person would want to dance naked around a blazing bonfire all night long to the throbbing voice of the drums.

**3rd Shift:** Those crazy people who dance and drum around the bonfire until the sun comes up.

**"Blessed Be":** Standard Wiccan/Pagan greeting. Proper response is to reply "Blessed Be."

**"Ninety Three":** Standard Thelemic greeting. Cabalistic short hand for "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law. Love is the law, love under will." Reply as you will.

**"So mote it be":** Magickal phrase used to indicate the focusing and closure of a particular use of power. Usually heard during ritual or at the end of a Magickal Blessing. Similar in form to "As I have spoken, so let it be done." It is proper to respond, "So Mote it be," to add your own support to the process.



## NOTICE:

The CONVOCAATION OF THE MAGI is held at the Humm in Spencer, NY. It is not an annual festival; rather, it's held when the energy is right. Characteristically, this festival is shamanic and intensely transformational. It is not for the weak at heart. Past Convos have included trinary realities, death and rebirth experiences, BAJ-hugging, personal confrontations, and Babalonian bliss, all fueled by the Elixir of the Gods.

This year the energy is right, and the theme will be a gathering of the Cthonic - Auranian OTO. We are trying to invite all initiates by means of the initiatory mycelium on which the Order was founded.

**Who:** Mostly initiates and a certain extended family, by invitation only. Most folks attending will have some years experience in the magickal community. Thelema is the common mythosphere, and tolerance will be strictly enforced.

**When:** Labor Day weekend.

The Humm is a private estate. Conditions are primitive, so come prepared to camp. Cars must be left off the land, and the camping space is one-quarter mile from the nearest drop-off point — be prepared to carry your stuff up a hill and/or get people to help. Facilities include outhouses, an outdoor shower, a community cooking fire, well water, woods and fields. There will be a Saturday evening feast with roast beast and vegetarian entree.

**Cost:** \$31.

**Contact:** Elise Del Vecchio  
P.O. Box 140  
West Danby, NY 14896



# FESTIVAL DRUMMING

Or

**Everyone marches to the beat of a different drummer, but what happens when they all show up at the same time?**

by Ranger Rick

I'm thrilled to see how popular drumming has become lately. Ten years ago, it seemed that only fringe members of fringe groups were into it. Even among musicians, the drummers were the crazies in the back with the scary look in their eyes. Everyone loved them, but few seriously joined them.

Today we have quite a different picture. Drumming is getting downright mainstream. Percussion bands are playing everywhere. Drum specialty stores are sprouting up. Ethnic and special interest groups have gone from a few drummers, to up to the majority taking to the drums. Percussion tapes which were hard to find because of no demand have gotten hard to keep in stock, and, if Mickey Hart writes another book, we just may have a new messiah! I've even heard tales of corporate execs thumping away their lunch hours. Could it be that in this time of cultural

sophistication, we are finding ourselves using one of the oldest, most basic arts known?

Drumming in the Neo-Pagan/Occult community is nothing new. Drumming at rituals and fires has been done for some time. Shamanic trance type drumming is familiar to most of us. The numbers that are taking part in drumming, however, have grown considerably. This article is a response to many requests for more information from a magickal viewpoint on drumming in general, and festival drumming in particular. I'm not going to dwell on items such as hand technique, different rhythm patterns, etc., as this type of information is better received in workshops.

## BEAT FROM HADIT

The first item I wish to address is absolutely the most important factor in drumming. As a matter of fact, it is the most important factor in all of music. Without it, there is no rhythm, period. It is the most simple, subtle and profound aspect of drumming. It is called the ONE, and has to do with internal timing. The ONE gives birth to the Beat. The Beat gives birth to Rhythm. I know, I know, some of you are sitting there thinking, "Oh boy, this guy is deep..." Of course the ONE sets up the Beat! Of course the Beat sets up Rhythm!

Why the theatrics? I wish I could write a thousand words here just to create a dramatic enough setting so that that single idea would be driven home. As in all things, the basics seem so simple and

obvious that the student rushes past them on their quest for glory. And, as in all things, mastery will elude them until they are rooted in the basics, not just know the words. I wonder how many drummers out there could actually beat the ONE along with a metronome, mute the metronome (with it still keeping time), and still be in time to it one, five, ten....minutes later? It's a simple enough test. I suggest all drummers try it. Tame your wild horses! Have you ever noticed that certain drummers have a Presence? When they play, you throb with their rhythm. While many things attribute to that skill, none can be developed without a firm rooting in the ONE.

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## Playing the bottom line is boring only if you do it badly.

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While developing your timing with the ONE, pay attention to your attack. The attack is the exact instant you hit. The claves are good examples. Although the person may be keeping adequate time with them, the sharp report they give will betray any deviation from the Exact moment your body tells you the beat should occur. A strong attack will add much in bringing power to your drumming. Every time you strike, Mean It! Beware, however, that focusing on your attack will tend to speed up the beat.

Finding a strong footing in the ONE, sharpening its edges with your attack, will go a long way in leading you to a place where eventually the Beat will play you.

## RHYTHM

The common beat is the 4/4. It's what I suggest for beginners and jam sessions to be

based on. When played alone, they sound like what most relate to as Amerindian rhythms. Put the accent on one beat to give you a sense of measures.

*ONE two three four ONE two three four*  
*ONE two three four*

or

*one TWO three four one TWO three four*  
*one TWO three four*

or

*one two THREE four one two THREE four*  
*one two THREE four*

or

*one two three FOUR one two three FOUR*  
*one two three FOUR*

As you go through these rhythms, you will note how different each feels. This is due to the accent placement. It is somewhat valid (amuse me) to say, "What the attack is to each beat, so the accent(s) is (are) to the rhythm." This will become more important as you move to more complex rhythm patterns. Let's say you were playing one of these patterns and someone walked in that did not hear you start. Would they be able to pick up which of the four beats has the accent? After all, each rhythm is identical in that there is one beat accented and three in a row which are not. Actually, the person walking in would probably not be able to tell unless you left a longer rest (pause) between measures. But, the person should be able to FEEL the mood which the pattern evokes. This is one of the clues to the mastery of drumming. If the listener cannot even FOLLOW the rhythm, they should still easily feel the mood of the drummer. The drummer, however, needs to have a keen sense of the rhythm and its accents to be able to accomplish the translation effectively.

There is only one more thing I want to touch on before throwing you into the arena with other drummers. Sing your rhythms. You will be surprised at how much easier it is to play a rhythm if you are already singing it (internally) to yourself. Do not confuse this with having a song running through your head. This creates too many incongruities for the listeners (of the drummer) because all the (song) fills and such are not manifested. The drummer who does this usually does not even realize that his drumming is hard to follow because it goes with the song in his head. But, singing your rhythm to yourself helps to bridge the gap between internal and external. This is important because you will make a tremendous breakthrough when you reach the point where the rhythm plays you, and your hands and arms are just along for the ride.



feel it's too repetitive and get bored with it. Bad attitude.

Personally, I love the bottom line. In many ways, it's the most powerful part of the rhythm. Without it, the drumming is chaotic, unable to hold a pattern. When played well, it creates that space where all things move to it. It becomes an irresistible urge that must be listened to, each beat anticipated and welcomed. It can create a space that is actually painful if stopped. Playing the bottom line is boring only if you do it badly.

The bottom can be laid down by more than one drummer. Several drummers can weave their beats together, complimenting each other, to create a rich, intricate sound.

I'm stressing the Beat (bottom line) just as I stressed the ONE earlier. It is the heart of the drum circle. If you are a beginner, focus on the Beat and play along with it; you will learn much here.

## PLAYING TOGETHER

First, you need a strong bottom line. It should be simple, yet interesting. It needs to be strong enough to support and hold together the rest of the drums. This is also the beat that most of the dancers are dancing to. I've heard it said that you should be able to pound out the bottom line with your feet (literally dancing out the beat). While I don't fully agree with this, I do think it's fairly accurate in expressing what the feel of the beat should be. Not many like to play the bottom line. They

The rest of the drumming is going to be a little difficult to describe here. First, without a good command of music terminology, it gets difficult to translate, and I want to keep this simple. Second, I feel I would need to get into lengthy examples of rhythms. And third, experience is definitely the best teacher in this. I think it will suffice here to give some examples of your options.

While the bottom line sets up the rhythm, you need the other drums to make the rhythm MOVE. Without movement, the rhythm becomes trance drumming. These drums are playing more involved patterns, sometimes going through one cycle of that pattern while the beat goes through many cycles. These patterns are also more spontaneous. At times, they even lure the beat to change (DO NOT try to force the beat to change! It will when it's time.). You can play syncopated rhythms; these have a feel of being backwards. You can get a bass drum and only hit the big, powerful beats of the rhythm. Or, you can use a high drum to fly about, weaving high overhead.

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## remember, the greater part of the rhythm needs to be constant

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And, let's not forget other percussion instruments. Rattles, wood blocks, bells, claves (sticks), gourds...there is a huge list of commonly used percussion instruments. There's an even longer list of uncommon ones. Play with percussion experimentation. The sounds that you can discover may truly surprise you. When many people are playing together, these instruments add texture that is quite wonderful (not to mention that dancers with zills or castanets are too fine!).

While playing in a group, feel for your place in the overall rhythms. When any number of people get together to jam, you will have those who like to take certain parts. This is good and bad. It's good because those who like certain parts are usually good at them. It can be bad because you can get overkill in some areas of the

rhythm without the desired support from other areas.

As your drumming awareness expands, you will become more "tuned in" to the whole rhythm. This will allow you to have the ability to move about the rhythm, adding fullness to it. This will also lead to the ability to accent, putting frills here and there, making the piece exciting and unpredictable. You may even cultivate the ability to "tell a story", to be able to move through the piece progressively from beginning to end.

But remember, the greater part of the rhythm needs to be constant. Listen to professional drummers; you will note a conspicuous repetitiveness to their playing. Even the ones who have taken their drumming into awesome spaces tend to come back to the basics. In the February issue of "Modern Drummer", Lars Ulrich, drummer for Metallica and the undisputed king of speedmetal drumming (which is some of the fastest, most involved drumming there is) said, "To be honest with you, I think I really burnt myself out on the mega drum fill. Playing a strong groove is what's important." And so it is.

Don't be in a big hurry to move about in a rhythm. The ability to do it WELL will come after learning the secrets of the Beat. Otherwise, it is sloppy and just tends to weaken the rhythm. Pay your dues! Drumming is not hard to do, but I find that many drummers settle for a level of proficiency which they are very proud of, but which doesn't really manifest much power. Move through the different levels of drumming and be able to do it All well.

I always find myself stressing the beat. Some feel I'm fixated on it. The fact is, as drumming is becoming so popular so fast,

there are scores of people playing badly. They want to “do their thing” and “express themselves” with good old American “instant gratification” attitudes. They are learning how to play at jam sessions and not getting proper instruction. You cannot jump to advanced techniques and learn the secrets of rhythm. I’m not saying that you shouldn’t experiment or even play some “salt ‘n’ pepper” in a jam, but I’m often amused when the best drummers are playing the bottom line while the less experienced drummers go nuts.

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good, solid drumming doesn’t tend to bother people like chaotic drumming does.

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I’ve listened to drummers that sound like a herd of wild horses running (I know drummers who think this is an accomplishment!). The rhythms are pounding along at different rates, skipping around in a frantic attempt to get nowhere. I’ll admit that there is a certain joy in it. It’s a shame though, when you can’t (or won’t) play any other way. It’s one thing to decide to do some chaos drumming, it’s another to be a chaotic drummer. I’ll also add that these drummers tend to be the ones who get hassled at gatherings and can’t figure out why THEY are singled out for persecution. Rhythm is based on order. When it’s not rhythmic, it’s noise.

When we drum at gatherings, we are there to add to the experience in a positive way. It’s a service to the community. There are times to cut loose, and times to slow down. In the midwest gathering circuit where I attend festivals, there is somewhat of a controversy over drumming all night (inside the community as well as with the

neighbors). Personally, I’ve never had a problem. Late at night you need to get into a more subtle space in your drumming. I’m not necessarily talking about quiet (although that, of course, helps), but about playing rhythms that are pleasing to sleep to as well as dance to. Ones that don’t keep every dog for ten miles around barking. I’ve drummed all night with others of the same mind (having a helluva good time) and had people who generally hate all night drumming come up in the morning to thank us for the wonderful drumming. If you respect others, they tend to respect you.

The most irresponsible attitudes I’ve ever seen in drummers are when they come to a gathering, drum like maniacs in the middle of the night, have the promoters come and tell them that the authorities have called and to quiet down, REFUSE to quiet down, and, when the cops hit the set, are PISSED OFF because the promoters didn’t shield them from being hassled! Then they wonder why the promoters are considering banning the nightly fires.

But good, solid drumming doesn’t tend to bother people like chaotic drumming does. Gee, I wonder if there’s a lesson in manifesting your Will here? Drumming is powerful. Be in control of it and let it work for you, or be out of control and guess at what you’re creating (which will usually be a reflection of your chaos).

The last thing I’d like to say about drumming in a large group is “Less is Better.” With many players, you don’t need to be hitting your drum two hundred times a minute. There are lots of beats being struck all around you. If everyone is playing different fast patterns, you start to get a drone. Rhythm has spaces as well as beats.

## DRUM ETIQUETTE

To wrap up this discussion of festival drumming, I have included some of the finer points of drumming etiquette.

Unless you know what someone's policy is concerning their instrument(s), ask. In particular, ask if you can use their drum. Some drums are very sacred to their drummer.

Do not play with rings on. This is bad on drum heads, and worse on your hands (fingers can swell while drumming).

If you are unsure of your drumming, please play quietly.

Keep ego out of your drumming. We are here to play together. Drumming games can be cool, if it's a game. But also remember that drumming games are usually fun only for the drummers. Which leads into....

If no one is dancing, examine your drumming.

Listen to the other drummers and make sure that you're playing with them. This is a more common problem than you might think.

Feed The Drummers! If you want the drummers to keep playing without stopping, meet some of their needs. Beer or water is a good one!

Don't trance out with your drum! If you want to trance, put your drum away. If you are drumming, you can go right to the edge, but no farther. Once the drummer trances, their drumming falls apart.



### *Elderflower*

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# DANCE WORK

by Diane Tabor

People dance for many reasons: Celebration and joy, sexual enticement, inward journeying, and for the invocation and evocation of energy. One sees all these forms around the fire of any pagan festival.

It is easy to spot some of these forms since they are often encountered at parties and dances in the mundane world. Some of the others are more subtle and perhaps more interesting. For those who may have thought that some of these dances look pretty unusual, and wondered at the reason (Are these people weird or what?), here is a short description of some of the many forms of dance you see around a ritual fire.

## MAKING "O"s

It is no accident that ritual dance often includes much circle dancing...making "O"s. There is much to be said about the significance of making "O"s. For the purpose of this article, let's just say: Dance a circle with intent and focused Will and you have created sacred ground.

What is more, dancing "O"s creates a vortex of energy which acts to keep the space safe. The warding effect is amplified when the dancers are aware and focused on their purpose. I know dedicated magicians who will circle a fire for hours keeping the vortex spinning with their movement and their Wills. It is the raising and maintaining of a temple. It is a sacred act. Try to make a few "O"s now and then when you get the chance.

## TRANCE DANCING

Dance is a powerful means of transportation between our physical forms and other levels of existence. Many people are familiar with trance drumming, but have never made the connection with dance.

In trance dancing, the body moves in repetitive rhythms; and, keying to the current, the movement is ridden to deep inner worlds. Trance dancing is not performed with an audience in mind. It is a symbolic expression of deep subjective experience and may include unusual looking movements or postures.

Dances for the attainment of higher states of consciousness are often simple, but they evoke a passionate intensity in the dancer. You may wish to try this form of dance in your own work. A good rhythm for inducing an altered state is...two steps forward, one step back. Whirling motions may also be used.

For trance dancing, it is very helpful to have drummers or other musicians who understand the qualities of trance and can maintain a steady rhythm for the "ride." It is easier to go deep and come back completely from a trance when the musicians are journeying with the dancers, all riding the same current. If the drummers are not tuned in to the current or stop abruptly, it can cause distressing disorientation in anyone attempting to trance to the beat.

Cooperation is needed from others around the fire, too. It is simple courtesy to refrain from distracting a dancer who is deeply engrossed in trance.



# RITUAL DANCING

The purpose of any ritual is to direct and focus the consciousness. Ritual dance is a subtle and powerful means of making the world of energies and powers manifest on the physical plane. Ritual Dance can help align our physical energies with our spiritual Will. As with any ritual method, the effectiveness of the dance as a magickal working is dependent upon the focus of the Will of the dancer, and upon the amount of personal significance in the movements.

Ritual dance originated as a form of sympathetic magick to evoke thought forms and energies. Since what we do on one plane influences all others, a strongly focused dance can be unsurpassed in effecting changes in one's reality. The more symbolic meaning invested in the motions, the more power is released through dancing them.

This type of working is similar to talismanic magick, except that the symbols are formed by the body itself. At some point in the working, the energies evoked through the movements are sent through the fire to free them to manifest.

Ritual dance may also be used to work on personal issues which are too threatening or deeply buried to address in our everyday consciousness. Emotions which have been repressed in the interest of preserving our lives and relationships can be allowed expression and worked through in the safe

space created by dance.

## DANCING FOR JOY

Most people can remember dancing for joy at some time in their lives, perhaps as a child. Anyone who has children knows that children naturally dance with joy and also for joy. They spin in circles and fall down giggling. They shout, prance, laugh and sing silly songs. They do this not only when some happenstance has pleased them, but also when they wish to be pleased and have fun.



Often the ability to dance for joy is lost as the mind is trained to focus on problem solving rather than experiencing the moment. As an adult, surrender to emotion, even a positive one, may stir fears of losing control. There is, however, a powerful magick in surrendering the body to the expression of joy. It provides a balance to the stress and sorrow encountered in every life.

The creation and expression of joy is often experienced as union with the divine.

*From joy springs all creation  
By it is sustained  
Towards joy it proceeds  
And to joy it returns.*

Mundaka Upanishad

Joyous celebration is a blessing and even

a little silliness doesn't hurt. So when you see dancers reveling in joyous or silly abandon, remember that joy and laughter are gifts from the gods.

## EROTIC DANCE

Some people become confused when they see others dancing in a sexually provocative (evocative) way. There is a tendency in our culture to equate highly sensual dance with a sexual invitation.

I have a friend who is both a beautiful woman and an exciting dancer, who has become reluctant to share her gift around the fire. She explains that the men think she's out to get laid and the women hate her for getting all the attention. A man I know, who is a powerful erotic dancer, often finds himself surrounded by women who interpret his dancing as a sexual come on.

In most cases, dancers who are dancing for the purpose of generating energy for the fire are not interested in getting picked-up, but rather in amplifying the collective energy flow. This is a valuable gift and deserves to be appreciated as such. By calling up the kundalini energy, the dancer becomes a channel for his or her own sexual energies. The feelings aroused in the observers may also be used to contribute to the personal and general energy flow.


For example, as one watches a woman who is skilled in middle-eastern dance, one might feel sexually aroused. If all one does with that energy is get horny, that's okay, but it is also an opportunity to let the energy rise up through the body, activating the higher chakric centers.

How do you know whether a dancer is dancing for the power of the fire or to

express interest in you? Sustained direct eye contact and close physical proximity can be good clues! But if there is a misunderstanding, try not to show your ignorance by remarking: "Then why were you dancing like that?"

## THE DANCE

The next time that you're around the fire and people are dancing in their various wondrous ways, remember that more may be happening there than the casual observer might understand. A bonfire is a party, but that isn't all that it is. There is magick in the fire, the chants, the drums, and the dance.




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—Mike Gunderloy, Factsheet Five

# A PILGRIM'S GUIDE TO PAGAN FESTIVALS

by Richard Keenan, Ph.D.

Festivals are one of the best ways to get in touch with contemporary Paganism. While each of the festivals is different, they collectively express a sense of Pagan community for a time, and they have a way of building good memories. In festivals, there is joy and energy and soap opera; and the gods are honored.

The author has attended various festivals since 1984 and tries to attend at least a dozen each summer while on teaching vacation. Some festivals you should consider include:

"Chants to Dance" and "Elf Fest" held in Indiana at Elf Land near Bloomington. The elves own some 90 acres of land and have created a primitive nature sanctuary. The water supply is a garden hose and it gets crowded in terms of parking and tenting space. Over the years, there have been various factions among the elves—ruled by committees—who disagreed with each other; and there have been frequent

arguments about drumming done at night. Just the same, there are usually good people there and the site takes you to the 12th century, sort of. Beware the bun sharks in the stream.

"Wellspring", held at Brushwood in western New York state in May last year, was the first Druid run festival event; and they got off to a good start in some cold weather that made camping more of a challenge. The druids tilt toward the intellectual, with stress on scholarship, bardic skills, and precision ritual design.

The Brushwood site is one of the best and least inhibited festival locations. It is the best equipped pagan-owned land, with upgrading facilities, festivaldom's best supply of hot water showers, a swimming pool, a hot tub, and supportive pagan management.

Three interesting festivals (including Elf Fest) converge during the last two weeks in May. "Heartland Fest" near Kansas City has been well reported by those who have attended. Visits from famous pagans and a convivial, mainly midwestern crowd are just a few of its attractions. Activities are more



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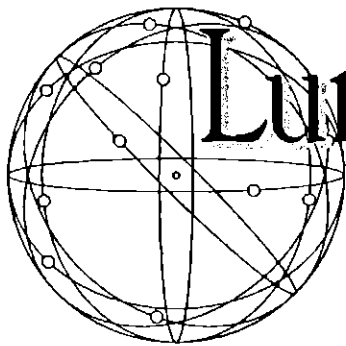
“Rites of Spring”, occurs in Massachusetts in late May. It’s one of the biggest and best east coast festivals. Some of the best drumming and programming in the festival circuit goes on there, as well as one of the best merchants’ rows. “Rites” is one of the top five festivals on the continent and draws a group mainly from the eastern seaboard, very colorful and heady.

For the last two years, they’ve been frustrated about sites (since being invited elsewhere three years ago after camp officials walked in on a “Wear What You Dare” ball). Drumming was severely curtailed and skyclad was forbidden at the last two locations. This repressed group mood and energy. This year a more permissive site has been found, so the festival should be much improved. Last year’s high point was a late night Dianic full

moon fire ritual. It is a strong and positive pagan community for a week. It’s well organized and well fed. When the bakers get creative, they make dick bread and vaginal bread loaves.

“Wic-Can Fest”—near Toronto, Canada—occurs in early June. This is a delightful festival, strongly wiccan in its orientation, with a Canadian flavor and a more laid-back approach than some other festivals. A beautiful lake has a crowded clothing optional beach and a usually empty textile beach. Rituals and workshops are first rate, ranging from dreams to trances, to drumming. Canada itself is worth a visit and so are Canada witches. The place is so convivial, I met my fiancée there.

“LumensGate” is held at Brushwood. This was well reported by those who attended. Kenn Deigh and his group organized most of the rituals, which



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centered on the dramatic polarities and sensuality of magic. People returned from this festival (sort of) glowing, charged, and enthusiastic. When Kenn Deigh does his Pan invocation, fasten your seat belts.

“Free Spirit Gathering” is located in Maryland and occurs around mid June. This delightful long-weekend gathering is attended by lots of DC-Baltimore pagans. The entire site is clothing optional and people have a sense of costuming and theatre about the weekend—from body painting (one woman got into character as a pict warrior dressed in nothing but full body blue paint; another dressed only in paint as a flame) to costume surprises like a group of 20 or so, all dressed in tie dye outfits, dancing through the grounds in a kind of human chain.

“Pagan Spirit Gathering” is held in Wisconsin in June. You could call this the mother of all pagan festivals (at least the current ones). It draws a world-wide, world-class group of pagans, and it is highly and efficiently organized by an experienced staff. Their rituals follow a different theme every night for a week and they are state of the art for large groups. As the parades to the evening rituals begin, you get the sense that you are in a revived pagan world. The community spirit is superb. The only downside is that the festival is usually pretty crowded. Food service is good, shower service is skimpy. It is, however, one of the best festivals; give Selena Fox credit for it.

“Starwood” is a week-long gathering held in July at Brushwood, New York. This is a mildly schizophrenic and thoroughly delightful big festival. It seems to be both a recidivist 1960's hippie gathering and a new-age pagan community that combines the best of both. It is upbeat, fun, and outrageous enough to generate shock and

scandal in local fundamentalist churches, some of whose members sneak into it.

“Starwood” has the summer's best ritual bonfire—with organized drumming, ceremonial lighting, and hundreds of dancers in various levels of dress and undress. The gods and the spirits are often honored. Workshops and classes in new-age, techno-spiritual and pagan subjects are held all week. Some evenings you can leave the hot tub to go watch the fireworks. “Starwood”—one of the top five festivals—will be a high point of your Summer.

Another July festival is “Suntide” at Cape Cod. Although this is a quick weekend where a group of pagans meets at a mundane camp—so things are subdued—this festival contains a New England lobster roast on a national seashore beach—and brings you to Cape Cod—and the historic delights of the region at its touristy peak. You need to visit Provincetown with its Summer population of 10 times that in Winter. It is one of the most free form and exotic mundane resort towns.

“Witchcamp” occurs in July and August, in Michigan and Washington state. This is not so much a festival as a boot camp for witches run by Starhawk and the Reclaiming Collective. Star and her crew are irreverent, funny, highly skilled magicians who will put you through your paces and take you to trance land in three sessions a day of training and practicing magical skills. Then they'll want to know what you're doing politically to change the world. Emotional frictions and misunderstandings sometimes happen—they work them out anarchistically. The group is inspired—by a vision of a magically influenced society and

they're working on it. (It's listed as "Wiccan Summer Intensive" in festival announcements.)

"Pennsic War" occurs in August in western Pennsylvania. While the war isn't exactly a festival, it is interesting as a middle ages recreation of 6000 people camping in community. Perhaps a third of them are pagans. Warriors gather on Saturday afternoon for a medieval war that is a lot like they must have been. Costumes range from stunning to bizarre at this week-long costume party...like female body armor with metallic breasts. It is obsessed with war and nobility and status.

Unlike any pagan festival, there are space and fence and boundary lines and limits and territoriality. It can get unpleasant if you wander past a fence or a guard. The interesting part is that 6000 gather and organize—even with street signs—and they create a colorful community of combatants. They're unimaginative in the mundane ways that they party, but they're wild by mundane standards. The stick jocks don't seem to know how to deal with bonfire energy.

"Balefire" is held in August at Elf Land in Indiana. This is a good group from Richmond, Indiana which moved its festival here a few years ago. Elf Land has beauty and charm and the group is open and hospitable.

"Wild Magick" is also held on Elf Land in late September. This is a large summer-ending gathering put on by the Elf Lore Family. It's valuable as a farewell to the Summer festival season. Good food and good crowds are evident. Overcrowding, squabbles over late night drumming and parking problems detract somewhat from the experience.

"The Festival From Hell" aka "Pan Pagan" occurred during the Summer of 1990. This festival is discussed here to show that not every pagan gathering is sunshine and flowers. Factional disagreements within the committee of this festival led to sudden, last minute banning of most drumming and any skyclad. While the campground management was permissive, the pagan committee got repressive for reasons not clear to most attendees. When one coven did a skyclad circle in a private area at midnight, one festival manager disrupted the circle and tried to scold it. Some pagans on the committee took mundanes on guided tours of the camp. "Pan Pagan" officials did a revised "Pan Pagan" festival in 1991, which some attendees said was improved.

"Winterstar" is held in late Winter in central Ohio. The people who put on "Starwood" also do "Winterstar", which is held at a mundane ski resort that never seems to get any snow. It's a very quick weekend without bonfires or many of the other externals of festivals, but provides an upbeat reunion for wintered-out festivalers. Conferences and workshops are offset by somewhat wilder cabin parties. Drummers and dancers gather around candles.

The best way to mix with other pagans is at festivals. The best source of information on them is Larry Cornett's comprehensive calendar of events, available by subscription for \$4.50 a year from Larry Cornett, 9527 Blake Lane #102, Fairfax, Virginia 22031.

See you at the fireside.

*Also see the Festival calendar on page 30.*



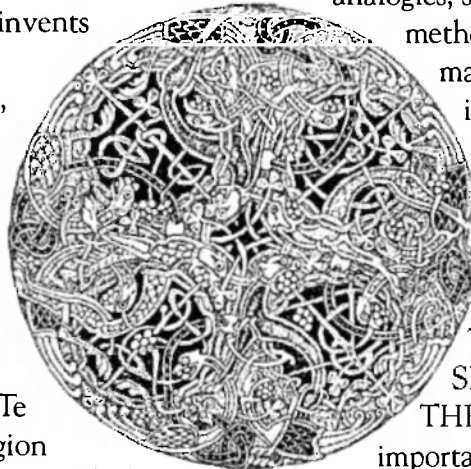
# FURTHER EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK OF "O"

*The initial Excerpts From the Book of "O" appeared in Volume I: 3 of Mezlim, published on Lammas 1990. The Book of "O" is, among other things, an intuitive guide to life, the universe and how to function as a Human Being.*

- The Editor

by Dennis Murphy

Another Tale—Another Book—More Words—More Baggage. Throw away all the books, erase all written words and symbols, wipe the mind clean, erase all history, all knowledge. What we have left is the Tao. As soon as someone invents a language, through art, images, symbols, or sounds, the essence of the Tao Te Ching will soon come through. Images, metaphors, and similes, ideas will soon bring forth the power of the Nothing. The world is now full of interpretations of the Tao Te Ching, descriptions of religion based on circles, and centers, and holes, and on and on from Nothing to All that exists. It is the First Religion, is in all religions, and will always be the last. THE SAME AS IT EVER WAS, making no effort to prove itself. For Tao Magick, just connect with the Tao, make it your center, and live it. The world around you will transform with you, as promised in the Te Chings. Read, study, scrutinize, revise, scream "Bull", let go. Ideas and thoughts that are generated through the contemplation of Tao are all meaningful and implied. Also (All So) their opposites, and meaningful connections. Blank spaces,



pages, margins, are all included for your interest. You are encouraged to re-write (Re-Rite) the Whole, Hole, O, Thing. Your imagination will be activated where you should draw pictures, change wording, etc. Feel Free. It is important for you to get the best image of the Tao. The Chinese word for image also means elephant, since most early Chinese people have never seen an elephant, but only its image. I hope to present the best image, taken, copied from books that I have studied, and from my own observations of that which cannot be seen. Qualities, powers, promises, descriptions, analogies, similes, metaphors, stories, methods are all included. The map is not the territory, the image is not the elephant, but the image is the Tao, and the Tao is the image. Homage to the image. Holy Holy Holy. NOTHING IS MEANT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY HERE AND THROUGHOUT! It's important for you to know that you are a messenger of God, that God dwells in you as you, and that if anyone is going to save the world—IT IS YOU. That's why you are reading this—What good is a saved world if you are not satisfied? When you begin to understand, and decide to return to and abide by the Tao Te Ching, then you'll experience the world transform with and around you. When you're content and find peace in your center (Zen-Ter), you'll understand. Then pass on the Tao Te Ching to others. Contemplate their return. In the meantime, pick up a drum, start a fire, drink some maya, sing and dance.



Note on nothing: There is only ONE NOTHING. Hence from nothing comes one. Nothing is neither good nor bad, but some think of it as good, and some fear it and think of it as bad. Positive and negative, from one nothing therefore comes two. Some believe in Nothing and some do not believe in Nothing. Nothing is, and Nothing is not. Opposites generate the other.

The Taoist knows what/who/where he is not. Because he is, he is part of the all, and hence he is part of everything, i.e., he is everything and everywhere; nothing and nowhere; here and now. He is nowhere and has no self to know. He doesn't know; he just is.

I take no credit for any of this—but give all to those who have written before me, and recommend everyone else's work about the Tao.

## THE BOOK OF "O" THE TAO TE CHING

It's about Nothing and it is Nothing. Nothing is as it seems. Nothing is as O it seems. Nothing is AZO it seems. There are many names for nothing: Tao, God, It, O, Round, Great, Small, Root, Ground, Void, Source, Circle, Nuit, Holy, Everything. It's always around. "TA" in Chinese means "Great". "TE" means "Natural", "Nature", "Natural Power", "Virtue". "CHING" has many meanings, some being: "Book", "Seed", and "To Transcend". Thus, the "TAO TE CHING" is "To Transcend Through The Natural Power Of The Great O", or "The Book Of The Great Natural O". In order to accept this you have to be able to believe in Nothing. The Tao is like a catalyst, it is the "Nothing" that gives rise to all beings while it itself does not change and remains Nothing. The Tao accomplishes all things without holding on

to what it has accomplished, and letting go but not abandoning its creation. As promised in the Te Ching, sooner or later all will be caught in the net of Tao, all will return to this, the Root, the Source, from which it all started. But not until it gets far out. "T" is □, the Father, the Cross, the Earth, Material, Body, Physical Existence. As "YANG", it is the active, penetrating, moving principle, the lingam male sexual organ. "A" is the Spirit, Δ, Air, the Androgynous Fool, One centered in Tao between Existence and Non-existence, the Child of Father "T" and Mother "O", the sum of  $1+1=0$ , the Mystical (Mystick O) Formula. "O" is the Mother, O, Water, the "TE", the passive "YIN", yielding, receptive, unmoving principle, the yoni female sexual organ, Non-existence, Nothing. The love of O's, to know the O regions is initiation into the Tao. O places are Tao places and places avoided by other people. The Tao is found everywhere, even in places loathed by most men. "AZO" is the messenger of Tao. "A" is Brahma, the Creator, the "Bull". "Z" is Vishnu, the Preserver, and "Z" stands for Zain, Love, again "The Preserver". "O" also is Shiva, The Destroyer, since to become Nothing is to be annihilated. The Bull is sacred to Shiva, and Shiva is a form of Pan. A formula for Pan is "IAO", "I" being a form of "T" as well as meaning the Ego, the Soul, and the "Seed", the "CHING". Theosophy is the love and study of "O's", The O Sophy. The Tao, and all other circle worshipping traditions, are all within the Cult of the Living Bull, an O-Cult under AZO. Every language has its idiosyncrasies. The early "Tao Te Ching" was pre-language, a wordless Te Ching, then later with the spoken language it devolved/evolved to an oral tradition, and with the written word to this. Each language uses its own symbolisms to represent the Tao as best it can. I pronounce "Tao" as TAO, as in "Tail" and "Tale", and give it similar meanings. Words

that sound alike but are spelled differently, such as “Whole” and “Hole”, can and should be interchanged for further meaning. This should be read on all different levels, and questioned thoroughly. Interchange syllables that sound like “O”, such as “El”, “Ol”, “Le”, “Al”, with “O”; and syllables that sound like “Bull”, such as “Ble”, “Bo”, “Bel”, “Bol”, “Bowl”, with “Bull”. To get the best benefit from the Tao Te Ching, keep a journal and continue to revise your understanding of the Tao. I plan to keep revising it myself and maintain a correspondence through the “Tao Commentaries”. The Tao is both yin and yang, male and female, active and passive—a “marriage” of all opposites, the Hierogamous [sic]; like sex, it is the coming together of all opposites: A balance, merger, to yang the yin and yin the yang; a blending and a dissolution. The essences blend, vitality is transformed, and the spirit becomes stronger. To the Taoist, Nothing is known for certain. Nothing is yours. The farther you enter into it, the deeper it gets. There is Nothing that you need to achieve. Nothing is more manifest than the hidden; Nothing is more obvious than the unseen. Tao is a “Don’t”, not a “Do”. Do Nothing which is of no use. “Tao Te Ching” is a “Nothing—Something—Transcendence”. It appears to be a lot about Nothing. There’s Nothing to it. Yet it appears to be Something. Ain’t this Something? You haven’t seen Nothing yet. To the One of Tao, Nothing is impossible.

## THE TAO OF DRUMMING DTAO

The DTAO, Drum Tao, is the Source of the BANG (In the beginning was the BANG, THE BIG BANG), (Yang) and the Not-BANG (Yin). The Not-BANG is eternal and of heaven. The BANG is transitory and of the earth. The BANG has

birth and death. The combination of BANG and Not-BANG make up the “BEAT”, which also has a beginning, birth, and an end, death. For the BEAT to be in harmony, BEAT and Not-BEAT must be in balance. The DTAOer is simple, and hence bases his BEAT to his center, his heart, his heart-BEAT, a basic 4/4 with alterations of tempo to suit his intuition and feeling, both dependent on his mood. Chaos, or noise, happens when he loses this connection, usually due to an overpowering mind, self-consciousness, trying to play someone else’s BEAT, or possession. The BEAT cannot be described, but it arises on its own. It always was, is and will be, as the DTAO is eternal and is constantly and spontaneously generating and regenerating the BEAT. Whenever the BEAT seems to be “lost”, a simple quieting of the mind (BE STILL) will bring it back, just stop and listen. Or put your ear on a mother’s breast and start playing. The DTAOer plays and becomes ONE with the BEAT. The DTAOist is the BEAT, and becomes NONE with it. The BEAT seems to come from out of the Ground, and is the Ground of Being.

The Not-BANG is the Root of the BANG.

The Silence is the Source of the Sound.  
Thus the DTAOer drums all night  
Without leaving his BEAT.  
No matter how far he travels,  
How splendid the views, he drums  
serenely on.

Why should the Master Drummer allow  
other DTAOs to foolishly affect him,  
moving him carelessly to and fro?

If you let yourself be carried away by  
other BEATs, you lose touch with your own.

If we depart from the DTAO, we become  
engaged in futile activities which lead to the  
Abyss of Choronzon, The Demon of  
Dispersion. Core – O – Zone



# The Gatherings

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Magicians don't do magic and Witches don't study! This was a truism a mere 10–15 years ago. It's not true any longer.

It was about a decade ago that I went to my first festival. Well, actually it was just an open circle. Today that doesn't seem remarkable, but back then it seemed like taking a big chance. "What if the fundamentalists come down on us? Will the police raid us?" I wondered in my post Vietnam, post Watergate paranoia.

The local newspaper wouldn't accept our advertising money. We had to print up flyers and post them in areas from which we thought we might attract people. We left flyers at the local occult shops.

---

There are few, if any,  
independent magical groups  
who live autonomously from  
society.

---

I wondered what would happen. Would no one show up? Would one group try to take over the event?


One hundred twenty people were there for the ritual. It was the biggest meeting I had ever seen. There were Wiccans from a variety of traditions. There were also ceremonial magicians and Thelemites. After the Wiccan ritual there was a huge picnic. There was laughter, teasing, and people having a good time. Nobody took themselves too seriously.

There was no great passing of wisdom that day, at least not in the obvious sense. The ritual was simply an enactment of part of the myth of the Wheel of the Year; nothing new here. For the picnic, people split into obvious groups—a coven here, a temple there with solitaires dotting the hillside. Individuals wandered from site to site, sat and talked for awhile, then moved on to talk with another group.

And that's what was learned, that's what was special. For the first time many of us saw ourselves as a magical community, not as a bunch of small and sometimes bickering groups. There are few, if any, independent magical groups who live autonomously from society. For a few minutes, we were one.

It is my belief that the major source of wars and disagreements in the future will be from fundamentalists—Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Hindu, Shinto, Buddhist and even Pagan and magical. Here in the U.S., the major group trying to force everyone to believe as they do is the leadership of the fundamentalist Christians. Now that they no longer have the "Evil Empire" to hate, they must turn their hatred (By definition all fundamentalists must hate anything outside of their belief system and be willing to fight it. Without this hatred, fundamentalism falls apart.) elsewhere.

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They are doing this by attacking all occultists as being evil Satanists. Who will stand against their lies?

Individuals have tried. Usually they have surprising success considering that they also tend to have limited funds. The fundamentalists, however, are becoming more clever. The goal of the fundamentalists is now to infiltrate the government at the local level, not at the level where you have to actually hear what they think and believe. In some areas, such as California, they are very active in this.

What can one person do? Not much against this sort of onslaught.

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It is this feeling of  
community that can last and  
help support you when you  
are feeling alone.

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But we are not individuals. We are a magical community. Sure, get 50 Pagans together and they'll show you 75 different traditions. Then there's the different Thelemite groups: Caliphate, Typhonian, Motta's group and numerous others. And all those that claim to be the real Golden Dawn. Yikes! We will scream, yell and scrap. "As brothers [and sisters, I might add] fight ye!" says the Book of the Law.

Something unique happens, however, when these groups come together with nothing to prove: They all get along. (Well, most of them do. At least the others aren't openly hostile.) We share, we laugh, we love, we trade, we become—for a few days at least—a true community.

It is this feeling of community that can last and help support you when you are

feeling alone. It is this feeling of community that can give you strength when attacked. It is the networking done at festivals which can help give you new information, new insights, meet new people and help you on your magical path.

I have a good friend, a beautiful woman who is a writer. She is a Pagan. In fact, she functioned as High Priestess for my first Wiccan initiation. Currently she is in a place where she could not come out of the broom closet. Yet, she needed companionship on her spiritual path. She found (I kid you not!) the Catholic Church.

We talk from time to time and she tells me how she stands up for Wicca in her church and how the newer priests consider Wicca to be another world religion. Some of the older priests seem to fit in more with the Inquisition, but she will not deal with them.

I am happy that she has found companionship in her spirituality. After all, is calling on Mary so much different from calling on Diana? I wonder, however, whether her life might be different if she had occasionally attended a festival. Would that have given her the desire to stay with Wicca. Perhaps. Perhaps not. She is happy, now, and that is what matters.

Whether you are a solitary, a Pagan, follow a ceremonial path or one of the neo-magickal systems, I encourage you to go to a festival. Meet people. Network. Purchase supplies from people who are there. Live with others who are on a parallel spiritual path.

The rewards only begin when you leave the external world out.



# THE SED FESTIVAL; REJUVENATION AND LEGITIMACY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

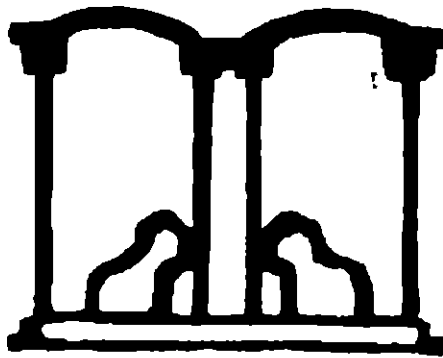
by Roy Jones

The power of the pharaohs of ancient Egypt rested on a fragile foundation. Agriculture, which was the basis of the Egyptian economy, was restricted to a narrow ribbon of land which straddled the Nile river. The annual flood kept the land fertile, but the waters were fickle, and variations of a few inches in the depth of the Nile's flood could sharply reduce the year's harvest, bringing famine and starvation. This was a serious problem for the pharaoh, who for his people, was the link between man and nature and an

embodiment of the divine. The throne names of the Egyptian kings proclaim their descent from and relationship with the members of the pantheon. For example, the titles of Senusert III included the following: "Horus, 'Divine of Forms'; ...Two Ladies\*, 'Divine of Births'; ...Son of Re, ...Granted life and wealth eternally." This formula of land and divinity was essential to the pharaoh's right to rule, and was at the heart of the Sed festival. The Sed festival was a rejuvenation of the king's "Ka", or vital force, and his connection with the gods and the land. In sum, the Sed festival was a renewal of the king's rulership.

Sed has been called a "thirty-year festival", and though Sed festivals were commonly held about the time of the pharaoh's thirtieth regnal year, there are records of Sed's being held much sooner in a pharaoh's reign, and some pharaohs celebrated several Sed's at shorter intervals after the first "thirty-year" Sed. Rameses II ruled for sixty-seven years and held fourteen Sed's. Historians are uncertain how or when it was decided to hold a Sed, in fact, specific records of Sed festivals are rare. Our

knowledge of the practice is based on hundreds of pieces of fragmentary evidence from carvings and inscriptions from a number of tombs and temple sites, some as early as the First Dynasty.



Graphic by Catherine Cartwright-Jones

The Sed was a great undertaking, sometimes involving the construction and dedication of a new temple and outdoor ritual space. All the gods who were to be acknowledged during the festival travelled in state to the temple, along with their associated priests. Their reception was an occasion of high ceremony in itself. Henri Frankfort, in "Kingship and the Gods", quotes a high priest of the vulture-goddess Nekhbet, who describes the "...reception of the front hawser of the divine bark by the king in person..." when Nekhbet's boat arrived at the festival site. The pharaoh's family, the nobles, court officials, and guests also had to be housed and fed for several days in special

accommodations prepared for the festival.

The Sed festival must have involved a great deal of historical research. Lawrence Berman of the Department of Ancient Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art, in an article for the catalog of an upcoming exhibition of art from the time of

“Akhenaten, the Heretic King”, suggests that the coronation ceremony followed an elaborate series of processions, which included visits to each of the chapels of the gods in “the court of the Great Ones”. There, the pharaoh made offerings to each of the gods over a period of several days and received their blessings. After he had been



Graphic by Catherine Cartwright-Jones

Amenhotep III, cites two inscriptions from Amenhotep’s time which show that his officials carefully studied the paintings and inscriptions describing the Sed festivals of his predecessors as a guide to designing his own rejuvenation rites.

Because the records of the Sed festivals are, at best, sketchy, the exact order of service is unknown, but scholars agree that two events formed the core of the Sed festival. The first was the re-enactment of the pharaoh’s coronation. Egyptologist Donald B. Redford, in his book

accepted and confirmed by the gods, the king was crowned on a dais which held two thrones. Both Redford and Frankfort point out that the hieroglyph representing the Sed festival shows two identical thrones, back to back, each under a pavilion. The king received the Red Crown of Lower Egypt on one throne, and the White Crown of Upper Egypt on the other. After he was crowned, the king received the homage of the members of the royal family, officers of the court, and official guests.

The other central event in the Sed

festival was the "Ritual of Territorial Claim" or "The Dedication of the Field". This is variously described as a race, a dance or a procession in which the pharaoh made his way around the ceremonial field, or between a pair of markers set in the ground. In either case, the area through which the pharaoh moved was symbolic of the whole of Egypt. During this ceremony he carried in one hand the royal flail, in the other he held a document called "The Secret of the Two Partners". This alludes to one of the most important of the founding myths of the Egyptian empire, the battle between Horus, the son of Osiris, and Seth, who murdered Osiris. Their feud was settled by the earth-god Geb, who divided the land between them, but then gave the whole country to Horus, declaring him the legitimate successor as the eldest son of the dead king. The reigning pharaoh was an earthly manifestation of Horus, so "The Secret of the Two Partners" was, in effect, his deed to the land of both Egyptian kingdoms.

As the pharaoh made the circuit of the ceremonial field, he chanted "I have run holding the Secret of the Two Partners...I have passed through the land and touched its four sides. I run through it as I desire." The image of the king striding the land and thus laying claim to it is, like the double pavilion, a symbol of the Sed festival itself, as well as a graphic affirmation of the pharaoh's rulership.

These and the other rites performed at Sed festivals had magical as well as symbolic value. C. J. Bleeker, in his monograph "Egyptian Festivals", points out that magic lay at the heart of all the most important religious ceremonies in ancient Egypt. Bleeker goes so far as to say that an appreciation of the Egyptian concept of magic is essential to an understanding of

ritual acts such as the Sed festival. When viewed in a magical context, even the simplest acts in the Sed festival become powerfully significant. Henri Frankfort says the lavish gifts which the pharaoh gave to his nobles and others who attended the festival were "...not merely rewards for past services or the price for future loyalty; the king in dispensing bounty, casts the spell of prosperity over the future and demonstrates the effectiveness of his royalty." The field used for the "Ritual of the Territorial Claim" was not simply symbolic of the land of Egypt; by an act of sympathetic magic, it was the land of Egypt.

In any discussion of the rights of kingship in ancient Egypt, it is easy to become lost in details of myth, magic and religion, and lose sight of an important point; the pharaohs were rulers of a large, wealthy and powerful state with trade and political links that ran as far as the Balkans and Mesopotamia. This meant that the pharaohs had a huge burden of domestic and international political responsibilities: Taxes and import duties had to be collected and accounted for; public works projects had to be carried out and paid for. In addition, vassal states had to be kept under control, and the country's own borders and ports had to be secured. This required a well-trained, well-equipped and loyal army and an extensive civil bureaucracy.

In order to maintain his position, a national leader must be recognized as legitimate. In a modern republic, legitimacy is conferred by election to office for a period determined by a written constitution. In ancient Egypt, the pharaoh ruled by a combination of hereditary right and divine election. Any dispute over heredity could be settled as long as accurate records were kept and the rules clearly spelled out. Whether the pharaoh had the support of



the gods was a more difficult question to answer.

The pharaoh represented Egypt itself, and, as did many of his fellow rulers of the ancient world, through his association with the gods, he came to represent the fertility of the land. If the crops failed, or the Nile flood was too high or too low, the people would naturally look to the king to do something about it. Although there is no evidence in ancient Egypt of the sort of ritual regicide which was the fate of some ancient rulers when they were considered to have failed at the task, the pharaohs must surely have worried about the stability of their governments when they were threatened with famine or the herds failed to increase.

Calamities of this sort were likely to be seen as a weakening of the pharaoh's "Ka", his vital force. Ka is a complex concept, and simplifying it is risky, but if the pharaoh's Ka could be viewed as having had a number of attributes, one of them being his ability to marshal the forces of nature for the good of his people, it follows that the pharaoh was responsible for good harvests and fertile herds and flocks. If we accept this idea, then Eva Meyerowitz's notion that the Sed festival might have been held after a series of poor harvests makes good sense. In her book "The Divine Kingship in Ghana and Ancient Egypt", Professor Meyerowitz suggests that the Sed served the dual purpose of renewing the pharaoh's Ka and his relationships with the gods, as well as "...reasserting his dominance over the land as its lawful ruler." It seems reasonable to assume that one intent of the Sed festival was to persuade all Egypt that the pharaoh had the backing of the powers of both heaven and earth. The sight of the king in full regalia, having been magically rejuvenated by the most powerful gods of

the pantheon, accepting the loyalty oaths of the leading citizens of the land as well as kings of neighboring countries must surely have served as a deterrent to anyone with thoughts of a coup d'etat or assassination on his mind. Likewise, the royal largesse showered on the pharaoh's nobles and other dignitaries would have been symbolic of the great resources he had at his command, and helped discourage any rebellious lords or vassals.

Modern heads of state have the same concerns as the pharaohs and attempt to deal with them in similar fashion. They display symbols of their position and power when they are acting officially. Some national leaders wear military uniforms as daily dress or on state occasions, identifying themselves with the state's legal coercive power. Even those who wear simple business suits still are often seen surrounded by senior military officers. The connection between church and state is now tenuous or absent in most modern states, but national leaders still know how and when to use religious imagery to sway their audiences, as Saddam Hussein did during the Gulf crisis, even though he is a thoroughly secular leader. Also, a tax break of some sort is an almost obligatory tactic for an American president attempting to be re-elected. While a few hundred dollars a year more in take-home pay hardly compares to the pharaoh's largesse, the intent is much the same.

Although there was apparently no firm rule that a pharaoh had to be on the throne for thirty years before holding his first Sed festival, the Sed could have been a valuable tool for a long-reigning king. Life expectancy in ancient Egypt was considerably shorter than in modern industrial countries. A man who had come to the throne as a teenager would have been

considered aging if not old by the time he had ruled thirty years. Once again the state of the king's Ka would have been considered questionable, especially if he had had any problems with his health. A Sed festival would have given a pharaoh of advanced years an opportunity to show himself as still strong and vigorous through his ability to perform a lengthy series of rituals and project a commanding presence from the double throne.

Here too we can find a parallel with modern rulers. American presidents and those who would like to be presidents sometimes seem to go out of their way to demonstrate how healthy they are. Videotape of presidential candidates jogging has become standard fare in national campaigns. George Bush's collapse at a formal dinner in Japan received coverage and comment in the press worthy of a national crisis. The Cultural Revolution in China gave us the image of Mao Zedong

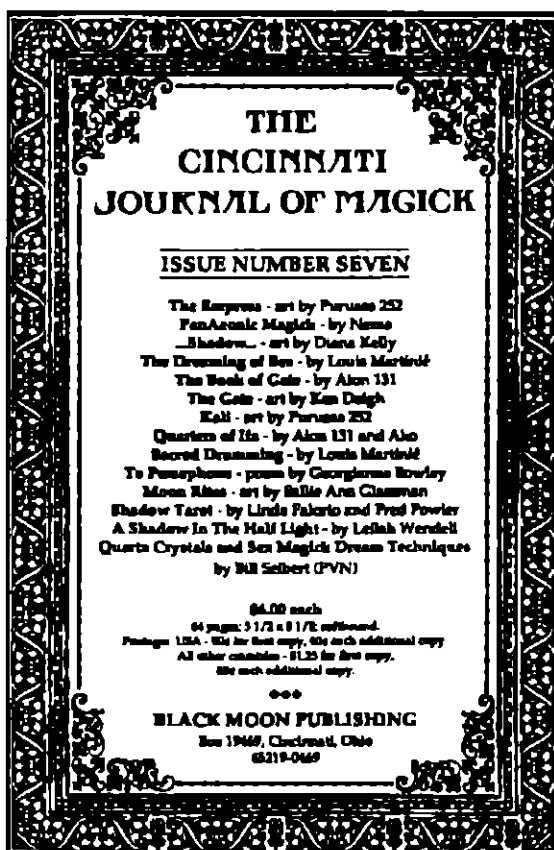
making his famous (or spurious) swim in the Yangtze River to show that he was not dead or dying as many believed he was.

The difference between the pharaohs and modern politicians is that the pharaohs lived in an age of belief and had at their disposal an ancient magical and religious tradition which strongly influenced all the population. Ours is a time of skepticism when leaders find it more difficult to touch the national psyche, and many Westerners are deeply suspicious of the mixing of politics and religion. The royal festivals of Egypt, on the other hand, were intended to establish and demonstrate the pharaoh's supreme role both as political leader of the empire and mediator of divine power to a people who believed that it was right that both these powers reside in one person. So the Sed festival would have been worth its great expense and effort if for no other reason than to persuade the people that they were ruled by a man who had the gods on his side.

\*The "Two Ladies" are Nekhbet, the vulture-goddess of Upper Egypt and Wadjet, the cobra-goddess of Lower Egypt.

Roy Jones is a freelance journalist and a graduate student in political science at Kent State University.

This article was prepared with the kind assistance of Lawrence Berman, curatorial assistant in the Department of Ancient Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art.



# 1992 FESTIVAL

Date	Cost	Event	Location	Description	Contact
5/1-3	\$55 \$75 at door	Beltane Seminar	Tampa, FL	Lectures with Church of Wicca, G. & Y. Frost, Ray Buckland, Scott Cunningham, D. M. Kraig	<b>Merlin's Books</b> 2568 E. Fowler Ave. Tampa, FL 33612 (813) 972-1766
5/20-25	*	Rites of Spring	W. MA area	Rituals, workshops, music, bonfire drumming, etc. (617) 395-1023	<b>EarthSpirit</b> P O Box 365 Medford, MA 02155
5/21-25	\$55 till 5/10 \$70 at door	ELF Fest	"Lothlorien" Bloomington, Indiana	Rituals, workshops, etc. in celebration of the Great Mother	<b>ELF</b> P O Box 1082 Bloomington, Indiana 47402
5/23-25	*	Wolf Song	West Point, TX	International conference of indigenous Elders, with ceremonies, teaching lodge, prophecies, etc.	<b>Thunder-horse ranch</b> Rt. 1, Box 87C West Point, TX 78963 (409) 242-5475
6/10	*	Memorial to Salem Victims	Salem, MA	Dedication of permanent memorial to victims of Salem witchcraft hysteria	<b>Salem Witch Trial Tercentenary</b> (508) 745-9595
6/10-14	\$55 \$60 after 5/29	LumensGate	"Brushwood" New York St. nr. Erie, PA	5 days of transformative work & play! Rituals, workshops, feast, bonfire. All nite drum & dance.	<b>N'Chi</b> P O Box 19566 Cin, OH 45219 (513) 791-0344
6/15-21	*	Pagan Spirit Gathering	W. Wisconsin	Rituals, workshops, music networking, bonfires, etc. (608) 924-2216	<b>Circle</b> P O Box 219 Mt. Horeb, WI 53572
6/17-21	*	Goddess Gathering	Cambridge, OH	Rituals, workshops, etc.	<b>Temple of Wicca</b> 817 1/2 Park St. Findlay, OH 45840
6/18-21	\$55 \$65 4/1-6/1	Free Spirit Fest	N. Maryland	Rituals, workshops, music networking, dancing, drumming, etc. Must pre-register by 6/1 to attend.	<b>FSA</b> P O Box 5358 Laurel, MD 20726 (301) 604-6049
6/19-21	\$35 \$45 after 6/1	Solstice/ Sun Fest	Bloomington, Indiana area	Rite of Solstice, workshops, Gnostic Mass Feast. Pay w/ checks payable to CASH.	<b>Illuminati of Indiana</b> P. O. Box 5793 Bloomnt'n, IN 47407
7/3-9	*	Wise Woman Trad Apprentice Week	Asheville, NC	Herbs, Women's Wisdom	<b>Whitewolf</b> P O Box 576 Asheville, NC 28802
7/10-12	*	Suntide	New England	Summer pagan beach party feast, rituals, workshops. (617) 395-1023	<b>EarthSpirit</b> P O Box 365 Medford, MA 02155

# CALENDAR 1992

Date	Cost	Event	Location	Description	Contact
7/10-12	*	Planet Fest	Bloomington, IN area	Global perspective Earth Fair	EPX P O Box 1328 Bloomington, Indiana 47402
7/21-26	*	Starwood	"Brushwood" New York St. nr. Erie, PA	Rituals, workshops, music, bonfires, drumming, fun, ecstatic dance, fireworks partying, etc.	ACE 1643 Lee Rd. #9 Cleveland Hts., OH 44118 (216)932-5421
7/29-8/2	\$50 at door \$55 per night (hotel rm.)	Ecumenicon	College Park Maryland	Rituals, workshops, etc. Neopagan, Oriental, Mystic Christian & other paths. (301) 345-6700	Ecumenicon P O Box 249 15106A Frederick Rd. Rockville, MD 20850
7/31-8/2	\$25 \$30 after 7/4	Balefire Lammas Rites	Central Indiana	Workshops, past life, path working, drumming, Spiral Dance-Wicca	Whitewater Valley Grove P O Box 1728 Richmond, IN 47374
8/6-10	\$20-35 per night til 6/1	CAW Grand Convocation	N. California	Church of All Worlds festival w/ rituals, music, drumming, dancing.	Tom Williams 1669 Nelson Rd. #10 Scotts Val, CA 95066
8/12-16	*	Pan Pagan Festival	N. Indiana	Rituals, workshops, music, camping, etc.	Midwest Pagan Con. P O Box 160 Western Spr, IL 60558
8/13-17	*	Dragonfest	Colorado area	Rituals, workshops, etc.	TBA
9/17-20	\$50 \$65 after 9/6	Wild Magick	Bloomington, IN area	Share the Green Dream rituals, workshops, etc.	ELF P O Box 1082 Bloomington IN 47402
9/18-22	*	Gathering of the Tribes	N. Georgia	Earth Religions leadership conference / Conference on the Goddess and the God	(404) 429-9252
8/19-23	*	Within the Temple of Isis	Denver, CO	Traditional Egyptian initiation techniques, with Temple of Isis	Karen Carbonneau 836 Mirian St. Denver, CO 80218
Fall '92	*	Alban Elvid Festival	Central Maryland	Festival of the Harvest celebrated in the Old Ways, workshops, rituals dance, drumming, music	Alban Elvid Fest c/o P O Box 5128 Laurel, MD 20726
10/9-12	*	Twilight Covering	New England	Heavy structured magical ritual weekend (617) 395-1023	EarthSpirit P O Box 365 Medford, MA 02155

\* Information not available to us at time of publication.

Special thanks to Larry Cornett for his work in providing the community with this festival calendar.

# OCCULTURE

## Part One: The Rebels of Imagination

by Antero Alli

*(Author's Notes: As a part-time astrologer and media-maker, I am fascinated by the timing of events and the people who find themselves there. The following speculations, observations and opinions are fragments of a larger unspeakable perception, of what I see as an emerging subcultural rebellion, or "occulture." What initially informed me of these possibilities was a previous knowledge of an astrological transit involving the Uranus/Neptune conjunctions in Capricorn, continuing between 1991 and 1995. I did not, however, wish to write another "astrological" essay about the symbolism of this planet or that sign. Instead, I've chosen to share my own interpretations in "common English" while keeping the astrology in perspective as subtext. For the astrological meanings, please refer to my book, ASTROLOGIK, especially the chapter entitled "Transits to Post-History.")*

Someday, in the not-too-distant future, certain drugs will be made available to the public that have the effect of increasing intelligence. Given the opportunity to partake, what would you do? I'd probably ask the pharmacist: "What kind of intelligence is your pill going to increase?" Like many others schooled in public education systems, I once naively assumed "intelligence" and "I.Q." were synonymous with "intellect" and "intellectual achievement" alone, until further research suggested a more plural definition of the terms. (Please refer to my book, ANGEL TECH, which reinterprets Dr. Timothy Leary's "Eight Circuit" whole-brain model

for re-mapping intelligence as eight interactive centers, or "brains" within us: Physical, emotional, intellectual, social, sensory, psychic, mythic and spiritual intelligences.)

Ever since the emergence and deification of the species own "genius of intellect" over the past several hundred years (Newton, Descartes, the "Age of Enlightenment, etc.), our faculty of imagination—and its latent "genius of intuition"—has all but been systematically devalued, demoralized and destroyed. As author Robert Anton Wilson suggests, "We are born as giants and raised as dwarves." From kindergarten through university levels, students are well-trained to posit *a priori* status on knowns over unknowns, and are rewarded accordingly; the highest grades are granted to those minds retaining the greatest volume of known data. Those who survive the public education systems with their imaginations intact are fortunate souls, indeed.

Outside traditional learning institutions, somewhere between the global mythologies of Joseph Campbell and the iconoclastic Illuminati conspiracies of Robert Anton Wilson, is an "invisible college" espousing hybrid forms of art and occult knowledge, referred to hereafter as "occulture." The academic credentials of its teachers are questionable; some have no degree, others never graduated from grade school. Most are self-taught in the school of life, as it 'twere, after passing the prerequisite tests inherent to survival in the real world; more often than not, this has meant psychic survival, as well as economic. As a result of competing political forces, many of these

“teachers” remain anonymous or assume the camouflage of pseudonyms. It’s surprising how many find sanctuary as “poets, artists and musicians” especially those who do not call themselves “poets, artists or musicians.” Yet, all seem to share an allegiance with the occultural driving force of an enraged imaginative intelligence, rebellious to the over-literalization of traditional culture, while adamant about nurturing its own microcultures and subcultures into existence.

This very spirit of imagination demands the redefinition of intelligence, if only to begin thinking like twentieth century brains, instead of eighteenth or nineteenth century ones. Intelligence thrives on information. Before the twentieth century, the most widely accepted and scientific definition of “information” was the common-sense process of accumulating known data; knowledge was inert, predictable, and easily categorized. The universe, or so it was thought, could be mapped out in surgical precision like some *deux machina* that followed logical and “natural” laws. How many of us still think this way?

At the turn of the twentieth century, Einstein, Heisenberg, and Schroedinger, amongst others, turned the world of intelligence on its ear; the world, according to the new physics and quantum mechanics, is infinitely more mysterious and strange than ever previously imagined. One outcome of this important update was the redefinition of what constituted “information.” In light of living in a universe of greater uncertainties, information was redefined as “the unpredictability of a message.” This means, the more unpredictable the message, the more information there is in it. At this point, author William Burroughs’ axiom

from NAKED LUNCH “Nothing is true; everything is permitted” might’ve made terrible sense to the cutting edge scientific community.

## When Data Became Dada

If information was no longer the known statistics of dead data, but fresh experience—spontaneous, unknown and alive—then twentieth century culture began with its creative assimilation. What the scientist finds out through thinking, the artist discovers through new ways of perceiving, hearing and feeling. While Einstein made scientific history with his theory of relativity and Heisenberg with his uncertainty principle, the Surrealist “dada” revolution (Dali, Cocteau, Satie, etc.), James Joyce’s omnicultural “Finnegan’s Wake,” and the music of Jazz brought the living experience to the people. Both scientists and artists recognized this dynamic shift from a “reality” that was once “predictable, solid and set” to one that seemed wilder, more plural, malleable and unfathomable. To those minds awakening from the slumber of nineteenth century “certainty” trance, our so-called “reality” entered the realm of immeasurable possibilities with countless interpretations. Any culture failing to assimilate this transformation in perception, never enters the twentieth century, let alone, the twenty-first.

## Wanted: Marginal Men & Women

After the bombing of Hiroshima, every American decade has seen and felt consecutive shock waves of occultural rebellion: The fifties’ beat generation, the

sixties' hippies, the seventies' punk rockers, the eighties' entrepreneurial new agers, the nineties' neoanarchists and cyber-artists. These movements trickled in from the peripheral fringes of mainstream society, propelled by occultural revolutionaries unable and/or unwilling to conform to the sociopolitical standards of their time. As "outsiders", they thrive on the fringes of their local cultural gene pools, where the new forms, the new rituals and the new traditions spring forth and find expression. These fringe dwellers cultivate their own idiosyncratic microcultures, no matter how short lived. While interacting with kindred spirits, individual microcultures may develop momentum and the critical mass necessary for the germination of genuine subcultures.

Marginal men and women contribute to the subculture of their time by their very placement at the grassroots' levels of society, working in the secrecy (hence, "occult") necessary for their cultural survival in a world of competing ideologies. Since the fifties, the early years of every decade have tended to show signals and characteristics common to their future fruition. Here, in the early nineties, these preliminary signals seem to suggest a more transparent and diversified nature; the occultural revolution of the nineties may be harder to track, hence, harder to crack. One theory I have about where to look for its emergence is in the breakdown not so much of Communism, Capitalism and Christianity—although these are probably viable symptoms—but the dismantling of the very type of mind it took to dream these sociopolitical and economic factors into existence in the first place.

For the sake of metaphor, let's assume that the "intellectual genius of humanity" has dominated euro-american thinking and

its world view since the eighteenth century and that humanity's own latent and oppressed "poetic genius" has risen up against its tyrannical other half. Imagine now, such a conflict in your own mind and one might get the impression of insanity, or a brain at odds with itself; paranoid, schizophrenic even. Now, picture the world at large.

Sanity, on an individual and group level, may depend on how "quantumized" our thinking and world view is. This amounts to the degree a given individual and/or group mind is: 1) Flexible enough to permit more uncertainty, and 2) Imaginative enough to handle the inherent anxiety, creatively. In the face of this world's increasing entropy, our psychic and cultural survival may depend on it. The nineties' occultural revolution also seems more characterized by socioeconomic crisis than, let's say, the sixties' more sociopolitical revolution. The nineties are the sixties turned upside down; the current crisis is as caught up in material "economic" consumer identification, as the sixties were with personal freedom and political rights.

## The Time of Your Life

So much money was made and spent in the eighties that the economic crisis of the nineties is turning into a virtual crisis in consciousness itself, if only because Reaganomics made it too easy to become a little—or a lot—crazy about money. If the eighties had "money on the brain", then the nineties are about getting our brains back again, before it's too late. This is why I'm calling this "post-information age" nineties era, a Consciousness Revolution. Perhaps the most insidious pill our individual and group minds have swallowed whole is this Dead Data assumption that time and money



are synonymous. Is time really money? That probably depends on which model of Time you're on. Did you know there was more than one?

On one end of the chronological spectrum, time is not money; it is the measure of your life, as in "the time of your life." The measurement of nature—the thirteen lunar cycles, the solar eclipses, the seasonal shifts—is as close as it gets to "galactic" time, the time which knows no beginning or end but a metamorphosis of duration. At the other extreme, there's the 60 second/60 minute/12 month manmade organization of available time into measurable bits and pieces, usually connected with the punch-clock of employment; time as commercial regulation.

To the extent we have identified with the latter "Gregorian calendar" as the only model of Time, yes, time is probably indistinguishable from money. The five-day work week—with weekends off—is more of a "smokestack economic calendar" maintained by participating governments as an economic incentive for social control. Like money itself, this calendar is a manmade mental construct. It is symbolic; not real. Those who have lost touch with this distinction have already lost their minds to some extent. International advertising moguls and mass media geniuses have also effectively conditioned the public/collective mind to becoming a little—or a lot—more nuts about money, insofar as its purchasing power is concerned. From the commercialization of Christmas to the neuroelectronic Nintendo warriors, the minds of adults and children alike belong to the most successful advertisers.

The nineties occultural revolution—spearheaded by the species

own poetic genius and the artists unleashing its forces—is striking blows and dents in the bloated consumer mind; first, in small pockets and then, infiltrating greater media outlets (more on this later) effecting change by the gradual reclaiming of our collective consciousness from its misplaced identification with rampant consumerism. If that sounded too idealistic, how about this: After science cures cancer, AIDS and cardiac disease, the ailments of the future will be—almost—entirely mental. Are people ready to openly suffer from information overdose?

Can a mind close down and die from INFO O.D.? A mind does not get sick from the oversaturation of information, but from the oversaturation of the wrong kind of information. The mass media's appeal towards the trivialization of all things, force-feeds the psyche increasing dosages of arbitrary "facts" to assure its over-literalization and an early imagination death. As depth psychologist James Hillman points out (*BLUE FIRE: Selected Writings*) without the play of an active and world-involved imagination, the life of a soul is not only severely limited, but questionable at all; imagination death precedes the death of the soul.

*(End of OCCULTURE: Part One. Part Two of OCCULTURE: Media Conspiracies and the Truth About Evil...to follow in the next issue of MEZLIM.)*



# The Neophyte's Niche

*Why this article? After assisting in the production of the last two issues of Mezlim and reading untold numbers of other interesting (!) periodicals, I found myself drawn to this thing called Magick. Kenn and I talked. What would be more natural, we thought, than for a person new to Magick to write an article dealing with basic questions. Questions that may not be obvious to the experienced practitioner but are nonetheless pertinent, informative and thought provoking. So this column was born.*

*Since this will be a regular feature, I am asking you, our readers, for feed-back; questions, comments, and of course, criticism.*

*Thank-you,*

*Donna Blake  
Editorial Assistant  
Mezlim*

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## Why Magick?

Magick. The word conjures up images of mystery, ritual, and power. It has intrigued me these last few months. Reading so many new and different magazines and newsletters has filled my mind with questions -What? Who? Where? How? But the most persistent question has been-Why?

Why practice Magick? What draws people to this path over the many other available disciplines? So I asked some practitioners with whom I have recently

become acquainted (with some help from the Editor). Some names you will recognize, others are not so well known. Their answers range from brief and to the point, to verbose and profound. In all their different ways, though, they answer the question "Why Magick?"

**Bill Covert:** "We make our own magic every day. We create our lives and all that goes on in them. That is magic(k). Most people aren't conscious of this basic fact, so their creating is done without direction. The results are very apparent around us. By practicing the discipline of Magick, I learn the techniques to consciously create my life instead of it being a haphazard happening."

**Diane Tabor:** "Like most people, I have travelled a distance on various spiritual paths. Each one had much to teach me about life and about myself. Yet none of these paths were mine. Someone else had lived them and mapped them. When I tried to fit myself into these systems, I found they did not really meet my needs. Something was missing."

The Magick I practice is unique among the systems I have tried. Rather than trying to fit myself into a ready made system, I am working to find my own path. The one which naturally expresses my higher Will. This is a path which allows me to share my own unique experience in a community of magicians—exploring, seeking, working, and sharing knowledge—all finding their own unique path to personal growth."

**Rick Peters:** "I incorporate all I learn into a belief system that, I feel, offers me

the most effective means of becoming whole - Magick is only part of that path. Ceremonial Magick affects both the internal and the external aspects of our world. It deals with forces psychology only eludes to and uses these forces to facilitate change. Basically, it gives a person a more direct strategy to becoming a whole being. Symbols form a bridge from the conscious to the unconscious. Magick ceremonial rituals with their adherent symbols and archetypes bring the conscious and subconscious in line. This is a much more direct and real approach than theology because both internal and external forces are at work."

**Keter Elan:** "To learn how to pull rabbits out of a hat. Oh, wrong magic!

To put it simply—because it works. If you accept the Sheya definition of Magick as "the intentional process of self-transformation" and the premise that we are here to grow and engage in self-actualization, then Magick is a way to embark on this process. It's not the only process, of course, for example, there is psychological therapy. But Magick is a valid choice—it works, it's readily accessible, and anyone can do it. It comes back to the reason you believe you are here on earth. Are you here to remain static, gain forgiveness or stay fixed? Then don't do Magick, it will make you crazy! On the other hand, if you are in a life process of growth and self-actualization, Magick is an efficient, effective method to reach your goal."

**Don Michael Kraig:** "I feel it's the same thing as the Declaration of Independence. We are endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights. Working with Magick to change our environment is one of these rights. Most people don't make use of their rights. Similarly, most people don't use Magick. When we fulfill our

potential as human beings by using the occult or any means of transformation, we are involved in the eugenics of the Mass Mind. The human race is in a constant state of evolution. Unfortunately, the concept of forced physical evolution has been maligned by the connection with the Nazis during WW II. The reality is as a magician changes—spiritually, intellectually, or physically—their chemical and biological structure also undergo a corresponding change. The result is expansion—not only of the Magician—but of the entire human race. The difference between the Nazi concept of forced evolution and Magick lies in the use of force—not the force of weapons, but the force of Will. Not only do Magicians achieve their potential, but they aid mankind in ultimately evolving toward the achievement of a greater universal society."

**Lisa Peschel:** "I became involved with Magick and Wicca because I always felt like a misfit growing up. No one understood me. At thirteen, I began reading Stewart Farrar's "What Witches Do". Mythology had always appealed to me and a dualistic view of the deity made sense. I had found something I could relate to. I ran away to California at fifteen and came in contact with Wiccans and ceremonial Magicians. It felt natural to study with them. I was accepted as an equal. I had always felt out of control. As a Magician, I learned to take responsibility for my world and change it with the use of my Will. I learned to take charge of elemental forces and thus take charge of the universe.

At one point in my process, I decided to give Christianity another chance. I never felt a connection with God or Jesus, though. One very stormy night, I was feeling so alone and so fearful that I called out to God, to Jesus - I received nothing.

I called out to Isis—instantly, I felt warm, safe, and protected. Isis was there holding me. I have never reconsidered my beliefs since. “Whatever works” is my motto. I have a good job. I have published a book. My life has been driven by Magick for the last eighteen years. It works!”

**Kenn Deigh:** “I believe that the basic desire to practice Magick is rooted in the primal urge to evolve. This desire marks the cutting edge of society. Whether they call it Science, Art, Magick or Mysticism—it’s all about mapping new territory for Human expansion. (Of course, there are many forms of these same practices that become hidebound and strive to maintain the status quo instead of reaching forward.)

Those of us who are drawn to Magick, are drawn for many reasons. Personally, it has to do with recognizing that we live in a cosmos that defies definition. We are constantly discovering how much we DON’T know about ourselves and the world we live in. Magick is a way of accepting this, and trying to work effectively within a world that is beyond rational comprehension. It allows me to utilize my intuition, rational mind and all my senses in an orchestrated manner; to bring about the changes that I desire within myself and my world.

In other words, I do Magick because I desire to come to an ever greater awareness of my Self; my universe; and, the relationship between them. Furthermore, I wish to be able to work effectively within this world, to bring about the changes I desire, in harmony with the whole. I wish to Do My Will; to become more fully Human; and, to do so in a way that reflects and expresses my own personal nature.”

Seven individuals answering the same question seven different ways. I’ve been warned that a group of fifty pagans will have one hundred different answers to the same question. Yet, even with the differences, a common thread runs through all the responses. Simply stated, if you want to transform yourself and your world, choose Magick. Why? Because it works! Of course, there are other paths that are just as valid. The one characteristic I have noted in MOST of the Magickal community is the tolerance for different beliefs. Ultimately, it is a personal choice.

As I was interviewing for this article, I was forced to look at my own beliefs about “Why?”. Not only in regards to Magick, but also concerning the relevance of my existence. Am I here to earn “X” amount of dollars, acquire knowledge, be fruitful and multiply? These are questions I have asked myself many times. But they took on new relevance during the creative process of writing this article. I have found some answers or, at least, hints to the direction in which I might find them. More and more, I find myself looking inward. More and more I find myself drawn to Magick. I need tools to explore my uncharted territory. Magick provides those tools. I need support in going through my growth process, a community of fellow travelers—a community of Magicians.

After one particularly interesting day of interviewing, I turned to Kenn and remarked, “You know, I’m going to have to start seriously getting into Magick.” With a laugh, he replied, “You already are!”

Oh...



# Standing Stones as Strange Attractors

## A Speculation

by Jaq D. Hawkins

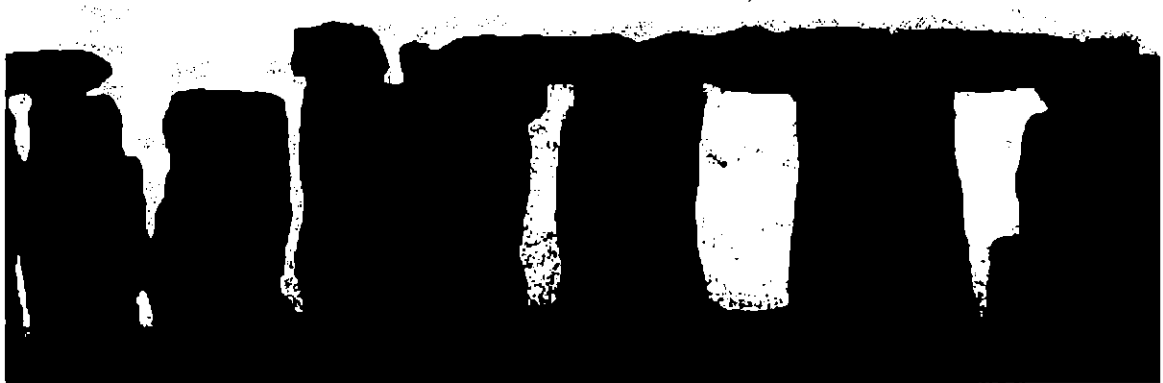
The science of chaos is of interest to many magicians. There are several books in print on the subject, two of which are listed in the sources section at the end of this article <sup>(1)</sup> <sup>(2)</sup>. For those who are unfamiliar with the subject, I offer a simplified explanation. In the 1960's and 70's, a few scientists began finding order within the disorder of natural phenomena, such as turbulence in the atmosphere and bodies of water, fluctuations in wildlife population, etc. They were mathematicians, physicists, biologists, chemists, all seeking connections between different types of irregularity.

They used computers to create special kinds of graphic images which capture the delicate structure underlying complexity in nature. They found that order arises spontaneously out of chaotic systems, and simple mathematical equations are used to model systems every bit as violent as a waterfall. Simple deterministic models could produce what looked like random behavior.

A scientist by the name of Edward Lorenz is credited with the discovery of the "strange attractor", which is a point in phase space which attracts the movements of molecules into spiral patterns. In chaotic systems, the molecules never follow the same path around the attractor, but create a pattern of folds within folds, always staying within a limited range. This can apply to any type molecule, fluids, gases or energy.

The original Lorenz Attractor shows a pattern where a molecule moves in a double-spiral path around two strange attractors. Other shapes were later created, but the data was always pulled into visible shapes. "Of all the possible pathways of disorder, nature favors just a few." <sup>(1)</sup>

For many centuries, science has been discovering explanations for things once called magic. It seems reasonable to theorize that our ancestors may have found a way to tap into the natural energy of the earth, depicting their mental images of this energy in diagrams. The inner-folding pathways depicted by the Lorenz diagrams brings to mind the labyrinth patterns depicted on the Glastonbury Tor and other neolithic sites. The patterns twist within themselves,



covering every bit of space within a constricted area, yet the paths never cross. Some of the spiral patterns surrounding a single attractor are reminiscent of the spiral patterns carved on ancient monoliths, known as “cup and ring” markings.

Scientists and archaeologists have been speculating on the purpose of standing stones and stone circles for many years. Some validity can be found for many different theories, the most widely accepted being for astronomical observation. While this theory seems to fit well with the positioning of the stones erected into circles, it does not explain the individual stones found in a wide variety of situations. Some of these stones have been credited as marking stones for old Roman roads, yet others are found standing in fields or other out of the way locations. These stones are often believed by the local population to have healing properties. Many people experience a “tingling” sensation when they touch the stones, and, in some cases, a violent rocking sensation that seems very powerful.

The dowser, John Williams, feels a representation of a positive and negative force. A Welsh water diviner, Bill Lewis, and John Taylor, professor of mathematics at Kings College, London, made an attempt to measure electromagnetic force on a stone in Crickhowell in South Wales (3). They used an instrument called a “gaussmeter”, which is used to measure static magnetic field strength. A young Argentinian physicist, Dr. Eduardo Balanovski, went along to see if there was anything odd about the stone. When he pointed the meter toward the stone, the needle shot up to capacity. Not only did the stone have a measurable energy field, but the strength could be measured in bands around the stone that suggested a spiral pattern.

There has not been enough “proper” scientific research on this subject to draw any hard conclusions, but the evidence seems to point to these stones somehow acting as amplifiers for natural energy currents within the Earth. There is some evidence that these stones are placed above points where two or more underground streams cross. Water moving through an underground tunnel creates a small electric charge. The charge is stronger where these streams cross. Keeping in mind the spiral patterns of turbulence, now measurable by chaos science methods, the theory exists that the stones are charged by this hydroelectric reaction. The molecular structure of quartz is spiral, and quartz seems to be a constituent of every “active” stone. Coincidence?

Modern man is always eager to believe that our ancestors were primitive animals, with nothing more important to think about than their next meal, but the evidence is increasingly pointing to a different picture. One where our ancestors had agricultural and building skills, mathematical and astronomical knowledge.

The next obvious step is to discover a way to tap into and use this energy spiralling around the stones. How and for what purpose did our ancestors use it? The answer to that question is yet to be discovered.

Sources:

- (1) *Chaos: Making a New Science*, by James Gleick.
- (2) *Turbulent Mirror*, by John Briggs & F. David Peat.
- (3) *Earth Magic*, by Francis Hitching.



# VOICE OF THE SHEYA

## An Interactive Magickal Forum

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### DHYANNA WORKING

by Keter Elan

I am seeking a deeper knowledge of Dhyanna, the Mother goddess of the Sheya pantheon. I “know” that She is Mother and Earth and All Form. The correspondences were outlined in the lesson, but She is also more.

I have been initiated into Her mysteries and “know” my body to be another of Her manifestations, the womb of the Earth to be Her home, but deeper understanding eludes me. Am I too preoccupied with worldly influences? Work has been extremely hectic for the past few months. My “daily” devotionals have been almost non-existent—my relationship with my body has grown distant.

In the midst of all this separation, I find the need to move more steadily toward union. Dhyanna represents the first step of my continued journey up the spiral path of my own personal process of transformation. I must experience some of Her deeper meanings!

I begin this process by dedicating a portion of my morning, every morning to a daily Temple working. External Temple and sometimes the Internal Temple as well, do I carve upon the constructs of my particular version of reality.

At first, my only experience within this

space is a sense of greater quiet and stillness, greater peace of mind and of body. I am becoming more centered. While this seems to help calm things at work, I wonder when or even if a deeper understanding of Dhyanna will arise.

As I continue with the daily workings, I encounter resistance to this process. At my most conscious and seemingly petulant level, I don't want to be “bothered” with this every day. Who am I kidding anyway with all this Magick stuff?

I concentrate on these feelings and realize that what I'm actually denying is my right to have time for my Self, my Work. I endeavor to give myself permission for this process, this particular journey. It becomes easier.

---

I am realizing that while my body is not perfect, it is beautiful.

---

I add an evocation of Dhyanna to my daily ritual and She enters my Temple—smiling, green, voluptuous goddess. I am drawn to Her, at first in a very sexual way; and, after several ineffectual attempts to address this feeling intellectually, I give in to my body and make love to Her/Myself. It is a very intense experience. As a result, I begin to feel more connected to my body.

I am realizing that while my body is not perfect, it is beautiful. My conscious,

worldly mind tends to reject this—after all, men don't chase me around at gatherings—but this realization is happening at a deeper level. I sense it, begin to feel it at my very center, but the words haven't formed yet and my "talkative" brain cannot grasp it.

I seek a burst of realization which will sweep me into full and complete acceptance of my body, an orgasm of gnosis. It doesn't happen. The process continues though. Maybe I'm too impatient.

My Dhyanna evocations are becoming more intense, particularly those that I do from within my Internal Temple. She seems to be expanding within my space, filling it, surrounding me—opening Herself to me. This is way beyond sex. I feel like I can see to the very core of the universe.

---

**"Pure" Dhyanna is an interface, a transition, a process.**

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I realize that Dhyanna is a personification of all that She represents—but what is the nature and extent of that "All"? I look deeper within Her, peeling away the layers.

Earth, body, form—that's the first layer. Building blocks within these—rocks, tissues, structures—another layer. Dhyanna is the beginning, the first point of existence. More layers—now I'm at the molecular level—but there's still Division, and therefore deeper levels, amongst the Forms within this layer.

I see atoms—but these are not the primal essence of Dhyanna because they in

turn are composed of electrons, neutrons, and protons with positive and negative charges (Maggah) binding them together (to form Khyatta). At what level does a particle become "just" a particle? Where does "pure" Dhyanna manifest?

Even in quantum mechanics a particle can be in all states at any time (Enochi) and is "fixed" in one state only by the act of observing it. How can I observe that which is purely and solely Dhyanna?

I find the core of Dhyanna and realize that Dhyanna in a "pure" state only exists theoretically—at the instant of time which is NO TIME—at the point of creation where form coalesces from the void and enters manifestation. "Pure" Dhyanna is an interface, a transition, a process.

I realize now that Dhyanna cannot exist alone. In Her many manifestations within this world, She is intrinsically interwoven with Maggah (energy, life force) and Khyatta (consciousness, uniqueness) to create Enochi (the Unity of all things).

To evoke Dhyanna is to specifically focus your attention on that aspect of Unity represented by form and structure. In this manner, I can become more aware of my issues and any blocks to my progress that center around that which Dhyanna represents.

My goal, for now, appears to have been reached. I have gained a deeper understanding of Dhyanna and therefore of everything She represents—including myself. And, with greater understanding comes a deeper love and appreciation for my Process. May it always be so.

Dhyanna, Ehya!

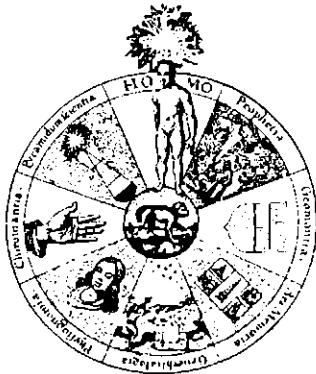


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# WISE GUY ASTROLOGY

## ARIES:

Most people know about the first two properties of fire, namely, illumination and heat. Very soon, if not now, a third property will avail itself to you in your dreams; that's the cryptic part of my message. By relearning the correct use of fire, you will not (I repeat) will not self-combust.

## TAURUS:

Sitting pretty is what you do best until some big shot challenges your position who, according to my sources, is about to do just that. Opposition is not the end of the world, however. If you believe William Blake, "opposition is true friendship." Hold your own and find out why...

## GEMINI:

The magical community gossips about your amazing cloak of invisibility. Undergraduates of Chameleon College are following your example as a professional changeling. Trouble is that this country's Alpha Gemini will probably get re-elected by using the same talents but for all the wrong reasons. Today's Moral Question: What do you NOT want to be when you grow up?

## CANCER:

Before the Mother Goddess becomes too fashionable, it is up to you to set the records straight by reminding the rest of us what the Real, Unadvertised and Unknown Truth is. Emotions; they are never the words or images or the concepts or icons used. Emotions are the truth, expressed.

## LEO:

Just when you were having so much fun,

someone or something comes along and spoils the party. If it hasn't happened yet, prepare yourself by covering your responsibilities. If it's already happening, don't cop an attitude; it looks bad now. Ask what the fuss is about and then, fix it.

## VIRGO:

What's stronger than dirt and twice as fun? Chaos is an evolutionary trigger; it catalyzes enough change to assure growth. Vintage chaos is like a fine wine; you break open a bottle when you deserve the best growth money can buy. Does this answer your economic question?

## LIBRA:

A married man once told me of three types of relationships: Safe ones, catastrophic ones and feared ones. Relationships are either very predictable and dull or, unpredictable and dangerous or, somewhere in-between where you can't tell the difference, yet fear the worst. You decide.

## SCORPIO:

One day the chief of a red tribe left his people to wander the land in search for gods. After many moons, he came upon a black tribe who treated him like a fool. After escaping, he continued travelling and soon encountered a yellow tribe who treated him like a god. He left them bearing many gifts and continued along his journey. The next day, a white tribe robbed and killed him.

## SAGITTARIUS:

The Nineties are the Sixties upside down. As part of this reversal phenomena,

your usually restless, gypsy self is settling down and taking root...as if you were under the influence of a drug allowing you to travel further than you imagined, as long as you had both feet on the ground.

### CAPRICORN:

You've flunked the sobriety test, which is to say, you are learning to redefine success more subjectively and on your own terms: Not as "they" would like you to appear but how you reach out and eat of the fruit from the second tree of life. The first tree, as you now know, was a decoy.

### AQUARIUS:

Who would've imagined the rebel in you would turn into such an authority figure? The changing of the guard has commenced and it is my solemn duty to inform you of your new position as gatekeeper of the new aeon. Watch out for those punks who are after your job.

### PISCES:

Your astrological symbol—the fishes swimming in opposite directions—may as well be your logo these days as you embody deeper contraries and start dwelling more in the center of your contradictions. What better way to bypass competition than to surrender your old worn out self-image? You know, the one that tries too hard to make sense? Stop making sense.

*Antero Alli is the author of ASTROLOGIK plus four other books updating archaic mystical systems; and, the editor of TALKING RAVEN QUARTERLY. For his extended 1992 Catalog of books, tapes and services, please send \$1 to: Antero Alli, PO Box 45758, Seattle WA 98145.*

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# Letters

Greetings!

Wow! I have just picked up my first issue of *Mezlim*—and if it weren't for the fact that I am moving to somewhere in the Pacific Northwest (I have no idea where, yet—we figured we'd just decide where when we get there) the first part of May, I'd subscribe immediately! I'm quite happy to find a magickal magazine that isn't filled with "soft pink sweetness and light" or the same commentary on the same rituals written in the same way over and over again. I am delighted to find instead articles of useful information, and coverage of topics that most Pagan zines regularly avoid. Bravo!

Along with my order of back-issues, I'd like to extend a greeting from myself and all of us here at the Temple of Neith. Temple of Neith is a Pagan temple serving Kansas City and the surrounding areas. We are a relatively new temple (2 years old) with a small body of Priest/esses and a few students. The temple has as its main task at this time, the production of a Pagan/Magickal radio program on the community radio station KKFI in K.C. We are going into our fourth year as of this Equinox, and look forward to expanding to a 1-hour format from our present 1/2-hour slot. Because of time constraints, we have not until now been able to include a local/national news segment, and so extend an invitation to our regional neighbors to let us know about any events or festivals that occur in your area (or news in your community, legal, magickal, or otherwise), lectures, benefits, etc. that you would like us in the Kansas City/Topeka/Columbia areas to know about. We will certainly do our best to get it out on the air.

We, as always, are looking for new music from local artists all over that may not get much visibility or airplay outside of their area. We encourage such artists to send us a copy, or price prohibiting, information about the price of a

demo tape. Any info on tapes (of music, poetry, etc.) pertaining to the ceremonial, Voudoun/Santeria, QBL or darker (or odder) topics would be quite welcome—as well, of course, as general Pagan topics. Please feel free to print this request for news and music in any journal or newsletter that you wish.

Thanks so much! Akhera Goiti, Akhera Beiti!

Hezrah, High Priestess, ToN Kansas City

Temple of Neith  
3608 Jefferson  
Kansas City, MO 64111

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Dear *Mezlim*:

*This text contains two letters. Letter #1 reads:*

I write in response to your Issue on Teaching. In my mundane life, I run an office of twenty people. The responsibility of training (teaching) them rests entirely on me, so I must necessarily concern myself with how to teach.

The progression in my abilities has fallen into three stages.

- 1) I can do.
- 2) I can teach others how to do.
- 3) I can teach others how to teach others.

This progression has taken some years and a lot of hard work. I used to think that the first two steps were enough, but now I wrestle with the third, including the writing of training and practice materials.

It seems to me that the same steps occur for any teaching process. You don't know something until you can show others how to do it. But how much more must be perceived in order to teach teachers.

Letter #2 reads:

I write in response to your Issue on Teachers and the correspondence of Antero Alli and Don Kraig in the next.

I do not teach.

I have a certain knowledge and experience that I am willing to share with anyone that asks. I long ago learned not to share it otherwise.

I write essays, printed in various publications, that reflect my view of the world. In the future I will try pulling them together in the form of a book, or books. Anyone can read them, or not, as they Will. Anyone can disagree with them, in print or in person, as they see fit. But I do not teach.

I have had many teachers in my time. Elementary, high school and college teachers. Music teachers. Yoga teachers. Some I submitted to willingly, others unwillingly. Now comes the time to be done with teachers.

The problem arises in submission. The position of teacher implies a hierarchical structure, one having knowledge being in a position over that of the querant. It can become a form of status. Levels of status also reside within the ranks of teachers, a subtle form of ego gratification. My book sells more than yours, so I teach better.

I have never had a teacher of "occult" material. Everyone I have interacted with has taught me something. The closest thing I have right now is my wife, who never fails to show me where my mistakes lie. Would that everyone could live in the magickal atmosphere that pervades our home.

The Pagan community abounds with teachers, some good at their craft, others not. I will not quibble with wanting to earn one's living through a skill. What I object to is attitude. The ill will displayed in the outburst between Messers. Alli and Kraig reveal, to me, an immaturity that does not belong in two stalwarts of the community. Now shake hands and make up.

Pax Vobiscum

Lairus Moundbuilder

To whom it may concern:

This festival goer is sorry to experience and witness Drummers being kicked around, badgered, bad mouthed and falsely accused of malicious mischief.

I'm tired of hearing the same line of shit, "We can't sleep!" Now, I know for a fact, you could sleep if you would stop fighting the beat and merge with it. Small children have slept under my drum on several occasions.

Now, I have never broken any other festival circles because I "did not like the energy". But, when you start interfering with the way I pray to my gods and goddesses (with one of the oldest ways to reach oneness with the universe), I say something must be done!

I personally feel that the drumming is an essential part of the festival. Stopping the beat is an outrage and a crime!

I hope this letter begins a community-wide discussion that leads to a solution of this problem. Please send me your comments and feedback (whether positive or negative) to my home address or in care of this journal.

Love and Light to all,

Maddog

Ed Maddog Reeter-Melton  
189 Lockwood Ave.  
Buffalo, New York 14220

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Valentine's Day 1992

To The Editor:

Hello, again. I have a few comments to Donald Michael Kraig's copyrighted "A REPLY TO ANTERO ALLI", the first of which is to thank him. Having read numerous articles by Mr. Kraig I confess my growing curiosity about his person; "Who is this guy?" His "REPLY"

revealed to me more than all his previous articles combined and for this, I am satisfied.

I regret what I perceive to be the suffering my words seemed to cause him or his vanity; I don't know him well enough to say which. His words suggest to me that he is easily insulted. My "attack" on his article was as much an exposition of myself as it was of his article, which is often the case with the Lowbrow Critic. It seems Mr. Kraig does not take well to criticism, thus compelling me to unleash more pedantic splendor and condescending wrath once again: "Lighten up, Donald; stop taking yourself so damn seriously!"

According to his "REPLY", Kraig's teaching bias seems decidedly "information-oriented"; to him, the best reason to seek a teacher is to obtain information. We differ here. My teaching bias tends to be "person-oriented" by necessity; my advice to those seeking teachers is not whether they have the data or the techniques or the skills you want but whether there is enough personal rapport between you to get along as personalities. Without this base of affinity, there is a far greater tendency for future communication jams, which can make that

inevitable time where "teachers must let go of students and students must let go of teachers", problematic to say the least. To me, every teacher/student relationship is like a good story; each one has a definite beginning, a middle and an end.

I admit to laughing out loud after reading Kraig's use of quotes pulled directly from two of my own books as part of his pathetic debate or, retort; surely his imagination could've done better than that! I chuckled at being called "leading edge" and, at his inference that my reputation meant something to me, personally, which it does not. For those readers still mystified by the mechanics of fame: It's a sham, friends. Professional advancement through the fabrication of a one-sided public image is an illusion to be manipulated like stage magic unless you start believing your own PR; at that point, you become the sorry sham itself. I prefer to be nobody but myself; if people don't like it, they can watch Oprah.

What I do care about is the PROCESS of interaction itself. Whether someone is right or wrong is often so subjective to each individual that I'd rather cut to the chase and get to know more of the person behind the knowledge, the "little man behind the mask of OZ", and Mr. Kraig did as much by parting the curtain with his reply.

In gratitude,

Antero Alli

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A LAST REPLY TO ANTERO ALLI © 1992

In every lecture I give, as well as in Modern Magic, I urge the use of the motto "TFYQA": Think For Yourself, Question Authority. I suggest that people listen to what I have to say, examine it, use what is relevant to them and ignore what is not. I encourage disagreement and dialog.

In the past four years I have only written two letters attacking individuals. One was to an

anonymous flunky of a group which insists on charging a thousand dollars or more for their already published information, a group which gives out questionable "astral" and "proxy" initiations. I will always decry individuals and groups who seem more open to ripping people off than truly providing a service.

The other person I attacked in words was Antero Alli. This is because rather than simply disagree with me and open a dialog, either publicly or privately, he chose to attack me as being wrong. If he had simply said he disagreed with me it would have stopped there. Instead he attacked me. When attacked, I fight back. If you can't stand the heat, Antero, get out of the kitchen—or at least learn how to disagree with a person without having to attack him or her.

I think your reply to my reply (this type of thing gets boring unless it's in **The Green Egg**) shows exactly what you mean and what you want. Of course the best relationship between a student and teacher is one where they get along. However, if the teacher has nothing to say, getting along has no real value unless you are teaching a course in "How To Get Along." The guy who lives in the apartment across from me in very nice and we get along well. But he has nothing to teach me.

I'm sorry that you consider quoting you in context "pathetic." Perhaps you shouldn't write such things. For example, in your recent copyrighted article in **Transformation Times** for October 1991 you claim that William Butler Yeats was an ineffective magician, and "not so much a magus as he was a mystic." It's too bad that you seem to never have bothered to study him. After all, he became the Emperor of the Golden Dawn after the overthrow of Mathers and defended it against all comers for several years until Waite finally split the Order, taking the mystics away from Yeats' magicians. Yeats wrote the document, "Is The R.R. et A.C. to Remain a Magical Order" over this schism.

If you want to call me names, inferring that I am merely Oz, the little man behind the curtain, I would remind you that in other books of the Oz cycle the magician did become a powerful

Wizard of Oz. Thank you for the compliment.

I must say, however, that I am surprised that you find fame to be a "sham," when in the above-mentioned article you write, "...I am left feeling a greater need TO BE SEEN, rather than the more heady need TO SEE..." (Emphasis in original.)

There are many paths up the mountain. When we stop looking, all we do is go around in circles. I will continue to look. I hope I can share some of my vision. People are free to look or not look with me. Mr. Alli seems content to have students get along with him rather than share anything of value. So be it.

To become a member of the Donald Michael Kraig Fan Club, please write to the Wizard of Oz, in care of Antero Alli, P.O. Box 45758, Seattle WA 98145. Include some nice thoughts and a large check.

Sincerely,

Donald Michael Kraig  
P.O. Box 1856  
Pioneer Station  
St. Paul, MN 55101-0856

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If you would like to respond to any of our articles, letters or simply wish to air your views in an open forum, send us a letter. Please be concise (no more than 500 words) and please indicate if you would like to have your name and address included or withheld from publication. While we cannot include all letters to the editor, we do try to print as many timely pieces as possible.

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Articles may range in length from 500 to 2500 words. All submissions should be typed, black ink on white paper. Please enclose S.A.S.E. Address all submissions to the Editor.

# Reviews

## Secrets of the German Sex Magicians

by Frater U.'.D.'.  
From Llewellyn Publications  
St. Paul, MN

Reviewed by D. Rose Hartmann

Frater U.'.D.'.s *Secrets of the German Sex Magicians* is a hands-on manual for sex magic which includes something for every body. The material and suggested techniques are non-sexist, but instead of ignoring the differences between men and women, Frater U.'.D.'. offers several exercises geared to the specific anatomy, psychology and *magi* of either gender. For instance, a loincloth designed to strengthen the testicles is not of much use to the female magician; females are advised to "Let your abdomen, your clitoris, your vagina 'talk'" through the medium of solitary ritual dance. While autoerotic magic (work with succubi and incubi included) is emphasized as the simplest, safest, and most efficient, particularly for the beginner, various heteroerotic, homoerotic, and group applications are also described in detail. The book is happily free of dogma, encouraging the reader to weld a program suited to HIR own needs and emphasizing the importance of breaking one's sexual taboos as a means to balancing the personality.

Frater U.'.D.'. has been called the father of pragmatic magic and his book is indeed void of over-blown mysticism. With his matter-of-fact style, he informs us that the basis of any magical act is the simple equation "Imagination + Will + Magical

Trance." It is magical trance which has been somewhat neglected and without Trance, magic is nothing but New Age positive thinking. Luckily, the modern magician needs not endure painful rites, ingest dangerous drugs, or fast in the desert—sexual ritual can provide the ferryboat into magical trance. It is this no-longer secret and most pleasurable means of altering consciousness which assures that "Magick is for all."

The preparatory exercises contained in the book are borrowed from Taoism, Tantra, Shamanism, and Western Magick, while the underlying theory is primarily influenced by the works of such Western magicians as Crowley, Austin Spare, and Peter Carroll. U.'.D.'. does not confuse Sex Magic with Tantra, but affirms that the former points toward the earth element and is well-suited for "success magic," while the latter points toward worship and the transcendence of duality. However, the two disciplines are not mutually exclusive and mastery of either will probably lead to success on all planes of existence.

*Secrets of the German Sex Magicians* offers a progression of techniques to improve concentration, gain control over CHI energy, master manipulation of this energy, utilize sigil magic, concoct aphrodisiacs, and invoke and balance the lunar and solar energies, to name a few. All exercises provided are easily understood, and can benefit even the pure tantrist who has no interest in "success" magic.

If all this isn't enough, Frater U.'.D.'. manages to entertain the reader with his offbeat humor, poking fun at himself and any reader who might be inclined to take HIRself too seriously. I laughed out loud when reading the "money drawing spell" in which the magician when sitting in a



restaurant is advised to surreptitiously caress one's money lovingly while crooning in a low voice "What wonderful, rustling thing is it that comes towards me? AHA, it is MONEY!!!"

This is a honest-to-god/dess handbook, one that promotes knowledge by way of experience. I began many of the exercises during my first reading and then shelved the book while I took a pause in my magical practice. Currently, I'm enjoying my second take at these sex magic practices. This book won't stay on the shelf—it induces works.

## Remembering Aleister Crowley

Kenneth Grant

£24.99 (Hardbound) from  
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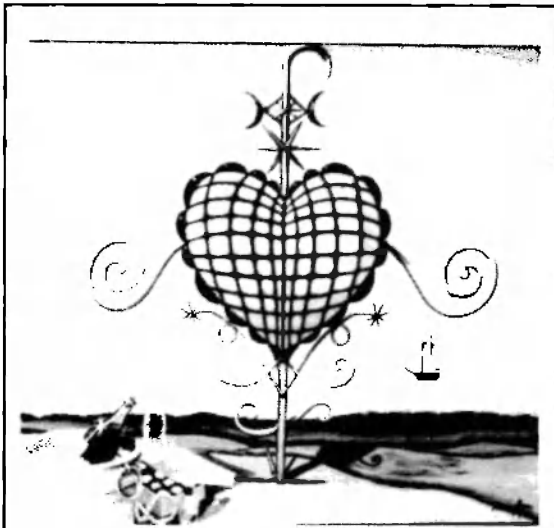
If you don't recognize the name Kenneth Grant, then you won't understand why so many people are so excited by this recent publication of his work. An internationally renowned author and historian of Magick, Grant is recognized - by some - as the spiritual heir of his teacher, Aleister Crowley. (I'll bet THAT name rings a bell.) His "Typhonian Trilogies" were originally published in the 60's and 70's and quickly became collector's items - beyond the reach of most pocketbooks. These same books are now being re-released by SKOOB, along with a number of newer offerings, such as this. The "Trilogies" were ground breaking, highly original and daring discourses on the Magickal process.

For this reason, many people may feel compelled to buy this book, expecting similarly evocative material therein. There isn't.

**Remembering Aleister Crowley** is a sometimes illuminating collection of letters written to the author by Crowley, during the last years of his life. Written from his final "digs" at "Netherwood" in Hastings, the letters detail the relationship between Crowley and Grant, and provide us with a glimpse into the character of the most influential figure in modern occultism. For some it may serve to bring him "down to earth", though I'm certain there will be those who find hidden cabbalistic messages even in his laundry lists and tobacco receipts.

In addition there is some revelation of Grant's personality as well, or at least of how he was viewed by "the Master." And we see, from the letters, diary entries and other commentary that Crowley was certainly looking to groom Grant for an "important position" in the OTO after his death.

In short, this is a treasure trove of Crowlianity for the Crowleyphile. For the rest of us, it's an interesting enough batch of letters, intimate memorabilia and commentary—that sheds some light on an obscure period of Crowley's life. The commentary is well balanced with the text of the letters, providing supporting material, without interpreting it for the reader. It's beautifully produced, and it's well worth the asking price. But it's not one of the books by Kenneth Grant that we've really been waiting for. I'm still looking forward to **Hecate's Fountain**. SKOOB tells us that it will be available "any day now."

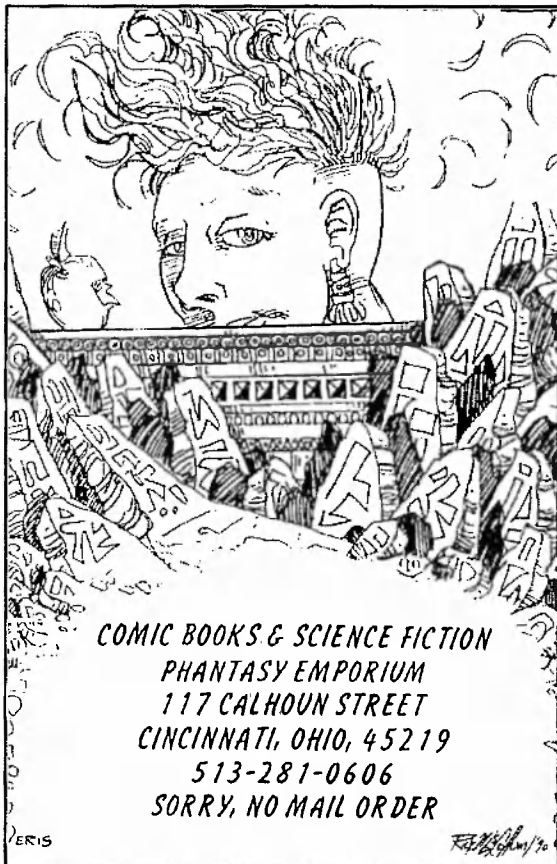


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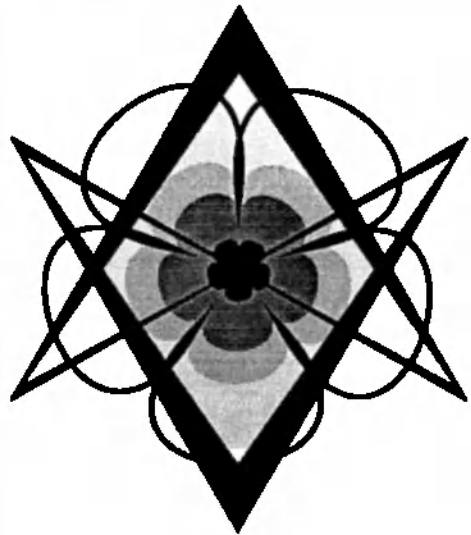
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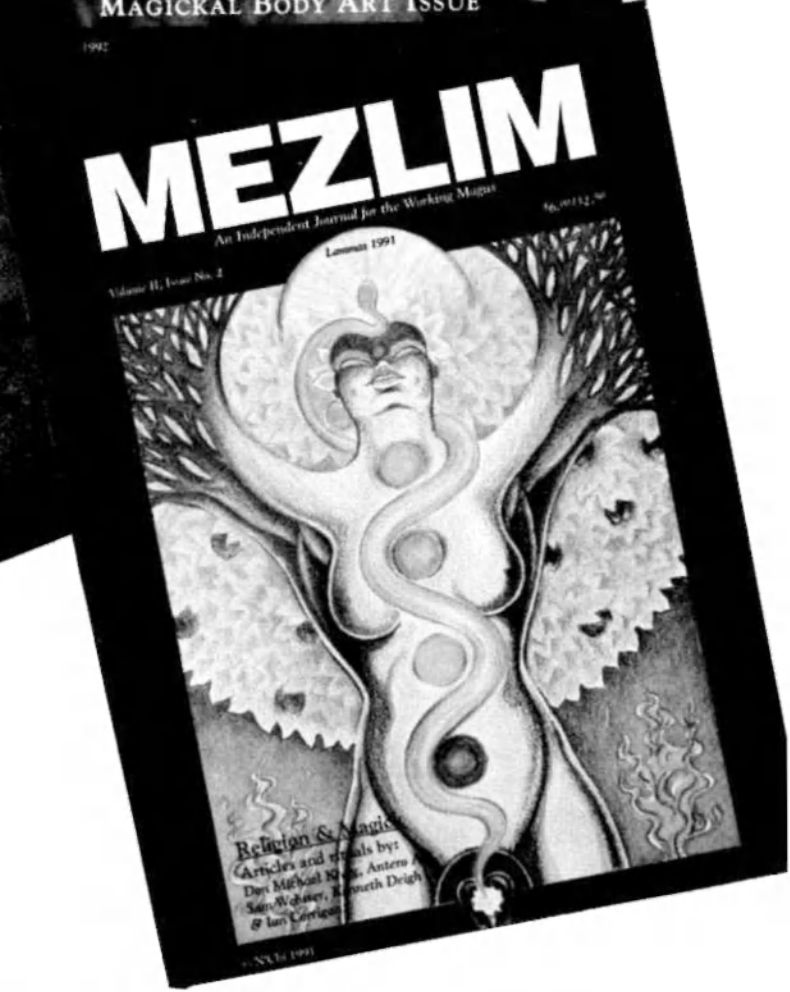
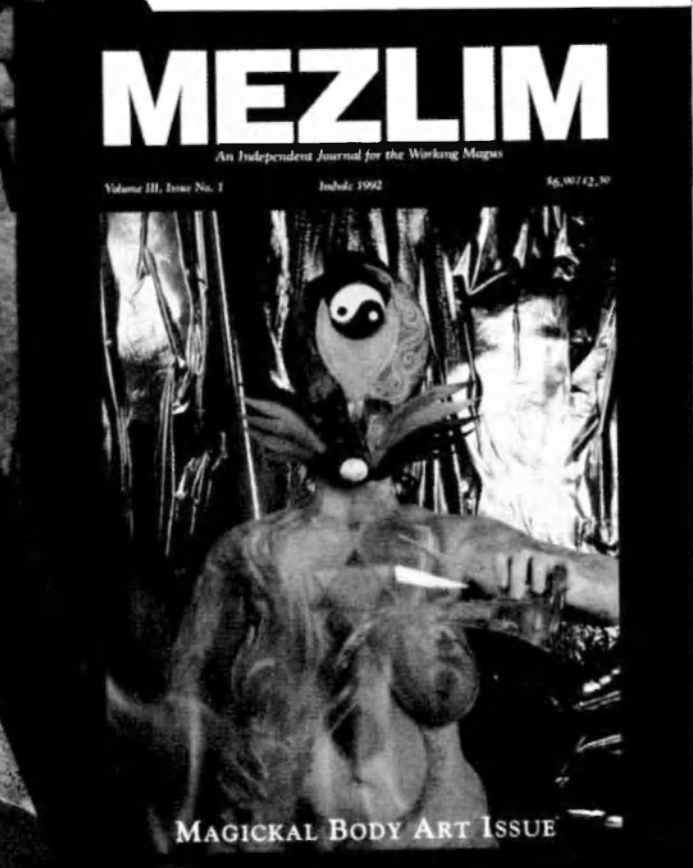
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