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The Cauldron

ISSUE NO. 15

LAMMAS 1979

A NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD RELIGION

COSMIC IMAGES. As stated in our last issue, humanity's conception of the Godhead is limited by the confinement of the spiritual self in a physical body. We use surrogate images to personify the abstract concept of the Absolute. Because these images are, of necessity, individual in nature there is a tendency to criticize or even persecute those who possess a different awareness or image of the Truth from our own. This misunderstanding - which is a root cause of human conflict - exists because the true mysteries of the Spirit cannot be communicated on a conscious level but only on the deeper level of 'knowing' or 'understanding'. The following article is an attempt to translate into mere words some aspects of the unspeakable mystery described above.

We begin our quest for Truth by examining the different aspects of Godhead recognized by modern pagans: The Supreme Creative Principle, Pure, asexual, transcendental energy. Sometimes singly referred to as the Life Force. Creative Duality, The Creative Principle manifested as a God and Goddess representing the 'masculine' and 'Feminine' (Yin and Yang) aspects of Nature. The Archetypes, Magical images of the God and Goddess imprinted in the human psyche as mythological deities, racial heroes and cultural teachers. It is the last level of spiritual awareness which attracts most pagans today and they share it with the followers of other world religions. In many ways it is an inadequate and immature model of the Godhead and eventually will be discarded as humanity progresses along the spiritual path. In the meantime, pagans work with the Archetypal Images because they are an integral part of the human unconscious, are deeply rooted in folk memory and myth and can be invoked to allow the individual to achieve personal growth, healing and wholeness of mind, body and spirit.

Jung described the Archetypes as primordial images representing fundamental human qualities which appear in dreams, folklore, ancient myths and psychic visions. The Dutch artist, Tarmo de Jongh, has illustrated these images vividly as an accompaniment to the writings of Richard Gardner, whose book 'The Purpose of Love' (Rigel Press 1970) is well worthy of study. The Archetypes or 'Channels of Expression' described by Gardner are very similar to the pagan gods. They include the Great Mother, the Enchantress and the Old Wise Woman which feature as potent deities in Craft lore and the Old Religion. The Archetypes relate in Gardner's writings to different types of human persona, the four elements of fire, earth, air and water, the major arcana of the Tarot and the twelve Zodiac signs.

It should be clearly understood that the Archetypes are subjective images of the Gods (i.e. personified aspects of the Creative Principle). However, there is a school of esoteric thought which claims that they can possess a separate reality outside of the human imagination. Dion Fortune had the following to say on this point: "The different Gods and Goddesses are the creation of the created fashioned in astral substance and ensouled by Cosmic forces. A god is an artificial elemental built up over long periods of time by successive generations whose minds were cast in the same mould It is in his (the magician's) mind that the image of the god builds up and it is the corresponding aspect of his own nature which provides the ensouling force".

That the gods invoked in ritual magic and ancient religious practices may possess a separate existence as artificial elementals or thought forms is an idea explored by the parapsychologist Hzhak Bentov. He has even described the modus operandi of the creation of a god! Bentov imagines a rock with a low level of consciousness in a desert. Its conscious threshold is raised or stimulated by contact with small animals in the vicinity with it who regard it as a protector against the elements. When a human being happens along who is sensitive to Nature, he or she finds something 'special' or 'different' about the stone. If this person is of a cultute .../which is sympathetic to such

which is sympathetic to such influences his or her awe of the rock may turn to worship of it as a cult object. This boosts the rock's embryonic consciousness even further and eventually the spirit of the stone becomes a god. Some of the strange reports of so-called 'supernatural' happenings at megalithic circles may be accounted for by this theory. Certainly the nature of stone as an inactive, solid mass has been revised by recent scientific experiments which suggest that stone is a complex energy structure which has many amazing secrets.

What Bentov describes is the creation of an elemental, faery or nature spirit - such as the little brown 'mushroom men' seen in psychedelic visions by the Siberian Shamans - which are associated with the manifestation of the Life Force through organic matter. These energy forces have been worshipped in the past as minor gods or guardians of sacred wells, trees, standing stones, lakes and rivers. Such manifestations have the ability to tune in to the human mind and cause it to interpret them in stereotypes Archetypal Images. An example of this process was related to the Editor of TC by the late W.E. Butler. Visiting an ancient site he saw a sphere of light hovering over one of the stones and, from past experience, recognized it as a nature spirit. His companion - who was not clairvoyantly trained and had no magical knowledge - also saw the sprite but she described it as taking the form of a traditional faery as seen in childrens' picture books. This suggests we are conditioned to receive images of certain aspects of the spiritual reality in specific Archetypal forms. It also offers one possible explanation for UFO phenomena which may have little to do with close encounters with men from Mars but everything to do with the Faery Realm and the so-called 'dragon power' channeled between sacred sites along the ley line network.

This theory of the Universe coincides with the research of two leading physicists, Karl Pribham of Stanford University and David Bohm of London University. They have speculated that our brains mathematically construct 'reality' by interpreting frequencies from a level of primal existence which transcends time and space. This archetypal reality they liken to a universal hologram (i.e. a type of photograph which projects a 3-D image). They suggest that phenomena such as precognition, telepathy and time warps, ESP and transpersonal experiences are rooted in the primal reality and occur when people tune in to the Universal Matrix which sustains the Cosmic image.

If we are to accept in principle the model of the pagan Universe outlined above (incomplete and contradictory as it seems to be at first glance) then the rather futile arguments raging at present concerning the alleged pros and cons of the sexual nature of the Godhead (e.g. The Great Mother vs the Father Sky God) pale into insignificance against the wider implications of our thesis. These implications lead to the inescapable and irrefutable truth that ALL Creation is united together at a non-conscious level which transcends the physical forms adopted by the Life Force to manifest itself on the material plane of existence. To quote a North American Indian Chief: "All things are connected like the blood of one family. Man did not weave the web of life; he is but one strand of it. Whatever he does to the web he does to himself."

To summarize; the Creative Principle is asexual but is experienced in human terms (at this stage in our selective development) as 'masculine' and 'feminine' principles personified in Archetypal Images. These images reflect the culture we live in and our own personal belief systems. Taken to its logical conclusion we have a Holistic 'religious' view which can encompass the materialisation of the goddess Isis in a magician's temple and the vision of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes. They are both manifested aspects of the feminine experienced within the framework of differing, yet hardly conflicting, belief systems. If this essential Truth is grasped then the contradictions and conflicts between different images of the spiritual reality - as described in our first paragraph - are eliminated along with many of the problems bedevilling humanity.

Mike Howard

EARTH ENERGIES REVEALED. Startling new developments in proving the existence of the elusive 'Earth Energy' at ancient sites were reported by Paul Devereux - Editor of 'The Ley Hunter' magazine - in an illustrated talk given to the Research into Lost Knowledge Organisation in London during June. Devereux is engaged in a two year project to investigate megalithic monuments and leys using the varied talents of scientists, psychics, geologists and dowsers to build up a comprehensive dossier on the nature of the earth forces. At the Rollright Stones in Oxfordshire infrared photographs of the King Stone taken at dawn clearly reveal an auric glow emanating from the monolith. Photos taken over a period of time suggest that this force field fluctuates with the lunar phases. This finding confirms experiments conducted by dowsers such as Tom Graves (author of the excellent 'Needles of Stone') and Bill Lewis at stone circles.

THE MANY PATHS OF WICCA. We publish below an extract from a recent letter from Alex Sanders to the Editor of TC which is reproduced with his kind permission:

"Thank you for the May Eve issue of 'The Cauldron'. Once again it is excellent to read and full of interesting, intelligent and informative information. I particularly like the research by Lugh and agree with him in practically every point he has made through each of his articles.

There are many ways to the Inner and many ways to the Outer and I believe that the Wicca throughout the ages has been sensible in including the practices and activities of other sects while keeping in harmony with the Great Mother and her Consort. It seems though that in the British Isles the bone of contention in the Wicca is whether the Gardnerian 'Book of Shadows' or the Alexandrian book is the real one, whilst others say you do not need a book. Understood, and used correctly, both are valid according to the people who made the choice to adhere to one or other sect. And the same applies to followers of the Wicca who do not use a book.

I have many indoor rites and many designed for out of doors, whether by the sea, in the country or on a Welsh mountain top. On May Eve I worked on Pook's Hill, (In Sussex, Ed.) to be in harmony with the spiritual insight of a poet who felt the ancient magic of the old mound. It was a spontaneous and simple ritual that progressed itself to natural movement and beauty without pre-conceived rituals or a book.

It is such a pity that the Wicca cannot accept the fact that if we were to unite in brotherly love before the face of the Lady and the Lord, we could become great again and open and respected in the outer world. But until that day comes we can only do our individual best for the Mother and Her children. I realise whilst I write this that I am as guilty as the next but now I am trying to make amends for some of the past hurts that I have given and many public stupidities I created for others of the Craft. As I have said in another letter to you, my house is open to sincere people of whatever belief or creed."

Alex Sanders

FESTIVAL OF CREATIVE LIVING TOWARDS THE NEW AGE. SEPTEMBER 1ST and 2ND at HOVE Town Hall, Brighton, Sussex.

HEALING is an important aspect of our work. Please send name and address of the person concerned to TC and we will then add them to our daily absent healing list. No fees but goodwill donations accepted.

THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING PAGAN KNOWLEDGE was recently set up with the intention of promoting a better understanding of all forms of Paganism, past and present. Nowadays, the word pagan is invested with a pejorative meaning. While Paganism was once the repository of all knowledge from medicine to astronomy via agriculture, geomancy and magic it is now portrayed as something backward and evil; a force opposed to the sweetness and light of the Christian religion. This image is totally false and has been fabricated by those who wish to peddle authoritarian, centralist and paternalistic creeds which allow no freedom to their participants. The SPPK exists to show that Paganism, far from being pernicious and harmful, is the faith for all those who believe in the generative principles which rule all life, in joy and creativity unfettered by dogma or doctrine. SPPK will publish information on various aspects of Paganism and attempt to communicate with the mass media in order to correct the serious misrepresentations which occur at present. A statement of aims is available from SPPK, PO Box 146, Finchfield, Braintree, Essex.

NEW AGE INTOLERANCE. It is sad that intolerance and bigotry are not the perogative of the Piscean spawned Christian Church but seem to be the hang ups of some self-styled 'New Age' groups. Commenting on the recent Aquarian Festival '79 one New Age publication complains of the presence at the Festival of "Magic-not-so-white" and suggests that witchcraft has nothing to do with the coming aeon but belongs to the Old Age where people want to maintain the status quo or return to the past!

As a progressive and forward looking pagan newsletter we would answer this blatant example of inverted snobbery quite simple: The past, and its rich, spiritual traditions, is there to build foundations on, not dwell in, as any true pagan will tell you. In fact, there is nothing sensational new about the New Age teachings propagated today, for they are but "old wine in new bottles". It is amazing how many of the New Age groups are themselves finding the feminine aspect, exploring ancient power centres and the symbolism of Celtic and other mythologies.

In these troubled times, the Old Religion has much to offer to cure the multiple crisis facing our planet. A special feature on the role of the pagan way in the 1980's will be published in the next issue of TC together with a candid analysis of the various predictions concerning the New Age of Aquarius.

ECO-NEWS. We hear that pagan groups in the States are becoming increasingly aware of ecological issues. News reaches us of psychic action by pagans to stop the culling of baby seals in Newfoundland. According to newspaper reports Christian clergymen blessed the Canadian and Norwegian seal killers before they set out on their bloody work! In response, pagan groups in the United States and Canada staged a co-ordinated meditation and prayer session for the seals and other endangered wild life. It is suggested that pagans worldwide should allocate some time to psychic action in support of our threatened animal brethren.

In TC14 we mentioned Dr. Kit Pedlar's comments at an ecology seminar last autumn. He has expanded his views on a spiritual response to ecology (the interrelationship of living organisms with their natural environment) in a new book 'The Quest for Gaia' published by Souvenir Press. He believes that the Earth and its biosphere is not a lifeless, physico-chemical lump of rock floating in space but a vibrant, living entity possessed of both intelligence and consciousness. At one time, Dr. Pedlar says, mankind was an integral part of this organism but over the centuries gradually became separated from it and at present is its worst enemy. His proposition leads to the unpalatable conclusion that humans, in their present stage of technological advancement, are a parasitic vermin which Gaia - Pedlar's name for the Earth Spirit borrowed from Greek mythology - will eventually reject and eliminate unless we drastically amend our destructive ways.

To prevent this happening, and re-establish the element of harmony with the biosphere which once existed thousands of years ago, Dr. Pedlar believes that a radical rethink of our accepted values and existing life style is urgently needed. Some of the balancing measures he advocates may seem rather extreme or even reactionary to the average person-in-the-street although perhaps not to some readers of this newsletter. He suggests a strict vegetarian or vegan diet (prohibiting canned or processed foods which contain chemical derived flavourings and colours) showers instead of water intensive baths, natural fibres for clothes to replace nylon, limited public transport to replace private cars (bicycles for short, local journeys) and a transformation of industry to 'soft technology'.

These are all changes which may be forced on us anyway as we enter the inevitable post-industrial age of the 21st century. Dr. Pedlar's argument is that if we do these things now we will not only safeguard the future of the biosphere - and our own existence as an organism living within its atmospheric fold - but also thwart the sinister plans of the faceless ones, he calls 'technologist toymakers', whose ideas for manipulating humanity in the future (e.g. genetic engineering, cybernetics and mass mind control) are too frightening to contemplate. We do not say we agree with everything Dr. Pedlar says but we are sure that intelligent, aware people who care about their environment and the direction in which the destructive technology of today is leading us will find his ideas stimulating. By definition that category includes many pagans and TC readers.

Two short quotations from the book may give an idea of where Dr. Pedlar is at. "... A tree is an extension of the Earth. A tree is part of the Sun, because the rays of the Sun are its life. A tree does not end at its roots. It is an organ of Gaia. It is living earth. A man is not a man, he is an extension of the Earth. A man and a woman are part of the Sun, the rays of the Sun are their life. A tree, a man and a woman are the same because they are extensions of the Earth". unquote.

"To be able to see the spectre of the tree above its seed; to be able to feel the flow of life and to recapture ancient vision; to be able to recognize the most central part of our beings, that our flesh and blood is the same as the green sap of a leaf and the fur of an animal; to recognize the interlocked rhythms of all the species around us and to know that death is a trivial event where our temporary mobile existence submerges like the sphere flattening our into the infinite plane of life; to know that the rational, logical reductionist analysis of Nature is magnificently, splendidly and absolutely wrong; and to know that the cybernarchy (the technological toymakers) is both alien, hostile and irrevocably other: these are the necessities for Gaian vision".

THE LONG MAN. One of the most interesting of our surviving hill figures is the Long Man of Wilmington in Sussex. The figure is traced in concrete blocks on the hill-side overlooking the picturesque village and holds in its hands two staves. The blocks were laid in 1969 and replaced 7,000 bricks put in place in 1874 which had been damaged by vandalism and erosion. Previously to the Victorian restoration the Long Man was traced in chalk and was only discernible in unusual weather conditions, such as a light covering of snow or a heavy frost.

It seems certain that during the 19th century restoration, some important details of the Long Man were altered or erased. An early drawing of the figure from the Burrell manuscript in the British Museum shows that the staves were originally a scythe and a rake. This suggests that the figure may have represented a local fertility deity invoked for good harvests. It seems to discount the theory put forward by the pioneer ley hunter, the late Alfred Watkins, that the Long Man represented an

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ancient 'dod man' who surveyed the routes of old straight tracks with special sighting rods. Interestingly enough we understand that a ley line passes through Wilmington church and leads directly to a prehistoric earthwork above the Long Man.

The age of the hill figure is a mystery. One historian claims that it had been cut by the monks of Wilmington Priory in the 14th Century! An archaeological survey conducted during the 1969 restoration however revealed traces of Roman tiles which dates back the figure at least 1,800 years. A resemblance between the Long Man and a bronze belt buckle found in a Saxon grave at Finglesham, Kent, have also been noted. The buckle depicts a horned figure holding two spears. There is some sign of soil disturbance above the Long Man, possibly caused by the erasing of the agricultural implements, but no clear evidence for horns.

Some witches say that the Long Man is a representation of the 'Guardian of the North Gate' whose significance in the Craft will be known to many TC readers. An active coven is rumoured to meet in the village below the Long Man and they may have some traditional knowledge of the figure's symbolism.

SACRED SPRINGS & HOLY WELLS. A holy well; holy and healing, whole. A sacred spring; numinous source of life-giving water, water which is the origin of life and conductor of the Earth's vital power. Long ago these wells and springs were recognized, named and venerated. Offerings were made to the Goddess who presides over wells, springs and deep pools filling them with special power. Ritual acts of worship were performed at these places and people came to them to be healed of diseases and sorrows.

Nowadays, most of the customs have disappeared together with our understanding of our place in the natural world and our direct experience of the divine in Nature. There are some remnants whose origins are forgotten and unguessed: well dressing ceremonies, tossing of coins into fountains or 'wishing wells', vague traditions of a certain well bestowing some blessing or healing to those who drink its water, memories of women dipping their babies in a well to cure them of rickets, weak sight or other ailments, institutionalised sacred springs such as Lourdes where hundreds of cures have taken place this century and the custom of blessing oneself with holy water or using it to exorcise evil forces. But while some springs are still visited for these modern rituals, most lie unrecognized and unknown. Some are named and have some half-remembered tradition attached to them. They may be visited from curiosity or come upon by chance and their magic will be accessible to any that come with open minds and an ability to wonder. Others are on private property, probably well looked after by owners who may guard their whereabouts as a family secret. Many, many more are derelict, abandoned, sealed and capped off; their springs diverted and culverted or situated in boggy ground or tangled brambly undergrowth.

The holy wells were often surrounded by a grove of trees and often were associated with a nearby hill or mound. They are an indispensable part of the pagan tradition that has come down to us and that many of us are trying, tentatively, to restore. Yet so little is known about them and even less has been written about them. We have come across sacred wells in their natural settings and we have personally experienced the peace, energy and sense of awe that emanates from these places. We have also seen wells neglected and spoilt by the insensitivity of modern man and we are concerned that these priceless and beautiful expressions of our spiritual heritage are gradually dwindling. Groves of trees are being destroyed; deliberately or through disease: sacred hills are being included in development plans and the wells and springs are disappearing.

Hilary Lewellyn-Williams
and Tony Padfield

Hilary and Tony are co-editors of a newsletter which seeks action to preserve sacred wells and springs. We wish them luck in their work. Ed.

PRESERVING ANCIENT SITES. The measures necessary to protect ancient pagan sites from vandalism, erosion and tourism are controversial. This is largely due to the fact that such measures frequently restrict freedom of access to the sites. We therefore find Stonehenge sealed off by barbed wire, hear talk of part of Glastonbury Tor to visitors and read of a plastic cover put over a Scottish standing stone. Such actions are rightly condemned by pagans and others who have a vested interest in the preservation of old monuments.

It is obvious to everyone in the pagan movement that the Establishment is not very interested in protecting or preserving our sacred places. The sad fate of the Gog Magog hill figures rediscovered by Lethbridge and then left to providence offers ample evidence of official apathy as does the barbed wire and concrete obscenity which is now Stonehenge. All the bureaucrats are interested in is herding 2,000 tourists through the turnstiles every hour. Their only concession to the spiritual aspect of the circle is to allow the Druids to hold their midsummer solstice ceremony there each year. Even that gesture of goodwill could be threatened by the outside interferences and harassments of recent years.

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What of the future? It is essential to preserve and protect pagan sires, but in an environmentally responsible way which still allows access easy by people genuinely interested (either historically or spiritually) in them and who can be trusted not to chip bits off as souvenirs or daub political slogans on them! The prospect of Stonehenge or Avebury being enclosed in giant plastic domes is abhorrent to all of us. Pressure must therefore be applied on the Department of the Environment, the National Trust, the Countryside Commission, Conservation Groups and Private Owners of ancient monuments to fulfill their duty responsibly when claiming ways of preserving our ancient pagan heritage.

RELIGION PLEASE? Ever tried telling the truth about your religion? I tried a couple of times. On being seen at an out-patient's clinic, the receptionist, filling in my official form said "Religion Please?" "Witch" I replied firmly. "No dear. What church do you go to?" she sighed, with her ball point pen poised. "Madam, I don't go to any church, I am not a Christian, I am a Witch". "Now do be sensible dear. What if you should be very ill, or even dying? (whispered!) Who would we send for to pray for you?" "My next of kin I trust", by now I was tired and my feet hurt. "Can we get on with the rest of the form do you think?" We rattled through the rest of the documentation without a hitch, then with a heavy sigh she said, "Have you decided what religion you are yet?" I restrained myself and said in a very civil manner, "Madam, I made up my mind what religion I was many years ago, now because you don't like it you suggest I change it?" "How would it do if I put Atheist?, that way you would not be tormented by vicars! Or even Agnostic? I', not sure what they are, but we don't call a vicar for them if they're dying, (whispered again!) You see, I'm not allowed to leave the space blank, I must put something down". "Why don't you just write with h and let me 'fight off' the vicars, (ridiculous thought) and worry about my own death-bed". "That's all very well dear but it isn't a religion is it? I suppose it comes under 'persuasions' and all the other little bits and pieces of different sects; but they're allowed for, because they're breakaway parts of recognised churches, your's isn't".

My name was called and I went for my consultation, her voice following me down the corridor, "I'll see you later dear. Next please!" I was admitted to a ward, and to help me recover from the shock of the usual tepid bath and icy cotton sheets, was brought a cup of tea by... you've guessed it, the receptionist! This time she was reinforced by a very large, very Scots ward sister. "Religion please?" said my tormentor, with a sweet smile. "Witch" said I, with a matching one. "Not allowed" grimed the Sister, "You've got to declare for one of the State churches or they'll bury you as an R.C. They lay claim to all the 'doubtfuls', I think maybe they're on commission from the Almighty, or something. How about putting Protestant and leaving up to your conscience just what you're protesting about?" This idea appealed to me, but the receptionist shook her head, "Won't do" she said, "Then she'd be seen by Protestant chaplains, wouldn't she?". Sister pulled a face, "That's true, and if she died she'd be buried by them, too". I was a little worried by all this preoccupation with death. I'd only come for a few days; and on my own two feet at that!

Mercifully, my G.P., an old friend of the family, poked his head round the curtains. "I do wish you folks would discuss philosophy in quieter voices. I'm trying to get some work done. The woman's a damned non-conformist in every other way, why can't she be one in her religion? Sure she deliberately posts all her second class mail in the first class mail box!" Bless the man, it answered all our questions and consciences. I am now officially a non-conformist.... outwardly as well as inwardly!

M. Bottomley

Although our readers encounter with ~~discrepancy~~ discrepancy is amusing on one level, it does highlight the serious question of society's reaction to people who have unorthodox spiritual beliefs. It is apparent that hospitals and other official bodies do not regard Witchcraft as a religion. A test case to establish the validity of Paganism as a recognised spiritual philosophy has also yet to be fought through the British legal system. Until that happens and a victory can be claimed invoking so-called Declarations of Human Rights (which are cynically disregarded by their signatories anyway) as a defense against harassment is an empty gesture and we will still face the risk of being buried or (preferably) cremated as Roman Catholics! Ed.

VISIONS OF THE SACRED TREE. Abused, vilified and persecuted, the North American Indian has been robbed of his country, culture and heritage by the European settlers who pushed westward across the continent carving out commercial empires based on gold, oil and cattle. Even amid deprivation the native Americans have still not forgotten their ancient Gods, the deities of Nature, and the Great White Spirit who spoke directly to his people even as they clung to the rockery of Reservation life.

In happier times the native Americans were free to worship as they liked and were in daily communion with Father Sun and Mother Earth. They contacted by day the spirits of the trees and at night listened to the voices of their ancestors in the howling of the wolves.

All creation sang with the mystical song of spirit for all life was one. The central belief of the native americans was in one god, omnipotent, all wise and beneficent. Many white men dismissed the Indian as a "sunworshipping heathen" without realizing that to him the sun was the visible symbol of the Creator just as the white man used the cross as the symbol for his god. Unlike their white opponents, the Indians respected all beliefs held by others and could see little point in forcing their ideas on people of different view. The Indians believed that the mystical knowledge of god was not a special gift granted to the few but could be attained by anyone through meditation, prayer and solitary vigil. In their beliefs god is impersonal yet can enter into all things and become a bird, a tree, an animal or even another human being. Although the Indian was not allowed to carve a representation of the Great White Spirit (a belief shared with Moslems) a totem pole was erected in the village and depicted the lesser gods, nature spirits, and ancestral dead. To the Indians, animals were to be respected and admired. Tribes were divided into friendly clans named after special Totem animals and they placed themselves under the creatures' protection in the hope that they would inherit their characteristics.

That Indian culture is very ancient is proved by the pre-historic remains scattered across North America. These include the mysterious Medicine Wheel which stands on Big Horn Mountain in Wyoming. This is a gigantic stone circle some 250 feet in diameter made of huge slabs of limestone and from the centre radiate 28 spokes composed of boulders which are believed to have an astronomical significance. Local tribes know little of the Medicine Wheel and only refer to ancient legends of a mysterious Shadow People who were the ancestors of the Indians. They were a race of powerful magicians living in "the time before iron" and built the mountain top circle with the aid of the gods. Possibly this is a far memory of the pre-historic shamans who crossed the landbridge into North America from Asia 10,000 years ago.

The loneliness of the Indian people today, as they seek to restore their ancient culture destroyed by the white man's world of materialism and false values, is expressed vividly in the words of the Sioux Medicine Man Black Elk, looking back in his old age to the battle of Wounded Knee where hundreds of his people were massacred.

"When I look back I see the butchered women and children lying heaped in that crooked gulch and I can see that something else died in the bloody mud and was buried in the blizzard. A peoples' dream died there. It was a beautiful dream. Now the Indian Nations hoop is broken and scattered. There is no centre any more and the Sacred Tree is dead."

When we look at the state of native american culture today; the degrading conditions of the Reservations, the alcoholic problem amongst Indians, the rejection of the old values by the younger generation and the sell-out to western materialism, the mining of uranium for nuclear energy on the sacred lands, how prophetic these words spoken by Black Elk many years ago now seem. However, there is some sign and hope of a new revival of the Old Ways among the Indians today and a return to the spiritual traditions which were lost when the Tribes were scattered. The sacred tree may well be dead but while one native american survives the spirit of his race lives on to inspire others (both Indian and non-Indian) with the beauty and strength of his Ancient Truths.

M.H.

THE WESTERN INSTITUTE OF ESOTERIC SCIENCE, announce a 4-day seminar entitled "Exploring the Earth Mysteries". This will be held August 24th -27th at a mountain retreat in the Redwood Forest of Northern California. The Seminar will be in Bardic style using discussion, direct experience, lectures and group synergy. The 4 days experience provides tools and insights needed to return our lives to a more meaningful pattern and make us effective agents for the New Age. Subjects include Geomancy, Ogham, Magical Scripts, Leys, etc. Full details from Madrakara, P.O. Box 82, Occidental, California 95465, U.S.A.

MJOLINIR is a new magazine covering the field of folklore and the Earth Mysteries. The first issue contains information on 17th Century Cheshire witch trials, Hereford Leys, the Green Man in Chester Cathedral and Robert Nixon's famous Cheshire prophet. An interesting addition to the genre but we wonder if the local flavour of this initial issue will mean a limited potential for future sales. Anyway we wish them luck. 'Mjollnir' is available from Torsdag Publications, 56 Filkins Lane, Chester.

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS. ... Due to rising costs we must unfortunately increase the cover price of TC from our next (Halloween) issue to 25p. We are sure that despite this small increase our loyal readers will still find the newsletter is good value for money and continue to support us in the future.

ADMIN. THE CAULDRON is a non-profit making venture and is produced four times a year at the major pagan festivals of Hallowe'en, Candlemass, Beltane & Lammastide, News items, short articles and opinions are welcomed for publication. Non-de-plumes can be used but please include your name and address as we do not publish anonymous material.

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..... And time, the greater healer, begat procrastination, saying, "Let it pass. The time will come".

But the enlightened knew, standing around in small groups, their words falling on deaf ears while they chanted softly, insistently,

"THE TIME IS NOW"

ADDRESS All correspondence, enclosing stamped addressed envelope or 3 International Reply Coups Overseas if a personal reply is required to:-

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