Casting New Light on Wicca?

THE ROLE OF LUCIFER IN CONTEMPORARY PAGAN WITCHCRAFT

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LUCIFER, THE LORD of Light, is a figure who appears in many guises throughout the vast, heterogenous entity that is the Western esoteric tradition. Aside from Luciferianism, in which Lucifer unsurprisingly represents the central figure of its theistic and mythological structure, this ancient character also appears in various different forms of contemporary religious Satanism, where he is often treated as either a synonym or a facet of Satan. In Thelema, the messianic religious movement founded by Aleister Crowley, Lucifer also makes an appearance, this time as a personification of the emerging Aeon of Horus, a new era for humanity. However, there is a further esoteric religious movement, far larger than the aforementioned three in terms of its number of practitioners, in which Lucifer can also be found: that is the religion of contemporary Pagan Witchcraft, often better known as Wicca.

Lucifer is far from being central to Wicca, and indeed no mention of him is made in many of the core texts associated with the religion. Many practitioners would decry the idea that Lucifer has any part to play in Wiccan theology, assuming him to be one and the same as Satan, the malevolent bogeyman of Christian tradition. Nevertheless, if you look deep enough then you will find him, and in this essay I seek to tease out and ex-

plore the appearances that he makes within the tradition. In examining the role of Lucifer in contemporary Pagan Witchcraft, my approach is admittedly not entirely pioneering; instead, it covers some of the ground already articulated by Fredrik Gregorius in his overview of Luciferian Witchcraft, as well as some of my own previous work on the theological structure of the Witchcraft practised by the mid-twentieth century British occultist Robert Cochrane.[1] Nevertheless, rather than simply regurgitating this previously published material, in this essay I seek to take the examination of this evidence into new, unexplored dimensions. In particular, I wish to look at how and why Pagan Witches have legitimised their use of Lucifer as a theological figure by portraying him as a pre-Christian deity who was worshipped by the original 'pagans' of the ancient world.

In the spirit of disclosure, I should specify that I do not identify as a Luciferian, Pagan, or occultist, and that when it comes to the objective, literal existence of preternatural entities such as Lucifer, I remain agnostic. Therefore, the approach that I articulate within this particular paper—and which may well be very different from those of practising Luciferians contributing to this volume—hence focuses on Lucifer as a character and a concept. Whether Lucifer genuinely exists or not is immaterial to this study; what is important is that many people have believed in Lucifer, and have acted in accordance with this belief.[2] However, it should be noted that despite my "outsider" status to the occult traditions that will be discussed, I was born and raised within a cultural and familial context that was replete with esoteric religious movements. Furthermore, for several years I have been actively engaged in the academic field of Pagan studies, over the course of which I have produced historical studies on the early development and emergence of various forms of contemporary Pagan Witchcraft. This essay, produced for a somewhat different audience than that for which I normally write, should therefore be viewed as part of this wider corpus of my work on the subject of Wicca.

1 Fredrik Gregorius, 'Luciferian Witchcraft: At the Crossroads between Paganism and Satanism', pp. 229–49, in Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen, eds., *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, Oxford University Press, 2013; Ethan Doyle White, 'An Elusive Roebuck: Luciferianism and Paganism in Robert Cochrane's Witchcraft', *Correspondence: An Online Journal for the Academic Study of Western Esotericism* 1, no. 1 (June 2013): pp. 75–101.

2 This approach fits within what in the discipline of religious studies is often term
'methodological agnosticism.'

AGAN WITCHCRAFT: HE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For the purposes of this essay, I define contemporary Pagan Witchcraft as a new religious movement which emerged from within Britain in the mid wentieth century, initially claiming to be the survival of an ancient pre-Christian witch-cult. Theistically, it typically revolves around the duotheistic veneration of a Horned God and a Goddess (although sometimes branches out into explicitly polytheistic or monotheistic frameworks), and observes a set of seasonal festivals known as Sabbats. Practitioners perform magico-religious rites, either solitarily or in groups known as covens.[3] Even though it is less common for practitioners to claim a direct lineage stretching back into prehistory than it was in past decades, Pagan Witches still typically express a great affinity with the pre-Christian belief systems of Europe, often extending this into a self-perception that the religion constitutes a form of nature-worship. Admittedly, this is a fairly broad-brush definition, but one that I find (from an outsider, academic perspective) to be heuristically very useful, for it allows for the recognition that various magico-religious traditions, such as Gardnerianism, Feri, and Reclaiming Witchcraft, are fundamentally linked as part of a common movement with a shared broad structure and history. At the same time, it is not so broad as to envelop other modern magico-religious movements, such as the Sabbatic Craft or Thelema, into its remit.

Today, the Pagan Witchcraft movement often refers to itself under the term 'Wicca.' Taking as its basis the Old English term for a male sorcerer, *wicca* (pronounced 'witch-uh'), it is a widely held misconception that the term was first developed by Gerald Gardner (1884–1964) in reference to his own tradition of Gardnerian Witchcraft. Instead, Gardner used 'the Wica' (with a singular c) in reference to the community of Pagan Witches as a whole, and it was only in the early 1960s, as Alexandrian Witchcraft came to rise to a level of prominence in the British Craft scene, that 'Wicca' publicly emerged as a term for the religion itself.[4] Thus, as used here, 'Wicca' is essentially a synonym for Pagan Witchcraft, although it must be

3 This is the broad approach that I adopt in Ethan Doyle White, *Wicca: History, Belief, and Community in Modern Pagan Witchcraft*, Sussex Academic Press, 2016.

4 Ethan Doyle White, 'The Meaning of "Wicca": A Study in Etymology, History and Pagan Politics', *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 12, no. 2 (2010): pp. 185–207.

borne in mind that some present day esotericists choose to use it in a mor
precise manner, to refer explicitly to those traditions of Pagan Witchcraf
that make use of the liturgy developed by Gardner, and which can trace a
lineaged line of succession back to him.

It is perhaps also necessary to clarify my own definition of contempo-
rary Paganism, or Neo-Paganism, for this essay. Here I use the term in ref-
erence to a broad array of modern religious, spiritual, and magical groups
which self-consciously adopt elements of the pre-Christian belief systems
of Europe, North Africa, and the Near East into their structures. This is
not the only definition of the term that exists, however. For some scholars,
it has been construed as a singular religion, into which an array of other
groups—among them Wicca, Druidry, and Asatru—can be categorised
as denominations. However, this is intrinsically problematic, not least be-
cause of the sheer diversity among such Neo-Pagan groups. It is more ac-
curate to view these each as singular religions that can be etically catego-
rised under 'contemporary Paganism' as a broad tent family of religions,
much as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam come under the broad remit of
the 'Abrahamic religion' category.[5]

No religion emerges fully formed from a vacuum. Instead, they typically
emerge out of a pre-existing milieu, from which they adopt ideas and con-
cepts; Wicca is no exception. This is an area that has been explored in some
depth by a variety of scholars, the most notable of whom is Ronald Hutton,
a Professor of History at the University of Bristol.[6] The work of Hutton
and others has shown that the early Wiccan pioneers were influenced by
a range of factors, from the initiatory degree structure of Freemasonry to
the Romanticist depiction of an enchanted natural world. However, one
of the central aspects of the milieu from which Wicca emerged was that
of prior magical practices, both those of learned, grimoire-reading cer-
emonial magicians and the folk magicians who plied their trade in their
local communities. While some Pagan Witches place great emphasis on
the claim that they are the inheritors of the traditions of the rural cunning-

5 I have dealt with this in greater depth in Ethan Doyle White, 'In Defense of Pagan
Studies: A Response to Davidsen's Critique', *The Pomegranate: The International Journal
of Pagan Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012): pp. 15–17.

6 Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft*,
Oxford University Press, 1999; also examining the esoteric milieu from which Wicca
merged is Joanne Pearson, *Wicca and the Christian Heritage: Ritual, Sex and Magic*, Rout-
dge, 2007 and David Waldron, *The Sign of the Witch: Modernity and the Pagan Revival*,
rolina Academic Press, 2008.

folk, it is nevertheless apparent that the beliefs and typical practices of Wicca are quite dissimilar from those of the wise men and women found in nineteenth and early-twentieth century Britain.[7]

Conversely, it is readily apparent that ceremonial grimoires like *The Key of Solomon* have provided the base outline upon which most Wiccan ritual is built, as can be observed through the use of the ceremonial circle and such ritual tools as the blade, wand, and chalice. In this manner, it has been suggested that Wicca can claim a pedigree that stretches all the way back to the texts of Hellenistic Egypt.[8]

While ceremonial magic gave Wicca an outline for its early magico-religious rites, as a whole the religion owes far more to the witch-cult hypothesis, as articulated by the Egyptologist Margaret Murray (1863–1963). Born in British India, Murray had taken a keen interest in the archaeological study of Ancient Egypt and had studied the subject at University College London, where the department head recognised her value and awarded her a professional position. When the First World War broke out, she was unable to travel to Egypt to continue her excavations, and so turned her attention to a number of issues that were closer to home, among them Arthurian legend and the witch-trial accounts of the early modern period. She developed the idea—albeit one not novel to her—that those accused of witchcraft had been followers of a pre-Christian fertility cult devoted to the veneration of a Horned God whom the Christian persecutors had understood as the Devil.[9] Murray's ideas have not stood the test of time, having been conclusively deconstructed by the in-depth work of historians specialising in the witch trials since the 1960s.[10] Her work was nevertheless

7 See for instance Rae Beth, *Hedgewitch: A Guide to Solitary Witchcraft*, Robert Hale, 1990. The dissimilarity between Wicca and the cunning craft is attested to in Hutton, *The Triumph*, p. 11 and Owen Davies, *Cunning-Folk: Popular Magic in English History*, Hambledon and Continuum, 2003, pp. 195–96, while the interest Pagan Witches have shown in rural cunning-folk is examined in Helen Cornish, 'Cunning Histories: Privileging Narratives in the Present', *History and Anthropology* 16, no. 3 (2005): pp. 363–76.

8 Ronald Hutton, *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles: Their Nature and Legacy*, Blackwell, 1991, p. 337.

9 A full biography of Murray has recently appeared as Kathleen L. Shepperd, *The Life of Margaret Alice Murray: A Woman's Work in Archaeology*, Lexington, 2013. It devotes comparatively little to her involvement in esoteric matters however, as I point out in Ethan Doyle White, 'Review of Kathleen Shepperd's *The Life of Margaret Alice Murray*', *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 15, no. 2 (2015): pp. 25–27.

10 Murray's theories had actually faced severe criticism from specialists in the witch trials ever since their first publication, but they would only come to be conclusively refut-

hugely influential, inspiring an array of responses in scholarship, literature, and of course contemporary Paganism, and it is for this reason that she is sometimes thought of as the godmother of Wicca.[11]

It is through Murray that we come to the central theme of this particular essay; Lucifer. In her seminal work, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, published by the prestigious Oxford University Press in 1921, Murray treats Lucifer as a synonym for the Devil, listing him alongside other names for the same entity such as Satan and Beelzebub.[12] Her work is filled with transcripts of actual trial accounts, and a number of those quoted by Murray refer to Lucifer, reflecting the fact that for many early modern Europeans, Lucifer was simply a synonym for the Devil and not a separate entity in his own right.[13] Elsewhere in the book, Murray makes the claim that the practitioners of the ancient witch-cult celebrated 'Sabbaths'—a term that she took from the trial accounts—describing these as the "General Meeting of all members of the religion". She stated that the main Sabbaths were 'May Eve' and 'November Eve', although added that February 2, August 1, Easter, and both solstices were also dates of major religious observance for this witch-cult.[14] As she noted, the Sabbath that fell upon February 2 was often known as 'Candlemas,' and added that on this date, "To call the chief *Lucifer* was therefore peculiarly appropriate" because of his name's

ed by work published in the 1970s. See Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Inquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt*, Sussex University Press, 1975, pp. 102–25; Jacqueline Simpson, 'Margaret Murray: Who Believed Her and Why?', *Folklore* 105 no. 1–2 (1994): pp. 89–96; Caroline Oates and Juliette Wood, *A Coven of Scholars: Margaret Murray and her Working Methods*, FLS Books, 1998. Probably the kindest assessment of Murray's theory has been provided by Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg, who opined that there was a "kernel of truth" in her belief that surviving pre-Christian beliefs influenced the early modern witch trials, see Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Johns Hopkins Press, 1983, p. xiii.

11 See for instance its use in Helen A. Berger, Evan A. Leach, and Leigh S. Shaffer, *Voices from the Pagan Census: A National Survey of Witches and Neo-Pagans in the United States*, University of South Carolina Press, 2003, p. 9.

12 Margaret Murray, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe: A Study in Anthropology*, Oxford University Press, 1962 [1921], p. 28.

13 Murray, *The Witch-Cult*, pp. 45, 125.

14 Murray, *The Witch-Cult*, pp. 97, 109. Murray's selection of these dates was dishonest; of the thousands of early modern witch trials accounts, only that of Forfar in 1661 included the claim that the Satanic witches met on the cross-quarter days; see Ronald Hutton, 'Modern Pagan Festivals: A Study in the Nature of Tradition', *Folklore* 119, no. 3 (2008): p. 255.

etymological meaning.[15] She connected this to her belief that fire, in the form of candle-flame, was closely associated with the horned deity of the witch-cult, hence explaining its appearance in a number of trial accounts.

There are two points to note here. The first is that in *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, Murray seemingly adopts an understanding of Lucifer from her source material, treating him solely as a synonym for Satan, the Devil. At the same time, she clearly acknowledges the original meaning of his name as 'Light-Bearer.' The second point of interest is that throughout the work she treats the Devil, as he appears in the early modern texts, as the survival of a pre-Christian, pagan fertility deity. When both points are viewed together it becomes apparent that Murray's basic approach allows for the understanding that an entity who was known as Lucifer in early modern Europe was a survival of a pagan god.

While there is evidence to indicate that in her private life Murray was a practitioner of magic,[16] there is no suggestion that she actively attempted to revive the witch-cult which she described in her publications. Nevertheless, there were certainly those who were inspired to do so, and by far the most prominent among them was a man who has come to be known as 'the Father of Wicca', Gerald Gardner (1884–1964). Born to a wealthy middle-class English family, he spent most of his life abroad, working for many years in the Far East. Upon retiring to southern Britain, he settled in the region of the New Forest and involved himself in the local esoteric scene. He later claimed that in 1939 he was initiated into a coven of Pagan Witches, and that it was the tradition which they passed on to him which formed the basis for the Gardnerian tradition which he was publicly propagating by the early 1950s.[17] It remains an issue of contention among scholars of Pagan studies whether this New Forest coven had ever existed at all, with some suggesting that it was instead a fictitious invention of Gardner's to

15 Murray, *The Witch-Cult*, p. 144.

16 Max Mallowan, 'Murray, Margaret Alice (1863–1963),' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/35/101035169/.

17 The authorised biography of Gardner, which has many traits of autobiography, appeared as Jack Bracelin, *Gerald Gardner: Witch*, Octagon, 1964. It has been superseded by the two-volume study by Philip Heselton, *Witchfather: A Life of Gerald Gardner*, Thoth, 2012, however some reservations regarding the approach in this biography have been expressed in Ethan Doyle White, 'Review of Philip Heselton's *Witchfather: A Life of Gerald Gardner*', *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012): pp. 171–74.

lend a sense of historical legitimacy to his newly founded faith.[18] Nevertheless, whatever its specific origins, it is clear that Gardner was responsible for shaping his tradition in a manner of his choosing, and that in doing so he drew heavily upon a wide range of older sources.

Alongside his attempts to propagate his Craft among personal acquaintances, Gardner also publicised his faith—which he typically termed 'witchcraft' and "the witch-cult"—through a number of fictional and non-fiction books. It is through studying these publications that we can gain a greater comprehension of how Gardner understood the Craft and its history, and thus is the place where we might expect to find mention of Lucifer. However, Gardner makes very little reference to the Light-Bearer in these works; indeed, there is only a single mention of the name in his first non-fiction book on the subject, *Witchcraft Today* (1954), and none at all in his second, *The Meaning of Witchcraft* (1959). Here, it is not even a direct statement from Gardner himself, but part of a quote from Bishop Wilson, who was reporting a case of witchcraft on the Isle of Man in 1720: "John Curlitt of Murlough, in the county of Down in the parish of Killough, did give himself body and soul to Satan the Devil, who is called Lucifer, after the term of nine years."[19]

This absence is intriguing, for it suggests that Gardner was intentionally avoiding any mention of Lucifer. This was perhaps so as not to provide ammunition for those critics who accused Gardner of practising and promulgating Satanism. Problematising this view is the fact that Gardner makes plenty use of the word 'Devil' and occasional use of 'Satan' in these texts, which were likely to have been just as sinister, if not even more so, in the minds of his detractors. In one passage of *Witchcraft Today* he attempted

18 Heselton presents a compelling, although not conclusive, argument for the existence of the New Forest coven in Philip Heselton, *Wiccan Roots: Gerald Gardner and the Modern Witchcraft Revival*, Capall Bann, 2000 and Philip Heselton, *Gerald Gardner and the Cauldron of Inspiration: An Investigation into the Sources of Gardnerian Witchcraft*, Capall Bann, 2004. He also makes use of this argument in Heselton, *Witchfather*. Two American scholars in particular have suggested it more likely that the coven is a fictitious invention of Gardner's, see Aidan A. Kelly, *Crafting the Art of Magic: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft Volume I: 1939–1964*, Llewellyn, 1991, pp. xviii–xix; Aidan A. Kelly, *Inventing Witchcraft: A Case Study in the Creation of a New Religion*, Thoth, 2007, pp. 22–23, 33, 272–73; Chas S. Clifton, 'Review of Philip Heselton's *Gerald Gardner and the Cauldron of Inspiration*', *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 6, no. 2 (2004): pp. 5–10; Chas S. Clifton, *Her Hidden Children: The Rise of Wicca and Paganism in America*, AltaMira, 2006, pp. 14–15.

19 Gerald Gardner, *Witchcraft Today*, Rider, 1954, p. 49.

to vindicate himself from any such potential criticism when he noted that "The Devil is, or rather was, an invention of the Church. Witches found that the popular view that Satan was one of them added to their power, and rather adopted it, though they never called him by that name except, perhaps, on the rack."[20] He was insisting that the pagans of the early modern witch-cult never truly called their deity 'Satan' or 'the Devil' unless they were under great duress; so why should he not mention 'Lucifer' here too?

There is also a second point that should be raised here. There is now growing evidence that Lucifer played a role in many nineteenth-century forms of British folk magic, most notably that of the Society of the Horseman's Word, and that it was this theistic current from which the likes of the Cultus Sabbati have emerged. This growth of Luciferian belief was no doubt influenced by the increased attention that Lucifer was receiving from Romanticist poets like Lord Byron,[21] but also may have something to do with the popularisation of Lucifer as a benevolent bringer of wisdom in the teachings of the Theosophical Society, arguably the most important esoteric organisation of the latter nineteenth century.[22] Had the New Forest coven, from whom Gardner claimed initiation, represented a survival of a nineteenth or early twentieth-century folk magical group, then it may have been expected that they would have inherited a Luciferian theism that Gardner would then have been made aware of. Perhaps this is suggestive of the fact that Gardner's Wicca owed little to the earlier beliefs and practices of nineteenth-century British folk magic, and that the New Forest coven was either fictional or of fairly late emergence. Conversely, it could be that that the coven represented a form of older folk magic which had never embraced a Luciferian world-view, that the coven had expunged these Luciferian elements prior to Gardner's initiation, or that Gardner himself either removed them or sought to hide them from the general reader. As with so many arguments surrounding Wicca's origins, very little can be said conclusively. What can be said for certain is that there is no evidence for any form of clear connection between Gardner's Wicca and earlier forms of Luciferian British folk magic.

20 Gardner, *Witchcraft Today*, p. 132.

21 Lee Morgan, 'The Romantic Age Roots of Witchcraft: Literary and Folk Cross-Pollination in the Nineteenth Century', pp. 331–56, in Michael Howard and Daniel A. Schulke, eds., *Hands of Apostasy: Essays on Traditional Witchcraft*, Three Hands Press, 2014.

22 The Theosophical Society's primary founder and leader, Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891) began issuing an esoteric magazine titled *Lucifer* in 1887, while living in London.

A third, unconnected point worthy of mention is that the work of M
ray, and by extension that of Gardner, placed firm emphasis on the
that the horned Devil who appeared in early modern sources was the
vival of a pre-Christian deity. This is an idea that would gain great c
rency within the Pagan community, and the publications of later Wicc
regularly declare that the Christian iconography of the Devil is based up
that of pre-Christian gods.[23] While Gardner placed no emphasis on Lu
fer, and Murray very little, they nevertheless both noted that it was one
the names used for the early modern Devil, and by extension, they bo
depicted Lucifer as the survival of a pre-Christian deity; this is an idea th
we shall see crop up more explicitly in the work of several other Wicca
authors.

CHARLES LELAND, ARADIA, AND ITS RECEPTION IN WICCA:

While it is Murray's theory of the witch-cult that undoubtedly served as the primary influence on the burgeoning Pagan Witchcraft movement's understanding of its own past, a second source has also been identified as being of significant importance. This was a work first published in 1899 titled *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches.* The book's author was Charles Godfrey Leland (1824–1903), an American folklorist who spent much of his life in Europe, documenting the beliefs of marginalised groups like the Gypsy community. While in Florence in 1886 he met a young woman whom he referred to as Maddalena, and who—according to his account—claimed to be from a family of practising folk magicians. Hiring her as his research assistant, she provided him with a variety of Tuscan folk charms and stories, on the basis of which he produced two folkloric studies, *Etruscan Roman Remains* (1892) and *Legends of Florence* (1892). Leland claimed that he then heard rumours of a *Vangelo* or witches' gospel, and convinced Maddalena to obtain a copy for him. She duly did so, and Leland went on to publish it alongside much related folkloric material as *Aradia.*[24] The mythology of

23 See for instance Patricia Crowther and Arnold Crowther, *The Witches Speak*, Samuel Weisner, 1976 [1965], p. 7; Stewart Farrar, *What Witches Do: A Modern Coven Revealed*, BCA, 1991 [1971], p. 23; Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, Harper SanFrancisco, 1989 [1979], p. 108; Beth, *Hedgewitch*, p. 33.

24 Robert Mathiesen, 'Charles G. Leland and the Witches of Italy: The Origin of Ara-

Aradia revolves around a god and goddess, Diana and her brother Lucifer, who together produce a child, the eponymous Aradia, whom Diana sends to Earth to teach the oppressed peasantry the ways of witchcraft in order that they might defend themselves from the exploitative aristocracy and clergy. In *Aradia*, Lucifer is described as "the god of the Sun and of the Moon, the god of Light (*Splendor*), who was so proud of his beauty, and who for his pride was driven from Paradise."[25] In this manner he is depicted as a pre-Christian deity (or at least, a non-Christian deity associated with facets of the natural world), while at the same time carrying with him some of the Christian mythological associations traditionally applied to the figure.

The context surrounding Leland's *Gospel of the Witches* remains enigmatic. We really don't know if anyone in late nineteenth-century Italy really treated the *Gospel* as a sacred text or whether they genuinely believed in the theistic structure that it espoused. As Hutton has noted, the complete absence of any corroborating evidence for a witch religion devoted to Aradia, Lucifer, and Diana—in an area for which we have strong documentation regarding religious minorities stretching back to the Middle Ages—makes it seem very unlikely that the *Gospel* represents what on face value it claims to be.[26] Instead, it can be suggested that either Maddalena authored the document in the hope of pleasing her employer, or that Leland in part created it himself, perhaps out of a desire to reflect what he thought was the genuine witch religion of past centuries or to provide an outlet for his anti-Catholic beliefs.[27] Whatever its origins, it should be noted that the Gospel undoubtedly draws upon pre-existing folkloric beliefs and characters. Both Diana and Lucifer are mythological figures with a long pedigree in Italian culture, likely as a result of being mentioned in the Bible, while research by folklorist Sabina Magliocco is suggestive of the idea that Aradia was a pre-existing folkloric character found in various parts of Italy, whose name is perhaps a bastardised version of Herodias, another Biblical figure.[28]

dia', pp. 25–57, in Charles G. Leland, eds., *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches: A New Translation*, Phoenix Publishing, 1998.

25 Charles Godfrey Leland, 'Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches', p. 127, in Charles G. Leland, eds., *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches: A New Translation*, Phoenix Publishing, 1998.

26 Hutton, *The Triumph*, pp. 145–46.

27 Hutton, *The Triumph*, pp. 146–49.

28 Sabina Magliocco, 'Who Was Aradia? The History and Development of a Legend',

Leland's *Aradia* was published at a time when both anthropology and folkloristics were dominated by a perspective now often known as the 'doctrine of survivals.' Influenced by the new science of geology, this paradigm viewed forms of modern, and in particular rural, folklore as fossilised preservations from the ancient past.[29] In this environment, it would be unsurprising that any nineteenth-century folk character, whether they be Aradia, Diana or Lucifer, would be interpreted as the survival of a pre-Christian deity, something no doubt aided by the knowledge that Diana had indeed once been the name of a Classical goddess.

Although its publication would pre-date the public emergence of Gardnerian Wicca by half a century, the influence of *Aradia* upon early Gardnerianism and other forms of Wicca is blatant.[30] For instance, the idea of holding the Esbats on the full moon is a concept borrowed from *Aradia*, not Murray, while Aradia was chosen as the secret name of the Goddess among the early Gardnerians. Given that this is the case, it is interesting that Lucifer was not chosen as the secret name of the God; instead, the early Gardnerians went for Cernunnos, the suspected name of an antlered deity whose iconography has been found from Iron Age contexts in North-western Europe. Perhaps Gardner chose to avoid Lucifer because he feared its toxic association among the British public (as we have seen, he made next to no mention of Lucifer within his published works on Witchcraft), however the secret name was never meant to made public, so this is perhaps not the likeliest explanation. Instead, it may have been that he felt that Lucifer was simply too satanic a name to use, and that it was fundamentally inappropriate as the name for a horned, pagan god.

While Gardner might not have had much time for Lucifer, his most significant High Priestess—a woman who has come to be known as the "Mother of Modern Witchcraft"—certainly did. This woman was Doreen

The Pomegranate 18 (2001): pp. 5–22; Sabina Magliocco, 'Aradia in Sardinia: The Archaeology of a Folk Character', pp. 40–61, in Dave Evans and Dave Green, eds., *Ten Years of Triumph of the Moon: Academic Approaches to Studying Magic and the Occult*, Hidden Publishing, 2009. Leland himself believed that "Aradia" was an alteration of "Herodias", see Leland, 'Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches', pp. 225–26.

29 Margaret T. Hodgen, 'The Doctrine of Survivals: The History of an Idea', *American Anthropologist* 33 no. 3 (1931): pp. 307–24; Gillian Bennett, 'Geologists and Folklorists: Cultural Evolution and the Science of Folklore', *Folklore* 105 (1994): pp. 25–37.

30 The impact of Aradia on Pagan Witchcraft is discussed in Chas S. Clifton, 'The Significance of Aradia', pp. 59–77, in Charles G. Leland, eds., *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches: A New Translation*, Phoenix Publishing, 1998.

Valiente (1922–1999), and she had developed an interest in occultism through reading books in her local library prior to contacting Gardner and ultimately receiving initiation in 1953. Rising to the position of High Priestess in his Bricket Wood coven, she aided him in rewriting much of the Gardnerian liturgy before splitting with him in 1957 over concerns regarding his incessant publicity seeking. After forming her own coven with fellow Gardnerian defectors, she authored a string of books on various aspects of the Pagan Craft and became a well known figure in the world's Pagan community.[31]

In *An ABC of Witchcraft* (1973), Valiente made reference to Lucifer amidst her wider discussion of Leland's *Aradia*, there referring to him as "the god of the sun."[32] Elsewhere in the book, when discussing the Horned God, she again made reference to Lucifer, asserting that

> *Every year we see re-enacted the Fall of Lucifer, the Light-Bearer, when the sun, the source of vitality for this planet, attains the height of his power at midsummer, and then falls from that height to hide himself in the realms below.*[33]

Although the entity Valiente is describing here is clearly a solar one, she nevertheless tied it in with the Horned God with the statement that the latter represents "the power of returning vitality in the spring."[34] Valiente was an individual with a clear interest in the historical development of the Lucifer character; under her entry on demonology in the book, she comments that "The identification of Satan with Lucifer rests upon a text in Isaiah," before proceeding to provide a brief outline of how she believed the two entities had come to be conflated, before adding her own moral judgment of the situation: "Out of such doubtful beginnings did religious doctrines grow, with the assistance of pious and semi-literate demonologists."[35] Thus, we can see that Valiente herself was clearly critical of the conflation of Lucifer with Satan, instead being sympathetic to

31 Valiente provides an overview of her life in Doreen Valiente, *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*, Robert Hale, 1989, although a short biography has also been made available as Jonathan Tapsell, *Ameth: The Life and Times of Doreen Valiente*, Avalonia, 2013.

32 Doreen Valiente, *An ABC of Witchcraft: Past and Present*, Robert Hale, 1986 [1973], p. 14.

33 Valiente, *An ABC of Witchcraft*, pp. 182–83.

34 Valiente, *An ABC of Witchcraft*, p. 182.

35 Valiente, *An ABC of Witchcraft*, pp. 81–82.

the idea of viewing them as separate and distinct entities, the former of which was a non-Christian deity. In her own largely autobiographical account of Wiccan history, *The Rebirth of Witchcraft* (1989), she discussed Leland's *Aradia* in her second chapter before stating that:

> *The word Lucifer is simply Latin for 'light-bearer.' Yet it has evidently become confused with the Christian idea of Satan, represented as a rebel archangel who fell from Heaven. This concept is, I think, something that has been grafted on to a much older story. 'The god of the old religion is the devil of the new.' The Christian Devil, with his horns, hoofs and tail, is simply another version of the great and ancient god Pan, who in his turn was derived distantly from the old Horned God of the painted caves. He is the male element in nature, the principle of fire, the sun and the phallus.*[36]

Several pages later, Lucifer is mentioned again. Here, Valiente expressed the view that his name may be connected to the Sanskrit term *Deva*, which she translated as "a shining one, a god" and claimed to be cognate with the Latin *Deus*.[37] Privately, Valiente was willing to go further; in a 1977 letter to Michael Howard she stated that she had no problem with Lucifer being used as the "name for the old god," while in a 1998 letter she went on to express her belief that Lucifer was in fact "the true name of the god of the Old Religion".[38] This is not a view that she publicly espoused in her books, likely out of fear of the negative attention which it would generate both within the Wiccan community and from outside of it.

Valiente was not the only prominent Wiccan to have gained her understanding of Lucifer from Leland's text. A similar interpretation appears in the lectures of Alex Sanders (1926–1988), an Englishman who had been initiated into the Gardnerian tradition in 1963 before using it as a basis upon which to develop his own Alexandrian tradition of Wicca, which he then passed off as an old hereditary tradition, claiming that it had been inherited from his grandmother.[39] In his lectures, which would be published as a small, collected volume in 1984, Sanders provided an account

36 Doreen Valiente, *The Rebirth of Witchcraft*, Robert Hale, 1989, p. 22.
37 Valiente, *Rebirth of Witchcraft*, p. 26.
38 Michael Howard, *Modern Wicca: A History from Gerald Gardner to the Present*, Llewellyn, 2009, p. 271.
39 For a biography of Sanders, see Jimahl di Fiosa, *A Coin for the Ferryman: The Death and Life of Alex Sanders*, Logios, 2010, as well as the autobiography of his wife, Maxine Sanders, *Firechild: The Life and Magic of Maxine Sanders, 'Witch Queen'*, Mandrake, 2008.

of the Diana and Lucifer myth, as originally found within *Aradia*, but followed this with a discussion of the Descent of the Goddess, a myth which appears in Gardnerian Wicca, and it is here that he refers to "Lucifer, the Horned God."[40] This is significant, for it is one of the few instances where Lucifer is specifically used as the name of the Horned God, the central male deity within Wiccan theology, rather than being used in reference to an explicitly solar deity. Elsewhere in the lectures, Sanders stated that the name of the Wiccan God was "a closely-guarded secret" but that historically, Christians had termed him the Devil, Satan, Beelzebub, and "Lucifer (more correctly *Lucifuge*—The Light-Bringer")."[41]

Two of Sanders' most prominent initiates, Stewart Farrar (1916–2000) and his wife Janet Farrar (b.1950), also quoted Leland's work on Lucifer in their book on *The Witches' God* (1989), in which they sought to identify many different facets of the male Wiccan divinity. They identified Leland's Lucifer as "the Son/Lover God", an entity who both mated with, and was born from, the Goddess.[42] In discussing this form of deity, they proceeded to claim that "this pattern—of the primordial, uncreated Mother giving birth to all things, including her own male counterpart...is the earliest foundation of all mythology and all religion."[43] However, later in the book they took a different interpretation of the deity when discussing "the Anti-God", an entity reflecting the forces of destruction and darkness. Here, they made reference to Lucifer but treated him simply as a synonym of Satan, thus accepting the traditional Christian understanding of the entity that was dominant at the time.[44]

A further source in which the influence of Leland's Lucifer is apparent is *Mastering Witchcraft: A Practical Guide for Witches, Warlocks & Covens*, authored by Paul Huson (b. 1942) and published in 1970.[45] The first book to be released that explained to the reader how to become a Pagan Witch or Wiccan in a step-by-step manner, *Mastering Witchcraft* would soon be

40 Alex Sanders, *The Alex Sanders Lectures*, Magickal Childe, 1984, pp. 71–76.
41 Sanders, *Alex Sanders Lectures*, p. 9.
42 Stewart Farrar and Janet Farrar, *The Witches' God: Lord of the Dance*, Robert Hale, 1989, p. 7.
43 Farrar and Farrar, *Witches' God*, p. 8.
44 Farrar and Farrar, *Witches' God*, pp. 54–55.
45 Some will take issue with my description of *Mastering Witchcraft* as a "Wiccan" book; it has indeed been referred to as "non-Wiccan" in Gregorius, 'Luciferian Witchcraft', p. 239. However, the structure of the magico-religious tradition it espouses easily fits within the wider rubric of Pagan Witchcraft as it is used here.

followed by an array of similar offerings, from Raymond Buckland's *The Tree* (1974) to Silver RavenWolf's *To Ride a Silver Broomstick* (1994). Huson's work nevertheless remained distinct, and this was in large part due to the unique theological structure that it espoused. In keeping with the ideas of many Wiccans, Huson drew his Lucifer from Leland's *Aradia*, describing the Lucifer-Diana story and attributing it to "Italian witch lore" rather than specifying its peculiarly Tuscan origin. He then added the observation that the story had "gnostic overtones" akin to the Kabbalistic story of Naamah and Azael, and intriguingly referred to Lucifer as Diana's "alter ego."[46] Several pages on, he stated that both Lucifer and Diana were "but figurative forms" of "the Watchers, the Mighty Ones of the Heavenly Places, the parents of giant and human alike as seen in symbolic and archetypal form as the parents of humanity", whose existence he believed were attested to in various ancient mythologies and in texts like the Zohar.[47] Much later in *Mastering Witchcraft*, Huson included Lucifer in his list of names for the Magister, adding that the name refers to the god "seen as the spirit of light and, hence, the sun."[48]

Leland's conception of the entity was also adopted by maverick archaeologist T. C. Lethbridge (1901–1971) in his 1962 book *Witches: Investigating an Ancient Religion*. Although there is no evidence to suggest that Lethbridge himself was a practitioner of Wicca, he was nonetheless deeply interested in paranormal phenomena, and was an early pioneer of what came to be known as the Earth Mysteries movement. Inspired by the publication of both Gardner's books and those of Murray—a woman he described as "an old friend"[49]—he devoted the book to what he saw as an exploration of the ancient origins of the witch-cult, in doing so drawing haphazardly from a multitude of archaeological, historical, and folkloric sources. In the book he turned to Leland's *Aradia*, suggesting that its references to a tyrannical clergy date it to around the fourteenth century; he subsequently referred to Lucifer and Diana as the witch-cult's deities, thus transposing them across Europe and throughout the centuries.[50] Furthermore, he described the alleged prehistoric hill figures on Wandlebury Hill, Cam-

46 Paul Huson, *Mastering Witchcraft: A Practical Guide for Witches, Warlocks & Covens*, Putnam, 1970, p. 11.

47 Huson, *Mastering Witchcraft*, p. 14.

48 Huson, *Mastering Witchcraft*, p. 214.

49 T.C. Lethbridge, *Witches: Investigating an Ancient Religion*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962, p. 41.

50 Lethbridge, *Witches*, pp. 7, 17.

bridgeshire as "Lucifer and Diana...in very primitive guise."[51] However, unlike the aforementioned approach of Sanders, who conflated the figures of Lucifer and the Horned God, Lethbridge viewed them separately, treating Lucifer as a solar deity and suggesting that Diana had taken both Lucifer and Pan, the horned god, as her lover.[52]

The influence of Leland's *Aradia* is also apparent in one of the brief articles authored by the enigmatic English occultist E. W. 'Bill' Liddell, who achieved notability in the 1970s for his highly controversial claims regarding the Essex cunning man George Pickingill (c.1816–1909).[53] Liddell claimed that his contacts with various covens, cunning lodges, and his family's own hereditary tradition gave him important insights into both Pickingill and into the history of witchcraft more generally. Problematically, Liddell's claims are regularly self-contradictory, far-fetched, and at odds with scholarly interpretations of the history of witchcraft; as accurate accounts of past events they are fundamentally inappropriate. They nevertheless offer useful insights into how some Crafters in the latter part of the twentieth century were interpreting and articulating the histories of their own religion. The 1970s had witnessed the thorough rejection of the Murrayite hypothesis within academia, as scholars like Keith Thomas and Norman Cohn performed more extensive research into the witch trial documents themselves. To some extent this rubbed off on the Pagan community; the American Pagan journalist Margot Adler (1946–2014) suggested that most Wiccans in the U.S. had recognised the flaws of the Murrayite approach by 1975.[54] These new understandings of the history of witchcraft left the traditional Wiccan origin myth in a highly precarious position, as it became clear that Wicca was not the genuine survival of an ancient pre-Christian faith. To avoid the appearance that Wicca was simply a new religious movement with no historical roots, many practitioners began to look elsewhere for their historical pedigree, including to forms of nineteenth and early twentieth-century folk magic which pre-dated the public emergence of Wicca.

51 Lethbridge, *Witches*, p. 92.

52 Lethbridge, *Witches*, p. 66.

53 For an excellent overview of Pickingill's life, as it can be ascertained from reliable historical sources, see the work of independent scholar William Wallworth, 'George Pickingill', Deadfamilies.com, 2012, http://www.deadfamilies.com/Z3-Others/Pickingill/George-Pickingill.htm.

54 Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers and Other Pagans in America*, third edition, Penguin, 2006, p. 83.

Liddell's publications must be seen as part of this growing trend. In his early letters, he had seemingly adopted the Murrayite hypothesis of a surviving pre-Christian religion, referring to the Pickingill family as having been priests of a pagan religion devoted to the Horned God since the eleventh century.[55] Several years later, he had changed his approach, claiming that the witch-cult was not a pagan survival after all, but that it had developed in fifteenth-century France through a union of Christian heretics, cunning lodges, and Luciferians.[56] In doing so, he stated that a sense of camaraderie developed between members of the witch-cult and Freemasonry, because both owed a "common allegiance to Lucifer, the Lightbearer." Illustrating a probable influence from Leland, he then went on to refer to both Lucifer and Diana as entities that had been present in Britain from at least the early modern.[57] It is noteworthy that his latter articles appeared in *The Cauldron*, a British esoteric magazine whose founder and editor, Michael Howard, developed the term "Luciferian Craft"—from which "Luciferian Witchcraft" has been extrapolated—as a term with which to describe Witchcraft groups whose theistic beliefs revolve around Lucifer.[58]

Leland's *Aradia* is an interesting and important text in part because it clearly intersects both the categories of Pagan Witchcraft and Luciferian Witchcraft, and in doing so blurs the boundaries that exist between them. As a seminal text in the early development of Pagan Witchcraft, there can be no doubt that many of the faith's early pioneers were well aware of its concept of Lucifer as a solar deity of the Witches. Thus, they were then in the position to make an active choice as to whether to adopt him into their own traditions or not. In the case of Gardner, it seems apparent that he actively avoided doing so, although for a number of others—most notably Doreen Valiente but also Alex Sanders and the sympathetic outsider T. C. Lethbridge—Lucifer remained an enigmatic figure worthy of mention, both as sun god and horned god.

55 E.W. Liddell, *The Pickingill Papers: George Pickingill and the Origins of Modern Wicca*, Capall Bann, 1994, p. 25.

56 Hutton, *The Triumph*, p. 291.

57 Liddell, *Pickingill Papers*, pp. 75–77.

58 Michael Howard, pers. comm., 06/25/2012. The term 'Luciferian' itself is older, having been used by the Medieval Inquisition in reference to certain heretics, see Gareth J. Medway, *Lure of the Sinister: The Unnatural History of Satanism*, New York University Press, 2001, p. 12.

LUCIFER AS AN ANCIENT PAGAN DEITY

Although he did not outright declare that Lucifer had once been a pre-Christian deity, Leland's ideas had clearly emerged from an intellectual milieu dominated by the folkloric doctrine of survivalism, and he did suggest that the traditions included in the Gospel had ancient Etruscan or Latin origins.[59] From there, it would only be a very small step to the view that the characters who feature in the Gospel—Aradia, Diana, and of course Lucifer—themselves might have ancient origins. Given this milieu, it was unsurprising that Murray and Gardner believed that the horned deity of the early modern witch-cult—who was sometimes named Lucifer in the trial accounts—was the survival of an ancient god. There was thus plenty of basis from which the idea of Lucifer as an ancient pagan god could grow within the Pagan Witchcraft movement, and that is precisely what happened. In his aforementioned tome, *Witches*, Lethbridge expressed the view that:

> *Lucifer the light-bearer figures in the witch trials and is alternatively known as Beelzebub, or the Devil. Lucifer was known over much of Gaul, Britain and Ireland as Lugh (the Latin: Lux). Places like Lyons in France still bear his name, for Lyons was once Lugudunum, Lugh's dun, or fort. Lugh's name still survives in Britain today. There is a Lugmoor on the hill just above the house where I am writing this.*[60]

Lethbridge subsequently emphasised that "Lucifer and the sun are synonymous", adding that "In Roman terms Lucifer is Apollo. In the Welsh lands Apollo was Mabon (or Maponus). Beelzebub, known to the Celts as Bel, Beli, Balor and so on, who burnt people up with his fiery glance, is only another name for Lucifer or Lugh."[61] With this dubious use of argument, Lethbridge equated Lucifer with a range of other pre-Christian mythological figures from various parts of Europe. He proceeded to look at the process of Christianisation with the statement that "Lugh apparently

59 Leland, 'Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches', p. 239.

60 Lethbridge, *Witches*, pp. 45–6. "Lugh" is a figure from Medieval Irish mythology, and various scholars suggested that this was a survival of a putative solar or fire deity that could be found in many linguistically Celtic societies of Iron Age Europe. It is this deity to whom Lethbridge refers.

61 Lethbridge, *Witches*, p. 46.

became Michael and Mabon became Andrew", both of whom were Christian saints.[62] Lethbridge's perceived links between Lucifer and Lugh here would be cited by the Farrars in their book, *Eight Sabbats for Witches* (1981). Basing their approach on the idea of pagan survivals, they added that the figure of St. Michael was "a later form" of Lucifer, and that the festival of Michaelmas was thus "the festival of Michael/Lucifer, Archangel of Fire and Light."[63] Other Wiccans would also embrace the idea that Lucifer had his origins as a pre-Christian deity, but would take it in new directions. For instance, Zsuzsanna Budapest (b. 1940), the Hungarian-American founder of the feminist-oriented tradition of Dianic Wicca, declared that Lucifer represented a Christian demonisation of an ancient "sun goddess", Lucina.[64]

Contemporary Pagan Witches are not the only ones to have specifically portrayed Lucifer as a pre-Christian deity. Anton LaVey (1930–1997), the American founder of LaVeyan Satanism—an atheistic magico-religious movement which venerates Satan as a personification of human nature—made reference to the idea in his seminal 1969 text, *The Satanic Bible*. Here, he stated that

> *The Roman god, Lucifer, was the bearer of light, the spirit of the air, the personification of enlightenment. In Christian mythology he became synonymous with evil.*[65]

Given that LaVey was known to appropriate much of his information from earlier sources,[66] it might be suggested that this idea of Lucifer as a Roman god was an earlier one which he adopted.

The depiction of Lucifer as a pre-Christian deity is also very much present in a number of recent Luciferian publications. In their exposition of Luciferian religion, Nigel Jackson and Michael Howard described "the firstborn emanations from the Divine Mind" as angelic entities whose ex-

62 Lethbridge, *Witches*, p. 47.

63 Stewart Farrar and Janet Farrar, *Eight Sabbats for Witches*, Robert Hale, 1981, pp. 105, 116.

64 Zsuzsanna Budapest, *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries: Volume I* (revised ed.), Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, 1986, p. 143.

65 Anton LaVey, *The Satanic Bible*, Avon Books, 1969, p. 39.

66 Eugene V. Gallagher, 'Sources, Sects, and Scripture: *The Book of Satan* in The Satanic Bible', pp. 103–22, in Per Faxneld and Jesper Aa. Petersen, eds., *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

existence had been acknowledged by ancient pre-Christian societies such as ancient Egypt; for instance, they identified the Egyptian god Osiris as an avatar of the angel Lucifer.[67] Another publicly prominent Luciferian Witch, Shani Oates (b. 1959), also portrayed Lucifer as one of a number of "angelic beings", whom she termed the "Great Higher Council of Seven", and whose existence—she believed—had been recorded in a number of ancient mythologies.[68] Oates is the Magistra of an English occult group known as the Clan of Tubal Cain, which she states is based upon a Luciferian and Gnostic mythos. However, there is also a rival Clan of Tubal Cain operating in California whose leaders, Dave and Ann Finnin, instead describe their practices as Pagan. Both groups trace their lineage via Evan John Jones (1936–2003) back to the highly influential English Witch Roy Bowers, who was better known under his pseudonym of Robert Cochrane (1931–1966).

Cochrane rose to notability as the leader of a Witches' group known as the Thames Valley Coven, around whom revolved the wider Clan of Tubal Cain, a sort of occult family. Born to a working-class family in West London, he later claimed to have been instructed in his family's Witchcraft tradition, although this has been refuted by both his widow and relatives. Instead, it appears that Cochrane only embarked on his study of the esoteric after attending a talk given by the Society for Psychical Research in Kensington.[69] Establishing his coven circa 1961 along with his wife Jane and friends George Stannard (c. 1912–1983) and Ronald White (1928–1998), the group remained active until 1966, during which time they attracted new members, among them Valiente, who by this time had separated from Gardner's tradition.[70] Although he achieved wider influence through a number of important articles and correspondences, personal problems led Cochrane to undertake a suicidal ritual at Midsummer 1966, resulting in his death several days later.[71] Today, he is widely cited as an inspiration by

67 Nigel Jackson and Michael Howard, *The Pillars of Tubal-Cain*, Capall Bann, 2000, pp. 6–8.

68 Shani Oates, *Tubelo's Green Fire: Mythos, Ethos, Female, Male and Priestly Mysteries of the Clan of Tubal Cain*, Mandrake, 2010, pp. 15–17.

69 Michael Howard, *Children of Cain: A Study of Modern Traditional Witches*, Three Hands Press, 2011, pp. 41–43.

70 Gillian Spraggs with Shani Oates, *Genuine Witchcraft is Explained: The Secret History of the Royal Windsor Coven and the Regency*, Capall Bann, 2011; Howard, *Children of Cain*, p. 43.

71 Gavin Semple, *The Poisoned Chalice: The Death of Robert Cochrane*, Reineke Verlag,

practising Witches across the world, becoming an almost totemic figure for many of those who identify as 'Traditional Witches'.

Oates' reference to seven angelic beings has parallels in a document allegedly authored by Cochrane as part of his correspondence with the English Witch Norman Gills. Titled "The Basic Structure of the Craft", in this text he referred to 'Lucet' as being one of the seven children of the Gods, stating that:

> *Lucet is the King of Light, Fire, Love and Intellect, of Birth and Joy... the Child. He is visualised as a bright golden light moving quickly with wings. Thieving and mischievous. Sometimes he comes as a tall golden man, moving rapidly, other times the wings of Fire surround him, but few can face the vision without aid from an even Higher Source. At time he is winged at the foot; at others upon the head, behind the glorious hair.*[72]

In another, undated letter to Gills, Cochrane refers to this entity more specifically as Lucifer, describing him as "the Angel of Light" who appears as a "tall golden man, moving rapidly" and who is sometimes seen with "wings of fire." However, he warned that "few can face that vision without aid from an even Higher Source."[73] In his correspondences, Cochrane listed three other children of the Gods as Tettens, Carenos and Node, the latter two of which are most probably bastardised names of the Iron Age deities Cernunnos and Nodens;[74] in this way, Cochrane's theistic structure situated Lucifer alongside the names of pre-Christian deities, leading to the possibility that he too may have deemed Lucifer to have once been a pagan god.

What therefore are we to make of this appearance? While there is clearly a character, known as Lucifer or Lucet, who appears within Cochrane's theistic system, he is far from a central figure, being simply one among seven other entities identified as the spawn of the Gods, several of whom are clearly named after ancient deities. These angelic entities were subordi-

2004.

72 Robert Cochrane, letter to Norman Gills, undated, reproduced in Cochrane with Jones and Howard, *Robert Cochrane Letters*, p. 164.

73 Robert Cochrane, letter to Norman Gills, undated, reproduced in Robert Cochrane with Evan John Jones and Michael Howard, *The Robert Cochrane Letters: An Insight into Modern Traditional Witchcraft*, Capall Bann, 2002, p. 157.

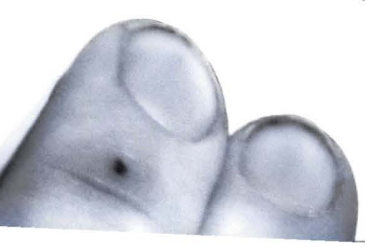
74 Robert Cochrane, letter to Norman Gills, undated, reproduced in Cochrane with Jones and Howard, *Robert Cochrane Letters*, pp. 164–66.

nate to a number of higher beings, including a Goddess—at least once re-
ferred to as Diana in a possible influence from Leland's *Aradia*—a God, and
a Horn Child, all of which were identified as manifestations of a greater
Godhead. Ultimately, an analysis of both the available textual evidence and
the testimony of those who personally knew and worked with Cochrane
paints a picture of a man who had developed his own form of contempo-
rary Pagan Witchcraft, not dissimilar in many ways from Gardnerianism
and other traditions which had appeared at this time.[75] It is noteworthy,
perhaps, that an argument has been presented that Cochrane was possibly
initiated into a Gardnerian coven that was based in West London.[76]

Most contemporary Pagan religions place great emphasis on their per-
ceived links with the pre-Christian, "pagan" religions of the ancient world,
arguing for a sense of continuity, either in the form of a direct line of suc-
cession (as with, for instance, Wiccan use of the Murrayite witch-cult) or
through the argument that the gods which they are worshipping are also
those worshipped by the ancients. This being the case, in those instances
where Pagan Witches incorporate Lucifer into their mythos, it would be
unsurprising that they interpreted him as a manifestation or survival of a
pagan god, whether Roman or "Celtic"; in doing so, they legitimate their
perceived links to the ancient past and avoid many of the claims that they
are venerating a Satanic deity. It is interesting that both Luciferians and
Satanists have similarly purported the idea of Lucifer being some sort of
pre-Christian deity, although perhaps for very different reasons. Lucife-
rians identify angelic beings such as Lucifer as entities with an objective
existence who have aided the development of humanity; from this per-
spective it would be evident that the ancient pagan gods may have been
reflections of this angelic-human interaction. Conversely, in the case of
LaVey, it is his staunch anti-Christian attitude that may have led to him
adopting the view that Christianity had simply stolen the idea and name

75 Doyle White, 'Elusive Roebuck'.

76 Ethan Doyle White, 'Robert Cochrane and the Gardnerian Craft: Feuds, Secrets, and Mysteries in Contemporary British Witchcraft', *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 13, no. 2 (2011): pp. 33–52. While originally articulating this argument, further contemplation of this issue has resulted in me concluding that an alternative scenario is equally if not more likely—that in the late 1950s Cochrane was a member of a non-Gardnerian coven in West London, many of whose members (including 'Taliesin') later became Gardnerian. Cochrane therefore learned more about the tradition without himself being initiated.



of Lucifer from earlier sources, thus painting Christianity in a some negative light.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Even a quick Google search reveals that the role of Lucifer within Wicc one that attracts interest.[77] Nevertheless, many Wiccans still express co cern and opposition to Lucifer and Luciferianism, either because they a sociate it with malevolent magic and Satanism or because they fear that th general public will do so, resulting in negative consequences for Wiccan themselves.[78] Conversely, others have taken a different view. Most nota ble perhaps was the prominent English non-Gardnerian Wiccan Alastai "Bob" Clay-Egerton (1930–1998), who practised both magico-religious traditions, although believed that there were "some basic differences be- tween those Wiccans and pagans who are Luciferian and those who are not."[79] What this essay has established is that while many Wiccans will be uncomfortable with the idea, Lucifer nevertheless makes appearances in their religion. While he is far from being a major figure within Wiccan the- ism, he reappears on a number of occasions throughout the literature of several key figures within the Wiccan movement, who have interpreted him in various different ways.

Many in the Wiccan movement—such as Gerald Gardner himself—ap- parently made no public differentiation between the figures of Lucifer and Satan, treating them simply as synonyms, much as most folk in Christen- dom had done for many centuries. This approach was one inherited from he "Godmother of Wicca", Margaret Murray, and led to Lucifer being re- cted as a Wiccan deity, likely in an attempt to remove any overtly Satanic ements from what was being promulgated as the survival of an ancient gan religion. However, a very different approach also emerged in early

"Lucifer?", Wiccan Together, http://www.wiccantogether.com/forum/ ics/1070680:Topic:552599.

The very real opposition and persecution that Wiccans face is explored in Catha- Cookson, 'Reports from the Trenches: A Case Study of Religious Freedom Issues d by Wiccans Practicing in the United States', *Journal of Church and State* 39, no. 4): pp. 723-48 and Carol Barner-Barry, *Contemporary Paganism: Minority Religions in oritarian America*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

ca, rooted in the fact that Lucifer was a common figure in various forms uropean esotericism, folk magic, and folklore, where his identity was blished as being distinct from that of Satan. Lucifer's appearance as a ir god of the witches in Leland's *Aradia* was something that exerted a ar impact on key Wiccan thinkers like Doreen Valiente, Alex Sanders, d Stewart and Janet Farrar, for some of whom he was a solar deity and others a name of the horned god himself. Wicca's great emphasis on e pre-Christian past led an array of practitioners to express the view that ucifer had once been a deity in ancient Europe, an idea also expressed y prominent Luciferians and Satanists. In this way, bridges were erected etween the contemporary Pagan and Luciferian traditions of Witchcraft, otentially having far reaching effects for the future of these two magico-eligious movements.