

MASKS OF MISRULE

Nigel Jackson



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Introduction

During the last thirty years the spiritual emphasis of the neo-pagan revival has been focused on the feminine principle or Goddess. This is an understandable reaction to the negative images of the male aspect of the Deity and male energy that have manifested in the patriarchal religions over the last 2000 years.

Unfortunately, it also means that the baby has been thrown out with the bathwater. Many pagans in rejecting patriarchal views and authority have also rejected the masculine principle in their spirituality and denigrated male energy as something which is intrinsically evil and tainted.

While such a view may be a legitimatised product of political correctness and the ongoing gender wars between the sexes, it is not a view which any intelligent pagan who can look beyond the stereotypes should subscribe to. Both male and female energies have their

dark and destructive sides, whether on a personal or a spiritual level.

These aspects should be accepted as part of the natural cycle and indeed many pagans recognise the Dark Goddess as an important aspect of the feminine principle and work successfully with her powerful energies. It is now time for the God, in both his bright and dark aspects, to be recognised and to receive equal status in modern pagan spirituality. In this important book that process begins and all his aspects are recognised and accepted.

Nigel Aldcroft Jackson takes as his central theme the dual or twin aspects of the God as he is known in traditional witchcraft. These are the Green Man, or Lord of the Wildwood, and the Lord of the Wild Hunt. These aspects correspond to summer and winter, and are represented by the symbols of the upright phallus and the skull. In these twin aspects the God reflects the ever-changing cycle of life, death and rebirth and the pattern of the seasons which has its practical expression in the celebrations of the Wheel of the Year.

In my own personal experiences of the God he has appeared in many forms that are typical of his roles as Lord of the Wild Hunt and the Green Man. As the former aspect I once encountered him many years on a winter's morning in a large Surrey park. A sudden snow blizzard had reduced visibility to a few feet.

All I could see in front of me was a wall of white and the shadowy outline of trees through the roaring gale and swirling snow. What was once familiar ground became,

in this "white out", unknown territory and I completely lost all sense of direction.

It was then that, suddenly and dramatically, I was not alone. I became aware of the awesome and feral presence of the Horned God, He appeared as a huge naked man of enormous strength with a stag's head and antlers. His body was tattooed with strange symbols whose meaning is still unknown to me and stained earth brown. Almost as soon as I experienced his protective presence the blizzard began to lessen in ferocity and I was able to find my way out of the park.

In his second form the God has appeared to me in a typical Robin Hood/Green Man/Lord of the Forest guise. He wears a leaf covered medieval tunic of Lincoln green and seems to be a mature man of about thirty five or forty. However his face has an ageless quality, combining great strength with an incredible wisdom and what can only be described as a 'brightness'. In both forms he has strange slanting eyes like an animal. They are a tawny-gold colour and have the piercing gaze of a bird of prey. Manifestations of the God are always associated with a strong smell of rotting leaves, newly dug earth, and the heady scent of musk and honeysuckle.

In his exploration of the nature of the God principle Nigel Aldcroft Jackson touches on much strange and esoteric lore belonging to the inner realms of the Traditional Craft. A lot of this will be new to many modern Wiccans and neo-pagans. Many readers may be surprised, or even shocked, at his references in the latter half of the book to Lucifer, Azazel, the Watchers,

the true meaning of the Grail Mysteries and the mysterious Mark of Cain. When my spiritual teacher first instructed me in these Mysteries nearly thirty years ago my reaction was similar. Experience and further knowledge has since revealed to me the ancient wisdom behind these controversial teachings. This material is also an indication of how the Craft has developed and evolved over the centuries, adopting beliefs and practices that are not native to this land, but which are deeply rooted in the collective unconscious of human-kind.

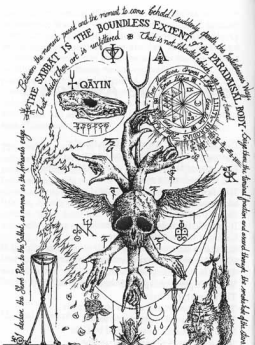
The God has much to teach men and women about the nature of positive male energy, especially women. We need more priestesses of the Horned God! The interplay between the male and the female creative energies, at a physical or spiritual level, is essential to the survival of life on Earth and the continuation of the human species. If we deny this this life-giving process then we are condemning ourselves and our planet to oblivion.

It is right and proper that we should respect and revere Our Lady. Equally, however, we must acknowledge the essential role of the Old God in the balance of cosmic forces which permeate and sustain the universe.

Michael Howard

Lay of the Arthame

This is the Metal: it dropp'd from the sky,
A ferrous tear of the Fire-Drake's eye,
That burned through cloud and seared the soil
And set the furious seas a-boil,
That lay in ancient pores of earth,
til Blacksmith's hand brought it to birth,
Thrice-purified in Tubalo's fire,
It suffered the ordeal of the pyre
Cast into waters, hiss'd it's song,
The starry viper's iron tongue
Was temper'd on the anvil-stone,
Til radiant as changeless bone,
With whispered charge and wordless spell,
The gramarye of Azazel.
The edge was ground and thus was made,
The narrow road of sharpen'd blade.
This is the metal: 'twas shaped by Cain
Who wrought the heavenly Arthame



In the Sign of the Horns

The old time is passed away and the 'age between the ages' is begun: the Aionic Twilight falleth over the world and the day of the cross and the mitre is wholly done with. The false slave-gods and their pernicious priesthoods must of necessity fall into the abyss of oblivion at the saturnalian turning of the cycles - their lying and venomous creeds have been abandoned and the shackles of blind dogma have been struck from our wrists as the flame of a new freedom is raised.

Let the sour patriarchs and deranged devotees bray and mutter to no avail for ne'er again will human-kind heed their foul creed of misery and restriction. However mightily the angry voices of false piety inveigh against us in their bitterness they will be but echoes lost in a great desolation, the wasteland in which the bones of sham messiahs are scattered and the mouldering pages

of forgotten scriptures flutter in the chill wind blowing from Annwryn.

For now the Old One is returned to liberate, illuminate and protect his people, the bearers of the Great Blood of Witchdom - the shadow of his horns is cast across the earth and his nocturnal summons reverberates through the empyrean. Those who would foolishly resist and distort the re-risen Wisdom of the Horned Master will be swept away before the furious passage of his Dark Hunt and will perish utterly in their folly.

For the Religion of the Horned One, closely concealed in the conclaves of the wise through centuries of persecution, is now revealed to those with ears to hear and eyes to see and wit to understand - the cultus of the Horned Dragon-Serpent waxeth in might and will be established in strength upon the earth, his kingdom, his chosen hierarchs once again move amongst men and women, uttering the oracles of the Black Goat and preparing the way for the glorious reign of our Master, great Azazel.

The elder sorceries of the warlock and the witch-wife now exfoliate into lush growth and the forbidden sciences and mystic arts again hold sway over men's minds - deeper secrets yet will be uncovered and the sons and daughters of men will once again learn the shadowed arcanae from the primal Gramarye of the Old Faith.

Armed with the tempered sword of the Elder Magics we must now address the great task of spiritual liberation and in the name of the Horned Master vanquish all that

limits and impoverishes the psyche of humanity. Beneath the cloven hoof of Old Pouck the treacherous wiles of priestcraft, false spirituality and social reaction will be ground into nothingness.

Ye are Gods! Thus speaketh the Old Master. Thou art the incarnate divinity of thy Daimonic Self - thy profane pseudo-self must be utterly reversed and consumed in the fires of thy Godhead. Now the Age of Misrule is at hand - all must be inverted, turned upside - down and inside-out for no hoary truism, no sanctimonious untruth, may rest unchallenged in the Court of the White Stag.

But be warned before you turn the pages of this book for herein lies danger for the deluded, the prejudiced and the little-minded - in the kingdom of the Master things are oftentimes not as they appear outwardly.

Therefore cast away the baggage of lies you have inherited from the hysteriarchs of the slave-religions, enter with a pure mind and a high aspiration to the Wisdom that ye may be counted amongst the illuminates of the age.

For the Weikkan Mysteries of the Great Horned One conceal much more than just simple rustic nature-rites - they are a high gnosis wherein the pathway to divinity is clearly revealed, the unique Self-Law of each being is realised, and the godly essence of our innermost being is unfolded.

So gather once again in the high and secret places and offer adoration to Owld Hobb, the Lord of the Two

Horns that the light of the sacred world be once more shed in splendour upon the earth and the weight of old sins be absolved. By the Sign of Misrule and the Beard of Robin Goodfellow, thus shall it be!

Chapter 1 Icons of the Primal Master

The oldest traces of the Great Horned One's mighty religion which flourished across the Eurasian lands before history began are to be located principally in the cave paintings of the Palaeolithic period.

At various sites and hallowed subterranea his priesthood communed with the numinosity of the Great God in trance-states and projected their visions in red ochre and carbon upon the rock walls of caverns, fixing his holy archetype by the sooty flame of guttering torches far underground.

The image of the god found at the Trois-Freres cavern shows the Master as a dancing, bison-horned figure with a horse's tail shown with a bull and a stag. A staff



found at Teyjat in the Dordogne bears engravings of three curious figures who appear to be semi-human though bearing the horned heads of chamois-deer.

At the Celtic site of Val Camonica in northern Italy we have an imposing petroglyphic depiction of the god crowned with antlers and again a painted tesson from Celt-Iberian Numancia shows the deity of the stags.

These images are echoed in a seal from Mohenjo-Daro from 2500-2000 B.C.E. which has often been remarked upon as reproducing the attributes of the Horned God of Europe and which has been interpreted as an early depiction of Rudra- Shiva as Pashupati 'Lord of Beasts'. The god is shown in cross-legged yogic posture, three-faced and wearing a high horned headdress, his phallus upright and surrounded by an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros and a bison: below him stand two deer.

Stuart Piggott refers to this seal as being a representation of 'Shiva as Lord of Beasts and Prince of Yogis: he may have been conceived as four-faced, and with his four animals looks to the four quarters of the earth. This would indeed recall the symbolical elephant, lion, horse and bull on the Mauryan column of the third century B.C. at Sarnath.'

There can be little doubt that the mighty cult of the Horned One was deeply entrenched throughout ancient Europe and Asia many centuries before the Sons of Ariomanus thundered across the Russian steppes in their chariots, The Great One, bestower of death and generative force, imaged as a horned man, is probably the very earliest conception of the Divine which

crystallised, along with the iconography of the Supreme Mother, in the depths of the prehistoric psyche. The archetype is older than the hills, old beyond reckoning, reaching back into unimaginable gulfs of antiquity, stirring primaeval residues of ancestral memory, for the Horned Master as the lord of this world and the Otherworld, has ruled from the time before time, omnipotent and mysterious.

The old icons are mute testaments to the initiatory encounters and transformations undergone by his shaman-priests in the vast forests, swamplands and mountains of the primaeval world. The Great God was the Divine Hunter who led his worshippers upon the chase, who was propitiated and who gave luck to the faithful who pursued the herds of wild bison, deer and goats.

To these prehistoric hunters the God of the Two Horns was the very incarnation of the Giver of Life and Death, the implacable and dangerous power who held sway over the wilderness. He was the Great Sorcerer and as such he was the source of those magico-psychic faculties which enabled early humanity to survive in a rough and savage environment by the guidance of cunning, intuition and magical luck-force.

However the Master was never a simple hunting-deity for he embodied the various states of spirit-trance and magical ecstasy cultivated amongst those early shamans of the Pleistocene era. As the cosmic god of life and death the Horned One was the Janus-faced divinity who stood between the worlds, between the realms of light and shadow, day and night, partaking of both and

transcending them in the highest state of consciousness.

The ancient rites to the Horned God were performed in order to attune to this great field of numinosity throughout the visible and invisible worlds and to awaken the root powers of the magical psyche accessed by his archetype. These are still viable aims within his cultus as it exists today which seeks to unveil the Wisdom - Self which irradiates and shines beyond the phenomenal world of duality. Within the image of the Ancient Lord, the God and the Beast are unified and resolved in that transcendent biunity which is denoted by the Sign of the Horns and is the exemplar of the perfected Sorcerer within the Old Religion.

Thousands of years in time separate these Palaeolithic traces of the Old Faith from the earliest ecclesiastical denunciations of those who continued the rites at the midwinter juncture between the year past and the year to come. Saint Cesarius of Arles (470-543) writes of the guizing ceremonies of the January Kalends, the New Year feast, and of those who

'...disguise themselves as stags: others don the skins of sheep or goats, yet others disguise themselves with animal-like masks, exultant and rejoicing because, having assumed a bestial appearance, they no longer seem to be men.'

Theodore of Canterbury (668-690) in his 'Penitential Book' expresses his pious indignation thus:

'If anyone at the Kalends of January goes about as a stag or a bull, that is, making himself into a wild beast and dressing in the skin of a herd-animal and putting on the heads of beasts...penance for three years because this is devilish.'

Janus, Dianus, Janicot

As the dual god standing between the past and the future, death and life, dissolution and generation, the New Year (January 6th - Old Reckoning), certain functions of the Old One were preserved in the old Italic deity, Janus, the Liminal One. Janus or Dianus is the ancient Oak-God of Latium, the male consort of the Great Huntress Diana.

As Janus Bifrons, the Two-faced Guardian at the doorway, he reigned over the beginning of the year on the first day of January and was thereafter honoured on the first day of each month as the lord of inceptions. Ovid correlates Janus with the original power of Khaos at the dawn of time and the original king of the Golden Age who welcomed Saturn, his successor.

The Basque Witches of the 17th century still worshipped the horned, dual-faced lord of the oaks under the name of Janicot, an eponym which became popular amidst the covens of mediaeval France. At the Sabbatic rite his image was set up and circumambulated by the coven. In his aspect as Janus/ Dianus/ Janicot the Old One is the master of the time between the times, a paradoxical function which, as we shall see, veils profound psycho-cosmological mysteries. Janicot is

the oaken pillar and the doorway between the dimensions.

Deus Monolithicus

In Witchcraft symbology the ultimate presence of the Master and the Mistress is contained in the sacred stones - the phallic, male 'Godstone' and the holed, female 'Hagstone', European equivalents to the Linga and Yoni of Indic Tantrism. The Old God under his representation as a pillar of stone is his cosmological hypostasis as the cosmological column, the omphalos-centre and the spinal axis within the human body.

In the Craft the Godstone is either a megalith or a symbolic stone placed at the heart of the compass as the mystical hub of the world, the immobile monolith which is the cosmic-phallic fountainhead of pneuma, light and holiness, the source of all life and the Witch's object of adoration.

On deeper levels the Godstone represents the silent, entranced sorcerer, whose central column is assimilated to the world-pole, absorbed in motionless exstasis. This is perhaps to be identified with the Old One as the One-Legged God perched, like the sacred crane, in meditative contemplation.

The Godstone is the stone menhir about which the universe revolves, rearing it's crown into the clouds of heaven, it's base rooted in the world's foundation, the column of divinity itself which is reflected in the Gaulish 'Cantena' and Jupiter-Pillar, the Irminsul of

Saxony and the 'Skambha' of Indo-Vedic cosmology. The 'Stan' or ritual standing-stone of the Saxons (Proto-Germanic 'Steinaz', Gothic 'Stains') can be linked, linguistically and conceptually, with the Indian 'Sthanu' - 'The Pillar', an aspect of Rudra-Shiva envisioned as a motionless, contemplating ascetic.

The Godstone likewise can be seen as the erotic energy of the cosmos and the divine model of the ascetic sorcerer-shaman. The Aberdeen Witches in 1596 used an old megalith as their central Godstone for they leapt and danced about 'ane gray stane' at the foot of a hill at Craigleauch.

A more symbolic token of the Godstone is seen in the account of the Northumberland Witches given by Ann Armstrong in 1633:

'She and the rest had drawn their compasse nigh to a bridge-end, and the Devil placed a stone in the middle of the compasse, they sett themselves downe and bending towards the stone, repeated the Lord's Prayer backwards.'

The notion of the Divine personified in the sacrificial pillar which is smeared with sacrificial blood and offered ceremonial libations can also be found amongst Siberian shamans: Vogul folktales speak of the 'Seven-Divided Pure Silver Holy Pillar' and the Ostyaks know of the 'Man-Pillar of Iron'.

The Godstone Rite

The Godstone Rite is an invocation of the Old One under his aspect as the cosmic stone pillar or omphalos-monolith. It can be enacted around a single standing-stone adorned with a ceremonial wreath of oak-leaves or around a ritual stone placed in the centre of the compass.

In either case the imaginal conception is of the divine presence made manifest as a great grey menhir about six feet high. The invocatory prayer is intoned by the Magister whilst the gathering pace about the stone deosil chanting the formula IO-HOU-JANICOT.

The Godstone Song

Swiftly skim the midnight geese,
Beneath the wheaten Moon,
Now lightly tread the compass-stead,
And sing the Master's rune:
Dark Bull of the Earth, all-hail
And honour to thine Horn,
By thy Seed thrives kin and kine,
Swell fruit and ripened corn.
Lord of the upright Godstone,
Old Janicot of the Oak,
Who ruleth over hill and wold,
Over Hidden Faith and Folk,
By sly red Fox a-running,
By the Crow in the ragged Thorn,

May we wax strong in thy Cunning,
Each eventide and dawn.
Yonder hides the milk-white Stag
Beneath the Singing Stars,
And chafes his antler 'pon the Yew
That grows beside the marsh.
Swiftly runs the silent Hare
Beneath the wheat-gold Moon,
Now lightly step about the Stone,
To the Master's whirling tune!

Now let the Coven continue to step deasil about the Godstone, persisting with the chant and fixing the consciousness one-pointedly upon the Stone until a palpable alteration in the atmosphere, an indefinable shift within and without heralds the manifestation of the Old God and his power in the compass.

This is the point at which the ritual may be turned towards spell-casting or to worship and meditation upon the mystery of the Upright One, the theophany of the ancestral Godstone, garlanded with oakleaves and acorns, rising from the smooth green turf of the moist land upwards into the silver-white clouds of the celestial plane.

Chapter 2

The White Stag of Annwyn

Through the dark wildwood and shadowy thickets of Celto - Druidic esotericism the shape of the White Stag can be momentarily glimpsed, wearing a silver crown for it's collar. This beast is the living embodiment of Mystery, the herald of wonders who guides the seeker into marvellous realms of initiatory experience. His lineage reaches far beyond the period of the Indo-European diaspora to remote Neolithic roots.

The psychopompic White Stag is the magical guise taken by the Horned One when he appears in Arthurian romances, luring the hunting knights deeper and deeper into the Otherworldly forests in their pursuit of the chase.



Such a stag lured Pwyll, Lord of Dyfed into the realm of Annwvyn in the *'Mabinogi'*, so that he changed places with the Lord of the Underworld, Arawn who appeared with a pack of white-coated, red-eared Cwn Annwvyn (Hounds of Annwvyn), mounted on a horse with a horn hung about his neck. The name of Arawn has been tentatively linked with that of Herne by some commentators.

The Gaulish Horned God bears the title CERNUNNOS meaning the *'Horned One'* or the *'God of the Deer's Head'*, a name found on the altar of the Parisii at Notre Dame, where the god is shown with torques hung from his antlers. A Romano-Gaulish stele from Rheims shows Cernunnos sat cross-legged and pouring a stream of coins from a bag, for he holds the wealth of the ancestral underworld like the Italic god Pluto. Above him a rat is carved and below the god a sacred stag and a bull, which along with the Goat constitute his principal totems. On the Celto-Scythian Gundestrup Cauldron the divinity bears a ram-headed serpent in one hand and a torque in the other.

The term *'Cernunnos'* would appear to be a divine epithet applied to the deity whose actual name was VINDOS - *'The White One'* from the I.E. roots *WEI - *'Clear'* and *HWIT - *'To Be White'* (compare the cognate Indo-Sanskrit CVETA - *'White'*). Vindos was the son of Noudons (*'Mist-Hunter'*) and his name is to be found at certain European cultic sites such as the city of Vienna (Vindobona), Chesterholm in Northumberland (Vindolanda) and Ebchester, Co Durham (Vindomora) where the god's horned image has been excavated.

Vindos-Cernunnos, the White Hunter of the Stag's Head is the true Horned God venerated in the ancient Celtic religion, the son of the Skyfather Noudons. His is the archetype of the Divine Hunter-Warrior, Ecstatic Wizard-Seer and Guide of Souls into the netherworld of Andumnos. His importance in Indo-European Druidry is emphasised by the images of the tricephalic Cernunnos from Gaul and Roumania which denote the Horned One's all-encompassing power as the triple lord of magico-spiritual wisdom (spirit/breath/head), vital energy (fire/breast) and abundance, eroticism and wealth (water/earth/loins).

His father Noudons is the One-Handed Sword God, equivalent to the Indo-Vedic Dyaus-Mitra, Teutonic Tiwaz, Roman Jupiter/Dius Fidius, Greek Zeus and the Irish Nuadu of the Silver Hand. He is the bright Day-God and Heavenly King who upholds the natural order and cosmic justice as the celestial sovereign par excellence. Vindos represents a hidden hypostasis of Noudons, his extra-societal incarnation of chthonic-theriomorphic Misrule.

In the Cymraeg-Brythonic recension of Druidic religion the Common Celtic '*Vindos Maq Noudons*' became Gwynn Ap Nudd, the faery King of Annwryn and master of the Wild Hunt in Welsh tradition. He rides across the night with his pale '*Hounds of Annwryn*' bearing dying souls away into the Tor at Glastonbury, a principal gateway to the Great Below.

Gwynn is the faery Monarch who rules the metamorphosed ancestral souls, the Plant Annwryn or Faery People. The clamour of his hounds as they race over the

wastelands at midnight is synonymous with the yelping of migratory geese, the bird which epitomises trance-flight, death-ecstasy and the ornithomorphic fetch-soul. The three aspects of the Horned God are preserved in Cymraeg lore as:

'Gwynn son of Esni, Gwynn son of Nuyure and Gwynn son of Nudd Silver Hand'. Of this god the 'Four Branches of the Mabinogi' speak cryptically: "Gwynn Ap Nudd in whom God has set the energy of the daemons of Annwryn, in order to prevent the destruction of the world, and Gwynn cannot be let loose."

This means that Gwynn, the White Stag-God is loosed from the depths on the day of Calangaeaf or Samhain when in truth the universe is destroyed with the extinguishing of the fires-time and the world are dissolved and return to the source as the Night of the Gods falls. Gwynn and his spectral hosts hold sway at this terrifying interstice and personify the holy powers of Khaos and Misrule from which all things will emerge in pristine renewal as the New Year dawns with the lighting of the new Fire, mystically capturing the original moment of cosmogenesis.

In Gaelic tradition the Horned God Vindos is found in the figure of Fionn mac Cumhaill (White, Son of Hazel) whom we might speculatively refer to as '*Fionn Mac Nuadu*' - in actuality Fionn's mother was Nuadu's grand-daughter.

Fionn as the magical Horned Hunter of Eirinn was the leader of a sacred band of warrior-wizards, the Fianna, roamed in the wilderness outside normative society, a law unto themselves. Dr Anne Ross has described how the Fenians inhabited the twilight borders between the supernatural and the real worlds relating that prospective members underwent:

'...daunting initiation rites and ordeals in order to qualify for membership of the group. Once admitted however, they were able to travel freely into the Other worlds, taking on animal forms and characteristics at will'.

The Fianna is based upon a typically Indo-European magico-military society; a mythic model which underlies the Einherjar, Wilde Heer, the Hosts of Germanic werewolves and the Wild Hunt. For the members of such extrasocietal groups held the sacred status of 'wolves' and the 'living dead', acting wholly outside the norms of society.

As the 'God of the Stag's Head' Fionn can appear in deer, hound and human forms by the powers of his magic hood or Cochul; the links with the horned animals of the forests are affirmed by the fact that one of his wives was enchanted into deer-form and bore his son Oisín (Little Deer).

With his two hounds Bran and Sceolang, Fionn is truly the Horned One of Eirinn, the Huntsman Wizard of Gaeldom.

Fionn was a Filidh (Seer) and an inspired poet-magician due to his having tasted of the Salmon of Knowledge which had feasted upon the nuts from the Nine Hazels of Wisdom in the Otherworld. This occurred in his youth when the Druid Finnecus caught the Salmon after a seven-year vigil at Linn Feic on the Boyne and set young Fionn to cook it. Burning his thumb on the fish he placed it in his mouth and instantly knew all things, becoming possessed of all hidden secrets as an omniscient seer.

Linked with this is the serpentine mystery of the Haselwurm in German lore, the white snake which dwells beneath hazels, whose flesh when consumed bestows inspirational wisdom. The wizard Michael Scot was said to have gained his magical wisdom and powers by eating a white serpent.

The episode of the Salmon of Knowledge possibly forms a key myth in the Fenian cycle of the Horned God for according to some accounts it was Fintan or VINDO-SENOS 'The White Ancient One' in salmon-form whom Fionn consumed. Fintan was a being of incredible age, the son of Bochra (Ocean), the daughter of Bith (World) who from the earliest ages of the cosmos had lived on in eagle, hawk and salmon forms, possessing memories and wisdom from the dawn of the worlds as the oldest of the beasts. Thus the Horned One, Vindos-Cernunnos, possesses the primaeval knowledge and memory of the Salmon, Vindo-Senos. These memories are the underworldly wealth of Cernunnos. For the Horned God as the oldest being, the White Ancient One, has existed from the deeps of time, omniscient, brooding in unimaginable contemplations.

All-wise and vastly ancient like some gnarled and hoary oak, the royal White Stag of Rhedenvre or the Salmon Llyn Llyw, replete with the deep magic and dreaming in his river cave as countless aeons revolve.

Another obscure Celtic archetype of the Horned God is to be found in the figure of Morvran (Great Raven) the son of the goddess Ceridwen, Mistress of the Cauldron. In the Mabinogi he appears as a hairy daemonic and horned Wyldeman:

'Morvran.....no man struck him at Camlann - because of his ugliness everyone thought he was a devil helping, for there was hair on his face like the hair of a stag.'

The One-Eyed Guardian of the Forest

In the Welsh Mabinogi we encounter an awesome archetype of the Master of the Beasts in the guise of a one-legged, one-handed and one-eyed Woodwose, a motif which recurs throughout the inner lore of the Celtic world. In the tale of the 'Countess of the Fountain' Kynon relates how he met this being in the forest:-

"... a big black man thou shalt see on the middle of the mound. And one foot has he, and one eye in his forehead's core: and he has a club of iron... But his

is not an ugly disposition; yet he is an ugly man, and he is the Keeper of that Forest. And thou shalt see a thousand wild animals grazing about him."

About the One-Eyed Keeper of the Wood with his mighty club there graze wild beasts, stags, serpents, lions and vipers. When the Keeper had summoned the beasts into his presence:

"...they bowed down their heads and did him obeisance, even as humble subjects would do to their lord."

The wild Black Keeper gives Kynon directions on his journey into the Otherworld in his short, gruff manner.

The One-Legged Guardian as a form of the old Horned God is a symbol of sacral unification, mystical transcendence of duality and the supreme stance of inbetweenness. The One-Legged God stands inbetween the worlds as a liminal guardian and is to be linked with the lame God in one sense and with the One-Eyed God of Magic (Wodhanaz, Lugus) in another.

In Highland lore we find Direach Ghlinn Eitidh, the 'Desert Creature of Glen Eti' of whom it was said that:

'There was one hand out of the ridge of his chest, and one tuft out of the top of his head, it were easier to take a mountain from the root than to bend that tuft'.

The Direach possessed but one leg and one cyclops-like eye in his brow.

Such monocular and cyclopean Guardians are known by the term Fachan in Gaelic folklore. Douglas Hyde cites a Fachan as described in an ancient Irish manuscript:

"he held a very thick iron flail-club in his skinny hand, and twenty chains out of it, and fifty apples on each chain of them, and a venomous spell on each great apple of them, and a girdle of the skins of deer and roebuck around the thing that was his body, and one eye in the forehead of his black-faced countenance and one bare, hard, very hairy hand coming out of his chest, and one veiny, thick-soled leg supporting him and a close, firm, dark blue mantle of twisted hard-thick feathers, protecting his body, and surely he was more like unto devil than to man."

The One-Legged Guardian appears in Arthurian romance for Gauvain (Gawain) in Chretien de Troyes 'Perceval' encounters a being with one leg of silver, set with many jewels, sat before the doorway of a castle, surrounded by ghosts in the shapes of dancing flames.

The Fomorians of Irish mythology also appear as reddish- coloured one-legged and one-eyed giants. In Samoyed legendry the Bull of the North who brings rain to the earth engages in aerial combats amongst the clouds with one-legged and one-eyed daemons.

Amongst the Yakut tribal peoples of Siberia it is said that the iron-feathered Bird-of- Prey Mother hatches the souls of shamans out of eggs in nests in the branches of a gigantic fir, the World Tree. When the soul of the shaman is brought forth she places it under the care of a one-eyed and one-legged daemon-shamanka who instructs the fledgling initiate and rocks his or her cradle of iron. Amongst the Buryat tribes there is found the one-eyed, one-legged daemon Anakhai, and similarly the figure of Arsari amongst the Chuvash.

In Tibetan Bon-Pa shamanism we see the goddess Ral-Gcing- Ma, who has one leg, one withered breast, one tooth and one eye and the similarly monocular divinities called Li-Byin-Ha-Ra. In the field of traditional Celtic wizardry there existed a curious magical posture which involved standing on one leg with the right hand behind one's back and the the right eye closed so that the sorcerer became a one-legged, one-armed and one-eyed being.

Having assumed this posture the magician would intone magical incantations, curses and the 'glamm dicinn' or 'poet's execration' against enemies. This sorcerer's posture was called the Corrguinecht or 'Crane Stance', a term synonymous with a magical performance, a mimetic assumption of the sacred Crane (Corr) who haunts the hazel-shaded pools of the Otherworld, spearing the Salmon of Knowledge with it's beak and therefore a living symbol of secret mantic wisdom.

The god Lugh allegedly adopted this stance when he encircled the camp of the Fomorians, chanting incantations against them. The Crane is associated in the Druidic science of magical phonetics (Ogham) with the Hazel (Coll) and thus with the sacred White Salmon and the Haselwurm and it is likely that to assume the 'Crane-Stance' implied an invocation of the Horned One under his aspect as the one-legged, one-eyed Crane-King or Heron-King standing at the edge of the otherworldly realms or at the heart of the cosmic labyrinth, Caer Droia.

To assume the 'Crane-Stance' is to stand between the dimensions and in this state of liminal magical consciousness all pronouncements would necessarily become all-powerful and imbued with efficacy.

The Lord of Carnac

The stag-antlered deity Cernunnos did not disappear under the episcopal rule of the Armorican Celtic Church in Gaul. In reality he survived as the patron saint of domestic herd-animals and horned kine, St. Cornely, from the same root evidenced by Greek '*Keros*' - '*Horn*' and Latin '*Cornu*'. St. Cornely is heavily associated with the ancient and mysterious megalithic alignments at Carnac in Brittany.

These enigmatic rows of standing stones are probably markers of spirit-lines upon the landscape linked with the Horned God and his host. According to Breton legendry St. Cornely was opposed by a great host at this site and by his holy power transformed them into ranks

of grey stones. These were said to be '*heathens*' but this laughable touch of Christian revisionism can hardly be taken seriously.

The feast day of St. Cornely falls upon September 13th each year when a fair is held at Carnac in his honour. St. Cornely, like his Pagan original, presides over horned animals and a feature of his festival is the blessing given by the priest at the church door, under the statue of the saint, sprinkling the animals with holy water to drive out disease and evil spirits. This service must undoubtedly have its roots in an annual rite in which the oxen, goats and rams received the Old God's consecration.

The waters of St. Cornely's Fountain are a entrance-interface between the upperworld and the underworld of Cernunnos (Andumnos). Both '*Carnac*' and '*Cernow*' (Cornwall) contain the I.E. *KAR- '*To Project, Stand Up*' which is also seen in Gaelic '*Corn*' - '*Horn*', Gothic '*Haur*' and modern English '*Horn*'.

This element can also be found in the Celtic tribal grouping called the Cornovii, the '*Horned Ones*', whose toutal deity was Cernunnos, the Divine Stag and whose territories included regions of Caithness, Staffordshire and Cheshire around 200 C.E.. Under the form '*Qarnayn*' this epithet was applied to Alexander the Great in mediaeval Arabia where he was called '*Iskhandar of the Two Horns*'.

Chapter 3

Cycles of the Midnight Hunt

The multiform manifestations of the Wild Hunt myths throughout the collective consciousness of European peoples attests to an extremely archaic and profound metaphysic of magico-ecstatic trance and death-wisdom. The Wild Hunt mythos contains the archetypal Mystery of Discarnation and its lord, the Huntsman of the Primal Midnight is the Great Initiator therein.

It is the Horned Master of the Hunt who summons forth and separates the Subtle Body, the vehicle of the Fetch, from the gross material body. His horn calls us forth into spirit to merge with the ecstatic horde of the dead who range between the cosmic realms at the dead of night. The Wild Hunt, throughout the diversity of its

folkloric forms, represents a sacred metaphor and pathway of initiatory death, ekstasis and the liberation of the soul upon the nocturnal journey to the regenerative epicentre of the Underworld, Annwyn, Faerie or Hel.

As the supreme formula of the Elder Rite of Witchcraft, the cycle of the Wild Hunt embodies the secret of Going-Forth-By-Night, the transformation of the psyche from incarnate materiality into discarnate vision and spiritual flight.

Auld Hornie, as the Midnight Hunter, governs this initiatic process, being both the *'Opener of the Way of the Dead'* and psychopompic guide into the dimensions beyond ordinary space-time cognition for those who call upon him.

The funeral cavalcade of the Hunt symbolises a state of spirit-consciousness and transition into primal ecstasy via the *'death'* of normative body-ego awareness in trance. The Horned One is thus the bringer of death and ghostly trance-states, the true liberator of the soul from all limitation and the inductor into the wildest depths and vertiginous heights of the Wisdom.

All states and loci which exist mysteriously *'inbetween'* identities, all liminal locations and time-periods when the world-order is mystically reversed and annulled, form portal-gateways through which the Wild Hunt ride forth. When old time has dissolved but new time is yet to begin, at the crack between the dimensions, the Dream-Host is made manifest as profane time becomes absorbed into Urzeit (Primordial Time) and the pre-

creational wilderness overcomes the cosmos in the cycle of 'eternal return'.

Thus the gnosis of the Midnight Hunt comes into being at the exact moment of midnight which is neither past, present or future, at the Twelve Nights of Yule which belong neither to the Old Year or the New, but rather are No-Time and All-Time, when the world is mystically suspended betwixt temporal orders as at the Celtic New Year, Samonios/Samhain.

The inner initiations of the Wild Hunt therefore form the Great Secret of traditional Witch theology throughout Europe.

Writing in 1668 the early antiquarian Matthias Praetorius described the lore of the Wilde Heer in Thuringia during that period: the unseen army of dead souls travelled over fields, towns and villages during the 'Holy Christmas', led by the Old One in his guise as Eckhard, 'the Doorkeeper or Guard of Venus Mountain', the Sabbatic Peak of the Witches or Hurselberg, from whose caverns the Hunt rode forth and to which it returned, entering into the hidden world of Dame Venus or Herodias. Thus the Wild Huntsman is also the initiatory Doorkeeper and Threshold-Guardian of the original Otherworld Mound, in his most ancient guise.

In Germany as a whole the Lord of the Wutanes Heer (Furious Host) was the magician-sovereign and ecstatic death-god Wodan, and by his side rode the Wild Huntress named variously as Frau Wode, Frau Frie, Frau Perchta or Holda. Old German chronologies such as that of Baden-Wurttemberg for 1550 record the

awesome procession of the Furious Host travelling invisibly over the town by night, accompanied by roaring, shouting voices and ringing vibrations.

For the most part the Wilde Jagd is invisible to the physical eyes and is usually heard as it passes overhead- those who see it are 'taken' and are swept away in the train of the dead. To behold the Hunt directly is to 'die' to ordinary awareness in the ecstasy of the seer, to be rapt into the state of Otherness which the Horned Master and Wild Huntress personify and open up to us.

W. Kelly, writing in 1863, describes yet another Teutonic hypostasis of the Wild Host and says of its Master:

"Mounted on his white or dappled grey steed, the Wild Huntsman may always be recognised by his broad-brimmed hat and his wide mantle, from which he is surnamed Hakelbarend or Hakelberg, an old word signifying Mantle-Wearer. The hooting owl Tutursel flies before him and ravens, birds peculiarly sacred to Woden, accompany the chase."

In Icelandic tradition the frenzied cavalcade of ghosts is called the 'Yule Host', referring to the period in which it makes its cyclical appearance at the year's turning.

In the early 12th century the nocturnal coursing of the black hounds of the Wild Hunter was recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, having been heard at the deer-

park of Peterborough. These encounters with the Wild Hunt were especially dreaded and in fact exhibit certain features in common with so-called 'alien abductions' in our own day which represent a technological acculturation of the same phenomenon. Those who were 'taken' by the Hunt were said to be transported long distances and were found pale, disorientated and confused afterwards.

Old English tradition says that those who are born at the instant of midnight will be sensitive to the worlds beyond the veil and will be able to hear the passing of the Midnight Chase, having been elected by birth beneath the natal Sign of the Hunter.

In Devonshire the Black Master of the Wish Hounds travels along certain old roads and trackways across the wastes of Dartmoor on tempestuous nights, racing over the wild landscape of granitic tors and windswept heather. Concerning the etymology of the term 'Wish' as applied to the spectral hounds, Robert Hunt in his *Popular Romances Of The West Of England* (1881) tells us:

"In Devonshire, to this day, all magical or supernatural dealings go under the common name of Wishtness."

He also says that the West Country dialect word 'Whist' denotes something melancholy and uncanny. The aerial passage of the Black Master and his headless ghost-hounds has left traces upon the geo-mythic topography

of the region, discernable in place-names such as 'Wistman's Wood' and 'Wishmoor' in Worcestershire, sites haunted by the eldritch presence of the Black Lord of the Spirit Hunt. The Wish Hounds of Dartmoor are also designated Yeth Hounds and Yell Hounds in the local tradition.

Towards Cornwall the spectral company becomes transfigured into the figure of the Devil and his Dandy Dogs. T. Quiller Couch says of the Cornish Hunter that he was.

"terrible to look at and had the usual complement of saucer eyes, horns and tail, accorded by common consent to the legendary Devil. He was black, of course, and carried in his hand a long hunting-pole. The dogs, a numerous pack, blackened the small patch of moor that was visible, each snorting fire and uttering a yelp of indescribably frightful tone."

In some accounts the Devil rode a headless charger and the coal-black Dandy Dogs bore horns. This rather surreal motif of headlessness is also found in the legendary 'Death-Hearse' of Durham, an apparition of headless horses and driver which appears at midnight, racing toward the Churchyard before a death in the vicinity.

The Wild Hunt as Death-Hearse or black funeral carriage is found in the Irish tales of the 'Coiste Bodhar' or 'Deaf Coach' which transports post-mortem souls

into the realms beyond this world. This motif of the funereal Wain is also found in Breton legends concerning the Ankou, the creaking wagon of the King of the Dead which rumbles along certain spirit-paths during the night hours, halting by the houses of those fated to die and rapping upon their doors to summon them into his train.

In mediaeval continental mythology and in regions of Britain the ancient god-king Arthur is seen as the leader of the Hunt, known in France as the '*Chasse Arthur*' or '*Chase of Arthur*'. He took souls away to '*Arthur's Bower*', the chthonic northern airt, and is significantly depicted on the mosaic floor of the Cathedral of Otranto, executed around 1163-65, where he is shown riding upon a horned billy-goat.

The environs of Windsor Forest have always been the territory of the Old English version of the Horned Master, Herne or Hran whose mythos is referred to by William Shakespeare in the '*Merry Wives of Windsor*' - with spreading antlers, his horn in his hand and mounted on a dark horse, Old Hran was said to materialise near his sacred oak on wintry nights. An euphemeristic tale relates that Hran was the royal huntsman who, when a stag charged at his lord, placed himself in it's path and was fatally gored. A wizard saved him by cutting off the deer's horns and binding them to Hran's brow.

This vestigial myth relates also that the Hunter hung himself from Herne's Oak in Windsor Forest which identifies him as the Hanged God, hanging being the Indo-European sacrificial technique specially associated

with the Dread Sovereign of Death and Magical Wisdom.

Herne's Oak is long gone but his unearthly presence is never far away in the forest. Herne also wears clanking chains suspended from his person, symbolic of magical binding (like the Indic deity Varuna) and carries a bow and arrows which imply his power to grant swift death and dead-straight spirit-flight (cf. the legend of Abaris the Hyperborean). This awesome horned archetype was allegedly encountered in the days of Henry VIII by the Earl of Surrey whilst that nobleman was out riding in the forest.

In the early part of the 20th century Hran was sometimes sighted on moonlit nights standing beneath the shadow of his oak.

The sacred horn of the Old One signals the dissolution of profane time, it's vibratory resonance parts the spirit from the flesh and impels the soul forth from the boundaries of the body, drawing it into the ecstatic motion of the ancestor-stream in limitless expansion of consciousness - for the uninitiated, however, this means either madness or death.

In 1964 a member of the Berkshire Morris troupe told Ruth Tongue about an incident a couple of years earlier when three youths were fooling around in Windsor Forest and one of them, finding an old horn amongst the leaves, rashly sounded it - an ill-advised act which invoked Hran and his hounds upon them. The three attempted to run to the nearest church but one of the Hunter's deadly arrows transfixed the youth who had

blown the horn and he fell lifeless in the porch. The sacrificial law of the Hunt is inexorable and pitiless-in truth the Horned God deals mercilessly with those who call him up whether intentionally or accidentally.

In Shropshire tradition the icon of the Horned Master merged with the 11th century figure of Wild Edric, a historical hero who resisted the Norman conquest, leading a spirited uprising from the Welsh borders into Herefordshire and finally sacking Shrewsbury in the year 1069. Behind the folk-hero of popular revolt the more ancient outlines of the Old God can be clearly detected, the Wild Hunter who overcomes the bondage of space, time and matter and who overthrows the normative order in his ghostly rising-out.

Wild Edric and his faery wife, the Lady Godda who is the Queen of Faerie and Goddess of the Old Craft in Shropshire, are witnessed a-hunting before great wars and calamities when many souls will pass over to the 'other side'. Thus the Wild Hunt was made manifest just prior to the outbreak of the Crimean conflict around 1853-54. Oral testimony of an actual witness to this earliest of portents is related in C.S. Burne and G.F. Jackson's 'Shropshire Folk-lore' (London 1883). This is the account of a woman who recalled being with her father at Minsterley when Wild Edric and Mistress Godda rode by:-

"...she heard the blast of a horn. Her father bade her cover her face, all but her eyes, and on no account speak, lest she should go mad. Then they all came by: Wild Edric himself on a white horse

at the head of the band, and the Lady Godda his wife riding at full speed over the hills."

Both Edric and Godda wore green, the faery hue of rebirth and mergence with the tellurian-spiritual environment. They thus can be seen as an actualisation of the Faery Rade of Elfame, the Master and Mistress of the Elder Rite of the Witches in it's Shropshire recension. The Wild Host of Edric and Godda reputedly appeared in the summer of 1939 heralding the outbreak of the Second World War.

In the 12th century 'De Nugis Curialium' of Walter Map the Herefordshire mythos of King Herla's Rade is alluded to - the Herlathing are there said to eternally wander through the darkened countryside. The Harlequin-Trickster of early European drama is descended from the Wild Hunter 'Hellequin' who led the nocturnal charivari through regions of mediaeval Normandy and France, wearing his black masque. The 'Ride of Harlequin' leading the horde of the dead through the skies and over hills and dales was recorded as having occurred at Bonneval in the year 1091. The figure of Harlequin is mytho-genetically related to the tremendous mystery and paradoxical archetype of the King of Misrule.

Rough Musick and Stang-Riding

The Great Horned One presides over the archaic English custom of 'Rough Musick', otherwise known as 'Riding the Stang', 'Skimmity' or the 'Skimmington

Ride', a mimetic invocation of the Wild Hunt to punish and shame individuals in the village community for their transgressions. Often inappropriate marriages would be targetted as such were held to threaten the fertility-field of the village.

Often the '*Rough Musicking*' would be aimed at those guilty of domestic disturbance, nagging, adultery and spouse-beating and from extant engravings this derisory procession would consist of an unruly company bearing stag-antlered, bull-horned and goat-skull stangs or cult-standards of the Old One, beating upon pots and pans and blowing upon horns with effigies of the wrong-doers placed on horseback, seated back to back. This damning practise symbolises the Horned Master of the Wild Hunt, personification of the cyclic irruption of misrule and chaos, performing the paradoxical task of upholding domestic and communal order.

In the villages of Dorset the rite of '*Rough Musick*' featured the wearing of the bull-horned '*Ooser*', the ritual mask of the Old One and originally every village possessed one but the last '*Ooser*' was recorded at the beginning of the twentieth century at Melbury Osmond. At Shillingstone in the 19th century the '*Ooser*' was brought out during Yuletide when the '*Christmas Bull*' roamed the streets and was placated with food and drink offerings, embodying the Horned Master's Wild Host riding forth during the intercalendary period.

In Wiltshire the horned mask of the '*Yule Bull*' was called the '*Wooset*'. In actuality both terms are derived from the Saxon '*Wodwos* / *Wudewasa*' which signifies the

Wild Green Spirit of Prophetic Ekstasis, the Green Master of the Forest. The Masters Wyldefolk appear during the Twelve Nights with the Wutanes Heer, flying over the storm-racked wildwood from the primordial domain of Old Hornie. The '*Wooset*' or '*Ooser*' was usually under the guardianship of a particular family in the district, a survival of an ancient hieratic custodianship by the Old One's elect priest or Magister in the village.

At the village of Haddenham in the early years of the twentieth century a venerable '*Rough Musicking*' horn fashioned of copper hung upon the wall of a certain farmhouse and was resorted to whenever necessary, it's stentorian blast riving the night as the rule of the Horned One was established on the material plane. This horn was an earthly symbol of the Old God's hunting-horn, whose call summons the fetch from the body and rallies the spirit- cavalcade forth. The winding of the horn ritually summons the Wild Hunt and it's master to manifestation.

An interesting variant of such Wild Hunt ceremonials and exorcistic-punitive rites is the '*Stag Hunt*' ritual enacted in North Devon during the 19th century: there the '*Stag*' was a man who assumed the identity of some local malefactor and he was hunted across the fields and woods by a group of men representing the '*Hounds*'.

When caught the '*Stag*' was ritually '*killed*' when a blood-filled bladder he carried was slashed, an act pregnant with echoes of ancient sacrifices offered to the Horned Master.

As a magical rite against enemies the Stang was employed by poachers in Rockingham Forest in the year 1255. The foresters who guarded this royal hunting-ground were incensed when they discovered the antlered head of a buck-stag set upright upon a pole, orientated towards the south, with a spindle propping open the jaws. This was resented by the authorities, quite rightly, as a gesture conveying 'great contempt' against the King himself.

We should interpret this as a subversive gesture of raising the Stang or Horned Standard of Misrule against the powers of the law, both civil and ecclesiastical. It was a call to the Old One to reverse all injustice and to aid his people against the greedy, the violent and the oppressive.

Thus to the commoners of the Middle Ages, the Great Horned One was invoked to punish and reverse both domestic, societal and political malpractice and villainy and to overthrow all that denied the freedom and well-being of the people and the land. In the ceremony of '*Riding the Stang*' the essentially extra-societal power of Old Hornie is raised to banish, humiliate and vanquish the anti-societal, be they peasant, cleric or king. For the Horned One in his wild majesty lays low all restriction and at his dread appearance the illusory laws of the profane world are dissolved.

At the village of Broughton in Northamptonshire around St. Andrew's Day (Old Reckoning-December 11th) the discordant riot of the '*Tin Can Band*' can be heard to this day. The traditional Ran-Tan Band which followed the Stang-bearers represents the elemental

uprising of nocturnal storm and chaos which characterises the passage of the Wild Hunt, raising their unhallowed barrage of metallic percussion in the dark of night. The ritual of '*Riding the Stang*' was customarily repeated for three nights running in order to fully affirm its magical intention.

The Psychotopography of the Ancestral Hunt

The aerial coursings and invisible flights of the Wild Hunt across the nighted world usually follow specific routes, paths of numinous motion which are echoed in trace-lines upon the material landscape. The movement of ancestral souls through the oneiric topography upon the Otherworld journey can be discerned in mysterious trackway-alignments on the physical terrain. These spiritual roads run to and from inter-cosmic access-points, intersections and gateways. Loci such as barrow mounds, dolmens, burial sites and megaliths which stand at the mystical centre of the cosmos where breakthrough between dimensions can be achieved. Thus the hallowed trackways of the Wild Hunter mark the lines of his cyclical emergence and are truly '*passages between the worlds.*'

The Saxon tribes called such ritual causeways the '*Deada-Waeg*' or '*Dead-Way*', features which eventually evolved into the '*Church-Ways*' of old England along which funerary corteges moved to the churchyard. There is some evidence that the terrestrial '*Dead-Way*' mirrored the celestial trackway of souls, the glittering

expanse of the Milky Way which the Estonians knew as the 'Way of Souls' and which was called the 'Bird's Way' in Finland.

This supposition may be supported by the fact that the ancient Saxon term for the Milky Way, 'Wodens-Waeg', also denotes the paths taken by the Wutanes Heer across the land. As the 'Bird's Way' of Finno-Ugrian star-lore we might note that amongst the Finns of the Volga the Milky Way was said to delineate the paths taken by migratory geese across the sky, the gander being the ornithomorphic form par excellence assumed by the night-travelling soul in many European traditions (such as the Welsh tales of the 'Hounds of Annwryn'). The link between nocturnal flights of birds and the psychopompic Death-Hunt is also resumed in the old Lancashire tradition of the 'Seven Whistlers' whose appearance often forebodes fatalities.

In the most remote stratae of Indo-European lore, the originally oral inheritance of the Indian 'Rig-Veda' we find reference made to the funerary paths of Yama, (the Iranian Yama Xsaeta). The King of the Otherworld (Yamaloka) and the Lord of the Dead who was the first pathfinder into the realms beyond. The ancestral forefathers (Pitris) move along these paths on their way to the paradise of Yama:

"Go forth, go forth on those ancient paths, On which our Fathers passed beyond: There you shall see the two Kings, Yama and Varuna, Rejoicing in the sacrificial drink."

In the folklore of the West Country we find the concept of the 'Trode', a green pathway along which the faeries move at the four quarter points of the year (the liminal gaps inbetween the seasons.) The Faery Rade can be seen as a stream of unearthly lights floating along the Trode at these times. To be caught upon the track when they are hovering always results in the individual being caught-up and 'taken' out of themselves by the Host.

This is the old motif of the Faery rade which in mediaeval legendry was led by the Horned God as the Faery Monarch King Orfeo with the Faery Goddess, Queen Meroudys (Herodyas).

In Ireland we find the idea of the 'Faery Passes' and tales of how dwellings erected upon the paths of the 'Hidden Folk' were periodically troubled by the disconcerting appearance of the 'Host of Peace' passing through the house walls. W.Y Evans Wentz, writing in 1911, mentions that the faery-beings of Albania, called 'Those Without' or the 'Ones from Outside' also had:

'their own particular paths and retreats, and whoever violates these is struck and falls ill.'

He also comments that:

'... young people who have been enticed to enter their round dance afterwards waste away and die, apparently becoming one of "Those Without".'

In Denmark the weird phenomena of 'King Volmer's Hunt' is encountered at particular seasons, according to Jacqueline Simpson, and is heard:

'whistling and roaring up in the sky...just like when a hunting-party is careering through the woods and fields, with horns blowing, hounds baying and huntsmen galloping wildly.'

The route of 'King Volmer's Hunt' passes again and again through certain buildings. A roof of a house at Herlufsholm was said to have collapsed and sunk in the middle on account of the regular passage of the Hunt overhead.

Simpson in her 'Scandinavian Folktales' (1988) says that:

'...there are certain farms through which he regularly takes his course, in at one gate and out at the other, and...people leave the gates open at times when he is likely to come.'

In connection with such ghostly alignments of the soul-stream, the Victorian scholar W. Kelly wrote that:

'Houses and barns in which there are two or three doors opposite each other are very liable to be made thoroughfares by the Wild Hunt.'

These geo-mythic fragments all point toward the ancient awareness of the linear movement of spirits and the 'dead-straight' way of the Spirit-Hunter and his phantom company. In many regions those who encounter the Wild Hunt upon or near to it's ancestral road should fling themselves face-down upon the earth or else hold onto a tree to avoid being 'taken'. Alternatively some German sources advise taking cover under an odd number of boards, seven, nine or eleven.

We might relate these vestigial folklore survivals to the linear flight-paths of so-called Ufo's which appear to be polymorphic sentient light-entities emerging temporarily between dimensional planes and at times perceivable by certain humans. The whole 'alien abduction' scenario has likewise been connected with the old pattern of supernatural journeys undergone by some individuals when they were seized by the Wild Hunt and carried through the air for hundreds of miles.

These experiences and mythic themes in actuality seem to be descriptions of a subtle and profound interaction between the human psyche and the non-organic environment occurring at certain places and times, leading to spontaneous shamanic visions, 'soul-flight' and deep-level perceptual shifts in particular people. This is enshrined in traditional knowledge of consciousness-catalysing 'points' and 'paths' in the mythological landscapes and psychotopographies of Europe and elsewhere.

Similar landscape points and pathways are probably involved in the accounts of nocturnal societies of sorcerers in Haiti, the 'Red Sects' of the Bizango,

Makandal, Voltigeurs (Leapers) and Vlenbendeng (Blood, Pain, Excrement) who are night-travelling shapeshifters are able to take the form of goats or cockerels. Organised in quasi-military 'columns' these Voudoun cultists march through the darkness dressed in white and scarlet vestments, crowned with metal horns, bearing candles and cracking whips as they move.

The 'columns' travel in this manner to cemeteries and crossroads (the crossroad being the supreme point of intersection between worlds) to celebrate the rites of the chthonic Lwa, Maitre Carrefour and Baron Samedi. The 'columns' are greatly feared as those who inadvertently encounter them at night. They are captured and must join the band or be killed on the spot.

Alfred Metraux relates a very peculiar Haitian equivalent of the Death-Coach or Ankou which he heard rumours of at Marbial; the people muttered that masked sorcerers drove at night in a car with strange blue beams shining from its headlights, the 'Motor-Zobop' which kidnapped people who mysteriously disappeared under cover of darkness.

The essential leitmotifs of the Wild Hunt can be seen in these Haitian analogical examples:- the travelling forth by night, the vehicle of dead souls, horned masks, animal transmorphosis and spirit-journeys to the crossroads and the 'place of the dead' along certain routes.

The likenesses to the European 'Wild Hunt' ceremonials and Witch-bands are very close to the surface and

evidence the universality of the themes on a cross-cultural level, as a collective psychic inheritance of humankind.



Chapter 4

The Christmas Fool, Saturnus and the Cult of Misrule

As we have seen, the intercalendary period in the year-cycle is the realm of the 'Great Inbetweenness'. It is under the rulership of the ancient Horned God whose formula and law of Misrule turns the universe upside-down and inside-out in the mystical phase of 'ritual reversal' where in all is inverted, sent 'backwards' in an infinite regression to the primal source behind creation.

It is the sacred void of Ur-Khaos (Greek 'Khaos' = 'Yawn, Gape', inferring the gap, chasm or empty field of all-potential at the beginning of things) which reopens at the liminal cleft in time and space (All-Hallows-

Yule). The void-chasm of Khaos is the mystical ground and womb of being, seemingly unknowable and nothingness, but pregnant with the magical latencies of all existence, charged with infinite possibilities.

In Italic-Latin lore this is the New Year feast of the Saturnalia which is marked by the sun's entry into Capricornus, the Saturnian Sign of the Goat. The Saturnalia took place in the Roman Empire around December 17th along with celebrations such as the Paganalia. It was characterised by universal revelry, sexual excesses, heavy drinking and the suspension and overthrow of all ordinary standards with masters laughingly attending upon their slaves and unrestrained erotic license prevailing for days. Mircea Eliade has described the intent of the Roman rites of Saturnalia as a reversion of all forms to indeterminate unity.

As all social norms and constraints were cast away crowds caroused in the streets where braziers smouldered in the wintry air. Houses and chambers were decked with evergreen holly and ivy and an ass was offered in sacrifice to the god Saturnus.

The ass, holy to the Egyptian divinity Set/Sut, was especially holy to Saturn in Europe and therefore with the Saturnalian mysteries at midwinter. Cornelius Agrippa in 1531 classifies the ass as a Saturnian beast. The 'Christmas Fool' of 15th century French Yule rites bore a pair of asses' ears upon his head, identifying Saturn with the Lord of Misrule himself.

Sebastian Brant's satirical 'Narrenschiff' or 'Ship of Fools' published at Basle in 1495 contains many woodcut images of the classic ass-eared fool of mediaeval allegorical imagery, the paradoxical trickster-shaman whose number is nought and everything. In the 'Townsley Cycle' of mediaeval mystery-plays the Devil or Horned God appeared on the stage goat-horned, ithyphallic and bearing asses' ears as he commonly did in art and drama of the period.

Saturnus, whose name derives from 'Sator'-'Sower', presided over the dawn of time, the first Aion which was the Golden Age of Latium, a paradisaical epoch when all were free, there was no hierarchy and life was blissful, unknowing of toil or suffering. The humanity of King Saturn's age were innocent of pain or sin and lived on acorns. This is the shamanic terrestrial paradise, the 'time before time' of mythic consciousness when heaven and earth were still unseparated and we existed in primal ecstasy, at one with the celestial and natural worlds.

The Saturnalia was a re-enactment of the conditions of this 'sacred world' and 'sacred time', a paradise preside over by the old goat-headed, ass-eared god of merry Misrule, the Holy Fool. By comparison with the knowledge of the Fool, the smug 'truths' of the worldly-wise are the veriest smattering of risible nonsense, for he bears the supreme wisdom which lies outside the island of 'reason'.

Those who possess the gnosis of the Fool are truly blessed for whether the world of men deals well or ill with them they can only laugh uproariously in it's face.



During the Saturnalia the image of the god in the temple of Saturn, which usually stood bound with woollen bands, was unloosed to signify his rule over the world, the liberation from the restrictions of profane time and mundane perception.

At the most esoteric level the Saturnian facet of the Horned One embodies his role as the Lord of the Night of the Gods. He it is who sows the seeds of all forms in the field of eternity, Master of the Outer Spaces and Guardian of the Threshold to the starry spheres—the Old One, Lord of Infinite Time who tests the initiate and guides us beyond the finite circles of space-time.

As the Gnostic Lord of the Aion, Saturn is described by Agrippa as;

'the father of the gods ...the author of secret contemplation, destroying and preserving all things, overturning force and power, and constituting a keeper of secret things...'

Speaking oracular heads were fashioned under the celestial influence of Saturn by mediaeval magicians and we might link Saturn as the 'Black Head of Eternal Wisdom' with Baphomet, the goat-horned god of the Knight's Templar.

The Saturnian 'furor' or 'madness' of melancholia was regarded as the contemplative hallmark and the temperamental curse of genius. Thus Albrecht Durer's engraving 'Melencolia' displays the planetary square of

Saturn. The sorcerers of the Middle Ages still associated Saturn with the ancient Horned God of midwinter:-

'a Saturnian planetary image consisted of 'a man with a Stag's Head, Camel's feet, on a throne or on a Dragon, with a Sickle in the right hand, an Arrow in the left.'

In the 15th century the holy madness of Saturnian Misrule was invoked in the rowdy and antinomian Festum Fatuorum, the *'Festival of Fools'*. A motley and sometimes cross-dressed throng of Fools led by the Bishop of Fools invaded the church and disrupted the saying of mass with heckling songs and lewd gestures to the strong disapproval of the ecclesiastical authorities.

The Festival of Fools also involved inversions and mockeries of liturgical rites and in 1249 the Christmas revels of the Fools began to flare up into riots. Crowds of ass-eared Fools, it is reported, raged through the streets, violently smashed down the doors of a convent and attacked the servants. Only personal intervention by the Pope managed to subdue this conflagration of folk-anarchy.

The motif of the *'Ship of Fools'* likewise denotes the reign of Misrule whose dominion it heralds. In the world of ritual reversal the Ship of Fools sails across the dry land in contrast to normal conditions.

One such procession of a ship across the land is recorded as having happened in 1133 in the Belgian

Chronicle called the *'Gesta Abbatum Trudonensium'*. A rite under the patronage of the Weaver's Guild; a wooden boat on wheels was equipped with a mast and sails and was drawn by weavers on a forty mile journey from Aachen through Maastricht, Tongres and Borgloon to the town of St.Trond. The abbot of the monastery at St.Trond tried to forbid the ship's entrance into the town but to no avail as the people admitted it through the gates.

The Weaver's Guild took over the vessel's guardianship and for twelve nights huge crowds of around a thousand people danced around the ship under the the light of the moon. Groups of semi-naked females rushed through the streets and orgiastic celebrations gripped the town. The clergy and their tonsured brethren were appalled, outraged and shocked at this explosion of heathen license and tried to have the ship dismantled or burned-suggestions which provoked popular opposition and could not be implemented. The wheeled ship finally trundled on to Louvain but was refused entry at the city gates by the nervous authorities.

On January 6th (Christmas Day, Old Reckoning) the Christmas Fool dressed in animal skins danced in triumphal procession through the streets of old England accompanied by sword-dancers and morris-men. At Revesby in Lincolnshire a play was enacted in which the four sons of the Fool interlocked their swords about their father's throat and noisily leaping aside, drew the blades away as the Fool dropped down dead. The four mummers then sang that they had:-

"...cut down our father like the evening sun. And here he lies in all his purple gore, And we are afraid he will never dance more."

One of the sons then stamps his foot and the Fool rises, resurrected in an ecstatic rebirth, full of the joy and delight of the Golden Aeon as time is regenerated. This is the original archetype of the Fool of the Tarots, leaping forth into the primal dawn of manifestation, the morning of the gods.

The Rite of the Horns of Misrule

- 1 *The Knell of Inbetweenness hath been struck,
The Bell of MISRULE soundeth;
Reverberating the Thirteen Angles,
Echoing through the Nine Spheres,
Rousing the Deep Ones from the starry Abyss of
UR-KHAOS.
Exalted be the Guardians of the Dolmen,
En-chanted be the Word Unspeakable,
the Signacula of MISRULE at the Gap betwixt the
~Times
Amid grey mist and gloaming I rown,
Through the hoary Stile of Stone,
Through the whispering World-Hedge.*
- 2 BAGAH! LACA BACHAHE
LAMAC CAHI ACHABAHE
KARRELYOS.
LAMAC LAMEC BACHALYOS

CABAHAGI SABALYOS
BARYOLAS.
LAGOZATHA CABYOLAS
SAMAHAC ET FAMYOLAS
HARRAHYA.

- 3 *Aligned are Star and Mound and Stone:
Come forth, Dark Preceptor,
Thou Upright Man in Black,
Sharp of tines and hard of hoof:
Come forth, ye Woodwose of the Ancient Night,
With the Wild Charivari,
The Blessing of thy Dark Light to bestow.*
- 4 *By Bullock's Horn
And ramping Buck,
Now raise the Stang
For Lust and Luck.
The Auld 'Un's nigh
On Coal-Black steed,
With Gabriel Hounds
The Hunt to lead!*
- 5 *Thou old Goat Dog of the Sabbat,
Shadow-cloak'd Piper of the Corpse Ways,
Divell and Master, I am rapt beyond,
In the Mysterium of the Skull and the Serpent.
Crowned with the gnarled Horns of Misrule,
I ride triumphant upon the tempest,
And rage in spirit with the Herlathing.
In the wake of the Seven Whistlers,*

*Masked in Ancestral Ecstasy
And mantled in the Grand Array of Night.*
HAIL I. HOA HRAN. HAIL HOU.

6 *I am grown mighty within Black Puck's hide
And wax wise to the rede of the Skull
And thrive in the virile numen of the Phallus.
From the Dark Tower in the Forest of Flint,
Under the wan Moon of ice and the fleeting clouds,
My spell flieth forth in every direction,
Borne on the Crow's Wing and on the Eight Winds.*

7 *O King of Misrule, who art the World's Upturner,
O Goat of Saturnus, whose Law is Perpetual
Revolt,
O Divine Fool, Overthrower of the Profane
Kingdom,
Destroying and Creating All in the Rite of the
Great Reversal!
Thine are the Uprais'd Horns,
Thine is the Wisdom of Lust,
Thine are the Red-Ochred Bones,
Thine is the Graveyard Dust.*

Chapter 5

The Man in Black & the Road to the Sabbat

To the Witch-clans and night-travellers of mediaeval Europe the old Horned One was regarded as the All-Master of the quick and the dead. He was the Hidden Father of the Wise and the monarch of the night-side of being whom they venerated in the form of the primal Beast-God, the Black Man of the Sabbat, the masked magister who officiated at the assemblies as his vice-regent on earth and the mediating vehicle of his ancient power.

The rites of Auld Hornie were celebrated in the streets of villages and towns, in moonlit fields amid the golden

corn, in the glades of moss-hung woods, on whispering, windswept heaths and by the crossways beneath the turning constellations of the witching hour. Enthroned and omnipotent, the the secret flame of the torch flaming between his great horns, the Black King received the adoration of his servants through many centuries. Throughout all times he rules as the Grand Magister of the Craft of Wisdom, the nocturnal gnosis of old Europe known as Weika.

The appellation of the Wisdom and the Rite is of early Indo-European derivation from the root *WEIK- signifying the *'Religion of the Sorcerers'*: from this root some trace the Anglo-Saxon Wicca/ Wicce-*'Witch'*, Wiccan - *'To Cast a Spell'*, Middle English Wicche - *'Witch'*, Old German Wikkerie - *'Witchery'* and Wickheresen - *'Witch'* (linked to Wicken - *'To Foretell'* and Wicker - *'Witch-Seer'*).

The Weikan faith, with it's immemorial worship of the Queen of Night, Herodias/ Habondia and her Horned Guardian-Consort was upheld by a network of practitioners throughout the European lands. As far back as 830 C.E., Cornelius a Kempen reports, in the reign of the Emperor Lothar the heaths of Friesland were the dwelling places of the Witte-Wiven or *'Wise-Wives'*.

At the innermost heart of the Weikan Mysteries lies a Dreaming-Cult whose solitary votaries fly forth by night on the pinions of trance, sending forth the fetch along the secret pathway that leads to the midnight conclave of the Hexentanz, the primaeval vision of the Otherworld Sabbat. The Witch-Sabbat is the nocturnal paradise of the Horned Master, the wild kingdom that

lies outside the confines of the known world, into whose Otherness the Witch consciously crosses over in the broomstick-ride across the gulf of darkness. To project the Fetch into the *'Field of the Goat'* the Witch employs a combination of subtle praxes designed to engage the Dream-Body and to expand awareness beyond the normative boundaries of the senses into an unfolding spiral of transformations and initiatory metamorphoses

The true Sabbat is simultaneously a state of Dreaming-consciousness and an extradimensional locus where the convocation of the living and the dead occurs and the Great Return which leads to a new becoming is achieved. The celebrants of the Sabbat gather in the twilit forests and mist-shrouded meadows of Elfhame and through the averse formulae of infinite return, deliberately *'go backwards'* to that which lies behind all phenomena and consciousness, the ineffable source of all creation glyphed in the Witch-Mysteries by the Cauldron and the Cavern.

This mystical self-reversion or initiatic regression to the root of the All is synonymous with the Horned God's law of Misrule. It provides the inner metaphysic of ritual reversal, symbolised by the Backwards Prayer, the Widdershins Dance and the black tapers and ceremonial inversions characteristic of the Sabbat-Rite. All these infer the way of infinite return and self-reversal to the ground and matrix of primaeval unity which is the true state of Sabbatic ecstasy.

The oneiric nature of the Witch-Cult is evidenced at some of the earliest trials in Tolouse in 1335 where the witch Catherine Delort affirmed that she went to the



Sabbat in her sleep. The Dream-Sabbat is the supreme rite of the Witches, a total actualisation of the Great Mystery-all restrictions and bonds are overcome there. The separations between god, human and beast dissolve in a polymorphous inferno of extasis, the secret rapture of inner Witchdom. Thus the Sabbat is a dream, a dream of such potency that the profane world seems pallid and unreal by comparison. To enter into this sacred world of paradisaical night-revels requires consummate agility of the Dream-Body and the employment of techniques to sidestep and diminish the hold of profane perceptual conditioning, enabling the leap or flight to the 'Other Side' to be effected.

Pierre De Lancre reports that a Witch avowed to him:

'...the Sabbat was the true paradise, where there was more joy than could be expressed. Those who went there found the time too short because of the pleasure and happiness they enjoyed...'

Another 28 year old woman told this murderous Witch-Hunter:

'... the joy which the Witches had at the Sabbat was but the prelude of much greater glory.'

The Horned Man in Black or Devil is the Doorkeeper and Opener of the Way to this state of otherworldly

bliss and silent enthousiasmos at the depth of all things, the deep kingdom of the Faery Nocturnaliala celebrated at the crossroads of the worlds.

It was the Upright Man, the Horned Father who delivered the dream-inducing ointment or '*Unguentum Sabbati*' to the neonate. Antoine Rose in 1477 said that the Devil whom she called Robinet, gave her a stick to ride upon and a vessel of salve after marking the little finger of her left hand at her initiation. The Somerset Witch Elisabeth Style said in 1664 that:

'... before they are carried to their meetings they anoint their foreheads, and hand-wrists with an Oil the Spirit brings them, which smells raw, and then they are carried in a very short time...'

Reginald Scot mentions both an oil and a potion prepared by the Witches, The former

'whereby they ride in the air; but the thinner potion they put into flagons, whereof whoso drinketh, observing certain ceremonies, immediately becommeth a master or mistress in that practise and faculty...'

The archaic praxes of trance-induction in combination with the effects of hallucinogenic ointments enabled the fetch to temporarily separate from the material body which lay in a death-like catalepsy or slumber. Jean de

Nynauld in his '*De La Lycanthropie, Transformation Et Extase Des Sorciers*' (1615) lists the ingredients of the Devil's Ointment as Water Parsnip, Aconite, Cinquefoil, Dwale and Soot. This salve must be rubbed into the flesh until it is warm and red and has penetrated deeply into the pores according to old writers.

The Fetch-Soul of the Witch was thought to leave the immobile body via the mouth in the form of a butterfly or moth. The old Lancashire dialect word '*soul*' used to be used for a moth and the very word '*soul*' (Anglo-Saxon '*Sawel*', Gothic '*Saiwala*') derives from I.E.*SAIWOLOS - 'Quick-Moving, Easily-Moving' inferring the swift motion and aerial mobility of the liberated psyche.

The symbolic steed of the Witch-Sorcerer usually consisted of the birch-twigg broom for women and the pitchfork, a version of the Stang, for men, upon which they rode on the night-journey. An old German name for male Witches, '*Gabelreiterinnen*', means the '*Pitchfork-Riders*' the masculine implement whose metal tines represent the Old One's horns. In Southern France it was customary to use riding-sticks of the '*Souhandourra*' - the Dogwood tree, though hazel and ash are also popularly favoured as woods for the Gand or '*Wand-Pole*'.

In the traditional Witch-mythos the practitioner often mounted the riding-pole and flew up the broad chimney-hole, as is shown in many old pictures such as Teniers' '*Departure for the Sabbat*' and Franz Franckens '*Witches' Sabbath*'. In 1598 it was alleged that:

'Francoise Secretain was carried on a white stick. Satan, in the form of a tall dark man conveyed thither Thieuenne Paget and Antide Colas who most often left their house by way of the chimney...'

A young girl, Claudine Boban, maintained:

'she and her mother mounted on a besom, and that flying out by the chimney they were thus borne to the Sabbat.'

Ostyak and Chukchee shamans in Siberia fly up through the chimney-hole or smoke-aperture of the 'Sky House', marked by the Pole Star in the centre of the heavens. Amongst the Altaians the 'Golden Flues of the Sky House', the central smoke-hole of the yurt, is regarded as the passageway between worlds taken by shamans in their mystical ascents, the intercosmic 'hole in the sky'.

In respect of the flight of the witch up the chimney/smoke-hole we might note that in the Tibetan Bon -Pa religion the soul, at the moment of death, leaves the body via the frontal suture of the skull, the Brahmarandhra, in the form of a shooting star - the lama facilitates this process via a rite called 'Shooting an Arrow through the Smoke Hole'. The ascent of the witch up the chimney-hole can therefore be seen as a microcosmic process in which the spirit-essence rises up the central axis and passes through the highest psychic centre in the skull, entering into the transcendent

state, emerging from time and matter into bliss and immortal being.

Much has been written upon the phallic significance of the Witches broomstick, riding-pole or Gandus. According to some traditions the end of such poles should be carved to represent the 'membrum virile' and concealed by being bound in birch-twigs.

The old iconography of the witch-goddess riding the broomstick up into the starry heights in fact resumes a highly secret sequence of techniques sometimes referred to as the 'Formula of the Besom' in the Old Rite. Here the riding-pole represents the Phallus of the White Stag, the Horned Master in his aspect as totally quiescent spirit and wisdom, which when conjoined with the creative energy of the Witch-Goddess, Dame Venus, manifests the original oneness from which the cosmos unfolds and to which it returns.

The conjunction of the Goddess and the phallic Gand-Pole denotes a method of erotic magic whereby the 'Seething Fire' of the Lady's Candel-Power is awoken in the lowermost cavern of the magic mountain and rises up the world-axis and through the 'Smoke-Hole' (the highest psychic centre in the skull). This is the union of the Red Essence of Dame Venus with the White Essence of the White Hart and conceals some of the deepest secrets of 'Witch-Flight' or levitation by broomstick.

The Black Lord of Witches, the Dark God of the two Horns, is the archetypal initiator-psychopomp who separates the subtle essence of the soul from the coarse material image of the body and who grants the extasis

of night-transvection in the 'living death' of magical trance. When darkness covers the world and all are asleep in their beds, he is the dark-robed Master who summons forth the Wise to go out of themselves, riding on the turbulent storms and tempests over brake and thicket, ditch and dale to the realms beyond. As the Great Sorcerer and Lord of the Dead, the Horned One enables such translations into the spirit and opens the Devil's Road to the High Sabbat.

The Masques of Old Skrat

The rationalist Reginald Scot in his 'Discoverie Of Witchcraft' (1584) ridiculed what he regarded as old wives' tales about the Witch God and in the process provided a description of the popular conception of Old Hornie in Elizabethan England:

"...the ouglie Devil, with hornes on his head, fier in his mouth, a huge tayle in his breach, eyes like basons, fangs like a boar, claws like a tiger, a skin like a bear and a voice roaring like a lion."

As the semi-bestial, semi-human Lord of the Animals, the Horned Witch-god assumes a variety of theriomorphic guises in the folk mythos of the Sabbat. Most celebrated is his form as the Black goat, the Lord of the Black Goatskins.

At Poitiers in the year 1574 three sorcerers and a sorceress were accused of gathering at the crossroads to

honour the Ancient One in the shape of 'un grand Bouc noir'. De Lancre reports that the Basque Witches said that the Horned God presided over their ceremonies in the form of a great goat with a torch in the midst of his horns. Henri Boguet also avers that the gathering worshipped the Old One:

"...sometimes in the shape of a tall dark man, sometimes in the shape of a goat and to express their worship and homage they made him an offering of candles which burned with a blue light."

The Horned God as the Buck-Goat Lucibello transported his chosen ones to the sabbat at the Walnut Tree of Benevento in Italian Witchlore.

As well as the Black Ram, the Horned Master also assumes the shape of the old Black Bull of the earth and the underworld. This masque may be linked with ancient Celtic images of the three-horned bull venerated by the Belgae and the chthonic god Donnotaurus (Lordly Bull') from Gaulish tradition.

Again De Lancre mentions that the Witches of the Bass-Pyrenees offered adoration to the Bull-Horned God. In Eurasian myths the Black Bull of the north brings storms and rainclouds to make the earth fruitful. The Bull is an embodiment of the Horned One's prodigious virility and masculine potency as the sire of all living beings.

As the Black Dog the Old One has a prominent role in legends throughout Europe as a death-omen and a funereal herald. To the 18th century Witches of the Highlands the Devil was worshipped in the form of a 'large, black ugly Tyke', the 'Towzie Tyke' of Scots lore who skirls his bagpipes in lonesome and eerie places by night, stamping out the tempo with his cloven hoof. In this canine transfiguration he is the Skriker of Lancashire and Yorkshire, Padfoot, Trash and the Barguest - all these denote a shaggy, black hell-hound with flaming red eyes, clanking chain and horns.

Other manifestations of the same archetype include the Mauthe Doog or Black Dog of Manx tradition. As an underworld guardian of the lower portals the Black Dog is known as the 'Church Grim' and Ruth Tongue describes how a completely black dog would sometimes be interred in the northern quarter of the graveyard as a guardian-watchdog. The Church Grim was at times spotted prowling around the graves during storms and rang the bells at midnight to announce an imminent death in the locale.

The Cat is another important form of the Horned God - Roland de Vernois described in 1598 how 'the Devil is present for those at the Sabbath in the form of a great Black Cat.' The Witches of Lapland also encountered the Old God in his dark feline aspect. Certain hellish Scottish ceremonies evoked the feline daemon or master-cat called 'Big Ears' who once conjured to visible appearance would grant the wishes of sorcerers.

The connection between the Horned Beast-God and the supernatural Black cat is very reminiscent of the cultus

of the Aztec divinity Tezcatlipoca who went forth at night as a great jaguar. An Aztec account describes this cat as:

'... a dweller of the forests, of crags, of water; noble, princely, it is said. It is the lord, the ruler of animals... cautious, wise, proud... And by night it watches; it seeks out what it hunts, what it eats... clear is its vision... even if it is very dark, even if it is misty, it sees.'

The nocturnal Cat-divinity of the mediaeval Witches may be rooted in archaic Celtic gods such as the cat-headed king Cairbre Cinn-Cait, the divine ancestor of the Erainn, mentioned in the 12th century Irish 'Coir Anmann':

"Cairbre mCinn Cait, 'of the Cat's Head' since it was a cat's head, that is the form or shape of a cat that was on his god."

In 1630 the 'warlock carl' Alexander Hamilton told his examiners that he saw the devil in the shape of a 'corbie' or crow recalling the god's ancient aspect as the 'Great Raven'. In Norfolk Witchcraft the Man in Black is primarily distinguished by the black crow's feather he wears in his hatband.

The Sabbatic God of the Bamberg Witches was green in colour, with taloned claws and feet, an owl's head and great horns - a curious composite archetype probably

drawn from the local folk-lore of that region of Germany in the 17th century.

Vajra-Trident & Pitchfork-Stang

The Horned God, under his European folk-iconography as the Devil, is often depicted as bearing a three-tined fork or trident in his hand, a distinctly non-biblical attribute. The meaning of the Devil's trident must be traced back into the prehistoric reaches of the Indo-European migrations. The cognate archetype in early Vedic spirituality can be identified in the ancient deity Rudra-Shiva, who has been called the 'Wild Huntsman of Hinduism' and who evidently represents the eastern hypostasis of the Great God who became Old Hornie in European traditions.

The name Rudra is nowadays interpreted as meaning 'Wild' and is found in Latin as 'Rudis' - 'Rough, Wild' from the Indo-European *RODAS - 'Roughness, Wildness, Rawness'. Riding upon his boar or bull, Rudra is a formidable marksman, despatching his deadly arrows with unerring aim, a terror to gods, humans and beasts alike as the personification of divine ferocity and awesome energy. As the lord of the extrasocietal wilderness 'Mighty Rudra, the god with braided hair' was excluded from the Vedic sacrifice and was propitiated separately. As the Rig Vedic Hymn 2.33 states:

'Rightly you carry the arrows and bow: rightly you wear the precious golden necklace shaped with many forms and colours: rightly you extend this

terrible power over everything. There is nothing more powerful than you, Rudra.'

Rudra is also invoked as the 'tawny and amazing bull', recalling the bull-horned god of pagan England, commemorated as the 'Christmas Bull' and in other masquing customs. In the Indian lore bovine totemism is visible in the Nandi-Bull of Shiva. The retinue of this god were the eight Rudras who rage with him across the worlds, shaking mountains and ravaging the forests at their passing. The Rudras have been interpreted as ancestral shades who accompany the Mahadeva, their names resuming his diverse facets:

Bhava	- 'Existence'
Sharva	- 'He Who Has Arrows,
Pashupati	- 'Lord of Beasts'
Ugra	- 'Dread'
Mahadeva	- 'Great God'
Rudra	- 'Wild'
Ishana	- 'Ruler'
Ashani	- 'Thunderbolt'

Jaan Puhvel states the case with clarity:

"Rudra is indeed the god of the wild, of chaos before cosmos, of nature antedating culture, of all that as yet, or ever, eludes control."



His two aspects as the peaceful, white Shiva and the furious, black Mahakala are echoed in the European Horned God's guises as the White Hart and the Black Bull, attesting a common Indo-Celtic ancestry.

Rudra-Shiva wields the Vajra-Trident called the Trishula whose three tines represent creation, preservation and dissolution or white clarity (Sattvas), red energy (Rajas) and black inertia (Tamas). The Gypsies use a trifork twig called the Trushul, the 'Gypsy Cross', in certain spells to stir potions and to hallow magical brews in Slavonia. The trident borne by the Devil in European folk-imagery is a version of the stang and seems to be derived from a related archaic source. The Vajra-Trident or tri-forked stang of the Wild God later metamorphosed into the familiar pitchfork of Old Nick, his dynamic symbol and the holy weapon of his triple force.

Hexentanz: the Sabbat of the Sorcerers

The night upon which the Sabbat was observed varies from one place to another: the Benandanti travelled out on Thursday nights as did many European Witches, whilst in Essex Fridays were preferred. regularly upon these nights and around the four Ember- Nights or Cross-Quarter Days the brothers and sisters of the Faith fell into '*transis and extasis*' and journeyed out to the otherworld assembly of the Master, the timeless revels of Otherwhere.

The Sabbatstead is usually a mountainous elevation, a caverned gateway to the noumenal realm, symbolic of the 'Mons Veneris' or womb of the Witch-Goddess. We see this in the Blocula or Black Peak of Swedish Witchlore, Pendle Hill in Lancashire, the Puy-de-Dome in Auvergne, France, the Venusberg of Germany. Christian Stridtheckh in his *De Sagis* (1691) states:

'In our own country the Mountain of the Bructeri, which some call Meliboeus, in the duchy of Brunswick is known and notorious as the haunt of Witches. In the common tongue this Mountain is called the Blocksberg or Heweberg, Brockersburg or Vogelsberg.'

He also comments that the Witch-Sabbat is:

'generally held in wooded spots, or on mountains, or in caves and any places which are far from the usual haunts of men'.

The true Sabbatic Peak, however, is not geographically fixed but exists as an archetypal eminence looming up on the visionary terrain revealed to the Sorcerer's inner eye. There on some windswept height the dull red fires leap and dance at certain seasons and the swift silhouettes of dancing figures mingle in the round, raising their voices above the night - storm in the dread cadences of the immemorial Sabbat - Song.

The various phases of the Ritus Sabbati are hieroglyphic configurations which veil the cycle of initiations, imaginal- symbolic representations of diverse magical acts and corresponding mindstates encountered on the Way of Night (Via Nocturna). Guazzo in his '*Compendium Malificarum*' published in 1626 describes the popular conception of the Sabbatic rites:

"Then they offer him (the Devil) pitch-black candles or infant's navel cords: and kiss him upon the buttocks in sign of homage..."

The Osculum Infame offered to the hindquarters of the Black Goat is both a symbolic inversion of the norm and a veil for an ancient technique involving the arousal of magico-creative fire in the lower 'wheels' of the body. Where the Sabbatic Rite was actualised by a group of Witches a sacramental feast was observed whose chief purpose seems to have been a hedonistic heightening of the sensory faculties. As Madeleine de Demandolx in 1611 said;

"The drink which they have is malmsey, to provoke and prepare the flesh to luxurious wantonness."

The wine drunk at the Sabbat was often infused with herbal alkaloids to induce altered psychic modalities in the celebrants, Guazzo tells us of the Backwards or Widdershins Round of the Witches:

"...which are performed in a circle but always to the left...All the rites are performed with the utmost absurdity in a frenzied ring with hands joined and back to back."

This dance against the path of the sun embodies the grand invocation of ritual inversion and misrule. As a metaphysical formula it implies the same mystery as the Indo-Tibetan Tantric concept of *Uta Sadhana* - 'Going Against the Current' which involves the total 'regression' or reversal of all human faculties, psychic, respiratory and physiological in the return to the Pure Void of the Diamond Body, eternal, unchanging, clear, beyond finite time and ordinary (delusional) awareness.

This is also the intention of the *Nuptiae Sabbati*, the collective congress of the Witches at the height of the Rite in an explosion of orgiastic sensuality led by the Horned Man in Black and the Queen of the Sabbat.

The writer Paul Grillandus says that female Witches conjoined with the Horned Master '*with the utmost voluptuousness*' and the entire panoply of ancillary adjuncts, including fascinum and flagellum were employed as psycho-sensory stimuli which exalted the celebrants to the zenith of eroto-magical ecstasy.

This was at once a hierogamic theophany and a fusion of all forms in the infinite return to primeval unity. By the formula of the *Nuptiae Sabbati* each sorcerer becomes a facet or transfiguration of the Great Horned One and each Witch an avatara of Dame Venus-Habondia and their union is a recovery of the mystical ground of Oneness. This is a symbolic representation of

the attainment of the Supreme Liberation of the Weikkan Gnosis.

Via Nocturna - The Way of Night

The Via Nocturna is a '*waking dream*' sequence used in the Spirit Hunt Covenant as a contemplative/oneiric gateway to the Sabbatic Conclave. It should be assayed at dawn or evening twilight or at the instant of midnight. The preliminary invocation or Night-Imprecation of the Witch-Sabbat should be intoned prior to the visualisation :

The Night Imprecation

Let my Word be bodied-forth in transmorphosis!

This is mine I that I evoke, calling forth all Self into multiform resurrections beyond the horizon of the known.

EMEN HETAN! I absolve the bondage of sense, leaping out beyond the uttermost edge into the Meadow of Dreamers, the Field of the Goat, the Covenant of Midnight outspread over all.

Black Lord of the Two Horns, All is reversed in thy Backwards Dance, wherein we return in perpetuity unto the secret source.

*Green Lord of the Wildwood, breathe upon us the
Green Mist of Inspiration, wherein we exfoliate
into a boundless fecundity.*

*Dark Empress of the cavernous Peak, by Silver Key
and Flaming Brand and Iron Knife, be thou the
supreme vessel of our Becoming in the Void of the
Cauldron: deliver us, we pray, into eternal
nascency of being.*

*In thy power I slay these profane eidola of all
thralldom, transmuting my Will into limitless
freedom, my Desire into totality of potentia, my
body into myriad manifestations of the New
Vitality!*

*By scarlet paths and green paths I process with the
Holy Throng in the Night- Pilgrimage to the Place
of the Satyr.*

So Mote It Be!

The Way of Night

You are seated cross-legged on the stained and polished floorboards of a shadowy chamber with walls of whitened stone and low, dark beams of oak. A deep-sunk window of diamond panes lets a pale shaft of moonlight fall upon the floor-through the glass the moon is to be seen climbing slowly through streaming cloud-vapour, lighting them up with milky radiance against the deep azure heavens.

The chamber is illuminated by two tall tapers of beeswax set in candlesticks before you on each side, standing before the flickering flames of the great hearth with it's overhanging chimney-breast directly in front of you.

A low wind moans and mutters without, causing the slender taper-flames to tremble, sighing mournfully in the smoky throat of the chimney as it roars away over the darkened world.

To the left of the glowing fireplace stands a broom, it's brush of tangled birch-twigs upright as it rests against the wall. To the right a pitchfork leans against the stones. You listen to the lonely keening of the night-winds rising and dying away, the hiss and crackle of the shifting embers, the fitful shaking of trees and tossing boughs outside.

Rising, you walk between the two candlesticks slowly and approach the hearth. you are taking the pitchfork/broomstick in your hand and placing it between your knees as a riding-pole. Now silently intend to go-forth-by-night, inwardly praying:

*Come Hidden Father of the Two Horns
Carry me to the crossroads of starlight and secrecy:
Come, Great Magisterulus of Night
Carry me to the black peak of the sabbat.*

Now you are floating up bestride the pitchfork or broomstick, lightly rising with the drifting coils of smoke from the hearth. Under the chimney breast you

ascend on the invisible wings of the Dream-Body, up into a dim tunnel of swirling blueish clouds which opens up above you.

Up into the misty vortex you will yourself higher and higher, into the twilight atmosphere. Leaving the world of men far below you sweep smoothly up through veil after veil of fog. Through the obscure air you travel and the curtains of mist now thin, growing diaphanous they finally part before you...

Chapter 6

The Red Bones of Resurrection

Within the symbology of the Elder Rite of the Craft the Horned One has always been represented by a skull resting on crossed thighbones, especially in his funereal aspect as Lord of the Dead and the cult of the Ancestors.

The veneration of the skeleton is of incredibly ancient pedigree in Europe and elsewhere, dating back to the practises of Palaeolithic spirituality. Red ochre or haematite, clay coloured scarlet with iron peroxide was used to redden bones and skulls during the Palaeolithic era.



The Skeleton of Hoteaux in the Ain was tinted with red ochre and laid out beside a ritual staff of reindeer horn upon which a stag was etched. Reddening the bones was a symbolic act of resurrection for it is the magical colour of blood, life, strength, dawn and rebirth. Thus the 'Red Lady' of Paviland in Wales (a male skeleton) was liberally coated with powdered iron oxide. The Old Norse term '*Taufr*' 'Magic Talisman' and German '*Zauberie*' - 'Sorcery' both derive from a root meaning '*To Redden*' for throughout ancient Europe '*reddening*' is synonymous with bestowing magical vitality and numinous life-force.

The Palaeolithic Horned God was the '*Master of the Beasts*' who regenerated the animals killed by hunters from their bones, a concept which survived in Siberian/Eurasian cultures where the bones of animals are not cracked or broken but carefully deposited on platforms or in trees. Such ritual precautions were deemed essential to the cyclical ecology of the reborn fauna each annual hunting season. The neolithic '*Tomb of the Sea Eagles*' in the Orkneys contained bones that had been stripped by exposure and then arranged within the tomb.

The Persian-Iranian '*Towers of Silence*' and Astodan ('Place of Bones') shows a similar preoccupation with the ossific core of the human body, conceived as a source of rebirth and new life. The Iranian eschatology described in the '*Greater Bundahishn*' relates that on the last day:

"...there will be raised the Bones of Gayomart, then the Bones of Mashye and Mashyane (the first couple); then will the bones of all other men be raised up. For fifty-seven years will Soshyans raise the dead and all men will be resurrected."

In Aztec legend the 'Feathered Serpent' Quetzalcoatl created humanity from the 'precious bones' which he won from the underworld, pouring his own blood over them to effect the anthropogenesis.

To fully understand the Horned One as the Lord of the Red Skull and the Crossed Bones in Traditional Witchcraft a firm grasp of the metaphysical significance of bone in shamanic ideology is essential. Bone represents the hard, unchanging core of transcendental reality, divested of the superfluities of external appearances, the illusory flesh. It thus symbolises the pure source and base of being and regeneration from which life springs in renewal. Joan Halifax has brilliantly summed up the shamanic view of bone as;

'...that mysterious and yet durable matter which, like the liquid crystal of semen, is the fertile source ever capable of reproducing itself, and like the sacred quartz crystal, is the clear body, the diamond body, the bone of emanant light.

Bone, like a crystal or a seed...represents both the repository of the very source of life and that which is not perishable.'

In the culture of the Yakut peoples the shaman wears a costume bearing a skeleton with iron bones, representing the return to the numinous seed-core of the Self and their rebirth therefrom.

Inuit-Eskimo shamans, during their initiatory retreat, contemplate their own skeletons, realising themselves as being totally stripped down to the 'bones of being'. This is an inner vision brought about by ascesis, ritual preparation and profound meditation. For the Inuit-Eskimo 'Angaqoq' this shamanic meditation upon one's own skeleton forms the crucial nexus of initiation.

The acquisition of spirit-allies is attained thereby and the 'Qaumaneg' or 'Inner Light' which irradiates the shaman's consciousness from within. Mircea Eliade comments on the contemplation of the skeleton:

"To reduce oneself to the skeleton condition is equivalent to re-entering the womb of this primordial life, that is, to a complete reversal, a mystical rebirth... a certain recovery of the very source of spiritual existence, which is at once 'truth' and 'light'."

Henry Cornelius Agrippa in the 20th chapter of his 'De Occulta Philosophia' (1531) recounts a Jewish-Kabbalistic tradition along identical lines:

"And there is in man's body a certain little bone, which the Hebrews call LVZ, of the bigness of a

pulse...which is subject to no corruption, neither is it overcome with fire... out of which, as they say, as a plant out of the seed, our animal bodies shall in the resurrection of the dead spring up."

A similar process of initiatory re-nascence from the bones is implied in the sinister '*Gtchod*' ritual of In do-Tibetan tantrism, the '*Red Meal*' in which the operator offers his body to be devoured by demonic entities and wild beasts who gather to consume him utterly. The '*Gtchod*' is celebrated in old burial-grounds and desolate places, the liturgical recitation being punctuated by blasts upon the '*kangling*', the human thighbone trumpet. The rite of self-sacrifice, fraught with horror, is concluded in the mystical '*Black Meal*'.

As part of the perilous '*Lam-Chung*' or '*Short Road*' of Tibetan Tantrism, heavily influenced by native Bon-Pa shamanism, the '*Gtchod*' is an initiatory ordeal whose summit of realisation consists of understanding that the devilish entities who are eating one alive are actually emanations of one's own psyche, that one is really consuming and devouring one's own delusory pseudo-self.

One Indo-Tibetan meditation includes visualising oneself in the form of;

"a radiant white skeleton of enormous size, whence issueth flames so great that they fill the voidness of the universe."

The sacred drama-performances called '*Tchams*' also feature skeleton dancers.

The European '*Danse Macabre*'-'*Totentanz*' or '*Makaber-tanz*' of the Middle Ages, a dancing procession of skeleton-mummers playing upon pipes and drums would troop through the streets and squares of towns across Europe during festivals and masquerades. The '*Dance of Death*' was executed in mural form upon the enclosing walls of mediaeval graveyards up to the 15th century throughout France, Germany, Switzerland, England and Spain, revealing the iconography of the skeletal horde who appear to overcome the false laws of the illusory world. The '*Dance of Death*' is really a variant of the Wild Hunt motif, led by the Horned God of Death, Ecstasy and Misrule, imaged as the Skeletal Monarch, the Master of the Bones in Annwyn.

Thus the Skull and Crossbones in Witchcraft is the symbol of the Horned One as the Wild Hunter who guides the ghostly throng across the skies at Samhain/Yuletide. It epitomises the initiatory death of trance, ancestral wisdom and the source of spiritual inspiration and oracular knowledge. Certain branches of the Old Rite in Britain still employ a skull in forms of ceremonial mediumship or necromancy in order to communicate with the souls of the deceased. The sacred posture of the crossed arms upon the chest is also associated with the Skull and Crossbones as an invocatory assumption of the Ancient One.

The ceremonial for '*Casting the Mound and the Skull*' in Traditional Weika involves laying three threads, coloured white, red and black, in the form of a six pointed '*hex-star*' over the cranial dome of the skull which is placed between two black candles. Certain

sciomantic techniques are utilised to call a spirit into the skull which then communicates oracles to the Witches. This appears to be a most archaic divinatory practise across the Eurasian cultural continuum as the skulls of dead shamans are kept by the Yukagir. These are held in the hands and when enquiry is made of them they grow heavier or lighter to signal a negative or affirmative answer.

The skull is the seat of wisdom, eloquence and the higher psychic faculties in Indo-European tradition with celebrated examples such as the Head of Mimir, Keeper of the Well of Memory in Norse mythology. Also the Head of the god Bran, venerated by the *'Assembly of the Wondrous Head'* in the Welsh *'Mabinogi'*. The *'Eyrbyggja Saga'* tells of a skull lying upon a ridge of scree (a place called Geirvor) which spoke, prophesying a great battle which afterwards took place there:

*"Red is Geirvor
With men's blood
She will kiss
Human skulls."*

The Horned God as the Lord of the Graveyard and the Barrow-Mound, Master of the Hunt of Souls and the Underworld, finds an echo in the saturnian trinity of Voudoun comprising Baron Samedi, Baron-la-Croix and Baron Cimitiere.

Baron Samedi appears in skeletal form clothed in a formal black coat and a top hat, with the spade and pick

of the gravedigger. His main glyph in the Haitian *'Culte des Morts'* is the Skull and Crossbones which adorn the Lwa's altars.

In reference to the role of Old Pouck as the Master of the beasts, granting rebirth from the bones in the netherworld. This shamanic feat was later recounted of the mediaeval witches and the animals they killed for the Sabbatic Feast. Bartolommeo Spina in his *'Quaestio de Strigibus'* (1523) describes how the witches slaughter and feast on an ox, afterwards magically reviving it from the bones by covering them with it's hide and uttering spells.

I was recently told by the writer Nigel Pennick of a highly secretive sect or society who may still linger on in remote pockets of East Anglia, called the *'Ancient Order of Bonesmen'*, a male association probably derived from cultic groups devoted to the Horned Man in Black as the Death- Divinity. This sinister sodality were, and by some still are, regarded with abhorrence as they specialise in using human bones for magical purposes, potions and necromantic rites, often robbing graves for this purpose.

The initiation of a Bonesman included the quaffing of a cup of ale into which powdered human bone had been mingled. Such sects, allied to the Traditional Craft, are similar to the Kapalikas or *'Skullbearers'* of India, extremist yogins who worship the God of the Burning Ghat, Shiva-Kapalabrht, and who eat out of the brainpan of a skull, meditating in graveyards.



The magical use of bone is part of the darker side of the Old Rite but is also one of the most archaic strata of Witch- magic under the moon, being sacred to the Black Lord of the Skull and the Dark Crone, Nicnevin ('Daughter of the Bones'). The witch Susan Barker was tried in Chelmsford in 1616 on the charge that she;

"...feloniously did take up a skull out of a certain grave in the burying ground of the parish church of Upminster aforesaid, being part of the body of a certain deceased man lately buried there, with intent to use the said skull in....witchcrafts, charms and sorceries."

That clandestine cult-associations such as the Bonesmen of East Anglia, linked to the Old Craft, have here and there lingered on in rural areas is hardly to be doubted. Some such society under the patronage of the Dark Master and the Hag was held by some to be responsible for the incident at Clophill in Bedfordshire in 1963.

On the moonlit night of March the 10th that year this dark covey exhumed the skeleton of a woman who had died in 1770 from her tomb by the ruined church on the slopes of Dead Man's Hill. The skull was impaled upon a spike and the bones arranged in a circle around it; the feathers of a cockerel at the scene attested to a sacrificial offering made to the chthonic powers and a four-armed cross within a circle, painted in red upon the walls of the church.

This was rumoured to be a genuine Traditional Craft rite of necromantic evocation performed to open a temporary portal into the ghost-world and to enable a discarnate soul from the other side to enter into the womb of the Priestess who was impregnated at the same time by the Magister.

The New Forest coven to which Gerald Gardner belonged in the 1940's preserved the hieroglyph of the dark Lord of the Dead and the Wild Hunt in their ritual symbology, in common with other surviving scions of the Old Rite; in his book *Witchcraft Today* (1954) he states that he was told:

"when the god (i.e. the Magister) was not present, he was represented by a skull and crossbones"

The symbol also found it's way into the lodge-ritual of early operative Freemasonry as a sign of the symbolic death undergone by the initiate before he is 'raised'. The Masonic Lodges, chartered in the 9th century by King Athelstan, derived from an originally heathen subculture of Saxon 'Mannerbunde' and secret male guilds which preserved much of the masculine side of the Old Wisdom intact. Thus in the 18th degree of later speculative Masons, the degree of Knight of the Rose-Croix of Heredom, the initiate must pass through the Black Room with it's altar of the Black Rose, flanked by skulls and crossbones, and the Chamber of Death, lit by 'seven flambeaux fixed in skulls and crossbones', until he emerges into the Red Room of resurrection.

The old Horned One, symbolised in Craft ritual by the Skull and Crossbones, is the initiator into absolute truth, the revealer who bares the adamantine substance of the deathless spirit in each human. He it is who separates the perishable veil of the transient flesh from the eternal and the immortal within us. For by the symbolism of the Old Rite to 'go back to the bones' is to die to the profane world of appearances, to be cleansed of the ephemeral surface which misguides.

To the Traditional Witch, bone is solid spirit, brilliance and pure being. Bone is crystallised light-kernel of the self-luminous soul and is thus the transcendent reality and the perfect consciousness, freed from all outer phenomena.

The Ceremony of the Red Bones

- 1 Upon the skull's crimson point I walk
Wielding lightning's sharp-edged glaive,
Slaying un wisdom, folly, pain and illusion,
Whose spirits assail me from the world's quarters,
Whom I pierce utterly with the thunderbolt
Whose blade is clarity.
- 2 Gather o Shades, Ghosts and Faery-Ancestors By the
Black Lord of the Dead come hither To bear witness
To the Mass of the Bones.
Gather, ye Rooks, Crows and Ravens of Annwryn,
From the gloom below, from the Charnel-House of
Nicnevin.

*Gather ye ravening beasts and Wolves of the forest
 Who lurk and Howl in the Wild Places,
 Old Shuck, Black Tyke of Death,
 Hie hither to the feast:
 My flesh I yield as thy Red Bread,
 My blood I yield as thy Red Drink.
 Come thou forth, ye renders and tearers,
 To I who am Offerant and offering.*

3. *Widdershins whirleth the Dance of the Dead;
 I go back to my bones.
 Great Lord of the nighted Graveyard and the Tomb,
 The Spade, the Coffin and the shady Yew
 Thou art Reverser, Separator,
 Unveiler Of that which Is concealed from the
 beginning.
 Black Lord of the Skull and Cross'd Bones,
 Send thou The scouring black wind of the north,
 To tear away Times transient rags,
 Laying bare the Changeless seed within.*

(The operator now contemplates his own skeleton,
 divested of flesh and emanating fire and effulgence.)

- 4 *From red bones I'm sprung
 In the dawn's bloody beam:
 My bones are perfect truth,
 Pure spirit, compacted of light,
 Which quicken beneath the Old One's hand.*

Chapter 7

Wudewasa: the Knowledge of the Green Man

During the High Middle Ages extensive areas of England, France and Central Europe were densely forested. It was held that when nocturnal thunder broke over the wildwood and the forked lightning-flash clove the darkness and the night-tempest roared and tossed the boughs, that the wild host of Woodwoses came forth in primal panoply, raging through the hoary oaks and pines, their eldritch voices mingling with the storm's tumult. Wild Men o' the Woods and hairy Woodwives swept along in the great Charivari of the Night, shaggy with green moss, crowned with chaplets of leaves and twigs, ivy



twined about their waists, some mounted on deer and unicorns, bearing leafing, ragged staves in their hands. At their head ride the Master and Mistress of the Woodwose cultus. The Horned Wyldeman, riding upon a stag, tendrils writhing from his mouth, grasping his oaken club. Beside him the Wylde Goddess,

Dame Wode, sits bestride a unicorn with it's high twisted horn, her unruly locks loose about her verdant body.

These are the Wylde People, as gnarled and ancient as the outer spaces of the timeless forests and wildernesses. As the cavalcade of Forest-Daemons rode upon the storm-winds through the haunted depths of glades and shadowed paths, both the lord in his castle and the commoner in his cottage hearkened to their passing.

The Green Spirit of the Wood is a truly ubiquitous presence in various folk-traditions of Europe: the Laubmannchen or Wild Green Man of Thuringian Whitsuntide Mummung-Plays, the Tyrolese Fanggen, the Roumanian Orken, the Ljesje of the Russian forests, the Oakmen of Cheshire and the Wild-Folk of Hesse, Salzburg and the Tyrol.

The archaic English term 'Woodwose' - 'Woodhouse' or 'Wodewose', used to describe the Wild Spirit of the greenwood, derives via Middle English 'Wodwos' from the Anglo-Saxon 'Wudewasa'. The connection of the first unit of this term with woods is an erroneous supposition-it is rather to be identified with the Old Saxon 'Wod'-'Furious, Wild, Ecstatic' from Proto-

Germanic *WODH- '*Ecstasy, Prophetic Furor, Inspiration*'.

Cognate words in other Indo-European tongues include Gaelic '*Faith*' - '*Inspired Bard*', Latin Vatis- '*Prophet, Seer*', Scots dialect '*Wud*'- '*mad*' and Elizabethan dialect '*Wood*' - '*Crazed, Mad*'.

These are all part of an archaic terminology of shamanic trance-consciousness, extasis and divine '*enthousiasmos*', replete with implications of sacred madness, god-like wisdom and the initiatory death of gnosis. The term '*Woodwose*' is thus descriptive of an initiatory process and within it are encrypted the formulae of translation into the primordial '*otherness*' of Ur-Khaos, of travelling on the soul-journey across the World-hedge into the forest-kingdom of the Horned Master as the Green Man.

The Wylde Host (Wutanes Heer) of the Woodwoses presents another aspect of the Witch-Mysterium of '*going-forth-by-night*' in the Dream-Body; the hairy, unkempt appearance of the Wild People is to be connected with the tangled, unbound locks which characterise the witches' reversion to the state of untamed nature. During the Yuletide festivities of Henry VIII a masque was enacted in which Knights and Wyldemen engaged in a ritual combat. For the Woodwose is a harbinger of the state of '*ritual reversal*' which prevails during the inter-temporal Twelve Nights.

The intricately carven lid of a late 15th century Rhenish trinket casket depicts the '*Queen of the*

Savages', the Wild Mother of the Forest, as a naked Woodwife with flowing tresses, riding side-saddle upon a unicorn: around her in the trees travel Woodwose-Huntsmen with their hounds, one blowing upon a horn, another with a falcon upon his wrist.

This is an especially explicit icon of the Wild Huntress, Frau Wode, roaming with the Wild People of the Woods. Tapestries from 15th century Strasburg show the King and Queen of the Woodwoses, courtly apparitions beneath whose finery green-haired limbs can be descried - these are the venerable hypostases of the true divinities of the Elder Rite of Witchcraft, the Old One and the Great Queen, the most archaic and primeval emanations of godhead known to human beings.

The Green Man of Finno-Ugrian tradition is the '*Golden Forest King*', Tapio, who with his consort, the Forest Mistress Mielikki, guards the woods and all the beasts therein.

Runo 14 of the '*Kalevala*' contains hunting-spells which call upon Tapio as the '*Old Forest Greybeard, Sprig-Hatted, Lichen-Coated*', to send the wealth of game to the hunter that he may return with a goodly catch from his day's work.

The Wild Man is the Master of the Wood and the animals and birds who dwell therein are his subjects who cannot be hunted without his permission being sought beforehand.

In Cumberland the '*Oakmen*' feature in the tale of '*The Vixen and the Oakmen*', collected orally in 1948, in

which they guard and preserve a vixen who is fleeing from the hunt and runs for cover into an oakwood. Foxhunting and other mindless assaults on the kingdom of nature invariably provoke the wrath of the Oakmen and make them actively dangerous towards humans. Oakwoods which have been coppiced are said to be especially perilous and strange after sundown and are places best avoided by humans if they would beware of the ill-will of the Oakmen. Both Reginald Scot's '*Discoverie of Witchcraft*' and the '*Denham Tracts*' (1892-1895) make mention of the old English belief in the '*Man-in-the-Oak*'.

The Woodwose-Gnosis is indicated in the 12th century '*Vita Merlini*' by Geoffrey of Monmouth where Merlin goes into the forest to become a Wild Man and appears riding upon a stag with a herd of horned beasts in a Charivari in order to disrupt a wedding. He is the '*Myrddin Gwyllt*' of Welsh lore and the Woodwose is known there as the '*Gwyllion*' or '*Wild One*'. Cymraeg '*Gwyllt*' corresponds to gaelic '*Geilt*' as a metonym for wild spirit-extasis and magico-poetic trance as in the Irish legends of Suibhne Geilt.

We might also note that Merlin was said to have been fathered by the Devil himself, or as in the 13th century '*Lestoire de Merlin*' by a Woodwose, both of which signify the magnificence of the Horned Father of the Craft. In the latter romance Merlin appears in shapeshifted form as a stag and his associations with the Old God go very deep indeed.

In the Old Rite of the Traditional Craft the Woodwose Woodwife within us is manifested and attuned to via

certain techniques of imaginal identification and dreaming in order to realise the Gnosis of the Green One within the Witch-Adept.

The Woodwose within is the soul's numinous core of wild inspiration and godly consciousness, the seed and root of the innermost psyche which secretly blossoms into ecstasy and is expressed through profound trance and spiritual movement between transformative mindstates/ worlds in the ancestor-stream.

To the witches the Woodwose Woodwife is the personification of the magico-prophetic power of the soul - the Green Man, Green George or Jack-in-the-Green of old English mummer's rites. The leafy masque of the Green Man which peers out of the shadows of old church-carvings and grins from the signs of rustic taverns, can be seen as a living glyph of the verdant growth and initiatic fructification of the mantically-energised psyche. The tendrils branching and coiling from Green Jack's mouth aptly signify the rising sap of the soul, the flowering of divine prophecy and wisdom-speech from the source.

The colour green, beyond it's well-known associations of tellurian-aqueous fecundity and sexuality, is the sacred hue of the Faery-Ancestors, the divinised souls of the dead who have undergone the metamorphosis of Elphame.

In certain branches of the Craft in mediaeval France the Magister was called the '*Verdelet*', the '*Man-in-Green*' who officiated at the Sabbatic Mysteries garbed in a green hat and mantle.



The Woodwose Sigil

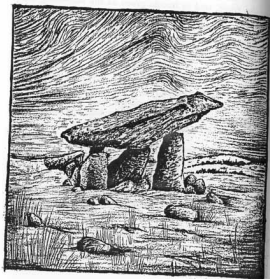
The Verdelet was the representative of the Lord of Witches under his aspect as the Green Man, Robin-in-the-Wood, clad in lincoln green as the May-King, the god of the plants, trees and verdure whose phallic-generative fertility renews the landscape each spring and summer, causing the seemingly dead wastes to foliate and flourish.

In the Elder Rite the Green Man guides the initiate into the heart of the Verdant World. It is he who causes the living sap of the psychic tree to ascend, whose quickening power transforms the being of the witch and whose breath causes the inner landscape of the soul to literally thrive and flourish.

In Lincolnshire tradition this is the '*Green Mist*' which is associated with the awakening of the earth-boggarts in spring. Like the rich earth at Maytide the soul becomes green with renewed vital numina. This is a process of organic-spiritual revivification and growth, concealed within the European rites, dances and pageants which feature the Green Lord of the Oak, the Wild Man.

In Germany the leaves, branches and greenery worn by the Green Man (Laubmannchen) were later buried in the fields to promote the land's fertility.

The '*Leafy King*' also symbolises natural humanity before the '*Great Separation*' and thus embodies the condition of unfallen human beings in the '*Golden Age*', the shamanic paradise of the foretime, a state characterised by communion with nature and the gods, ecstatic consciousness and primaevial growth-potential.



The Green Man is the unfallen spirit at the core of each human.

Certain old Rhenish tapestries show the Wild Men and Wild Women engaged in agricultural tasks for they stimulate the fecundity of the green land as the Ancestral-Faeries, in a mystic symbiosis which unites the dead below and the living above the horizon of appearances.

The Wild Green Man in this role as Brownie-Guardian of the fields and herds features importantly in Irish and Scots folklore in the shape of the Gruagach-*'The Hairy One'* or *'The Long-Haired One'*. In the Highlands the Gruagach can be male or female in gender; the latter appear as green-robed faery women who look after the herds of kine and are often beautiful of countenance with long golden tresses.

The male Gruagach is described as shaggy, immensely strong and possessed of wizardly powers-he works about the farm, performing agricultural labours and seems to personify the ancestral genius-loci whose presence brings fertility, luck and prosperity. Both were given a tithe of the produce in return for their services as Lewis Spence says:

"...this spirit was until quite recent times placated in the Western Isles of Scotland by oblations of milk which were poured into a hollow stone known as the 'Gruagach's Stone (Clac-na- Gruagach)'".

This is in line with the ancient Indo-European practise of making offerings to the divinised Ancestors, the Fathers and Mothers. The Grogach or Grogan of Ulster was said to be *'low of stature, hairy, with broad shoulders and very strong.'*

The Manx Brownie called the Phenodyree (Fionnadh-Duiri 'Man of the Oaks') likewise ensures that the work of the farm goes well as described in the old Manx song 'Yn Folder Gastey':

*'Phenodyree stole at dawn to the Round-field,
And skimmed the dew like cream from a bowl,
The maiden's herb and the herb of the cattle,
He was treading them under his naked sole.
He was swinging wide on the floor of the meadow,
Letting the thick swathe leftward fall;
We thought his mowing was wonderful last year,
But the bree of him this year passes all.'*

(trans. Walter Gill)

The deeper wizardly side of the Wild Green Man as the initiator is seen in the 14th century poem 'Gawain and the Green Knight'. This is written in the Anglo-Saxon dialect of mediaeval Cheshire/Lancashire and this preserves a very ancient myth of Celto-Saxon origin.

The Green Knight is a thinly-veiled version of the Old God and appears as a fierce Wild Man dressed in emerald-green finery, riding upon a green horse,

bearing a sprig of Saturnalian holly and a ritual axe. He plays the famous 'beheading game' with Gawain at King Arthur's court - but when Gawain severs the woodwose's head with the blade he picks it up and departs, reminding the knight of his sworn oath to submit to reciprocal treatment at the Green Chapel at Christmastide next, a year hence.

The Green Chapel is an old barrow mound and to reach it Gawain has to travel through the wilderness of Faerie. The Green Knight in this poem is the Woodwose-Initiator who tries the truth, steadfastness, endurance and mettle of the candidate through various ordeals. In the end when he is revealed as the partner and servant of 'Morgan the Goddess' we see the familiar pairing of the Horned Master and the Great Queen.

The custom of the 'Burry Man' enacted at the August Fair at Queensferry in West Lothian is yet another vision of the Green Man. Covered from head to foot in green burrs with a crown of wild roses and bearing two staves twined with blossoms he wanders through the streets collecting donations.

The custom of dressing up an individual in vegetation as Jack-in-the-Green is of dateless antiquity in the British Isles and Europe as part of Maytide revels: chimney-sweeps often took the role up to the 19th century in May processions wearing a framework of wicker dressed thickly with leaves with only an aperture remaining for the eyes. In her *'Folklore and Customs of Rural England'* (1974) Margaret Baker says:

"Mr Ernest Shepherd, the artist, remembers that as a child in St. John's Wood, London, in the 1880's, he was frightened by a cavorting Jack-in-the-Green group with a Bessy-like figure catching donated coins in her parasol."

Similar ceremonies can be discerned in the Indian Sabarotsava in which the celebrants apply mud to their bodies and then cover themselves in leaves and flowers until they are completely concealed. The Sabarotsava derives from the orgiastic rites of the Sabaras ('Savages'- Sabara is also a by-name of Shiva), an aboriginal people of Southern India and is held at the autumn harvest in honour of Durga.

A highly significant figure from pre-Islamic folk-tradition in Arabia bears many points of comparison with the European Green Man. This is Al-Khidhir, the 'Green Prophet' who is especially important as the patron saint of Sufic gnosticism and who, having drunk of the waters of immortality, wanders the worlds for all eternity. Al-Khidhir is the Great Guide, the Initiator of the Green Resurrection, sometimes associated with St. George and derived from the Al-Jahiliyya (Days of Wildness), the period of Arabic paganism. Al-Khidhir may be related to the Green God of the Osirian Mysteries.

Finally to emphasise the close relationship between the archetypes of Al-Khidhir and Green Jack let us consider the following episode from Sir Richard Burton's translation of 'Alf Laylah Wa Laylah' (The Thousand Nights and a Night) (1885-86)

"Next the herbalist stood up and opening his basket brought out fragrant herbs and fell to scattering them over his sconce and about it and over his ears, till such time as all his face was hidden in greens, after which he also went out and accosting the house-master said 'The Peace Be Upon You'. And when the man returned the salaam he asked him '...but what mayest thou be?' 'I am Al-Khidhir, the Green Prophet (upon whom be The Peace)."

Elements of the cult of Al-Khidhir may conceivably have seeped into European traditions in the decades following the Crusades.

The Wild Man or Green Man is the polarised aspect of the Horned God as Lord of fertility, incarnation and generative force and is symbolised by the phallus, represented in the Woodwose's leafy oaken club. He stands in contrast to the Dark Lord of death, idiscarnation and the Wild Hunt emblemised by the Skull and Crossbones. These two sides of Auld Hornie's archetype represent the diurnal and nocturnal modalities of the ecstasy he embodies and his seasonal avatars.

The Wild Man is invoked on the Great Sabbat of May-Eve (Germanic - Midsummer) just as the Wild Hunter of Souls is invoked upon All-Hallows (Germanic - Yuletide). The former aspect presides over the bright summer half of the year with it's fecund efflorescence and warmth. The latter rules over the shadowy winter half when all nature is stripped down to it's bones amidst ice and freezing winds.

In the French witch-tradition this duality of the Horned God as Wild Man and Death Hunter is seen in the offices of the Verdelet, the Man in Green also called by the godname Robinet or Robin Hood, and the Diable, Man in Black or Harlequin. The warlock must realise both divine aspects within himself as a unity for neither aspect can exist without the other, being the two faces of the Primal father of the Craft. Hence the true Magister must simultaneously walk upon the Scarlet Points of the Skull and Crossbones, and the Green Points of the Serpent-Phallus.

The 'Knowledge of the Green One' Ritual

The Woodwose Sigil should be marked in green upon a parchment square or alternatively painted in red upon a leaf and concentrated upon as the following chant or 'Prayer of the Verdelet' is intoned:

*Jack in the Hedge, Robin in the Wood,
Grant thou guidance, Grand Verdelet,
By branching twig and writhing root,
Into the leaf-green dream.
By virid Oak and twisted Thorn,
Upon mossy ways I follow thee,
Green Master of the watchful thicket.*

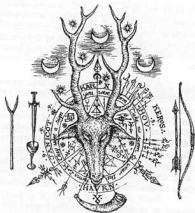
*I am the Leaf-Masque of all Wyldenness,
Whose lips unfurl fronds of prophecy,
When the sap of the Soul-Tree riseth!*

Now meditate deeply upon the colour and quality of greenness itself, dwelling upon the leaves, shoots, boughs and roots of mighty trees and the emerald tones of lichen and moss.

Dream that you are become a tree yourself sat motionless in the midst of the sacred wood, sending down tendrils and taproots into the secret loam below, your hair becoming wild foliage blown by the winds and twigs and buds slowly writhing and unfolding from your mouth.

Continue with this meditative theme, ever deepening your identification with the arboreal realms until in your mind's eye you are wholly transformed into a Wild Man or Wild Woman, immersed in greenness and sacred verdancy. This state when reached may be characterised by silent vegetal absorption and bliss or by a state of wild inspiration. You will become infused with the dreaming consciousness of the great trees and this may later unfold in your dreams in the form of prophetic visions and encounters with the Wyld-Folk.

Before you go to sleep place the Woodwose Sigil under your pillow and repeat the 'Prayer of the Verdelet', calling upon the Green Man to guide you into his domain in the dream-state. In the past members of the Old Religion who wished to become Wild Men or Wild Women actually retired to the woods and performed certain rites involving rubbing down the body with leaf-sap in order to attain magical identification with the spirit of the forest.



Chapter 7

Satyromanía - In the Kingdom of the Goat

From the figure of Pan, Lord of the noonday silences of Arcadia and the bringer of terror, to the Great Black Goat of the mediaeval Sabbat, no other beast is so deeply established in the common imagination as a glyph of irresistible vitality, libidinous force and the urge to transcendence. The leaping he-goat with his curling horns and slanted yellow eyes, racing across the rocks of high mountain crags and lurking in the clearings of ancient glades and woods epitomises the true heathen spirit of the Old Religion in Britain and Europe.

If the Saviour was seen as the '*Lamb of God*' Christendom was swift to relegate this spirited, lustily wilful beast to the Devil's domain due to it's ancient

sacredness to the classical divinity Faunus and the Great Horned One worshipped in north-western Europe by rural folk and traditional witches. The cult of the horned Goat-God in European Witchlore is of great antiquity and was enriched along the centuries with Eastern elements as we shall see.

That the Dark Goat was identified as the totemic beast of this oldest and most primaeval of mankind's conceptions of divinity is widely attested throughout the European lands. Sebastian Michaelis wrote in 1613 of how the Devil appeared at the sabbats of the Witches of Avignon:

'upon the altar (which is some rock or great stone in the fields) there to bee worshipped by them' invariably under the 'forme of a great Black Goat with a Candle between his horns.'

The torch or candle which blazes between the horns of the Goat-God represents the mystic flame of illumination, the ascended light of the magically-inspired consciousness which he awakens as Lucifer the Lightbearer.

The Basque Bruxos of the Bass-Pyrenees in the 16th century celebrated the midnight mysteries of the Dark Goat at a place called Aquelarre which Pierre De Lancre translates as 'Lane de Bouc' or the 'Field of the Goat'.

Old Pouck & the Hob-Satyrns

The Indo-European word *BHUG-denotes 'a Horned Beast, Goat, Ram, Stag' and is the ancestor of the modern English 'Buck'. From this root-word are derived terms:

Sanskrit 'Bukka' - 'He-Goat',
Anglo-Saxon 'Bucca' - 'He-Goat',
Middle High German 'Bock' - 'Goat',
Gaelic 'Boc' - 'Goat',
Icelandic 'Bukkr' and
Low Latin 'Boquena' - 'Goatskin'.

Under his guise or masque as the 'Lord of the Goats', the horned One was named Pwca in Wales. His power extended over the family of shaggy, satyr-like Hobgoblins and Brownies known by the name of the Bwca who maintained the prosperity and health of flock, field and homestead in return for faery-oblations of sweetened milk (goat's milk) and barley bread left by the hearth each night or upon a flat cup-marked stone in the fields.

Cwm Pwca near Brecon is one of the Goat Lord's sacred places. Should the Bwca be crossed or insulted by gifts of clothes he will either abandon the homestead for another or become a troublesome source of poltergeist activity. A Monmouthshire maid who left a bowl of urine for him was savagely attacked and kicked about the house by the enraged Bwca who bellowed out 'The



idea that the thick-buttocked lass should give barley bread and piss to the *Bwca!*' before departing to patronise a neighbouring farmstead near Hafod ys Ynys.

In Ireland, the devil or Goat-God was known as Puca, Phouka or Pooka. In contemporary speech the goat is still called a 'puck' as in the famed '*Puck Fair*' where a goat whose horns are decked in green ribbons is paraded through the streets as the '*Puck King*' with a young maiden-consort amid scenes of drunken revelry and anarchic riot. A happy survival of the Old One's ancient worship in Eirinn.

The Horned Lord of the Goats was called the Bucca in old Cornwall and granted good yields to farmers and fishermen, receiving sacrificial dues of beer, fish and bread. His bright and dark aspects are resumed under the twofold name of Bucca Gwidder (White Bucca) and Bucca Dhu (Black Bucca) as the Janus-faced lord of life and death.

We might trace the Old One's shaggy goatish subjects in the Buggane of Manx lore, the Bagan of Cheshire and Shropshire, the boggarts of Lancashire and Yorkshire tradition, the Lincolnshire Bogles and the Devonshire Hobgoblin known as Buckie. Also the Scottish lore concerning Bocans and Bogans as Brownie/Goat-Spirits akin to the Aegipans and Fauni of Roman/Greek religion and possessing the same relationship to him as the latter beings to the Great God Pan.

In Denmark the Yuletide was ushered in by the appearance of the '*Christmas Goat*'. This was a guizer

who wore a covering sheet surmounted by a horned goat's head on a pole whose jaws clacked together as he capered from house to house, bringing Saturnalian reversals to the world and the Kingdom of Misrule upon earth. This is reflected in the movement of the sun into the sign of Capricornus on December 22nd, the chthonic house of the Black Goat at the winter solstice.

In the England of the Middle Ages the lore of the Goat-God lived on with some vitality in popular culture and in Middle English the Devil was called Pouk or Pouck. Langland's *'Piers Ploughman'* refers to the netherworld as *'Pouk's Pinfold'*. The Witches' familiar or Magistellus was sometimes referred to as a Puckril.

Old Pouck as the Horned God of the mediaeval Craft was envisioned by the witches who worshipped him as a shaggy satyriac figure, horned and bearded, with hairy haunches and cloven hooves, ithyphallic and robed in animal skins, the Black Goat-King of midnight and midwinter. His by-name amongst the mediaeval covens was Robin or Robin Goodfellow. His trickster behaviour was celebrated in the pamphlet *'Robin Goodfellow, His Mad Pranks and Merry Jests'* published in 1628 and illustrated with a woodcut of the Horned One with an enormous phallus, ramping lewdly in the midst of a circle of revelling dancers. This black-letter chapbook describes Robin Goodfellow's shapeshifting exploits, his unruly charivari-like disruption of weddings, his routing of a would-be rapist by turning into a horse and throwing him into a thorny hedge and the services he rendered to a farm-girl in breaking hemp which he laboured at after midnight singing a mad song which contains the verse:

*"When Saturne did live, there lived no poore
The King and the Beggar with rootes did dine.
With lilly, germander and sops in wine.
With sweet-bryar and bon-fire
And strawberry wyer and collumbine."*

Robin's tricksterish hilarity, rough jests and ringing laugh of *'Ho! Ho! Ho!'* gave rise to the proverbial expression *'To laugh like Old Bogie'*.

During the Elizabethan age Robin Goodfellow's most famous name was Puck. This reveals him to be the goatish semi-animal god of the witches who governs the powers of the earth and underworld, the hairy Hobs, Bwcas and Brownies who inhabit the spiritual environment about us. The satyrish nature of Auld Hornie and his hirsute Hobgoblins reveals a strong affinity between goats and the faery folk.

In Wales it is said that the Tylwyth Teg comb goat's beards on Fridays and many Scottish faery-spirits exhibit goatish attributes. The Glaitig is a water-haunting spirit, half-woman and half-goat who looks after the herds and flocks and who is given milk-libations. Likewise the Uruisg is another semi-human, semi-goat Brownie spirit who helped the farm to prosper by his labours and who also frequented lonely pools. In Guernsey the straight spirit-paths of the Puca faery-Satyrs are called *'Poucquelaie'* and link megaliths and burial-mounds in the ritual landscape.

Even in Iceland the Goat-faeries of the Horned One were known by the name of Pukki, meaning an imp,

hobgoblin or sprite. In Sweden on the sabbat-day of May-Eve or Roodmas, mummers performed the Bukkerwise drama in which a Goat-Guizer marries the May-Queen, is sacrificially killed and resurrected from the dead, reborn: - a survival of Old Hornie's role as the Slain God or Sacrificed One who must die so that the world may be reborn.

The Yuletide Goat

In old Denmark it was the custom at Christmastide to carve and dress up a 'Yule Goat' symbolic of the Horned One as Lord of the Liminal Cusp the midwinter solstice. An old tale from Vinten is recounted by Jacqueline Simpson in 'Scandinavian Folktales' (1988) which features the 'Yule Goat' in a decidedly sinister light.

An especially bold girl lived and worked on a farm west of Horsens and was said to be unafraid of anything, not even of Old Nick. One dark and snowy Yuletide-Eve the lads of the farm made up a 'Yule Goat' and as they feasted they taunted the girl, daring her to dance with the Yule Goat in the barn at the very stroke of midnight. Not to be so easily daunted the girl made her way in a carefree manner to the barn at the time appointed and took up the goat, skipping and dancing with it as she sang;

*"The ploughman is dancing,
The cowman is dancing,
And I'm dancing too."*

As she continued to sing this refrain a hideous and deep voice came from the Yule Goat's mouth in reply:

*Yes, the ploughman is dancing,
The cowman is dancing,
But the Devil's dancing too,
He's dancing with you."*

The Yule Goat had come to life at the precise moment of midnight at Saturnalia, the 'time between the times, and the Horned Master, Old Nick now spun and threw the incautious girl in a monstrous dance of death. The people at the farm quailed at the terrible noise of her screaming mingled with the gruff, low voice of the Devil. It was only the next morning that they dared to go into the barn and find the girl. A powerful smell of brimstone filled the place and they were utterly horrified to find that, though the walls and beams of the barn were spattered with blood, the Devil had taken the girl away with him.

Afterwards the farm had a reputation for being haunted in a peculiarly horrible manner which grew especially threatening around Yuletide each year. This suggests that the site had become an interface/gateway between the worlds, which temporarily 'opened' at the 'gap in time'. At length a priest with magical skills, (a common species in Scandinavian folk-tradition) laid the girl's ghost under the roots of an apple tree in the yard. The main trouble was thus defused but the tree only bore apples full of noxious ash and it's fruit were entirely inedible after this rite had been performed.

We might also remember that in old Iceland the Elves (Divinised Ancestral-Souls) were said to visit farmsteads on Yuletide-Eve when the family were away at midnight mass, performing their faery rounds and leaving their footprints in the hearth-ashes. A tale also related in mediaeval German lore. An old engraving from Olaus Magnus shows a circle of Elven-Folk dancing in a ring who exhibit distinctly hirsute, goatish aspects such as horns and cloven hooves with a satyrish bagpiper playing the music.

In Iceland a cautionary story was told to the effect that anyone who stayed behind at midnight on Christmas-Eve back at the farmhouse would be lured into joining their dance and would thus be *'taken'*, bewitched and bereft of their wits

The Buxen

A curious cult-association, probably related to the old Teutonic Mannerbunde with their Furious Host ceremonies, persisted in regions of Germany up until the 17th and 18th centuries. These were called the Buxen, the *'Goats'*, and their nocturnal ridings were dreaded in the villages and hamlets around the province of Limburg. The Buxen had links with the local Gypsies and held Sabbatic revels under the cover of darkness. In particular, their initiations were conducted in a structure called the *'He-Goats Chapel'* which was situated by a cross-roads.

Copious draughts of alcohol were consumed and the initiate, profoundly intoxicated, was made to ride a wooden buck-goat in the curious inductory rite into the Brotherhood of the Goats.

After the assemblies held at the Chapel of the He-Goat, the members of this nocturnal sodality, wearing long cloaks and horned masks, rode out on horseback through the countryside, plundering and leaving chaos in their wake. Beyond the pale of the world of the living, the buxen became emissaries of the Horned Master and having assumed the spirit-masques of wild beasts and spirits, they operated outside all normative order and were thus immune to prosecution.

The depredations of this masked company were eventually to bring them into direct conflict with the authorities. The tribunal of Fouquemont condemned some 400 members of the Buxen to death between 1772 and 1774. Only by 1780 had its activities been forcibly quelled. It is not difficult to see in the old German secret society of the Buxen, an initiatory band under the patronage of the Old Goat himself, stemming back to pre-Christian times, and operating outside all societal boundaries.

The wild raids of the Buxen represented an incursion of the underworld of ghosts, animals and gods into the territory of the living. The continuance of such survivals into the modern era brought them into direct conflict with the growing power of the civil authorities which saw in them a threatening embodiment of disorder.

Azazel Rising

In certain groupings of the Old Rite across the British Isles there exists a tradition that the 'Grand Sang' or Blood of Wisdom which burns in the veins of the hereditary Witch or Warlock is an ancient inheritance stemming from a remote interaction between proto-humanity and the Shining Ones, divine emissaries from the otherworlds who came down to the earth many aeons ago.

This spiritual gene derives from an early mingling between the divine and human spheres which took place in the Golden Age (Krita Yuga) and has persisted secretly along certain familial lines, often lying dormant for generations, activating here and there in certain elected individuals. The concept of an immemorial magico-genetic linkage between the gods and humanity actually goes back to the ancient Celtic and Norse religions.

However in the Traditional Craft context it received a powerful new impetus through the influence of Apocryphal Middle-Eastern strains imported between the 15th and 17th centuries, transmitted through the gnostic daemonology of mediaeval scholar-mages and probably introduced into the Old Religion by literate Cunning-Men. This teaching was connected with the Biblical Scapegoat figure who was fused into the Old Horned God of the Hidden Rite in Europe.

The Scapegoat, in *Old Testament* tradition, was an expiatory sacrifice performed at the Jewish New Year up until 70 c.e. and is described in *Leviticus* ch. 16 v. 22:

"And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

The Scapegoat, with threads of scarlet wool twined about its horns, was sent out into the wild places of the desert as a sacrifice 'for Azazel'. Azazel or Azael is a figure rooted in the religious mysteries of the neolithic Middle East, whose name is formed by the Semitic words OZ - 'Goat, Vigour' and EL - 'Lord', signifying the 'Goat-Lord' or 'Lord of the Goats'. He is the titanic horned Goat-Angel of the Primaeval Fire and the leader of the Beni Elohim, the 'Sons of the Gods'. It was he, according to the *Apocryphal Book of Enoch*, who led the company of two hundred rebel-angels, the 'Watchers' down upon Mount Hermon in Palestine, lured by the beauty of mortal women:

"And the angels, the children of heaven, saw and lusted after them (the daughters of men) and said one to another: 'Come, let us choose wives from among the children of men and beget us children'...And all the others together took unto themselves wives and each chose for himself one, and they began to go in unto them and defile themselves with them, and they taught them charms and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants. And AZAZEL taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the Metals of the Earth and the Art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and

the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures. SEMYAZA taught enchantments and root-cuttings, ARMAROS the resolving of enchantments, BARAQIJEL astrology, KOKABEL the constellations, EZEQUEEL the knowledge of the clouds, ARAQIJEL the signs of the earth, SHAMSIEL the signs of the sun, SARIEL the course of the moon..."

These verses encapsulate the esoteric history of the transformative psychic evolution of humankind. Azazel's descent was a titanic revolt whereby he 'sacrificed himself into matter' in order to catalyse human consciousness, mingling the undying divine fire with the clay of mortality. An influx of solar pneuma and illuminatory energy was in this way seeded into the early humans in order that they might achieve liberation and realise their divine nature. From this intercourse derives the Mystery of Witchblood.

The 13th century Kabbalist Moses ben Nahmen wrote of Azazel:

"He is associated with the planet Mars...and his portion among the animals is the Goat. The daemons are part of his realm and are called in the Bible, 'Seirim'.

The Seirim, 'He-Goats' or 'Hairy Satyrs' dwell in the wild places of Azazel's kingdom, as the retinue of the

Goat-Angel. Ishmael ben Elisha refers to Azazel's initiatory role as the Primal Sorcerer when he asks:

"What power was in them men that they were able to bring ...(the stars) down? They would not have been able to bring them down but for UZZA, AZZA and AZZIEL who taught them sorceries whereby they brought them down and made use of them." In other words, Azazel infused man with the consciousness and power whereby he could marry earth to heaven through the techniques of magic.

In Arabic lore, which perhaps trickled into Europe after the Crusades, Azazel or Eblis was the firstborn being of the celestial fire, the Great Djinn, formed of cosmic flame. God commanded Azazel to bow before Adam whom he had fashioned of the terrestrial clay but he refused proudly saying;

'Why should a Son of Fire prostrate before a Son of Clay?'

Those in whom the fire of Azazel glows are a breed apart from common humanity who are the 'People of Matter', the Hylekoi of the Valentinian Gnostics. The Hidden House of Azazel is the pact and conclave of Witchblood preserved down the centuries in the elect of the Goat-Angel.

This refusal of the immortal Angel-Djinn to bow down before the profane, transient and mortal aspect of man and the world made him especially revered in the wilder regions of Sufic speculation. Thus from the luminous seed of Azazil is born the effulgent, divine human as opposed to the lower human of earth or dust. Azazil/Eblis was honoured as the supreme upholder of the Oneness, the Divine Ens, in the microcosm and the macrocosm and thus Ahmad Ghazali said:

"Whoever does not learn adherence to Divine Unity from Eblis is an Unbeliever."

Hassan Basri in the *'Tamhidat'* says:

"Indeed the light of Eblis is the fire of the Magnificence...And if Eblis were to reveal his light to mankind they would worship it like a God".

In the *'Ketab-e Ensan-e Kamel'*, the sage Nasafi makes a deeper point in identifying Eblis as the divine imagination (Wahm) which refused to bow to the lower intellect (Aql) represented by Adam. Sufic texts describe the *'Black Light'* of Eblis/Azazil which is the secret radiance of the veiled divinity or Hidden God. Aziz'od-din Nasafi also describes how Eblis emerged from the third heaven with the Peacock and the Serpent, revealing Yezidic influences. Thus Eblis/Azazil can be equated with the *'Peacock-Angel'* Melek-Ta'us of the Yezidic religion.

Slavonic legendry avers that the Peacock is a bird of sinister omen because it directed the Serpent into the Garden of Eden. Jewish folk-mythology ascribes the clawed feet of the Peacock to the Devil. Thus Azazel is the Lord of the Goats, the Peacock-Plumed King and the Serpent (Hewya) who is the Divine Instructor (Hawa) of infant humanity. The mediaeval Witches had no difficulty in syncretically fusing this Middle-Eastern figure with the native Horned God, worshipping him as the Secret Father of the Wise.

At the Forge of Qayin

Azazel's most significant aspect is that of the *'Master of Metals'*, the Divine Blacksmith who is the Master of the Primaeval Fire and the Great Sorcerer. The alchemical and transmutative sorcery of the Blacksmith's forge belongs to a very ancient mythological complex across Europe and Asia.

Amongst the Siberian Yakuts it is proverbially stated that *'Smiths and Shamans are from the same nest'* for the metalworker learnt his magical trade-secrets from the Underworld-Smith K'daai Maqsin of whom Eliade says

'He sometimes takes part in initiating the famous shamans of the other world, by tempering their souls as he tempers iron.'

In Traditional Witchcraft and shamanic systems the arts of metallurgy are seen as possessing a profound initiatory/ spiritual significance associated with the mastery of 'inner fire' or magical heat as a means of catalysing altered mindstates. The Mongolian God of the Forge, Mahagala, was fused with the Indian deity Shiva as the supreme deity of Yoga, Mahayogin or Mahakala, the 'Destroyer of Time'.

This concept of magical heat is found in Indo-Vedic tradition as 'Tapas' and those who unleash it via ascetic and yogic methods are called Tapasvins. We might see the smith's bellows with which he fans the forge-fire as being synonymous with the use of breathing-techniques by the magician in order to awaken 'Tapas'. The techniques of Tibetan magic seek to arouse the mystical heat called gTum-Mo by which the practitioner can dry out wet sheets and melt snow about him as Celtic warriors were said to do.

In Celtic magic this quality is called 'Tein' and is resumed in the figure of Govannon, the Smith of the Gods. Warrior-magic such as that cultivated by Cuchulain was intended to release the divine energy of 'Tein' in the state of martial ecstasy called 'Ferg' in Gaelic. Every human had a flame of the cosmic 'Tein' within them, a spark of divine heat, brilliance and solarly which constitutes the divine spark linking man with the gods.

Azazel's allonym or alter-ego is that of the first blacksmith Tubal-Qayin and this figure plays a significant role in early mediaeval Masonry and Witchcraft. In the Semitic tongues, Qayin/Cain signifies

'Metalworker' and he was the original culture-divinity of the Kenite tribes of the Middle East, who taught divine magico-transformative skills to mankind.

The role of Tubal-Qayin in certain branches of Traditional Witchery in Britain is probably due to his adoption by the lodges of male Cunning-Men who assimilated his archetype with that of the Horned One as the 'Coal-Black Smith'. Indeed Robert Cochrane noted that in certain old covens a hammer and tongs was placed upon the altar in Tubal-Qayin's honour.

We might also bear in mind that the original Blacksmith-God of the Romanies was called Tubalo and that the Gypsies called themselves the 'Children of Qayin' being famed for their smithwork throughout Europe, as well as their magical skills. In the traditions of the Horseman's Word or Society of Horse-Whisperers, the first Horseman and Master of the Word was Qayin.

The Lord of Horsemen

This aspect of the Horned God as the divine patron of the secret male societies of horsemen, blacksmiths and shepherds is especially important as it very clearly shows his function as the 'Master of Beasts' and the granter of the magical arcana required to achieve that mastery and empathy. At the 'Horning Rite' of Weyhill Fair a novice shepherd was inducted into the ancient cult by being crowned with a pair of ram's horns inbetween which stood a metal cup brimming with ale whilst the initiates sang:

*"Swift is the Hare, cunning is the Fox,
Why should not this little calf grow to be an Ox?*

*To get his own living among Briars and Thorns
And die like his Daddy with a great pair of
Horns!"*

This is reminiscent of the old rhyme used in the Witchcraft of Cornwall which goes:

*"Take no scorn to wear the Horns
They were a Sign ere you were born
Your father's father wore them
And your father wore them too."*

The most famous of such old British Mannerbunde was the infamous 'Horseman's Word' which may still linger on in secret in parts of the country and which retained powerful vestigial remains of Old Pouck's mysteries, being of vast and dateless antiquity. At one time every farmworker, every labourer and hand was a sworn brother of this society - to belong ensured employment and mutual help as well as being the source of miraculous powers and magical skills.

The initiations of the Horsemen were held in some secret place such as a secluded barn at Martinmas, that is, Halloween by Old Reckoning and the gatherings usually consisted of thirteen men or some other odd number. The invitation to attend sometimes consisted of an envelope containing a single horse-hair.

The blindfolded neophyte would be taken to the barn and the Horseman's Knock was given, consisting of three slow raps and an imitation of a horse's whinny. The initiation proper took place at the stroke of midnight when the neophytes knelt around the 'minister' with their left hands raised and their left foot bare. They were told of the first Horseman, Qayin, and were instructed in the mysteries of the cult which included invocation of the Devil by the utterance of inverted verses from the Bible. This culminated in the transmission of the actual 'Word' itself which allegedly gave control over all animals.

The members were sworn to regard the horse as a brother and to always treat horses with utmost respect. Certain magical techniques were imparted - unruly horses were dealt with by taking their bridles to a crossroads and reciting various backwards verses over them. The Horned One would then approach in the form of a horse and if the initiate climbed up and rode him omnipotent control of animals was his forever. A whole science of preparing and using various scents and herbal applications to render horses tractable was preserved in the cult of the 'Horsemen', often containing fennel, opium and other secret ingredients.

The rite of induction was concluded with the blindfolded neophyte shaking 'Auld Hornie's' hand in the 'calf-house' attached to the barn where a live goat was kept or otherwise a man draped in the horns and hide of a goat, rubbed with phosphorus to emit an unearthly glow. The dramatic impact of taking the hoof of the Old One must have been quite powerful and finally sealed the pact of initiation.

The secrets of the Horsemen belonged exclusively to the masculine side of the Craft and could never be divulged to women or, as the Horsemen themselves stipulated, *'anyone who wears an apron, except a blacksmith or a farrier'*, emphasising the connections with the figure of Tubal-Qayin, the first Blacksmith.

The Hidden People

In the Old Rite of the Craft the first witch and sire of witches was Qayin or Tubal-Qayin together with his sister, the goddess Naamah-Lilith, the Mother of all Witch-Blood, transmitted the divine flame to mortal humans as related in the legend of the Watchers.

His hidden progeny, concealed amidst the mass of humankind, are the true witch-people, the *'Clan of Qayin'*, who bear his secret sign, the invisible *'Mark of Qayin'* upon the brow or *'third eye'* centre. These are people who have something indefinably different about them, that certain extra *'spark'* that separates them from the mindless herd and raises them above the profane condition of humanity.

Such individuals are the true witches in whom the fiery seed-pneuma of Azazel-Qayin burns - the common humanity in their spite have always sensed this and have feared, hated, revered and persecuted such folk down the centuries.

In actuality we might see the Traditional Witches as constituting a virtual separate species, a trans-human race who bear the activated genes of the *'Luminous*

Ones' within them and who wield the creative, transformative powers of their Horned Forefather and Blood-Mother.

The following ritual is a magical invocation of the inner fire of Qayin as the Horned Sorcerer-Smith, the brilliance of the divine fire within the witch personified as the flaming heart of the Daimon or Genius, that being who is the source of an individual's magico-creative abilities and skills.

Through the diligent application of the *'Fire of Qayin'* formula the inner fire that smoulders beneath the ashes of the outer human is fanned into incandescence and radiant activity and the *'Son/Daughter of Fire'* comes forth as a being of spiritual flame, uttering the oracles of the Primaeval Flame and radiating the mantic heat of the Sorcerer-Smith.

This is the realisation of the Angelic Fire within matter, the numinous essence of our inner godhead whence all our higher faculties emanate. The invocation of the Daimonic Self via the archetype of the Secret Father of Witches is not without it's perils however - this fire can illuminate or consume, create or destroy. Those who release this force within themselves may be transformed into deathless radiance or otherwise be scorched by it's searing heat.

The Rite of the Fire of Qayin being The Mystery of the House of Azazel

The Invocation of the Great Blood and the Mystick Flame Let the Witch kindle the Mystick Fire upon the Altar and gaze into it's heart, brooding upon the Inner Fire and fanning it with each inhalation of breath as a blacksmith fans the forge with the bellows. The Mystick Fire burns at the level of the navel within the microcosm.

1. *Through the Hollow Reed I bring down the Mystick Fire from Heaven and draw to earth the Royal Flame of the Sun by my enchantments.*

The Witch now makes burnt offerings of resinous perfumes and aromatic oils to the Fire, worshipping it as the Light of the Horned Goat-Angel and also contemplating it as the fiery essence of the Daimon/Genius within.

2. *Horned Father of the Hidden Craft, mighty TUBAL QAYIN, o Brother of NAAMAH-LILITH, who didst descend as a Serpent of Lightning upon Earth's ancient mountains, o Bringer of Light, hear the Prayer.*

In the Brazen Citadel, in the Hall of Flames I call upon thee, Goat-Angel of the Golden Horns, Master of the Primal Fire, AZAEL-QAYIN, appear in thy brilliance

Thou art He: who fell from the Sun to consecrate humankind with Sacred Heat. Thou art He: who led the Hosts of the Watchers, the fair Sons of the Gods to mingle their fiery Seed with the beauteous Daughters of Men in the world's morning.

Thou art He: King of the Dragons of Wisdom, thine ministers who are the Elder Daemons formed of the Fire: SHEMYAZA, ARMAROS, BARAQIJEL, KOKABEL, EZEQEEL, ARAQIEL, SHAMSIEL, SARIEL.

Thou art He: who instructed us in the Mystery of the Metals, the Crafts of Shaping, the Magics of Transformation: who bequeathed the Wise Blood unto thy Progeny, teaching unto us the Art of Wedding Earth to Heaven.

Thou art he: the Scapegoat whose Self-Sacrifice purifies us of Sin, Ignorance and Illusion, hanging invert'd in the night-firmament, thy One Eye of the Goat, open and glittering, who lightens our darkness with the fires of the stars, the myriad lanterns and blazing torches of All-Knowledge.

By the methods of the Art rouse the Inner Fire and fervently invoke the Daimon within by the Ancient Pact. Let the force of the Goat be raised and the Dragon-Serpent of Naamah-Lilith be stirred

through all five senses perfectly focussed upon the Fire within the mortal flesh.

3. *O Flame-Breathing Daemon and Wizardly Smith, who forgest the iron weapons of victorious liberation, the precious jewels of wisdom and beauty, hearken to me why am sprung from thy Cunning Seed, the Hidden House of AZAZEL. I am of the Children of TUBAL QAYIN. Thy Mark burns upon my brow: of thy Clan and Stock am I Cunning-Man. Waken and feed the Flaming Fire within my Blood, kindle the shining Fire of my inheritance. By Goat and Snake, great TUBALO, thou Coal-Black Smith, let the warmth of thy sorcerous power glow bright in my spirit and flesh by the Holy. Threefold Name AZZA: UZZA : AZZIEL.*

4. *Strength to my Daemon-Genius in the Fires of the Aelohim and the Great Blood of Faerie.*

*Here's to the Horse with the Four White Feet
The Chestnut Tail and Mane,
A Star on His Face and a Spot on his Breast,
And His Master's Name was QAYIN.*

Chapter 8

The Emerald Crown & the Morning Star

In the 19th century literary re-working of Italian Witch- traditions published by Charles G. Leland as *'Aradia: the Gospel of the Witches'* we may note that the Horned consort of Diana, the Queen of the Night, is none other than Lucifer, the Lightbringer:

"Diana greatly loved her brother Lucifer, the god of the Sun and Moon, the god of Light who was so proud of his beauty, and who for his pride was driven from Paradise. Diana had by her brother a daughter, to whom they gave the name of Aradia."

The mysteries of the Horned One as Lucifer have peculiar reference to the astronomical mysteries of the planet Venus conceived of as the Morning and Evening Stars, Phosphorus and Hesperus, Lucifer (Lightbringer) and Noctifer (Nightbringer). The Morning Star is the herald of the rising sun at dawn and at nightfall it follows the sun's descent, twinkling above the western horizon. To the Hebrews the Morning Star was called Helel-ben-Shahar, *'Day Star, Son of the Dawn'*.

These twin aspects are resumed symbolically in the upright and averse pentacles of Craft symbology and represent the celestial and chthonic aspects of the Master as Lord of Light and Darkness.

The Lightbringer, considered esoterically, opens the way to spiritual illumination and transmits solar enlightenment into the the material realm. Some especially profound mysteries concerning this archetype are contained in mediaeval German Grail texts including Wolfram Von Eschenbach's *'Parzival'* wherein the Grail is described as a miraculous stone, specifically an *'Achmardi'*, the Saracenic term for the emerald, which appears in the castle of the Grail-Templars, upon a cloth of green samite.

According to this mythos, which combines Arthurian motifs with Arabic gnostic traces, the Graal-Stone was originally a refulgent emerald which formed the crown-diadem of Lucifer himself, glowing at his brow-centre or *'third eye'* (Ajna-Cakra). This reveals the mystical seat of Luciferian illumination in the microcosm and the centre of the higher psychic faculties of enlightened consciousness.

During the *'War in Heaven'* when Lucifer clashed with the Archangel Michael, this stellar jewel became dislodged and fell down to earth like a blazing emerald-green meteorite where it was preserved as the Graal-Stone beloved of mediaeval German minnesingers. This esoteric myth also describes the descent of the Luciferian brilliance into the material sphere in order that early humanity could evolve into full self-consciousness and realise their true (divine) natures.

The emerald Graal-Stone is thus the luminous jewel of Lucifer hidden at the centre of the earth and the Lightbringer is seen as the heroic liberator of the psyche. The revolt of Lucifer was undertaken in order to emancipate humankind and can be seen as a harmonic of the old tale of the Watchers. It is said by some that those descended from the Watchers can be distinguished by the *'Mark'* upon their foreheads, visible only to the spiritual eye.

The goddess Venus is sometimes called Lucifera in classical and mediaeval lore and the emerald is amongst her mineral correspondences as is the rose amongst flowers, the *'Lucifer Rose'* as Henry Cornelius Agrippa calls it. There may be a link here with the Goddess-Mysteries of mediaeval German Witchery whose supreme feminine divinity was Dame Venus, the Mistress of the Magic Mountain, the Venusberg.

In the light of the Luciferian Grail-Mythos we might interpret the Emerald as the Graal-Cup of Dame Venus hidden deep within the caverns of her holy peak. This certainly recalls the old alchemical VITRIOL formula which signifies:

'Visit the interior parts of the earth, by rectification thou shalt find the Hidden Stone'.

Again the '*Lucifer Rose*' is another feminine symbol of the Graal, Cup and Cauldron and the Otherworld castle of the Goddess is surrounded by roses in the symbolism of certain branches of Traditional Witchcraft. This is the Mystick Rose of the Otherworld Goddess, Dame Venus, who appears robed in silks and velvets of emerald green, the faery colour of regeneration.

Thus there is a hidden tradition of Luciferian Mysteries in the Grail-lore and Traditional Craft of Britain and Europe. This primarily relates to the Horned God as the mystical initiator into the light of higher consciousness, the lightning-bolt of psychic illumination and the leader of the '*Divine Revolt*' against the tyranny of the demiurge who descended to free the divine soul imprisoned in the darkness and ignorance of the profane world and consciousness.

Obviously we are dealing with an intertwining of European Witchcraft, Arthurian Grail-traditions and Sabaeen Gnostic Daemonology which probably took place around the 15th century. Elements of this Mystery-Tradition may also have been inherited from the heretical sect of the Luciferians who appeared in Pomerania and inhabited the Brandenburg Marches in the Middle Ages as well as from ancient Saxon starlore in which the '*Morning Star*' is called Earandil. Whatever the case the Magister in certain Covens even today bears the title of the '*Son of the Star of Morning*' as the vice-regent of Lucifer.

The Blazing Torch of Loki

Other important astronomical mysteries are found in connection with the old Northern god Loki who was allegedly worshipped in Craft traditions in East Anglia (c.f. the Nine Covens of George Pickingill) and other regions with a Norse cultural sub-stratum. In the Lincolnshire Fens he was called upon as '*Lok*' in spells to drive away the ague as late as the 19th century.

In this respect Loki represents the Teutonic hypostasis of the Lord of Misrule for esoterically he is the '*Shadow-Soul*' (Anglo-Saxon '*Sceadu*', Celtic '*Scath*' - '*Shade, Phantom*', Proto-Germanic '*Skadwaz*') of Woden, the Great God of the Wild Hunt and his blood-brother according to the Eddic lays.

As the '*Shadow*' of the Great God, Loki represents the hidden side of divinity, the concealed '*Otherness*' of the godhead, that which lies beyond the pale of the known and belongs wholly to the realm of Utgardh (Utgardh-Loki), outside all normative values. This is expressed in Loki's function as the Dark Trickster-Wizard and the Master-Thief of the Gods as well as in his sexual ambivalence and gender-shifting. His name is related to '*Logi*' meaning '*Fire*' and he is indeed the Volcanic Divinity of Dark Underworld Fire.

In relation to Loki's function as the Dark Fire-God we might note that in Icelandic folk-tradition the star Sirius is called '*Loki's Brand*' and is one of the more secret attributions of the old Rune-stave '*Kenaz*' - '*Torch*'. Sirius as '*Loki's Brand*' rises and sets with the

Sun during the forty 'Dog Days' which run from July 3rd until August 11th each year. It is thought to exert a baleful effect, bringing destructive heat, fevers and pestilence in it's wake as well as driving dogs mad. Alternatively it can also bring honour, wealth and success in keeping with it's master's inexplicable nature.

Loki represents the extrasocietal and disruptive nature of magico-shamanic power and embodies mischief, misrule and antinomian craftiness - all the traits of the nocturnal sorcerer. He is the god of sudden reversals and through his 'supernatural' cunning and skill often turns a disaster into a positive benefit. Thus his tricksterish exploits and magical wiles often lead to highly useful ends as when he provided the gods with the sacred Hammer and Spear which he had obtained through a wager with the Dark Elves. Yet he is also the sire of the Fenris Wolf, that lupine manifestation of ancient chaos who will be loosed at the end of the aeons and who will devour Odin at the Ragnarok.

Loki seems to embody the elusive and often anti-social nature of mantic inspiration and as such cannot be integrated into the normal order of the world and society. In the Norse and other Indo-European traditions Loki is figured as a mighty giant bound beneath the world, whose writhings are the cause of seismic disturbances and volcanic eruptions, an awesome power which will be unleashed at the end of time. As the Dark Fire-Lord of Misrule he helps bring about the 'Twilight of the Gods' and appears with the Giants on the last day. But he does this only in order that the world may be transfigured and perfected in the

new cycle, paradoxically acting as an agent of rebirth in spite of his destructive qualities.

In ancient Teutonic astronomy this final conflict is fixed in the heavenly bodies. During the Viking age on the night of Winter Solstice it was seen that Loki's Brand, preceded by the star Procyon. Called the 'Torch Waver' it stood upon the southern end of the Milky Way which scintillates to the northern realm of Hel. This configuration of stars was seen as a stellar prophecy of the cyclical destruction of the cosmos inaugurated by Loki himself. But this cataclysmic dissolution is only the prelude to the rising of a new and flawless world from the darkness and is it's necessary prelude.

Loki therefore possesses a profoundly paradoxical and mystical interpretation in Northern Heathendom and is probably to be identified with the darker side of the Wild God of the Wutanes Heer, the Furious Host and further back, with the underworldly side of the Horned One: the King of Shadows and bearer of Dark Flame across the world at midwinter. As a magical archetype Loki represents the reverse of our profane persona and may often manifest as the destroyer, the rebel, the overthrower of all limitation and order. As such inner work with the Loki current is both dangerous and enlightening.



Glossary

Andumnos: (Gaulish). The '*Un-World*' of Celto-Gaulish Druidism, echoed in the Welsh Annwryn and the Irish Tir Andomain. The chthonic domain of the Horned God Vindos or Gwynn Ap Nudd.

Azazel: (Hebraic). The name of the Horned Goat-God of apocryphal Semitic angelology, the leader of the rebel hosts of angelic Watchers; applied to the native Horned One in the Middle Ages. The derivation is from OZ- '*Goat*' and occurs in Arabic as Azazil.

Cernunnos: (Gaulish) the primary title of the Horned God or '*Lord of the Deer Head*' worshipped by the Parisii. Also appears as Cernenus in Celtic Britain and under christianised form as St. Cornely of Brittany. The '*Horned One*' of the Brythons.

Cochul: (Gaelic). A magical hood, skin or mask which confers transformation into animal shape when donned or enables the wearer to enter the Other Worlds.

Daimon: (Greek). The Daimon of classical lore, also known in Roman tradition as the Daemon or Genius, is a person's indwelling god or spirit, of either male or female aspect and a source of spiritual protection and inspiration. Analogous with the Fetch and Fylgia of Northern lore and the faery 'Co-Walker' of Scots folklore.

Deada-Waeg: (Saxon) The Deada-Waeg or 'Death-Way' is the name given in Old English lore to the straight alignments along which ghosts, spirits and the Wild Hunt periodically appear. Cognate with the Doodwegen of mediaeval Holland and also called 'Coffin-ways' and 'Corpse-Roads' in rural England.

Godstone: (English) An upright phallic menhir, symbolic of divine masculinity and the God.

Gwynn: (Welsh) The 'White One', the old Cymric name for the Horned God of Annwyn, cognate with Irish Fionn and Gaulish Vindos. As the 'Oldest Being' he is identified with Fintan (Vindo-Senos), the 'White Ancient', in salmon form. Gwynn is lord of the Wild Hunt and the hounds of Annwyn and appears upon All-Hallows and stormy winter nights.

Hagstone: (English) A holed, yonic stone, symbolic of divine femininity and the Goddess.

Haselwurm: (German) The White Serpent of Wisdom sacred to the Horned God which dwells under hazel trees. When the White Haselwurm is seethed in a potion three stars appear on the surface of the brew - the first star when consumed gives wisdom, the second

gives seership but the third star whirls round and drives one insane.

Herne: (Old English) related to Anglo-Saxon 'Horn' and Gothic 'Haurn'; the saxon title of the Horned god of the Wild Hunt in the environs of Windsor Forest.

Hurselberg: (German) The magic mountain of the Witch-Goddess, dame Holda or Frau Venus in German lore; the cavernous gateway to the underworld of Hel upon which flowering elder-trees grow.

Janicot: (Basque) The horned two-faced god of Witches worshipped in the Bass-Pyrenees. The Basque equivalent to the Latin god Janus/Dianus.

Khaos: (Greek) Originally meaning a cleft, chasm or gaping abyss, the term Khaos signifies the mystical void which is the ground and origin of all being, seemingly empty but charged with the potential of all things. Cognate with the Old English concept of Misrule.

Lucifer: (Latin) The Horned God as 'Lightbearer' embodied by the planet Venus as the Morning Star and herald of solar brilliance at dawn. The Old One as the Great Horned Dragon-Serpent of Light and bringer of mystical illumination to the material world.

Misrule: (English) The condition which characterises the return to the mystical void of Khaos, exemplified by ritual reversal and cosmic inversion at the liminal cusp of time and being. (Halloween/Yuletide) The Horned God personifies this quality at midwinter as the Lord of

Misrule, Divine Fool and overthrower of the profane world and it's order.

Pouck: (Old English) The mediaeval English name for the Horned God in his goatish aspect, also called Puck, Robin Goodfellow and in Devonshire, Bucky. Related to Anglo-Saxon Bucca - '*He-Goat*' and Middle English Bukke - '*Male Deer, Goat*'.

Qayin: (Hebraic) Meaning '*Fireworker, Metalworker, Smith*' the name Qayin is the appellation given to the Horned God as Lord of Horsemen. As Tubal-Qayin, he is regarded as Master of Inner Fire and the Coal-Black Smith. Qayin is esoterically synonymous with Azazel in Semitic tradition.

Sabbat: (Uncertain) The term used in Weikka for the dream- convocation of the Wise before the Old One and the Black Mother in the underworld. The Sabbatic state is realised in liminal trance-consciousness induced by oneiric techniques, visualisation and herbal decoctions, all of which allow the soul to slip out of the physical vehicle and to 'fly forth by night' in ecstasy.

The Sabbat is accessed via gateways in time, space and consciousness the exact nature of which forms part of the inner lore and instruction of the Traditional Witch.

Seirim: (Hebraic) '*Hairy Ones*', the horned goat-satyrs who dwell with Azazel in the wild places according to Middle Eastern tradition.

Stang: (English) The forked standard-pole of the Horned God seen as the Dark Lord of Samhain. Also

the May-Stang of the Beltane celebrations, better known as the Maypole.

Tein: (Gaelic) The Celtic term for the divine fire within all things; solarity, sacred heat and the flame of the gods within living beings.

Trushul: (Romani) The tri-forked '*Gypsy Cross*' used to stir magical brews in Romani Witchcraft, synonymous with the three-tined Trishula of Shiva and the trident-pitchfork of the Devil in European folklore.

Weikka: (Indo-European) The Old European '*Religion of the Sorcerers*': the nocturnal gnosis and cultus of the Horned God and the Wild Goddess.

Woodwose: (Saxon) Archaic English term meaning '*Wild One*' and used to denote the mossy, shaggy '*Wild Man of the Woods*' or '*Green Man*', an aspect of the Horned God, as the Woodwife is of the Goddess of Witches.

Wooset/Ooser: (Dorset dialect) A name given to the bull-mask of the Horned God as the '*Yule Bull*' worn at midwinter masquing rites in Dorsetshire in his honour.

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