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| 1 | WHAT IS WICCA ... AND WHERE DID IT COME FROM? |
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Before we can even discuss the history of Wicca, the where-did-we-come-from of Wicca, I have to make one assertion here. IN MY PERSONAL OPINION, the terms “Pagan”, “Witch”, and “Wicca” are *not* interchangeable! Each of these words has its own use and meaning, just as the words “Christian”, “Protestant”, and “Southern Baptist” do. Yes, in each case, the terms are related, but they are not exactly the same.

In other words, for me, the relationship between Pagan, Witch, and Wicca can be described in a similar matter to describing Christianity and its various denominations and sects.

| Christianity | | | | Paganism | | | |
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| | | | | | | | |
| Roman Catholicism | | | | Witchcraft | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Protestantism | | | | Streggha, Christian Witchcraft, Hedge Witch | | Wicca | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | Baptist, Church of Christ, Friends Society (Quaker), Amish, Mennonite, Seventh Day Adventist, Methodist, Presbyterian | | | | | | Gardnerian, Alexandrian, Christian Wicca, Correllian Nativist Tradition, Georgian |

In other words, from Christianity, we get Roman Catholicism. From the Roman Catholic church, we had the Protestant Reformation which, in turn, gave us a wide variety of Christian denominations that are further removed from the Roman Catholic Church.

Paganism and its sister paths come to us through a similar manner. Paganism is, more or less, a general term to describe millions of people and their religious paths. From Paganism, we can then see Witchcraft as a separate and unique religion. From Witchcraft, we now get to Wicca. One thing that is unique to Paganism, Witchcraft, and Wicca is that many of their adherents manage to practice Christianity in some form (or Judaism or Islam or Buddhism) *and* their Pagan-based religion.

Pagan

I will start with the word, “Pagan”. In the past, the term, “pagan”, referred to anybody who was a polytheist, to somebody who believed in more than just one god or deity. As time went on, this word was changed to include anybody who was not a follower of the three big Western religions; that is, somebody who is not Jewish, Christian, or Moslem. Now, we often see a Pagan who believes that deity is immanent as opposed to transcendent, the Divine as being here with us and acting with us as opposed to being outside of Creation, as above creation. Paganism is not actually a specific religion, just as Christianity is not one religion. It is a movement with room for a variety of beliefs and sects! Pagan is an umbrella term, one that covers a lot of different beliefs, groups, individuals, and practices.

Paganism is an umbrella term. It is *not* one specific religion with one set of beliefs, practices, and ethics. Paganism can include Witchcraft, Wicca, Shinto, Yoruba, and various other spiritual beliefs and practices. Paganism is not any one of these; it is *all* of these!

Witch

Now, a witch may be a Pagan—or he/she may not be a Pagan! We tend to assume that all witches are Pagan, but some of my best friends, for example, are what we can now call Christian Witches! Witches, whether Pagan or Christian, tend to believe in magick as a part of their practices and spiritual life. They use magick to manipulate energies in order to achieve a specific goal. They tend to incorporate a Goddess and a God into their pantheon and work with Them in ritual, worship, and magic (For Christian Witches, this may be God the Father and/or Jesus, and maybe one of the Marys as the Goddess). Witchcraft is also the largest single form of Paganism in the world today and it is the most influential form of Paganism that we see (White, 2010: 185).

But doesn't the Bible say, ... ?

Many people will bring up the Biblical injunction against witchcraft (and Paganism) by quoting Exodus, chapter 22: 18 in the King James Version. “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live!” In the Hebrew Bible, this would be Exodus 22: 17 and reads “Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live (יִוֹ מְכַשְׁפָּה, לֹא תַחֲיֶיהָ).”

But what does that verse *actually* say?

In the original Hebrew, the word, “witch”, is not actually used. Rather, the Hebrew word, “mekhashepha” (Sloane, 2017), is found. This is the word which has been *mistranslated* into witch! In all actuality, what the verse *should* read is “Thou shalt not suffer a poisoner to live” or “Thou shalt not suffer an herbalist who uses their cuttings for evil purposes to live”.

Additionally, it may be argued that the verse is *not* referring to Israeli herbalists, but to PAGAN herbalists as a way to keep the Israelis a separate people! Jewish magical texts have existed for *centuries* and are nothing new. What appears to be anathema to the Hebrew scriptures are *foreign* magickal practices and beliefs—and this actually makes sense when you remember that:

1. The Jews had been enslaved in Egypt and, when they came to what is now Israel, they were attempting to lay their claim to these land and establish their own kingdom and national identity
2. While slaves in Egypt, they would have witnessed the magicks of the court magickians—and were determined not to have the same in their society!

Wicca

Wicca is a newer religion than either Paganism or Witchcraft. It is also a more specific path. Yes, Wicca stems from both Paganism and Witchcraft, but it is a more specific faith system than Paganism (which can include a wide variety of radically different religious systems) and can be more narrowly defined than Witchcraft (which in itself can include a wide variety of different types of witchcraft, including Wicca). By definition, Wicca is a:

1. Modern form of Witchcraft
2. That is initiatory
3. And was founded in England,
4. Based upon ancient forms of Witchcraft and Paganism, ancient forms of pre-Christian religions
5. Duotheistic religion; it incorporates a Goddess and God into its natural framework

It seems that a part of the reason for the confusion about the words “Witch” and “Wicca” may stem from the Middle Ages in Europe. It seems that, at that time, the common Old English word was actually “wicca” and was pronounced as *witch-a*. The word, “wicce”, did not denote an actual religion or spiritual philosophy. Rather, it was the common term for what we would now call a sorceress or witch (with a small “w” to differentiate the non-religious witch from a modern day Witch).

That Modern English uses the word “Wicca” seems to be no accident! Modern Wicca was brought about in England and was popularized by Gerald Gardner in 1954; *this* form of Wicca promoted itself as having been based on the ancient witchcraft practices of Ye Olde England and they kept the same word that the English used in the Middle Ages! The term Wicca is a continuation of the ancient practice of wicca.

Here is an interesting aside. As per White (188), Gerald Gardner did *not* use the word “Wicca” to describe the form of Witchcraft which he taught and practiced. Rather, he referred to his Tradition (sect of Witchcraft) as “the Craft of the Wise” and the “witch cult”.

Wicca is a unique faith system and religion in its own right. Generally, Wiccans do hold a reverence for Nature (we are a part of Nature, as opposed to being a part from Nature!). Wiccans typically worship and work with a Goddess and God, although some Wiccans and Traditions may work solely with a Goddess. Wiccans hold to certain morals and codes of ethics, such as the Wiccan Rede.

Wicca takes the more naturalistic aspects of Paganism and Witchcraft and incorporates a religious aspect to their spiritual natures. It provides a framework for Wiccan morality. It has a structure for set

holy days/holidays, the eight Sabbats. While Wicca has no set scriptures, it gives a set of moral codes, such as the Wiccan Rede and the Law of Three, to follow and observe.

Wicca is, also, not a monolithic structure, where everyone does exactly the same thing and believes the same thing. There are various sects or Traditions in Wicca. Most of these Traditions are Pagan and are rooted in one form or another of Paganism, but here are also Wiccans who blend their beliefs and practices with Judaism and Christianity. Many of my friends, for example, worship Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Monotheism Polytheism, Henotheism, and Atheism

Another common feature of Wicca is the belief in what is called *polytheism*. The major approaches to how we all view Deity or the Divine can be broken down into *monotheism*, *polytheism*, *henotheism*, and *atheism*.

Monotheism refers to a belief in one God, only. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are examples of monotheistic religions. They each only believe in only one God (Exodus 20: 3 states, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"). While Christianity accepts the premise of a God the Father (Yahweh or Jehovah), Jesus the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, they maintain a tradition of worshipping God the Father. The confusion comes from the appearance of Christians worshipping three distinct personalities (thus giving the impression of three distinct and separate personages), but Christians tend to see Them as aspects of the same God.

Polytheism is older and was more widespread than monotheism. Polytheists can and do believe in and worship a set of multiple Gods and Goddesses. There can be a God of war, a Goddess of love, a Goddess of the harvest, a God of the hunt, and so on. The common denominator for all polytheistic religions is the acceptance of there being more than just one Divine person.

Henotheism is a form of polytheism. It accepts the premise of a pantheon of Goddesses and Gods. It accepts the belief that the pantheon will have more than one God or Goddess. What separates henotheism from polytheism is one simple fact; henotheists, while accepting the belief in more than one Deity, will place emphasis on the worship of only one of these Gods and Goddesses! An example of this could be a coven of witches or Wiccans who focus their worship on the Goddess Diana or on a coven which emphasizes Cernunnos to the exclusions of all other Goddesses and Gods.

Finally, we get to atheism. Atheism is the belief in *no* Gods or Goddesses. It isn't that they deny the existence of Jesus, for example, but that they deny the existence of *ALL* Deities! This does *not* mean, however, that they hold no reverence for some guiding light, if you will. Many atheists, for example, will put their faith in science as their guide post.

A Brief Introduction to Wiccan History

I would love to say that Wicca came about in all of its glory and fully formed in the 1950s in England and was formulated by Gerald B. Gardner. That would be the easy way out and would make for a much shorter history to read through. The fact is, though, that Wicca is a revival and recreation of earlier magical religions and practices. That means that Wicca shares a long history, one that dates back several thousands of years!

The belief in and the use of magick has been widely recorded by historical documents and artifacts. It existed as a reality for ancient societies and a daily fact of life for the people living in those times. Sources ranging from the Bible to Roman law details the legality (or illegality) of magick and its practitioners. Different forms of Paganism and polytheism were the norm of the time; various related religions were the dominate faith systems around the world.

To start off, there is a *lot* of controversy over the start and history of Wicca. It seems that no two people can actually agree with each other on this topic. Some people tend to look at the hard, cold facts, the facts which can be documented and proven, much like evidence in a court trial. Other people may opt to bring in mythology and present that as actual and verifiable history. Some people will try to present Wicca as a religion with thousands of years of history itself and others will try to show that Wicca is [a] a more modern religion, one that came about during the 1950s in England and [b] is a blend of various religious and magickal practices and beliefs!

A part of the problem with establishing a thousands-of-years timeline is that many people assume that Wicca is a continuation of ancient European practices and beliefs. This viewpoint was first professionally presented by Margaret Murray back in the 1920s. In her work, Ms. Murray presented a religious system that had been in hiding since the Burning Times, the time of the persecutions against witches. While I don't doubt that some people may stem from families that did indeed practice some forms of witchcraft from even before this time, I do not believe that their faith can actually be characterized as being Wicca. My preference is for establishing actual, verifiable facts, facts which most people can agree upon.

There are definitely a few things that we do know about pre-history and how they may have shaped religion. Initially, humans were hunter-gatherers. They do not seem to have farmed food nor to have raised their own animals, such as cows and pigs. Rather, they hunted as they travelled and they gathered food from the plants, such as berries, as they moved on. While they may have worshipped a Deity of plant life, they would have had no gods to worship for help in raising animals. Instead, they would have had a God of the Hunt. Early religion and magick would have been tools to ensure the group's survival, a successful hunt.

We know, from history, that the men of the clan were the traditional hunters. They wore the cloaks of animals (with the heads attached), they painted on the walls of the caves the animals that they hunted. In a symbolic sense, these hunters *became* the very animals (or symbols of the animals) that they were hunting. This is definitely an early form of ritual and magick.

With the advent of farming and raising animals, we start to see a more formalized approach to religion. With this dawn, we see representations of Goddesses and Gods. Consider the literature, architecture, and artwork of the Indus Valley, the Mesopotamian region, the British Isles and northern France, Greece, Egypt, and the Middle East as examples. At this time, we see societies tended to be duotheistic or polytheistic. Even the Hebrew Bible gives us an insight into this in the passage with the reference to *Elohim* (אֱלֹהִים). In this example, we see the name of a Canaanite god (Elo) and the addition of *him*, indicating a number greater than one—thus, more than one god and/or goddess. So, when the Bible says, "And God (Elohim) said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness," (Genesis 1: 26), we are *not* getting an idea or desire from just *one* god, but the command to create human beings after the image of *more than one* god!

Now, polytheism and paganism also developed in Europe (approximately 2000 B.C.E.) with the Greeks inheriting certain elements of the mystery cults from the Minoans. In turn, many of these concepts were absorbed by the Romans (along with the existent Etruscan practices native to Italy). From there, some of these mystery teachings appear to have been brought into Gaul and other Celtic lands by the Romans as their empire continued to spread and grow.

The idea of a polytheistic pantheon is not new to us. The ideas of witchcraft and paganism are not new to us. Because of the fears surrounding these ideas, laws were passed to criminalize these practices, laws which extended to England (Witchcraft Act in 1736 and Vagrancy Act in 1824 (which outlawed fortune telling and acts of divination)) and the American colonies. The Salem witch trials (1692) are a grim reminder of these laws. These laws, however, did not simply disappear just because of some Enlightenment. They took time to be repealed! Indeed, for centuries, witchcraft was considered a heresy by the Church and was punishable, using a variety of techniques that ensured the death of the person suspected of “witchcraft”.

During the sixteenth century and beyond, we see the writing of various texts about magick and certain esoteric mysteries. In 1533, for example, we find the writing of Henry Cornelius Agrippa’s *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, which detailed various magickal practices. In 1866, we find *The Key of the Mysteries and Transcendental Magic* by Eliphas Levi; don’t let the relative youth or newness of these works fool you, however, as this date is simply the time of the English translation of the original manuscripts from the French. In 1877, Madame Blavatsky gave us *Isis Revealed* and, in 1888, we get *The Secret Doctrines* by H.P. Blavatsky. 1881 gave us *The Occult World*, by A.P. Sinnet. In 1897, we are introduced to Charles Godfrey Leland’s seminal work, *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches*. *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches* was purported to be the surviving holy text of witches in Italy who followed the cult of Aradia and Her Daughter, Diana. In this work, we read the first published version of any Charge of the Goddess.

It must be said that Leland is the closest thing that some Wiccans can claim as a “patron saint” for the religion. From Leland and *Aradia, the Gospel of the Witches*, we see the reintroduction to many people the idea of a Goddess figure, a Deity Who is concerned about humans, Her children. From these sources, we can see the evolution of modern Stregheria and the Correllian Nativist Tradition (a Wiccan Tradition which started out more as a family tradition of witchcraft before Gerald Gardner wrote about Wicca). Indeed, in terms of Correllianism, we can see something of a family tree stemming from Leland to the present day with:

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| Donald Lewis High-Correll |
| Krystal High-Correll; begins (with Donald Lewis High-Correll) to make Tradition’s lessons, as a Wiccan Tradition, more widely accessible in 1979 |

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| | |
| LaVeda Lewis High-Correll | |
| | |
| Mable High-Correll | |
| | |
| Lady Orpheis Caroline High-Correll by Lydia Beckett in 1904 into the Aradian lineage; promotes the Correllian Nativist tradition | |
| | |
| Lydia Beckett | |
| | |
| Charles Godfrey Leland initiated into Stregheria/Aradia in late 1800s | |

1903 brought us *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* by Jane Ellen Harrison. The following year (1904) gave us Aleister Crowley's work, *Book of the Law*, followed by *Magick in Theory and Practice* in 1929. Various spiritualism groups (such as the Theosophical Society in New York, the Golden Dawn, and the Hemitic Society (the Hemitic Society appears to be our source for the four quarters as related to the four directions and the watchtowers, as well as the use of our modern working tools of wands, chalice, and scourge)) and spiritualist individuals helped to contribute to the continued success of such works.

The twentieth century brought about an interesting change in occultic literature. Rather than repeating some "ancient traditions", we see the beginning of studying paganism and witchcraft from a more scientific perspective. Key among these attempts was Margaret Murray's work in 1921 *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*. In this work, Professor Murray introduced the world to the concept of there being 13 people in a coven, the theory of ancient goddess traditions, and the celebration of four of the Sabbats for religious celebration and Esbats for more of a business purpose.

The modern age of Wicca, the time period in which Wicca became a distinct and separate religion from the more general Paganism and Witchcraft can be looked at as taking place with the birth of Gerald B. Gardner (1884 – 1964) and with the contributions that Edward Aleister Crowley (1875 – 1947). Together, these two men, along with the significant contributions of Doreen Valiente (1922 – 1999), ended up creating much of the framework of some of the more ceremonial aspects of Wicca and its foundational "scriptures". Some of the elements of modern Wicca were introduced by Gardner in his work *High Magic's Aid* in 1949, which gave us the description for the use of the athame, introduced the world to a Book of Shadows, and made women an equal part of the ceremonies. This work also took us

from the four Sabbats mentioned by Murray to the more universally accepted idea of the *eight* Sabbats. Now, some of the members of Gardner's coven disapproved of having their rituals and practices revealed to the public, so Gardner had this work published as a piece of fiction.

Gardner had been a civil servant and had served in Asia, learning of some of the local myths, beliefs, and religious practices. He was interested and involved in the occult and joined a Rosicrucian group. Through this group, Gardner met a woman named Dorothy Clutterbuck, a follower of the Old Religion. In 1939, Gardner was initiated into Clutterbuck's coven in the New Forest (appropriately named the New Forest Coven). Gardner also continued to study some of the more ceremonial aspects of magick and it may be from this interest that we see some of the introduction of a more formalized practice fused with Old World witchcraft.

Aleister Crowley was an influencing factor on Gardner and his writings and religion. It is widely believed that many of Gardner's writings and rituals were anonymously penned by Crowley.

About that same time (1948), Robert Graves educated the world about the concepts of:

- Triple Goddess, incorporating the Crone aspect
- Ancient Goddess religions form some of the genetic blueprint for ancient poetic sources

In 1951, the rather primitive Witchcraft and Vagrancy laws were repealed in England. This meant that certain practices to be found in modern Paganism, Witchcraft, and Wicca were no longer criminal acts in England. This gave Gardner the freedom to publish his work, *Witchcraft Today*. As opposed to *High Magic's Aid*, *Witchcraft Today* was a non-fiction and introduced us to the ideas of a belief in faeries, the Knights Templar practicing a form of witchcraft, and that nine million victims were killed in the Burning Times (modern estimates show the figure to be more likely somewhere between 40,000 and 100,000). It appears that this is the same time period that Gardner assumed a leadership role in Clutterbuck's coven and moved the coven from the Old Religion to Wicca.

An important figure in Wiccan history (Doreen Valiente) joined Gardner's coven (1953) and was critical for the growth of this religion thanks to her poetic talent. She is rumored to be largely responsible for the creation of the modern Gardnerian Book of Shadows and, more importantly, reworked the Charge of the Goddess found in *Aradia, the Gospel of the Witches*. Valiente ultimately left Gardner's coven (1957), largely due to her disagreeing with Gardner as to how public Wicca was becoming.

It didn't take long for other people to devise their own forms or Traditions of Wicca. Probably one of the most famous offshoots would be the Alexandrian Tradition founded by Alexander Sanders. His Book of Shadows was almost identical to the one composed by the Gardnerians, but his Tradition also incorporated more "high magick". Alexandrian Wicca has had a certain controversial history. Initially, Sanders had attempted to join a Gardnerian coven led by the Crowthers (1962), but they felt an instant dislike for him and refused to let Sanders join them. Sanders then performed a public ritual based on the Gardnerian Tradition and falsely claimed to be a Gardnerian initiate. Later, he changed his story and claimed that he was initiated into Wicca by his grandmother.

Alexandrianism was greatly influenced by Janet and Stewart Farrar, so much so that even the name of the Tradition was influenced by this couple (the term, "Alexandrian", is based on the Library at Alexandria). Another change that was brought about was in relation to gender roles. In the Gardnerian

Tradition, gender roles were more strictly defined thanks to gender polarity (a product of its times) and this, in turn, made homophobia more acceptable in that Tradition (of course, most Gardnerians are much more inclusive and accepting of the LGBTQ community now). In the Alexandrian Tradition, Wicca became more accessible to the members of the gay community.

In 1966, the Regency coven was founded by some of the followers of Robert Cochrane. Cochrane's Craft offered certain differences to Wicca, such as:

- The abandonment of the scourge
- A greater emphasis on philosophy and mysticism
- The idea that Wicca is *not* a Pagan religion, that Wicca is simply *based on* paganism
- It is preferable to perform ritual outdoors whenever possible
- Elements with their corresponding Quarters or directions

§ Earth = North

§ Air = East

§ Fire = South

§ Water = West

Unfortunately Cochrane perpetrated one of the most common beliefs that scares some people away from Wicca. In Cochrane's view, *his* Tradition was the only valid and "real" Wicca. Valiente had been involved with Cochrane's Tradition, but left it because of this insistence on his Cochrane's Craft being the only way; Valiente considered Gardnerian Wicca and Cochrane's Craft to be equally valid.

Cochrane committed suicide in 1966, but a version of Cochrane's Craft lives on in the 1734 Tradition.

In 1963, Raymond Buckland came and introduced Wicca to the United States. America turned out to be fertile ground for this new religion as many groups of people were hungry for a faith outside of the white male-dominated religious hierarchy that dictated the social norms of the time. Wicca was a religion that encouraged people to acknowledge and honor their own spiritual roots, insisted on empowerment for women, and generally welcomed members of the LGBTQ community as full equals.

Now, in 1975, Doreen Valiente published her works, *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*, along with her book, *Natural Magic*. In these works, Valiente introduced to the Wiccan community the idea of self-initiation (you did *not* have to be a member of the "right" Tradition or coven in order to become Wiccan), correspondence with Nature, the idea that *anyone* (and not just people who were recognized as Wiccans by the "proper" authority or chain of command) could work positive magick, and her original charges of the Gods.

In 1979, another revolutionary book was introduced, *Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, written by Miriam Simos, also known as Starhawk. This work applied certain psychological concepts to Wicca and placed a certain emphasis on spiritual feminism, ecofeminism, and

the Goddess movement. Starhawk also applied the ancient ideas of karma and how they worked with magick.

At this time, James Lovelock introduced the idea of the Gaia Hypothesis. In this line of thought, we recognize the Earth as a living organism rather than as dead material to be exploited for wealth. As a living organism, humans are a part of that life, a part of nature as opposed to being apart from Nature. The Gaia Hypothesis caught the attention of many environmentalist and is generally accepted in the Wiccan community.

The 1980s and the 1990s were an important time for Wicca. The religion saw an explosion of books written and published that encouraged people to study on their own and to practice Wicca, to act as their own High Priest and/or High Priestess. In America, Wicca was becoming more eclectic and more of a do-it-yourself religion. It became more open, more free to experience. During this time, we saw more of a solitary experience becoming valid in Wicca. Additionally, in 1985, a district court in Virginia and, in 1986, a federal appeals court in the United States ruled that Wicca *is* a legitimate religion and must be respected by the government as such as it is to be protected under the First Amendment. Furthermore, in 2007, the Bush Administration decided to allow Pagan soldiers to have the pentacle engraved on their headstones when they are buried in *any* U.S. military burial grounds, such as at Arlington National Cemetery.

Other Wiccans stepped forward and became pioneers in the growth of Wiccan spirituality. Some of these innovators include Scott Cunningham, Silver Ravenwolf, Raymond Buckland, Marion Weinstein, Don Lewis, and Zsuzsanna Budapest. *All* of these people are well worth your time to look up and research. They have each brought something invaluable to the practice of Wicca.

Wicca is a relatively new development in the history of religion. It is *not* some religion that was passed down by word of mouth through each generation. Wicca is a faith whose foundations have been built on much older religious practices and systems, in the same sense that other religions are built upon the bones of an older faith system, such as Christianity being built on the ideas of Judaism. In a sense, Wicca is a renewal of the faith of *all* human ancestors. It has liberally borrowed from various religious traditions that were in practice *prior* to the introduction of the monotheistic religions with which so many of us were raised. More importantly, Wicca is not a static religion; it is constantly evolving.

The relative newness of this faith, however, does not in any way invalidate its worth and its contributions to the twenty-first century world. Wicca has been invaluable in attempting to restore a balance between the Divine Masculine which has dominated Western religions for the past two thousand plus years and the more ancient Divine Feminine, the ultimate Mother and Nurturer for the human race. A judgment of Wicca should not be based on how old the faith is, but on what the religion offers to people in the here and now.

It is true that Wicca is something of a journey back to a “simpler time” in that its roots are based on a more rural and nature-based faith system. It is a counter-balance to the mechanization of the human soul in our industrialized and computerized world. It is an act of rebellion against a world that is calculated, a world where worth is measured by wealth and the potential for exploitation. It is the attempt for humans to reconnect with Nature, with a more natural and intuitive path. The witch is a symbol of the freedom of women (and men) from the hierarchical structure of a more rigid faith system; Wicca is an extension and loosely formalized branch of that archetype.

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