

Concerns and Wicca Today - "The Way Wicca is Changing"

April 2016; by Feywer Folevado, Temple of the Tree

I wrote this document originally in two segments. It was mark for discussion among an occult forum and thus the place where the additional material is added will be noted.

There are some things about Wicca that I would like to discuss. Chiefly, the "emergence" of "Neo-Wiccans" or "McWiccans" in the Craft.

I should start by explaining I actually started with Wicca. I used to believe that Wicca was indeed the "Ancient Religion" it touted itself as. What books I had I parroted and read like a Bible - mainly because I was a sponge for information, but also, what I had read, I didn't *know*; I knew only surface level understandings of things. As I got older I realized the more stark reality of Wicca, and what it was "then", and how it is now, blah blah, and here I am today.

Something happened around the 80's I'd say where the idea that "What works for you" really took off. There's nothing wrong with that statement - but when it comes to Wicca, compared to the more traditional ways of it's practice, there was a formality; a "rigidity" in practice; there was a dynamic, but it was in many ways like a priesthood.

The Gardnerians and Alexandrians are reminded.

But we see the term "Eclectic" today used with Wicca that often times means that a person has many sorts of different practices or the lot that fits into the "Wiccan Framework" and so on.

In a respect this is good, because a person is fluid. But it's not as if one can pick up a practice and work with it for a while and then say "this isn't for me", and then move onto the next thing like it's something that can be picked up and thrown away. I mean, you can, but when it comes to spiritual practices, a level of respect is admired and often times required in order to work with certain entities. While it's good to have a variety of practices, jumping around from practice-to-practice and not sticking to something is never good.

There is also the over-saturation of "Magical Books" in the market, that more often than not all regurgitate the same thing and repackage it in different formats.

Also, there is a great deal of inaccuracy and misinformation in many of them. Many people that are interested in Magic (if it's not just a curiosity or a phase) that start out in the beginning don't know where to begin or look; and that's a problem because with the abundance of crappy occult books since the 80's, we see today what I like to affectionately refer to as "McWiccans".

While there is a lot of McWiccan bashing around these days in occult circles and groups. I for one used to be in such a state - so I understand the mindset of such a person.

The Wiccans and Witches of today are certainly not the Wiccans and Witches in the craft's early days. While I admire the self-initiate, as I surely am, the motto "What works for you" has made an uncountable amount of versions of Initiation Rituals, the key Wiccan Texts, an endless amount of Book of Shadows that also more often than not never have the same information in them.

And while it was said that "no two Books of Shadows were the same", and certainly the Craft was never intended to be a rigid system of Magic or like a Priesthood or Clergy, there is an amount of rigidity in the Craft, and it was for good reason. Persecution is something that is not as much of a dire threat as it was in the past, but Secrecy was a key. That also may not be such a problem today (and that's a good thing), but the very lack of consistency in Wicca has made it so watered down, that now there are terms like "McWiccan", "NeoWiccan", "Eclectic Wicca" and many other "traditions"... - It's not just Alexandrian and Gardnerian any more.

This may have a lot in part to do with Self Initiation. The person unable to find a Coven may initiate themselves into the Craft, and an initiation from the Heart is something that is True, which is a reason the self-initiate is much to be desired. But with a Self Initiate, there is no Teacher to pass on a Tradition. There is no Teacher to help and point out fallacies and errs when they come up. And while the Student may have had his own trials and tribulations by his own run anyway, with a Teacher certainly there was a Tradition that went along with that, and with the Self-Initiate, it went right out the Window. Thus, is why (I believe) we see so many [Self Initiates] grabbing and taking from many different traditions and practices, and "forming their own" which "works for them".

It may seem a bit ridiculous to consider this because the Craft mind you was with the idea that each Coven is to be different, as they are; and each has a personality, and a way of teaching and how they enact their rites; but to-day there is such a watered-down amount of them that, again, for the lay-person getting into the Occult and not having any clue where or what to look for (that's reliable), sadly we see many individuals growing up on crappy books and forming practices that are based on "New Age"

thought and the lot, instead of "Traditional" (if we disregard the definition of Traditional at the moment) Wicca.

In the End I feel like I am discussing what Wicca "is" and what it "is not"; We are all people with our practices, and on our own paths, but Wicca is Wicca - and Wicca is a certain way, a certain practice. It's not a jumble. I shouldn't have to even be making this because I feel like it's "Traditionalist Wiccans and Witches" against the "New Age Wiccans", and it shouldn't be that way, we are all part of Wicca. But there is an alarming amount of [frankly] crappy books, misinformation, lack of consistency and practice that makes me address these things. And the very fact that these terms exist says something about the way Wicca is changing.

Spiritualist and Feminist Movements in the 80's like with Starhawk, Dianic Wicca, and all that New Age stuff; there's a good reason why it's considered New Age.

And later I added some additional content to the original article:

Having re-read much of my original post, I have a different attitude now than I did then. Or to be more concise, a better way of communicating that thought.

What I was getting at with the post was about how many practitioners within Wicca (particularly the new age folk) make a grab bag of their own packaged Wiccan flavour, but doing it without having an understanding clearly of what they change or incorporate before they do so.

New Agers would say "why are the witches all formal?" - why do we need all that tradition (you know, the Gardnerians or Alexandrians, with their rigidity)? Well I think the reason for it, or at least a large part of it is, that you learn how it is done itself - as it is.

While Wicca is a hodgepodge in itself, learning Wicca through a good, regular gardnerian or alexandrian coven, will teach it clearly and without any 'personal flavours'.

Only after one has that good understanding of what Wicca is before they start mixing it with their own or other practices should be a no brainer, but often it is not in the brain at all.

I think that also, as the saying goes, "evolve or die" - Wicca isn't meant to be a dogmatic religion. While it's classic traditions do teach Wicca a certain way, after that certain-way-of-learning the Craft is

accomplished, it is healthy to incorporate and diversify.

Wicca, and all these Neo-Pagan movements aren't really reconstructions even, because we really don't know what the pagans did. Margot Adler said it best that these new resurgences really take out the juice - the "good stuff" of the ancient pagan practices and into a whole new, modern practice in itself.

While the practices today may not be 100% accurate to what was practiced by the ancient pagans thousands of years ago, the modern practitioners are sincere in what they do.

Guess I branched a bit but bleh.