

Isis-Seshat Journal

Personal Post of the Fellowship of Isis

Issue #23

September 2009



Volume 6 Number 3

GLIDING ON SPIRIT WINGS

By
Pat Cummins

Within and beyond some measure
of today's mundane

My Spirit lifts
to heed its call for soaring.

Streaming consciousness
Pointedly direct
feathers my outstretched arms
as

Vision is expanded
and
Time is filled with space.

Gliding on Spirit wings
I am
filled with
Grace.

~eyeka~

pat cummins

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ISIS-SESHAT
 c/o Deena Butta
 3334 W. Eastwood Ave.
 Chicago IL 60625-5334
 USA

Please make checks out to "Deena Butta" with "magazine" in the memo line.

You may also send payment via Paypal to DeeAnkh@sbcglobal.net

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear All,

Thoughts from Juno at Autumn...She speaks to me in many ways ...through the voices of nature, animals, plants, stones, stars, whistling winds, rain, crackling flames, rustling leaves, gurgling rivulets, and sometimes humans.

I know when the message has come from Her because Her Voice makes my inner self sit up straight and I feel my Eye of Vision open in amazement... and then I can feel her smiling...because she is happy I got the message.

I have been listening to her messages about the changes our world is going through. It is pulling itself apart. The earth is trying to ascend. Its vibratory level is increasing. There are things happening in the galaxy and the universe that we are not aware of. But earth is responding to them. We humans struggle against the changes. We create massive clouds of fear and panic. Fear is a very low vibratory level. Does responding to increased frequencies with lowered frequencies balance anything? Or does it simply shred the fabric of reality, and split the atom? Is it like mixing fire and water directly? Is this what Equinox and Alchemy are about?

As this issue was going...and going and going... to press, we were in the throes of giving birth to *The Throne of Destiny*, a ritual by Lady Olivia about the art of Sovereignty, and the initiations of Arcanum III and XIV. We were so busy being sovereigns of our respective domains that, ironically, we had no time to think and write about sovereignty itself. That will be a project for our Winter issue!

Sovereignty partly results from an awakened and open *Eye of Vision*. Sovereignty involves being honest with oneself, and listening to one's heart. This inner guidance extends to those who look to you for leadership. Sovereignty is about knowing where your boundaries are, on many levels. It is about a true willingness to serve, and honesty with oneself about the service being rendered and why. There is still so much to learn and process.

We have collected pieces for this issue that pertain to the contracting, inner, yin time of year ...when we let go of everything and float as ova in the body of the Great Dark Mother...good preparation for living in the spirit world, or between lifetimes!

Juno urges us to put our house...our kingdom...our selves...in order. She is goddess of marriage, law, and all other institutions that foster orderliness and cooperation. You have heard much satire about Hera and her Jovial cuckoo husband Zeus with their great cosmic Punch and Judy show. Satire emerges when our cultural institutions have gone to their logical (or illogical) conclusion and need to be reevaluated. Sometimes you need to laugh about something before you can think about it. Humor raises the vibratory level in the middle of great fear, or perhaps right after it. Laughter is cleansing, healing, and

sometimes the best, indeed the only, thing we can do. Laughter is the gift of Zeus, Jupiter, the great benefic, the expander, god of the waxing year.

The gifts of Juno are laughter, order, the creation of something beautiful to serve, and to contain, something else. Juno helps us order, organize, and beautify our lives.

Punch and Juno...under stress we may find ourselves reverting to stereotypes and extremes...such as the Cuckoo and the Shrew. Sometimes all we can do is laugh.

Juno tells us to clean our house, our kingdom, our temple and our empire... to organize our assets, and to husband our resources. What will we pack to take to the next world, or the Fifth World? Whatever we leave behind, let's do it respectfully. Juno wants us to respect our resources even if we don't understand them...which means leaving them in good order, so that they may be easy to deal with, whether by ourselves or another.

The subject of *Economy* seems so mundane, but it is not. *Economy* means "putting our house in order on all levels." Elemental Earth is as necessary as Fire, Water, and Air. Earth is the Throne of Juno.

Our resources are gifts from deity, and our economy reflects our level of respect and awareness. We want our House to be filled with joy and romance...which means that sometimes we have to clean it. Sometimes we have to organize and maintain order. We struggle against the limitations of order, and sometimes we have to laugh about them.

Slow down and organize, slow down and put your affairs in order, whether you are planning to leaving this world soon or in the distant future. Our global economy needs to be cleansed, transformed, transmuted, so that it can be foundation of the Fifth World. Old behaviors and ways of thinking can be left behind.

The Empress and *Temperance* show us 2 aspects of Juno: the benign and the strict, the passive and the active, the inner and the outer, the organic and the alchemical. They are the pillars of the Equinox gateway, in which all things are momentarily in balance. We celebrate this balance, and go forward into a time that, as Temperance shows us, blends water and wine...or perhaps water and fire...the red and blue goblets. These are the beautiful and functional pots Juno taught us to create, in which Water is safely boiled over a well-tended efficient Fire so that it will sustain us rather than explode. The good housewife...or Empress...maintains order gracefully, with good humor. These are the gifts of Juno...who offers us the Throne of Earth. Let us embody the fertile and blissful Empress as well as the Tempering Angel.

Juno bestows new ways of thinking while Jupiter bestows expansion and expansiveness. Juno helps us maintain order in a good-tempered way.

In the words of the liturgy, "Help us, Juno, ancient goddess, future queen of the coming age...teach us how to control our lives!" We gratefully celebrate this moment of perfect

balance at this sacred Equinox season, may we carry its blessings in our hearts, our memories, and our beings as we go forward into Samhain.

So mote it be.

Enjoy the blessings of Mabon and Samhain
Blessings,

Deena



LETTERS

These Halloween memories from Lillian Morgan Evans capture the essence of Samhain...

Dear Deena,

...Since I was a child, as the wheel turns to October's end I know that special time is nearing when everything has another dimension ...and you can almost see it, sometimes hear it, and always feel it. I've never ever truly understood why some folks who do feel it fear it?? Maybe the past "training" that it's demons and evil forces...unnatural things abroad... still haunts these folks?

I have always opened my arms to it, opened my mind and heart to it, this holy Eve best known as Halloween here. Since I can remember (which is age 4) my Father and Mother told me how different "Halloween" night is. As a little girl, before trick-or-treat time, my Father told me about the "ghosts that were out, among the stars, overhead" and the trees that could speak to one another on the chilly night, and the jack-o-lantern that people carved was a happy thing, but that it also helped scare away the angry goblins that were free to roam this night. He told me there were happy ones, and also angry ones.

Father also told me not to take any of the candy in offering bowl for trick-or-treaters (like myself). "It is disrespectful," he said in a stern voice to me in my orange cat-suit, "they stand for the ghosts who are hungry, and need goodies for their journey! You go to other houses and get your goodies." And this is how it was done,

it seemed. So...my folks would stay there a while to give candy, then they'd take me out to trick-or-treat. It was rural, so only 5 or 6 neighbors to walk to. They'd after, drive me to edge of town where there were endless houses, it seemed, and back then, they'd open the door till midnight for anyone. Those were the days!! ☺

But when I was just 4 and 5, I recall my parents each taking one of my hands and walking with me in the early night down the neighbor's driveway..."hold our hands," my Dad said, "If you don't, one of the ghosts from the stars could swoop down and spirit you away..." EEK!?! I hold tight. But as I got a bit older, next few years and went on my own—for hours! – I always looked up...wondering.

Here I am, almost 49, and understanding Samhain's older meanings as well. There are strong spirits abroad, and they offer much. And still, I "offer up my heart and soul in love with this Halloween Eve..." There is way more friendly out there than scary. For sure.

Thank you again, so much.

Blessed Be.

Lillian Morgan Evans

Please write to Lillian at the following address:

1720 Bigelow St. NE
Olympia WA 98506



Rosie Weqver had this dream shortly before the Goddess Festival. It is wonderful knowing FOI members far and wide connect on the etheric level...

Hi Deena

I just thought that you'd like to hear about a vivid dream I had a few weeks ago relating to the Throne of Destiny celebrations you'll be holding.

In it I find myself sitting next to you on the way to the celebration in a car & in between us sat your black cat. You commented to me that your cat was treated like Royalty, I replied that he reminded me of my lovely old cat 'Salem' who has passed to spirit & how beautiful your cat is & gave him a kiss on his neck.

We arrived at the conference where Olivia was busy preparing for guests. The room's central focus being a throne seat which I commented must be for everyone although I thought Olivia must sit upon it first.

We discussed how woman could use the throne experience to make what we would jokingly call 'executive decisions' on all issue's from personal, family, community & global simply by being still here and in turn by directing our focus to gain a renewed clarity on how to deal with & resolve problems of all descriptions.

Deena at this point had become distracted by issues to do with fuel costs of the conference, I felt it important to stress that Deena sit here too & wrote this on an envelope of Olivia's & held it up to show her. Deena then acknowledged this.

Olivia proceeded to unpack some items from a bag one of which was a lovely box embellished with Isis as she opened it amazing light came streaming out. Within the box itself were 2 wooden inserts & a small oblong object wrapped in linen, I sensed Derry was intrinsically linked to this box.

Olivia said that Isis is alive on the inner planes & ready to come through to those whom take her seat of sovereignty.

People began to arrive at the conference as a video was ready to be played of the relevance of the conference. As Olivia turned on the video I awoke.

I wish I could be their with you all on this occasion Deena but think perhaps on some level I shall be thanks to Isis.

Blessings -
Rosie



Sherry Burke of Serenity Travel arranges Lady Olivia's journey to the U.S. every Autumn. Sherry has experienced catastrophic illness, and the Sherry Burke Medical Fund has been set up on her behalf.

Dear Friends:

As most of you know I had major surgery On Aug 18. What most of you don't know is that 6 days later I developed a life treating infection. I spent the next 3 weeks in isolation. Along with this wonder infection which is resistant to all but one antibiotic, I was having major terrifying hallucinations. I have never experienced such fear in my whole life.

Now for the hard part-I, as most self employed people in this country, have no health insurance. My medical bills so far are over \$150,000.00. I'm working with the State to see if there are any programs to help with catastrophic medical bills. In the mean time 2 months with out work has really taken a toll on my personal life. My van has been repossessed and everything else is hanging on by a shoestring.

It is with a heavy heart that I need to set up "Sherry Burke Medical Relief Fund. If you are able please help. If any of you would like to do a fund raiser please do. Remember, if you can help, and I fully understand if you can't, you are all still loved and are an absolute part of my extended family.

Love to you all
Sherry
sherry@serenity.webmail.com

Send checks and money orders to:
Sherry Burke Medical Fund

c/o SERENITY TRAVEL INC
1169 AVENUE A

WESTWEGO LA 70094
TELEPHONE: 504 328-6600



Cauldron Poem

by

Mystic Child

The witches cauldron is not just a black pot

It is a witches heart

For from within

Magick flows

Rituals are birthed

Spells are created

From deep within A witches' heart

there is stirring going on

Creativity is high

While transformation takes place

The witches' cauldron is not just a black pot

It is a witches' heart

Filled with visions and dreams known only to her

Awaiting the right time

For them to be realized

Veiled in flesh her cauldron sits

The witches' cauldron is not just a black pot

it is a witches' heart

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MEMBERS

New Books by FOI Members...

Sigyn: Our Lady of the Staying Power
by Galina Krasskova.

Sigyn, the Norse Goddess of constancy and compassion, is the second wife of the Trickster God Loki. She gathers broken things, and people, to Her breast to heal. In this book, Galina Krasskova reveals the beauty of this little-known Goddess whose name means Victory. With prayers, poetry, personal and group rituals, this is a manual for all those who would offer devotion to this gentlest of Divine figures.

Healing with Art and Soul: Engaging One's Self through Art Modalities.

Edited by Kathy Luethje. -- c2009,
Cambridge Scholars Publishing
Available for purchase from Life Force
Arts Center, 3148 N Lincoln Av.,
Chicago IL 60657 (773)327-7224
www.lifeforcearts.org

This fascinating collection of essays, including one by FOI priestess Joan Forest Mage, "The Good and the Beautiful: Aesthetic Concepts and Expressive Arts Therapy," contains a variety of perspectives about the use of expressive arts for facilitating physical and emotional healing. Each author brings a fresh approach and unique experience. Within these pages, you will find many ideas for using the arts to engage the inner layers of the self so that the natural healing processes of body and soul can flourish. When we fully engage an art modality, we find

ourselves in a place in our consciousness that could be called 'healingspace,' where we feel ourselves whole and remember ourselves as well. From psychic trauma to physical illness, disease of many kinds may be addressed through the various techniques discussed here. The tools offered by some authors are population and age specific, while others provide the philosophical underpinnings. While the authors represent the grassroots voices of this new and rapidly expanding field, several have developed their own methods for using the arts, and have thriving practices. The approach is wholistic. Music, visual arts, movement, dance, and poetry are discussed as separate modalities as well as in combination with one another in a process or flow. The reader will engage in the authors' experiences with these modalities as they have been lived. The CD that comes with the book provides a full sound experience of toning. If a rationale is needed for establishing arts programs in medical centers or other health facilities, it can be found here. The book offers tools for self development and for group facilitation. Those wanting to expand their healing practice through the use of the arts will find the book to be a faithful guide. Anyone wishing for a fuller understanding of how the arts may work to facilitate healing will find much food for thought within these pages.

NEW DVDs by FOI Members...

Jeanne Foster of Temple Beautiful in Virginia sells the following DVDs:

--(1) *Laws of Kam* (30 minutes) with teens in Edgar Cayce Garden 2006 processional with bells, gongs, and chants

--(2) *Isis and Osiris* (28 minutes) at Heritage Center with dancers and harp

--(3) *Horus Anointed* (55 minutes) at Fellowship of Inner Light .

--(4) *Dance the Divine* (1 hour 20 minutes) instructional sacred dance revised from 1996

--(5) *Temple Beautiful* (50 minutes) inspirational demonstrations about

sacred dance archives, including classical Isadora style and ritual.

The first three are \$20.00 each or three for \$50.00. All original ritual dramas are written and directed and feature Jeanne Foster, Priestess Hierophant of Temple Beautiful. Send check or Money Order to: Jeanne Foster, 4629 Shore Dr. Suite 302, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23455. Email: jeanocainfoster@cavtel.net. Call: (757) 216-7240 between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM Eastern time. Love and Blessings, Jeanne



News From Groups Founded by FOI Members

MEET THE BERENGARIA ORDER OF DRUIDS

By

Sarah Rooke

www.berengariaorder.co.nr

The Berengaria Order of Druids was founded in June 1996 at the time of the Summer Solstice after its founders had attended the Wolf 359 'Encounter' Sci-Fi convention at Blackpool, which featured some of the cast members of Babylon 5. Sci-Fi buffs will know that Wolf 359 is the name of the rendezvous point in the ST:TNG episode "The Best of Both Worlds", it is also the name of an actual star. The Order's name comes from the Classic Trek episode 'This Side of Paradise', where Spock refers to the planet Berengaria, 'where there be dragons...'. Berengaria is also the name of the Plantagenet queen wife of King Richard the Lionheart of England, the name of a Celtic chieftain from the Isle of Man there is as well a USS Berengaria, need one say more?

We are a Druidic Order dedicated to the aims, ideals and whatever else of Star Trek (ice IDIC - Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations) and Babylon 5 (we suggest you follow the story arc, you'll be surprised!), plus any other sci-fi that takes our fancy. Plus, of course, lots of traditional Druidic silliness! As a response and a call felt by us for there to be more fun and light-heartedness in Druidry, and by the noticeable number of Wiccans, Druids and other Pagans who were also sci-fi fans, the Order was born with our growing study of the plot story-arcs of Star Trek

(in all its incarnations), Babylon 5, The X-files, and others, with certain references of a metaphysical nature in these series, which we felt was too much of a coincidence by the writers of these shows and also not highly un-noticeable on closer examination.

The Order is based on fun, silliness and lunacy that is characteristic of Sci-fi fans. We plan to meet up at conventions, and also Druidic events and gatherings. Members need not be Druids to join, though we have an Initiation Ceremony for those interested with a sci-fi theme! Sci-fi dress is encouraged, any alien race, though we do hope that members will attend in traditional robes. In addition to this, we hope that the odd drop of Druidic wisdom is shared and experience is shared and experienced by all in Awen (the Welsh word for 'Inspiration'). As the Order sufficiently establishes, we hope to conduct the Eight Festivals as appropriate according to Inspiration, Originality and Imagination.

There are now ceremonies written for each of these, plus those for the Five Rites of Passage, sci-fi style. And there is also a basic and advanced 'Book of Lights and Shadows, too'. Copies of all of these are available on receipt of an SAE to the Archdruidess. The Order is dedicated to dedication through the media of Druid sources (and others in popular sci-fi shows, which manage to convey more than the odd grain of truth in their content. Also, studies of a Druidic nature in the Bardic, Ovate and Druidic fields is equally important for those so inclined - please contact the Archdruidess. for details of this, sci-fi style, of course!

Please note that this is a DRUIDIC order and NOT a Sci-fi fan club. The Order does have a serious side, (Life, the Universe and Everything), but unfortunately it CANNOT run as one, however much it may seem to be so. There are plenty of other organisations and groups who serve this purpose for those wanting that.

The founders are the Archdruidess, Sarah Rooke, Priestess Hierophant of the Fellowship of Isis and also Ardbandraoi of the Druid Clan of Dana, Dame Commander of the Noble of Tara, and Bard of Caer Abiri, and Taruka Quauhetzcatl, Keeper of the Sacred Animals, Bard of Caer Abiri and Priestess of the Devil, Bear and Condor in her South American traditions. The Order naturally has its Chief Oracle, Ceilaer, the Sacred Oracle of Murp, who appreciates an offering of tuna-flavour cat-biscuits for her wisdom. She is assisted as and when they feel like it by Lucky, Uisce, Ro Laren, Jadzia Minbari, Fluff, Sapphira, Spot, Cleo, Zathras and Delenn. The Order has its Twin Groves of Minbar located at the founders addresses.

The Order is founded on the premise of love, beauty and truth, and at the time of writing, is free to join, though there is a subscription fee of £5.00 a year (\$10) to cover printing and postage. For those who are interested in going where no-one has gone before, please write to Sarah Rooke, Flat 3, 20 St David's Rd, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants, PO5 1QN, or telephone 023 92 341946, or 07714 092151 or email sarah.rooke@ntlworld.com

Remember, the truth is out there and what do you want.....

Live Long and Prosper!

The Iseum of Hekate, Phosphorus, Soteira & Psychopompus Hermeneus
By
Dorn Simon-Sinnott

This new Fellowship of Isis Iseum received its officially signed *Charter* from Rt. Rev Lady Olivia Robertson dated 26/06/2009. It is based in County Wexford, Ireland.

Founder: Dorn Simon-Sinnott

Contact: newdorn@hotmail.com placing 'Iseum' in the subject line.

<http://dorndryad.weebly.com>
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=116051475169>

Correspondence training is available along with a future chat room online for appointed meetings.

Iseum Name and Aspects:

Hekate Phosphorus - Hekate the Lightbearer/Lightbringer. Soteira - Means Saviour, therefore Hekate Soteira = Hekate the Saviour. Psychopompus - Guide of Souls, it is those Deities who have the power to walk in both the land of the living as well as enter the underworld, thus can travel between the light and the dark, guiding those to the other side, through the darkness into the light. Hermeneus - Comes from the God Hermes, in relation to his name and one of his aspects, being that again of Psychopompus, but also Hermeneus - Meaning an interpreter whom bridges the boundaries between strangers.

In essence the above descriptions are an insight to the work and purpose chosen for this Iseum. To aid those who find themselves in the darkness, to find a path to the light. For those who fluctuate between light and darkness, highs and lows, to find spiritual guidance and balance. For those interested in learning their darker aspects and being more in control of them. For those in need of healing, either their past, present, or future plans, and cognitively & spiritually progressing through the work of the Goddess, in her myriad of forms, yet guided by the Iseum Patrons Hekate & Hermes, and the Fellowship of Isis. To learn the key to a fulfilled life, the key we hold deep within us.

Training & Working Vocation Purpose of the Iseum:

Fellowship of Isis Initiate Drama Rites Training on the Spiral of the Adepti. Personal Development through Meditation, Energy Clearing/Balancing Exercises, Daily Devotionals & Prayer, Path-working, Visualisation, Healing, Writing, Psychology & Counselling. Eclectic Witchcraft, Wicca, Ancient Pantheons & Alphabets, Gods/Goddesses and their aspects, overall Pagan & Occult Magickal Training with Certified results for work accomplished. Reiki Training (once I too have finished mine to Master Level) Level I, II, III Master in Usui Tradition, and further Reiki traditions/Angelic training once I too have accomplished these. Divination/Psychic Development Training, not just simply teaching Tarot but helping the Candidate/Neophyte to discover their own natural psychic gifts, whether clairvoyant, or clairsentient and so on, using techniques such as Cards, on a variety scale, Crystals, Spirit, Ogham, Clouds, Skrying & Treelore etc. Writing: Ritual, Poetry, and Stories/Articles, as a way to manifest inner guidance, messages from Deity/Spirit, and as an outlet psychologically to unlock past events/hurts during healing.

Vocational Work Provided through the Iseum:

--Energy/Reiki Healing Sessions:

€30 for 1 week of 'Hour a day' Distance Healing.

€20 in person Full Body Healing (on Plinth with Meditative sounds).

--Psychological Counselling:

--Client Centred Approach utilising an eclectic scale of treatments tailored to individual needs.

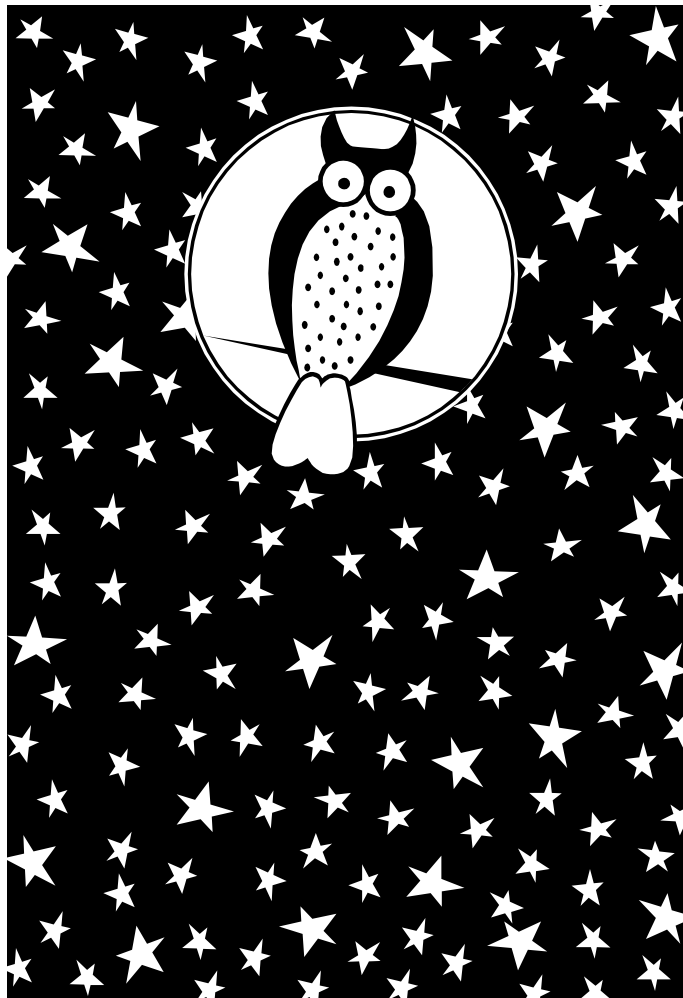
Writer/Researcher/Poet:

In the works is, and currently researching Self Publishing Deals with various companies/websites is a Book of Poetry written by the Iseum Founder, to which she is happy to Launch/Publish through the Iseum.

Accessibility of the Iseum:

Those in Ireland, if willing to travel to Wexford can avail of this Iseum/Training in person with Liturgy Initiate Drama Rites being held in person.

Those outside Ireland will/can train through correspondence coursework in the Iseum, Liturgy Initiate Drama Rites being held solo by candidates (or with other Iseum Members if in close proximity) with study guides, advise and general guidance from me prior, all achievements will be logged, and Certified as is protocol in the Fellowship of Isis, and Attunements of Consecrational /Ordinational Rites held for each member at each level of achievement.



MIRABILIS

A Prayer to Odin

By

Galina Krasskova

All I want is to be near You,
to be immersed in You,
devoured by You.

I long for those kisses
that silence breath
creeping as they do
upon the sweet, unsuspecting stillness
of the mind.

Devotion seems simple—
loving you an art
I could spend a lifetime mastering.

MUSES SYMPOSIUM: NEWS

Paula Horecny's creative interests are in writing. She has written a novel about the life of Persephone, which she is in the process of trying to get published. She has also created a *Photographic Tarot Deck* with an accompanying book of poetry for each card. She has several large photographs hanging in the Tarot Museum in Bologna Italy. She also makes magical dolls. E-Mail Paula at isadoramarie@hotmail.com. Or call her at (708) 214 7958

See more about the Muses Symposium at *The Muses Symposium Blog*, www.musessymposium.blogspot.com



Solitude
by
Denise Wong

*I was made for solitude,
for quiet,
to think,
to imagine,
to brood.*

*I was made for night,
when darkness surrounds me like an island.
Here in the pool of light cast on my book,
I look into the past
and see that all the suffering,
all the effort
was what it took
to bring me here
where I dwell within myself,*

BOOK REVIEWS

BY

Deena Butta

***The Jill Principle : A Woman's Guide to Healing Your Spirit After Divorce Or Breakup* / by Michele Germain, LSSW. – Llewellyn, c2006**

Read this book whether your relationship is breaking up or not. It provides practices, techniques, and exercises which can be used to help a woman heal inwardly from any kind of relationship which is breaking up or has broken up, and perhaps even prevent one from occurring. As the author says on p. xi, "Divorce or a major breakup is a call to heal old pain."

The title of the book comes from the nursery rhyme in which Jack and Jill are metaphors for the problem of marriage. It specifically deals with the women's perspective. The practices, techniques, and exercises provide a dimension beyond ordinary treatment and counseling to help unblock and heal your energy on each level of being (body, emotion, mind, and spirit). It will help you to recognize symptoms of trauma on these four levels, and describes the steps that must be taken in order to heal on that level.

Much of the book consists of illuminating and well-chosen personal accounts by women (including the author) who have experienced trauma on one level or another, and how they worked through it. It also touches on legal and other issues you will need to deal with, and tells (again from a women's perspective) how to respond

productively, and how to get started working on them.

She discusses grief, how it affects you on the spiritual level, and discusses some good ways to heal it. She also discusses the effect grief and anger have on the body, of which women are not often consciously aware, and how to recognize signs that healing is occurring.. The exercise and visualizations start out on a gentle focused level, and move progressively to deeper levels where healing is needed. Old pain from early childhood can manifest in patterns of thinking and feeling become re-inforced; and the author provides practical effective ways of healing this old pain. The value of crisis is discussed, and ways for learning to trust one's own self again, how to release fear, listen to inner guidance, and not fall back into old patterns of negativity are described.. She also teaches us how to recognize what personal power is, and how to let go of disempowering reactions..

One extremely practical exercise is keeping a life inventory, in which you label your activities as intellectual, emotional, physical, or spiritual. In this way you find out which areas are out of balance, and how to restore balance to them..

There is a nice further-reading list.

Learning how to integrate body, mind, and soul is important for everyone. Your primary relationship might not be a marriage; and this book can help your

heal your primary relationship, which might be with your self. This book can help you find out who you really are on all four levels, and how to heal your relationship with your self.



***Vampires in Their Own Words: An Anthology of Vampire Voices* / edited by Michelle Belanger. – Llewellyn, c2007.**

This fascinating collection of first-hand accounts by members of the vampire community is a wonderful introduction to the topic. It was compiled by Michelle Belanger, who is herself a vampire and tells her own story in the fascinating introduction.

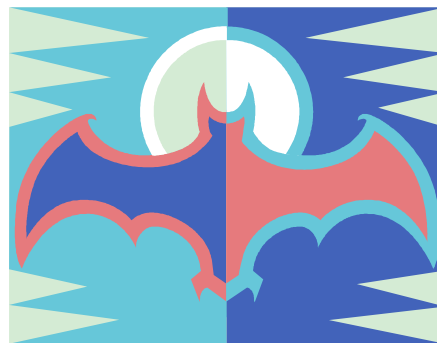
This anthology will be useful to many audiences. It provides a balanced and concise introduction for the general public, for scholars, and for those who suspect they may be vampires. It will be useful to anyone who is trying to understand the phenomenon, and what it is like to be a vampire.

Seven sections discuss being a vampire; becoming aware of being a vampire; different forms of feeding; aspects of the

vampire community and its members; codes of behavior, etiquette and ethics; introductions to four major vampire traditions and their founders; and outside observations from members who have backgrounds in other spiritual communities such as Wicca, Paganism, Gnosticism, and OTO.

Each section contains four to nine essays, each averaging about four pages in length. Essays are preceded by brief biographies of the authors; and followed by glossaries of terms used in each essay, which provides understanding within the context of that particular essay.

The essays are short enough to convey the essence of their topic; but plentiful enough to provide an overview from many perspectives. The pace of the book does not bog down in a single perspective. The result is a diverse introduction to the subject. For those interested in learning more, Michelle makes liberal references to books, websites, periodicals, and organizations throughout the text.



**Mr. Fox:
An Irish Merlin**

o0o---o0o---o0o

by

Olivia Robertson

Mr. Fox! Even now the name conjures up memories of the supernatural! I see in my mind's eye that fine head, the aquiline nose, the glittering eyes that saw things not of this earth. "Fox's" is still mysterious, though Mr. Fox's cottage has left only a few traces of fallen stones amidst long grasses and encircling weeds. The Holy Well is dried up, hidden by ferns and brambles: the altar cannot easily be found; though the Faery Seat is still visible in the middle of the river, water foaming about it.

Mr. Fox made his dramatic appearance in our lives when my sister Barbara and my brother Derry and I were children. Freshly arrived in Ireland from Reigate, all we had seen of nature up to then was the pleasantly subdued countenance of Surrey; the heath with its windmill and grass-snakes; a back lane with wild flowers; and well tended gardens, one of which had a model railway in which we could ride. My mother used to quote me as saying, when I was about six years old: "I don't like nature!" I was thinking of Nature Class at Micklefield School, very boring, with beans growing on wet pink blotting paper, and those poor desiccated creatures, dried flowers, stuck with sticky paper on copy-books. Perhaps I was rather like a dried flower.

One of our few excitements in Reigate was a recurrent border skirmish with boys from the Council School, who used to lurk round a corner, in order to throw stones at us when we emerged from school. Class distinctions did not appear to matter: it was all *money power*. There was the gulf between those children who possessed two layer pencil boxes, and those who had only one layer. I remember once, when we were whirled off in a special bus to enjoy an opulent children's party from school, seeing one pupil playing by herself with racquet and ball in a small back garden. "Why isn't she coming?" I inquired. "Oh, she wasn't asked," was the reply. "She's poor!"

But I never saw a really poor person in Reigate, nor heard of real fighting, nor of revolutions, executions—nor ghosts. In Reigate, ghosts, poltergeists, angels, goddesses, gods, faeries, leprechaun and magicians did not exist. Angels were occasionally mentioned in church, but I gathered that these were memories of the Dark Ages when people were *superstitious*. One clergyman thundered to his congregation, "Do you believe in Black Cats, or in God?" which was held to be very telling. I had not then heard of Bast, the Cat Goddess. She wasn't there in Reigate, either.

To be transported, then, at the age of eight, to Southern Ireland was to move into another age. We found ourselves in an old castle belonging to our family, which had recently been *occupied*. The Irish Republican Army came first, followed by the Irish Free State Army. I read Commandant Barry's signature in our Visitors Book, stating that

Huntington Castle was Headquarters for Counties Carlow, Wicklow and Wexford, finishing: “De Valera still at large.” We children were fascinated. This was like a favorite adventure story come true. Our house had had a cannon on the roof, and people had been locked up in our dungeon! And a man had been court-martialed in our library. Children do not understand politics; but they do appreciate *happenings*. Money did not matter here, in Ireland: it was all adventure and history, a history that went back for thousands of years, with people talking as if Brian Boru and Chuchulain and the Tuatha De Danaan had been living a few years ago. In fact, the Tuatha De Danaan were held by many still to be living within mountains and hills, from which music came at night.

But our most astonishing discovery was of ghosts. The Tuatha were safely elsewhere, and were apt to appear just once a year at Samhain—All Hallows Eve. But ghosts were actually living with us, in our own house! There was not a bedroom that had not some ghost in it, sometimes an ancestor who had died of fright from having seen a previous ghost. There was a lady who haunted the back avenue, combing her hair in the moonlight, accompanied by a white cat. Johnny the gardener had been delayed in a journey in his ass-cart by a rabbit-ghost: “It was there in the road, just a small buck-rabbit. But then it began getting bigger and bigger and I knew it wasn’t *right*. Soon its head was as tall as the trees and it sitting up on its hind legs. Then it vanished.” An ancestress trailed in silken skirts up and down the chapel passage, rattling keys. Her maid, also a ghost, wiped doors down with her hair. Out-of-doors was equally alarming at night. There was a network of phantom hearses that appeared to wayfarers as regularly, and certainly more punctually, than the country green buses.

Did we believe in ghosts? most certainly, especially before going to bed. We would sit by the scullery wood fire with Denis the butler as he told us about them. In the end we would be too frightened to go to bed. Then Denis would reassure us: “Nothing will happen to you if you say your prayers...still and all, a dreadful thing happened to poor old Mrs. Bennett, in the stair head room. (Derry looked alarmed. He was sleeping there.) She was a very good lady, and always said her prayers. We don’t know what it was she saw one night—but whatever it was, she was never the same again! And she was dead in three days.”

Mr. Fox was different. For one thing, he was not a Catholic or a Protestant. This was strange, because, as in Victorian England, every British boy born alive, was either a Liberal or a Conservavie—so everybody in Ireland was either a Catholic or a Protestant. But Mr. Fox, although born a Catholic, seemed to be in trouble with some of his own clergy. A priest even warned my father and mother against letting their children visit Mr. Fox. It was one point on which the Protestant clergy agreed. But why? Who was Mr. Fox? Was even his name real? Why did he look so different from his family and everyone else?

People couldn’t tell us why. I don’t think they knew. They wouldn’t use the word *Pagan*. But Mr. Fox must not be talked about: he must be avoided. Even the place he lived in was haunted and hardly anyone went there, except a stray fisherman.

Mr. Fox had the second sight. I gathered he was some sort of wizard like Merlin. Like Merlin, he loved animals. He was called *Mr. Fox*, the people said, because long ago he had rescued a fox from the hunt by hiding the animal in his yard, and refusing to give him up. Hence he was not popular with the gentry. He had also, like Merlin, traveled to foreign parts. Merlin had visited Rome: Mr. Fox had been in Egypt.

I longed to meet him. At first only Derry went there. He used to walk miles up the River Slenay to a wild part of the bank and was very mysterious about his visits. I kept on asking to go, so finally Barbara, Derry and I all went off to Fox's in a donkey cart. It was a lovely wild drive. The road was pitted with holes filled with stones. On our left was the deep green wooded Slaney Valley with the glitter of the river far below us, and beyond lay the Mount Leinster Range, blue and violet, curving against the cloudy sky. Fox's itself was still more remote. We had to get out of the cart and lead the donkey up a steep hill, and then make our way down a narrow steep lane until we reached a thatched whitewashed cottage.

Mr. Fox greeted us courteously. He was a tall stooping old man with finely cut features. It was the first time that I met the eyes of a seer. His gleaming eyes looked through and beyond me. Years later I met another man rather like Mr. Fox: the artist, Jack Yeats, brother of the poet. Mr. Fox's voice was beautifully modulated. He invited us into his cottage and gave us tea. He was, like most Irish people, both polite and hospitable. Every time we visited him, he gave us tea and showed us the river bank if we wished to visit it.

It was during subsequent visits that Mr. Fox told me about his visions. Possibly he told things to Barbara and Derry when they were alone with



him: naturally, I only remember my own talks with Mr. Fox, while we sat over the wood fire smoldering on the stone hearth, the evening light growing deep sapphire through a small window. As I stroked his black cat, Mr. Fox told me of the adventure rescuing the fox and how he received his name. But I wanted to know about his visions.

“I first got the Sight when I was at a funeral,” he told me. “I was going towards the chapel, when I saw the dead man walking towards me. After that, I saw the ones they call dead mingling with the living and I could not tell them apart.”

When Mr. Fox talked about the strange people of long ago he was more reticent. But I would press him: “Mr. Fox, tell me about Them,” and he would change his tone of voice, so that it was lower, hushed.

“I first heard them,” he said. “I heard voices talking about a churn. But I couldn’t see Them. Then one evening one of Them put a cap or a bandage over my eyes. Then I could see Them.”

“What did They look like?”

“They were small and dark. Ordinary people like you and I.” Were Mr. Fox and I ordinary? I wondered.

“What did they wear?”

“Just clothes like you and I.”

“Are they faeries?”

“They lived hundreds and hundreds of years ago, when the River ran another way.”

“Were They nice, or nasty?”

“As nice as you and me.”

“What work did they do?”

“The same sort of work as you and I.” I reflected that neither Mr. Fox nor I did much work.

“What religion were they?” I asked, thinking of Catholics or Protestants.

Here Mr. Fox would say very clearly, “The same religion as you and I!” And I would wonder what our religion was.

I enjoyed Mr. Fox’s description of Priests and Curates coming to wrestle with him in theological debate, and how he would send them forth defeated. Especially I liked *Them*.

I was always very happy when Mr. Fox would take me to where they used to assemble every morning to greet the dawn. The first occasion we visited the wooded bank, he brought me to the Holy Well and told me he had discovered it and dug deep until the water returned. Sure enough, it was a very old well built with stones now covered with wild flowers and grasses.

“Drink from it,” he told me, and I knelt down and drank. The water was pure and cold.

Then he said, “Every morning before sunrise They came here, old and young, men and women and their children, and they drank from this very well.”

Now Mr. Fox took me through the trees until we looked upwards at a rectangular granite stone above us, square against the skyline.

“That was the altar,” he said.

“Did they sacrifice things?” I asked, vaguely remembering stories about Pagans. Mr. Fox was not pleased at this.

“They did not,” he said emphatically. His voice softened: “I talk to an old woman who cleans the altar,” he said. “And very nice she is too,”

Now, using his heavy staff, he took me down the very steep bank overlooking the Slaney. Set against the bank was a gigantic boulder that had been erected against the weed covered rocks. In it was a glittering mica cross, which a scholar later told me must have been respected as a pre-Christian emblem representing the four seasonal festivals. It was *prehistoric*. Mr. Fox showed me another large boulder in the middle of the river far below us. Water foamed round it. This was the Faery Seat.

“They bated every morning in the river,” he said. I watched the rushing water eddying round rocks and at the precipitous black rocks rising across the river, so that the place here was a gorge. It was so strange and beautiful that I did not wonder that the neighbors thought it haunted. I loved it here. And in my heart, once like a dried flower in a copy-book, there arose a love of nature and the as yet invisible Beings who dwelt here.

“They would assemble on this bank after bathing,” said Mr. Fox, waving around him with his staff, “and they would look up yonder, above the rocks, and wait to see the sun rise.”

“Did they worship the sun?” I asked, feeling that we were following some catechism of question and response.

“No, they did not,” Mr. Fox replied, gazing across the river as if watching some other dawn. “They worshipped the very same God as you and I.” And I wondered what Being or Beings Mr. Fox and I worshipped.

Mr. Fox has left this life, and on the earthly level there is little remaining of that prehistoric worship, that ancient Irish race. Some years ago I brought Brinsley le Poer Trench, the UFO writer, to Fox's, and we were scratched and our clothes were torn in our efforts to find the altar and the well. All was overgrown. Another time I tried again, and brought a party including Gerald Gough, the occultist and lecturer on the Graal Mystery. This time we found the Well. Alas, it was dry. We sat and meditated. My friend Josephine felt that there were advanced Devic Beings, unlike the simpler faery life on the more frequented river bank near us. Gerald told us, "I had a magic hare on my lap! I even stroked him. You know, I'm not usually so clairvoyant. This valley helps with vision. I did see a most lovely women, a nature spirit, with long pale fair hair and a beautiful smile. Not a church window angel—she was so free and wild."

Josephine saw Mr. Fox in London, during a meditation. "He appeared very clearly," she said. "A very fine, aristocratic looking man. I recognized him from your description. He had an aquiline nose and the most extraordinary piercing, shining gray eyes. His hands were long, large and bony. He was tall."

My brother and I are grateful to Mr. Fox. He brought magic to our lives when we were young, and we feel that this Irish Seer is partly responsible for inspiring us to found the Fellowship of Isis. One thing is certain: since our visits to him, Derry and I have never been the same again!



Winter Solstice: the Eternal Birth of the Light

By

Denise Wong

The world is frozen-----
or are our hearts instead?

Just when we think the light in us is dead
the miracle occurs:
a small, fierce spark of love
is once more born,
as it always is

on the Solstice morn.

Nepthys

By
Margaret Harvey

Over the years, quite a few scholars have produced commentaries on and editions of *De Iside et Osiride*. Only the most important of them over the past 60 years would make a long list, including Hopfner, Gwyn Griffiths, Betz and Smith, Cavalli, Babbitt, Froidefond, Borghini, Richter, Chiodi, Thayer, etc., etc. (Phew...) And that is far from all of them.

As *De Iside* provides enough material for all these – and more – scholars to get their teeth into, then it's plain that it's a text which not only allows, but actually requires interpretation. Indeed, it's not, unfortunately a particularly accessible text, one that we can simply read and understand. Not only is it far removed from us in terms of age and culture, but it was also contains much obscure allegory, and philosophical theory.

What is more, we know little about the mystery religions that *De Iside* may have been intended for, or how its dedicatee, the Priestess Clea, used it. Greek religion involved no fixed beliefs, or fixed ways of relating to the Gods, so she would have enjoyed considerable freedom in using it.

It was not, however, meant simply as a record of Egyptian myths. Whilst (see below) it may record the theology of some places in Egypt fairly accurately, it is, essentially, Plutarch's views on Platonic philosophy, which uses a story about various Egyptian and Greek deities as little more than simply a vehicle.

In fact the Egyptians, unlike the Greeks and Romans, had very few myths about their deities. The Osirian myths are the exception rather than the rule. Egyptian faith was – apart from in "state" religion, in the temples – a personal relationship with a deity, rather than an organised religion, with set beliefs and scriptures. This kind of faith does not need a story to "explain" what a deity is.

Indeed there was no practical means by which Egyptians could be taught about the beliefs of an organised religion. The Egyptian priesthood was not a clergy in the modern sense, and as few people were literate "scriptures" could not be read, even if they could be produced – papyrus was costly, and fragile.

The Greeks, on the other hand, were used to long, complex stories about, and family trees of deities. They would have found it harder to understand Goddesses and Gods about whom little was written.

Furthermore, unlike the Egyptians, the Greeks thought of their deities as anthropomorphic, i.e. having an actual bodily existence, in an idealised human form. Greek deities were regarded as actual "people", rather than the more complex, metaphysical beings of the Egyptians. In other words Greek deities were humanized in a way that Egyptian ones rarely, if ever, were.

For example, unlike the Greeks, the Egyptians never thought that it was possible to fully depict a deity. What they painted or sculpted appears to have been an elaborate hieroglyphic determinative. If these determinatives showed a deity with, say, a human or animal form, then that merely represented a particular aspect of the deity, intended to allow some kind of human relationship with them. (Of course it is far easier for most people to relate to a being that is human in form, or at least has some kind of recognisable shape).

The Greeks tried to make sense of Egyptian deities by associating them with whichever Greek deity they thought was the best fit. But of course this only worked on a superficial level; Plutarch says, for example, that Nephthys was associated with Aphrodite, and also perhaps Nike (*De Iside* XII.6). Whilst this might well reveal some of Nephthys's aspects it was far from a complete picture of Her. (Still, we might well ask if even Hellenistic elite in Egypt, let alone mainland Greeks, ever cared whether it did or not).

So for Priestesses such as Clea, there were challenges in making Isis understandable to the Greeks and Romans, when Isianism expanded. As Heyob says in her *Cult of Isis Among Women in the Graeco-Roman World* (1975), it: "involved creating an image of the Goddess [i.e. Isis] that would appeal to the Greek spirit; indeed the Isis who so captivated the ancient world was the product of an intermingling of characteristics, many of them gained through the process of syncretism."

Isis was certainly already associated with Greek deities; Plutarch mentions that She was believed to be the daughter of either Hermes or Prometheus, for instance, (*De Iside* III.1), and is linked with Athena (LXII). However, there needed to be more than a rather superficial association with someone else. There needed, for instance, to also be myths.

Greek and Roman deities were largely defined by their myths. Myth was one of the main ways – if not the main way – in which Greeks and Romans learned about their gods. After all, this was an age when faith was still largely expressed by metaphor – parable if you like - rather than dogma.

So Plutarch naturally made use of myth in *De Iside*. He would have certainly known very well how to do so; after all, when we consider the roles played by Greek deities in Greek myth and drama, they are very similar to the roles invented for Egyptian deities by Plutarch.

One of the functions of Greek myth, for instance, was moral instruction, and this is a strong theme in *De Iside*. The Greek deities were rarely concerned with human suffering, or natural justice – and again this is a theme evident in *De Iside*, despite the fact that Egyptian deities were actually very much concerned with trying to mitigate human suffering, and indeed so deeply involved with natural justice that there is even a Goddess of it: Ma'at.

Plutarch and Clea also may have wanted to use myth for another reason. This was the great age of mystery religions – which unfortunately we know little about, because they were... well, mysteries - but evidently they required some kind of story, some kind of explanatory narrative about a deity – in this case Isis.

So we must not lose sight, then, of the fact that *De Iside* is very much a Grecian version of the original myth, intended to be effective only in Greek – or at least Hellenistic – society. Plutarch was not writing for an Egyptian audience. And therefore, he could say pretty much what he wanted to about Egyptian deities. Indeed, he may have actually known very little about Nephthys, other than as the "sister" of Isis that he describes Her as.

(In fact Plutarch seems to have misunderstood the actual relationship between Isis and Nephthys. In Egyptian belief they were actually a duality, a *ntrtj* [fem; a male duality is *ntrwj*]. A duality is, in effect, two deities in one. It is not simply a plural, or *ntrwt* [fem.], *ntrw* [masc.] (A single Goddess is *ntrt*, and a single God *ntr*.) But this is perhaps something for another article...)

Let us look now at the two people most involved with *De Iside*: Mestrius Plutarch (ca. 45 – ca. 120 CE), and Flavia Clea (fl. ca. 100 CE).

Plutarch lived for most of his life in the town of Chaeronea, in Boetia, Greece, which was conveniently near to the famous oracular shrine of Delphi. Though his family were wealthy and very well-connected – to the most important Roman, as well as Greek families – surprisingly we don't know much about them. It's not even certain what the names of his parents were.

We do know, however, that his wife's name was Timoxena, and that they had at least six children; four sons, the eldest of whom died in infancy, and two daughters, "fair Charon", and Timoxena, who was named for her mother, both of whom unfortunately died young. (Plutarch wrote his essay *Consolatio ad Uxorem* "Consolation for his wife", following his daughter Timoxena's death).

Plutarch studied maths, and Platonic, Aristotelean and Stoic Philosophy at Athens. He became the senior of the two Priests of Apollo at Delphi, and as such had the internationally important role of interpreting the prophecies of the famous Pythia. He was also involved in the Mystery religion of Apollo.

However, he is best known now for his books, especially his *Parallel Lives*, in which biographies of famous Greeks and Romans are compared. *De Iside* appears in a collection of essays called the *Moralia*. Another of the essays in the collection, the *Bravery of Women* is also dedicated to Clea. Since the definitive "Stephanus" edition of 1572, *De Iside* has traditionally appeared in Book V of the *Moralia*, together with three other "religious" essays, all of which are – unsurprisingly – about Delphi, or about oracles, or both.

When exactly Plutarch wrote *De Iside* seems unclear; *Wikipedia* says that the *Moralia* were composed comparatively early in his life, whilst Richter, in his *Plutarch on Isis and Osiris* says

that it was "written late in Plutarch's life."

Although Plutarch rarely left Chaeronia, he tells us in the *Moralia* that he did visit Egypt – although we don't know how long he stayed for, or what he studied there. It is possible that he visited the country as an ambassador, a post he held as a young man. It is likely that he visited Heliopolis and Memphis; *De Iside* is based upon Heliopolitan theology, and both cities were well-known to Greeks and Romans. Both were also important religious and cultural centres; Memphis was, at the time, Egypt's second city, after Alexandria.

As an active member of the clergy in Greece it would have been natural for Plutarch to discuss theology with his Egyptian colleagues, and would undoubtedly have heard local versions of the Osirian myths. He seems to have recounted a reasonably accurate version of these, in *De Iside*. Heyob, 1975, for example, claims that in *De Iside* "the myth essentially stayed the same", and Thayer (nd), in his essay on Plutarch for the University of Chicago that it got "many things right and some wrong."

However, it is important to remember that what was believed in Heliopolis, or Memphis, was not necessarily what was believed elsewhere in Egypt. Each area had its own ideas; each *nome* (administrative area) its own main deities. In fact no Egyptian deity was worshipped everywhere in the country, at the same period. On the other hand, Plutarch may not have realised this, as all Greeks worshipped at least the 12 Olympian deities –though usually giving them local, or descriptive epithets.

Plutarch also appears to have obtained information from books about Egypt, as his work mentions aspects referred to by Diodorus Siculus, and Aelian.

(Note: although Plutarch's works are now generally given Latin titles, they were originally written in Greek).

Which brings us to the woman who he dedicated *De Iside* to: Flavia Clea. Clea provides a good example of how a career in the clergy was a way for intelligent and educated Greek (as of course Egyptian and Roman) women to gain a career, and a place in society that would otherwise have been denied them. Pythagoras, for example, learned philosophy from a Delphic Priestess, Themistoklea.

Clea was the leader of the Delphic *Thyades*. The *Thyades* were women who travelled from Athens to Delphi, every other year, performing sacred dances at various points along the way. At Delphi they joined other women, generally known as the *Bacchantes*, to celebrate the rites of Dionysus, on the slopes of Mount Parnassus.

She appears to have been married, though we do not know her husband's name. She had a daughter, Memmia Eurydice, who erected a statue of her mother at Delphi. Memmia married Lucius Flavius Pollianus Aristion, whose name, like Clea's and Plutarch's show that they were Greeks who had become Roman Citizens. Lucius Flavius's father, Soclarus of Tithora, was another friend of Plutarch's, who would, then, have known both sides of Clea's family well. Memmia and Lucius had 3 children, their daughter being named for her grandmother.

During the 3rd century BCE, various Hellenistic cults, including Isianism, had become established in Greece, at first on the Island of Delos, a great trading centre. An inscription to Isis found on Delos dates from the late 4th – early 3rd century BCE. During the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE, Isianism spread widely in Greece.

Plutarch tells us that Clea was initiated into the Osirian mysteries (i.e. including those of Isis), by her parents. She is, therefore, the first known female initiate – indeed the first known Priestess - of Isis in Greece. And as an Isian Priestess, she would naturally have been very much interested in Plutarch's thoughts about Isis – particularly if they helped make Isis more relevant to Greeks.

Indeed, there is debate as to how Isis, alone of all the "foreign" deities introduced into the Greek and Roman world, gained, and kept, Her great popularity. Certainly She may have appeared at first to be rather exotic; for instance the Christian convert and apologist Arnobius (fl. ca. 300 CE), in book I:36 of his anti-Pagan tract *Adversus Gentes (Against the Heathen)* actually describes Her as "tanned by Ethiopian suns". Although this comment can be regarded as racist, as it was intended as a criticism of Isis, it does none the less suggest that Isis is black. (Can this somehow relate to the "Black Virgins", originally statues of Isis, or even to the black woman in the Song of Songs?)

Some of Isis's appeal undoubtedly came from Her ability to constantly remain relevant, not only across time, but also across distance. The earliest images of Her show Her wearing an Old Kingdom sheath dress; the latest ancient ones show Her in the dress, and with the hairstyle, of a contemporary upper-class Roman lady. On the edge of the mediaeval period, She was depicted in a way so identical to mediaeval versions of the Virgin Mary, that the two are completely indistinguishable; even elements of their iconography, such as a crescent moon, and stars, are shared.

Clea, by the way, has an – imaginative - literary resurrection in Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*. The *Quartet* draws on the story of Isis and Osiris; Alexandria, of course, being a city that was in the past closely associated with Hellenistic Isianism.

What conclusions, then, can we draw from *De Iside et Osiride*? And is it useful to us now? Certainly it has handed down a rather entertaining story, as well as recording Heliopolitan myth (with a Greek twist).

However, the fact is that it does only record Heliopolitan myth. And that has, unfortunately, tended to give us a very skewed picture indeed about Isis, Nephthys, Osiris, Seth, Horus, etc. Unfortunately it has become by far the best-known one.

What's more, it is a book that is by no means easy for even a scholar to understand. And, so, unless we have an edition with a good commentary, it is almost impossible for us to understand! Indeed Plutarch even had to write a chapter (XI) called "Advice to Clea Concerning the Hidden Meaning of the Myths".

So how might we then best approach it? Firstly by understanding what it really is: a set of philosophical ideas meant for a limited audience, in a particular time and culture. How far it gives us a real understanding of various Egyptian deities is certainly debatable –although Plutarch has preserved some – rather surprising -aspects of Nephthys that might otherwise have been forgotten; Her association with Aphrodite, and Nike, for instance.

He also records such interesting information as the symbolism of the sistrum (Chapter LXIII), an instrument essential in the worship of both Isis and Hathor (to the extent that it became one of the principal symbols of Isis in the Hellenistic world).

Besides, now that so much information is coming to light about Nephthys, and Her true significance in Egyptian belief understood, there is no need to have to rely on Plutarch, or on works based on Plutarch, for our knowledge of Egyptian Goddesses and Gods.

How Clea may have used the material, if at all, we don't unfortunately know. However, its strong metaphysical and philosophical content suggest that if it was used in any direct way, it most likely found a place in the Osirian Mysteries of the time.

Mystery Religions were something of a fashion of the later Classical period of history. After all, they were perhaps rather too elitist for the tastes of other periods, given that they involved information, or knowledge, being passed from those supposedly in possession of it to initiates. This was in contrast to sacred knowledge being gained by direct spiritual contact with the divine, or, as with Christianity, from divine revelation.

In the end, parable – which is what *De Iside* is - is a very powerful tool for communication, even today. But it can over-simplify; it can give undue preference to certain sides of a story at the expense of others. And Nephthys suffered considerably from this in *De Iside*. Instead of understanding Her as she truly is, one half of Isis, a vital part of the cycle of beginnings and endings that formed the basis of Egyptian belief, Plutarch and presumably also Clea (who is not known to have ever visited Egypt) saw Her as little more than an irrelevance.

And so Nephthys comes down to us as no more than a rather sad loser; the victim of an unhappy marriage and an adulterous affair, who can be left out of the story as soon as possible. But there again - we now know better, don't we.

OTHER INFORMATION OF POSSIBLE INTEREST

BLOODTIME MOONTIME DREAMTIME:

Women Bringing Forth Change

A Guide to using the DVD trilogy for teaching,

written by Roberta Cantow and Sydney Salt.

Edited by Susan Messer

BLOODTIME: Claiming the Territory

This is a documentary trilogy containing poetic, experimental and conventional documentary elements. The theme of the ancient “blood mysteries” threads throughout the trilogy and provides a lens through which to view this contemporary landscape of women invested in bringing forth change. Collectively, the three parts depict an alternative culture and alternative modes of being which might be considered the empowering preliminary steps to transformative social action. A musical score by Bronwen Jones, hauntingly layers voice and instrument, provides beauty, depth, and integrity to the trilogy as a whole.

The purpose of *Bloodtime* is to focus on the mixed cultural messages associated with the idea and image of blood.

BLOODTIME: Claiming the Territory takes a look at our contradictory relationship to the meanings and metaphors of blood. While the time of blood marks the reality of war and medicine, entertainment and vampires, it is contrasted with the life-affirming signature of the seasons of a woman’s life. *Bloodtime* explores this contradiction and questions our out of balance relationship to both the wounding and healing meanings and metaphors of blood. Bringing “the feminine” out of the shadows might be the response to the needed wholeness. Interweaving commentary from Judith Greer Essex, Director of the San Diego Expressive Arts Institute and Mark Weaver, former VA clinical psychologist deliver the essential message of this segment which also includes on camera commentary of women of diverse backgrounds. The segment contains graphic images of war and violence, in addition to other images, done in an interpretive style. Viewers are encouraged to notice what the content and style of the film evoke. Many of the images are multi-layered, and viewers will gain most from the film by identifying the many suggested and contradictory layers of meaning.

MOONTIME: Celebrating the Blessing

Moontime explores the practice of celebrating a girl's entrance into womanhood, a trend that has begun to take hold in the United States. Treating a taboo subject in an unconventional way (and building on the metaphor of blood explored in *Bloodtime*), *Moontime* shifts the meaning of menarche and menses from a biological event that must be tolerated, to one that empowers women spiritually, reclaims the sacred essence of the female body, and provides opportunities for insight and wisdom. In this section of the trilogy, women, mothers, and fathers share their experiences using art and ritual to celebrate this important life passage. Lara Owen, author of *Her Blood is Gold: Awakening to the Wisdom of Menstruation* and Judith Larken Reno, psychologist, provide the essential commentary of this segment.

If the audience did not previously view and discuss Part I: *Bloodtime*, participants could now discuss their associations with blood and the image of blood to generate an understanding of the ways we think about it and the meanings it has for us. In short, we usually associate blood with violence, vampires, and medicine rather than as a life force or a metaphoric connection of generations.

DREAMTIME: Creating Art and Ritual

DREAMTIME: Creating Art and Ritual continues the theme of creatively using art and ritual through the life cycle to celebrate transition points. The women depicted demonstrate their belief in the potential of these moments for spiritual growth and healing. By using imagination, artistic expression, and ritual, the women in the film mark the milestone events of their lives and chart the pathways to becoming more vocal leaders and healers of the world. “Dreamtime” provides a glimpse into the ways that honoring the body and connecting with the soul might return a long-lost status to women and, as such, challenge patriarchal views.

Dreamtime depicts and includes:

- * Artists: Helen Redman; Kate McCavitt : Lynn Dewart's art dolls and others
- * Commentary featuring those working with the issues: Janet Larkin Reno, psychologist/mystic; Judith Greer Essex, Director of Expressive Arts Institute San Diego, Sydney Salt, author Voices in the Dreamtime, and others.
- * Rituals, including: a Blessing Way Ceremony, a Croning Ritual, a pregnant woman performing a Mikvah bath in the spring-fed waters of Northern California and a wedding to a cardboard man.

Copies of Bloodtime / Moontime / Dreamtime can be obtained by following the instructions below:

Bloodtime: \$15.00 • *Moontime*: \$15.00 • *Dreamtime*: \$25.00

BMD - all three titles on one DVD: \$45.00/\$65.00

Make checks payable to Buffalo Rose Productions and send your check and the bottom portion of this order form to:

Buffalo Rose Productions
11956 Bernardo Plaza Drive, #212
San Diego, CA 92128

Or to request a PayPal invoice from the filmmaker, please send an email to:

rcantow@originaldigital.net

Or (877) 843-3601 or (858) 487-4945 • www.originaldigital.net

ORDERING FOI BOOKS AND PAMPJLETS

Liturgy of the Fellowship of Isis by Olivia Robertson:

The Rite of Rebirth U.S. \$5 airmail (£2.00)

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Ordination of Priestesses and Priests. U.S. \$5 airmail (£2.00)

Dea: Rites and Mysteries of the Goddess U.S. \$14.00 surface mail (£5.50)

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Materials by Lawrence Durdin-Robertson, MA

Communion with the Goddess Series: The Manuals of the FOI:

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Initiation and the Mysteries. U.S. \$8.00 surface mail (£5.00)

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 Idols, Images and Symbols: India U.S. \$10.00 surface mail (£5.00)
 Idols, Images and Symbols: SE Asia and Tibet U.S. \$6.50 surface mail (£5.00)
 Idols, Images and Symbols: China and Japan U.S. \$6.50 surface mail (£5.00)
 Symbolism of Temple Architecture U.S. \$10.00 surface mail (£5.00)

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 Ireland

About Our Contributors

Cummins, Pat

Pat lives and has an isium in Shalimar, Florida.

member of FOI since 1993. She received her initial training with Lyceum Urania Celeste in NY. In 1994, she was ordained to Sekhmet but primarily, she belongs to Odin. In addition to being a member of FOI, she is Theodish Heathen and very active in that community.

Harvey, Margaret

Margaret lives and works in the Netherlands as a Librarian. She is the co-founder of the Guild of Hypatia Shrine Keepers online group, and a contributor to other online groups.

Krasskova, Galina.

Galina is priestess hierophant of Iseum of the Star Eyed Warrior and Lyceum Sothis Stardescending in Brooklyn, NY. She has been a

Wong, Denise

Denise has been a member of the Fellowship of Isis for about 17 years, and is a Priestess of Bright and the founder of the Iseum of the Green Fire. She is also an Adept in the Spiral of the Adepti. She earned a bachelor's degree in literature and a master's degree in English, and

taught part-time on the college level in the panhandle of Florida for ten years. She lives with

four fur-children and a friend/house-mate who is a priest within the Fellowship of Isis.

Archpriesthood Union Directory

*(Star of Isis members are marked with a *)*

***Afarri, Prof. A. E. :** Isis of the Mysteries
Accra North, Ghana.

***Almond, Jocelyn:** Lyceum of Isis Myrionymous
BM Box 1129, London, WC1N 3XX England.
ladythemaga@lyceum.fsnet.co.uk
(FOI Q&A Forum moderator)

Barikor, Abraham K. D.: Isis and Ngama Paradise
Rivers, Nigeria.

Bhagavati Devi Dasi, Mother Beatrice: Lyceum of the
Cosmic Isis
Abia, Nigeria.

***Butta, Deena Hartray:** Lyceum of Alexandria
3334 W. Eastwood Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60625 USA.
(773) 478-4763
DeeAnkh@sbcglobal.net
www.foichicago.org
(Isis Seshat Journal editor
Goddess Festival coordinator
FOI Q&A Forum moderator)

Dillon, Ruth & Richard: Crystal Moon Lyceum
Matteson, Illinois, USA
info@crystalmoonfoi.com

Ekwe, Uchechukwu Oko: Lyceum of the Cosmic Isis
Abia, Nigeria

Greer, Mary: Isis Aurea
122 Cottage St., Nevada City, California 95959
mkgreer@pacbell.net

Griffin, Patricia: Lyceum of Aine and Sophia
Ireland
(Assistant Foundation Center Temple priestess)

Kurimoto, Sumika: Lyceum Isis Orientalis
Tokyo, Japan
isis@ss.ij4u.or.jp

MacWatt, Ian: Isis Invicta
England

Matthews, Caitlin & John:
Fomus Sophiae Terrae and Sancte Gradalis Lyceum
BCM Hallowquest, London WC1N 3XX England
Tigerna9@aol.com

McCord, Julie (Estara T'shirai): Lyceum of the Wayfarer
California
Estara2@earthlink.net

Merron, John: Elen of the Green Ways
P.O. Box 196, London WC1A ILY England

Nwogu, Sunday: Isis of Happiness
Imo, Nigeria

Nwonti, Joseph: Lyceum of Miraculous Healing
Rivers, Nigeria

Ohnuma, Prof. Tadahira: Lyceum Isis Orientalis
Tokyo, Japan
isis@ss.ij4u.or.jp

Okoruwa, Michael: Temple of Ngame
Edo, Nigeria

Onyeani, Apostel Paul: Isis of Divine Healing
Cotoneu, Benin Republic

***Regula, DeTraci:** Throne of Isis Lyceum
California
tregula@concentric.net

***Robertson, Olivia:** FOI Foundation Center
Clonegal Castle, Enniscorthy, Ireland
(FOI co-founder; Star of Isis and FOI Q&A Forum
overseeing consultant; creator of FOI policies and
procedures)

***Rogers, Cathryn Anne:** Font of Isis Lyceum
Minnesota USA
fontisis@yahoo.com
(FOI Q&A Forum moderator)

***Silver, Connie:** Crossroads Lyceum
P.O. Box 19152, Tucson, Arizona USA
isislyceum@aol.com
(FOI central homepage; FOI central register; FOI Q&A
Forum moderator)

Starsheen, Michael Artonn: Isis of the Stars Lyceum
203 Marion St., Dunsmuir, California 96025 USA
starsheen@sbcglobal.net

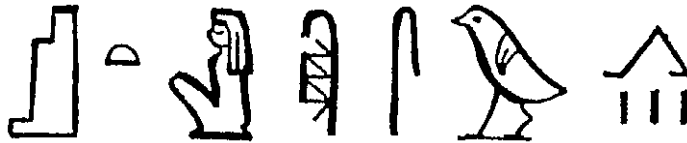
***Sudheer, Swami Prem:** Lyceum of Brighid
166 Rullion Rd., Penicuik Midlothia, EH26 9JB Scotland

Vigne, Loreon: Isis Oasis
20889 Geyserville Ave., Geyserville California 95441 USA
isis@isisoasis.org
(Temple of Isis legal status / federal recognition in California
USA)

Wehmeyer, Claudia & Thomas: Tara Hedge Lyceum
Westfalia, Germany
Fellowship_of_isis@online.de

Wilson, Steve: Isis of Time and Space
England
steve@sethur.f9.co.uk

The Fellowship of Isis



Aset t fem. det. shm s w "go, walk" det. plural sign
Aset Shemsu – The Retinue of Aset

Manifesto

Growing numbers of people are rediscovering their love for the Goddess. At first, this love may seem to be no more than an inner feeling. But soon it develops; it becomes a longing to help the Goddess actively in the manifestation of Her divine plan. Thus, one hears such enquiries as, "How can I get initiated into the Mysteries of the Goddess? How can I experience a closer communion with her? Where are her nearest temples and devotees? How can I join the priesthood of the Goddess?", and many other such questions.

The Fellowship of Isis has been founded to answer these needs. Membership provides means of promoting a closer communion between the Goddess and each member, both singly and as part of a larger group. There are hundreds of Iseums and thousands of members all over the world, since the Fellowship was founded in 1976 by Lawrence, Pamela and Olivia Durdin-Robertson. Love, Beauty and Truth are expressed through a multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi-racial Fellowship. The good in all faiths is honoured. The Fellowship of Isis has no particular affiliations.

The Fellowship is organized on a democratic basis. All members have equal privileges within it, whether as a single member or part of an Iseum or Lyceum. This manifesto applies also to the daughter societies: the College of Isis, the Spiral of the Adepts, the Spiral of Alchemy, the Noble Order of Tara and the Druid Clan of Dana.

The Fellowship respects the freedom of conscience of each member. There are no vows required or commitments to secrecy. All Fellowship activities are optional and members are free to resign without question. Membership is free.

The Fellowship reverences all manifestations of Life. The God also is venerated. The Rites exclude any form of sacrifice, whether actual or symbolic. Nature is revered and conserved. The work of the Noble Order of Tara is for conservation of Nature.

The Fellowship accepts religious toleration, and is not exclusivist. Members are free to maintain other religious allegiances. Membership is open to all of every religion, tradition and race. Children, listed as "Children of Isis", are welcomed, subject to parental consent. The "Animal Family of Isis" accepts members' animal and bird friends through centres.

The Fellowship believes in the promotion of Love, Beauty and Abundance. No encouragement is given to asceticism. The Fellowship seeks to develop friendliness, psychic gifts, happiness, and compassion for all life. The Druid Clan of Dana develops Nature's psychic gifts.

The College of Isis has been revived after its suppression 1,500 years ago. Like Aset Shemsu, The F.O.I. itself, it has always been alive in the Inner Planes. It is from these Inner Planes that its return has been inspired. Magi degrees may be conferred through Lyceums of the College. Correspondence courses are offered. There are no vows nor secrecy.

Iseums are the very Hearths of the Goddess, or Goddess and God to Whom they are dedicated. These are listed, along with Lyceums, Groves and Priors in the F.O.I. Homepage Directory. All these centres and Isian News are for F.O.I. members only. For full information: <http://www.fellowshipofisis.com>

The Archpriesthood Union is over-all Custodian for the Fellowship of Isis. The Fellowship of Isis Priesthood is derived from a hereditary line of the Robertson from Ancient Egypt. Priestesses, priests, every member, have equal honour. Priestesses and Priests work with the Goddess - or Goddess and God - of their own Faith. Every human, animal, bird, tree is an eternal offspring of the Mother Goddess's Divine Family of Life.