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## Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe: Early Scandinavian and Celtic Religions. By H. R. Ellis Davidson

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ecstasies who in their native Manchester had been known as Shakers brought Huguenot spirit possession to America" (p. 11; emphasis added). The weakness of the evidence is underscored in other passages where Garrett makes verbal connections where none exist in fact: The French Prophet Isaac Hollis, he writes, "lived until 1774, the year that Ann Lee and seven English Shakers sailed for America" (p. 141). And of the Shaker use of Christmas as a day of reconciliation, he writes, "It may have been only a coincidence, but it is worth recalling that it had been on Christmas in 1707 that the French Prophets had first introduced their ceremony of communion and reconciliation" (p. 224).

Garrett's account leaves us, then, where we were, with parallels and possibilities, with speculations rather than proofs. To have a convincing case, we would need direct evidence that Ann Lee or others in the group of Shaking Quakers witnessed or heard accounts of the possession states of the French Prophets. For there are at least three other possible explanations for the origins of the worship practices of the Manchester group: (1) that they preserved behavior of radical dissenters who Christopher Hill believes were forced underground by the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, (2) that scriptural accounts of the day of Pentecost offered them their chief expressive precedents, and (3) that immediate circumstances rather than historical models, led the Shaking Quakers to actualize an expressive potential that appears universal among humans.

But if Clarke Garrett fails to achieve his declared intention, his book nevertheless has value. It is admirably researched and offers a detailed and richly informative account of the religious ferment gathering beneath the placid surface of Enlightenment rationalism. Even more detailed and focused is his account of 18th-century Shakerism. No one before him has read the earliest documents of Shakerism, its apostates, and its observers with the attention and care that Garrett has. He pieces these fragmentary materials together into a cogent account of the steps by which the religious enthusiasm of the English founders of Shakerism evolved into the disciplined order we know as American Shakerism. What he demonstrates is that American Shakers succeeded better than the other, earlier groups in conserving an intense indwelling of the spirit within a powerfully ordered social structure.

**Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe: Early Scandinavian and Celtic Religions.** By H.

R. Ellis Davidson. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1988. Pp. 280, introduction, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$28.00 cloth; \$15.00 paper)

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The aim of the author has been to examine the pre-Christian records of Scandinavia and the Celtic world (primarily Ireland and Wales, but also including Continental evidence), as well as the later literary and folk material of these peoples, in an effort to reconstruct their original world-views. Needless to say, this is a very ambitious project, yet Davidson has been quite successful in carrying it out. Well known to students of Scandinavian folklore and mythology from her earlier studies, *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* (1964) and *Scandinavian Mythology* (1982), she has demonstrated also in the current work an admirable knowledge of Celtic material, including the archaeological and literary evidence for Celtic religion and mythology.

The chapter titles indicate the comprehensiveness of this study: "Holy Places," "Feasting and Sacrifice," "The Rites of Battle," "Land-spirits and Ancestors," "Foreknowledge and Destiny," "The Other World," and "The Ruling Powers." For each subject area Davidson generally provides substantial evidence from both Celtic and Germanic traditions.

Davidson shows a general acceptance of Dumézil's tripartite Indo-European model as an explanation for much of the inherited Celtic and Germanic material (e.g., his theory on the "war" between the priestly and warrior "functions" on the one hand and the producer-agricultural "function" on the other, possibly reflected in the Aesir-Vanir conflict in Scandinavian myth or the Second Battle of Mag Tuired in Irish tradition). However, she does point out the difficulties in reconciling this model with much of the actual Celtic and Germanic evidence (pp. 200–201). In addition, she seems quite willing to accept other sources for the parallels between Celtic and Scandinavian myth, including diffusion from other cultures, "such as the imagery associated with Roman deities, shamanistic practices of the Finno-Ugrian peoples, and the horse cults of the nomads from the Steppe" (p. 220).

In addition to the warrior gods and heroes in the two traditions, Davidson also devotes a great deal of attention to the goddesses and other female supernatural beings, as well as the priestesses and seeresses, whom she rightly sees as major forces in both Celtic and Germanic religion. Seeing the survival of much of this material as the result of storytelling in the Middle Ages, she points out the "need to know more concerning the tradition-bearers to whom we owe our knowledge" (p. 228), certainly a concern familiar to folklorists. Both the visual and written records need to be examined more fully, as she also indicates, citing Dumézil who, in his study on early Roman kingship, stated: "We are still at the stage of simply recording the results of operations whose mechanism we cannot describe and whose agents we cannot name" (p. 228).

My major criticisms of the work stem from the carelessness with which it was edited and proofed. It is a great shame to see such an excellent study marred by repeated missing or incorrect page and figure citations (found on pp. 18, 29, 52, 56, 62, 78, and 147), which are frustrating for the reader attempting to check a reference found in the text. Other errors are more substantive. First of all, the Turoe Stone is found in County *Galway*, Ireland (not *Galloway* as stated on Plate Ib, or *Meath* as on p. 20). Figure 4 shows panels from two gold panels found at *Gallehus*, not *Gundestrup*, Denmark, find-site of the equally famous cauldron. The author relies on generally superseded, or at least highly debatable, theories on the relative ages of the two branches of the Celtic languages (pp. 3–4), as well as the etymology of "druid" (p. 156). Finally, she at times either ignores or distorts *comparanda* from the Welsh tradition (e.g., those found in the *Mabinogion*), most notably in her inadvertent sex change of Arawn (from "Pwyll," the First Branch of the *Mabinogion*) whom she mistakenly refers to as "a beautiful woman dressed in green," rather than as an Otherworld king dressed in grey, who comes from Annwn (the Welsh Hades) accompanied by a pack of Otherworld hounds (p. 183). Most of the remaining errors are typographical in nature and, along with the above-mentioned examples, could easily be corrected in subsequent editions.

Despite these criticisms, I would recommend the book highly to students of Celtic and/or Scandinavian folklore and mythology, comparative religion, history and medieval studies. It will certainly provoke further research into the complicated set of relationships between the two major traditions of northwestern Europe.

**Eros and Magic in the Renaissance.** By Ioan P. Couliano. Translated by Margaret Cook. With a Foreword by Mircea Eliade. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. Pp. xxi + 264, translator's note, foreword, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index of names. \$34.95 cloth; \$13.95 paper)

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On February 16, 1600, the lapsed Dominican and Hermetic philosopher Giordano Bruno was burned on the Campo de' Fiori in Rome, sentenced as a relapsed heretic and handed over to the