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differently from formalized ritual. “Male” and “female” energies present in living things were celebrated, articulated in archetypal ways – the Green Man, the Triple Goddess (maid/mother/crone; also linked to the moon, new/full/waning). One such “spell” sung straight out went: “green man of sap springing / moon lady water flowing / both bound together / protect the land around us.”

It should be emphasized that the Dongas did not claim to see these essences actually manifesting (unless they had eaten many magic mushrooms). Rather, they were symbolic ways of reestablishing connections to nature, and, as importantly, to history.

Such everyday “cookbook” eco-magic was tied into ideas about living lightly on the Earth through living communally and sustainably. The Dongas lived in benders (like rounded tepees) made from saplings and tarpaulins, ate communal simple meals, buried their feces, etc. Such alternative lifestyles were seen as providing at least partial solutions to overconsumption and an anthropocentric alienation from nature, viewed as the modern (Western) condition. Critiques of Christianity’s role in creating cultures/structures of patriarchal anthropocentrism and dislocation from nature were a common thread, concentrating on such manifestations as the power implications of burning village midwives and herbalists as witches, the loss of animism, and the like. Such discourses, and the political paganism, link Donga spirituality to eco-feminist, deep ecology, and social ecology perspectives, as such distinctions often blur among and within individuals.

Alexandra Plows

Further Reading

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- Tarrow, Sydney. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 (2nd edn).
- Wall, Derek. *Earth First! and the Anti-Roads Movement*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- See also: Anarchism; Deep Ecology; Dragon Environmental Network (United Kingdom); Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front; Ecofeminism (various); Eco-Paganism; Radical Environmentalism; Social Ecology.

P Dragon Environmental Network (United Kingdom)

Dragon was founded in London in 1990 to link environmental action with a magical practice called “eco-magic.” Founding members sought a practical expression of the pagan belief that “the Earth is sacred.”

Dragon’s practical work began with woodland conservation, but within months we became involved in the campaign to save Oxleas Wood. Dragon worked closely with other campaign groups providing practical as well as eco-magical support. We initiated a postcard campaign and petition, published a school information pack on the Wood and helped organize fundraising events.

Dragon initially kept our magical work secret, but allowed it to become public knowledge once our practical work was proved. Oxleas Wood became a major campaign success when the road project was shelved in July 1993. As Dragon became more widely known, the need arose to establish basic principles that allowed flexibility but clearly established our identity.

We agreed that:

1. Dragon believes that the Earth is sacred.
2. Dragon is a decentralized network – a web of people working together on local, national and international issues.
3. Dragon combines practical environmental work with eco-magic. Each is as important as the other and it is through this synergy that we focus our vision for change.
4. Dragon is committed to nonviolent direct action.
5. Anyone who shares our principles and aims is welcome to join, regardless of their religion or spiritual path.

Our aims were defined as to:

1. Increase general awareness of the sacredness of the Earth.
2. Encourage Pagans to become involved in conservation work.
3. Encourage Pagans to become involved in environmental campaigns.
4. Develop the principles and practice of magical and Spiritual action for the environment (which we call “eco-magic”).

With Oxleas Wood safe, Dragon became more involved with the M11 road protests in East London and the Twyford Down campaign. The Dongas Tribe, who were encamped on the Down, were natural allies, although Dragon remained an essential urban pagan group.

Dragon grew throughout the early 1990s reaching a membership of over 300 in 13 local groups. The organiza-

tion was particularly active in road protests and nature conservation, and published a regular newsletter discussing environmental issues and eco-magic.

The mid-1990s marked a peak of activity. Dragon became involved with many campaigns including protests against the Criminal Justice Act, road building at Solsbury Hill and Newbury, and the Manchester airport campaign. Conservation work continued, and the Essex Dragon group started to manage woodland for the regional Wildlife Trust. Positive media coverage of Dragon improved public perception of Pagans, while environmental concerns proved to be fertile ground for interfaith work. But despite, or perhaps because of, this success, Dragon needed to change.

The influence of eco-paganism meant that by the mid-1990s eco-magic had become common at campaign sites in Britain. Some Dragon members felt that eco-magic had become a movement that was beyond any one organization, so Dragon increasingly adopted a networking role.

Meanwhile, internal concerns that Dragon had become a campaigning rather than a magical organization led to an increasing focus on eco-magic. Dragon now encourages the development of eco-magic through conferences and a journal. The Dragon website has a selection of eco-magic workings and a links to an email discussion list.

Dragon has become part of a global movement and, instead of membership, holds a register of eco-magic practitioners. Joining the Network is free and open to all. Although Dragon welcomes people from all magical traditions, we have evolved an eco-magic that is strongly influenced by Starhawk. Dragon rituals, which typically include drumming, dancing, chanting and simple ritual, blur the distinction between ceremony, performance and political action. Dragon has organized open ceremonies at protest sites, during the illegal "Reclaim the Streets" street parties, and at nightclubs.

The Dragon World Tree Rune, a central symbol for the Network, is a sigil combining several runes. The Dragon Rune has been drawn onto machinery, buildings and trees, used in ritual and meditations and worn as a talisman.

Mainstream campaigners typically show a skeptical tolerance of eco-magic, while grassroots protestors often invite it. Dragon works mainly with grassroots groups, although there has been constructive cooperation with Friends of the Earth, Surfers Against Sewage, the Wildlife Trust and local councils.

Several campaigns illustrate Dragon's commitment to social protest as well as narrowly defined environmental campaigning. The M11 campaign, for example, was as much about the destruction of an urban community as the environmental impact of a road.

The Dragon Network resists a final definition. Although the Network has specific principles, it encourages constant

reinterpretation and ultimately belongs to whoever practices eco-magic.

Adrian Harris

Further Reading

Dragon Eco-Magic Journal. Published annually since June 2001.

See also: Deep Ecology; Donga Tribe; Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front; Eco-magic; Eco-paganism; Paganism; Radical Environmentalism; Starhawk.

Druids and Druidry

Contemporary Druidry, notionally derived from the ancient religion and philosophical system of the Celts as described by classical authors and later Christian commentators, is a highly eclectic phenomenon. There is considerable variety within Druidry (Pagan Druids, Christian Druids, New Age Druids, CyberDruids, syncretistic Zen Druids and Hassidic Druids) and differing levels of commitment, formality and seriousness among Druids.

The earliest references to Druids come from classical authors, who remark upon their level of learning (acquired over many years of study), and their ritual use of mistletoe, oak trees and groves. The social and religious position of the Druid described in classical literature is often equated with that of the Brahman in Hinduism, a tradition with which Druidry is frequently compared. Bards (concerned with poetry, genealogy and music) and Ovates (specializing in healing) were also part of this system. Classical accounts of human sacrifice are rejected by some modern Druids as a slur by hostile outsiders, while others explain that for a willing victim acting for the good of the community it would have been a great honor.

Although for centuries Druids were depicted as the pagan enemies of Christianity, their image underwent considerable rehabilitation in the eighteenth century. Antiquarian and Anglican cleric William Stukeley characterized Druids as proto-Christians who had come to Britain "during the life of Abraham, or very soon after," with a religion "so extremely like Christianity that in effect it differ'd from it only in this; they believed in a Messiah who was to come, as we believe in him that is come" (in Piggott 1989: 145). Welsh patriot, freemason and Unitarian Edward Williams – better known as Iolo Morganwg – presented and promoted what he claimed was an authentic, ancient Druidic tradition of the British Isles which had survived in Wales through the bardic system, a distinctive Welsh language poetic tradition. He held his first Welsh Gorsedd (assembly of bards or poets) in 1791 on Primrose Hill in London. In 1819, Morganwg's Gorsedd became affiliated to the Welsh Eisteddfod (itself an eighteenth-century revival of a medieval literary and