

Sheffield Goddess Temple

NEWS LETTER

Issue 14
Summer Solstice 2019

Arts Magical
Fair

Special Edition

£1 or Free
with any donation to temple

Sheffield's Summer Goddess and Temple Events

Derwena

Goddess of South and Summer

Each season in our *Northern Wheel of the Year* is dedicated to a unique northern Goddess. Four of the eight seasonal celebrations are linked to river goddesses, and also to one of the four cardinal directions.

For the summer solstice we have the lovely, shimmering Derwent. There are two major river Derwents in our region, and both flow to the south, with the upper Derwent river flowing into the Howden and Derwent reservoirs.



Image [Celtic River Goddess]: <https://sylviajohnson.me/2011/12/27/selene-hekate-a-mystic-dream/>

Derwent is an ancient Brythonic name meaning the river of the oaks. Derwen or Derwenna are feminine Celtic names which are still used in Wales today. There is also a rural village of Derwen in the south of Denbighshire in Wales, laying approximately halfway between Corwen and Ruthin, on the north side of another river -the Welsh River Clwyd.

There was also a British folk group called Derwenna, "*Originating in Sheffield's lively folk dancing and ceilidh scene*", (!) playing a mix of English, Irish and Welsh tunes.¹

There is more information on *Derwena* and other goddesses in our *Northern Wheel of the Year* booklet (see page 3)



Temple Celebrations

Summer Solstice Arts Magical Fair

- Friday 21st June – Opening Ritual from 6:00 pm
- Saturday 22nd June – Stalls and workshops from midday – BBQ from 6:30 pm
- Sunday 23rd June – Workshops 12:00 – 5:00 pm

Lammas Celebrations

Early August - join us to celebrate harvests and fruitfulness. Please ring the Airy Fairy shop (number below), or see the temple web page (sheffieldgoddess temple.org) for details and updates.

Temple Diary Dates

Free Monthly Guided Meditation

Friday 12th July, 12:00 - 12:30 pm. No booking required.

Moon Meets

Celebrate the ever changing energies of the moon with Carmen Edwards.

- 2nd July 7:00 – 8:00 pm
- 16th July 7:00 – 8:00 pm



Heart Meditation

Saturday 29th June. 2:30 – 4:30 pm. £15 (portion to charity). *'For a calm mind and a happier life'*: www.heartoflivingyoga.com

Learn to Read Tarot

Course continues Thursdays 2:00-4:00 pm. Sessions £2 each.

To book events please ring *Airy Fairy* on **0114 2492090**



Spiritual Crisis Network – 20th July, 1:30-3:30 pm

Pagan Pathways – Talks, Discussion, Tuesdays, 8:00 pm

- 25th June: *The Element Fire* – Facilitated Discussion
- 9th July: *Trip Out* – Shillito Woods
- 23rd July: *The Silence of the Toads* – Robin Ellis

Sheffield Goddess Temple – Events Location

Unless otherwise stated Sheffield Goddess Temple seasonal celebrations and other events take place at:

Airy Fairy - 239 London Road, Sheffield S2 4NF (tel. 0114 2492090).

Please note: *the temple is accessed via one steep flight of stairs.*

¹ <https://www.last.fm/music/Derwenna/+wiki>

The Summer Solstice in Sheffield

What exactly is the Summer Solstice? “The longest day of the year” might be the most common answer, by which of course we really mean the day with the longest period of sunlight... well, as long as we live in the northern hemisphere that is. South of the equator countries such as South Africa and Chile are in Winter and experiencing not their longest day, but their shortest. For them June brings their Winter Solstice.

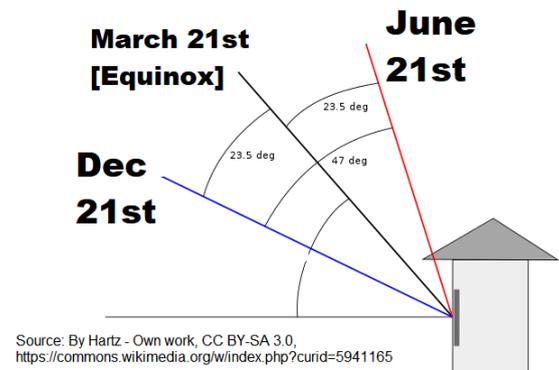
And if you ask the experts you’ll be told that actually the solstices are not days at all! They are points in time. The BBC’s Countryfile explains: “The solstice – also referred to as Midsummer – is often thought of as a day-long event, but in fact represents a single moment in time: when the sun is at northernmost point from the earth’s equator during a single year.”¹ In 2019 the Summer Solstice occurs at 16:53 (or to be precise 16:53 and 49 seconds) in Sheffield. The precise moment varies with physical location.²

During Solstices the tilt of the axis of the Earth (with respect to the Sun) is at its maximum (23° 26’). Solstices occur on 20th or 21st June, and 21st or 22nd December each year. In 2019 sunrise on 21st June is at 04:37 in Sheffield, and sunset at 21:38, giving us a local ‘longest day’ of 17 hours and 1 minute.²

Sheffield’s Winter Solstice will be on 22nd December this year. On that day our daylight hours will be restricted to 7 hours 30 minutes, meaning that on the day of our local Summer Solstice we get 9 hours and 31 minutes more daylight than we do on our ‘shortest day’. In London, because it is further south and that bit nearer the equator, the precise timing of the Solstice is very slightly different, and the maximum difference in daylight hours between the Winter and Summer solstices is less, at 8 hours and 49 minutes, compared to Sheffield’s more northerly seasonal variation of 9 hours 31 minutes. Travel to the north of Norway of course, and the sun hardly seems to sleep at night at all in high Summer.

The term solstice is derived from Latin and means ‘the sun stands still’. Why? “Because at the solstices, the Sun’s declination appears to momentarily ‘stand still’; that is, the seasonal movement of the Sun’s daily path (as seen from Earth) stops at a northern or southern limit before reversing direction.”³ So, in

other words, the sun appears to be higher in the sky in Summer, and lower in winter, as per this diagram:



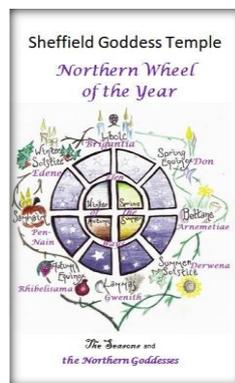
It is tempting to speculate that this might mean that the influence of sun goddesses, such as **Sol** in north European mythology, or Greek **Athena**, is at its greatest around the period of the Summer Solstice. Conversely higher powers associated with the Winter, such as northern Europe’s giantess **Skadi**, might be thought to be at their most effective at or around December 21st.

It is important at this time of year especially perhaps to remember that in Germanic mythology (and modern day Germanic languages) the sun is feminine – and the moon masculine. “Does the mention of a sun deity make you think of Apollo? Perhaps you should envision a female divinity instead! Unlike the Greeks, many Indo-European peoples probably believed a goddess ruled our bright, blazing star.”⁴

In both the Poetic and Prose Eddas the sun goddess **Sol** is described as the sister of her brother Moon, Máni, and as the daughter of Mundilfari. The myths tell us that she will be killed (in north European cosmology the gods are all mortal) by a monstrous wolf during the events of Ragnarok: the last battle at the end of the world, which could be said to be destroyed in an environmental catastrophe of never ending

winter. However before she dies she will have given birth to a daughter who will continue Sol’s course through the heavens, as a new female personification of the life-giving sun’s maternal energies.⁵ ☿

Sheffield Goddess Temple Booklets



Available in the temple (£4 each).

The temple is open each day, Monday to Saturday, 12:30 to 1:30pm, or ask in the Airy Fairy shop.

¹ www.countryfile.com/go-outdoors/days-out/

² www.drikpanchang.com/seasons/

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solstice>

⁴ Sheena McGrath, *The Sun Goddess: Myth, Legend and History*, 1998

⁵ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%B3l_\(sun\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%B3l_(sun))

The Wise Woman and the Demon-Skin

A Modern Folktale from Chile

Introduction

Before Europeans arrived in South America other peoples had already settled there. Their languages and folktales still survive, and are still developing today. In northern Chile and Peru the Quechua people, although now largely Roman Catholic, still venerate the great goddess "*Pachamama (Mother Earth) - who grants fertility to the fields. Burnt offerings and libations are made to Pachamama to ensure her aid and thank her for her goodness.*"¹ In southern Chile the surviving indigenous peoples are the Mapuche, which means 'people from the earth'. Today there are about 1,000,000 Mapuche in Chile, with another 300,000 living in Argentina. This modern-day Mapuche folktale has been found in several Mapuche areas of southern Chile.

The Wise Woman and the Demon-Skin

A family of foreigners was on holiday in the south of Chile. They came across a place both exceptionally beautiful and lonely, and decided to camp there. Their camping site was by a lake set between high mountains, with pure water, fresh, perfumed air, and the sublime sounds of nature.

"It's strange that there aren't more people around in such a beautiful place," commented the father of the family.

"Yes, well we're certainly more than lucky to have found it," the mother replied.

"Can we go and play in the water?" the children asked their parents, but the reply was:

"No sorry, better not. The lake waters are very cold in this part of Chile."

The family spent a wonderful day by the lake, enjoying nature, playing, and resting. But as twilight approached, something odd happened. The father became very still, staring quietly into the water, at a spot near the shore where a strange bubbling had become visible. Without saying anything, the father began to walk into the water, despite his family's attempts to dissuade him. He seemed as if hypnotised, and without looking back suddenly plunged into the lake.

At that moment the bubbles transformed themselves into a whirlpool, and from the water there arose something that resembled a stretched cowhide or skin. The skin wrapped itself around the body of the submerged man. The horrified family saw that the edges of the hide bore hooked, sharp claws, except at one end where instead there could be seen two huge eyes of an intense red colour. The skin then turned over and revealed a single enormous sucker like a giant mouth. Finally the skin disappeared into the deepest part of the lake, taking the man with it.

The desperate family went to seek help. After a long walk they came upon a Mapuche village. Their story was believed by the villagers, who explained that what they had seen in the lake was the '*Trelke-Wekufe*'. The villagers ran to find



their *Machi*, the wise woman, the only one believed to be capable of attracting the demon-skin to the lake shore and eliminating it.

The next day they all followed the Machi to the lake. She put together branches of spiny brushwood from *quizco* and *calfate* bushes, and wrapped them together in such a way that they took on the shape of a human body. Then, casting her gaze on the water, she began to recite a chant and intone words in Mapudungún [the Mapuche '*language of the earth*'].

After a little while bubbles became visible, slowly getting nearer to the lake shore. The Machi wise woman began splashing the water at the lake's edge with the branches. The hide rose up from the water, flexing its terrible claws, its huge red eyes glaring madly. It began to roll itself around the body of spiny brushwood which the Machi had made, seeking to absorb the human-shaped construction of branches into itself.

The more the monster writhed about, the more deeply the sharp, spiky thorns pressed into it, mortally wounding it. Eventually the diabolical being gave up the fight and perished, falling back into the depths from which it had emerged. The bubbles ceased, and the water returned to its usual flat calm, but although the demon-skin had been conquered by the wise woman, the father of the family was never seen again. Which is why, to this very day, children are never allowed to play alone on the lake shore. ❧

Notes

¹ Paula Martín, *Pachamama Tales*, Santa Barbara (California), 2014, p.12

² Martín, *ibid.* pp.118-119

³ "*The Machi is a religious authority, advisor, and protector of the Mapuche people. Usually this is a woman.*" Martín, *ibid.* p.119

⁴ Image: wisewomanrising.org/2018/03/20/

medicine-women-mother-is-calling/



The Musings of an old Zen Buddhist (with Pagan Connections)

The Importance of Interconnectedness

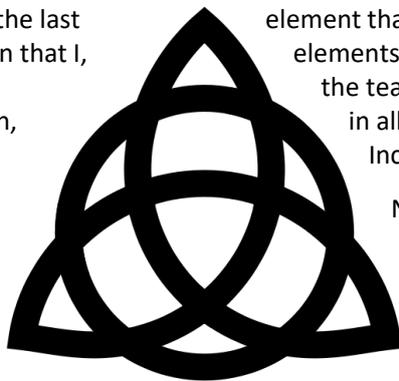
Inspired by the “Musings of an Old Druid” in the last issue of the Newsletter, I pondered the notion that I, too, am the “elder” of my family (at least my particular “branch”). I have two adult children, but for reasons too complex to write here, there will not be any further issue after them (well, not blood, anyway). It is all too easy to think of endings, to be too tied to the importance of physical continuation and creating self-suffering over a loss of something that will never be.

I have been a practising Buddhist for something like thirty five years, the last fourteen with the Zen Tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh (pronounced Tik nat han). Interconnectedness is an inherent part of Buddhist teachings, none more so than in this tradition, where it is known as “Interbeing”, a word coined by Thich Nhat Hanh to explain how we “inter-are” with everything in existence.

Any sadness or loss that I may have felt regarding the *further* continuation of my family does not arise, because I see continuation in all sorts of ways, some of which will be beyond knowing in the long term. None of us are separate and we all have a continuation and it can be our choice (depending on our conditioning and circumstances) how positive that continuation will be. Every encounter, every action has an effect. We meet someone, we have an interaction, and we both take something away that may change us, in some way, large or small. All the more reason to be open, friendly and positive as much as possible, lest our continuation (what the person takes away with *them*) be a negative one.

My purpose here, is not to give a talk on Buddhism, but to show the amazing common ground that exists in all spiritual traditions, old and new, and the realisation that if a spiritual truth is *really* true, it isn't purely a Buddhist truth, a Pagan, Christian, Jewish, Hindu (etc.) truth – it is just “true”. And “Buddhist”, “Pagan” are man-made constructs, because “Buddhism” is made of non-Buddhist elements. “Paganism” is made of non-pagan elements.

A teaching I have received talks of the existence of a flower. Many things need to be in place for that flower to exist. There needs to have been a seed. There needs to be soil. Clouds (for rain). Sunshine. If any one of those elements is not present (and the example is simplified) then the flower cannot come into being: it would not exist. There is no single



element that is “flower” by nature. Only when all the elements are present can it actually be a flower. This is the teaching of emptiness – the ultimate emptiness in all things.

Including us.

No doubt you will have come across the idea that the Earth and all that exists is made of stardust, the debris created by exploding stars from long, long ago in a galaxy far away... er, let's not get distracted!

What we pass on, our continuation, is on many levels: physical (offspring); social (how we influence those who we come into contact); cultural (traditions we follow and therefore lend strength); and our hopes and fears that can have a positive or negative affect on those around us. The latter is probably the most important. Many of us come with “baggage” handed down to us and we have an opportunity - even a responsibility -not to pass it on.

It is all too easy to blame our parents for the bad stuff (and to forget the good stuff we received) but sometimes the negative things come from further back, even beyond our grandparents. Some cultures talk about “sins” and suffering lasting seven generations and, recently, I read that psychologists can detect trauma in people akin to experiences they have not physically encountered in their own lives but from someone maybe three, four or more generations ago, did. Their demeanour, actions and speech connected with that trauma are passed on, and although weakening with each generation, is detectable for a hundred years or more. My mother's father was in the WW1 trenches, my father was in the RAF in WW2: what traits do I display connected with all that?

It's quite a sobering thought to consider that we are not completely separate beings, but a continuation of our ancestors, our teachers and others with whom we have had a lot of contact. There's also an input that we sometimes inadvertently consume - the negative and frequently biased indoctrination that we get from the media. But that's a subject for another discourse...

So, getting back to my musings of not having grandchildren to continue the family line, passing on all the positive things and hopefully reduced negative stuff, I see that my daughter, particularly, formed relationships with like-minded positive individuals, having a beneficial effect in the wider community and whose



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partner is also of that mind. So, whatever seeds were sewn in her upbringing have contributed to this – but that is not to say I'm claiming the credit, it's all hers, but I'd like to think I helped create the fertile soil in which she is nurturing such wonderful seeds.

Moving on to my relatively new Pagan connections, I recall something that Thich Nhat Hanh has said in various talks about not abandoning our roots otherwise we will deny our connections. His talks were mainly aimed at people who had been born and raised in predominately Christian countries, who were either looking for something that spoke to them more, or who were looking for teachings that help them work with inconsistencies in their Christian faith. "We don't need any more Buddhists" he said. I found this difficult as, whilst I had indeed been brought up in a predominately Christian society, I never practiced it and so I did not have deep Christian roots although, of course, I will have been under its influence. I had fully embraced Buddhism. When I contemplated what was said, and asked myself "what roots do I have", the immediate response I had arose from the literal sense of roots – the trees, nature – and how I always had that deep sense of connection. I recalled I had bought Vivianne Crowley's book "Paganism" some 18 or so years ago to get some sense of what it was all about. So, as nebulous as the connection that I made was at that time, I felt that I had some roots to connect to.

I then realised that there were already connections with my practice in place: teachings on interconnectedness (Interbeing) with nature, in fact the very building blocks of all things and my ancestors' continuation within me. We are even encouraged to have an ancestors' shrine on retreats and at home where photographs can be placed. However, I felt a little reluctant to admit to my fellow-practitioners about my connection to the "old ways" of our island home and then, bless him (Thich Nhat Hanh) gave a sort of "permission" when additions were made to some of our ritual practises. This needs a little explanation: in some ceremonies, the names of various Bodhisattvas are invoked. (*Bodhisattvas are, traditionally, 1. beings who have achieved Nirvana but vow to forgo it and stay to save all beings and 2. contemplative representations of human qualities such as Compassion, Wisdom etc. to help with meditative practice.*) What he offered in order to focus our intention on Mother Earth so that we protect her, and acknowledge the life-supporting Sun, we were given:

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"Mother of Buddhas, Bhodisattvas and all beings, nourishing, holding, and healing all, Bhodisattva Gaia, Great Mother Earth, precious jewel of the cosmos, to whom we bow in gratitude."

Radiating light in all directions, source of life on Earth... Great Father Sun, Buddha of infinite light and life, to whom we bow in gratitude."

I am very happy with that. They are two of many bridges between my spiritual practices yet, in fact, they are so inter-related as to be inseparable.

Then, last year, I came across a book "Zen Druidry, Living a Natural Life with Full Awareness" by Joanna van der Hoeven. I wasn't far into it before I was reading very familiar concepts. This was quickly followed by "Zen for Druids, a Further guide to Integration, Compassion and Harmony with Nature" by the same author. It was of no surprise to me that she openly quotes Thich Nhat Hanh in the second book and how his teachings on meditation helped her with her spiritual path as a Druid.

Whilst specific practices and rituals differ, the common ground between the two paths is essentially the same: I refer to what I wrote near the beginning of this article – "if a spiritual truth is really true, it isn't purely a Buddhist truth, a Pagan, Christian, Jewish, Hindu (etc.) truth – it is just true."

To clarify something: I don't advocate that all religions / spirituality are essentially the same, as *some* aspects on some paths are clearly not helpful, usually those bits that have been hi-jacked or created for political control, but there are many instances of common spiritual truth in all traditions, revealing how interconnected we all are. Science now confirms that all humanity is truly, physically, related, emanating from one single coupling in what is now Kenya: I think many of us already knew that in a general way, but our inter-connection with all of humanity is only part of the whole picture: we belong to ALL that is - animals, plants and minerals as we journey along our path of spiritual awakening and Enlightenment.



Paul Rees

Images:

 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Charmed_1998_logo.svg

 <https://www.yelp.com/biz/valhalla-sevilla>



Write for the Newsletter 😊

Do you follow a particular pagan path? Do you have an interest in an individual goddess, or a whole set of deities? Are specific aspects of daily life, such as the environment or social relationship issues, of concern to you? Do you have a favourite seasonal recipe? Please consider writing for this newsletter (articles can be as short as you like or up to about 1,500 words).

Contact Jamie at: temple@lovecat.com

Solstice Recipes

Summer Pudding

Source: <https://www.ravenandcrone.com>

Ingredients

- 1 lb. Mixed Red Soft Fruits
- 4 oz. Sugar
- Enough White Bread to line a Pudding Basin
- Whipped Cream for serving



Method

Trim the crusts off the bread and line the pudding basin with it, cutting a circle for the base. Ensure that the basin is lined without any gaps. Cook the fruits and sugar, without adding extra water, for a few minutes until the juices run. Drain the fruits and retain the juices. Fill the lined bowl with fruit and place a circle of bread on top, enclosing the fruit. Then put a plate on top held down with a weight on top. Place in fridge overnight. When ready to serve, turn out onto a plate and pour the reserved juices over the top. Serve with whipped cream.

(The above recipe for "Summer Pudding" is from Jan Brodie's book "Earth Dance: A Year of Pagan Rituals", page 98-99, Capall Bann Publishing, 1995)



Faery Honeycakes

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup sweet white wine
- 1 egg
- 2/3 cups flour
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup of honey
- 1/8 teaspoon of nutmeg
- Oil for frying



Method

Beat the wine and egg in a medium bowl. Combine the flour, cinnamon, salt and sugar in a small bowl. Stir into the egg mixture. Let stand 30 minutes. Combine the honey and nutmeg in a small bowl. Heat 1/2 inch of the oil in a frying pan until hot but don't let it get so hot it smokes!! Drop the batter into the oil 1 tablespoon at a time and fry until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Dip into honey. Makes about 18 honeycakes.



Goddess Temple Melissas



Join our Sheffield Goddess Temple Melissas between 12:30 and 1:30 pm, Monday to Saturday, to experience the seasonal energies in quiet contemplation.

Temple Melissas are the people who hold space in the Temple between 12.30 and 1.30 pm every day, Monday to Saturday. It is a delightful job to do. If you would like to be part of the Melissa team please leave a message at Airy Fairy for Ann Staniland or Brian Harrison.

The Temple on the Web



For all the most up to date information on what is going on at the temple, don't forget to check out our website which has all the latest news of events, and links to our Facebook and Twitter pages:

<https://sheffieldgoddess temple.org/>

Agree or Disagree?

"People think of death as the consumer of life... but it is the other way around. Life feeds on death like a baby suckles its mother's breasts. Life is born from death. Death is a beginning. Death is a great provider. Death the nourishing womb."

Maria Kvilhaug
[A Twisted Mirror,
Amazon 2017, p.19]

Happy Summer Solstice



Image:
humanisticpaganism.com

Litha – Festival of the Mother of WaterSummer Solstice – *Festival of the Emotions*

by Kathy Jones

Abridged from "Priestess of Avalon – Priestess of the Goddess", Glastonbury, 2006 pp. 197-215
(available from: www.goddessstemplegifts.co.uk)

Litha is the festival of the Glistening when we celebrate the Mother of Water on the longest day of the Year. We celebrate Novala as Lady of the Springs and Wells; we honour Her as Lady of the Lake. The Mother of Water is Queen of all the Emotions. She nourishes the needy.

At Litha visit a sacred spring or well near your home and especially those in Glastonbury. Cleanse your body with water, let go of your cares, drink in the healing waters of the Lady of the Holy Springs and Wells.

Summer solstice comes around June 21st. It is the time when the hours of daylight are at their longest in this land, with short nights of darkness. Nowadays Litha marks the beginning of summer rather than its culmination. Warm summer days follow through the end of June, all of July and into August. It is the beginning of the holiday or holy day season, when we can rest, play and enjoy ourselves.

Novala of Water is the Compassionate One, whose loving gentleness holds us as we meet and begin the process of healing our Shadow Selves. It is She who helps our emotions overflow in streams of tears that we need to release, for tears of themselves naturally heal our pain. British patriarchal culture discourages public displays of emotion. This repression of emotion has no place in a Goddess-loving society, where the conscious expression of emotion is encouraged and welcomed.

At Litha we honour Novala as the Lady of the Holy Springs and Wells. The most famous and honoured of Glastonbury's springs are the Red Spring at Chalice Well, and the neighbouring White Spring on the slopes of the Tor. Wells and Springs are seen as Openings in the body of Ertha our Mother Earth, from which Her red iron-rich menstrual bloodwater flows to fertilise the earth, or clear clean mineral-rich water flows for drinking and to purify the earth, or foul-tasting sulphurous waters come to the surface from deep in Her Underworld. At Litha we gather at Chalice Well and the White Spring to experience the healing powers of the Red and White waters.

Symbolically water represents the emotions. Like the ocean our emotions are continuously moving, ebbing and flowing, sometimes lying still and tranquil, and at other times washing over us in great waves which threaten to drown us with pain, fear, sadness, grief or anger. All the major rites of passage in human life, those times when we can be most spiritually present in our bodies, incarnated, are accompanied by emotion – as we are born, as we give birth, during sex, in relationship and marriage, and upon death.

During our menstrual life we naturally move in and out of our emotions in a rhythmic pattern, which is affected and sometimes determined by the rise and fall in the production of oestrogen in our bodies. Men have a different emotional rhythm which is

reflected in the production of testosterone in the body, and its expression through physical and creative activity.

Most women experience emotions daily. In Anglo-Saxon cultures men on the whole see emotion as a negative experience both in its

expression for themselves and being on the receiving end of women's emotional expression. Men in colder climes are taught to have a stiff upper lip, to be strong and unemotional, not weak like women. Patriarchal religions on the whole deny the positive power of emotion, seeing it as something which must be controlled, repressed and suppressed in order to attain the spiritual heights. For example the majority of meditation practices have intrinsic to them the ideal of the suppression of emotion using a variety of techniques, including the control of breath, restriction of movement, or placing the body in certain yogic postures.

However human emotion has not gone away, and shows no signs of leaving after five thousand years of patriarchal attempts to deny its importance. We have been told for thousands of years that the world is a place of suffering, and we must do everything in our power to escape the wheel of suffering and leave the planet when we die. We have been told that to climb the spiritual heights we must remove ourselves from the world, sublimate our sexual desires, be ascetic, and separate ourselves usually from women. We must control our lower chakras and our base emotions.

I do not believe it. The world is a place of great natural beauty and bounty, gifted to us by a generous and loving Goddess, who wants us to enjoy Her and our abundant natures. Yes there is suffering, but it is caused on the whole by our adherence to patriarchal ideals of greed, competition and selfishness. Goddess teaches us to share with each other, to co-operate for the good of all, to be generous and loving, to enjoy Her planet and each other.

Can we recognise that the seat of the Soul lies in the centre of our bodies in the heart, rather than in the head? We are at the very beginning of the return of the Goddess and Her Mysteries. She brings with Her new forms of spirituality, which will take us to greater heights and depths of ecstatic mystical experience. We need not be afraid that if we let go of the old She will not be there for us in new forms, in new experiences. She will not abandon us as we abandoned Her. **Goddess created emotion and loves its expression.** ❧

