

## The origins of modern Witchcraft – maybe.

Today we have a lot of different traditions of Witchcraft – many claiming to be more “real” or more of a “direct descendant “of Real Witchcraft or Original Witchcraft or whatever. None of these have any REAL proof of what they say. (Please – if you are part of one of these groups – don’t start yelling – just read on). Now there is nothing wrong with these beliefs within a tradition as it is part of the mythology of the tradition – they only get bad when a member of the trad starts preaching it to others. (Hey guys – things like that are some of the secrets of your trad – you don’t want others to know)

Let’s look at what we know historically – 1. In the 1950 – Gardner brought about his form of the Craft and started using the name Wicca as another name for Witchcraft. 2. Charles Leland wrote Aradia, Gospel of the Witches in 1899 telling about the Strega or Italian Witches.

OK that’s about it. Just about everything else is speculation. Witchcraft goes back at least to 1899. When Gardner came out of the closet in the 50’s he felt that there were no other Covens left, but to his surprise others did start popping up. Now did they already exist or did they come into existence because of Gardner?

Now we are going to MY origins of Witchcraft. This may have no truth at all to it, since it is speculation. Pre – Christian Church Witches are talked about in Mythology and other sources, but usually they were nothing like our Modern Witch. Today’s Witch is more like the Witch that came from the Middle Ages.

Let’s look at a few things we know. The early Church took over Rome and most likely was a major cause of the downfall of the Empire. A few of the things that were done by the Church was outlaw all the Old Religions within the Empire. Outlawed education for the common person. By the time of the inquisition, being educated was a crime that could be punished by death.

When the old religion were torn down the Priest and Priestess had to go into hiding. They were educated and with their religions gone – they were common people. Yet they were still needed by the people. The church had done nothing to replace these people who in many cases were the doctors, midwives, herbiest, and other scientist. (Barbers took over much of the medical work – scary).

They had to go underground. In cases like this small cells are used. 13 was a good number. They became the Witches. As time went on, only one member of the group would be taught to read and write. This can be reflected to the modern Coven of six working pairs – with HP and HPS and a Maiden who is leaning to become a HPS. The 13<sup>th</sup> person would be the one learning to start a new cell or Coven.

This would give us the different types of Witchcraft and why so many different ways of doing something works. Now for another step – a lot of the secret societies and other groups that modern Pagans get a lot of their materials form – may have been formed by some of these Covens or from people who had studied with them. Remember we have a long period of time where the Craft was completely hidden in most parts of the world. Some wanted to come more out in the open – being part of one of these organizations was more “honorable” than being a Witch.

OLD RELIGIONS ----UNDERGROUND CELLS OR COVENS---SECRET SOCIETIES -----MODERN WITCHCRAFT.

As I said there is nothing to back up my theory and it just speculation. Today we have many groups that claim one thing or another – and as a Witch or a Pagan or response should always be ok. But these same people should not try to preach to others on their way – but they do. And Goddess help the person who says, look you believe it your way and I'll believe it my way – and since all paths lead the same way – Blessed Be. They yell and say “Your wrong” MY WAY IS THE ONLY WAY. Please you are starting to sound like members of other religions that we will not name now!

One of the things about history is it's a fiction based on facts and influenced by the Winners or who is in power. And in the Western World the Christian is who is in power and they have done their best to keep the information away from the common man. How many books and scrolls are there about the old religions that were either destroyed or locked away? What do we really know about the old religions? We have myths, but they are just stories, much like bible stories are today – and we don't know how much they reflected the old religions and much was just a work of fiction.

We don't even know how much our beliefs are like the old religions. But for our religion to work we must accept some of our own myths as truth, even when we know that there is a good chance that they are not. This helps us form the basis of our religion. But even though these stories have been passed down through your Coven or from your teacher – when someone makes a statement you may feel is wrong – don't say you are wrong – state the way you look at it, and you both may be right.

As pagans we state that all paths lead to the same place, yet we want our path to be a narrow one, not a superhighway that have the paths (lanes) right next to one another, just a little off being the same path. Let's be the superhighway – don't fight.

The Wicca/ Witchcraft debate is so dumb. We have on one side people who claim they are the same and on the other people claiming they are different. Why? If you feel they are different – fine – you have your reasons. If you feel they are the same – fine – again you have your reasons. Friendly debate is fine – but when one side starts calling the other names and saying they don't know what they are talking about it not fine. You are following your path of the Craft – if within it you feel they are not the same, that is your path – but where do you feel you have the right to tell someone whose trad says they are the same that they are wrong? Their path of the craft says they are the same. (For the record – I follow that they are the same)

But can you all see why it's good for us to believe in our myths and stories that form our trad or coven or solitary path. And why we don't have the right to tell others their beliefs are wrong. We have very little true history of the craft before Garner except Leland. Most of it is written by Christians which contain the slant that we worshiped the Devil – even giving the Devil names of Pagan Gods. And giving him horns like the Horned Hunter.

Blessed Be

Dreamweaver

