

Forcing Change



“Together. We Are One.”

By Carl Teichrib (www.forcingchange.org)

“Together. We Are One.”

The above line is the tag for an upcoming transformational festival, an event highlighting “oneness” through music, art, and community.

Like other similar events, large and small, the anticipated gathering encourages a sense of cosmic unity; man, nature, and the Divine are all One. This “reality” is experienced through the energy of group encounters – we discover our potential and unity together; on the dance floor and through the music, by interacting with art and creativity, in quieting ourselves around sacred spaces, and via the dynamics of our social interactions. We *feel* connected as *one*.

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Carl Teichrib, Editor

In February, I had the opportunity to briefly talk with a festival participant. We met in the Minneapolis airport during a layover to San Diego; she was going to Southern California to attend festivals as a flow artist, and I was traveling to Escondido to give a lecture on the same cultural phenomena. We sat beside each other for only a few minutes, but it was enough to authenticate my earlier research on the subject.

I asked a simple question. “With all the transformational festivals you’ve attended, what’s the one thing that unites them? What’s common to the broader movement?”

Her answer was quick and telling; “It’s spiritual. It’s all very spiritual.”

Indeed it is.

If anything, transformational festivals and the growth of “evolutionary culture” represent the “re-enchantment” of civilization. It is a return to the ancient ideal of cosmic unity and continuity, when humanity, nature and God were viewed as constituting a whole. It is a resurgence of interest around the core belief of paganism: All is One. We are rapidly moving from Postmodernism to a new era: *Re-enchantment*. [Note: watch for my new book in the near future, which outlines the pagan ideal of re-enchantment and its consequences – *more info to come soon!*]

Understating the Scope

In 2013, I penned a *Forcing Change* essay on transformational events titled “Celebrations for Transformation: From Burning Man to TomorrowLand and Beyond.”

For the first time, as far as I could tell, a comprehensive Christian exposé of transformational festivals had been written. Other authors had tackled the most well known event, Burning Man, but no one in the Christian community had connected the dots to it being part of a larger, global phenomena. However, as the essay, “Celebrations for Transformation,” was a first in attempting to understand and reveal the broader movement, there were flaws in the information. This wasn’t a misunderstanding of the culture; rather, the error was in *understating* the subject.

For example, in the 2013 article I mentioned that approximately 90 events took place around the world during the previous year. Now I know that there were many more, and that the culture is far more pervasive than I originally thought.

During the spring of 2014, I started lecturing on the cultural side of “oneness” and the rise of evolutionary gatherings, speaking on the subject in Fargo, and then later in Colorado Springs, Abbotsford, Winnipeg and Dallas. Initially, I reported that 120-to-150 transformational events take place annually. Wrong again. There are hundreds and hundreds worldwide, possibly a thou-

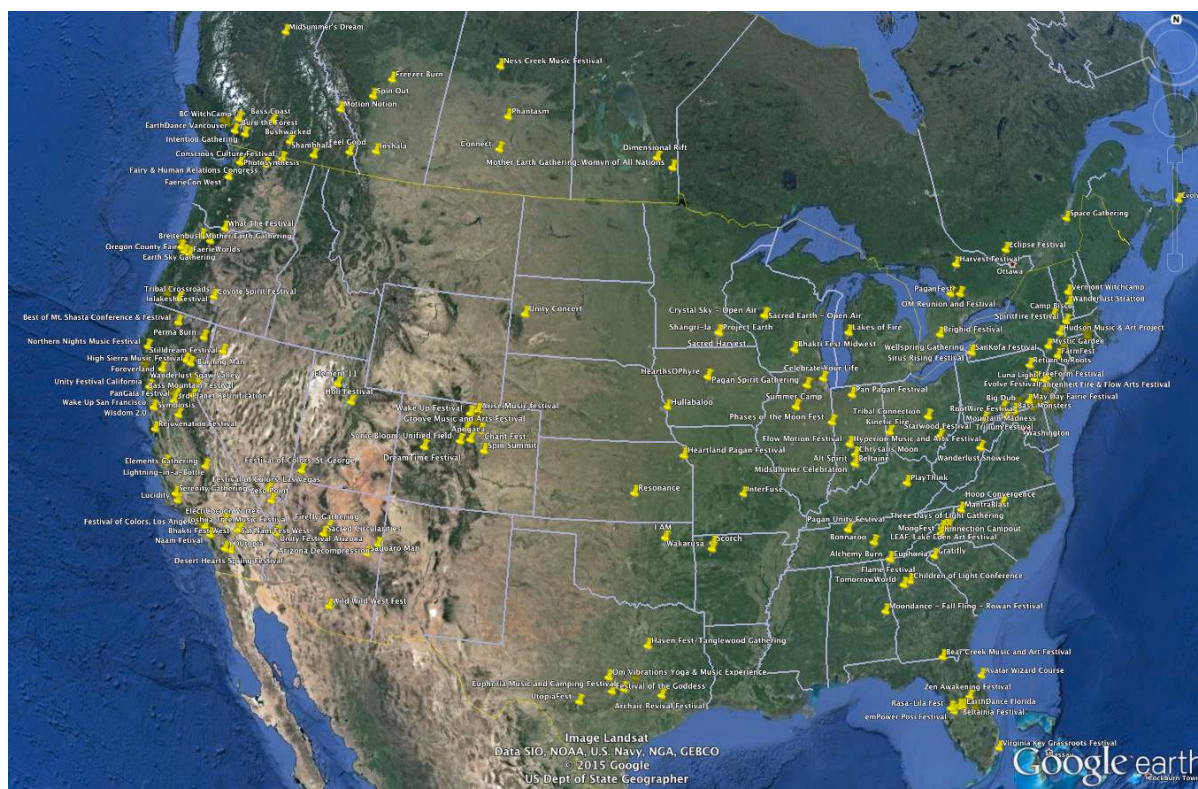
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sand or more when one includes wholeness/New Age expos and yoga festivals – gatherings that fit within the broader framework of evolutionary culture.

By late summer, it was apparent that I needed to catalog the many events cropping up in my studies; transformational festivals, music events that intentionally preached oneness, yoga and color fests, and other gatherings that incorporated elements of New Age spiritual and social change. So I began pinning and labeling these various events using Google Earth as my platform, embedding within each pin a longer description of the activities and other information useful for understanding the specific setting. Often times, multiple gatherings would take place in a single location. Here are some examples: At one rural site in northwest Georgia, three annual events take place - Flame Festival, Alchemy Burn, and Euphoria. In northeast Maryland you'll find these three events hosted at the same location; Maryland Faerie Festival, Free Spirit Gathering, and PEX Summer Festival. And one spot in southern Indiana hosts the Midsummer Celebration, Beltaine, and Alt Spirit. Many other examples could be given.

By Christmas, I had over 200 locations pinned in the United States and Canada (others occur around the world, but I could only focus on these two countries). Many more Canada-US events will be added, as I have an extensive list to sift through, vet, and pin. Eventually, I would like to release this map project to the Christian community. It's a visual eye-opener to the revolutionary shift now taking place. [See the screen-capture photo for a static overview of the pins]



If, however, much of the above information on evolutionary culture is new to you – and you’re saying to yourself, “What are transformational festivals?” – I’d encourage you to read the August 2013, *Forcing Change* report, “Celebrations for Transformation.” You can find it in the membership section of www.forcingchange.org. I would also suggest downloading the September 2013 issue, as that edition has extra details on the subject.

With all of the above as background, this edition of *Forcing Change* contains two articles by guests on cultural evolution. These pieces were originally student essays from a class I taught last fall at Millar College of the Bible - one a general overview of transformational festivals, the other on “fairy faith” as a component of re-enchantment.

Over the course of five days, I had the opportunity of lecturing on the subject of “Secular Trends,” including a section on pagan cosmology and transformational festivals. At the end of this modular course, my class of approximately 40 students submitted research papers on a topic-of-choice. The following essays, penned by Kyla Wiebe and Christine Friesen, work out different aspects of transformational culture, and offer important insights into the worldview.

I trust that these two pieces will better inform you to the spiritual shift taking place. *FC*

Transformational Festivals

By Christine Friesen

Transformational festivals are a relatively new global phenomenon that has its roots in a philosophy of esoteric ‘Oneness.’ These have been gaining popularity and influence all over the world, including the emerging church. Themes of these types of festivals include art, music, ecstatic dance, self-healing, the idea of mythos, rituals, sacred spirituality and self-actualization that seemingly results from the combination of these themes. It is a growing culture and it is important for the church to be aware of the ideas and philosophies behind this movement.

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Fairy Faith

By Kyla Wiebe

In the search for meaning and purpose in the world, humanity runs to many sources. The one that I have chosen to study is the culture of fairy. This choice stems from my own interest and fascination with fairies as a child. I grew up fostering a half-belief in fairies, enjoying the mystery of whether or not fairy-folk were real, and harboring hopes that they were. I am an artist, and fantastic fairy themes have always been a steady feature in my artistic endeavors. One day, as I was looking for books on fairies, I was shocked and dismayed to discover a set of Tarot cards in the fairy section.

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Transformational Festivals *continued*

A transformational festival is an emerging counterculture event that seeks to inspire personal spiritual transformation, create a community-building ethic and provide a value system that celebrates life, social responsibility, creative expression and healthy living. This culture, which has evolved from within the electronic dance music (EDM) community, is, at most, only a few decades old and has spread past the EDM community to include people from all types of social circles.¹ Notable festivals include Lightning-in-a-Bottle (California), Boom (Portugal), and Burning Man (Nevada).



Dance floor at Boom Festival.

These multi-day festivals are usually held in outdoor environments, and often in remote and natural locations such as the desert, forests, and mountains.² Much like a typical music festival, it is an environment for partying, socializing, and watching musical performances. In contrast, a transformational festival is a multifaceted celebration that integrates a variety of musical, art, educational, and spiritual components.³ More specifically, what distinguishes these festivals from the typical music festival is that they feature seminars, various types of workshops including those on healing, ceremonies or rituals, visual and installation art, sacred spaces (or temples), and extreme environmental awareness.⁴ Interestingly, participants are co-creative in transformational events.⁵

Two large and integrated components of transformational festivals are music and dance. Although not exclusively electronic, the majority of the music at these events is electronic dance music (EDM). Jeet Kei-Leung, writer, producer and director of *The Bloom Series*, a multi-part media series that explores the world of transformational festivals, said in episode one, “The emergent culture of transformational festivals builds around electronic music’s core ritual of ecstatic dance to incorporate visionary art and performance.”⁶

One of the main goals of these festivals is to encourage and develop unity among those attending, and this tribal-like community accomplishes this through the ritual of dancing. Many participants share that there is a “spiritual” experience that occurs when the group collectively engages in this activity, one that allows them to be themselves as they truly are. In essence, it is a tool of self-expression that leaves dancers feeling emotionally raw and open to a sense of release.⁷ One participant explained, “...that’s the power of electronic music... beyond the aspect of just dancing and having a good time... You open up your body, you open up your communication, you’re opening up your soul, your spirit, your creativity, and allowing [yourself] to feel free.”⁸

As previously mentioned, one of the distinguishing features of a transformational festival is the major theme of healing, deep introspection, and self-discovery or actualization. The collective goal and philosophy of these festivals is that a festival-goer is impacted and inwardly transformed positively to become more conscious and connected to others, the earth and the spiritual. The hope of the festival producers is that participants will leave empowered and inspired to be who they want to be, live the lifestyle they want, and take this transformational experience home and share it with others.⁹ This self-actualization is sometimes achieved through healing.

Jeet-Kei Leung explains,

“...transformational festivals have been developing a culture that empowers participants to lead a more holistic and healthier lifestyle... [they] have become containers where participants are experiencing spontaneous breakthroughs of pivotal moments that lead to a deep personal healing and release of grief and becomes fundamentally life-altering.”¹⁰

There are a variety of healing services that are devoted to transforming the physical and emotional health of the participants, as well as classes and workshops - everything from relationship dynamics to yoga classes to massage and chiropractic therapy to energy healing is available.¹¹

Episode three of *The Bloom* focuses on the themes of mythos, ritual, ceremony, and the sacred within the festival context.

Mythos is abstractly described as “an awareness of our role in a greater multi-dimensional reality and story.”¹² Leung describes it as, “...the magic of our existence in relation to the forces of creation.”¹³

Transformation festivals attempt to reestablish a sense of mythos within its setting and encourage participants to create their own fantasy and reality.¹⁴ Most often, this sense of mythos is en-

countered through artistic story creation. Within the festival dynamic, performance art allows for creative self-expression and participation, which is at the heart of these gatherings.¹⁵ Stories can be told through the use of lighting, projection, dance, and aerial performance. Ritual is thus described as how people embody the mythology that emerges through the group experienced story, where it “...create[s] the condition for a moment where everyone can feel like they are one.”¹⁶

The sacred can refer to anything “spiritual.” This can include any number of “spiritual” practices including prayer, chanting, singing, building altars and offering up sacrifices to gods/goddesses.¹⁷ Much of this spirituality is centered around the belief that they are “...divine, eternal beings here for human experience...”¹⁸

Philosophy

Transformational festivals preach and operate on a worldview of One-ism.

Dr. Peter Jones explains this concept in his book *One or Two*. It is a belief that “all is one” and, as Jones explains, that everything “shares the same essential nature” or essence. Simply, it is a belief that everything has a piece of the divine, including nature and humanity.¹⁹ This worldview goes hand-in-hand with *esoteric* spirituality in which one finds spirituality, or the divine, within oneself. This perspective is in direct opposition to the Christian worldview of Two-ism, the belief that while all of creation has the same essence, God, the Creator and Sustainer, is a completely different being. This worldview thus corresponds to *exoteric* spirituality in which one finds spirituality or the divine outside of self, namely God.²⁰ These two perspectives come into conflict as to the basic philosophies and ideologies behind the purposes and goals transformational festivals. One seeks “God” within, and the other acknowledges God as exalted beyond the creation.

As previously mentioned, the philosophy of transformational festivals is based on the worldview of esoteric Oneness. Throughout *The Bloom Series*, which highlights the growth in transformational gatherings, there is mention of “re-enchantment.” For decades, Western culture was steeped in postmodernist ideologies that abandoned Christian theism and embraced secular humanism. Thus, the postmodern worldview regarded rationalism and science as its fundamental core and real truth, and spirituality was all but lost in North American secular society. However, Western culture is in the process of moving past postmodernism into a spiritual ideology of Neopaganism.²¹ It has now become an age of spirituality - without religion. This is the “re-enchantment” mentioned in the web series; the reestablishment of a sense of spirituality within culture and society, whether it is in the form of cosmic humanism or pantheism. There is no single set of beliefs for modern paganism. Anything is permissible as all moves to “One.”

New Age ideology and modern paganism is dominant in transformational festival culture. The idea of Oneness is repeated frequently throughout *The Bloom* web series. From building temples and sacred spaces, to adopting Pagan practices of erecting altars,²² this ideology and philosophy is rampant. In short, transformational festivals operate on the belief that nature, humanity, and

the divine are one. This makes humanity divine as well as the earth, and they are treated as such, producing a value system that connects festival goers with “divinity,” others, and nature.²³

One participant said, “...we’re expressing gratitude to the sun and to the earth and to everything that influences the bounty of the things we sustain ourselves with...”²⁴

Maraya Kerena, a Cyborg Anthropologist and festival participant said, “...[we’re] understanding the importance of our own individuality the power of it and the joy and ecstasy. And I think that is the characterizing flavor of spirituality [at transformational festivals], it’s ‘live your dreams, you matter, you are god’...”²⁵

Appeal to Society

It almost goes without saying that transformational festivals have tremendous appeal to the public. The music, the art, and the sense of community are just a few of the many aspects that draw people from all ages and walks of life. This musical aspect is often the main attraction for newcomers,²⁶ as some of the biggest names in EDM headline these events, and along with EDM comes rave culture.

Raves are large parties or music/dance festivals in which EDM is performed in concert with light shows and visual effects. Formerly an underground subculture, it is now very popular, especially among young adults. One transformational-styled festival built around EDM/rave is Tomorrowland, in which hundreds of huge electronic-music acts perform every year.

Another attractive aspect of these festivals is the art. This can be in various forms including visionary art, performance art, and interactive art. In festival context, art is an obvious form of self-expression and is meant to illicit connectedness, introspection, and inspiration.²⁷ Those interested in art can directly observe some of the talent that emerges in the festival setting, including live painting and sculpture creation, costuming, and flow art movements.

The third, and possibly the main appeal for most festival-goers, is the sense of community and the special environment of acceptance. The want-and-need for acceptance is universal among human beings and transformational festivals allow for an extremely tolerant and accepting atmosphere. According to festival partakers, this “...really friendly and trusting environment... allows people to let go of [their] boundaries...”²⁸ It is therefore considered a community of harmony and support, allowing people to be themselves and receive acceptance regardless of who they are. Many people come with unique talents to contribute to the experience, and can freely use those gifts within a non-judgmental setting²⁹.



Jeet-Kei Leung says the following regarding this sense of community, and the freedom to experiment with self-discovery.

“While we have lived the vast majority of our history deeply embedded in kinship and community, our modern urban societies are more often typified by the experience of separation and alienation... transformational festivals are fulfilling the deep human need for connection by creating safe containers to reveal ourselves and discover each other.”³⁰

Transformational Festivals and the Emergent Church

While most Christians are unaware of transformational festivals, there are a few who are actively engaging in this type of activity within a church setting.

Progressive Christians and many involved in the emergent church movement attend, support, and organize “Christian” festivals that are very similar in nature to transformational festivals.

The Wild Goose Festival held annually in the United States is one example. On their website it states, “There is no creed required beyond a willingness to meet respectfully across lines of difference, to share wisdom and listen to each other’s stories, and become more than the sum of our parts.”³¹

Wild Goose is the place for, “...courageous, imaginative, and participative social justice work, creative expression, spiritual practice, and astonishing music.”³²

The site boldly welcomes everyone to attend, regardless of ethnicity, sexual identity, gender expression, or religious affiliation, among others. The Wild Goose website claims that they are committed to fair trade, gift exchange, ecological sanity, and economic inclusion. There is one mention of God in the section about the festival, and *not one* about Jesus or the gospel. Further study reveals that Wild Goose takes inspiration from the well-known transformational festival, Burning Man, which repeatedly emphasizes care for the earth, and includes speakers who support and practice homosexuality. These themes are obviously discrepancies within a supposed “Christian” festival. Wild Goose, therefore, is a festival that gains inspiration from and preaches the same values as secular transformational festivals. Values such as extreme environmentalism, self-expression through art and dance, and extreme tolerance are all high priorities.



One of the main issues with Wild Goose is that there is simply no mention of the gospel. Christianity as a faith is founded on the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus said, “go and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” However, environmentalism and the importance of self-expression are taking priority over the Son of God. This is simply and profoundly wrong. Moreover, Wild Goose and similar festivals ignore basic Biblical teachings about the sin of homosexuality, and instead accept and embrace the sin for fear of being labeled “intolerant.” Yes, Christians are commanded to love others, but the gospel should never be compromised in the process.

Author Gary Gilley, had this to say regarding the emergent church and the culture it promotes, “The emerging church is a movement in search of an experience, not the truth.”³³

In the case of transformational festivals and their Christian spin-off, this seems to be true.

Conclusion

Transformational festivals are a developing culture, and it is experiencing rapid growth. From a Biblical perspective, this global movement seems to epitomize what Paul wrote in Romans 1:25, “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator...”

The spiritual ideology occurring today within transformational festivals is not new, it has simply been modernized. However, through knowledge of its core values and the worldview behind it, believers in Christ can better understand a society moving in this direction and be aware of its implications to Christianity, as well as culture. **FC**

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 - ² Krasnow (2013), on-line document.
 - ³ Perry (2013), on-line document.
 - ⁴ Perry (2013), on-line document.
 - ⁵ Krasnow (2013), on-line document.
 - ⁶ Leung/Chan (2013).
 - ⁷ Biaz (2013), on-line document.
 - ⁸ Leung/Chan (2013)
 - ⁹ Perry (2013), on-line document.
 - ¹⁰ Leung/Chan (2013).
 - ¹¹ Biaz (2013), on-line document.
 - ¹² Leung/Chan (2013).
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 - ¹⁴ Leung/Chan (2013).
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 - ¹⁷ Leung/Chan (2013).
 - ¹⁸ Leung/Chan (2013).
 - ¹⁹ Jones (2010), p. 17.
 - ²⁰ Jones (2010), p. 87.
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 - ²² Pitzl-Waters (2011), on-line document.
 - ²³ Leung/Chan (2013), Episode 1.
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 - ³³ Johnson/Gleason (2008), p. 291.

Fairy Faith *continued*

Thank the Lord, rather than curiously exploring the world of Tarot cards and magic, my reaction was to think, “Well, I guess I can’t go any further in my fairy interest,” and I never pursued any further knowledge or insight into the magical. I see this as a divine deliverance from potential demonic control over my life, and I am very thankful. I have been fascinated to study fairy lore for this paper, not only because I am eager to identify the false worldview that is behind it, but because I genuinely find it interesting, and I know that if I were not a disciple of Christ I would most certainly be a disciple of Brian Froud (a popular fairy artist) and others like him.

Fairy lore has its origins in every culture and has existed since ancient times, and is now witnessing a resurgence of interest.

The most popular “branch” of fairies comes from Celtic countries. It is built around an entirely pagan belief system, with fairies being traditionally worshipped or highly respected throughout the ages. They are called the “Good People,” and dwell in every natural landscape. Their realm is called “Tir Na Nog,” “the Land of Eternal Youth,” “Otherworld” and other such titles.

Beliefs about fairies have evolved over the years, perhaps starting with the ancient gods and goddesses of tribal peoples, or the creatures of Greek mythology. In reality, the multitude of origin stories for fairy folk are diverse, but can be grouped into a few theories. Origins of fairies can be put into these categories:

The Pygmy Theory states, “The whole fairy-belief has grown up out of a folk memory of an actual Pygmy race.”¹

The Pygmy Theory claims that fairies are actually descendent from a tribe of ancient pygmy humans. This theory is easily debunked by several arguments, including the fact that fairy-folk are associated with dwarves and giants, which confuses the pygmy theory (giants can’t be pygmies), and also, there are fairies where pygmies never were, so the two mustn’t be connected.²

Other possible origins of fairies are included in the following; they may be Spirits of the dead, Fallen Angels, Demons, or Pagan deities. They may be Elementals: personifications of different elements of nature, typically earth, fire, water, air and spirit.

Another option is the Naturalistic Theory: “In ancient and in modern times man’s belief in gods, spirits, or fairies has been the direct result of his attempts to explain or to rationalize natural phenomena.”³ In this theory, fairies are the causers of weather changes, good or bad luck, etc. However, “The Naturalistic Theory examines only the environment and its effects, and forgets



Poster for upcoming fairy festival.

altogether the germ idea of a fairy to be acted upon.”⁴ In other words, the Naturalist Theory observes only the effect, and neglects the cause.

In the Druid Theory, fairy folk stories are explained to have come from old tales of ancient Druidesses, who were remembered as fairy women. “The fold-memory of the Druids and their magical practices is alone responsible for the Fairy-Faith.”⁵ The emphasis on Druidesses, however, deflates this theory. Druidesses were never very influential, or important (especially when considering that fairy faith extends beyond Celtic culture), so to claim that such a vast, complex web of stories of fairy-folk came from them would be ludicrous.

Another theory – The Mythological Theory – “is of very great importance. It is that fairies are the diminished figures of the old pagan divinities of the early Celts; and many modern authorities on Celtic mythology and folk-lore hold it.”⁶

The last plausible theory is the “Psychological Theory,” which “includes or absorbs the four theories [Naturalistic, Pygmy, Druid, and Mythological] already advanced to account for the belief in fairies.”⁷

More important than the origins of fairy folk is what people think of them today. Fairy culture is heavily influenced and connected to Theosophy (that a knowledge of God may be achieved through spiritual ecstasy, direct intuition, or special individual relations), Buddhism (holds that there is no creator god and gives a central role to the doctrine of karma), the Green Movement (environmental awareness and emphasis on being at one with the earth), the Occult (Tarot readings, using fairies to discern spiritual truths, harnessing energy, etc.), Paganism (decidedly anti-Christian), and Tribal Culture (nomadic communities, hippie movement). Those who believe in fairies claim that they exist not only under the moniker “fairy,” but also by many other names, though they are constitutionally the same thing.

“The Ancients called its inhabitants gods, genii, daemons, and shades; Christianity knows them as angels, saints, demons, and souls of the dead; to uncivilized tribes they are gods, demons, and spirits of ancestors; and the Celts think of them as gods, and as fairies of many kinds.”

This does not explain the attraction, though. The real draw of fairy faith is the experience of seeing a fairy, communicating with an other-worldly or trans-human/sub-human creature, having a mystic experience beyond regular, ordinary life, and being at one with the whole earth. The prominence of Nature (capital “N” intentional) in fairy lore is very obvious.

“The natural aspects of Celtic countries... impress man and awaken in him some unfamiliar part of himself – call in the Subconscious Self, the Subliminal Self, the Ego, or what you will – which gives him an unusual power to know and to feel invisible, or psychical, influences.”⁸

Fairy followers love Nature and have a hatred for city life. W.Y. Evens-Wentz said of city folk:

“They themselves have ceased to be natural. Wherever under modern conditions great multitudes of men and women are herded together there is bound to be an unhealthy psychical atmosphere never found in the country – an atmosphere which inevitably tends to develop in the average man who is not psychically strong enough to resist it, lower at the expense of higher forces or qualities, and thus to inhibit any normal attempts of the Subliminal Self (a well-accredited psychological entity) to manifest itself in consciousness.”⁹

Accordingly, city dwellers, because of their starvation of the “Natural,” are also starved of a “natural subconscious power,” and fall sadly under “the hypnotic sway of city influences.” In the city, people are obsessed with business, politics, and society. They are divorced from Nature, and live in a world of unrest and worry, impure smoggy air, and darkness. The artificial replaces the natural; traffic replaces quiet solitude, ‘Civilization’ and ‘Culture’ replaces Nature.

It is argued that country “bumpkins” on the other hand, have an intuition and ease of belief that city dwellers lack.

“Not only has he the will to believe, but he has the right to believe; because his belief is not a matter of being educated and reasoning logically, nor a matter of faith and theology – it is a fact of his own individual experiences, as he will tell you. Such peasant seers have frequently argued with me to the effect that ‘One does not have to be educated in order to see fairies’.”¹⁰

Fiona McLeod summed this up poetically: “In the Beauty of the World lies the ultimate redemption of our mortality. When we shall become at one with nature in a sense profounder even than the poetic imaginings of most of us, we shall understand what now we fail to discern.”

Arthur Conan Doyle [pictured below], when addressing the Cottingley photographs - said to prove the existence of fairies - spoke with great hope. He quotes Mr. E.L. Gardner, a discoverer of fairies and an authority on theosophic teaching:

“For the most part, amid the busy commercialism of modern times, the fact of [fairies’] existence has faded to a shadow, and a most delightful and charming field of nature study has too long been veiled. In this twentieth century there is a promise of the world stepping out of some of its darker shadows. Maybe it is an indication that we are reaching the silver lining of the clouds when we find ourselves suddenly presented with actual photographs of these enchanting little creatures – relegated long since to the realm of the imaginary and fanciful.”¹¹



People see fairies as a link to their happiness. If one were to put “fairy faith” into concise steps meant to move the individual towards happiness, it would look like this:

Step 1. Go into Nature and become one with it. You can do this by going on spiritually themed nature walks, such as the “Enchanted Walkabout” in Florida. As you walk through the forest, the guide shows you the spirits of the garden, the tree people, the elements of the air, water and earth. You *experience* the joy and energy of the fairy realm as you walk, smelling the smells of the forest, hearing voices of the unseen realm, and seeing the beauty of nature. The purpose is to “awaken, and become one with your world.”¹²

Step 2. The more you spend time in Nature, the higher chance you will come across a fairy, or a gate to the fairy realm, “Tir Na Nog.” The chance to go to the Land of Eternal Youth is an attractive one, and if you can enter, you stand a chance of being adopted by the fairy folk.

“And it is well known that ‘Fairies,’ as well as ‘Feens,’ while possessing distinct innate attributes, *were not averse to obtaining adherents from other races*, who thus became ‘Feens’ and ‘Fairies’ by adoption” (italics added).¹³

If you return out of Tir Na Nog, you emerge as a “reborn” person, with insights to a different realm and true oneness with the earth. This process of “rebirth” is actually *reincarnation*, which is Step. 3.

“‘In Greek mythology as in Irish, the conception of rebirth proves to be a dominant factor of the same religious system in which Elysium (the place at the ends of the earth to which certain favored heroes were conveyed by the gods after death) is likewise an essential feature.’ (~Alfred Nutt) Death, as many initiates have proclaimed in their mystical writings, is but a going to that Other-world from this world, and Birth a coming back again; and Buddha announced it as his mission to teach men the way to be delivered out of this eternal Circle of Existence.”¹⁴

Another attractive thing about fairy culture is the community. On “monstrous.com,” in the religious section of the site, the writer comforts the reader this way: “If you feel different from the crowd, don't be ashamed. There are other people like you: vampires, therians, witches, people who see ghosts or talk to the dead, people who fly in the sky at night or turn into animals.”¹⁵

Weird folk of all types are welcome to join this community, or tribe, of believers. There are many conferences and festivals¹⁶ that are available to attend, where you can really experience the spiritual and meet with like-minded people. In the “Faerieworlds” conference there are many fun activities such as concerts, larp events, and workshops¹⁷ such as “Lupa: Mixing Art and Spirit,” “Mind Forest,” “To be Fey in this World,” “Re-enchanting the World,” “Spirit of the Witch,” “The Spell of Desire: Manifesting a Life that Matters,” and more. Fairy festivals are attractive to our culture and include fun activities, a sense of community, love for the Earth, and a way to connect with the spiritual.



- The Fairy & Human Relations Congress, which takes place in the state of Washington, has for its 2015 theme, “Returning Home in Sacred Union.” The poster on the left is from 2013.
- FaerieWorlds, below, is a mythological based transformational festival in Oregon. It is known for its world class musical acts, themes of eco-spirituality, and vibrant tribal community. Approximately 25,000 people attend.



If a fairy follower wants to connect with fairy folk a different way, the use of magic can be employed. On Brian Froud’s fairy website a book called *The Fairy’s Oracle* is for sale.

“[You can call] on sylphs, pans, gnomes - and, of course, faeries - to lead you on a delightful journey of adventure, discovery, and enlightenment that will illuminate the future and heal the heart and soul.

[You can get] a complete deck of 66 radiant cards... to personally connect to and communicate with the faeries.”¹⁸

Much could be written about the growth of fairy faith, and media interest too has increased, demonstrating a cultural upsurge in the subject. For example, in the November 17, 2014 *Plymouth Herald* there was a story about a new “fairy census,”¹⁹ where people in Britain and Ireland can report a fairy sighting. Although it is mostly an anthropologic study to discover what and why people believe, it shows that there is an interest and a longing for the supernatural.

What is behind all of this mystic hodge-podge? What worldview stands firm behind the festivals and folk-tales? The answer is Love of the World, *literally*. Those who embrace “fairy faith” have an immense respect and love for the Earth, and long only to be one with her. They have a desire for spiritual enlightenment, so as to have power over their own lives. And they want perfect community and unity amongst humans, so as to feel loved and connected.

To a spiritually-seeking world, these things sound so good and wise. However, the Bible says,

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever”

(1 John 2:15-17).

The problem with Fairy culture is it worships the created-order instead of the Creator. Fairy followers see the majesty of Nature and revere it for itself, instead of seeing and worshipping the One who is above all of it. “They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen” (Rom. 1:25).

Though there are many facets to Fairy/folklore culture, the Idea behind it is very simple: Created over Creator. This Idea is “as old as the earth itself.”

For the majority of Christians, it might be easy to think that “fairy” is a counter-culture trend that will simply fade away. Don’t be mistaken. As society accepts re-enchantment, the Idea behind Fairy will gain momentum. Indeed, “fairy” is as popular as ever.

In 1911, Mr. Evens Wentz, the American writer noted for his studies in Eastern spiritual traditions, made this remarkable statement,

“We believe that a greater age is coming soon, when all the ancient mythologies will be carefully studied and interpreted, and when the mythology of the Celts will be held in very high esteem.”²⁰

It is sad to see that his prediction is coming true. However, herein lies our triumph:

“Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;

let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,

he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness

and the peoples in his faithfulness.” (Ps. 96:11-13, italics added)

The Lord is supreme over all creation, and He reigns sovereign over it. The schemes of the devil cannot stand, for the Lord is Lord of all. This is our hope: the Person of God. He, in His Holy and mighty splendor, has proven himself more than worthy to rule over us, and by His merciful hand we are saved. **FC**

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¹ Evens-Wentz, *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries* (Oxford University Press, 1911), pg. 33.

² Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 34.

³ Evans-Wentz (1911), pg. 31.

⁴ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 33.

⁵ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 35.

⁶ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 36.

⁷ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 31.

⁸ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 30.

⁹ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 36.

¹⁰ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 40.

¹¹ Conan-Doyle, *The Coming of the Fairies* (George H. Doran Company, 1921, 1922), pp. 171, 172.

¹² www.enchantedwakabouts.com/walkabouts

¹³ MacRitchie, *Testimony of Tradition* (Woodfall and Kinder, 1890), pg. 83.

¹⁴ Evens-Wentz (1911), pp. 605-606, n. 358.

¹⁵ Monstrous.com (Monday, November 17, 2014)

¹⁶ One list of fairy gatherings: <http://www.faeryteachings.com/thefairytree/usa.html>

¹⁷ Workshop list: <http://faerieworlds.com/festival-information/workshops-2/>

¹⁸ Froud (2011), worldoffroud.com/books/faeriesoracle.php

¹⁹ *The Herald*, "Have you seen any fairies in Plymouth, new census asks?" November 17, 2014, online edition. www.plymouthherald.co.uk

²⁰ Evens-Wentz (1911), pg. 41-42.