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My favorite proverb is from Africa: "I am because we are." Certainly this article reflects the wisdom and creativity of more people than myself alone.

It exists because we are. I would like to thank Kim Atkinson, Richard Ely, Rowan Fairgrove, Anastasia Fischer, D. H. Frew, Anodea Judith, and Anna Korn. To all of them my most sincere gratitude.

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Hekate the Salvatrix in Late Antiquity

Hekate Soteira, A Study of Hekate's Roles in the Chaldean Oracles and Related Literature. by Sarah Iles Johnston. America Philological Association Classical Studies 21, Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1990, ISBN 1-55540-426-X hc, 1-55540-427-8 pb

This book is a revision of a dissertation by Sarah Iles Johnston, written while she taught in the Princeton Department of Classics. It is likely to intrigue persons interested in Hekate, in the development of late-stage Mediterranean magic and paganism, or in the Neoplatonic ideas of cosmic spheres and ensoulment
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Gods and peoples do not give each other up without a struggle. During the thousand years following the temples and plays of Classical Greece, when the Gods slept no further away than Olympus, inclination toward Neoplatonic philosophy made those Gods that survived transcendent, removing them to the celestial sphere above the moon. Hekate was a survivor. In the minds of many ordinary people, she always remained the chthonic goddess of the crossroads and source-protectress for witches; but to a select cadre of philosophers and theurgist-magicians, she became the intercessor between the celestial deities and the world of man, and furthermore, the Cosmic Soul from which each human's soul flowed.

From a complex field covering Neoplatonic and Middle Platonic concepts and a

… in Classical times Hekate acted as an escort and mediator between the world of man and the Underworld realms reached after death. She was favoured by the Orphics as the companion of Persephone. She might be petitioned for acts of magic and she controlled the chthonic daemons who did the magician's work … She dealt with the liminal gateways and carried their key.

subset of religious philosophy labelled Chaldean by its first writings, Sarah Iles Johnston has selected the parts describing Hekate's transformation, the world view of this group, her identification with the Cosmic Soul, and the Oracles attributed to her. Johnston then follows the development of the Chaldean doctrine. To relate Johnston's work to historical, Neoplatonic, and magical thought, one might wish to consult writings such as the Greek magical papyri and a copy of the full collection of 226 fragmentary Chaldean Oracles, of which Johnston uses 95.

The Oracles may have been written—or collected—by Julian the Theurgist, who was reputed to have taken part in the campaigns of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius *ca*. 172 AD and said to have used magic against the enemy. He was the son of Julian the Chaldean, who may also have written part of the Oracles. Johnston avoids this argument, stating, "use of the name 'Julian(s)' indicates my agreement only with the premise that the Oracles emerged during the mid to late 2nd century and not necessarily with the premise that they were composed by one or both of the Julians."

Julian claimed that the doctrines contained within the Oracles were handed down directly by "the god" or "the Gods". Hekate and Apollo were the two deities usually credited. Hekate is named five times and may speak directly in up to 11 fragments. Hekate/Soul is discussed in 66 fragments. Other deities named are Eros (2x), Zeus (2x), Rhea, the nymphs, and Helios, once each. Unlike surviving oracles from Delphian Apollo, which often concern economic and political matters, Hekate's oracles seem largely advice encouraging the spiritual and theurgical progress of the believer.

The word and concept of "theurgy" emerged at this time, meaning something different from magic (*goeteia*). Theurgy required proper piety and intention, designed to purify and prepare the soul of the theurgist in a way that ordinary magic did not. The pious theurgist subordinated himself to the gods, allowing them to work upon him; the traditional magician attempted to work upon the gods. The theurgist approached the divine through sacred names and tools directly given by the gods in oracles or "planted" to be discovered by the believer. He was enjoined to avoid divination by phys-

ical means such as bird flight and to open his mind to the messages of the gods, delivered through speaking statues, mediums speaking with the deities' voices, or direct epiphanies of the gods.

Chaldea was located in southern Babylonia near the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates. The Chaldeans were a semi-nomadic people from Arabia whose city was Ur. In 720 BC they briefly held the throne of Babylon and under Nebuchadnezzar II they captured Judaea. The Persian invasion of 539 BC ended their dynasty. In the Book of Daniel and by many writers of antiquity the name "Chaldean" was applied to legendary Babylonian magi learned in astronomy, astrology and magic. It was a name of power given to a doctrine developed seven centuries later: no more direct relationship has been implied.

The Neoplatonist and Chaldean systems modelled their cosmos on Plato's 3rd century BC writings, especially *Timaeus, Philebus* and *Laws*. Johnston extends her research through the commentaries of Porphyry, Plotinus, Psellus, Iamblichus, Proclus and Damascius.

How, then, did Hekate change? Even in Classical times Hekate acted as an escort and mediator between the world of man and the Underworld realms reached after death. She was favoured by the Orphics as the companion of Persephone. She might be petitioned for acts of magic and she controlled the chthonic daemons who did the magician's work Three-faced, she guarded the chaotic space of the triple crossroad, where travellers had to decide between two alternatives in order to continue their journey. She dealt with the liminal gateways and carried their key.

The Neoplatonists divided the cosmos into two realms: the divine celestial, which existed outward from the moon's orbit, and the worldly one of man, which lay beneath the moon. Since they were fond of tripartite systems, the Moon became the third, intermediary part. It became the location of Elysium and was identified with Hekate. Johnston says that verifiable associations between the Moon and Hekate do not survive from earlier than the first century, about two centuries after the evidence in which Moon is associated with Artemis. Hekate became two-faced instead of three. She looked upward and down, herself being the third part.

Above was the divine Father, who generated Ideas. His name is never given. Hekate's role was three-fold: through her womb she transmitted his Ideas and thereby structure to the physical world; she was both division and bond between the "Intelligible" and "Sensible" worlds above and below; and as the Cosmic Soul, she was the source of individual souls and enlivener of the physical world of man. Of the few traditional deities retained, she was the most accessible mediator between the increasingly transcendent male divinity and humans. The daemons or angels had moved up to the celestial realms—to control them, she must follow. But still she guided man through the uncertain journeys of dying and being born. Psellus said that she had the middle place among the gods and was the center of all power, also the source of dreams.

The second part of Johnston's book deals with Hekate's connection with the individual theurgist and also the role in the cosmogony for "angel", "iynx" and "daemon". The use of a top or iynx wheel, seeming to be a symbolic counterpart of the whirling iynx energy (the Idea of the Father God) is debated. There is also an Oracle in which Hekate gives

directions for making her telestika/statue, containing small lizards and wild rue. Finally, some Platonists divided the Cosmic Soul into two, creating a lower, irrational soul called Physis whose source was still Hekate and who carried her previous bad traits. Physis was associated with daemon-dogs capable of distracting the theurgist from his work.

Instructing the theurgist to recognize her epiphany, Hekate speaks:

If you say this to me many times,
you will observe all things growing dark,
For the curved bulk of the heavens disappears
and the stars do not shine;
The light of the Moon is hidden
and the Earth does not stand steady.
All things are revealed in lightning.
Having spoken these things,
you will behold a fire leaping skittishly
like a child over the aery waves;
Or a fire without form,
from which a voice emerges;
Or a rich light,
whirring around the field in a spiral.
But [it is possible] that you will see a horse
flashing more brightly than light,
Or a child
mounted on the swift back of a horse,
a fiery child or a child covered with gold,
or yet again a naked child;
Or even a child shooting arrows,
standing on a horse's back.
But when you see the sacred fire without form,
shining skittishly
throughout the depths of the Cosmos,
Listen to the voice of the fire.

Review by Kate Slater

In the opinion of the Pom editors, Ms Slater is a Canadian National Treasure.

Mything in action: new ethnicities, paganisms and English law.

Ethnicity, Law and Human Rights. by S. Poulter. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1998. hb, 391pp + bibliography, index, tables. ISBN 0-19-825773-2.

In this text Poulter considers the way in which the English legal system engages with a variety of ethnic groups, concentrating on a number of case studies. Although the focus of the work is ethnicity, rather than religious identity and practices, the case studies, as I shall discuss below, make this an important work for any student of the interaction between the law and religion in the United Kingdom jurisdictions. In this narrow review I wish to discuss some problems arising from Poulter's definition of ethnicity, in particular the problems his analysis poses to Pagans in the United Kingdom.

A concept of ethnicity is central to Poulter's discussion, but in developing it he departs from two obvious foundations for his discussion. At the very start of the text, he makes it clear that he favours legal analysis for its "clarity and precision of exposition in a subject often bedevilled by obfuscating sociological jargon, impenetrable to all save specialists in the subject" (p.1). His engagement with non-legal sources on ethnicity, accordingly, is fairly limited. He also departs from obvious legal sources on how to define ethnicity and ethnic groups, particularly the jurispru-

dence on the racial discrimination legislation. Instead, he favours a broader definition of an ethnic group as "a group of people differentiated from the rest of the community by racial origins or cultural background" (quoted on p.6). He relegates racial origins to the status of "merely ... the colour of their skin" (p.15), and clearly sees ethnicity as being a matter of cultural background. His emphasis on shared culture, and a common cultural heritage, leads him to discount the interests of groups, and hence of individuals, which do not possess these elements. This is particularly to be noted in relation to non-Gypsy travellers, although a brief reference to Paganism per se also needs to be discussed.

The only case-study which does not deal with a community clearly defined largely by a shared religion is that discussing "Gypsies: The Pursuit of a Nomadic Lifestyle" (ch. 5). To clarify this, the other case studies deal with Jews and ritual slaughter; Muslims and family law derived from *shari'ah;* Hindus and the Bhaktivedanta Manor Temple; Sikhs, beards and turbans; and Rastafarians, dreadlocks and cannabis. Although all of these deal with elements of ethni-city which are as much cultural as religious—if that is a sensible distinction—the importance of the shared religion is clear. The discussion of the importance of nomadic lifestyle to Gypsies does not share this characteristic. It is in this case-study that the interests of groups Poulter is prepared to exclude from ethnicity are most clearly compromised.

In his discussion of "attitudes of the majority community" (p.150), Poulter notes "Conflict between gypsies and the settled population appeared to grow during the 1980s and early 1990s, perhaps accentuated by the adverse publi-city attracted by the antics of 'New Age Travellers' who were often mistakenly linked in the public mind with ethnic gypsies." (p.152). In a later discussion of the government reactions of the 1980s, he returns to this theme—"in 1986 the law of trespass was strengthened, following the antics of a convoy of 'hippies' who were attempting to make a pilgrimage to Stonehenge ... although this new statutory offence was aimed directly at bands of 'hippies' rather than at gypsies, it was clearly liable to be used against the latter in suitable circumstances" (p.166-7). In discussing a shift in government policy in the 1990s he stresses that "the advent of significant numbers of 'New Age Travellers' had complicated the problem" (p.173), in particular because members of the majority community tended to "attribute the behaviour of one group to the other ... Certainly, 'New Age Travellers' have a very tarnished image among Conservative voters in rural areas and their antics must have contributed to pressure on the Government for decisive action to be taken to curb unlawful encampments" (p. 174).

There is a tension between the discussion Poulter gives these two nomadic groups, and he seeks to resolve it, in passing, by a strong assertion. "While 'New Age Travellers' and 'hippies' also seek to follow a different pattern of life from that of the bulk of the majority population, they do not constitute an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority group. Hence, while their preference for a nomadic existence is certainly entitled to respect in a democratic society, specific differential treatment in law to preserve a distinctive cultural tra-

… there seem to be strong connections between conceptual problems posed by Rastafarians and Pagans to the legal system. As Poulter notes "to describe Rastafarianism as a religion when it is of such an amorphous nature and lacks any authoritative doctrine or controlling institutional framework may … give rise to practical difficulties of formal recognition …." (p.341-2). In the case of Rastafarianism, Poulter does not see these problems as being insurmountable …

dition is not required in their case, as it is for gypsies" (p.192).

There are two important elements to draw out from this defence. Firstly, Poulter's approach towards ethnicity allows him to blur "religious minority group" and "distinctive cultural tradition". Although in this quote being a religious minority group can show possession of a distinctive cultural tradition, is there not a danger that the absence of a cultural tradition might impact adversely on the treatment of a religious minority? I return to this point below. Secondly, while I would agree that New Age Travellers and hippies do not constitute a religious minority group, I would argue that Poulter is asking the wrong question.

An analogy might be drawn between a nomadic lifestyle and the consumption of wine. If we pose the question whether "those who consume wine" are a religous minority, the answer would seem to be no. A wide variety of people consume wine for a wide variety of purposes, including social and recreational ones. Dealing with this question might lead us to consider that prohibition of wine would not raise any questions relating to religious minorities. If the question we pose, however, is whether one particular, specific, group of those who consume wine, for instance Catholics in communion, constitute a religious minority, the answer would seem to be yes. Thus, prohibition of wine would raise questions relating to a religious minority. Poulter asks the general question, rather than unpacking the different individuals, and groups of individuals, he treats under this term. I would not argue that all 'New Age Travellers' adopt a nomadic lifestyle as part of their religious practices and identities; I would not argue that all 'New Age Travellers' who actually identify with a New Age spirituality, a Pagan spirituality, or both, adopt a nomadic lifestyle as part of their religious practices and identities. I would argue that Poulter has neglected the possibility that at least some of this group treat their nomadic life as as cen-

tral to their religious life, as some Gypsies to their cultural life. In the quote above, some of the 'New Age Travellers' may well have been on a religious journey to Stonehenge.

Paganisms are dealt with extremely briefly in the chapter dealing with Rastafarians, which is unfortunate, as there seem to be strong connections between conceptual problems posed by Rastafarians and Pagans to the legal system. As Poulter notes "to describe Rastafarianism as a religion when it is of such an amorphous nature and lacks any authoritative doctrine or controlling institutional framework may, as we shall see, give rise to practical difficulties of formal recognition by the state and its bureaucracy" (p.341-2). In the case of Rastafarianism, Poulter does not see these pro-blems as being insurmountable in recog- nising them as a group entitled to consideration as such. Additionally, he rejects judicial opinion suggesting that Rastafarianism lacks sufficient shared history to be an ethnic group — "To regard a sixty year history as insufficient for the construction of an ethnic group is to disregard modern anthropological perceptions of ethnicity and ethnic identity as concepts which can be fashioned, moulded, and even invented to suit particular social circumstances" (p.354). The application of this approach to Paganisms seems clear. Unfortunately, the only reference to Paganisms in this chapter, and indeed the text as a whole, is at best ambiguous. In discussing religious identities and practises of prisoners, he notes "There is sufficient evidence of the usual attributes of a religion, including reverence for a deity, to warrant such recognition, and even Pagan prisoners are now permitted to record their religion officially" (p.364). It may be that Poulter implicitly recognises that some of the structural aspects of Rastafarianism which pose problems to the legal system are even more pronounced in Paganism. This is a preferable reading to a suggestion that Rastafarianism is a more authentic religion than Paganism.

In conclusion, I would suggest that a number of problems are demonstrated by Poulter's discussion of ethnicity. Firstly, ethnicity might seem an attractive concept with which to secure fundamental human rights for minorities within the United Kingdom jurisdictions. As it has been read by Poulter, who it should be noted takes a considerably more liberal view of the term than the courts, it may encompass some religious communities, but exclude others. The protection of the rights of minority ethnic groups is important, but it is not synonymous with the protection of religious rights. Secondly, even as thoughtful a writer as Poulter, well aware of the dangers of structural and doctrinal demands imported from well-estalished religious systems, can be led into discounting individual rights through too broad a focus on the religious community and the religious organisation. Both of these problems are of general importance, but particularly acute when considering the position of Pagans within the United Kingdom.

It may be hoped that the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into United Kingdom law will enhance the protection of individual religious rights, and avoid the problems flowing from an ethnicity analysis of this type. Certainly, the jurisprudence on the religious liberty guarantees of the Convention holds out some hope. But it should be

noted that, even in the act of incorporation, the United Kingdom legal system stresses organisational and group religious rights. The probable final draft of the instrument incorporating the ECHR into United Kingdom law provides that "if a court's determination of any question arising under this Act might effect the exercise by a religious organisation (itself or its members collectively) of the Convention right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion, it must have particular regard to the importance of that right" (Human Rights Bill, clause 13). It is to be hoped that legal protection of the rights of religious organisations, and religious communities, will not eclipse protection of the rights of the individual religious believer.

Review by Peter W. Edge

Professor Edge is the Senior Lecturer in Law and researches law at the University of Central Lancashire, in the UK. His main interests are the interaction of law and religion in the UK, and under pan-European bodies such as the European Convention on Human Rights. He has published a number of articles on the topic, including a piece dealing with Paganisms in the Journal of Civil Liberties. *He is currently working on a book in the area, due for release by Kluwer in 2000.*

READERS' FORUM

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to the nature of any and all reality as being nothing more nor less than human subjective self-expression and projection. And on the other hand, in some more progressive pockets of postmodern thought, one finds a renewed appreciation of the co-participation of ecological and cosmological elements. The new physics, for example, instructs us that what we discover depends on where and when and how we look; that there is something else out there beyond human discourse. How does this relate to the questions of being self-aware about our own theoretical assumptions, and the manipulations of data to fit pre-conceived theories? How do we shift this debate beyond the overly deconstructionist claim there is no there there, and the overly empiricist claim that the scientific method produces objective data that are value-free?

Philosophers of science advise us, "all data are theory-laden." I doubt anyone ever has absolute truth; neither humans nor human institutions are infallible; and we need to keep open minds. I also think we can settle into probable conclusions that are subject to later amendment or refutation. The significant question for truth-seekers then becomes how do we constitute shared thresholds of plausibility and probability? I want to not just debate facts with archaeologists, but to dialogue about theoretical frameworks and primary assumptions. To some extent, all humans "manipulate" or rather construct data within theoretical and philosophical frameworks. But what allows us to change our *systems of thought* to see reality in a clearer way?

Contrary to what some of Gimbutas' crit-