

Episode #007 – Paganism and Being Pagan

The Infinite and the Beyond

An esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind hosted by Chris Orapello
www.infinite-beyond.com

❖ Show Introduction

- Its Sunday, August 23rd, 2009 Thanks for joining me again. Hello and welcome to the seventh episode of "The Infinite and the Beyond," an esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind. Where we explore a variety of topics which relate to life and one's unique spiritual journey. I am your host Chris Orapello.
- Intro music by George Wood.
- In this episode we discuss...
 - Paganism and being Pagan with Amie Tolomeo.
 - I respond to listener email and talk about paranormal investigation.
 - We learn about Hermes Trismegistus and Hermeticism in A Corner of the Occult.
 - We see who won the copy of Arthur Hinds' album *Poetry of Wonder*
 - And I discuss the principle of vibration as we continue with our journey through the Kybalion.

❖ Intermission

- Hello to old listeners and if you have just recently found the show I would like to welcome you to the show family.
- The audience numbers increase daily and just continue to grow.
- Thank you for being with me for this episode and now let's do some announcements.

❖ Announcements

- (Background Music: ?????? by ??????)
- PaganSpace.net - I'm Back!
- Congratulations to Oraia the Sphinx for producing her tenth episode of Media Astra Ac Terra! Looking forward to many more episodes to come. 😊
- As some of you may know already, I've redesigned the show website and added a sound player to the home page as well as to some of the show pages (blog, paganspace, myspace) so the show can be listened to by those who frequent those pages or by those who happen to come across the show. Go me!

❖ Thank You!

- (Background Music: “?????” by ??????)
- iTunes
 - The show has received some ratings, but has yet to receive any further reviews by the listeners.
 - If you use iTunes and appreciate this show then please feel free to leave a review for the show. I would appreciate it if you did so and would be happy to mention your review in the next episode.
- Podcast Alley?
 - By the end of July the show received 31 votes which is a record high for the show.
 - This enabled it to finish in the top five of the religion and spirituality category which is just awesome! Thank you to everyone who voted for the show! You Rock!
 - And if you have yet to cast your vote this month, please visit the show website and click the Vote Podcast Alley button on the left side of the screen. And the deed will be done.
 - Be sure to always vote for all your favorite pagan podcasts on podcast alley because we’re all just so awesome and we appreciate your vote.
- Chat Room?
 - Not so active... though Amanda dropped by. Sorry I missed you Amanda.
- Yahoo Group?
 - Has been active.
 - Oraia the Sphinx, Soaring Lilith, and I have been chatting it up on yahoogroups and it seems to be the most active list a long side the group on Facebook.
- Forum?
 - Hello to Artemis and Neo Pagan Wolf who joined the forum recently.
- Facebook?
 - Has exploded with members in the past month. Welcome to all new members especially the Pennsylvanian strangers I celebrate the sabbats with!
- Frappr Map?
 - TP from New Jersey... TP doesn’t stand for Toilet Paper, well at least not in this case. She’s a friend of mine and of the guys from Haunted New Jersey.
 - Oberon Whitethorn from South Carolina
 - Ba of Osiris from Turnwater, Washington
 - Zaronic Hicwitch from who produces a new podcast called Hicwitch that can be found listed on the links page of the show website.
- PaganSpace.net
 - Like I mentioned earlier I’m back on paganspace.net

- Welcome to all the new members of the show group page.

❖ As of Late...

- (Background music: “?????”)
- Show Swag?
 - T-shirts at some time?
 - Desktop icon there for anyone who would like to have for their desktop
 - Size 550 x 570 JPEG
- Happy Lughnasadh ☹ Too bad I missed it... Though I am looking forward to Mabon as I have been asked to participate in the ceremony.
- The Moustache Game: Deep Blue Sea
 - A friend of a friend introduced us to what Tara and I refer to as the Moustache Game or Moustache Theater.
 - While watching a movie or show place a life-size paper moustache on the screen of your TV, we have an older TV so we can do this without affecting the screen.
 - What you do after placing the moustache is watch the movie and take utter delight when it lands perfectly between the upper lip and nose of one of the actors or animals in the movie. As childish as this sounds for a bunch of 30 year olds it’s actually fun to do as it turns the worst movie into a good time. You can even turn this into a drinking game where you all drink when the moustache lands on someone or finish your glass when it lands on a cop who already has a moustache. The original game that we heard of was done with the Friday the 13th movies and so when it landed on Jason Voorhees that was extra special.
 - If you don’t see how this can be a fun thing to do when watching someone on TV (which I doubt) check out the show notes where I placed some pictures from the game or if you have friended me on Facebook I posted all the good images from the night we watched Deep Blue Sea. So, you may have already seen them and this have already been infected with the greatness of this game!

❖ Promo

- *Get Witchified!* With Oseanna

❖ Segment: What does Paganism mean?

- (Background Music: “?????”)
- I want to take this episode to address some core elements, one’s which I have yet to discuss directly. I realized that I have yet to define and or discuss the term pagan, what it means, and what is to me; and for the context of

this podcast I think I should. After all, doing so creates more of a foundation for me to stand on for later episodes and provides you the listener with a deeper understanding of where I’m coming from.

- The word ‘Paganism’ is often defined or explained to non-pagans in a variety of ways all of which are often too general to really convey any actual understanding of the word because of the contradictions often inherent in most of the explanations given. After all, if we have to follow up the use of a term with an explanation or definition, which is often the case, then why use it? Why not simply find a more suitable term to use one which other people already understand or why not simply jump right to the definition instead of attempting to use the term? To touch upon the issues with using the word paganism lets go over the many ways in which it is often defined or explained...
 - For example, the most common explanation is that the term Paganism refers to any Non-Abrahamic religion.
 - Meaning any religion that isn’t Judaism, Christianity, or Islam; which would then imply that Buddhism, Hinduism, and Shinto for example are all Pagan religions, which most people of those religions would often argue against labeling themselves or their religion as being pagan.
 - Another attempt to define paganism tries to claim that religions that are pre Christian in origin are Pagan religions.
 - Aside from re-lumping or referencing Hinduism and Buddhism, this attempt at explaining the term also includes Judaism as well as a host of other faiths and traditions which vary too greatly to accurately define or portray a clear example of paganism.
 - Another popular approach states that religions which are earth centered in faith and practice are pagan religions, however, this would disregard Hellenic re-constructionists, most forms of Kemetism, and even Vodou which many feel is a pagan religion, including my girlfriend who has been a Vodou practitioner for nearly the entire 8 years that we’ve been together. So, saying that paganism is earth-centered may refer to some established pagan religions, but it definitely doesn’t refer to all religions that are self-stated as being pagan.
 - Another definition defines paganism as being polytheistic; being of many deities, but Vodou for example is monotheistic and some practitioners of Dianic Wicca practice a faith that can often be referred to as being monotheistic as well. So, polytheism isn’t entirely consistent among the variety of pagan religions.
 - In reference to the Latin origin of the term pagan, being the word paganus, implies that the religion of a pagan is of someone who dwelled in the country, but how can we say that everyone who dwelled in the country practiced the same religion? Though, I imagine they would have to do so out of fear of persecution or of being ostracized, but, like the terms suburbanite, American, Canadian, etc. I imagine that paganus referred more to a geographic group of peoples than to a religious community of which one does not always dictate the other though there are exceptions.

- So, we have come to an impasse. After going through the many ways in which pagan and paganism has been applied and defined, the only thing that has been clear is that it is an umbrella term with a lot of holes in it.
- How are we able to use an umbrella term that carries no single element that can be regarded as being consistent across the spectrum of faiths which the umbrella covers? Or is paganism more of a floating term one which some people choose to use and apply at will. Making it a point of identification like any other label or name?
- Though I would agree that yes, all these definitions of paganism can apply to some pagan religions, they however cannot all be used at the same time to define any particular religion deemed to be pagan. So, we’re forced to pick and choose how we apply and use the term.
- It’s an interesting impasse. Here we have a word that is so widely used by a community of people, but yet a proper singular definition cannot be determined except in isolated cases because when one definition gets used in a broader sense, it falls apart as explained earlier.
- So, can we define Paganism?
 - No, I don’t think we can determine a solid definition of paganism at this time however this may change in the future as peoples understanding of what Paganism is also changes.
 - With its obvious lack of uncertainty, coming up with an accurate definition is Nye on impossible, and all that we can really do is use the inaccurate definitions to the best of our ability to use them properly in regards to ourselves and others.
- In regards to this show, this segment is meant to allow me to put my own use of the term into a proper context. So, when I use the word on this podcast you have an idea of what I am referring to.
- I realize this may be a strange way to explain this idea of paganism and what I imply when I use it, but when I use the term paganism, I’m mostly referring to those individuals whose interests, faiths, and practices can be found in the New Age or metaphysical section of the local book store... I know this is a weird way to approach it, but it does fix a lot of the problems the previous definitions created for us.
 - In this section of a bookstore you will often find...
 - Books on general Paganism as well as books on Wicca, Druidry, Asatru, Goddess worship, Urban Primitivism, vodou, chaos magick, forms of low and high magickal practices and techniques.
 - Books about the various cultural flavors of witchcraft,
 - Books on various old and new world religions and religious practices that have become popular in today’s world.
 - Books on divination, herbalism, stones, etc.
 - Though, I realize this explanation does not fit the problem entirely as I would not necessarily include everything found in that section of the book store as being Pagan because Conversations with God,

scientology, and the works of Anton Zsador LaVey do not really pertain to my view of what paganism is, at least in regards to how I use the term on this show and in my own life.

- But like I said, thinking of the term in this context does enable us to have a reference in regards to what I mean as paganism and that which is pagan in today’s world.
- For some further insight I decided to speak with Amie Tolomeo who as I mentioned earlier is the one of proprietors of Sun and Moon Metaphysical Shoppe located in Somerdale, NJ, but not only is she the proprietor of a local pagan store she is also the Coordinator for the Mid-Atlantic Region of the Pagan Pride Project and a co-local-coordinator of South Jersey Pagan Pride Day which will be in its sixth year this October...
- (*applause* sound clip)
- ... of which I presented at during its third year, which was a mistake I made when speaking of my involvement in it during the last episode. For those interested, Amie store can be found online at www.newagenewjersey.com.
- I just want to preface the following recording. This is my first attempt at doing an on-location recording for the show, which was done using a digital voice recorder that records in stereo. It’s not a bad recording, but it’s certainly different from the regular sound quality of the show. Think of this as my experiment in doing on-location work for the show, which may happen again as I would like to do a Pagan Pride Day episode in a couple of months during the South Jersey Pagan Pride Day. Anyway enough me rambling... Let’s hear some of my conversation with Amie.

❖ Segment: Amie Tolomeo

- File: What does Paganism Mean?
- File: Save the Pagan Babies
- File: Without God

❖ Promo

- *Get out of the Broom Closet* hosted by Drake Atlas
- *PPP Advertisement* by Dave from PCP

❖ Segment: Perchten Procession

- We’ll get back to the conversation with Amie in a bit, but I wanted to briefly touch upon something I found while doing research for this episode, read listener emails and visit the Corner in the Occult before we returned to our conversation with Amie.
- (Background Music: ???? by ????)

- When I was researching paganism I came across the Wikipedia entry for “paganism” and there is this picture found in the article about the Perchten procession in Klagenfurt, Austria, to quote the caption on Wikipedia “it is a remnant of a practice performed by the historical pagans of the area. Many elements of modern European culture and folklore originate among pagan beliefs and practices.”
- Concerned this image was inaccurate and possibly a picture taken from a horror or science fiction movie I began to do further research and it’s actually an image from a yearly processional event which occurs from the 21st of December to the 6th of January in the Germanic regions in Europe. The procession symbolizes the vanquishing of laziness and darkness and the coming of light, fertility and prosperity (which has a very New Year’s theme of changing bad habits and taking on good ones). Apparently there are two depictions found in the folklore that this event is based upon, one is dark and menacing and the other is light and welcoming. It sounds pretty interesting and it’s nice to learn something new. I’m not sure what else is done during this event. If you don’t know what I mean by this procession check the blog as I have placed a link for the image in the show notes and if you haven’t seen this picture or know of this event, you may be taken back by it since the individual depicted in the image is pretty impressive looking.
- ❖ If any of you happen to participate in this, have stories, or pictures of it that you have taken please share them with the show either by sending them to chris@infinite-beyond.com where I will post them in the blog or if you like, post them in the forum under Perchten Procession.

- ❖ **Letters and Messages**
 - (Background Music: ???? by ?????)
 - Since the last episode....
 - We’ve had some great feedback on Podcast Alley, Facebook, and on the Frappr Map, and I want to say thank you to those who left comments for the show. Your support and messages are always appreciated.
 - Ba of Osiris from Turnwater Washington wrote on the Frappr map:
 - “Truly, you are the American Deo's Shadow, and I really mean that!”
 - Oh, so what you’re saying is I’m not good enough to be Canadian? That I have to be American! *gasp* Just kidding. Thanks. ☺ That means a lot to me to hear that.
 - In reference to The Value of Change segment from episode #006, Auberon Draenen Wen wrote this on the Facebook group: His blog: <http://draenenwen.blogspot.com/>
 - On the whole, I think change can be a good thing within reason. I do not, however, now nor will I ever support change for its own sake. To me constant unstoping change is a cancer.
 - Change must in Paganism be framed by need and with good reasons like a carefully cultivate plant, growing constantly but slowly building off older growth.

- As to the need for circles and ceremonies, well yes we are a religion. It is, or at least it SHOULD, more than just our relationship to the Powers as individuals but our relationship with ourselves as a Pagan community and the communities' relationship to the Powers.
- This said the Gods won't punish us for missing; well maybe they would if we made a commitment to be there or where part of the Priesthood or had a duty there and didn't have a good reason to shrink it.
- I also think we are approaching the time when we cannot allow Paganism to keep being "Whatever you want it to be" it must to some extent crystallize as what is and what isn't. This isn't to say what is judged none Pagan should be considered bad, Pagans could even still follow it, but those that have a majority of non-Pagan views would be better served finding the communities that hold their views.
- But then I keep being told to go back to the Catholic Church so take it with a bit of salt, lemon and tequila.
 - ◆ In response: I agree. Change for its own sake is pointless as there should be a reason for it. And yes constant change, in the sense of a constant restructuring and reworking, is a cancer. Though, we are always in a state of change and growth, but I know what you mean.
 - ◆ A thoughtful, calculated, and appropriate sense for change is what is needed to ensure paganism grows properly in the today's world.
 - ◆ The idea of community is important like you mentioned, but I would be careful to not allow us to fall into being a part of an oppressive religion, similar to what some of us have moved away from. The powers that be were there before we were. They were there before we acknowledged them. And they will still be there long after we have returned to the earth. I don't think we have to worship or honor them, but that as modern neo-pagans doing so only helps our situation and understanding of the world around us as well as reflects our sense of the divine. Meaning, by being who we are and believing as we do, worshiping and honoring them is only fitting and proper, but not expected.
 - ◆ I would like to see some organization occur in paganism, but still not deter solitary or personal practice. One of the strengths of neo-paganism is the lack of exclusivity, which I admit has also been its downfall at times; though I think we do need to harbor this unique quality. I think, full fledge Catholic/ Vatican like organization would be a huge mistake and even a regression in the development of the religion as a whole.

➤ Amanda from Ontario Canada wrote:

- One of my favorite shows is Creepy Canada, on one of your previous podcasts you said that not all shows of ghost hunting and such are not always what they seem to be. I was just wondering if this show is what it is like or not. Thanks! –Amanda
 - Thanks for the message Amanda. I'm not familiar with the show Creepy Canada, but I can give you some tips on spotting problematic ghost shows or local ghost hunter groups that you may be familiar with as both scenarios often spread misinformation or are simply fraudulent.

- For example: NJ is full of ghost hunter groups of which 99% of them have no idea what they are doing and you can bear witness that they have no idea what they are doing by visiting their websites because if you know what to look for you can spot them for what they are without even meeting them. I know I’m sounding egotistical and presumptuous, but it’s true most of the shows and groups are misrepresenting paranormal investigation as a process and practice. And here are the red flags for you and others to take note of...

◆ **Fostering Superstition**

➤ Using religious terminology

- Such as demons, blessings, exorcisms, etc., are not indicative of a scientific practice.
 - For example: Demons can’t be proven to exist.
 - ◆ So, to claim a demon or some other “type of spirit” is present is wrong.

➤ Working in the Dark.

- Regardless of having night shot capabilities, these cameras still don’t see as well in the dark and neither do investigators.
 - Also think about this.... Night shot cameras illuminate a space with infrared light and the cameras are able to see this light. So in this situation the investigator is like a blind person turning on a light in a room. The light may be on, but they can’t see it.
- Also working in the dark or at night is people being superstitious and makes things seem spooky. Things happen in the day just as much as if not more so than they do at night. I have a saying “If you’re lights out, then you’re in the dark!”

➤ Cemeteries

- For example, a lot of groups in New Jersey periodically visit cemeteries to conduct investigations, which is absurd.
 - Hauntings tend to occur where people lived and not where they died or for that matter where their body it buried.
 - ◆ Going to cemeteries is superstitious and what is often thought of as being a place where the dead lurk. Lurk not meaning 6ft under.

◆ **Misuse of equipment.** which happens more than you realize.

➤ None of the equipment used was designed or is able to detect “ghosts”

- Literally. Some people will misconstrue what they’re equipment is telling them by embellishing on their findings.

➤ EMF meters.

- Detect EMF fields
 - If ghosts are disembodied people then these meters should also react to people which they don’t.

➤ IR Thermometers

- Do not take air readings. They only take surface readings. So shooting them into an open field does no good and if someone is shooting them around in a house they’re only taking the temperature of whatever surface they’re pointing at whether it’s a wall, the floor, the ceiling, furniture, another person, etc.
- Thermal Imaging Cameras (which are not directly paired up with video cameras to act as a control).
 - I’ve only played with one these briefly and they seem to be similar to an IR thermometer in that they only take surface temperatures as well. So you’re not going to capture anything invisible with this camera. They may give you a reading on steam or smoke providing that it is dense enough to bounce the IR light off of.
 - Often tough to read what is being filmed which is why they should be paired up with a normal video camera.
 - And oh yea, ghosts don’t have body temperatures.
 - Can’t see cold spots so, they won’t show up on film.
- Still photography
 - All the alleged ghost pictures that use to be associated with still photography are the result of camera error.
 - The lack of time element in still photography allows for a lot of misunderstanding to occur.
 - ◆ “Photographic Anomalies” article on MAPR website which can be found at www.midatlanticparanormalresearch.com
 - Only good for documenting the situation.
- Video
 - Should only be used to help maintain control of a situation. Video can help one know what is going on at a particular time and is good for cross referencing material.
 - ◆ Also with the lights on.
- ◆ EVPs (Electronic Voice Phenomena)
 - Are awesome forms of evidence, but recording has to be done under a strict controlled environment. I doubt everyone is being accounted for during a television shoot. Or if you’re having a local paranormal or ghost hunter group in your home and they have multiple teams in multiple places all at the same time cross contamination will occur in all audio recording being done.
- ◆ Conduct of Group

- If they treat the location as if it were a tourist attraction.
 - Best way to describe it.
- Large group of people, all working at the same time all over the house creates false evidence.
 - Situation like this eliminates any sense of control one can have over the environment.
- If you’re in one of these groups and you don’t cross reference your equipment or experiences you’re going to come up with false evidence.
 - For example: If you’re listening to audio and you don’t follow that up with watching corresponding video footage there’s a problem. Or if you think you caught something and don’t check it with all the other equipment present during that moment, there’s a problem.
- If a group’s website is full of pictures, video, and audio this is also a red flag. As
 - 1) They’re probably not cross referencing their findings which would create less “evidence.”
 - 2) They have no real standard in regards to their findings. Meaning everything gets published from the good stuff down to the pictures of dust balls and reflections, to the video of a flash light shining in from another room or the recording that could very well be contaminated by the team working underneath down in the basement.
 - If an investigator is going to put evidence out there for public consumption they had better feel confident in what they’re showing. Because filtering out questionable material shows a sense of integrity for one’s work and in turn respects the integrity of the public as a whole.
- So, Amanda with keeping all I just said in mind... you be the judge of Creepy Canada. Let me know what you think.
- SapphoRose from Columbia, South Carolina wrote:
 - Merry Meet, Chris - First off, I subscribe to just about every pagan/witchcraft podcast out there and I must say, yours is the most enlightening. I don't appreciate hearing podcasts where there are rants about nonsense, how some-one's day went, who's hot, and no intelligent information. I liked the comet as sperm and earth/planet as egg theory you shared with us in episode #006. Do you know anything about quantum physics? If you don't, I can turn you on to some good books written by physicists who excellently explain it in layman's terms. Try "The Elegant Universe." It should be in your local library. It speaks of parallel universes, Quantum Physics., etc... If you can, I'd like to see you do a show on that and apply this using pagan science. I'd also like more shows on Hermes Trismegistus and Hermeticism. Keep up the great podcasts, Say purr to your cat, and Merry Part, for now.
 - Response (Kind of adlibbed)

- ◆ Thank you for the kind words about the show.
- ◆ I try and make everything I talk about relevant to the listener even when I talk about my life and if not I just try and keep that stuff to a minimal. I do feel though that for the sake of the show I do need to be open and personal with who I am so that the listeners can better identify with me as a host and presenter, which is why I often bring up recent events in my life in the beginning of each show. After all, my everyday life is where I experience my religion and where I learn about it and myself.
- ◆ Quantum Physics?
 - Recommends Book: “The Elegant Universe”
- ◆ Hermes huh? I think I can help you out Sapphorose. Linda.... oh Linda...

❖ **Segment: A Corner in the Occult: Hermes Trismegistus and Hermeticism** (approx. 1300-1500 words)

- (Background Music: “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer)
- Hello and welcome to “A Corner in the Occult” Where we focus on one part or person from the history of occultism. In these regular segments, I touch upon many aspects of the occult and I hope to offer you something new or at least something to think about. The information presented is always done so in the best manner possible in regards to its content and accuracy depending on the available sources. There is a lot in occultism that one may never choose to look into, and here you have the opportunity to learn about something which you may have never bothered to investigate. And oddly enough there are a lot of people who may not be that aware of what today’s topic is on...
- Much of the foundation of Western Occultism is rooted in the philosophy and practice of Hermeticism which stems from the writings and teachings of Hermes Trismegistus. The name Trismegistus, meaning *Thrice Greatest* probably comes from his association with Thoth, the Egyptian deity of knowledge, secrets, writing, and scribes who was also known as the great, great, great Thoth and whom the Greeks identified with their god Hermes. Other sources claim that the thrice nature of Hermes was that he contained knowledge of the three great wisdom of the universe being alchemy, astrology, and theurgy (being the operation of the sun, moon, and stars). Of which, revolved around earth, which at time compiled the sum total of existence.
- Hermes Trismegistus seemed to be a new version of both Hermes and Thoth because Hermes Trismegistus was viewed as being part god and part human. Though it is not generally viewed that Hermes Trismegistus actually lived at one time, there are several texts attributed as to having been authored by him and a tomb for his body allegedly existed within the Egyptian Empire because it was there that Alexander the Great found the Hermetic scrolls along with the legendary Emerald Tablet of which was being clutch by the dead hands of the alleged Thrice Greatest Hermes who was after all two times greater than Alexander himself.

- Upon its attainment and translation by Alexander's scholars, the tablet was put on display for all to admire and learn from. The tablet was reported as being a wonder in itself due to its beauty and craftsmanship. One individual who had seen the tablet on display is said to have written this about Alexander's great discovery:
 - *"It is a precious stone, like an emerald, where on these characters are represented in bas-relief, not engraved. It is esteemed above 2,000 years old. The matter of this emerald had once been in a fluid state like melted glass, and had been cast in a mold, and to this flux the artist had given the hardness of the natural and genuine emerald, by his art."*
- The Tablet itself contains 13 statements some of which are immediately recognizable by many pagans and occultists who may have not read the Tablet previously and some of those statements are...
 - "That which is below is like that which is above, and that which is above is like that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of One Thing."
 - "And as all things have proceeded from One, by the meditation of One, so all things are born from this One Thing, by adaptation."
 - "The Sun is the Father thereof. The Moon is its Mother."
 - Just to read a few
- Hermes himself can be viewed as an embodiment of the first quote as it was believed that he was part God and part Human making him a union of the above and the below which enabled him to accomplish the miracles of the One Thing, which his writings alluded to in their message of personal transcendence and one's union with deity, a goal which is now referred to as The Great Work which is often discussed in regards to High Magick and especially the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. This act being similar to the traveling up through the 30 Aethyrs found in the cosmological layout of Enochian Magic or the climbing of the Sephiroth found on the Tree of Life from the Qabalah, which very much could have been influenced by the teachings of Hermes.
- Hermeticism primarily grew during the period of often referred to as Late Antiquity. It began a long side Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, and early Christianity of which all vary to some degree in regard to each other concerning their philosophical, theological, and cosmological perspectives of existence.
- The primary writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, often called the Hermetica, include the Emerald Tablet and the Corpus Hermeticum (also known as the Divine Pymander), but Asclepius 21-29 a short document found in The Nag Hammadi Library which is a text of Gnostic scriptures has also been named at times revealing the connection Hermeticism has with Gnosticism.
- Regardless of the historical reality of Hermes Trismegistus, an issue beholden of many ancient religious and spiritual icons, a philosophical legacy attributed to the great great great man exists nonetheless and one which has influenced and inspired much of the western world and not simply western occultism...
- Through Hermes mastery of the sun, moon, and stars via alchemy, astrology, and theurgy we discover a spiritual system built on mastery of the outer and inner self. Through one's knowledge of one self, they in-turn increase

an understanding of the other. This ability to increase one’s knowledge relates to the notion of transcendence and one’s ability to commune with God and to ultimately ascend from the earthly plain to reunite oneself with deity through knowledge, self mastery, and personal spiritual transformation.

- Hermeticism is said to have influenced occultists John Dee, Frances Barrett, Eliphas Levi, and others. And was a primary element in the teachings of the Rosicrucians, influenced Esoteric Christianity, and one of the foundations for Western Esotericism and Occultism of which is still an integral part of the Western Magickal Tradition.
- Thank you. This has been another Corner in the Occult.
- Suggestions for A Corner in the Occult are welcomed and encouraged so please be sure to contact the show online via the website, the yahogroup, or through the show forum.

❖ **Pagan Podcast Promo/s**

- College Witch Promo with Dan

❖ **Segment: A conversation with Amie Tolomeo continued...**

- (allow File: Being Pagan to begin right after the College Witch promo)

❖ **Promo**

- Proud Pagan Podcasters
- (Sound Clip: Dragnet_nodoz)

❖ **Show Segway**

- In a bit we’ll be delving back into The Kybalion for our third part of it, but first let’s do our contest draw to see who won Arthur Hinds’ new album *Poetry of Wonder*.

❖ **Contest: Arthur Hinds Poetry of Wonder**

- (Background Music: exerp: “Pantheon” by Arthur Hinds)
- If you recall in episode 6...
- Who Won?

❖ **Segment: The Kybalion: Principle of Vibration**

- (Background Music: “Exodus” by Alexandre Falcao)

- As we continue with our journey, let’s now look at the third section of this segment as we make our way through the Kybalion by looking into the third principle of the text being The Principle of Vibration.
- In Chapter Nine we are introduced to the concept of vibration.
- The Kybalion states: that *“Nothing is at rest; everything moves; and everything vibrates.”*
- It further states that the principle of vibration embodies the truth that motion is manifest in everything in the Universe, implying that everything moves, vibrates and circles.
 - Which we know to be true since even if we stand still to try and defy this statement, the earth is still rotating upon its axis and moving through space, both speeds being dependent upon where we are on the earth or where the earth happens to be in relation to the Sun.
 - Even on the quantum level, molecules of which all matter is composed of, experience vibrations in their chemical bonds.
- In regards to the manifested cosmos, the teachings in The Kybalion explain that spirit is at one of the poles of vibration and the other end of the pole consists of certain extremely gross forms of matter.
 - Implying that the frequency or degree of vibration, inherent in a thing, is an indication of its form or level of manifestation.
 - This idea then further explains the way in which something moves through the Three Great Planes of existence as described in episode #006 of this podcast when discussing the second principle of the Kybalion, The Principle of Correspondence.
 - The Three Great Planes being, the Spiritual, Mental, and Physical planes each pertain to a different level of manifestation. It is explained that which comes into being must move through the first two levels of manifestation in order to exist on the third or physical plane and it does this by adjusting or diminishing its rate of vibration to theoretically tune into the frequency of the desired plane so that it may harmonize with the level of manifestation. The faster the vibration, the closer to spirit a thing becomes, the slower the vibration, the closer a thing moves towards the physical.
 - A social example of this phenomenon is evident in living a fast lifestyle as opposed to the slower lifestyle. One who lives a faster lifestyle is often viewed as being less grounded and may be less in touch with the world around them and time itself may even move at a faster pace making weeks feel like days and years feel like months. The opposite being the case for the individual who approaches life with a slower and more relaxed approach. The slower individual in turn becomes more in touch with the world around them and the seconds and minutes of the day become more observed and treasured as one’s perception of time is effected by the slower lifestyle and the details of each moment become more noticeable and memorable as they are able to be noticed, observed, and enjoyed.

- The temperature of an object effects its material state as that which becomes cold (the molecular structure slowing down and solidifying) begins to degrade into smaller and smaller pieces as a result of its growing fragility. While as most objects heat up their structure liquefies and evaporates becoming air like as therefore moving up and away from the earth.
- In regards to thought... if thought could be thought of as a vibration, this would relate it to the first principle, the Principle of Mentalism. If the universe is mental then it is a thought and if it is a thought then it is also a vibration echoing out from the source. The echo slows down to point of the final bits a manifestation being the certain forms of gross matter. So, if one were to increase their level of vibration they could then ascend and reunite with The All. Similar in reference to the Secret Chiefs who were so advanced that they were allegedly no longer of this world or reminiscent of the story of Enoch from the who walked in the presence of God even though he had not died.
- In a practical sense, vibrations contagiously affects other things... For example
 - Speaking, seeing, and hearing are functions that are dependent upon the vibration of light and sound as a part of their function and as a result are also contingent upon communication and an organism’s ability to interact with and partake of the world.
 - A vibrating tuning fork, through its presence can affect the strings of an instrument causing them also to vibrate.
 - The temperature exuded by an object will affect the temperature of other objects in relation to their closeness to that object by its mere presence.
 - A heavy impact can be felt by those within its relative vicinity dependent upon the force behind it.
- Similarly the reality of vibration in a person is contagious between people.
 - Emotions are contagious.
 - Anger and joy.
 - One’s volume and tone of speech affect the listener and their reaction.
 - Yelling often begets yelling
 - Whispering often begets whispering
- Intensity of vibration has a mutual effect between two objects as depending on the rate will depend on the exchange and the leveling of that exchange. For hot water introduced into an equal amount of cold water will create warm water whose temperature is the average between the two.
- Protesters only create and effect change if their numbers are high enough to affect the voice of the majority. In a sense creating a vibration throughout a society.

- As obvious or mundane as this all may sound, these examples would then go for magick as the core behind the principle of vibration as demonstrated by these examples is about the intensity of transference and an objects ability to cause an effect equal to the rate of its inherent power or vibration.
- So, in closing the Principle of Vibration can be said to be about manifestation and the transference of inherent energies and states of being with the world around us and as a result instills in us the knowledge to govern and regulate those effects to the fulfillment of our will and how we effect the world around us as we make our way through life and the cosmos.
- Next episode we’ll be looking into the third principle which is The Principle of Polarity.
- Remember that if you would like to follow us on your own as we make our way through The Kybalion, the text can be found online as a PDF file by visiting the show notes from Episode #003. Thank you.

❖ Promo, Clip, or Ad?

- ?

❖ Podcast Shout Outs! (Pick 6)

- (Background Music: “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes)
- Thanks to Oseanna from *Get Witchified*, Drake Atlas from *Get Out of the Broom Closet*, Dan the College Witch, and the gang from the Pagan Centered Podcast for making those promos for your shows available online. As always, check the links page on the show website to find links for these and other pagan podcasts.
- I would also like to give a shout out to....
 - **Darkly Fey from the Darkside of Fey**
 - **Dee and all the other ladies from Pagan FM**
 - Oseanna from Get Witchified!
 - Greywolf Moonsong From A Pagan Heart in Maine
 - **Ruth and Gary from the Celtic Myth Podshow**
 - Foxfire and Arrowind from Pagan Parent on the Edge
 - Dave, Amber, Ashlee, Brendan from the Pagan Centered Podcast
 - Brook the iPod Witch
 - **Oraia the Sphinx from Media Astra Ac terra**
 - **Sparrow and Mojo from The Wigglian Way**
 - Gene and Bryan from Hometown Tales
 - **Garret, Al and Gordon from Haunted New Jersey**
 - And Tommy Elf From the Edge of the Circle

- All Your hard work does wonderful things for the podcast community! Thank you so much and keep podcasting!
- If you haven’t listened to any of these podcasts, then please check them out by visiting the links page on the show website.

❖ **Segment: A conversation with Amie Tolomeo continued...**

- (allow File: Paganism Lingers to begin right after shout outs)
- **Sound Clip: I’m a Pagan! Mwuhahaha**

❖ **Segment: Being Pagan**

- (Background music: “?????” by ??????)
- The irony about being pagan is that no one can say for certain what that exactly means, but yet most of us know what we are talking about when we use the word. It’s strange, but yet not at the same time. The reason paganism is so hard to define is because as a spiritual path it’s different for everyone who walks it. The beast of the term (meaning, its inability to be properly defined) is also its beauty.
- Earlier in the conversation with Amie, she said something that really hit home for me. She said that one thing she likes about being pagan is that if she is doing a Buddhist meditation or speaking to a Hindu God and she had an experience or there was some improvement in her life as a result, that would be fine with her and she wouldn’t feel like she did something wrong or that she had to change her path as a result. This is an important point in regards to what many of us like and find in what we know to be paganism and what it means for us to be pagan. This being the freedom and liberty to be who we are within our faith and to practice a faith that does not bind or restrict us in how we interpret or practice it.
- Many of us didn’t grow up in a pagan family. We came to paganism from another religion and perhaps came to paganism after exploring several other religions before finding it. Regardless of the journey, we chose to become pagan and as a result of changing our religion, we learned a very valuable lesson. We learned that through all the changes our religious lives have gone through over the years is that the one remaining consistency between all these changes was that we were the same person. And for some reason despite going from tradition to tradition, religion to religion, etc. we were still able to find value in what we did. We learned that it wasn’t the names we were using, the words we were speaking, the gestures we were making, or the building in which was sat that mattered. We learned that the key to experiencing deity was within us. The knowledge of this key and the results it could create for us, made us realize that we could step outside the norms of conventional religion by stepping into ourselves. The uniqueness and introspective nature of paganism is what draws many of us to it.

- The openness found in our paths as pagans is liberating, but more importantly it allows us to take a personal approach to our path. This sense of personal religious liberty is not something often inherent or encouraged in many of the world’s religions as individual practice and interpretation is often frowned upon and as pagans we are very fortunate to have this freedom. Along with this freedom there are other unique attributes that make being pagan something which I personally enjoy...
- The most powerful thing I can say about paganism is that it is a present religion that it is a religion of the moment. Unlike many religions, paganism has a solid place in the present moment and lacks a dependence on an ancient history or a series of ancient events to validate or justify our celebrations and religious customs. Meaning that we have no event in our religious history that we need to believe in or that is contingent upon our faith as pagans or acts as a basis for our religious tradition. Though acknowledging history, paganism exists independent of its history and grows on its own accord effecting and reaching thousands of individuals across the globe who choose to gather and partake of the old ways in their own unique manner that provides them with what they need as people of this day and age.
- As a result of our paganism we often learn why something is done instead of us performing an act without the knowledge or reason behind doing it. Allowing us to achieve a deeper connection to our traditions and practices. By having and knowing the reasons behind what we do we become empowered because not only are we practicing our faith because we want to, but we also know why we are doing it giving our participation in it substance and purpose.(?)
- Paganism allows us to question the world and our lives which allow us and our faith to grow. As pagans we are not expected to sit within a mold or wear a proverbial shoe of which we have long since over grown, but instead are encouraged to purchase new footwear and clothing that better suits the person which we are, which will later be shed for new attire to fit who we will become in future.
- Like Amie, many of us found a rich foundation in our ethic or cultural heritage through our brand of paganism, unlocking a once long forgotten part of our family’s background and journey to the present day. In this light, paganism is a religion which not only reaffirms our connection to life and the world, but to ourselves as well. Enhancing our knowledge of who we are, who our family is, and who our ancestors were as well.
- Paganism is not simply a religion because it can also be a culture or ethnicity, it can be a system of beliefs, and more importantly what it was and became, did so out of specific reasons which we can now begin to understand as we revisit them. Its growth wasn’t done for the sake of doing it or for any reason other than out of simple practicality. And what we learned in our observation of current traditions and celebrations is that often times those ancient customs and practices don’t go away easily. We’ve learned that they can’t simply be burned away or rewritten. They can’t be over thrown or changed by an Emperor or King’s order. The core of Paganism and

what it is will always be felt and be a part of our world. And what we know is that despite the appearance of the last 2,000 years, Paganism never went away... people just forgot what it looked like.

❖ Closing Thank You

- Before I go I just want to say Thank you to Amie once again, and to remind listeners that Sun and Moon Metaphysical Shoppe is located in Somerdale, NJ and can be found online at www.newagemewjersey.com.
- Thank you very much for listening and in our next episode I will be discussing That Old Black Magick...

❖ Episode wrap up

- Well this concludes this episode of The Infinite and the Beyond.
- If you have any thoughts about this episode or about what I've said in one of its segments please let me know by sending me a message through the show website or by taking advantage of the other venues by which you can interact with me and the other listeners of this podcast all which can be found by visiting the website at www.infinite-beyond.com.
- If you liked this show and are interested in hearing more or subscribing, then visit the show website where you can find links to where this show can be found online for you to subscribe and download. And a manuscript for this episode can also be found on there as well.
- To find an index of this show and other pagan podcasts visit The Pagan Podcast Index at paganpodcastindex.wordpress.com
- The regular music heard on this show is listed on the 'About page' of show website.
- Any links mentioned and all other music played in this episode can be found by referencing the show notes on the show blog which can be accessed through the show website.
- "Some of the music provided tonight is from the PodShow Podsafte Music Network. Check it out at 'music.podshow.com'"
- This show is happy to be a member of the Proud Pagan Podcasters which can be found at paganpodcasting.org
- The Infinite and the Beyond and its segments are copyrighted by Chris Orapello under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
- Thanks for listening, thanks for subscribing, and until next time Merry Part, Blessed Be, and 93!

Show Notes: Episode #007 – Paganism and Being Pagan

❖ **Show Summary:**

- In this episode, a discussion of the meaning of paganism and being Pagan with Amie Tolomeo co-owner of Sun and Moon a south Jersey Metaphysical Shoppe and co-coordinator of the South Jersey Pagan Pride Day. I respond to listener email and talk about paranormal investigation, how to spot poor investigative practices and recognize misinformed ghost hunter groups. We learn about Hermes Trismegistus and Hermeticism in A Corner of the Occult. We see who won the copy of Arthur Hinds’ album *Poetry of Wonder*. And we discuss the Principle of Vibration as we continue with our journey through The Kybalion.

❖ **Breakdown: (Total Length - 01:18.13)**

- (00:00.00) – Introduction
 - Music: “Proteus” by composer George Wood
 - Music: “There’s a Spy in my Martini” by David Parker
- (00:02.58) – Promo: Get Witchified! With Oseanna
- (00:03.27) – What does Paganism mean?
 - Music: “Telepathic Interplay” by Alexandre Falcao
- (00:11.26) – Part 1: Conversation with Amie Tolomeo
- (00:20.36) – Promos:
 - Get out of the Broom Closet with Drake Atlas
 - Proud Pagan Podcasters
- (00:21.53) – Perchten Procession
 - Music: “Paths and Reflections” by Alexandre Falcao
- (00:24.29) – Listener Email
 - Music: “No More Hectic Days” by Alexandre Falcao
- (00:41.00) – A Corner in the Occult: Hermes Trismegistus and Hermeticism
 - Music: “Piano Quartet in G, 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer
- (00:47.19) – Promo:
 - College Witch Podcast with Dan
- (00:47.55) – Part 2: Conversation with Amie Tolomeo
- (00:53.29) – Promo:
 - Pagan Centered Podcast
- (00:55.05) – Contest from #006
 - Music: “Pantheons” by Arthur Hinds

- (00:56.18) – The Kybalion: Principle of Correspondence
 - Music: “Exodus “ by Alexandre Falcao
- (01:02.48) – Promo:
 - A Pagan Heart in Maine with Greywolf Moonsong
- (01:03.27) – Shout Outs!
- (01:04.11) – Part 3: Conversation with Amie Tolomeo
- (01:09.55) – Being Pagan
 - Music: “Enlightening Light” by Alexandre Falcao
- (01:16.23) – Episode Wrap-up
 - Music: “Universe inside you” by Persian Paladin

❖ **Music:** (in order of being heard)

- “Proteus” by composer George Wood - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/1454/>
- “There’s a Spy in my Martini” by David Parker - <http://www.soundclick.com/davidparker>
- “Telepathic Interplay” by Alexandre Falcao - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=613461>
- “Paths and Reflections” by Alexandre Falcao - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=613461>
- “No More Hectic Days” by Alexandre Falcao - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=613461>
- “Piano Quartet in G, 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer - <http://www.ualr.edu/lrholzer/bio.shtml>
- “Pantheon” by Arthur Hinds - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=808504>
- “Exodus” by Alexandre Falcao - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=613461>
- “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/939/ted-Tunes.php>
- “Enlightening Light” by Alexandre Falcao - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=613461>
- “Universe inside you” by Persian Paladin - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/2644/>

❖ **Links**

- Perchten Procession - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Perchten4.jpg>
- Corpus Hermeticum - <http://www.levity.com/alchemy/corpherm.html>
- Asclepius (21-29) - <http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/asclep.html>
- Sun and Moon Metaphysical Shoppe – <http://www.newagenewjersey.com>
- South Jersey Pagan Pride Day - <http://www.southjerseypaganpride.org>
- Proud Pagan Podcasters – <http://paganpodcasting.org>
- Mid-Atlantic Paranormal Research – <http://www.midatlanticparanormalresearch.com>

❖ **Promos**

- Get Witchified! - <http://getwitchified.libsyn.com/>
- Get out of the Broom Closet – <http://getoutofthebroomcloset.webs.com/>
- Pagan Centered Podcast - <http://imbleedingprofusely.com/>
- The College Witch - <http://www.thecollegewitch.webs.com/>
- A Pagan Heart in Maine - <http://www.paganheartinmaine.com/>

❖ **Credits**

- PodsafeAudio - <http://www.podsafeaudio.com/>
- Podsafe Music Network - <http://music.podshow.com>