

Gnostic Contemplation

The Grail of Light

Ancient legends of the Celtic Tradition

Since long ago, the Celtic regions of Ireland and Britian have been wellsprings of myth and magic. A universal wisdom pervades these ancient stories and sagas of the Celtic people and their timeless essence speaks to the seeking heart of today. For the celts were said to have a personal link with the divine and they were embedded in the World Soul; not as the thoroughly individualised personalities that we are today, but as part of the mysterious whole.

The Druids as the leaders of the Celts, were initiates in the mystery knowledge. A druid knew and protected the secrets and transmitted his teachings and wisdom only orally. They recognised the trinity in all creation and knew an energy of the Light, called Hesus or Jesu. They undoubtedly expected the new impulse of the Light: the Christ. Hesus was ‘the re-creator of the future’. In this way, the arrival of Christianity linked the Spiritual Sun with the mystery of the resurrection.

It was in Ireland that, during the first centuries of our era, that a very special marriage was achieved between the ancient wisdom of the mysteries and the new impulses of inner Christianity. Those who were inwardly capable, had the ability to perceive this extraordinary new Etheric impulse descending into the world without any outside influence.

The beloved stories of the Celtic people have a timeless essence which has spoken to the hearts and imaginations of countless people throughout the centuries.

For a story to be timeless it must speak to a ‘timeless something’ in the human being. It must resonate with the quintessential essence residing in our core; that deep knowledge that something is missing and that it must be found. It stirs within us a yearning for fulfilment, the yearning to belong fully. For there is a divine restlessness in the human heart, an eternal echo of longing that lives deep within us and never lets us settle for what we have or where we are.

This yearning is so aptly described by the Irish poet and writer, John O'Donohue in his book 'Eternal Echoes',

“Perhaps your hunger to belong is always active and intense because you belonged so totally before you came here. This hunger to belong is the echo and reverberation of your invisible heritage. You are from somewhere else, where you were known, embraced and sheltered. This is also the secret root from which all longing grows. Something in you knows, perhaps remembers, that eternal belonging liberates longing into its surest and most potent creativity. This is why your longing is often wiser than your conventional sense of appropriateness, safety and truth... Your longing desires to take you towards the absolute realization of all the possibilities that sleep in the clay of your heart; it knows your eternal potential, and it will not rest until it is awakened.”

— John O'Donohue, *Eternal Echoes: Celtic Reflections on Our Yearning to Belong*

There is a key which opens the door to that state of wholeness and fulfilment we long for, to that original kingdom.

That key was sent down along with humanity in our fall and lies hidden awaiting discovery for all human beings and is spoken of in symbolic language throughout the ages.

Silence or music

Tír na nÓg, meaning Land of the Ever-Living or Land of Eternal Youth is a mysterious, hidden island spoken of in Celtic stories. It was a place of sublime beauty and eternal life. Many legends recount the appearance of this invisible island such as the tale of Oisín, the legendary Irish Warrior, or of Connla of the golden hair. It speaks of the ultimate discovery to find the immortal essence within ourselves.

The later legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the round table and the quest for the Holy Grail speak of finding this key to fulfilment, discovering the secret to receiving this Eternal Life.

The Grail has always accompanied humanity, but not as an outer treasure hidden in a cave or in the possession of a secret order.

For the Grail itself was the secret!

It reveals the key that is hidden in human beings, like a latent divine spark.

Finding the Grail is to ignite that spark is hidden in a special place; the human heart.

And this ignition can happen only by means of a Light that is of Divine origin;

The Grail also represents the human being that is equipped with the original Spirit-Soul.

When he/she opens himself up - with heart and head - to the creative divine light, then this

Light will flow into his being so intimately that it becomes a part of the feeling and the

thinking. Emotions and thoughts will be purified by the Divine Light and that is an inner

work of greatest value. Inevitably, such a person will also feel the irresistible urge to **act** in

keeping with the pure feelings and pure thoughts.

The Grail cup was found in much earlier stories of the Celtic race as the cauldron or magical

cup. The Celts believed the cauldron was of Divine descent, because the gods mixed the

creative and life-giving elements in it. If a mortal human being drank from it, he partook of

liberating knowledge and was transformed from a mortal into an immortal being.

According to the the Mythological Cycle of early Irish literature, the Tuatha Dé Danann, (a

race of God like people), brought four treasures or jewels with them to Ireland. The magical

cauldron of the De Dagda, (the Good God), was one of these four gifts. It was known as the

Undry and was an endless source of nourishment for all who fed from it.

And in the Celtic legend of Bran the Blessed, the cauldron appears as a vessel of wisdom and

rebirth. Bran, the mighty warrior-god, obtains a magical cauldron from Cerridwen (in

disguise as a giantess) who had been expelled from a lake in Ireland. A lake, the element of

water, represents the Otherworld, the Tír na nÓg of Celtic lore. The cauldron could resurrect

the corpse of dead warriors placed inside it.

The Finnish Kalevala, too, sings of the sampo (chalice, shield or world column), and we also encounter it as the mixing vessel with Plato and Hermes. In the Vedic tradition, we see it reappear as the source of the soma, the food of immortality.

Time and again symbol of the magical Cauldron of plenty, the Chalice, the Grail cup has accompanied Humanity since as far back as we can tell, perhaps evolving, but nevertheless speaking to the imagination of countless seekers throughout the ages of a key to fulfilment.

The quest for the Holy Grail is anchored very deeply in the consciousness of humanity because it resonates with that deep-seated knowledge of something which we lost and can again be found – it stirs up within us a pre-remembrance, the Great Homesickness. It speaks to that very deep longing within our hearts for fulfilment.

The prize for the race, the purification in and through the living water from the Divine Mixing Vessel, the Grail, is an opportunity that is available to every human being.

It is withheld from no one.

It cannot possibly be kept from anyone.

Yet it can manifest itself only to those,

who have at their disposal a matured, pure soul,

a soul purified by the Divine Light that flows into their heart and their head,

and a soul purified by the experiences it goes through via our human experiences here on earth.

Musical interlude

But what is a Divine Soul? Can a Divine Soul be known? Does it have a beginning? Can we feel or experience it?

Irish poet and writer John O'Donohue describes the first contact with our Divine Souls as

'THE INNER VOICE

Somewhere in every heart there is a discerning voice. This voice distrusts the status quo. It sounds out the falsity in things and encourages dissent from the images things tend to assume. It underlines the secret crevices where the surface has become strained.

It advises distance and opens up a new perspective through which the concealed meaning of a situation might emerge.

The inner voice makes any complicity uneasy.

Its intention is to keep the heart clean and clear.

*This voice is an inner whisper not obvious or known to others outside.
It receives little attention and is not usually highlighted among a person's qualities.*

Yet so much depends on that small voice.

The truth of its whisper marks the line between honor and egoism, kindness and chaos.

*In extreme situations, which have been emptied of all shelter and tenderness, that small voice
whispers from somewhere beyond and encourages the heart to hold out for dignity, respect,
beauty and love.*

(John O'Donohue, excerpt from 'Beauty')

This Inner Voice comes from your **inner** Tír na nÓg, from your inner sacred island of Eternal Youth of which the Celtic lore speaks. And it coincides with your heart.

It is there that the Grail cup will find its beginning; it is there that it is awaiting its discovery. It is in your heart where the magical Cauldron has to be forged by you. The Rosicrucians call that self-freemasonry, the building of the Inner Grail cup.

From the book 'The Universal Gnosis' by Jan van Rijckenborgh we can learn that

The apprentice in Christian alchemy now proceeds, in a most comprehensive way, to prepare his beloved Paschal Lamb. The Grail Cup must now be set up in the heart sanctuary. You must not think of a mystical, emotional process here. An impressive piece of work must manifest itself, as it were; from the fire. The original idea 'Passover' means 'crossing a threshold'. By a correct reaction to the Ray of the original pranic Light this threshold, or new possibility, has been realised and the pupil now crosses it to enter an entirely new world, a domain of life which presents totally new and different aspects, problems and activities. It is the life-field of liberation. In this new sphere of life the Christ Power, the redeeming divine Light, will participate in the work to the fullest extent offering itself in ineffable love.

[...]

When Paul speaks of these things, he calls the result of this preparation 'the guarantee of the Spirit in our hearts' or 'an epistle written in our hearts'.

[...]

The head-heart system must be viewed as a complete unity. If we consider this system on the basis of the universal doctrine, we find that anatomically - organically the heart and the head are each other's perfect reflections. They form together one sphere and it is the task of the lesser blood circulation to ensure the development of the circulation of forces in that sphere. In dialectical man this unity is completely disrupted. In the man of this nature a constant battle is waged between the head and the heart.

Certain esoteric authors speak of 'becoming cold' with respect to head and heart. You must understand this becoming cold in the sense of organic non-receptivity and not in the sense of cold as opposed to hot. According to the common concept, a cold person is a stone-hearted person. The gnostic apprentice who has become completely 'cold' to the mental and emotional stirrings of this nature, who has neutralized these workings in himself, has consequently made a very significant contribution to the preparation of his precious Paschal Lamb. Such a person is engaged in setting up the holy Grail in his heart sanctuary. You are perhaps familiar with the very ancient legend of the Holy Grail. The Grail is the cup which Jesus the Lord used during the Last Supper. According to records, Joseph of Arimathea received the blood of the crucified Lord in it, and then took it under his protection. Later on his successors transferred the Grail-cup to the West, where it has been kept concealed till the present time.

[...]. It is the human being himself who must construct the Grail which can be used later by the Lord Jesus.

Anatomically the Grail-cup is described by three nodes of the nervous system, the so called plexuses ; the laryngeal plexus , the pulmonary plexus and the cardiac plexus. We then find that the upper part of the Grail-cup corresponds to the laryngeal system, the stem of the cup stands in the lungs and the base of the crystal bowl is to be found in the aorta.

Consequently, the possibility of constructing the Grail cup is present in every human being.

If you hear 'The Inner Voice, then use the possibilities, given to you in unfathomable love by the Divine Light, and you will undoubtedly find the Grail of the Light.