

Introduction

There are few books written on spirituality and devotion from the modern Heathen perspective. This is unfortunate, as I believe lack of concern with personal spirituality on equal level with lore and folk traditions actually weakens the faith. It is not unexpected, however, in a tradition that prides itself on scholarly acquisition of knowledge. The path of devotion isn't one that is easily culled from books. This is a path of the heart, one focused on experience and personal connection therefore; the best way to learn and explore devotional practice is actually to engage in it regularly. There are a few worthy books on the market that might be of use, though, and I have chosen to conclude my own book with a brief selection of suggested titles. I always like to increase my own book-hoard and follow up personal exploration of those things that are important to me with reading on the same.

Devotional practice is grounded not only in faith but in an amazing sense of trust in the Gods we love and honor. It takes a lifetime's work to develop and nurture, and it can be immensely difficult at times. I have often drawn great strength from the works of mystics of other religious traditions—yes, even Christianity. There is something in the direct experience at the heart of a mystic's spiritual life that seems to transcend religious boundaries. I read Mechthild of Magdeburg, Rumi, and Mirabai, and I find men and women speaking a common language, one that I myself also comprehend. There is comfort in that inspiration, in knowing that others have conceived of their Gods in similarly intimate terms.

As Heathenry develops as a religion, moving out of its infancy, slowly but surely we are seeing people who are claimed strongly by their Gods. We are seeing people who find their spiritual life

Silence

Like fragile sakura blossoms, peace is fleeting.
I yearn for the grace of stillness.
With the precision of a sword seeking its sheath,
it eludes me.
It dances before me, like smoke dissipating in a roaring gale,
or sunlight dancing on dappled waters.
I cannot capture it.
Instead, I haunt its passage, my hunger never sated.
Only in You, is that desired stillness found
and there it is not stillness but the rushing flood
of adoration unleashed.
Perhaps I should fear such a thing,
as the living fear the stillness of the mortal heart.
I cannot bring myself to such indulgence though,
no more than a warrior
might fear the deathsong his blade must bring.
You are like that to me, Grimnir.
The last decisive cut of a warrior's blade is kinder
than time spent away from You.
In the end, it seems I have abandoned my search for solitude
to court instead the storm.