



Title: Reflections on Recovering the European Tribal Mind

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APPENDIX C
REFLECTIONS ON RECOVERING THE EUROPEAN TRIBAL MIND
Professor/Wizard Brian Bates

So what do we want to get back of the tribal mind? We need to identify the beauty, the insight, the spiritual nature of it. But we don't want to say, "Hey, let's all go tribal again, and everything will be alright". It wouldn't be. It would be just as bad as it is now. It happens now on a bigger scale, of course, because we have nation-sized consortia of tribes. But as soon as a country is 'liberated' - e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan, it splits up and the tribal warlords begin to rule immediately. Nations don't really work for humans. So what will? We'd better be talking at the UN about all this, because no one has the answers.

And of course, its not just tribes after each other's throats because they are different tribes - a main driver is religion. How do we identify what is beautiful and healing about tribal spirituality which is different from major elaborated, organized religions like Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism etc. Because the latter are a fast formula for hatred and bloodshed. There was plenty of that in tribal times, but we are in the best of it, and leave behind the worst of it.

My contention is that we all have within us 'tribal mind'. We call it imagination, or intuition, or earth consciousness. It is repressed by over-reliance on analytical mind, just as the beauties of Christianity became malignant and poisoned the spiritual traditions it came into contact with, and sought to replace. And then along came the scientific 'revolution', and the Church adapted to it as fast as possible. So we need to help people get back in tune with their tribal mind. It can still sing the sacred songs, dance the tribal rhythms, if we teach people how to release it.

One way of releasing it is to take modern, western, alienated people, and help them to identify a tribal strand in their own heritage - one which speaks to them - and help them to learn about it. It will never be their exclusive 'original' tribe, because too much time has passed, too much mixing has happened. But to get back to ONE of our origin tribes is the key. Experientially, as much as possible. Not to utopianise these ancient tribal cultures, but to attune to those aspects of it which are healing, beautiful, wise. It is not something 'other' - it is already within them. This knowledge unlocks within the modern person something that has lain dormant - worse, repressed and forbidden - and their tribal mind can infuse their being with a balance which was missing. They still live in modern, western culture. But they SEE differently, they FEEL differently, they ACT differently. And because modern society NEEDS tribal mind desperately, to recover what has become unbalanced, this process will make the people we work with to become more effective people in contemporary society, and to act with greater balance, wisdom, compassion, imagination, and integrity.

I don't want to recover the darkness of Saxon tribal culture. But I do so much want to reconstruct the beauty of the best of its spiritual heritage, its tribal mind. Can this be done? Can the 'best' of an ancient culture be separated from its context, then reconstructed, and integrated with contemporary mind? Well, a third of a million people

bought my novel about Wyrð. This wasn't because I am a brilliant novelist - I'm not - but it was because I was able to bring back for them the beauty of Saxon culture in a way they could EXPERIENCE. Some of them say it changed their life. And if a mere BOOK can change someone's life, then there is hope, for there are many other things that can be done to go further!

Of course, there is the HUGE shadow of what happened to the Native American peoples in recent history, and currently. You say that for the Indian peoples the war is over - now we have to work on the Peace. The Healing. That is a fabulous project. It is where the work on ancient western indigenous mind, and current indigenous tribal mind come together.