

"REAL MAGIC" Movie Notes: Based on the British Isles and Northern European traditions

*The magical belief of 2000+ years ago was their equivalent to "scientific" knowledge today.

*Where was the Otherworld to ancient peoples?

*Why were/are masks important to magical ways of thinking?

- magical transformations of humans into a specific animal
- helped Shamans into trance states

*Shamans—a Russian [Siberian Inuit] designation—at the heart of our understanding of wizards and wizardry.

- Trance
- Can be male or female
- Hallucinogenic drugs used in the ritual setting to make the otherworld clear to the Shaman
- Have additional knowledge through the otherworld that the whole community needs

EXAMPLES:

*Burial site in British cave:

- used b/w 13k-20K BP—broken ivory wands found in grave
- wands may have been an extension of "finger pointing," of projecting the human will

*Druids—organized religion which started on the European continent and made its way to the British Isles [England, Scotland, Wales, & Ireland]:

- sophisticated magical network in Northern Europe
- Wisewomen/Wisemen
- natural scientists
- in charge of all sacrifices—animal and human
- divination

*silver cauldron found in a Denmark bog dated 2100 BP was made of 13 plates with etched and punched scenes and figures of a supernatural nature. Described as inspired by a "psychedelic trip," it was probably cast out into a marsh as an offering—

*Why? Water was considered "otherworldly" b/c it reflected a mirror image of the world. So, when offerings were made, they were cast into the otherworld of the water.

*Sacrifices: It is thought, through archaeological finds, that certain people, perhaps Shaman or wise ones, volunteered to be sacrificed. Tolen Man [2000+ BP] is one such case. Thought not to be just another murder, Tolen Man was removed from a peat bog perfectly preserved in a state of mummification.

- Why? Perhaps the volunteer wanted to act as a link to the otherworld with the earthly worlds.
- Perhaps to continue to work with the people with whom she/he had been with during life.
- Deliberate intention in the sacrifice of Tolen Man:
 - traces of Ergot [a fungus that grows on Rye—the staple grain of European agriculture—which produces hallucinations and seizures]
 - a particular method of death, a rope with a particular knot at the back of the neck
 - the Shaman laid out in the bog as if in sleep with magical wands, birch-bark hat still intact.

There's much more, but this is a good beginning to show how magical religious systems became "non-magical" religious systems, e.g. Christianity, which gave way to scientific systems. All are part of the same human thought patterns and all are in existence in today's world.