
Not Quite Pagans: Ancient Eyes, Modern Tongue; the Challenge of Linguaging an Eco-Spiritual Sensibility

Résumé

Not Quite Pagans is intended to be an outdoor, ambulatory creative writing and eco-poetry workshop that explores the difficulty of expressing an Eco-Spiritual sensibility when the languages we speak may lack the words that let us easily communicate the sacred in Nature. Led by eco-poet Grace Wells, the workshop will move through the surrounding grounds of the university, and nearby green spaces, as we invite the world to support us in languaging our deep love for the living Earth.

Pausing to be with the experiential sensate realities of the living world, we will let our full-bodies become as Patrick Kavanagh wrote 'clay-sensuous' as we both deepen into our individual spiritual ecologies and also see what we can learn from our group experience together. Engaging with breath, gesture and movement we'll push against the boundaries and limitations that may be hampering our modern tongues and try to find a broader linguistics that articulates feelings of reverence and world-care. Diving into scent, colour, sensation, weather, wind and light, we'll listen to the spirits of place and to the wider community of beings around us, inviting the other-than-human to support us in our attempts to broaden a culturally accepted eco-spiritual linguistics.

The workshop will trace the eco-spiritual limits within our languages, and chart some of the prohibitions that may exist within our cultures that have up to now prevented us from easily speaking about, or speaking directly to, the sacred or divine in Nature. As David Abram has written, "while persons brought up within literate cultures often speak about the natural world, indigenous, oral peoples will speak directly to that world". Together we'll look at the discomforts of being not quite pagan, and seek ways to break any taboos that may have restricted us as we seek to voice the sacred wild and find words and phrases that help us to better defend the living spirit within our loved world.

Mots-Clés: Eco, Spiritual Linguistics, Deep Ecology, The Sacred Wild