



OUR SACRED WORLD

*Enjoyed, denied
and found again*

Paul Cudenec

Our Sacred World

Enjoyed, denied
and found again

Paul Cudenec



winteroak.org.uk

Our Sacred World. Enjoyed, denied and found again

Copyright © 2025 Paul Cudenec. The author formally
retains copyright over this work but permits non-
commercial reproduction or distribution

ISBN: 978-2-9598641-0-0

CONTENTS

Preface	vii
0. Channelling the spirit of life	1
1. Rooted in the living world	7
2. Our sacred belonging	18
3. Dancing on the web of being	28
4. Gnosticism and the universal mother	42
5. The magic of meaning	49
6. The disenchantment of life	57
7. The disgodding of nature and our hearts	66
8. The “scientific” war on our freedom	73
9. The Invisible College and the plan for our enslavement	81
10. Exposing the life-hating criminal conspiracy	101
11. Rediscovering rootedness	105
12. Coming back to life	110
13. The reenchantment of our world	119
14. Becoming what we are meant to be	125

PREFACE

I have long been fascinated by the way in which the dominant system tries to restrict our *thinking* on so many levels.

We are always told that we should count ourselves lucky to live in “free” and “democratic” modern societies which do not police our thoughts and self-expression in the manner of the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany.

But, in fact, even to question the reality of this “democracy” is a thought that is forbidden by our supposedly democratic society!

In *Against the Dark Enslaving Empire*, I quoted academic Samuel Piccolo’s claim in a 2024 book on “far-right Newspeak” that “when people no longer believe they live in a liberal democracy, they no longer act as if they do — or care whether its principles live or die”. [1]

When we untangle this typically convoluted argument, we see that the *real* problem is that people are increasingly *seeing through the façade of so-called democracy*.

Obviously, the system’s defenders cannot frame it that way, because this would be to draw

attention to the subversive suggestion that our “democracy” may be fake.

So instead, with the usual inversion, they flip the issue on its head and insist that anyone complaining of the absence of real democracy is a threat to democracy!

At the core of this twisted technique is the fact that their version of “democracy” is a total misrepresentation — it is just a label they use to validate their corrupt and rigged system — and yet because most people do not realise this, the propagandists can get away with using the term to suggest that it is *ethically reprehensible* for us to challenge their illegitimate and criminal domination of our societies.

You can always tell when you are getting close to issues of central importance for the ruling system when it starts to use the language of *moral shaming* to attack dissidents.

During Covid, defenders of truth and freedom could not be presented simply as questioners of official narratives, but had to be condemned as dangerous threats to the community, putting lives at risk.

If you are suspicious about the industrial, financial and administrative infrastructure that has been built around “climate change”, then you are not considered merely sceptical or unconvinced, but guilty of “climate denial” — the

term deliberately evoking the “Holocaust denial” which is a criminal offence here in France.

Criticism of Israel, which of course has been very widespread since it embarked upon a literal genocide, has been branded “anti-semitic” and the wearing of pro-Palestine t-shirts treated as “terrorism”.

Again, we see that familiar inversion. The *real* moral offence lies with the Israeli state carrying out the mass slaughter and with the Zionist lackeys aiding and abetting them.

It is utterly absurd, in these circumstances, to try to use the usual moral shaming technique against those standing up for decency and humanity, but still our rulers insist on doing so, simply, I suppose, because *that is what they always do*.

I sometimes feel as if my own worldview is the *exact opposite* of that of the global mafia, because it seems that each one of my most strongly-held beliefs is considered by its thought-police to be heresy.

The system’s rigid dogma has totally saturated the thought of certain sections of our societies — particularly those who have gone through the most conditioning (“education”) and those who have adopted the virtue-signalling groupthink of the so-called “left”.

When I was still hanging around with anarchists sharing that outlook, I found that it

was impossible to talk about people's innate qualities without being suspected of being a "reactionary" or a "racist", impossible to invoke spirituality without being accused of the terrible sin of mysticism or of supporting repressive religions, impossible to talk about what really lies behind the abstract concept of "capitalism" without being called a "conspiracy theorist".

For the clever set, nature is just a construct used by reactionaries to justify "natural" social inequality — to suggest that we belong to it is, moreover, an assault on the individual's absolute right to be whatever they want to be.

The broader "modern" and "rational" outlook is, of course, not confined to the "left" and has been at the centre of our culture for so long that it no doubt seems self-evidently *correct* to most people, at least in the "developed" world.

But I have always felt that it is a mind-prison and that beneath its smooth certainties a great underground ocean of real consciousness is battling to rise up and break free.

This ocean, I would say, is the energy of life itself — the spirit of life, the soul of the living cosmos. It should be surging up through all of us, enchanting our lives, spraying us with the vital joy of being present here and now and, at the same time, with the deep knowledge of our belonging to the great eternal Mystery.

But its flow has been blocked from reaching us by those who seek to reduce and exploit us.

We find ourselves born and raised in desert-dry mental boxes of calculation, control and conformity within a global system built on measurement and mathematics, on method and manipulation, on machinery and money.

For a long time I viewed the stunted state of modern thinking and being as the *result* of industrial society, the consequence of hundreds of years of soul-stifling “progress” and “development”.

But now I see that it is the other way round — our thinking and being had to be reduced in this way *in order for us to accept the slavery that was planned for us*.

Our traditions, customs and beliefs had to be swept away, our profound attachment to nature removed, our authentic essence smothered, *because these were all obstacles to the advance of the global empire of greed*.

The walls that have been built around our thinking, and which continue to close in on us at an alarming rate, are a central element in the systematic long-term assault on our freedom.

Without this psychological, intellectual and spiritual confinement *we simply would not accept the debased existence imposed on us by our industrial overlords*.

The content of *Our Sacred World: Enjoyed, Denied and Found Again* was originally published online during the summer of 2025 as a series of essays.

It consists, as the title suggests, of three parts. Firstly, I explore the way that our full belonging to the universal organism has traditionally been recognised and celebrated.

Secondly, I discuss the manner in which our lives have been disenchanting — and, crucially, how this was a *deliberate* and hostile act.

Thirdly, I look at ways in which we could bring the magic back into our world and encourage that ocean of spiritual vitality to break through the concrete defences of the life-denying slave-system.

The book begins with a short piece that was not originally intended to form part of the project, but to which I occasionally refer in the “official” chapters and which, I realised with hindsight, raises important issues which I go on to address later.

Chapter 0, as I have labelled it, can therefore be seen as an *anecdotal preamble* to the rest of this volume.

[1] *Far-Right Newspeak and the Future of Liberal Democracy*, ed. A. James McAdams and Samuel Piccolo (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2024), p. 256, cit. Paul Cudenec, *Against the Dark Enslaving Empire: A condemnation of the global criminocratic conspiracy* (2024), p. 132.

0. CHANNELLING THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

On May 1 2025 I attended, for the first time, the May Day celebrations in Padstow.

This was a magnificent occasion in the old Cornish fishing port, on a beautiful spring day.

Two teams of local people of all ages, the red team and the blue team, paraded for hours on end through the streets, each accompanying their own “obby oss” – a totem horse that is in fact a large black disc with a head and a tail attached.

The Day Song [1] (I wasn’t there for the Night Song!) is sung throughout, accompanied by massed accordions and drums.

*Unite and unite and let us all unite,
For summer is a come unto day,
And whither we are going we will all unite,
In the merry morning of May.*

The trance-inducing repetition of the May Day melody, the white costumes in the bright sunshine, the smiles, the vitality, the greenery decorating the streets... I found it a deeply

moving occasion. [2]

Later in the month, back home in France, I was able to attend – again for the first time – an annual event in Saintes-Maries de la Mer in the Camargue, Provence.

The town is named after three saints – Mary Magdalene, Mary Salome and Mary of Clopas – who are said to be the women who were the first witnesses to the empty tomb at the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

After that, the Marys supposedly set sail from Alexandria, Egypt, with Joseph of Arimathea and ended up across the Mediterranean at what is now called Saintes-Maries de la Mer.

An additional element is the role of another saint, Sara, who some claim was the Egyptian servant of the three Marys.

Sainte Sara (pronounced *Santa Sara* with the local accent) is venerated by the Roma people and is represented as a dark-skinned woman in the Black Virgin tradition.

Her name, Sara the Black, [3] is expressed in Romani as *Sara e Kali*, providing an obvious link to the goddess Kali [4] of India, whence the Roma are believed to originate.

Each May thousands of people from all over the place, including many travelling families, descend on the town for a weekend of pilgrimage. [5]

The Roman Catholic nature of the event is mixed in with a popular festive atmosphere.

As I waited in the crowd in the square in front of the beautiful thousand-year-old church, the music of the ceremony inside, relayed by loudspeakers, was mixed with the sounds of merry melodies from a nearby café.

Yet another ingredient was added to the cultural dish by the arrival of twenty *gardians* mounted on their traditional white Camargue horses on which they herd the black Camargue bulls used for bull runs in the region.

Under the scorching Mediterranean sun, we all waited for the priest to finish his address, which focused on the need for peace, following an unfortunate shooting incident earlier in the day!

Finally, it got underway, with the horsemen accompanying banners including the Romani flag.

The focus of the day's activities took longer to show herself and there was a throb of excitement as the statue of *Sainte Sara* herself came out of the church, her tiara glinting in the sun.

Vive les Saintes Maries! Vive Sainte Sara!

We paraded through the streets of the town in the direction of the beach – slowly, because judging from the sweat on the brows of the burly statue-bearers, Sara is no lightweight saint!

Running the gauntlet of a thousand

smartphone cameras, we eventually reached the seafront and poured down the beach and, footwear removed, into the sea behind Sara.

I couldn't resist reaching out to gently touch the saint as she came out of the water.

Those who rule over us have always hated these popular festivals and would love them to disappear for ever.

Both manufactured world wars advanced their globalist technocratic agenda by heralding the start of new "post-war" eras in which old customs and festivals were no longer considered relevant or "modern" enough.

And, needless to say, both the events I attended were banned by our overlords for two successive years during their "Covid" assault on our lives and our freedom. [6]

They were probably hoping that their Great Reset would finally kill off the few remaining remnants of our collective past and sense of belonging.

They despise folk traditions because they belong to *us* and not to *them*.

They are not something they have sold to us, rented to us or imposed upon us, but are organic expressions of our independent existence and flourishing beyond the cultural, psychological and physical cage in which they want to imprison us.

Folk events like these are not rigid affairs,

sterile and unchanging re-enactments of some fixed ritual.

For instance, I was reliably informed at Padstow that the participation of two teams was a recent affair – or relatively so anyway, in the context of the celebration’s centuries-old existence.

The blue team, it seems, was initially formed as a “temperance” non-alcoholic alternative to the original beery band, although that distinction has now disappeared.

And *Sainte Sara* was this year marking only the 90th anniversary of her procession to the beach in Provence, although the history behind the event is obviously much, much older.

Folk customs and celebrations, whether inherited, revived or invented, are the expression of *who we are* and, even more importantly, *who we are together*.

Social cohesion and its expression are the enemy of the demonic cabal that would enslave us.

When we come together to celebrate our shared belonging to nature, to the land, to the sea, to this magical world, we are channelling the life spirit itself.

It is this life spirit that our satanic overlords want to destroy and it is also this life spirit that can empower us to rise up and destroy their death grip on our world.

*As they sing in Padstow: “Unite and unite
and let us all unite!”*

- [1] https://www.cornwalls.co.uk/padstow/obby_oss_may_song.htm
- [2] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p27zJcEIdc4>
- [3] https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_la_noire
- [4] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kali>
- [5] <https://youtu.be/At2w2DHDvLo>
- [6] <https://www.cornwalllive.com/news/cornwall-news/obby-oss-festival-padstow-cancelled-5057868>
<https://www.ledauphine.com/societe/2021/05/25/pelerinage-gitan-annule-aux-saintes-marie-de-la-mer-ils-ont-ferme-le-coeur-de-notre-mere>

1. ROOTED IN THE LIVING WORLD

“In the time when gods, spirits and human beings lived together in nature with the plants and the animals, everyone communicated, each knew everything about the others”. [1]

Such is the ancient wisdom of the Kalash people of South Asia, their ancestral memory of a Golden Age evoking a belonging to the living world that has been lost from view in the desert of industrial modernity.

The Kalash live up in the Hindu Kush mountains of north-west Pakistan and, until relatively recently, had remained miraculously untouched by the various centralising forces that destroy organic culture everywhere.

Viviane Lièvre and Jean-Yves Loude lived with them, and learned from them, from 1976 to 1990 and paint a fascinating portrait of their society in *Le Chamanisme des Kalash du Pakistan*.

Rooted societies always enjoy a strong spiritual connection to *place* and the Kalash

honour various lakes and caves as being holy, [2] as part of their “sacred geography”. [3]

The seasons are also part of their enchanted worldview, with the winter solstice festival, *chaumos*, celebrating “the providential regeneration of society”. [4]

Trees are also regarded as spiritually important. For instance, cedars are believed to be protected by fairies and anyone who chops one down is likely to find themselves under an evil spell which can even lead to death. [5]

Before his first outing of the year, a Kalash woodcutter makes an offering of bread and cheese to the nature spirits. [6]

Karl Jettmar writes of the neighbouring Gilgit people: “All trees not planted by men and growing wild are part of the supernatural sphere.

“Cutting them down constitutes interference with the world of spirits.

“If it is considered necessary to fell a tree instead of simply collecting dead wood, a sacrifice (usually of a goat) must be carried out beforehand.

“Even today [1975] this is perfectly obvious for anyone building a house or a bridge”. [7]

The evergreen holm oaks are seen as real natural treasures because they can keep herds of goats fed from the end of October right through to the beginning of June. [8]

And the Kalash have a particular love for

junipers, which manage to grow at high altitudes and, as well as feeding goats, also provide essential firewood. [9]

These trees, believed to have been planted by the fairies, feature prominently in the ceremonial life of the Kalash and their neighbours – when burned, their pungent smoke is used to incite shamanic trances. [10]

The juniper is sacred because it enables life in those inhospitable mountains. It is a means by which divine nature cares for her people.

Needless to say, it is to be treated with care and it is only cut down when dead and dry. “If we felled a green juniper, it would be like killing a child”, one Kalash man explains. [11]

This feeling for trees, this knowledge of our deep belonging to the essential Whole, is shared by all humans whose hearts have not been turned to reinforced concrete by the vitaphobic industrial system.

Like all traditional hunting peoples, those of the Hindu Kush have a code of respect for the animals they kill to eat.

“As soon as he kills an animal, the hunter must immediately sing a song, *ghoru*, in honour of the slain beast, otherwise he will not be able to kill any game in the future”. [12]

Even the feelings of snakes are acknowledged. If one is killed, the person responsible and any other witnesses should place

personal objects in a circle around the dead animal, observe a minute's silence, then throw the body into a river.

In this way, other snakes will not seek vengeance for the killing. [13]

Nature-based folk beliefs like this would once have been held by all our ancestors, before they were declared “heresy” by organised religion and “superstition” by the narrowed-down “scientific” modern mindset.

Lièvre and Loude explain: “Neither Hinduism, nor Buddhism, nor Islam have managed to impose themselves at the expense of the beliefs and practices carried out by the community”. [14]

They say the Kalash *dehar*, shamans, “have managed to pass on to each generation instructions inspired by the supernatural.

“Adopted by the community, their revelations have been built into customary codes giving the Kalash people a religious specificity, despite external pressures and influences”. [15]

In neighbouring areas which have been converted to Islam, shamans take on a different role – upholding the collective communal ethos from outside the centre of power, they issue warnings or criticisms about the direction that society is taking.

Peter Snoy has given an account of a shaman who, in 1955, sung revelations about a

local tax collector.

“He had nothing good to say about him – on the contrary, he claimed that he was oppressing the poor and favouring the rich; misfortune would strike him if he carried on acting that way”. [16]

Lièvre and Loude say that the polytheistic Kalash society is notable for the absence of priests, who are not at all the same thing as shamans.

This is even a point of principle, they explain, with inherited teaching absolutely excluding any monopoly by a priestly class. [17]

And, they add, this ethos permeates Kalash society on every level: “Politically, it does not tolerate central power, like a good number of nomad peoples of the steppes of central Asia or Afghanistan, even though it has been solidly sedentary for a long time now”. [18]

They describe how in the “holistic society” of the Kalash, persistent illness or other problems afflicting one individual or household are regarded as troubling for the well being of the community as a whole and thus the shaman’s intervention in such affairs represents a collective desire to put things right. [19]

This is partly because an illness is itself seen as involving more than the individual’s physical condition and as being “the result of pressure exerted by a part of the community (members

alive or dead) with regard to an individual who has disturbed the game of social relationships”. [20]

This is all part of the anarchistic flavour of Kalash society, its idea of an internally-assured balance, free from outside power.

Roberte Hamayon notes: “In fact, we have never seen a shamanic society which, while remaining shamanic, has been centralised, constituted into a state”. [21]

The role of the Kalash shamans is not to lay down religious law but, by entering into a trance, to become a channel between the spirits of nature and human communities.

The ceremonies often feature green branches – universal symbols of our belonging to nature – and the playing of music. The shaman is frequently exhausted by his exertions and collapses at regular intervals. [22]

Hamayon stresses: “Far from being the priest of a god, the shaman is the servant of his community, using for its benefit his capacity for communication with the supernatural”. [23]

Lièvre and Loude add: “The trance is cultural behaviour not only accepted by the community, but valued as irrefutable proof of the manifestation of the sacred in the body of a man, allowing communication between two worlds, visible and invisible, profane and sacred”. [24]

The *dehar* himself (they are nearly always

men) plays an almost passive part in the process. “The message from the supernatural simply comes to him. His role does not involve modifying or interpreting ‘received’ words.

“Moreover, he does not need to dance, or sing, or play an instrument to enter into a trance. His ‘art’ is thus thoroughly spontaneous and needs no instruction. He is a medium, a receiver, a transmitter of information”. [25]

As intermediaries between two worlds, the shamans see the fairies.

Lièvre and Loude say that the Kalash people and their neighbours were originally nomads and when they settled in the Hindu Kush they adopted the nature-spirit beliefs of the original inhabitants.

“The newly-arrived Kalash developed a syncretic attitude reconciling their Indo-Aryan gods with aboriginal fairies”. [26]

However, we Europeans also have a tradition of believing in fairies and other nature spirits, so I am not sure about that particular point.

Indeed, the fairies of the Chitral region are called *peris* [27] which seems remarkably close to the term *esperis*, used by Joan of Arc’s prosecutors in 15th century France to describe the fairies, or “spirits”, that she had seen at a sacred fountain. [28]

One Kalash *dehar*, Djanduli Khan, explains

what the fairies look like: “They wear dresses that go down to their knees, leaving the rest of their legs uncovered and their feet bare.

“Their hair is red and hangs loose, coming down to the waist. Their skin is red like that of Westerners”. [29]

In the Gilgit region, the fairies are described as being beautiful, with blond hair and pink skin like European women, and are sometimes specifically said to look like English “ladies”. [30]

There are also less attractive female demons with pendulous breasts which they throw back over their shoulders when they are angry! [31]

Altars are constructed on the mountain slopes in honour of the fairies – Lièvre and Loude describe a ceremony that took place at one of them on May 13, 1987.

“As the sun is setting (around 3pm), men bring branches and foliage from all the trees most important for life and the continuation of society; all symbols of the revitalisation of nature after the winter.

“An extraordinary and most beautiful sight: foliage-men, bent down, camouflaged, advancing under these waving wings of greenery, one behind the other. They place their loads next to the altar dedicated to the fairies”. [32]

If they are kept happy, the fairies will come to people in their dreams and give them advice or warnings. [33]

Like the Kalash community with which they are entwined, the fairies enjoy drinking the local wine (a cultural pleasure which is unusual in that part of the world) [34] and are known to have sex with some local men. [35]

Their human lovers are described as being “mixed with the fairies”, which implies that they behave in an eccentric or bizarre way [36] – a bit like being “away with the fairies”, as we put it in English, I suppose.

So how can we best understand all of this?

If we see the whole of our world, indeed of the cosmos, as a living organism, then this entity must have some way of *knowing itself*, of *feeling itself*, of *transmitting information* within itself.

The shamans who enter into a receptive state of mind are making themselves available to accept that information from the Whole, in a way which was perhaps once possible for all humans.

I would say that the fairies are not so much “supernatural” as a part of nature that we cannot see, measure or fully grasp.

Lièvre and Loude write of “that permanent human desire to understand the language of the spirits and the plants, as in primordial times”. [37]

The fairies, and the shamans, are speaking that language and relaying messages from the Whole – they are part of the invisible nervous system by which it knows, feels and regulates its

being.

Their magic is the magic of the living universe to which we all still very much belong, despite the spiritual numbness, blindness and denial of this wretched modern age.

[1] Viviane Lièvre and Jean-Yves Loude, with the collaboration of Hervé Nègre, *Le Chamanisme des Kalash du Pakistan: Des montagnards polythéistes face à l'islam* (Lyons: Presses universitaires de Lyon, 2018), p. 147. All following page references are to this work, unless otherwise stated. There is an English version of the book, but obviously my own translations here will not correspond exactly to that text.

[2] p. 46.

[3] p. 140.

[4] p. 182.

[5] p. 90.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Karl Jettmar, *Die Religionen des Hindukusch*, vol 1 (Stuttgart: 1975), cit. p. 90.

[8] p. 100.

[9] p. 54.

[10] Ibid.

[11] p. 54.

[12] Shahzada Hussam-al-Mulk, 'Chitral Folklore', Karl Jettmar and Lennart Edelberg (dir), *Cultures of the Hindukush: Selected Papers from the Hindukush Cultural Conference, Moesgard 1970* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974), pp. 109-10, cit. p. 77.

[13] p. 317.

[14] p. 529.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Peter Snoy, *Bagrot: Eine Dardische Talschaft im Karakorum* (Graz: Akademische Druck-u-Verlagsanstalt, 1975), p. 197, cit. p. 306.

[17] p 160.

[18] p. 146.

[19] p. 313.

[20] p. 372.

[21] Roberte Hamayon, 'Des chamanes au chamanisme', *L'Ethnographie*, No 87-88, 1982, pp. 13-48, cit. p. 304.

[22] pp. 26-28.

[23] Hamayon, p. 32, cit. p. 227.

[24] p. 434.

[25] p. 440.

[26] p. 161.

[27] p. 48.

[28] Paul Cudenec, *The Green One*, 2017, p. 160.

<https://winteroak.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/the-green-one-1.pdf>

[29] p. 48.

[30] Jettmar, p. 220, cit. p. 48.

[31] p. 48.

[32] pp. 57-58.

[33] p. 76.

[34] p. 120.

[35] p. 76.

[36] p. 78.

[37] p. 56.

2. OUR SACRED BELONGING

All the folk customs and rituals which today celebrate our belonging to nature are but the scattered and oft-distorted remnants of a primordial nature religion.

This is the view put forward by French scholar Alain Daniélou (1907-1994) in his 1979 book *Shiva et Dionysos*. [1]

As the title indicates, he sees the same belief system as having been shared by India and ancient Greece – and, indeed, by other cultures.

He cites many convincing details that confirm that the cults of Shiva and Dionysus are essentially one and the same tradition.

And he explains: “Shaivism is essentially a nature religion. Shiva, like Dionysus, only represents one aspect of the divine hierarchy, that which concerns the whole of earthly life.

“Shaivism, in establishing a plausible coordination between subtle and living beings, has always been opposed to the anthropocentrism of urban societies.

“Its Western, Dionysian, form likewise

represents a stage at which people were in communion with wild living, with the animals of the mountains and the forest.

“Dionysus, like Shiva, is a god of vegetation, of trees, of vines. He is also an animal god, a bull god.

“This god teaches people to turn their backs on human laws so as to rediscover those of the divine”. [2]

I can certainly see some parallels between Shaivism and the nature-based spirituality of the Kalash people of Pakistan [3] – the Indian god’s entourage contains various sprites, nymphs and phantoms, “all the spirits that rule over the aerial or terrestrial world, over the forests, the springs and the storms”. [4]

If European fairies and nature spirits can trace their origins back to the Indian sub-continent, this would explain why it is so hard to tell from which source the Kalash drew this folk belief.

Another connection is wine – Dionysus is the god of wine and the drink plays an important part in Indian-Greek-Roman Bacchanalian feasting, as well as being enjoyed by both humans and fairies in the Hindu Kush.

Daniélou writes: “The invention of wine and its spread among humankind constitutes an essential theme of the Dionysian legend.

“It seems that the vine was a plant of Indian

origin imported into the Mediterranean with the cult of Bacchus well before the Aryan invasions.

“Megasthenes mentions the importance of the Indian vineyards. Wine became the sacred drink of the Mediterranean peoples. Cretan gardeners grew vines”. [5]

“The climate of Shaivite and Dionysian life is not only ritualistic. It’s a searching for joy, for pleasure, for the blossoming of the individual.

“Wine and other intoxicating drinks form part of that *joie de vivre* which is one of the fundamental aims of any existence, for happiness (*ananda*) is the very nature of the divine condition.

“All that is pleasure and joy brings us closer to God”. [6]

However, unlike today’s Kalash society (and, indeed, most others across the world), the old Shaivite world was matriarchal.

Daniélou says: “Property, home, land and servants all belonged to the woman.

“The man was just an impregnator, a wanderer interested in the arts, in war, in games, or he was dedicated to the intellectual or spiritual life”. [7]

The primordial religion is a religion of *belonging* and of *being aware of* that belonging.

“All the elements which constitute the world are interdependent, are part of a whole. There is no hiatus, no discontinuity, in the work of the

Creator.

“The mineral world, the vegetal world, the animal and human world and the subtle world of the spirits and the gods exist one through the other, one for the other”. [8]

We can find and confirm our part in that great interconnected cosmos by taking part in celebrations and rites.

Daniélou says: “Communication between different states of being, between humans, spirits and gods, can only be effected by means of special techniques, called rites, which use the fault lines, the invisible joining points where communication between different worlds is possible”. [9]

“The seeker must discover in the world in which he lives, and in himself, the points of contact or of attachment to other worlds.

“He must know how to recognise in the mineral, vegetal and animal world, on the surface of the earth and in his own body, these forms, these points through which flow into him and into the world the fundamental energies in which are revealed the thought, the nature and the action of the Creator”. [10]

For the Shaivite and Dionysian tradition, dance is a perfect means of accessing this connection.

Says Daniélou: “Shiva as manifestation of primordial rhythmic energy is the ‘lord of the

dance' (*Nata-raja*). The cosmic universe is his theatre". [11]

"The ecstatic dancers, inspired or possessed by the god, acquire perceptions of the invisible world, powers of prophecy and magic.

"In the semi-conscious hypnotic state brought on by the rhythm of the drums and the movements of the dance, they enter into contact with the gods, with wild animals, even with stones, and charm them". [12]

He sees a continuation of this dancing tradition, via Greece, in the Sufi *zikr* dance in the Islamic world and in customs which survived until the 14th century in the Rhineland and Flanders as well as in southern Italy, [13] as I will discuss in another essay.

Sacred places are an important setting for sacred dances.

As the Romanian historian of religion Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) explains, the temple in any religion constitutes an "opening" towards a higher reality and "ensures communication with the world of the gods". [14]

But the use of a building, along with the formulation of dogma and laws, is already a step away from a primal awareness.

Daniélou insists: "Shiva's temple is nature. This is why the Shaivite rites of initiation take place in the forest or by the side of a river or sacred lake, and never in temples or human

dwellings.

“Springs are home to nymphs or genies, rivers are goddesses, the source of the Ganges is in Shiva’s hair”. [15]

The natural world is an enchanted world, he says.

“For someone who is conscious of the fact that creation is not only a divine work, but the very form of the divine, every being, every life, every action takes on a sacred character, becomes a rite, a means of communicating with the celestial world”. [16]

As Paolo Santarcangeli explains, for any people which lives in harmony, “in consensus”, with the forces that surround it, “many animals are sacred or rather *everything* is sacred: sky, earth, water, fire, air.

“The whole life of the ‘primitive’ human is a succession of magical operations aiming to create a bond of affection with the surrounding world, to conjoin, to bewitch, to conjure the forces of nature”. [17]

Eliade defines this in terms of *hierophany*, of something sacred revealing itself to us.

He says this ranges from “the most elementary hierophany, for example the manifestation of the sacred in some object, a stone or a tree, up to the supreme hierophany, which for a Christian is the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ”. [18]

He adds: "The modern Westerner feels a certain uneasiness regarding certain forms of the manifestation of the sacred: it is difficult for him to accept that, for certain human beings, the sacred could manifest itself in stones or trees.

"But it's not a question of venerating a stone or a tree *in itself*. The sacred stone and the sacred tree are not adored for being such; it is rather than they are *hierophanies*, because they 'show' something which is no longer stone or tree, but the *sacred*". [19]

"A *sacred* stone remains a *stone* – apparently (more precisely: from a profane point of view) nothing distinguishes it from all the other stones.

"On the other hand, for those to whom a stone reveals itself as sacred, its immediate reality transmits a supernatural reality.

"In other words, for those who have a religious experience, Nature as a whole is likely to reveal itself as cosmic sacredness. The Cosmos in its totality can become a hierophany". [20]

Eliade stresses that early human communities, whether nomadic hunters or sedentary farmers, shared something more important than the differences between them.

All of them "lived in a sacralised Cosmos, took part in a cosmic sacredness which was manifested as much in the animal world as in the vegetal one". [21]

So the "magic" in this world, which many of

us feel to be totally missing in industrial society, is in fact our knowing of a deep *connection* to everything around us – our conscious *witness*.

Writes Daniélou: “The manifestation of a world whose nature is energy demands two opposed poles.

“The substance, the matter of the world, is the current which unites these two poles. Matter is not something stable, but pure energy organised in space-time.

“In the primordial Trinity, it is neither Shiva nor Shakti who is the substance of what is created; it is the spark that flies between them, the attraction (*raga*), bliss (*ananda*), pleasure (*kama*) and love”. [22]

This fits nicely with the point I was making in my piece on the Kalash about their fairies representing the nervous system of the Whole, the *means* by which we *feel* our belonging to something much greater than us and through which we might, if we listen, be guided to act in its (and therefore our own) best interests.

Our pleasure at being in and part of nature – our *awe* – is the tingling sensation of becoming aware of *who we really are*.

The modern outlook regards only our *individual* existence as real, with any suggestion of a wider belonging seen as spurious and all talk of the sacred dismissed out of hand as ludicrous.

But Eliade writes: “The sacred is the *real*

par excellence, at the same time strength, effectiveness, source of life and fertility.

“The desire of the religious person to live *in the sacred* amounts, in fact, to his desire to place himself in objective reality, to not allow himself to be paralysed by the endless relativity of purely subjective experiences, to live in a real and effective world and not in an illusion”. [23]

And part of that greater reality is the *telos* behind it, the *meaning* that flows into a receptive heart through the sacred veins of the cosmic being to which we all belong, whether we realise it or not.

Daniélou puts it like this: “Nothing can exist without being implied in its cause. If thought exists in beings, thought is necessarily part of the cosmic principle from which they issued.

“There thus exists universal thought, a universal conscience, and creation is not just an accident, but the choice of a transcendent will that wanted it to be the way it is”. [24]

[1] Alain Daniélou, *Shiva et Dionysos: La Religion de la Nature et de l'Eros de la préhistoire à l'avenir* (Paris: Fayard, 1979). All translations from French in this essay are my own.

[2] Daniélou, p. 20.

[3] See Chapter 1.

[4] Daniélou, p. 139.

[5] Daniélou, p. 195.

[6] Daniélou, p. 196.

[7] Daniélou, p. 265.

- [8] Daniélou, p. 15.
- [9] Daniélou, p. 225.
- [10] Daniélou, p. 226.
- [11] Daniélou, p. 249.
- [12] Daniélou, p. 251.
- [13] Daniélou, p. 253.
- [14] Mircea Eliade, *Le sacré et le profane* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), p. 29.
- [15] Daniélou, pp. 166-67.
- [16] Daniélou, p. 17.
- [17] Paolo Santarcangeli, *Le livre des labyrinthes*, p. 108, cit. Daniélou, p. 34.
- [18] Eliade, p. 17.
- [19] Ibid.
- [20] Eliade, p. 18.
- [21] Eliade, p. 22.
- [22] Daniélou, p. 97.
- [23] Eliade, p. 31.
- [24] Daniélou, p. 15.

3. DANCING ON THE WEB OF BEING

As the bulldozers of power and control *progressively* destroyed organic folk customs and beliefs across the world, some areas held out for longer.

One such place was the south of Italy, which in the 16th century was described by Jesuits as an “Italian India” [1] – this was not meant as a compliment!

Its most famed tradition is *taranta*, which is much more than the similar dance today represented on stage.

From his investigations in 1959, anthropologist, historian and philosopher Ernesto de Martino (1908-1965) found that *tarantismo* in the province of Salento then still influenced directly “the ideology and behaviour of several thousand people”. [2]

It is essentially a form of shamanic ritual, not so different from the ceremonies of the Kalash people that I recently described, [3] except that in this case the participants are mostly women. [4]

The idea is that the music and dance are a

cure for having been bitten by local poisonous spiders (not those we call “tarantulas” in English) or by scorpions.

There is no quick cure – it generally goes on for two, three or four days, although de Martino records one case where 18 days of music and dance were needed to expel the toxin! [5]

Neither is it usually a one-off: the “first bite” generally occurs around the beginning of puberty [6] and then the person can be “re-bitten” and re-cured on a regular basis for as long as 30 years. [7]

De Martino judges it unlikely that these people are really bitten by poisonous spiders on every such occasion, even though it is certainly possible, particularly for those who work in the fields.

But the idea of the cure is an old one, with records showing that Norman soldiers in Palermo, Sicily, were treated for spider bites with music and dance nearly a thousand years ago, in 1043. [8]

And the spider is certainly the *focus* of the folk custom.

The dancer acts out, at one and the same time, the effects of being bitten by a spider and of *becoming* a spider.

De Martino describes watching a woman dressed in white, a scarf tied around her waist, her black hair in wild disarray over a face

wearing an ostentatiously hard and fixed expression, her eyes sometimes open, sometimes shut. [9]

To the sound of guitar, violin, accordion and tambourine, her movements “visibly mimed a being incapable of standing upright and which moved forward almost glued to the floor, in other words a spider.

“The dancer was thus living out her identification with the spider and, a slave to the animal, danced with it, herself became the dancing animal. At this moment there was total identification with the spider”. [10]

As the dance evolved, and quickened in pace, her feet observed a rhythm of 50 beats every ten seconds and, after a particularly frantic spinning phase, she collapsed – just like the Kalash shamans.

“The band stopped playing, the dancer was brought a cushion for her head and a glass of water, assistants mopped abundant sweat from the musicians, then after a break of about ten minutes, the band started up again and the cycle repeated, with always the same phases”. [11]

It used to be widespread, says de Martino, for dancers to be suspended from a tree, or a ceiling, on a rope swing, mimicking a spider hanging from its threads. [12]

The dancer’s relationship with the spiders can be intense, even outside the ceremonies.

De Martino describes one case: “Each year Matilde was again bitten and re-bitten by the spiders: she saw them, felt their sting, called them by their names (Rosina, Marie-Antionietta...) and answered their call.

“These spiders gave her orders, forbidding her, for instance, to eat certain types of food, making her dress in a certain way, telling her to stay away from certain people: and she had to obey her little tyrants, otherwise they would get their own back by giving her the feeling of being ‘injured’”. [13]

The spiders here seem to be playing the same role as the Lakash fairies in representing the intermediary nerves between the individual’s unconscious and the being of the organic Whole, thus providing advice and guidance from beyond the limited perspective of the conscious ego.

Real spiders are also widely reported to respond to the music and take part in the dance.

De Martino explains that the father of one dancer, Carmela, had told him that she danced in the summer (as is usually the case) “because in this season the spider’s web is dry and tight and the spider can easily dance and run on its threads, communicating its movement to the girl.

“In winter, on the other hand, the web becomes damp and soft and cannot bear the weight of any dancing by the spider, which stays motionless at the centre of its web, leaving the

girl in peace”. [14]

A book published in Rome in 1641 by the scholar Athanasius Kircher describes an experiment carried out by a duchess in the presence of her courtiers and a number of priests.

“To start with, at the sound of the guitar, the spider showed no sign of movement, but, afterwards, when the musicians played a melody appropriate to her mood, the creature not only seemed to carry out a dance by hopping around on its legs and moving its body, but danced for real by respecting the beat; if the musician stopped playing, the creature also stopped its dance”. [15]

De Martino writes that, according to tradition, “spiders seem sensitive to music and dance and, depending on their size and their colour, they prefer one melody or the other; moreover, through their bite and their venom, they communicate their preference to those bitten so that to spark the dance that will act as the cure, the musicians must, by trial and error, determine the melody suited to the case, the one that binds, through the same sympathy, the spider and the bitten”. [16]

Scorpions can get in on the act, as well, as was explained to de Martino.

“The whole family was in agreement in confirming that while Carmela was dancing, the

scorpions arrived from the end of the neighbouring garden and came up to the house, as if fascinated by the music; on the last occasion a scorpion had even come into the bedroom and had started dancing on the floor to the same rhythm as Carmela". [17]

Referring to Plato's thought about the power of music and dance, de Martino makes a comparison between the way young babies are calmed by singing and rocking and the fact that we are all rocked by the cosmic rhythms of mother nature. [18]

This reminds me of the German philosopher Ludwig Klages and his insistence that the rhythms of reproduction, of life and death, of the stars and planets, of the ocean's waves and of human hearts are the pulse of one great living.

He said that we can access a different dimension of existence by allowing ourselves to follow that life rhythm – for example, when, in dancing, we lose ourselves and become part of the pulsating universe.

"The more the dancer is granted the grace of becoming completely absorbed in the dance, the more it is not about movements, not about a change of locations and a measuring of line segments, but about the will-less, indeed almost impulse-less, *resonance* in the element of a wave creating motion, which henceforth experiences and, while it is experiencing, at the same time is

‘worked and woven’.

“In the rhythmically perfect dance something reaches its consummation as a primordial unique experience which, in the meantime, is experienced only at the sight of falling leaves, passing clouds or the surge of ocean waves: the sense of being carried away by the stream of things in action”. [19]

It is here that we might touch ecstasy or *Rausch*, which Klages defines as “to be outside oneself” and “outside the ego”. [20]

This is, of course, very much the case with *tarantismo*, shamanism in the Hindu Kush and countless other such traditions across the world.

By passing beyond the restraints of our individual identity we rediscover our always-present belonging to the Whole.

Another intriguing element is that of colour. Spiders are said to have their own favourite colours, which point to the appropriate cure.

Kircher wrote in the 17th century: “The different spiders create in those bitten a passion for different colours... so that those who were bitten by a red spider have a liking for red; those who were bitten by a green spider have a liking for green, and so on.

“That the spiders take pleasure from a certain colour is proven by the fact that if you place them on various coloured surfaces, they choose that of a similar colour to their own”. [21]

Not only is the scene of the “exorcism” – as de Martino calls it – decorated in the right colour, such as red or green, but the band also plays a tune known as the red or green one. [22]

He explains that because the spider dances to a rhythm and music which suit it, “its bite participates in the melody, in the dance, in the colours – it communicates, to the person who endured it, the corresponding preferences and injects into their veins a poison whose harmfulness lasts as long as the spider is alive and whose effects come to an end when the bitten person, thanks to the agonistic identification of the dance, makes the poisoning creature ‘die’”. [23]

Colours, like music and rhythm, form part of the cosmic pattern that underlies the human mind and experience.

They are part of the web of life and the *meaning* of things – a meaning which has been rendered largely invisible by the empty modern “scientific” mindset.

I stressed earlier that folk customs are not fixed and rigid re-enactments but fluid and ever-evolving expressions of our belonging. [24]

And trying to trace the exact origins of a tradition like *tarantismo* is not easy, as de Martino discovered.

He sees similarities with the Dionysian cult, [25] notably the feminine involvement, thus

providing a hypothetical link not just to ancient Greece, but on to India, as explored in the work of Alain Daniélou.

De Martino too places *tarantismo* within the Shaivite and Dionysian tradition and draws parallels with the spinning dances of the Sufis in the Islamic world. [26]

He says that Dionysus was the most important god in the Taranto province where the dancing has its roots.

“During the Dionysian festivities, the whole town descended into intoxication and the arrival of the Roman fleet in 282 surprised the citizens in their celebration of this occasion”. [27]

But de Martino also suggests an “Afro-Mediterranean” origin to the custom, enhanced perhaps by the rapid expansion of Islam in the 8th century. [28]

He cites research by French historian Henri Jeanmaire (1884-1960) regarding the origins of the broader Dionysian tradition.

“In the course of his analysis of the *mania* and menadism among the Greeks, Jeanmaire has drawn attention to a range of structurally similar African cults (*zar*, *bori* etc) characterised by demonic possession and by a choreographic-musical treatment of this possession.

“The areas in which these cults could be found would appear to include (at least according to the relevant data in our possession), the

Islamic countries of North Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia), the Arab peninsula, Ethiopia and an important part of the lands of Sudan, as far as the basin of the lower Niger.

“To this sphere as indicated by Jeanmaire, we must add its historical offshoot, the Afro-American world (Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Cuban, Afro-Haitian) where cults of an analogous structure developed, with particular modalities and under various names (*macumba, candomblé, santería, voodoo*”. [29]

He adds: “The comparison between *tarantismo* and the voodoo cult is particularly instructive”. [30]

Something I find very intriguing is the way in which, like the tradition of Sophia, or Divine Wisdom, [31] *tarantismo* combines pagan and Christian elements.

It is particularly tied in with my namesake, Saint Paul, who is regarded as intimately linked with the spiders.

De Martino questioned a 70-year-old woman, Filomena, who was bitten by a spider, as to why she had not killed it, when she had had two occasions to do so.

“She replied that the spider was ‘a creature of Saint Paul’ and that killing it would offend the saint. Her husband, for his part, confirmed that the spider had been ‘sent by the saint’”. [32]

Indeed, taking the name of St Paul in vain is

generally regarded as one of the sins which lead to somebody being bitten by (his) spiders. [33]

De Martino adds that most of the dancers converse with an imaginary voice, that of the spider or that of Saint Paul, with the distinction between the two not always clear. [34]

One male dancer, himself bitten of course by a spider, spoke with Saint Paul, whom only he could see or hear, during the pauses between dances.

“The voice of the saint, said Pietro, came to his ears as if from outside, but was not as clear as those of other people”. [35]

I was very much struck by the dancer Carmela’s account of having encountered Saint Paul in a dream.

“She dreamed of a great green meadow across which there came forward towards her a young man with a white beard, dressed in green with a red cape. Carmela at once recognised Saint Paul and wasted no time in asking him to cure her”. [36]

When you add in the fact that she then dreamed of water surging forth abundantly from the earth, [37] I am reminded of Khidr, that nature divinity indigenous to the Middle East to which southern Italy is so close.

As I wrote in *The Green One*, this white-bearded verdant saint is associated with sacred springs, fertilising rain, the greening of nature

and the renewal of life. [38]

A strong connection with the universal human symbolism declaring our belonging to nature comes with the greenery used to decorate the scene of the ritual dancing, [39] as in Cornwall, [40] Lakash, [41] Albania, Croatia, Russia, Romania, Austria, Germany, [42] and just about everywhere else!

I will conclude by once again stressing that *our belonging to nature* is real and permanent.

Each one of us is aware of it deep down inside, beneath all the soul-smothering layers of industrial conditioning.

Although its ritual manifestations have often been snuffed out over the centuries and its spirituality derided and proscribed, its essence, because rooted in reality, lives on.

This innate nature-awareness is born again with every child who arrives in this world and, despite our life-denying overlords' sinister efforts, will never be eradicated.

[1] Ernesto de Martino, *La Terre du remords (Terra del rimorso)*, trans. Claude Poncet (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, 1999), p. 16. Translations from the French edition are my own. All following page references are to this work, unless otherwise stated.

[2] p. 45.

[3] See Chapter 1.

[4] p. 53.

[5] pp. 106-07.

[6] p. 55.

[7] p. 209.

[8] p. 319.

[9] p. 78.

- [10] p. 79.
- [11] p. 80.
- [12] pp. 165-66.
- [13] p. 113.
- [14] p. 117.
- [15] A. Kircher, *Magnes sive de arte magnetica libri tres* (Rome: 1641), p. 770, cit. p. 180.
- [16] pp. 182-83.
- [17] p. 117.
- [18] p. 309.
- [19] Ludwig Klages, *Der Geist als Widersacher der Seele*, 6th edition (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1972), p. 1054, cit. Paul Bishop, *Ludwig Klages and the Philosophy of Life: A Vitalist Toolkit* (Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2018), p. 131. See Paul Cudenec, *The Global Gang Running Our World and Ruining Our Lives* (2025), pp. 89-90.
- <https://winteroak.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/the-global-gang-web.pdf>
- [20] Ludwig Klages, *Vom Wesen des Bewusstseins, Sämtliche Werke 3*, ed. Ernst Frauchiger, Gerhard Funke, Karl J. Groffmann, Robert Heiss and Hans Eggert Schröder, 9 vols (Bonn: Bouvier, 1964-1992) pp. 391-92, cit. Bishop, p. 135.
- [21] A. Kircher, *Musurgia universalis sive ars magna consoni et dissoni*, (Rome: 1650), II, p. 222, cit. p. 203.
- [22] p. 202.
- [23] p. 235.
- [24] See Chapter 0.
- [25] pp. 279-80.
- [26] See Chapter 2.
- [27] p. 313.
- [28] pp. 250-51.
- [29] p. 251.
- [30] p. 256.
- [31] Paul Cudenec, 'The spirit of Sophia', *The Global Gang*, pp. 38-67.
- [32] p. 93.
- [33] p. 103.
- [34] pp. 118-19.
- [35] p. 96.
- [36] p. 115.
- [37] Ibid.
- [38] Paul Cudenec, *The Green One* (2017), pp. 105-115.

<https://winteroak.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/the-green-one-1.pdf>

[39] p. 161.

[40] See Chapter 0.

[41] See Chapter 1.

[42] Cudenec, *The Green One*, pp. 127-128.

4. GNOSTICISM AND THE UNIVERSAL MOTHER

“The birthing of humans by the Earth is a universally widespread belief. In numerous languages, we are named ‘born of the Earth’”. [1]

So writes Mircea Eliade in *Le sacré et le profane*, a book to which I have already referred. [2]

On the surface there would seem to be no connection between this earthy and rooted outlook and the mystic, even ascetic, gnostic tradition which is generally regarded as an early phase of Christianity proposing a somewhat negative view of our physical, material, being.

However, American scholar John Lamb Lash takes a different perspective in his 2006 book *Not In His Image: Gnostic Vision, Sacred Ecology, and the Future of Belief*, declaring: “Gnostic cosmology is deeply rooted in indigenous wisdom and reflects a sophisticated version of the native sense for life on earth”. [3]

“The possibility that Gnostic knowledge and practices were the final flowering of millennial experience in ‘archaic techniques of ecstasy’

(Eliade's famous term for shamanism) has yet to be recognized or explored.

“The work of the earliest scholars (usually German, such as Richard Reitzenstein) clearly supported this path of inquiry, but their work is no longer cited.

“The pioneers of the field regarded the Gnostic movement in the broad sense as a monumental spiritual phenomenon of central Asiatic origins, predating Christianity by centuries, if not millennia”. [4]

American poet and culture critic Kenneth Rexroth argues that gnosticism grew from the prehistoric matrix of Goddess worship in Europe, “Neolithic and even earlier”.

The focus on “the descent of the redeemer goddess” would therefore account for “the strong matriarchal or at least anti-patriarchal emphasis of most Gnostic sects”. [5]

An important connection between what appear to be two very different spiritual traditions – the pagan Mother Earth cult and Christian mysto-ascetism – comes in the form of Sophia.

She is, as I set out in ‘The Spirit of Sophia’, “a religious character or metaphysical metaphor broadly representing divine wisdom and the presence and beauty of that wisdom in our world and in our hearts”. [6]

Lash writes: “Gnostics taught that Sophia is

a goddess, a divine being embodied in the earth. The wisdom unique to her is the living intelligence of the planet.

“All the Mysteries were dedicated to this divinity, the Magna Mater, the Great Mother whom I propose to correlate to Gaia.

“Initiation in the Mysteries involved a direct encounter with the Sophianic intelligence, that is, ‘earth wisdom’ in New Age parlance.

“Gnostics preserved a sacred story about the origin of humanity, how the earth evolved, and how we as a species are uniquely involved with the planetary intelligence”. [7]

He adds that the role of the Mysteries is usually ignored or underplayed by scholars specialising in gnosticism, who also tend to treat these rites as being confined to the Near East, Egypt, and Greece, in the Hellenistic era (320–30 BCE).

Lash argues that they in fact amounted to “a network extending from the northernmost isles of Britain down to the northern coast of Africa and deep into Asia, a network of extremely ancient provenance”. [8]

Again we see intriguing pointers towards a universal nature-based human *gnosis* hidden from our sight by the restrictive mental walls of ‘modern’ thinking.

In *The Golden Ass*, a novel written in the second century AD, the Berber Latin-language

writer Apulieus gives a fascinating account of initiation into the Mysteries of Isis.

At the key moment of revelation, a sublime female voice addresses him, announcing:

“I am Nature, the universal Mother, mistress of all the elements, primordial child of time, sovereign of all things spiritual, queen of the dead, queen also of the immortals, the single manifestation of all the gods and goddesses that are known to you on earth”. [9]

An important proponent and teacher of the old human religion of life was Hypatia of Alexandria, Egypt, the great philosopher, astronomer and mathematician who was murdered by a mob of Christian extremists in 415.

Canadian-born writer Manley Palmer Hall says that when it came to debating ideas about the divine, “Hypatia eclipsed in argument every proponent of the Christian doctrines in Northern Egypt”. [10]

And Lash maintains that her expertise in theology typified the pagan intellectual class of gnostics, *gnostikoi*, “those who understand divine matters, knowing as the gods know”. [11]

He makes the important point that ancient learning was multidisciplinary and eclectic, contrasting strongly to the narrow specialization of higher education and the sciences in our time.

One might even think that the narrow

specialization has been brought in specifically to *prevent* any broader and deeper understanding.

The word “philosophy” means, of course, “love (*philo*) of wisdom (*sophia*)” and for Gnostics, says Lash, “Sophia was a revered divinity, the goddess whose story they recounted in their sacred cosmology”. [12]

He adds with regard to the martyred gnostic philosopher: “To the people of her time and setting, Hypatia would have been wisdom incarnate”. [13]

But what is meant by “paganism”, which still has a bad name among many Christians 1,600 years after the death of Hypatia and is often seen by them as representing dark, even Satanic, forces?

Lash states: “Paganism may be defined as the primary orientation of society to the natural world and habitat, where both are perceived holistically”. [14]

“In the Pagan sense of life, culture is organically situated in nature... Pagans were by definition people rooted in the place they inhabit”. [15]

British historian Garth Fowden notes that pagans were immersed in “that distinctive understanding of divinity that comes through dwelling together with the gods in a certain place, a precise local knowledge that no distant prophet could or would ever make into a

scripture”. [16]

The Celtic pagan tradition is represented by the druids who, according to Diogenes Laertius and other ancient sources, “taught that the ideal for people was to live in harmony with nature and themselves, accepting that pain and death were not evils but essential... and that the only evil was moral weakness”.

Their message to the common people was: “Revere the gods, do not do evil to each other, and exercise courage”. [17]

As Lash points out, the word “druid” comes from an archaic root term meaning tree (and, I would add, often specifically associated with oaks) which is also the source of the English word “truth”. [18]

Truth is therefore about trees, or rather about the divine beauty that manifests itself in trees as in rivers, mountains, lakes, seas, plants, animals and even – if we allow it to do so – in human beings.

The old – and now forbidden – spirituality of our ancestors was about their *withness* to community, to nature, to the universe.

All the various forms that it took across the world were rooted in a recognition of the sacredness of the living world, the truth of the divine presence in this world.

As Canadian anthropologist Jeremy Narby puts it: “How could nature not be conscious if our

own consciousness is produced by nature?" [19]

[1] Mircea Eliade, *Le sacré et le profane* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), p. 121.

[2] See Chapter 2.

[3] John Lamb Lash, *Not In His Image: Gnostic Vision, Sacred Ecology, and the Future of Belief* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green, 2006), pdf version, p. 179.

[4] Lash, p. 132.

[5] Kenneth Rexroth, 'Introduction', G.R.S. Mead, *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten* (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1960) p. xiii, cit. Lash, pp. 31-32.

[6] Paul Cudeneo, 'The Spirit of Sophia', *The Global Gang Running Our World and Ruining Our Lives*, 2025, p. 40.

<https://winteroak.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/the-global-gang-web.pdf>

[7] Lash, p. 34.

[8] Lash, p. 130.

[9] Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, translated by Robert Graves (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1983), p. 264, cit. Lash, p. 133.

[10] Manley Palmer Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* (Los Angeles: Philosophical Research Foundation, n.d.), p. 197, cit. Lash, p. 26.

[11] Lash, pp. 26-27.

[12] Lash, p. 27.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Lash, p. 46.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Garth Fowden, 'Religious Communities', *Late Antiquity*, ed. Bowerstock et al. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 82-106, cit. Lash, p. 46.

[17] Lash, p. 65.

[18] Lash, p. 225.

[18] Lash, p. 225.

[19] Jeremy Narby, *The Cosmic Serpent* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 1998), p. 138, cit. Lash, p. 318.

5. THE MAGIC OF MEANING

Our ancestors enjoyed not just a very different way of living to ours today but also a very different way of *being*.

Morris Berman writes of the supposedly “primitive” human being: “He may often be frightened by his environment or by things in it, but he is never alienated by it.

“There are no Sartres or Kafkas in such cultures any more than there were in medieval Europe.

“The ‘primitive’ is thus in touch with what Kant called the *Ding an sich*, the thing in itself, in the same way as was the denizen of ancient Greece”. [1]

Our pre-modern predecessors felt part of a greater whole, in the context of which their lives were not random or absurd but filled with *the magic of meaning*.

Berman explains: “The view of nature which predominated in the West down to the eve of the Scientific Revolution was that of an enchanted world.

“Rocks, trees, rivers, and clouds were all

seen as wondrous, alive, and human beings felt at home in this environment.

“The cosmos, in short, was a place of *belonging*. A member of this cosmos was not an alienated observer of it but a direct participant in its drama.

“His personal destiny was bound up with its destiny, and this relationship gave meaning to his life”. [2]

“This metaphysic was preserved through the Middle Ages, an age noted (from our point of view) for its extensive symbolism.

“Things were never ‘just what they were’, but always embodied a nonmaterial principle that was seen as the essence of their reality”. [3]

Berman says that this type of “participating” consciousness, as he terms it, involved a “psychic wholeness” that we do not encounter in industrial society [4] and in which the individual feels embodied, vital, even enchanted. [5]

The New Zealander ethnographer Elsdon Best (1856-1931) declares: “When the Māori walked abroad, he was among his own kindred.

“The trees around him were, like himself, the offspring of [the great god] Tane; the birds, insects, fish, stones, the very elements were all kin of his, members of a different branch of the one great family.

“Many a time when engaged in felling a tree in the forest, have I been accosted by passing

natives with such a remark as ‘*Kei te raweke koe I to tipuna i a Tane*’ (‘You are meddling with your ancestor Tane’). [6]

This quotation came to me via Marshall Sahlins in his posthumously-published 2022 work *The New Science of the Enchanted Universe*.

There is much of interest in Sahlins’ book, so I am going to extensively draw upon it in this essay, despite my serious disagreement with one particular position he takes, which I will explain in the endnotes. [7]

He cites, for instance, Stanley Walens’ finding that for the Kwakiutl people of North America, “the prime agency of causality is not human action but spirit-power action”. [8]

And these spirits are not regarded as being *elsewhere* but totally enmeshed with everyday physical life, like the fairies of the Hindu Kush [9] or the dancing spiders of southern Italy. [10]

Sahlins writes: “Humans are essentially spirit-beings, even as spirits are essentially human”. [11]

“For all their usual invisibility, the spirits are co-present with humans in the same reality. The spirits may be invisible to the people, but the people are visible to the spirits”. [12]

“The cultures of immanence, enspirited cultures, know only one world in which people interact with the myriad of nonhuman subjects,

from the deities to the dead.

“These species of meta-persons may have their own habitats, from the heavens to under the ground or the sea, but they are co-present, visibly or invisibly, with human beings in one great cosmic polity. There is no ‘other world’”. [13]

“In an enchanted universe, the natural/supernatural distinction becomes meaningless”. [14]

An “enchanted” universe is one in which humans are infused with the *knowledge* of belonging to a greater whole.

It is one in which we are not spiritually numbed, but alert and attentive to the messages and guidance being sent to us by the vast organism of which we are part – messages that we can see as being delivered by intermediaries such as fairies or spiders.

We are connected to what the Sioux people of North America term *Wakonda*, described by ethnographers Alice Fletcher and Francis la Flesche as “the permeating life of invisible nature – an invisible life and power that reaches everywhere and everything, and can be appealed to by man to send him help”. [15]

British anthropologist Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard relates how the East African Nuer people see the various spirits of the air, the ancestors and other powers as just so many

“refractions” of their deity Kwoth.

“Nuer do not conceive of lion-spirit as something separate from God... Lion-spirit is thought of as Spirit in tutelary relationship to a particular social group. It and God are the same thing different regarded”. [16]

In an enchanted world of belonging, we are not trapped within the confines of our own personal ego.

Missionary-ethnographer Hermann Strauss explains the idea of soul held by the Mount Hagen people of Papua New Guinea.

“This concept is not the individual soul in the sense in which we understand it, but the individual’s *share* or *participation* in the *communal* life-force and spiritual power, and every member of the group shares it some way or other...

“The *min*, or [clan] ‘soul’, is tied to its individual bearer, the self, but it comes to him as something else. It is something greater than the individual, for it is simply his participation in the power and the spiritual life of the community”. [17]

This sense of supra-individual identity can also extend across time.

Mark Mosko says that for the Trobriand Islanders in Papua New Guinea “living people *are* their ancestors embodied. Thus when humans act magically, their incorporated spirit

predecessors *as kin* are invisibly but effectively acting also”. [18]

For non-modern people, time is usually not linear – the assumption used to justify the relentless and supposedly inevitable advance of industrial “progress”.

Instead it is cyclical, revolving and pulsating to the rhythms of the earth and the universe.

This rotation is not flat and the circle is never closed, as the great becoming of the cosmos gradually unfolds in the form of a spiral.

But from the perspective of the ephemeral individual – whose experience of the daily, monthly and yearly cycles is itself extended into three-dimensional spirality by the advance of his or her life – the greater world appears stable, self-renewing and essentially timeless.

Until very recently in our species’ history, the reality we were born into was also the reality that we left behind at our death.

Berman writes: “For the people of the Middle Ages, the seasons and events of life followed one another with a comforting regularity.

“The notion of time as linear was experientially alien to this world and the need to measure it correspondingly muted”. [19]

“Our notions of growth and expansion would have made little sense in this static and self-sufficient world”. [20]

A “static and self-sufficient world”!

Am I alone in feeling, as we plummet ever faster into a deranged global techno-totalitarian hell, that this sounds very much like a paradise lost?

[1] Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 142.

[2] Berman, p. 16.

[3] Berman, p. 28.

[4] Berman, p. 16.

[5] Berman, p. 19.

[6] Elsdon Best, *The Maori* (Wellington: Harry H. Tombs, 1924), pp. 128-29, cit. Marshall Sahlins, with the assistance of Frederick B. Henry Jr, *The New Science of the Enchanted Universe: An Anthropology of Most of Humanity* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2022), p. 118.

[7] Incredibly, for someone long considered part of the anarchist milieu, (<https://fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net/library/370-fall-2005-the-original-affluent-society>), Sahlins claims that “something like the state, the cosmic state, is the general condition of humankind – even in the state of nature” (p. 137) and that “the state is a universal human institution” (p. 138). He confuses universal belonging with “universal governance” (p. 140) and regurgitates the age-old authoritarian line that the notion of a metaphysical cosmic hierarchy somehow justifies tyranny in the human world. I really have to wonder if these opinions formed part of the text as he wrote it, or whether there was some kind of editorial interference after his demise.

[8] Stanley Walens, *Feasting with Cannibals: An Essay on Kwakiutl Cosmology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 24, cit. Sahlins, p. 23.

[9] See Chapter 1.

[10] See Chapter 3.

[11] Sahlins, p. 44.

[12] Sahlins, p. 41.

[13] Sahlins, pp. 37-38.

[14] Sahlins, p. 36.

[15] Alice Fletcher and Francis la Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 2 vols (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), p. 599, cit. Sahlins,

pp. 114-15.

[16] E.E. Evans Pritchard, *Nuer Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 93, cit. Sahlins, p. 109.

[17] Hermann Strauss, *The Mi-Culture of the Mount Hagen People, Papua New Guinea*, trans. by Brian Shields, ed. by Gabriele Stürzenhofecker and Andrew Strathern, Pittsburgh Ethnology Monographs no 13 (Pittsburgh: Department of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh, 1991), p. 99, cit. Sahlins, p. 50.

[18] Mark Mosko, *Ways of Baloma: Rethinking Magic and Kinship from the Trobriands* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), p. 57, cit. Sahlins, p. 94.

[19] Berman, p. 56.

[20] Berman, p. 52.

6. THE DISENCHANTMENT OF LIFE

In previous chapters I have been looking at the divine magic of this world and the ways in which this has always been recognised and celebrated in traditional human cultures.

In these next few chapters, I am going to explore why it might be that this sense of the sacred in nature has been marginalised in contemporary society, before eventually going on to suggest how we might go about bringing it back to the centre of our thinking.

The term “disenchantment of the world” (*Entzauberung der Welt*) was famously invented by the German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920), so it seems appropriate to start with a look at his analysis of how this came about.

Weber identified close parallels between the growth of the industrial-capitalist mindset and the emergence of the Protestant branch of Christianity.

“The *direction* in which the influence was exerted was the same in Protestant countries which knew the most diverse imaginable

political, economic, geographic and ethnic conditions; this was the *same* on the decisive points and, in particular, was *independent* of the degree of the development of capitalism as an economic *system*, whether we are looking at New England, at the German diaspora, at southern France, at the Netherlands or at England, to which we could further add the Scots-Irish of Ireland and a great number of other German territories.

“I have moreover established the ‘*absence*’ of the ‘capitalist *spirit*’ (in the sense which *I* have given to this term!), including in Italy, the territory in which, *before* the Reformation, the capitalist economy was most developed (the situation is the same in Flanders)”. [1]

Weber explained that while the Roman Catholic Church had always *accommodated* the accumulation of wealth (in contradiction to the teachings of Christ), it had never *glorified* this activity – indeed, a sense of *guilt* amongst the well-off was fostered to encourage their compensatory charitable contributions to the coffers of the Church.

With Protestantism, while getting rich for the sake of getting rich was still frowned on, obtaining wealth as the fruit of professional dedication was regarded as a divine *blessing*. [2]

Working hard in order to earn money was regarded as a *moral virtue* – even one that

formed part of the individual's salvation.

“Work was, *in itself*, the purpose of life, as laid down by God... An aversion to work was a symptom of the absence of a state of grace”. [3]

This strange new belief, so very different from the old-fashioned approach of doing only the minimum of work to get by, thus helped sweep away the traditional European ethical view that it was “sordid and despicable” to lead a life dominated by an accursed hunger for gold (“*auri sacra fames*”). [4]

The modern pursuit of profit as the purpose of someone's life, rather than as a means to satisfy their material needs, was the “inversion of a state of affairs that one could describe as ‘natural’”, remarks Weber. [5]

“Any economic activity fuelled by the ‘capitalist spirit’ (in my terms) is, certainly, directly opposed to traditionalism”. [6]

Puritan Protestants frowned on any kind of worldly joy, such as frequenting taverns or taking part in sports. [7]

Even sex between man and wife was not supposed to bring pleasure, but to serve only as “a *sober* procreation of children”, according to religious leader Richard Baxter. [8]

As I set out in my 2014 book *The Stifled Soul of Humankind*, [9] in my native country they also set out to do away with Merrie England, its folklore and its traditions, such as

the Padstow May Day that I enjoyed in 2025.
[10]

Writes Weber: “The Puritans’ furious hatred of everything that smacked of ‘superstition’, of everything that suggested a magical or hierurgical dispensation of grace, was directed at the Christian feast of Christmas as well as at the Maypole”. [11]

In his work on the sociology of religion, Weber points out that the Old Testament, very important in Protestantism, was the product of an advanced urban civilisation in the Middle East.

He writes that Judaism has a “particular historical importance in the blooming of the economic ethics of the modern West” [12] and involves a “systematic regulation that also applied to everyday ethics”. [13]

Weber notes that the decrees of the most ancient Hebrew sacred law “presupposed the existence of a monetary economy”. [14]

So there was a gulf between this view of the world and the traditional lives of European peasants “so strongly connected to nature, so dependent on organic processes and natural events and as such so little orientated towards rational systemisation, including in the economic sphere”. [15]

For people living close to the land, the *magic* of the natural world and the elements was deeply

ingrained, along with the importance of all the festivals and dances through which they bonded with the sacred earth.

But the disciplined domination of “economics” and industrialism meant that “in its entirety, the content of human existence, ever more rationalised, left the organic circuit of the simple rural life”. [16]

The Puritan outlook, judges Weber, represented “the exact opposite of ‘joy of being in the world’ (*Weltfreude*)”. [17]

It promoted instead the ideal of being reserved and self-disciplined – robot-like, we might say today – and thus eminently suitable for the dehumanising demands of industry or the military.

“Destroying the innocent and instinctive joy of life was its most urgent task; instilling *order* into the life conduct of its followers was its principal *means*”. [18]

“At the time of its birth, capitalism needed workers who went along, for reasons of *conscience*, with their economic exploitation”. [19]

In order for industrial development to advance, there had to emerge a way of thinking and living that was conducive to its agenda and this change in outlook was provided by Protestantism, says Weber.

The specific features exclusive to a life completely impregnated by the spirit of

capitalism included, he said, “a cold objectivity, insensitive to humanity”, “a calculating spirit” and being confined within a narrow specialism. [20]

A sort of double denial of life was involved in the Protestant work ethic – you were supposed to work hard to earn money but not to spend that money on enjoying yourself!

Weber adds that this treatment of a human being as primarily a unit for production – which obviously forms part of our contemporary corporate-run mentality – was shared by the Marxist outlook, which also spurned deeper meaning in life in favour of a rigid “economic” (money-orientated) approach. [21]

The “left-wing” labelling of men and women as “workers” has always struck me as a pitiful reflection of the dehumanising viewpoint of the exploiting class.

Weber also explores the way in which some strands of Protestantism adopted the idea of the “elect” – the chosen few who were guaranteed a place at God’s side, in contrast to the rest who were definitively excluded.

This, he argues, meant there was no need for “sacramental magic” to provide the path to salvation. [22]

“The great process, in the history of religion, of the *disenchantment* of the world, which began with the prophecy of ancient Judaism and, in

association with Greek scientific thought, rejected all the magical means of seeking salvation as arising from superstition and sacrilege, found here its culmination.

“The authentic Puritan even rejected any trace of religious ceremony at the graveside and buried his loved ones without song or music, so as to leave no room for any kind of ‘superstition’, any confidence in a salvational act of a magical-sacramental order. There was not only no magical means, but no means of any kind, to bring down divine grace to someone to whom God had chosen to deny it”. [23]

Weber again makes the contrast with Catholicism, in which “the priest was a magician who carried out the miracle of transubstantiation”. [24]

The Protestant faith, so suited to the new industrial capitalism, had spurned the idea of a sacred world, infused with divinity, in favour of the Middle Eastern idea of a God who had created the world from nothing and remained apart from it.

“The path of self-divinisation and the fully mystical possession of God was closed, because it was identified, in the literal sense of the term in any case, as blasphemy, the idolatry of human beings. Another ultimate consequence was also forbidden: pantheism”. [25]

Puritan Protestantism encouraged the

reduction of the human existence to dry duty, economic function and obedience to authority, with the prohibition of “all enjoyment of the beauty of the world, of art or of exalted state of mind and personal emotions”. [26]

In other words, the anti-traditional modern industrial-capitalist mindset set out to steal from us everything that makes life worth living.

[1] Max Weber, *L'Ethique protestante et l'esprit du capitalisme, suivi d'autres essais*, édité, traduit et présenté par Jean-Pierre Grossein (Paris: Gallimard, 2003), p. 335. Translations into English from the French translations of Weber's work are my own.

[2] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 235.

[3] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, pp. 207-08.

[4] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 53.

[5] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 27.

[6] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 378.

[7] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 225.

[8] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 206 FN.

[9] Paul Cudeneac, *The Stifled Soul of Humankind* (Sussex: Winter Oak, 2014)

<https://winteroak.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/the-stifled-soul-of-humankind-w.pdf>

[10] See Chapter 0.

[11] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 227.

[12] Max Weber, *Sociologies des religions*, choix d'extraits et traduction Jean-Pierre Grossein (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), p. 331, cit. Max Weber, *Sociologie de la religion ('Economie et société')*, traduction de l'allemand, introduction et notes par Isabelle Kalinowski (Paris: Flammarion, 2006), pp. 285-86 FN.

[13] Weber, *Sociologie de la religion*, p. 320.

[14] Weber, *Sociologie de la religion*, p. 158.

[15] Weber, *Sociologie de la religion*, p. 206.

[16] Weber, *Sociologie de la religion*, p. 440.

[17] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 13.

[18] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 137.

[19] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 247 FN.

[20] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 407.

- [21] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 29.
- [22] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 107.
- [23] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, pp. 106-107.
- [24] Weber, *L'Ethique protestante*, p. 132.
- [25] Weber, *Sociologie de la religion*, pp. 351-352.
- [26] Weber, *Sociologie de la religion*, p. 358.

7. THE DISGODDING OF NATURE AND OUR HEARTS

Max Weber was not alone in suspecting that certain religious beliefs – or the lack of them – had played a key role in shaping modern industrial society.

Indeed, a century before Weber wrote about “*die Entzauberung der Welt*” – the disenchantment of the world – German playwright and poet Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) described “*die Entgöttung der Natur*” – the “disgoddling” of nature. [1]

While people were still paying lip service to their God, they were not seeing and respecting His presence in the living world.

Divinity was no longer regarded as existing here on earth, amongst us and within us, but *uniquely* in a separate realm to which we could only have access via the intermediaries of organised religion.

As Marshall Sahlins notes: “The essential change was the translation of divinity from an *immanent* presence in human activity to a

transcendental 'other world' of its own reality, leaving the earth alone to humans, now free to create their own institutions by their own means and lights". [2]

Morris Berman writes that it is very difficult to form a reliable impression of the consciousness of premodern society and to know to what extent this was influenced by animism, the knowledge of spirit in nature.

He continues: "One thing that *is* certain about the history of Western consciousness, however, is that the world has, since roughly 2000 BC, been progressively disenchanted, or 'disgodded'.

"Whether animism has any validity or not, there is no doubting its gradual elimination from Western thought.

"For reasons that remain obscure, two cultures in particular, the Jewish and the Greek, were responsible for the beginnings of this development.

"Although Judaism did possess a strong gnostic heritage (the cabbala being its only survivor), the official rabbinical (later, talmudic) tradition was based precisely on the rooting out of animistic beliefs". [3]

He says the very fact that Yahweh insisted on his people worshipping no gods other than him is proof that pagan beliefs in other deities were still alive in that part of the world.

John Lamb Lash makes exactly the same point when he writes about “Pagan divinities who pervade nature, manifesting in all manner of creatures, in clouds and rivers and trees, even in rocks”.

He notes: “Monotheism will tolerate none of these sensuous immanent powers. It makes the earth void of divinity, its inhabitants subject to an off-planet landlord”. [4]

In what Lash terms “the nature-hating basis of monotheism”, [5] Berman sees, in his own terms, “the first glimmerings of what I have called nonparticipatory consciousness: knowledge is acquired by recognising the *distance* between ourselves and nature”. [6]

He adds: “Ecstatic merger with nature is judged not merely as ignorance, but as idolatry”. [7]

“Matter, as well as the earth, is effectively dead; and God is not a world soul, but a world director”. [8]

Alain Daniélou warns: “The principle itself cannot be personified”. [9]

“The danger of monotheism is that it results in the reduction of the human being and an appropriation of God for the service of a ‘chosen’ race.

“It is the opposite of a real religion, for it serves as a pretext for the subordination of the divine work to human ambitions”. [10]

For me, as a believer in the divine One, the key issue is the *separation* of that divine from the natural world and the way this *total* transcendence is also used to cut human beings off from our belonging to nature.

Daniélou regards this as emerging from nomadic cultures which “have no real contact with the world of nature”. [11]

He explains: “The monotheist simplification seems to have emerged from a nomadic religious concept, amongst peoples who were seeking to assert themselves, to justify their occupation of territories and their conquests.

“God is imagined in the image of man. He is reduced to the role of a guide who accompanies the tribe in its migrations and gives personal instructions to its chief.

“He is only interested in human beings and, amongst them, only in the group of the ‘chosen’.

“He becomes an easy pretext for conquest, for genocide, for the destruction of the natural order, as we can observe throughout the course of history”. [12]

Judaic influence seems particularly significant in this respect, not least via Christianity – even though, as Daniélou remarks, the latter faith seems to have initially been “a message of liberation and revolt against a Judaism which had become monotheistic, dry, ritualistic, puritan, Pharisee and inhuman”. [13]

Sahlins cites the Dutch orientalist Henri Frankfort's reference to the "austere transcendentalism" of the ancient Hebrew God and his statement that "the absolute transcendence of God is the foundation of Hebrew religious thought". [14]

Lash, for his part, refers to a 2001 collection of essays entitled *Deep Ecology and World Religions* published by the State University of New York Press.

He remarks: "Most of the contributors manage to squeeze ecological values from the existing traditions, but Eric Katz, writing on 'Judaism and Deep Ecology', confesses 'profound misgivings that traditional Judaism can be understood as an ally of deep ecology'". [15]

Lash argues: "The biblical directive script is about psychic distancing from nature and alienation from generic humanness.

"This is contrary to the universal form of indigenous narrative that relates how 'the people' emerge from nature, but remain grounded there, reflected in their habitat where they learn to live by observing organic laws and interacting with other species.

"The ancient Jews did not discover conscience, the power to choose what is right, they merely introduced a set of rules purporting to dictate what is right...

"The rules for living for the ancient Hebrews

came from *outside the natural world* in the form of a model morality dictated by a distant superterrestrial deity”. [16]

“Rooted in nature, humanity does not need preset behavioral rules to follow, but uprooted from nature we are compelled to replicate what we’re missing”. [17]

This strikes me as a crucial point. Because we are *part of* a greater living organism, we naturally contain within us the patterns of its thinking, its values, its *telos*.

We have an inner moral compass in our hearts that we can choose to access and to heed.

Not only do we not *need* external rules to follow, but these rules – manipulated by those who have declared themselves their upholders so as to advance their own control agenda – *prevent us from following our own inner moral compass*, both individually and collectively.

The inversion of right and wrong by authoritarian organised religions and associated states defines these dogmatic and controlling rules as representing nothing less than divine will and thereby relegates natural law to the status of heresy.

It is this tension between what we *know* to be right and true and what self-appointed “authorities” tell us we *must* think and do that is the greatest cause of human unhappiness.

We find ourselves living in societies

governed by rules which conflict with our innermost sense of meaning, of love for each other, for life and the cosmos.

We are forced to submit to a code of conduct and thought that is not our own, not that of nature. We are thus not free to think and act *authentically*; we are not free to be *who we are meant to be*.

- [1] Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 69.
- [2] Marshall Sahlins, with the assistance of Frederick B. Henry Jr, *The New Science of the Enchanted Universe: An Anthropology of Most of Humanity* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2022), p. 2.
- [3] Berman, p. 70.
- [4] John Lamb Lash, *Not In His Image: Gnostic Vision, Sacred Ecology, and the Future of Belief* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green, 2006), pdf version, p. 221.
- [5] Lash, p. 19.
- [6] Berman, p. 71.
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] Berman, pp. 110.
- [9] Alain Daniélou, *Shiva et Dionysos: La Religion de la Nature et de l'Eros de la préhistoire à l'avenir* (Paris: Fayard, 1979), p. 285. Translations are my own.
- [10] Daniélou, p. 19.
- [11] Daniélou, p. 18.
- [12] Daniélou, p. 285.
- [13] Daniélou, p. 287.
- [14] Henri Frankfort et al, eds, *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946/1977), p. 343, cit. Sahlins, p. 4.
- [15] Roger S. Gottlieb and Barnell, David Landis, eds, *Deep Ecology and World Religions* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001), Lash, p. 154, cit. Lash, p. 127.
- [16] Lash, p. 228.
- [17] Lash, p. 229.

8. THE “SCIENTIFIC” WAR ON OUR FREEDOM

If it was a certain kind of *religious* thinking that paved the road to this modern hell, then it was a certain kind of *scientific* thinking that pushed us on the bus that brought us here.

Morris Berman writes of his conviction that “the fundamental issues confronted by any civilization in its history, or by any person in his or her life, are issues of *meaning*”. [1]

And he adds: “Historically, our loss of meaning in an ultimate philosophical or religious sense – the split between fact and value which characterizes the modern age – is rooted in the Scientific Revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”. [2]

The Scientific Revolution, it is clear to me, was nothing less than a *philosophical declaration of war* on traditional ways of thinking and living, particularly those of Britain and Europe.

Berman points out: “Once natural processes are stripped of immanent purpose, there is really

nothing left in objects but their value for something, or someone, else.

“Max Weber called this attitude of mind *zweckrational*, that is, purposively rational, or instrumentally rational.

“Embedded within the scientific program is the concept of manipulation as the very touchstone of truth. To know something is to control it.

“This identification, in effect, renders all things meaningless, except insofar as they are profitable or expedient...

“The medieval Thomistic (Christian-Aristotelian) synthesis, that saw the good and the true as identical, was, in the first decades of the seventeenth century, irrevocably dismantled”. [3]

He writes regarding René Descartes and Francis Bacon: “Both made it clear that Aristotelianism had had its day. The very title of Bacon’s work, *New Organon*, the new instrument, was an attack on Aristotle, whose logic had been, in the Middle Ages, collected under the title *Organon*”. [4]

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he says, Baconianism promoted the identification of truth with utility, specifically industrial utility.

The old ways of thinking were to be replaced by the domination of “the mechanical arts”. [5]

“What Descartes does, really, is provide Bacon’s technological paradigm with strong philosophical teeth”. [6]

“Bacon is convinced that knowledge is power and truth utility; Descartes sees certainty as equivalent to measurement, and wants science to become a ‘universal mathematics’.

“Bacon’s goal, of course, was realized by Descartes’ means: precise measurement not only validates or falsifies hypotheses, it also enables the construction of bridges and roads”. [7]

Descartes’ philosophy of separation – *from the cosmos, from nature, from our own bodies* – was based on a “schizoid duality”, says Berman.

He explains that, like a schizophrenic, Descartes pictured his mind as being a mere observer of his body and thus also not part of the wider physical world. [8]

This is totally the opposite of the traditional nature-based spirituality I have been discussing, with its knowledge of *belonging* to everything around us.

It is noteworthy that dreams, regarded for millennia as a primary means through which we can receive messages from the Whole, are regarded from Descartes’ scientific perspective as having no meaning or relevance. [9]

This same rejection of natural wisdom, of humanity’s shared common sense, today fuels the life-denying techno-totalitarian and

transhumanist globalist agenda.

Isaac Newton's approach was likewise not based on the "why" of scientific enquiry but on the "how" of industrial utility.

He could not explain what gravity *was*, but he could observe and measure it and this was all that mattered for his kind of science. [10]

Quantity and measurability formed the backbone of this sterile "philosophy" and its positivist approach remains at the core of contemporary science as well as of the "economics" that drives the relentless advance of so-called "growth", "innovation" and "modernisation".

Berman writes: "In the course of the seventeenth century Western Europe hammered out a new way of perceiving reality..."

"The acid test of existence is quantifiability, and there are no more basic realities in any object than the parts into which it can be broken down". [11]

"We threw out the baby with the bathwater. We discounted a whole landscape of inner reality because it did not fit in with the program of industrial or mercantile exploitation". [12]

The *philosophical* war obviously had a *practical* purpose – its "elevation of technology to the level of a philosophy" [13] was intended to usher in a regimented industrial-imperialist society, together with vast profit and power for

the greedy few.

Scientific thinking thus also amounted to a *political attack* on the people and specifically on the authentic grassroots radicalism which had been unleashed in the English Civil War from 1642 to 1651.

Groups like the Diggers and the Ranters held the kind of views that are still feared and despised by the ruling class today.

The Digger Gerrard Winstanley, for instance, combined a political belief that “true freedom lies in the free enjoyment of the earth” with a spiritual connection to this same earth that “brought us all forth; that as a true mother loves all her children”. [14]

Not only were these radicals crushed by Oliver Cromwell once they had helped him gain power, but their “unscientific” nature-based way of thinking had also to be extinguished so that the country could be pushed down the grim path of industrial imperialism.

Says Berman: “After the Restoration, the mechanical philosophy was seen by the ruling elites as the sober antidote to the enthusiasm of the last two decades.

“From 1655 onward there was a series of conversions to the mechanical philosophy by men who had previously been sympathetic to alchemy.

“The conversions were thus part of the

reaction against enthusiasm on the part of the propertied classes and leading members of the Church of England, groups that coalesced in the Royal Society itself.

“Thomas Sprat, in the earliest history of the Society (1667), viewed the mechanical philosophy as helping to instill respect for law and order, and claimed that it was the job of science and the Royal Society to oppose enthusiasm”. [15]

I will be taking a look at the dubious origins of the Royal Society in the next chapter...

The triumph of the Puritan view of life, was, as Weber showed, [16] the perfect preparation for the industrial age, forging a robotic personality-type oriented towards work, submission, patient endurance and self-restraint.

Our natural freedom was confiscated and today, as Berman acknowledges, the prison bars of industrial modernity enclose every aspect of our existence.

“Keeping free from the System is not a viable option. As technological and bureaucratic modes of thought permeate the deepest recesses of our minds, the preservation of psychic space has become almost impossible”. [17]

We all suffered the sinister and unprecedented encroachment of this system into our personal lives during the Covid attack and we are now facing the looming threat of digital ID, digital currency, social credit scores, impact

slavery [18] and the techno-gulag smart cities in which our overlords want to confine us.

The whole industrial-scientific “revolution”, launched 400 years ago, therefore amounts to a *war on our being*.

Stresses Berman: “Scientific consciousness is alienated consciousness: there is no ecstatic merger with nature, but rather total separation from it...

“The logical end point of this world view is a feeling of total reification: everything is an object, alien, not-me; and I am ultimately an object too, an alienated ‘thing’ in a world of other, equally meaningless, things.

“This world is not of my own making; the cosmos cares nothing for me, and I do not really feel a sense of belonging to it.

“What I feel, in fact, is a sickness in the soul”. [19]

[1] Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 16.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Berman, p. 40.

[4] Berman, p. 29.

[5] Berman, p. 30.

[6] Berman, p. 34.

[7] Berman, p. 29.

[8] Berman, p. 35.

[9] Berman, p. 36.

[10] Berman, p. 43.

[11] Berman, pp. 45-46.

[12] Berman, p. 132.

[13] Berman, p. 31.

- [14] Gerrard Winstanley, *The Law of Freedom* (1652).
Gerrard Winstanley, *The True Levellers Standard Advanced* (1649).
See <https://orgrad.wordpress.com/a-z-of-thinkers/gerrard-winstanley/>
- [15] Berman pp. 123-24.
- [16] See Chapter 6.
- [17] Berman, p. 18.
- [18] <https://winteroak.org.uk/impact-slavery/>
- [19] Berman, p. 17.

9. THE INVISIBLE COLLEGE AND THE PLAN FOR OUR ENSLAVEMENT

Over recent centuries we have, as Mircea Eliade points out, witnessed a “gigantic transformation of the World taken on by industrial societies and made possible by the desacralisation of the Cosmos under the effect of scientific thought and, above all, by sensational discoveries in physics and chemistry” . [1]

He underlines the enormous gulf between the traditional and modern ways of living, noting that for Le Corbusier, the notorious Swiss-French pioneer of modern architecture and urban planning, a house was merely a “machine to live in”. [2]

Eliade remarks: “The ideal house in the modern world must be, above all, functional, in other words allowing people to work and to rest so as to be able to work.

“You can change your ‘machine to live in’ as frequently as you change your bike, fridge or car.

“You can also leave the town or province of your birth with no other inconvenience than the changes in the climate that this involves”. [3]

Alongside dehumanising urban planning and “modernisation” came the behavioural psychology required to manufacture human beings who would tolerate modern industrial slavery.

Morris Berman describes how, at the start of the 20th century, American infant care was under the influence of Luther Emmett Holt, Sr, a professor of paediatrics whose popular writings urged fixed feeding schedules, abolition of the cradle, and a minimum of fondling.

“J.B. Watson, the founder of behavioural psychology, was also very influential at this time, and he urged mothers to keep their emotional distance from their children.

“He specifically stated that such treatment, in addition to fixed feeding schedules, strict regimens, and toilet training, would mold the child’s capacities in a manner that would facilitate its conquest of the world”. [4]

Berman notes that Watson’s avowed objective of making the child “as free as possible of sensitivities to people” has now “come to fruition with stunning ‘success’”! [5]

Not long after the publication of his *Psychology from the Standpoint of the Behaviorist* (1919), Watson accepted a job with an advertising agency in New York, where “he applied his principles for controlling rats to the manipulation of consumers”. [6]

This organised manipulation of human beings, of our ways of thinking and being, has of course not been conducted in the interests of the great majority, but in the interests of those who would dominate and exploit us.

As Berman remarks: “Imperialism, whether economic, psychological, or personal (they tend to go together) seeks to wipe out native cultures, individual ways of life, and diverse ideas – eradicating them in order to substitute a global and homogeneous way of life”. [7]

“Modern science, in short, is the mental framework of a world defined by capital accumulation”. [8]

With this in mind, we need to go back to some of the key players in the imposition of the “scientific” outlook, as described in a recent essay, [9] and see if they were plausibly participants in a *pre-meditated plan* to reshape our lives, to train us like laboratory rats to think and behave in ways that reap the most profit for a dominant few.

Berman judges: “One thing that is conspicuous about the literature of the Scientific Revolution is that its ideologues were self-conscious about their role.

“Both Bacon and Descartes were aware of the methodological changes taking place, and of the direction in which things would inevitably move.

“They saw themselves as leading the way, even possibly tipping the balance”. [10]

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) himself wrote in 1620: “We must begin anew from the very foundations, unless we would revolve forever in a circle with mean and contemptible progress”. [11]

We see here a direct assault on the natural cyclical time enjoyed in the “static and self-sufficient world” of our ancestors. [12]

People had to be uprooted from their pleasant traditional existences and put to work as human capital on the lucrative treadmill of modern “progress”.

In the light of what Max Weber tells us about the role of Protestant Puritanism in the “disenchantment of the world”, [13] it is interesting to see that Bacon, as a sickly child, was educated at home by “John Walsall, a graduate of Oxford with a strong leaning toward Puritanism” [14] and later travelled abroad with Sir Amias Paulet, the English ambassador in Paris, “a fanatical Puritan with a harsh character”. [15]

It is also intriguing to note that Bacon’s career ended in disgrace when “a parliamentary committee on the administration of the law charged him with 23 separate counts of corruption”. [16]

Wikipedia refers to speculation that his acknowledgement of guilt may have been made

because he had “been blackmailed, with a threat to charge him with sodomy, into confession”.

And it suggests that Bacon may have been describing *himself* when he wrote in his novel *New Atlantis* about married men who secretly visited “dissolute places” for “meretricious embracement’s (where sin is turned into art)”.

Anyone else thinking of Jeffrey Epstein’s 21st century blackmailing operation?

Historian Paolo Rossi has argued for an occult influence on Bacon’s scientific and religious writing.

We learn that “conspiracy theories surrounding Bacon” include alleged connections to the Freemasons and the “Qabalistic” Rosicrucians, famous for their manifestos proclaiming a change agenda. [17]

“In the early 17th century, the manifestos caused excitement throughout Europe by declaring the existence of a secret brotherhood of alchemists and sages who were preparing to transform the arts and sciences, and religious, political, and intellectual landscapes of Europe”, says *Wikipedia*. [18]

It also emerges that Bacon had borrowed a large amount of money in his younger years and was thus lumbered with debts.

“In 1608 he began working as the Clerk of the Star Chamber. Despite a generous income, old debts still could not be paid”. [19]

It would be fascinating to know *to whom* he was in debt!

René Descartes (1596-1650) has, coincidentally, also been linked to both Freemasonry and the Rosicrucians. [20]

He even specifically dedicated one of his mathematical projects to the “F.R.C.” (Frères Rose-Croix), whom he described as “very famous” in Germany. [21]

Also very relevant is the fact that Descartes, although a Roman Catholic, served a Protestant state.

“Descartes spent much of his working life in the Dutch Republic, initially serving the Dutch States Army, and later becoming a central intellectual of the Dutch Golden Age”. [22]

This “golden age” of the Dutch Republic, following its creation in 1602, was the period described by Meeuwis Baaijen, in his 2024 book *The Predators Versus The People*, as that during which it was the temporary HQ of “Glasia” – the global mafia.

Having moved its centre of operations north from Venice, Glasia was shortly to switch to London, then much later to New York.

Baaijen writes: “While the Dutch and British states were still in diapers, metaphorically speaking, powerful and ruthless private *joint stock corporations* were given the task of colonization: the British (1600) and the Dutch

(1602) ‘multinational’ East India Companies (EIC), mostly owned by Glafia or Glafia-affiliated shareholders”. [23]

“In a letter to Oliver Cromwell, Rabbi Menasseh Ben Israel had bragged about the great influence of the Jews in the Dutch colonial and financial projects”. [24]

Baaijen explains how the Dutch war for independence from Spain had been financed by Glafia from Venice as part of a sidelining of the Catholic state, and its Portuguese neighbour, from their global roles.

This, he argues, “was undoubtedly related to their expulsion of the large numbers of Jews at the end of the 15th century, and more generally, to their anti-capitalist and anti-usury stance.

“That’s why Glafia chose to go ahead with the Protestant (Jew- and usury-friendly) Dutch and Brits”. [25]

As a servant of the Dutch Republic, Descartes was therefore effectively employed by the global industrial-imperialist mafia.

Little surprise that his influential philosophy was such a perfect fit with its life-denying and disenchanting agenda of separation and control!

We have heard how Descartes’ approach is characterised by a “schizoid duality” [26] and Berman identifies something similar regarding Isaac Newton (1643-1727), who took up the Cartesian “scientific” baton in England when it,

in turn, had become the global mafia's HQ.

“Despite his eventual nervous breakdown, Newton was no psychotic; but that he bordered on a type of madness and allayed it with a totally death-oriented view of nature, is beyond doubt.

“What is significant, however, is not his view of nature itself, but the broad agreement that it found, the excitement that it generated.

“Newton was the magician who succeeded. Instead of remaining some kind of isolated crank, he was able to get all of Europe ‘to join in the grand obsessive design’, becoming president of the Royal Society and being buried, in 1727, amidst pomp and glory in Westminster Abbey in what was literally an international event.

“With the acceptance of the Newtonian world view, it might be argued, Europe went collectively out of its mind”. [27]

I don't think it is irrelevant that in 1696 Newton moved to London to become master of The Royal Mint, four years after it introduced “new production methods” for manufacturing money. [28]

Berman identifies a strange shift in Newton's interests, from a focus on alchemy and nature-based Hermeticism to his role as “a mechanical philosopher”. [29]

He maintains that this change was not made on scientific grounds but political ones and that we should bear in mind the society in which he

was trying to establish his place.

“The forces that triumphed in the second half of the seventeenth century were those of bourgeois ideology and laissez-faire capitalism.

“Not only was the idea of living matter heresy to such groups; it was also economically inconvenient.

“A dead earth ruptures the delicate ecological balance that was maintained in the alchemical tradition, but if nature is dead, there are no restraints on exploiting it for profit.

“Loving cultivation becomes rape; and that, to me, is most clearly what industrial society in general (not just capitalism) represents”. [30]

Newton was also, from 1703 until his death in 1727, president of The Royal Society, fully named The Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge. [31]

The period around its creation in 1660 is a crucial one in understanding the origins and purpose of the “scientific” thinking behind global industrialism and imperialism.

Berman writes of “a general ‘congruence’ between science and capitalism in early modern Europe”.

He adds: “The rise of linear time and mechanical thinking, the equating of time with money and the clock with the world order, were parts of the same transformation, and each part helped to reinforce the others”. [32]

He also reveals that a deliberate and coordinated offensive to introduce this new way of thinking was *already underway by the middle of the 17th century*.

One important figure at this time was French polymath Marin Mersenne (1588-1648), who joined the Minim Friars in 1611 and, after studying theology and Hebrew in Paris, was ordained a priest in 1613. [33]

“Mersenne’s monastic cell became the virtual nerve center of European science. He conducted weekly meetings and a vast correspondence with scientists in every country, introducing their works to each other and to the educated public.

“Proponents of mechanism, such as Galileo, were translated or explicated. Contacts were made with men who would later be key figures in the Royal Society of London, and these ties were strengthened when a number of them went into exile in Paris during the Civil War”. [34]

“The mechanical philosophy, and the divorce of fact from value, were built right into the guidelines of the Royal Society”. [35]

A whiff of conspiracy surrounding the Royal Society is provided by the very name of the informal group which paved the way for its creation.

From 1630, members of the “Invisible College” devoted themselves to the cultivation of

the “new philosophy” and met frequently in London, often at Gresham College, with meetings also held at Oxford. [36]

This influential group was also known as the “Hartlib circle”, after Samuel Hartlib (1600-1662) a Polish-born follower of Bacon’s work who has been called “the Great Intelligencer of Europe” – intelligencer being defined as “a bringer of intelligence (news, information); a spy or informant”. [37]

Professor Yosef Kaplan of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem provides some very enlightening information about Hartlib and his activities in his essay ‘Jews and Judaism in the Hartlib Circle’. [38]

He writes of “the connections that Hartlib and his partners formed with Jews from Holland and other places, from at least 1650”. [39]

He says that the wealthy Amsterdam merchant and theologian Petrus Serrarius “transmitted important information to Hartlib and [John] Dury about the disposition of the Jews of Amsterdam, especially at the time of the Sabbatean messianic fervour that set the entire Jewish world in an uproar in 1665-1667, and also gleaned information from the Levant about the ‘messiah’ Shabetai Zevi and the echoes aroused among both Jews and Christians about his actions, including his conversion to Islam”. [40]

This pragmatic and false “conversion”, by

the way, is considered by some Jews to provide moral justification for the practice of hiding their real faith behind the cloak of a different religious identity. [41]

Kaplan continues: “Taking note of the rather marginal concern with Jewish matters on the part of Hartlib and his associates until the early 1640s, the great importance that they bestowed upon the subject of the Jews in their educational plans, at least from 1642 on, is striking”. [42]

In that year, he explains, Hartlib published a document entitled *Englands Thankfulness*.

Here, the task of bringing the Jews to “true conversion” to Christianity was presented as one of the most important aims of the Protestant camp and indeed of the English people, along with the efforts to reform education and, of course, to advance science.

To realise God’s kingdom, Protestants were needed to bring the Jews into the bosom of Christ, “because none are fit to deale with them to bring them to Christ, but Protestants”.

However, in order to pave the way for the conversion of the Jews, which was prophesied in the Book of Daniel and in Revelations, Hartlib argued it was necessary “to make Christianity lesse offensive, and more knowne unto the Jewes, then [sic] now it is, and the Jewish State and Religion as now it standeth more knowne unto Christians”.

Protestants therefore had “to perfect within themselves that part of knowledge and learning, which is necessary to prepare a way for their conversion”.

Kaplan says Hartlib and Dury based their view of the place of the Jews in the millenary age on the English Protestant apocalyptic tradition which, from the time of John Bale on, made the Jew into a “glorious apocalyptic agent”, in stark contrast to Martin Luther’s opinion that the Jews were destined, along with the Antichrist, Satan, and Gog and Magog, to be objects of the wrath of God. [43]

He adds: “Hartlib and Dury drew freely upon [Thomas] Brightman’s apocalyptic teachings, which led to a radical rehabilitation of the Jews, as having to fulfill an actual historical function in salvation history”. [44]

Kaplan notes that quite a few of Hartlib’s correspondents in Holland, who included Johannes Moriaen, Justianus van Assche, Godofroid Horton and the aforementioned Petrus Serrarius, were especially interested in Jewish studies. [45]

“Hartlib and Dury began to sketch proposals for the establishment of a Federative University in London, one of whose colleges was to concentrate on Jewish studies”. [46]

“The names of Boreel, Ravius and even of Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel were mentioned as

possible candidates for teaching posts in that proposed institution, but I doubt whether the Sephardic rabbi of Amsterdam was involved in any way in this plan or that he knew about it at that stage”. [47]

“Just as the college ‘towards the advancement of Universal learning’ was intended to help people become more rational, so, too, the college for the study of ‘Oriental tongues and Jewish Mysteries’ was intended to make people more ‘pious’, since the ‘first oracles of God’ were delivered in those languages, and the revelation of the true worship and religion was transmitted to humanity by means of Judaism”. [48]

It is noteworthy how the idea of making people “more rational” is so closely linked here with the idea of “true” religion originating from Judaism.

We see a reflection of Berman’s statement that the Jewish religion was “based precisely on the rooting out of animistic beliefs” [49] – in other words our sense of belonging to living nature.

I am also reminded of Alain Daniélou’s reference to “a Judaism which had become monotheistic, dry, ritualistic, puritan, Pharisee and inhuman” [50] and of John Lamb Lash’s view that the ancient Jews were not interested in conscience, and the power to choose what is

right, but “merely introduced a set of rules purporting to dictate what is right”. [51]

It is further worth recalling that Max Weber says Judaism has a “particular historical importance in the blooming of the economic ethics of the modern West”. [52]

We see clearly here the basis of the scientific “rationality” so central to the supposedly “new” philosophy being promoted by Hartlib and his friends.

In the end they did not create the college they had in mind, but, explains Kaplan, “at the same time, they did not miss any opportunity that came their way to encourage cooperation with others, both Jewish and Christian, in publishing the basic texts of Judaism.

“The point of departure for their approach was recognition that a considerable portion of the Jews of Western Europe, and especially of the Dutch Republic, with whom they had direct or indirect contact, themselves lacked sufficient knowledge of their Jewish heritage”. [53]

A more direct aspect of the Invisible College’s work involved “the desire of Hartlib and Dury to work for the Jews’ return to England”. [54]

Kaplan says the two most prominent Jews who maintained “close and long-standing ties with the Hartlib circle” were Jacob Judah Leon and Menasseh ben Israel. [55]

The latter, who, as we heard, boasted about the great influence of the Jews in the Dutch colonial and financial projects, played a key role in planning the (official) return of Jews to England under Cromwell, victor of the Civil War.

Kaplan notes with regard to the Hartlib circle: “The help they extended to Menasseh ben Israel in his mission to Cromwell in 1655 is well known and described at length and in great detail in many studies”. [56]

Their all-round philo-semitism had long-term consequences that spread beyond Britain’s shores, he adds, and “contributed significantly to a change in attitudes toward the Jews in early modern Europe”. [57]

“The Protestant millenarians in the Hartlib circle were respectful and sympathetic to the idea that the Jews had been God’s chosen people, and they even foresaw a great future for their ‘elder brethren’”. [58]

But *why* was it so important to engineer the open return of Jews to England, nearly 400 years after they had been expelled by King Edward I?

Despite a thin veneer of religious justification, the real reason was clearly the rich pickings on offer from rapidly expanding British commerce and imperialism, including, of course, the slave trade.

Wikipedia tells us that Cromwell “foresaw the importance for English commerce of the

participation of the Jewish merchant princes, some of whom had already made their way to London”. [59]

So what exactly is staring us in the face here?

A *deliberate* initiative to destroy the traditional nature-rooted spirituality and ethics of whole populations in order to turn them into submissive and disempowered fodder for the industrial-imperialist money machine?

And this carefully planned intergenerational “modernisation” [60] project – the manufacture of a “world defined by capital accumulation” – being grounded in a belief in the supremacy of Judaism, its “rational” ways of thinking and its “chosen people”?

Is it possible to name what we see, without being regarded as dangerously deluded by contemporary society?

The irony, of course, is that modern inversion means that today sanity is often mistaken for insanity and vice versa.

Berman comments that “we now live in a world turned upside down, a systemic double bind that has resulted in a kind of collective madness”. [61]

And he cites R.D. Laing’s summary of that double bind: “Rule A: Don’t. Rule A.1: Rule A does not exist. Rule A.2: Do not discuss the existence or nonexistence of Rules A, A.1 or A.2”.

[62]

- [1] Mircea Eliade, *Le sacré et le profane* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), p. 50. All translations from French in this essay are my own.
- [2] Eliade, p. 49.
- [3] Eliade, pp. 49-50.
- [4] Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 168-69.
- [5] Berman, p. 169.
- [6] Philip J. Pauly, 'Psychology at Hopkins', *Johns Hopkins Magazine* 30 (December 1979), p. 40, cit. Berman, p. 326.
- [7] Berman, p. 263.
- [8] Berman, p. 49.
- [9] See Chapter 8.
- [10] Berman, p. 29.
- [11] Francis Bacon, *New Organon*, Book 1, Aphorism XXXI, in Hugh Dick, ed, *Selected Writings of Francis Bacon* (New York: The Modern Library, 1955), cit. Berman, p. 29.
- [12] Berman, p. 52.
- [13] See Chapter 6.
- [14] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Bacon
- [15] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amias_Paulet
- [16] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Bacon
- [17] Ibid.
- [18] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosicrucianism>
- [19] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Bacon
- [20] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Descartes
- [21] https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Descartes
- [22] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Descartes
- [23] Meeuwis T. Baaijen, *The Predators Versus The People: The Big Picture of the 500-year Secret War against Humanity and how to regain Our Stolen Planet, Freedom and Future* (San José, Costa Rica: 2024), p. 59
- [24] Baaijen, p. 54.
- [25] Baaijen, p. 78.
- [26] Berman, p. 35. See Chapter 8.
- [27] Berman, p. 121.
- [28] Berman, p. 21.
- <https://www.royalmint.com/brand/our-story/1400-1800/>
- [29] Berman, p. 122.
- [30] Berman, p. 126.

- [31] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Society
- [32] Berman, p. 57.
- [33] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marin_Mersenne
- [34] Berman, p. 111.
- [35] Ibid.
- [36] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Boyle
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invisible_College
- [37] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Hartlib
 Arved Hübler, Peter Linde and John W. T. Smith, *Electronic Publishing '01: 2001 in the Digital Publishing Odyssey* (IOS Press, 2001).
- <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/intelligencer>
- [38] Yosef Kaplan, 'Jews and Judaism in the Hartlib Circle', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 2006, pp. 186-215.
- <https://pluto.huji.ac.il/~kaplany/hartlib.pdf>
- [39] Kaplan, p. 190.
- [40] Ibid.
- [41] Tobin Owl, 'Sabbataen-Frankist Illuminism and Labor Zionism'. <https://totheroot.substack.com/p/sabbataen-frankist-illuminism-and>
- [42] Kaplan, p. 190.
- [43] Kaplan, pp. 190-91.
- [44] Kaplan, p. 191.
- [45] Kaplan, p. 193.
- [46] Ibid.
- [47] Kaplan, p. 194.
- [48] Kaplan, p. 195.
- [49] Berman, p. 70. See Chapter 7.
- [50] Alain Daniélou, *Shiva et Dionysos: La Religion de la Nature et de l'Eros de la préhistoire à l'avenir* (Paris: Fayard, 1979), p. 287.
 See above essay.
- [51] John Lamb Lash, *Not In His Image: Gnostic Vision, Sacred Ecology, and the Future of Belief* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green, 2006), pdf version, p. 228. See same essay as above.
- [52] Max Weber, *Sociologies des religions, choix d'extraits et traduction Jean-Pierre Grossein* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), p. 331, cit. Max Weber, *Sociologie de la religion ('Economie et société')*, traduction de l'allemand, introduction et notes par Isabelle Kalinowski (Paris: Flammarion, 2006), pp. 285-86 FN. See Chapter 6.
- [53] Kaplan, p. 195.
- [54] Kaplan, p. 206.

[55] Kaplan, p. 196.

[56] Kaplan, p. 206.

[57] Kaplan, p. 209.

[58] Kaplan, p. 210.

[59] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menasseh_Ben_Israel

[60] Paul Cudenec, 'Modernisation means pillage and profit'.

<https://winteroakpress.wordpress.com/2025/01/31/modernisation-means-pillage-and-profit/>

[61] Berman, p. 233.

[62] E.Z. Friedenberg, *R.D. Laing* (New York: Viking, 1974), p. 7, cit. Berman, p. 228.

10. EXPOSING THE LIFE-HATING CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY

In previous chapters I have been writing a lot about our belonging both to nature and to the living organism that is the cosmos.

I have described some of the ways in which humans have traditionally expressed their awareness of this belonging and how we can sometimes make ourselves receptive to guidance and messages from the Whole, via what is essentially its nervous system.

I went on to describe how “civilized” human cultures have progressively lost that awareness, and therefore that guidance, initially because of organised religions that reject belonging in favour of domination and deny natural law in favour of their own manufactured dogma.

These religions not only regard nature as dead matter, as a mere resource to be exploited, but also consider their own in-group to have been chosen by God and thus to be superior to the rest of humankind.

This separation process was completed by

the rise of “scientific” thinking, whose sterile reduction of living beings to mere objects of utility allowed the construction of industrial society and the associated uprooting and enslavement of populations across the world.

Furthermore, I have shown how there are historical, as well as thematic, links between *religions* of separation and the modern secular *philosophy* of separation.

It seems clear to me that a deliberate programme has been carried out over many centuries to destroy traditional nature-based spirituality and lifestyles in order to impose a cruel system of imperial control and exploitation.

Everything we are seeing in the 2020s – the push for digital slavery, smart cities, transhumanism, genetic manipulation and so on – is merely the culmination of this epic and indescribably evil intergenerational conspiracy.

In the next few chapters I will, as promised, try to suggest some ways in which we might restore awareness of our belonging and shake off the chains of the dominant global cabal.

The first and most important thing to do, in my opinion, is to spread the news of what has happened and what we are up against.

Otherwise, people will be working in the dark, will easily be led astray into various political dead ends and fall into the traps that the system deliberately sets so as to neuter our

resistance.

Spreading the information is no easy task, given the extraordinary control that the overlord caste has gained over our sources of knowledge, our ways of thinking and even our perception of reality.

Its control of the global money supply means it can employ massive armies of people, and machines, to censor, smear and silence truth-tellers.

But the task is not a hopeless one, either.

We are already seeing encouraging signs that the official historical narrative is losing its hold on people's minds as more and more of us realise to what extent we have been lied to.

The role of those who can see what is going on must be to do *all they can*, in their own particular way, to share their understanding with others.

The global mafia's great weakness is that their toxic cause cannot call upon the direct loyalty of very many people.

They have always been obliged to advance by means of *bribery, blackmail and deceit*.

While the puppet leaders who front their system are held firmly in control by the first two methods, it is the third – deceit – that is the mafia's Achilles' heel, it seems to me.

Their physical control has always been dependent on the millions of foot soldiers who

have been *duped* into working for them.

These people have fondly imagined that they were devoting their lives to “the nation”, to “public safety”, to “social justice”, to “health” or to “the environment”.

When – thanks to the efforts of increasing numbers of truth-tellers in the societies in which they live – they finally realise that they are in fact being *used* by a manipulative gang of criminals to pursue a thoroughly malevolent agenda, they are not likely to be happy.

At the very least they will not put the same effort into their work as they previously had.

At best, they will get together with colleagues and refuse to obey the illegitimate orders issued by an illegitimate global junta.

Once these fissures start appearing, and multiplying, it will not be long before the whole imperial edifice – built as it is on the hollow foundations of lies and corruption – collapses and crumbles into the dust of history.

And we will be free to lead the lives we were meant to lead!

11. REDISCOVERING ROOTEDNESS

It is not our *belonging* to nature that has been stolen from us by the industrial system, but our *awareness* of that belonging.

The distinction is an important one, because it means that it *lies within our own power* to restore that psychological connection.

Many of us, of course, already feel that belonging, but we can encourage and enable others to do the same in a variety of ways.

We can try to tempt city-dwellers, in particular, to venture out of their concrete cocoons and experience a world that is actually alive.

This is what was done more than a century ago by the *Wandervogel* movement in Germany and by initiatives such as the Clarion Clubs and various rambling groups in England, which “expressed a revulsion against the ugliness and anonymity of urbanised, industrial society, and a deep reverence for nature”. [1]

While being able to identify, or photograph, the trees, plants, birds and animals that we

encounter there can be interesting and useful, it is not essential.

The idea is to *feel* the life around us and to *know* that we are mere *offshoots* of that greater life.

On every level of existence, we are here not as *observers* but as *participants*.

This sense of *presence* can also be encouraged by maintaining, reviving or even inventing traditions which celebrate the natural world and its rhythms.

When we dance around a sacred oak tree on Midsummer's Eve, as I used to with my friends in Sussex, or pay respect to springs, rivers or stones, we are reinforcing our awareness of belonging and, furthermore, our *appreciation* of that awareness and that belonging. [2]

Not so long ago, I attended a talk by local folklore expert Claude Alranq on "*L'esprit des lieux*". [3]

He explained how the idea of "the spirit of places" has been progressively denied and stifled by our society, not least in the communist atmosphere in which he personally grew up.

Alranq focused particularly on the way that towns in Occitania, southern France, traditionally had totem animals which featured in their annual religious carnivals. [4]

Although the Roman Catholic Church did not approve of these distinctly non-Christian

effigies, and Protestants even less, it was not until the French Revolution, with its “scientific” and “rationalist” outlook, that they were actually banned.

Happily, the practice survived this state repression and totem animals still parade through the streets of the region today – Béziers has its camel, for instance, Gignac its donkey, Pézenas its foal, Agde its seahorse.

Like the “obby oss” in Padstow, Cornwall, these tend to be stylised versions of animals, rather than attempts at accurate representations. [5]

The encouraging news reported by Alranq is that many town and villages are now asking him how they can have a totem animal of their own.

He says it is not something that is easy to invent, as the traditional versions took hundreds or even thousands of years to take shape.

But he says we can re-enchant a place, build back its spirit – and thus understand what totem animal would suit it best – by looking at where various social activities take place, understanding the shape of its “body”, its particularities.

He also suggests identifying the core of a town or village, the historical heart, and then looking at the four cardinal points – north, south, west and east – and noting what lies on the horizon at each point and where the sun rises

and sets at various times of the year: in other words, what its physical *context* is.

A sense of specific *place* and *time*, shared with a specific group of *people*, helps to undo the alienation from which we tend to suffer in the anonymous, homogenous modern world.

When we stop rushing around madly in search of novelty, entertainment and artificial stimulation, we start to feel roots sprouting from our toes and gently reaching into the soil beneath our feet.

Growing bonds with a place and a community, like growing fruit and vegetables, is to turn our backs on the centralised industrial money-world of supermarkets and high-speed travel, of propaganda and “authority”.

It is to start to rediscover what it means to be human, what it means to live as part of a healthy organism.

Of course, nurturing our sense of belonging in these ways will not, by itself, do away with the global concentration camp into which we are being herded.

But it will make us *harder to herd*, more determined in our defence of all that we love, more resistant to the further assaults on our freedom and well-being that are no doubt being planned by the criminocrats.

This is, after all, why they took such pains to destroy our nature-based ways of thinking and

living in the first place!

And, because their insane system is like a bicycle that has to keep moving forward in order to remain stable, slowing its advance may be enough to topple it.

[1] David Prynne, 'The Clarion Clubs, Rambling and the Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890s'.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/260250>

[2] <https://www.strangehistory.net/2011/07/08/the-midsummer-oak-and-its-skeletons/>

[3] <http://claude-alranq.com/a-l-affiche/conferences-animees>

[4] https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animaux_tot%C3%A9miques_de_l%27H%C3%A9rault

[5] See Chapter 0.

12. COMING BACK TO LIFE

Because the magic in our lives has been *deliberately* removed by the industrial slave-system, because our all-round witness has been *deliberately* stolen from us, we are obliged to take *deliberate* steps to bring it back.

One such practical initiative with which I have been involved in recent years is to hold evenings of what, in French, is called *la culture participative*.

Culture, like everything else in modern life, has been turned into a product, a commodity that we have to pay for.

Our experience of it has become *commercial* and *passive* – we buy a ticket to sit and watch somebody else sing songs, tell jokes, dance or act out a drama.

The – very enjoyable! – alternative is to do it ourselves, for and with each other without the alienating division between *performer* and *spectator*, *provider* and *consumer*.

At our events, each person (if they wish) comes with something to share with the others – whether their own creation or not.

During the evening, we all, in turn and when the moment seems right, perform our personal contributions – a song, a poem, an anecdote, a reflection – around the pre-determined theme.

There is no fear of being judged – we all know we are not professionals and have no grand expectations of the others gathered with us.

All of this is washed down with a few drinks and, this being France, nourished with home-made salads, quiches and gateaux that people have brought with them.

Another means of restoring witness which I have been enjoying for several years now is *Biodanza* – the dance of life. [1]

This practice was developed by Rolando Toro (1924-2010), a Chilean professor who “carried out research concerning expression of the unconscious and states of consciousness expansion”. [2]

He originally called it *Psicodanza* as it evolved from his treatment of patients at the Psychiatric Hospital of Santiago.

But in this insane modern world, we are all in need of life-affirming therapy, and the broader relevance of the activity quickly became apparent.

Biodanza is, according to its international federation, “a human integration system of organic renewal, of affective re-education, and of re-learning of the life original functions”. [3]

One leading theoretician is Danielle Tavares, whose father Alberto Tavares was a friend of Toro and one of the early pioneers of the practice in Brazil back in the 1970s. [4]

She explains in a booklet: “The vital unconscious is in synchrony with the living essence of the universe. When this synchrony is broken, sickness occurs.

“The act of curing can therefore be understood as a movement which sets out to rediscover this vital synchrony with the universe”. [5]

She adds that a *vivencia*, that’s to say a Biodanza session, is “the path of direct access to the vital unconscious”. [6]

Before going any further, I should probably explain what a Biodanza event actually involves.

We gather once a week for a couple of hours – in a municipal dance hall in the colder months and in the grounds of a local chateau in the summer.

Before the dancing starts, we have the chance to share our thoughts on the previous session, or anything else, with the rest of the group, who can number anything between 10 and 25.

But there is no talking during the dancing – communication is purely visual.

Our group is pretty balanced on the question of gender, though there are usually a few more women than men.

The recorded music often reflects the Latin American origins of Biodanza, and indeed of one of our facilitators. It's generally to my taste, anyway!

The *vivencia* always begins with a circle. We hold hands and, as the music begins, revolve in an anti-clockwise direction, establishing eye contact with as many of the other participants as possible.

After that, the session heads off in all sort of directions, depending on the theme chosen by the facilitating duo.

Our movements are always free and unchoreographed.

Sometimes we just stroll in step with the music, acknowledging the presence of others as we pass them.

Sometimes we walk or dance in pairs, finding a common rhythm. At other points, we come together in groups of three, four or five.

There are frequent changes and dance-games of forming and re-forming. A collective dance is followed by an individual one, an energetic exercise by a meditative moment. Lots of hugs are involved.

The emphasis throughout is on *presence* – in our own bodies, in that place, in that moment, with those people, in this living universe.

Stresses Tavares: “I have not the slightest doubt about the fact that the energy of life is one – common to all living beings, plants, animals and humans. We are all immersed in the same cosmic cauldron of life.

“The energy of life passes through us and through nature as a flow. It is human beings who block this flow with their attempt to separate themselves, isolate themselves from the rest of creation.

“But this attempt is vain and illusory: we are connected by an extraordinary telepathic intelligence whose very nature is love and towards which we have the choice to be either open or closed”. [7]

The Biodanza philosophy strikes me as being part of a contemporary *rediscovery* of ancient wisdom.

Tavares writes: “Life is not a mere consequence of chemical and atomic processes. It is the expression of an implicit programme guiding the organisation of the universe.

“The evolution of the universe is, in reality, nothing but the evolution of life itself”. [8]

“I don’t think that life arose from matter. I think, rather, that matter takes shape according

to the possible structures of life. The cause, even, of the universe is life”. [9]

“We could define the feeling of love as the supreme experience of contact with life. Through Biodanza, we reach the original source of the vital impulse”. [10]

Our other Biodanza facilitator sent me Tavares’ booklet after I was chatting with him about this essay series on the need for a reenchantment of our sacred world – and her vision is, indeed, very close to my own.

She writes: “Dance, love and life are terms which allude to the phenomenon of cosmic unicity. The creative core of the culture of the third millennium will be born from our ability to restore to life its sacred dimension”. [11]

Tavares says that what distinguishes Biodanza from other practices and beliefs is the clarity of its biocentric principle, “which sees life as being the highest expression of the divine mystery”. [12]

She adds: “In Biodanza, people who establish contact in a ‘dance of love’, discover the cosmic meaning which integrates them into a much greater unity.

“The magnetism of the dance generates creative, erotic and biological energy fields which constitute the great ceremony of life, transcendent in its very essence”. [13]

“The sacred is not confined to a ritual space (mandala or temple), but extends to all the circumstances in which life is manifest. Everywhere, the whole of life is sacred”. [14]

Biodanza founder Toro wrote about accessing the ecstatic feeling of belonging to the universe, “the supreme sensation of something great and eternal within yourself”. [15]

I would say that this *gnosis* is the necessary accompaniment to our long-overdue exit from the global industrial prison.

Reclaiming our witness, on every level, is an act of rebellion against a system built on separation and control.

Our belonging is our resistance and that resistance, in turn, amplifies our sense of belonging – we can set in motion a magical spiral of individual and collective spiritual self-empowerment.

There is nothing more threatening to our overlords than a way of thinking and being which is based on *joie de vivre*, love and connection, insists Taveres.

“This recognises no external authority, whether government and institutional violence or political, religious or discriminatory ideology. The biocentric principle is pure revolt”. [16]

And this revolt must of course involve an *explicit rejection* of the fraudulent “scientific”

worldview artfully sold to the world by the Invisible College in the 1600s. [17]

Anne Marie Riel, a Biodanza facilitator in Quebec, writes: “Has a big cultural lie succeeded in desacralizing life? For it is only when life is deprived of its sacred quality that it loses its intrinsic value and can then be mistreated, exploited, even destroyed”. [18]

Says Tavares: “People’s separation from the cosmic matrix of life has triggered, throughout history, essentially destructive forms of culture. The dissociation between soul and body has led to the profound cultural crisis facing humanity...

“We have to free ourselves, with absolute determination, from all kinds of cultural argument based on profit and destruction”. [19]

[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRu_yAasreo

[2] <https://www.biodanzarolandotoro.com/en/rolando-toro/>

[3] <https://www.biodanza.org/en/definition-of-biodanza/>

[4] <https://biodanzarj.org/danielle-tavares/>

[5] Danielle Tavares, *Inconscient vital et principe biocentrique*, École de Biodanza Rolando Toro Méditerranée, p. 4. All subsequent page references are to that work and all translations from French are my own.

[6] p. 6.

[7] Tavares, p. 16.

[8] p. 26.

[9] p. 27.

[10] p. 28.

[11] Ibid.

[12] p. 29.

[13] Ibid.

[14] p. 30.

[15] Rolando Toro, ‘L’inconscient numineux’, <https://www.ecoledebiodanzalyon.com/post/l-inconscient-numineux->

par-rolando-toro-araneda-1

[16] p. 30.

[17] See Chapter 9.

[18] Anne Marie Riel, 'Célébrer le sacré de la vie',

<https://www.cheminement.com/rubriques/expression-et-creativite/celerer-le-sacre-de-la-vie/>

[19] p. 27.

13. THE REENCHANTMENT OF OUR WORLD

“The only hope, or so it seems to me, lies in a reenchantment of the world”, writes Morris Berman in his book thusly titled. [1]

“*Some* kind of holistic or participatory consciousness and a corresponding socio-political formation have to emerge if we are to survive as a species”. [2]

We have seen how this process might be encouraged by nurturing our connection – our witness – to place, to nature and to the rhythms of the cosmos.

But what kind of spiritual-religious-social “*formation*” would accompany this, would act as an ideal vehicle for reenchantment?

Alain Daniélou favours the revival of the animistic Shaivite and Dionysian tradition shared by so many of our ancestors.

He argues: “Every civilization, every culture, is the fruit of the accumulation of human knowledge and experience transmitted from generation to generation.

“Shaivism, whose origins go back to the most ancient prehistorical times, represents an immense sum of experience”. [3]

“For Westerners, this would be no embrace of the exotic. The religious wellsprings of Europe are the same as those of India and we have only lost track of that in relatively recent times...

“The rediscovery, at the dawn of the twentieth century, of the happy and peaceful Cretan civilization, and of its religion, so close to Shaivism, which seems to be the deep source of Western civilizations, might be considered a premonition of a return to what [Arnold] Toynbee calls ‘a right religion’”. [4]

“The faithful followers of the god are called *bacchoi* (bacchants) in Greece and *bhaktas* (participants) in India.

“For them, it is in the drunkenness of love and ecstasy that can be found real wisdom, where communion with nature and the gods becomes possible”. [5]

John Lamb Lash sees the best source for contemporary nature-friendly spirituality as the gnostic tradition that reached its peak with Hypatia in Alexandria, Egypt.

He writes: “The Gnostic message for humanity may well present the ancient taproot of deep ecology, a social movement that asserts the intrinsic value of the earth, apart from its use for human purposes.

“The religious component of the environmental movement has yet to be defined, but it might now come to expression in a Gnostic perspective, framed by the Sophianic vision of those ancient visionaries”. [6]

“Gnostic cosmology is deeply rooted in indigenous wisdom and reflects a sophisticated version of the native sense for life on earth”. [7]

“This is not merely an alternative religion, it is an alternative to religion itself. It is a path of direct knowing, a passage beyond belief”. [8]

“Gnosis is direct contact and communion with Divinity without an intermediary agent of any kind”. [9]

Personally, I think an important element is the *emphasis* we place on certain aspects of existing religions and philosophies.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr does this, for instance, when he argues that Islam, the “green” religion, is more environmentally oriented than other faiths.

He said in a 2014 radio interview: “The Qur’an addresses not only human beings, but also the cosmos. It is much easier to be able to develop an environmental philosophy”. [10]

In Islam, he has written, “man is the channel of grace for nature; through his active participation in the spiritual world, he casts light into the world of nature. He is the mouth through which nature breathes and lives”. [11]

We see the same thing with Christianity, in which sophiologists stress the concept of divine nature and wisdom that they source from within the teachings of their Church. [12]

They are not *inventing* a nature-friendly version of Christianity, but bringing out a quality that is already in there somewhere, if not always emphasised by the religious authorities.

Mircea Eliade describes how, although rural European peoples have been Christianised for more than a millennium, “they have managed to integrate into their Christianity a large part of their pre-Christian religious heritage, of an antiquity beyond memory”. [13]

That does not mean that they are not Christians, he stresses.

“But we have to recognise that their religiosity cannot be reduced down to the historical forms of Christianity, that it conserves a cosmic structure almost entirely missing from the experience of Christians in towns.

“One might speak of a primordial and ahistorical Christianity; in becoming Christian, European farming peoples integrated into their new faith the cosmic religion that they had conserved since prehistorical times”. [14]

The fusion of spirituality and love for nature could, and should, take place in a million different ways, according to the cultures, tastes,

attitudes and realities of the peoples and individuals concerned.

Most importantly, as I will explain further in the concluding chapter, we have to ditch any notion that there is some kind of *contradiction* between religious spirituality and our physical belonging to nature.

As Eliade writes: “An existence which is ‘open’ to the World is not an unconscious existence, buried in Nature.

“Opening’ to the World makes the religious man capable of knowing himself in knowing the World, and this knowledge is precious to him because it is ‘religious’, because it refers to Being”. [15]

[1] Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 23.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Alain Daniélou, *Shiva et Dionysos: La Religion de la Nature et de l'Eros de la préhistoire à l'avenir* (Paris: Fayard, 1979), p. 175. All translations from French here are my own.

[4] Daniélou, p. 12.

[5] Daniélou, p. 21.

[6] John Lamb Lash, *Not In His Image: Gnostic Vision, Sacred Ecology, and the Future of Belief* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green, 2006), pdf version, pp. 32-33.

[7] Lash, p. 179.

[8] Lash, p. 127.

[9] Lash, p. 139.

[10] ‘Islam and the Environment’, CBC Radio,

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/islam-and-the-environment-1.2914131>

<https://orgrad.wordpress.com/a-z-of-thinkers/seyyed-hossein-nasr/>

[11] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man* (Chicago: ABC International Group, Inc, 1997), p. 96.

[12] Paul Cudeneac, 'The spirit of Sophia: wild air and wisdom'.
<https://winteroak.org.uk/2024/09/12/the-spirit-of-sophia-wild-air-and-wisdom/>

[13] Mircea Eliade, *Le sacré et le profane* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), p. 139.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Eliade, p. 142.

14. BECOMING WHAT WE ARE MEANT TO BE

The embrace of our belonging to nature is an important step in restoring a sense of the sacred to our world, as we saw in the last chapter, but it still does not go far enough.

To achieve full witness in relation to our place in the universe we also need to accept our own *essence* as human beings.

But what is that essence?

The road to understanding always seems to be snared with false binary oppositions, either/or options that preclude a “neither” or “both” conclusion, and mainstream modern thinking tends to present us with two possible opinions on this issue.

The first view insists that we are simply animals – apes who have, for better or for worse, become more sophisticated than our fellow creatures. From this perspective, imagining a higher spiritual role is deluded human vanity.

The second view turns its back on our belonging to the earthy natural world, in favour

of a quest for a higher mode of being, whether imagined as spiritual or technology-related (transhumanism).

Both of these positions fall short of grasping the whole picture.

The binarity-dissolving *gnosis* of ancient (and universal) wisdom is well expressed in the familiar yin-yang symbol of the Chinese Taoist tradition.

Not only are the two “opposites”, represented as black and white, entwined rather than diagonally separated, but the seed of each can be found within the contrasting half of the circular whole.

This same tradition understands the human being to be a mediator between heaven and earth, the spiritual and the physical. [1]

Our feet are firmly planted on the ground but our heads touch the heavens.

In the words of Antoine Fabre d’Olivet, the human being “is neither an animal nor pure intelligence” but “placed between matter and spirit, between Heaven and Earth, so as to be the link between them”. [2]

This role obviously comes with a lot of responsibility!

But because we have lost our awareness of this aspect of being human – at the same time as losing awareness of our belonging to nature – it

is a responsibility that most of us are currently shirking.

The aim of authentic religious traditions – rather than the degraded and instrumentalised counterfeits surrounding us today – is to encourage people to take on that crucial human role.

As you might expect when dealing with a linking phenomenon, a two-way process is involved.

The first stage is to see beyond the merely-individual level of our being and understand that we are all manifestations of the divine light.

The great metaphysician René Guénon explains that any physical manifestation is necessarily a limitation of the ultimate source and so our individual existence and identity are defined by the form of that limitation. [3]

I picture us to be shadows cast on the physical plane by the ultimate light, given shape by what we exclude rather than what we ourselves are.

The aim of the spiritual path is, by accepting this reality, to reduce the size of the personal ego and therefore of the shadow it casts.

At the same time, by embracing our role as a connection to the divine, we allow the divine light to shine through us; we become as *transparent* as possible and the shadow thus fades as well as shrinks.

We remain, of course, very human and imperfect. But we allow our human presence to become an instrument of the divine here on Earth.

Thus the second phase in the two-way process is the descent of the divine light, through the connecting channel of the awoken human being, on to the physical plane.

Guénon writes that someone who successfully takes that path “assimilates the celestial influences and in a way brings them into this world to unite them with earthly influences, initially within himself and then, through participation and as ‘radiance’, in the cosmic medium as a whole”. [4]

As I have previously said, I think we could see these “celestial influences” as being the nervous system of the organic Whole, the vital pulses that direct and co-ordinate its being and becoming.

By allowing ourselves to conduct this energy, by playing the role we are supposed to play as human beings, we allow the full living of the great body of which we are part.

Modern society and its thinking has *cut off* that vital flow by disabling humankind as a medium for its transmission.

If enough of us can assume the connecting role for which we were intended, we can restore the flow, allow the sacred, the magical, the

spiritual presence of the Whole to flood back into our collective mind.

I foresee this restoral as feeling like a psychological version of the “pins and needles” we experience when we allow the blood to flow back into a limb after it has temporarily gone “dead”.

Guénon points out that this idea of a channelling connection between the divine and the earthly can be seen in many traditions – not least in that of Jesus Christ. [5]

He also points to the blazing five-pointed star that is a symbol of the regenerated human being, its branches representing his head, arms and legs. [6]

This is the shining of the sacred light in the midst of the shadows of the profane world, he says, and he makes a connection with the words of the Christian Gospel of St John: “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not”. [7]

By taking up his or her proper place in the universe, the human being is on “the middle way” of the Taoist tradition.

And, as Guénon explains, this connecting presence also exists in the dimension of time.

From the perspective of the ultimate One, time does not exist, all happening eternally and simultaneously.

But as human beings we are present in the dimension of time, just as we are present in this physical spatial world.

Writes Guénon: “We should first note that the present can be represented as a point dividing into two parts the line along which time unfolds and thus determining, at any given moment, the separation (but also the joining) of the past and the future”. [8]

And it is our presence at this connecting point that gives us the chance to *act*.

We are *nothing but* parts of the Whole, elements of its thinking and self-guiding intended to shape its becoming according to its own inner purpose or *telos*.

If we are acting as channels for the divine light, we can be *the means by which the Whole becomes what it is meant to be*.

I think this is the source of our innate sense of “right” and “wrong”, “good” and “evil”, “beautiful” and “ugly”.

Because our role as human beings is to help advance the *telos* of the Whole, the blueprint of that *telos* is embedded in our minds, forming the pattern of our uncorrupted thinking.

Fabre d’Olivet writes that when the human will collaborates with the divine will, or Providence, this constitutes Good and when it goes against it, this amounts to Evil. [9]

“The human being becomes perfect or depraved according to whether he tends to merge with the universal Unity or to disassociate from it”. [10]

He equates the notion of Destiny with the past, because it is the idea of events already having been determined – being fixed.

Providence, or divine will, relates to the future and the human being is at the junction of the two. [11]

If God, as the *Quran* says, possesses “the keys of the unseen”, then human beings are the means by which he can turn them in the lock of the present. [12]

Showing parallels between Taoism and the Western alchemical tradition, Guénon writes that sulphur, “a principle of interior activity considered as radiating from the very centre of the being” can be seen as representing the human will when it channels the divine will. [13]

It is no coincidence that the erasure of alchemical thinking was so central to the “Scientific Revolution” through which the industrial death cult gained a hold on the soul of England and then the world. [14]

The satanic overlords know that when a critical mass of people play the role of sulphur and channel the divine will, our collective power will be too much for them.

It is through the magic of self-transformation that we can become the vehicle, on the physical plane and in the present time, for the victory of Good and its wholeness over Evil and its separation.

In so doing, we will finally tear down the dark walls of deceit that have been deliberately built to hide from us the radiant light of our true belonging.

[1] René Guénon, *La Grande Triade* (Paris: Dervy, 2022), p. 152. The translations are my own. All subsequent pages references are to this work, originally published in 1946. For more on Guénon see <https://orgrad.wordpress.com/a-z-of-thinkers/rene-guenon/>

[2] Antoine Fabre d'Olivet, cit. pp. 159-60.

[3] pp. 107-108.

[4] p. 113.

[5] p. 116.

[6] pp. 121-22.

[7] John 1:5, cit. p. 122.

[8] p. 167.

[9] p. 162.

[10] Fabre d'Olivet, cit. p. 162.

[11] pp. 168-69.

[12] *Quran* 6:59, cit. p. 170.

[13] p. 98.

[14] See Chapters 8 and 9.

Also by Paul Cudenec

NON-FICTION

The Anarchist Revelation

Antibodies, Anarchangels and Other Essays

The Stifled Soul of Humankind

Forms of Freedom

Nature, Essence and Anarchy

The Green One

Fascism Rebranded

The Withway

The Great Racket

Converging Against the Criminocrats

Our Quest for Freedom

Against the Dark Enslaving Empire!

*The Global Gang Running Our World and Ruining
Our Lives*

FICTION

The Fakir of Florence

No Such Place as Asha

Enemies of the Modern World

The Good in Our Hearts

All these titles are available to download for free via the Winter Oak website (winteroak.org.uk) as well as to buy from booksellers. To get in touch with Winter Oak email winteroak@greenmail.net or follow [@winteroakpress](https://twitter.com/winteroakpress) on X/Twitter.

Paul Cudenec's work can also be found at paulcudenec.substack.com