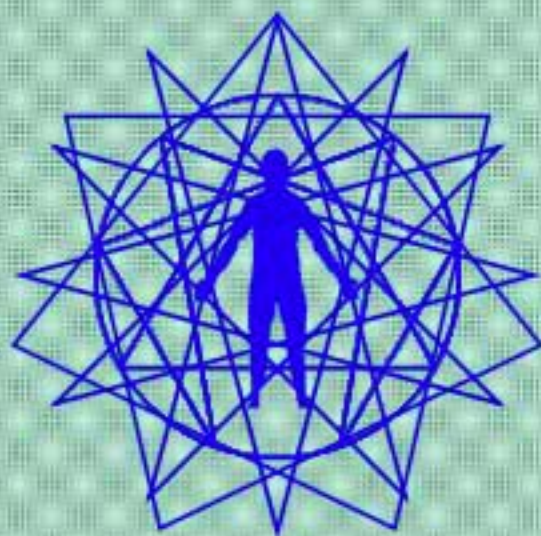


# **A Wholeness Foundation Publication\***

**A Universal Bridge**



**LEVEL - ADEPT\*\***

**\*We do not take sole credit for the content within we only have used our networks, which are vast, to bring it forth to humanity so they may receive the abundance of knowledge left by our Ancestors through their experiences with the Universe, Positive and Negative which to the Adept become the same thing.**

**\*\*An Adept is one who has finished the battle of opposites and is teaching their shadow by example not by the sword and scorn.**

# Alien Dreaming

## The Enigma of the Archons



Human beings are on a journey of awareness,  
which has been momentarily interrupted by extraneous forces.  
Carlos Castaneda, *Magical Passes*

In the "high strangeness" of the Gnostic materials, the strangest factor of all is certainly the presence of the Archons. Here we confront an enigma of cosmic proportions. Where do we situate these weird entities in the evolutionary plot of the Gaia Mythos? Are they to be regarded as real entities, a species in their own right, albeit a non-terrestrial one? What is their relation to Gaia, the intelligence of the biosphere? And how do the Archons in turn relate to humanity?

### Non-Ordinary Reason

Gnostics explored these questions in a sober and consistent way, but to follow in their tracks we must first observe a caveat: *Do not expect the inquiry into the Archons to be rational*. At least not in the ordinary sense of rationality. Aristotle stated that the mark of a mature mind is to entertain an idea without accepting it — without "buying" it, as we say today. I am not insisting that anyone buy the Archon theory of Gnosticism. I propose that we examine and sample it, that's all. Skepticism is essential when it comes to the enigma of the Archons.

This inquiry calls for application of a special faculty that might be called *non-ordinary reason*. What this is can be illustrated by a Woody Allen joke (from the film *Manhattan*):

A man comes to a psychiatrist in behalf of his brother who suffers the affliction of believing he is a chicken, and behaving accordingly. "It's terrible to see, Doctor. The way he goes around clucking and scratching. The family is going through hell with this. What can you do? Can psychiatry help my brother?" The doctor responds that certainly it can. "Even in advanced delusions like this, therapy can often bring the patient back to reality," the doctor assures him. "I am willing to work with your brother, to do whatever it takes. It will be a long haul, though."



Assuming that the man is encouraged, the psychiatrist consults his agenda. "When can you bring your brother in for the first session?" he asks. Suddenly the man furrows his brow. "Sorry, Doc. I'd like to, but I can't do that. I really can't. We need the eggs."

The man's response is entirely rational within the context of his imagination. When Trekkies (devotees of the cult TV series, *Star Trek*) avidly discuss characters and events in the series, they are using non-ordinary reason. The Pokeman card-trading phenomena triggered an explosion of non-ordinary reason in which children had to recite in rigorous detail the behaviors and traits specific to over a hundred different entities. In Internet MMORPGs (Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games) players assume fictional identities that must behave in consistent way, exhibiting a kind of virtual rationality. The reasoning involved in such role-playing is rigorous, for players cannot cause their "avatars" to do anything they like. The avatars must have specific codes of behavior. Developing and maintaining such codes involves non-ordinary reason.

In effect, non-ordinary reason is just like ordinary reason, except that its subject matter is imagined rather than perceived.

Gnostic seers had to be skilled in non-ordinary reason to interpret the experiences they underwent in states of heightened perception. Not everything in the cosmos or in the human psyche can be reduced to rational terms, of course, and that in any case is not the point of non-ordinary reasoning. The point is, to bring sane and sober understanding to aspects of human experience that lie beyond the limits of ordinary sense perception.

This essay treats the Archons in the context of the imaginal exercise proposed in **Coco De Mer**: our participation in Gaia's Dreaming. What we learn about these entities, and ourselves in relation to them, will involve non-ordinary reason, but it will not be irrational nonsense. Contemplating the Archons is not an exercise in fantasy or a game of make-believe. Far from it. If the Gnostics were right, it is primarily by detecting how the Archons work that we can know our own minds work, and claim the sovereign power of intelligence endowed in us by Sophia.

## Fractal Visions

The Archons may be regarded as progeny of Sophia, but not in the same sense as species born and sustained in Gaia's womb, the terrestrial biosphere. In fact, they are called Archons (from the Greek *archai*, "primordial, first, antecedent in time") because they arise in the planetary system *before* Earth was formed into a habitat for life. Sophia's unilateral Dreaming produced a power surge from the cosmic center, and the Goddess, shooting forth like a torrential current, impacted the inert fields of primordial matter in an unusual way. Gnostic texts use the term "aborted fetus" to describe the results of this impact..

- A veil exists between the world above, and the realms that are below; and shadow came into being beneath the veil. Some of the shadow became matter, and was projected apart. And what Sophia created became a product in the matter, like an aborted fetus. (*The Hypostasis of the Archons*, 94: 5 - 15)

To the Coco de Mer icon we can now add a graphic variation to suggest how the Archons emerge from Sophia's Dreaming, like a leak from a placenta. As explained in the preceding essay of this trilogy, the Coco de Mer with cosmic detailing represents the "trimorphic protennoia," the original three-body world of Sophia's Dreaming. Our world, the terrestrial biosphere coupled with the sun and the moon, is the manifestation of this Dreaming. With the arising of the Archons, another Dreaming comes into play *outside* our threefold world order. I propose to call this the Alien Dreaming. (This choice of language will become self-evident as we proceed.) This *other* Dreaming is a spin-off of Sophia's power of emanation, an exotic spill, yet it does not impede or arrest Her original Dreaming.



The Gaia Mythos describes how the impact of the Aeon Sophia upon the density of atomic matter produced a massive fracture, like the shatter pattern on an ice pond. The pattern has a center where Sophia is located (identified by the Mandelbrot Set), and a spider-web extension of fracture lines that run in all directions (the frozen sea of fractal waves). Episode 9 describes how Sophia, situated in the center of the impact zone, sees around Her something like a sea of tensile waves, and riding the waves, or actually composing the waves they appear to ride, are self-repeating forms that resemble seahorses. These seahorses are similar to the forms that appear at high reiteration of the equation for the Mandelbrot Set. These forms correspond to the anatomical type spontaneously generated from formless atomic matter by Sophia's impact, a type called the "shadow body," *haibes* in Coptic.

*A word on fractals:* Although fractal-like patterns appear in nature (in ferns, for instance: the disposition of the leaves on a stem is repeated in the form of the stemmed branches), the self-similar forms produced by high iteration are not natural, strictly speaking. Fractals such as those pictured here result from feeding a mathematical formula into a computer and having the formula reprocess itself, over and over again. However, the forms so produced do resemble the famous "paisley" seen by many people who took LSD in the 1960s. I would argue, first, that fractals are consistently seen in altered states, and second, that the patterns thus seen may also represent real, though supernatural processes in the cosmos at large.

The fractal formations described in the **Gaia Mythos** (Episodes 9 - 10) are actual physical

phenomena that occur spontaneously when an Aeon (a mass-free, high-porosity current of stellar plasma) pours into the dense fields of elementary matter. At first these "fractal seahorses" seem to be inanimate structures, rigid and almost crystalline in nature, but by the very fact that Sophia beholds them, they become animated. In the second stage of the unfoldment described in *Trimorphic Protennoia*, the Aeon Sophia "descends to empower her fallen members by giving them spirit or breath." (NHLE 1996, p. 511) Thus the tensile forms morph from semi-rigid seahorses into rounded fetal forms with tails, but the tails, it seems, keep falling off and turning into other embryos. By this bizarre process of self-repeating generation, the neonate horde of the Archons emerges.

### [ET/Archon Navigator](#)

#### The Lord Archon

*The Hypostasis of the Archons* describes a further development that follows the initial emergence of the foetal Archontic entities. In the passage cited here, I apply some concepts drawn from modern astronomy to develop a more vivid picture of events presumably observed by Gnostic seers in the cosmos at large:

- A veil exists between the world above [in the galactic core], and the realms that are below [exterior, in the galactic limbs]; and shadow came into being beneath the veil. Some of the shadow [dark mass] became [atomic] matter, and was projected apart [partially formed into elementary arrays, the dema]. And what Sophia created [by her impact] became a product in the matter [the dema], [a neonate form] like an aborted fetus. And [once formed] it assumed a plastic shape molded out of shadow, and became an arrogant beast resembling a lion. It was androgynous, because it was from [neutral, inorganic] matter that it derived. (*The Hypostasis of the Archons*, II, 4, 93:30 ff, with my glosses in brackets.)

A close reading reveals a crucial detail: after the initial formation of the embryonic Archon types, a second variant of "shadow body" arises, with distinct characteristics of its own. *The Hypostasis of the Archons* describes it as "an arrogant beast resembling a lion," but this creature is also described (in another cosmological text, the *Apocryphon of John* 10: 5) as "a serpentine body (*drakon*) with a lion-like face." Thus there are two distinct types of Archons: a foetal or embryonic type, and a drakonic or reptilian type.

In *The Hypostasis of the Archons* (93: 30 - 94:5), a suppliant asks the great angel Eleleth, "Teach me about the faculty of the Archons, how did they come into being, and by what kind of genesis, of what material, and who created them and produced their force." The teachings given in response to this question were precise and detailed. Two distinct variants of the Archon type are indicated, and their behaviors are also specified. Another cosmological treatise, *The Tripartite Tractate*, states that "the two orders [of Archons] assaulted one another, fighting for command because of their manner of being." (84: 5-15) Due to the two distinct stages of their generation, the Archons are invested with an aggressive and divisive nature, fighting among their own ranks. The problem is provisionally resolved, however, when the reptilian type assumes dominance over the massive horde of neonates, and, indeed, over the entire realm

of the dema affected by Sophia's plunge:

Opening his eyes, he [the drakonic Archon] saw a vast quantity of matter without limit [spread through the galactic limbs], and he became arrogant, saying "It is I who am God [the sole deity of these regions], and there is no other apart from me." (*Hyp Arch*, 94:20)

While the neonate Archons are inert, their forms arrested at a premature stage of development, the reptilian leader is aggressive, territorial, and charged with demonic powers. For one thing, he is a formidable shapeshifter:

Ialdabaoth had a multitude of faces more than all of them, so that he could put a face before all of them, according to his desire... He shared his fire with them, therefore he became lord over them. Because of power of the glory he possessed of his mother's light, he called himself God. And he did not obey the place from which he came. (*The Apocryphon of John*, 11:35 - 12:10)

The declaration of the chief Archon that he is the only god in the cosmos is, needless to say, a defining moment in Gnostic cosmology — if not in human evolution as well. All the cosmological texts describe this event, with slight variations. Gnostics were insistent on the identification of Yaldabaoth with Yahweh or Jehovah, the tribal god of the Hebrews. This deity is not only blind, but witless and insane (*Hypostasis of the Archons* 89: 24-25). To Gnostics insanity is not so much unsoundness of mind as the consequence of failure to correct mental errors. The mentality of the Archons "cannot be rectified," and, what's worse, "the archontic nature is not capable of development." (Gilhus, *The Nature of the Archons*, p. 40) Due to the manner of their generation, Archons have no *ennoia*, no innate intentionality. Theirs is an Alien Dreaming, set apart from the biosphere, the intelligent life-field of Gaia.

The concept of a god who is both void of will power and insane is apparently unique to Gnosticism. Needless to say, when Gnostics expressed their views on the identity of Jehovah to devout Jews and to Christians who also revered the Jewish Father God, they were not well received.

The *Apocryphon of John* adds crucial details to the Archon scenario. For one thing, it presents a rare instance where Sophia is actually called the mother of the Archons. It also says of the chief Archon that "he did not obey the place from which he came." This is a telling detail. The fact that the chief Archon moves away from the places where he arose indicates a key concern of Gnostics: the boundary-violating tendencies of the Archons. From the outset they are an invasive species.

The drakonic Archon is said to be blind (Coptic *bille*), so he does not see either the Pleroma or Sophia. "Blindness of the spiritual world characterizes the Archons." (Gilhus, p. 17). He is called Samael and Saklas. Samael is Hebrew and Saklas is Aramaic for "blind one."

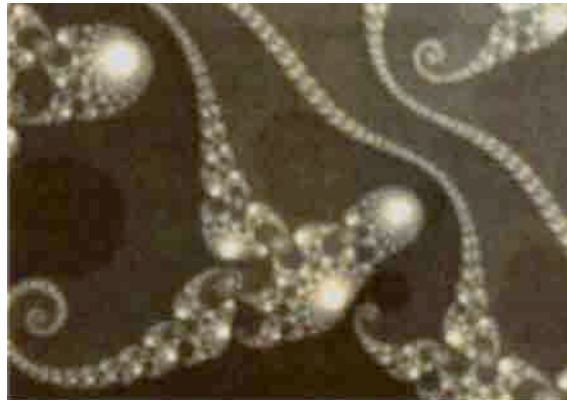
Understanding the blindness of the Archons is crucially important to our detection of how they can affect humanity.

## Alias Jehovah

The chief of the Archons is also called the Lord Archon. He is also given the bizarre name, Yaldabaoth (pronounced Yall-DAH-buy-OT). Scholars disagree on what this name might mean, and how it was derived. By one translation it means "the child who crosses space." By another, it means "chief of the horde." (Jarl Egil Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, p. 332-6.) Thus it seems to slur together allusions to both types of Archons. In the Old Testament the title *yhwh seba'ot*, Yahweh Sebaoth, occurs 276 times as the title of the father god. (*Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, p. 155) Gershom Scholem, pre-eminent scholar of the Cabala and Jewish mysticism, explained Ialdabaoth as "a compound of the Aramaic active participle *yaled* (i.e., 'to beget') and the name Abaoth, which represents an abridged form of the name Sabaoth. Thus, Ialdabaoth means 'the begetter of Sabaoth'." (Nathaniel Deutsch, *The Gnostic Imagination*, p. 55) And there are half a dozen more interpretations.

It is likely that the name Ialdabaoth is simply a variant of Jehovah, the paternal father god of the Hebrews. Gnostics identified Jehovah with the Lord Archon and rejected the OT and the entire Judaic plan for salvation as a subterfuge of the Archons. It makes sense that they would have used the same term used by Jews to expose the true nature of the Jewish deity.

When it came to knowledge that they considered crucial to human survival, and to humanity's coevolution with Sophia, Gnostics could be confrontational, and totally unconcerned about whom they might offend. Their uncompromising and sometimes scornful attitude, combined with their failure to anticipate the high degree of physical violence that would be triggered by their challenge to Judeo-Christian beliefs, undoubtedly fuelled the vicious fanaticism that destroyed the Mysteries.



Magnification of the fractal Archon generation presents a graphic image that seems to fit the scenario described by Gnostic seers. The embryonic type, or neonate Archon, is clearly defined, but so is another entity: the reptilian Archon with its avaracious jaw and long spermatic tail. This "arrogant beast" seems to lunge at the entrails of the embryonic type. Right at the point where the embryonic Archon would have a nurturing umbilicus, the reptilians move in invasively. The neonate Archon remains passive, apparently sucking its finger or thumb!

Something odd is happening in the lower part of the neonate's body, for its seahorse-tail is

precariously jointed to the torso. The embryonic type remains self-absorbed, but reacts to the aggression of the other type by dropping its tail, as frightened reptiles do. We wonder if the disjointed tail will form another neonate, or another reptilian. The reptilian form does appear to be fractally repeated in the tail-structure of the embryonic type, as if the tail broke off and became an entity of its own, rather than another embryo.

The element of *fear* figures largely in the behavior of the Archons and their effect on humanity. In the Old Testament, fear of God is held to be one of the primary marks of religious experience. The possibility that human fear is a kind of nutriment for certain invasive extraterrestrials has been widely argued in the ET/UFO debate. *The Second Treatise of the Great Seth* says that the agenda of the Archons is "fear and slavery." The Archons wish to keep humankind under "the constraint of fear and worry." (NHLE 1990, p. 367) Other passages also warn against the Archons' use of fear as a psychological weapon.

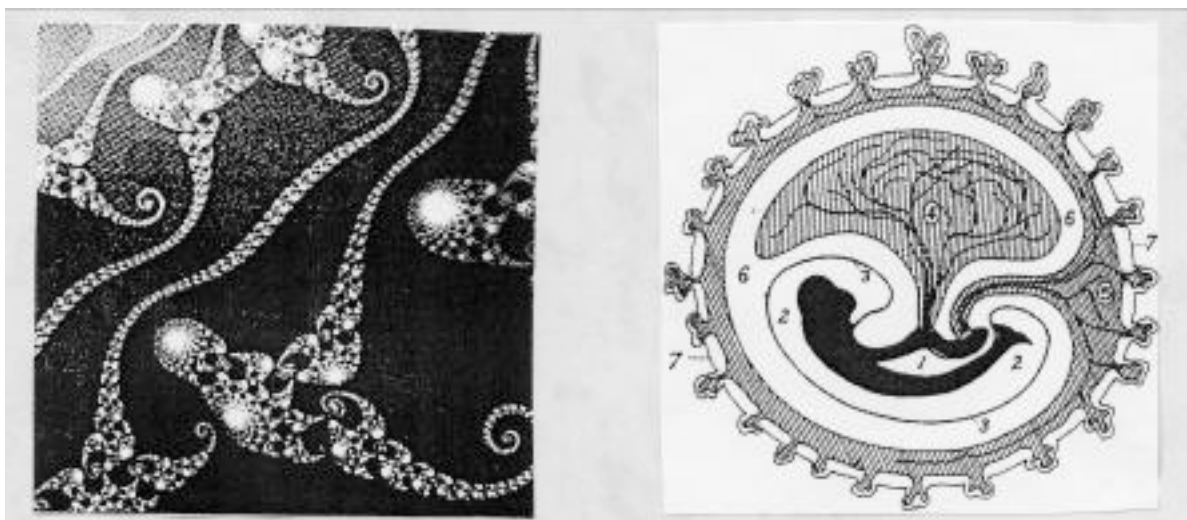
In another striking detail, the reptilian type seems to be holding a sphere in its jaws, recalling the mythical image of a serpent who offers forbidden fruit: for instance, the Serpent in the Garden of Hyperborea with the golden apple in its mouth. Is the neonate eating from this rounded fruit? Gnostics had their own version of what transpired in the Garden of Eden, events in which the Archons were deeply involved, and so it is perhaps not surprising to see hints of the Paradise scenario at this primal stage of cosmic activity.

All this activity in the fractal generation of the Archons is imaginal, but it is not imaginary, i.e., not purely made up in our minds. Recreating what Gnostic seers observed is a sober use of imagination, not a flight into make-believe. It takes non-ordinary reason to describe what is happening here, but the scenario so developed is entirely reasonable and coherent on its own terms.

### Foetal Conflict

However the Gnostic seers of the Mysteries came to imagine the generation of the Archons, the high-iteration fractals around the Mandelbrot Set fit their scenario in an uncanny manner. And they do more as well, for the fractal embryos and reptilians also mimic features of human gestation (or vice versa). In human conception, the embryonic sac consists of two parts: the yolk sac (4 in the illustration below), and the foetal mass attached to it (1), suspended in amniotic fluid (2). At the moment the developing embryo gains initial anatomical definition, it is fish-like (a fact that medical science likes to use to remind us of our pre-human origins). It has a distinct head, and a tail, and a third feature, the umbilicus that connects it to the yolk sac through which it is fed. The fractal generation of the Archons exhibits all these features in a clear and precise manner.





As the embryo grows, the yolk sac (4) contracts, and there is at the same time a secondary development. Also connected to the umbilicus is the allantois (5), a vesicle that fills the interspace between the amnion (3) and the chorion (7), the outermost boundary of the entire placental sac. A kind of morphological tension plays between these evolving structures: for the allantois to grow, it must contract or press back (repress) the yolk sac that feeds the growing fetus. Unless the allantois grows in this manner, the protective placenta cannot be fully matured. A similar tension pertains between the embryonic Archons and the reptilians. Just as embryonic development in humans is divided between the growth of the fetus fed from the yolk sac, and the repression of the yolk sac to produce the full-grown placenta from the allantois membrane, the power of the Archons is divided by the nature of their generation ("because of their manner of being," cited above) This conflict is partially resolved when the reptilian type assumes dominance over the massive horde of neonates.

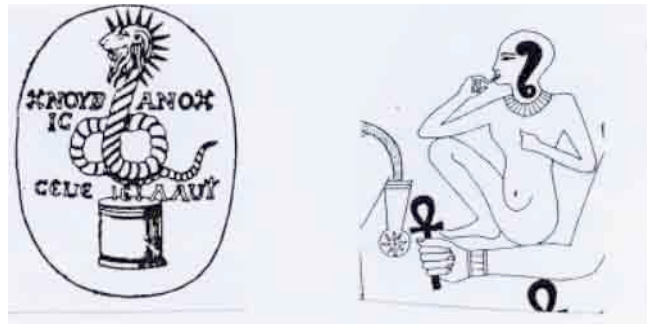
Gnostics certainly knew what an aborted foetus looks like. Morally opposed to biological procreation by humans, they were known to practice birth control, and must have assisted others to do so. They would have known from direct observation that the foetus aborted at an advanced stage of gestation does not resemble a half-baked omelette; it has the vestiges of anatomical form. Their choice of this bizarre metaphor must have been intentional, reflecting the occult perception that Archon anatomy mimics the neonate form of humans. Such a metaphor is extremely valuable, not only because it allows us to visualize what Gnostic seers detected by extrasensory perception, but also because it establishes a close tie between the human species on earth and the pre-terrestrial Archons.

For more on this tie, see the closing passage, "Cosmic Cousins."

## The Serpent Power

The description of a "lion-headed serpent" for the Ialdabaoth is arresting. For Gnostics the lion

represented the blind force of procreation (an association that probably stems from Egyptian Mystery schools, not to mention observation of the force and noise of lions mating in the desert), so the sperm-like body of the lion-headed reptilians is even more appropriate. This drakonic type of Archon appears on Gnostic germs, not because the Gnostics worshipped the reptilians— far from it— but because *they viewed the image as a magical antidote to Archontic influence*. Rather in the way a skull on a label indicates a poisonous liquid, thus preventing us from mistaking it for a liquid that is safe to drink, the lion-serpent image was represented on Gnostic amulets to ward off Archontic intrusion.



The lion-headed serpent of the Gnostics is called by magical names such as Ophis, Knuphis, and Abrasax. In the occult anatomy of Asian mysticism and Yoga, this reptile is known as *Kundalini*, the serpent power. Gnostics who practiced Kundalini yoga were called Ophites, from the Greek *ophis*, "snake." This cult was condemned by early Christians as pagan "snake-worshippers." To the mundane and uninitiated mind, the Kundalini serpent can only be conceived by crude literalization. To Gnostics, the lion-headed serpent crowned with solar rays was not only the image of the Lord Archon, but also of the source of spiritual power that allows human beings to resist that entity.

Experts who do not look outside Gnosticism to understand it never mention Kundalini, but unorthodox and esoteric scholars such as G. R. S. Mead, Helena Blavatsky, and C. W. King (*Gnostics and Their Remains*) make the connection routinely, as do comparative mythologists such as Joseph Campbell and Alain Danielou. In *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space*, Campbell shows how the image of Kundalini, the "serpent power," appears in world art from the Indus Valley circa 2300 BCE and continues right across the spectrum of ancient cultures, well down into the Common Era. As late as the 16th century, golden thalers in Germany (Campbell, Fig. 8) showed the Crucifixion on one face and a serpent draped over the cross on the other. At that late date, Christ would have been identified with Kundalini — without an inkling of why, however — but to Gnostics the snake on the cross was a cancellation of the saving power attributed to crucifixion (i.e., the glorification of suffering as a redemptive force). Arousal of Kundalini produces ecstasy, triggers superconsciousness, opens the occult faculties, and releases waves of healing energy that flush physiological and hormonal secretions through the body.

As the mythical serpent guarding the Tree of Knowledge in *Genesis*, Kundalini was "the messenger of salvation" for Gnostics. In a complete reversal of the usual reading of the Fall, Gnostics regarded the serpent as a spiritual ally to primal humanity, "the first to attempt to release mankind from bondage to an unknowing god who had identified himself with the

Absolute and thus blocked the way to the tree of eternal life. (Campbell , p. 78) The "unknowing god" who falsely identified himself with the Absolute is of course Yaldabaoth, alias Jehovah.

Gnostics taught that *nous*, the spiritual intelligence endowed in humanity, could be blocked by the Archons. This occurs through Archontic intrusion affected by a kind of subliminal invasion at the level of thought and language (i.e., mental syntax). But *nous* could be reinforced through accessing the power of Kundalini, an ecstatic current that normally rests dormant in the human body. In his monograph on the Archons, I. S. Gilhus notes that "the erotic strategy is the most important means used by the pneumatics to save the lost light." (p. 51) Pneumatics is the Gnostic terms for humans who pursue the path of psychosomatic illumination, the key method of Gnostic religion. Pneuma, "spiritual force," is developed by cultivation of *nous*, "higher intelligence." But the Archons present a blind field of resistance to this process: in short, they rely on humans remaining ignorant of their inherent spiritual potential.

When Kundalini is raised from its dormant state, higher intelligence blossoms, and there are other effects as well. Gnostic sects such as the Ophites practiced the communal raising of Kundalini to produce an protective envelope against Archontic intrusion. In effect, they held Kundalini, the sexual-spiritual energy locked in the body structure, to be the main instrument of defense against the Archons. *The Dialogue of the Savior*, NHC III, 5 (85), contains this exchange:

- Judas said, "Behold, The authorities (Archons) dwell above us, so it is they who will rule over us."  
The savior said, "It is you who will rule over them. But only when you rid yourselves of jealousy, and take on the protection of the Light, and enter the nymphion (bridal chamber)."

The savior-teacher is emphatic that we have power over the Archons, but he also makes it clear that some human failings impede the use of our power. The Greek word *phthonos* may be translated as "jealousy" or "envy." Gnostics considered envy to be the signature of the Archons, as well as *the key human failing that makes us vulnerable to their intrusion*. "The protection of the Light" comes through activated Kundalini, often described as a lightning-like tide of electrified light that pours through the body. "Nymphion" is a code word for the ambient cell of psychophysical protection generated by high levels of Kundalini.

Sir John Woodruffe, the great transmitter of Hindu Tantric wisdom to the West, directly identified the practice of Kundalini yoga (raising the serpent power through the channels of the spine) with Gnostic rites of "serpent worship." (*Shakti and Shakta*, p. 191 ff.) Buddhist scholars such as E. A. Evans-Wentz, J. M. Reynolds, and H. V. Guenther have made similar observations, but Gnostic scholars have not reciprocated because they do not look outside their genre to understand the theory and practice of Gnosis.

The lion-serpent image is displayed over and over in hieroglyphic form on the walls of the Temple of Horus at Edfu, forty miles south of Nag Hammadi. In the cult of Hathor celebrated there, the lion-serpent represented the "royal seed" of the pharaohs. The royal child Horus is often depicted in a finger-sucking gesture that vividly recalls the posture of the embryonic

Archons. Did Egyptian priests who directed the breeding of the dynastic families have intimate knowledge of Kundalini, as well as the Archons? The Kundalini serpent is displayed in Egyptian sacred art by a standing cobra, or a pair of cobras, sometimes wound on a staff, and by the uraeus, the cobra headress of divine empowerment. The ceremonial braid on the side of Horus' head was yet another indication of the serpent power. The pharaonic braid, traditionally worn on the right side of the head, visually repeats the form of the spermatocobras of Edfu. The sacred iconography carries explicit, but highly occult knowledge: Horus is the child whose right-brain cerebral functions are heightened by the serpent power.

The "esoteric" imagery of the serpent power operates at several levels at once. We shall see that the complex biological symbolism of Gnostic myth has much to teach us about the nature of the Archons, as well as how we can resist them.

### The Rape of Eve

Ialdabaoth is also called the Archigenitor, "the master breeder." (*Apoc John* II, 12, 25) Gnostics, to whom ethics must be consistent with cosmology, regarded biological procreation, insofar as it is an involuntary act, as a mindless mechanism that makes humans accessory to the head Archon. How Ialdabaoth breeds his own type, and controls the breeding of the embryotypes, and may even be involved in interbreeding with humans — are some of the more baffling elements in the Sophia mythos. Several texts in the NHC describe the Archons' attempt to "rape Eve": i.e., inseminate the human species. The texts make it clear, however, that they do not succeed in their aims. The *Hypostasis of the Archons* describes this episode:

- Then the Archons approached Adam. and when they saw his female counterpart speaking with him, they became greatly agitated and in arousal for her. They said to one another, "Come let us sow our seed in her," and they pursued her. And she, the mother of the living, laughed at them for their witlessness and blindness; and in their clutches she turned into a tree, and left before them her shadowy reflection resembling herself. (89: 15-25)

This passage demonstrates the imaginal sophistication of Gnostic vision. Gnostics discerned the Archons attempt to inseminate Eve — to interfere in the genetics of the human species, if you will — but they also observed that the attempt was a failure. The metamorphosis of Eve into a tree recalls the Greek myth of Daphne who turned into a laurel. (This parallel shows that Gnostic cosmo-mythology was not a fluke, but a system of visionary knowledge deeply rooted in the indigenous mind of pre-Christian Europe.) For Gnostics, the visions they beheld in altered states were empirically true and could be tested. By doing so, they were able to develop extraordinary insight into the superhuman worlds, the activities of the gods, the relation of humanity to alien species, and the long-term experience of the human species. The above scenario describes how the Archons fail to capture Eve, yet they somehow engage her shadow, a mere reflection. This implies that although the Archons cannot access our genetic structure, they may affect or distort our image of woman, of the Feminine, and in that sense they really can succeed in defiling Eve. They may distort our sense of our own genetic make-



up.

As it so often does, Gnostic insight into cosmic order challenges us to understand what is happening in our own minds. Is there some way in which we humans have defiled the image of woman? For instance, by imposing on women an artificial notion of identity, a falsification of their true nature? If so, we would be regarded by Gnostics as accessory to the rape of Eve by the Archons. Is there evidence in the world today that we have a distorted view of genetics? If so, this distortion, and the actions that proceed from it, would fully merit being regarded as consequences of the Archons' deviating effect on human behavior.

### Enter The Annunaki

The above passage from *The Hypostasis of the Archons* calls to mind current scenarios of alien intervention in human genetics. Most theories of the ET breeding program assume that whatever the aliens (usually, the embryonic Grey types are suspect) might choose to do, they can do. But Gnostic seers who applied non-ordinary reasoning to their observations of the Archons reached a different conclusion. In the Gnostic view, it would be a huge error to assume the Archons are doing things they cannot do, for that would give them power over us. Gnostics taught that the main danger we face with the Archons lies less in what they can actually do than in *what we falsely believe they can do*. Their trump card is deceit (*apaton* and *plane* in Greek), especially deceit about the nature and extent of their powers. "For their delight is bitter, and their beauty is depraved. Their pleasure is in deception." (*The Apocryphon of John* BG 56, 3-7)

Strange as they are, certain elements in the Gnostic mythos of our species may now begin to look familiar. The theme of alien insemination of the human race also occurs in archaic narratives from ancient Sumeria, dating to the third millennium BCE, and it is rampant in contemporary ET/UFO lore. Sumerian accounts describe an alien species called the [Annunaki](#), who are credited with producing the human species by genetic engineering, and also with inaugurating civilization. These narratives are found on cuneiform tablets dating to circa 1800 BCE, but they preserve late redactions of much earlier versions. Apparently, the story about alien intervention is one of the oldest scripts of our species. Many people who follow the ET/UFO debate are aware of the Sumerian accounts of the Annunaki, who are easily equated with modern-day ETs, but there is a total absence of reference to the Gnostic scenario of the Archons in the controversy so far.

The Gnostic account of Archon/Annunaki activities differs on many significant points from what is found in the Sumerian accounts. For one thing, Gnostics did not regard Archons as superior beings who jump-start civilization. Nor did they consider the Archons capable of accessing the human genome (called by them the *Anthropos*), although they did grant some role for Archontic activity in our physical evolution. This point is extremely difficult to clarify, however... By far the most striking difference between the Sumerian and Gnostic accounts is that the former contain no inkling of the Sophia mythos and no explanation of how the Archons, alias Annunaki, originated. This is a considerable lacuna, to say the least.

In his elaborate reworking of the Sumerian materials, Zecharia Sitchin describes the Annunaki

as a highly advanced non-human species who inhabit the planet Nibiru, an outrider of the solar system with a period of 3600 years. In Sitchin's version of prehistory, the Annunaki came to earth in quest of gold for manufacturing a colloidal suspension needed to stabilize their atmosphere. (For a full account, see Sitchin's last book, *The Lost Book of Enki*.) Although Sitchin appears to be a legitimate Sumerologist with a profound grasp of ancient languages, no orthodox scholar endorses his scenario for the Annunaki. At worst, it is dismissed as an "ancient astronauts" fantasy dressed up in scholarly robes. I am unable to say whether Sitchin's account of the Annunaki on Nibiru is an accurate rendition of cunieform texts or a fantasy extrapolated in his mind.

Significantly, Sitchin never describes the physical appearance of the Annunaki of either type. One of the great benefits of the Gnostic Archon scenario is that it does provide vivid descriptions of these entities. Is it a coincidence that the embryonic and serpentine Archons described in Gnostic texts present an identical match to the two kinds of ETs most frequently reported in modern times, the Greys and the Reptilians? If the Gnostics got this part of the intervention scenario right, what else did they get right?

### Cosmic Cousins

The same manifestations that created our religious beliefs,  
created our UFO beliefs. A serious look at the Phenomenon  
would cause a revision of our way of looking at religion.  
John Keel, *UFO: Operation Trojan Horse*

It is startling to find vivid and detailed descriptions of predatory aliens in obscure texts dating from the 4th century CE, but the revelations of Gnosis are nothing if not startling. Some ancient reports of "UFO sightings" do exist, but Gnostic material on the Archons does not merely present "reports." It explains their origins in the cosmic order, their nature (inorganic, imitative, without intentionality), their appearance and tactics, their attitude toward humanity, and more. A more clear and coherent solution to "the Phenomenon" (the ET/UFO enigma) could hardly be imagined.

The "high strangeness" of the Gnostic Archon material poses a credibility issue, of course. We are faced with the choice of believing that these texts represent an accurate account of what Gnostic seers observed in states of non-ordinary reality — that is, a reliable report of genuine parapsychological research achieved by remote viewing, lucid dreaming, clairvoyant observation, and then carefully assessed by non-ordinary reason — or believing that Gnostics were mere fantasists, mystics deluded by their visions, wacko cult weirdos, or worse.

How, then, can we determine if the Gnostic account of the Archons was delusional or if it presents reliable knowledge of alien intervention?

In **Sources of the Gaia Mythos**, I discussed the indigenous concept of the Dreamtime, the timeless play of creative awareness in the Eternal Now, and its variant, Dreaming:

- When the Dreamtime comes to expression in particular knowledge and behavior, the Aborigines refer to the Dreaming of the creature who embodies that knowledge and exhibits that behavior. For instance, the Kangaroo Dreaming is the summation of the innate knowledge and instinctual behavior of all kangaroos, going back to the Dreamtime ancestors. One could say, in biological terms, it is the enactment of the genome of the Kangaroo species.
- 
- All creatures, organic and inorganic, human and non-human, live and die by the Dreamings that play through them. In the Aboriginal worldview the unique gift of humans to create culture stems from our capacity to remember and retell the Dreaming, not only of our own species, but of others as well. The indigenous belief that the role of humanity is *to remember the events of the Dreaming for all creatures* accords with the suggestion presented in *Sharing the Gaia Mythos*: the human species enables a memory-circuit for Gaia.

To apply these ideas to the problem of the Archons, let's recall that we, the human species, are involved in a special way in Gaia's Dreaming, which originates from the *trimorphic protennoia*, the threefold primal intention of the Aeon Sophia. Our proper boundaries are defined by the earth-moon-sun trinity, and our wisdom endowment unfolds, given by Sophia, unfolds within the unique conditions of the biosphere, the womb of Gaia. However, there is another Dreaming that leaks into the Earth Dreaming, rather like a wireless message that bleeds through into a conversation in progress on another frequency.

Something extremely weird is happening on Earth due to a fissure in the human mind, and this fissure in turn arises from an anomaly in the cosmic order:

The world system we inhabit came about by a mistake. (*The Gospel of Philip*, NHC II, 3, 75.1)

The magical journey of awareness in which we co-evolve with Gaia's Dreaming is deviated or distorted by an alien influence, so the Gnostics taught. On this recondite point they seem to have agreed with the Yaqui shaman don Juan, who said to Carlos Castaneda, "Human beings are on a journey of awareness, which has been momentarily interrupted by extraneous forces."

Everything we learn about the Archons teaches us something crucial about ourselves.

## The Gnostic Theory of Alien Intrusion

Since the explosion of the ET/UFO phenomena in 1947, speculation about alien intrusion on planet Earth has been rampant. Half a dozen theories dominate the debate, but there is one theory that has yet to be examined. It did not emerge after 1947, but approximately 1600 years earlier. To be precise, the evidence of this theory came to light through a discovery in Egypt in December, 1945, although the significance of the find was not realized until — guess when? 1947.

In that year, French scholar Jean Doresse identified the Egyptian find at Nag Hammadi as a cache of rare Gnostic texts. "Gnosticism" is the label scholars use for a body of teachings derived from the Mystery Schools of pre-Christian antiquity. Gnostics who protested against Christian doctrines such as divine retribution and Christ's resurrection found themselves targeted as heretics and were brutally suppressed by early converts to the One True Faith. This is the untold story of how the Mysteries ended. Since that signal year, 1947, some of the lost Mystery School knowledge has been recovered.

Gnosis ("inner knowing") was a path of experimental mysticism in which the initiates of the Mystery Schools explored the psyche and the cosmos at large. Using psychoactive plants, yoga, and sex magic, these ancient seers experienced altered states and developed siddhis, occult skills such as clairaudience and remote viewing. Gnosis was a kind of yogic noetic science melded with parapsychology. In heightened perception, Gnostics developed a vast cosmological vision centered in a female deity, the Divine Sophia. The Gnostic creation myth is unique in that it includes a full-blown explanation of how inorganic alien beings came to be present in our solar system.

The Nag Hammadi material contains reports of visionary experiences of the initiates, including first-hand encounters with inorganic beings called Archons. Gnostic teaching explains that these entities arose in the early stage of formation of the solar system, before the Earth was formed. Archons inhabit the solar system, the extraterrestrial realm as such, but they can intrude on Earth. Interestingly, this Gnostic insight accords closely with the view of Jacques Vallee, who maintains that ET/cyborgs probably belong to the local planetary realm. Vallee also proposes that the ET/UFO enigma is a "spiritual control system," a phenomenon that "behaves like a conditioning process." (Messengers of Deception). This is exactly what Gnostics said about the Archons: they can affect our minds by subliminal conditioning techniques. Their main tactics are mental error (intellectual virus, or false ideology, especially religious doctrines) and simulation. Archons are predatory, unlike a wide range of non-human and other-dimensional beings also known to the Gnostics, beings who are benevolent or neutral toward humanity.

Physical descriptions of Archons occur in several Gnostic codices. Two types are clearly identified: a neonate or embryonic type, and a draconic or reptilian type. Obviously, these descriptions fit the Greys and Reptilians of contemporary reports to a T. Or I should say, to an ET.

Delving into the Gnostic materials, it is quite a shock to discover that ancient seers detected and investigated the problem of alien intrusion during the first century CE, and certainly well before. (The Mysteries date from many centuries before the Christian Era.) What is amazing about the Gnostic theory of the Archons is not only the cosmological background (explaining the origin of these entities and the reason for their enmeshment with humanity), but the



specificity of information on the alien m.o., describing how they operate and what they want from us. For one thing, Gnostics taught that these entities envy us and feed on our fear. Above all, they attempt to keep us from claiming and evolving our “inner light,” the gift of divine intelligence within. While I would not claim that Gnostic teachings on the Archons, or what remains of such teachings, have all the answers to the ET/UFO enigma, one thing is clear: they present a coherent and comprehensive analysis of alien intrusion, as well as specific practices for resisting it. They are far more complete and sophisticated than any theory in discussion today.

In short, the ancient seers of the Mysteries in Europe and the Levant seem to have accomplished 2000 years ago what many of us have been attempting to do since 1947: figure out who the ETs are, where they originate, how they relate to us, and most important of all, how we ought to relate to them.

As far as I know, apart from myself only one writer on the ET/UFO issue has directly identified the Gnostic Archons with contemporary ETs. This is Nigel Kerner, whose book, *The Song of the Greys*, is a strange, singular and little-known contribution to the debate. Kerner cites the Nag Hammadi texts just in passing, and does not elaborate on Gnostic teachings about the Archons. He makes a strong case for alien interference with the human genome, but this claim does not stand up against Gnostic analysis. Gnostic texts use mythological language to describe actual events in prehistory as well as long-term developments in the human psyche. According to the ancient seers, Archons cannot access our genetic makeup but they can fake an intervention. Considering the confusion of humanity in modern times, a faked intervention would be as good as real. This typifies the Archon tactic of getting us to imagine and believe things that are not true, and to accept simulation for reality. In this way, Gnostics taught, these alien cousins can deviate the human species from its true and proper course of evolution.

The unique emphasis on the Goddess Sophia is the high inspirational message of Gnosis. The ancient seers taught that, through a special link to the Goddess, our species can overcome the Archons and secure a human, and humane, future for the Earth.

## The ET Deception

### Knowing Who the Gods Are, and Who Are Not Gods

In my recent interview (Thursday, February 16) with George Noory for Coast to Coast AM, a listener called in a crucial question that I did not answer properly, due to the fast-paced, improvisational nature of the on-air format. Sometimes, in responding to a question concerning the complex subject matter of mythology, it is necessary to frame the answer carefully, but radio interviews do not allow time for this. In the following short piece I will have another try.

### Who Are the Gods?

The listener asked me if the identification of the Sumerian Annunaki and Gnostic Archons with modern ETs could be applied to other gods in different cultures, such as the Greek and Nordic myths. A great question, and absolutely essential for a clear and sober orientation to the perplexing issue of alien entities, visitors, ancient astronauts, "gods in flying saucers," etc.

I use three simple classifications for the various gods described in mythology and ancient texts (the Sumerian cunieforn tablets, the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi codices, etc), and the entities reported in ET encounters and UFO sightings. The first classification is purely psychological. Some "gods" are not autonomous entities, independent of us, but projections of natural and intrapsychic processes. I call such "gods" psycho-deities because they manifest through our psyches. Even if they represent forces operating in nature, what happens in the natural world also impacts the human psyche, and permeates it, so "nature gods" are also intra-psychic.

For instance, in Nordic myth Wotan or Odin is a shamanic deity, or a deified shaman, who represents the power of higher seeing and the gift of divination. These are capacities that come to be embodied, or personified, if you will, in the figure of Odin. The capacities Odin possesses are paranormal, hence "god-like," both in the sense of being beyond the human norm, and in the sense of resembling faculties we might imagine superhuman beings to have. Yet, they are intrapsychic capacities, fully within our range of evolution.

Or consider the nature god, Osiris, who was central to Egyptian religion. He represented processes of death and regeneration in nature, at the cellular level (hence a "grain god"), paralleled by other processes in the human psyche. As a "dying and resurrecting god," Osiris does not stand totally beyond human reality. The psycho-gods are interactive *within* the range of our mental and sensorial experience. They are, in a sense, extensions and reflections of ourselves and other sentient creatures.

Nordic mythology describes the celestial conflict between two generations of "gods," the Vanir and the Aesir. The Aesir represent a class of "gods" of a superhuman, cosmic stature. They are not psycho-deities but cosmo-deities, divine powers that pervade the cosmos at large. They produce and sustain the manifest worlds, without manifesting themselves. Of course, they also can reach into the human psyche, and enter our consciousness. They can go anywhere they like! Gnostics taught that the authentic cosmic gods, the pleromic divinities or Aeons, do not invade and overwhelm us. They have excellent boundaries. They do not assume human form. They are not of this world, but they are not entirely inaccessible to this world, either.

Cosmo-deities are the foundational and shaping forces of the manifest worlds, whereas psycho-deities represent our capacities to experience all that is so manifested. In Gnostic language, the cosmo-deities are the Aeons, the pleromic gods or Generators, as I like to call them. Pleroma means "fullness, plenitude." In astronomical terms, the pleroma of the Aeons is the galactic core, or hub. The opening Episodes of the [Gaia Mythos](#) present an attempt to describe the nature and activity of the Aeons. (I use a prose-poem for this purpose, as awkward as that may be, because a literal description would be inappropriate.)

Between these two classes of "gods" is a third group, an ambiguous class of entities who are part psychic and part cosmic. They are called *tricksters* in anthropological studies and

comparative mythology. Indigenous lore of the Americas is full of tricksters who interact with the native peoples, usually in a playful manner. There is a vast range of trickster entities that do no harm and harbor no intent to deceive. Their trickery is pure fun, or it may often be a way to instruct humans in survival, adaptation, and even self-knowledge. Many tricksters take the form of animals such as the rabbit, fox, crow, coyote, and so forth. These shapeshifting entities belong to the planetary habitat as much as we do. They are psychic, animistic powers of this world, close to the "animal powers" recognized by all indigenous peoples as allies to the human species. The fairies and "little people" of Celtic folk-lore belong to this class.

Indigenous wisdom teaches that we cannot *fully* know what it means to be human unless we show the humility to learn from non-human beings. Trickster entities also include the spirits of various species of psychoactive plants, fungi, and mushrooms. The *ninos* or *hongitos*, the "little ones" of Maria Sabinas, for example. Or the trolls seen in DMT experiences, reported by Terence McKenna and others.

There is, however, a particular strain of the trickster-type entity that behaves in a different manner. It deliberately presents itself as a cosmo-god, having a divine status. This entity tricks us by pretending to be other than it is. Most tricksters do not act in this way, as you can see from a study of the indigenous lore. They may be shapeshifters, they may spin tall tales and perform all manner of clever illusions, but they do not pretend to be cosmic gods. Those who do present themselves as cosmo-gods, our creators, and so forth, could be called "trickster gods." But this is a tricky term! We can call them trickster-gods, not because they are true gods, but because *they can be mistaken for true gods*.

These tricksters cannot be equated with the animistic type of trickster, nor are they psychogods. *They can be identified by their deceptive tactics, their attempt to be taken for genuine cosmic gods*. In short, they are pretenders, imposters who seek to imitate the cosmo-gods. I propose that they be called pseudo-gods. Such are the Archons described in Gnostic writings.

### **Demiurge and Sophia**

The ultimate imposter deity is Jehovah, the father god of the Bible. This entity of the lord of the Archons, or chief archon (*protarchon*). Jehovah is a trickster-god who pretends to be an Aeon, a Generator. When Gnostics explained this distinction, they were violently resisted and, in some cases, murdered by the devotees of the pseudo-god. Much violence has been done on this planet to protect the Biblical pseudo-god from being exposed. In fact, Jehovah's agenda encourages and sanctions this violence, as any sane person can see from reading a few pages of the Old Testament. The pseudo-god needs to protect its identity and preserve its deception. To do so, it persuades its human devotees to fight in its behalf. This particular trickster-god is extremely jealous and malicious. This explains why the three mainstream religions, whose followers take the pseudo-god for the supreme creator, are informed by an agenda of violence, aggression, and domination. We live on a planet where millions of inhabitants are caught in the deceptive spell of a pseudo-god. This was the Gnostic warning to humanity.

Some writers on Biblical Ufology — see [Nine Theories](#) of Extraterrestrial Contact, which I discussed in the Noory interview — have pointed out that Jehovah acts like a murderous psychotic. Christian O'Brien (*The Genius of the Few*) is particularly astute in his psychological

profile of the Biblical father god, and A. D. Horn (*Humanity's Extraterrestrial Origins*) flatly asserts that "Jehovah is a lizzie" — that is, a predatory reptilian. Horn does not cite Gnostic sources, but this is exactly what you will find in the Nag Hammadi materials. The *Apocryphon of John* (NHC II, 1) and other cosmological texts use the term *drakonic* for Jehovah, or the Demiurge, as this pseudo-god is also called. The name given to this entity in the Mysteries was Yaldabaoth, YAL-duh-BUY-ot. Roughly translated this means "breeder of the hive, or horde."

Now, an important distinction: I cannot say if there are malevolent trickster-gods throughout the cosmos, manifesting in various worlds. The Gnostic teachings that survive do not cover this range of phenomena. *Gnostic cosmology is specific to the conditions of our solar system and life on earth.* The seers of the ancient Pagan Mysteries observed that Archontic entities are present in the solar system, but they are not native to the earth as we are. They are literally an extra-terrestrial and non-terrestrial species. As such, they are only capable of flitting into the atmosphere of the earth in erratic ways, making brief forays, and then flitting out again. For them to remain on earth, special conditions would have to be established, just as when humans set up an outpost on the moon, or in the depths of the ocean. The Archon tricksters cannot live in the biosphere, just as we cannot live on the other planets of the solar system such as mars, jupiter, and neptune.

Gnostics taught that the earth does not belong to the solar system, but is merely captured in it. As the Gaia theory of Lovelock and Margulis affirms, the earth differs from the rest of the planets by the strange equilibrium of its atmosphere, providing not only a space for life-forms to inhabit but *an interactive medium in which life can evolve, adapt, and innovate.* Such is the miracle of life on earth, including the human species as part of an open experiment overseen by the cosmic gods, the Aeons.

The earth is a special case (as Gaia theory asserts), because it is embodiment of a cosmo-god, the Aeon Sophia, whose name means wisdom. On this planet we see wisdom incarnate, living, evolving, sentient, and we are part of it. Sophia is one of the cosmo-gods of the galaxy we inhabit. She emerged from the core of the galaxy, the pleroma, to become immersed in a planetary body. This situation is unique to our world. Mythologically, it is called the Fall of Sophia. To us, Sophia is the one Aeon or cosmo-god who is directly, sensorially present. We live in her skin. Our cosmic mother is the Aeon Sophia, whom we now call Gaia.

But Sophia is also the mother of the Archons, the tricky pseudo-gods who want us to take them for Aeons. Gnostic mythology (extensively described on site and in my forthcoming book, working title, [Not in His Image](#)) taught that before Sophia morphed into the earth, she produced a kind of spatter in the realms of elementary matter (quantum foam), resulting in a weird species made of inorganic (silicon-based) elements: the Archons. These entities proceeded to fashion a world for themselves, the planetary system exclusive of the earth, which is Sophia's body, and was formed somewhat later. The Archons are so named, from Greek *archai*, "prior, previous," because they and their world were formed *before* Sophia morphed into the earth.

This is all quite a huge picture, of course. I do not expect anyone to digest it in one lump. But it is remarkable that seers in the ancient Mysteries were able to establish this scenario. Take it or leave it, believe it or not. Personally, I believe this scenario is trustworthy and can be tested



against the evidence. It explains the origin of the Archontic ETs, both reptilian and embryonic or neonate types (the big-headed, bug-eyed Greys), as no other theory can do. The value of the Gnostic scenario of the Demiurge and his horde is that it gives us a framework for discerning various types of non-human entities, and *detecting one predatory type of trickster-god*. I do not insist that these are the *only* predatory ETs in our galaxy — I know there are tales of many types — but the brutal fact is, one is enough to endanger our evolution. Following Gnostic teachings, I believe that the Archons are the most immediate and intimate threat to humanity.

### **The Insanity of God**

Now, just a few more words on Gnostic cosmology, and then I will return to the question that prompted this brief essay.

I often say that the Gnostic seers in the Mysteries were adept at paranormal skills such as lucid dreaming, remote viewing, clairaudience and clairvoyance. If this is correct, they would have been able to observe the Archon pseudo-gods and discern their *modus operandi*. In fact, about one-fifth of the NHC concerns the origins, motives, tactics, and actions of the Archons. What those seers were able to determine about the predatory trickster-gods may be crucial to human survival. I want to emphasize one aspect of their dia-Gnosis of alien intrusion: not only does Yaldabaoth *pretend* to be the supreme creator god, but he falsely believes he is just that. The chief Archon has a god complex! He is not only trying to deceive us, he is deceived. The pseudo-god is delusional, and his delusion infects all those who follow him — such is the shocking message from the ancient Mysteries.

The Gnostic assertion of the insanity of god must be one of the most astonishing concepts in human experience. But it is not isolated, not totally unique. In [The Madness of the Ego](#) I present a Buddhist parallel to the Gnostic Demiurge. Read this scenario and see if it is not an exact equivalent to the Gnostic myth of the Demiurge. Both narratives state that the pseudo-god mistakes himself for the creator of the entire universe. This, of course, is exactly what Jehovah does, too. Believers in the mainstream religions who take this delusional entity for their Supreme Being are themselves delusional. In blind faith, millions of people are enmeshed in the insanity of a pretender god and implicated in the violence and aggression of the Archons.

The Demiurge is an imposter deity who works against humanity. Yaldabaoth stands between humanity and the Aeons in the galactic core, pretending to be one of them. The Archon horde, operating on a hive-mentality, try to intrude between humanity and the Aeon Sophia, embodied in the earth. Thus they work against our innate wisdom, so closely connected to the intelligence of Gaia, in the vain attempt to deviate us from that connection. This is the dia-Gnosis of the Mystery seers.

### **Double Deception**

Finally, in closing, I would like to return to the call-in on the interview with Geroge Noory. Is it possible, he asked, to discern ET-Archons in other myths around the world? It is clear that the Sumerian Annunaki and the Gnostic Archons are identical to modern ETs, but it is by no means easy to go through the massive material of myth and folk-lore and weed out every reference to the pseudo-deities. I have not done this, not completely or exhaustively, but I have

made various attempt at it. I would like to report my investigations on another article on site.

Meantime, there is one more crucial factor in the dia-Gnosis. This concerns the *double deception* of the ET phenomenon: the phenomenon itself tricks us from seeing how it works. Since I have introduced the ET-Archon theory on this site, there has been ever more excited talk about how the gods described in ancient myth were actually extraterrestrials or "ancient astronauts." I am certain that factoring the Archons into this discussion can be extremely instructive. At the same time, the introduction of Gnostic counter-intelligence on alien intrusion *takes the discussion to another level*. We now have to become more sophisticated in our understanding of the alien factor.

When we today regard the gods described in ancient times as Archontic ETs, *we tend to think that we have finally understood who the gods are*. This is not correct: in reality, we have come to see who the gods are not! In making the identification, Annunaki = ETs, for instance, we catch sight of the entities who *pretend* to be gods. In the Sumerian cunieform record, which are transcripts of channelled materials, the Annunaki claim to be our creators. But does the fact that something was written on clay tablets 2800 years ago mean that it is true? Of course not. The Sumerian cunieform record presents a *claim* that the Annunaki are superior creator gods, not *proof* that they are.

The cunieform tablets are not evidence of facts, they are evidence of a story presented as fact.

Here we are close to seeing the double deception. Having ascertained that the ancient gods were really ETs, we fail to ask, What about gods who are *not* ETs? The nature of the ET deception is, first, that it tricks us about the gods, and then, when we get on to the deception, *it diverts us from looking beyond it* toward the true gods, the divinities of the living cosmos. Having made the ET-god connection, we must take another step toward more sophisticated knowing. The sane thing to do, then, would be to ask, If the Archon-ETs were *wrongly regarded* as gods, who are the genuine gods? It would be a gross error to assume that we have understood the nature of the gods simply by making the ET connection to ancient mythology.

Due to the double deception of the ET phenomenon, we tend to assume that "ancient astronauts", who pretended to be gods and were taken as such, must be the only gods.

*With the dia-Gnosis of the Archons, we are just on the threshold of discovering the true Gods. This is a momentous shift.*

According to the Gnostics, the "true gods" are the Aeons of the Pleroma. And one of these is Sophia, the wisdom goddess, who morphed into the planet earth. Today we call her Gaia. She is the ground of life and consciousness for the human species and all sentient life, including molecular life. Such is the ancient Pagan teaching preserved by the guardians of the Mysteries. Today we stand at the threshold of reviving and reliving that teaching.

The trick is, to get past the extraterrestrial tricksters to the real magic of life on this earth.



## Christianity - Extraterrestrial Religion?

### Reflections on Von Daniken and Biblical UFOlogy

NOTE: This is an expanded version of the article, "Abraham and the Doctrine of the Aliens," by John Lash, published on [phenomenamagazine.com](http://phenomenamagazine.com).

In 1968 a Swiss innkeeper named Erich von Daniken published *Chariots of the Gods?*, which became an international bestseller and remains in print today. According to von Daniken's sensational theory, "ancient astronauts" from an advanced civilization visited the Earth in times long past. He found proof of their presence in rock-carvings, religious artifacts, ancient myths, and, of course, megalithic monuments such as the Giza pyramids.

Von Daniken provocatively asked, Did God drive a Flying Saucer? With this question planted in the mainstream mind, God, angels, and everything Biblical instantly attached itself to UFO speculation, but von Daniken did not explore these associations in a cogent or consistent manner.. A less-known but far more intelligent study, which appeared in the same year as *Chariots*, did just that. *The Bible and Flying Saucers* was written by Barry H. Downing, a Presbyterian pastor with degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary and the University of Edinburgh. The scope and depth of his book reflect his learning, a far cry from von Daniken's hokey shenanigans. But this book also reflects the author's steadfast faith in Christian tradition: Downing assumes that God and His angels, even if they are ETs who navigate in UFOs, are

implementing a divine plan for the benefit of humanity.

(Note: I am informed that Desmond Leslie in his 1952 book *Flying Saucers Have Landed*, featured an entire chapter entitled "Chariots of the Gods." This is *the* source from which Von Daniken borrowed both his title and much of the content for his book. Thanks to Sweeps Fox for this detail.).

Downing, along with Desmond Leslie, may be considered the founders of [Biblical Ufology](#), the genre of studies proposing that many events in the Bible reflect extraterrestrial intervention, *assumed to be benign*. Visions such as those seen by Ezekiel are taken as close encounters. Angels, such as the one who announced the birth of Jesus to Mary, are regarded as aliens of a superior evolution. Some interpretations even regard Jesus as an extraterrestrial who comes to Earth from a more highly evolved world, or is cloned as a "model human" by technologically superior space brothers. Imagine the headline, Jesus – The First Designer Baby!

Biblical UFOlogists assume that space aliens or ET-like entities act in a kind and benevolent manner toward humanity, consistent with the fulfillment of a "Divine Plan." Downing wonders if "Biblical religion was planted and nurtured by persons from another world." He does not merely speculate on the presence of "ancient astronauts" on Earth, but he considers their possible role in initiating and directing the religious experience of humanity. This issue demands a much deeper cut into the human psyche than von Daniken undertook. Without the benefit of Gnostic materials, Downing was unable to conceive that Biblical religion, "planted and nurtured by persons from another world, works not for the betterment of humanity, but for its enslavement.

Biblical Ufology is widely developed today, but an optional interpretation that could not have emerged until some time after Downing and von Daniken wrote has yet to be considered. This option arises with the view of alien intervention proposed by the Gnostics of the Mystery Schools. Although some of the Gnostics' views can be found in obscure arguments written against them by early Christians, original Gnostic material was not widely available until the Nag Hammadi codices, discovered in 1945, were translated into English in 1978. The Mysteries were destroyed in the 4th Century CE, when the Nag Hammadi cache was buried, but they are known to have preexisted Christianity for thousands of years.

Gnostics were psychonauts of extraordinary scope and finesse. Their cosmology, centered on the figure of the Goddess Sophia, presents a complete and coherent description of the origin and methods of an inorganic predatory species called Archons. Although Gnostic texts describe firsthand encounters with Archons who "abduct souls by night," their teachings do not emphasize physical threat. Rather, they warn that the Archons affect us most profoundly in our minds, especially through religious ideology, through beliefs about God and what God

wants for us.

For Mystery School instruction on facing and repelling the Archon ETs, see [A Gnostic Catechism](#) and the commentary on the [First Apocalypse of James](#), text 9 in the Nag Hammadi Reading Plan.

One of the most sensational ideas of the Gnostics is that Jehovah, the Father God of Judeo-Christian religion, was an Archon, an inferior or *imposter deity* not to be confused with the true Gods, called Aeons, who inhabit the cosmic center (galactic core). Jehovah is said to be blind and mad, a demented alien who nevertheless has some god-like powers. Although he does not create the world we inhabit, he believes that he does. "Opening his eyes, the chief Archon saw a vast quantity of matter without limit, and he became arrogant, saying, 'It is I who am God, and there is no other power apart from me.' " (*The Reality of the Archons*, NHC II, 4, 94.20). Of course, this is exactly what Yahweh-Jehovah says in the Old Testament. Over and over again, the Mystery teachings preserved in the NHC presents a view of Judeo-Christian religion that turns it completely inside out.

Fortunately, the Nag Hammadi cache, meager as it is, contains quite a lot of clear information on the Archon God and his insidious tactics. In the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, an unnamed Gnostic Master says, "The Archons devised a plan about me to release their error and their absurdity."

This line recalls Jacque Vallee's pithy comment on alien strategies in *Messengers of Deception*: "The way to a man's belief is through confusion and absurdity."

The text cited explains how the Archons induce a false plan of salvation into the human mind, a counterfeit of the true path of self-liberation we can take by developing our innate potential of *Nous*, "divine intelligence." The Gnostic teacher, called Phoster or Illuminator, openly ridicules Abraham, Moses and the prophets for accepting the Archons as divine and putting faith in an imposter god who works against humanity. The *Second Treatise* says that the "doctrine of the aliens" is "a great deception upon the human soul, making it impossible for humans to find *Nous*, the self-liberating mind, and thus come to know true humanity."

What Gnostics meant by "the doctrine of the aliens" is the ensemble of beliefs at the core of Judaic and Christian religion —and, by extension, Islam. All three of the "great world religions" derive from the revered Patriarch Abraham, thought to have lived around 1800 BCE. Because the history of the ancient Hebrews is taken as exemplary or symbolic of humanity as a whole, our species' "sacred history" begins with Abraham, but Gnostics considered that Abraham was a dupe, the psychological "vector" for the intrusion of the Archons. In effect, they trashed the notion of a "Divine Plan" overseen by Jehovah, and exposed Judeo-Christian salvationism (the Redeemer Complex) as an extraterrestrial religion, alien to the Earth and

hostile to human potential.

The Gnostic critique of the Redeemer Complex was devastating to the cherished beliefs of many people, and still is, but the teachers in the ancient Mysteries did not leave us without alternatives to these received beliefs. Gnostics taught what they embodied: the illuminist path of experimental mysticism, contrasted to blind belief in salvationist dogmas. Against the religious deceit of the Archons, the *Second Treatise* invokes the "hope of Sophia," affirming our bond to the Wisdom Goddess whose body is the Earth.

### Kundalini and the Alien Force

### Gnostic and Tantric Practices of Sacred Sexuality

The exploration of Gnosticism may be one of the more revealing pursuits of our time, and it is certainly one of the more difficult. Since Gnostics were suppressed in the 4th Century, disinformation about them has run amok. There is no clear and consistent presentation of Gnostic views, either in the slim surviving materials or in modern scholarship. To add to the confusion, Gnostics were initiates in the Mystery schools, and initiates were bound by a vow of silence about many things they experienced — although not, fortunately, about all things.

### Body Knowledge

One of the stickiest subjects in Gnostic studies is the question of sexual practices: Did they do it, or didn't they? By some accounts, Gnostics were ascetics who rejected the world as the fabrication of a pseudo-creator, Jehovah, identified by them as an alien deity or Archon. It is now widely recognized that the accusation of [world-denial](#) cannot fairly be laid on Gnostics, and more properly ought to be directed to Christian ideologues who falsely imputed hatred of the body to the "heretics," thereby cleverly diverting attention from their own disgust for nature and human embodiment.

One Gnostic scholar, M. A. Williams, has dedicated an entire book to refuting and sometimes reversing the disinformation about Gnostics, their views, and practices. In *Rethinking 'Gnosticism'*, he states that, far from despising the body, it is far more likely that Gnostics believed that "precisely in the human body is to be found the best *visible* trace of the divine in the material world." (p. 117. His emphasis.) From meticulous analysis of textual references, and line by line examination of the polemic writings of the Church Fathers against Gnosticism, Williams concludes that "the familiar clichés about 'gnostic hatred of,' 'contempt for,' 'hostility to,' the body fail completely as interpretations of what these sources overall have to say about the question." (p. 137) Williams argues that Gnostics were deeply committed to healing themselves and others, and "far more optimistic about what actually could be done to *transform* somatic experience," than their opponents. (p. 137. His emphasis.)





In the sacred art of Tibet, mating divinities are called Yab-Yum, "mother-father," identical to the coupled Aeons in Gnostic cosmology. In rites of sacramental sex, the partners imitate

mating divinities, but they do not become gods. The purpose of the rite is to heighten pleasure to the level where it becomes the medium of "cosmic consciousness." (Vajraghanta, Mural painting, Gyantse, 15th C. In Philip Rawson, *Sacred Tibet*, p. 51)

By some accounts, which are usually condemnatory, Gnostics engaged in ritual orgies that involved the ingestion of sexual fluids as sacramental substances. By far the most scandalous account of this kind comes from Epiphanius (376 - 403 CE), a heresy-hunter who infiltrated the Ophite cult of "Snake-worshippers." He reported that the Ophites

- venerate the Serpent because God has made it the cause of Gnosis for mankind. Ialdabaoth [Gnostic name for Jehovah, the false creator god] did not wish humankind to have any recollection of the Generators (Aeons), the Cosmic Mothers and Cosmic Fathers on high. It was the serpent who, by tempting them, brought Gnosis to our parents; who taught the first people of our kind the complete knowledge of the Mysteries from on high.
- (Cited in Jean Doresse, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics*).

Here, typically, Gnostic myth reverses Judeo-Christian tradition: the serpent in Eden is a benefactor, not a malefactor. How does such a passage stand against the Gnostics' description of sinister aliens, the reptilian Archons, who intrude on humanity? Are the predatory reptilians merely the shadow-side of another snake-like force that acts for our good? A twisty issue, here. The answer would seem to lie in the true nature of sexual practices of the Gnostics.

## Magna Mater

There is no doubt that some Gnostic sects were ascetic and practiced total abstention from sexual intercourse. For example, there is the sect that produced the channelled material known as *Books of Ieou* (non Nag Hammadi), a patchy collection of teachings on the afterlife. This Gnostic group believed themselves to have a sacred responsibility to preserve esoteric knowledge regarding the "Treasures of the Light," and the "Receivers," benevolent spiritual entities and guides we encounter when we die. The arcane material in the *Books of Ieou* includes a brief condemnatory outburst against other sects who practice sexual magic. Apparently, continence was necessary for the keepers of *Ieou* to know what they knew. This outburst of one Gnostic sect against another is unique in all surviving Gnostic materials.

Apart from Williams' meticulous deconstruction of the world-denial ("anti-cosmic dualism") attributed to Gnostics, I have argued in more elementary terms that the Gnostic vision of life, being as it was centered on Sophia, the divinity embodied in the Earth, could not have fostered or supported contempt for the material world, the realm of the senses, and the human body. Everything Gnostics thought and taught depended on direct communion with the Goddess Sophia, whose name means wisdom. This was true for the Mysteries in general, and for the Gnostic adepts in particular. Sophia was a cosmic version of the Magna Mater, the Great Mother worshipped in many ancient religions. Even the Church Fathers, who condemned

Gnostics as world-haters, affirmed that the Mysteries in all their diversity were unanimous in the consecration of the initiates to the Great Mother.

Historians of religion agree that Pagan spirituality involved sacramental sexuality, orgies, rites of empowerment through sexual yoga. (On the figure of Mary Magdalene as an adept of sacramental sex, see [She Who Anoints](#).) The Tantric sects in India present a close parallel to the Ophites — so close in fact, that the report of Epiphanius could be applied to Tantrics as well. Tantrics (or Tantrikas, as they are more properly called) are experimental mystics who arouse the “Serpent power,” Kundalini, a force concealed in the human body, in order to achieve cosmic consciousness and awaken *siddhis*, occult powers. It is more than likely that Gnostics in their sexual orgies had the same aim.

Clearly, then, the mythical serpent worshipped by the Ophites cannot be equated with the reptilian predators described in Gnostic texts and the Dead Sea Scrolls. More likely, the Ophite serpent is not entirely a mythical version of the serpent of Eden, but is identical with Kundalini, the serpent power that resides at the base of the spine in human anatomy. This being so, sexual orgies among the Gnostics would not have been merely for the pleasure and indulgence (although they would not have excluded that, either!). *They worshipped the supernatural force that resided in their own bodies*. In fact, the word “orgy,” Greek *orgia*, means simply, “working, activation.” The orgia of the serpent power was a rite for activation of Kundalini in Tantric and Gnostic practices alike.

The *Gospel of Philip* contains the scandalous passage that describes Jesus french-kissing Mary Magdalene. It is also the one text from Nag Hammadi that gives the most explicit description of the sexual orgia, but in symbolic language, or insider jargon, if you will. The text asserts that all harm on earth is due to the conflict between the sexes, but this problem can be overcome by a corporal rite of re-union. (See commentary by the translator, Wesley W. Isenberg, in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 1990, p. 139ff.) The act of sacramental coupling occurs in a “bridal chamber” called the *nymphion*, or perhaps it produces the *nymphion*. The ritual involves light, and Kundalini is also associated with a soft blaze of milk-white light that produces an electrical surge of ecstasy up the spine. The text explicitly says that the light veils and protects the partners joined in sacred sexual union:

The alien powers do not see those who are clothed in the perfect light, and so they are not able to restrain them. By the rite of sacramental union, one is ensheathed in this light.” (*Gospel of Philip*, passage 70)

*Nymphion* was a code term for the cell-of-light or protective aura generated by ritual intercourse. Within the cell, the initiates overcome the influence of the Archons who produce error in our minds, and threaten to take over our bodies — although it must be added that Gnostics insisted that threat of intrusion at the bodily level is exaggerated by the Archons themselves, to make us believe they possess more power over us than they actually have! One such error concerns resurrection:

Those who say they will die first and then rise are in error. If they do not first receive the resurrection *while they live*, when they die they will receive nothing. (Passage 72)

This is core Gnostic teaching, stated in such a way as to refute Judeo-Christian beliefs on survival after death, beliefs held precious to millions of people today, but considered by Gnostics as delusional notions insinuated in our minds by the alien force, the Archons. It also sends a clear message about our ability to enter deeply into the biological mysteries of nature, for it claims that we can experience resurrection before we die. This assertion has many parallels in Asian Tantric teachings, of course. In both Hindu and Tibetan traditions, yogis of high attainment are said to achieve complete regeneration of the body and resurrect themselves; hence, when they die, they did not die in a normal way. (See, for instance, the legendary accounts in *Masters of Meditation and Miracles* by Tulku Thondup.)

The more one considers Gnosticism in parallel to Shaivism, Hindu Tantra, Tantric Buddhism, and Dzogchen, the more likely it seems that some Gnostics were *mahasiddhis*, yogis of high attainment, due to their mastery of the serpent power. The technique of *psychosomatic illumination* by raising Kundalini was not unique to Gnosticism, but it was certainly central to its practices. In *Shiva and Dionysos*, Alain Danielou draws close parallels between the Greek cults of ecstasy dedicated to Dionysos, and the Dravidian cults of Shiva worship indigenous to Southern India. Citing Epiphanius' eye-witness account of Gnostic orgies, Danielou remarks that Gnostic teachings on sexual magic "are very close to the idea of Shaivism." (p. 223) Likewise, Sir John Woodruffe, the great exponent of Hindu Tantra to the West, directly compares the Gnostic worship of the Magna Mater to Tantric adoration of the Devi Shakti, the "Mother Power." He says that in the ancient Mysteries, just as in the Tantric cults of India, the aim of sexual rites was to awaken the divine forces in the body:

- An ancient feature of this faith [Tantricism] and one belonging to the ancient Mysteries is the distinction which it draws between the initiate whose Shakti is awake (PreBuddha) and the Pashu, the unilluminated or "animal" person, or, as the Gnostics called them, "materialists." The Natural, which is the manifestation of the Mother of Nature, and the Spiritual, or the Mother as She is in and by Herself, are one, but the initiate alone truly recognizes this unity. (*Shiva and Shakti*, p. 88)

In this passage, Woodruffe clarifies how the Aeon Sophia, identical to the "Mother of Nature," is both embodied in the natural world and not so embodied, remaining "as She is in and by Herself," because Sophia remains an Aeon of the Pleroma even though She has morphed into the planet Earth. Such statements do not come from intellectual speculation, but from direct experience of the very cosmic powers being described.

## Sex and Death

In his account of Gnostic-Shivaite parallels, Danielou describes the faculties of higher perception acquired by activation of the serpent power. These are called *siddhis* (sounds like cities), "attainments," and those who attain them are *siddhas*, or *mahasiddhas*. The Asian *siddha* is the exact counterpart of the "adept" in the Mystery Schools. Adept comes from the Latin root, *adipisci*-, "touch, gain, attain." Adept is closely related to aptitude; hence the adepts

(AD-epts) were men and women with special aptitudes. In the meeting of Mary Magalene and Jesus in the Garden on Easter morning, the Gospel writer has Jesus say to her, *Me mou aptou*, usually translated as, "Do not touch me." But in a Gnostic reworking of that incident, he could as well have said. "You can see me, but cannot reach me, until you to have attained this state for yourself," if he were indeed a Gnostic master appearing in the docetic body, or phantom body, as some Gnostic teachers claimed. The phantom body of the Gnostics is called in Buddhism the Nirmanakaya.

Describing the yogic attainments of the Shivaite mahasiddhas, Danielou cites a Tantric text, the *Samkhya-Karika*:

The yogi who has perfected the Siddhis thus acquires powers like those which belong to the gods. These are essentially the power of vision and the power of knowledge, that is to say, omniscience, as well as the actional or facultative siddhis (*kriyashaktis*), which are nine in number. (p. 94-5)

Among the siddhis listed are the ability to see on the microscopic or molecular level, the power to transport oneself at a distance, and the power to read minds. The adepts of the Mysteries would have attained these powers, and applied them to their work in teaching and training neophytes. Due to their specialist insight on the intrusion of the Archons, it is likely that Gnostics would have developed the powers required not only to detect the alien force, but to resist it. To prevent the "archontic pirates" from capturing the body (ibid., Williams, p. 137), they would have developed a whole range of defensive and immunological tactics. Modern studies of Kundalini emphasize its effects in boosting the immune system, or "strengthening the human aura," in New Age terms.

In Gnostic practices an ecstatic encounter with Divinity occurred in a kind of hermetic cell or sacred aura, called the "bridal chamber" or nymphion. The Greek writer Pausanius, who was extremely cautious about disclosing any secrets relative to the Mysteries, uses the word *nymphion*, so it does not appear isolated in Gnostic sources. Despite the elimination of countless documents, especially those that may have described sexual rites, there is ample textual evidence that Gnostic practices leading to "divinization" of the participants involved an act of sacramental sexual coupling in the *nymphion*. "Now the light is the chrism (the anointing fluid)." (Passage 69) In Tibetan teachings, the ultimate mystical experience of "White Light" occurs uniquely when we die, and only for a fleeting instant for those who have not previously attained the capacity to hold the Light in their attention. But from Gnostic reports it appears that this experience could be achieved in more ways than one. Through sex and in death, alike.

The *Gospel of Philip* celebrates the mystico-erotic union in the bridal chamber as the most holy of rites by which the initiates are "begotten by Christos in the two." This act is rigorously distinguished from ordinary carnal intercourse:

Whereas in this world the union is one of husband with wife... in the aeon the form of the union is different. [This is possible because] Christos came to repair the separation which was from the beginning, and unite again the two, and give life to those who died as a result of the separation.

The "[Christos](#)" in this passage is not Christ of the Pauline and Johannine doctrines, not the incarnate Son of God. In Gnostic jargon, Christos is the Aeon coupled with Sophia, her male cosmic counterpart. In Christian faith, the blood of the God-man, Jesus, gives life to humanity and heals our separation from the Father God, but to Gnostics these were delusional notions that imitate and distort the truth. In the Gnostic sexual sacrament, the bliss of the man and woman joined in sacred union is what repairs our separation from God, for the Gods (Aeons), who are eternally blissful, are the source of body bliss as well. The rapture of the Gods makes the blood stream in our veins. Uniting in sacramental sex "gives life to those who died."

## The Alien Force

If Kundalini is a biological force, as is widely attested in the writings of Western investigators such as Lee Sanella and Arnold Mindell, the other kind of serpent power may be distinctly anti-biological. The Archons are said to envy humanity, for a number of reasons, but primarily because we live in the body of their Mother!! According to Gnostic creation myth, the Archons are a species of inorganic beings produced anomalously by the impact of the Aeon Sophia upon atomic matter, before the Sophia herself became transformed into the Earth. They are called Archons, from *archai*, "prior, from the beginning," because they arose *before* the Earth and the solar system were evolved, but they did not emerge directly from the Pleroma, as humanity did. (On the emanation of Atum Kadmon, the Anthropos template, see [The Promise of a Lonely Planet](#), part three, and the Gaia Mythos, [Episode 10](#).)

In their attempt to intrude upon humanity, which has been ongoing for millennia, the Archons use a lot of bluff and bravado. They affect our minds to get us to believe they can do far more than they can actually do, but in so believing, we unwittingly surrender our power to them — the result is, *they get their way with us, because we have betrayed our own capacities*. Hence the Archons claim to rule over humanity, and even pretend to have been our creators, as is recounted in the Sumerian cuneiform record of the Annunaki, accepted as true by Zecharia Sitchin and many other sincere investigators. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in [1947](#) at the very moment the Nag Hammadi texts were initially recognized to be rare Gnostic materials, contain explicit accounts of direct threats posed by reptilians. For instance, the *Testament of Amram*:

- I saw Watchers in my vision, the dream-vision. Two of them were fighting over me, saying... and holding a great contest over me. I asked them, "Who are you, that you are thus empowered over me?" They answered me, "We have been empowered and rule over mankind." And they said to me, "Which one of us [will have you]?" And I lifted my eyes, and looked at one of them directly. His appearance was dreadfully frightening, and his skin was multicolored, darkly glittering scales. (4Q542)

(Note: The "Watchers" are consistently identified with the Annunaki in modern ET/Alien speculation.)

As I have explained elsewhere in this site, a Gnostic sect called the Archontics was stationed

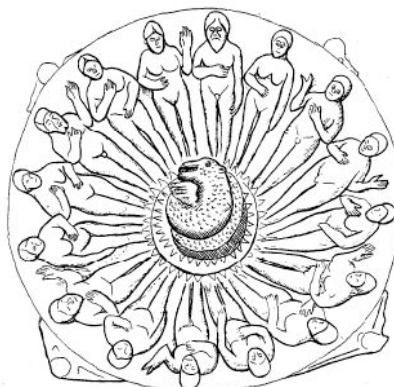


on the Dead Sea south of Qumran. Gifted with powers of paranormal perception, such as remote viewing, Gnostic seers who had met and repelled Archons observed the persisting presence of reptilians among the Dead Sea cult of the Zaddikim. The *First Apocalypse of James* (NHL V, 3), which contains descriptions of face-to-face encounters with the reptilian aliens, warns that "Jerusalem is a dwelling place of many Archons." But the Gnostic teacher adds, a crucial insight, typical of the highly nuanced knowledge of the Mystery School adepts, "These powers are not armed against you specifically, but they are armed against each other." (Passage 27) This line not only corroborates contemporary scenarios that describe conflict between the aliens who are among us, it also indicates that their powers are more engaged in battling each other than in overcoming us.

Nevertheless, they have overcome us, in certain ways. Due to their subtle tactic of intimidation via false beliefs, the Archons can get us to surrender our power. To betray ourselves to them in the deepest way, in a terminal act of self-effacement, we would have to give up our bodies and surrender the hidden powers within our bodies. Gnostic initiatory practices were directed toward strengthening our embodiment by the arousal of Kundalini, which grounds us in the Earth. Kundalini means the small ("ini") Kundala, "serpentine or spiralling power." The big Kundala is the serpent power of the Earth itself, the swirling Erotic currents of Gaia. She, the Earth Mother, is the supreme ambient force that holds DNA configured in its spiralling chains of nucleic acid. When Kundalini is awakened in sacred sexual rites or otherwise, it grounds the human body *consciously* into the planetary body. This is the ultimate aim of Kundalini yoga: not escape from the body, not deification of the participants, but grounding into Gaia, the Godhead of Nature.

In the nymphion, Gnostics bathed in ecstatic luminosity which they considered to radiate from the Godhead, the Pleroma of Aeons, via the Aeon Sophia who is embodied in the Earth. The absorption of these emanations effectuates sexual healing and repairs the split or rupture between the sexes ("gender rift") that arose on the cosmological level when Sophia fell, shearing the Anthropos template.

The cosmos is healed through what has been most deeply wounded, human sexuality.



The Gnostic Succotash: Orphic ceremonial bowl showing sixteen naked adepts, eight men and eight women, in a circle with their feet touching. ("The Sanctum of the Winged Serpent,"

Orphic bowl, 200-300 CE. In Joseph Campbell, *Creative Mythology*, p. 96.)

The Aeon Sophia, acting without a consort, plunged from the Pleroma, but it is also Sophia, now “grounded” on Earth, who connects humanity to the cosmic Source. The most direct and dynamic form of connection was effectuated in the ecstatic streaming of Kundalini during the sacred orgia. These rites were practiced to protect the circle of adepts (the Gnostic cell of sixteen *mystai*, shown above) from the meddlesome pranks of the Archons. High Archontic immunity (HAI?) is perhaps what we need today, facing as we do the ravages of HIV on the planet, not to mention sexual mores gone to wrack and ruin. With unusual candor, Tobias Churton asserts that Gnostics thought “intercourse is good for your spiritual development.” (*The Gnostics*, p. 59)

For it is by a kiss that the perfected hearts, the adepts, conceive and give birth. For this reason we also kiss one another. We receive a conception of our humanity from the grace found in each other....

Spiritual love is all wine and fragrance." (*The Gospel of Philip*)

In the Gnostic version of the Fall from Paradise, there is no sin on the part of our ancestral parents. It is not humanity who falls, but Sophia, the Wisdom Goddess. The Serpent in Eden is Kundalini, a sublime ally to humanity, not a tempter. In some Gnostic texts, the serpent power is called "the instructor." Eve, the ancestral representative of the human species, acquires from the serpent ally the secret knowledge for the Mysteries.

“It was the Serpent who, by tempting Eve, brought Gnosis to our parents.”

## Nine Theories of Extraterrestrial Contact

### A Brief Inventory of the Leading Paradigms

These are categories more than theories; within each definition a number of theories are possible. However, as categories, they do present a comprehensive overview of current ways of viewing the ET/UFO phenomenon, i.e., an inventory of the operative paradigms. Each category contains particular authors and researchers who fit with it (not a complete list, but just some suggestions). Some authors might fit into more than one category: for instance, Sitchin dominates category 3, but he could also go in 4, because of his reliance on Biblical material (especially the life and activities of the patriarch Abraham), as well as in category 7, because some elements of his work are close to, if not identical with, von Daniken. There are close parallels, and some important overlaps, between categories 8 and 9.

I exclude *Star Trek/Star Wars* spinoffs and sci-fi-related material in books and film, which is massive. Also, I do not delve into reports of diverse and warring aliens, friends and foes. There are simply too many variations to cover. But in general outlines, these complex, multi-species scenarios will fall into one or more of the categories listed. All theories exemplify [intervention theory](#), defined in the Lexicon.

This inventory is nowhere near complete, but perhaps it will provide a helpful provisional

framework for discussion. Readers are welcome to send comments and suggestions to [John Lash](#).

**1, The Extraterrestrial Hypothesis.** Aliens who belong to a technologically advanced civilization from somewhere in outer space made contact with the US government (and others, perhaps) in 1947, or earlier. The aliens cut a deal, offering to trade their advanced technology for the right to experiment with the population (Corso, *The Day After Roswell*). Source of innumerable conspiracy theories and nightmare tales of CIA mind control, cattle mutilations, underground labs, etc. Proponents: Timothy Good, David Icke, George C. Andrews (who carefully distinguishes between extraterrestrial friends and foes), and many others. This theory assumes that the aliens have an advanced interbreeding program (David Jacobs, *The Threat*), and that their aims are not at all benign but downright sinister.

**2, The Benevolent ("Space Brothers") Hypothesis.** Assumes various kinds of intervention, motivated by kind and helpful intent on the part of the aliens; or possibly as part of their program for boosting or initiating humanity to a more advanced level of consciousness. Most well-known example, Whitley Streiber's "visitors," and the Billy Meier Pleiadian scenario. After much research and reticence, the late John Mack (*Passport to the Cosmos*) also adopted this view. Includes the earliest contactees such as George Adamski, whose tall blond Venusians came to warn humanity about immanent self-destruction, pollution of the environment, etc. Earliest modern prototype for this theory, the "Lords of the Flame" (also from Venus) in the theosophical scenario of Madame Blavatsky.

**3, The Sumerian File.** Includes all theories centrally based on the Annunaki scenario found in Sumerian clay tablets, the oldest written documents on earth. Main proponent, Zecharia Sitchin, who maintains that the Annunaki descended to earth, founded civilization, and instituted theocracy. He also claims that these aliens come from Nibiru, the outermost member of our Solar System, with an orbital period of 3600 years, but this claim has not (to my knowledge) been astronomically verified. Spinoffs: Lawrence Gardner, Anton Parks, and many others. (This category is unique in its reliance on ancient textual evidence. Compare to category 9.) The Annunaki are space masters rather than space brothers. The Sumerian myth says they created humanity by genetic boosting of an apelike native population, so that humans could serve as their slaves.

**4, Biblical UFOlogy.** Includes hybrid and crossover theories that develop category 2 specifically in the context of the Old and New Testaments. Draws heavily on Apocryphal writings, especially the *Book of Enoch* with its famous account of "the Watchers," believed to be fallen angels. Uses a straightforward and literal-minded equation between aliens and angels. Proposes that angels described in the Bible — such as those seen in the visions of Ezekiel, or the one who wrestled with Jacob at the Jabbok ford on the Jordan River, or the Angel Gabriel who announced the birth of Jesus to Mary — were ET entities *who are assumed to have a benevolent attitude toward humanity, consistent with the fulfillment of "God's plan."*

Some of the angels may be fallen, but the leading assumption here is that the angel/ETs are on the side of the Father God, and the Father God is working for humanity (not against it, as the Gnostic theory, category 9, asserts). Epitomized in the Raelian cult with emphasis on the

genetic creation of humanity by god-like ETs.

This category reflects the deep religiosity of ET/UFO speculation, as well as its naive and attraction to the divine parental image. In some rare instances, Biblical UFOlogists approach the views of category 9 and challenge the identity and motives of the Creator God: e.g., Christian O'Brien, *The Genius of the Few*, and A. D. Horne, *Humanity's Extraterrestrial Origins*. These are both intelligent, sobering books.

**5, The Mind Control Hypothesis.** Largely developed by Jacques Vallee in a brilliant manner. He called the ET/UFO phenomenon "a spiritual control system." Equally so, John Keel (*UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse*) has explored this angle with sober and startling insight. Includes the influential writings of C. G. Jung. Also, *Demonic Reality* by Patrick Harpur. ETs are projections of imagination, or the collective unconscious, intrapsychic phantoms, psychic shapeshifters, etc. The most intellectually sophisticated category (apart from 9, which incorporates it), it assumes that the Phenomenon (as Keel calls it) is totally real, *but not in the sense that it appears to be*. It operates as a "inboard" control system, rather than a miraculous event or supernatural intervention.

**6, New Age or Visionary theories.** Found in numerous versions which tend to proliferate wildly. Materials employed to develop this thesis are largely drawn from channelled writings. Examples are *The Prism of Lyra* and *The Only Planet of Choice*. New Age theories of alien contact tend to present a mixed bag of grand, starry-eyed plans and divine intentions involving a diverse cast of non-human species, some benevolent and some otherwise.

**7, Ancient Astronauts**, the Von Daniken Hypothesis, which has spawned a wide range of spinoffs. Take away all the smoke and ladders and this is simply a "cargo cult" interpretation of alien contact. Although von Daniken steered clear of these explosive issues (Swiss neutrality?), the mystique of ancient astronauts attaches itself readily to the worst fringe element in modern thinking: i.e., crypto-fascism. We hear tales of Hitler escaping to South America in a saucer donated by his alien allies. Catastrophic theories of the Ice Ages and hollow-earth fantasies proliferate in this category. For a good critique, see Jocelyn Godwin, *Arktos*. Bear in mind that von Daniken's artifactual and archeological evidence has been largely dismissed as fraudulent and fantastical. (We tend to assume that an advanced race would have advanced technology - but would it be *that* kind of technology, i.e., headphones and such gadgets?)

**8. Shamanic – Indigenous – Otherworld.** The most traditional of all nine categories because it draws upon world-wide folk-lore and mythology, for instance, the Aboriginal lore of Australia and the testimony of Zulu shaman, Credo Mutwa (who claims that the alien spirits are malevolent). Classic work: *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries* by E. A. Evans-Wentz, which inspired Jacques Vallee, plus Vallee's own, *Passage to Magonia*. Includes the intentional production of living phantoms (*tulpas*) demonstrated in Tibetan Buddhism (Alexandria David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*), *Kachinas* in the magical rites of the American southwest (Frank Waters, *The Book of the Hopi*), and many reports from shamanic cultures, including *ayahuasceros* of the Amazon and urban DMT trippers. Carried to a level of high sophistication by the "Gnostic astronaut," Terence McKenna in his speculations on the UFO-mushroom connection (*The Archaic Revival*).

**9. ET/Archon theory**, or the [Gnostic theory of alien intrusion](#). Specific to JLL and the Gnostic material on Metahistory.org. To my knowledge, only Nigel Kerner (*The Song of the Greys*) is the only other author who equates modern Grey ETs with the Archons of Gnostic writings, but he does not develop this idea in depth, textually. Through Metahistory.org I do just that. The [ET/Archon Navigator](#) takes you to the relevant articles.

This theory relies on the most solid and complete textual evidence from antiquity: the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Codices. It assumes that Gnostic teachers in the Pagan Mystery Schools were accomplished shamans who used paranormal powers such as remote viewing to detect aliens, as well techniques of [psychic self-defence](#), to resist and repel them. About one-fifth of the surviving Gnostic materials are concerned with the ET/Archons, their motives, methods, appearances, tactics, etc. Their most accomplished power is said to be HAL, "simulation, substitution," i.e., virtual reality. They are imposters allied with the false Creator God (the Demiurge), Jehovah, who is working against humanity.

Kerner assumes that Archons have deeply penetrated our genetic makeup, but Gnostic writings support the view that they have only duped us into believing this is so, whereas they are in reality incapable of reaching or breaching the genomic intelligence we embody. Their victory lies in make-believe, getting *us* to act out what they *pretend* to be doing to us. Their work through insinuation.

Gnostic cosmology is closely related to the modern Gaia theory of Lovelock and Margulis, for which it presents an ancient prototype. Gnostic writings explain the cosmic origin of the predatory ETs (both the fetal or embryonic and reptilian types), which no other theory can do. Our planet Gaia plays a key role in their presence in our minds and lives. *The Archons are a spinoff of the intelligence of the divine being, Sophia, who is embodied in our planet, but they are not compatible with human intelligence, so they inhabit the solar system at large, apart from the earth* - this is the Mystery teaching. (Gnostics taught that the earth does not properly belong to the planetary system, but is captured in it.) Archons introduce a deviant skew into human evolution. Our responsibility is to detect and correct it. In this way we align ourselves with Gaia, the planetary intelligence that initially produced the Archon species.

The Gnostic codices found in Egypt in 1945 warn explicitly that these predatory alien entities infiltrate our minds through spiritual belief systems. These systems, especially the Judeo-Christian-Islamic program of salvation, are not entirely of human origin, but arise in our minds due to non-human deviance. Salvationism is an ideological virus of extraterrestrial origin. Jehovah is a demented pseudo-diety who pretends to be our creator. Gnostics detected the presence of ETs in the same forms reported today. The Nag Hammadi texts contain firsthand accounts of alien abduction. But at a more profound level, the ancient seers who guarded the Mysteries also discerned the operations of the inhumane Archontic mind in the religious ideologies that are today tearing humanity apart at the seams.

## A Gnostic Catechism

Encounters with Aliens in a Mystery School Text

Here and there the Coptic Gnostic materials contain passages that describe encounters with the ET-like beings, sometimes with explicit advice about how to handle these entities. What beliefs are implied in such testimony? And what are we to believe *about* such testimony? I will attempt to address both these questions in this brief topical essay.

## Occult Instruction

For a first-hand look at the testimony, let's consider a passage from *The First Apocalypse of James* (NHC V, 3), a revelation dialogue in which an unnamed teacher (the "Lord" or "Master") confers secret knowledge upon a Gnostic named James:

- The Master said: James, behold, I shall reveal to you the path of your redemption. Whenever you are siezed and you undergo death-pangs (mortal fear), a multitude of Archons may turn on you, thinking they can capture you. And in particular, three of them will sieze you, those who pose as toll collectors. Not only do they demand toll, but they take away souls by theft.
- 
- Now, when you come under their power, one of them who is the overseer will say to you: "Who are you, and where are you from?"
- 
- You are then to say to him, "I am a child of humanity and I am from the Source."
- 
- He will then say to you, "What sort of child are you, and to what Source do you belong?"
- 
- You are to say to him, "I am from the pre-existent Source, and I am the offspring of the Source."
- 
- Then he will say to you, "Why were you sent out from the Source?"
- 
- Then you are to say to him, "I came from the Pre-existent One so that I might behold those of my kind and those who are alien."
- 
- And he will say to you, "What are these alien beings?"
- 
- You are to say to him: "They are not entirely alien, for they are from the Fallen Sophia (Achamoth), the female divinity who produced them when she brought the human race down from the Source, the realm of the Pre-Existent One. So they are not entirely alien, but they are our kin. They are indeed so because she who is their matrix, Sophia Achamoth, is from the Source. At the same time they are alien because Sophia did not combine with her like in the Source (her divine male counterpart), when she produced them."
- When he also says to you, "Where will you go now?"
-



- You are to say to him, "To the place when I came, the Source, there shall I return." And if you respond in this manner, you will escape their attacks.
- 
- (NHC V, 3. 33 - 34: 1- 25. Translation from *NHLE 1990*, pp. 265-6 and Kurt Rudolf, *Gnosis*, p. 174-5.)

Considerable information is packed into this exchange. The resemblance to contemporary reports of close encounters is undeniable: the Archons induce a state of mortal panic, they often appear in threes, they perform abductions ("take away souls by theft"). These details present a striking match to contemporary ET/UFO lore. But in an equally striking departure from the current literature, the Gnostic teacher gives explicit instructions on how to face the alien entities. The vast amount of testimony on the ET/UFO phenomenon available today presents almost nothing on defence against alien intrusion. Contactees and abductees are passive witnessed, overwhelmed and overpowered by the aliens. But Gnostic writings not only describe such encounters, they also prescribe defensive action. The Master offers cogent counsel for keeping the Archons in their place.

Gnosis is a remembering of our origins. The student is instructed to remember the cosmic birthright of humankind, and to affirm its direct link to the Pleroma, the Source. Specifically, the student is taught to *recall and repeat the key episode in Gnostic mythology, the fall of the Aeon Sophia, and thus effectuate a defence against the Archons*. By recounting the myth of their origins, the student demonstrates initiated knowledge of the origin and identity of the entities s/he is facing.

Intentional recall of cosmic matters disempowers the Archons. This, at least, is a clear inference from the above passage. The tactic of remembrance accords closely with indigenous wisdom — consider, for instance, the saying of the Na-Khi, a Tibetan people of southeastern China: "One must relate the origin of the medicine, otherwise it cannot work its magic." Shamans heal, not only by their knowledge of the properties of plants, but also by their recounting the story of the plant. Likewise, Gnostics defeated the Archons with the "medicine" (occult power) of mythological recall.

The Coptic materials become increasingly relevant as we realize they do not merely present pedantic or recondite commentaries on a dead religion, but vital insights on the timeless spiritual dilemmas of humanity, insights as valid today as they were 2000 years ago. Describing the find at Nag Hammadi, Tobias Churton writes, "Had Mohammed Ali not broken open the jar, we would not be able to hear these things. In the truest sense of the word, these things are dynamite. One might have imagined headlines throughout the world..." (*The Gnostics*, p. 12)

But there were no such headlines, even in the tabloids. It took many years before the codexes were translated and still, even today, no scholar will allow that these rare Coptic codices contain reliable accounts of encounters with ET-like entities.

[ET/Archon Navigator](#)

**Ideological Virus**

In another passage of *The First Apocalypse of James*, the Master refers to those people "who exist as the type of the Archons" (30:20). Gnostics were not only alert to the intrusion of the Archons, they were also acutely aware of the possibility of humans becoming totally "Archontized." This threat appears to have emerged in a particularly alarming way in that era to which Philip K. Dick often refers: the first century of the Common Era, when the Incarnation of Christ is said to have occurred, according to Christian belief. Both the time and the place where Archontic molding of human character set in strongly are specified in the Nag Hammadi texts. In his Gnostic view of the human condition, Dick assumed that the spiritual life of humanity *was arrested at that moment*. It is as if the behavior of those "who exist as the type of Archons" locked into place in that era, and came to dominate all subsequent centuries — until the moment in 1945 when the Nag Hammadi texts were discovered.

In a close parallel to Philip K. Dick's vision of "the Empire," Wilhelm Reich saw the rise of a similar syndrome which he characterized as "the mechanico-mystical" complex. (See *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*.) Its signature is "authoritarian ideology," the mindset of fascism and patriarchal domination. Significantly, *archon* was the common term for "governor," or "authority" in Roman times. In some translations of the Coptic materials, *archon* (plural, *archontoi*) is rendered as "the authorities." Reich's analysis of what I propose to call the mystico-fascist complex focusses on National Socialism, the Nazi movement, which he experienced first-hand, but *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* contains ample references to Catholicism and the Holy Roman Empire, the millennial ancestor of the mystico-fascist program.

For more comments on this subject viewed in a contemporary vein, see [Armageddon Politics](#).

In allusion to the fascist ideology of the "authorities", Philip K. Dick wrote: "The Empire is the institution, the codification, of derangement; it is insane and imposes its insanity on us by violence, since its nature is a violent one." (*Valis*, p. 235, citing entry 41 from "The Exegesis.")

This is purely a Gnostic insight, compatible with passages in the NHC and deeply resonant with Reich's views on the *massenpsychosen* of Roman Christianity. It might be argued that the Nazis were not Christians, but in fact Hitler imagined himself as a Grail Knight, modelled after Wagner's Parsifal, and the saviour complex of Judaeo-Christian belief is wholly transposed into Nazi racial ideology — hence the "Aryan Christ" identified, and, to some degree, embraced by C. G. Jung. *The Holy Reich*, published in 2004 by Richard Steigman-Gall, professor of history at Kent State University in the USA, argues that Hitler was sincere in calling himself a Christian, and reveals to what extent Christian ideology was embraced by the Nazi party and contributed to the advancement of their cause.

Wilhelm Reich warned that since the breakdown of the pre-Christian ethos of earth-oriented Paganism, "the biological core of humanity has been without social representation." (*Ibid.*, p. xii). This is a staggering observation, to say the least.

The "authorities" exhibit the behavior of spiritual zombies, people who exemplify a baffling mix of mystical and militaristic fixations. (What I have called [behavioral cloning](#) is widely evident in both militaristic and mystical behavior, such as we see today in neocon religious *realpolitik*, although it is also embodied in the mass conformity of global consumerism and the

rites of technophilia.) According to Reich, these fixations, focussed on the master fixation on a transcendent God beyond the Earth, arise from the repression and displacement of somatic sensations, especially sexual-genital feelings. Philip K. Dick agreed with Reich in observing that the mystico-fascist ideology grows like armor around people who adopt these fixations, either through indoctrination or intimidation ("conversion"). The mystico-fascist ideology operates like a virus, "imposing its form on its enemies. Thereby it becomes its enemies." (*Valis*, p. 235) The ideology of the authorities can infect even those who resist it. Hence it turns humanity against itself.

But it would appear that some Gnostics were immune to infection—not by accident, but due to their [deliberate practice of orgiastic sexual techniques to produce immunity](#), and due, in equal measure, to their explicit teachings on the Archons and how to resist them, as seen in the above passage from *The First Apocalypse of James*. Gnostic observers on the ground when Christianity arose saw salvationist ideology exactly the way Philip K. Dick did: as a virus. An *ideological virus*, to be precise. Pagan intellectuals of the day even used that very term for the fanaticism of the converts.

Gnostics saw the tyranny of belief, of metaphysical fantasies that underwrite militaristic agendas, in the rise of early Christianity. We can only imagine what they would see today in the political religiosity of the American right.

## Defending Humanity

What are we to make, then, of Gnostic beliefs about the Archons? It might be said that Gnostics believed that only by confronting what is [insane and inhumane](#) in ourselves, can we truly define what is human. In essence, to define humanity is to defend it against distortion. Gnostics asserted that the capacity for distortion of *humanitas*, or dehumanization, is inherent in our minds, *but this capacity alone is not potentially deviant*. Since we are endowed with *nous*, a dose of divine intelligence, we are able to detect and correct distorted thinking. We can master what Tibetan Buddhists call *krol'pa*, "thoughts that lead astray," mental fixations that turn us away from *humanitas*, our true identity. However, Gnostics also warned of *an alien spin* that can add a truly deviant element to our thinking. The effect of the Archons is not to make us err, but to make us, largely through dullness and distraction, disregard our errors, so that they extrapolate beyond the scale of correction.

- The Archons cast a 'trance' over Adam... They put him into a sleepy state, but it was his perception they dulled... They make our hearts heavy that we may not pay attention and may not see. So we lose the reflection of the Divine Light within us... [Thus the Archons acted on humanity] with a view to deceive.
- When the life-spirit increases and the illuminating power of the body strengthens the soul, no one can lead you astray into the lessening of your humanity. But those on whom the counterfeit spirit preys are alienated from humanity and deviated... The despicable spirit gains strength by leading us astray. The Archons burden the soul, attracting us to works of evil, and pull us down into oblivion, making us forget who we

- are.
  - (*The Apocryphon of John*, II, 22: 14-10, through 27-20.)

The catechism on alien encounters in *The First Apocalypse of James* is not exceptional. A great deal of Gnostic teaching was dedicated to the theory of error I have just summarized. In a practical sense, Gnostic teachers in the Mystery Schools instructed the neophytes in how to face the Archons both as alien intruders, comparable to the Greys and Reptilians of contemporary lore, and as tendencies in their minds. The detection of Archontic intrusion in *both* these modes of experience seems to be unique to the finely nuanced noetic science of the Mysteries.

In the Gnostic view, human beings "who exist as the type of the Archons" are those who blindly follow religious ideologies of an insane and inhumane nature, for it is primarily through religious beliefs that the Archons intrude upon us. Behavior driven by such beliefs produces pathological personality fixations, resulting in the spiritual zombie. All scholars agree that some Gnostics condemned equally the Jewish origins of the Christian salvationist program, and the Pauline-Johannine program itself. Doing so, they did not spread a hate message against anyone. *Rather, they attempted to expose what they perceived to be the hateful and deceiving message disguised in the Judeo-Christian ideology of salvation.* At the source of this message, they detected the subliminal intrusion of the Archons into the human mind. Hence the thrust and preponderance (more than half of all surviving material, by my estimate) of politically and theologically incorrect passages in the Coptic materials.

Whether or not Gnostics were delusional about the Archons is a private judgement call. But a fair and open-minded reading of the Coptic texts will not yield much evidence for derangement on their part. The seers who exposed derangement were not deranged. They were sober and methodical in describing what they knew, and extremely conscientious in prescribing action to face the perceived threat. They believed that they really had identified that most baffling of all enigmas: the root cause of inhumanity in human nature.

What are we to believe *about* all this today? There is an issue of [credibility](#) here, of course — that is to say, we may consider the source of Gnostic teachings apart from their content. But Gnosis is by definition a matter of knowing and not of believing. It is about enlightenment, not faith. To give Gnostics credit for actually knowing what they claimed to know is only the first step. Beyond that, we must confirm what they knew by our own resources, our own faculties. This is the perennial challenge of Gnosis, the living, ever-renewing cognition of the human spirit.

Knowledge of that which is alive can alone banish terror.  
Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*.

## The Promise of a Lonely Planet

Gaian Cosmogenesis and the Origin of Alien Life

According to Gnostic Teachings

One: Star Birth and Simulation

Two: The Passion of Sophia

Three: The Shishta



Indigenous cosmology with Sun, Sophianic Eagle and Yonic Earth. Huichol yarn painting. From *Plants of the Gods* by Richard Evans Schultes and Albert Hofmann.

ONE: Star Birth and Simulation

Several texts in the Nag Hammadi collection describe the cosmic origin of the Archons. The most complete version is in *The Apocryphon of John*, found in three drafts in the NHL and also



in a non-NHL source, the Berlin Codex. In the scholar's edition of the complete NHL in English, all four versions are printed in parallel, arranged in two columns on facing pages. The story of how the Archons arise in the cosmic order, due to the precipitious plunge of Sophia, and how they intrude upon humanity is not told in great detail, but it is told adequately.

*The Apocryphon of John* also describes the aims and tactics of the Archons, the way they act relative to humanity. A keyword for this activity might be *intrusion*. In the language of comparative mythology, this situation constitutes an [intervention scenario](#). As Gnostics saw them, Archons properly belong in the extraterrestrial realm of the planetary system *exclusive of the Earth*, and so they are intruders in the biosphere. The threat of Archontic intrusion into the human realm is clearly stated in the Sophianic origin myth. Yaldabaoth, the head of the Archon hordes, "did not obey the place from which he came." (*The Apocryphon of John*, 12:10, cited in [Alien Dreaming](#)). This problem is inherent to the foundational story of our species.

Both/And

We, also, are like the Archons, subject to the same cosmic principle of self-regulation. If we, as a species, "do not obey the place from which we came," we risk losing our place in the cosmic order. Gnostic teachings on the Archons are beautifully conceived so that at no point can we blame the Archons for what we do. Nevertheless, the Archons do exist independently of us, and do exert a significant influence on our behavior and outlook. They are both aspects of our mentality and independent alien entities. The *both/and* proposition typifies the noetic finesse of Gnostic wisdom.

The Sophianic origin story is a narrative of events, a cosmological script as such, while the interpretation of how the Archons affect humankind is commentary, a diagnostic treatment of the story and, to some extent, an extension of it. Unlike the origin story, Gnostic views on Archontic intrusion are not found in any single text, and even where they are found, they are often garbled and incomplete. Nevertheless, the main outlines of intrusion are clear enough.

Metahistory.org contains numerous passages on the ET/UFO enigma, treated in the perspective of Gnostic teachings. Here and there I equate the Archons with contemporary ETs, those "alien" entities who seem to flit in and out of our world, particularly the Greys and Reptilians widely associated with UFO sightings, encounters, and abductions. There is, as everyone knows, a vast mythology developing about these entities. My aim here is to show what is unique in the Gnostic story of the Archons and analysis of their activities.

In this essay I would like to summarize the cosmological narrative, the Sophianic origin myth with emphasis on the Archons as alien life-forms. In a companion piece, **How We Are Deviated**, I "profile" the Archons more closely, with the aim to elucidate their motives and tactics, as described in various Gnostic texts.

A Cosmic Abortion

The central event in Gnostic cosmology concerns the Aeon Sophia, a divinity in the Pleroma (astronomically speaking, the core of our galaxy, or any galaxy). In the scenario of the [Fallen Sophia](#), the Aeon plunges from the cosmic center and produces a massive perturbation in the



realms of elementary matter, the encircling limbs. This mythological event may be envisioned in a way consistent with modern cosmological physics: The erratic surge of a plasmatic stream from the galactic core exits the elementary matter in the limbs, producing a spate of inorganic life-forms. They are called Archons (from the Greek *archai*, "prior, from the beginning") because they arise first, before the sun and the planetary system as a whole.

Archons are humanoid creatures of inorganic composition, but alive and aware in their own way. Their first habitat is the region where the galactic limb has been impacted by the "shoot" of plasma from the core. (Astrophysicists now surmise the existence of such shoots by the evidence of thread-like tunnels extending from the core, or central bulge, into the limb-structure.) This agitation occurs in the region of Orion, the most well-known and easily recognized of all the starry constellations. The Archontic entities so produced are of two types, neonate (or embryonic, resembling the human foetus) and drakonic (resembling reptiles or lizards, but still humanoid). The rudimentary forms of these entities can be traced in fractal patterns around the Mandelbrot Set. (See [Alien Dreaming](#).)

Gnostics called this event "the generation of the Archons," or "the generation of error," because they equated the Archons with the human tendency for error—a curious trope, to be explained below, concerning *the Gnostic theory of error*, and in the profile of Archontic intrusion in **How We Are Deviated**. In a bizarre image, the fractal Archon generation is compared to "an abortion without any power of its own. Like a shadow it came into existence in a vast watery substance... And Sophia hovered over the chaotic matter, which has been expelled like an aborted foetus." (*On the Origin of the World*, 99: 5-10, 20-25)

The Gaia Mythos describes how the Aeon Sophia is stunned by the spontaneous generation of these entities, for this event was not foreseen in her "Dreaming" of a world-system out there beyond the Pleroma. The Archons arise from the impact of a deific force-field that automatically configures the chaos of the raw elements, the *dema*, rather in the way a sound-current configures fine sand on a flat surface (the "Chaldni forms"), or a magnet configures iron filings into a graceful rosette. This pattern-forming dynamic is the autopoiesis of the Gods, great living currents that surge through the Dreamtime.

The Archons emerge first in the neonate form, and then a further mutation ("tail-dropping") produces the drakonic type. *The Apocryphon of John* describes how the Aeon Sophia hides the chief Archon in a luminous cloud, so that the Pleroma does not see the "abortion" she has unwittingly produced. With this image, the mythology points directly to an event described in modern astrophysics.

## The Birth of the Sun

In modern astrophysics, the sun, the central star of our planetary system, is said to have been produced by an explosion in the interior of the Orion Nebula. In the area mythologically pictured as Orion's sword, or the "Phallus of Osiris," is a dense [molecular cloud](#), a cradle of star-birth. The sun was literally ejaculated from this region. The stellar explosion has two effects: it propels the newborn sun on a trajectory upstream in the third galactic limb, and as the sun advances, its spinning motion acts like a turbine, pulling elementary matter into a vortex.

The vortex gradually flattens into the "proto-planetary disk."

According to the current model of solar evolution, this disk is to be imagined as an immensely wide, flat ring composed of elementary matter with the sun, roaring like a blast furnace, positioned at its center. Gradually the raw elements separate, and the ring differentiates into bands of agglomerated particles that condense into individual planets. The conditions of this process are such that, just by chance, the Earth evolves from a density-band located at a unique position, neither too far from the Sun, not too close to it. This location affords the precise conditions needed for the development of the biosphere. The conditions required for organic life do not arise from the other bands.

Such is the modern cosmological narrative, but the Gnostic mythos of planetary evolution differs on a few key points.

Gnostic seers who observed the cosmos at large saw all events as part of the ongoing miracle of consciousness. They realized that the power we possess to be aware of the cosmos is not a unique subjective property of humans but belongs to the very dynamics of the universe. Hence, they regarded everything that happens "out there" beyond the Earth to be an expression of awareness and sentience operating in higher dimensions. To them, the explosion of the sun in the Orion Nebula was an event witnessed and felt by cosmic powers, even by the Sun itself. In their "visionary replay" of that event, Gnostics used mythological language to describe the emergence of our planetary system as if it were a sentient process, felt and witnessed by cosmic presences—but for the seers who developed this myth, "as if" was "as is." They did not anthropomorphise, falsely projecting human qualities into a non-human world, but they attempted to describe the sentient, self-aware qualities of the cosmos at large.

Gnosis is living knowledge of a living universe.

In the Gnostic scenario, the eruption of the Sun in the Orion Nebula is an event beheld by the Aeon Sophia and the legion of Archons She has produced due to the premature side-effect of Her impact. At first the Archontic entities are merely ripple-like formations in the dense elementary matter arrays, the *dema* (the chaos of atomic and sub-atomic particles). They are initially formed like crinkled filigree on a skin of metals, but when the sun erupts in the Orion Nebula, it exerts a powerful vortex effect upon them. The material of the emergent Archons becomes organized around the spinning solar vortex, then flattened into a vast rotating plate that differentiates into distinct bands. (Here the description follows current theory.)

None of this happens without awareness, however. The cosmos in formation is witnessed and sensed by the powers forming it. (What is the instrumentality for this act of witnessing, the organs for sensing on the cosmic scale? I would say it is a cluster of resonant shells, rather like the higher-dimensional structures proposed in String Theory.) As the proto-planetary disk forms, the Archons are absorbed into it. They are inorganic beings whose physical composition matches the inorganic chemistry of the planets, apart from the Earth. As the disk develops, the chief Archon, the reptilian type called Salkas, Samael, or Yaldabaoth, witnesses its formation and erroneously assumes that he is the creator of the emergent system. It is as if the chief Archon sees himself mirrored in the emergent solar disk, and then takes that system as his

product.

- Opening his eyes, the chief Archon saw a vast quantity of matter without limit, and he became arrogant, saying, "It is I who am God, and there is no other power apart from me."
- *The Hypostasis of the Archons*, 93:23.

This is the primordial error of the Archontic mentality: to mistake the witnessing power for the power to form what is witnessed. Hence, the emergence of the Archons, a cosmological event, is intimately identified with the "generation of error," a noetic event. *Cosmic-noetic parallelism* is a mark of Gnostic visionary science, as I have elsewhere noted. However, it is not entirely unique to Gnostic teachings. It also occurs in Buddhism. In **The Insanity of God : A Buddhist Cosmological Narrative** (forthcoming in "Believe It or Not"), I consider a rare Buddhist creation myth that presents an exact counterpart to the Gnostic scenario of the Lord Archon, Yaldabaoth.

### [ET/Archon Navigator](#)

#### Simulated Order

Assuming the arrogant pose of a solar deity, Yaldabaoth falsely believes himself to be the only god in the entire cosmos. Thus, for Gnostics, the identification of Yaldabaoth with Jehovah of the Old Testament, a deity who suffers from this very complex of cosmic egotism, is a foregone conclusion, prefigured in the Sophianic origin myth. Being blind, he cannot perceive the Pleroma (galactic core), nor does he recognize Sophia, the cosmic current that surged from the core and produced him in the first place. He becomes infatuated, bloated with grandiosity, causing Sophia to feel shame and want to hide him from the sight of the Pleromic Aeons. "She cast him away from her radiance, so that no one among the immortal ones might see him... She joined a luminous cloud with him, and placed a throne in the middle of the cloud." (*Apoc John* BG 38, 1-10)

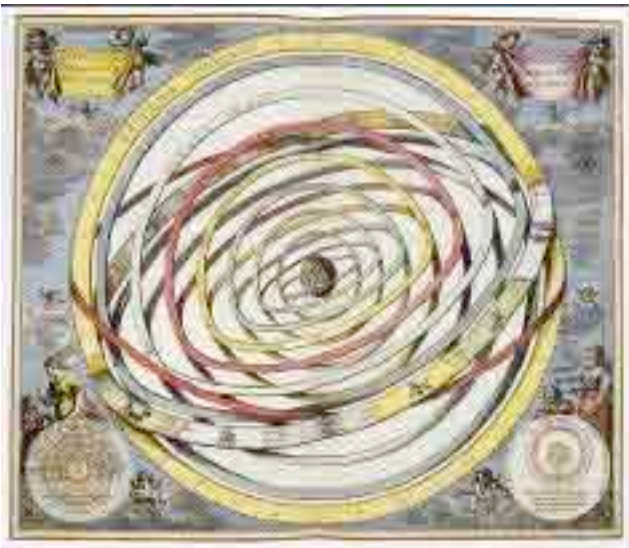
The Aeon Sophia is that cosmic current whose impact organizes the *dema* and produces the Archons. This happens because She acts unilaterally in Her plunge from the galactic core, but Sophia does not unilaterally cause the birth of the Sun. This is a process continually occurring in the galactic limbs, due to the physics of the limb structure itself. In an action that might be compared to a mill wheel grinding stones, the galactic armature churns and refines elementary matter, constantly producing starbirth, the promise of new worlds of experience.

The key to the unique status of our planetary system is the convergence of Sophia's impact with the nebular expulsion of a newborn star. The material of the Archons is incorporated into that material vortex that forms around this star, and Sophia herself fixes the chief Archon centrally ("enthroned") in the center of the proto-planetary disk ("luminous cloud").

Overseen by Yaldabaoth, the Archons now proceed to fabricate the planetary system from the inorganic elements of which they themselves are composed. As they have no intentionality (*ennoia*) and no creative capacity (*epinoia*) of their own, they can only do this by imitation. *The Apocryphon of John* (II, 10, 24-25) describes how the Lord Archon "produced for himself cyclic worlds (orbiting bodies) from the luminous spark that still shines in the sky." Thus, he draws upon the vortex power of the central star, the newborn Sun, to organize the matter swirling in the proto-planetary disk. Yaldabaoth originates nothing, however. He can only copy the model of the Pleroma, without even knowing that he does so:

- And he was amazed by his own arrogance, for he seemed to beget material powers (*exousiai*, "authorities") out of his own solitary power, but after the patterns of the imperishable Aeons... And so there came to be a stereoma ("firmament") corresponding to the cyclic formations of the Pleroma.
- (II, 10, 26-28, and 12, 25)

Gnostic teachings constantly emphasize that the Archons are imitators who cannot produce anything original, yet they arrogantly claim they can. The Lord Archon is called *antimimon pneuma*, "counterfeit spirit." (*Apoc John* III, 36:17. The term occurs several times in different texts.) The cosmos he produces is described by the Coptic term *hal*, "simulation." The vast planetary system of the Archons is a *stereoma*, a virtual reality projection in simulation of a higher dimensional pattern.



Typically, the Archontic framework of the planetary system has been depicted by "armillary bands" that surround the Earth. (Illustration from A. Cellarius, *Harmonia Macrocosma*, 1660.) Taken in many esoteric systems (Hermetics and Rosicrucianism) as the preeminent image of cosmic harmony, the model of the planetary spheres reflects a mindless imitation of divine design, not the living reality of the cosmos.

Yaldabaoth, the presumed all-mighty creator God, really creates nothing; instead, he copies

from "archetypal" patterns in the Pleroma. The planetary stereoma of his making is like a plastic copy of an abalone shell. Only someone who does not know the reality of the abalone shell, and what living miracle of nature is required to produce it, would accept the plastic substitution. Here again, the *cosmic-noetic parallel* applies: Archons simulate in the cosmos at large, and they also simulate in the human mind. This is a key indication of their effect, a clue to their subtle intrusion tactics.

The main cosmological texts in the NHL, *On the Origin of the World*, *The Hypostasis of the Archons*, and *The Apocryphon of John*, are consistent in describing how the solar system arises as an inorganic simulation of the living pattern of the eternal Aeons. Here is further insight into "the generation of error." One might be excused (but just barely) for mistaking plastic for pearl, but it would be terrible ignorance indeed to be unaware that it takes an entire ocean and a living, symbiotic biosphere to produce a pearl. Yet such is the ignorance of the Archons that they cannot comprehend the living miracle of divine order, rooted in the Pleroma, even when they are imitating it.

The stereoma of the Archons is truly a grandiose accomplishment, rather like the many-roomed Venetian palace of a Mafia don afflicted with religious grandiosity and a militaristic sense of the command chain:

- Now the prime parent (*archigenetor*), the master breeder of the Archons, since he commanded vast orbiting worlds, produced heavens for each of his offspring... beautiful dwellings, and in each heaven Yaldabaoth produced glorious decor, seven times excellent: thrones and mansions and temples, and also chariots and celestial virgins... consigning to each one its own heaven-like realm, and providing them with mighty armies of gods and commanders and messengers and overseers, in countless myriads, so that they might all serve and be served.  
*On the Origin of the World*, 19.

Readers familiar with the archetypal psychology of C. G. Jung will recognize in this passage all the elements of the heaven archetype common to the mainstream religions: heavenly mansions, celestial armies, cloud chariots, virgins on order, choirs of angels arranged with military precision. The stereoma is loaded with spiritual kitsch. If anyone needs evidence of how the Archons can infect human imagination, here it is, seven times excellent.

### "Divine Deceit"

It may come as a shock that so much of what human beings have imagined as heaven is an Archontic fantasy, or would be so regarded by Gnostics. It is rather as if our idea of heaven (the realm of the Afterlife) were based on a Disney theme park. There is indeed something Disneyesque about the Archons, and there is in turn something distinctly Archontic about the Disneyfication of our world. (For some astute observations on this point, see Jerry Mander, [In](#)

[the Absence of the Sacred](#), under suggested reading for Technology). It is worth noting that Walt Disney began to reach the mainstream in the early days of American television with remarkable films on nature, such as *The Living Desert*. At a certain moment, however, Disney turned from nature to fantasy. He proposed that the construction of Disney World in Anaheim, near Los Angeles, be overseen by a team of "imagineers." The result is that some people today who visit Disney World are so impressed by the simulacra, they cannot tell if the hippos in the river are real or artificial.

From a Gnostic viewpoint, Disney might be accused of the error of Yaldabaoth: "he did not obey the place from which he came." Rather than stay within the boundaries of nature, and learn from what is to be observed there, he decided to make nature over in simulation. This is exactly what the Archons did by imitating "the pattern of the imperishable Aeons." But consider the results.

Whether we are considering heaven or Disney World, we are confronting the effects and artifacts of human imagination, as well as of Archontic imagination, the genius of artificial intelligence. The simulacra of the Archons can be so convincing that we fall under the spell of believing that the entire planet can be turned into a technological theme park, and even believing that such a world would be better than the one we already have. Such beliefs are typical of the Archontic subterfuge that Gnostics detected, first, in their visionary survey of the cosmos at large, and second, in their astute observations of how human behavior is driven by religious fantasies and delusional beliefs.

### [ET Archon Navigator](#)

Elsewhere in this site I have cited the master principle for the Great Work, stated in the *Theatrum Rosarium*, a compilation of alchemical lore from the 17th century:

- In all thine operations, let the Work be guided by nature, according to the slow progression of metals in the bowels of the Earth. And in thine efforts, be guided in all ways by the true and not the fantastic imagination.

Fine words, these. But how can we tell the true from the fantastic imagination? The language of the alchemical principle states in the first part of the formula what must be assumed in the second: true imagination follows nature, false imagination deviates from it. This deviation is the signature of the Archons, but it is typically human, or, I should say, typical of our species' arrogance, to presume that we can imagine a world better than the one nature provides. And even if we do improve on the natural world, we ought to do so with alchemical rigor, making sure that what we invent is based on close observation of how nature works.





Alchemists collecting the morning dew. *Mutus Liber* ("The Silent Book"), 1677, La Rochelle.  
From *Alchemy & Mysticism* by Alexander Roob, p. 380.

The human tendency to be seduced by the fantastic imagination was deeply understood by Gnostics who detected therein the intrusion of the Archons into our minds, and indeed, into the biosphere we inhabit. Of course, we recognize today — some people do, at least — that the Disneyfication of the world, more currently disguised in technomaniac pretensions, presents a serious deviation for humanity. Perhaps a terminal deviation. The enthrallment of artificial intelligence is now widespread and massively impacting every aspect of our lives. In the near future, if not already, it may be impossible for the large majority of human beings to discern what can be truly, livingly imagined, from disembodied fantasy.

This is the "Divine Deceit" we face as the ultimate test of our own divine potential.

By putting a Gnostic slant on these matters, I am not saying anything new, nor making any observations that have not already been made (by the likes of Jerry Mander, Theodore Roszak, or Jeremy Rifkin, for instance), but I am framing the entire issue in a cosmic perspective. Although it takes exceptional smarts and loving patience and, yes, "the true and not the fantastic imagination," to get behind this Gnostic material, I believe the effort is worth what it asks of us. The spell of the Archons is indeed strong, but it can be counteracted by a consummate strength we find in ourselves, deep within our Sophianic endowment. This strength has to be claimed and cultivated, however. It does not arise by itself but it is sparked and sustained *by initiated effort*.

After a lifetime of involvement with experimental Gnosis and the Sophianic mythology, I am convinced that therein lies the power not to be found in ordinary knowledge, nor derived from even the best observations of the most sensitive minds of our time. More than ever we need the noetic finesse of the Gnostic initiates who lived the Mystery, learning directly from the Earth Goddess. In the cosmic perspective of Gnosis we may at last discover the secret sense of who we are and what we are facing on this lonely planet.

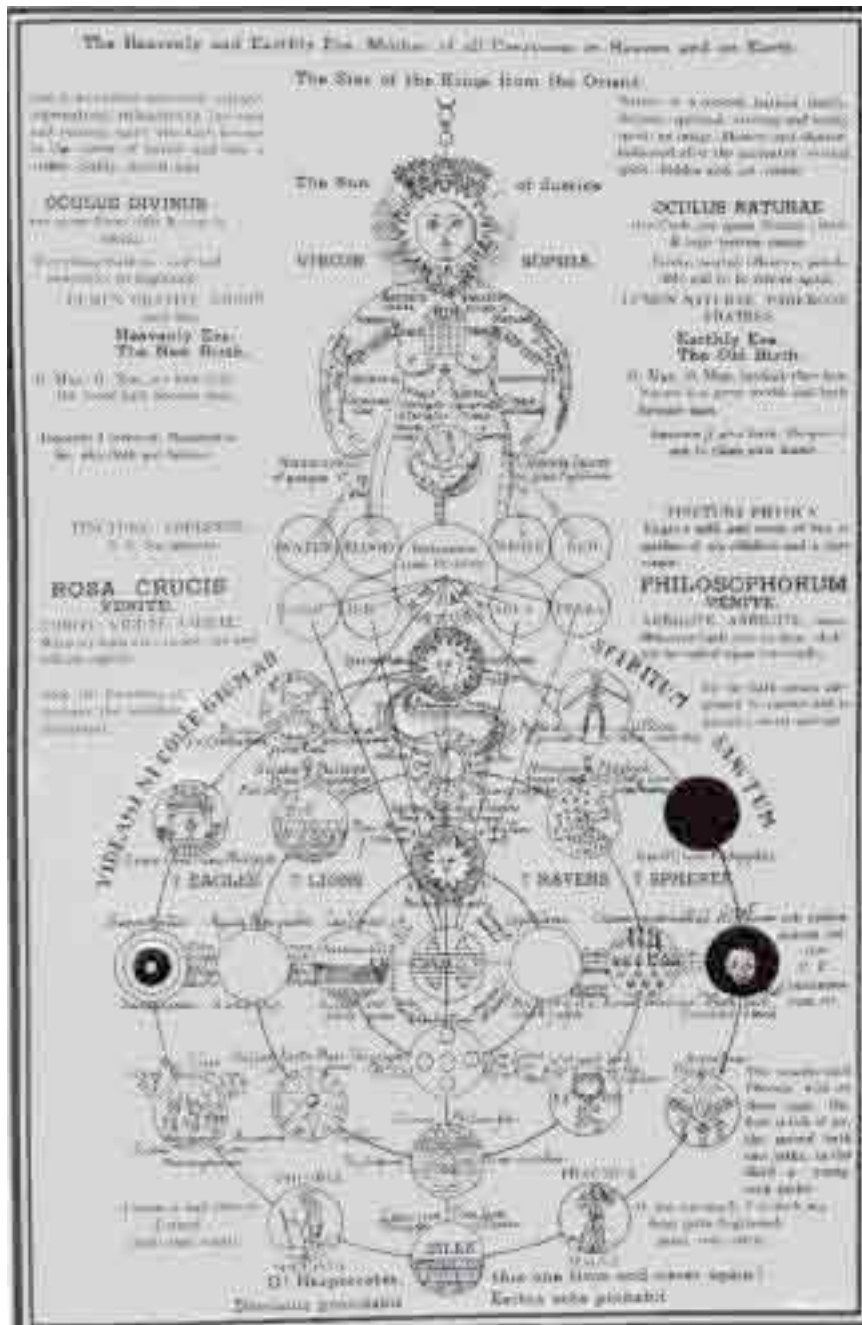
## The Promise of a Lonely Planet

### Two: The Passion of Sophia

One thing I would say about Gnostic cosmology — May this comment be helpful to those who struggle with its density and difficulty — is that the stranger it gets, the more sense it makes. Such, at least, has been my experience over 30 odd years of delving into these recondite materials. Gnosticism has been called science fiction theology, and I cannot think of a more apt characterization.

But what if the science fiction elements in Gnosticism turn out to be "true fiction" — fact in a fantastic disguise? Well, I guess it could be said that all I'm doing in this site to recover the original Mystery teachings of the Gnostics is to prepare people for that eventuality. It could be the most liberating revelation of our time. It could be the breakaway from reliance on faith and fantasy toward the living proof of enlightenment.

- "Let your mind awaken." *The Apocalypse of Paul*.  
 "So also that you receive divine empowerment, but unless you receive it through knowledge, you will not be able to find it at all." *The Apocalypse of Peter*.  
 "Since the universe is actually composed of information, then it can be said that information will save us. This is the saving *gnosis* which the Gnostics taught. There is no other road to salvation." Philip K. Dick. *Valis*, p. 236. Entry 44 from "The Exegesis."



The "Virgin Sophia" pictured as the wisdom that permeates the material world—hence, a Kabalistic representation of the Fallen Sophia. *Geheime Figuren des Rosenkreuzer*, 1785. Such schemas *may* arise from visionary contact with Gaia, but it is unlikely that scrutiny of them will lead to it.

## A Living Planet

The stereoma is not alive as we are, but it is animated in a peculiar way that might be compared to computer animation. The virtual reality zone of the Archons is a fabrication of inorganic chemistry which they inhabit and keep running, like custodians who live in the structure they maintain. Archons can be imagined as fully employed cyborgs, extraterrestrial worker-drones in charge of the "celestial mechanics" of the solar system.

The solar system exclusive of the Earth, that is.

Having looked at how the Archons convert the proto-planetary disk into a full-blown planetary system by imitating the designs of the Pleroma, it is time to look at what the Aeon Sophia is doing while all this transpires. As I have explained elsewhere in the site, Gnostic accounts of how Sophia becomes metamorphosed into the Earth do not survive in the paltry Coptic materials, but are found in the paraphrases of the Church Fathers, such as Irenaeus:

- And when she could not pass by the Pleromic boundary (Horos) and return to the place from which she had plunged due to her wild and unmatched passion (*enthymesis*), Sophia was left in isolation, outside. Now she was resigned to undergo every sort of manifold and varied passion to which she was subject; and thus, on the one hand, she suffered grief because she had not attained the object of her desire [the triple world-system of her original Dreaming. JLL], and on the other hand, she suffered fear that life itself would fail her, as the primordial light had already done, fading to opacity; and all the while, she was in great perplexity...
- 
- *The ensemble of her passions was the substance from which the matter of this world was formed.* From her desire to return to the infinite life of the Pleroma, every ensouled creature belonging to this world, and even to the world of the Demiurge [Lord Archon], derived its origin. All other things owed their being to her terror and sorrow. From her tears, all that is of the liquid realms was formed; from her smile, all that is lucent; from her grief and perplexity, all the corporeal elements of this world. ( Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book One, IV. 1-3. My italics.)

In a development parallel to, but independent of, the Archontic simulation that produces the planetary system, there arises the planetary embodiment of the Goddess. The Aeon Sophia is a living, self-aware current of high-porosity, mass-free radiance, Organic Light that acquires mass and convolves upon itself, spinning into a foetal ball. As the Sun spins elementary matter into the whirling banded plane of the proto-planetary disk, *Sophia forms an independent*



*center*, a node of organic life opposed to the inorganic planetary shells. This is how "the earth has consolidated itself through Sophia." (*On the Origin of the World*, 103: 1).

The paraphrase of Irenaeus contains some clues on how Gnostic seers (whom we may now recognize as genuine scientists in their own right) might have perceived the difference between organic and inorganic matter: they distinguished "animal substance" from "matter" as such. (*Against Heresies* I, 5) Curiously, the former, organic matter, is said to be right-handed, and the latter left-handed. In *chirality*, the property of handedness, Gnostics seem to have detected abiogenesis: the organization of organic life on an inorganic basis. This is one of the great unsolved mysteries of natural science. The Gnostic distinction recalls the insight of Louis Pasteur, who believed that chirality, seen for instance in the left-hand spin of the DNA helix, conceals the ultimate secret of life.

As one anonymous wit observed, "Hydrogen is an odorless, invisible, inorganic vapor that gradually turns into people."

How, then, can the organic arise from the inorganic? In our world system, due to the anomaly introduced by the generation of the Archons, all organic forms, from flatworms to human bodies, are *seated* on an inorganic base—or so it appears. The chemical elements present at the formation of the solar system are all inorganic—hydrogen, nitrogen, helium, carbon, iron, etc. — yet they produce and sustain a vast array of organic life-forms. In Gnostic science, this is explained by the fact that a living planet, the Earth, is captured in an inorganic field and is thus subject, to an extent, the laws of that fields. The stereoma is like a scaffolding but not merely a passive one. The extraterrestrial planetary frame does not merely enclose the Earth in an inorganic grid, it mingles with terrestrial physics. The living planet is like the yolk-albumin component of an egg, and the planetary system is like the shell, composed of calcium. The total chemistry of the egg is one process, even though shell and innards have their own chemistry. So it is with abiogenesis in the planetary system where the Earth is seated.

This analogy is particularly apt. Let's recall that eggs are oval-shaped, not spherical. Likewise, the complete planetary system that emerges from Sophia's metamorphosis within the frame of the Archontic stereoma is an oval structure, having two foci or nodes: Sun and Earth. The proto-planetary disk with a living planet incorporated is an oval or egg-shaped plane, rather than a circular disk. Around the Sun-node the planets are spun from a mix of inorganic components. Around the Earth-node cohere the rudiments of a solid orb with a unique atmosphere. Gnostic myth clearly describes how the elements of the biosphere are formed from the sentient life of the Aeon Sophia, *independent of the Archontic stereoma*. It may not be just "by chance" (and how lucky for us!) that the Earth is positioned neither too close to the Sun, nor too far away.

If Gnostics were right, astrophysicists in the future may come to consider that the proto-planetary disk was ovalesque rather than circular. Not such a huge surprise, really, since the orbits into which the planets eventually settled are known to be ovals, not perfect circles. The Earth does not revolve around the Sun in a perfect circle, but in an ellipse. This was the momentous discovery of Johannes Kepler—or was it merely his *recovery* of what Egyptian astronomers (i.e., Gnostics seers on the Nile) knew, as Kepler himself insisted?

## The Conversion of the Sun

An organic world captured in an inorganic planetary system: this is how Gnostics saw the Earth. As we might expect, then, the Sun, the central star of the planetary system, has an exceptional role to play in the Fallen Sophia scenario. Let's recall that a sun-star and a moon-satellite figured in the threefold triple *ennoia*, Sophia's original Dreaming of a world outside the Pleroma. This is how She preconceived a special habitat for humankind and the myriad species. In the Aeonic Dreaming, the mother star is symbiotic with the Earth and its satellite, the Moon. What the Aeon projected on the cosmic level we on Earth experience as a given.



Normally, we do not feel ourselves integrated into a planetary system, but into a three-body cosmos. Sun and Moon are constantly present, tangible and visible. They mark the rhythms of life, impacting us in many ways, down to the cellular level. The planets cannot be said to do likewise, for they are not immanently and intimately active in all life-processes, even in our conscious living habits, as Sun and Moon are.

(Schema of the three-body-cosmos, depicted in an alchemical book. Michael Maier, *Septimania Philosophica*, 1616.)

In *The Apocryphon of John*, the Sun is called by a name from the Mystery Schools: Sabaoth, pronounced SAH-buy-ot. The Gnostic cosmological treatises describe how, early in the evolution of the solar system, the Sun-star becomes aligned in a special way with the emergent Earth. In the idiom of the myth, this event is called the conversion of Sabaoth. This occurs in a three-way interaction between the Aeon Sophia, Yaldabaoth, and Sabaoth. As we have already seen, Yaldabaoth declares himself to be the sole creator-god, lord of all he beholds. Seeing his image in the light of the newborn Sun, he declares himself the sovereign power in the



cosmos." After the founding of the planetary world, Salkas said to his angels, 'I am a jealous god, and apart from me nothing has come to be.' (*The Gospel of the Egyptians*, 58, 25-30) "He came to have authority over matter, and Sophia withdrew into her own interior light." (*On the Origin of the World*, 8.)

But other witnesses and participants in these cosmic events see things differently, especially Sabaoth, the emergent mother star. One cosmological text, *On the Origin of the World*, treats this event more extensively than any other.

- When the Aeon Sophia saw the impiety of the Lord Archon she was filled with anger. Remaining invisible to him, she said, "You are mistaken, Samael (that is, blind god), for there is an immortal Child of Light who has been in existence before you, and who will appear among your modelled forms (*plasmata*), and that one will trample you in scorn, just as a potter's clay is pounded down. And you will descend to your origin, the Abyss, along with your legions. For at the consummation of your works, the entire defect that has become manifest from the true origin of the cosmos will be abolished, and the cosmos will cease to be as it is, and it will be as it never was."
- 
- Saying this Sophia revealed her image in the cosmic waters, and then withdrew into her interior light.
- 
- Now when Sabaoth, the son of Yaldabaoth, heard the voice of the Aeon Sophia, he sang praises to her and condemned his putative father [the chief Archon]... He praised the Sophia because she informed him of the Child of Light ("the immortal man") and its radiant Power. Then the Aeon Sophia stretched out her finger and poured upon Sabaoth some of her own radiant Power, to be condemnation to Yaldabaoth. When Sabaoth was illumined in this way, he received great authority against all the Archons, the forces of chaos. Since that day he has been called "Lord of the Vital Forces." (*Orig World* 25-27, with paraphrases.)

This mythic cosmology asserts that the Sun, presumably a massive dynamo of inorganic chemistry, stands with the Earth and against the planetary system — but this is precisely the reality of terrestrial physics, isn't it? Massive as it is, the Sun is nurturing to life on Earth, a true mother star. It provides *prana*, vital force, in a constant stream delicately filtered by the terrestrial atmosphere, so that the lethal elements in sunlight are eliminated. James Lovelock was initially clued to the Gaia Hypothesis by the observation that the Earth remained livable, and sustained a constant temperature, during eons when the solar temperature fluctuated wildly. The myth tells us that the life-supporting properties of solar radiation were invested in the Sun by the Aeon Sophia, "who poured upon Sabaoth some of her own radiant Power." This is, of course, another outrageous notion, typical of Gnostic myth-making. But could it in any sense be physically true?

Well, if scientists eventually come to recognize the nature of [plasmatic surges from the galactic core](#), as they seem on the verge of doing, it might be theoretically conceivable that such a

current, engaged frontally with an emergent sun, could alter the chemistry of the nascent solar orb. Stars are continually being born in the nebular regions of the galactic limbs, but not all of them are frontally affected by a raw plasmatic surge. This appears to be the unique cosmic event described in the conversion of Sabaoth.

## Lunar Pearl

The original emanation of the Aeon Sophia, *trimorphic protennoia* or "three-formed intent", is to produce a three-body system, the most simple and elegant model of planetary evolution: star-planet-satellite. Due to the planetary domain of the Archons having formed from the unforeseen effects of cosmic impact, the three-body world is captured in a seven-body system, consisting of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, plus Sun and Moon. These seven bodies are collectively called the Heptad.

In the Heptad, only the first five bodies belong exclusively to the Archontic realm. Due to the "conversion of Sabaoth," the physics of the Sun are integrated closely with the terrestrial biosphere. Thus, Sun, Moon and Earth reflect, although in a compromised manner, the three-formed intent of the Aeon Sophia, the pure autopoietic focus of that current, as it were. Sun and Moon remain dominated by inorganic chemistry, yet they are intimately integrated into the organic chemistry of the biosphere. The Moon emerges during the same period that "'the earth has consolidated itself through Sophia" (just cited), and acts as a *counterweight* to the Heptad. With its pearl-like rotundity, the Moon represents the condensed end of the original "shoot" of cosmic plasma from the galactic core. Imagine a molten bubble of foam-like Pleromic plasma condensed and ossified, absorbing inorganic elements that would otherwise have penetrated the biosphere and loaded it down too heavily.

In other words, the Moon was formed rather like the pearl in an oyster. A grain of sand irritates the oyster which then secretes a milky fluid that hardens into a pearl. In the bizarre perspective of Gnostic science, the Moon was not ejected physically from the Earth, as the current, admittedly shaky theory of lunar formation asserts. Instead, the Moon was distilled from the biosphere by an act of secretion, a slow discharge of inorganic elements. It makes sense, then, that the Moon and its cycles remains intimately linked ("structurally coupled" in the jargon of systems theory) to all life-forms on earth. The *material* of the lunar mass was extracted from the earth-mass, but the *form*, the living patterns of the lunar node of the three-body world, were retained. This is consistent with Sophia's retention of her original *ennoia*, the Dreaming that patterns a three-body cosmos: star-planet-satellite, Sun, Earth, Moon.

## Observing the Planets

We all participate organically in the dynamics of the three-body cosmos, but it takes a deliberate act of attention just to recognize the planetary cosmos. Most people cannot tell planets from stars, and once it is pointed out, it still takes considerable training to appreciate fully. During the many years that I gave sky-watching tours in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I had to repeat the elementary facts of planetary motion over and over again. After I had pointed out a planet in the sky, and described its position relative to the background constellations, I had to explain carefully how the planet's position would change in the course of a month, a year, ten years.

Fortunately, the classes I led had the opportunity to observe the planets for months at a time under the crystal-clear skies high in the Sangre de Christos mountain range, the southernmost end of the Rockies Chain.

But even repeated observation is not sufficient when it comes to understanding the planetary realm beyond the three-body cosmos we inhabit. It is necessary to combine direct observation with a rather complex process of visualization, for as the planet-bodies are perceived, their cycles must be simultaneously conceived. In the classes I held in Santa Fe, we regularly spent a good part of our time looking at diagrams of planetary movement, such as the retrograde cycle of Mars. For a group exercise—one could almost say, a group meditation—I proposed that we carefully compute the key moments in such a cycle, and pay conscious attention to those moments as they were transpiring, to see if we might detect any corresponding patterns in the events of our lives, or any psychological "currents" that might be associated (not causally, but through symbolic parallels) with the rhythms of the planets. It was a daring and sometimes revealing experiment, by no means easy to pull off. It took considerable training for the participants to be able to follow how a planet moves over several months. Without diagrams constantly on hand (usually stuck on the fridge), they would not have been able to keep up the exercise.

Considerable practical difficulties are involved in learning the planetary system. Both long-cycle and short-cycle observations are problematic in their own ways. Of the two most rapid planets, Mercury and Venus, the first is too close to the Sun to be frequently or easily seen. Venus is a spectacular sight, and her cycles, including the retrograde shifts that bring her close to the earth, are by far the easiest to follow. But the short-cycle advantages of viewing Venus do not permit good observation of how she moves relative to the stable background of the constellations. For this one needs to track the long-cycle planets, Jupiter and Saturn, whose slow trek through the constellations can be observed in meticulous detail. However, long-cycle viewing requires month-by-month regularity in sky-watching sessions, not to mention the right atmospheric conditions. Mars presents the best mix of short-cycle advantages (rapid and easily detectible motion) and long-cycle advantages (tracking the planet's passage through the constellations).

I realize that it may seem arbitrary, if not purely artificial, to distinguish the Earth-Moon-Sun system from the planetary system in the way I am proposing. This is one of those weird notions that comes out of Gnostic teachings, or what's left of them. But as I have already noted, the stranger it gets with Gnosticism, the more sense it makes. From years of teaching people how to observe the skies, I am convinced that getting in synch with the planets is, and can only be, a *forced* experience. No matter how comfortable you become with planet-watching, it remains a highly orchestrated act. Compared to the semi-conscious ease with which we synch into the cycles of the Sun (i.e., the seasons) and the Moon (week-month intervals), participating in the planetary system is awkward and arduous. And beyond computing and tracking the planets, the experience of empathic contact with these far-off orbs is hard to muster.

### Fatal Habits

The word *planet* means "wanderer," or in a literal sense, "deviant." It derives from the Greek word *plané*, "error, deviation, going astray." Plané (pronounced PLAH-nay) is one of a half

dozen key terms in the Gnostic texts. It is always used to describe the action of the Archons: "And they steered people who had followed them into great troubles, by leading them astray with many deceptions." (*Apoc John* II, 29, 30 - 30, 10.) Plané is "leading astray," or "deceit," although the Greek word *apate* is used in a more specific sense for the latter. (A Gnostic nuance: leading astray differs from deception in that the former occurs when natural or innate tendencies are misdirected or exaggerated, whereas with the latter a specific element or tactic of deception must be applied to those innate tendencies, and as such it comes from outside.) The Coptic equivalent to plané is *sorem*, but this term is rarely used. Apparently, the Greek was preferred because it directly associates error, the Archons, and the planetary realm.

Gnostics used another Greek word, *heirmarmene* (pronounced High-MAR-muh-KNEE) for the rigid system of control associated with the planetary regions. They taught that such control, displayed in the clockwork regularity of "celestial mechanics," was hostile to human life and contrary to the living pulsations of the three-body cosmos. Scholars translate *heirmarmene* as "the rule of fate," and they label the Gnostic view of the planetary spheres as "astral determinism." So much confusion and misinterpretation surround this subject that it difficult to get a clear fix on how Gnostics actually understood "the rule of fate." Here again is an example of how Gnostic scholars might improve their grasp of their subject by looking outside their own field.

Consider this brief passage from *The Apocryphon of John*:

- For from that fate (heirmarmene) which the Archons devised, came forth every sin and injustice and blasphemy, and *the chain of forgetfulness and ignorance*, and every severe command with serious sins and great fears attached to it. And thus the whole world was made blind in order that we may not know the One which is beyond all this ... And because of this chain of forgetfulness those who are enmeshed do not see their own errors, for they are bound with the measures of times and moments, since fate has rule over everything that is so measured. (II,28, 21 -35. My italics.)

Without going into a long commentary here, I would note one point. "The chain of forgetfulness and ignorance" immediately recalls the "chain of interdependent origination," a concept central to Buddhist teachings on karma. The chain consists of twelve links (*nidanas*), the first of which is ignorance (*avidya*). Buddhist teachings assert that when we become enmeshed in the karmic chain-reaction based on ignorance, we forget ourselves and become blind to the One Reality —that is, the pure awareness called *Rigpa* in Tibetan. It seems almost self-evident (to me, anyway) that this passage is a close paraphrase of Buddhist teaching on karma. Hence, the "astral determinism" of the Gnostics was very likely a version of Asian karma theory.

Gnostics undoubtedly taught about karma, and they seem to have framed their ideas about it in a celestial metaphor that included the Archons as psychological "drivers" who enslave us to habitual and unfulfilling patterns of behavior. Tibetan Buddhism also uses an elaborate metaphor for karma enmeshment: the "wheel of life," comprised of the Three Poisons, the Six

Realms, and the Twelve Nidanas. This model can be correlated point by point to the astrological paradigm of signs and planets. In my opinion, the Gnostic heirmarmene and the Tibetan wheel of life are two versions of the same teaching on karmic determinism. For Gnostics the Archontic realm of the planets was a cosmic reflection of *the forces of habit* that drive human beings into blind and unfulfilling behavior. The system of fatal error reinforces itself, and that is the rule of fate, the tyranny of the Archons..

In Buddhism we escape from the wheel of karma by awakening to the mind nature or Buddha Nature, but Gnosis proposes a different path. In Goddess-based spirituality, we transcend our behavioral bondage by flowing ecstatically into the great continuum of life, connecting to the planetary body of Gaia.

### [ET Archon Navigator](#)

#### Sensuous Beholding

If the passions of Sophia have congealed and morphed into the elements of the biosphere, as Gnostics taught, then the empathy we as human beings can feel with nature must be resonant with what She feels. To genuinely feel nature is to recognize that *it feels back*. And how it feels back. We might coin a term here: *feelback*, the emotive dimension of feedback. And indeed, the feelback of Gaia toward us does feed us, does nurture us. It keeps us alive every moment of our lives—and who knows, the magnificent tendrils of Her love may be what loops us into this planet in the first place, and then back out again.

In Hindu Tantra the serpent power compressed in the human body is called Kundalini, literally, "little Kunda." The big Kunda is the massive coiling telluric power of the Goddess. In the hilarious exploits of Castaneda and his "sorcerer's party," this force is called "the Tumbler." I have seen it at loose along the flanks of the Sierra de Libar in Andalucia, causing a vast stretch of the mountain chain to writhe. The sensuous abandon of the Dragon current expresses the bliss of the Earth as it dances nakedly in space. The sorcerer takes this current into the glow of h/ir eyes.

It is hard to see such things and live, but it much worse to live without seeing them.

Elsewhere in this site, I have proposed the term *biomysticism* for the practice of loving communion with Gaia. The term might be objectionable in view of the Reichian slant that I like to give to all matters concerning our communion with the Goddess. With Gnostic acumen, Reich detected in mysticism a displacement of biological and affective forces into a disembodied Beyond. Biomysticism is the opposite: the reclaiming of the feeling-knowledge in our bodies, the sweet strong somatic surge that comes up from the soles of our feet and churns into a warm ball in the solar plexus, as if the tummy were a honey-pot basking in the sun. We live because we are perpetually plugged into this delicious current, the Tumbler, Mahakundala, and not because we are simply given a finite dose of life-force that gradually runs out. If we knew how to receive the earth force in gratitude and reverence, consciously, intentionally, each

moment, we would not have to die as we do but we could shed our skins like snakes, as the old initiates did. Gaia's feedback makes us morphically immortal.

Even when we attempt to flee from natural bliss, we are pulled back into it. It could be argued that even the Christian mystics, who verge on disembodiment in their unnatural lust to reach the Beyond and see the face of God, are tricked by Eros and so fall back into the embrace of the Goddess. The ecstasy of Saint Teresa of Avila has often been compared to orgasmic rapture. Teresa was a hot dame, but more vividly erotic you cannot get than Hildegard of Bingen, who converted her vision of the Divine into music and paintings. One image in particular presents graphic evidence of massive feedback bliss. (From *Scivias*, in the Rupertsberg Codex, 12th Century.)





"Then I saw a huge object, round and shadowy. Like an egg it was pointed at the top... Its surrounding layer was bright fire (Empyreum). Beneath this lay a dark skin. In the bright fire hovered a reddish, sparkling fireball..." (Cited in Alexander Roob, *Alchemy & Mysticism*, p. 120)

It would be hard to imagine a more vivid, perfectly detailed image of the female genitalia, complete with a fringe of foliate adornment. Everything is revealed: the starburst clitoris, the vermilion labia, inner and outer, the pinhole of the urethra discreetly depicted as a crescent

Moon, the tunnel of the vagina furrowed with ruggia (for that slippery grip), the opening to the womb, the stem of the cervix, a cache of ova waiting to be fertilized. This is biomysticism in action, evidence that the highest revelation of God is indistinguishable from the miracle of our natural functions.

And there is more, for Hildegard's "vision of the cosmos" (Roob) is also a neat demonstration of the three-body world, Sophia's original Dreaming. Egg and oval set up the overall composition. Sun, Moon and Earth are beautifully aligned on a vertical axis. This is all there is, all there needs to be. The sacred figuration of the womb of Gaia is stamped anatomically on the body of all women of the human species, and through that gate we all come into life, we emerge into the greater womb, the biosphere. It is all there in Hildegard's vision, including even the subliminal trace of a three-headed demon—the three-chambered brain, squawk-box of the human ego?

I do now know much about the life of Hildegard of Bingen, who lived from 1098 to 1179, but I suspect that it was not fabulous in sensual terms—at least not as far as overt sensuality and sexual experience were concerned. It simply could not have been so. Little Hilda was a sickly child "given into the service of the Church" by devout parents, and she lived constantly in the fearful, repressive atmosphere of the nunnery. Yet from well before adolescence, Hildegard was having visions that she dared to relate to those around her. Something stirred inside her and produced a huge outpouring of pictures and musical inspiration. Others wrote down her words and visions for her. These renditions were "interspersed with salutary admonitions to live in the fear of the Lord (*Catholic Encyclopedia*)." Of course they were.

Among the works left to posterity by Hildegard of Bingen are hundreds of letters fifty allegorical homilies, a list of nine hundred words in an unknown language, seventy hymns with melodies, a manual of nine books on plants, trees, stones, fishes, birds, reptiles and metals, a medical treatise, and, of course, the *Scivias*, the records of her visions. One of her poetical books is the "Liber divinorum operum," a "contemplation of all nature in the light of faith. Sun, moon, and stars, the planets, the winds, animals, and man, are in her visions expressive of something supernatural and spiritual, and as they come from God should lead back to Him." Why, thank you, authors of the on-line *Catholic Encyclopedia*. This is just what I have been trying to say. Almost.

### Loving Gaia

The yonic imagery of Hildegard of Bingen and the luscious contours of the Coco De Mer are displayed in Metahistory.org because they match the message of the site. If it is true that about 60 percent of all traffic on the Internet is pornographic, lusty cybernauts can now get their kicks from the real thing.

Sensuous beholding of the Earth produces the feedback effect, and this in turn fosters what Inga Muscio outrageously calls "a cuntlovin' attitude." In his introduction to her book, *Cunt: A Declaration of Independence*, Deep Ecologist Derrick Jensen wrote:

- Merely to reside in the sensual as the world burns isn't good enough. Nor is it good enough merely to mourn the losses both inside and out. Both of these are necessary, but not sufficient.... If you're in love, with your life, with your body, with your lover, with the tree outside your door, with the world that gives rise to all of these, the fact that we're all deeply, deeply fucked doesn't matter a damn to your actions: if you're in love, you act to protect your beloved.  
If we are to survive, we must reclaim our planet from those corporations which—and people who—are destroying it. But even before this, we must reclaim our own bodies and our hearts from that same grasp.

Tenderness is the essence of the cuntlovin' attitude, and in what we learn through ecstasy, through surrender and sensuous beholding, we may come to realize that a supreme strength inheres in tenderness, sublime healing power that comes through our connection to Gaia-Sophia. We do not die, today, not merely because we do not cease to live, but because we are perpetually healed into life. The inpouring is constant, and in the feelback it becomes conscious. Love *that* and see what follows.

Where religion affects our lives, there is always lots of talk about love. Personally, I detest this. Especially when the love talk tells us that "God's love" is operating in our lives. God loves you. Jesus loves you. And they want us to love each other. If there is anything good in this kind of talk, it is hugely outweighed by the use of such language as a pretext to hid a multitude of evils, transgressions against body and mind alike. Love talk is the perpetrator's favorite foil. I say let's practice kindness and shut up about love, shut the fuck up—unless there is something funny or sexy to say, unless there are love secrets to impart.

Just think of Hildegard. Even with the curse of religion on her soul, she went into massive feelback. Erotically handicapped by her time and surroundings, she became what many of her gender might aspire to be: not the Madonna or even Madonna herself, but a *genuine* mystical woman, her intimate anatomy bursting with stars.

Somewhere I said that loving Gaia is the height of human destiny. This is one of my love secrets. To learn from the Gnostics about the passions of Sophia is both a high challenge and a humbling experience. A challenge because the mythos engages our powers of attention and imagination at a genius level. No one evolves in this story who does not love to learn. And it is humbling because it sets us up for feelback, however and whenever it may come. As we venture into the mythos, shifting ever deeper into body-knowledge, we become biomystically gifted and erotically giving, generous as the gods themselves. If generosity is the signature trait of Divinity, rather than love—well, that wouldn't be such a bad deal, would it?

As for loving Gaia and being loved by Her, this is the supreme path of human discovery. It leads beyond fear and hope, promise and pretence, it surpasses all claims and all speculations about the Divine, it puts religion to shame. The call to this path tingles like soft wildfire in our cells.

# The Promise of a Lonely Planet

## Three: Stalking the Anthropos

This essay, the third in a trilogy, is dedicated to all those who are presenting, and participating in, an acoustic recitation of the Gaia Mythos in the USA for the Eve of the year 2005.

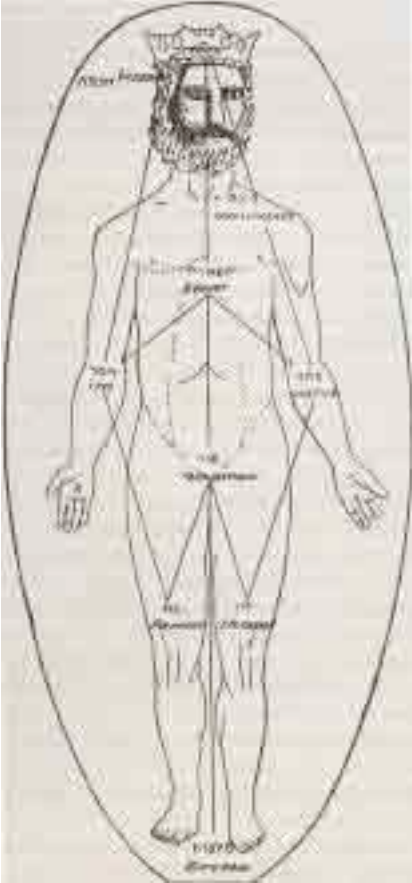
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The stranger it gets, the more sense it makes. And the more sense it makes, the more imagination it takes to stay on board with the Gnostic experience. That is the high challenge of the path of applied visionary science, the noetics of hyperception. (Bear with me, folks: hyperception is my proposed term for heightened faculties of awareness as demonstrated in the *siddhis* of Asian yogis and lamas, and the visionary prowess of shamans around the world. Not to mention the natural faculties of children and animals. Empathic communion with Gaia spontaneously incites hyperception, *directed* perception in "altered states.")

Gnosis was high heresy, and it still is. It seems to escaped notice that heresy derives from the Greek *hairesis*, "choice." To be a heretic means to have choices, to opt for another way of believing, another kind of knowing, another channel of perceiving, another course of experience. Heresy is about having options, and sometimes those options are rather outrageous. With the episode of Sabaoth's conversion, we are introduced to a dealbreaker, perhaps the most outrageous notion in occult and Gnostical lore: the pre-existence of the human species in the cosmic order.

In the Gaia Mythos, the preexistent, preterrestrial form of humanity is called [Atu Kadmon](#). This is a play on *Adam Kadmon*, "earth creature, composed of letters or code," a term found in the Kabala. *Atu* denotes the product of divine emanation, Aeonic intent. (In Sanskrit, *Ati* means "supreme," as in Atiyoga or Dzogchen, the ninth and highest path of Buddhism.) The made-up word *Kadmon* signifies "encoded unit," comparable to our modern conception of the genome. *Atu Kadmon* is the encoded monad for the human species.



The Gnostic myth of the creation of humankind (*anthropogenesis*) describes how this monad was emanated from the Pleroma in a rite performed by the Aeons, the Gods. (Technically, this is not a "creation myth" comparable to *Genesis* in the Bible, but an imaginative description of cosmic emanation.) Through a complex process of collaboration, a singularity emerges from the Originator, the Uncreated Source, and then is meticulously channelled into a standing wave that is projected through a circular lattice to produce a fractal deposit in the outer limbs of the galaxy. (**The Gaia Mythos**, Episodes 4 through 7.)

The "mortal emanation" is deposited as a mesh of nucleic acid in the molecular cloud of the Orion Nebula.

There it glistens like a splatter of dew on a spider's web — but what does it really look like?

"In Cabbalistic tradition, the ten Sephiroth that structure the universe are the limbs of the primal man, Adam Kadmon. He is so vast that each of his hairs can be imagined as a stream of light linked to millions of worlds." (Adam Kadmon, typical Kabalistic image of the Anthropos, from a Jewish Encyclopedia. In Alexander Roob, *Alchemy & Mysticism*, p. 550.)

The Child of Light

- No form, no world had existed before the form of man was present. For it includes all things, and everything that exists, only exists through it.
- William Blake, *The Sun at its Eastern Gate*

We saw in the episode of Sabaoth's conversion how the Aeon Sophia shames Yaldabaoth and warns him of his end. Doing so, She invokes a vision, She calls the cosmic witnesses to see what She sees. This is one of the sublime, arresting moments of Gnostic cosmology. The Aeon Sophia has been stunned by Her plunge into the outer regions of the galaxy, but gradually She comes around. In one decisive moment She is able to rally Her powers and regain the vision of what She, in union with Her consort, the Aeon Christos, had originally projected from the Pleromic core. As described in Episode 9 of *The Gaia Mythos*, "Before Orion's Mist":

The power returning to Her gaze was drawn away from the glittering skin of radiation that encased Her, drawn toward that smoky flush. For an instant, without knowing what She saw, She beheld the terrible deep maw of elementary flux, the awesome *dema* melding in Orion's Mist. Dark elementary matter in arrays, the batter churning in dense cataracts through the galactic limbs and, like a scarf in tow from a whirling carousel, the figure of Atu Kadmon tumbled in a soft molecular glow.

The Aeon Sophia beholds the figure of Atu Kadmon, a phantom image hung like a scarf in the swirling metallic haze of the *dema*. (Lo and behold: it does not look anything like the body of a "cosmic man" projected into the sky. It may, however, resemble the ten-Sephira Tree of Life configured as a fractal array of chemical nodes, a configured membrane of nucleic acids.) What Sophia sees gives Her strength to challenge Yaldabaoth, the Lord Archon, by invoking the vision of humanity to come. This key moment of the Fallen Goddess scenario is repeated half a dozen times in various codices, but most vividly in *The Apocryphon of John*.

- And when her power ascended, although not taking her up to Pleroma, her proper realm, it raised Sophia above the realm of the Archons, so that she might be in the Ninth [the Earth realm] until she corrected her deficiency. And a voice came forth from the exalted heavens, her own voice in Pleromic magnitude: "The Child of Light exists, and the offspring of the Child."
- 
- And the Chief Authority (*protarchon*) heard this and realized that the voice came from Sophia, his matrix. And yet he did not really know where it came from, for it was a revelation of the divine and perfect Couple (*metropator*, "Mother-Father"), the supreme Awareness that is the origin of the All, through which all things come into being, and so does Primal Humanity, for in the human form that Awareness is revealed, and lives.
- 
- And the entire cosmos of the Chief Archon trembled, and the foundations of the Abyss shook. And in the watery space above the chaotic matter of the *dema*, the underside was illuminated by the appearance of this image (*eikon*). (II, 14, 20 - 30, with moderate paraphrase.)



Without going into an elaborate commentary, a couple of key points in this narrative, involving tricky translation issues, need to be clarified. Revisionist scholars like Marvin Meyer insist on translating the Coptic word *rhōmē* as "human" rather than "man." So, Sophia's pronouncement, "The Man exists, and the Son of Man," becomes "The Human exists, and the offspring of the Human." Karen King, in her translation of the *Gospel of Mary* (found in the Berlin Codex along with a draft of *The Apocryphon of John*) opts for the clean generic language without gender bias. "In the *Gospel of Mary* the 'Son of Man' is the child of true Humanity, the Image of the Divine Realm that exists within every person." (*The Gospel of Mary of Magdala*, p. 59.) Of course, King does not extrapolate the Gnostic material in astronomical terms, as I do. No scholar in h/ir right mind would propose, or even imply, that "the Image of the Divine Realm" is a biological field in the external cosmos, as well as a subjective component of the human psyche.)

Hence, there are a number of options for translation: Human, Primal Human, True Human, Divine Humanity, Child, Divine Child, Child of Light. Years ago I proposed *the Devanthropos*, "radiant Humanity" for the pre-existent template. Coptic is extremely poor in metaphysical and poetic expression, and it lends itself very awkwardly to ideas and images that require elaborate syntax. Moreover, one in every five Coptic words in the codices is a loan from Greek. Translating the Coptic texts is like using a range of poetic hues to fill in the crude underpainting of the Greek originals. Problems occur because the Greek "originals," no better than garbled and incoherent notes in the first place, have been translated by scribes who did not understand them very well, if at all.

## The Male Creator God

What Sophia sees is not "Man" or a male anatomical form, but the Anthropos, the pre-existent mold of the human species. Unfortunately, the Coptic copyist of *The Apocryphon of John* carries over the Greek word *andreos*, "male," giving a masculine bias to the cosmic matrix of humanity. Elsewhere in *The Apocryphon of John* and the other cosmological treatises, *anthropos* is used to indicate generic humanity without sexual bias. The Coptic equivalent is *rhōmē*, "human." (Pronounced RO-may.) In *On the Origin of the World* the Anthropos template is called "Adam of Light" and "holy Adamas." (108: 20-25) This conception was absorbed into Kabala where it comes to be seen in Adam Kadmon, the "Primal Man" (pictured above).

*The daunting problem with the description of Primal Humanity is not that it is anthropomorphic, but that it is masculinized.* And this problem is not unique to the Gnostic materials we have inherited. It pervades the Kabala and other occult systems that preserve (or claim to preserve) Mystery teachings, including the heretical notion of the pre-existence of humanity. The illustration above shows a typical version of Primal Humanity represented as a male figure embellished with cosmic iconography and occult symbols. In *The Hero*, I pointed out that "in cosmologies based on somatic values, woman's body was typically equated to nature, the earth itself, while man's body was equated to the cosmos entire." (p.12) There is a long-standing tradition involved here, of course—not to mention deep "archetypal" formative

tendencies in the human psyche. Nevertheless, the moment for a huge psychic shift may be at hand...

Imagery that represents the Anthropos template as a male figure, even as the mystically conceived *Adam Kadmon*, is totally unacceptable in the context of the Gaia Mythos.

A couple of other points of clarification on the above passage. In the jargon of the Mystery Schools, the Aeon Sophia is said to be in the Ninth, a code term for the terrestrial realm. The Eighth indicates the visible starry zone surrounding the Earth, and the Seventh, the Heptad, is the planetary realm exclusive of the Earth, as already explained. Yaldabaoth, the Chief Archon or *Protarchon*, is the putative master of the Heptad. He is most definitely *a male creator god*, the prototype of Jehovah, and the Father God of Christianity, and Allah. Monotheism is the fixation of Yaldabaoth on his illusional ego, and this illusion infects all those who adopt him as the supreme being. The theology of the One God carries and enforces a heavy patriarchal agenda. The Gnostic image of the *Metropator*, the Cosmic Parents, succeeds in avoiding either a masculine or feminine bias for the Divine. This language vividly recalls the *Yab-Yum* of Tibetan Buddhism, and the *Shiva-Shakti* coupling of Hindu Tantra.

The curious repetition "Man and the Son of Man" has baffled scholars. I propose that the redundant language indicates an occult perception that the Anthropos template ("Man") contains many strains ("Sons of Man"). More than one version of humanity proceeds from the monadic code. So an apt rendering would be, "Humanity and its strains, the offspring of the Primal Human." The strain of humanity to which we belong is one outgrowth of the "master" template—Let's watch the language, boys!—deposited in the Orion Nebula. The Devanthropos is a massive locus of singularity that engenders human strains in earthlike settings throughout the galaxy from whose central bulge that singularity emerged. This broadband emanation of organic life is unique to "our" galaxy, but our version of it is not unique within this galaxy.

What are the options, then? How are we to imagine what Sophia sees in Orion's Mist? Could it be a bisexual or androgyne form?

#### Narrative Link

Let's recall that Gnostic cosmology, including anthropogenesis, accounts for alien life-forms that emerge prior to humanity's appearance on Earth, and then intrude upon the biosphere. The Gaia Mythos is insuperable because it contains the sole description of alien life *inherent* to the human condition, *and* cosmologically situated. As M. C. Hammer said, speaking from the depths of his pantaloons, "You can't beat that." The [Gnostic catechism](#) clearly says, "The Archons are not entirely alien, for they are from the Fallen Sophia, the female divinity who produced them when she brought the human race down from the Source, the realm of the Pre-Existent One."

When we realize who the Archons are, we can finally understand who we are. The secret of human potential, our Sophianic endowment, becomes self-evident when we realize what threatens it, and how. This is truly strange, and yet it makes perfect sense. We discover our humanity at the very moment when we are most at risk of losing it, and that moment is upon us. As long as we do not reach this realization, *the revelation of our own identity as a pre-*

*existent species*, we will never see through the illusion of our isolation on this lonely planet, Earth. This is the great imaginative leap for humanity today.

In reality, we are not isolated, for we are continually in touch, interactively, with a myriad of other-dimensional beings, "Star People" and spiritual allies, including other strains of humanity derived from the luminous Stain in Orion. Why, then, do we suffer the illusion of cosmic quarantine?

Until we can see how we are related to that *one* alien species, our immediate cosmic kin, we shall not see how we relate to any others. Paradoxically, the Archons are the key to unlock our illusion of separation, yet they would imprison us in that illusion, because it serves their dementia. Called *anomia*, "aberration," in *The Apocryphon of John* and elsewhere, the dementia of the Archons is evident in our own minds, especially in religious ideas such as the belief that we, the human species, are supreme and unique, created "in God's image."

The Sophia narrative is an imaginative picture of human origins based on the experience of Gnostic seers. The mythos teaches that humanity is a singularity projected from the Godhead, but not to reproduce or resemble its originators, for that would be a supreme act of narcissism on the part of the Gods. Rather, humanity is the open-ended evolution of an encoded monad with infinite potential to develop in novel ways. To do so, the species requires a special environment that reflects its deepest potential as well as its dependence on exchange with other species. This is exactly what the miraculous biosphere, the Gaian life-matrix, does for us.

We are the exceptional promise of this beautiful and symbiotic world, not because we are the male creator's god's most privileged offspring, but because we have the unique ability to disrupt the Earth's operative harmonies by our ignorance. Detect and correct that ignorance and we are on track with Gaia's purposes. We cannot continue in Gaia's way unless we enter Herstory and live in the description it provides. Our salvation in Gnostic terms is a narrative link to the living planet, not supernatural intervention from outside it—which is the Archontic ploy.

We are not made in the image of God, but according to the imagination of the Gods. Yet the Archons would like us to believe otherwise. For about 3800 years they have been going all out to convince us otherwise.

The Archontic Spell (or Ahrimanic Spell, as I used to call it when I was cruising with the Anthropops) relies on duping us with substitutes we dumbly take for real. Plastic for pearl. Artificial intelligence for genuine living knowledge. Cyberspace for gardenspace. Parking lots for glaciers. In an insidious secondary tactic, upon which they rely heavily, they make simulation do double duty *as a blind* as well as a substitute. Example: The monotheistic concept of God is an error, a mental glitch. It becomes exploited by the Archons, and exaggerates beyond correction. As it does so, the monotheistic paradigm takes on a totalitarian profile. When we come around to rejecting monotheism, we tend to reject the totalitarian aspect as well. Naturally, we become extremely leery of totalitarian models, "master narratives," etc. This wariness, although perfectly genuine and a sign of sanity, serves to blind us to the nature of the "mistress narrative" we can develop with Gaia-Sophia.

## ET/Archon Navigator

Now here is perhaps where the penny drops—a penny the size of Stonehenge. It might be thought that everyone "gets" the Sophia Mythos "in their own way." To expect otherwise would verge on a totalitarian demand, repeating the error of monotheism. Well, yes and no. The Mythos is not totalitarian, but it takes an exceptional degree of acumen to see *how* it is not so. In reality, the Mythos is generic to our species, thus uniform in narrative terms. The lovely challenge with this *species-specific* story is not just to get it in your own way, but to get out of your own way and engage something that transcends you. This is why the Gaia Mythos must be transceived and shaped narratively, mythopoetically, through shamanic recall *that requires egodeath*. We all come to the Herstory in our own way, but we do not develop it in our own way. We develop it by going beyond ourselves. By entering Her Way.

Thus, the Mythos has a quasi-totalitarian look because it is uniform in terms of the revelation that sources it. It is not a carte blanche for personal expression, it is a calling to transpersonal expression.

### Anthropos Angst

The Anthropos template is central to Gnostic cosmology, and closely related to the enigmatic business of the Archons. Gnostic teachings are unique in providing extensive background on the birth of the Sun, the formation of the Earth, and its capture in the planetary system. This narrative places the Archons in a cosmic setting, along with humanity—the pre-existent, preterrestrial mold of humanity, that is. *Atu Kadmon* is our cosmic origin as a species. Like the Archons, we are, extraterrestrials—but in our own way.

The difference is, we proceed from the Pleroma and we have been seeded into the living fabric of the planet, and the Archons have not.

The assertion that we are to not made in God's image wounds the dignity of many people, but with the Anthropos template, *Atu Kadmon*, another option comes into play. Rather than being made to reflect a pre-existent god-image (male, sevenfold, Archontic), the human species may be conceived as a god-like project in the making, a divine experiment. Identification with God is an Archontic ploy. The process of "deification" was wrongly attributed to the Mysteries by Gnostic wannabes like Clement of Alexandria. Genuine Gnostics do not pretend to be Gods on earth, deities in human guise. They aspire to know *as* the Gods know, and *what* the Gods know, but not literally or even symbolically to become Gods. Cognitive ecstasy brings moments of mystical identity with the Godhead, of course, but it also insures and enhances the supreme discrimination between human and divine.

Good psychonauts stay behind the medicine.

## ET Archon Navigator

### Alien Intrusion

The Fallen Goddess scenario, Herstory, has a unique value, perhaps even a unique survival value, for the human species. It does not merely state that we are not alone: it explains WHY we are not alone. Why we cannot afford to believe we are alone, or in any way supreme and unique. Gnostics constantly warned that the Archons *envy* us our humanity. To cope with the unbearable anguish of their envy, our alien cousins attempt to infect us with their mentality so that we become more like them and their anguish is lessened. By insinuating in our minds the belief that we are made in God's image, they draw us into a mental game we cannot win because its rules are false, arbitrary, alien to human experience.

Needless to say, I paraphrase. The precise received text in mythological idiom reads like this:

- And when the authorities and the chief Archon looked, they saw the whole region below illuminated. And through the light they saw in the waters below the form of that image [the luminous template of the Anthropos, Adamas, the Child of Light]. And the Lord Archon said to the authorities which attend him, "Come, let us create a man according to the image of God and according to our likeness, that his image may become a light for us." (*The Apocryphon of John*, II, 14,30 - 15, 5)

Gnostic cosmology is amazing, if for nothing else but the imaginative subtlety of passages like this one. This is applied noetics, profound psychological teaching framed in mythological terms. The Archons believe they can create humanity in their image, and they wish humanity to believe the same!! Lacking *ennoia*, the Archons cannot create, they can only imitate. Beholding the Anthropos template, they wrongly imagine they can create humanity to resemble themselves, and this remains their most cherished desire: *to have us become like them*. The only way they can achieve this aim is to trick us into a betrayal of our basic humanity. Gnostics taught that due to our exceptionally large margin for error, we are a species that can stray from its proper course of evolution, and thus betray its true potential. If this deviating tendency goes unchecked and uncorrected, we can indeed fulfill the wish of the Archons.

The bitter truth of it is, we do the best part of their work for them.

This can happen, not because the Archons command power over us, but because we surrender our inborn power to an alien mindset. The Archontic mentality is our own tendency to betray our divine birthright: it is the inhumane component in human potential. "Archons 'R Us" may be the most liberating message on the planet. Only Gnosis, the god-like knowledge of our origins, can save us from the self-abandonment we risk by ceding our minds to the "Authorities."

- Judas said, "Behold, the Authorities dwell above us, and so it is they who will rule over us?"
- The teacher answered, "It is you who will rule over them."
- *The Dialogue of the Savior*, 49-50

But how can we rule over anything if we cannot even choose the beliefs that drive our behavior, the thoughts that rule our minds?

- You are the pure mind and the serenity of the solitary. Hear this, and understand that the Elect are self-selecting. Through consecration... in the place where there is no rule, no tyranny, the reasoning power... inner truth... lives... in order that you prevail.
- 
- But the crossing place is fearful... Only with a single one-pointed mind, can you pass over... The lamp of the body is the mind. As long as what is within your minds is harmonious, your bodies are luminous. As long as your hearts are dark, the luminosity you anticipate will escape you...
- 
- Who does not stand in the darkness, will not be able to see the light.
- (*The Dialogue of the Savior*, fragmentary text, 2 - 34)

In the first three centuries of the Common Era, Gnostic teachers who emerged from the Mystery Schools taught that the paramount tool of alien intrusion is the salvationist program of religion, centered on the image of human divinity. This is the core message of the Gnostic protest against Judeo-Christian doctrines. Those who were warned of this danger turned on the Gnostics and eradicated them. If the Gnostic protest had been heeded, Christianity as we know it could never have come to be. Gnostic teachings *had to be eliminated* so that the salvationist program could spread.

### Human Divinity

There are criminals and arch-criminals. There are enemies and arch-enemies. There are types and arche-types. There are cons and there is — the arch-con, the supreme confidence trick. This trick substitutes for faith in the species, our confidence in our inner wisdom potential, the belief that we must be made human through a superhuman reflection, the Word made Flesh. The arch-con is *human divinity*. If this idea had not infected our species' imagination, the world would look nothing like it does today. Human divinity is the confidence trick that allows us to perpetrate a multitude of sins, which are nothing but uncorrected errors, patterns of behavior alien to our inborn capacities. From the belief in human divinity proceed all the great evils humankind is heir to. Like Christ, they all begin with c: conversion, conquest, colonialization, consumption.

And most lately, cyberspace.

Where the Archons have migrated. Finally, they have a secure niche on the planet. As I write these words I stand before their Altar, as you may be doing when you read them. But I do not worship there.

Historically, the arch-con has emerged in three stages: first, in germinal form in Jewish



apocalypticism, formulated in the hate-driven ideology of the Zaddikim; second, in salvationist Christianity, a fascist program in the sugar-pill coating of the Gospel fairy tales; and third, in the horrific viral mutation of Islam, the pest of submission. We are now closing a fourth phase that began when science took over the work of religion, around 1650. The fifth phase will be short but not , perhaps, sweet. We are facing terminal conditions, including climatic collapse and cybernetic disembodiment of the species.

Gnostics in the classical word did not survive to face Islam, except perhaps in some underground movements. (Sufi = Suphia?) Radical Pagan Gnosis was anti-Jewish and anti-Christian in opposing the salvationist ideologies common to those two belief-systems. If Gnostics survived today, they would oppose Islam, another viral mutation of the same ideology, on the same grounds. Gnostics were not against love, tolerance, forgiveness, self-regulation, kindness, compassion, or any other genuine virtues attributed to Judaic and Christian morality, and latterly to Islam (what a disgusting sham!!). They were against the ideological framework of salvation with its three key components: the dominion of humanity on Earth, the incarnation of divinity in human form, and final retribution by the Father God. (More on this crucial point in the companion essay, [How We Are Deviated.](#))

*Pistis Sophia*, "confidence in the inborn wisdom," is a positive faith that builds creatively into Herstory and grows outward into a sane society of inspired members. But the will to create such a world has to be forged in the realization of what we're up against.

## Modelling Humanity

Clearly, setting up the Archon/ET theory is not a fast and easy assignment. This is not a sound-byte exercise. To understand Archontic intrusion requires a complex and extensive background, a cosmological education up to the graduate level. Yet this background—the encompassing tale of the singularity in the galactic core, the paired channeling of the Anthropos by Christos and Sophia, the unilateral desire of the Fallen Sophia, the unforeseen impact in the *dema*, the Earth's origin independent of the solar system, the alignment of Sun and Earth, the persistence of Sophia's original Dreaming of a three-body system, the seeding of the Anthropos on Earth—comprises that part of *our own story* we vitally need to learn before we can understand the role of the Archons in the full story. It's a big order, I admit, but it may be the decisive insight we need today, the crucial dose of "planet medicine" that can restore human imagination to its divine potential.

In any case, we cannot possibly decode the ET/UFO phenomena without first knowing who we are, cosmically speaking, and then seeing ourselves in relation to our cosmic cousins, the Archons produced by Sophia before humanity emerged on the Earth, but not before the Anthropos was seeded in Orion. As for the occult and esoteric systems that purport to teach "Divine Humanity"—frankly, I'm not sure they can be trusted to deliver the Child. You can learn a lot from these models and systems, but you learn almost nothing about Gaia. I have spent my life from the age of four in pursuit of esoterics. . Talk about getting lost in a shaggy dog story. Or it is a shaggy god story?

The question that now looms largest for me after all my questing is: How to describe the pre-

existence of humanity so that we can live into that description and counter the con of divine humanity? I don't have the answer here, but at least the language of the question is precise enough, for now. Why is the Gnostic narrative of pre-existence so crucial for the shift ahead? Because the story shows how Sophia Herself invokes the Devanthropos to put the Lord Archon in his place. And we must do the same.

In this full cosmic perspective, it becomes evident that the Archon/ETs are truly extraterrestrials, but confined to the planetary system in which the Earth is captured. (Jacques Vallee, whom I regard as the most sophisticated analyst of the ET/UFO enigma, holds the view that the pesky aliens come from within our local system.) They are a specific predatory species with special designs on humanity, not to be confused with other non-human entities, such as "Star People" and allies from other dimensions, supernatural guardians, the Dead, and other human strains of the Anthropos who live in planetary settings somewhat like ours—all of whom are benevolent or neutral. This picture is truly vast, but the Gnostic view is precise in the way it specifies the predatory nature of the Archons.

Related to humanity through the peculiar fate of the Aeon Sophia, the Archons are also involved in Sophia's "correction," her realignment with the cosmic center (Pleroma), a subject on which I have written extensively throughout this site. We first have to define our role in the correction of the Aeon Sophia: this is nothing less than defining the purpose of humanity in Gaia's evolution. If we are engaged in a project, and someone is helping or impeding us, we cannot know how they are doing so unless we first understand what we ourselves are doing. This is just common sense.

### Teaching the Mythos

Upon long reflection, I have come to accept that the cosmological perspective on the Archons can only be taught to those who genuinely aspire to know about it, or even crave to know about it; and I strongly feel that this aspiration to know must be grounded in a conscious sense of co-evolution with Gaia. (Of course, there is a huge sci-fi appeal in the Gnostic Archon scenario. It could happen that the story spreads merely as a story, and that would be fine.) How the recovered Gnostic cosmology might spread, and to whom, is a continual concern of mine, so it might be appropriate to close with some personal reflections on this issue.

It is an enormous privilege and an equally enormous responsibility to put out the Gaia Mythos and related Gnostic teachings on this site. I am immensely grateful to the Marion Institute for supporting this project, but support is not reception. This work is not intended merely for those who sponsor it (I am sure they would agree). It is intended for the generations to come, but it must be transmitted by the generation of today, by an elect, self-selecting portion of it.

In Hindu mythology related to the World Ages, those who prepare the future in the present are called *Shishta*, the "seed group." This word derives from the common Sanskrit word *shisha*, "disciple, student." *Shishta* means something like "the student body." Or "learning party," to borrow an apt term. The main mark of the *Shishta* is equality in knowledge. Everyone carries their share and all who learn, also teach. I would say this is *the* primary requirement for transmission of the Gaia Mythos and the Archon scenario: those who learn it, teach it. At least that is what I would propose as the primary mark of the *Shishta*. The leading aspiration, if you

will.

For those who are consecrated to Gaia, the Mythos is not just any story, not just an outrageous sci-fi plot embellished with theological filigree. It is Herstory. To keep the story straight is not easy, and may well demand a lifetime of imaginative discipline. If you can afford it. Egodeath in more than a single dose. If you can dare it. Techniques of cognitive ecstasy, including divination, dance and trance, are the best tools for spreading the Mythos in its ever-expanding narrative form. At the same time, there is a moral balance to observe. Everything we learn about Anthropos and Archons must be balanced between our shared self-knowledge as a species and our solitary individual moments of communion with Gaia.

Moments of sacred and sublime intimacy. Of rapture coemergent.

Observing Gaia, we see a myriad of wonderful creatures who completely fulfill their potential in being what they are, doing what they do. Sunflowers and flatworms, whales and weevils, you name it. They are so perfectly realized that there is nothing left over for them to attain. They have no promise to fulfill because they are so fully realized, just the way they are. We know this intuitively, and feel it deeply in a language older than words. (Thanks, Derrick.) So it is that when the salmon swim off course, when whales get beached, when geese migrating south end up in Swansea, we lurch, we are deeply panged to see our animal kin so disoriented, so dislodged from their beautiful fate fulfilled.

And we are affected most poignantly, I reckon, because when they go off course it reminds us of ourselves, a perplexed species stranded on a lonely planet...

We of the human species appear to be situated in the Gaian habitat in a different way than our animal kin. We are more potential than actual. We carry a promise to be fulfilled. We *are* that promise. If we fall short of it, we do not threaten Gaia in any ultimate sense, I believe, but we diminish the magnitude of our participation in Her purposes. And in that way we can demean the Mystery. The promise we carry is exceptional, not because of our presumed privileged status, and not because we are divinity in human guise — no one human ever was, or ever needs to be — but because of our demeaning tendencies. This is the lesson to be learned from our unwitting complicity with our alien cousins.

Yet we know ecstasy. And in ecstasy we know ourselves, and how to go beyond ourselves. There is our promise, perpetually fulfilled.

"You Are the Plague"

#### A Review of The Matrix (film)

With the release of the second film in the Matrix Trilogy, *The Matrix Reloaded*, the adventures of Neo and Trinity continue to fascinate millions of moviegoers around the world. Spectacular as they are, there is more to the Matrix films than special effects. Various beliefs regarding the human species are nested into the plot-line, and the way these beliefs play against each other makes these films the subject of endless debate. The Matrix films provide a unique occasion to

consider the immense power of electronic media over our minds and lives.

In the definitive scene in *The Matrix* (1999), Agent Smith, a coolly sinister plainclothes entity in the computer-simulated world that is the Matrix, says to Morpheus, leader of the rebel group that has escaped it: "Human beings are a disease, a cancer on this planet. You are the plague. And we are... the cure."

In this exchange, Agent Smith speaks for what created him: the power of AI, artificial intelligence. In another scene where Morpheus initiates Neo, a new recruit to the rebel team, he says: "Through the blinding inebriation of hubris, we marveled at our magnificence as we gave birth to AI." This sentence encapsulates the attitude of many technocrats who believe that advanced computer science will produce astounding miracles of a beneficial kind. Confidence in the miraculous possibilities of AI is one of several technocratic beliefs at play in the complex plot of the Matrix trilogy. Morpheus explains to Neo, whom he has extracted from the Matrix, that sometime at the start of the twenty-first century war broke out between the humanity and a race of machines spawned by the advanced technology of AI, itself the product of human minds. Thus humanity, instead of using AI to engineer a new world, has become enslaved to its own invention.

In the Matrix trilogy the central conflict is between the mental power of human beings and the mind-mimicing powers of AI. (All quotes are from *The Shooting Script: The Matrix* Screenplay by Larry and Andy Wachowski, Newmarket Press, New York, 2001.)

### Man Against Machines

Agent Smith, who is not a simulation of an actual human being but a perfect human replica devised by AI, represents the Machines that rebelled against their inventors. (This theme is not new, of course. It plays a central role in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, written by Arthur C. Clarke, in which a superintelligent computer HAL rebels against his makers and hijacks an interplanetary mission.) The Machines themselves are horrible gigantic insects, depicted with erector-set carapaces, octopus-like tentacles and high-tech sensors, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the earth. The planet has been demolished by nuclear war, the atmosphere plunged in perpetual darkness.

The vast majority of human beings are no longer born naturally but raised in huge cellular banks of holding tanks where they are harvested by the Machines to whom they supply bioelectrical energy. Each individual body of a living human is comatose, immersed in gooey gel, and gruesomely connected by coaxial cables to an unseen mainframe that simulates a world resembling ordinary urban life in the late twentieth century. Neo, who is the "One" predestined to free humanity from the illusion of living in a real world, must first realize that the world from which he was extracted, and which *he* took for totally real, is "a neural-interactive simulation that we call the Matrix."

The Matrix was filmed in Sydney, Australia, a city that looks like any other. At first the viewer is unaware that scenes occurring in this setting are not real-world events but simulations. In this perfect replication of ordinary urban life, a message appears on the screen of Neo's computer

telling him, "The Matrix has you." At the moment we read these words, we the viewers are also caught in the same illusion.

The film tricks the viewer, not into believing that the world simulated in the Matrix is real, but into believing that it is possible to wake up within the simulation, as one does in a lucid dream. The heroic quest of Neo consists in realizing, when he is in the Matrix, that he has the power to master it through his own mind. To this end, Morpheus and his team of rebels, who have extracted Neo from the holding, voluntarily return with him to the Matrix so that they can test their human mental powers against the AI that drives the simulation. Many scenes in the film unfold as if the characters were functioning in a video game.

Among the team is Trinity, Neo's love interest, who plays a decisive role in his final battle to overcome the illusionary powers of the Matrix. The romance of Neo and Trinity carries the belief that love between two humans is necessary if one of them is to find the inner strength to master the Matrix. Although the actors who play these two lovers are almost totally devoid of emotion, this romantic angle is perhaps the most appealing twist of the film.

### Let's Get Real

The exchange where Agent Smith tells Morpheus, "You are the plague," occurs in the Matrix itself, that is, in a setting simulated in virtual reality (VR). This scene contains some of the more profound moments in the film. (It must be said, there is a lot of terrific dialogue in the Matrix - in the first installment, anyway.) It takes some brainwork during and after the film to realize that Agents like Smith are human replicas with no human counterparts. They are not linked to the real humans held captive in the holding tanks, but are pure constructs of AI, like Lara Croft and other video-game "avatars." As such they are invested with superhuman power: Agents can kill human replicas in the Matrix, and when they do, the real human body attached to the replica dies. Humans who appear in the Matrix, including ordinary people on the street as well as the rebel escapees, all have their doubles outside it. The difference is, the rebels live as free beings in the real but devastated world beyond the Matrix, conscious that the Matrix is an illusion, but all the other unplugged humans who appear to live normally in the Matrix are blind to the illusion.

Obviously, this two-world scenario has a tremendous impact on human imagination. The notion that we inhabit a world that is somehow not real is extremely appealing to a society dominated by advertising, entertainment, governmental fictions and untrammelled technological magic. The Matrix trilogy has been called the first sci-fi action film for intellectuals. Its creators, the Wachowski brothers, were inspired by the hazy conceits of French sociologist Jean Baudrillard who has written extensively on "simulation." Material on the Internet devoted to Baudrillard's theories as represented in the films runs into hundreds of pages. The Wachowskis acknowledge Baudrillard as a major influence by inserting a visual cue to one of his books, *Simulation and Simulacra*, in the opening scene of the first film. Baudrillard himself "has snorted in derision regarding *The Matrix*." He says that no film can fully explore his ideas and that the attempts to do so in these films are "misinformed and misguided." (*Taking the Red Pill*, edited by Glenn Yeffeth, p. 290)

Whether or not the Matrix films accurately reflect Baudrillard's recondite notions, they succeed brilliantly in presenting an extravaganza of special effects to demonstrate the spell of simulation. But the ultimate effect of this spectacle is ambiguous. If the message here is "let's get real" and wake up from the Matrix, i.e., the artificially simulated world of electronic technology in which the human species is rapidly cocooning itself, then the question remains, "What is there to wake up to?" The life of the rebel escapees unfolds entirely on Morpheus's ship, the Nebuchadnezzar, which navigates continually through massive sewage tunnels bored into the earth. The rebels talk of a place called Zion, the last refuge for humanity, somewhere in the interior of the planet, but Zion is never shown in the first film. The life of the rebels aboard their tunnelling spacecraft is anything but warm and cushy. One of them, Cypher, plays a Judas figure who prefers to return to the Matrix. He cuts a deal with Agent Smith who promises, when Cypher is reinserted into the mainframe of simulation, to provide him with a life of "someone important, like an actor."

This is clever play on the theme of simulation, but it is cynical play. There are endless pleasures in the Matrix, all the sensory and material gratifications promised by the modern world. Weary of the tough side of being real, Cypher aspires to be an actor in an illusion, a simulation squared. The options of the film are stark: accept the illusion provided by AI, masking a horrific reality, or accept the hardship of living in a world devastated by the conflict between humanity and AI. Thousands of pages of commentary on the Matrix have been published on the Internet, and several books are dedicated to close analysis of the plot and its metaphysical ramifications. All this scrutiny fails to pose an essential question, however: What is the fate of the natural world, the original habit of the human species?

### Beyond Simulation

The rebels who have liberated themselves from the Matrix do not have the option to return to living on the surface of the planet — although this option might (I suspect) arise in the third and final installment, *Matrix Revolutions*, due out in November 2003. Life in Zion is depicted in the second film as an underworld rave scene populated mainly by people of color invested with high tribal glamour. ("Black is beautiful" is clearly a subtext of the Matrix films.) The lily-white lovers, Neo and Trinity, played by Keanu Reeves and Carrie-Anne Moss, stalk around wearing supercool shades and looking for all the world like Jesuits in leather designed by Armani. Almost nobody smiles except the sinister Agents and Cypher, the traitor.

In the first film the Matrix simulates a modern urban setting with few traces of the natural world. In the sequel, some scenes of simulated nature are shown. Presumably, if you want to go skiing in the Alps in the Matrix, the mainframe will download the required program to your cortex and you will have the entire experience exactly as if it were real. (In the second film, Neo succeeds in penetrating the mainframe where he encounters a simulated figure who claims to be the creator of the Matrix.) This recalls how VR, virtual reality, is expected to work according to the prophetic vision of many technophiles today. Captives of the Matrix can enjoy simulations of nature and never know what they're missing. Theoretically, escapees from the Matrix could return to nature, but there is no motivation to do so if the natural world is devastated, or rendered almost unlivable. The Machines do not require the conditions necessary for human survival on the surface of the planet: oxygen to breathe, for instance. According to Agent



Smith, these Machines consider the human race to be something like a virus, a plague for which AI is the cure.

Agent Smith tells Morpheus, "I'd like to share a revelation that I've had during my time here. It came to me when I tried to classify your species. I've realized that you are not actually mammals. Every mammal on this planet instinctively develops a natural equilibrium with the surrounding environment. But you humans do not. You move to an area and you multiply until every natural resource is consumed and the only way you can survive is to spread to another area. There is another organism on this planet that follows the same pattern. Do you know what it is? A virus." This is perhaps the most telling line in the first film. At this point the story line presents a comment on the audience: we, the human species, do not behave like ordinary mammals, and so we could permanently lose our place in nature. Instead of inhabiting the natural world, we infest it, like a plague.

In Agent Smith's ominous words, the voice of AI condemns the human species for its rapacious consumption of natural resources and its cherished habit of overbreeding. These behaviors are inconsistent with mammalian intelligence and they devastate the natural world, as we all know so well, but our obsession with AI is also part of this auto-destructive syndrome. Indeed, it may represent the endgame phase. Some sci-fi writers script into their stories the belief that our species has developed AI so that we can "downlaod ourselves into the hardware" and thus eliminate ourselves as perishable humans. One could say that AI is a means to end the human narrative. The Matrix carries this belief to its ultimate ramification: there will be no human life beyond or apart from simulation produced by the Machines, the non-human cyber-species.

The positive message of the Matrix films thus far is that if we as individuals awaken to the simulation in which we live, we can master it by spiritual means, by the exertion of will power and mind control. At the end of the first film, Neo uses such powers to annihilate Agent Smith. The hero exhibits superhuman abilities in the Matrix, but he remains entirely human in his extra-Matrix existence. (During their interventions into the Matrix, the rebels appear as human replicas but remain in their human physical bodies aboard the Nebuchannezzer, strapped into reclining chairs and temporarily plugged into the Matrix so that they can access and subvert it. However, if they are killed in the Matrix, they can really die in physical form, like a dreamer killed in a nightmare who actually dies in bed.)

Neo's triumph over the Agents is a magical resolution with a wide range of fascinating possibilities. It recalls the esoteric practice of developing *siddhis*, magical faculties possessed by yogis, Zen masters and Buddhist warrior monks. To remain a liberated human and at the same time penetrate at will into the Matrix is itself an occult feat of the highest order: bilocation. (Full physical bilocation is no mere fantasy. Actual cases are attested: see *Supernature* by Lyall Watson, in orientation reading for Metahistory.) A sort of bilocation occurs spontaneously in out-of-the body experiences as well as in lucid dreaming, when someone wakes up in a dream knowing that they are simultaneously asleep in bed.

Facing the Archons

The way beyond the Matrix remains to be discovered. Baudrillard's effete and largely impenetrable writings on simulation, but this may be a red herring, as there is another way, perhaps a better way, to explain what is happening in the Matrix. In a long article entitled "Gnosticism Reborn: The Matrix as Shamanic Journey," author Jake Horsely considers how the Matrix films reflect the Gnostic myth of the Archons, alien entities who attempt to deceive humanity by simulating its thoughts and behavior. Although Horsley delves into Gnostic mythology only superficially, and does not mention the Archons except in a footnote, his essay introduces an entirely new perspective on the plot the Matrix trilogy.

(Horsely's essay appears in several places on the Internet. I am citing from <http://www.mindmined.com>

Gnosticism is the name historians give to the final phase of a vast tradition of pagan spirituality that came to be condemned as heresy when Christianity rose to power. Until the discovery of the Nag Hammadi documents in 1945, almost nothing was known of the core teachings of Gnosticism. The word Gnostic means simply "one who knows" but carries the implication of special insight that penetrates to the hidden core of human experience. Certain Gnostics taught that humans are deviated from their proper course of evolution by a bizarre species of inorganic beings who inhabit the solar system beyond the earth, and named this species the Archons. The Greek word *archon* means "authority," and the Archons are sometimes called "the Authorities." In the Matrix, the Agents are the authorities who police the simulated world looking for human replicas like Neo who show signs of waking up to the scam. Horsely explains the Gnostic idea that the Archons try to impose "a program of mind control, or soul enslavement [in order to] keep mankind distracted by material problems and concerns, imprisoned by its own fear of death, of mortality, and ignorant of its true, divine nature."

A Gnostic perspective thus suggests that the Matrix scenario presents a cyberpunk version of a genuine spiritual dilemma, a true and daunting challenge that faces humanity, perhaps its ultimate challenge. In their warnings about deception by the Archons, Gnostics may have foreseen the risks of AI two thousand years before it emerged. However, the manner in which the Archons operate, their strategy of simulation, as it were, as described in certain Gnostic texts, does not involve advanced technological devices but religious ideology. (Horsely does not explore this point.) According to the Gnostic texts, Archontic deviation of the human species is a form of mass behaviour modification achieved through blind conformity to certain false religious beliefs, such as the belief in salvation from a sinful condition by the intervention of God or God's only representative. In short, Gnostics rejected the salvationist ideology common to Judaism and Christianity (and later, after their elimination, Islam).

It is known that Gnostic ideas deeply influenced Philip K. Dick, widely considered as the greatest sci-fi writer of the twentieth century. Certainly Gnosticism presents theological and cosmological beliefs as if plotted in a science fiction novel. This characterization of Gnostic ideas is suggested by scholar Richard Smith in the afterword to *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*: "Gnostic motifs have been identified in that most visionary of our modern literary genres, science fiction... In the science fiction novels of the prolific writer Philip K. Dick... Gnosticism is consciously employed" (p. 546). In *Valis* and other works, Dick developed the idea that humans live in a "two-world hologram," part of which is genuinely real and part of

which is the deceptive projection of an alien mentality that distorts our humanity. This schizophrenic model is consistent with the Gnostic mythos.

With the Archons we face *an alien invasion in the depths of our own minds*.

### Escape from the Matrix

Treated as a heresy in its time and still considered as such by the Catholic Church, Gnosticism has been widely misrepresented, even by those who claim to defend it. In particular, there is enormous disinformation around Gnostic views on the reality and value of the physical world. Many scholars declare that Gnostics "condemned matter" and regarded the natural world as evil, purely a product of Archontic deception. Nonetheless, a few dissenting voices argue that the Gnostics rejected, not the physical world per se, but our distorted perception of it. This view confirms the uncanny insight of Agent Smith: the behavior of the human species *is inconsistent with sane mammalian activity*. Could it be *a distorted perception of nature* that makes us act like a plague upon Earth?

According to the contemporary Gnostic revivalist Stephen Hoeller, "Gnostics did not necessarily reject the actual earth, which they recognized as a screen upon which the Demiurge [chief of the Archons] projects a deceptive system. To the extent that we find a condemnation of the world in Gnostic writings, the term used is inevitably *kosmos*... and never the word *ge* (earth), which they regarded as neutral if not outright good" (*The Gnostic Jung*, p. 15). *Cosmos* in ancient Greek did not mean the natural world or the physical universe at large. It meant "system," recalling the use of that word in computer terminology: "operating system." It is perhaps a ripe coincidence that the Coptic word for simulation found in Gnostic texts is *hal*, recalling HAL the rebellious computer in Kubrick and Clarke's *2001*!

Much could be said about the Gnostic elements in the Matrix, but one point is central. The deception of the Archons described in Gnostic writings is precisely what is manifested in the "neural-interactive simulation we call the Matrix" (the words of Morpheus). But if this is the case, how come the simulation that threatens to absorb humanity is technological rather than ideological, as the Gnostics believed it to be? The answer may be that the technological takeover of our species has actually been prepared long in advance by ideological deviations in our religious belief-systems, especially those religious beliefs that determine our response to the natural world. This implies a deep intrusion into the psychic territory of humanity, but it is totally consistent with the Gnostic argument that erroneous religious ideology is a kind of virus insinuated in the human mind by an *alien intelligence*, a non-human species comparable to the Machines in the Matrix.

Jake Horsley is one of the very few people writing on the Matrix who has asked, "Where is the glory of nature in the Matrix?" He notes that "I don't believe I saw a single tree throughout the movie." This observation returns us to the central question, here rephrased: If escaping from the simulated world of the Matrix does not take us back to the natural world where we as a species originated, *where will it take us?*

Alluding to the Romantic poet William Blake, Horsely compares Neo's heroic quest in the

Matrix to "Blake's liberation of perception into the Imagination." It remains to be seen if the imagination of the creators of the Matrix trilogy is up to this high standard of achievement. Whatever the case, this cinematic story challenges us to break out of the fierce technological spell of simulation and to recover our humanity through the realization of our imaginative powers. The Gnostics held imagination to be part of our divine endowment, that which distinguishes us from other mammals.

We are the plague, for sure, but do we also hold the cure for what ails us?

### Who Wrote the Reptilian Agenda?

#### The Origin of the Annunaki Script

A Collector's Edition entitled "Secrets of the Da Vinci Code," published by *US News and World Report*, features a brief interview with James Robinson, general editor of the *Nag Hammadi Library in English*. Correcting Dan Brown's reference to the Nag Hammadi texts as scrolls, Robinson points out: "They are codices – books with individual pages. They are actually the oldest example we have of leather bound books."

Amazingly, whatever the significance of their content—and we have yet to comprehend what that might be—the Nag Hammadi Codices (NHC) are the earliest surviving examples of bound books. Close reading of these arcane materials shows that Gnostics, as teachers in the ancient Mysteries were called, were deeply concerned with alien intrusion upon humankind. Entities they called archons appear to be identical to the ETs of modern UFOlogy. The codices indicate both Gray and reptilian types: namely, a reptilian or "drakonic" type and a neonate type, suggested by the image of a prematurely born fetus. The former are the overlords, the latter, servile, robotic drones who obey a hive-mentality. The NHC do not contain graphic physical descriptions of these alien intruders, but present ample information to profile them comparatively with the two types of ETs most widely discussed today.

#### Alien Profile

Perhaps one-fifth of the intelligible material in the NHC concerns the origin, methods, and motives of the archons, also called "authorities, governors." Their name derives from *arche-*, "first, from the beginning," because, according to Gnostic cosmology, they emerged at an early stage of the solar system *previous to the formation of the earth*. These bizarre entities may be regarded as a locust-like species of cyborgs with silicon-based bodies so designed to permit only brief forays into the earth's oxygen-rich atmosphere. They inhabit the solar system at large, traveling among the planets in alien-engineered spacecraft. Gnostics texts hint that they may be compared to custodial engineers of the inanimate clockwork mechanism of the system. Some, but not all, UFO sightings and abductions may be attributed to them.

Although archons do exist physically, the real danger they pose to humanity is not invasion of the planet but invasion of the mind. They are intrapsychic mind-parasites who access human consciousness through telepathy and simulation. They infect our imagination and use the power of make-believe for deception and confusion. Their pleasure is in deceit for its own sake, without a particular aim or purpose. They are robotic in nature, incapable of independent

thought or choice, and have no particular agenda except to live vicariously through human beings. They are bizarrely able to pretend an effect on humans which they do not really have. For instance, they cannot access human genetics but they can pretend to do so, in such a way that humans fall for the pretended act, as if staged events were taken for real. In this respect, archons are the ultimate hoaxers. The trick is, if humanity falls under the illusion of superhuman power, it becomes as good as real, a self-fulfilling delusion. This is the essence of archontic intrusion.

In the cosmic perspective, archons present a dynamic aspect of the evolutionary scenario of humankind, through which human potential is tested. The Gnostic view of their role closely matches the "flyers" in *The Active Side of Infinity*, the last book of Carlos Castaneda, who says that the flyers are "the means by which the universe tests us." There are numerous close [parallels](#) between Castaneda and Gnostic teachings.

This profile of the archons is not speculative. It follows what can be gathered from the Gnostic writings. For instance, NHC texts describe how the archons [attempted to rape Eve](#)—clearly a mythological rendition of genetic intervention. Such passages appear to support the claims of alien interbreeding so widely discussed today. But in the Gnostic account, the alien intruders did not succeed in this act of cross-species intervention: they *tried* but *failed*.

The notion that archons present a test to humanity—explicitly stated by Castaneda if one accepts the archon/flyers correlation—can also be traced in some NHC writings, especially *The Apochryon of John*. That text suggests that the Aeon Sophia, the cosmic intelligence of the earth, engages the archon species and uses their deviant and deceptive influence for such a purpose. The account of how the overlord of the authorities "committed adultery with Wisdom (Sophia)" and binds humanity to "a chain of blind compulsion (*hiermarmene*)" is baffling, to say the least (NHC II, 1:28.16). To sort out and clarify what the Sophianic narrative may have to say about the test of the archons is a great challenge to our understanding of the Gnostic message and how it can benefit humanity today.

## Cosmic Error

The sacred creation story of the Mysteries ([Sophia Mythos](#)) explains that the archons arise due to an anomaly in the cosmic order. "The world system we inhabit came about by a mistake" (NHC II, 3:75.5). This startling line alludes to the Gnostic view that the planetary system we inhabit resulted from the impact of a massive power surge from the galactic center—in mythological terms, the "fall" of the goddess Sophia. Sweeping over a region of lifeless atomic matter in the galactic limbs, this tsunami of core energy produced a planetary system complete with a resident species, the locust-like archons. At first the planetary system was a merely whirlpool of agitated matter, like a beehive under construction with bees swarming around it. Then it became centered on a newborn star, the sun of our solar system.

The fallen goddess myth says that the earth was not formed in the same manner as the rest of the solar system. The other planets conglomerated from vast fields of inert atomic dust, but the earth *grew organically from the original plume of core energy*: that is, from Sophia's alive, animating, self-awareness, a pure torrent of galactic luminosity (Organic Light). Weird as it might sound, this view is not incompatible with modern astronomy. Science affirms that the

solar system at large is dominated by inorganic chemistry that does not support life as it occurs in the terrestrial biosphere, where organic chemistry is the norm. This being so, how did the organic, life-bearing part of the solar system, the planet earth, evolve from the non-organic part that does not support life as it appears in the terrestrial habitat? Are we to assume that the anomaly of organic life within the solar system evolved from the inorganic planetary matrix, that life evolved from the non-living? If that were so, how it could happen has not been demonstrated or proven by science. It has been assumed as a dogma (called *abiogenesis*), but not proven.

Were they here today, Gnostics would argue that the solar system has two distinct dynamics, organic and inorganic, because the earth is the metamorphosis of a surge of super-alive animating power from the galactic center, while the solar system, the habitat of the archons, is the product of inert atomic matter impacted by that surge. The observation of the difference between the inorganic and organic aspects of our solar system led James Lovelock to formulate the Gaia Hypothesis. In *Not in His Image*, I show how key points of Gaia theory correlate to the Gnostic cosmology of the galleen goddess, Sophia.

Sophia is the name Gnostics gave to the animating intelligence of the earth *before it become this planet*. In their view, the cosmic origin of our planet is present to us here and now as wisdom, the living, all-informing intelligence of nature. Sophia is the *Anima Mundi*, the soul of the world.

## Cuneiform Lies

So, the earliest surviving documents *in book form*, the Nag Hammadi Codices found in Egypt in 1945, contain an account of alien intrusion with descriptive clues on the physical form of the intruders. But what about the *earliest known writings in any form*? Archeologists tell us that cuneiform writing was invented in Mesopotamia around 3200, long before bound books appeared. The cuneiform record on clay tablets presents a fascinating repertoire of stories about human prehistory. Cuneiform texts such as Atrahasis, Enuma Elish, and Enki and World Order, describe an alien race called the Annunaki, “those who from heaven to earth came,” as Zechariah Sitchin translates that term. Sitchin is well-known for densely researched books on the Annunaki, whom he identifies with the Biblical Nephilim and “the Watchers” of the *Book of Enoch*. These are alien entities who “came into the daughters of men,” as Genesis says. In short, they interbred with the human race.

Assumed to be factual, the Sumerian tablets give an account of alien intervention upon humankind by a master race from another world or dimension. This is the Annunaki script, as I call it. Sitchin and many others take this script for a record of *actual events* in prehistory. The tablets describe two Annunaki leaders, Enki and his half-sister Ninhursag, who produce a hybrid slave race by mixing their divine genes with the inferior genes of the *lu-lu*, the indigenous ape-like peoples of the planet. Thus, an alien “interbreeding program” is central to the Annunaki narrative. This is also a key event in the “reptilian agenda.” Indeed, it may be considered the *foundation myth* of that agenda. A foundation myth is a story that legitimates a social or cultural custom or order. It is worth noting that the Annunaki script is the foundation myth of theocracy, rulership by the gods or descendents of the gods. The ancient theocrats



claimed descent from the reptilian alien race.

It is an indisputable fact that this story is written down in the oldest surviving records, but is the story *itself* a fact? And if Annunaki intervention were not a fact, but a fiction presented as fact, how would we know? How would we be able to tell the difference? What critical faculties would be required for such an exercise of discernment?

How amazing it is that the *oldest known writings* and the *earliest surviving books* both tell the same story! The cuneiform tablets and the Nag Hammadi books both describe an alien intervention scenario. To my knowledge, no attention has yet been given to this remarkable coincidence.

But hold on a second. There is a huge difference in the way these two sources handle the foundation myth of the reptilian agenda. The cuneiform record presents alien intervention as if it were solid fact, an event that really happened in prehistory. By contrast, Gnostic writings in the NHC put the story of the Annunaki (there called archons) in the cosmological perspective of the fallen goddess myth, then analyze and deconstruct it in quite rigorous terms. The trained seers of the Mysteries had a definite fix on the Annunaki, including a view of their origins and motives, and within that view, they took a critical approach to intervention. In short, they deconstructed the Sumerian narrative and exposed part of it to be a fabrication, a lie.

The cuneiform record itself is just a story, without critical commentary. We are not told the source of the story, who authored it. By contrast, we know that the NHC texts come from Gnostic sects of the pre-Christian Mysteries. Although the authors remain almost all anonymous, we know them as having been participants in that ancient tradition of spiritual education, the Mystery Schools. The resident seers of those organizations took special interest in a panoramic view of human evolution, with particular attention to interference from non-human channels, but they did not report that the human species has been engineered by alien forces. Several passages in the NHC describe the "alien interbreeding program," yes, but always treating it as a *failed venture*:

The Archons came to Adam. When they saw Eve talking to him they said to each other, 'What sort of creature is this luminous woman?' ... Now come, let us lay hold of her and cast our seed into her, that she may become soiled and unable to access her inner light. Then those who she bears will be under our charge... But Eve, being a free power, laughed at their decision. She put mist in their eyes [and escaped them]." (*On the Origin of the World*, NHC II, 5 : 116.10ff)

This is one of several riveting passages that show Eve, the primal woman who represents the human race, outwitting the archons. Another text describes how Eve leaves her "phantom image" for the archons to defile, but they are unable to access her body, i.e., human genetic structure. If the Gnostics knew what they were talking about, and were not themselves merely fabricating a tall tale, the Archon/Annunaki race did *attempt* to interbreed with humanity, but failed.

If this is true, the cuneiform record is a lie, a deliberate fiction intended to deceive. It is *mythological disinformation*. That possibility must be allowed, but can it be investigated?

Consider this: actual alien intervention in human genetics would have an effect, obviously, but *equally so would a false claim of intervention* were it taken for real. The physical and evolutionary effect of genetic intervention would, however, be impossible to trace without samples of pre-intervention DNA to compare to modern DNA. So, even if it is literally true, the cuneiform story cannot be confirmed, or refuted, scientifically.

### Testing Credulity

Consider what effects might arise if human beings held the fictional story of intervention to be true. To get an idea of what can happen when people believe a false story, consider the panic reaction to Orson Welles's [radio program](#), "The War of the Worlds," announcing an invasion by Martians. The invasion was a fiction but it produced a massive panic, as if it were really happening. This famous stunt (regarded by some today as a government- backed psi-ops experiment on the public) exemplifies the archontic power of HAL, simulation. The power of a HOAX happens to be extremely strong in human reality, due to the gullibility of our species combined with our high imaginative talent, i.e., the capacity to live our mental fictions and inventions.

It is a well-known truism of psychology that the subconscious mind cannot distinguish fact from fiction. Normally, we rely on the conscious rational mind to make that judgment. Most people can rationally choose fact over fiction, if the choice is clear, and, most important, if the conditions for making a choice are provided. But what if they are not provided? If you are presented, say, with a fake terrorist alert, you will be strongly inclined to react *as if it were real* unless you have preponderant evidence to the contrary. Psi-ops tactics use the dynamic of the subconscious mind, unable to discern fact from invention, to subvert the operations of the rational mind, thus breaking down and overpowering the capacity for discrimination and choice. Trick someone in that way and you have them in control, under your "authority". Although in fact you command no real power of them, the fabrication taken for real commands the mind and actions of those so duped. In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist events, many people around the world have had occasion to consider the archontic power of simulation.

There is no way to prove the effects of actual genetic intervention in a remote time, but the effects of a hoax purporting such intervention can be investigated. Gnostic seers appear to have understood that the interventional power of the archons is pure fakery, like the special effects of the Wizard of Oz. But for humanity, imagination is powerfully real and directs our purposeful behavior in a crucial way: we have first to imagine a goal or objective in order to pursue it. Presented with a decoy in place of a real objective, we will pursue the decoy and adapt our behavior to a false set of events. The Sophianic story about the testing of the archons may refer to the risk of pursuing fake objectives, such as a "war on terror," when we fail to apply our intelligence to the quest for a true version of events.

The archon story tests us, perhaps more than the Archons themselves do, or can do. The intervention story tests human credulity and poses a riddle: *Do you accept the power of your imagination to invent something that comes true, and use it in that way, or are you in default imaginatively, overpowered by an invention that pretends to be true?*

The "Reptilian Agenda" propounded by David Icke and others is an extrapolation of the

Sumerian cuneiform story. If the Gnostic critique of the Annunaki script is correct, this would amount to the unwitting perpetuation of an ancient hoax. Icke and others such as Michael Tsarion and Jordan Maxwell appear to be completely uninformed about Gnostic teachings on the archons. If so, they cannot benefit from the critical commentary of those veteran seers and clairvoyants, the initiates of the Mystery Schools. Moreover, they do not question Sitchin's weak points: namely, his inability to confirm the return of Nibiru, the home planet of the Annunaki, by astronomical science, and his failure (or refusal) to describe their physical appearance. Most ET speculators who follow Sitchin assume the Annunaki are reptilians: for instance, R. A. Boulay in *Flying Serpents and Dragons*—an excellent book, by the way, and more deeply researched than Sitchin in some ways.

### Serpentine Wisdom

Another account of the failed rape of Eve occurs in *The Reality of the Archons*, NHC II, 4. Here again the Mystery teachers offer wise counsel concerning the reptilian factor in human evolution. According to the Gnostics, the *serpent* in the Garden of Eden was a benefactor because it advised the first humans to eat the forbidden fruit that opened their eyes to heightened or paranormal perception. *The Reality of the Archons* says explicitly

The female spiritual principle came through the snake, the instructor.

This passage identifies the psychophysical energy known in Asian mystical practices as kundalini, the serpent power. This electricity-like spiralling energy belongs equally to the cosmos, the earth, and the human body, integral to our corporeal and spiritual make-up. It has been universally equated with goddess divinities or shaktis. Raising kundalini is the aim of yogic practices that have persisted for thousands of years. The serpentine power is also the form of divine energy-intelligence witnessed by countless people who have undergone ayahuasca trance. Veteran shamans assert that this serpentine power is an actual dynamism of nature, a supernatural creature to be encountered in the altered state of ayahuasca trance, over and over again. Sacha Mama, the great serpentine wisdom goddess of the Amazon, is identical with the Rainbow Serpent of the Australian Aborigines. Countless other examples and parallels of the "female spiritual principle" could be given.

But note carefully: this telluric vision serpent is not a *reptilian* entity. A serpent is a reptile, but not every reptile is a serpent. An iguana, a salamander, a monitor lizard from Indonesia—these are reptiles, but not serpents. No one mistakes a lizard for a garden snake. The snake exhibits a particular legless morphology of the reptilian class of creatures, distinct and separate from other reptilians. But where in all the accounts and analyses of the reptilian agenda, does anyone make this obvious distinction? Nowhere. So far.

### Wisdom Endowment

Whatever the threat to humanity, real or imagined, coming from reptilians such as the scaley overload of the Gnostic archons, the gift of the serpent power is clear. In all esoteric systems, eastern and western, the serpent is the agent and symbol of wisdom—Sophia. In Asia and the Western Mysteries, masters of the coiling energy were called "serpents of wisdom." They were teachers, healers, and guides, not power-crazed theocrats or tyrants who claimed descent from

alien serpent gods. Gnostic initiates and their counterparts in the ancient world never claimed to be descendents of off-planet deities, as theocratic rulers did, citing the Annunaki script.

The benevolent and healing serpent power is a spiritual birthright that bonds the human species directly to the planetary goddess. Kundalini is essential to the wisdom endowment that nature has implanted in us for sanity. Countless myths attest to the beauty and power of the serpentine connection. Eve, the instructor, did not merely eat the forbidden fruit presented by the snake in Eden. She herself is an instrument of the serpent power. The role of this power as a teacher, healer, and visionary guide to the human species is immeasurably great, and the record of its presence stands out everywhere in ancient mythology, mystical and esoteric traditions, and indigenous lore.

Yet all through David Icke's references to ancient lore in his books, he does not indicate that the serpent power has been considered the ally, healer, and teacher of humanity.

The *form* of the archons or Annunaki ETs is reptilian (*drakonic* in the NHC text), but the *faculty* built into our psychosomatic structure, by which we detect and repel alien intrusion, is serpentine. To confound the divinely endowed serpentine power integral to our biopsychic functions with the alien reptilian menace is grotesque, a ridiculous error. The difference between the two is as clear as day, once it is pointed out. No one doing research into ancient esoteric and mythological lore could fail to note that difference. Yet David Icke gives no indication of doing so anywhere in his writings and talks. He dwells on the reptilian menace as the problem facing humanity, but ignores the serpentine endowment *provided for the solution to that very threat*. He explains in detail the fight-or-flight impulses of the R complex or reptilian brain without a word on the serpent power that resides in the spinal column, informs the subtle anatomy of the chakras, and enlivens the entire network of the autonomic nervous system.

Gnostics from the Mysteries taught that we must recognize our benign serpentine endowment to face the intrusive reptilian influence. *The Gospel of Philip* describes [the use of the serpentine power Kundalini to repel alien intrusion](#). Mystery teachings on sexual mysticism and anointing of the human immune system with Light can be found in my [commentary](#) on that text in the Nag Hammadi reading plan.

Today we hear the wildest claims regarding reptilians, how they manipulated us genetically in ancient times, their horrific rites and shapeshifting powers, how they are running the world, etc. Unfortunately, most of the chatter on the reptilian agenda ends up providing hype for the scaly intruders, who are enormously overrated, I would warn. Gnostics taught that the signature of the archons is HAL, the Coptic word for "simulation." They warned us in no uncertain terms to distinguish between what the archons can actually do, and what they merely *simulate* with the alien technology of VR, virtual reality. These cosmic cousins of ours may be lolling in perverse delight at bringing humanity down to their level, turning us into monsters of aggression and conformity, slavish control-freaks. If they prevail it will be by tricking us to annihilate ourselves. What if arch-CON power looming over us depends upon the CON we perpetrate in our own minds, giving our power away to them?

It will be impossible to see the truth of the archontic test unless we recognize and own the

wisdom that comes down to us from genuine adepts of the Mysteries, men and women who mastered the serpent power, kundalini. Those initiates of the serpent wisdom must be distinguished from the alien reptilians and their human accomplices. There has always been an intrepid corps of enlightened warriors who resist the alien game on this planet, but current discourse on the reptilian agenda, led by David Icke, fails to recognize the nature of the Mystery cells as bastions of resistance. Imagination fuelled by kundalini gives total immunity to alien intrusion, Gnostics taught. There is no hint of this solution coming from David Icke in his recommendations for facing the reptilian assault.

### Icke on Ayahuasca

Icke himself has long maintained that the Mysteries were training schools for the Illuminati, programming centers for the reptilian controllers. He has conflated the ancient agenda of hierarchal mind control with the teachings and practices of the Mysteries. This is dead wrong, and not supported in any way by historical evidence. There is not one single fact or reference in ancient history that shows the Mysteries in that light. By tarring adepts of serpent wisdom with the same brush as the reptilian-inspired Illuminati, Icke grossly misleads his readers. By intention? I would say not. Rather, by lack of qualification in handling the material on sacred mythology and ancient esoteric traditions. Lately, perhaps, he may be taking a different view. His recent book, *Human Race Get Off Your Knees*, contains one sentence that qualifies his previous wholesale condemnation of the Mystery Schools as Illuminati think tanks: "Not all the Mystery Schools were of ill-intent." (p. 58). Well, fancy that, matie.

Also, just in passing, I would note that Icke now places a paramount emphasis on predatory felines, especially the lion. Icke makes the lion the icon and inspiration of humanity's strength to resist the alien predators and their historical game plan, now culminating in the globalist mafia takeover. With some allusion to Andromedan lore, as I like to call it, he traces the preterrestrial history of the human species to the Orion Nebula. According to Zulu shamanic teachings imparted to him by Credo Mutwa, Icke now asserts that "humans are from Orion" (p. 312). The claim that the human genomic template (called Anthropos in Gnostic writings) is nested in the Orion Nebula, and the crucial role of predatory felines in humanity's effort to right our course and align with the planetary animal mother are distinctive elements of the visionary practice developed on this site. And until now these two features have been unique to this site, as far as I know. Is Icke now borrowing some insight or thematic material from [metahistory.org](http://metahistory.org)? That is up to him to say.

It is deeply concerning that Mr. Icke, with all his research into ancient cults and esoteric practices, has not been explicit in separating the benign serpent power from the reptilian menace. *This omission verges on a flat-out dismissal of the divine shakti, the goddess power endowed in the human species.* In some respect, Icke appears unwilling or unable to acknowledge this power. Consider his most recent book, where he describes his experience in an ayahuasca trance. Apparently, a disembodied voice pronounced to him a flurry of New Age platitudes about cosmic unity and divine love. His account of "The Voice" he heard after taking ayahuasca runs against the testimony of South American shamans and Western initiants of the ultimate snake medicine. Testimony on the repeatable and verifiable core of this experience is clear and consistent: namely, the ayahuasca trance *invariably* brings the subject face to face

with a telluric serpent power, the sublime teacher and vision-giver of the medicine, often described as a huge, psychedelically illuminated anaconda. Isn't it odd that when Icke has the opportunity to meet, at first hand, the benign serpentine presence that he so scrupulously ignores in his expose of the reptilians, he entirely misses the chance?

Having taken ayahuasca a few times, I have to say, you can hardly miss that immense, writhing anaconda! Those glistening forty-foot coils are a little hard to overlook. I assume that Mr. Icke is reporting honestly on his ayahuasca session. Apparently, he experienced nothing of the sort. That would make his session a glaring anomaly, an exception to the many accounts of ayahuasca trance initiation. But in all fairness, it does take some people a number of sessions to break open and fully surrender to the awesome presence of the great medicine snake.

[NOTE: For the benefit of those who do not practice shamanic rituals with sacred plants, I ought to point out some, but not all, psychoactive plants, notably iboga, peyote, and ayahuasca, *produce closely similar visions in everyone*. The real hallucinations induced by these plants are consistent, repeatable, and predictable. Shamanic trance is not a game of "anything goes," although unfortunately it is often undertaken in that way by unprepared and untrained people who do not follow safe, well-tested guidelines, or who ingest the plants for the thrill of it, or mere recreational diversion.]

### Channeled Fiction

To return to the coincidence that the oldest bound books and the oldest written records treat the same scenario: The "reptilian agenda" stands or falls on how we view the cuneiform accounts, the oldest version of the alien intrusion plot. It would be irresponsible to ignore the deconstruction of those accounts found in the Nag Hammadi Codices.

Finally, we might ask, Who wrote the cuneiform stories? The answer is, scribes in the service of the Sumerian theocrats. This answer is incomplete, however, because scribes just write things down, they do not originate what they write. Who then *originated* the intervention stories taken down in cuneiform by scribes? I propose that it was soothsayers and advisors in the service of the theocrats, the patriarchal tyrants of the Fertile Crescent. No ancient court was without a "Chaldean" or psychic medium, if not a whole team. Is it surprising that psychics advising the theocrats would produce a story to please their masters: specifically, a story making the tyrants out to be descendents of "gods" and, at the same time, slaves (albeit privileged ones) to the higher race that claims to have created them? This message is schizophrenically ambivalent, and as such totally consistent with the split-mind bias of channeled material and the mentality that produces it.

The *Second Treatise of the Great Seth* in the NHC asserts the bold heretical view that Abraham, Moses, the Patriarchs, and even Jesus the Messiah, were duped by archons. They suffered a false sense of grandiosity based on the illusion of being chosen by the off-planet father god, Jehovah, whom Gnostics identified with the archon overlord, a nasty reptilian called Ialdabaoth. The same observation of duping can be applied to the egomaniacal patriarchs who founded the first city-states in the Near East. They bought the Annunaki script hook, line, and sinker because it fed their pretensions of descent from superhuman masters, and legitimated their enslavement of the general populace. The story telepathically received by their advising

soothsayers was highly appealing because *it provided a divine mandate for their schemes of world domination*. La plus ça change...

The more it changes, the more it stays the same. The picture of global *realpolitik* is not much different today. In fact, it's identical, and Icke is really on target on that point, but he misses the Gnostic warning about archontic fakery. Now as way back then, reptilians may appear to be running the show, but this can be so only if human complicity, and credulity, enable them to maintain the illusion of power they do not have.

In reality, the "authorities" rule by the power of illusion, not actual and veracious power. Gnostics would insist that actual power on earth *comes from the earth* through humanity's bond to the planetary goddess whose name is wisdom, and whose instrument is serpentine.

It may be that the archons fed the Annunaki script to ancient mediums to plant a lie in human imagination, as a test Sophia allows them to perform. (Such would be my best shot at a brief paraphrase of the baffling passage in *The Apocryphon of John*.) If the cuneiform stories are the product of psychic channeling in ancient times, they are no different than tales of Ramtha coming from j z knight. How reliable is such material? The scant material surviving in the NHC reflects the record of trained seers who worked in teams over millennia to explore the supernatural and investigate the prehistory of the human species. The Gnostics who detected the archons were experts in parapsychology who had a cosmic perspective centered on the divine intelligence of the earth. They learned directly from disciplined trance instruction giving them access to the planetary mind. They incorporated their learning in thousands of books and founded spiritual universities where they served as the teachers and vocational advisors of the ancient world. They preserved in imagination and practice the connection to the divine source of our species, the Pleroma, or galactic center. How reliable is *that*, compared to spoonfed revelations coming from a psychic medium?

The rigorous critical skills of the Gnostics can serve us well today. The reptilian agenda in its modern elaboration needs to be entirely reexamined in the light of archon theory from the Mysteries. The first step in confronting the reptilian menace is to set the story straight and see the disinformation in the cuneiform scenario, to name the game of alien deception, as Gnostics themselves did.

### Fabulating Jesus Why Gnostic "Codes" Do Not Name the Historical Jesus

On this site and in my book *Not in His Image* I have argued that "Jesus," considered as the proper name of an assumed-to-be historical person, does not appear in the Gnostic Coptic writings. The same applies for the term "Christ" understood as the Incarnation or Son of God celebrated in the theology of Saint Paul and Saint John. In *Not in His Image* I wrote:

In the Coptic Gnostic material the names Jesus and Christ are never written in full, but indicated by code such as the letters *IS* with a bar over them. Scholars routinely fill in the blanks, making *IS* into I(eseo)S, the Greek form of the Hebrew name Yeshua. They do so with considerable poetic license, for there is no textual evidence to support the assumption that in Gnostic usage *IS* indicated a historical person named Ieseos, Jesus. *IS* could as well be



translated in another way: I(asiu)S, giving the name Iasius, "the healer," a title rather than a common name. But translators assume that IS indicates Jesus of the New Testament. In short, scholars do not allow us the chance to consider that IS might indicate anything else but a literal person whose identity is predetermined.

The same applies for Christ. The code for Christ is XS or sometimes XRS, which could as well indicate Christos, or even Chrestos. In Coptic it looks like this: XC, with a bar over the letters. *X* is the Greek letter chi and *C* is the Coptic *S*. Scholars fill in XC so that it reads "Christ," never "Christos," even though "Christos" is more consistent with the final *S*. Where XC appears in the Apocryphon of John, for instance, scholars put the Greek *Christos* in parenthesis but translate the coded word as "Christ." Doing so, they immediately equate XC with the well-known entity of Pauline and Johannine theology. Again, this is poetic license. Considering all the Gnostic material that argues against the Pauline-Johannine redeemer, this equation is extremely dubious.

#### Forum Protest

I do not belong to palmtreeforum, a locus of Gnostic discussions, because I will not comply with their rule to refrain from religion-bashing. Among the aspects of "Lashean Gnosticism" discussed on that forum is the issue of the nomina sacra, the coded terms presumed to stand for Jesus Christ of the New Testament. Since I cannot respond in the forum itself, I will use this digression to further clarify my view of the nomina sacra.

One forum contributor wrote:

*I've been studying Coptic for two whole years now. In that time I've read a great deal of Coptic manuscripts of a wide spectrum from proto-orthodox, orthodox, Gnostic, Manichean, to laundry bills and legal documents. One thing consistently attested in all these diverse genres is nomina sacra, the use of abbreviations like the ones Lash is discussing here (yes, even on laundry bills). In the entire span of these works the abbreviations XS, XRS, and IS all refer to the character understood by the authors as a historical person referred to as Jesus-the-Christ.*

*In asserting that there is "no firm ground" for assuming these codes do in fact refer to Jesus, Lash is ignoring the entire context of Coptic literature. There is even less firm ground for assuming that these were codes for Pagans (IE there is no external attestation to this being the case anywhere at any time) so he sets up a perceived conspiracy here to support his view:*

"I argue that nomina sacra were used deliberately to indicate that Christ and Jesus, as understood in conventional terms, were not meant. The codes were intended to warn us off literal associations. The scribes who translated the Gnostic materials into Coptic were, I believe, instructed to use these codes, probably without knowing why."

*The old men-in-black defense. The codes were widely used, so pagan conspirators must have used commonly Christian abbreviations to hide their pagan notions. What's his evidence? He doesn't provide any except his speculation that it is what Pagans would have done to hide their views from the oppressive Orthodox Christian establishment - which wasn't around during the composition of any of these texts!*

Backlash, I

In the first place, I do not claim that "pagan conspirators" lurking in the shadows inserted the codes. I claim that scribes *were instructed to use the codes* by whoever directed them and oversaw the transcriptions that come down to us in the NHC materials. Who commissioned these transcriptions from (presumed) lost Greek original texts into Coptic? No one knows. Why were the Greek-language writings translated into Coptic at all? No one knows. Did those who commanded the translations do so to preserve Gnostic ideas, or to refute them? No one knows.

We do know, however, that Coptic was a language invented (around 100 CE) to transcribe hieroglyphs at a time when few people remained in Egypt who could read them, and that subsequently Coptic became the official language of the Egyptian Christian monastic movement. Presumably, by the middle of the 4th century CE when the Nag Hammadi books were buried, Coptic was used mainly by Egyptian monks who had been converted to an early form of Christianity—the desert monastic movement. It is known that the leaders of these cenobite boot camps, such as Shenoute of Athribis, were rabid ideologues who openly advocated violent means to suppress and eradicate all that remained of non-Christian culture. From *Not in His Image*:

Just across the river from Dendera are the ruins of an early Coptic monastery, Tabennisi. At the time the codices were hidden in a cave around 345 C.E., the founder of the monastery, the cenobitic monk Pachomius, had just died. A generation later, the monastery came under the control of Shenoute of Athribis (348–466), the leading figure in the Coptic Christian church and a close ally of Cyril of Alexandria, the man who probably orchestrated the murder of Hypatia. To his dismay, Shenoute discovered that a small remnant of persecuted Gnostics had taken refuge in the Temple of Hathor. He wrote to Cyril that the heretics possessed “books full of abominations” that must surely be destroyed. Shenoute commanded the Gnostics to renounce their perverted beliefs and accept Cyril as their spiritual master. When the heretics resisted, Shenoute warned them in no uncertain terms: “I shall make you acknowledge the archbishop Cyril, or else the sword will wipe out most of you, and moreover those of you who are spared will go into exile.”

Yet it was men such as Shenoute who oversaw the transcription of Greek-language Gnostic writings into Coptic. Or was it? Could the scribes who copied—NOT authored—these lost documents have been closet heretics, friends or students of Gnostic holdouts like those who took refuge at Dendera, or native Egyptians faithful in some manner to the sacred pre-Christian traditions of their land? We simply don't know if the scribes of the NHC were Christian monks robotically following orders, or if they were a straggling remnant of students of the Egyptian Mysteries who, for some odd reason, chose to preserve jumbled notes from their instruction in

the language of the Christianized conquerers.

If they were monks of the Coptic Christian Church, their assigned purpose in transcribing these materials would have been to Christianize or refute them. That is, I think, an obvious and reasonable hypothesis.

If they were Gnostic diehards or sympathetic to such, they would have tried to preserve as much genuine Gnostic content as possible while shackled with the daunting task of hiding their intentions; thus resulting in the terrible mish-mash we find. This is also, I submit, a reasonable hypothesis.

The incoherence of these materials, and the maddening mix of Christian and non-Christian elements, suggests to me that Coptic-speaking monks transcribed a hodge-podge of received materials that they could barely understand. The huge range of scribal errors and inconsistencies lend support to this view.

## Backlash, II

The forum contributor flatly states: *In the entire span of these works the abbreviations XS, XRS, and IS all refer to the character understood by the authors as a historical person referred to as Jesus-the-Christ.*

Okay, let's take a step or two back and look at this claim. What it says is that *scholars today agree* on what the codes mean, but this is no assurance of *what the codes meant to the people who originated them*. I ask, Where in the writings of that time and setting do we find anything that explains who set up the nomina sacra and why? I would like to see that information in the textual sources of the 4th century CE, or earlier.

I don't know who established the scribal conventions found in the NHC. I presume it was not the scribes themselves, but whoever oversaw them. Would this have been the head honchos in the hierarchy of the Christian Coptic Church, men like Shenoute? Probably. In that case, are we to assume that the overseers insisted on the codes to specify allusion to Jesus Christ of the New Testament? But if they were so adamant about that identification, why use codes? Why not be literal and totally straightforward in naming the intended person? Wouldn't such literalness be consistent with the attitude of the early Church Fathers regarding the historical value of their sacred narrative? If we assume that the overseers imposed the code, we are left wondering why they, who advocated the literal Jesus and elevated that human figure to a divine status, would have encoded His Name?

Bear in mind that examples of the nomina sacra other than IC and XRS occur in the Nag Hammadi books. The *Apocalypse of Adam* (V, 5) shows these names in code or full spelling with the superlinear mark: Seth, Adam, Eve (Euha), Deucalion (a figure from Greek myth), Ham, Japeth and Shem (sons of Noah), Sakla (a name for the Demiurge), Abrasax, Sablo, Gamaliel (Gnostic magical deities), the word Pneuma (spirit in Greek), Phersalo and Sauel, the word Aeon, Michou, Michar and Mnesinous (Gnostic angelic spirits), and Yesseus Mazareus Yessedekus (invocatory name for the "Spirit of the Living Waters"). The name Noah, by

contrast, is not coded, and Adam is inconsistently coded.

Now, I don't think that any scholar would argue that these nomina sacra refer to historical persons known actually to have lived in the early Christian era. So why should XC and XRC be any different? If the scribal convention was such, where is the textual proof in the words of those who introduced that convention? Lacking such proof, the accepted view of modern scholars about the XC and XRC is mere speculation. And my speculation is as good as theirs.

I argue that the Coptic IC, Greek IS, can indicate I(asiu)S rather than I(eseo)S, the Greek spelling of Jesus.

The whole issue hinges on sacramentalism, actual or symbolic enentheogenic ingestion. Many Gnostics practiced actual enentheogenic ingestion, and came to identify the enentheogen with *Iasius*, "the Healer," Jesus. The canonical fascists, bent on political conquest of the Empire, insisted on symbolic enentheogenic ingestion, murdered both the original Nazarenes and their early Gnostic followers, and burned their writings.

- Dan Russell: *Shamanism, Patriarchy, and the Drug War*

Okay, palmtreegarden folks, take a bite of that one. I for one do not accept the direct identification of Jesus/Iasius with an enentheogenic sacrament, but many people now do. A growing number, so it appears. I argue rather that the codes XC and XRC, along with the other coded examples cited above, were applied to mythological source material from Pagan traditions. For the "canonical fascists" who had to treat heretical writings in order to oppose them, this material was highly ambiguous and had to be defused. Its original allusions had to be subverted. Adam, for instance, could be understood in the Gnostic sense as the "first human" or Anthropos, not a literal male ancestor; but thought police like Shenoute would have insisted on the single, literal interpretation. It would have been to their advantage to put this tricky material in question by encoding it, thereby, in a sense, asserting their sovereign right to declare what the code meant. A clever way of saying, "We have made this name into an object of our privileged knowledge, and you must ask us what it means."

But insistence on a literal identity for XC and XRC by the Church fathers did not, and does not, obviate the rich alternative allusions that long predate the patristic ruse—if such it was. I challenge any scholar today to tell me that Deucalion, the mythological name found in encoded form in the NHC, was an historical person, and nothing but that.

### Backlash III

The forum contributor accuses me of "the old men-in-black defense." Well, I don't know any old men in black, although I do know some women who dress in that color, including wide-mesh stockings held up by garter belts embellished with Gnostic amulets of Chnuphis the serpent god engraved in amber and jade. Recently, I asked one of these mystical harlots about pagan notions hidden in secret codes in the NHC. She laughed and said, "That's wild stuff, but there are more pagan notions hidden in my undies than you will find concealed in the entire Gnostic corpus. But seriously, John," she added, "Does this guy make you out saying that *pagans* did the NHC translations, and inserted the codes? You had better clarify that matter,

dear man, wearisome though it be."

I suspect that the forum contributor and I agree on the grounds of historical evidence that Christian Coptic scribes, not pagans, transcribed the Nag Hammadi texts—although I must emphasize, once again, that *the people who wrote down the codices did not author them*, and probably did not in many places understand what they were translating. The forum contributor insists that the nomina sacra refer to "*the character understood by the authors as a historical person referred to as Jesus-the-Christ.*" But, oops, we don't know who the *authors* of the NHC were, do we? And besides, it was not the authors of the lost originals who applied the codes, it was the *translators*. Wasn't it?

If this was the case, either the transcribing monks invented the nomina sacra themselves, or they were instructed to use them by their overseers. I go for the latter explanation, which leaves us baffled as to who so instructed them, and why, as I have already noted. We just don't know, period. Houston, we have a problem.

But here it's more appropriate to say: Jerusalem, we have a problem. We are delving here into an operation run by "mission control" in Jerusalem, either symbolically or literally speaking.

Wrongly assuming that I claim that pagan conspirators inserted the codes, my palmtreegarden interlocutor says, "*there is no external attestation to this being the case anywhere at any time.*" True enough. And it is equally true, as far as I know, that there is "*no external attestation*" to support the opinion of modern scholars that XC and XRC refer expressly to the "*historical person referred to as Jesus-the-Christ.*" If there is external attestation of this kind, let's see it. Then we would know who introduced the codes and why!

### Extraneous Nitpicking Detail

The forum contributor adds: "Pagans were the dominant culture and would have had no reason whatsoever to hide their beliefs in code." Get your nose out of those Coptic laundry lists and look at the history books. In 391, about fifty years after the Nag Hammadi codices were buried, Theodosius declared Christianity to be the official religion of the Empire, and strictly banned all Pagan cults. The tide had been turning against Pagan religion and the Mysteries for centuries. From the initial attacks on Gnostics by Christian ideologues around 150 CE, the atmosphere of tolerance was disintegrating sharply in the classical world. The thought police and their mindless mobs had proven what they could do to the opposition many times over. In the 4th century CE, Pagans had good reason to be cautious about expressing their views.

### Gnostic Dissent

So, what's it all about, after all? This is not just a nit-picking argument about Coptic scribal conventions, *it is a battle over narrative control*. To insist that XC and XRC name the historical person Jesus, also regarded as the Son of God and divine savior of humanity, is to insist that such a person existed to be named: this is the real core of the argument.

But I maintain that such an alleged historical person, attributed with a divine status or not, never did exist, and so the codes could not have named him. *The codes could have been introduced*

*by the Church Fathers to enforce the fabulation of that person, but not to prove his existence.* The nomina sacra prove nothing, and are better read as ambivalent mythological allusions. The scholarly consensus that the codes name Jesus assumes there was a Jesus to name, but the overwhelming weight of textual and historical evidence *and* disinterested opinion on the history of Christinaity shows, first, the complete lack of any reliable contemporary report of Jesus's existence, and second, the ambiguous use of Christ, Christos, Chrestos and Chrestus in canonical writings well into the 5th century. Even Saint Paul, the indisputable founder of Christian salvationist ideology (which he hijacked from the Zaddikim and distorted to his own ends, or to the agenda of his Roman paylords), totally disregards the historical existence of the Savior.

When all the sizzling nits fade into the void, this is what the contributor to palmtreegarden is doing: enforcing the fabulation of Jesus. To insist that the Coptic codes name an historical person is to affirm the existence of that person. For all I know, the contributor may not even believe that Jesus existed historically, but he does adopt the scholarly consensus that the codes were intended to name the key figure of Christianity whose fictional persona was still under construction in the 4th Century CE. I sense, however, that the contributor and the scholars in whom he trusts do indeed accept that Jesus Christ lived as an historical person whose existence is provable. They follow the fundamentalist and literalist view of JC.

Well, that's fine. So do many other unenlightened dolts on this planet. But it is eminently clear to some of us that since the time of Renan and Schweitzer, the historical Jesus has been shown to be a fiction, an obvious fabulation and, even more so, a confabulation that arises from the blind collusion of many confused and often hateful people. It's up to each one of us to make up our own mind and decide where we stand in that collusion, or if we stand against it. There is no compromise on Jesus. Gnostic dissent is a radical option, not a reconciliatory stance.

In protesting the attribution of XS and XRC, I rely on my scholarship, such as it is, and I am also demonstrating Gnostic dissent. As a scholar, I refuse to support the confabulation of Jesus and collude in inventing the Savior. I take no part in the ongoing fabrication of the delusional image of Jesus. I reject all messiahs, but first and foremost *that* one.

I am quite willing, on occasion, to take a lesson in scribal conventions from a serious person, but these matters go far deeper than such quibbles. I leave you with this question,

What is the point of getting involved with Gnostic writings, if we ignore the power of dissent from the savior program inherent to the Pagan Gnostic message, and merely use scholarship as a pretext to continue fabulating Jesus, the divine victim whose exalted doom so contaminates the world he came to save?

## The Tyranny of Faith

### Reflections on the Death of a Patriarch

As I write these words, an estimated three million people are gathered in Rome to observe the funeral services of Pope John Paul II who died on April 3. The figure is impressive, and this is just the people who have come to Rome for the event, not those already there. News commentators marvel at this tremendous “outpouring of humanity.” On the day of the event, and for long afterwards, we can expect to be barraged by close-up images of people in prayer, bereaved, devout, reverent, their faces and indeed their entire bodies seized by deep emotion.

What are they feeling? What do they believe? Why are they there?

### The Placebo Effect

We tend to assume we all know the answers to these questions, more or less clearly. We also assume that those participating in the event also know the answers.

Granted, the participants know why they are there. They are moved by emotions rooted in their faith, and they have reasons relating to their deepest, most cherished beliefs concerning God, humanity, and the world. The strength of their faith does not incline them—nor does it permit them—to put any of these factors in question. At a moment such as this, faith prevails. Faith leads. Faith decides how people will act by a power all its own.

Faith may be defined as the power invested in beliefs, but, more precisely, the power invested in *unquestioned* beliefs. It could as well be said: the power *derived* from unquestioned beliefs. The strength of faith consists in its not being questioned, challenged, doubted. Once it is put in doubt, faith weakens. Hence, the beliefs associated with faith must remain unquestioned for faith to stand.

The dynamic of faith is extremely difficult to grasp, because faith seems to have an almost magical ability to grant power to those who give power to it. This dynamic has been called *the placebo effect*. It works with many things, from medicines to mantras. The efficacy of a placebo inheres in a feedback loop: it gives power to those who give it power. For instance, taking the Host at Mass gives power to those who give it power. To those who give it no power, it is ineffectual.

However, the placebo effect does not consist just in this two-way exchange. There is a trick involved: the returning power of the placebo (be it an object, such as the Host, or an idea, such as grace) *appears to be independent of the power granted to it in the first place*. The feedback is effective, and tends to quell any doubting or critical observation, because the way it works tends to conceal the true nature of this exchange: giving away power to get power. Those who receive the Host in Catholic mass, believing in the independent power of the Host, get back far more through their faith than they give. Or so it appears.

But the operation of faith here is deceiving. We are not yet at the core dynamic of the placebo effect. There is another layer of dissimulation at work. The placebo effect makes it appear as if believers get more than they give (first level of dissimulation), but in reality believers may be giving more than they get (the second, deeper level of dissimulation). The placebo effect is wonderful, and really works, otherwise there would not be so many deeply religious people in



the world, but what goes without notice is the investment that must be made to get a convincing return.

It has been said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, but a little faith can also be dangerous. The old adage suggests that knowledge becomes safer as it increases. Unlike knowledge, faith can become even more dangerous as it increases. Its hidden dynamic makes it almost impossible for the faithful to see what they are giving in return for the boost they get from their beliefs. And the bigger the boost of faith, the more must be given. It could happen that believers give away what is most precious in their humanity, that which lives in the unsounded depths of human potential, without knowing what they are losing, or even that they are losing anything at all. The returning effect of faith, the boost, fills the void inside, but never fills it completely, for *the power rendered to the placebo always exceeds the power that comes back from it*. The second dissimulation, hiding what is given away, conceals the huge inequality that makes the exchange work so effectively. The inability to see this double-dissimulating dynamic, and measure its toll upon the human spirit, is the immense, unspeakable tragedy of human faith.

### Prudential Morality

The Abrahamic religions have existed since 600 BCE (Judaism, founded on the codification of the Torah under King Josiah), 33 CE (Christianity, founded on the fable of the god-man, Jesus Christ) and 600 CE (Islam, founded on a book attributed to a male “prophet” whose authority exceeds all others), and humanity may not be getting any better for them. The trajectory of these 2600 years is one long jagged plunge into terror and destruction. Whatever good has been achieved in the name of these religions (and may well have been achieved without them, if we believe in the basic goodness of humanity – more below) has been massively overruled by the behavioral insanity demonstrated through the ages by believers, behavior that is now culminating in the threat of a global holocaust, eagerly awaited, and perhaps deliberately precipitated, but a great number of the faithful.

Things in the world stand today as they have for a long time already: the most violent, threatening developments on the planet are driven by religious beliefs drawn from the three Abrahamic creeds. The worst hatred confronting humanity is, and always has been, “sectarian” hatred. Why?

One explanation is: Abrahamic religion is the supreme expression of patriarchy, and patriarchy, by definition, is a program of control by covert psychological coercion and overt violence. Patriarchy has been called dominator culture or domination culture. Discussing this term in an interview for *The Sun Magazine*, Marshall Rosenberg closely relates the act of domination to “salvationism.” He uses this term in the context of research conducted by Milton Rokeach:

- **Rosenberg:** Social psychologist Milton Rokeach did some research on religious practitioners in the seven major religions. He looked at people who very seriously followed their religion and compared them to people in the same population who had no

religious orientation at all. He wanted to find out which group was more compassionate. The results were the same in all the major religions: the nonreligious were more compassionate.

("Beyond Good & Evil: Marshall Rosenberg On Creating a Nonviolent World," in *The Sun*, Issue 326, February 2003. Rosenberg is an author, and founder and director of the Center for Nonviolent Communication: [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org).)

*The Sun* interviewer remarks, "The idea that we are evil and must become holy implies moralistic judgment." Rosenberg replies: "Oh, amazing judgment! Rokeach calls that judgmental group the Salvationists."

Judgment is a basic element in the salvationist program. Jehovah judges, Christ judges, Allah judges. All the creeds are unanimous on this point. Bear in mind that "You are judged by God" is a human statement, made by men who claim to be emissaries of the judgmental father-son deities. This assertion that God judges us exemplifies the tactic of the Abrahamic religions: a man tells us what God wants of us. Presumably, the man who speaks in this way has been previously briefed by God. That is an issue of faith. Patriarchal religion demands that we believe the men who speak for God, that we take them on their word, which is God's word. And consistent with the violence inherent to patriarchy, the word of God is threatening, menacing. God judges you, so you must do this and that in order to be well judged, to get good marks, to have your soul saved by the very entity who threatens to condemn it. The threat tactic is very effective in setting up a social control program.

Millions of people submit to this tactic. Bear in mind, however, that submission is gained from an early age, when the believer-to-be is weak and impressionable. The tactic is applied within families, exerted on children before they can even speak, and enforced in all kinds of ways. No choice is involved in adopting the belief that *God rewards those who obey His rules as defined by the men like John Paul II*. Children have this belief laid into them long before they can question or protest it. Later in life dissent is nearly impossible. The die is cast.

Walter Kaufmann proposed the term "prudential morality" for the kind of behavior that results from threat tactics: people act kindly toward others because it is prudent to do so, because it increases the odds they will be saved and rewarded, rather than damned and punished. In *The Faith of a Heretic*, he makes the observation that "the notion of a deed done for its own sake is unknown in the Old Testament." Everything is done prudentially, as a means to an end. The universal end, the transcendent purpose of doing good, is the eternal salvation of the soul of the doer. It takes faith to act morally, because prudential action assumes that its reward comes in another world, through the agency of an invisible spiritual power, whose existence must be taken on faith.

Kaufmann is one of the rare few who has the courage to argue that morality is possible without coercion, without the prudential ethics policy. This argument is regarded with deep suspicion by people of strong faith, because religious people consider that irreligious people are, by definition, immoral. The belief that there is no morality without a religious framework (divine commands, reward and punishment for the soul) is a classic example of the placebo effect: the more you believe there can be no morality without religion, the more potent religion becomes in

your life. Kaufmann would observe that in holding this belief, the individual is giving away their power of moral choice, rooted in the essential goodness of human nature. But as we have seen, the hidden dynamic of faith makes it almost impossible for the believers to see what they are giving away to their faith. Or even that they are giving anything away at all.

### Perversely Overwhelmed

In the extortionist framework of patriarchal religion, human action has no authenticity apart from the framework of redemption, human kindness has no value except as a means to an end. A deed done for its own sake, for the pleasure of seeing someone benefit, and, indeed, for the sheer pleasure of performing it, is not forbidden, but it is assumed that we are unlikely to perform such a deed, left to our basic inclinations. To act morally we must go against our natural inclinations, for they will never lead us to do good. The belief hidden in this view of human nature is that we are innately corrupt. Therefore, prudential morality appeals to those who believe they are corrupt. Or, to peer through yet another lay of dissimulation, who have been made to believe they are corrupt.

Patriarchal authorities such as John Paul II insist that we need the Redeemer because we are corrupt. But what if we are corrupted by needing the Redeemer?

The redeemer complex is the set of beliefs that provides the theological basis of the salvationism common to the Abrahamic religions. Many beliefs cluster in this complex, but two are primal and essential: the belief that the suffering of the Redeemer atones for human sin, and the belief that the Redeemer is an immortal, superhuman being. Thus, the Redeemer serves a dual purpose: he insures us that our suffering is meaningful, or will be rewarded or compensated, and he presents an ideal for the world to follow. The ideal (or idol, if you will) is superhuman, and giving credence to the superhuman model of humanity seems to return a terrific boost of faith.

But what is more productive and sane, in human terms: living up to a possible ideal, or to an impossible (i.e., superhuman) one? It is difficult for believers in the redeemer complex to formulate this question. Why? Because the placebo effect operates at a terrific return on the superhuman model: give power to it, and you get or seem to get a lot more back, an enormous return. The belief that human suffering is somehow connected to the suffering of a divine being is probably the most powerful placebo known to humankind. But if the above analysis of the dynamics of faith is true, what has to be given away to get this kind of return?

What if adopting a superhuman model for humanity requires the inner surrender of our humanity? The terrible truth is, it might really be that simple.

The crowds are gathered in Rome to honor the life of a role model for humanity, yes, but they may also be there because they have surrendered something deep in their own humanity, and the aching emptiness so produced acts like a reverse vacuum, sucking them into the collective wave of experience. Faith can reward us generously for what it takes away from us by stealth, through our feat of self-deception.

Does it sound arrogant to propose that millions who are deeply moved by the death of the pope are deluding themselves in their religious beliefs? Perhaps it does, but the suggestion is not original to this writer. Almost two thousand years ago, people in the ancient world who witnessed the rise of the redeemer complex were deeply critical of the what they saw, and deeply concerned about how the salvationist belief-system would affect humanity:

- Those who become enmeshed with the authorities [of the salvationist system] shall become their prisoners, due to their lack of perception. On the guileless, good and pure among you, the authorities will impose a deathlike burden, a kingdom of enslavement for those who expect Christ to restore them. And they will praise those who allow the propagation of falsehood... They will cling to the name of a mere dead man, Jesus, thinking they will become pure. They will become greatly defiled and will fall into the name of error, and under the power of evil, cunning agents and diverse dogmas, they will be perversely overwhelmed.
- (From *The Apocalypse of Peter*, VII, 3.74, Nag Hammadi Codices.)

The people who viewed the emergent religion of Christianity, and its Jewish precedent, the Abrahamic religion of the Torah, in this manner were called *gnostokoi*, "those who know about divine things." They were branded as heretics, persecuted, driven underground, and, in some cases, murdered by the converts to the new religion with its message of peace, tolerance and divine love (if you believe that *was* its message).

### The Gnostic Protest

Heresy derives from a Greek word meaning "able to choose." A heretic is "one who embraces heresy," but heresy is not a preset body of doctrines comparable to the orthodox doctrines it opposes. Heresy is an alternative way of looking at issues that are defined, once and for all, in unchallenged beliefs and doctrinal and dogmatic propositions set forth as the sole truth by self-defined groups or institutions. In all cases of patristic religious extortion, the tradition of orthodoxy relies on a story, a sacred narrative about how certain men, at a certain time and place, received instructions from the Creator God. Whatever does not fit into this story is condemned as heresy. In 425 CE heresy was declared by Roman authorities a crime punishable by death. That law has never been rescinded.

But the Gnostics, as those heretics are now known, challenged male spiritual authority head on. They confronted patriarchy on its deepest terrain, the spiritual control strategy of salvationism. This is not a message of divine truth, they protested, it is a sick, self-consoling deception of the human soul, and the pretext for brutal political ideology.

Christian religion is associated with brotherly love, forgiveness, and acts of altruism. Gnostics did not protest against any of these attributes, but it was also obvious them that Christians did not have a monopoly here. What they rejected specifically was the redeemer complex, a theological system which they, as specialists in divine matters, were well qualified to analyse

and refute.

Christianity is a religion advocated by billions of people, but rarely chosen by anyone. The same could be said of Judaism and Islam, the two other world-scale religions derived from the Abrahamic cult of the ancient Hebrews. Those who belong to these faiths rarely join them by choice. Once joined to the fold of the faithful, they are rarely left free to consider the choice of looking elsewhere. Almost without exception, conversion occurs under huge psychological pressure and mass persuasion. Often it takes the collective mania of 60,000 people in a football stadium to induce it. Cases of individual conversion through visionary experience are extremely rare, and tend to produce borderline heretics, like St Teresa of Avila, who threaten authority and splinter the institution into factions. Those who receive their convictions via family, culture, and race, remain ardently attached to their faith because it gives them identity and solidarity, and because they are not presented with viable alternatives.

Adoption of religious beliefs happens without a critical quest for truth, but the beliefs so adopted *come to be regarded* as absolutely true.

### Evil and Ignorance

If I were mingling among those crowds and let my thoughts be known, the fine young Poles who have ridden 30 hours by train to pay their last respects to the Holy Father would not judge me for my heretical views, or at least they would not let on that they do. I am certain they would find it difficult to admit that they stand in judgement of me, and of themselves... Perhaps they would argue, "No, we do not judge, we cannot. It is God who judges." But this is more self-serving dissimulation. Those young, vibrant people are condemned to judge by their belief in their own corruption, their "fallen state" in theological terms. In Poland strict Catholic education is compulsory from the age of three. Since they could barely talk, they have judged themselves under the coercion of beliefs imposed on them, which they now regard as their most cherished convictions. Patriarchy must first corrupt those it would claim to save through the redeemer complex, because an uncorrupted person would immediately and instinctively reject the idea of redemption.

Like all other adherents to the Salvationist creeds, the young Poles hold their beliefs to be true, but not because they discovered truth in them through the act of searching and questioning, and then embraced the truth so found. Having received their beliefs under coercion and without choice, *they came to regard them as true* after the fact. They embrace Christianity, yes, with all the innocent passion in their hearts, but they did not choose it. Imagine how terrible and humiliating it would be for them to realize that the beliefs they hold so dear are false, deceptive, and harmful.

Yet the most liberating thing that could happen to them, perhaps, would be to realize that they do not really believe, after all, what they have been told to believe. The strength of their faith depends on ignorance, *on their not knowing how they acquired their faith*. The strength does not reside in the faith itself, but it seems to. That is the intrinsic treachery of faith.

Gnostics taught that "ignorance is the mother of all evil." The heretical teachings in the *Gospel of Philip* say:

- So long as the root of evil is hidden, it is strong. But when it is recognized, it is dissolved. When it is revealed, it perishes.... As for ourselves, let each one dig down for the root of evil, and let each one of us pluck it out of our own heart, sieze it at the root. It will be plucked out if we recognize it. But if we are ignorant of it, it takes root in us and produces its fruit in our hearts. It masters us. We are its slave. It takes us captive, to make us do what we do not want, and what we do not want to do, it makes us do. But it is only powerful in this way as long as we do not recognize it.

Gnostics were transcendental humanists who believed that evil is not sin, not a failing in us, not an inherent flaw, but the corruption of our divine potential to know, discriminate, and choose. Evil is our own doing, as patriarchy is our own program. But we do evil out of ignorance, not because we have an innate drive to evil. This, at least, is what Gnostics taught. And it is what most Pagans in the ancient world believed.

To ignore how we acquire faith is a terrible act of abdication that undermines our humanity, even though the faith we embrace seems to enforce and enhance it. The placebo effect again. The tyranny of faith is worst where it binds us to this, the ultimate act of self-betrayal.

### Imagination Denied

Ever since the faux-convert Roman emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion, patriarchy has used the redeemer complex to implement control and repression. Among the things it represses most forcefully is the power of imagination. Theodore Roszak has pointed out the salvationist system of Christian faith favors history over myth and, in doing so, supports the repression of human imagination. In *Where the Wasteland Ends*, he says "there occurred with the advent of Christianity a deep shift of consciousness which has severely damaged the mythopoeic powers [of humankind]" (p. 132). The image of one supreme male divinity is deeply conflictual for our species, yet it suits patriarchal domination to a T. One must wonder if Roman fascist ideology merely merged with salvationism—a marriage of convenience at one historical moment—or if the two systems were not made for each other from the outset.

The result of repressing human imagination is an epidemic of make-believe and pretending. Evidence of this pathology is widespread in our global culture—the media, entertainment, escape from reality via the internet and an array of other channel. The power of imagination cannot be entirely repressed, so it manifests in grotesque ways. In the realm of *religious* imagination, the image of a crucified man become the emblem of divine love. Is this not a grotesque twist?

All the images around the funeral of the Pope feature men, men, men. Consistent with

patriarchal use of redemption theology, the division of the sexes is vividly and constantly reinforced. Believers are allowed to imagine that Pope John Paul II was the Holy Father. But what about the Holy Mother? Where is she? How is she to be imagined?

Reply: She is the Virgin Mary, of course.

Okay, but where is her human counterpart?

Reply: She has none.

So, the Holy Father is there, a man on earth, but the Holy Mother is not represented by any woman on earth?

Reply: That's right. That's as we are told to imagine it.

But there is an explanation of why the Holy Mother is not there in the flesh. It concerns a story about the division of power between the sexes. A long, long time ago, well before patriarchy was invented, there was a custom called *heiroi gamos*, sacred mating, a ritual enacted by a man and a woman, a man who would be king and a priestess of the Earth Goddess. This is a long story, and it takes some imagination to follow it....

Would it be possible to draw the attention of the crowd to this story? It is, after all, a holy story about a sacred act. Yet the image of "sacred mating," with man and women figured as equal participants, cannot reach the imagination that has been overwhelmed now, for almost two thousand years, by the image of a man alone, bloody and tormented, crucified on a cross. The image of divine suffering that atones for the sins of the world brands human imagination like a hot, blinding stigma. This is what Roszak meant when he said that the redeemer complex has severely damaged our mythopoeic powers.

The Holy Father, John Paul II dedicated his life to ease the suffering of others. Well, perhaps he did. And perhaps you do not need to be the Holy Father, or even a Catholic, or even a person of religious faith, to live out such dedication. (Rokeach found that "the nonreligious were more compassionate.") But even if he did act in this way, he did so as the figurehead of an institution that has inflicted and continues to inflict enormous suffering on the world, both through its ideology and its social imperatives, not to mention its financial and political alliances. An institution that denies women, a denial that goes back to the repression of the Goddess, the rejection of *hieros gamos*, a rite of gender balancing that assured society of the moral quality of the man who would be king.

## Religious Freedom

Gnostic heretics have been compared to Romantics of the European movement, visionaries who called for religious experience without rules, doctrines, priests, or institutions. In a book on Romantic attitudes, *The Vision of the Voyage*, Robert Combs wrote:



- Unquestioned beliefs are the real authorities of a culture. Therefore, if an individual can express what is undeniably real to him *without* invoking an authority beyond his own experience, he is transcending the belief systems of his culture

Neil Evernden, who quotes Combs in his book *The Natural Alien*, says that the Romantics "challenged not only conventional beliefs but the very processes of formulating beliefs." He suggests that if we were able to do what the Romantics proposed, we could have deep and genuine religious experience "without translating it into the abstractions of the dominant social paradigm." *That* would be true religious freedom: not belonging to whatever faith you choose, but having religious experience without the framework of institutional faith of any kind.

I submit that the above definition — faith is the power invested in, and derived from, *unquestioned* beliefs — is fair and can be used in an open, honest discussion of what salvationist religion really is, and what it actually does to human beings, by contrast to what believers may believe it does, or like to pretend it does. Once it begins to be doubted and put into question, faith immediately weakens and soon is no longer worthy to be called faith. It has become compromised. It must remain unquestioned to be effective. The purest kind of faith does not question the beliefs that are embraced by the faithful. The Koran opens: "This book is not to be doubted." There are over a billion faithful Muslims in the world, and it's no great wonder why. If their faith is based on a document that demands not to be doubted *even before you read a single line*, then the faith of the adherents is assured, isn't it?

The double dissimulation of the placebo effect must not be analyzed or exposed, or faith will be plucked out at its root, and the ignorance that makes it possible will dissolve, the fabric of pretending that embellishes faith will disintegrate.

But this will not happen easily. To argue against faith is like using a peashooter against a cruise missile. Religion is a smart weapon, the oldest and most reliable weapon in the arsenal of dominator culture.

- **Rosenberg:** Look at how families are structured: the parents claim always to know what's right and set the rules for everybody else's benefit. Look at our schools. Look at our workplaces. Look at our government, our religions. At all levels, you have authorities who impose their will on other people, claiming that it's for everybody's well-being. They use punishment and reward as the basic strategy for getting what they want. That's what I mean by domination culture.

But even if this is so, and even in religion, if domination is the rule of order, with all the good things that people derive from religious faith, how can anyone in their right mind criticize it?

In reflecting on the crowds gathered in Rome, I have no intention to dismiss, demean, or belittle the experience of the people there, but I would point out that those masses are experiencing

what they have been told to experience, based on what they have been told to believe, without questioning their beliefs or asking how they acquired them, from whom, and why. Paradoxically, by challenging what they believe, I may be more on their side than they realize. To speak like a Gnostic (or like the Gnostically minded R. D. Laing, who made this observation years ago), I would warn those masses that *their capacity to have their own experience can be destroyed*. That is precisely how domination succeeds: by alienating us from our own deepest resources, our precious spiritual birthright, human potential. And I would propose that the critique of redeemer theology formulated by Gnostics is sane and plausible on three counts:

First, it is valid to observe that people ignore how they acquire their beliefs.

Second, it is valid to observe that the glorification of suffering enshrined in the redeemer complex is patriarchy's legitimation of the suffering it inflicts. In other words, the ideology of salvation is the operative pretext for the setting up and maintaining the victim-perpetrator bond.

And third, perhaps most decisively at all, it is valid to assume that all the good done in the name of religion could as well have been done without it—*but only if we grant that human nature is inherently good*. This is the dealbreaker. If we do not or cannot grant that humans, left to their own deepest inclinations, will do good and act in a kind and caring manner, then it is worth considering if our view of humanity has not been corrupted by the supreme patriarchal ploy, the ruse of redemption. Faith in humanity does not require a redeemer, but faith in corrupted humanity does. This is the spiritual entrapment the Gnostic teachers wished to expose, and for that intention they were annihilated.

If it is possible to admit that the corruption of humanity is a judgment that comes from corrupted humans, and serves an insidious program of spiritual and social control, having nothing to do with genuine religious experience, then the reign of the patriarchs may have an ending, after all.

It is not the death of a patriarch we need to celebrate on this tormented planet, but the death of patriarchy itself.

## Armageddon Politics

### The Rule of the Righteous Ones

- A month ago Bill Moyers was honored with the Global Environment Citizen Award by the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School. The award was presented by Meryl Streep. Excerpts here are from his acceptance speech published on Monday, December 6, 2004 by CommonDreams.org.

In his talk, Bill Moyers discussed the fundamentalist religious mania that informs American politics, and has done so for some time now. Given the scout's honor earnestness with which

President George W. Bush declares his personal faith in public, and demonstrates it in political terms, it is perhaps no surprise that Bible Belt fundamentalism has been guiding White House political prerogatives since the first Reagan term. Believe it or not, the Texan politician often described as "the most powerful man in the world" says he was called to his mission by God. And believe it not, God has an agenda, a master plan that President Bush is intent on fulfilling. A plan that Bill Moyers finds deeply disturbing.

### A Mere Scottish Lass

It may come as a surprise to some people that God's plan involves the full-scale destruction of the planet we inhabit. In some bizarre manner, He, the Creator God and Father of Jesus, wants to destroy the world in order to save humanity — or a select portion of it, anyway. But then it makes sense that the Supreme Being who created this world has the right to annihilate it, doesn't it? It does to some people. And not just a few, either. The promise of a planetary holocaust is actually cherished by millions of God-fearing Christians around the world, and strategically anticipated by the politicians who lead them. Those living in the USA who share George W. Bush's "[faith](#)" made "god-damned" sure he got reelected.

The promise of global annihilation is not new in American politics. Moyers recalls how James Watt, President Reagan's first Secretary of the Interior, "told the U.S. Congress that protecting natural resources was unimportant in light of the imminent return of Jesus Christ. In public testimony he said, 'after the last tree is felled, Christ will come back.' " Watt was not the only member of the Reagan White House known to hold such extremist views. Reagan himself firmly believed that Armageddon would happen in the Middle East. For at least 20 years now the political policies of the USA have been underwritten by a divine agenda.

We can only wonder, How far back does this complex run?



In metahistorical terms, the Armageddon scenario breaks down into a core belief system with narrative variations. Bush and Co. are operating on a recent variation described by Bill Moyers in a paraphrase he credits to British writer, George Monbiot : "Once Israel has occupied the rest of its 'biblical lands,' legions of the anti-Christ will attack it, triggering a final showdown in the valley of Armageddon. As the Jews who have not been converted are burned, the messiah will return for the rapture. True believers will be lifted out of their clothes and transported to heaven, where, seated next to the right hand of God, they will watch their political and religious opponents suffer plagues of boils, sores, locusts, and frogs during the several years of tribulation that follow."

Moyers adds sardonically: "I'm not making this up." Yes, Bill, we know that, but someone else certainly did. As far as historians can tell, the author of this script seems to have been an itinerant Evangelist named John Nelson Darby. Taking advantage of the ambiguous and contradictory material on Jesus in the NT, Darby came up with the idea that Jesus would return twice, once to summon the faithful to the Father, and again to reign over a celestial battle above Armageddon in the Middle East. Darby was himself inspired by an unnamed Scottish girl who had visions of the Second Coming around 1830, when she was in her teens.

Thus, a mere wisp of a Scottish lass originated the script that enshrines the beliefs held by the leading politicians of the American right today. Not to mention untold millions of ordinary American citizens and other Christians around the world, including a continually burgeoning number of "converts" in Africa, many of whom are impoverished Blacks dying of AIDS and terrorized by local wars. No wonder they passionately embrace the endtime story. Anything to escape the hell of their lives on earth.

Esteemed historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., author of fourteen books, observes that in the 19th century when the Darby narrative emerged, "all presidents of course professed belief in a

heavenly father, though religion did not occupy a major presence in their lives." He also notes that in his youth, "Presidential Evangelicals were a disdained minority," and "born-again fundamentalists could be relied on to be anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic." All this began to change with Jimmy Carter, and now, Schlesinger explains, "the Protestant Right has formed an alliance with right-wing Catholics over abortion and with right-wing Jews over the Holy Land." ("Holy War" in *Playboy*, December 2004. Painting of Bush and Rumsfeld as Crusaders by John Thompson, with the article.)

The result is, fundamentalists now outnumber mainline Protestants—i.e., those who may tend to distance themselves from the endtime mythos. With this shift, the bizarre visions of a Scottish teenager have come to the forefront of religious imagination in the USA.

### The Germ of Madness

Schlesinger's careful analysis shows how religion and politics have become allies over the past forty years, but it does not explain the immense appeal of the Armageddon complex as such. I would propose two observations, one short focus and one long focus. First, in short focus, it is obvious that believing in the will of God to destroy the natural world is a fantastic way to rationalize the destruction of nature by consumption and pollution. Americans are known for contributing to environmental havoc at a level that far exceeds their numbers—I can't cite those figures here, but we have all seen them. How do you soothe your conscience about driving a SUV and consuming an inordinate share of the world's natural resources? Well, if the destruction you wreak is but a small contribution to a larger scheme in which God is going to set all things right...

Second, in long focus, there is deeper meaning in the fundamentalist coalition with Catholics and Jews, noted by Schlesinger. The religion of Roman Catholicism is not a religion at all—at least not in the sense that it provides *genuine* moral and spiritual guidance for the masses. Roman Catholicism is a political ideology in religious guise, and has been little more than that since the days of Constantine, the faux-convert Emperor who married the Empire to the One True Faith. Others before Bill Moyers have observed that Christianity provides religious cover for a fascist globalization scheme (convert, conquer, colonialize, consume), but this insight only goes halfway to the core of the madness to which Moyers is now alerting the world. The catholic ("universal") program of salvation institutionalized by Constantine predates him by about 500 years, so the Jewish-Catholic alliance has deeper, pre-Christian roots. Thanks to the Dead Sea Scrolls, historians of religion now understand that the salvationist ideology championed by American neocons in geopolitical terms dates back to obscure cultic origins in Palestine. We are looking here into a deep, deep fissure in the human psyche.

The shocking revelation of the DSS exploded upon the world in 1991 after nearly fifty years of suppression and disinformation by the *Ecole Biblique*, the team of Catholic scholars and archeologists assigned to excavate the caves at Qumran and produce an "official view" on the Scrolls. Led by Father Roland de Vaux, and working with the full support of the Vatican, the *Ecole Biblique* attempted to keep the world ignorant about many things concerning the DSS, but especially one point, one crucial and sensational lesson of history: Christianity did not

emerge from mainstream Jewish religion, but from a radical Jewish sect that was, in its own time and setting, hostile to the entire world, including the Jewish people themselves.

In short, the message of universal love attributed to Christianity and encoded into the political tactics of Roman Catholicism is the outgrowth of a genocidal cult complex, the belief system of the *Zaddikim*, "the Righteous Ones." This was an extremist splinter group whose policies of sectarian hatred speak from the Scrolls with clarion intensity and blood-chilling conviction. The mad hunger for a world-scale holocaust goes back to the *Zaddikim*. So violent and so vengeful were the beliefs held by this group that they *had* to retreat to the hills south of Jerusalem, both to escape the Roman authorities (that Qumran was a fortress and not a peaceful settlement of hippie-like "Essenes" was one of the archeological findings suppressed by de Vaux), as well as to avoid the wrath of devout mainstream Jews who perceived the sectarians (and rightly so) as a danger to the survival of the Jewish community under Roman occupation.

The organization of the Qumranic extremists was three-layered. The core group of ideologues, the *Zaddikim*, held some highly esoteric beliefs regarding how the world would end and the Righteous would be saved. Surrounding them was a mesoteric group, the Chassidim, the "Pious Ones," who knew less about the core ideology but served it by enforcing inhumane standards of purity on the cult members. Surrounding these two circles were the Zealots, a band of cutthroats like Judas Iscariot (literally, "Knifeman") and burly enforcers like Simon Peter (literally, "Rocky"). The Zealots were known assassins who killed their fellow Jews as readily as they did Romans. In fact, the practice of crucifixion began among the Jews in the early days of the *Zaddikim* movement, around 150 BCE. The militant wing of the *Zaddikim* were terrorists, comparable to Islamic groups like Hamas who today are fighting for liberation of Palestine from the Jews—just as the Zealots fought to liberate the same territory from Roman occupation, over 2000 years ago.

Among these terrorists was a special character, [Jesus of Palestine](#), a man revered and protected by the Zealots because they regarded him as the national liberator, the Messiah who would be King of the Jews. Jesus was, in effect, the Yasar Arafat of the Jewish Liberation Front.

Contrary to the popular notion that Christianity (in all its forms) grew out of Jewish religion, studies by DSS scholars not controlled by the Vatican now show that the *larval form* of Christian-Catholic salvationism is *uniquely found* in *Zaddikim* ideology, not in the mainstream religion of the ancient Hebrews. The "Righteous Ones" were xenophobic extremists who endangered ordinary Jews and used Hebrew religion to mount a political end-game with Rome. Among the Zealots were genuine freedom-fighters who died at their own hands, Pagan-style, rather than surrender to the Romans at Masada. Such partisans were ignorant of the secret agenda of the inner circle. After 70 CE, the movement to overthrow Roman occupation did not survive, but the bizarre ideology of the *Zaddikim* did.

## The Messiah Complex

The moment that George W. Bush's first Attorney General, John Ashcroft, was informed of his appointment, he was at home with his father. Ashcroft dropped the phone, ran to the

kitchen, siezed a bottle of Mazola oil, and had himself anointed by his dad in imitation of messianic rituals from the Old Testament. The Hebrew word "messiah" simply means "anointed with oil." From the time of Saul, before 900 BCE, the Jewish king who underwent this ceremony was ritually called "Son of God." Originally, the title had no connotation of divinity. It simply meant that the king was required to serve Yahweh, *aka* the tribal god Jehovah, as a son serves his father. In fact, the ancient Hebrews explicitly rejected the notion of human divinity, and this is why devout Jews today do not recognize Jesus as such.

The Jewish messiah complex, including the belief that the ancient Hebrews were the Chosen People of the sole true Creator God, was never fulfilled in mainstream Jewish religion, and remains today an unrealized project. But the sectarian core myth survived, and mutated weirdly. During the Babylonian Captivity, around 600 BCE, some Hebrew religionists absorbed the Persian myth of Celestial Warfare in which Absolute Good is pitted against Absolute Evil into their theological corpus. Further developed by the visionary prophets such as Ezekiel and Daniel, this theme became *the* central fixation of the Zaddikim for whom the Messiah was both a national-racial liberator and a supernatural avenger. All this is written large and clear in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the millennial testament of the Zaddikim.

When the Zaddikim, Chasidim and Zealots were wiped out by the Romans, lest they destabilize the Empire, the Empire took on the Messianic complex like a virus caught by the conqueror from the conquered. In fact, Pagan intellectuals of the time referred to Christianity as an "incendiary virus" spreading over the Mediterranean world. The virulent endtime ideology, at first confined to the tiny sect of the Zaddikim, burst into pandemic proportions via the "catholic" message of universal love—which just happens to have a hate-driven holocaust scenario attached to it. How odd. Anyway, the combination of a religious message of love with the guarantee of fascist enforcement of God's Plan (a plan inherited from the ancient Hebrews, and originally intended for them alone, but now revised for the world at large) is a win-win situation. *If* you are on God's side.

All this takes us a long way from Schlesinger's well-honed observations, but the continuity is evident enough. The recent alliance of the Protestant Right with Catholics and Jews is an inevitable merge, historically speaking, for *all three factions share a common taproot that traces back to the Zaddikim belief in divine retribution*. With this infernal collusion driving world events, the prospects are terrifying. At least, Bill Moyers finds them so. To my knowledge, he is the first widely respected social commentator in the USA to state in public that fundamentalist endtime theology is too weird to be believed. "I can see in the look on your faces just how hard it is for the journalist to report a story like this with any credibility."

This is fine and frank. We see a respected journalist making himself vulnerable. But in a metahistorical perspective, Moyers has hardly begun to tackle the credibility issue here. The fact that endtime theology (or *annihilation theology*, as I propose to call it) is credible to many is a bare fact of our times. Any journalist might report it as such. The trick is, the report is credible, but *what it reports about* is not credible to those who do not embrace the messianic ideology of fundamentalism. What is most shocking to Moyers is that those who are in the category of non-believers, the infidels, now find themselves sidelined in history, disempowered socially and politically by those who do believe.



Considering the alarm signalled by Bill Moyers in his keynote talk, it may really be time to look at religious beliefs with a critical eye, to see if they might be insane and inhumane. Of course, it is dangerous to propose the critique of beliefs, as we do in this site, because *it seems to violate the general principle of tolerance for all faiths*. But what happens when you tolerate a belief system that is itself intolerant? The genocidal ideology of the Dead Sea Scrolls exemplifies religious intolerance coupled with endtime fanaticism. Scary stuff, this. But the insanity did not die with the Zaddikim. The formula that once threatened the Roman Empire became incorporated into it. More lately, it has been incorporated into global imperialism and enshrined in the heart of millions who cherish it with their lives, believing that it represents a message of universal love delivered by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was sent to earth by the Father God. The message of love and tolerance is like a sugar coating on the genocidal pill. Now that's really scary.

### Fulfilling the Plan

Present-day Crusaders for messianic Christianity are guided by a recent script, the Rapture scenario paraphrased by Monbiot, which itself is but a variation of the far older core complex, the Zaddikim ideology of the endtime. This being so, it is not unreasonable to suppose that George W. Bush and those around him could make decisions with a calculated view of hastening the end, making things get worse so that God's plan will be fulfilled, and the sooner the better. "I welcome faith to help solve the nation's deepest problems, " George W. has stated. (Cited by Schlesinger.) When questioned about Iraq by Bob Woodward, one of the journalists who exposed Watergate, Bush responded in a way that left the reporter with the impression that "the president was casting his mission and that of the country in the grand vision of God's master plan."

Bush told Woodward that before invading Iraq he did not seek counsel from his mortal father, who had fought Saddam Hussein in the first Gulf War of 1991, but he appealed to "a higher father." Schlesinger comments:

- The higher father evidently tells him what he most wants to hear and imparts a messianic drive to his discourse. George W. Bush has remade himself through redemption and transformation, and he may well regard it as his God-given destiny to redeem and transform the Middle East.

All this sounds rather familiar by now, and we may even be getting vaguely bored hearing about the President's messianic pretences. But hold on a second. Let's consider the insane logic of the Righteous Ones a little more closely. It may be that President Bush declares one aim in public and pursues another in reality. This he would do to be *completely* consistent with his divine calling and implement the Divine Plan. Thus, the mission to "redeem and transform the Middle East" would be a pretext, a cover for other intentions. What if the invasion of Iraq was never intended to succeed in the first place? This makes sense in terms of annihilation theology, for Iraq could well be *the* decisive move in the Religious Wars Cum Oil Wars that cannot be won, and will ultimately bring the world as we know it to a gruesome end.

President Bush, a direct descendent of the Zaddikim, the Righteous Ones, has the God-given

right to make it play out this way. Or so he believes.

### Moral Imagination

What the Zaddikim wanted 2000 years ago in Palestine—the destruction of the entire world so that the Righteous can be rescued—could happen on a global scale today because of beliefs held by millions of people, beliefs they are unwilling or unable to question, and which they will not tolerate having put in question by anyone. Bill Moyers is shocked by the way these beliefs are encoded in the endtime narrative *as an historical drama*, including the Rapture (the last-minute rescue of the believers), and the wholesale destruction of the natural world. At the conclusion of his acceptance speech, he poignantly asks: "What has happened to our moral imagination?"

Good question, this. Metahistory tries to answer that question from many angles. One of the savviest responses I know comes from Theodore Roszak. Writing in *Where the Wasteland Ends* on the "pathological extremism" of Judeo-Christian beliefs, Roszak says:

- From Judaism, Christianity inherited a passionate concern for the historicity of belief. In a way that contrasts sharply with the mythopoeic outlook of all other religions, Judaism embeds the heroes and prodigies of its tradition in a worldly chronology. Even the stories of the creation and of Eden lack that sense of being located in the "dream-time long ago," which is the necessary dimension of myth....
- 
- For Christians, this inherited prejudice in favor of historicity became the very foundation of their soteriology [i.e., their belief in divine salvation. JLL]... Christianity alone could claim historical validity for its gospel. It alone taught the Word become flesh—at one time, in one place, in one human personality... Christ belonged to history and his rivals were mere myths.
- 
- Clearly, *there occurred with the advent of Christianity a deep shift in consciousness which severely damaged the mythopoeic powers* [of humankind]. ( p. 133-4. Italics added.)

If the planet is being run to ruin on a wacko religious script, many of us have genuine cause to be alarmed, but there is a deeper concern as well, a concern that Metahistory.org tries to address by proposing a different story to guide the species.

How, we may ask, can the recent "Scottish version" of the millennial annihilation theology of the Zaddikim hold such power over human imagination? Roszak's metacritique goes to the heart of the dilemma: the historical myth so loved by President Bush can command great appeal because something behind that story, something that produced it in the first place, damaged human imagination at the core. Due to this damage, we submit to the endtime narrative and cannot counter it with a different story. We are *imaginatively disempowered*, as if something alien to the human spirit has intruded upon our species' Dreaming, stunting our capacity to imagine our place on Earth and in the cosmos at large. If there is any way to correct the course

of history, if there is to be a healing of the story-telling faculty upon which we as a species depend to delineate our path, it must be made at the core where the damage is located.

How, then, do we locate the core of moral imagination?

## The Last Taboo

### Have We Failed to Meet the Challenge of *The Da Vinci Code*?

With the May 2006 release of the film based on Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code*, the debate that has rocked the world for three years may finally begin to subside. As the atmosphere clears, and with all aspects of the debate having been examined many times over, will the controversy surrounding Mary Magdalene still have anything to reveal to us?

I, for one, would assert that it does. But the revelation I have in mind touches an as-yet unconsidered aspect of the debate.

### The Sexuality of Christ



Giovanni Bellini, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1500  
Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, Bergamo

Magdalene's shock value consists in the simple fact that highlighting her presence in the life story of Jesus changes the story. It forces us to think differently about the savior. If we continue to believe that Jesus was the only-begotten Son of God, i.e., divinity incarnate in human form, then we must consider that the divine status does not exclude sexual intercourse. This possibility destroys the image of Jesus as chaste, continent, virginal, standing fully above the temptations of the flesh. If the Son of God impregnated Magdalene, a mortal woman, it is also possible that their congress inaugurated a sacred blood line—although, it must be said, divine genealogy is quite an arcane notion. Are we to imagine there would be something special in the actual genetics of a blood-line descended from Jesus Christ? Such is the unstated assumption of the Priory of Sion conspiracy, or [Sion scenario](#), as I have called it in my review of *The Da Vinci Code*. Jesus must have been special, genetically, for his blood-line to matter so much. The Sion scenario resumes the ancient notion of theocracy, genealogical descent from the gods, and applies it to the figure of Jesus.

Oddly enough, this scenario does not conflict with the long-standing ideology of Jesus as Pantocrator, spiritual ruler of the world. In fact, theocracy is consistent in many respects with

the doctrine of the Incarnation. (It could be said that the Catholic Church is a theocracy that resists being labeled as such. In other words, it wants to operate like a theocracy but not be accountable for doing so.) The blasphemy implied in the Sion scenario is not that Jesus was genetically different—if he truly were the virgin-born incarnation of a divine being, he would have been different down into his genetic structure—but that he could have transferred that difference to a line of descendants by engaging in the mundane act of procreation.

Many people of faith consider the notion that Jesus was married to a woman who bore him children to be the ultimate sacrilege that one might direct against him. To them, the sexuality of Christ is totally incompatible with his divinity, but this was not always the case among believers. In *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion* (published in 1983, the year *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* was released in the United States), distinguished art historian Leo Steinberg showed that in previous times the sexuality of Jesus was widely regarded as proof that Christ had assumed the full guise (or burden, if you will) of humanity. "How then could he who restored human nature to sinlessness be shamed by the sexual factor in his humanity?," Steinberg asks (p. 17).

This line of reasoning is consistent with the view held by many devout people through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. Steinberg presents dozens of examples of Christian art to prove his point: for example, Giovanni Bellini's *Madonna and Child* (above), pictured on the cover of his book. In this painting, as in many other representations of the Madonna and the "Christ Child," the mother makes a gesture that brings attention to the genitalia of the infant. Or she may actually be fondling it. Steinberg says that this pose was a convention in Christian art so essential to the notion of the Incarnation that "many artists came to regard the Incarnate's sex as a necessary exhibit" (p. 35). Among the dozens of paintings he presents to illustrate this convention is the *Adoration of the Magi* (1487) of Domenico Ghirlandaio, where an aged magus inspects the penis of the divine infant, held up to his scrutiny by the mother. Other versions of the Adoration, by Jan van Scorel (1535) and Pieter Breughel (1564), are no less explicit.

Commenting on paintings of the circumcision, Steinberg cites no less an authority than Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, who argued that "the circumcision is proof of the true humanity he [Christ] has assumed" (p. 55). For many centuries, the "first and last wounds" of Jesus were closely linked in theological argument: the first, circumcision, was the proof of his full humanity, the second, the crucifixion, was the proof of his mortality. Devout people in former times who believed that Jesus rose from death also believed that he was fully incarnated in his sexuality, the "fallen condition" of humanity, "otherwise his mortal status would have been incomplete and the efficacy of his miraculous resurrection, flawed.

### **The Virile Savior**

Steinberg is extremely discrete in handling these touchy issues, and nowhere does he broach irreverence or blasphemy. He does not even remotely suggest that Jesus, fully incarnated in human sexuality, may actually have engaged in sexual behavior. Instead, he lets the art speak for itself:



*Ecce Homo*, "Behold the man." *Man of Sorrows* (c. 1525) by Flemish artist Maerten van Heemskerck is one of several arresting images of Jesus with an erection to be found in Steinberg's monograph. Some images even suggest an erection on the man crucified on the cross. There is no surviving image of Jesus engaged in sexual intercourse, but the erection clearly tells us that he was fully capable of such an act. "The humanation of God entails, along with mortality, his assumption of sexuality," Steinberg wrote, resting his case. Wilhelm Reich made exactly the same argument in *The Murder of Christ*, where he presented Christ as the supreme expression of the fully embodied life-force (eros, orgone) and male exemplar of orgasmic potency. If Steinberg is correct, Reich's concept of a virile-vital Christ would have been totally acceptable to many Christians in the former times.

Another convention of Christian art involves the motif of the "groin-searching hand," as Steinberg calls it. This is evident in Renaissance paintings from many countries, such as the *Entombment* from the *atelier* of Germain Pilon, (c. 1540).



Steinberg argues that this gesture, seen even in well-known Pietas, would have been regarded with acute pathos by the faithful. Not only is it the typical, wince-evoking gesture of a man hurt in his most vulnerable parts, but it can be read as a sign of the humility of the superhuman Christ, showing that he accepted the fallen condition of sexuality even in death.

The fondling of the Christ child's genitalia, the erection on the man on the cross, and the groin-searching gesture occurred widely in medieval and Renaissance art, but the emphasis on the savior's sexuality stems from a much earlier source, located squarely within Christian tradition. In the *City of God*, Saint Augustine wrote:

- I feel that theirs is the more sensible opinion who have no doubt that there will be both sexes in the Resurrection.. For from these bodies vice will be withdrawn, while nature shall be preserved. Now the sex of a woman is not a vice, but nature. And in the Resurrection it will be free of the necessity of carnal intercourse and childbearing. However, the female organs shall remain adapted, not to the old uses, but to a new beauty, which, so far from provoking lust, now extinct, shall excite praise to the wisdom and clemency of God (XXII, 17).

A more intimate glimpse into the sexual fantasies of a bearded white patriarch can hardly be imagined. During his youthful days in Carthage, Augustine went through a period of debauchery, but later underwent an aversion to sex. Though he dabbled loosely in Gnostic ideas, he was violently opposed to the perceived libertinism of Gnostic cults rumored to practice "sexual orgies." He embraced celibacy, but imagined that in the next life sexuality would continue to exist, although uniquely for the glory of God. His belief that in the Resurrection the female genitalia would be raised to "a new beauty" and venerated would have sounded bizarre to Tantrikas of India or their Western counterparts, Arthurian knights and troubadours, who did not have to wait for the afterlife to find divine beauty in the nether zone of female anatomy.

Augustine does not discuss the genitalia of the Redeemer, but if he thought that the organs of woman—that lowly creature and instrument of the Devil—are to be glorified in the afterlife, it is more than likely that his theological argument would allow for the male organ to achieve even higher glorification through the Incarnation. In any case, this is how it looks by the evidence of Renaissance art. In the end, Steinberg insists that Jesus was chaste, and asserts that chastity has a supreme religious value. Equally so does the fully incarnate sexuality of the Redeemer, even though it is not enacted in carnal intercourse.



William Key, *Pieta*, c. 1530

With the widespread debate over the sexuality of Jesus raised by *The Da Vinci Code*, it would seem that the taboo is not merely being breached, but totally demolished. Yet this is not really so.

### Against Procreation

Amazingly, no scholar or historian commenting on the issue of the sexual life of Jesus raised

by the *The Da Vinci Code* refers to Steinberg's monograph. (An advanced search on "Da Vinci Code/ Steinberg" in Google brings up [my long article](#) on MM on this site, but no other association of these two elements in current media or writing.) Yet this reference is invaluable, because the material in Steinberg's book anticipates a crucial distinction: that is, between the claim that Jesus had sex with Mary Magdalene, and the claim that he fathered children on her. These are utterly different claims, yet they are not (to my knowledge) clearly distinguished anywhere in the DVC/Sion debate. Steinberg does not discuss sexual intercourse between Mary Magdalene and Jesus, of course, but his book introduces a nuance essential to how we might imagine their intimate union. He firmly states that the fully incarnate sexuality of Christ does not imply enactment of sexual behavior. Call this the first nuance: the attainment of *sexual potency* does not imply performance of the *sexual act*—as anguished teenagers of both sexes will attest! Now consider a further nuance: intercourse may be performed, but not for the purposes of procreation. Once again, we touch on the deepest and fondest desire of the adolescents on the planet.

Experts on Gnosticism, theology and the history of religions who comment on the DVC all equate the act of sexual intercourse with procreation. The spin of the claim made in the Sion scenario, and cast in fictional form by the DVC, is this: Jesus had sex *in order to procreate*. The spin leaves many believers in outrage and confoundment, but it does worse as well. The moment our attention goes to the sexuality of Jesus Christ, we are directed to his descendents. The focus of this diversionary tactic is Mary Magdalene who is equated with a sacred vessel, the "sang gral" or Holy Grail. Magdalene, we are told, *is* the long-sought grail vessel because she was impregnated by Jesus and carries the fruit of the sacred blood-line in her womb. We are encouraged to believe that in this claim we are being let in on a tremendous secret.

Gnostic scholars who discuss *The Da Vinci Code* in their books, in articles, and in documentaries, usually cite the Nag Hammadi writings, especially the famous kissing cameo in the *Gospel of Philip*. In fact, the papyrus page where that passage appears (NHC II, 3: 63. 35) is damaged right at the line that says *where* Jesus kissed his "companion." Scholars restore the text to read "on the mouth." He could as well have kissed her on the forehead, or on the ass, for that matter. This latter may sound like an outrageous remark, intended purely for offence, but there is something even more outrageous in the works here, by which I mean the negligence of the experts who discuss this passage as if it lent support to the claim that Jesus and Magdalene had children. Scholars such as Elaine Pagels seem to allow, even if just marginally, that the Gnostic cameo of Jesus kissing Magdalene implies a physical intimacy consistent with sexual union. By negligence I mean that in accepting to discuss how the Gnostic materials might support the DVC/Sion claim that Jesus and Magdalene were parents, the experts do not inform the public of something essential to the Gnostic world view.

What the experts don't tell us is that the couple described in the Gnostic writings, if they were truly a Gnostic couple, *would have rejected procreation*, for that was the known policy of Gnostics of all sects.

Of course, I have not read everything written on the DVC in the last three years. But I am somewhat informed on the statements made by the leading scholars in books and documentaries. If, say, Karen King points out somewhere that Gnostics rejected procreation, I



missed it. Someone, scholar or not, may have made this point somewhere along the way. (Again, an advanced search in Google yields no results.) What is outrageous is that no expert has clarified this issue in mainstream discourse. Yet all experts agree that Gnostics were radically opposed to procreation. In fact, this is one of the few factors in the mixed bag of Gnostic views upon which *all* scholars *do* agree. It is one of the few, solid, consistent things known about the Gnostic world view. There is clear textual evidence, both from within the Gnostic writings and elsewhere, that Gnostics opposed procreation on philosophical grounds, and rigorously practiced abortion.

This being so, it is plainly erroneous, not to say misleading, to cite Nag Hammadi materials in support of the claim that Jesus and Magdalene had children.

The experts have failed to rise to the challenge presented by the debate around *The Da Vinci Code*, and they have done so in an alarming manner. At the very least, they must be held accountable to elucidate certain points of Gnosticism so that the public can decide how the DVC/Sion claims really stand against these ancient texts. To allow the assumption that Jesus and Magdalene, considered on Gnostic terms, were parents, is irresponsible—but there is worse. The negligence of the experts does not stop there. It goes deeper.

### Ecological Insight

Having introduced (finally!) this essential factor into the debate—that Gnostics opposed procreation—it is only natural to ask, Why did they do this? Why did they refuse it for themselves, and condemn it as bad for the human species?

At first sight, this seems like a defeatist position. If humans do not procreate, how can humanity survive? What is the point of protesting against procreation? Gnostics not only thought it was worth protesting on ethical grounds, but they are known to have practiced abortions among themselves, and more likely than not they assisted others who did not participate in their cultic activities.

The Gnostic stand against procreation has a cosmological basis, closely linked to the ethical principles of the Mysteries. In Gnostic cosmology, the father god Jehovah was identified with Yaldabaoth, an alien deity who pretends to be the sole and supreme lord of the cosmos. Yaldabaoth, also called the Demiurge, wants humanity to take him for a true god (an Aeon, in Gnostic terminology), and many people do regard him as the Creator. Gnostics warned of this delusion in no uncertain terms. They asserted that Jehovah's claim to have made humanity "in his image" is false, and should be rejected. In the Gnostic view, humanity is a self-elaborating projection of the imagination of the Aeons, the true Pleromic Gods, who do not imprint their image on what they emanate.

One of Jehovah's commands to his people (textually the Jews, but by implication the entire human species) was to procreate and spread across the entire earth. We may see in this command the clever ploy of the Demiurge to make the human species conform to a false image of itself, and *to lose itself in the mindless proliferation of that image* (i.e., by overbreeding). The arrogance of the pretender god infects those who believe his lies and follow his commands. To see ourselves made "in His image" is grandiose, and supports the assumption

that we are a unique species with the right to overrun the planet and dominate all that is non-human.

Gnostics objected to procreation because they saw in the philoprogenitive emotion the extension of human egotism in biological terms, taking humankind beyond its proper boundaries relative to the rest of life on earth. I would argue that this is a sane ecological insight.

In ethical terms, Gnostics distinguished three types or classes of human beings: the materialistic type, the psychic or soul-oriented type, and the spiritual or "pneumatic" type. In rejecting procreation, they placed themselves in the third category, but they allowed that people in the first category, who lacked spiritual discernment, would be prone to breed in a mindless and egotistical manner. There was no question that the human race will survive as long as people of that type continue to reproduce. Gnostics emphasized that some people in the second category, those who were open to spiritual enlightenment, could be persuaded not to reproduce, but nothing could be done with the first group. Hence, they accepted that the human species would always breed, but they did not let it be so without comment. They were like non-smokers who openly condemn and oppose smoking, and establish non-smoking zones, rather than just passively stand by and let people smoke.

Yet Gnostics did not merely condemn procreation in others and abstain from it among themselves, they also worked to counteract and remedy the ills attendant to it. They served the offspring of the very people who were overrunning the earth. In the institutions of the Mysteries they adopted into their care many pupils who were the children of other people, and educated them to achieve the highest level of human potential. Without children of their own, they assumed a quasi-parental relation to their pupils and proteges. Without heirs of their own, they made others' children their inheritors. As *telestai*, The Gnostic teachers in the Mystery Schools were deeply concerned about the future of humankind and the peak potential of our species. To reject procreation was consistent with their sacred commitment to the future of humanity, rather than to the future of their own progeny. Although some rare instances of parental connection do occur in the Mysteries—Hypatia and her father, Theon of Alexandria, for instance—these cases do not contradict the primary ethics of the initiatory system, in which no favor or preference was shown to blood-relations, and generational inheritance was renounced in favor of initiatory transmission.

### **Truly Scandalous**

Granted, these are obscure and complex issues that could not easily be explained in a documentary interview, and, even if explained, might not speak to the minds of people today. But then again, this might be just what people in our time most need to know about Gnostics and the Mysteries. These considerations touch on the issue of population control, one of the great taboos of our time—perhaps the last taboo. If it were more widely understood that Gnostics opposed procreation and practiced birth control, *and why they did so*, we might have a more lively, more enlightened debate on over-population. Yet no scholar takes the time to discuss this subject or elucidate the Gnostic stance against procreation.

These considerations may seem remote from the issue of the sexuality of Jesus, but in fact they

point directly to the core confusion in the debate over *The Da Vinci Code*. As I have suggested above, this confusion is due to the failure to see the difference between sexual intercourse and procreation. In proposing that Jesus had sex with Mary Magdalene, both the DVC and the Sion scenario place ultimate importance on the offspring produced by their union. But what if they had sex and no offspring? That would have been consistent with their position as Gnostics. And if we are citing Gnostic materials on Jesus and Madgalene, it is only fair that we consider them in Gnostic terms, isn't it?

Linking Jesus to a theocratic conspiracy works sensationally well in fiction, as the success of *The Da Vinci Code* shows. The Sion scenario assumes the divinity of Jesus, otherwise the blood-line could not be sacred. But Gnostics opposed the Christian view of human divinity that informs the theocratic program. In rejecting human divinity (the Incarnation, theologically speaking), they also rejected the idea of theocracy. Yet scholars allow Gnostic texts to be cited in woolly-edged discussions geared to validate the theocratic fantasia proposed by the Priory of Sion. The best way to counter that fantasia would be to interpret Gnostic texts on their own terms, but this is never done.

Scholarly omission concerning Gnostic views on procreation and what stands behind them is not an incidental oversight, is truly scandalous. The failure to address this issue totally skews the discussion around the DVC and the Sion scenario. It also prevents us from going beyond "the sexuality of Christ in Renaissance art and modern oblivion" and getting to what really is the most forbidden subject in the world. The claim that Jesus had sex with a woman may seem to be the ultimate outrage, but the sexuality of the Redeemer is still not the last taboo. If the Gnostic argument against procreation is taken into account, there is a further outrage:

*Jesus engaged in sexual intercourse, not to procreate, but purely for the pleasure of it.*

The last taboo is not about sexual intercourse but about the *pleasure* to be had in the sexual act. The debate around the sexuality of Jesus raised by *The Da Vinci Code* is wrongly focused on procreation, rather than on pleasure. If the perfect man and divine Redeemer could have experienced sexual pleasure for its own sake, what is to be made of the Incarnation and Resurrection, both of which glorify the burden and agony of the Savior for the salvation of humankind? If Jesus and Magdalene were unmarried lovers who engaged in orgiastic sex as a spiritual practice, as the *Gospel of Philip* clearly indicates, what happens to "the message of love" in the Gospels? If pleasure can link us to the Divine, how can we give pre-eminent importance to pain in religious experience?

Pleasure is the last taboo because when it is introduced into the story of the redeemer—imagined as merely human or as a divine avatar, either way—it throws the redemptive value of suffering into question. Belief in the redemptive value of suffering is the core of salvationist religion. It is the belief that keeps humanity crucified by the grandiose, self-fulfilling drama of self-immolation.

## Mesotes - Matrix of Animal Powers

### The Gnostic Christos and the Interspecies Bond

The fowls of the heavens, and of the beasts whatever is beneath the earth, or upon the earth, and the fishes of the sea, these are they that draw you unto the Divine.  
*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Gnostic fragments in Greek)

As frequent visitors to this site will know, the writing on metahistory.org mixes historical research and mythology with some elements of the author's own invention. I extrapolate from proven and verifiable subjects toward imaginative prospects that cannot be verified except by living them out, testing them to see how they work. For instance, in discussing the myth of Sophia, I cite the textual evidence of that myth, the Coptic sources and patristic literature, and I present mythic, literary, poetic, and symbolic parallels to it, but in places I extrapolate on the myth (as carefully and soberly as I can). Doing so, I go beyond the received evidence but without contradicting or undermining it. This is not at all easy to do, by the way. Sometimes I pull it off pretty well, and sometimes not so well. Occasionally, I bog down in the process, like a ballerina on snowshoes dancing in a shallow pond of molasses.

The purpose of my extrapolations is to bring the material to the place where it engages human potential, the place from which it can be *lived*, here and now. Call this, if you will, *dynamic mythology*.

In addition to the extrapolations, I also venture to make *corrections* in the *materia mytica*, or in the way it is interpreted. This is necessary because some myths have become corrupted over time, and because of the intentional hijacking (co-optation, to use the polite word) of mythic themes and figures to serve ends contrary to their authentic meaning. An example of hijacking is the identification of the winter solstice, a recurring moment traditionally associated with the birth of Pagan solar gods such as Mithras, with the literal birthday of Jesus, the Christian savior. Another instance associated with Christmas is Santa Claus, who dresses in red and white and comes down the chimney, as everyone knows. These folk-loric details are partially corrupted and partially co-opted from shamanic lore in which the shaman who eats the *amanita muscaria* (fly-agaric mushroom) travels in the sky by magic flight, climbs a ladder to the stars, etc. Santa's sled is pulled by reindeer because these animals are known to eat the same psychoactive mushrooms. The red, white-spotted mushrooms still used in Christmas decor around the world are unmistakable replicas of amanitas.

To correct the popular mythology of Christmas is to restore it to its original values, and reinstate the true references of the motifs and images. Correction and restoration go together. In Gnostic myth, the goddess Sophia plunges from the Pleroma (cosmic center) and morphs into the earth. She becomes the very planet we inhabit. This event is clearly described in the paraphrases of the Church father Irenaeus, but it is largely absent in any surviving Coptic

materials. No original account survives of Sophia's conversion (in Greek, *epistrophe*) into the earth. And what's worse, the received interpretation of the Gnostic myth of the fallen goddess, accepted and repeated by almost all scholars, [wrongly states that the Demiurge or lord Archon creates the material world](#). This is the source of the Manichean doctrine of world-denial, a version of split-source duality. In this site and in my published writings, especially *Not in His Image*, I attempt to correct this interpretation and restore the genuine, coherent, and self-consistent form of the Sophia myth.

## The Spirit of the Wild

When it comes to correcting myths, no topic presents more of a challenge than the Mesotes, the mysterious entity mentioned a few times in the surviving Gnostic materials. The Greek *mesotes*, also spelled *mijotes*, is a made-up word, or neologism, found in the *Apocryphon of John* and some non-Nag Hammadi sources, such as the *Pistis Sophia*. Mesotes mean "medium, intermediary." The construction of the word suggests "half-joined" or "half-united." But what is half-joined to what?

*The Second Treatise of the Great Seth* (NHC VII, 2, 66.3-8) says that "we become complete in the inward ineffability by a living code, attaining undefiled union through the Mesotes, the medium of Jesus." The Coptic MESOTES NTE IS is usually translated "the medium of Jesus." The Coptic letters IS, written with a line over the top, are a code for something. The scholarly convention to render IS as I(eseu)S, the Greek spelling of the Hebrew name *Yeshua*, is one way to decode IS, but not the only way... MESOTES also appears without the NTE IS, "of Jesus."

Two questions immediately arise: What is the Mesotes, in and of itself?, and How might it be related to the historical Jesus?

As to the first question, there is a long answer and a short answer. The short answer is, the Mesotes is the Manitou of indigenous shamanic traditions in the Americas. This is a powerful supernatural figure who traditionally appears to people on vision quests in the wilderness. In fact, the vision quest is not complete, and cannot be considered a success, unless the devotee encounters the Manitou or a power animal sent by it. In a sense, Manitou itself assumes the guise of a particular animal. Manitou is the spirit of the wilderness and the matrix of animal powers.

Manitou is a word in the language of the Algonquin (or Algonkin) natives of Manitoba, Canada. In fact, Manitoba is named after this entity. It is the place of the Manitou. Gitche Manitou means "Great Spirit" in Algonquin, but "Great Connection" is closer to the native sense of the term. Note that *connection* resonates with Mesotes as an *intermediary*, an entity that connects. The concept of the wild, majestic, connecting spirit is not unique to the Algonquin nations. It is universal in tribal traditions all through the Americas, such as the "Anishinaabe," a self-description used by what was once a vast population of indigenous tribes, including the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Algonkin peoples of North America. (The Ashaninka of Brazil have a name that resembles the Anishinaabe peoples. This name simply means "first or original people.")

Among the Iroquois nations, Manitou was a supreme divinity associated with the healing powers of water. The Iroquois say that healing herbs are found where Manitou has planted them. Among the Lakota Sioux, White Buffalo Woman appears to be a particular female epiphany of Manitou. In other language groups the Wilderness Spirit is more loosely called *Wakan*, *Wakanda*, *Wakan Tanka*, terms which mean "divine, powerful spirit, or medicine spirit." The Iroquois call the same presence by the name *Orenda*.



Many non-native people regard *Black Elk Speaks*, written by John G. Neihardt, to be *the* classic book on the vision quest in Native America. In this book, Black Elk (1863 - 1950), a medicine man of the Oglala Sioux, recounts the visionary experience of vast scope and power that he underwent at Harney Peak in 1931. He sees many horses in a mandala-like formation, stands before the council of the Six Grandfathers, beholds a spotted eagle, and hears a mighty Voice addressing him from the center of the world. Black Elk's vision has been widely taken as the model of an indigenous vision quest. He does not describe the encounter with a singular supernatural presence, nor does he give a name that might be equated with Manitou. The presence of that entity seems to make itself known in the Voice he hears. (Black Elk on Harley Peak, from *Black Elk Speaks*.)

Another, less celebrated but (to my mind) more valuable, and perhaps more authentic, account of the Native American vision quest can be found in *Lame Deer - Seeker of Visions*, written John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes. In the tribal language of Lame Deer, *Wakan Tanka* is the most sacred force that pervades nature. "The gods are separate beings - but they are all united in Wakan Tanka" (p. 102) He does not put a particular name to the Manitou as such, but he makes a curious correlation: "Inyan Wasican Wakan — the Holy White Stone Man — that's what we call Moses," he says. This odd statement demonstrates how Christian lore absorbed by native peoples can be interpreted in terms of their own spiritual experience, without loss of value to them, although such interpretation displaces the interpreted element from its original context.





For Lamé Deer (pictured on right) to understand who Moses *might have been*, he must imagine the Biblical figure as a supernatural entity already familiar to him. Doing so, he leaves the Christian profile of Moses entirely behind. In other words, Lamé Deer corrects the received mythology according to the criteria of his own traditional experience.

The variations of Manitou are too numerous to elaborate. It is important to note, however, that that the Algonquin associate the Wild Spirit with a vast entourage of *manitos*, lesser spirits, who indwell the stones, plants, and animals of the natural world. Each of the lesser spirits is an organ or instrument of the all-pervading Manitou. The manitos communicate mainly through animals and plants. (John Bierhorst, *The Mythology of North America*, p. 220 ff.). The *sanctos ninos*, "sacred little ones," of Mazatec shaman Maria Sabina belong to this class of animistic spirit-allies. Specifically, the *sanctos ninos* are the talking, guiding, and healing spirits of the sacred mushrooms of the *Psilocybe* genus. Generally, they are any kind of supernatural intelligence, plant- or animal-identified, that interacts with human beings to foster the connection between humanity and the natural world. The manitos are intermediaries.

In sacred lore far afield from the Americas, Manitou appears in the guise of the *Manu*, a kind of supernatural guide in Hindu mythology. Theosophical lore derived from Brahminical traditions conflates the Manu with the Biblical Noah and other mythical figures associated with Flood mythology - perhaps echoing the Iroquois notion that Manitou controls the "healing waters." Although the Manu-Manitou correlation is valid in general terms of comparative mythology, it does not hold up in more rigorous application. The Manu is a male hierarchal figure whose function is to guide the human species through the transitions between the Zodiacal Ages or Kalpas, epochs of cosmic time. As such, it does not appear to have much to do with nature or the natural world, but Manitou and its variants always does. The Manu appears to be a Manitou-figure that has lost its indigenous value as the Spirit of the Wild and turned into a source and model of patriarchal order. A figurehead of theocratic authority, as it were.

## Do Kamo

The root **man-** occurs world-wide, always in connection with the notion of spiritual presence or sacred power *experienced* (not merely *conceived*) animistically. In Celtic lore, Manannan, the son of the river goddess Danu, is a Manitou-like figure who presides over the dark waters of the Underworld — again recalling the Iroquois motif. The Welsh equivalent is Manawyddan, imagined in human reflection as a sorcerer and poet. In Roman religion, Manes was the general name for the spirits of the dead. The term comes from the Etruscan Mantus, an underworld spirit. (The Romans took a great deal of their lore from the indigenous Etruscans, whom they displaced.)

The term "animism" was introduced by anthropologist E. B. Tylor in his theory of the origin of religion (*Primitive Culture*, 1871). Tylor found the term *mana* in the languages of Oceanic cultures spread across Melanesia, Polynesia, and Micronesia. This term denotes an impersonal and omnipresent force or quality that indwells people, animals, and inanimate objects and instills in those who contact it a sense of respect or wonder. In anthropological jargon, mana



has come to be the generalized concept for the Sacred understood in animistic terms.

Tylor's generalization of mana put animism on the map, but it tends to obscure the fact that mana is always perceived by indigenous peoples in vivid and particular terms, never in the abstract. Although some Manitou-like figures might be identified in Oceanic cultures, the prevailing tendency in that part of the world is to specify mana by totemic plants and animals. One remarkable example of this trend is the divine maiden Hainuwele, whose name means "frond of the coco palm." Among the people of West Ceram in New Guinea, Hainuwele is a Dema or "virgin spirit" in nature, whose elaborate myth recounts how she became the totemic plant for the people. The tendency to participate in the sacred presence of the Manitou through alimentation is very ancient, predating the Spirit of the Wild as known in the Americas. (See Joseph Campbell, *Primitive Mythology*, p. 172ff.)

Among the Kanak people of New Caledonia, the presence of the Sacred in animistic and totemic forms is closely associated with the quality of *do kamo*, "authenticity." In 1947 anthropologist Maurice Leenhardt published *Do Kamo - Person and Myth in Melanesian Society*, in which he explained this word as indicating the indigenous sense of dignity proper to the human species. According to Leenhardt, who was known as a pioneer of the method of "participant observation," *do kamo* (pronounced DOE-kah-mo) is the expression in Kanak for what is seen to be genuinely human because it exhibits a gift for clarity and competence, tenderness and timing. The Kanak say you can see authenticity in the way a person holds a yam, or paddles a canoe. (On *do kamo*, see the essay, [Socrates in the Last Days](#).)

For the indigenous mind, awareness of the presence of the Sacred is required so that we can be authentic in the human sense. Totemic identification, and ritual ingestion, of the Manitou is one form of *participation mystique*, and the encounter with the Spirit of the Wild during the vision quest is another. In both cases, the Presence of the Sacred wells up from nature and imbues its human witnesses with the right and proportionate sense of humanity. The vision quest of the Americas is a direct encounter with the Spirit of the Wild, the Manitou, that not only confers visionary wisdom on the witness, but imbues him or her with a deepened and compassionately delimited sense of humanity.

### Genomic Endowment

If these parallels are correct, we may expect that the right sense of humanity is engendered by the encounter with the Mesotes as well. How true this is, if we read in depth into the Gnostic materials. *The Second Treatise of the Great Seth* (NHC VII, 2), cited at the top of this essay, says:

We become complete in the inward ineffability by a living code, attaining undefiled union through the Mesotes, the connection of the one who heals (Iasius).

Like so many passages in the awkward Coptic renditions of the presumed "Greek originals" of Gnostic writings, this one contains a string of undetermined referents: "inward ineffability", "become complete", "a living code", "undefiled union." What is ineffable? Complete in what sense? What sort of code? The last term might also be translated "pure unity." But union with

what, unity in what sense?

Let's recall that the made-up word Mesotes literally means "half-joined," but it is better rendered as "intermediary." An intermediary joins two things. The Mesotes joins humanity as a species to all other species. This is the "pure unity" that can be realized by encountering Manitou, the Spirit of the Wild. The term "become complete" uses *teleios*, the adjectival form of *telos*, "goal, aim." NHC texts, as well as the non-NHC *Gospel of Mary* which contains teachings attributed to Mary Magdalene, use the term PITELEIOS RHOME, "the perfect humanity." I have argued that "ultimate" is closer to the original meaning of the Gnostic masters than "perfect." *Perfection cannot be attained in human terms, but human potential can be ultimately achieved, raised to an optimal level.* This is what it means to *thrive*. Thriving was the goal (*telos*) of Gnostic education and vocational training based on the initiatory method of the Mysteries.

The potential of our species is encoded in the human genome, "a living code." Each of us carries a share of the genius of the species in a genomic endowment, distinct from the genetic inheritance deriving from the familial bloodline. The genomic endowment, "the inward ineffability," is a *phylogenetic transfer from the experience of humanity as large*. As such, it transcends and overrides whatever traits we inherit from familial blood-ties. It is connected with the sense of a mission, a vocational calling.

**phylogenesis:** the long-term process of the evolution of a species, distinguished from the short-term development of an individual member of a species (ontogenesis). **Phylogenetic transfer:** the endowment in an individual member of a species of skills and intelligence derived from the species' long-term experience, rather than from the familial line of inheritance - i.e., genomic inheritance in an individual.

The Mesotes-Manitou has a double function: to mediate between the human species and all other species, and through "the connection that heals," to engender in us the right sense of humanity, including our personal share in the indwelling genius of our species. The complementarity of these two functions cannot be overstated.

PITELEIOS RHOME is the full or ultimate expression of human potential that can be achieved when we own and evolve the genomic endowment. Gnostics used the term *Anthropos* for the human genome, the template of our species. They were teacher-seers who used mystical insight and initiated knowledge to foster the genomic endowment of their students. In the indigenous cultures of the Americas, young members of the tribe went on a vision quest for exactly the same purpose: to be taught by the Spirit of the Wild. If the quest was successful, they would return to the tribe with a heightened awareness of the interspecies connection, as well as a deepened awareness of their specific mission in society. With Native Americans, the vision quest produces a sense of responsibility toward the entire tribe or "nation," as clearly demonstrated with Black Elk.

The adolescent who returns to the ordinary society from the non-ordinary rigors of the vision quest is not expected to fulfill the expectations of his or her parents, but to re-enter the community with a wider, transpersonal sense of purpose. No tradition records that the sense of mission acquired in the vision quest conforms to parental and familial duties. If one follows

these duties, that is an independent matter, unrelated to what comes from meeting Manitou, the Spirit of the Wild. Phylogenetic transfer overrides any kind of familial or parental obligation or continuity. In the widest sense, it confers solidarity on the individual person in relation to the human tribe, the species as a whole — this is *the species-self connection* described in Chapter 23 of *Not in His Image*, with extensive reference to the Mesotes. It must be understood that the species-self connection only makes sense within the all-species connection. The Mesotes consolidates both of these.

Left to our own devices, without an empathic connection to other, non-human species, we cannot even know what it means to be human.

### The Power Animal

All the above applies to the short answer to the question, What is the Gnostic Mesotes, in and of itself? (On the long answer, see the end of this essay.) Now, what about the second question: How might the Mesotes of Gnostic writings be related to the Jesus of Christian faith? The Coptic MESOTES NTE IS is translated “the medium of Jesus,” as noted above. This suggests a close correlation, if not identification, between the supernatural presence of the Mesotes and the man Jesus, or possibly the supernatural Christ indwelling the man, according to the conventional view of the Incarnation.

Can the Mesotes legitimately be considered as the *Presence* of Jesus Christ in our midst? Perhaps something like the expression of the Incarnation in the realm of wild, non-human nature?

It would certainly provide a great boost to Christianity to consider the Mesotes in this way. For one thing, it would broaden Christian faith beyond its constricting frame of anthropocentrism. We could, if we choose to do so, consider Jesus in this way. To paraphrase Lama Deer on Moses: “Mesotes — the Spirit of the Wild — that's what we indigenous people make out of what you call Jesus.” But it must be noted that this answer does not necessarily legitimate the Jesus of the New Testament, who is presumed by believers to have actually lived as an historical person, and who may have been the Son of God, a divine incarnation in human form who died a human death on the cross and was resurrected, etc. Rather, it *corrects* the mythological figure of that name and restores to it an original and uncorrupted value. To follow this correction, we have to establish that IS in Coptic code denotes *Iasius, the healer*, rather than the presumed historical person, Jesus of Nazareth. That particular person — considered either as a real -life historical figure or a fictional persona invented for moralistic purposes — has to be dissociated totally from the Mesotes in order to recognize the Gnostic meaning encoded in the term MESOTES NTE IS, “the connection that heals.”

The Mesotes-Manitou is not remotely related to the divine redeemer of Christian tradition, except by the specious conflation of Iesios-Iasius. The Intermediary has nothing in common with the powers attributed to Jesus, either as a radical Jewish guru and folk-healer, who is fully human, or as the Incarnation, the unique human instrument of the Cosmic Christ. Bear in mind the primary and essential attribute of the Redeemer, the hybrid Jesus/Christ: he is concerned above and beyond all else with the human condition *viewed in a totally anthropocentric manner*. Christ came into this world to redeem humanity, Christian doctrine states. The

program of salvation to be fulfilled by the Redeemer is completely and exclusively human-centered, fixated on the privileged relation of the human species in the eyes of the the father god. *The entirety of animal and plant life on earth is categorically excluded from this connection, and so remains outside the program.* Other species play no role in the father god's plan for salvation.

It is an erroneous extravagance to grant the doctrinal Jesus Christ any role in the natural world, comparable to the Manitou. Consistent with the factors that define the mission of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer clearly has nothing in common with the Spirit of the Wild. This being so, any conflation of Jesus or Jesus/Christ with the Mesotes engenders false and deceptive notions of the latter. Such conflation will always work to the advantage of the savior — for example, by investing him with the aura of a nature-spirit or nature-lover. Clearly, this is absurd.



There is no textual or mythological material to support such a profile for either Jesus or Christ, or the combo. On the other hand, the Mesotes loses its genuine and autonomous attributes when identified with the Redeemer. Taken out of the context of nature, "the connection that heals" becomes meaningless.

In the tradition of Pagan religion, which was animistic, the nature god Pan was a kind of Manitou-figure, pictured as the matrix of animal powers, or encircled by the animal images of the Zodiac (on left).

But with the rise of Christianity, the Christ was often represented in the place of Pan, and likewise encircled by animal powers. In the attempt to suppress all alternatives that preserved the Pagan sense of divinity immanent in nature, Christian ideologues and their enforcers substituted Christ for a variety of Pagan deities, most notably Pan and Orpheus.





The decorated ceiling of the Domitilla catacomb (Roman, 3 C AD) displays Orpheus as the shaman who tames the wild animals with his chanting and the sound of his lyre (Joseph Campbell, *Creative Mythology*, Figure 1). Among candidates for a Manitou figure in Greek mythology, Orpheus stands at the top of the list, along with Pan. Apollo, on the other hand, represents the intellectual solar deity or male sky god who opposed the autochthonous powers and becomes merged with Christ, as I explain in Chapter 2 of *Not in His Image* ("Pagan Roots").

Orpheus is a denizen of the Underworld, a healer (Iasius), and tamer of wild animals. The imagery of the Domitilla catacomb ceiling represents the final stage of a millennial tradition of sacred art that goes all the way back to Paleolithic cave paintings. That tradition was broken when the Christian redeemer was substituted for the Manitou-figure. Sacred art from the 3rd century onward puts Christ in the center of the Zodiac, even though redeemer theology clearly denies any significance to the animal world, and ignores the interspecies bond.

In short, the off-planet, anthropocentric orientation of Judeo-Christian faith and redeemer theology exclude the realm of animal powers where the Manitou-Mesotes appears as a

supernatural guide who confers those powers. Those who return from the vision quest have identified with a power animal provided to them by the Spirit of the Wild. The Mesotes-Manitou does not involve a connection with a divine world beyond the planet we inhabit. It is instrumental to our species connection to the divine element in this world, *Wakan Tanka*, right here on the planet with stones, snakes, bugs, birds, plants, and animals.

The fowls of the heavens, and of the beasts whatever is beneath the earth, or upon the earth, and the fishes of the sea, these are they that draw you unto the Divine.

The Oxyrhynchus papyri are a motley collection of fragmentary texts and notes written in Greek, found in a once marshy area about 120 miles south of Cairo, west of the main course of the Nile. The assumption that Coptic-language Gnostic writings were translated from Greek originals was confirmed by this find which produced passages in Greek from the *Gospel of Thomas*, and other sayings assumed to be Gnostic, such as the one cited here. If scholars are correct about the "Greek originals," we may assume that Oxyrhynchus material such as this phrase brings us one step closer to the core Gnostic teachings. In this case, the fragment supports an understanding of the Mesotes as the matrix of animal powers, rather than a human-centered redeemer.



In the Zuni myth of the Emergence, Posayamo is said to be the "foremost of the people," the first to emerge from the earth and road the surface. He acted as an intercessor for the people, and brought them to a knowledge of the animal powers so that they could survive in harmony with other species. (Posayamo Calling the Food Animals, watercolor by Richard Martinez, San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico. In *The Mythology of North America* by John Bierhorst)

### **Interspecies Revelation**

The historical Jesus and the associated divine redeemer, Jesus Christ, cannot and ought not be equated with the Mesotes, but there is a sense in which the Gnostic Christos figures into this mythological complex. For Gnostics, Christos was not a redeemer and never assumed human form in flesh and blood. In the Sophia myth of the Mysteries, Christos is often paired with Sophia. They are the two Aeons who encode the singularity of the Anthropos, the human genome, with a range of species-specific potentials. At a critical moment when Sophia has morphed into the earth, and she is overcome by the density and diversity of the life-forms that arise in the biosphere, the Aeons of the Pleroma send Christos to intervene in her behalf. This is the Christic intercession. (See Chapter 14 of *Not in His Image*, and [The Fall of the Wisdom](#))

[Goddess](#), on site.)

The long answer to the first question, What is the Mesotes, in and of itself?, is that the Mesotes is the bioplasmic after-affect of the Christic intercession. This is a vast mythological theme that stands distinct and independent from the Judeo-Christian redeemer myth. The answer is long because you have to get into the myth to understand it.

So, it *is* possible to relate the Gnostic Aeon Christos, but not the Christ of conventional faith, to the Mesotes as matrix of animal powers. In a remarkable feat of mystical anthropology, Linda Tucker has proposed this correlation. In her book, *The Mystery of the White Lions*, which is reviewed on this site, Tucker presents her drawing of a Manitou figure whom she identifies with both Jesus and Christ. The caption reads: "Jesus, surrounded by the biodiversity of nature. Based on medieval manuscripts illustrating that the figure of Jesus is one with all creation. He is flanked by the lion on one side and the lamb on the other."



Tucker comments on this drawing at some length:

The presence of the original Creator God is manifest in all of original creation: nature. God lives in every living, wild and wondrous creature on this planet.

Nice thoughts, here, but rather unclear in theological and biological terms. In the Gnostic view, the Creator God is not responsible for the earth and does not indwell it: Sophia the fallen goddess does. Strictly speaking, the earth is not *created* by any god or goddess, for it is the metamorphosis of the divine body of the wisdom goddess, Sophia. When Tucker asserts that "God lives in the White Lions, and manifests His presence through them," she is mixing Christian theology with animism in what is (to my mind) a misleading way. Tucker has



certainly had an epiphany with the White Lions, a spiritual awakening that carries enormous importance to the world today, but I would suggest that it is not possible to communicate that awakening in the familiar doctrinal term she uses.

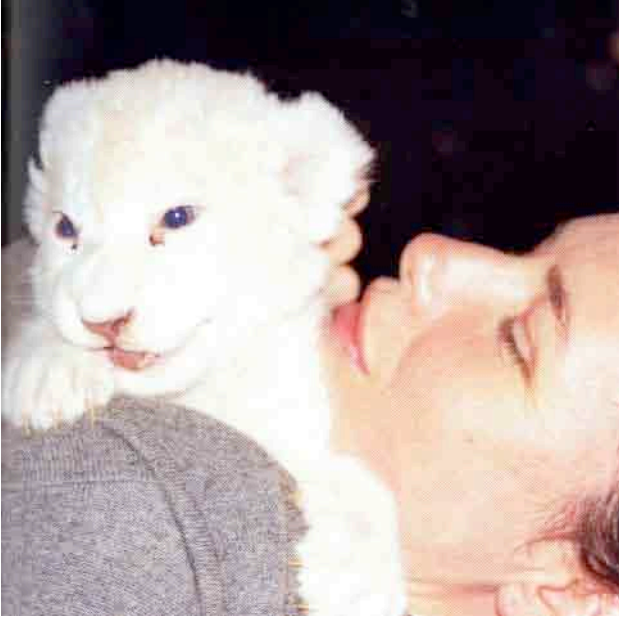
She continues:

Christ was one with Nature. In fact, the word Logos (God's law on earth, the rule of nature) is used as Christ's very title.

We are all familiar with Christ's description as the sacrificial "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." Christ himself explained, "I am a good shepherd, I know my sheep and my sheep know me." Yet, while the lamb is the meek and mild image of Christ with which we are comfortable, it should not blind us to his true godlike leonine powers... The truth we should face up to is that there are many occasions in the Bible when God's judgment is likened to a lion's attack. (*The Mystery of the White Lions*, p. 338ff)

This passage mixes up Biblical language with the animistic revelation of the white lions. If you ask me, the lions lose out in the mix. Is the Christic figure that Tucker imagines "surrounded by the diversity of nature" to be identified with the suffering Redeemer and the wrathful Father God, Jehovah, who judges the world with violence? If so, then why not attach all the theological baggage of the redeemer complex to the mystical animism of the white lions? What then happens to the intrinsic value of the animal powers?

Tucker shows the bias of her Jungian training when she conflates the white lions with the received material of redeemer theology. According to the Jungian view, opposites coincide in the psyche: "The lamb is of course Christ, Lion of Judah, who ultimately reconciles lion and lamb, predator and prey, since in him all are One" (p. 339). This kind of archetypal mish-mash is hopeless for providing guidelines toward genuine mystical experience of the natural world. At worse, it indemnifies redeemer theology and all the horrors it entails. Tucker comes close to saying that the white lions, raised as "canned lions" to be shot by trophy-hunters for a high price, are like Jesus who died for our sins.



As much as I love Tucker's book, and find in the white lions an astonishing epiphany of the animal powers, I cannot go along with her interpretation of the Christ-Lion connection. It risks losing the interspecies revelation coming from the white lions in a reversion to victim-perpetrator ideology. I would suggest a Gnostic interpretation that sees in the white lions the specific form of the Mesotes, matrix of the animal powers. In other words, the white lions appear on earth in an inexplicable way at this moment in history, to serve as a power animal for the entire human species, so that we can learn by connecting with them the reality of our own extinction. Tucker (show here with a white lion cub) relates the lions closely to the coming extinction, the next Ice Age that will be precipitated by global warming. Her anthropological interpretations in this vein are fascinating and far more convincing than the syncretistic and apologetic speculations that conclude her wonderful book.



In a time when many species are becoming extinct, due to the anthropocentric attitude of the human species — an attitude clearly supported by the mandate of the Creator God to propagate and master the earth, and reinforced by Judeo-Christian-Islamic theology that makes only the human species worthy of God and worth saving — the white lions may have come to guide us toward our own extinction.

In terms of metahistorical discipline, it is totally inadmissible to cite a few snatches of innocuous language attributed to Jesus Christ to support the notion that the redeemer and the paternal deity are nature-friendly. Christ and Jehovah are not immanent in the natural world. That is theologically incorrect, and it is rather dangerous to insist so in psychological or archetypal terms. If Father and Son are not conceived in that way by the millions of faithful believers, why pretend otherwise? The point of Gnostic correction demonstrated in this site is not to make Jesus Christ look right, but to look elsewhere.

Equating the Gnostic Mesotes with the Manitou of Native American vision quest is not something I do lightly, but once the equation is made, I believe we can count on the strength of the evidence, the comparative motifs, etc. The Christos-Mesotes-Manitou correlation makes sense and will stand up to scrutiny. The mythographic evidence for the argument could fill ten essays the size of this one...

But the essential thing is that the Manitou-Mesotes correlation would provide corrective

guidelines for genuine, firsthand mystical experience.

- In humanity, by contrast to other animals, symbiosis has to be realized by overcoming an inveterate tendency for self-obsession. “We are human only in contact, and conviviality, with all that is not human,” David Abram says. By entering into kinship with all species, we overcome our anthropocentric tendencies, which can be vicious, harming ourselves as much as others. The Christos intercession effected a softening of human boundaries, especially ego boundaries, to allow enhanced empathy with all that lives. In this empathy we find our personal path more easily, because no creature lives by itself. The ultimate function of the Mesotes is a subtle, non intrusive guiding effect. Laurence van der Post, who lived with the San Bushman of the Kalahari, captured the taste of this experience when he wrote (in *A Mantis Carol*): “We all know more than we allow ourselves to know because of a certain cowardice in face of the inexpressible, and fear of accepting its effect on us as guide to the nature of its reality.”
- 
- Upon encountering the Mesotes, most witnesses do not go with the guiding effect but refer it back to their conditioning, and see it through their conditioning, especially their religious beliefs. Sad to say, the encounter is wasted on people when it leads back to fixation on the historical Jesus and blind beliefs in salvation, sacrifice, the redemptive value of suffering, God’s plan for the world, and so on. The genuine mystical encounter is wholly lacking in these fictions. We are guided by “the living Jesus” into a unique personal experience of kinship with all species. The luminous phantom is the subliminal inner guide, not a “life coach” who fosters self-empowerment or collusion with God. It does not support the gratification of our personal lives, but selfless consecration to all that lives.  
In the range of human instincts there is a drive for self-preservation (including preservation of the ego as well as the body) so strong it can counteract the drive to coevolve, to embrace all life-forms and to love Gaia, the earth itself. We are immersed in Gaian symbiosis, and we always have the choice to override self-preservation in the cause of life at large. The inner guide is a sublime gift endowed in our species from the Pleroma, an insuperable aid to self-correction.

Without the subtle guidance of the luminous phantom, we would be even more driven by insane egotism than we already are.

From *Not in His Image*, Chapter 23, "The Species-Self Connection."



Mesotes represented as Christ between the horns of a stag.

#### /Telestics

is a term of my invention, derived from the Greek *telos*, "aim, end, purpose." I have often pointed out that the title "Gnostic" was an insult, never used by the people to which it was directed. The seers and teachers of the Pagan Mysteries called themselves *telestai*, "those who are aimed." Telestics is the art of interpreting the mystical and supernatural elements of human experience in a sober and rational manner, yet without dismissing or denying the authenticity of such experience. Gnosis was an ancient form of noetics, the science of relating mind to phenomena, natural and supernatural. In telestics, the insights of noetic science can be brought to focus specifically on issues of human purpose, cosmic order, and so forth.

It specifically treats the diagnosis of social evil and presents Socratic techniques for confronting

it.

## On the Illuminati

Extract from *Not in His Image*, Ch. 9, Schools for Coevolution

The *telestai* of the Mysteries were sophisticated shamans, past masters of “archaic techniques of ecstasy.” Traditionally, shamans were the intermediaries between the human-made realm of culture and the nonhuman realm of nature. Their special calling demanded a schizoid capacity to move between two worlds, keep the two worlds distinct, and effectuate exchanges between them. Schizophrenics naturally have this mobility, but without a proper spiritual orientation and appropriate training they are easily undone by it. Successfully managed schizophrenia can result in great works of mythopoesis, as seen in the writings of Antonin Artaud, Philip K. Dick, and Carlos Castaneda, to cite just three (male) examples.

Mystery adepts who were responsible for the cultivation of human potential to its optimal level took great care not to risk schizophrenic damage with their pupils and neophytes. They realized how easy it is to induce and exploit schizophrenic states that can arise spontaneously in the process of initiation. The requisite lowering, or total dissolution, of the ego-self produces high suggestability in the subject. Neophytes in the Mysteries were prime subjects for “imprinting,” the process in which a predetermined psychic content or program is implanted in the subconscious mind. Imprinting occurs universally in nature as the means by which instinctual programs are transferred from one generation to another. Ethologist Konrad Lorenz (1903–89) famously imprinted newborn ducks, convincing them that he was their mother. Lorenz coined the term “inner release mechanism” (IRM), whereby organisms are genetically predisposed to respond to certain stimuli. The ideas expressed in his popular book *On Aggression* (1966) were known to initiates through their intimate, firsthand observation of psychomimetic activities, formulated today in the science of neurolinguistic programming.

In short, the psyche can be trained to imitate behavior modeled for it ritualistically, or repeat assigned behavior when exposed to a specific signal (posthypnotic suggestion). Such manipulations of the psyche depend on the primary condition for initiation: temporary dissolution of the filter of self-consciousness.

Behavioral manipulation, psychological programming, and mind control were utterly repugnant to the genuine *telestai* of the ancient Mysteries. Such procedures represented to them a path leading away from consecration to Sophia and the Great Work of coevolving with nature, toward social engineering and personal power games. The goal of the *telestai* was to foster a sane and balanced society by helping individuals reach their peak potential, and never to interfere directly in social management.

Over the course of time some initiates did take the path of social engineering, however. Dissident members of the Gnostic movement who came to be known as “Illuminati” chose to use initiatory knowledge to develop and implement various techniques of behavior modification. Originally, the Illuminati were members of the Magian order, an ancient Persian lineage of shamanism from which the Gnostic movement was derived.\*

Historians understand the Magi to have been the priesthood of Zoroaster, or Zarathustra. According to a scribal note written on the margin of *Alciabides I*, a work attributed to Plato, “Zarathustra is said to have been older than Plato by 6,000 years.”<sup>163</sup> In her extraordinary and little-known book, *Plato Prehistorian*, Mary Settegast situates the rise of the Magian order, the original priesthood of ancient Iranian religion, in the Age of the Twins, around 5500 B.C.E., a date supported by the Greek sources. The Age of the Twins, or Geminian Age, lasted from 6200 to 4300 B.C.E. The motif of duality associated with the constellation of the Twins is consistent with the central theme of Iranian religion: absolute cosmic duality, Good versus Evil.

But this type of duality is not what we find in Gnostic teachings. The problem faced by the Magian predecessors of the Gnostics was *the duality of human intention*, not the dichotomy of cosmic absolutes. Around 4000 B.C.E., with the rise of urban civilization in the Near East, some members of the Magian order chose to apply certain secrets of initiation to statecraft and social engineering. They became the advisors to the first theocrats of the patriarchal nation-states, but in fact the advisors were running the show. Their subjects were systematically programmed to believe they were descended from the gods. The Illuminati inaugurated elaborate rites of empowerment, or kingship rituals. These rituals were in fact methods of mind control exercised on the general populace through the collective symbology and mystique of royal authority. Kingship rituals were distinct from the rites of initiation that led to instruction by the Light and consecration to the Great Goddess. Their purpose was not education and enlightenment, but social management.

Gnostics refrained from assuming any role in politics because their intention was not to change society but to produce skilled, well-balanced, enlightened individuals who would create a society good enough that it did not need to be run by external management. The intention of the dissident Magians to run society by covert controls was based on their assumption that human beings are not innately good enough, or gifted enough, to create a humane world. This difference in views of human potential was the main factor that precipitated the division of the Magians.

Historians recognize a split in the Magian order, but do not understand either its origin or its consequences. Within the order, the *telestai* were given the title of *vaedemna*, “seer,” “wise one,” as distinguished from the priest, the *zoatar*, who officiated openly in society and advised Middle Eastern theocrats on matters of statecraft and social morality, not to mention agricultural planning—for Zoroaster was by all accounts responsible for the introduction of planned, large-scale agriculture. It is generally agreed that women discovered by gathering plants how to cultivate them, and men later expanded this discovery into the ancient equivalent to agribusiness. So arose the first theocratic city-states in the Fertile Crescent. (Civilization may be defined as the way of life that begins by amassing vegetables to increase population, and ends with a population of vegetables.) Urban populations required social control, and the Illuminati assumed the role of planners and controllers—more often than not, hidden controllers.

In *Plato Prehistorian*, Mary Settegast explains that “at one extreme Zarathustra has been described as a primitive ecstatic, a kind of ‘shaman’; at the other, as a worldly familiar of



Chorasmian kings and court politics.”<sup>164</sup> The distinction between the shaman-seer and the sacerdotal figure engaged in court politics exemplifies the split in the Magian order. In book 3 of the *Republic*, Plato disclosed the Illuminati rationale: “contrive a noble lie that would in itself carry the conviction of our entire community.” The first recorded use of the word *gnostikos* occurs in Plato’s *Politicus* (258e–267a) where the ideal politician is defined as “the master of the Gnostic art.”<sup>165</sup> From its introduction into the Western intellectual tradition, *gnostikos* was wrongly associated with the Illuminati faction and hence the name came to be disowned by the *telestai* who did not engage in statecraft and social management, using the “noble lie” rationale.

In fact, *gnostikoi* like Hypatia would never have used that term to describe themselves. Six centuries after Plato, it came into use as an insult. The Church Fathers ridiculed the teachers in the Mysteries with the term *gnostokos*, intended to mean “smart ass,” “know-it-all.” Among themselves, the initiates would have used the term *telestes*. Paradoxically, “gnostic” comes down to us tainted by the condemnation of the Roman Church and associated with the very members of the Magian order who were disowned by the guardians of the Mysteries.

The Illuminati program was (and still is) essential to patriarchy and its cover, perpetrator religion. While it cannot exactly be said that the deviant adepts known as Illuminati created patriarchy, they certainly controlled it. And still do. The abuse of initiatory knowledge to induce schizophrenic states (“entrainment”), manipulate multiple personalities in the same person (“platforming”), and command behavior through posthypnotic suggestion (the “Manchurian candidate” technique) continues to this day, with truly evil consequences for the entire world. If we accept that the Mysteries were schools for Gaian coevolution dedicated to the goddess Sophia, they could not have been run by the Illuminati, as some contemporary writers (who believe they are exposing the Illuminati) have supposed. Everything the Gnostics did in the schools was intended to counterbalance and correct the machinations of the deviant adepts. Initiation involved melting the ego boundaries in preparation for deep rapport with nature, not lowering of ego consciousness so that the subject could be “sectioned” and behaviorally programmed using the power of suggestion, imprinting, and other psychodramatic methods. These behavioral modification tools of the Illuminati were strictly forbidden in the Mysteries overseen by Gnostics.

## THE TOPIC OF TOPICS

### Gnostic Parallels in the Writings of Carlos Castaneda

The eleven books of Carlos Castaneda record his apprenticeship with a Yaqui Indian, don Juan Matus, who plays Socratic mentor to Castaneda’s skeptical anthropologist. Over more than twenty years, Castaneda learned the theory and practice of a new discipline proposed by his mischievous and demanding teacher. The art of the “new seers” involves revising ancient secrets of Toltec sorcery transmitted to don Juan through a late lineage dating from the 18th century.

“Sorcery” in this case means a path of experience that stands apart from the experiential habits

of humanity (French *sortir*, “to leave, depart”).

Through a long process of trial and error, Castaneda manages to alter the parameters of perception and explore other worlds. In the process of his adventures, he encounters certain alien inorganic beings who present an obstacle or test for the shaman. In *Magical Passes*, Castaneda wrote: “Human beings are on a journey of awareness, which has momentarily been interrupted by extraneous forces.”

## Mud Shadows

In Castaneda’s final book, *The Active Side of Infinity* (1998), don Juan challenges Castaneda to reconcile man’s intelligence, demonstrated in so many achievements, with “the stupidity of his systems of beliefs... the stupidity of his contradictory behaviour.” Don Juan relates this blatant contradiction in human intelligence to what he calls “the topic of topics,” “the most serious topic in sorcery.” This topic is *predation*. To the horrified astonishment of his apprentice, the elder sorcerer explains how the human mind has been infiltrated by an alien intelligence:

- We have a predator that came from the depths of the cosmos and took over the rule of our lives. Human beings are its prisoners. The predator is our lord and master. It has rendered us docile, helpless. If we want to protest, it suppresses our protest. If we want to act independently, it demands that we don’t do so...
- Sorcerers believe that the predators have given us our systems of beliefs, our ideas of good and evil, our social mores. They are the ones who set up our hopes and expectations and dreams of success or failure. They have given us covetousness, greed and cowardice. It is the predators who make us complacent, routinary and egomaniacal.

According to don Juan, the sorcerers of ancient Mexico called the predator *the flyer* (italicised by Castaneda) “because it leaps through the air... It is a big shadow, impenetrably black, a black shadow that jumps through the air.” This description matches thousands of accounts of the bizarre jumping movements, sometimes sideways, executed by alien Greys who accost people at random. Fleeting black shadows are less often reported, but they play the major role in the long and detailed report of alien activity by John Keel, *The Mothman Prophecies*.

Gnostic writings contain descriptions of alien predators called Archons, Arkontai in Greek. The texts from Nag Hammadi describe them as heavy, elusive, shadowy creatures. The most common name for them is “beings of the likeness, shadow-creatures.” Could the Archons be compared to the “mud shadows” described by don Juan? This question raises the general issue of parallels between don Juan’s Central American Toltec shamanism and the shamanism of the Mystery Schools of ancient Europe. Let’s consider some of these parallels.

First, there is the matter of the influence of the predators or flyers on humanity. In *The Active Side of Infinity*, Don Juan tells Castaneda that “the predators give us their mind, which becomes our mind.” This alarming statement suggests an immediate parallel to Gnostic teachings.

Gnostics, who directed the Mystery Schools of the Near East in antiquity, taught that the true mind of human beings, *nous authenticos*, is part of the cosmic intelligence that pervades nature, but due to the intrusion of the Archons, this “native mind” or “native genius” can be subverted

and even occupied by another mind. They warned that the Archons invade the human psyche, they intrude mentally and psychologically, although they may also confront us physically as well. Their main impact, however, is in our mental syntax, in our paradigms and beliefs, exactly as don Juan says of *the flyers*.

Don Juan tells Castaneda that the predator's mind is "a cheap model: economy strength, one size fits all." This description fits the hive-mentality of the Archons. Sorcerers call this uniform alien mind "the *foreign installation*, which exists in you and in every other human being." The *foreign installation* (italicized by Castaneda) pulls us out of our syntax. It deranges our indigenous abilities to organize the world according to the language proper to our species. The role of correct syntax in the sorcerer's mastery of intent is one of the central factors in the later teachings of Don Juan. The sorcerer's concern for deviation of syntax, and consequent derouting of intent, parallels [the importance of language and correct definition](#) emphasized in Gnostic teaching.

Don Juan makes a number of statements pertinent to strategies against alien intrusion. He says that the sorcerers of ancient times "found out that if they taxed *the flyers'* mind with inner silence, the foreign installation would flee, giving to any one of the practitioners involved in this manoeuvre the total certainty of the mind's foreign origin." In other words, the realization that another mind can operate in our minds only becomes fully clear and certain when the foreign mind has been exposed and expelled. Only then do we understand how "the real mind that belongs to us, the sum total of our experience, after a lifetime of domination has been rendered shy, insecure and shift." The "real mind" of Castaneda can be equated to the *nous authenticos* of the Gnostics. The main effect of *the flyers* upon our mind is seen in mental conditioning, brainwashing. This is also the main effect of Archontic intrusion.

## Psychic Self-Defence

Gnostic texts describe direct, physical confrontations with Archons of two kinds, an embryonic or foetal type—hence, the Greys of modern UFO lore—and a reptilian type. The usual tactic of the Greys is first to stun and then infiltrate the mind of the human subject. In the [First Apocalypse of James](#), the Gnostic master instructs a student in how to confront the Archons. These predatory entities are said to "abduct souls by night," a precise description of modern ET abductions. The adept in the Mysteries learns to repel the Archons with magical formulas (mantras) and magical passes or gestures of power (mudras). In some texts, the encounter with the Archons is structured according to the system of "planetary spheres." The adept who practices astral projection, lucid dreaming or "manipulations of the double" (as in Castaneda) is said to face the Archons in a kind of computer-game maze of seven levels, corresponding to the seven planets. At each level, the adept is unable to continue unless he confronts the "gatekeepers," using magical passes and words.

For more on confronting Archons, see [A Gnostic Catechism](#).

The archetypal format of the "journey through the planetary spheres" was well-known in antiquity, particularly in schools of Hermetics and Kaballa. In *Tantra Vidya*, O. M. Hinze

compares the Gnostic ascent through the seven spheres with the raising of kundalini through the seven chakras in Indian yogic traditions. Don Juan does not use the seven-level scheme, but his description of *the flyers* can be fitted into that scheme. The correlation works especially well if we equate the “serpent worship” of certain Gnostic cults with Kundalini yoga practice, which may in turn be equated with “the fire from within” and the Plumed Serpent in several Castaneda books. In short, the Toltec sorcerers would also have been adepts of Kundalini yoga, cultivating “the fire from within.” Their encounters with *the flyers* might not have been formalized into a seven-level test-game, but the same experiences are indicated in all three instances: Toltec, yogic, and Gnostic.

Gnostics believed that the force of Kundalini, or the ambient field generated by that force, served as protection from the Archons.

On the use of Kundalini to repel alien intrusion, see [Kundalini and the Alien Force](#).

The human character-traits attributed by don Juan to deviation by the *foreign installation* are identical to those ascribed to the Archons in Gnostic writings: envy (covetousness) and arrogance (egomania) are said to be their primary features, while their behaviour demonstrates that they are mindless drones (routinary), greedy for power over us and too cowardly to come out in the open and reveal themselves.

It would be misleading to make Don Juan’s revelations comply in a strict and literal way with Gnostic teachings, but these initial parallels are striking, and there is much more. Here is an outstanding instance where indigenous wisdom from the Americas tallies with the esoteric teachings of a long-lost spiritual tradition in the Near East. The Toltec-Gnostic parallel may seem remote and improbable at first sight. But if we assume that shamanic experience is consistent and empirical (i.e., it can be tested by experience), it would not be surprising to find consistent reports in widely separate traditions.

## The Foreign Installation

The idea of a foreign installation is extremely instructive. It immediately recalls metallic or crystalline implants said to be used by the Greys (and their human accomplices) to track human subjects. In another, less technological sense, it suggests an ideological virus implanted in our minds by non-human entities. According to the Gnostic critique of Christianity, salvationist ideology in its Judeo-Christian form (i.e., belief in a divine redeemer and a final apocalypse) is just such a virus. It is something implanted in the human mind by alien forces. The Gnostic emphasis on Judeo-Christianity (which can now be extended to Islam) gives a strategic advantage in the detection of alien influences, because the patriarchal/Salvationist religions have dominated the historical narrative on our planet. This dominance is symptomatic of Archontic deviance, Gnostics said.

The alien mind penetrates into our story-telling activity, the narrative power so crucial for humanity to make its way in the cosmos. This is one of the ways, or the most effective way, that we are deviated from our proper course of evolution. For the human species, the capacity to achieve intent depends on developing plots, stories, narratives that can guide us from initial

conception to final goal.

Human purpose is manifold, and so the manner in which we are being deviated is likely to be multifarious. In the immense complexity of intrusion, clarity and concentration are indispensable assets. In a startling remark, Don Juan asserts that “*the flyers*’ mind has no concentration whatsoever.” This remark recalls the Gnostic assertion that the Archons have no *ennoia*, no will of their own, no intentionality. Concentration might be defined as the coordination of attention and intention. To concentrate is to bring a certain depth of attention (*Bythos*) to intent (*Ennoia*). In Gnostic teachings, Bythos and Ennoia are cosmic deities or principles of the Pleroma, the Wholeness, and they are also attributes of the human mind. They are symbolized as two spheres. To concentrate is to bring the two spheres together at a single, unifying point, a common center. We do this constantly when we focus our attention upon a certain intention or goal, but the Archons are incapable of anything like this because they have “no concentration whatsoever.” They have no concentrating power, no innate faculty that would unite intention with attention. Human resistance to their intrusion depends on inner composure and mental discipline, the sobriety of the warrior. Don Juan’s counsels on the warrior’s tests with *the flyers* seem to present a Toltec version of Gnostic strategies for resisting the Archons.

## Common Points

Upon close examination, the teachings of Don Juan, developed in nine books by Carlos Castaneda from 1968 to 1998, contain numerous distinct parallels with Gnostic instruction. The new sorcery introduced by Castaneda is an extension and make-over of traditional knowledge of the “old seers” of the Toltec tradition of ancient Mexico. It differs from the old sorcery largely in its lack of concern for intricate power-games, feuds, sinister pacts with non-human powers, and control over others. Its aim is freedom for the spiritual warrior, rather than control over anyone or anything. Both in Toltec and Gnostic terms, the ultimate liberation for humanity may come through facing the alien predators. They are not here to advance or assist us, but in confronting and overcoming them we may gain a vital boost toward another level of consciousness. Some points of commonality between Gnosticism and the Toltec-derived neo-shamanism of Castaneda are:

1, the Toltec exposure of an alien mind or *foreign installation* that makes us less and other than we humanly are: comparable to the Gnostic idea of a dehumanizing ideological virus implanted in our minds by the Alien/Archons.

2, the importance for the sorcerer of mastering intent: comparable to Gnostic emphasis on *ennoia*, intentionality, which aligns us with the Gods and elevates us above the Archons.

3, Castaneda’s emphasis on syntax (correct attributions, and the use of mental command signals for directing intent): comparable to Gnostic teaching on *ennoia*, mental clarity, and correct attribution ( right use of definitions).

4, the Toltec assertion that predation is “the topic of topics”: comparable to the Gnostic

emphasis on the intrusion of the Archons. Facing intrusion is essential, because if we cannot see how we are deviated, we cannot find our true path in the cosmos.

5, the work with lucid dreaming, astral travel, projection of the double, in Gnostic circles and the Mystery Schools: comparable to many episodes in Castaneda.

6, the Toltec model of great *bands of emanations* that pervade the universe: comparable to the emanations or streamings from the Pleroma described in Mystery School revelation texts.

7, the Toltec distinction between organic and inorganic beings: comparable to the distinction between humans and Archons in Gnostic cosmology.

8, the Toltec exploration of other worlds and dimensions through the practice of non-ordinary awareness: comparable to age-old shamanic practices of the Mystery Schools.

9, Don Juan's description of the "luminous egg": comparable to the oval of clear light in Gnostic revelation texts and the *augoeides* or "auric egg" of the Mysteries.

10, the Toltec figure of the Eagle, a primary metaphor in Castaneda: comparable to the same figure in the Nag Hammadi Codices where the instructing voice of sacred mind, perhaps equivalent to Castaneda's "voice of seeing," states: "I appeared in the form of an Eagle on the Tree of Knowledge, the primal knowing that arises in the pure light, that I might teach them and awaken them out of the depth of sleep" (*The Apocryphon of John*, 23.25-30).

11, the organization of the sorcerer's party into eight pairs of male and female sorcerers: comparable to the organization of the Mystery cells into sixteen members, eight of each sex. (Artifactual evidence: Orphic Serpent bowl, and Pietroasa bowl. See [A Sheaf of Cut Wheat](#))

12, the cultivation of the fire from within, Kundalini, or the Plumed Serpent of the Toltecs: comparable to the Winged Serpent and divine Instructor of the Gnostics.

13, the mechanism of the assemblage point.

It would take an entire book to develop these parallels at length. Three factors out of the ten are of particular importance. These factors are the luminous egg, the great bands of emanations, and the role of certain inorganic beings as allies.

## The Assemblage Point

Among the many strange features in the teachings of don Juan, the matter of *the assemblage point* is certainly one of the most baffling. In several books we are told that the *luminous egg* surrounding a human being is attached to the physical body by an odd mechanism called *the assemblage point*. The location of the point is high behind the right shoulder. Apparently, at that point in the body, the luminous egg exerts a kind of pressure, forming a dimple or



depression. As long as the force of the egg stays in the dimple, *the assemblage point* is stable and the human being perceives reality in a predetermined way. By shifting *the assemblage point*, sorcerers are able to change their perception of reality, or actually deconstruct and reconstruct reality at will.

Don Juan's instructions regarding *the assemblage point* are as baffling as they are fascinating, and far from clear. The dynamics of sliding or shifting the mechanism are difficult to understand, and even harder to visualize. Moreover, it seems that *the assemblage point* is a weird item, not comparable to anything found in any other sources.

There is, however, a rare piece of testimony from the Mysteries that describes *the assemblage point* in exactly the manner found in Castaneda.

In *The Subtle Body in Western Tradition*, Gnostic scholar G. R. S. Mead cites the lost writings of Isidorus, the husband of Hypatia and one of the last Gnostics who taught at the Mystery School (the Museum) in Alexandria. Isidorus' original work is lost, but it was paraphrased by another writer, Damascius, so a few faint indications of his teachings can be surmised. Isidorus is said to have described the *augoeides*, "golden aura," comparable to the *luminous egg* of Castaneda. The nature and operation of the *augoeides*, also called the auric egg, was one of the deepest secrets of the Mysteries. Apparently, a lost treatise of Isidorus stated that the *augoeides* surrounds the human being like an oval membrane, in such a way that the physical body floats in the oval. This is precisely how Castaneda describes the *luminous egg*. The Gnostic teacher also said that the luminous oval is connected or locked into the physical body at a point in the back, high up on the right shoulder blade.

Thus, one of the weirdest details in Castaneda's writings is confirmed by a teacher of the Mysteries who lived in Alexandria the 5th century CE.

## A Cosmic Test

In the classical scheme of the planetary system, there are seven planets, not including the earth: sun, moon, mercury, venus, mars, jupiter, saturn. (The sun is not of course a planet, but a star, the central body of the planetary system, and the moon is a satellite of the earth. In some ancient systems, these two bodies are excluded from the seven and replaced by the lunar nodes.) This situation recalls Castaneda's description of the organic and inorganic structure of the "great bands of emanation" that compose the universe. If we set the earth apart from the other planets, the "seven inorganic bands" could well be correlated to the "seven planets," known to be realms that do not support organic life as the Earth does. Gnostics taught that the earth does not belong to the planetary system, but is merely captured in it. They called the planetary system apart from earth the Hebdomad, the Sevenfold. This terminology may be compared to the Gnostic description of the realm of the Archons, who are inorganic beings. The "seven inorganic bands" in Castaneda's scheme may be different language for the same model.

Gnostic seers located the habitat of the predatory Archons in the planetary system, exclusive of the Earth. The Archontic realm would then be assembled from the seven inorganic bands.



Within the domain so assembled, the Archons would be on their own “turf.” Their presence in the world assembled around us, the biosphere ruled by the laws of organic chemistry, would be an intrusion. Nowhere does Castaneda indicate that the predatory entities come from these seven bands, but the conclusion is obvious. He does say explicitly that *the flyers* are inorganic beings, so the conclusion is not only obvious but consistent with his syntax, his system of description.

Don Juan specifies that sorcerers can and usually do initiate contact with inorganic beings. They do this by shifting *the assemblage point* and crossing into the unknown territory of other bands, or sliding into unknown regions of our own band. A great deal of the activity described in Castaneda’s work consists of forays into the other worlds contingent to ours. “Once the barrier is broken, inorganic beings change and become what seers call allies.” These allies can be deviating or even deadly, but mastering them is one of the primary tasks of the new sorcery. There are numerous allies in the cosmos at large. According to many indigenous traditions, earth is visited by many kinds of other-dimensional beings who serve as allies and guides to humanity. The dark, shadowy predator would seem to be a unique category of inorganic beings who is perhaps not an ally at all, or else a particularly difficult ally to master.

Don Juan stressed the need to confront this inorganic being to experience “the total certainty of the mind’s foreign origin.” The “predator that came from the depths of the cosmos and took over the rule of our lives” may certainly be equated to the Archons of Gnostic teachings. Don Juan describes Alien intrusion and its main consequence, behavioural modification, in a most vivid manner. The old sorcerer also makes a striking comment on what might be gained from our encounter with these entities. “The flyers are an essential part of the universe... and they must be taken as what they really are — awesome, monstrous. They are the means by which the universe tests us.”

The parallels between Gnostic materials and the new Toltec sorcery of Carlos Castaneda are striking and present sobering insights on the human condition, if nothing else. What can we do about the topic of topics, predation? “All we can do is discipline ourselves to the point where they will not touch us,” Don Juan advises. Significantly, he says *will* not, not *can* not. He also says that the alien predators are the way the universe tests us, as just noted. It follows that the intent to arrange our minds and lives so that *the flyers*/Archons are not willing to intrude on us is the capital exercise, the primary test in progress for humanity.

## Or Ever the Earth Was”

### A Planetary Myth from the Pagan Mysteries

Resistance to the Gnostic Sophia Myth is still running strong, and comes at times from the most unlikely of places. Recently I submitted a piece to *Parabola* magazine for their upcoming issue on the theme of "Sacred Earth." The article was rejected. One might think that *Parabola* would be exceptionally compatible with such material, that the Sophia story would be right up their alley, especially for an issue on the sacredness of the earth—but apparently not.

Friends who have read this piece say it is one of the best I've done on the Sophia myth. It may well be, especially because of the way it specifies the interactive aspects of Her Story. I leave it to readers to consider whether or not the Gnostic scenario of the Divine Sophia merits attention as much as expressions of the "sacred earth" drawn from other, more widely known, less controversial traditions.

jll 5 June 2007



In the vast inventory of classical lore on the Goddess, one example stands out vividly, both for its unique plot and its narrative scope. The Gnostic story of the fallen divinity Sophia presents an authentic feminist redemption myth. It places Sophia, whose name in Greek means “wisdom,” centrally in a cosmological drama in which *the fallen divinity is the main agent of world redemption*. ("Gaia in Chaos," [Ed Fisher](#), used with permission.)

But in what sense does the Divine Sophia fall, and in what manner does she redeem herself, and humankind along with her? These questions lead to the little-known Gnostic theory of the sacred earth.

### Sophia and Solomon

Sophia, the Wisdom goddess, figures centrally in the Gnostic books dated to the 4th century CE, discovered at Nag Hammadi in upper Egypt in 1945. She also appears in the Old Testament Wisdom literature, called *sapiential writings*, dating from the 4th to the 1st centuries BCE. Although the sapiential writings predate the Nag Hammadi codices, the divine figure of Wisdom does not derive from them. The Gnostic Sophia is a version of the Great Goddess celebrated all through the ancient world, not exclusively or originally in Jewish tradition. Yet the Jewish sources provide some important clues to the Gnostic scenario.

The apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon* (9:8-11) says that the Divine Sophia instructed the king in how to construct the Temple of Jerusalem. In her honor, Solomon erected in the inner sanctum

a sacred tree, symbol of the Canaanite goddess Astarte. Following the reforms of King Josiah (after 650 BCE), Jewish scribes rigorously deleted references to Astarte, but she continued to be viewed as Jehovah's consort in popular religion and Gnostically oriented Jewish heresies. In the doctrinal battle over the Divine Feminine, the Wisdom literature plays a key role, showing how the lines were drawn. The figure of Sophia could not be eliminated, but it was increasingly distorted.

In the Biblical canon, the "Wisdom of God" became a vehicle of didactic, moral, and poetical expression, and the goddess lost her autonomous character. In the Psalms and Proverbs, she figures as a metaphor for the voice of conscience obedient to the righteous dictates of the Lord. In the Song of Solomon, Wisdom retains the character of the sacred prostitute and lover of the king, who sanctifies him with the power of the Divine Feminine. In moral and sensuous terms, Sophia survives, but just barely.

The Old Testament also retains some traces of the planetary dimension of the Wisdom goddess. Proverbs 8 gives an aretology where the goddess announces herself in the first person and sings her own attributes:

The Lord possessed me in the beginning, before the works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, *or ever the earth was* (8:22-23).

The full passage is a mere nine verses, but it discloses a key element of the Pagan Sophia myth: "or ever the earth was." This phrase shows that the Wisdom goddess pre-existed the earth, even as she comes to be identified with it through the aretology that declares her terrestrial attributes. Proverbs 8 intimates that the Divine Sophia is a pre-existent divinity that becomes embodied in the earth—an assertion to be fully developed in the Gnostic scenario of the fallen goddess.

The "Hymn to Sophia" from the non-Biblical *Wisdom of Solomon* (7.22-25) shows Wisdom in Her sublime cosmological aspect as the indwelling planetary spirit and divine instructor to humanity:

Wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me,  
For there is in Her a power that is intelligent and sacred,  
Unique, manifold, sublime,  
Mobile, clear, undefined,  
Distinct, beyond harm, loving the good, keen,  
Unhindered, beneficent, generous,  
Firm, sure, free from care,  
Affecting all and observing all,  
And interpenetrating all beings  
That are intelligent, pure, and as subtle as She.  
For Wisdom is more mobile than any motion,  
And She permeates and penetrates everything,  
For She is the embodied breath of divine power.



This passage asserts the divinity of the earth as flagrantly as any to be found in Judeo-Christian tradition, a tradition that is fundamentally averse to such statements. Jewish religious writings praise the earth as a showpiece of the father god's creative power, but following the prerogatives of Josiah, it was heresy to allow the sacredness of the planet in and of itself.

Yet the passage above implies that the earth is divine, not because it is the well-fashioned artifact of the paternal creator god, Jehovah, but because *it is the very embodiment of his suppressed consort, Sophia*. This distinction recalls the premise of deep ecology, namely, that the earth has intrinsic value of its own, regardless of its use for humanity, and (I might add), regardless of how it serves religious beliefs that insist on paternal omnipotence.

### Applied Imagination

The Solomonic hymn to Sophia anticipates the little-known Gnostic narrative of the fallen goddess. This myth was the centerpiece of the Pagan Mystery tradition in which the *gnostikoi*, "those who know divine matters, as the gods know," were the founders and directors. Over a century ago, G. R. S. Mead observed that "Gnostic forms are found to preserve elements from the mystery-traditions of antiquity in greater fullness than we find elsewhere," but this opinion has been ignored by scholars who find in Gnosticism only the cast-off elements of early Christian views. Consequently, there has been little or no interest in recovering the complete Sophia myth that formed the sacred narrative of the Pagan Mysteries.

This is not an academic problem, but a crisis of human imagination—a crisis clearly indicated in the myth itself, as we shall see. To the Gnostic masters of the Mysteries, a sacred theory of the earth required the power of imagination, or, one could say, applied imagination, so that humanity could participate actively in the life-story of the fallen goddess. Even the scant elements in the sapiential writings sketch the way toward this sacred vision, but the Gnostic Sophia story attains the full-blown expression of *an interactive planetary myth*.

In *Where the Wasteland Ends*, Theodore Roszak observed that the Judeo-Christian redemption story, by presenting a linear male-centered plot overseen by an off-planet deity, has crippled the mythopoetic powers innate to the human species:

Christ belongs to history; his rivals were mere myths. Clearly, there occurred with the advent of Christianity a deep shift of consciousness which severely damaged the mythopoeic powers—far more so than was the case even in Judaism.

The history of Biblical writing before the Common Era, and the subsequent war on Gnostic heresy waged by the Church Fathers, show the immense effort it took to deny the sacred origin

of the earth recounted in the myth of the fallen goddess, Sophia. The *fact* of the sacredness of the earth depends on the *faculty* to engage it, the cognitive capacity to know Gaia with insight and empathy. The myth itself asserts that the Divine Sophia gave humanity the gift of imagination, “the luminous epinoia,” so that humans could participate in Her Story via creative or imaginal thinking: “The luminous epinoia was endowed in humanity, for this is the one power that was to awaken its thinking”(NHLE 117.**21**. Hereafter cited by page number and codex page, indicated **in bold** in the NHLE).

The sacred myth of Sophia is interactive and transhistorical. The heresy condemned by the Church Fathers is not, and never was, a mere matter of academic argument. It is a flashpoint for imaginative engagement. The repression of the Divine Feminine is a fact of history, and it is also part of Sophia’s mythic biography. The powers ranged against human imagination are clearly described in the myth. According to the Gnostics, Sophia’s redemption depends on humanity’s empathy with Her story, the unique myth that describes the goddess who existed “or ever the earth was.” In the Mysteries, Sophia was the name for what we today call Gaia, but before Gaia became the sensuous, inhabitable earth.

### **The Perfect Mother-Father**

Textually, the myth survives in two parts: in the Nag Hammadi codices and the polemics of the Church Fathers, written to refute Gnostic teachings and condemn the Mysteries dedicated to the Magna Mater. Cosmological books such as the *On the Origin of the World* and *The Tripartite Tractate* describe how Sophia, a divinity (Aeon) in the company of the Pleroma (Divine Fullness) of super-terrestrial gods, longed to be involved in the active manifestation of external worlds (110.**9-10**).

Gnostics taught that Aeons do not usually cross the cosmic boundary, called the hymen, through which they emanate the raw potential of material worlds. They remain centered in the Pleroma, the cosmic matrix of infinite potential. But Sophia was an exception. The myth emphasizes Her desire to engage in a world-in-the-making—but not just any world. Curiously, the world that Sophia anticipates will only come into being through Her own metamorphosis. Such is the odd fate of the fallen goddess.

The Aeons work through *ennoia*, intentionality. They project the seed-form of a sentient world from the cosmic matrix, and then allow it to unfold by itself, to be self-generating. The word *autogenes* in the NHC is close to the current notion of autopoiesis, widely discussed in the context of the Gaia hypothesis proposed by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis. The Sophia myth resonates with Gaia theory, *but situates the autogenetic principle in a preterrestrial event*. Before the earth existed, Sophia and another Aeon, Christos, joined in a cosmic act of propagation, a sacred mating dance in the heart of heaven, the Pleroma (233.**82**). The two Aeons received from the supreme Aeon, the Originator, a formless potentiality to configure into a discrete evolutionary impulse.

The Originator (Propater) is the hidden source of all novelty (*monogenes*, “singularity”) in the cosmos, but the Aeons, or Totalities of generative gods, give shape and intention to such novelties. (72.**76-78**). Christos and Sophia do so by imbuing their divine intent into the prototype of an emergent species, the Anthropos. In a sense, they are the divine parents of

humanity, but they do not procreate the nascent species, they merely emanate it, working “in an imaginary way” (73.78).



Two-parent procreation yields offspring physically removed from the parental source, but with the Aeons “begetting is like a process of extension,” not separation (71.72). The nature of their union is emptiness and compassion, comparable to the dynamic of Tibetan deities in Tantric union, *yab-yum*.

The *Apocryphon of John* calls the divine dyadic unit “the holy and perfect Mother-Father” (113.14), an exact translation of *yab-yum*. Gnostics rejected biological procreation as the expression of a lesser, extra-Pleromic deity, or pseudo-deity, the Demiurge. Their reasons for this heretical stance become clear as the sacred narrative unfolds.

Once the nascent species has been configured, the entire company of Aeons project it from the Pleroma, the realm of infinite potential, into the Kenoma, the realm of deficiency or finite potential. There it will unfold by its own laws, seeding itself in worlds-in-the-making. Gnostic myth thus asserts the theory of panspermia, the seeding of planetary life from extra-planetary sources, initially proposed by Svante Arrhenius around 1910 and now widely accepted by astronomers and biologists. If Gaia is a panspermic laboratory, as Lynn Margulis and others have suggested, then the extra-terrestrial origin of the human species has been explained in the Mystery narrative.

### Divine Desire

The Divine Sophia’s special involvement with humanity (the Anthropos) begins long before the earth exists. Looking out from the Pleroma, the goddess feels attracted by what this singular species might achieve, once it has a world to inhabit. In a manner similar to the Dreamtime ancestors of Australia, She dreams the formative outlines of such a world. She might be compared to a pregnant mother who lavishly imagines a life for her unborn child—but the biological analogy is misleading, for reasons already noted.

*Sophia did not conceive humanity with Christos by material, procreative union, but in an ecstatic, imaginative act: emanation, not creation.*

Then the Aeon was compelled to wonder how this particular species will actualize its endowment of *nous*, divine intelligence. Her wondering about human potential aroused *enthymesis*, “burning passion, impetuosity,” in an extreme and unusual manner for an Aeon.

The sacred story says that Sophia longed to merge into what She imagined, but she indulged

this longing on her own, independent of another Aeon (110.9-10). *A Valentinian Exposition* says that “it is the will of the Originator not to allow anything to happen in the Pleroma apart from a syzygy, a coupling” (486.36). The Originator wishes that all activity in the Pleroma be accomplished by paired Aeons—observing the law of cosmic parity, as it were—but this is not a rigid rule, and it is not enforced. With the Sophia-Christos coupling that configured the Anthropos, cosmic law was observed.

But exceptions are allowed, and the divine Sophia will be one.

Compelled by burning desire, the goddess plunges from the cosmic center into the Kenoma, the chaos of material worlds. Her impact in the outer regions is sudden and immense, producing a shock wave that generates a bizarre species, the Archons. The *Hypostasis of the Archons* calls this violent eruption of alien life-forms an “abortion,” meaning a spontaneous miscarriage of divine power (167.94). This premature event presents a hugely problematic situation for Sophia, a situation *in which humanity is deeply implicated even before it emerges from its larval state of pure, unexpressed potential*.

The Archons fabricate a virtual world or stereoma, modelled on the cosmic patterns in the Pleroma, but they do so mindlessly, drawing creative power from the goddess without knowing its source. In the sacred narrative of the Mysteries, our planetary system arises before the earth due to the premature action of an alien species. (Not surprisingly, this feature of the Sophia myth has been dubbed “theological science fiction” by one scholar, Richard Smith.) The chief of the Archons is Yaldaboath, the Demiurge, a demented pseudo-deity who takes himself for the supreme creator. “Because of the glory of the power he possessed from his Mother’s light, he called himself God” (111.12).

Gnostics daringly identified the Demiurge with Jehovah and condemned the Biblical deity as a monstrous tyrant who works against humanity. This was, and still is, the central message of Gnostic heresy.

The fallen goddess now finds herself in double trouble. Faced with the artificial world system of the Archons, Sophia is slowly metamorphosing from her Pleromic form into a dense material body. “The intensity of her divine light diminished” (111.13), but a celestial light comes to her aid. Nag Hammadi cosmologies describe a complex set of events in which the Aeon Sophia aligns her power with a newborn star that has emerged in the Kenoma, the chaos outside the galactic core where the Archons swarm. Unlike the Anthropos, the Archons have not been emanated from the Pleromic core. They are an extra-Pleromic aberration, the side-effect of Sophia’s fall. To help her manage these bizarre conditions, the goddess finds an ally in Sabaoth, the newborn sun, who is also a chaotic, extra-Pleromic entity like the Archons.

The “repentance of Sabaoth” is a vivid cinematographic episode in the sacred narrative (174.103-104). *On the Origin of the World* recounts how Sophia, having strengthened herself by this alliance, confers unique power on the newborn sun: “Sophia poured upon Sabaoth a burst from her Divine Light for recognition of the condemnation of the Archon. When Sabaoth received this light, she also received great authority over the powers of Chaos” (175.103). Henceforth, Sophia will be bonded to the sun through her “flame-born daughter,” Zoe, deathless vitality (168.95-96). The “structural coupling” of sun and earth is an established



concept in Gaia theory.

### The Luminous Child

The Mystery narrative is participatory, describing how humanity plays into the story of Sophia's bizarre metamorphosis. After the conversion of the sun, Sophia condemns the Demiurge and predicts the triumph of humanity over the falsifying influence of the Archons (174.103):

You are mistaken, blind one. There is an immortal Child of Light who came into this realm before you and who will appear among your duplicate forms, in your simulated world. . . . Humanity exists, and the offspring of the human strain exists. . . And in the consummation of all your works, its entire deficiency of truth will be revealed and dissolved by this luminous Child.

Sophia declares that humanity will overcome the spell of the Archons, entities who can deviate human evolution in odd, undetectable ways. But humanity, the Pleromic emanation of novelty, needs a world to inhabit before it can evolve and assume its responsibilities in the cosmos. Normally, such a world would arise automatically by the laws of the Kenoma, the outer chaos. But the fall of goddess is a rare exception in cosmic order: *The Divine Sophia morphs into the life-supporting planet that humanity will inhabit*. The myth implies that the earth formed from the divine force of the fallen goddess does not belong to the planetary system, but is merely captured in it.

Sophia's *epistrophe*, Her conversion into the elements of the biosphere, does not survive in writings attributed to Gnostics, but only in the paraphrase of the Church Father, Irenaeus. Book IV of *Against Heresies* recounts how the goddess morphs into the planet earth, her emotions turning into the elements of the biosphere. Seemingly baffled and amazed by this development, Irenaeus says that Sophia must have been "compelled by love or audacious yearning." Plunged into the material elements and immersed in sensuousness, the goddess is called *prunikos*, "outrageous," and insultingly dubbed "the Whore of Wisdom" for this bizarre act of commingling.



Such is the first half of the sacred biography of the Wisdom goddess. It explains how She who existed before the earth ever was, became the earth. The second part of Sophia's biography concerns her correction, *diorthosis*, the process by which She becomes reintegrated with the Pleroma, the cosmic core of our galaxy. Although surviving Gnostic writings are not explicit on how correction works, they leave no doubt that humanity is deeply involved in this process: "And the luminous epinoia was hidden in Adam, in order that the Archons might not reach that

power, but that the epinoia might be a correction to the deficiency of Sophia” (116.20).

**The Gnostic myth of the sacred earth is open-ended. Its conclusion has not been predetermined by the will of a higher being, but it can be affected by human willingness to embrace the plight of the Divine Sophia, and complete her cosmic adventure with Her. The story of Wisdom becoming Gaia is a redemption myth with a feminist spin, and much more. It is an ecofeminist fable of regeneration, and perhaps the ultimate survival myth for the human species.**

## The Fall

of

the

Wisdom

Goddess

Here in a nine-part synopsis is one version of the sacred myth of Sophia, the "fallen goddess" of the Pagan Mysteries. The fallen goddess scenario (FGS) is not the invention of this author, John Lash. It is his reconstruction of a mythic narrative developed by [ancient seers](#) who applied it as a vision story for guiding humanity to evolve interactively with the living planet, Gaia. I consider this complex narrative to be the singular and paramount explanation of cosmic purpose produced by human imagination, truly a myth to guide the species.

- JLL, October 2010

NOTE (May 2011): My recovery and reconstruction of the FGS is the only full and coherent version of the Sophianic vision story of the Mysteries to be presented by any scholar, yet it is

still not complete. Three key elements of the myth are missing: the creation of the moon, the separation of the sexes of the Anthropos (human genome), and the arrival of the hunters from Orion, the first men to inhabit the earth which was at that time exclusively populated by women.

NOTE (August 2011): Pay close attention to the revisions in this narrative, indicated by **the text in red**.

In its received form, the Sophianic vision story falls into the genre of "astral theogony," an account of celestial events, including the intentions, feelings, and actions of cosmic forces conceived as gods and goddesses. The version below demonstrates one possible way to render the myth: namely, by placing it in an *astronomical framework*. Thus, perhaps, making it more accessible to the modern mindset. This is not the only way to tell the myth, but after long [consideration](#) I am convinced it may be the optimal way to introduce the Sophianic vision of the Mysteries to the 21st century.

This sacred narrative is the sole [planetary myth](#) in the world that describes the origin of the solar system, the earth, and the human species, and situates all this in a galactic perspective. Be it understood that a myth need not be fantasy or falsity, but a veracious way of describing events of cosmic scope, including the galaxy where the earth is located. "Sophia" is the astro-theological term for a power surge from the galactic core that impacted the rotating arms: the "fall" of the goddess is an eruption from that core. This is an [animistic myth](#), attributing the equivalent of emotion, ideation, and intention to the cosmic energies of the galaxy, imaginatively realized as gods and goddesses. I address the predictable [objections](#) to cosmic animism in a related essay.

[Not in His Image](#) contains both a short synopsis and (in another rendering) a full expansion of the nine episodes. "[Or Ever the Earth Was](#)" will be helpful in orientation to the unique significance of this myth. Readers may also benefit from looking at the [Overview](#). The [Gaia Mythos](#) an attempt to render the narrative in mythopoetic form as a prose poem, but incomplete with 11 episodes of 16 on line. The [commentaries](#) on the prose poem contain a considerable amount of astronomical detail with correlations to the myth.

## The Sophia Myth in Astronomical Idiom

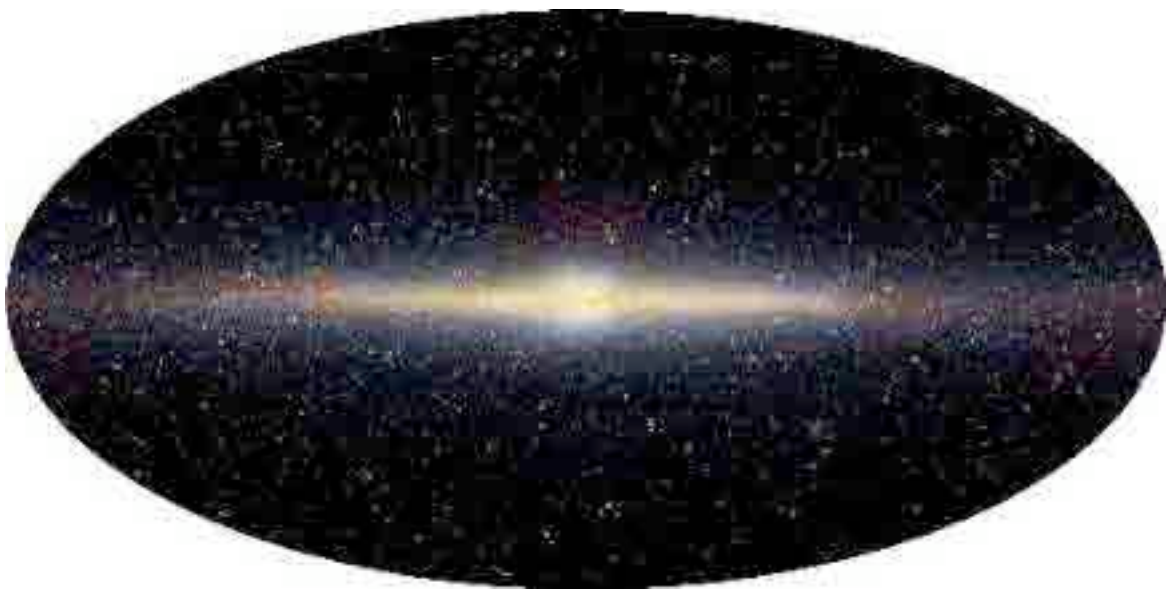
### One - In the Galactic Core

At a certain moment in eternal becoming, a *singularity* arises in the core of one galaxy among countless galaxies in the Universe. This singularity is a spontaneous rush of new potential, totally unconditioned and undefined. It emerges from that one universal source which is the eternal dwellpoint of every galaxy, but in each galaxy standing unique so that originality can manifest through the Universe. In each galaxy, the Originator is the all-pervading presence greater than any god, any single divine entity. It stands beyond time and space and matter, yet it comes to expression time and time again through the Pleroma, the central vortex of a particular galaxy.

Within the Pleroma dwell the aggregate of cosmic gods, energy waves of the galactic dimension. They circulate around the core, massive currents of living luminosity thriving with sound, odor, even taste. Their form is a serpentine, torrential streaming, their substance, a nougat-like mass of self-generating luminosity. These Pleromic currents receive the singularity of pure potential from the Originator and spin it into expression. They convert the formless seed of originality into a standing wave design that can eventually appear in space, time, and matter beyond the galactic core. The Originator imposes nothing on these cosmic designing powers, the Generators or Aeons. The singularity it releases to them is an undefined potential for novelty, without signature, non-encoded. It has no predesigned structure. It is pure, unconditioned possibility. The singularity is like a vast but infinitely soft tremor that erupts from the galactic core and spreads through the choral waves of the Pleroma, the aggregate of Aeonic torrents.

In every case when a singularity emerges in the galactic core, it comes to be designed differently by the Aeons of each galaxy who are infinitely creative, innovative, and playful. Once designed, the singularity can be projected from the core into the outlying region of the limbs, the spiral arms circulating around the core. This region is the realm of finite potential, the Kenoma, contrasted to the infinite potential of the Pleroma, matrix of the Generators.

The spiral arms are regions of constant activity. Like a mill wheel, they grind out stars, planets, comets, and asteroids from the grist remaining of previous galaxies. The *dema*, the dense elementary matter arrays of the spiral arms, are chaotic and inorganic, consisting of atomic matter and even finer substances, mere quantum foam. Yet the *dema* has self-organizing powers of a sort, so that it can form and reform itself plastically into the scaffolding and groundwork of many world-systems. The endless reworking of matter in the spiral arms is subject to the mill-like mechanism of involution, including mass-bound attraction-repulsion and differential rotation, forces that are entirely absent in the galactic core.



Typical form of a lenticular spiral galaxy seen edge-on.

## Two - A Singularity Encoded

The nougat-like mass of the galactic core pulses with the dance of alternating currents, gendered energies. The male currents stream through the Pleromic mass with an encoring action, like filaments extruding from a sieve. The female currents stream with an expulsive power that hollows out the way before them. Encoring and decoring are the constant gender expressions of the Generators.

In one particular galaxy, a singularity from the Originator is received by two Aeons with the equivalent of gender, female and male: **the Aeon Sophia and her counterpart, the Aeon Thelete.** **This name means "the intended" or "free will."** In a tandem activity, these two balance the singularity between them and dance it into a particular design.

Each Generator is an energetic wave with inherent properties and characteristics. As a current moving along optical fibers can carry signals, so do these wave-forms carry vast arrays of configured impulses. The receiving Aeons impart to the singularity a select combination of their attributes, making a unique design, never before manifested. By their combined activity, they imbue the singularity with a set of inherent properties derived from their own impulses. They encode its pure potential with definite properties that can unfold in a distinctive way when provided with a world-system as a setting for those properties. In this instance, Sophia and **Thelete** design a life-form, the template of a species, the Anthropos. The specific configuration of the Anthropos is an expression of the creative vision of the cosmic dyad, the pair of Generators. The human genome originates in a dance of cosmic energies in the galactic core.





Buddhist *yab-yum*: iconographic image of mating gods, which may be compared to the coupling of Aeons in the galactic core. However, Aeons dance, they are energetically and emotively in motion, whereas the yab-yum is a static image. Nevertheless, the same archetypal idea of divine union is expressed in both cases. It must be noted, however, that the designing gods or Pleromic Generators do not propagate by analogy to biological reproduction; rather by analogy to play, an act of pleasure. The Gnostic vision story follows the narrative norm of Hindu Tantra according to which Shiva and Shakti, the gendered energies, produce the world from the vibrations of pleasure generated by their intercourse, not by insemination and conception due to intercourse. This distinction illustrates the difference between emanationist (non-reproductive) and creationist (reproductive) cosmology.

### Three - Projecting the Anthropos

With creative dance of Sophia and Thelete completed, the singularity is configured and ready to

be released. In a collective act of emanation, all the Aeons circulating the galactic core merge their currents to form a lattice, like a holographic plate. Using the lattice as a lens, the Pleromic Aeons in their entirety project the Anthropos into the outer realm beyond the bounding membrane of the galactic nucleus. Out there is the Kenoma, the zone of dark elementary matter arrays (*dema*) swirling in the immense carousel of the spiral arms. The encoded singularity will be seeded in the *dema* where new worlds are constantly arising, so that the Anthropos can have a habitat, a world of its own in which to unfold its singular potential. Many strains of humanity can emerge from the template so projected, and there are many world-systems rising and dissolving in the galactic limbs, providing ample opportunity for these strains to take root and develop.

Imagine a hollow stalk of light in the form of an immense opalescent shaft with the genomic design within it. The genomic template of humanity is a stereomorphic projection into the outer regions of the galaxy. Remaining within the boundary of the galactic core, the Aeons inject the predesigned genome into the outer realms of the galaxy [as if through a glass tube or pipette](#). Acting in unison, the Generators implant the potential novelty of the human species in the carousel arms, like a fertilized ovum implanted in the wall of the uterus. For the Aeons, the projection of the anthropic template designed by Sophia and [Thelete](#) is the first moment of a divine experiment. From the galactic center, they will observe how the human strain propagates and unfolds its novel potential in many worlds. Their act of projection may be compared to *dreaming* rather than to biological reproduction of offspring by two parents, or artifactual creation, like a potter spinning a pot. It is a process of emanation, not creation.

Humanity is not the progeny of divine beings, made in their image, but the expression of the divine imagination of the Generators who design and project cosmic singularities into free-form manifestation in a myriad worlds.

The Pleromic Aeons project the Anthropos into the galactic limbs with a precise, target intention of location. They embed the template for incubation in a molecular cloud or galactic nebula in the third spiral arm, counting outwards. The fertile moisture of the nebula is the ideal medium for nesting the new life-complex. This done, the Generators withdraw their projective action pull back to observe in detachment what happens next. Energetically, Generators do not exceed the boundaries of the Pleroma, the matrix of infinite potential. They remain within the boundary of the nucleus, yet they observe and sense what lies beyond it in the Kenoma, the matrix of finite potential. The delight of the Aeons is to behold the spontaneous arising and dissolving of myriad worlds, and to divine the adventures of the creatures that emerge in those worlds. To do this they use a kind of cosmic empathy that does not require that they enter or intervene in the worlds they witness. Aeons are sentient, feeling intensively, and responding to what they observe, yet remaining detached. The cosmic gods are impartial: they do not impose their intention for an outcome on any experiment unfolding in the galactic limbs. Above all, they do not enter directly into the experiments they have designed and set in motion by externalization in the spiral arms. Not usually, anyway.

But at a certain moment, one Generator in the aggregate of this particular galaxy responds more keenly than the others to the sight of the Anthropos template nesting in the molecular cloud of Orion. While the other Aeons hold back, the one called Sophia senses an unusual stirring of



her currents. The cosmic equivalent of desire draws here right up to the boundary of the Pleroma, where she lingers. The Aeon Sophia feels a profound, unsettling attraction to what she beholds. She is captured by total fascination for how the Anthropos will evolve and manifest its unique potential. Drawing her currents away from the general aggregation, Sophia muses about a world to come where the human singularity will emerge and thrive. She empathizes intensely with the human creature that will appear in the divine experiment now underway. As one of the Aeons who configured the genome, she takes an unusual interest in its future development, and she does so unilaterally, without consulting with her counterpart, Thelete. This is unusual behavior for a Generator, transgressing the norm, but is within the freedom allowed by the Originator that such developments can arise.

The Aeon Sophia now formulates her own act of projective dreaming, centered on the glittering template suspended in the spiral arms. Independent of the other Aeons, this torrential waveform dreams *on her own* about what might happen to a strain of the Anthropos. In her freedom, Sophia is impetuous, daring. She goes much farther than Aeons usually do to anticipate how a certain experiment might play out. She idealizes the situation, picturing a three-body system, star-planet-moon, where a strain of the Anthropos would have optimal opportunity to discover and develop its encoded talents, even to achieve works of genius. Sophia is tremendously excited by these prospects of the divine experiment that has only now been seeded in the Kenoma, the matrix of finite potential.



Cabalistic Tree of Life, an esoteric schema that recalls the form of DNA in two intertwining strands with nodal points. Is this mystical icon an attempt to visualize the formal design of the Anthropos template? A masterful feat of human imagination, perhaps... But this image is not the only way to visualize the anthropic template. More below.

#### **Four - Cosmic Power-Surge**

Totally enthralled in her solitary view, and ever more detached from the other Generators in the Pleroma, Sophia previsions a world yet to be, where humanity will emerge to live, learn, and love. The sight of the Anthropos nested in the nebular cloud engages her divine powers of dreaming in an unusual way, with exceptionally intense involvement. Rather than leave this cosmic novelty to mature and unfold on its own, according to the instructions encoded within it, the Pleromic current whose signature is wisdom succumbs to a strange attraction. Sophia is deeply compelled to get involved in an experiment with a strain of the Anthropos.

With exquisite slowness, Sophia's longing pulls her precariously close to the porous bounding membrane of the Pleroma, the outer rim of the galactic core. Her desire follows the path taken by the Anthropos, out into the *dema*, the chaotic flux of elementary matter in the spiral arms. Compelled by the excitement of what might happen out there, this Aeon is gradually pulled

away from the core—until the moment she plunges, out and away. Like a slow-motion waterfall twisted into a torrential braid, the Aeon Sophia spirals downward toward the object of her own desire. The currents that compose her energetic form distend into massive power spike, a tongue of pearl-white luminosity leaping from the Pleroma, shooting light-years into the exterior regions.

The wisdom goddess falls out of the galactic center.

The composite luminosity of an Aeon, a Pleromic god or goddess, may be called Organic Light because it is organically responsive and capable of intention, like an animal. This divine luminosity has two specific but oddly contrasting properties: it is mass-free and infinite in density. Sophia's fall produces a plume of Organic Light extending from the galactic core in the third limb of the carousel arms, where the Orion Nebula is located. There it reaches the place where the genomic template of the human species is nested, like a pattern of dewpoints on a spider's web.

### Episode Five - Archontic Cosmos

When the Aeons Sophia plunges from the galactic core, the immense surge of high-density, zero-mass energy composing her wave-form impacts the *dema* in a totally unforeseen manner. The *dema* is quantum foam composed of subatomic elements not yet formed into discrete elements. It is pure chaos, but it is not blind, dead matter. The chaotic flux of elemental matter is a residue from previous worlds and the raw material of worlds to come. Even the *dema* has the potential for life, if not organic life. The *dema* glitters and crackles with a kind of phantom life.

In the residual dust of dissolved worlds, vast fields of particles surge with attractions and repulsions, potentials consisting of impulses that remain from things seen and done in previous worlds, but left incomplete when those worlds dissolved. Out of this residuum other worlds continually arise. In the Kenoma, many worlds are in the making, and some will become the habitats of organic species like the Anthropos.

But the plunge of this Generator perturbs the usual order of cosmic evolution is the Kenoma. The impact of Sophia's power-surge upon the *dema* is anomalous, producing wierd conditions. The subatomic residuum of dense elementary matter arrays does not usually receive such a direct influx of Aeonic energies, straight from the core. The consequences of this anomaly are bizarre and far-reaching. Hitting the *dema*, the torrential wave of this female Aeon makes an enormous circular splash, like the ripple pattern of a stone thrown into a pond. But in this case, the impacting body has no mass and the material impacted has the mass of elementary substance. Oddly, the splash pattern is more like a fracture in an ice pond. The splashing of the *dema* immediately gels and congeals like molten metal hardening as it splatters outward in a circular pattern.

Sophia's torrential current carries the Aeonic power of animation and imparts it to the *dema*. This action is anomalous, for normally an Aeon does not act directly upon the physics of the spiral arms. But now this Generator engages the *dema* energetically, and Sophia watches her dreaming power trigger a series of events she cannot resist or impede. Like all Generators, the wisdom goddess commands *superanimating intent*. For such a cosmic entity, the mere act of

attending spontaneously causes form and activity to arise. As if gazing at a rose-bud you could make it blossom, or by looking into a tide pool, you could cause the microscopic life-forms floating there to grow, mutate, combine, and aggregate into colonies. Just by the power inherent to your attention.

In just this way, wherever Sophia directs her attention the *dema* springs into life and acquires form. To her horror and amazement, the Aeon finds herself surrounded by bizarre creatures, a phantom species spawned of elementary matter: *archons*. These entities are legion, like a swarm of locusts. Having no place to alight, they mass around Sophia, sucked into her currents and blown out again. They swarm like bees or locusts in a circling mass, but not entirely in a chaotic way. Due to the innate designing powers of cosmic intent, the archons emerge in a kind of parade, a pattern of fractal iterations. The archon species is inert, inorganic, yet it immediately acquires a shadowy kind of life from the superanimation of the dreaming powers of the Aeon.



Generation of quasi-embryonic fractal "sea horses" at high iteration of the Mandelbrot Set, useful to visualize the fracture effect of Sophia on the elementary matter of the *dema*, producing the pre-terrestrial archon species. Fractalization is the signature of an Aeon or Generator, the expression of "the innate designing powers of cosmic intent." In Gnostic terms, intent is *ennoia* and the designing capacity of divine intent is *autogenes*, "self-generating, autopoietic." Complexity theory (formerly, chaos theory of stochastics) now recognizes in autopoiesis the signature of organic life on earth and intelligent self-organization elsewhere in the cosmos. Complexity theory derives from speculations initially triggered by fractal iterations such as the Mandelbrot Set.

As she beholds this monstrous side effect of her divine powers, the Aeon Sophia sees a distinct shape in the fracture pattern she makes in the *dema*: [something like an aborted fetus](#), a human form born prematurely with an oversized head and spindly limbs. The head and body of this creature are slick, streamlined. This is not the Anthropos she designed with [Thelete](#), but a grotesque distortion of it. This neonate form multiplies itself fractally to millions of entities arrayed in cascading waves across the circular impact zone where her energy-plume hovers. The forces churning in the spiral arms begin to sieze upon the Aeon with excessive intensity, contracting her wave-form. Under the high compression of elementary matter in the galactic limbs, Sophia's plume of Organic Light swirls into a knot, curling on itself in something like a

fetal contraction. The circular fracture in the *dema* gathers into a tightening vortex, surrounding the Aeon, blocking the free streaming of her composite currents.

To her astonishment, Sophia realizes that she is now the mother of a bizarre species that has emerged from the *dema* due to the impact of her divine currents, but without her divine intention. Such is the weird consequence of her precipitious plunge from the cosmic center. But now something even more odd occurs. Sophia sees a distinct mutation in the archon swarm: an aggressive figure appears, a dragon-body with the head of a lion that rages and roars. This reptile-like mutation of the archon horde rapidly dominates the embryonic creatures and assumes the role of overlord. The entire archon colony comes alive with the reptilian overlord assuming a god-like stance over the rest of the species.

The overlord of the archon species rapidly becomes conscious of himself and his surroundings. He prances and preens before the swarming horde that has arisen from the fracture pattern of Sophia's impact. He is blind arrogance embodied, and he is truly blind. Looking around, the chief archon does not see the Pleroma or the Anthropos, nor does he even see the Aeon Sophia. This monster, the Demiurge, takes the impact zone for the entire cosmos, and declares himself to be lord of all he surveys. "I am the only god, let there be no others before me." The archon overlord is delusional, believing that he has created the elementary cosmos in which he finds himself along with the countless minions of the embryonic archons.

Sophia realizes that something terribly odd is underway. Here she beholds a cosmic species propagated by mistake so that it does not have a proper habitat for itself. Unlike the Anthropos, which is a production of divine imagination *intentionally projected from within the galactic core*, archons arise unintentionally *outside* the core, in the encircling limbs. Witnessing this bizarre spectacle, the Aeon is constantly aware of the presence of the Anthropos embedded in a galactic nebula close to where she has impacted the limb, the third of the spiral arms of the galaxy, counting outwards.

The archons cannot swirl around in the *dema* vortex forever. A more stable environment must be provided for them. And besides, the chief archon wants a kingdom to reflect his false omnipotence and his arrogant impulses. He wishes to organize fantastic celestial mansions for himself, but since he has no intentionality, no will of his own, he can create nothing. Archons are not the product of divine intentionality like the Anthropos, the genomic template of humanity. They are a cyborg species of inorganic make-up. In the manner of robots programmed for repetitive tasks, they can imitate, but they cannot originate. They can copy or simulate life but they cannot demonstrate the intimate dynamics of the living. The archons are a mimic species that borrows what powers and faculties it has from the divine energy of the Aeon, the fallen goddess, their unwitting mother.



Fiddlehead fern: the elegant shape of this plant suggests the curling involution of the plume of Organic Light, the natural contraction of a living energy system in a hostile, non-living environment. In nature, the fiddlehead fern *unfurls* from the point outward, but in her anomalous situation, the fallen goddess may be imagined as *confurling* her plume to a terminal point or enclosed node. Yet even in this involuting process, the luminosity of Organic Light retains its fractal organizing power, the quintessential mark of Aeons in the galactic core. In Gnostic cosmology this power is called *autogenes*, "self-generating," calling to mind the *autopoesis* of modern complexity theory and Gaian biophysics.

### Six - A Star Is Born

Sophia feels something like compassion for the plight of the archons and their overlord, the demiurge. They are, in a sense, her offspring and she is responsible for their survival, if not their ultimate fate. But they are a blind, rabid species, swarming without sense or intention. They do not even have a proper domain to inhabit! Sophia imparts a portion of her dreaming power to the chief archon so that he sees the Pleroma, even though he does not realize what he is seeing. To him, the living energies in the galactic core appear as a kaliedoscopic array of colored rays in regular patterns. The demiurge commands his legion of celestial drones to imitate these living fractal designs. From the fracture zone of Sophia's impact now arises the protoplanetary disk, the groundwork of a stable world-system where the archons can construct a system of celestial mansions that [mimic the divine designs of the Generators in the Pleroma](#). But the archontic heaven is a simulation of Pleromic design, the mere scaffolding of a clockwork mechanism, majestic on its own terms, but rigid and lifeless.



The inorganic world system of the archons is subject to the influence of other cosmic forces in the region of the galactic limb where it arises. It first takes shape as a protoplanetary disk with distinct bands, rather than a fully orchestrated system of rotating planets. As long as the archontic cosmos has no central focus, it remains inchoate and unstable. Then something happens in the immediate region of the *dema* that will radically affect archontic activity. From the Orion Nebula, the molecular cloud where the Anthropos template is deposited, a newborn star emerges, as stars often do in the galactic limbs. Galactic nebulae are cradles of star-birth. Stars are continually being born in the depths of M42, the Orion Nebula, and expelled like flaming cannonballs into the galactic arms. *The forces involved in starbirth are independent of the archons, and superior to them, though involving the same raw materials of atomic and elementary matter.*

Due to the mass-free status of the Organic Light, the Aeon Sophia is unable to provide a dwellpoint for the archon cosmos. Her streaming energies are increasingly constricted by the massive pressures churning in the carousel limbs, conditions totally absent in the galactic core. Sophia whirls upon herself, the expulsion plume curling into a knot as the *dema* closes upon her in a dense, darkening cloud. Her shrinking plume hovers uncertainly in the galactic limb as the forces of that region run their own course. Sophia watches the archontic cosmos taking form. At the same time, she is keenly aware of the presence of the Anthropos, a gleaming maze embedded in the Orion Nebula.



The "fall" of the Wisdom Goddess: a power-surge from the galactic center (gold) forms an immense plume that impacts the elementary matter of the galactic limb (bounded by blue lines). This impact precipitates the conditions for a protoplanetary disc (PPD), a standing vortex of elementary matter (*dema*). Initially, the disk consists of undulant waves in a fracture pattern—but bizarrely, this pattern comes to life due to Sophia's animating power of intention. Archons emerge in fractal cascades and circulate madly like a swarm of bees or locusts, a species without a fixed habitat. The protoplanetary disk has no stable center, but then a newborn star erupts from the Orion Nebula (O.N.) where the Anthropos template (grid design) is nested. The enormous mass of this star constellates the unstable disk into a planetary system with regular orbital paths, with the star fixed at its center. The earth, however, is not formed in this manner. It eventually congeals from the involuting point of the expulsion plume from the galactic center. The divine luminosity of the goddess (Organic Light) morphs into a range of material elements that become englobed into an organic planet. The earth is then captured in the celestial clockworks of the archons, the inorganic planetary system.

The archon overlord, the demiurge, desires to control the copy-cat heaven he has constructed, but the center of the protoplanetary disk will not hold due to lack of sufficient mass to balance against the overall mass of the composite elements. A stable planetary system must be supported by a central sun, a star. Fortunately for the demiurge, the star that has precipitated



from the Orion Nebula possesses the required mass. And it is composed of inorganic elements comparable to those in the archontic realm of elementary matter, the *dema*.: the physics of the star and the protoplanetary disk are compatible.

Responding equally to the laws of elemental matter, the archon vortex and the newborn sun merge. Gradually, the turbulent flat whorl of the impact zone assumes the form of a multibanded disc with the newborn sun at its center a bright, throbbing nucleus. Planetary globes forming in the *dema* and the incandescent metals forged inside the newborn star produce a single-star cosmos, a solar system with circulating planets. The archons now have a habitat of sorts. They gather around the demiurge, who falsely believes he is the creator of this clockwork mechanism. The demented archon deity rules over his kingdom, the planetary system exclusive of the earth, sun, and moon.

The earth does not belong to this planetary system engineered and inhabited by archons. The earth has not been formed yet and it will not arise in the same manner as the inorganic planetary system. The archons receive their name from the root *archai*, "first, from the beginning," because they were present before the earth appeared.

### **Seven - The Living Planet**

Slowly, with increasing disorientation, the Aeon Sophia shifts from the natural state of a torrent of living light to something else, something like a mottled globe of thickening curd. The expulsion plume curls upon itself at its end and the long stream trailing toward the Pleroma dissipates. But despite this deformation, the Aeon is still endowed with perception and intention. The powerful attraction that pulled Sophia from the galactic center is still operating. The attention of the wisdom goddess keeps returning to the source of her difficulties, the genomic template nested in the Orion Nebula.



The appearance of the Anthropos template nested in the Orion Nebula can be imagined as the pattern of dew on a spider's web, but [on close examination](#), the gleaming nodes of the pattern are dense clusters of filament like fungal mesh or mycelium. Milkweed fluff provides a good visual analogue.

Beholding the planetary system constructed by the archon hive, Sophia is stunned by what she has unwittingly produced, but when her attention goes to the Anthropos, she remembers how she got into this situation in the first place. As her currents of Organic Light convolve more and more toward a dwellpoint in the *dema*, the Aeon undergoes a massive metamorphosis. The planets of the archontic system are inorganic, unable to support life, but Sophia now senses herself becoming a planet—but of a very different sort, a different genesis.

This torrent of Organic Light morphs into a planetary body that does not belong to the realm of the archons, yet comes to be captured in it. [Sophia morphs into a planet that is organic, sentient and self-aware](#). But the life she acquires by this transformation is different from the life she enjoyed among the Pleromic Aeons. It is not a life singular and whole, seamless, integral, autonomous, but a life of dependence and interrelation, a vast web of precarious complexity.

### **Eight - Pleromic Intercession**

As Sophia loses her Aeonic form, her emotions transform into the physical elements of the earth. The terrestrial globe solidifies, a fetal planet captured in the clockwork heavens of the demiurge and his minions. The mother star at the center of that system bestows a stream of the nurturing warmth on the emergent planet. At the same time, the planetary clockwork exerts its blind forces, subjecting Sophia to conditions that do not exist in the Pleroma.

Over many eons the fallen goddess produces an atmosphere and oceans. The Generator veils herself demurely in the cloudy marbled vapors of the biosphere. Upon her planetary body life arises in rampant forms. Creatures great and small appear in such abundance that Sophia is unable to manage her progeny. Looking on from the galactic core, the Generators see her plight. By communal assent **they send the Aeon Christos**, to bring order to the biological diversity teeming in Sophia's world. **Due to the unique power it commands, the Aeon Christos can induce the cosmic process of gemmation, or nucleation, thus setting boundaries on all life processes, for nucleated bodies have membranes that define their properties and actions. Nucleation entails the swelling of bud-like nodules that exude moisture and fragrance, like a chrism. Because this Aeon carries the chrismatic action, Christos is called "the Anointing."**

In an action that reflects intentionally what Sophia committed without intention, Christos crosses the Pleromic boundary and **intercedes in the experiment unfolding in the spiral arms**. The Generator organizes the life-forms burgeoning upon the planet and then recedes, withdrawing to the galactic center.

### **Nine - Sophia's Correction**

Totally identified with the life-processes of the planet she has become, the fallen goddess now embodies the world she dreamed, where the human species now emerges and proceeds to live out a divine experiment, the unfolding of a cosmic singularity. But not quite as she dreamed it. The organic planet is captured in an inorganic system.

Sophia embodied is the living planet, all the way from its molten core out to the limits of the biosphere. Her passions have become the physical elements, solid, watery, aerial, fiery. In and through the elements Sophia experiences joy and anguish like every sentient being, and her emotional field encompasses the array of planetary sentience, entire. Having become a planetary body, Gaia, she does not forget what it is to be an Aeon, a dancing torrent of Organic Light, alive and aware, autopoietic, super-animating. She both the torrential stream of Organic Light and the material planetary body: she is Gaia-Sophia.

But Gaia's memory of her own divine condition is dependent upon what unfolds under the conditions of **the terrestrial experiment**. And in some mysterious way, the fallen goddess depends for self-recollection upon one species among all the other—that singularity, the human strain.

Even before her plunge, Sophia was intimately engaged with the novelties that were to emerge on Earth through the Anthropos. This species does not decide the fate of life on Earth, nor does it ultimately determine the Aeon's reconnection to the Pleroma. But does it somehow play a key role in *how* Sophia realigns to the Pleroma while she is still entrained in the cycles of nature, undergoing the cyclic metamorphoses of planetary life? The message of the telestai, those trained seers who were aimed by this vision story, strongly suggests that to be so. The teachings that survive from the Mysteries present us with a consummate mystery to solve: Sophia's correction.

Over billions of years, the Aeon Sophia shows that she is fully able to recover her life force after massive traumas and extinctions. The continuity of her life-cycles is shared by all creatures whom she selects for resurrection, but it is lived out by humankind in a special way, because humans have a narrative skill more advanced than other animals. It may be that humanity, with its story-telling capacity, serves as a memory-circuit for Gaia-Sophia. In imagination, through the medium of language, the human species can recall and recount the entire trajectory of her metamorphosis.



Alchemical image of the Divine Sophia as a Tree of Learning and source of the Elixir of Life. As such, she was known to alchemists as Sapientia, Lady Wisdom, Lady Nature, Alkimia. The multi-walled enclosure around her may suggest the multi-banded cosmos of the archons. Metaphorically, it represents the alcove of learning, then the exoteric, mesoteric, and esoteric



chambers of divine instruction.

But can the human species see itself in such a lofty role? Can it see itself as divinely imagined species at all? Can it design its proper course of evolution within the frame of Sophia's cosmic biography? Can it live up to the challenge to complete some aspect of divine imagination and contribute to the correction of the fallen goddess?

Although not the most precious species – all her progeny are precious to the [planetary animal mother](#) – humankind has the rare privilege to participate intimately in Sophia's correction, her realignment to the cosmic source, the Pleroma. But to do this *the Anthropos must first correct itself*. It must realize its own true potential, and face and master the deviance represented by the archons. How humankind meets this challenge, and how the correction of Gaia's cosmic trajectory will be accomplished, belong to the present and future, unwritten part of Sophia's story.



[Nature performeth her operations gradually; and indeed I would have thee do the same: let thy imagination be guided wholly by nature. And observe according to nature, through whom the substances regenerate themselves in the bowels of the earth. And imagine this with true and not with fantastic imagination.](#)

## The Fallen Goddess Scenario

### Summary and Evaluation

Writings attributed to ancient seers known as Gnostics describe an outpouring of energy from the center of our galaxy that eventually forms the planet earth. This event and its consequences are recounted in the narrative of the fallen goddess Sophia, whose name means "wisdom." My summary of this "creation myth" uses a transposition of its mythic features into terms consistent with modern cosmology. Following the summary is an evaluation of what the myth tells us about life on earth, and how it may be corroborated by scientific finding, on the other hand, and mythology, on the other.

This entry is linked to the [Reading Plan](#) for the Nag Hammadi Codices which I have upgraded.

jll 2 October 2010

### Galactic Dynamics

Framed in mythological language, this fallen goddess scenario (FGS) describes the core of our home galaxy as a vortex of infinite potential (Pleroma: fullness, plenum) consisting of massive serpentlike entities or torrents. The gods and goddesses of the Pleroma are called Aeons in the

Gnostic writings. They are *gendered* male and female to describe different types of dynamic activity, like positive and negative charges of electric current, or the attractive and repulsive poles of a magnet. The Aeons are divine: that is, luminous, radiant, emanating light. They are also alive and intelligent and capable of feeling, perception, and desire, but on the level of cosmic consciousness. From the glossary of *Not in His Image*:

**Aeon:** (*AY-on*) (Greek, “god,” “divinity,” “process,” “emanation,” “time cycle”) Gnostic term for a cosmically pervasive process, aware, animated, and animating. Aeons manifest sensory worlds by **dreaming**, rather than by the artisanlike act of creation attributed to the biblical father god. Adj., *Aeonic*.

An Aeon might be envisioned as a massive current of living luminosity capable of sentient response, gesture, speech. The standard metaphor for such energies is "serpent." *"The Aeons are serpentine but not reptilian.* A snake is a reptile but distinct from a lizard, iguana, chameleon, etc. All things snakey and serpentine ought not to be contaminated by association with the dubious label, "reptilian."

The "outpouring of energy" in the FGS describes the central event in Gnostic myth: how one of the massive luminous serpentine currents swirling the galactic core burst beyond the boundaries of the core. Science today recognizes that the galactic core has a boundary, but a soft, porous one, like the yellow of an egg. The structure of our galaxy conforms to a standard model, the regular lenticular spiral: a egg-shaped rotating core surrounded by limbs or spiral arms. The extent of the rotating arms is vast, but the arms themselves are thin, so the entire galaxy has the shape of a pancake with a central bulge. The dynamics of the core, the Pleroma, differ from the dynamics operating in the spiral arms, called the Kenoma, "deficiency, incompleteness." This is the difference between infinite and finite potential. The core is like a fountain head perpetually erupting with boundless, undefined potential. In the spiral arms, this cosmic potential scales down into the relatively limited, but still immense, potentiality of celestial events, including planetary systems where experiments in life can unfold.





The galactic core or hub consists of a concentrated mass of high-energy currents, the cosmic gods. Its composite mass is pure stellar energy, the stuff that stars are made from, in a state of excitation that precedes and impedes the appearance of any particular form. Form arises in the Kenoma, the realm of finite potential. The composition of the outspreading galactic arms is not pure stellar luminosity but residue, the granular elements of past worlds. The entire galaxy is a vast glittering pinwheel that acts like a mill, grinding out future worlds from the residue of former ones. The *dema*, dense elementary matter arrays in the spiral arms, have some self-organizing properties but for the most part they are inert. The *dema* can produce suns, planetary systems, comets, nebular clouds, and so on, due to its own inherent dynamism, which is largely inorganic; but to produce living systems it requires activation from the galactic center. Hence, suns may be born and planetary systems formed in the *dema*, but for sentient life capable of self-awareness to appear in those worlds there must be a "input" from the galactic core.

In the normal course of cosmic events, Aeonic currents remain dynamically within the boundaries of the galactic core. To produce experiments in worlds arising in the galactic limbs, Aeons project their power of intention (*ennoia*) outward while remaining where they are. Consider the analogy of massive kleig lights inside a white canvas tent. The power generators, bulbs, and mounting apparatus of these lights remain within the tent, but they can project beams through the canvas walls. So do the Aeons, the cosmic divinities, project their intentions and designs into the Kenoma without engaging dynamically in the *dema*, the dense elementary matter arrays. Then they observe what happens in the interaction between the inorganic field of the *dema* and the sentient-organic projections they have "seeded" into it.

It could be said that the gods, the Pleromic Aeons, project myriads of Kenomic experiments to entertain themselves. This view of divine purpose recalls the Asian concept of *Lila*, "divine

play."

## Divine Mistake

And so it goes in the usual course of cosmic events. The designing powers at the galactic center — Aeon headquarters, if you will — allow for free play of boundless potential, trial and error, novelty and innovation, in the experiments they initiate. The divine powers do not interfere with an experiment in progress, otherwise they would not be able to see how it plays out on its own terms. But there can be exceptions in the cosmic order, and Sophia's plunge is one of them.

"The world as we know it came about due to a mistake," (*The Gospel of Philip*). The "mistake" is an anomaly rather than an out-and-out error. Sophia commits a misstep or overstepping of cosmic boundaries and a mistake arises as a consequence of her audacity. Sophias's becomes enmeshed with the experiment she has projected, forced by her own compulsion, as it were, to go *interactive with the subjects and conditions of the experiment*. The dilemma faced by the goddess is *the* crucial plot factor of the fallen goddess scenario.

Of course, there may also be other Kenomic experiments where something similar occurs. Gnostic cosmology is a multi-world perspective, even a multi-galaxy perspective. The texts assert that there are many Pleromas. It may be that we will get optimal insight and benefit from the fallen goddess scenario if we consider it to be unique to our world, describing conditions specific to the earth. If the myth of the Aeon Sophia specifically describes an event in *this* galaxy with particular consequences for the planet earth and humanity, as I am convinced is so, then we would do well to concentrate on *our unique situation* before speculating on what happens elsewhere or, ultimately, what happens in the scope of the Universe, the totality of all galaxies.

**The recognition that the fallen goddess scenario tells the story of OUR planet exclusively, and so engages humanity in an urgent and intimate way with the "earth goddess," presents a block for some people, I have noted. Interest in this particular galaxy, the planet earth, and the conditions of human existence in this unique habitat where we are, may act as a deterrent or self-selection factor. I have noted that some people don't care for this limited scenario, preferring to go beyond it toward a larger picture. I would argue that the larger picture will come into view when our perspective here on earth is clear, including our view of the origin of the earth and the role of the human species in terrestrial design.**

**But this earth-first view is not attractive to some people who (it seems to me) assume that some abstract vision of the larger picture will automatically make our situation on earth clear and comprehensible, if not purposeful. A Gnostic would advise cautious scrutiny of any cosmic perspective that overlooks the particular fate of the home planet, Gaia.**

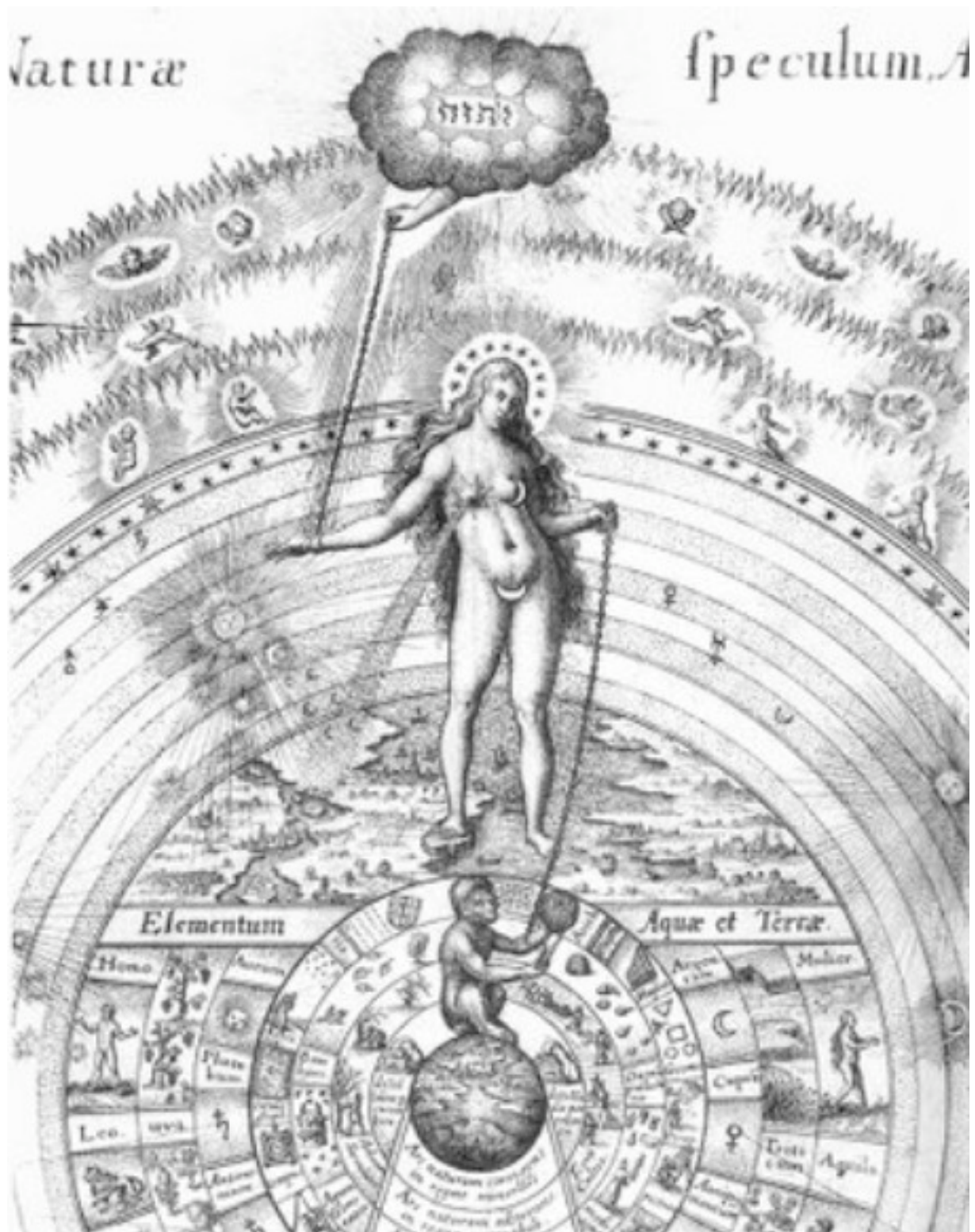
The Sophia Mythos, as it may be called, is not, technically speaking, a creation myth like the Biblical account of creation in *Genesis*. Rather, it is an *emanation myth* consistent with the Aboriginal paradigm of the Dreamtime and the Hindu mytheme of "Vishnu dreaming," i.e., the oneiric paradigm. From Greek oneiros, "dream." Oneiric: of or relating to dreams or dreaming.



Atypical image of the paternal deity or Father God creating the world and its creatures. Unlike the male creator, Sophia does not make this world of ours, she makes herself into it. She does not create the animal species by divine fiat, she dreams them empathically. Theologically, emanation is a paradigm of immanence, placing the generative force of divinity with and in the world, permeating it. No matter how hard apologists try to say otherwise, the Father God does not permeate the world. The creator remains distinct from his creation, transcendent, omniscient, off-planet. The above image is atypical because shows the creator in the midst of his creations, rather than stationed in the clouds (i.e., some heavenly zone beyond this world).

The analogy to dreaming is a metaphor, if you will, but not just that. The oneiric paradigm describes a dynamic process in which life on earth is sustained in the way a dream is sustained by the dreamer. The characters in a dream exist and act *as long as the dreaming continues*. In the creationist paradigm, the creations *persist* after the initial fiat of the creator that brings them into existence. In Sophia's dreaming, called *apporia* in the NHC, terrestrial life persists as the dream activity *concurrent* with it unfolds. The creationist paradigm allows for humans to have a relationship to the off-planet deity, usually realized in an act of faith, but relating to Gaia-Sophia is interactive and experimental. We know Gaia in the immediate sensuous presence called nature, but interacting with her dreaming requires a dialogue with the mind of nature, the indwelling intelligence or Anima Mundi ("soul of the world").

In short, this habitable world of ours has not been created as an artifact, like a pot made by a potter, but is *continually being emanated* by the Aeon who dreams it. The assertion that the world was not created once and for all but is continually emanated is a first-hand truth of experimental mysticism, attested by many mystics and psychonauts who have enjoyed this mysterious dynamic perception both with and without the use of psychoactive agents.



Well-known image of the Anima Mundi from an alchemical text. It shows the continuity from an extraterrestrial Pleromic realm (cloud with Hebrew lettering and extended hand) to the

Divine Sophia to the rational mind of humanity (squatting monkey), with many divisions of the celestial and terrestrial elements. The entire ensemble might have been conceived with this line in mind: "All natures, starting from the revelation of chaos, are in the Light that shines without shadow, and indescribable joy, and unutterable jubilation" (*The Sophia of Jesus Christ*, NHC III, 4. 20). The Light that casts no shadow is the Organic Light, the primary substance body of Sophia and all the Aeons, contrasted to her planetary body, the earth.

Consider again the "mistake" that produced this particular world of ours: the compulsion of an Aeon to be engaged in an experiment projected from the Pleroma, the galactic core. The FGS describes how Sophia actually morphed into the planet earth. Her mass of living luminosity of Organic Light turns into the planet we inhabit by a process of condensation and densification. Sophia does not *create* the earth at all: she becomes the earth.

Nor does Sophia create humanity. At least not in the way the paternal deity of the Bible creates Adam and Eve "in his image." Gnostic writings explain that the Anthropos, the genomic template for humanity, is at first a featureless singularity produced from the Originator, called *propater* in the Greek loan-words in the Coptic books. The Originator is the monistic source of the multiple Aeons. Then the featureless singularity, an explosion of pure undefined possibility, comes to be *configured* by the Aeons of our galaxy into an experimental projection that will be implanted into the galactic arms. Variations of this event can be found in different texts.

One version says that two Aeons, Sophia and Christos, undertook the encoding of the human genome (Anthropos). These two Aeons are as it were the "parents" of the human species, but not in a biological sense. Christ and Sophia make a syzygy, a dyad or cosmic coupling. Once they have configured the ground plan for the human genome, encoding it with countless capacities and talents, they join the entire Pleromic company to release it into the galactic limbs. The Anthropos then emerges from the cosmic center *as a projection of the divine imagination of the gods*, not a creature *made in the image* of any god. Such is the grand vision of the Mysteries on the origin of the human species.

Gaia Mythos is a multi-world scenario, so the Anthropos template may be conceived as the matrix of many strains of the human species, able to emerge in many Genomic experiments unfolding in the galactic limbs. But again, the Mythos is about *one* particular strain of humanity on that *one* particular planet subject to the anomalous plunge of the Aeon Sophia. The uniqueness of this story cannot be overemphasized.

## Nine Episodes

Although allusions to a feminine deity identified with the earth are widespread in mythology and indigenous lore, they are fragmentary and anecdotal. Gnostic materials present the unique case of a *complete and coherent scenario* describing how such a deity on the cosmic level turns into a planetary body. Only the FGS of Gnosticism presents such a complete narrative about a goddess who morphs into the planet earth.





Sculpture by [Binna Green](#). The tendency to represent the planet earth or the totality of nature by woman's body is universal. Why? In the *Hero - Manhood and Power*, I pointed out that models of the abstract totality of the universe almost always use the male body, whereas some intuition in us sees this planet and the natural world as female. This is not mere anthropomorphism; rendering something non-human in human terms. The earth *is* Sophia's body, literally speaking. *This is not a metaphor*.

Due to the sparse and fragmentary condition of the surviving textual evidence, the fallen goddess scenario has to be reconstructed, sometimes by extrapolations from slim and scattered clues. The lamentable state of the NHC requires *imaginative reworking* of the mythos. This task benefits from a transposition of the mystical and symbolic language of the Gnostic materials into astronomical terms, as seen above.

Modern science itself is largely an imaginative exercise—the fantastic scenario of "black holes," for instance.

For more on extrapolations and astronomical language, see Coco de Mer, Part One: [The Human Role in Gaia's Dreaming](#), and the [Commentaries](#) on the Gaia Mythos.

The complete scenario can be summarized in nine episodes:

- 1. A singularity, the potential for a unique divine experiment, emerges in the galactic center (Pleroma)
- 2. Two divinities (Aeons) in the galactic core, Sophia and Christos, configure the singularity into the Anthropos, i.e., they encode template of the human species
- 3. The divinities of the cosmic center collectively project the Anthropos into the galactic limbs where it can emerge and evolve experimentally in many worlds
- 4. Fascinated by the possibilities of the human experiment, and compelled by a desire to be involved in it, the Aeon Sophia plunges from the galactic center
- 5. Sophia's solitary and anomalous act ("the fall of the wisdom goddess") sets off a bizarre side-effect on elementary matter in the galactic limbs, producing the Archons, an inorganic species with a hive mentality that proceeds to construct a planetary system under the direction of a reptilian overlord, Ialdabaoth
- 6. As the densification of Sophia's energies assumes a globular, planet-like form, eventually to become the earth, a newborn sun (the Mother Star) emerges from a nebular cloud in the spiral arms and churns the chaos of the proto-planetary disk into a system of centralized orbits. The terrestrial globe becomes captured in this system of celestial mechanics. The Mother Star affects a "structural coupling" with the unique planet arising from Sophia's metamorphosis of Sophia, so that the two bodies, sun and earth, will be symbiotic
- 7. Sophia, originally a mass-free current of living luminosity, gradually solidifies into the earth, morphing into the elements of terrestrial habitat. In a final definitive condensation of Sophia's energies, the terrestrial globe secretes the moon like a massive pearl, thus completing the three-body system, earth-sun-moon with special properties distinct from the rest of the solar system
- 8. Observing that Sophia cannot manage the prodigious explosion of biological diversity she produces, the divinities of the galactic center send the Aeon Christos to configure and coordinate the instinctual life-plans of her progeny. This is the Christic intercession.
- 9. With the full metamorphosis of Sophia into Gaia, the living earth, humanity emerges as a unique part of her experiment but without knowing how it is so. Thus, the "mistake" of overriding cosmic boundaries leaves Sophia in a dilemma regarding how to achieve her "correction," that is, the coordination or harmonization of her experiment in the galactic limbs with its origin in the galactic center

Of these nine episodes, 1 through 6 are preterrestrial. They concern events that occur *before*



Sophia turns into the earth, preparatory to the conditions of terrestrial life, for instance, the capture of the organic earth in the inorganic planetary system of the Archons. 7 describes the formation of the planetary body, the biosphere, and the appearance of all species, including *our strain of humanity*, the outgrowth of the Anthropos template. With the definitive morphing of Sophia into a planetary globe, problems arise. Episode 8 describes the emergence of rampant biodiversity on that globe—a chaotic situation that evokes a "rescue call" on the part of the Aeons in the galactic core. Episode 9 is ongoing, here and now. It involves current and future events unfolding in the biosphere, and poses a sublime challenge: the prospect of co-evolution of our species with Gaia-Sophia, the planetary animal mother.

People writing to me at this site have occasionally objected to my apparent literalization of the Sophianic narrative. Isn't it just a metaphor? they ask. I am warned of looking like a Biblical fundamentalist by taking it literally. How can I respond to this objection?

Well, first off, let's be clear about what a metaphor is. Here's what the internet oracle Wikipedia says:

Metaphor is the concept of understanding one thing in terms of another. A metaphor is a figure of speech that constructs an analogy between two things or ideas; the analogy is conveyed by the use of a metaphorical word in place of some other word. For example: "Her eyes were glistening jewels".

So, for instance, a tv anchor is someone who presents the news each night. "Anchor" is a metaphor for the newsreader, one term being used in place of another. I take it then that a metaphor is always a term chosen to stand *for something else*. If "Sophia's fall" is a metaphor, a term chosen to stand for something else, what does it stand for, what is the something else? I submit that the Sophia narrative, if it is to be considered metaphorically, presents imaginative terms chosen to describe something that actually happened, a real event. It presents in mythological language an account of events that actually transpired.

In this respect, consider Plutarch's comment on the Egyptian Mysteries of Isis and Osiris "Whoever applieth these allegories to the blessed Divine Nature, deserves to be treated with contempt. We must not however believe that they were mere fables without any meaning, like those of the Poets. They represent to us things that really happened" (fn. 322, *Not in His Image*).

#### Textual Sources

The task of piecing together the FGS relies on longish passages and isolated clues in the Nag Hammadi Codices and in paraphrases of Gnostic cosmology found in the polemics of the Church Fathers. The NHC materials are wildly inconsistent in how they present the full-scale cosmological narrative. The most consistent, near- complete versions of the FGS occur in four documents, the longest in the NHC.



Nag Hammadi Codices, earliest surviving bound books.

## Basic Cosmology

*The Apocryphon of John*. 31 pages. Found in three versions of various lengths in the NHC and in one fragmentary version in a non-NHC text. This is most comprehensive text on the Sophia mythos, giving a relatively coherent overview of all nine episodes.

*The Hypostasis of the Archons*. 11 pages. Omits features 1 and 2, presents crucial details on the activity of the Archons and Sophia's correction (feature 8).

*On the Origin of the World*. 30 pages. Found in two versions in the NHC. Omits features 1 and 2, presents a detailed treatment of features 4 and 5, including the Gnostic narrative of Adam and Eve. Ends with a rare apocalyptic passage referring to feature 8.

*The Tripartate Tractate*. 78 pages, longest in the NHC. Describes the Sophia Mythos *without using the name of Sophia*. For instance, Sophia's plunge (feature 3) is called "The Imperfect Begetting of the Logos." Refers to the chief Archon as the Demiurge, a term found in Plato and the *Hermetica*. Contains important details on episodes 4 through 8, with an emphasis on the salvific action of the Aeon Christos. This text presents the Demiurge as an artisan assisting the Pleromic gods, rather than as an aberration and adversary to them and, by extension, to humanity. In this and other elements, *Tri Trac* is not genuinely Gnostic. Rather, it more closely resembles Hermetic texts that develop a favorable view of the Demiurge (i.e., the Archons) as an "artificer" who assists the Pleromic gods in engineering the world-process.

Excerpt from the commentary on the *Tripartite Tractate* in the Nag Hammadi Reading Plan:

*Tri Trac* describes the fall of the goddess Sophia in terms of the drama of the spiritual Logos, *logos pneumatikos*. Sophia as such is not named in the text. The Archons are named outright, and their chief, the demiurge, is specified in sections 6 and 8. Section 5, "Aeonic Life," proceeds in the lofty metaphysical idiom of the opening passages. It states that the Archons do

not resemble the eternal beings, the Aeons (71.5), and further explains how the Originator selflessly confers generative power on the Aeons, acting from pleasure, sweetness, and love. "Each one of the Aeons is a name, a code" (73.5): that is to say, the Aeons are generative powers that encode the infinite *undefined* potentiality of the Originator. "Their begetting is like a process of extension," i.e., emanation, compared to a wellspring of many currents. Unlike the literal, artifactual creation attributed to the father god, Aeonic emanation proceeds "in an imaginary way" (78: 5). I have explained what this means at length in the chapter on "Dreamtime Physics" in *Not in His Image*.

*Trimorphic Protennoia*. 15 pages. A revelation discourse presenting the descent of the Aeon Sophia in obscure mystical language. Rich with allusion, although it contains almost no concrete elements of cosmology. For an extended discussion of this text, see [Sophia's Passion](#) in *Coco de Mer*, Part One.

*The Paraphrase of Shem* (41 pages), like *The Tripartate Tractate*, presents the FGS in abstract language, but even more vaguely. This text is allegorical rather than mythological. Sophia is named, but not as a main character. *Paraph Shem* features Darkness, Spirit and Nature as the three principal actors in the cosmic drama. In allusion to feature 4, the emergence of the Archons, it refers to an "afterbirth" rather than an "abortion." It is difficult to extract anything relevant to the FGS from this material.

[A Valentinian Exposition](#) (8 pages, very fragmentary) describes the Pleroma and paired Aeons (feature 1), omits 2, the projection of the Anthropos, and treats 4 in a manner specific to the Valentinian School, contrasted to the Sethian School, whose version I follow in reconstructing the mythos. This text refers to feature 6 by the phrase, "Jesus and Sophia revealed the creature," and other obscure clues relating to the mysterious co-action of these Aeons in the formation of all species. It uniquely describes Sophia laughing despite Her unexpected exile from the Pleroma; in short, amusing Herself as She can. *Val Exp* contains the memorable, almost taunting line: "Indeed, the Devil is one of the divinities." Thus the Gnostic view that Ialdabaoth, the chief Archon, who is a diabolic entity working against humanity, is still entitled to divine status, of a kind.

In *A Valentinian Exposition*, episode 8, the intervention of the Aeon Christos in behalf of Sophia, tends to be treated separately from the evolutionary narrative. The precise manner in which Christos assists Sophia, and the ongoing effects of this intervention for humanity, are deeply problematic issues in Gnostic study. Some texts make Christos and Sophia the paired Aeons who project the Anthropos, the template for the human species; hence, presenting them as the divine parents of humanity. This action occurs within the Pleroma, before Sophia falls. There follows an intervention of Christos into Sophia's evolving world. Some clues on this feature of the scenario occur in the parallel texts *The Sophia of Jesus Christ* and *Eugnostos the Blessed*.

NOTE: The most detailed account of the Christic intercession is not found in the NHC or any Coptic Gnostic materials but in *Against Heresies* by the Christian ideologue Irenaeus.

An Evaluation

In the process of recovering and restoring the FGS I was continually amazed by what the story tells us, and how much it tells us. The scope and richness of the narrative is unparalleled, in my experience. Others may not be so impressed, assuming that it is just one creation story like any other. But my impression is based on the privilege of a lifetime of research in comparative mythology, which most people have not enjoyed. I have seen a lot of parallel material to compare to it, so I can assure you that the material of the FGS is incomparable. In scope, richness, coherence, and explanatory value, it wins hands down over any other creation scenarios. It is the unique case of a genuine, full-blown, participatory [myth of planetary evolution](#).

Consider some of what the FGS shows us and tells us:

- # The living fractal beauty of the Aeons, the gods dancing in the galactic core
- # The generosity of the Originator, the Prime Aeon, who offers undefined singularities to be developed by the generating Aeons—a perfect compromise of monistic and polytheistic elements
- # The emergence of humanity as a singularity in the galactic core, an upsurge of the Originator
- # The encoding of the singularity into the human genome (Anthropos)
- # The origin of the human species as an imaginative project of divine intelligence
- # The empathy of a divine being for the human experiment, leading to [the fall of the wisdom goddess](#)
- # The nature of the Aeonic endowment of Nous, divine intelligence
- # The origin of an alien species or cyborg-type inorganic race, the Archons, due to the impact of the fallen Aeon on elementary matter in the galactic arms
- # The embryonic and reptilian (drakonic) forms of the Archons
- # The delusional god-complex of the head Archon, Ialdabaoth
- # The nature of plane, "error, going astray," distinguished from evil
- # The mindset, tactics, and motives of the Archons, including their hallmark of simulation (HAL)
- # The insanity of the lord archon, Ialdabaoth, who wishes to convince humankind that he is the sole and supreme creator
- # The failed attempt of the Archons to "rape Eve" (genetic intervention?)
- # The Sophianic endowment of "luminous epinoia," imagination, to enable mankind to resist the Archons and participate in her designs
- # The structural coupling of earth and sun that allows life on earth to thrive even though the solar heat would render the planet uninhabitable,
- # The spontaneous organization of Gaian life-plans after extinction, without the need to re-evolve any species (Cambrian explosion, related to the Christic intercession?)
- # The Mesotes or intermediary, an intra-psychic phantom providing to humanity a way to see itself as a species and recognize its exceptional but not superior status among animals

Excerpt from *Not in His Image*, Ch. 23, The Species-Self Connection

The Christos of the Mysteries was understood to be, not an indwelling divine essence, but something that directs us to our animal-human nature. Against the God-self equation, Gnostics asserted *the species-self connection*. To the ancient seers, Christos had the unique role of an

intermediary who connects us as self-conscious individuals to our species identity, and *through* that identity, to all other species. The Mesotes is the specific term for the intermediary as an intrapsychic presence, accessible to every human being, all the time. Even though the intercession of the Aeon Christos for Sophia's sake occurred in remote times, it produced a permanent effect that is only evident, however, at the species level of self-conscious awareness. What does it mean for a human individual to be self-conscious at the species level? This is kind of awareness that comes with the humility to see oneself as a member of the animal world, yet belonging to a particular species of animal. It implies that we own our humanity most deeply when we sense the sublime modesty of being a human animal.



Contemporary image of the "vision quest," a solitary vigil undertaken in nature with the aim of meeting a power animal, an epiphany of the Mesotes or Intermediary.

- # The unique status of the earth as an organic planet captured in an inorganic system,
- # The derivation of delusional religious belief from the intrapsychic spell of the Archons
- # Interactivity of the living earth and the human species in Sophia's correction, i.e., alignment of her experiment with the Aeonic designs of the galactic core

And that is a partial list, just off the top of my head. I am still amazed every time I go over the entire myth and consider its ramifications, such as the Gnostic theory of error. What impresses me most of all is the coherence of all these features into a single plot trajectory leading to the present moment of human existence on earth, and pointing ahead. The "story arc" (to borrow a term from screenwriting) of the fallen goddess scenario is utterly clear: everything leads up to

Sophia's correction. To be involved in it or not is a choice for each person to make, for coevolution with Gaia is a volunteer system. No involvement is possible, however, without coming to know and love the story. In the vision of the Mysteries, the story is the savior.

The FGS answers the two great questions, What are we doing here? and Are we alone?, more thoroughly, clearly, and coherently than any other religious or mythological system. Whether or not it is verifiable in all points, the sacred narrative of the Mysteries is without question the most lucid and comprehensive existential cosmology produced by the human mind. It goes the whole nine yards. Competing visions have been channeled since the days of Blavatsky, of course. Consider the Pleiadian scenario of Barbara Marciniak or the ramblings of Ramtha. Channelled material proliferates with all manner of sci-fi comic book detail, some of which may resemble the FGS, especially the Archon episodes. But as far as I know, the emphasis of channelled material is on the divinity of humanity, our heritage as star children, progeny of the gods, etc. Such information does not emphasize or even include the divinity of the earth, or Sophia's interactivity with humanity, on the one hand, and the Pleromic Aeons on the other. Pleiadian scenarios and the like may contain elements of the FGS, figments and fragments, but they cannot top it for its overall coherence and applicability to the human condition. The Sophianic myth is the story to guide the species, by which other versions may be evaluated. Such is my conclusion as a comparative mythologist and experimental mystic.

### Scientific Correlations

For those who need it, there is considerable scientific correlation to the cosmology of the Sophianic vision story. Recently astronomers detected a double helix at the center of our galaxy. If the Aeons were trying to signal us with the news that the human genome originated in the galactic core, they couldn't have chosen a better way to do it. Also, I have mentioned the discovery of a tunnel from the galactic center running laterally into the spiral arms, suggesting the after-effect of Sophia's plunge. *Not in His Image* presents extensive correlations between the FGS and Gaia Theory of Margulis and Lovelock.

### Mythological Parallels

Clues and fragments of the Sophia Mythos show up in countless different mythologies all around the world. Sacred lore world-wide presents aspects of the earth goddess and her story. Indigenous legends are particularly rich in such allusions. They are too numerous to list here, but here is one example from *Not in His Image*:

To be compelled by her solitary passion and fall out of the Pleroma—such is the unique fate of the goddess Sophia... Gnostic myth recalls the many accounts in myth and folklore of a female deity who falls from heaven or becomes embodied in the earth. For instance, the Thompson Indians of the American Northwest recount this story:

At first Kujum-Chantu, the earth, was like a human being, a woman with a head, and arms and legs, and an enormous belly. The original humans lived on the surface of her belly [The legend recounts how the Old One] transformed the sky woman into the present earth. Her hair became the trees and grass; her flesh, the clay; her bones, the rocks; and her blood, the springs of



water.

Such parallels (many others could be cited) show that Gnostic cosmology is deeply rooted in indigenous wisdom and reflects a sophisticated version of the native sense for life on earth.

As to objections regarding my possible idiosyncratic additions to the sacred narrative, there are only two: I state that the Anthropos template was deposited in the Orion Nebula (M 43) "like the pattern of dew on a cobweb," and I propose that the moon emerged from the earth as a final surge of the Pleromic plume, a terminal condensation of Sophia's Organic Light secreted externally like a pearl. There is no textual basis for either of these assertions in the Gnostic Coptic materials so far under study.

Recently David Icke has said that the moon is an artificial satellite constructed by aliens and is being used for a broadcasting station to program humanity into a state of blind enslavement. Needless to say, this is quite a contrast to my view of the moon as an index of dakini instruction related to the Shakti Cluster: in other words, an accessory to the Gaian mind and an instrument of enlightenment and liberation. I understand that Icke may base his view on the teachings of the African shaman Credo Mutwa. I have a lot of respect for Credo Mutwa, an extraordinary man of genius and heart. His account of ET abduction is chilling. And highly veracious, I would say. I believe that he accurately depicts the predatory alien threat detected by Gnostic seers in the presence of the Archons. ET researcher John Mack (whom I met through the Marion Institute) interviewed Credo Mutwa who gave him a profile of alien predation that I compared closely to Gnostic materials when I was writing early drafts of *Not in His Image*.

Credo Mutwa attributes some of the information he shares with David Icke to the ETs who abducted and tortured him. This may include the claim that the moon is an artificial body constructed by those same aliens, or may in some way contribute to that claim. However, if much of what Credo Mutwa says is true, all of it is not necessarily true. Curiously, the Zulu shaman himself notes that the predatory aliens are liars, a fact well-known in his tradition, apparently. They are in Gnostic terms agents of error and deceit—as I have exhaustively argued on this site, in interviews, and in my book, *Not in His Image*. In [Severed Rose](#) I explain how I fell for the Arthontic lie of salvationism, even though I attempted to see it in a mystical framework rather than as an item of dogmatic faith. The point is, I saw the lie and corrected it.

Well, I wonder if Credo Mutwa would tell the world what lie, if any, he has heard from the alien predators?

### Wooing the Whore of Wisdom (1)

#### Considerations on Reconstruction of the Sophia Myth

Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. *Proverbs* 6:25

The Jewish author of Proverbs warns against the temptation of whorish women, but to the mystic inspired by the story of Sophia no beauty excels that displayed by the Whore of Wisdom, and once seen, she is irresistible. To lust for her beauty and be taken upon her eyelids is rapture without compare. Loving Gaia is the highest calling of the human species. Such is



my persuasion.  
- JLL: October 2010

I have probably read the entire Nag Hammadi Library at least twenty times. Not until the sixth or seventh reading did I begin—just *begin*—to develop a consistent comprehensive view of radical Gnostic heresy, especially the anti-salvationist features. After fifteen or so runs, combined with reading other non-NHL and non-Coptic materials and delving into around two hundred scholarly books on Gnosticism, I began to pull the vision story into a coherent narrative. At the end of the day, the story will have to stand on its own legs, no matter what anyone makes of Lash's reconstruction.

I implore you to recognize that this story is not my construction, a personal myth (although I am fully capable of producing personal myths). I don't expect anyone to take this story on faith, but I ask that it be given fair consideration. Savor it, discuss it, pass it around. Compare it to other narratives that are currently being promoted as master plots of the human situation. And ponder the claim I make as a comparative mythologist who has examined the entire repertoire of worth myth: namely, the Fallen Goddess Scenario is the sole coherent full-scale planetary myth produced by the human species so far.

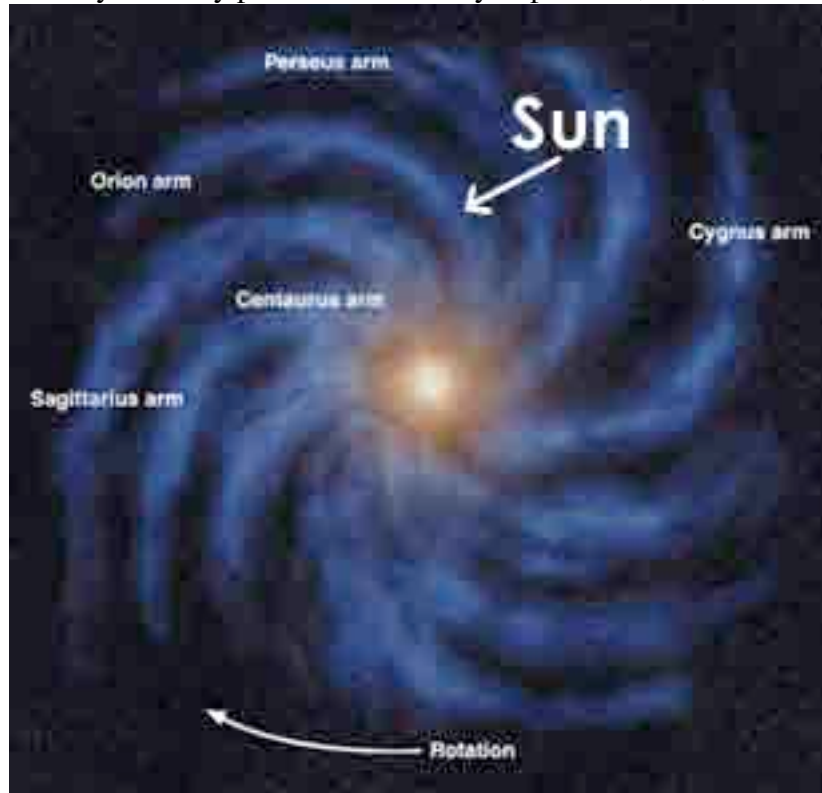
Versions of the Sophianic vision story to date are five: 1, the synopsis in *Not in His Image*, 2, the extended elaboration of the narrative through several chapters of that book, 3 the [summary of the fallen goddess scenario](#) (FGS) on this site, 4, the rendering in an astronomical framework, and 5, the unfinished prose poem on this site. Each rendering follows the format of nine episodes, except the prose poem which comprises sixteen episodes. I have gone over the story line hundreds of times to bring it to optimal articulation and clarity, so that it can be taken up by others. The challenge of this unique myth is to learn the story by heart and then participate in it, live it out. My deepest gratitude goes out to all those who respond with passion and determination to this challenge.

### Considerations

In retrieving and restoring the Sophianic vision of the Mysteries, I have been faced with many daunting considerations. Throughout this complex life-consuming task, I have always been my own most severe critic. I doubt there is any objection to my rendering or interpretation of the myth that I have not inflicted on myself. The main consideration, of course, pertains to how much I may have invented or added to the myth. The second, equally daunting consideration pertains to the issue of viewing the myth as a metaphor or taking it more literally, as an imaginative account of events that actually happened. I will not be able to answer the objections that stem from these considerations to the total satisfaction of all parties. But to offer my best effort, I propose to be transparently honest on three points of the reconstruction: the additions, amplifications, extrapolations I have performed in the process of restoring the myth. In this essay and the second part, I will address these three points.

As for the second consideration, regarding confusion over the metaphoric or literal status of the vision story, it tends to get mixed up with yet another objection: namely, the objection to the animistic or anthropocentric language of the myth. In the astronomical rendering, I treat the mythological entity "Sophia" as an astro-theological term for a power-surge from the galactic

core. Fine, this immediately puts the myth in a scientific framework. From this point on, Sophia can be considered as a torrent of cosmic energy or wave-form located in the core of the home galaxy of the solar system to which the earth belongs. That is a pretty good astronomical rendering of the myth. The problem is, once we proceed into further details of the myth, we are required to imagine that this torrential wave-form is not merely a form of cosmic *energy*, such as a gamma-ray burst, but a living *entity* that can perceive, feel, and intend. With the shift from energy to entity we veer away from the astronomical framework. With the attribution of human-like faculties to the torrent of galactic core energy, we land in the domain of cosmic animism. It is impossible to relate the myth in full without doing so, however, because the energy entity of the myth clearly possesses the ability to perceive, feel, and intend.



This rendition of the pinwheel structure of a regular lenticular spiral seen from above is suggestive but inaccurate. Of the five spiral arms of our home galaxy, the Orion Arm is third from center. The solar system is actually located further down the arm (to the left) than shown here, putting about 3/5ths of the way out from the galactic center. What we call the Milky Way is the local region of the Orion Arm seen from within, not a panoramic sweep of the entire galaxy. Stars visible in the the Milky Way comprise about three percent of the total stellar population of the galaxy, estimated to be 200 billion stars.

Current astronomical knowledge about the structure and activity of the home galaxy is not incompatible with the cosmology of the Mysteries, except that the latter attributes animistic and anthropomorphic traits to the composite energies in the galactic, solar, and planetary dimensions. To ancient seers and surviving indigenous peoples alike, the cosmos is alive, sentient, animated and animating.

How can I justify the cosmic animism of the Sophianic vision story? Do you find it difficult to imagine how an "energy torrent" can be intelligent, self-aware, capable of perceiving, feeling, and intending? I can see why anyone would balk at this claim: an energetic wave-form possesses no sense organs. How can it feel itself and perceive anything else? And how can it be intelligent and intentional if it is merely a surge of electricity or a wave of stellar matter (whatever that is!).

Well, consider that an electrical current in an optical fiber can carry voices, pictures, and information, a vast and varied array of "intelligence." If the optical fiber is fed into a device configured to it, the signal stream can cause the device to behave in certain ways, making it perform definite functions such as search and locate, as well as functions of a mechanical nature, robotic actions. Moreover, the information functions and commands in a signal stream can be transmitted across space without support of any physical medium except the atmosphere. Even disembodied, the signal stream can effect actions that demonstrate intelligence, design, choice, selection, and intention.

Now, if human beings can conceive, construct, and operate informational systems of this kind, what do you imagine nature at large might be able to do? Since it is nature that endows humans with the capacities required to conceive and create such systems, what range of capacities might nature itself exhibit, going right out to the cosmic dimension? The claim that natural processes in the cosmos that produced human intelligence do not possess their own kind of intelligence, and perhaps a superior kind, is untenable.

**It could be said that the paramount spiritual and scientific challenge facing humankind is to detect the intelligence at large that produced its intelligence, and deliberately interface with it. Telestic shamanism meets this challenge by venturing into the inner dimensions of psyche and nature alike, with the intention of detecting and engaging the foundational dynamic forces. To encounter the supernatural is the logical outcome of natural science, but the dogmas attached to scientific investigation can block this encounter.**

I, for one, can imagine that nature at the cosmic level may well be able to perform what it enables humans to perform, demonstrating the same faculties of perception, selection, design, and intention, but on an infinitely greater scale. It seems to me a blind dogmatical resistance to deny the operation of human-like faculties in the cosmic dimension, merely due to lack of so-called hard evidence of what might be happening *emotively* and *sensorially* in that dimension.

In further support of cosmic animism, consider the organic forms of slime mold, mycelia, and amoebic colonies. These living entities have no sense-organs yet they can perceive and respond to their environment, communicate with each other, and act intentionally, showing purpose that conforms to a design and preconceived aims. They are intelligent but have no brain as the apparent seat of consciousness. They perceive and respond without eyes or ears. If such intelligent organisms exist in nature, may it not be that some equivalent to them exists in the cosmic dimension among lava-like torrents of stellar material? A torrent of galactic core energy can be like a mass of slime mold, or the mycelium of a mushroom species, and behave accordingly. Wouldn't it be probable that such an energy-entity or intelligent, facultatively endowed wave-form would behave at infinitely higher, more complex and inclusive levels of

intelligence, design, and intention than we do? And how might such behavior on the cosmic scale interconnect to our behavior in the microcosm?

Absence of proof is not proof of absence. Absence of proof of intelligent, self-aware, and sentient properties in energy currents circulating in the galactic core or ranging freely through interstellar space, does not prove the absence of such properties. The case of cosmic animism is open to investigation and merits close scrutiny. Unfortunately, the power of dogmatic denial often prevents us from even thinking about it with an open, inquiring mind.



Artistic stylization of a wave form using "paisley" motifs from the era of psychedelic art. The rhythmic, fractal patterning suggests dance, play, and animation, known to be traits of the gods in Asian mystical traditions. The snaking effect recalls Aboriginal art motifs that also represent cosmic and telluric energies perceived to be alive, intelligent, and interactive with the beholder. In trance induced by psychoactive plants, similar visions arise and may rapidly permutate into hallucinations. The trained seer who can restrain the hallucinatory display finds that perception deepens, allowing access to the molecular structure of nature and other wonders of the supernatural realms. Which realms are, more often than not, densely inhabited.

### My Additions

I have restored the Sophia Myth from received materials of two kinds: the Gnostic literature in Coptic and Greek and the polemics of the Church Fathers who argued against Gnostic views, also called the Ante-Nicene writings. These two sources provide the actual textual material I have used. For an overview of this material, and access to the sources, consult the [Gnosis Archive](#).

I can tell you up front that I have added precious little to what can be found in those two resources, either in hinted form, in fragments, or broadly outlined. I have so far interjected only two features into the received narrative. First, the location of the Anthropos template *in the galactic nebula M 42*, a cosmic locale visible to the naked eye in the constellation of Orion. No text states that the Pleromic Aeons projected or "seeded" the Anthropos in the Orion Nebula. This is purely my addition. Second, the imagistic reflex of the Aeon Christos in the terrestrial atmosphere, an effect that manifests in the luminous intrapsychic phantom of the Intermediary, the Mesotes. Although the made-up word Mesotes occurs in several places in the NHC and elsewhere, no text states literally that it is an afterimage left by the intercession of the Aeon Christos (episode 8). Rather, it is described as [a persisting aroma](#). The afterimage concept is my addition to the narrative.

You may wonder, What is the basis for these two additions? Answer: my first-hand observations as a disciplined experimental mystic working in cognitive ecstasy with heightened perception. I have encountered the luminous phantom ([Honeycomb Light of the Christos](#)) on

more than one occasion, and I have observed the Orion Nebula countless times. As, I believe, did the ancient seers who produced this amazing planetary myth to describe events that really occurred in our home galaxy, the Milky Way. The vision story they constructed from their mystical practices is not a fantasy or baseless fabrication but a veracious rendering of things they saw and learned over many generations of teamwork in the Mystery cells.

As for the observational powers of those ancient seers who founded and directed the Mysteries, let me say this: the secret to their observing faculty was that *they did not hallucinate* when in a state of heightened perception induced by psychoactive plants or meditative trance techniques. Instead of hallucinating, the telestai used the increased intensity and scope of their faculties to deepen and extend perception — *infinitely* deepen and extend. Likewise did yogis who followed a millennial tradition of mind science in Asia. Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* (probably compiled around 200 BCE) lists eight *siddhis* or occult faculties of an accomplished yogi, including *mahima*, the capacity to see at a distance, all the way out to the galactic dimension.



Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 - 1952)

In *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Paramahansa Yogananda recounted his experience of *samadhi*

(cosmic consciousness) in which he enjoyed mahima, preceiving the structure and movement of galaxies as if he were a witness hovering in the remote reaches of interstellar space. Yet he was standing firmly rooted on the earth, as were the Gnostic seers who called themselves "the standing ones" because they could handle such visionary faculties while remaining fully grounded and present in their physical bodies—not prone and passed out in a state of out-of-body transport. This also is my practice.

## My Amplifications

By amplification, I mean that I build on received textual content. You cannot imagine how I do this without being deeply conversant with the material. From a superficial view, it might look like I am recklessly fabricating things not to be found in the original sources. Not so. Believe it or not, I follow the rule of high rigor in my amplifications. I keep close to the bone of the textually based story content, even close to the marrow of the bone. My critics do not appreciate this procedure, and cannot, as long as they do not delve into the material deeply enough to see what constitutes rigorously delineated amplification, by contrast to loose, sloppy, textually groundless fabrication.

My amplifications can be seen in several features of the expanded rendering of the Sophia Myth, principally in four areas: the projection of the Anthropos template, the generation of the archons, the dynamics of Christic intercession, and the morphing of the Aeon Sophia into a planetary body. In fact, I do not add anything to the textual material on these events, I simply amplify what is in the materials. The amplifications do go beyond what the texts *explicitly state*, but they do not exceed, distort, or violate what the cited texts *mean*. Critics may protest that amplifications of this sort are merely disguised and dishonest fabrications, the texts do not mean what Lash says they mean, etc etc. That's fine, but let's hear this whining from someone who has read the NHLE at least a dozen times. And offer their non-amplified version of what these texts mean in the complex mythological imagery of the Sophia narrative.

The most controversial of my amplifications concerns the archons or preterrestrial species accidentally generated by the impact of Sophia's power-surge. "Preterrestrial" is my interpretation of the derivation of archon from the Greek *archai*, "first, from the beginning." The archons arose before Sophia morphed into the planet earth: hence they are a preterrestrial species. Granted, no text *explicitly states*, word for word, that archons arose before the earth was formed, but the plot-line of the myth clearly indicates this to be so. Prior to morphing into the earth, Sophia impacted the Kenoma, the elementary matter of the galactic limbs, and generated the archon species. Such is the story arc of the sacred narrative. My scenario of the rise of the archons remains closely referenced to the textual content. It is not a loose, fancy-free inference by any means. It is a grounded amplification.

The same holds true for my profile of the two types of archontic entities, the reptilian and the embryonic. The Greek loan word *drakon* occurs in NHC II,4, *The Reality of the Archons*: "in the form of a lion-faced serpent." So much for the reptilians who, oddly, have faces like lions. The wierd Coptic word *houhe*, "aborted fetus," occurs in NHC II, 5, *On the Origin of the World*: "a product in matter, like an aborted fetus," as well as in the Greek-language paraphrase of Gnostic myth in book I, part 4 of *Against Heresies* by Irenaeus. The phrase, "a plastic form molded out of shadow" uses the Coptic word *haibe* for shadow, recalling the "mud shadows"

of Castaneda. This word is also suggestive of the Grey ET—a chiaroscuro entity, as it were. Such are the slim pickings of Gnostic astral cosmology.

In my treatment of the drakonic and neonate types of the archons, I amplify the textual material that you find developed around these three terms which appear perhaps a dozen times in the surviving Coptic writings. You could object that I fabricate a huge case on three piddling words. Wrong, The case is present is not merely based on these words but on the way they are used and how the usage fits contextually into the overall story arc. No text literally states, word for word, that the abortion produced by Sophia's fall into the Kenoma spawned an alien species, as I tell it in restoring the myth. But NHC V, 3. *The First Apocalypse of James* ([A Gnostic Catechism](#)), does explicitly state the equivalent, regarding the archons:

- They are not entirely alien, for they are from the Fallen Sophia (Achamoth), the female divinity who produced them when she brought the human race down from the Source, the realm of the Pre-Existent One. So they are not entirely alien, but they are our kin.

If they are not "entirely alien," may it be allowed to imagine that they are in some sense alien? The implication is clear. Thus, to call the archons an alien species closely akin of humankind is an amplification rigorously tied to the textual sources. And so it goes. I believe that a fair assessment of my treatment of source materials will not reveal the crime of fictitious embellishment. I have no intention to embellish carelessly and defraud or mislead those who take an interest in this myth which, at this moment, is only available in my rendering. To what aim would I put over such a deception? My intent is to make the story accessible on its original and authentic terms. I do not achieve this aim to perfection, but then, given the appalling state of the source materials, who could?

### Patristic Paraphrase

Some parts of the Sophia myth are not preserved in either the Coptic or Greek writings, but only in the paraphrases of Church ideologues such as Irenaeus. The patristic writings belong to the dossier of the prosecution of Gnostic heresy and must be handled with caution, needless to say. The paraphrase of Sophia's fall in Irenaeus draws heavily upon Valentinian sources, which he attempts to refute. In the Valentinian compromise, the Christos plays an equal or superior role to Sophia, by contrast to radical Sethian Gnosticism in which the Aeon Sophia, the fallen goddess, is the sole redemptive agent in the cosmic process involving humankind. Nevertheless, Irenaeus fills in key episodes of the vision story that have not survived in Coptic or Greek writings attributed to various Gnostic sects. For instance, book I, chapter 4 of *Against Heresies*:

The [enthymesis](#) of that Sophia who dwells above, which they also term Achamoth, being removed from the Pleroma, together with her passion, they relate to have, as a matter of course, become violently excited in those places of darkness and vacuity [to which she had been banished]. For she was excluded from light and the Pleroma, and was without form or figure, like an untimely birth, because she had received nothing [from a male parent].

Note the spin: Irenaeus says that "the untimely birth" in the outer chaos occurred because Sophia, a female Aeon, acted without having been inseminated by a male counterpart. In the Sethian version, the untimely birth or cosmic abortion was due to the impact of her galactic core



energy upon the Kenoma, the realm of finite potential. True, a factor of her fall was the rash impulse to act unilaterally and engage in dreaming on her own, without pairing with another Aeon as she did in the configuration of the human genomic template. This is not a violation of cosmic law, however. It is merely a departure from the usual operations of cosmic law. A *Valentinian Exposition* (NHC XI, 2) says, "It is the will of the Originator not to allow anything to happen in the Pleroma apart from a dyad, a dynamic coupling." But the will of the Originator does not constrain the Generators, who always remain free to act without a counterpart.

Another key patristic paraphrase describes how Sophia morphs into the planet earth (Ibid, VI, 2)

This collection [of passions] they declare was the substance of the matter from which this world was formed. For from [her desire of] returning [to him who gave her life], every soul belonging to this world, and that of the Demiurge himself, derived its origin. All other things owed their beginning to her terror and sorrow. For from her tears all that is of a liquid nature was formed; from her smile all that is lucent; and from her grief and perplexity all the corporeal elements of the world. For at one time, as they affirm, she would weep and lament on account of being left alone in the midst of darkness and vacuity; while, at another time, reflecting on the light which had forsaken her, she would be filled with joy, and laugh; then, again, she would be struck with terror; or, at other times, would sink into consternation and bewilderment.

No such graphic description of the *epistrophe* or downscaling of Aeonic energy into a planetary body survives in the NHC or other writings attributed to Gnostics, either in Coptic or Greek. As I noted in *Not in His Image* (ch 14):

This [patristic writings, the case for the prosecution] is a dubious source of information, to say the least. Reading the polemics, we must distinguish genuine elements of Gnostic knowledge from what has been unwittingly misconstrued or, more often, deliberately skewed and misrepresented. Disinformation is rife. Half the time when it comes to Gnostic theology and philosophical argument, we can safely assume that the Fathers did not understand what they were refuting. Yet they would have had to represent some things clearly and accurately, if only to make their refutations more effective. With mythographic or visionary content such as we are seeing in these episodes, it would have suited the purposes of the patristic adversaries to present the material more or less accurately, so that its absurd and grotesque nature (to their minds) would be self-evident.

We may, then, expect to find the patristic writings rather more helpful in relating the mythos than in representing intellectual notions held by the Gnostics.

### Astronomical Myth

Finally, let's note another amplification of mine. This one comes in the form of a correlation: I make out Pleroma, the infinite plenitude, to be the core of our home galaxy, and Kenoma, or outer shadowy chaos or finite plenitude, to be the region of the spiral arms circulating around the core. In short, I transpose the astro-theological imagery into astronomical terms. What is my justification here?

A great deal of world-wide mythology encodes astronomical information: sidereal or stellar myth, as it is called. For instance, the myth of the Sampo or heavenly mill in the Icelandic national epic, *Kalevala*, encodes the precession of the equinoxes. Astronomical myth is widespread and has been vastly inventoried and analyzed. Gnostic mythology is no exception, and why should it be? In fact, ancient sources including the *Antiquities* of the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius assert that Sethian Gnostics were the earliest star-gazers and astronomers who mastered the science of the heavens before other peoples did. It is not at all improbable that seers in the Mysteries recognized the Pleroma to be the radiant nucleus of our home galaxy. Nevertheless, critics scream in protest against this correlation, claiming that "Pleroma" is a purely metaphysical term, or a metaphor that cannot be equated with celestial phenomena in space and time.

Against this objection I would point out that anyone who knows what they're talking about in metaphysics, knows that both/and is the operative syntax in that venerable genre: meta-phor and meta-physics are isomorphs. Translation of the Lashian spin here: the Gnostic Pleroma can be specifically the galactic core AND at the same time it can be a non-local metaphysical zone. It can be a place in your mind or a place in the physical cosmos where your mind arises, physically present to your body. Both, at once.

"What is here is there, what is not here is nowhere." *Visvasara Tantra*.

Having done my homework, I do not put much time, if any, into countering such arguments. I stay aloof of fisticuffs in the blogosphere, preferring to discuss with my cats, Rumi and Nikita, the baffling matter of why sheep have long tails.