

Re-Enchant Your World!



Preface of 1997 edition of “Secret Societies and Psychological Warfare” by Michael A. Hoffman II

There is a joke operating behind the scene-flats of history. It has as its running gag the ambition to perfect mankind and create a utopian society. In 4,000 years of such hucksterage it has not dawned on the particular activists that every attempt to perfect humanity brings only calamity.

The path to hell on earth is trod by the road to utopia. This trail leads not simply to Jacobin Paris or Bolshevik Moscow, but to the laboratories of the scientists practicing genetic manipulation and seeking a "cure" for the AIDS virus right here in modern America. How I marvel at the viral chess match, observing the AIDS virus, with the very cunning of nature, deceive and checkmate every move of the brilliant scientists charged with decoding the cryptogram at the heart of pestilence. Alas, if these demented doctors should succeed in their ambition to overcome AIDS, then the next immune deficiency microbe that careens down the corridor of iatrogenic catastrophe, will do more than rot the colons of satyrs. It will constitute the plague-most-potent; the annihilator of humanity.

By the same token, childhood immunizations, which eliminate the diseases of infancy, bear within them the scourge of the elderly, who pay at the other end of the chronological scale, with Alzheimers and multiple sclerosis, for the prophylactic pills and injections they submitted to as children. In other words, there is no escape, not even by means of great god Science.

What separates the traditional people of the past from the modern variety, is their attitude toward human nature. Modern ideologues decree that the trouble with society derives from the traditional view of man as a fallen creature; hopelessly defective. The modernists resolve to improve the world by exalting man and announcing his essential goodness. The Old Christian Way taught that until man faced the fact of his evil nature, he would forever be a prisoner of illusion and of those magicians who would enslave his energies--

ostensibly in pursuit of utopia--but actually to the furtherance of the inner executive power ideology of the secret elite.

This is the quotidian occult current, the initiate's hubris that the elite have a license to betray the utopian principles and high-minded laws they advocate for the masses, because their "inner eye of insight" or their "direct illumination," licenses them to do so.

The Sufi executive coined the most humorous, yet also the most apt description of this disguise process of occult adepts, who absolve themselves of their own public rhetoric and preachments: "permissible dissimulation" (taqiyya), performed in the "black light" (nur-e siyah).'

There are old wives' tales about a counter-force on this planet that foils progress; a force that cannot be commanded by ritual magic; that is profoundly wild, intractable, rural and mischievous. The old people alleged that this prankster pedagogue taught the wisdom of things-as-they-are-which-are-not-as-they-seem; a caveat to those who would sell their immortal souls to the 'insubstantial pageant' for knowledge that turns to sorrow (Ecclesiastes 1:18).

This force manifests hostility toward industry and empire and the detritus of the machine age. It casts a vote of no confidence in man. It cries "Nevermore" to each chapter of human achievement. It is the guardian, set at the east of Eden, to forever bar us entrance. Far from being a morbid presence, it revels in childish tricks. It observes, with unconcealed glee, the present decay of the Masonic Imperium and asks of us whether, amid the ruins, we intend to turn off the electricity and restore the forest glens, or enslave ourselves again to some new Builder's conceit.

With the onset of the machine technology known by the interesting sobriquet, "Virtual Reality," the immersion of mankind into the counterfeit, computer-generated cryptosphere, intensifies, and the march of induced hallucination, digital money, junk from Wal-Mart and miracles by priests in lab coats, accelerates, commensurate with the spiritual and mental deaths of the animated corpses of the masses of

the walking dead of America.

Millions of men and women who, just thirty-two years ago, even with all their flaws, were at least family and community-oriented human beings, possessed of some sense of place, some vestige of esteem for their heritage and a semblance of commonsense, are now alchemically transformed into beasts, who care for nothing but money and television, as pliable and easy to manipulate in the hands of what James Shelby Downard calls the "huckster witches" of media and government, as cattle at a slaughter house.

Whereas, according to the mythology, the elves once tricked us with fake gold that turned to leaves, we now trick ourselves into taking the true, green gold of the Ecuadorian rain forest and turn it into the black slime of the Conoco Oil Corporation.

In the name of better living through machinery, dead matter reigns. For the cause of making every day Shrove Tuesday, we do more than ever ritually proffer our heads to the perpetual Lent of automated artifice.

As we compound falsification in the name of escaping it, we are only doing what comes naturally to us, as the heirs of Adam and Eve, except that, whereas in the past the illusion was attired in the incomparably resplendent beauty of antique fairy mystification, it now heralds the end of the revel through the banal mask of Microsoft plastic.

Excerpt from “Spiritual Destinations of an Anarchist” by Peter Lamborn Wilson

From Hermeticism, however, science inherited nothing except a few odd and accidental discoveries in chemistry, but no basic ideas, no major tropes. This is at least according to science's own official history of itself. Of course this legend is simply not true. Newton smuggled one central Hermetic concept into his system, that of "action at a distance," to explain gravity. He even used the Hermetic/erotic term for it: "attraction." But Newton never published his secret alchemical treatises, and for political reasons he disguised his debt to Hermetic science, thus perpetuating the decisive betrayal so incisively condemned by William Blake.

Blake was the last serious Hermetic radical. Newton and his allies opted for real power-the Royal Society - and turned their backs on the embarrassing enthusiasts and cabalistic conspirators of the Hermetic left. In doing so, they succeeded in swiping the Hermetic concept of attraction while utterly rejecting the Hermetic idea that had always seemed to accompany and even explain the mystery of action at a distance - the idea of the animate world.

According to Hermetic philosophy or Natural Magic, the world is alive, and thus, like any living individual, can be said to have spiritual faculties such as intellect and imagination. Imagination is not simply the impotent fantasy of an ego locked inside a skull and able to influence the world only as a ghost in the machine; the Hermetic imagination is a force capable of acting at a distance through the subtle will-substance of attraction focused through images. This can be done because everything is alive and to some degree conscious. The world carries out this attraction (life attracts life) , and the individual consciousness can accomplish the same thing (on a necessarily microcosmic level) through the practice of Natural Magic. Newton's brilliant move was to accept the idea of action at a distance (gravity's "attraction") while denying that it could be considered in any way conscious or animate, or that it could possess a prolongation in the world as topocosm or in human consciousness as microcosm. Attraction was in fact "mechanical," even if it did not depend (as the Cartesians argued) on corpuscular activity in the aether.

The world was indeed a clock, even if some of the springs were invisible or purely mathematical. (No wonder some of the Cartesians accused Newton of thinking like a wizard!)

Hermeticists on the Living Earth

"Chaos was first made, and in that all the elements at one and the same instant; for the world was manifested and brought out of the Chaos like a chick out of an egg."

To this Apollonius replied like a pure sophister:

"And must I then think"-saith he-"that the world is a living creature?"

Saith J arcas: "Yes, verily, if you reason rightly; for it giveth life to all things."

"Shall we then"-saith Tyaneus-"call it a male or a female creature?"

"Both,"--saith the wise Brahmin Uarcas - for the world, being a compound of both faculties, supplies the office of father and mother in the generation of those things that have life."

-Thomas Vaughan

(Eugenius Philalethes) ,

The Fraternity of the Rosy Cross

Hair of the Dog

When our spirit has been carefully prepared and purged by natural things it is able to receive many gifts through the stellar rays, from the spirit of cosmic life. Cosmic life is visibly propagated in grasses and trees, which are like the hair of the body of earth; it is also revealed in stones and metals, which are like the teeth and bones of this body; it circulates in the living shells of the earth, which adhere to stones. By making frequent use of plants and other living beings it is possible to gain a great deal from the spirit of the world.

-Anonymous Hermeticist

If the world is a tree, then we are the blossoms. - Novalis

Symbiogenetic Desire: An Egoist Conception of Ecology by Bellamy Fitzpatrick

An Unfortunate Silence

Egoist anarchism has regularly had criticism leveled against it for its relative silence on issues of ecology. This criticism is well-placed: other than a few references to how non-human animals are exemplars of egoism due to their seemingly unalienated relationship with their desires^[1], egoist literature is sorely lacking in this regard. This lamentable absence likely has to do with the proclivities of its authorship more than anything else, as an egoist analysis is readily applicable to ecology.

The identity eliminativism – the denial of oneself as having an essential self, a perspective that will be defined and developed further in this piece – implied by egoism is the basis of this ecological worldview, as one’s sense of self expands to subsume and be subsumed by one’s habitat and symbiotes. Through such an analysis, one steers clear of the twin alienations of, on the one hand, the tiny self, that is, the self as an independent, enclosed, free-willed subject who remains relatively stable through space and time and who interacts with a world of objects; and, on the other hand, the reification of the nonhuman world, that is, the construal of nonhuman organisms as a more or less unified whole that acts collectively for the Good and into which one can dissolve oneself or to which one can swear allegiance. Eschewing both of these alienations, one finds oneself able to experience a symbiogenetic desire that unites a love of oneself with a love of one’s ecosystem.

The Expansive Self: Identity Eliminativism

An egoist conception of ecology begins with the notion of the expansive self. The expansive self regards the inner world, our thoughts and emotions, and the outer world, our phenomenality or sensory experience, as inseparable, as each reciprocally informs and defines the other. Insofar as identity can be said to exist, it is our perceptual totality, shifting from moment to moment. When we walk through the world, all that we touch and perceive is an extension of

ourselves; conversely, there is no I that exists separately from our phenomenal experience. Thus, the self subsumes and is subsumed by the world, annihilating this subject/object dichotomy that alienates us from other beings and places.

If our language sounds strange here, it is because we are trying to talk about the ineffable. Perception is the basis of existence, but it is also profoundly difficult to describe with words: the qualitative always eludes the symbolic; however circumspect and technical or poetic and pithy the phrase, it can never completely capture the real of our experience. The phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty, while not an anarchist egoist (actually, for at least part of his life, a Marxist! gasp), nonetheless beautifully described how perception is neither subjective nor objective but a gestalt from which the two are artificially rendered:

“The visible about us seems to rest in itself. It is as though our vision were formed in the heart of the visible, or as though there were between it and us an intimacy as close as between the sea and the strand [...] What there is then are not things first identical with themselves, which would then offer themselves to the seer, nor is there a seer who is first empty and who, afterward, would open himself to them – but something to which we could not be closer than by palpating it with our look, things we could not dream of seeing ‘all naked’ because the gaze itself envelops them, clothes them with its own flesh.”[\[2\]](#)

What is traditionally called the object of perception, then, is as much a part of ourselves as what is traditionally called the subject of perception – we are so accustomed to think only of the latter as being truly ourselves. With the dissolution of transitivity of identity, the importance of perception to identity becomes clearer still. David Hume is instructive on the point of identity eliminativism, when he observes that there is no essential substrate, no fixed and quintessential I, that exists behind his phenomenality or the thoughts and feelings he has about it; instead, his sensory experience and his reflections of that experience are the whole of his being. We are not merely a body, which is only part of our perception, but instead everything we perceive, everything with which we interact. And among that with which we interact are of course other beings, meaning that our

consciousnesses are inextricably intertwined.

We are therefore experiencing at all times the ultimately ineffable phenomenon of nigh-infinitely many mutually co-created consciousnesses. When we encounter one another, human or nonhuman, being or place, each becomes forever a part of the other - whatever beauty, strangeness, or upset that encounter might bring, we know, as those feelings pass from immediate intensity yet leave us permanently changed, that we have only encountered a new and stimulating aspect of ourselves with which we were previously unfamiliar.

The Tiny Selves: The Reification of Identity

To highlight my meaning with a foil, opposite to the expansive self are various conceptions of what Jason McQuinn has taken to calling “the tiny self”^[3] - the self as mere body, the self as the free-willed bourgeois economic agent, the self as social role or identity, and so forth. Each of these is a reified self, an idea of who and what we are that comes from giving undue weight to one aspect of ourselves, to hypostatizing one part of our experience and imagining that it is all that we are.

The expansive self is diametrically opposed to these conceptions of self that characterize the dominant culture: the Cartesian self that sees its distinctiveness as self-evident or the bourgeois self that imagines a separable entity that is self-willed and therefore morally entitled to and responsible for its economic success.

To take just one case here, as I have discussed this issue at greater length^[4] elsewhere, Descartes’ cogito ergo sum (“I think; therefore, I am”) contains, like every ideology of domination, a subtle presupposition: “I”. Stirner rejects out of hand the Cartesian split by describing himself as “creator and creature [Schöpfer und Geschöpf] in one.”^[5] - he does not presuppose himself as a separate entity of his phenomenal perception but instead recognizes that subjectivity and objectivity are simply synthetic conceptual frameworks, sometimes useful instrumental constructions that have no existence beyond our moment-to-moment imagination of them. Nietzsche similarly repudiated this atomized self as a linguistic fiction, a mode of thinking imposed on us by the subject-verb-object structure of our

language.[6]

Nature: The Platonic Residue

Yet the expansive self is also the very antithesis of any conception of Mother Nature, Gaia perspective[7], or other reification of the nonhuman — it is not advancing the notion that there is some transcendental whole we could call Life that we might dissolve ourselves into or act on the behalf of for the Greater Good. While there is certainly a great deal to draw from the observation that organisms often are deeply enmeshed symbiotically, that the niches in ecosystems are often mutually reinforcing; these phenomena are counterposed by the fact that, at times, organisms also demonstrably act inimically to the stability of the biosphere: take cyanobacteria, photosynthetic microorganisms whose evolution might have annihilated most life on Earth 2.3 billion years ago by filling the atmosphere with oxygen that was toxic to the anaerobic majority of life. Considering contradictions like this one, what can it mean to act in accordance with the biosphere?

Even were this not the case, the identification of a Gaia or Life would be yet another case of self-alienation – we do not experience a biotic/abiotic totality except in cases of adventurous imagining; and, to whatever extent there is one, we are surely as much a part of it as anything else, meaning our desires are its desires. It thus cannot grant to us any metric of value. Unfortunately, a pernicious desire to recapitulate this reification of the nonhuman, for "life [to be] about something bigger than ourselves", [8] persists in anti-civilization theory today.

The Platonic urge is strong: insofar as we put our weight in recent archaeological findings [9], the very beginnings of Civilization may be characterized by believing in things “bigger than ourselves”, things greater than actual and particular beings or events, things vast and eternal. Whether it can be said to be an essential human characteristic is unclear, but it is certainly an urge of present human beings to reify aspects of their lives, perhaps due to a relationship with enslavement [10] or depression [11]. Though some seem to think an ecological perspective entails reifying something great and beautiful and leaping into it with outstretched arms; an alternative lies in

persistently refusing reification, rather than simply choosing which is ostensibly the right one.

Symbiogenetic Desire

Biologists, most famously Lynn Margulis[\[12\]](#), employ the beautiful term symbiogenesis (etymologically meaning something like origin of life together) to describe the phenomenon in which two or more ostensibly distinct organisms become so closely intertwined in their lifeways that they more or less merge into one creature.

By way of example, certain termites are able to digest wood through having their guts inhabited by protist (complex single-celled organisms) symbiotes who, in turn, are inhabited by bacterial symbiotes; up to one-third of a termite's weight can consist of these creatures, each of which is dependent on the others for survival. Other species of termites have their massive nests inhabited by a fungus that acts as a kind of external stomach for the insects, enabling enhanced digestion. The fungus occupies a larger volume of the nest and possesses a greater metabolism than the termites themselves, and it possibly influences the behavior of the insects through chemical signaling not unlike the kind that happens among differing organs of the same body.

In the same vein, an immensely distant ancestor of our cells may have been formed similarly, through smaller and simpler cells fusing into larger and more complex ones. Margulis' Symbiogenetic Hypothesis posits that at least some eukaryotic cells - the complex cells that, in this case, make up plants and animals - came about through larger cells engulfing smaller cells, the latter becoming organelles of the former.

A parallel, then, can be drawn between this biological understanding of inseparability and emergence in the organic and the gestalt sense of identity - or, perhaps better, lack of identity - described above. Recognition that each of us is constituted by every other being we encounter entails a perspective of intimacy, a desire to live as deeply and vivaciously as possible. As an ecological perspective, then, reveals itself as one that treats all organisms, humans and nonhuman, as potential symbiotes, cocreators with whom we can have various relationships.

Just as one might have a close and intimate, a friendly, a cordial, a neutral, an antagonistic, or a hostile relationship with a human, one might have any of those relationships with a non-human. One might therefore strive toward unions of egoists among the organisms in one's habitat, maximizing mutualistic interactions and minimizing antagonistic ones through Stirner's understanding of infinitely revisable collaborations among beings who combine their powers toward the pursuit of cooperatively achieved, but individually recognized, values. Even non-animals, surely, experience something, possess a phenomenality, and have some notion of value, one we can often infer through interspecies communication; though surely their experience of value is unspeakable and ultimately incomprehensible to us. Through such unions, we become symbiotes of one another; our sense of self expands to encompass the bodies, lives, and values of others through symbiogenetic desire.

Practically, an interspecies union of egoists would surely entail the abandonment of agriculture, a thoroughly stultifying practice that homogenizes experience and squelches the diversity of mutually co-created consciousnesses. Subsistence through some combination, varying with bioregion, of foraging and horticulture/permaculture would mean not only a richer and more diverse habitat; but also would entail an intimate relationship with it through regular interaction. In this way, we truly inhabit our ecosystem, enriching ourselves as well as our symbiotes from whom we are inseparable. Similarly, the abolition and destruction of the homogenizing and toxifying institutions and infrastructure characterizing civilization follow from such a perspective, as they could only limit and stultify ourselves and our connections.

Anti-Civilization Egoism

The gaze of the rapacious capitalist objectifies the biosphere, treating it as an object to be plundered by whoever has the tenacity and guile to best exploit it. The paleoconservative or libertarian gaze romanticizes it, regarding it as the wide-open terrain of rugged individualism on which one might live off the fat of the land. The liberal or conservationist gaze spectacularizes it, transforms it into a thing that should be cherished and preserved for its beauty. Again, all of

these perspectives are iterations of alienation predicated on reifying the subject/object dichotomy; they merely dress it in different skins. As M. Kat Anderson writes, “These seemingly contradictory attitudes—to idealize nature or commodify it—are really two sides of the same coin, what the restoration ecologist William J. Jordan terms the ‘coin of alienation’ [...] Both positions treat nature as an abstraction—separate from humans and not understood, not real.”[\[13\]](#)

But the egoist perspective dissolves this alienation. It refuses the notion that our selves are limited to this little bag of skin; it insists that we extend our bodies to encompass our perceptual horizons. I am every person I have met, however fleetingly; every river I have swum in lovingly or passed by, barely noticing; every mountain I have climbed or merely glanced upon while driving; every intoxicant I have consumed; every advertisement to which I have been subjected. The habitat in which we choose to live thus becomes not merely a logistical-economical choice, but instead one of whom we fundamentally want to be.

The anti-civilization insurgency thus takes on an irredeemably personal character. We do not resist civilization because it is “innately wrong”[\[14\]](#) or because it is “the domination of nature”[\[15\]](#), we resist it because it is an absolute assault on ourselves. There is no need to mediate such a desire through an unfounded claim about transcendental goods and evils or a conceptualization of the nonhuman; it is one immediately felt.

The flattening of living ground into dead, uniform parking plots is the flattening of our affect. The mediation of our lives through representations is a stifling of creativity and dreams. The denuding and toxification of the biosphere is the restriction of our lives and the narrowing of possibilities. Our sorrow and rage is not directed at some essential metaphysical Other that attacks Nature; it is directed at an immediate mutilation of our experience, of ourselves.

[1] Stirner writes, for instance, when imagining a conversation with people who feel they need absolute values to guide them lest they merely follow their instincts and passions and thus “do the most senseless thing possible. – Thus each deems himself the – devil; for, if, so far as he is unconcerned about religion, he only deemed himself a beast, he would easily find that the beast, which does follow only its impulse (as it were, its advice), does not advise and impel itself to do the ‘most senseless’ things, but takes very correct steps.” Stirner, Max. *The Unique and its Property*, trans. Wolfi Landstreicher, Berkley: Little Black Cart 2017.

[2] Merlau-Ponty, Maurice. “The Visible and the Invisible: The Intertwining—The Chiasm”.

[3] “Interview with Jason McQuinn on Critical Self-Theory”, Free Radical Radio, 02/27/2015.

[4] See my “In Defense of the Creative Nothing” at bellamy.anarchyplanet.org

[5] *The Unique and its Property*

[6] Nietzsche, Friedrich. “On the Prejudices of Philosophers”, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

[7] Note that by Gaia Perspective, I do not mean to refer to the Gaia Hypothesis advanced by James Lovelock

[8] Hayes, Cliff. “Slaves to Our Own Creations”, *Black And Green Review*, vol. 1.

[9] Consider the recent claims by archaeologist Klaus Schmidt – leader of the excavation of Göbekli Tepe, the earliest known human monument – that a human turn toward religion was the beginning of Civilization as its construction precipitated, perhaps necessitated, the domestication of plants and animals in order to furnish the sedentary lifestyle dictated by the construction, maintenance, and worship of the monuments. The monuments themselves display symbols that might be interpreted as the human domination of the nonhuman (humans holding, perhaps controlling, various animals that might be considered dangerous) and the triumph of patriarchy (phallogentrism).

[10] Rosset, Clément. “The Cruelty Principle”. *Joyful Cruelty*.

[11] Real, Terrence. *I Don’t Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the*

Secret Legacy of Male Depression.

[12] A number of biologists dating back to the early 1900s have discussed variants of this theory. Margulis put forth the modern version, still controversial but widely accepted, arguing that animal and plant cells first formed through the unification of simpler cells. She has since argued, more controversially, that symbiogenesis ought to be considered a major factor of evolution, influential on a par with selection by competition.

[13] Anderson, M. Kat. *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*.

[14] Tucker, Kevin, *Black And Green Forum*.

[15] Zerzan, John, "Patriarchy, Civilization, And The Origins Of Gender".

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