PHARMAKEIA IN THE

MYSTICAL BODY

A Study in Saint Paul’s Anthropology, Jungian Psychoanalysis, Gnostic Pluralisms & Altered States of Consciousness

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I. The Polemics of ‘Magic’ in Christianity

In the historical sciences, there exist several competing theories of ‘magic’ and its meaning. These positions frequently, though often unavoidably, espouse anachronist descriptions of the word, due to the fact that its semantic excavation is ongoing. Initially, the school known as ‘intellectualists’ defined magic as a primitive error of man mistaking analogy for real relation. In this view, magic and religion were separate in their essence and origin. J.G. Frazer amended this theory into his famous three-phase evolution of human idealism: magic > religion > science. ‘Functionalists,’ opponents of the intellectualists, defined magic as ‘non-social religion’, that is, ritual behaviors unassociated with any organized cult. A third school, ‘participationists’, argued that there existed in every culture a stream of logic called ‘participation causality’, ‘where causes and effects could be seen as associated to the point of identity and consubstantiality, without assuming the presence of intermediary links.’ This concept is closely linked to the ‘New Age’ penchant of synchronicity as discussed below. While the categories of ‘science’ and ‘religion’ grew more and more narrow throughout the Middle Ages up to the modern period, the class of practices called ‘magic’ grew increasingly vague, including activities classified as ‘occult’, ‘superstition’, ‘mysticism’, ‘esotericism’, ‘irrational’, ‘primitive’, ‘fetish’, ‘idolatry’, and others. The category of ‘occult science’ or magia naturalis arose in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and was based on discovering hidden, but rationally mappable, forces in nature. Despite its rational basis, occult science came under intense scrutiny in the seventeenth century from both Protestant and Catholic authorities who were hypersensitized to respective unorthodoxy within any discipline. In the West, a heightened fear of the demonic and subsequent witchcraft persecutions made for a particular enmity with occult experiments, exemplified in the now over-publicized crimes of early modern religious xenophobes.

“Academic theories of magic [since the 20th century] have continued to make a sharp distinction between religion and magic, in spite of the fact that this distinction properly belongs to the domain of theological polemics internal to Christianity, and cannot claim any scholarly foundation” in so far as ‘scholarly’ is synonymous with strict empiricism. Post-colonial intellectuals have, however, became more aware of the Eurocentricism of previous theories and loosened the Western Christian stranglehold

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2 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, 717.
3 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, 717.
4 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, 717.
5 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, 718.
on what may be called ‘true religion’, admitting that some traditions of ‘magic’ were legitimate forms of what is generally meant by the word ‘religion’. Although perpetuated in Christian rhetoric, such as that against the ‘Gnostics’ and ‘pagans’, the stereotyping of heterodox religions as ‘witchcraft’ or ‘sorcery’ began at least as early as ancient Greece. The origins of ‘magic’, and magia related words, can be traced back into written history at least 2500 years.\(^6\)

Pliny recalled that ‘magic’ grew out of ancient medicine; out of primeval attempts to manipulate nature for healing purposes. There was, in early civilization, a plethora of positive associations for magia and its relatives; they were not always merely terms for the religious ‘other’. Magia “was used as a self-referential term by Graeco-Egyptian ritual specialists, which led to an identification with the concept and, what is more, to a positive evaluation of their (inevitably construed) religious identities.”\(^7\) Although positive, inclusive, and self-referential uses of the magia terms are still a minority in extant manuscripts, this evidence should temper the modern tendency to deconstruct these words altogether into a contentless polemic.\(^8\) Nevertheless, a systematic definition of magic across Hellenistic, Roman, Jewish, and Christian sources remains philologically inaccessible. An important record for this study is Plato’s Nomoi where he describes pharmakeia (used by Paul in Galatians 5:20) as a means of bribing the gods through ritual offerings: “he implicitly attacks the well-established sacrificial cult in classical Greece, thereby proposing the moralistic-philosophical ideal of a helping, yet not bribable, god.”\(^9\) Another famous Greek, Plotinus, took a more syncretic approach and tried to fuse magic rituals with his idea of a divine universe, thus allowing the cosmos to be seduced through the decoding of its sympathies with earthly objects.\(^10\) At the end of the classical period, “Augustine classified magia as a pactum daemonum (a deal with the devil), implementing the idea of a single, powerful opponent of God reigning over a regiment of daemones (demons, being for Augustine, in contrast to Plato or Apuleius, intrinsically evil) who try to seduce and enslave humans.”\(^11\)

Some forms of magic were directly associated with a priestly class of persons thought to possess a special ability to communicate with the gods. Specific ritual actions combined with the power of the priest-magician’s words to control spirits had the obvious potential to create a chasm between this shaman-priest class and those without such powers. Plato condemned the practice of controlling spirits as

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\(^7\) “Towards Historicizing ‘Magic’ in Antiquity,” 315.


detrimental to society because the authority garnered by its exercise was rooted in the fear of said spirits. “This demonological understanding of magic is the general view of later antiquity as found e.g. both in the *Magical Papyri* and the actual ritual spells, and it is, in a semiotic theory of speech, the basis for Augustine’s refusal of magic: since the meaning of words is arbitrary and results from an agreement between the speaking parties, magic loses its power when the Christians cancel this agreement between themselves and the demons and thus make language unintelligible to them.” Christians did this through their adoption of the *Logos* as the source for communicating in a privileged way to the spiritual realm, specifically to God the Father as ‘sons in the Son’ (i.e. through the authority of Jesus Christ). Christ’s primacy over all spirits was a central claim of the Gospel message.

One of the essential writings of the late Hellenistic and Roman religions were the Hermetic texts. “Having purported origins in particular revelations by Hermes Trismegistus, Asclepius, and other pagan gods of Greco-Egyptian background, ‘Hermetic’ medical revelations assume multiple aspects that attempt to reconcile contrary concepts of medicine and pharmacy, employing the device of an ‘archetypal’ beginning.” Hermetic methods of medicine and pharmacology were precisely defined in an astrological-pharmaceutical text by Thessalus, called *Powers of Herbs*. Dated to the period between the emperors Claudius and Nero (41-68 A.D.), the *Powers of Herbs* contained a treatise on twelve medicinal plants and their relationship to the twelve signs of the zodiac, along with an exposition of seven planets connected synchronistically with seven particular plants. Ancient texts indicate a wealth of writings discoursing on the relationship between plants, herbs, planets, and the signs of the zodiac. Such works demonstrate a strong association between medicine and astrology that would persist from ancient times through the neo-Platonic Renaissance, affecting the prognoses and diagnoses of many physicians and scientists through the centuries. As will be further discussed below, a pseudo-sacramental belief about drugs, being a mix of both human and divine elements, began not with heterodox Christianities but in the theologies of ancient Greece.

Plato’s religious anti-instrumentalism, in regard to religion, paralleled closely with the Jewish teachings on magic and divination. *The Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch* defines magic, in a nuanced Jewish context, as attempting to use supernatural powers to control or influence people, events, or other supernatural beings. Contrarily, *Biblically approved ritual practices maintain the necessity of*

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12 *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*, 720.
14 *Magika Hiera*, 155.
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divine initiative and divine prerogative. Although modern Christian scholars still lean toward a highly negative interpretation of magic – i.e. “there are no extant examples of people using magic to accomplish the will of a deity”16 – this position is in part challenged by the well-documented use of magic (especially pharmaka as distinct from pharmakeia) in therapeutic and healing rituals that are in some cases indistinguishable from modern holistic and/or conventional medicine. Nonetheless, the instances of appropriating magic as a means of wish fulfillment, or for love potions, protective amulets, angelic summoning, and demonic curses are much more prevalent than the medicinal examples. The author only wishes to consistently highlight the subtly of the difference between ‘miracles’ or ‘true prophecy’ in subordination to God and ‘magic’ or ‘false prophecy’ intended to manipulate God/gods. Superficial methods in both forms of prophecy or ‘divination’ may have been very similar, in which case the hidden intentions and objects of its practitioners would be the only measures of permissibility as moral acts (cf. CCC 1749-61, “The Morality of Human Acts”).

In Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity, Hans-Josef Klauck recounted the often striking similarities between the ‘miracles’ of the apostles and the ‘miracles’ of various pagan and Jewish ‘magicians’ as recorded in the book of Acts.17 Klauck asserts that the classical period recognized ‘black’ and ‘white’ forms of magic, so that the word might be used in a polemical sense by mainstream religions but also in an inclusive sense by groups seeking to set themselves apart, as Otto has shown. For example, ‘magician’ could be a positive judgment if applied to a pharaoh or emperor by their subjects. Similarly, Jesus was certainly viewed as a ‘magician’ figure by many of his ancient contemporaries.18 Competition between magicians of different allegiances is a theme that one sees with Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Peter, Paul, and other Biblical celebrities without clear distinctions between the morphological consequences of the respective sides. This ambiguity of the term is persistent throughout Acts as well.

In the miracle of tongues and the subsequent re-proclamation of Joel 2:28-32 in Acts Chapter 2 there is a strong emphasis on the fluidity of signs and prophecies across traditional socio-cultural borders. Of course, for the Christians, this power is clearly anchored in the descent of the Holy Spirit and ordered to ‘calling on the name of Lord’:19

And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.

16 Dictionary of Paul and his Letters, 581.
19 Magic and paganism, Kindle Edition, Location 205.
Even upon the menservants and maidservants
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be
turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And it shall
come to pass that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord
calls.

“But there was a man named Simon who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed
the nation of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. They all gave heed to him, from the
least to the greatest, saying, ‘This man is that power of God which is called Great’. And they gave heed to
him, because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic” (Acts 8:9-11). Simon Magus became
an important figure in Christian antiquity due to these verses from the evangelist Luke. A certain
‘Gnostic’ sect appealed to Simon Magus as their founder, leading to a tradition that Simon is the father of
all ‘Gnostics’:

First, there is Simon from Samaria… He pretended to be a believer, since he thought the apostles performed
their healings by means of magic, rather than by the power of God… He was venerated by many people like a
god. He taught that it was he who had appeared to the Jews as the Son, had descended in Samaria as the Father,
and had come to the other peoples as the Holy Spirit… [His disciples] too possess a name: after the inventor of
their despicable teaching, they call themselves Simonians. It is with them that the so-called gnosis began…

Irenaeus’ assessment is a bit too neat for most historians, since ‘Gnosticism’ itself is an
anachronistic category, and the Simoneons could have been making a false appeal to Scriptural authority
in their adoption of the Biblical founder, Simon from Samaria. Nevertheless, Simon remains paradigmatic
of the ‘sorcerer’ mentality, as his attraction to the kerygma of Philip, Peter, and John appears to have been
based on a greed for power: he attempted to buy the Holy Spirit with his riches, giving birth to the bitter
an instance of evangelical mimesis, or mirrored (not identical) images of supernatural power, evil and
good respectively. “The people ‘all gave heed’ to the words of Philip (v.6), but previously they had
already ‘given heed’ to Simon and his deeds (vv.8f.). Simon is described as the ‘great power’ (v.10),
while we are told of Philip’s ‘great deeds of power’ (v.13): these miraculous signs form the contrast to
Simon’s magic.”

This rhetorical strategy seems to reveal that sometimes the only discernable difference
between miracles of God and the works of sorcery are whether it is credited to Jesus or credited to
oneself. This theme emerges strongly from Simon’s subsequent dialogue with Peter: “But Peter said to
him, ‘Your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You

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21 *Magic and paganism*, Location 304.
have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity’. And Simon answered, ‘Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me’.” (Acts 8:20-24). The non-canonical Acts of Peter continues this narrative, portraying a finally unrepentant Simon in a battle of miracles with the apostle Peter, ending in Simon’s humiliating defeat and death.

Another instance of this dichotomy appears in Acts 13:6-12, where the magician Bar-Jesus/Elymas, a member of the proconsul’s entourage, attempts to dissuade the proconsul from hearing the Gospel. Paul is annoyed by this ‘son of the devil’ ‘making crooked the straight paths of the Lord’ and invokes the hand of God against him. The scene is remarkably potent given the similarities with Paul’s own metanoia and calling by the Lord. Paul almost seems to be rebuking his former self in his disciplining of Elymas. In the Acts narrative, Paul and his former self Saul, like Paul and Bar-Jesus, can be viewed as the respective true and false Jewish prophets, or even as true and false magicians. ²² As Klauck made clear, these imitators of Jesus were no equals to the risen Christ. “In Luke’s eyes the greatest obstacle to the spread of the Christian message is an all-devouring syncretism which at its worst even usurps Christian substance such as the name of Jesus, and hence threatens the church from within.”²³ As the story of Simon Magus illustrates, there is a particular danger of relapsing into prior idolatries for a convert who does not break his habits on the Logos of cosmic symbols. Even if idolatrous practices are properly sublimated to Christianity in the beginning, the neophyte may retain a slippery concupiscence toward old hermeneutics, very much like the psychological pathology of a recovering addict, or the ‘trigger’ stimuli of a PTSD patient. Ultimately, the Christian system of signs does not rely on superior miraculous powers, but on the privileged relationship with God that it produces. If the Mystical Body of Christ rules all cosmic bodies, all earthly bodies, all social bodies, and all personal bodies under its spousal kingship, the Holy Spirit is compelled to correct any transgressions of that intimacy. ‘If you love Him only then will you know Him. And once you know Him, you will to listen to His Word and celebrate His Flesh. As He changes you, so you change the universe’.

Paul’s missionary journey to Lystra was Paul’s first encounter with ‘pure’ paganism, undiluted by either Judaism or Greek philosophy. It is no surprise that there a ‘priest of Zeus’ attempted to offer public sacrifice to the apostles after they had performed a miracle of healing (cf. Acts 14:8-11). In this response, one recognizes both a culture of sensationalism and an innocent mistake. Without questioning Paul’s evangelizing methods, it seems worth acknowledging the theoretical pedagogical misstep of this pericope.

²² Magic and paganism, Location 879.  
²³ Magic and paganism, Location 860.
A people who only celebrate the transcendent through extravagance will need first to learn the extravagance of humility, just as the Christian God’s self-emptying in Christ sets Him apart from all other gods. Perhaps Jesus himself would not have responded much differently than Paul: “Men, why are you doing this? We also are men, of like nature with you, and bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them” (Acts 14:15).

In the time of Paul, Athens, Greece was a small town of about 5,000 people living off the city’s famous reputation in an ancient form of tourism. Providentially, and likely through a premeditated imitation of Socrates, Paul addressed the city of Athens on the Areopagus. The Spirit of God in Paul was ‘provoked’ because the city was full of idols. As the first commandment articulates, God demands the reverence due to Himself, the right to define Himself, and respect enough to be called by the name that He has revealed. Thus, idolatry is at best the practice of ignoring the One Person who humans are supposed to love the most. This neglect can become scorn when one then replaces the true God with an object ‘made from human hands’ – literally the worship of one’s own psyche and a denial of the transcendent. In an attempt to clear this palette of images, Paul appeals then to the ‘unknown God’:

“What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are indeed his offspring’.” (Acts 17:23-28; cf. Is 45:15).

Although Klauck, following Jerome, doubted whether an altar to the unknown God really existed in Athens at that time, it has been argued elsewhere that Paul was drawing upon a tradition of honoring the ‘prophet’ Epimenides from the fourth century (B.C.). This teacher from the East was thought to have purified the religion of Greece and started a movement toward monotheism there. He may have influenced the faith of Plato, who regarded him highly. He accused the Athenians of breaking a covenantal bond by their worship of multiplicitous gods in Athens. As a penance, Epimenides proscribed the building of altars to the unknown God wherever a lamb would lie. Hence, scattered altars to the unknown God have been found throughout ancient Greece and Rome. It has been suggested that Epimenides was attempting to help the Greeks reestablish knowledge of the primordial covenant of Genesis, in which God made the promise of adopting human kind. As Paul believed this covenant was fulfilled in Christ, he says ‘for we indeed are his offspring’, emphasizing the metaphysical principle of relationship with the Divine that has not been sufficiently grasped by the Athenians. The pivotal message
Pharmakeia in the Mystical Body of Christ’s Resurrection was for the Athenians in Paul’s day as for a large portion of the world today, not an idea easily entertained, for it entails the subordination of all previous and future psychical ‘resurrections’ under the only supposed historical one.24

In Acts Chapter 19, the record of Christian activity in Ephesus says much about the state of the question on ‘magic’. The failed exorcism in vv. 13-16 seems to recount an instance of attempting to use Jesus’ name for ‘magical ends’ (meaning self-centered intentions of grandeur or riches). Apparently, this violent failure to rebuke evil, due to an impure hearts, led to the repentance of a whole community against ‘witchcraft’: “And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily” (Acts 19:17-20). The people burned their magical books as a burnt offering of their sins reminiscent of the Jewish burnt offerings of Egyptian god-animals. One of these books was likely the Ephesia grammata, which Plutarch described as being used for magical aid against demons. In this Biblical record the vacuum left by the loss of magic powers is filled by the proclamation of more Gospel miracles.

When the local smiths hear that Paul’s preaching is hurting their business of making graven images, they cry out in rage “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” (cf. Acts 19:28). C.L. Brinks has brought attention to the peculiar relations between this Artemis and some Eastern faith traditions. “Particular characteristics that Ephesian Artemis shares with mother goddesses of the ancient Near East have led scholars to posit some type of connection between her and Cybele, Astarte, and Ishtar.”25 In the third century B.C., this goddess may have underwent a change in appearance causing confusion for archeologists and historians who have not traced her lineage in these same directions. The center of the Ephesian Artemis cult was the great temple just outside the city of Ephesus, considered to be one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. According to Pliny, the temple of Artemis was 425 feet by 225 feet, with 127 columns, each 60 feet tall. The temple was torched in 356 B.C. Saint Jerome commenting on the book of Ephesians wrote:

He [Paul] wrote to the Ephesians who worshipped Diana. This was not the huntress who holds the bow and is girded, but that multi-breasted Diana which the Greeks call πολυμαστόν, so that, of course, on the basis of the statue itself they might also falsely assert that she is the nurse of all beasts and living beings. He wrote, moreover, to the chief city of Asia where idolatry and the deceptions of the magicians’ arts which always

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24 Magic and paganism, Location 1450.
accompany idolatry thrived, as Demetrius said, ‘And the temple of the great goddess Diana shall be considered nothing, and her majesty shall also be destroyed, whom all Asia and the whole world worship’ (Acts 19:27). Finally, the apostle remained there for three years preaching the gospel of God night and day so that when the stronghold of idolatry had been destroyed they might easily take the temples of the lesser cities. 26

Klauck instils this point at the end of his study: evangelization requires a deep understanding and appreciation of the ‘other’. In the ancient world, the ‘magician’ and Christians were often the same people of the same families and same cultures seeking the same Truth. In-group and out-group labels may help to dramatize in retrospect but they do little or nothing to convert hearts in the present. The Gospel of Christ is just as radical in the twentieth century as it was in the first, and the idolatries are just as numerous. As the story of Genesis is found scattered throughout every culture of the earth, all peoples recognize a primordial human originator and the social memory of a Father-like God. Graham Hancock, Terence McKenna, Deepak Chopra, and many other cultural syncretists and religious pluralists have argued that all ancient civilizations share a common oral history. Anthropology confirms that the temple, with accompanying priests and magicians, is one of these universally transportable symbols of the divine and human interconnection. If the Genesis account is correct, then all non-Abrahamic faiths are attempting to imitate or impersonate the covenantal temple worship of the original family. When Paul states that ‘God does not inhabit man-made temples or shines’ he is drawing attention to, not only the pluralistic temples in Athens, but also to every other cultic religion in the world that has not yet encountered and submitted to Christ. For Jesus, (although temporally preceded by his mother) is the ‘first-born’ of the bodily Temples of the Holy Spirit, that is, the Temples made by God himself. The shift from natural to supernatural religious rituals – as in the movement from divine appeasement in animal sacrifices to the ‘living sacrifice’ of human morality – is, logically, an initiative that only God can take. This romantically literal penetration of the Thrice Holy into human nature is the great burden and breath of Christian belief. The cross of Christ cannot be bypassed by any religious believer of any faith or culture in their respective subjective and objective ascents to God.

Navigating the border between enculturation of religions and compromise of the Gospel is a critical skill in the human participation of salvation for all people, who God desires to be saved. As N.T. Wright has emphasized, it is the very labor of sharing the Gospel that becomes the means to salvation for the sharer, and one does so without in any sense affronting or replacing the work of the Holy Spirit, a supernatural life that only He can give in souls. God commands Christians to ‘go out to the nations and bring them back to Me’. This will indubitably, if eschatologically, occur, whether through active

evangelization or the witness of martyrdom. The imitating faiths of Gnosticism are revealed by their deeds, which inevitably seek to preserve and advance worldly power, hence why Genesis separates the city of God and the city of Cain by the latter’s greed for technology. Idolatrous technology takes many forms, not least the machinery of religions themselves. This is why the law of the Old Covenants, such as circumcision, ‘counts for nothing’ in Paul’s rhetoric because integration between temple sacrifices and praises and the practical human psychological and practical life has been utterly sealed in the historical and trans-historical Body of Christ. Paul carries the ‘true stigmata’ on his flesh precisely for this reason, because his Christianity is the unparalleled and unsurpassable religion, where one literally assumes the body of the God-man through exercises of humble ‘representations’ of his life, in sacrament and deed. Under the same logical of Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection, which in various ways was prophesied in all the ancient cultures, the living Body of Christ remains on earth subsisting in the form of the Catholic Church, and slowing assimilating and deifying all the truths found in and out of its present borders. Therefore, the on-going work of the Christian is to call upon and exercise the power of God’s Spirit exclusively for the sake of uniting the earth in perfect concordant beatitude, when religions in the plural will cease to exist and the light of dawn will shine from heart of Christ (cf. Rev 21:23).

II. Jungian Synchronicities and the Pluralism of Signs

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men (1 Cor 1:18-25).

A. Renaissance Active Imagination

It is not uncommon to meet a newly converted ‘believer’ who has just awoken to the idea of a life without coincidence. Having come to faith in a Creator, he or she has also come to see every detail of life as strokes of the pen within His-story. Absolute Being by definition must be involved in every experience of contingent being. In classical philosophy, multiple layers of causality and/or the parallel senses of meaning could satisfy the intellectual question as to how a circumstance or event, record or word, could be both natural and providential. Among the non-believers or the nominal-believers, however,
understanding that the natural world unfolds and evolves layered into a relationship with God, this can hardly be taken for granted, even among theologically sophisticated people. Scientism has been far too effective in dismantling the common person’s trust in God’s benevolence toward His creatures and His concern for earthly affairs. The American Puritans and their religious legacy instigated the now standard conflation between professional success and God’s favor. Today, the ‘New Age’ movement has professed this same creed but for divergent ends. Early modern doctrines of Predestination have become ‘manifest destiny’ of an individualistic variety. In popular self-help spirituality, ‘signs’ – defined as instances of supernatural patterns perceived above or in ‘synchronicity’ with natural events – are sought only to support one’s goals or augment one’s desires.

Standing apart from past and present American cultures, the Catholic Christian lives in this world as preparation for the next, and she carefully ponders the purpose of material gain, not necessarily seeking it nor rejecting it. For ‘naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord’ (cf. Job 1:21). This disparity between spiritualities is the subtle but essential theme of this study: how does one discern whether a sign is given by God, insinuated by the devil, or invented by the mind? Philosophers like Daniel Dennett, have demonstrated with commendable effort the power of the human brain to ‘see what it wants to see’, in some instances scandalously falsifying sense data for the sake of satisfying an emotional need. Nevertheless, the ability to find meaningful patterns in the math of life cannot be reduced to a mere function of physical survival or procreation. A Catholic and Pauline psychology of signs will insist on a liturgical economy of meaning, that is to say, the sign that is truly from God will survive being sacrificed by the soul on the altar of freedom.

Every life tells the same story in a unique way. Once the universal story is known, and joined to one’s own, the variations of ‘signs’ becomes infinite; meaning and purpose are imbedded into every touch of time. Until one achieves lucidity, concerning the storyline and its Teller, the ‘unexamined life’ remains boring, rote, empty of objective values in any absolute sense. Dr. Carl Gustav Jung believed that the human person is a multilayered psychic entity. In Jungian anthropology, there is a burdensome pressure of conflict, and a need for alleviation by integration between the conscious with the unconscious layers of the individual. Symbols are the mediators between these realms of the ‘Self’. Although symbols can be studied at great depth in any period of human history, the conscious manipulation of symbols in the Christian tradition reached the highest levels of controversy during and after the Renaissance and Reformation movements. In the early 1500s, Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim, also known as

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28 The scene of Genesis 22:1-14 provides the Judeo-Christian paradigm of a liturgically proven sign from God.
Pharmakeia in the Mystical Body

Paracelsus, took the alchemical symbols of his own time and united them to the emerging science of medicine. About fifty years earlier, in Florence, Italy, Marsilio Ficino revived the symbols of Plato and assimilated them into a densely Catholic marketplace. These two men embodied the power of, what Jung would call, “active imagination” to inspire oneself and society in a particular way. Jung’s work has proven prophetic in the interpretation of these important historical figures and their ideas which so closely parallel the ‘New Age’ movement. American popular culture desperately needs to revive the practice of active imagination if it hopes to restore its forgotten ingenuity. A culture without imagination is vampiric, because the human spirit has hungers that base materialism will never abate. An innovative imagination lives in a hopeful soul, while self-destruction accompanies a hopeless mind.

C.G. Jung coined the term synchronicity referring to an ‘acausal connecting principle’ or a nonmaterial relationship between two or more living substances – a coincidence that is too serendipitous to be merely chance. This idea became an underlying concept of New Age movements in the twentieth century. The great prophet of calendar change, Jose Argüelles, extended this ‘synchronic order’ throughout the whole of earth’s timetable, suggesting that the ability to attune to synchronic time events was synonymous to coordinating one’s life with Divine providence. In this way, time-keeping structures would have to be at the heart of all human belief systems. “José was able to take the I Ching/DNA code as a type of planetary computer program and integrate it into the mathematical code of the Mayan calendar system, the Tzolkin. José discovered that the common mathematical key was that any magic square of eight (the same mathematical matrix as the DNA/I Ching) has an array of 260; that is, any row always adds up to 260, horizontally or vertically. He knew this number was the key to the Tzolkin; the 13 x 20 = 260 ‘time matrix’ upon which the Mayan calendar is based.” This allowed Argüelles to create a calendar that restored a natural timing frequency of planetary and galactic time; a 260 day galactic cycle and 365 day solar cycle. He “posited that a psi field was functioning in conjunction with the Van Allen radiation belts and, like DNA, it operated in a double-helix manner. The Van Allen radiation belts (which constitute the principle part of the magnetic field) and the genetic code were both discovered in 1953, the year José had his vision at Teotihuacán” – a synchronistic vision that initiated his worldwide quest to supplant the mathematically-non-synchronized Gregorian calendar.

The ‘psi field’ or noosphere was also conceptualized in the work of mathematician Buckminster Fuller, physicist Oliver Reiser, and theologian and scientist Teilhard de Chardin. Argüelles made a truly

heroic and lifelong campaign (he believed his mission was of supernatural origin), and spoke about much more than correcting the astronomical errors of the Gregorian calendar; his goal was to build a planetary system of knowledge. The ‘13 moon calendar movement’ became a way to synchronize the beliefs of the planet’s diverse peoples and cultures by celebrating the universal mathematical harmony between DNA and nature, living and non-living systems, on a day to day basis. Judeo-Christian tradition has not disagreed that there is need for harmony between science and nature, with caveats in the relatability of sub-human natures to human persons. Argüilles spoke with several bishops in his travels and made enough noise to impel the Second Vatican Council’s ruling that the Gregorian calendar held no official doctrinal necessity. Any calendar which retained the seven-day week was a potentially valid form of keeping time and might be assimilated into the Catholic rites. Countries in South America and Asia have already adopted and standardized the ‘13 moon calendar,’ although some doing so in rebellion from the Catholic presence in their countries.

The idea of synchronicity is of course closely linked to the ancient and medieval belief in celestial beings who are in a causal relationship to the beings of the earth. These heavenly bodies were often thought to be embodied in the galaxies, stars, planets, moons, and other objects in space. Thus, the cyclic and rhythmic movement of these bodies could measure similar or parallel movements of time and space on earth and in its creatures. Since, human persons have always needed images to symbolize and name their experiences, it is no crime that they took the most obvious and available icons as those from nature: the sun, the moon, dirt, fire, wind, water, animals and plants. This custom permeates Scripture and Tradition throughout the history of Christianity no less than paganism. “We have the truths of philosophy from nature; she has taught us these without idle talk…Just as Christ offered his person to our eyes, so we have personal teachers in nature…They are born through seeing and touching, and not through nonseeing. For seeing and touching beget the truth.” 31 These are the words of the medieval Christian physician Paracelsus to his readers. For Paracelsus, man participated and tied together three worlds: through his corporeal body the natural world of elements, through his astral body the celestial world, and through his immortal soul the spiritual world. 32 Paracelsus’ conviction in manifold layers of the human person is an example of both the positive and negative effects of what C.G. Jung called ‘active imagination’.

As Dr. Michael Fordham warned “there is a danger of psychosis being precipitated if active imagination is begun ill-advisedly.” 33 This fear was certainly one of the chief instigators of the accepted

prejudice against religion in early modern inquisitions and modernism’s philosophical skepticism. Paracelsus does embody this kind of disconnect from reality in certain aspects of philosophy, especially the belief in a causal relationship between constellations and personality characteristics. However, considering the level of technology that existed in his time, Paracelsus was far less guilty of intellectual laziness than most astrologers of the present age. The positive effects of Paracelsus’ active imagination are evident in statements like: “Every disease is a kind of purgatory.” Interpreting the empirical conditions of a patient within his or her spiritual context was in fact an enlightened perspective on therapeutic medicine. To see sickness as a purifying gift from God was not to forget the ultimately evil origins of ‘sickness’ as such, but allowed one to accept the unknown future with an enhanced hope. It is precisely this ‘best of both worlds’ mentality that makes active imagination so powerful. Even while closely and intelligently examining the facts of nature, one is always free to see that “nature is a self-revelation of God” – and in the perhaps better days of Paracelsus, God and Good-will could not be divorced. It is a good thing to be a physician, but it is a better thing to be a ‘divinely-appointed’ physician, since the latter can draw from an entirely additional toolbox of medicine and motivation, without lacking any virtue on the purely scientific plane. Paracelsus’ view of medicine as a religious calling illustrates how active imagination can empower a man or woman to pursue a very long-suffering career, achieve only modest results, withstand inordinate social repudiation, and yet remain passionate and hopeful about one’s work. For such was the life of Paracelsus.

The modern resurgence of religious pluralism resembles the rise of neo-Platonism in the late Renaissance. During the height of the Italian Renaissance, Marsilio Ficino used his own style of active imagination to marry the symbols of Christianity and ancient Greece, during the height of the Italian Renaissance. At a time when many of Plato’s manuscripts were being rediscovered, Ficino retranslated a large portion of them to be made accessible in his libraries. Ficino established the great Platonic Academy of Florence. “As the most influential exponent of Platonism in Italy during the fifteenth century, Marsilio Ficino belongs both to the history of the diverse fortunes of that ancient philosophy and to the evolution of those ideas and attitudes which we term ‘modern’.” Following the tradition of Augustine, and in this specific realm surpassing it, Ficino sought to acculturate all that was good in Platonism. For Ficino, this was most, if not all of Plato’s thought, as he considered it “divinely-revealed” and “necessary in order that

34 Paracelsus, Selected Writings, 81.
the Christian religion may be confirmed and rendered sufficiently rational to satisfy the skeptical and atheistic minds of the age.”

Although Ficino also made questionable ontological connections between physical realities and their spiritual and astral meaning, his errors, like Paracelsus’, fell on the side of Christian hope. The issue still to be addressed is: If one must not occlude spiritual meaning from hypotheses on the material order, how then does one decide which spirituality to take as template? In the active imagination process, in the discernment of signs, and in scientific hypothesizing it is unavoidable that one chooses in this way, regardless of the high probability of imagining and hypothesizing incorrectly at times. While particular questions of science definitely merit a limited imaginative process, the wider context of those questions and answers will not. For example, science might be able to determine the way AIDS attacks the immune system, and thereby devise medications to stifle its spread, but it cannot determine the disease’s effect on the patient’s self-image, nor devise a medication to bring coherence to that patient’s life-story. Active imagination on a spiritual level is required to build a logical bridge between the experience of AIDS and the providence of God. Without this bridge, nothing prevents such a person from falling into despair with no recourse to hope. To give another example, there are many citizens today who are sensitive to violence toward animals. A case of well-formed Christian imagination might be person who sees in the mistreatment of animals, or nature in general, a symbol of Satan’s princeship over the earth. This constitutes a good use of imagination only because it offers a rational explanation for the feeling that nature is sacred and beautiful, yet synchronistically acknowledges with history that nature can be cruelly indifferent, even evil. There is in this view neither a rejection of nature’s value (as a vestige of God), nor a denial of its physical destiny (which is destruction). Thus, only the practitioner of Christian active imagination can avoid the fallacy of projecting moral judgments onto an amoral universe through the assertion of Satan’s existence, and simultaneously avoid denying Original Sin and the source of possible salvation by accepting Jesus as God’s self-revelation. In an instance of the former’s alternative, the finality of material death would prevent access to hope, and in an instance of the latter’s alternative, the conclusiveness of human evil would still demand a God-like savior.

“The numinous [Rudolph Otto’s idea of a universal unnamed deity] used to be mediated by rituals and symbols which were carried out by the community. But because rituals and symbols have lost their power in the community, the numinous can only appear directly through violence and sexuality which however have no clear meaning.” These base instincts are the common expressions of primordial

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religion, and their perverted forms offer deficient parallels to the Christian experience of God as expressed through Sacrament and devotion. Scientific Gnosticism and psychoactive therapies are examples of digressive avenues to the numinous. According to the relativistic trends in contemporary spirituality, one must subvert objective truth claims and rely on empirical evidences alone, which unsurprisingly fall short of what is dignified in a genuinely human sense but contrarily allow for a very tangible encounter with the mysteries of the body. Nonetheless, as Dr. Toshio Kawai states, these experiences of the numinous are without meaning apart from a doctrinal or creedal context. Although Kawai also suggests that philosophical doctrine might replace ritual altogether, the alternative, coalescing the two levels of experience (as Paracelsus and Ficino did), remains a viable option. The human experience cannot be reduced to either empiricism or rationalism, nor to objective laws or subjective feelings, but rather, these levels of experience must be reconciled as originating from and orienting toward the same Reality. The present moment has significance in and of itself, but it will always be incomplete without a historical and an anticipatory vision. The conscious experience of bodily sense communicates to the self like a ritual or liturgy, while the unconscious expectations of the mind (once enthroned) govern one’s judgements with a transcendent hand. Thus, religion is necessary to give hope to the experience of now. At the same time, a dogmatic faith which cannot be logically connected to the reality of the present moment will inevitably be abandoned for a faith that is more consistent with experience (or else lead to insanity).

Processes of acculturation by means of which a variety of originally ‘pagan’ systems of ideas – such as e.g. those originating in hermetic, neoplatonic, and even aristotelian contexts – became integral parts of Christian culture during the Middle Ages and Renaissance are an obvious focus of interest for the study of ‘Gnosis and Western Esotericism’. Major examples during the Middle Ages are the reception of Hermetic literature by a range of Christian theologians, the strange phenomenon of ritual magic flourishing in the context of the medieval ‘clerical underworld’, and the revival of the ‘occult sciences’ during the later Middle Ages as a result of a flood of translations from Arabic into Latin. These developments provided the indispensable foundation for what has been referred to as the Hermetic tradition of the Renaissance, starting with Marsilio Ficino’s epoch-making translation of the Corpus Hermeticum in 1463 (published in 1471, and with numerous reprints throughout the 16th century), in the context of his life-long project of recovering the supreme religious philosophy of the ‘divine Plato’ and a long chain of prisci theologi [ancient pre-Christian theologians] who were believed to have preceded him.

As language evolves through exploring the experiences of the ‘other’, the Christian consciousness, along with the human ‘collective unconscious’, can only evolve at a rate congruent to the assimilation of new symbols. However, new language does not necessarily imply new information; more importantly, it signifies the ability to recognize and interpret both old and new information across cultural

41 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, viii.
boundaries. Languages grow stale over decades and centuries and force mutation upon themselves. When the meaning of a word becomes narrowed by respective local uses, such a word often degrades into a dialectic beliefs and political ammunition. This was occurring with Scholastic nomenclature in the time of the Italian Renaissance. The abstract articulations of Europe’s parent-traditions, namely Medieval Scholasticism, had become somewhat disconnected from the everyday experience of the Italian people. With an emerging fascination for historical-methods and practical-philosophies, Renaissance-humanism distanced itself from the language of Aristotelian metaphysics and other articulations typical of Scholasticism. Marsilio Ficino found in Platonism a mode to reunite the systematic-transcendent Logos with the free-historical person. The noetic experience of Plato, expressed as a natural desire for the divine, gave life to the idea of the human person as a microcosm of the Trinity, uniting matter and spirit, time and eternity, philosophy and theology in the Spirit. The human soul could be understood to have a supra-erotic desire for the supernatural (not unlike Augustine’s ‘restlessness’). This rehabilitated noetic experience denied static divine-ideas to which man had access, in favor of a dynamic encounter with divinity around every corner of daily life. This natural openness of the soul to the divine became the principle which best exemplified man as ‘the image of God’ in the Renaissance period. This belief had the power to transfigure normal calculations of empirical quantities by the illumination of the Father’s guiding Word, and thus the emotional response of man to God was revitalized in reflective observation.

It was Jesus Christ’s Church that finally gave meaningful expression and logically consistency to otherwise uninteresting pagan rituals. For example, Christmas and Easter add a new and deeper layer of meaning to the Winter-Solstice and Spring-Equinox respectively, transforming a cyclical concept of life and death, daylight and darkness, into a progressive concept of incarnation-death-resurrection and new-life. Thus, violence is transferred into self-sacrifice, because in the Christian-context death is not a law of fate, it is a creative choice. Similarly, the Sacrament of Matrimony transforms the isolated orgiastic-state into a climactic moment within a larger and more important creative-fidelity to familial union and procreation. The weekly Eucharist, and the Christian-mystical experience in general, likewise reinvent psychoactive experiences to include real-life ‘trips’ (induced by any number of unintended, yet unavoidable, physical or emotional sufferings). Altered states of consciousness are accessible, more simply, by being caught-up into the life, death, and resurrection of the Body of Christ. The pagan rituals were attempts at expressing genuine encounters, as was Paracelsus’ belief in the relationship between the stars and medicine. But some symbols, like medical-astrology, prove to be rationally unsustainable, and therefore, fall away. Those symbols of Catholicism, however, retain their power to give meaning to the typology of human experience despite five-hundred generations of social evolution.
The recorded reality of the Incarnation is the solution to the disconnection between symbols and meanings. Only the reality of the Incarnation has this power, because incarnation considered only as a concept would be reducible to another undifferentiated sign, expressed and defined variously by divergent cultures. If, however, the Incarnation is a historical fact, and if it can be trusted that the event actually happened (i.e. a uniquely Christian belief), then it necessarily could only have happened once with everlasting consequence – it must have had a real and lasting impact on philosophy and science alike. The Incarnation is how God imagines Himself in time and space, an omnipotent imagining, nothing less than a perfect and eternal creative-generation known as ‘God the Son’. Hence, a literal historical non-mythical Incarnation could only happen once. Because God’s Being is the ground of existence, the finite universe would have to be completely consumed by that single event, like a new, albeit spiritual, singularity. The Holy Spirit, then, represents the essential difference between a transient symbol as opposed to a permanent one. The difference between a sign which points to something else and a sign which effects the reality it signifies. What makes the sacramental ritual meaningful, even from the perspective of an outside observer, is the possession of a relative faith, but a faith founded on a historically unparalleled belief-system (anthropologically speaking). If that faith-filled ritual truly corresponds to a reality, for the believer performing it, the experience will be as concrete as anything deemed ‘empirical’.

Jung’s ‘active imagination’ could be considered a way to discover Christ’s teachings in the imagery of dream-fantasy, a method for filling the ‘gaps’ of understanding with the supernatural theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity). ‘The realization of the shadow’ in Jungian analysis could parallel the Catholic philosophical tensions known as sacramental paradoxes.42 “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be contradicted – and a sword will pierce even your own soul – to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed” (Lk 2:34-35). Confrontation with the shadow, that is, the weaknesses and wounds in one’s psyche, creates in the Christian a perfection in suffering which imitates the crucifixion of Christ. For he who is conscious of his own shadows can become “all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some” (1 Cor 9:22). If Paracelsus and Ficino could have read Jung, they would have interpreted the collective unconscious as an aspect of the noetic connection between nature and God. “According to Jung, alchemy is not about physical (chemical) processes at all but rather about psychological developments occurring within the practitioner. The metaphorical language and strange phenomena filling alchemical tomes actually record hallucinatory ‘irruptions of the unconscious’ which are ‘projected’ from the alchemist’s psyche onto the contents of his flasks.”43

43 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, 14.
The spiritual pendulum swings again toward the crest of predestination, that is, voluntary helplessness against the behavioral conditioning of sin. Herein lies the danger of using imagination as a tool for creating ‘therapeutic’ idol gods in the psyche. One could construct a wall against objective reality by an idol-faith in the imagination itself. “Once one has seen the vital importance (that is, the healing or destructive impact) of the symbols produced by the unconscious, there remains the difficult problem of interpretation.”

Either there does or does not exist a theological template for this work of discernment. Over the course of tens of thousands of dream-interpretations, Dr. Carl Jung recognized a certain pattern which he called ‘the process of individuation’. Although this process has a few general and universal characteristics, it is also largely subjective. Only the individual can interpret the meaning of his own symbols for him or herself. Nevertheless, certain basic ‘archetypes’ exist in the ‘collective unconscious’ of all human beings. It is these archetypes which are particularly relevant to the respective naturalistic and humanist philosophies of Paracelsus and Marsilio Ficino. Both of these philosophers used active imagination to discover meaning in the symbols of their conscious and unconscious experience. Fortunately for them, they had access to a full treasury of medieval and ancient typologies with which to adorn the mental canvas. To avoid the dangers of Gnostic nihilism about the body and to avoid the Jungian-esque idolatry of the psyche, they had only to heed the words of Paul: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom 12:1-4).

Thus, active imagination, used as a discerning appendix of ‘unconscious’ Christic patterns layered-over empirical experience, can allow for a fully moral freedom in sensual and intellectual play, so long as it protects its openness to reconciliation with objective Reality by the practice of penitential sacrament. The labor of deciding which imaginings must be altered and which preserved, this must be a collaborative effort from both natural philosophy and Christian theology. To this end, the truth has already been defending and defining itself since the beginning of civilization. As has been stressed, active imagination practices, like New Age synchronicity, are necessary to create logical consistency in the human experience. However, when active imagination becomes a means in the pursuit of power through logical prediction, it degenerates into an idol, another boring symbol of material determinism over and against spiritual freedom. The only authentic symbol of true freedom and infinite creativity is the cross/contradiction of the Incarnation. The Gospel is the only story which makes sense of the human condition while giving proper dignity to the human person. Faith in Jesus is Hope for eternal life and the

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44 Man and His Symbols, 159.
resurrection of empiricism, in the ‘new body’ ruled by Love. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval” (Heb 11:1-2).

To avoid any pretentions of a total Jungian endorsement, the focus here must be on method more than content. As David Bentley Hart argues, Jung’s Red Book’s “religious sensibility is thoroughly Gnostic, in a number of ways. It is, for one thing, simply saturated in imagery and concepts drawn from the Gnostic systems of late antiquity, and its narrative form – its incontinent mythopoeia, its rococo excesses, its figural syzygies and archons and aeons (or whatever one might call them) – has all the occult grotesquerie of authentic Gnostic myth.”

Since Jung believes that the universal human tragedy is the ego's alienation from the unconscious mind, human development is that process of individuation whereby the personality crawls out from the mental mud of minimally differentiated symbols. As in the individual’s psychic emergence so in the cultural phylogeny. Gnostics masked over the alienation from the unconscious with the idea of spiritual exile in matter, avoiding much of the healthy psychological examination that Jung would suggest. The ‘New Age’ zeitgeist likewise tends to avoid self-critical analysis, which would imply the need for repentance, in favor of self-rationalizations that ‘empower’. Thus, the present generation, in reaction against materialism, but still thoroughly mechanistic in practice, has adopted a strong gnostic sensibility, combining the dual desires for spiritual freedom and power over matter. New religious fashions of the first-world, such as Scientology, Christian Science, Naturalism, and the Occult Sciences, have assumed the age old Gnostic characteristics of spiritual pride and greed.

To Hart’s point: “The modern attraction of the East for the West was viewed by Carl Gustav Jung as ‘a compensation in the unconscious’, making up for the swamping of religion by science in the collective psyche, and thus obeying an historical law of the conservation of psychic energy.”

B. ‘Gnosticism’ and the ‘New Age’

Like ancient Gnosticism, the New Age movement often looks to nature for its rhythms and remedies. Looking at two different examples from contemporary proponents of the ‘New Age’ movement, Hans Baer has compared and contrasted the works of Deepak Chopra (author of multiple bestselling self-help books) and Dr. Andrew Weil (of Harvard Medical School). New Age medical pluralism, like its Gnostic counterpart, fails to draw-up a sufficiently detailed model of what it means to be a healthy human being (compared to not knowing what it means to have a healthy spirituality in

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46 “Jung’s Therapeutic Gnosticism,” 28
47 “Jung’s Therapeutic Gnosticism,” 29.
48 Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, 714.
Gnosticism). The individual is encouraged to define spirituality and health for him or herself. Feeding this relativism is the fact that biomedicine and holistic (alternative) medicine officially broke confidence in the early twentieth century. Due to the propaganda campaign launched against its competitors, pharmaceutical conglomerates successfully discredited preventative medicine to bolster the profits of their own intervention methods. As a medicinal reactionary movement, some forms of the ‘New Age’ sought “to create a ‘new planetary culture’ that emphasized inner tranquility, wellness, harmony, unity, self-realization, self-actualization, and the attainment of a higher level of consciousness. Levin and Coreil delineate three New Age healing approaches: (1) body-oriented ones that emphasize the achievement of somatic and psychosomatic health, (2) mind-oriented ones that emphasize esoteric teachings as a means for achieving health, and (3) soul-oriented ones that emphasize meditation and other contemplative techniques.”

Andrew Weil, in his early books on health, argued that psychedelics could serve the raising of human consciousness, asserting that health is “wholeness and balance, an inner resilience that allows you to meet the demands of living without being overwhelmed” and that ‘optimum health’ entails a sense of strength and exuberance. He specified ten principles of health versus illness: (1) “Perfect health is not attainable;” (2) “It is alright to be sick;” (3) “The body has innate healing abilities;” (4) “Agents of disease are not causes of disease;” (5) “All illness is psychosomatic;” (6) “Subtle manifestations of illness precede gross ones;” (7) “Everybody is different;” (8) “Everybody has a weak point;” (9) “Blood is a principal carrier of healing energy;” and (10) “Proper breathing is a key to good health.”

In contrast to Weil’s mostly subjective approach, Chopra said in his book Perfect Health that “perfect health is a state found in every person that is free from disease, that never feels pain, that cannot age or die and is an entity that every person must choose for himself or herself. He maintains that the physical body functions as the portal to the ‘quantum mechanical body’ that exists at a subatomic level where matter and energy are interchangeable.” Chopra’s brand of ‘quantum healing’ is method that entails shifting fields of energy information to facilitate correct thinking.

Hans Baer criticizes these ‘New Age’ methods for underplaying the role of social factors in the etiology of disease. Despite the increasing awareness that many health problems are related to stress in the workplace, socioeconomic inequities, racism, and environmental pollution, the individualistic approach of most holistic health practitioners seems to preclude the possibility of forming social

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movements to address these problems collectively.\textsuperscript{52} Surveys have shown that the majority of consumers of alternative therapies are white upper-middle class urbanites who grew up in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{53} Since, working class citizens generally cannot afford a lifestyle of holistic food and medicine, the positive outcomes of these practices still remain out of reach for most Americans. But, if the economic problem were to improve, the holistic health movement would have potential to subvert current food and medicine monopolies and emancipate the lower classes from these oppressive capitalist structures. Such a shift toward the health of the poorer classes would be a concrete form of complementarity between the ‘New Age’ and Catholicism. The ‘New Age’ in turn would have to shape its ideal model of ‘health’ through relationship with the Church. The spiritual elements in ‘New Age’ practices are merely an extension of the health model, as only a \textit{theological} anthropology will sufficiently address the question ‘For what do human beings exist?’ and thereby, ‘What is a healthy human being?’ and equally important, ‘What is illness?’.

Echoing the period between 1400 and 1700, today’s world is more interested, even obsessed, with the psychosomatic influences of spiritual forces. The post-modern epoch has reacted against a quasi-Christian cultural hegemony by regressing back into the ancient syncretist or pluralist religious worldviews. In order to protect themselves from the categories of European Catholicism, intellectuals in this movement have reduced spiritual illness to a subjective coloration of a scientific problem. “As E´mile Littre´ pointed out a hundred and fifty years ago, this ‘retrospective medicine’ assumes that possession as such did not really exist, that it was always something else,” despite the fact that “a demonic or divine etiology existed in their [seventeenth century Christian physicians’] classificatory system side by side with naturalist definitions,” and they were not significantly less skilled in making scientific prognoses.\textsuperscript{54} “The transmutation of diabolic possession into medical or psychopathological diagnoses” disallows the possibility of defining ‘spiritual health’ since it occludes the reality of ‘spiritual sickness’.\textsuperscript{55} In cross-cultural studies, almost every variety of spiritual encounter tends to be subsumed by the concept of ‘altered states of consciousness’. In this regard, “the dangers of cross-cultural universalism and sociological functionalism are no smaller than the dangers of medical or psychological reductionism.”\textsuperscript{56}

Demonstrated by the prevalence of ‘New Age’ spiritualties and Gnostic pluralisms, the contemporary West has seen a resurgence of interest in the mystical. Christianity has retreated to the

\textsuperscript{52} “The Work of Andrew Weil and Deepak Chopra,” 240-41.
\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Believe Not Every Spirit}, 3.
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Believe Not Every Spirit}, 5.
minority in Europe while ‘non-religious spirituality’ has also risen in the United States. The ‘sacralisation of the self’ is replacing the God of (objective) revelation with a ‘divinity’ only to be found in one’s interior life. Traditional Christianity and its treasury of teachings are being supplanted by syncretistic and pluralistic approaches to religious doctrine. The half-truth that this fashion stands on, asserts that Reality (as a whole) can only be known by listening to each and every individual’s spiritual experience and assimilating the sections of data therein. Ed Mackenzie calls this a “post-religious spirituality” and responds to it with Saint Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. The said religious existentialism is actually a kind of theological eschatology, a spirogenetic evolution, or a leap of consciousness roughly synonymous with the ‘Resurrection of the Body’ in Catholic Christian tradition. In this way, the spirituality of the Ephesian Church of the first century was not unlike the present age. As Brinks has already pointed out, Ephesus was the locus of its day for devotion to the prehistoric ‘goddess’, at that point subsumed into the cult of Artemis. At the same time, the Christian community in Ephesus took a strong stance against this syncretist religion, which was likely one of the birthing ideologies for the later ‘Gnostic’ sects. As this locale is traditionally thought to have been the home of the Virgin Mary after Christ’s death, it is no surprise that the Christians there held enmity toward the concept of the ‘goddess’. The ‘divine feminine’ equalized the world’s religions in a way that would have denied the uniquely transformative and definitive fullness of the Revelation of Christ, an affront all the more to her who is Theotokos (God-bearer) par excellence. Thus, the letter to the “Ephesians was written in the context of first-century spiritualties that competed for the loyalty of its readers. With its varied use of terms for spiritual powers (1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12), and its focus on the cosmic Christ who works in and through the church (1:22-23; 2:19-21; 3:20-21; 4:1-16), Ephesians points to the contrast between life in Christ and alternative spiritual and moral ways of life.”

In this context, Paul’s letter draws emphasis on the free-gift of salvation, the priority of grace over works (cf. Eph 2:8-9), the centrality of the Church’s authority, the universal call to moral excellence, and the unity of history and religion in the Body of Christ. Ephesians Chapter 1 summarizes:

In love he [God] predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved [Son of God]. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth (vv. 4-10).

58 “Following Jesus in a Spiritual Age,” 141.
59 “Following Jesus in a Spiritual Age,” 143.
I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he [God] put all things under his [Christ's] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all (vv. 15-23; emphases added).

Paul calls the Ephesians to celebrate the glory of God, through liturgical practices and the radiation of holiness. They are to give thanks for the unmerited gifts that the Father conferred, reaching apogee in willed adoption as His children. Christ’s superiority over all powers and dominions, over the highest ranking spiritual beings, over all names that are named, and over the many gods and goddesses worshiped, is a blatant and offence assertion of Jesus’ consubstantiality with the One True God.

One major theme within the letter to the Ephesians is the necessity of witnessing both personal and communal moral transformation. This emphasis challenges post-religious spirituality about what is authentically human. “While many forms of post-religious spirituality are deeply concerned with ethical living, they often assume that the self can discern what is right and good, and do it. In the Pauline view, such an approach is naive at best and idolatrous at worst.”60 This conclusion is echoed in the paraenesis of Ephesians, Chapters 4-6. Moral formation wages as a war of love that can only be won in the name of familial bondedness to God. Obedience to Christ conforms the members to the body and the body to the members. The human person, naturally alone and without divination, has no inherent power to save himself or herself. Salvation comes by the relationship that the Divine offers to the human person in Christianity; it is possible only by communion with the historical Incarnation of God’s body in Jesus Christ. “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (Eph 14:9). Fractals of God’s Oneness and Authority circulate through time as the economic Logos and Pneuma, the Head of all religions, truly embodied in a sacramental Church, building the super-physical bridge to Eternity. The mediator Christ, is the form of this Universal Church. The fact that these realities are expressed analogically or paradoxically, is why faith is required. This is not irrational faith. Indicating that the God referenced by Christianity is both inside and outside the jurisdiction of time and space is no transgression of logic; it is logic’s transfiguration and the object of faith. Subordination of the self to the Divine, of the body to the Head, requires faith in an absolute yet accessible religious authority.

Post-religious spiritualties argue that submission to a divine Patriarch – whether in a personal relationship to God the Father or/and in a communal liturgical relationship to Him – necessarily damages

60 “Following Jesus in a Spiritual Age,” 146-48.
the self because of the way that hierarchy – whether of origin or ability – seems to transgress the freedom of those on a lower rung. Jesus challenges this one dimensional reasoning in statement like, “the last will be first, and the first last” (Mt 20:16). How can one actualize oneself if ‘forced’ into a particular role, a gender, a marriage, a job, a religion, etc.? The Catholic Church responds with a robust and persistent polemic against coercion into faith. The answer is, one cannot be forced, only repeatedly invited. God does not do violence to freedom. The real question is philosophical: can one become one’s self, preserve one’s freedom, and still accept certain limitations of action proposed? The worthiness of the proposal depends on one’s definition and understanding of the higher good at stake. If the proposal is genuinely non-manipulative, the acceptance sincerely undertaken, and the outcome on course with one’s premeditated aims, in such a case, the answer of course must be ‘yes’. Rebellion for the sake of rebellion (or even freedom for the sake of freedom) is parasitic and evil. But freedom for the sake of love is universal beauty. Orthodox Pauline Theology asserts that one must become unified ‘in Christ’, risen and exalted with him, to become maximally free (Gal 5:1). This paradox of infinite diversity married to total equality is the heart of Trinitarian Christianity and its distinct and superior claim over other faiths. The human person becomes one with God the Father, in Christ, by the Spirit, through the Church. Thus, the authority of the Father Himself permeates throughout all who accept and share the gift. That authority, however, orchestrates a universe of particulars and so demands the virtues which Paul extolls. In order to avoid small sightedness: “walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:1-3). In this way, the Holy Spirit works through community to reveal the authentic self as an irreplaceable and unrepeatable member of a Cosmic Body.

In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions of the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love (Eph 4:9-16).

Totalitarian autonomy cannot bring about personal authenticity, but instead promotes the loathsome repetition of age-old mistakes; errors that cause human discord, interiorly and socially. True spiritual transcendence necessitates welcome entrance of the Father’s Spirit of holiness into the self from the eternal ‘exterior’, an endowment awarded by God’s eternal Son who became human for humans’ sake. Thus, the story of the Christian Gospels must become for spiritualists what they always were to Christians throughout history, a trustworthy record of the historical record of God’s once and for all Incarnation in Pharnakeia in the Mystical Body
Jesus of Nazareth, the most powerful spiritual action ever performed. This is the only story that tells a Way of salvation from self-imposed death. The exclusively Divine power, of self-donating Love, articulated by the doctrine of the Trinity, can only be learned from a human Person of equal spiritual weight, that is Jesus Christ. “John M. G. Barclay makes a similar point in terms of personal ‘narratives’ because the connection and coherence between [the stories of Paul, Israel, and the church] is Christ crucified, they do not cohere by the normal criterion that the smaller plot fits within the larger, on a timescale congruent with human historiography. Although the crucifixion of Christ was indeed an event in history, it punctures other times and other stories not just as a past event recalled but as a present event that, in an important sense, happens anew for its hearers in ‘the revelation of Jesus Christ’. In the preaching of the gospel, time becomes, as it were, concertinaed [that is, collapsed], and the past becomes existentially present.”

“For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority” (Col 2:8-10; emphasis added).

One justification for the post-religious mentality is the now academically passé thesis that Christianity was another form of sun worship dressed in fresh metaphors. Such reactionary rhetoric, in its impulsiveness, fails to acknowledge that its argument could be stated in the opposite way on the very same rational grounds (as Paul stated it in Ephesians). What if sun worship was always an informal preparation for Christianity? What if all religions have similar patterns of symbolism, simply because they are all looking at the same reality, those objects which the Christian God created? The above positions are equally self-referential in their premises; either one sees gods made in the image of Stars or one sees stars made in the image of God. The measure of the veracity of the assumed premise would have to be the inclusiveness of the respective symbols, their different capacities to incorporate the full range of human culture and experience. While it is obvious that the symbols of Christian Theology have assimilated much from Astrotheology and the like, the inverse proposition remains to be seen. The sun of our solar system can be likened to the Son of God metaphorically, in that it is, like Jesus, a source of energy and light and gravity to the world; but the sun is not even loosely fit to be considered a sacrificial bread from Heaven or the spouse of human nature or the temple of the Holy Spirit, as Christ and the Church are. The symbolic transference only works in one direction, toward Christ. Restating the argument: personal traits cannot be literally applied to unconscious objects except in an irrational act of faith, on the other hand, impersonal substances will always be the food of psychosomatic symbolism. Hence, there is no such word as ‘im-personification’. The bias belongs on the side of the most conscious

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being. Non-living systems cannot draw symbolism from the living. The symbolism of the earth’s sun must of necessity be inferior to the symbolism of God’s Son, unless by ‘sun’ one refers to something more like a personal being (as Rupert Sheldrake does), or by ‘God’ one means an entity which does not explain its own being and so is not God at all.

Looking at astrology in a positive light, authors Matthew Fox (a Christian) and Rupert Sheldrake (a syncretist) have analyzed some of the Christian traditions of angelology. All human cultures acknowledge the existence of such spiritual beings living on planes outside the human and material. “In the United States, for example, over two-thirds believe in their [angels’] existence, and one-third state that they have personally felt an angelic presence in their lives. Half believe in the existence of devils.”

Belief in angels opens certain ecumenical spaces between New Age and Christian spiritualties because of the way that “the gods in polytheistic religions are assimilated into monotheism by being treated as angels. If the many gods are recognized as subject to the one supreme God, they can be accepted as divine intermediaries and as divine powers. The difference between monotheism and polytheism [pluralism], at first sight so stark, is softened and modified by the recognition of the angels.” In some ways echoing Paracelsus’s astro-pharmacology, Sheldrake and Fox examine the possible role of angels and demons in effecting human psychology. Can physical motion (including neurological motion) and the laws of nature come under supernatural influence, or be guided by angelic governance? If this be the case, the laws of nature may not be as static or mechanical as popular science proclaims, and perhaps the universe is organically unified due to angelic synchronicities (harmonies) in time and space. Along the same lines, a Christian might reasonably infer demonic forces fighting to create discord in nature and the human psyche. As Saint Paul says “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12).

Rupert Sheldrake suggests that angels operate in realms of influence parallel to the fields of natural science, in what he calls morphic resonance theory (not unlike Alfred North Whitehead’s “nexūs). The universe is ordered into nested hierarchies, recalling Pseudo-Dionysius’ holy spheres and angelic choirs, but also extending into interpersonal relationships. “Matter is made of energy bound within fields, and therefore matter is a structure of activity. The fields themselves are actually immaterial. The electromagnetic field and the gravitational field are not made of matter; rather, as Einstein said, matter is made of fields. Matter is energy bound within fields, more a process than a thing.” These ‘generative’ 

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fields could be co-manifestations of angelic influence, transforming and evolving according to a divine order. Jewish tradition had held that angels took charge over physical elements and earthly seasons. Thomas Aquinas believed that intuition, inspiration, and prophecy were mediated by angels, suggesting that angels affect the fields of the mind as well as those of all other photon-based matter. The quantum ‘wave’ of probability spread out over all of space, may be like the immaterial potency of angels waiting to be exercised, or ‘collapsed’, into photon action by a sung command from the Logos – “Hildegard paints Mary as the conductress of the symphonies of the celestial spheres in heaven – she directs the music there among human beings and angels alike.”66

This theory is further supported by the prehistoric relationship between the symbol of angels and of light. The morphic resonance theory, if it could be further demonstrated, would give pertinence to the idea that celestial fields of movement are sometimes connected to and overlapping with psychosomatic fields.67 This means that astrology might be granted greater credence in science and Christianity, deserving to be revisited to some extent in modern systematic theology. All this recalls the ‘synchronic order’ of Jose Argüelles and the theological discipline of natural revelation, and does so without broaching the question of supernatural Revelation necessarily. Supernatural Revelation distinguishes itself from post-(pre)-religious spiritualties because of its claim to a direct interpersonal interaction from God to human individuals. While natural revelation may be discovered through intellectual investigation, supernatural Revelation is the unmitigated self-disclosure of God to the human soul. This latter portion of the proclamation is unique to the Christian Gospel. The Church already believes that angels, under the dominion of Christ, are guarding over specific geographic locations, thus creating a theological underpinning for syncretic or pluralistic ecumenism on the basis of reverence for these beings. As many pluralists have argued, the goodness found in other religions is not to be considered as a mere shadow of the Catholic Church, rather, the truths waiting to be found there may often deserve to be recognized as novel contributions, “elements of sanctification and of truth” that otherwise could not be known (cf. LG 8). However, solidarity in origin and end does not imply natural immunity to corruption or any natural progress toward unity. That part takes a lot of work. The division of the nations after the time of Noah was “at once cosmic, social and religious. It was intended to limit the pride of fallen humanity united only in its perverse ambition to forge its own perfection as at Babel. But, because of sin, both polytheism and the idolatry of the nation and of its rulers constantly threaten this provisional economy with the perversion of paganism” (CCC 57). The Noahic covenant does indeed represent a universal promise of God to all the living, Christian or otherwise, but that promise was precisely for the coming of the High Priest who

would reopen the pathway to religious at-one-ment: “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 5: 7-14).

As Roy Abraham Varghese demonstrated in *The Christ Connection: How the World Religions Prepared the Way for the Phenomenon of Jesus:*

The primordial peoples who preceded all the organized religions and belief systems believed in a supreme God, a Father, to whom they turned for all their needs. They were also driven by the need to perform sacrifice in expiation and propitiation. When we come to the first systematically organized religions, those of the Indians, Chinese, and Persians, every one of them, in their own distinctive ways, were alerted to an impending event of great import centered on sacrifice and atonement and salvation: the sacrifice of Prajapathi and the redemption of humanity; the Border Sacrifice to Shang Di and the astral occurrences that seem to have accompanied a birth and death in a remote land; the sacrifice of Haoma and the prophecy of the Saoshyant. The Mediterranean mystery religions were all about sacrifice and the incarnation of deity. And, finally, we have the Jewish nation, who embodied in their own history the reality of sin and salvation, sacrifice and atonement, divine visitation and the promise of resurrection. All of this leads to the extraordinary possibility that Jesus (“Savior”) is the fulfillment not simply of the Jewish “idea” but of the beliefs and aspirations of the Indians, Chinese, and Persians, of the primordial tribes and the Mediterranean mystery religions.  

Work by the famous Sumerian authority Zechariah Sitchin points to a convergence between ancient mythologies and history, not normally entertained in mainstream academia. The content of that original history varies.

The Christian tradition clearly give precedence to the Septuagint, stating that it provides the hermeneutic that must be applied on-top-of other versions of ancient history. This article of faith requires one to entertain the possibility of a prophecy, with at least some knowledge of future events, that cannot be surpassed and so holds the scepter of truth over contradictory claims.

The overwhelming historicity of the Christ event continues to be that fact which places the Jesus story outside the scope of mythological pluralisms, and allows for the subsequent claim of Biblical authority as one of the extensions of this trans-historical event. Jesus of Nazareth can almost certainly be (relative to the scholarly criterion) located in a definite place and time. He was a fully human man who gave his adult life to the mission he believed was given him by God: to announce the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven and to establish a new living Body of divine sacrament on earth. His life was neither transient as professed by the philosophers nor cyclical like the other ancient myths. His miracles and prophecies were uniquely orchestrated for moral transformation, and he handed on this authority and

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68 Christ Connection, Chapter 10, Intro.
power to followers who were to be space-time vessels. Jesus’ declaration that He shared in the divine nature was a scandalous teaching, paradoxical and incomprehensible without the corresponding gift of the Holy Spirit, God’s own Life force by which to measure what true (‘He will lead you into all truth’). “His resurrection from the dead was unexpected and does not tie in either with pagan ideas of life after death (as most recently shown by N. T. Wright in his *The Resurrection of the Son of God*) or with Jewish expectations that centered on collective and not individual resurrection.”69 Thus, Christianity cannot be legitimately reduced to another myth without reconstructing history; and for this reason it is only non-historians who seem to entertain the idea. Schools contending that Jesus did not really exist are rapidly fading in popularity, although the trend continues to cling to life among skeptics who follow the nineteenth century ‘Jesus-as-product-of-mythology’ thesis. Nevertheless, the field of comparative religion has all but decimated the historical and anthropological evidence onto which this belief once adhered.70

While some of the pre-Christian myths could be cited as symbolic preparations for the historical Incarnation of God in Christ, there can be no doubt that there was and is no story to parallel the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus in pre- or post-Christian mythology. Those mythologists who argue that the Jesus narrative is fabricated out of Old Testament prophecies fail to acknowledge the New Testament contradictions to the conventional Jewish expectations of a ‘messiah’. Many Jews were confounded by the life of Jesus, not to mention Saul of Tarsus before his blinding revelation. “Paul initially could not believe in Jesus because of the curse associated with the cross. In later years, the Jewish Trypho was willing to concede to the Christian Justin that the Messiah is called to suffer, but he could not accept the punishment of the cross since it seemed contrary to Deuteronomy 22:23. Paul points out, of course, that Jesus redeemed us from this curse in the Torah by becoming a curse for us.”71 Paul and the early Jesus followers were not pagan scholars testing the veracity of Christ’s divine claim by detailed comparison to previous religious prophecies. Rather, Jesus Christ was introduced to the earth as indistinguishably human man and experienced by his lowly friends and family to be God Incarnate for mostly moral reasons. After his death and resurrection, his followers discovered the living relationship with God through Christ transforming their lives by the Spirit of Love. This Spirit testifies infallibly on Its own behalf. The liturgical rhythms of the Church were played *on top of* the ancient ‘times and seasons’ not *in imitation of* them. The Eucharist undermined all ancient idols by its simplicity, humility, and its reality – a sign chosen and transubstantiated by God Himself (‘not made of human hands’) (cf. Ps 115:4; Ps 135:15; Acts 17:25). Finally, the evangelistic and missionary force of the Christian movement consistently

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69 Christ Connection, Location 2157.
70 Christ Connection, Location 2102.
71 Christ Connection, Location 2165.
subordinated previous religious rituals and symbols, as is unquestionable throughout the Acts of the Apostles and Paul’s epistles.

C. A Jungian-Pauline Discernment of Signs

In his popular book, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, renowned scholar N.T. Wright records the unique assets of the Christian kerygma. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to Paul, is a four-cornered message. First, it is a Gospel of *crucifixion*; the death of the God-man on a cross won a definitive victory for the human person over the powers of evil, sin, and death. By this event, the demonic angels, principalities and powers were conquered in time and space, creating for human persons a gateway to Heaven by the free-willed submission to Christ’s body, the Sacramental Catholic Church. Secondly, the Gospel preaches the *resurrection* of the redeemed bodies of humanity through baptismal death into Christ’s death. This fulfills Old Testament and pagan prophecy, always a precondition to salvation. The resurrection is the first century event, and the ever-present Church, and the eschatological ‘second coming’ in a single object of faith. Thirdly, Christ announced his *kingship*, an anointing by the Holy Spirit that makes him the one and only Messiah and Savior and extends his kingdom into the realms of human order. Thus, Jesus is also, fourthly, the *Kyrios*, or Lord, true ruler of the universe, the one at whose name every knee must bow. It follows from the exclamation that Jesus Christ is true God, that all other spirits and ‘deities’ are not God. “Paul discovered, at the heart of his missionary practice, that when he announced the lordship of Jesus Christ, the sovereignty of King Jesus, this very announcement was the means by which the living God reached out with his love and changed the hearts and lives of men and women, forming them into a community of love across traditional barriers, liberating them from the paganism which had held them captive, enabling them to become, for the first time, the truly human beings they were meant to be.” 72 Paul did not merely preach a blueprint for becoming saved, but he participated in the saving action of God by the very proclamation itself.

Paul’s pedagogy toward the pagans and Jews, and toward the many hybrid spiritualties of his time, was unreservedly Christocentric. The later Christian tradition of demoting ancient ‘gods’ and ‘goddesses’ (especially constellations, nebulae, and planets) to angelic powers was not without precedence in Paul’s writings, but it was not promoted or disseminated with any zeal in his texts. The Israelites had had a precarious relationship with sun-worship throughout the Old Testament; often turning to the idol Baal, who was worshipped as god of the sun (cf. Judges 2:10-23; 1 Sam 7:3-4). Nevertheless, natural creations, like the sun, belong ontologically in matter and metaphor to the Creator.

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72 What St Paul Really Said, 61.
Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God (Col 2:16-19).

Paul also would have held the Old Testament belief that the entire human race sprouted from a single family and that, therefore, ‘every nation of men’ would share elements of synchronicity that are genetic, cultural, and religious (cf. CCC 57). It will always be a temptation to confuse similarity with identity, and the Church’s theologians, scientists of God, follow in the work of Paul to clarify these distinctions, always ‘increasing in the knowledge of God’ through ‘spiritual wisdom and understanding’ (cf. Col 1:9-10). The illumination of the intellect through supernatural grace is ultimately the only path to theological clarity and spiritual unity. The self-emptying, kenosis, of Christ is God’s own image of himself given to the world for this purpose: to unveil the mystery hidden from all ages; the mystery hidden under the dark and muddied glass of a human nature enslaved to sin. Because of Original Sin, hell is not so much punishment to humankind as it is destiny, Jesus Christ being ‘the only way of escape’ (cf. 1 Cor 10:13). Only God can reveal who God is. Paul proclaims in Sacred Scripture that the ancient and abiding Father became consubstantial with the body of Christ and over-powered nature with the Spirit of Love.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:5-11).

The above discussion of the interpretation of spiritual signs, whether they be astrological, ecological, biological, ritualistic, or unconscious archetypes, led to a brief examination of the Christian pedagogy of discernment in the writings of Paul and subsequent tradition. ‘Discernment of spirits’ (diakriseis pneumaon) is a phrase taken from 1 Corinthians 12:10. “Paul Debuchy defines it as ‘the judgment whereby to determine from what spirit the impulses of the soul emanate’. And ‘spirit’ here refers to the ‘various spiritual agents which, by their suggestions and movements, may influence the moral value of our acts’.”73 Although this gift involves differentiating between a perhaps numberless species of spiritual beings, its essential purpose is to recognize an action that is inspired by the Holy Spirit as opposed to one that is not.

The etymological source of the word “discernment” is the Greek diakresis, which Paul cites as a gift of the Holy Spirit. As such, it is freely assigned according to God’s plan for the salvation of all

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73 As quoted in, Pluralism and Discernment of Spirits, 417.
human souls (cf. 1 Tim 2:4). The charismatic gift of discernment of spirits is available to both men and women, laity and clergy, as Paul elucidated in his discussion of the topic, in 1 Corinthians 12:4–11:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Saint Thomas Aquinas devised four notes for ‘testing the spirits’ to discover if they are genuine divine prodigies or false demonic attacks: 1) the demonic ‘sign’ is short lived and the heavenly ‘sign’ persists; 2) the diabolic is futile and the angelic is useful; 3) the demonic is harmful to holiness while the divine is fruitful to one’s faith and morality; 4) angelic spirits invoke the name of the Lord with dignity while demonic spirits use shameful means. "But Aquinas went on to warn that sometimes demons operate through lasting and beneficial prodigies in order to deceive more successfully. Only the complete ensemble of all four signs is therefore a guarantee that an intervention is genuinely angelic.” Likewise, all four diabolic marks in the ‘sign’ must coincide to prove a supernaturally evil presence.74 Yet, Aquinas’ measures proved too simple, since he did not seem to believe demons could affect the interior or soul of a person but only work and tempt from the exterior physical. The Church holds that demonic possessions are in the body and not in the soul, but if demonic influence were always merely exterior or sensual, diagnoses of the demonic would have been much easier than history has shown them to be. Because ‘Satan disguises himself as an Angel of Light’ (2 Cor 11:14; cf. 2 Thes 2:9-12), no prophet, no mystic, no priest, however advanced, is immune to being deceived:

Writing a hundred years before Aquinas, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) had already warned against zeal without knowledge and indicated the connection between spirituality and demonic deception: “The more eager the zeal, the more vigorous the spirit, the more generous the love, so also the greater the need for more vigilant knowledge to restrain the zeal, to temper the spirit, to moderate the love.”75

The difficulty of discernment of spirits is closely connected to the virtues of modesty and moderation evinced through humility, discretion, patience, truth, and charity, notwithstanding the idiosyncratic modes of the individual. Therefore, the contemplative will always be more practiced in discernment of spirits than the mere theologian. But contemplation is an altered state of consciousness equally susceptible to the whole spectrum of spiritual influences as any illness or drug. Teresa of Avila,

74 Believe Not Every Spirit, 170 (emphasis added).
Francis de Sales and Frances de Chantel, to differing degrees, were skeptical of the authenticity of mystical experiences and religious people prone to extensive contemplation. For them, the ultimate judge of a true mysticism is the gentle unfolding fruits of time. Only interior intentions and their objects can, in the end, reveal the presence or lack of divine grace. Thus, the early modern period ended with the now infamous personal inquisitions of individual ‘mystics’ (often with a misogynistic bent), the large majority being females across every range and class of European life. By the eighteenth century, deeply mystical spiritualties were considered guilty until proven innocent. One of the areas of ‘private revelation’ (i.e. prophecy) most prone to demonic imitation has been that of Marian apparitions.

As the demarcations between false mysticism and demonic possession became more clear, so arose the distinction between deliverance, which could be practiced by any Christian, and exorcism, which was a rite reserved to the ordained. The criteria of genuine possession was listed under seven ‘signs’: demons make the possessed to 1) speak foreign languages that had previously been unknown to them; 2) reveal secrets and predict the future, 3) demonstrate physical strength above their condition or age, 4) exhibit hatred toward priests and holy objects, may sink into melancholy and desperation, 6) explode in rage and blasphemous outbursts, and, finally, 7) they can vomit sharp objects, including knives and pieces of glass. Some of these criteria, however, could lead to a misdiagnoses, due to their morphologic similarities to real mysticism. “Demons, after all, are fallen angels, and as such possess all the powers and attributes of good angels. They have perfect intelligence, memory, and will, and can predict the future (but only of natural events). They know human inclinations and dispositions, and do not err. Like good angels, they can appear as angels of light, and even as Christ, the Virgin Mary, or saints. But while good angels possess people for the glory of God and induce good feelings, fallen angels harm and cause pain.” The difficulty of avoiding personal biases in the process of discernment is as real for the Church as for the world:

Following the Roman Rite of 1614 (and the new guidelines of 1999) and the processes that were described in Believe Not Every Spirit, the new exorcists are instructed to consult with physicians and psychologists, and to exclude all natural explanations prior to embarking on their mission. And they are to look for (and find?) Satan among heavy metal rock bands and their followers, rather than within the souls of devout nuns and other mystics.
The segregation between psychological and spiritual ailments is clearest in the criteria for possession, and becomes less clear as the case of infection decreases in severity. Just as the human mind affects the spiritual realities of heaven and hell, so spiritual realities are indeed affecting the human brain. Where this fence is raised, and the significance of its sides, is the question of discernment of spirits existentially and supernaturally. The Church recognizes three levels of direct demonic influence: 1) possession, where a demon/s takes over the body (but not the soul) of a person; 2) integration, where a person willingly cooperates with a demon who possesses his or her body; and 3) obsession, where a person is oppressed by recurring thoughts that weigh him or her down as in depression. Since the victory over evil spirits is already won in the Baptism of Christ, exorcism and deliverance are ministries of healing, and their power culminates in the sacrament of Reconciliation. Exorcism, reconciliation, acts of contrition, and deliverance prayers are all methods of calling demons into the light of God’s judgment and out of the moral obscurity in which they thrive.

It is in awareness of this fact that Jesus says: “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.” And, “the eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!” (Mt 7:1-5; Mt 6:22-23). So it is in the spiritual battle that demons hide behind those issues which are most obscured in an individual’s own psyche, in the ‘shadow’ as Jung called it. One’s faults become the very peeves one judges in others, because this protects the shadow from the light and keeps the beam in one’s eye. The presumption of judgement is a form of attempted prediction of the future, the future of another’s life, even if only a prediction about tomorrow or this afternoon. This effectively isolates one from the very persons who would be most collaborative for mutual healing. As Father Daniel Patte says, the simplest rule of discernment is whether a thought, word, or action brings one closer to visible communion with the Church (the people of God), body, soul, and spirit. Often then, the discernment of spirits will rely on a slow maturation of communication and relationship.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola, like Paul, included discernment of spirits within the larger process of election and assimilation into Christ. Luigi Rulla suggests that, in the thought of Ignatius, spiritual

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discernment was distinct from the charismatic gift, with some overlap between the two, like that between a genetic talent and a developed skill. Discernment in the existential sense is the skill built through living the Christian life; it is an objective kind of sanctity. The action of grace, which may be assimilated more or less by human nature, provides subjective sanctity that is available to all in the present moment. “As concerned with the presence of grace, discernment relates to subjective sanctity and apostolic effectiveness; as concerned with the appropriateness of the individual’s response to grace, discernment may be related to objective sanctity and apostolic effectiveness; and this is the case when the response to grace is subconsciously motivated, not by the search for the Kingdom of God, but by a search which, in ultimate analysis, is for oneself.”

In an Ignatian evaluation between goods, the ‘affective’ is a perceived good that is ultimately self-focused, while the ‘effective’ is a true good that is self-transcendent. Rulla brilliantly expounds on the role that these conscious and unconscious consistencies can play within the psyche, influencing one’s ability to discern spirits and assimilate values in the way of Christ.

The spiritual gift of discernment has to do, not with a supernatural reasoning powers, but with a gifted ability to absorb additional data related to spirits – beyond the senses of those without the gift. The existential discernment process would be the same for those with or without the gift. However, those with the gift would perceive patterns in experience that the others did not. The difference appears in Rulla’s comparison of Rom 7:14-25 and Gal 5:16-17. The ‘transformation of the mind’ in Romans expresses a universal Christian rebirth and growth in sanctity, but the war of ‘flesh versus Spirit’ in Galatians refers to trials unique to various psychological profiles. “Following Lonergan, it can be said that two notions vanish: ‘the notion of pure intellect or pure reason that operates on its own without guidance or control from responsible decision; and the notion of will as an arbitrary power indifferently choosing between good and evil’.”

Thus, Christian anthropology suggests that spiritual direction and psychoanalysis should work together in discernment, remembering nonetheless that charity is the final judge of the good.

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, “allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills” (1 Cor 12:11). He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit” (cf. 1 Thes 5:12, 19-21). These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church. Extraordinary gifts are not to be sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from their use; but judgment as to their genuinity and proper use belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the Church, to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good (cf. Jn 11:52).

83 “Discernment of Spirits and Christian Anthropology,” 542.
84 “Discernment of Spirits and Christian Anthropology,” 567.
85 Lumen Gentium, 12.
In conclusion to this section, the author offers his own rubric for practicing the discernment of signs. Imbedded in this practice is a kind of intentional ‘altered consciousness’ endorsed by decades of successful psychoanalytical therapy. As Carl Jung understood, “Today, we are all influenced by an archetypal occurrence, which shows us that we need a correction to the one-sided development of science since the 17th century. This constellated archetype is the hierosgamos, the sexual unity of a god with a goddess, that alchemy described as the coniunctio oppositorum, and which we can - in modern terms - paraphrase as a union of matter and soul at the background of a monistic psychophysical reality, which is itself invisible.”^86 The invisible interplay of parts within the self is a balance of masculine and feminine each in active and passive modes. Because the self cannot reach perfect symmetry in this life, due to limitations from both sin and temporality, this ‘squaring’ of the circle is a journey that culminates in the reward of a good death. It will be sin’s role especially to exaggerate the asymmetry. It will be the role of Christ to bring the seemingly imperfect into harmony with itself and also to assimilate asymmetrical beauty into the larger perfection of the Trinity. ‘Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect’ (cf. Mt 5:48) is the paradox of Christian perfection, and its asymmetry is mirrored in psychoanalysis of the individual ‘internal family system’ despite its healthy moral efforts toward symmetry or balance. “Jung reduces the six-fold or double-triadic mandala, [known as] the Seal of Solomon, in a very unusual way to a quaternity… In his typology, the (3+1) structure serves the distinction between the ‘trinity’ of the conscious functions and its opposite, the monistic unconscious one. But in his model of the unconscious' center, the so-called Self, he prefers the quaternity in the shape of a square, which means that all members are equally weighted. Thus, we can already conclude here that this ambivalence shows a certain unconsciousness of Jung in relation to the problem of the fourth.”^87 The discrepancy in symmetry which Jung did not fully grasp or appreciate is explained in the Greco-Catholic doctrine of evil as a privation of good. The fourth stands as a mediator, like the proto-divine feminine figure of Mary, between the Trinity and the human will to sin. The ‘fourth’ in the below model is best represented as the Child, the amorphous lover, creator, and observer in the psyche, a prefiguration of the spiritual-resurrected body. The shadows of the faces are the ‘protectors’ of the pure and defenseless child, who is also the gate to fully enlightened self.

One of the most important tasks of alchemy was the transformation or transmutation of the unrefined into the refined. The unrefined was the so-called prima materia, the refined the lapis, the philosopher's stone, the philosophical gold or the corups subtile (subtle body) which in far-eastern alchemy is the diamond body. The alchemist's fascination with matter was compensatory to the too spiritual Christian eon, which demonized the body (matter) and the feminine principle in general. Of course they were not consciously aware of why they were so drawn to this effort and this is why some of their explorations became literal attempts to make gold.

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^87 Roth, The Return of the World Soul, 3.2.
However, the alchemist’s work prefigured the task we have at the start of the 21st century - and that is to consciously realize the importance of the body, the feminine principle, or Eros functioning for it is pure gold. Such a conscious realization of the feminine principle will provide a much needed balancing of the human psyche and thus how it relates not only to others but also in how it values and honours the earth and its resources.88

The demonizing of the feminine in Christendom was part of an influential genre of theological discourse, but it was never rooted in Christian doctrine itself nor did it ever take hold there. The author is, however, participating in the renewal of the feminine and earthly aspects of Christian tradition in modern scholarship, not least for the sake of greater balance in the human psyche. The Catholic point of contention with both medieval neoplatonic and hermetic ideas is the same but at opposite ends. Catholicism neither consigns the material world/body to evil, nor exalts the material world/body to divinity. This, again, constitutes the integrally fractional complementarity indicative of sacramental nuptial unities. An unresolvable paradox within the constraints of time-space. Thankfully, the human body-soul composite is not destined to remain within these borders forever. Thus, the project of holistic development reaches beyond the limits of discursive vision by asserting the groundedness of fleshly existence alongside the neo-material life of beatitude – the latter being mystically accessible in the present moment through unmerited grace.

The human person is spiritually generative, as Catholicism professes – “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Mt 12:34). The hearts of men and women are like emanating spheres of light. The interlacing rays of heart meeting heart form infinite colors of light to be discerned. One’s person, or light projection, overlaps in part with the spiritual influence of others’ projections. There is also a third and fourth sphere who move in and out ‘where they will’: the Spirit of God, but also, the spirits of evil. To identify these shades of light and shadow, the human person wears a four-shaded mask, each with eyes of separate focus. These are ancient masks in the psyche which, though serving different roles, can never be fully distinguished from each other. Together they make an ‘internal family system’ in each developed mind.89 This fourfold family borrows from the Greek elements, medieval temperaments, ecclesiology, and Jungian personality theory. They may at times be confused or have contradictory characteristics, due to the normal ambiguity of ideas, symbols, dreams, and personalities.90 It is important to recognize, as in internal family systems therapy, that a healthy psyche is one which turns easily between faces adapting to circumstance and need, without compromising the unity and singular will of the self: “To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people,

90 “Discernment of Spirits and Christian Anthropology,” 544.
that by all means I might save some” (1 Cor 9:22). These faces are the ‘Four Seasons of Fatherhood’ – meaning Fatherhood as an extended trinitarian analogy of the psyche – allowing together for the fullest expression of all that is possibly human and every spectrum of masculinity and femininity.

The four faces are the Priest, the Father, the Child, and the Mother. The Mother and the Priest see each other’s weaknesses most clearly and are similar in their domesticity, but active and passive respectively in approach. The Child and the Father correct each other’s excesses and are similar in their leadership, though also passive and active respectively in approach. The pairs of the Priest with the Child and the Mother with the Father work very well as companions. The Mother and the Child represent the active and the contemplative feminine respectively. The Father and the Priest name the contemplative and active masculine respectively. To move freely through these relational modes will maximize the conflict between that which is light (from God and the authentic human) and that which is shadow (from the devil and flesh and world). Each archetypal ‘mask’ reveals shadows in the others. When the faces are integrated in the Self, they become a fabric of virtue unlikely to unwind. The self will have become infused to the Spirit in the Body of Christ. Evil can only imitate one of these faces, to hide behind its goodness, ignoring its counter facets. Evil relies on privating or perverting the truth. Saint Paul warns, “for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” (2 Cor 11:14).
The first mask is the Mother’s face, the upper right arm of the rose-star. She is also the warrior, the Queen, the sanguine, the body. She commerces with the currency of flesh. The Mother sees with the full capacity of the senses, sensual, but with a social, spatial, and kinesthetic intelligence. Her faculty is associated with the classical ‘passions’. The Mother is a master of environments, confident in terms of corporeal preparedness. She filters life through bodily and cultural fitness. Though she often does, she need not possess great physical prowess, for she will nonetheless carry fortitude as her body confronts the three-dimensional otherness of the world. She is confident against all that is not of her own body, with a willingness to know the pain from damage or insult to its integrity if necessary. She is hyper-outward-focused, on a tactile objective, and she deals with others on a superficial level, on the stage of physical or social performance. In Christ’s human nature, the Mother is the face of his humanity, holding his identity as God Incarnate, knowing physical humiliation and death. In the ecclesial sense, the Mother-face remembers the universal participation of the people of God in the priesthood of Christ and the presence of God in the individual bodily temple of the baptized. The shadow of the Mother face is the physically violent fighter or the aesthetic manipulator. If one has worn the Mother face too long, often as a defense mechanism against the Priest, she may lose wisdom and humility becoming self-righteousness. She may become prideful about her physical allure, wielding the body as a weapon, whether of pleasure or anger. She might become instinctual and unthinking in action. This person could be a killer, a prostitute, a terrorist, or a conspirator. “Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil… And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were seal for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” (Eph 4:26, 30-32).

Paul represents the mature and holy Mother face when he asserts the dignity of his work in conjunction with his sincere piety. He does not present his deeds primarily for recognition, but as a profitable sign of his laboring for Christ. For example, in his defensive ‘boasting’ to the Corinthian Church one witnesses Paul’s intentional turning from a Mother to a Priest face in order to clarify his authority:

I repeat, let no one think me foolish. But even if you do, accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. What I am saying with this boastful confidence, I say not as the Lord would but as a fool. Since many boast according to the flesh, I too will boast. For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves! For you bear it if someone makes slaves of you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face. To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I
was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in
danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city,
danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a
sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things,
there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is
made to fall, and I am not indignant? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness (2
Cor 11:16-30; emphasis added).

The second mask is the Priest face. In Jungian terms the ‘Sage’. The Priest has a contradictory
nature; his identity is in sacrifice. He is a sacrificial victim to knowledge of truth. This mode cultivates a
special intimacy with the shadow, paradoxically strengthened by its own conceptual effacement. “Let no
one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he
may become wise” (1 Cor 3:18). The Priest face perceives discursively through the intellect, ceaselessly
analyzing the universe, learning, for example, that his body is dust and wind. Thus, being one with his
ideas theoretically, he uncovers the patterns of earth and air and acquires their science. The Priest face is
a master of dichotomy and synthesis, mystical in its ability to reconcile paradoxes. He is the
metaphysician, the scientist, the contemplative. These characteristics give his face the eyes to see the
spiritual realm in detail. The intellectual person notices the subtleties of intellectual beings (Aquinas
refers to angels as pure intellect). His instinct is to serve through teaching, his wisdom is inspiring and
contagious. He operates rightly when in a spirit of humility, since the acceptance of transience is essential
in his role as a vessel. In Christ’s human nature, the Priest is the face that patiently edifies and instructs,
planting seeds of truth with the greatest supernatural faith, reaping mystically multiplying fruits. In the
ecclesial sense, the Priest face would be analogous to the presence of God in the Sacraments, the offering
of one’s powers to the edifice of others. “‘When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he
gave gifts to men’. In saying, ‘He ascended’, what does it mean but that he had also descended into the
lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that
he might fill all things (Eph 4:8-10).

The shadow on the Priest’s face is cowardice toward people and passivity toward the world. The
risk of too much contemplation is a lack of fruits:

Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother
who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For you yourselves
know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's
bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to
any of you. It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. For
even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not
eat (2 Thes 3:6-10).

The Priest can use knowledge to control his circumstances, avoiding encounters with the unknown; he
can thus be deceptive and vampiric to others outside his specializations. Thus St. Paul warns: “Having put
away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another… Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Eph 4:25, 28-29). Even worse, the ‘Sage’ can become a worshipper of occult knowledge, even gaining spiritual power over others to bolster his ego: “This ‘knowledge’ puffs up, but love builds up. If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, he is known by God” (1 Cor 8:2-3). Again, an unconscious wound may be at work in the shadow, a spirit of the flesh that fears exposure through relationship. A dark priest may suffer outright demonic enslavement. But there is freedom to thrive under the mask of the ‘Wise Man’. The true Priest-Sage must not be overly dependent upon his own revelations, or rely on empirical evidence before every action, but he must patiently and faithfully test his revelations against the reality of his other masks and the living history of his family and friends. This face does no service to vanity or pride; its transformational power comes from encountering and accepting one’s wounds in humility.

For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw – each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor 3:11-15).

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Phil 2:5-8).

The third face is the authoritarian Father-King. This is the face of law and order, a position of emotional security and generative power. The Father discerns boundaries well and knows how to protect and expand his own domain. He cultivates unity through an artful coalescence of wills. He lives to enlarge the kingdom of heaven. Master of justice, he satisfies the disappoints of compromise with the balm of fairness. If he knows the kingdom’s welfare will benefit because of it, or if he must defend its purity from defilement, Father will initiate political action even at the expense of his immediate popularity. The good King enforces limitations on his subjects for the sole purpose of enhancing their growth. Hierarchy and equality are here brought into a reciprocal complementarity. In Christ’s human nature, the Father’s face shows strongly in his confrontations with the demonic. This authority is synonymous with a true doctrine, against spirits of falsity and confusion, realized in the figurative and literal exorcism that occurs in the ministration of his Sacraments: “I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose
on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt 16:18-19). The ministerial priesthood in a unique way represents and embodies this kingly aspect of God in the world.

The shadow of the Father’s face is the self-righteous ruler, power without responsibility. He is that figure in history past and present, a killer, by war or economics, whose dystopia must be created at any cost. He is afraid of other strong leaders and so he prefers his kingdom to be oppressive to his subjects. He has clung egotistically to a kingly identity and forgotten to whom authority ultimately belongs – “he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen” (1 Tim 6:15-16). The true Father-King concedes his status to the good of the populace, as God desires. Saint Paul teaches about the shadow spirits of this face when he says: “Godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs” (1 Tim 6:6-10). The greedy corporate thief, the despotic president, and the psychotic demagogue prey on the desperate, the scared, and the ignorant; they lead their constituents into the sickness. The good Father leads only as a means to God’s ends. For this reason, he is helped by a strong and independent citizenry and ponders their advice. He is open to changing the law of his will to meet the needs of his sheep. Like the gently authoritarian parent, he issues godly commands only after a sincere and listening ear. Those under his obedience are those for whose sake he leads; his authority is a service of charity. It is a dangerous, challenging, ethereal, and humbling role because it is a role that belongs to God, the only pure Giver. As Paul reminds, “In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us… or you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory (1 Thes 2:6-8, 11-12).

Finally, the Child is the counter-weight and inspiration of the Father. She is the ‘Lover’ and the ‘Poet’ in Jung’s images. It is the most essential and delicate of faces, childlike in the positive sense, pure and beautiful. The other faces often emerge as ‘protectors’ of this one, because it must come out and play in its own space. When the Child is hurt by life, the other faces will often turn to their darkside in
desperation to help. “If the king holds the real together in unity, if the warrior protects the necessary boundaries of the real, if the magician shows us how to live the paradox, depth, and dark side of things, then the lover [child] holds it all together with the sweet glue of appreciation and occasional ecstasy.”

This mode is utterly relational receptivity and existential gratitude. The Child face perceives spiritual joy in all circumstances and practices holy eros toward the most mundane events. Her art is the talent of seeing as God sees, the many layered cosmic dance of the nuptial mystery. Importantly, whether male or female in sex, the Child dimension of the psyche is primarily feminine; it recognizes Love as a gift first received from the Divine Bridegroom.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church (Eph 5:25-32).

The Child archetype is master of intimacy, reconciling interpersonal conflict with poetic tact. She is the painter, the composer, the nurse, and the servant. In conjunction with the intellectual intuition of the Priest face, she intuits others’ emotions and moves freely into empathy with each. She operates characteristically in a spirit of purity, simplicity, honesty, and nakedness. She takes enjoyment without guilt, because she is equipped to suffer emotionally with joy. In Christ’s human nature, the Child face of his Personhood is the face of Mary his mother, who weaves sorrow with joy in a perfect pattern of creative compassion. This is why she is most immaculate of all created persons. In the ecclesial sense, the Child face is analogous to the presence of God in the ‘other’, the neighbor whom the Christian loves with the love of God, as God loved first. The Child-Lover listens and receives the other. She is impregnated by a new life more than the sum of what was brought to the relationship. The Child is therefore the most creative of the faces. She constructs masterpieces from the details of her interactions. She makes every particular a personal symbol and relates all to the romantic initiative of God for her soul.

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything. We have spoken freely to you,

Corinthians; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also (2 Cor 6:2-13).

The shadow of the Child’s is her overreactive protectors, though she herself admits no darkness, she will hide within it. Gluttony, lusts, and addiction are her most frequent shields. Her face is so near to the resurrection that human happiness fails when it is neglected. Unacknowledged or forgotten, the most adhesive demons will be summoned in her place. A lack of joy will always be replaced by artificially-induced pleasures, that is, until despair and self-destruction run their course. If one is not able to know joy as beloved child of God, then any lesser loves must become idols. “To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled” (Titus 1:15). The Child must learn the discipline of vulnerability and wield a ready temperance, even if only for the sake of those whose faith is weak and whose hearts are sick. Paradoxically, the Child-Lover must not become overly reliant on human loves, for as that reliance takes the place of God, so the shadow will grow in strength. Nevertheless, the Love who is God demands His expression to come through living souls. Sensuality, emotionality, conversation is crucial to human well-being. The hope of the Child must be learned, through the tangible love of parents and maintained in friendships throughout life. When this does not occur, she will go the way of the addict or pervert. The supernatural virtue of Hope is all that can save the most isolated heart.

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we can confidently say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?’ (Heb 13:1-6).

*Priest* – Mystical, Fatherly, Service, Wisdom, Fire (mixed masculine)

Primary encounter with shadow and sin

- Supports the Child
- Balances the Mother
- Amplifies the Father

*Father* – Pastoral, Authoritative, Kingly, Initiative, Justice, Earth (hard masculine)

- Head in temporary image of God the Father
- Partners the Child as low-Christological Self
**Child** – Artistic, Spousal, Intimate, Receptive, Fortitude, Air (hard feminine)

Primary face of the Self to the Spirit

Partners the Father as ‘Resurrected’ Self

**Mother** – Sensual, Warrior, Charismatic, Confidence, Temperance, Water (mixed feminine)

Social intelligence

Supports the Father

Balances the Priest

Amplifies the Child

The neural engine processes all the various sciences through the same psychological filters; there is a curricular coherence to psychoanalytical reflection as it parallels theological contemplation. The holy does not insult the natural, and this is a test of spiritual allegiances. The counter measure to sinful divination (spirits of the devil), pathological behavior (evil spirits of the world), or mere subconscious concupiscence (evil spirits of the flesh), one can employ a model, as the above, in an existential discernment of spirits and signs. As one dialogues with the faces, similar to internal family systems therapy, the archetypes communicate with each other in an effort to become a ‘family’, headed by the single-unified-self who is espoused to the Holy Spirit. In response to the worldly environment a healthy motherly mode should assert oneself in (1) Chaste Dignity, defending the personal value of one’s perceptions without claiming total objectivity. In response to authorities, one’s fatherly side should exercise (2) Charitable Leadership by practicing an inclusivism of opinions in regard to the sign without conceding one’s own opinion to be insulted or defaced. When negotiating the realm of priestly idealism, one will need (3) Patient Faith to bear the beating waves of time until all but the purest truth of the sign or revelation has eroded away. Finally, the inner spousal child must resist the temptation to cling to relationships by exercising (4) Hopeful Imagination to artistically color the input of loved ones, separating evil elements away from the beloved persons themselves. She must interpret the good in light of the Worship of Christ, the earthly fountain of all Loves.

Francis De Sales emphasized in *On the Love of God* that the discernment of mystical experiences will finally rest on the state of the will-faculty, in or out of charity, and not on a rational analysis of the sensual and/or spiritual data. “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is
patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (2 Pet 3:9). If a revelation stands the test of time by bearing fruits for the upbuilding of Christ, if it coincides with the mystical state of being that is living the beatitudes, then its trustworthiness and divine origin will be self-evident. In the meanwhile, all of the above must be consistently applied, daily dying and rising with the Body of Christ. The Sacraments of the Catholic Church possess the supreme privilege of being the mystical signs to which all others conform. Radical ecstasies dim in the radiance of Divine Liturgy.

“Through the liturgy Christ, our redeemer and high priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with, and through his Church… In a liturgical celebration the Church is servant in the image of her Lord, the one leitourgos; she shares in Christ’s priesthood (worship), which is both prophetic (proclamation) and kingly (service of charity)” (CCC 1069-70). The life and prayer of the Church is the preferential ‘lifestyle’ for receiving and discerning signs within the ‘new body’ which Christ shares. Jesus the Logos is the absolute eternally anointed head of the symbolic order. No alternative revelations or signs can take His place as the sign of God or exercise the same categorical power. This dogmatic truth claim need not be felt as a despotic coercion over other spiritualities – if those other religious systems will submit to the cosmic Christ they will find themselves fulfilled rather than censored, finding a room prepared within the ‘hopeful imagination’ of the Mind of an Incarnate God.

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to beings that by nature are no gods; but now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits, whose slaves you want to be once more? You [idolatrously] observe days, and months, and seasons, and years! I am afraid I have labored over you in vain. (Gal 3:27-29 - 4:1-10)

For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him. For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.
Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; never be conceited. Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” No, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (Rom 12:3-21).
III. Psychotropics, Anthropology & Prophecy

Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

manifesta autem sunt opera carnis quae sunt fornicatio inmunditia luxuria idolorum servitus veneficia inimicitiae contentiones aemulationes irae rixae dissensiones sectae invidiae homicidia ebrietates comesationes et his similia quae praedico vobis sicut praedixi quoniam qui talia agunt regnum Dei non consequentur.

φανερὰ δὲ ἐστιν τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκὸς ἤτινα ἐστίν πορνεία ἀκαθαρσία ἁπάθεια εἰδολολατρία ψαρμακεία ἐξήρα ἐρημοθεία διηγομέναι αἰρέσεις φθόνοι μέθαι κόμοι καὶ τὰ δήμοι τοῦτοι ἄ προλέγω ὑμῖν καθὼς προέπουν ὅτι οἱ ταυτὰ πράσσοντες βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν.

In Galatians 5:19-21 cited above, Paul lists the works of the flesh. The word pharmakeia (φαρμακεία) in Greek, veneficia in Latin, and translated “sorcery” in the RSV, “witchcraft” in the KJV and NIV, is one of these works. Derived from a morally neutral earlier form of the word, pharmaka – which referred merely to edible medicinal substances – for Paul the term references a practice of administering drugs or poisons for the sake of manifesting or soliciting spiritual power. This practice must have been common in his time, even among the Jews and their Christian counterparts. As Paul implies in the first chapter of this letter, “there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed” (Gal 1:7-8).

Professor Tom Horn defines pharmakeia’s only other Biblical use, in the Book of Revelation (9:21; 18:23), as a real ‘sorcery’ that opens metaphysical gateways to a spiritual knowledge, which God has closed. God commands out of love for his people, but He does not force obedience. Many instances in the Old Testament, and one or two passages in the New, suggest the existence, past or present, of forbidden technologies accompanied by forbidden idol Gods. The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge is the archetypal example, but others appear in pericopes of Genesis about the children of Cain, the tower of Babel, and the idolatrous Canaanites. Archeological and anthropological evidence has been discovered all over the world of inexplicable megalithic structures and advanced beings, in the pyramids of Egypt, proliferated throughout Native American histories, at Tiwanaku, Bolivia, in Hannibal’s Carthage, through the Incan Chinkana tunnels, in extra-Biblical scriptures, and in the Sumerian Enuma Elish, among many other sites and modern records of paranormal activity. This technology parallels closely to particular psychoactive drug experiences and subjectively authentic alien encounters, with their accompanied ‘visions’ and ‘prophecies’. There is no reason to doubt that such realities contributed to the context of Paul’s warning in Galatians and his use of the word ‘pharmakeia’.

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The *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible* identifies the conflict in Galatia in the follow excerpt. Paul was preaching against the forced circumcision of Gentiles and those who wanted to following Christianity under the so-called ‘Judaisers’:

Before the coming of Christ, the rite of circumcision was the doorway into God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:9-14) and the sacrament of initiation into the family of Israel (Lev 12:3). The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, however, marks a turning point in covenant history where circumcision is now set aside, along with the entire body of liturgical and ceremonial legislation promulgated by Moses. Through his Cross, Christ has redeemed us from the curses of the Old Covenant (Gal 3:13) and unleashed the divine blessings of the New Covenant in a powerful way, inaugurating a ‘new creation’ (6:15) and a renewed ‘Israel’ (6:16).

One may not grant precedence to a spiritual force above Jesus himself, that is, without incurring damnation, including the assumed spiritual force that was attached to the ritual of circumcision. To be sure of its provisional nature, Paul went to the apostolic center of the Church to test his private revelation against the Public Revelation of the Church, that is, the Lord’s anointed ‘pillars’ of Peter, James, and John (cf. 1:18-19; 2:1-2). Paul did this, not to gain political influence in the community, but to have the official approval of Christ, and to remain ‘mindful of the poor’ (cf. 2:7-10).  

Baptism is the definitive replacement of circumcision. What was symbolic adoption in the Old Covenant became literal adoption in the New. Before Christ, the ritual signs, of both Jews and Gentiles, awaited their transformation. God’s cosmic body, who is Christ the prophesied heir, has taken over the symbolic order and designated the metaphysical gateways to Heaven in its sacraments. In Galatia, when the gifts of the Holy Spirit descended upon the baptized, many who had practiced occultic ceremonies presumed that their newfound ‘powers’, at least in part, had roots in these pre-Christian rituals. Paul had to emphasize constantly, even to Peter himself, that Christ superimposed himself over all previous signs, and that the freedom of the Spirit is a gift of Faith and not a work of law or ritual. The vision of Peter in Acts 10 illustrates a careful discernment of signs through patient prayer and the counsel of believers. This model of revelation contradicts practices of divination, because its outward gaze of charity has its origin in God’s initiative. Consequently, Peter, Paul and the rest of the believers are instructed not to build up again those acts of worship which had been broken down for the sake of the Gospel – the main example being the Jerusalem Temple which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. If one does continue to presume the efficacy of these now supplanted symbols and offerings, he transgresses, not merely a new law, but the Spirit of Love Himself. There is only one act of worship that has power anymore: “O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you

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suffer so many things in vain – if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith” (3:1-5).

Those who are under the law are under the curse of that law, since none can uphold all its precepts, none are justified by its works. Instead, God became a man and destroyed the curse of the law in his morally perfect Body (cf. 3:10-14). From this Body, after his death and received through Faith, freedom and justification are given for the works of Love in obedience of faith to the commandments of God. “Brethren, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman. For freedom Christ has set us free” (4:31-5:1). In Genesis, Abraham’s mistress Hagar is the daughter of an idol faith ruled by the ‘flesh’ and impregnated out of fear. Abraham’s wife Sarah is the daughter of the covenant, sanctified to bear the father of Israel through a miracle. The ‘flesh’ for Paul is essentially concupiscence, while the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ is sanctification. Against the fruit of the Spirit there is no law, or rather there is only the law of Christ, in whom ‘all things are possible’. This ‘law’ is a new creation, a new cosmic body, a new body of humanity, and a new individual body, each part sharing in the burdens of the whole while also reaping the fields of its own labors. This ‘new law’ begets new freedom because it reaches beyond justice into mercy and beyond happiness to beatitude.

The context of Galatians Chapter 5 suggests the proper use of Christian freedom: “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” Paul references the old law of Leviticus (19:18) as it was fulfilled in Christ and should be lived by all Christians: “you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (cf. 5:13-15). In order to discern that which is of the flesh, Paul gives his list of works as cited at the beginning of this section. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (5:22, emphasis added). These are the marks of any experience, idea, or deed that is ruled by the King of Love. If pharmakeia is to be distinguished, in terms of an orthodox Christian and Pauline moral framework, from modern uses of psychoactive substances and/or other induced mystical ecstasies, these practices, intentionally and methodologically pure or not, must first equally adhere to this rule of spiritual fruit (v. 5:22). The following will entail a brief review of scholarly opinions on this subject and concluding remarks.

95 Ignatius Catholic Study Bible, Galatians 5:16-24, Commentary.
96 “A Few Notes on the Use of the Scripture in Galatians,” 299.
97 Paul, Master of the Spiritual Life, 177-78.
In *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*, Dead Sea scrolls scholar John Allegro seriously hypothesized that the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible were written as a cryptogram of an ancient mushroom cult:

Whether it is Esther's crown, or the capitals of the temple columns, or the names of the apostle Peter, or the Cross, or a host of other instances, almost everywhere we look we encounter the mushroom. The Bible stories are merely “cover-stories” (p. xx) for this cult, their purpose being to deceive the Establishment (whether the Jewish authorities or, in the case of Christianity, the Roman State), and so preserve the secrets of a cult that reaches back to Sumerian times.^[8]

Allegro entertained the idea that, not unlike many other ancient religions, psychedelic rituals were embedded into the earliest traditions of Christianity. Making use of pseudo-philological methods, his thesis relied entirely on linguistic evidence. Essentially, the whole corpus of Scripture was accused of concealing allegories and allusions to the psychotropic mushroom *Amanita muscaria*. These references were hidden from the common reader by secret typologies, abbreviations, rhymes, and spellings that were codes for the fungus. Cyril Richardson reviewed Allegro’s method and deemed it unscientific: “Were Allegro to apply this type of scholarship to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *New York Telephone Directory* he would undoubtedly be able to unmask both works as extensive cryptograms of his fictitious cult.”^[9]

Allegro’s thought has nevertheless influenced several contemporary media purveyors. In more credible research, *Amanita muscaria* was shown to be an important element of Hindu tradition, but there is no evidence of its use in the ancient Mediterranean. It is not unlikely, however, that some sects of Gnosticism used psychoactive substances during the time of Christianity’s rise. Historians have analyzed the connection between celebratory drug inebriation and corresponding astrological events. Scholars have contended that astro-theology and shamanism where common to all ancient religions.^[10] The origins of Christianity are inevitably caught up in this discussion. Ancient mystery schools disseminated information sparingly, according to hierarchal achievement within the school – the source of timeless conspiracy theories about occult (hidden) knowledge, privy only to the upper echelons of society. This practice is purposed to apply to Christianity as well, as in the ‘discipline of the secret’, an early catechumenal practice. However, in Christianity the *disciplina arcani*, as it was called, referred to the reservation of the highest mysteries of faith for the baptized as opposed to catechumens or non-Christians. The hierarchy of doctrine had only two official levels, catechumenate and mystagogy. This practice

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differs significantly from the mystery schools in its lack of additional stratification. Where the mystery school required advancement by means of institutional promotion, the Christian community awards by the fruits of holiness (and the latter reward often comes with persecution rather than fortune). Christian piety is expressed by faith in the incarnate nature of the sacraments and a radical detachment from worldly advancement. No two facts illustrate this difference better than the early Christian belief in eating Christ’s body-blood and the resilience of martyrdom in defense of its objective truth. An obfuscated contrast shows in the desire for spiritual power in this life versus the desire for spiritual union with God after death. Following this logic, Justin Martyr explicitly rejected the Roman mystery religions of the second century as demonic imitations of the true faith.

Infamous ethnobotanist Terence McKenna in his acclaimed text, *Food of the Gods: The Search for the Original Tree of Knowledge* (1992), asserted that human beings evolved their distinguishing self-reflective capacity through, a firstly accidental, and subsequently intentional, ingestion of hallucinogenic plants. In the wake of this psychological expansion, humans became more proficient providers and better philanthropists, gaining clear evolutionary advantages from these chemical encounters. As the title suggests, the emergence of the human ego also led to a departure from nature and into technology, the origin of evil in the world. More than a scientific study, McKenna’s book is a moral exhortation against masculinized ‘dominator societies’ who have destroyed or subjugated the original feminine ‘partnership societies’. McKenna is highly sensitive to the political agendas behind modern drug law. He necessarily draws attention to leviathan pharmaceutical companies and their many legalized mind-altering drugs, and how these latter correlate to thousands more deaths a year than the worst of illegal activities. McKenna’s insights in this regard are outstanding, as he outlines the relationship between addiction and language. Chemical addictions of many kinds create and amplify addictions of language thereby fortifying habitual worldviews. On the verge of conspiracy, legalized drugs support dominator lifestyles: efficient, mechanical, practical, and individualistic mentalities edged forward by coffee, alcohol, sugar, tobacco, and other focusing stimulants (all of which are chemically addictive).

Ignoring McKenna’s shaky misconstrual of Christian doctrine with Western imperialism, his is a noteworthy solution to the human tendency toward addiction and dependency. Anthropologist Graham Hancock makes a similar argument in *Supernatural: Meeting with the Ancient Teachers of Mankind*, where he alludes to the repression of consciousness-altering practices, whether they be drug-induced or caused by meditative practices, as a main cause in the materialist and corporate turn of Western society.

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Neuroanatomist and author, Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, has also discovered interesting evidence for the value of fluid conscious states. Her leading-edge neuroanatomy research suggests very positive advancements for human interaction and civilization.\textsuperscript{103} Having suffered a stroke in the left hemisphere of her brain, Taylor lost the mathematical and linguistic circuits of her mind for a period of time. As a result, the normal internal dialogue – that analyzes sense data according to past experience and judges what actions ought to be taken next – was silenced. The phenomenological consequences of this trauma were utterly transformative for her. Without language, emotion became purified of its previous associations, allowing Taylor to be absorbed in the present moment without any baggage or presuppositions. To Taylor this was a mystical state of unadulterated wonder, a union with the divine, or ‘Nirvana’ as she later called it. This experience recalls the thesis of McKenna, who proposed that the development of language might itself be considered a kind of Fall from grace. The story of the tower of Babel relates a similar idea:

\begin{quote}
“Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.” So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel... (Gen 11:4-9; emphasis mine).
\end{quote}

The Judeo-Christian interpretation of this passage, in the context of the rest of the Pentateuch, is that the technology of language and (discursive) reason, even at a level of maximal efficiency (where human dominion would be theoretically perfect), is not sufficient to reach the beatific vision. Without broaching the question of whether Taylor was in a state of supernatural grace during her stroke, it is enough to emphasize that her life has been radically refocused on living and sharing her relationship with ‘God’. She preaches the necessity that all peoples ritually nurture and celebrate this relationship. It is remarkable how close Taylor’s experience corresponds to records of psychotropic experience, revealing the power of such drugs to open a person to new forms of spirogenetic liberation. “Metzner (1999b, pp. 169-170) echoed the view that psychedelics act as a catalyst that assist us in breaking free of the habits of cognition (Schroll, 2005b; see also Metzner, 2008, p. 42; Schroll & Rothenberg, 2009).”\textsuperscript{104}

It is possible, however, to have an excess of right brain activity (emotionality) no less than left brain (empirical technology). In the instance of Dr. Taylor, one might ask if being without language put her a truly or fully human state. When one speaks of language as a result of the Fall, as a Christian, he or

\textsuperscript{103} See “IBC Coaching - Oprah Winfrey entrevista Jill Bolte Taylor”, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMNwA4qbcGY).

she must remember that God revealed Himself as the *Logos* or “Word”. It seems that without language, Taylor’s potentiality for human communion suffered overall, even if she tapped into a deeper power of spiritual communion in the process. Another possibility is that language as *discursive* reasoning was a result of the Fall, that is, language amputated from embodied relationships and relegated to the abstract sphere. Christ, “the Word made flesh,” represents a full and undivided personal communion that must include the wholly human, affective and embodied, reality. Phenomena such as that which Taylor experienced may point to a more positive Christian evaluation of emotion, in the classical sense of ‘desire’ and/or in Thomas Aquinas’ teaching on the ‘affections’. Emotion is naturally oriented toward the divine in a similar but distant way to the *teleos* of intellectual knowledge (CCC 27-36).

The question as to whether intentionally induced states of ecstasy can be understood to parallel Western theistic experiences of God, under the inclusive umbrella term of *mysticism*, is still a contested and underdeveloped discussion in the Catholic Church. R.C. Zaehner devised three categories of mystical experience 1) pantheistic experience 2) monistic experience and 3) beatific experience. Generally, he considered the third experience ‘theistic’ (Christian) and unable to be induced by drugs (i.e. *pharmakeia*). Zaehner also distinguished preternatural phenomenon (like clairvoyance) from theistic ecstasies such as those of John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila:

For both St Teresa and St John of the Cross, visions and locutions (the auditory analogues of visions) could be ‘corporeal’, ‘imaginary’ or ‘intellectual’. With intellectual visions nothing is seen by the eye, nor is there an ‘impression’ on the imagination (which the Scholastics thought to be an intermediate faculty between the senses and the intellect). Rather an impression is communicated directly to the intellect. [On the festival of Saint Peter.] Teresa does not say that she saw Christ, but that she was ‘conscious of Him’. Both Teresa and John put less confidence in the kinds of mystical experiences that involved much physical or emotional intensity because these might be replicated by the devil more easily than a purely contemplative (indescribable) ‘vision’. Nevertheless, there were moments of super-sensual ecstatic experience in Teresa’s life towards which she placed a great deal of her faith.

A second type of mystical experience involves the realization of a truth that significantly alters one’s perspective on reality. This comports with ideas of self-awareness, enlightenment, and the attainment of wisdom. A third type of mystical experience is a change in the state of being. Eastern faiths tend to describe it in the language of un-being or non-being; it is a paradoxical state combining self-renunciation and self-attainment. Ruysbroech expressed this as “dying in God to himself.” Others describe the experience as being absorbed into God. The Christian tradition would call this the ‘unitive

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106 “Mysticism and drugs,” 177.
107 “Mysticism and drugs,” 180.
state’, or as understood by some Christian mystics, like Teresa of Avila, ‘spiritual marriage’: a state of
dwelling with God in the interior of the soul, detached from external experiences even while living a fully
active life.

William James, W.T. Stace, and Walter Pahnke have done similar work developing the criteria of
‘mystical states’. Pahnke conducted an experiment in 1962 where he gave a small number of theology
students the psycho-active substance psilocybin (found in the popularly named ‘magic mushrooms’), a
particularly important study because it added to previous criteria a “persisting positive changes in attitude
and behavior” after the drug experience. This factor builds a sturdy bridge to Christian methods of
spiritual discernment. St. Teresa of Avila and St. Ignatius of Loyola both placed strong rhetorical
emphasis on the post-mystical-experience fruits, especially peace or tranquility of soul. Specifically,
Christian mysticism requires the essential union with God, also called ‘marriage’ precisely because it
involves a mutual consent and commitment. God’s consent to initiate the induced experience, of course, is
very difficult to measure.

Whether a properly Christian mystical experience can be induced by drugs begs the further
question of what it means to be a Christian, which would always make mysticism as such ancillary to the
former qualifying term. Commitment to the Christian worldview still has to be the grounds from which
one launches into the ineffable mystical transcendence. Entering a mystical state without the framework
of Christian typology (whose possession would not necessitate explicit membership in the Christian
body), would have to imply an incomplete, though not inauthentic encounter with God. Outright rejection
of Christian typology, however, would almost certainly lead to a perverted experience of God, echoing
the caution of St. Teresa, that the devil could initiate and imitate certain ecstatic states. The possibility of
classifying intentional psychotropic trips as true instances of ‘non-being’, that is, genuine
renunciations of sense and will, depends largely on the amount of will power exercised in the choice to
undergo it and the level of sensual dependence involved in the desire to do it.

Kellenburger clarifies whether the mystical experience as such can be induced by a propitious use
of drugs by showing that the phenomenal comparison is not enough. The intellectual awareness of the
mystical reality and the state of being which the mystic undergoes are two elements of mysticism that will
always transcend any momentary experience. However, if the transient experience is all that is being
judged as mysticism, then drugs are certainly no hindrance and most likely an aid to its attainment. If
the phenomenology of the mystical experience were identical in the cases of Christians, Sufis, and LSD

108 “Mysticism and drugs,” 183.
109 “Mysticism and drugs,” 183-84.
users (to name three of the numberless modes), that would not necessarily be qualification enough for the right to be called a ‘mystic’, definitively not in the Christian sense. The real question for the Christian then, is whether drug induced ecstasies can assist or contribute to the life of a specifically Christian-mystic? For Zaehner, if the experience fits the typology of “the love of God in the context of pure spirituality beyond space and time and beyond the ‘one’,” than the answer is ‘yes’ – even though he denied ever witnessing such a ‘theistic’ experience in LSD users. Other researchers have seriously challenged this observation that psychotropic and Christian mysticism are mutually exclusive; for example, there are records of peyote users in the Native American Church who have had visions of Christ. Many of these experiments verified “behavioral changes of a positive character” even in LSD users.

If the negative test of ‘fruits’, that is, evidence of positive affective and conative change, is passed, then a further issue of veridicality is raised. To be judged an aid to Christian life, the drug experience must move one forward on the path of theological wisdom, but also, it must include an objective encounter with the Trinitarian God: a definitionally non-coerced interaction. In other words, God cannot be summoned by biochemical alchemy; God is not a genie released by psychoactive molecules. Any encounter with God does involve some type of altered perception: a pattern, a relationship, an image, a feeling, a knowledge, or a state of being that all of reality is illumined by. Whether this is a light that reveals or a darkness that deceives remains the question at hand, but not a question which any specific psychotropic substance ever consistently answers one way or another – a sign of moral neutrality. Equally, the drug experience could incite spiritual pride and relational dissonance or it could be used for therapeutic counseling and mental reconditioning (as is being studied in psychoanalysis and addiction recovery all over the world). For the Christian as well as the secular, the test of veridicality hinges on tradition, that of Doctrinal Revelation and of scientific law (both in continual but ever-narrowing ‘development’). Without these spiritual and psychological virtues to guide the experience, altered perception can be a doorway to self-delusion or even demonic influence. For the well-formed Christian, already living in the physical, mental, and spiritual landscape of the Catholic Church, however, psychotropic drugs may offer a form of therapy very much under-appreciated. Preliminary studies have already shown a significant reduction of anxiety and depression in terminally ill cancer patients as well as acute reduction of symptoms in patients diagnosed with OCD.

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110 “Mysticism and drugs,” 186.
111 “Mysticism and drugs,” 188.
112 See http://reset.me/ for a plethora of drug-related research.
In a conversation forum on transpersonal psychology, professional counselors from various fields discussed the borders between religion and science in the clinical use of psychedelic drugs. They asked questions like whether or not ayahuasca rituals could become an accredited element of training in transpersonal psychology. Ayahuasca is a hallucinogenic tea containing the psychotropic DMT (dimethyltryptamine) implemented in centuries old religious rites by indigenous Amazonian peoples. Also, “several syncretic religious movements in Brazil that combine aspects of ‘Catholicism, esoteric European traditions, and Afro-Brazilian and Amazonian religion’ are currently using ayahuasca as their sacrament.” The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Uniao Do Vegetal Church’s freedom to use ayahuasca as a legal sacrament in 2006 (Gonzales v. O Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao do Vegetal):

A seminal study in this area, known as the Hoasca Project was conducted by Dennis McKenna and colleagues in the early 1990s [169, 171]. The participants involved in this study were 15 members of the Uniao do Vegetal (UDV) syncretic sect in Brazil who had ingested ayahuasca an average of once every 2 weeks over a minimum period of 10 years. Using a battery of psychological assessments, the UDV members were compared with 15 ayahuasca-naive age-matched controls. The UDV members were found to perform significantly better than the controls on the WHOUCLA Auditory Learning Verbal Memory test and to be of high functional status according to structured interviews. Of particular interest was the finding that a number of UDV members with previous histories of violent behaviour and alcoholism had experienced symptomatic remission since joining the UDV.115

James Fadiman refers to the importance of harmony between the 1) drug, 2) set, and 3) setting, especially with those maximally intense psychotropics containing DMT.116 That is to say, one should be well informed of the physiological effects of any drug her or she is considering, the personal intentions and objectives for the drug’s use, and the wider cultural and political perspectives on the choice to ‘use’.117 This is a secular echoing of the Catholic teaching on the three aspects of a properly moral act: essentially, a good intention, a good object, and a good outcome. Taking this highly reverent approach to the psychedelic experience explains a long tradition of spiritual shamanism. In such communities, neophytes are guided throughout their psychological journey – the repeated metabolism of psychoactive chemicals unveils certain patterns in the ‘trips’ that can be respectively learned. As previously mentioned, the essential combination of subjective context and exterior environment cannot be overemphasized in evaluations of a psychotropic therapy as morally permissible or not.

In a groundbreaking work, Dr. Rick Strassman (author of DMT: The Spirit Molecule) returns to his Jewish roots to explore the exchange of meaning between psychedelic and religious experience. He garners both religious scholarship and scientific inquiry upon the intriguing thesis that human persons are

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114 “Reflections on Transpersonal Psychology’s 40th Anniversary,” 50.
115 “Plant-Based Medicines for Anxiety Disorders,” 313-14.
116 “Reflections on Transpersonal Psychology’s 40th Anniversary,” 48.
uniquely designed by God to have consciousness-expanding experiences, and that this is how God chose from the beginning to communicate His revelation. Strassman amasses convincing evidence for his case by comparing and contrasting the Hebrew Bible passages related to prophecy and the remarkably similar, but still limited, reports from his dissertation subjects under the clinically controlled influence of DMT (dimethyltryptamine). Several parallels are made to construct a theory of ‘theoneurology’: “the idea that the Divine intentionally communicates with us using the brain, rather than the oft-posed model of neurotheology, which holds that altered brain function simply causes hallucinations with content that can be interpreted as spiritually significant.”118 Strassman’s theory is a historical development on Descartes’ speculation that the body and soul meet and commune with Spirit through the pineal gland of the brain – some modern scientists like Rupert Sheldrake relocate this point of contact to the frontal lobe. Not committed to any precise spatial locus of contact, Strassman merely asserts that the natural production of DMT in the human brain (as well as in most plants and animals) may account for most, if not all, prophetic dreams and ecstasies. Most people do not even know that this, the most powerful psychotropic chemical we know of, is produced naturally in the human brain.119 Without suggesting that the Old Testament prophets relied on or necessarily ever intentionally used psychotropics, the power of this thesis rests on the fact that DMT levels in the brain can be heighted by multiple means: sensory stimulation or deprivation, physical posture, intense prayer, geographic anomalies, direct ingestion, sleep and/or natural overproduction.120 This means that there is no inherent contradiction between the psychoactive experience in itself and the orthodox Jewish or Christian interpretations of prophecy.

In this top-down, spiritual to physical, model of prophecy “it is important to reiterate that similar phenomenology is not equivalent to a similar message, despite the phenomenology being necessary for the transmission of that message.”121 Although all human beings, by virtue of DMT in the brain, have a natural capacity to become ‘prophets’ or ‘mystics’ (in Strassman’s thesis), only YHVH has the authority to grant or withhold true prophecy. Only God can purify light as it penetrates the muddied window of fallen human nature. Jeremiah captures this notion when, speaking for God, he says: “The prophet with a dream tells a dream, but the one with My word speaks My word of truth” (Jer 23:28). Strassman’s collection of overlapping data between Old Testament prophecy and DMT altered-states suggests, at minimum, empirical evidence for a spirit-to-matter organic vessel of communication. Visual parallels

121 DMT and the Soul of Prophecy, 289.
included: “darkness, vast visual perspectives, clouds, fire or fiery colors, intensely saturated and melting or flowing colors, the recursiveness of images, chimeras of animals and other animals, animals and humans, and animate objects with inanimate or machinelike objects.”\textsuperscript{122} Other similarities were basic somatic phenomena, emotional intensities, touching hands, beating-wing sounds, whispering voices, cognitive awareness, and self-efficacy. The most profound category of similarity Strassman called “relatedness,” a bidirectional relationship with objective ‘alien’ beings and/or God. These interpersonal exchanges “display varying levels of reciprocity, and sometimes follow stereotypical patterns such as ‘question and answer’ and the ‘rhetorical question.’ The effects of these various interactions extend into a number of domains: blessing, overseeing, healing, guarding, guiding, and informing. In addition, harm may accrue to someone as a result of their interaction with a being.”\textsuperscript{123} This latter genus of prophecy forces one to question religious claims (mainly Eastern) that deny the hard reality of relationships, collapsing objective personal-beings into a collective consciousness of the ‘One’. For these reasons, Rick Strassman asserts that dimethyltryptamine studies may initiate the reemergence of a scientifically sanctioned metaphysics of divine revelation. Strassman is adamant that his own experiences with ritual shamanism and Zen Buddhism do not explain the DMT studies’ data better than his experience with Judaic tradition (his understanding of Christianity being relatively limited).\textsuperscript{124}

This highlights the significance of the notion of ‘divine presence’ in the study of religious experience. Strassman organizes this idea under the Hebrew Old Testament word \textit{Kavod}, referring to God’s manifest (in an incomplete sense, incarnate) glory.\textsuperscript{125} Jewish encounters with \textit{Kavod} and the \textit{Shekina} presence of God – an anthropomorphic object of veneration in later Kabbalah tradition – clearly indicate a spatio-temporal dwelling place for the divine Being amongst humanity, marking a significant element of divergence from the majority of DMT drug experiences. Herein lies the point of greatest contention between Judaic and secular modes of spiritual communion. The risk of idolatry of the human psyche can only be mediated by a true and free intervention of God into the particular prophetic experience. It is not enough to be chosen by God, for all are chosen, but the prophet or mystic must also be led forward by the Lord, as the cloud of \textit{Kavod} guided Israel through the desert. Returning to Paul’s theology of prophecy:

\begin{quote}
I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{DMT and the Soul of Prophecy}, 156.
\textsuperscript{123} \textit{DMT and the Soul of Prophecy}, 193.
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{DMT and the Soul of Prophecy}, Chapter 7.
\textsuperscript{125} \textit{DMT and the Soul of Prophecy}, 194 and Chapter 16.
from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2 Tim 4:1-5).

Further on in this same chapter, Paul references a false prophet who strongly opposed the Christian message. The last of the apostles takes it as testimony of the Gospel that he was ‘rescued from the lion’s mouth’, echoing a theme of Acts: the true prophet, after doing his part in preaching, relies on God to defend the truth (cf. 1 Kings 13). This leads to the question and meaning of theosis in Paul’s theology.

Irenaeus of Lyons, in Against Heresies, claims that “God the Logos became what we are, in order that we may become what he himself is.”126 This is rephrased by Athanasius, who says, “The Word of God Himself...assumed humanity that we might become God. He manifested Himself by means of a body in order that we might perceive the Mind of the unseen Father. He endured shame from men that we might inherit immortality.”127 The Christian doctrine of theosis, or the deification of man by God, is defined by Michael Austin simply as the “progressively transformational union with Christ.” The main biblical justification for this doctrine comes from the Second Letter of Peter, Chapter One, verses 3-11:

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:3-11).128

Philosophically speaking, human beings cannot have the nature of God in an ontologically equivalent sense to the way that God is his own nature. Like J. de Waal Dryden’s distinction, between justification and sanctification,129 there is a paradoxical simultaneity between the absolute self-generating power of God and His ordained relationality with man. The omnipotence of God does not infringe on the freedom of the person, as the omniscience of God does not occlude His ability to have relationships (exemplified in the Trinity utmost). These Christian doctrines enhance rather than take from the realness of interaction between God and human beings. The baptized soul is ‘once and for all’ made righteous in Christ by the merits of Christ alone, but the sanctification of the soul in time is actualized by a union of wills between

126 Against Heresies 5, pref.; ANF 1:526.
128 See also, Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2; and 2 Corinthians 3:18.
the human soul and the Holy Spirit. Thus, ‘partaking in the divine nature’ does not imply an equal status with God, rather, “upon becoming indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we now have direct access to the mind and heart of God.” This truth is fully realized in the Catholic Church’s Liturgy of Word and Eucharist.

_Theosis_ is a definitive marriage with God and a progressive mimesis of God through the super-virtuousness of ‘life in the Spirit’. As such, _theosis_ would have to be the ultimate aim of any morally legitimate use of drugs, psychotropic or otherwise, just as it need be the aim of all spiritual striving. “The spiritual disciplines are not just about seeking some special experience of God. There is nothing wrong with longing for God’s presence, but many are seeking a particular kind of emotional experience without realizing the relevance of a transformed character for spiritual life in Christ. The doctrine of _theosis_ can act as a corrective here, as it includes a deep emotional union with Christ coupled with the cultivation of intellectual and moral virtue in Christ.” “That you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” is Paul’s clear intention for the Christian individual and the body of the Church (cf. Eph 3:14-21).

In a study on Paul’s use of the word _aphtharsia_ (incorruptibility), Dănuţ-Vasile Jemna develops the biblical anthropological understanding of _theosis_. Applied to both God and man in Paul’s letters “incorruptibility” has metaphysical valences paralleling _theosis_ and mysticism. “The state of incorruptibility is given several meanings, as we shall see from the eight texts where _aphtharsia_ appears at the Apostle Paul in the noun form. The adjective form of the term incorruptibility appears at Apostle Paul in four passages, two of which mention God, the other two referring to the human being. As for the man, incorruptibility points to the eschatological dimension and brings into discussion both the reward and the transformation that resurrection brings.” The transformation of the human body into the incorruptible begins with the Incarnation of God’s Son into history and unfolds temporally unto its blossoming at the resurrection. During this process, the source of life in the human person moves from the soul to the Holy Spirit, from a fleshly to a ‘spiritual body’. “I tell you this, brethren: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Cor 15:50). In contraposition to Gnostic forms of ‘body-hatred’ or the damnation of matter, this concept represents the salvation of man as a body-soul composite. Incorruption is described as a state of increased spirogenetic fruitfulness. Though not a quality of human nature before Baptism, when the body passes through those waters it is immediately transfigured from the corrupted state to the incorruptible one (cf. 1

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131 “The Doctrine of Theosis,” 185.
Cor 15:51-52). As responding to the Gnostic’s denial of God’s Incarnation, Irenaeus proclaimed: “But how could we be joined to incorruptibility and immortality, unless, first, incorruptibility and immortality had become that which we also are, so that the corruptible might be swallowed up by incorruptibility, and the mortal by immortality, that [we] might receive the adoption of sons?”134 “Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible” (Eph 6:24).

Similarly, William Nelson argues for a more comprehensive Pauline anthropology, one that avoids the three errors of 1) Greek dualism, 2) Protestant isolationism, and 3) psychological reductionism.135 The human person for Paul is neither a Greek dichotomy of body and soul, nor a trichotomy of body, soul, and spirit, but more than these, a body-soul-spirit unity governed by the acting person. Protestant scholasticism tends to isolate ‘man’ in his state as a concupiscent sinner, but this results in an incomplete picture of the child of God, who can only understand himself fully in the light of the incarnate Word (cf. GS 22-23). Psychological reductionism, in most cases, creates a relative and individualistic picture of the human, void of supernatural connection. Yet, human persons cannot be understood as entities in themselves divided from a relationship with God or from the ecclesial personality of Christ. Paul's teaching that the human person is a new creation in Christ presupposes a state of tension between the actualizations of the body-soul and the human spirit. “Man in his natural humanity is part of a corporate personality ‘in Adam’; man in his redeemed humanity is part of a corporate personality ‘in Christ’.”136 “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Rom: 6:5). Moreover, Paul’s Christology is trinitarian and pneumatological, as the new life in Christ is the power of the Holy Spirit. It is only in the Spirit that Jews and Gentiles both have a vessel to the Father (cf. Eph: 2:18), and that all Christians “participate and have fellowship with one another” as the Mystical Body (cf. 2 Cor 13:14; Eph: 4:34).137 According to Paul, the Church is simultaneously the children of the Father, the body of Christ, and the sharers of the Spirit, a microcosm of the Blessed Trinity. Thus, if one wishes to discern the effects of pharmacological substances on the human person in terms of a Pauline anthropology, he or she cannot limit the analysis to a philosophical bifurcation, naturalistic isolation, or psychological segmentation. Instead, the data from these inductions must be combined with the deductions of Revelation.

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor 6:19). In an article entitled, “Which Body is a Temple?”, Nijay K. Gupta asks if ‘body’

136 “Pauline Anthropology,” 19.
in the above verse refers to the Corinthian community, the personal body, or both? Western culture favors the individual body because of its sensitivities to property and freedom, but the ancient Mediterranean cultures emphasized a communal body. Both of these positions can find support in the writings of Paul.\footnote{138} Looking solely at the grammar of the Greek word soma, body, does not directly answer Gupta’s question. Although it is properly interpreted in English as the singular ‘body’ rather than ‘bodies’, the Greek genitive pronoun can be translated distributively as in ‘the body of you all’ or ‘the body of each of you’.\footnote{139} So, on the lexical level, the ‘body’ in this verse does not exclude an understanding of the individual as a temple, even if an interplay of persons is implied by the form of the word used. “The dialectic between collective unit and separate members is both semantically provocative and contextually appropriate… From the very beginning, then, Paul is interested in maintaining the balance and tension between concentrating on the person-in-community and the person-in-community.”\footnote{140}

In multiple places, it seems that Paul purposefully fluctuates between singular and plural or individual and collective forms of the same words/phrases in the same contexts in order to assert this necessary personal-communal balance. It is evident in several pericopes (cf. Gal 6:15-17; 2 Cor 4:1-6; 12:9-10; Phil 3:7-11). Galatians Chapter 2 is especially vivid, wherein Paul addresses the doctrine of solidarity in justification, verse 17. He avoids making a theological proof or a scriptural reference but instead speaks phenomenologically: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:19-20). Paul was called beyond his Judaism precisely by this tension as also recorded in Acts 9:1-5:

Saul [Paul], still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ And he said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Christ, whom Paul had never encountered personally, associated Himself with all the individual Christians whom Paul sought to harm. In 1 Corinthians 5, when speaking of a sexually immoral man, who was a well-known member of the Corinthian church, Paul says, “Drive the wicked person from among you,” echoing the Deuteronomic language of Israel who had to fight for the integrity of their covenantal community. Two clues in the text, however, suggest that Paul is interested in both the stability of the group and the fullness of the individual. First and foremost, Paul’s interest in expelling the ‘wicked

\footnote{138} “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple?” 520.  
\footnote{139} “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple?” 522.  
\footnote{140} “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple?” 524-25.
person’ is not just for the sake of the whole; equally important for Paul is the preservation of the immoral man, because the handing over of him to Satan is ‘so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord’ (v. 5:5). Certainly, Paul is just as concerned for the troublemaker’s restoration as for the perseveration of the Holy Spirit in that specific community.141

The Christian body is a novel species of community; the body of Christ is not merely another instance of a Greco-Roman ‘body-politic’. For this reason, one must acknowledge a distinct dynamic arising in Christianity between the individual and the community, one that did not exist before in the ancient world. Taking the human body as the standard metaphor for multiple layers of relationship to God again follows the pattern of the nuptial mystery; God’s romance with humanity as proclaimed throughout the Old and New Testaments of Scripture has been consummated bodily in the person of Christ. The physical body is united to the soul as spouses are united in ‘one-body’ in marriage, as the person is united to the Church body, as the Church is united to the body of Christ, as Christ is united to the Trinitarian Godhead. While granting that the analogies are not univocal: “This mystery is profound” (Eph 5:32). What transports across these bodily idioms is, at least, 1) the idea of boundaries (what is ‘inside’ or ‘outside’ of the body), 2) the concept of various ‘infections’ that can ‘damage’ these respective ‘bodies,’ and 3) the fact that these bodies exist for communion, and closely related, 4) a special presence of the Holy Spirit (like the shekinah) exists within their borders.142

The human person wages in his and her heart the apocalyptic war for the cosmos, therefore, he and she must live interiorlly at the service of the universal priesthood of the Kingdom of Heaven. This involves the protection of the Temple-Church-Community from evil penetrations, but also the actively lived sacrifices of individual charity. The psycho-somatic-social unity demands involvement in the cleansing, or evangelization, of other human persons in the fallen universe. As heart merges with heart, difference is not destroyed but subordinated to an emergent value, subsumed into a Trinitarian pattern of love that is worthy of worship because it preserves without stain: the whole personal artistic contribution and the whole collective eternal movement. The difficulty of holding this faith, for so many, is the acceptance of authority. To some, hierarchy and positions of status seem to be a result of the Fall, or as McKenna suggested, a consequence of language. Yet the Catholic Church proclaims the fault of Adam was ‘happy’, because by the mercy of God, it led to the divination of humanity. This is why Christ is hailed as the Logos, the Greek word for absolute intelligibility, because only God can give order to ‘language’ once adopted by creatures. Here one touches on a difficult theme in the theology of sexuality and the Trinity, on the connection between the language-hierarchy as masculine and the emotion-equity

141 “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple?” 526.
142 “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple?” 528-29.
as feminine. Although the balance of the two is tantamount to health in all knowable systems, God still chose to reveal Himself as ‘Father’, an unambiguous assertion of authority. All the same, the question of the status of respective ‘bodies’ and their sacredness bears great significance to the question of pharmakeia. “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom 12:1-2).

From the 1997 Catechism of the Catholic Church:

Divination and magic

2115 God can reveal the future to his prophets or to other saints. Still, a sound Christian attitude consists in putting oneself confidently into the hands of Providence for whatever concerns the future, and giving up all unhealthy curiosity about it. Improvidence, however, can constitute a lack of responsibility.

2116 All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone.

2117 All practices of magic or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others - even if this were for the sake of restoring their health - are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone, or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons. Wearing charms is also reprehensible. Spiritism often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it. Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers or the exploitation of another's credulity.

On the secular level, the philosophical debate is already settled in favor of psychotropic therapies, but a Catholic Christian legitimization remains highly questionable. “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Gal 5:1). If the act of using psychotropics were to be considered a moral act, the specific drug would have to be deemed a neutral substance, the act would have to have the intention of harming or communion, and the environment in which it took place would need to be maximally conducive to physical safety and Christian spirituality. The current debate hinges on the exact classification of a drug as “occult” or “sorcery” or otherwise. At least in the case of the neuro-chemical dimethyltryptamine, it would be untenable to label its concentrated presence in the blood stream as an act of the occult. Because its effects are essentially the magnified effects of most other natural psychotropic plants, it might also be difficult to sustain an argument that psilocybin (magic mushrooms) and tetrahydrocannabinol (cannabis) should be considered ‘sorcery’ or ‘witchcraft’ either. The key tool in the discernment of such experiments would be to measure the prevalence of secondary motivations, such as greed for spiritual powers or lust for a feeling of ecstasy. Also, taking into account
the secondary circumstances, such as potential scandal to the weak of faith, or roadblocks to communication with neighbors, should be considered as valid negative points.

Psychotropic drugs have been used in modern cultures and in the past (anachronistically) to imitate the Holy Eucharist as celebrated in Christendom (i.e. Rastafarianism, Iboga, and Ayahuasca traditions). The function of such drugs in these cultures is usually, blatantly, idolatrous; it functions to replace the one true God, Jesus Christ. Yet, distinguishing between drugs as mediators and drugs as idols may be difficult in certain cases. Even if a particular culture believes in One God, or even the Trinitarian One God, psychoactive drugs could be abused by becoming a preferred method of experiencing the divine, and therefore, an unintentional intellectual idolatry and an act of spiritual sloth. “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe – and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness’ – and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone” (Jas 2:19-24).

Could it ever be contended, that Paul, as representative of Catholic theology, would allow for the use of psychotropics as form of charismatic training in the discernment of spirits? If one believes that God is One and Jesus is Divine, and if one is growing in all the virtues of the saint, and if medicinal psychotropics do not interfere with his or her spiritual life and corporal works mercy, then it should these drugs not be as lawful for a Christian to use as it is for him or her to eat pork or drink beer or not get circumcised? That is a lot of ‘ifs’. Since certain genetic and environmental determinates can already dispose individuals to mystical-like experiences, including those phenomenologically identical to psychoactive states, it seems there could be a biological class of humans that would specially benefit from organized psychotropic education. For example, people with ADHD are said to receive more sense input from their environment than the average person, forcing their minds and bodies into patterns of behavior that appear impulsive or irrational because they are acting on more than the average person can perceive. Perhaps, people like this would benefit from practicing states of altered consciousness, in order to vocationally make best use of such a gift. As with any medication, the goal would only be healing, that the medicine become no longer necessary. Whether or not such and similar cases could be made, the final judgement of Mother Church is God’s Word, and one must remember always, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight” (Prov 9:10).

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil (1 Thes 5:19-22).
The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thes 2:9-12).

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot (Rom 8:1-7).

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things (Gal 5:22-23).

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others (Phil 2:1-4).

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, ‘When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men’ (Eph 4:1-8).

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2 Tim 4:1-5).
IV. Conclusion

The political, economic, and philosophical history of the world has always been and will always be religious, because the human person is *homo religioso*. Life admits possibilities more than mere logical theory, but also faith premises, nor will political utopia satisfy desire, as does the resurrection hope. Genetic evolution cannot be an end in itself, as only divine charity can. These theological virtues are Christic bred and the highest functions of the human body-soul composite. The only other religion is a false religion of slavery to those former belief systems, free masonry, gnosticism, pantheism, panspermia. These are the demons of the universe waring against the cosmic body of Christ. Today, more people believe in aliens than in God. Pagan worship has resuscitated; its ancient allure has returned to the masses through the power of schooled forgetfulness. Now people worship the biochemical fundamentals of life, the ideal of an amoral evolution, the belief in achieving technological immortality, the same old heresies in fancy new dress. Atheists have shown to be especially fond of panspermia theory precisely due to this ‘mystical’ aura surrounding the DNA molecules and their data stores that produce all forms of life. An occult priest class worships their supposed creators, alien experimenters, as gods (fallen angels). They believe these beings are an advanced humanoid species who will grant to the elite achievers of the world special powers over life. They also believe these aliens can manipulate forces of nature, such as magnetic lines, atomic structures, and human DNA, and that gaining this hidden knowledge ‘will make them like the gods’ (cf. Gen 3:4). Eugenics propaganda and other mutagenic tactics function as sacramental acts or ritual offerings to these god-demons. Thus, the world is ruled by a cult whose faith is self-worship, believing they are like Calvin’s ‘justified sinners’, saved by their own strength and beyond damnation. They are the few elect to whom all must beg for their bread. ¹⁴³ Fearing the brutality of the primitive populace, these rulers poison, lie, manipulate, dissect, and murder common person in the name of their Satanic religion. “Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God” (John 16:2).

Satanism masks as a literal spirituality of hatred or it can be an implicit worship of oneself. While the panspermist scientist represents the latter Satanism, extreme ‘fundamentalist’ faiths represent the former. An obvious, but politically incorrect, example is found in the radical Islamic jihad and its parallel agenda of population control (without the mutagen testing aspect). Islam’s moral philosophy is based on a divine command theory (obedience without moral limits) that depends on the law of a Caliphate politician. Being a constitutionally political religion (based on the Quran and history), it is the perfect

¹⁴³ John Taylor Gatto, *The Ultimate History Lesson*, Tragedy and Hope: 2011. ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQiW_l848t8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQiW_l848t8)).
‘opium for the Muslim masses’, who have been and are being trained to treat the state as a god. Thus, it is clear in a world of desperately religious animals, that there is spiritual warfare on multiple fronts, and none are safe: “for our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12). ‘Equality’ is established by spiritual unity, not by imposed sameness. Ideological coercion becomes forced slavery. The true God persuades through the power of sacrificial love. Dignity rests entirely on the fact that we are loved by the one and only God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When we worship in the way He has set before us in history we learn to love as He loves; by following in His footsteps. Self-immolation and supragenetic-faith are the exact opposite of epi-eugenic religion. Worship through service brings a balanced gravity between trusting God and working hard.

Catholicism, in the witness of its doctrine and the practice of its saints, is the inversion and enemy of panspermia Paganism and radical Islam. Some suggest that the Catholic Church is the embodiment of ancient and modern gnostic cults, because it has internalized some symbols and ritual forms that mirror these religions, such as the Papal tiara, the colored robe, the blood sacrifice, the consuming of the deity. However, the Church’s history and tradition contradict this superficial assessment. The Church borrows decoration and symbol from all over the earth because all that is natural is God’s, those signs never belonged to the Babylonians, or the Egyptians, the Nephilim or extraterrestrials. The Christian theological foundation underpinning these syncretic images is utterly unique in the science of comparative religion. The qualitative difference rests in the logic of Incarnation, an idea much more profound than mere material disguise or genetic reorganization such as the lesser ‘gods’ performed. When the Christian God takes on the human body-soul, He does not simply manipulate elemental forces, He performs the one and only true miracle (because science could explain almost anything else): God literally becomes a human person and transfers to human persons the Spirit of God. Yet, God remains God, and that is the miracle. We must learn and understand that Incarnation is an exclusively Christian way of being, at odds with all other faiths in one or another way. In the free market of religions, Christianity has already won history. It is responsible for every great liberty we take for granted in the world today. “For freedom Christ has set us free” (Gal 5:1). Recognize, the ‘rock of the ages’ is the Catholic Body of Christ. “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (Jn 14:6).

In the historical revelation of the person Jesus Christ, God discloses all that He is. Nothing remains to be revealed; no salvific truth is hidden from the seeking heart. In a Catholic milieu, the allure of the unknown leads primarily, not to technological invention or personal evolution, but to the Perfect Face of Love itself in the mode of a human relationship. This is Jesus Christ, not a concept or a building but a Person. The Person is also God, the truth, the way to that truth, and the life-giving spirit that the
truth inspires. Eden was God’s garden of creation. The forbidden fruit gave the knowledge of DNA to man, separating in his and her mind the spiritual and the genetic body. The mystical sciences of Christ’s genetic code and the genetics of the Eucharist eclipse the shape-shifting errors of panspermia Satanism. God does not hide truth, He does not revel in power. The True God reveals as a lover reveals, delicately and with consent, but also, without giving more than one is ready to receive at a given time. Like the Tree of Knowledge in Eden shows us, humans are prone to take what is not yet, just not yet, offered them. In this way, the bride continues to coerce herself into being loved as less than she was made to be, as more an animal body than a spiritual body. God leads time, or else there is no God. No amount of knowledge or data can answer that question. The deception of Satan continues to muddy God’s command so that human’s see it as a prohibition, but the true law of love is freedom itself, just as Christ though human is God himself. Sin is the occult power of Satan, the power to reject God, to give up freedom, to love only materially and to live without hope of resurrection. Lucifer seduces us into becoming gears ground by the teeth of an amoral beast of nature. Pharmakeia presents this danger when the drug becomes a necessary sacrament more than a temporary medicine. It is a spiritual power not to be taken lightly for it cannot be tamed. Recklessly undertaken, psychotropics can enslave the mind and cause forgetfulness of Christ. When the eye is open, it no longer discerns in darkness. When the power of love is revealed, magic and fortune will lose their appeal. The ungraced will be deceived and overtaken by the beings of the other dimensions. In the end, ever spirit will knee to the holiest Lord. “Nor, did they repent of their magic arts (pharmakeia)…” (Rev 9:21 NIV).

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”
Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”
Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:
“He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”
Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”
Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”
Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”
Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.145

145 Matthew 4:1-11 NIV.
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